The National Agriculture in the Classroom Organization (NAITCO) and the Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) state programs, that are its members in most of the 50 states and the District of Columbia are charged with educating students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade about the importance of agriculture.

The non-profit organization and its member state programs work hard every day to provide Pre-K-12 teachers with educational resources and programs that use agricultural concepts to teach reading, writing, math, science, social studies and more.

It provides agricultural connections to the hundreds of Pre-K-12 lessons and companion resources that are searchable on the Curriculum Matrix on its website. It uses food and farming as the theme of its annual national conference that attracts hundreds of teachers from around the country who are interested in using agriculture as a teaching tool. It uses agriculture as the context for its national teacher and volunteer awards programs that showcase innovative ways educators use agriculture to teach students about a very important industry. It provides grant money and professional development opportunities to strengthen AITC state programs.

The 2018 Annual Report highlights the strides NAITCO and its member state programs made, the efforts of which are funded by a combination of membership dues, sponsorships from national agribusiness companies and organizations and a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA/NIFA). NAITCO owes its success to USDA which has provided leadership and support of the Agriculture in the Classroom movement since it began in the early 1980s.

Thanks to the hard work of NAITCO leadership and staff the organization is poised to reach even more teachers and students moving forward.
Educating Pre-K-12th grade teachers and students about the source of their food, fiber and fuel is the mission of NAITCO and its AITC state member programs.

We strive to develop relevant, standards-based Pre-K-12 lesson plans and companion resources, offer teacher training workshops, host agricultural literacy reading programs in elementary schools, provide grant opportunities and other initiatives to help teachers educate students about the importance of agriculture to their daily lives. Special programs in 2018 included:

- The 2018 National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference, ‘Agriculture for ME on Land and Sea’ held June 26-29 in Portland, Maine, and of which I was the proud host, that showed a sold-out crowd of 425 teachers and educators from around the country how to use agricultural concepts as teaching tools in their classrooms, farm tours and workshops.
- The 2018 National Excellence in Teaching about Agriculture Award that honored eight Pre-K-12 teachers from Florida, Kansas, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, Tennessee, Virginia and Wisconsin for the innovative ways they use agricultural concepts in their classroom instruction.
- The 2018 USDA/NIFA Fire Up Grant program that funded new, existing or professional development projects submitted by six AITC state programs.
- The 2018 NAITCO Leadership Summit, the first joint professional development workshop of AITC state programs, held April 16-18 in Chicago that showed 80 AITC state contacts and their staff members how to use agriculture to meet Next Generation Science Standards, how to use new technologies such as 360-degree videos and virtual reality viewers to enhance students virtual visits to different types of farms, among other topics.

Altogether, NAITCO and its AITC member state programs reached more than 96,000 teachers and 8.2 million students with the message of the importance of agriculture in Pre-K-12 classrooms across the country. The organization leveraged the combined state budgets of $14 million with the grant funding it received from USDA/NIFA and support it received from Nutrien Ltd., CSF Foundation and the American Egg Board.

Together with our partners we can accomplish anything. I am honored to have served as president of such a great organization and look forward to the exciting future it and its member state programs have in front of them.

Sincerely, Willie Grenier

President’s Message

Program Impact

Number of Pre-K-12 teachers and students reached in 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Students</th>
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<td>96,000</td>
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More than 400 educators from around the country learned how to use agricultural concepts to teach reading, writing, math, science, social studies and more at the National Agriculture in the Classroom National Conference called 'Agriculture for ME on Land and Sea' held June 23-26 at the Holiday Inn by the Bay in Portland, ME. NAITCO, in partnership with USDA/NIFA and Maine Agriculture in the Classroom program, held three days of workshops showing pre-kindergarten through 12th grade teachers how to use agriculture to teach core subjects.

In addition, conference participants went on traveling workshops of nearby agribusinesses and research facilities to learn about lobster fishing, mussel farming, dairy production, among other stops. They also heard from keynote speakers such as Sebastian Belle, executive director of the Maine Aquaculture Association who spoke about the latest trends in the aquaculture industry, and Roger Deien, director of SeedMoney, a Maine-based non-profit that helps to establish food gardens across the country and around the world.

The conference honored national teacher winners and a national Agriculture Advocate winner for the innovative ways they use agriculture to teach students about an important industry.

“We were thrilled to host this year’s National Agriculture in the Classroom National Conference in Maine,” says Willie Grenier, president of NAITCO and executive director of Maine Agriculture in the Classroom. “The national conference used workshops, awards, and tours of farms on land and in the water to show educators how effectively agriculture can be used in formal classroom instruction.”

NAITCO and Nutrien Ltd. issued a challenge at the beginning of the conference for AITC state programs to form teams and play farming game ‘Farmers 2050’ on their devices during the conference to win money for their AITC state programs. Louisiana AITC won the top prize of $2,000, and New York AITC came in second and won $1,000.

