



Updated 'Mapping Louisiana Agriculture' Lesson Plans Now Available

Louisiana AITC's most popular resource has been newly revised. The Louisiana Agriculture Production map is the most requested resource that the program offers. The map is based on the top 16 commodities in the state as determined by gross farm value. The map shows parish outlines, the four major rivers and the major crops produced in each parish. These full-color maps are available in two sizes; the 24" x 36" poster-sized map is distributed free to educators at AITC workshops. If you missed your free copy, we can send one to you but shipping charges of \$3 apply. The map placemats are desk-sized, 11" X 17" versions of the poster with student activities on the reverse side. The placemats are available only in packs of 100 for \$20.

At the request of Louisiana teachers, our newly-revised teacher's guide which accompanies the map will be available for download by Feb. 1 from www.aitcla.org. The guide includes lesson plans for grades K-8 and covers Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science and computer skills. All lessons are Grade Level Expectations (GLE)-correlated.

Post Office Box 95004
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Ag in the Classroom
 Louisiana



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2009 AITC Teacher of the Year Trades the Combine for the Classroom

By Michael Danna
 Sow, Grow & Know Staff Writer

IOWA, La. -- When your teacher was raised on a farm, your school is built on a rice field and the building's architecture incorporates a rice bin, there's a good chance you're going to learn something about farming.

It's here at Lebleu Settlement Elementary, in rural Calcasieu Parish, that you'll find Carla Denison Cormier teaching her third graders about agriculture. The lesson during a recent visit, as it is most days, incorporates farming; not how to farm, but why farming is important and how it crosses cultural and economic lines. Her students know rice is a primary crop in Calcasieu Parish and cotton is grown in parishes further north.

"They're learning about the different crops grown here in Louisiana, which parishes grow rice, beef cattle and other commodities," she said as she moved steadily from one computer to the next.

It's all part of Denison Cormier's commitment to carry on the lessons she learned growing up on her father's rice farm.

"I can remember hot summer days, climbing up that hot metal rice bin in the morning, climbing in the top of it to level the rice," she recalled. And she knows about her subject matter. "You really can't teach someone about farming who's never done it, but if you



Carla Denison Cormier, AITC's 2010 Teacher of the Year, supervises one of her Lebleu Settlement Elementary School third grade students on the computer. The class learns about agriculture through computer and hands-on activities.

have done it, you understand it. I want my students to both understand and appreciate what farmers do for all of us."

Denison Cormier is the Louisiana Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom Teacher of the Year for 2009-10. Agriculture has been a way of life for this Iowa native, and her passion for agriculture and ag education has only strengthened since she traded the combine for the classroom.

"Just because these children live here in a farming community doesn't mean they fully understand it," she continued as a student beckoned her for a little computer assistance. The day of her interview, the class was working on a PowerPoint presentation that would demonstrate their understanding of farming.

Please see "Cormier," continued on page 3

Join us on Facebook and Twitter!

Become a fan of Louisiana's Ag in the Classroom program on popular social networking sites Facebook and Twitter. AITC will use these tools to keep you current on the latest happenings with the program.

By joining us, you can be the first to know important news, from when a new lesson plan is posted or a workshop is scheduled to updates on our teachers, or national news developments. Stay in touch with AITC — start following us today!



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TEACHERS! Get immediate gratification! APPLY ONLINE at www.aitcla.org/Teacheroftheyear.html!

Application for the Louisiana AITC 2010 Outstanding Teacher Award

The Louisiana Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom Program is recognizing a Louisiana teacher for their achievements and efforts in educating students about the importance of agriculture.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- Teachers integrating agricultural concepts into non-agricultural curricula
- Certified teachers currently engaged in classroom instruction at the Pre-K through 12 level

WHAT WILL THE WINNER RECEIVE?

- A trip to the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference, June 23-26 in Baltimore, MD valued at up to \$1,200
- A \$500 cash award
- A commemorative plaque

HOW DO I APPLY?

Log on to www.aitcla.org/Teacheroftheyear.html to enter, learn more about application requirements and evaluation criteria and other important facts. You may apply directly online. **Email entries must be in our online mailbox NO LATER THAN 11:59 pm March 8, 2010.**

You also may print the application, fill it out and mail it in. Mail to:
Lynda Danos, AITC Coordinator | Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation | P. O. Box 95004 | Baton Rouge, LA 70895-9004. **Hard copy applications mailed must be submitted by certified mail postmarked by March 8, 2010.**

The 2010 AITC Teacher of the Year winner will be posted on the website by April 15, 2010.