Of the 425 conference participants registered, more than half were teachers from around the country, many of whom received scholarships provided by CHS Foundation, Inc. to cover their conference registrations. In addition, 10 teachers and informal educators received White-Reinhardt scholarships from American Farm Bureau’s Foundation for Agriculture to attend the conference.

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Workshop goers learn about pasta, jars, and plants by studies to create farming talks about the future, a workshop called "Programming for the Future.

Teacher shows off her metamorphosis activity that uses pasta to replicate the life stages of a butterfly in the early elementary workshop 'Pollinating Young Minds.'

Teacher watches a 360-degree video of a farm using her cell phone and a virtual reality viewer in the upper elementary and middle school workshop 'Bring Agriculture to Life with Virtual Reality.'

Teacher weaves wool into yarn in the workshop for all educators called 'Resources to Grow.'
Minnesota, who initiated a schoolwide, cross-curricular garden effort starting with each class planting hay bale gardens and expanding to raised bed gardens available to all classrooms and built by the high school construction class.

New Mexico rancher and educator Margaret ‘Margie’ McKwon won the Agriculture Advocate Award for 2018. McKwon received the award for her efforts to establish New Mexico’s largest and longest running agricultural event called ‘McKeen Ranch Days,’ an annual program held at her ranch where more than 30 teachers and 450 students learn about animal agriculture and life on a working ranch. They learn how to milk a real cow, how to make butter and where honey comes from. In addition, they learn about the compartments of a cow’s stomach and the nutrients cows absorb by observing a cannulated cow provided by the USDA Research Center. They also learn about how and why cattle are branded and dehorned.

Helping Pre-K-12 students understand the importance of agriculture by incorporating it into reading, writing, math, science, social studies and other subjects is the main focus of the National Agriculture in the Classroom National Conference. Every year the organization highlights the innovative ways they infuse agricultural concepts into their classrooms. Informal educators are encouraged to share how these lessons teach students about the importance of agriculture and its role in items they use everyday. The award is sponsored by USDA/NIFA, Farm Credit, and CropLife America.

In addition, the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture sponsored the White-Reinhardt awards program in 2018 in which it sponsored 10 educators to attend the NAITC national conference. The CHS Foundation provided scholarships to help 40 teachers attend the NAITC national conference.

Also, the Agriculture Advocate Award recognizes informal educators who volunteer to educate Pre-K-12 students about the importance of agriculture. The Agriculture Advocate Award is sponsored by the National Grange.

The eight award winning teachers and their projects are:

- Jacqueline Holmes, a third-grade teacher at Triangle Elementary in Sorrento, Florida, who turned a love of horticulture into a schoolwide garden initiative to teach students reading, writing, math, science and social studies, good nutrition and the value of giving back to the community.
- Wanda Sip, social studies teacher and agricultural educator at Community Elementary in Muncie, Indiana, who partnered with the University of Delaware to teach students about agricultural sciences and cover the STEM subject areas (Science, Technology, Engineering, Agriculture and Math).
- Julie Jancek, a fifth-grade teacher at East Peoria Elementary in Las Cruces, New Mexico, who used a schoolwide unit on the chile, her state’s signature crop, to teach science, economics, cultural studies and reading.
- Amy Gossler, a first-grade teacher at Milton Terrace Elementary in Clifton Park, New York, who developed a cross-curricular unit on corn and whose students began regularly with an Iowa corn grower as he planted, harvested and developed his crop.
- Andy Roach, a fifth-grade math teacher at McFadden School of Excellence in Cane Ridge, Tennessee, who used a school garden and hen house to teach students how to measure the distance between seeds as they are being planted, and chicken height, weight and percentage change between the two as the chickens grow, among many other math lessons.
- Jennifer Massengill, a fourth-grade science and technology teacher at Hampton Roads Academy in Williamsburg, Virginia, who used a school garden as the subject for a school-wide blog group, afternoon garden club and morning cooking class to teach technology and plant germination, nutrition and genetics to teach science.
- Lisa Dyer, a fourth-grade teacher at Mineral Point Unified School District in Mineral Point, Wisconsin, whose students launched a successful effort to convince state lawmakers to make cheese Wisconsin’s official state dairy product.
- Amy Maste, a middle school teacher at Laporte School in Laporte, Minnesota, who initiated a schoolwide, cross-curricular garden effort starting with each class planting hay bale gardens and expanding to raised bed gardens available to all classrooms and built by the high school construction class.