Louisiana Agriculture Literacy Day Scheduled for April 28, 2010

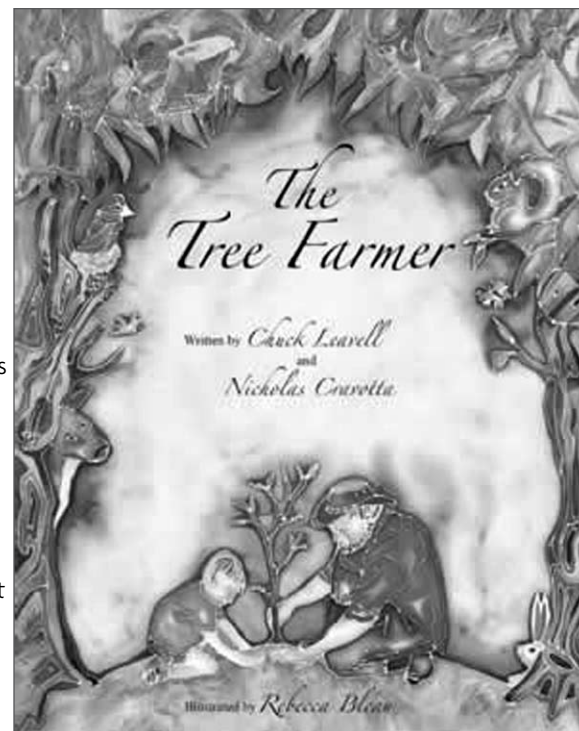
Louisiana Agriculture in the Classroom's Second Annual Louisiana Agriculture Literacy Day is scheduled for Wednesday, April 28, 2010. Volunteers from the AITC program will visit K-4th grade classrooms across the state reading to students in the program's celebration of Ag Literacy Day.

The book this year is "The Tree Farmer" by Chuck Leavell and Nicholas Cravotta. The book is about a grandfather who owns a tree farm and takes his grandson on a magical journey through the forest.

The story begins with Grandfather, loosely based on author Leavell, proudly taking his grandson on a tour of his farm. The grandson confronts Grandfather, asking how he can grow these trees with so much love and care, only to cut them down. As they walk through the forest, Grandfather describes the majesty of each tree. These visions encompass the circle of life, as Grandfather explains how some trees may become a bed to hold a child, a frame for a house, a love letter, a musical instrument, among other items that can uniquely touch and change lives. Throughout the colorful images and prose, Grandfather describes the ideals of stewardship and renewable resources. In the end, Grandfather likens the journey of the trees to the journey of his grandson's life and wonders in what marvelous ways the grandson will change others' lives.

Leavell speaks with first-hand experience as an accomplished conservationist and tree farmer. Chuck travels the country promoting sound forestry management practices and has become a sought-after keynote speaker on the topic. In 1999 Chuck and his wife, Rose Lane White Leavell, were named National Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year for the ideal management of their own tree farm, Charlane Plantation, near Macon, GA.

Interested teachers can invite volunteers to read to their class by visiting the website at www.aitcla.org.



Get Ready for AG DAY 2010 In YOUR Town!

National AG Day March 20, 2010
National AG Week March 14 – 20, 2010



National AG Day is a day to recognize and celebrate the abundance provided by agriculture. The National Ag Day program believes that every American should: understand how food, fiber and renewable resource products are produced; value the essential role of agriculture in maintaining a strong economy; appreciate the role agriculture plays in providing safe, abundant and affordable products and acknowledge and consider career opportunities in the agriculture, food, fiber and renewable resource industries.

Visit www.agday.org to request the educational resources that are available to you and your students!

Cormier, continued from page 1

"How much cotton does it take to make a hundred \$100 bills?" she asked one student. Moments later, she questioned another: "Did you include all the products made from corn in your summary?"

Across her classroom the clicking of computer keys broke the silence of an otherwise quiet group of third graders. Many were studying their screens intently. They were really enjoying this.

"It's something different and it's something interesting," she said of her lessons on agriculture. "And believe me, there are times when I know I'm doing the right thing."

She related a story of two students who once questioned the nature of corn.

"I was sitting at the lunch table and I heard a couple of the boys say, 'Ask Miss Cormier, she'll know.' We had corn on the cob that day. They asked, 'What animal does corn come from?' That's when I knew they did not know about where their food came from and I needed to teach them that."

For nearly 25 years Ag in the Classroom has helped teachers across Louisiana and across the country instill in their students the importance of agriculture. But the program's state coordinator said even after nearly a quarter-century, there's still much to be done.

"Every day people get further and further removed from their sources of food and fiber," said Lynda Danos. "And if we're not out there telling our story, no one else is going to tell it correctly for us."

AITC National Conference On Your Horizon

June 24 - 26, 2010 • Baltimore, MD

One of the most exciting events of the year for ag educators is scheduled to sail into Baltimore June 24, 2010. The AITC National Conference will take place at Baltimore's Marriott Renaissance Harborplace Hotel in early summer. Attendees will experience traveling tours, hands-on learning workshops, a resource fair where you can pick up an abundance of materials for your classrooms, a Maryland crab feast and more.

Registration information and scheduling are available on the national AITC website, www.agclassroom.org/conference.

Fun Websites We Love Right Now

www.watermelon.org

The National Watermelon Promotion Board offers an array of tools for your classrooms! Lessons, activity sheets, coloring pages and recipes about one of kids' favorite fruits are all downloadable for free. In the teacher tool kit section you'll find lessons and worksheets in Language Arts, Math, Geography/Social Studies and Science. Everything is downloadable in black and white PDF format, making it easy for classroom copies. You can download material by grade level or request a copy of your own teacher's tool kit. It comes with a CD-ROM of all the lessons, recipes, activities and more.

www.agclassroom.org/ut

Many of us are familiar with the fact that Ag in the Classroom programs exist in all of the 50 states. Perhaps you've even visited some of the other state AITC sites. One of our favorites here at Louisiana Ag in the Classroom is Utah's site. Upon visiting Utah's Ag in the Classroom site you'll find a wealth of resources including lesson plans, virtual tours, a student center plus much more. See why we love it — take some time to visit today!