New Mexico rancher and educator Margaret ‘Margie’ McKwon won the Agriculture Advocate Award for 2018. McKwon received the award for her efforts to establish New Mexico’s largest and longest running agricultural event called ‘McKeen Ranch Days,’ an annual program held at her ranch where more than 30 teachers and 450 students learn about animal agriculture and life on a working ranch. They learn how to milk a real cow, how to make butter and where honey comes from. In addition, they learn about the compartments of a cow’s stomach and the nutrients cows absorb by observing a cannulated cow provided by the USDA Research Center. They also learn about how and why cattle are branded and dehorned.
NITCO and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA/NIFA) selected six state AITC projects for funding in 2018 as part of a competitive grants program called ‘Fire-Up Grants’ to support the growth of agricultural literacy in pre-kindergarten-12th grade classrooms across the country.

The purpose of the Fire Up Grants program is to strengthen new and existing state Agriculture in the Classroom programs with additional funding. The six projects are expected to reach more than 1,500 teachers and informal educators and more than 73,000 students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade across the United States with the message of the importance of agriculture.

Projects selected for funding were:

**Start Up Grants**
- Pennsylvania Friends of Agriculture Foundation
  - Developed kits and interactive displays as part of its ‘Finding Your Future in Agriculture (Career Day)’ project to interest 6-12th grade students at Career Day events in pursuing agricultural careers.

- California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom
  - Created LearnAboutAg Starter Kits and LearnAboutAg 101 Video and Guide to help K-12th grade students explore the wealth of resources offered by NITCO and the California AITC program.

**Scale Up Grants**
- Alaska Agriculture in the Classroom
  - Increased the number of indoor school garden workshops to reach more K-12th grade teachers across Alaska with its online lessons plans called ‘Alaska Indoor Gardening Curriculum.’

- New Hampshire Agriculture in the Classroom
  - Expanded its ‘Tapping Into Maple Tradition’ program with a new Ag Mag, new lessons, a new pre-service teacher program, and grants for teachers interested in purchasing equipment to make maple in their classrooms.

**Jump Up Grants**
- Michigan Farm Bureau’s Agriculture in the Classroom
  - Funded regional workshops to train educators to run the mobile FARM Science Labs developed by the Michigan AITC program that travel to schools across the state to educate K-5th grade students about Michigan agriculture.

- Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom
  - Expanded a volunteer toolkit to include new ‘Who Grew My Food?’ promotional materials and lesson plans called ‘Who Grew My Breakfast? Who Grew My Lunch? and Who Grew My Pizza?’ to help volunteers reach even more students with the message of the importance of agriculture.

- Michigan Farm Bureau’s Agriculture in the Classroom
  - Used Fire Up Grant funds for regional workshops to train educators how to run its FARM Science Labs that visit elementary schools across the state.

Education examines device used to make maple syrup in New Hampshire Agriculture in the Classroom grant project ‘Tapping into Maple Tradition.’
The CHS Foundation supported 15 agriculture-related classroom projects with $500 each at schools around the country. The funded projects are:

- Florida (K-4) – Celebration Kids Village’s ‘Tigua-cited Little Farmers: Fostering Agricultural Literacy through Poutry Embryology in the Classroom’
- Georgia (K-2) – Mickey Hill Primary School’s ‘Growing Gardens, Growing Minds’
- Georgia (9-12) – Central High School’s ‘Futting the Future’
- Iowa (K-4) – Grant Ragan Elementary School’s ‘Suburban Farmers Raising Chickens’
- Louisiana (K-5) – LSU Elementary Lab School’s ‘Just Keep Swimming and Sprouting: Aquaponics in Action, Growing Fish and Food’
- Minnesota (4-12) – Peir Heyl High School’s ‘Creating a Pollinator-Friendly Courtyard’
- New Jersey (3-5) – Mount Vernon School’s ‘Native Pollinator Garden and Berry Patch’
- New Mexico (3-5) – Roy Municipal School’s ‘Growing Larger Futures’
- Oregon (K-12) – Tillamook High School’s ‘Chicken Embryology-It’s Alive’
- Pennsylvania (K-2) – Circle of Seasons School’s ‘Raised Beds Garden Project’
- Pennsylvania (9-12) – Tyrone Area High School’s ‘Modeling Ruminant and Simple Stomachs’
- South Carolina (K) – Calhoun Academy’s ‘Cowpiter Garden’
- Texas (ELA) – Cactus Elementary School’s ‘Community Garden Project Part 4’
- Utah (6-8) – Excelsior Academy’s ‘Thermophilic Compost Science’
- Wisconsin (9-12) – Chippewa Falls Senior High School’s ‘Chicken Embryology-It’s Alive’

The CHS Foundation launched a new grant program in 2018 to support Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) state programs. Called ‘Educating Next Generation Agriculture Leaders Grants,’ the program provides funding to strengthen AITC state programs and reached more than 1,000 teachers and nearly 14,000 students. The five programs and projects that received funding are:

- Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom which updated and Field to SMART Board technology for use with their educational student activity resource that educates students about poultry using the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) subject areas. In addition, grant funding included providing more pre-service teacher trainings and conducting evaluation outreach to measure the resource’s effectiveness.
- Iowa Agriculture Literacy Foundation which reprinted its popular My Family Live Farm book and held additional in-service and pre-service teacher workshops to show K-12 teachers how to use this resource and others like it to teach core subject areas using agricultural concepts.
- Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom which hired a regional agricultural curriculum specialist to conduct K-12 teacher workshops throughout the state that demonstrated how to use its agricultural resources to teach core subject areas.
- Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation which updated and reprinted its Get Organized curriculum that uses state agriculture history and geography concepts to teach Oregon social studies standards to students in third and fourth grade.
- Wyoming Agriculture in the Classroom which funded a summer work week in which educators from around the state revised lessons developed as part of the organization’s Wyoming Stewardship Project using feedback from teachers involved in the pilot testing of these lessons.

Students at Cactus Elementary in Texas show off the produce they grew in their school garden.

Students at Grant Ragan Elementary in Iowa are fascinated by the incubation process.

Students at Grant Ragan Elementary in Iowa are fascinated by the incubation process.
U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Institute of Food and Agriculture

USDA launched the AITC initiative in the early 1980s after recognizing Americans were becoming more removed from the farm. Then U.S. Secretary John Block charged states around the country to establish AITC programs to conduct agricultural literacy outreach in K-12 classrooms within their state Farm Bureaus, state Departments of Agriculture or state land grant universitites.

Fast forward 37 years. USDA/NIFA provides leadership and financial support to NAITCO and its AITC programs in 50 states including the District of Columbia and relies on them for agricultural literacy outreach in formal classroom settings. By comparison, 4-H provides agricultural literacy in after-school programs and FFA in secondary vocational settings.

Thanks to the support of CHS Foundation, Inc. pre-kindergarten-12th grade teachers from around the country received classroom grants for agricultural projects and scholarships to attend the 2018 NAITC National Conference in Portland, ME. In addition, the CHS Foundation launched a new grants program called ‘CHS Foundation’s Educating Next Generation Agriculture Leaders Grants’ to strengthen Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) state programs.

CHS Foundation Classroom Grants funded 15 projects that helped pre-kindergarten-12th grade teachers around the country use agricultural concepts to teach reading, writing, math, science, social studies and other core subjects. To learn more about the 2018 projects, please visit 2018 CHS Foundation Classroom Grants.

In addition, CHS Foundation funded 40 scholarships to allow pre-kindergarten-12th grade teachers from around the country to attend the 2018 NAITC national conference in Portland, ME. And it funded five AITC state programs. To learn more and download Journey 2050, visit Journey 2050. To learn more and download Farmers 2050, visit Farmers 2050.

National Center for Agricultural Literacy (NCAL)

Another key NAITCO partner is the National Center for Agricultural Literacy (NCAL) at Utah State University. Led by NCAL Team Leader Dr. Debra Spielmaker, NCAL develops standards-based educational resources for the Curriculum Matrix, manages the NCAL website, provides professional development training for AITC state programs and oversees K-12 agricultural literacy evaluation and research.

In 2018, NCAL’s efforts to provide an easy-to-navigate website (www.agclassroom.org) and rigorous, standards-based K-12 lessons and companion resources for the online searchable database (Curriculum Matrix) resulted in the following increases in website and Matrix use:
NAITCO is excited about the upcoming year with USDA/NIFA grant funding approved. New projects include adding new lessons to the Curriculum Matrix to cover important subjects such as using agricultural concepts in problem-based learning and phenomena-based learning approaches and the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) subject areas, among others. In addition, NCAL is working on development of an evaluation tool kit to help AITC state programs measure the efficacy of their pre-kindergarten-12th classroom outreach.

The NAITCO team provides passion and years of experience in agricultural education and fundraising. The grants, sponsorships and donations NAITCO receives throughout the year directly support the organization’s programming and operation allowing it to work toward its mission to ‘increase agricultural literacy through pre-kindergarten-12th grade education.’
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- Protect the Harvest – Lucas Oil Products

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- McCain Foods USA
- National Grape
- Nutrients for Life Foundation
- Protect the Harvest – Lucas Oil Products
- Protect the Harvest – Lucas Oil Products

$1,250 to $4,999 (Ranch Hand)

- American AgriWomen
- Cooke Aquaculture
- Cotton’s Journey
- CropLife America
- Farm Credit East
- IDEXX Laboratories, Inc.
- Iowa Farm Bureau
- Maine Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry/Maine Agriculture in the Classroom
- McCain Foods USA
- National Grape
- Nutrients for Life Foundation
- Protect the Harvest – Lucas Oil Products
- Protect the Harvest – Lucas Oil Products

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