



2011 Louisiana Agriculture Literacy Day Scheduled for April 20

Ag literacy project spans from March 15 - May 15

Louisiana's Agriculture in the Classroom's Third Annual Louisiana Agriculture Literacy Day Project is scheduled for Wednesday, April 20, 2011. Volunteers from the AITC program will visit K - 3rd grade classrooms across the state reading to students in the program's celebration of Ag Literacy Day.

The book this year is "Harvest Year" by Cris Peterson. This photographic essay gives readers a month-by-month sampling of the wide diversity and volume of crops grown throughout the United States. Photographer Alvis Uptis captures the brilliant colors of fields and orchards, the amazing variety of workers and machines, and an engaging assortment of children sampling foods from the year-round harvest. "Harvest Year" shows the readers

there's more to a bag of groceries than meets the eye, providing an introduction to the months of the year, the geography of the United States, and the technology behind an important industry. For those schools using the Accelerated Reader program, "Harvest Year" is an AR book.

Cris Peterson is the author of the award-winning children's book "Extra Cheese, Please!" Cris and her husband from corn, oats, hay and milk dairy cows on the farm in Wisconsin.

Teachers interested in having a volunteer come and read to their class should contact AITC by email at aitc@lfbf.org or at www.aitcla.org. While we encourage that the reading take place on Ag Literacy Day, it is not required. However, readings should take place between March 15 and May 15.



Spring 2011

2010 AITC Teacher of the Year Blends Old and New School Tools for Effective Teaching

By Michael Danna
Sow, Grow & Know Staff Writer

METAIRIE, La -- For Pam Brierre, all the world's a classroom. This veteran science teacher at St. Martin's Episcopal Elementary in Metairie teaches her students about the world around them by sometimes leaving the textbook on the shelf. In her classroom, it's high tech meets old school. Activities on any given day range from students using an integrated wireless internet projector to examine stems and leaves to making those same plant parts out of pipe cleaners,



Pam Brierre, a science teacher at St. Martin's Episcopal Elementary in Metairie, is AITC's 2010 Teacher of the Year.

construction paper and white glue.

It's this hands-on approach that helped Brierre to top the list of educators from across the state nominated for the Ag in the Classroom Teacher of the Year. Brierre says it's important for her students to learn about how things grow and to have a greater appreciation for those who make their living off the land.

"We have gardens down by the dining hall and right now we're looking at creating a farm-to-plate program at this school," Brierre said. "It's extremely important that my students understand where food comes from and how it gets to their table. I want them to know that someone has to plant the crop, tend to it while it's growing and then market it to us."

As part of her award, Pam in June attended the National Ag in the Classroom Conference in Baltimore.



Pam Brierre encourages students to use all their senses during lessons.



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!



www.aitcla.org



TEACHERS! Details and the application are at www.aitcla.org/teacher-resources/teacher-of-the-year
Application for the Louisiana AITC 2011 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 22-25 in Fort Lauderdale, FL valued at \$1,200
- A \$500 cash award

HOW DO I APPLY?

Log on to www.aitcla.org/teacher-resources/teacher-of-the-year for the entry form and to learn more about application requirements, evaluation criteria and other important facts. **Applications must be submitted by certified mail postmarked no later than March 10, 2011 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 2011 AITC Teacher of the Year winner will be posted online at www.aitcla.org by April 15, 2011.

Strawberries – a Sweet Louisiana Bounty



Strawberries have a history that goes back 2200 years, and can be traced back as far as the Romans, and possibly even the Greeks. Strawberries grew wild in Italy as long ago as 234 B.C., although the fruit was not discovered in America until 1588 when the first Europeans landed in Virginia. Early settlers enjoyed eating the strawberries grown by local American Indians, who cultivated strawberries around 1643. By 1860, strawberries were being widely grown in many parts of America.

Commercial strawberry production first began in Louisiana in 1876. Louisiana currently ranks as one of the top 10 states for U.S. strawberry production.

Strawberries are a member of the rose family and are produced as annuals. Land preparation begins in June with producers liming the soil and planting cover crops. Plants are planted by hand

starting in October through early November. After the plant blooms, it takes about one month to produce a ripe strawberry. In most years, harvest begins in February and continues to May.

The 2009 the Louisiana strawberry industry had a gross farm value of \$17.4 million. They continue to be the leading fruit crop in the state, with Tangipahoa the leading strawberry producing parish.

To learn more about Louisiana strawberries, visit www.louisianastrawberries.com or www.lsuagcenter.com. For more commodity fact sheets, log on to www.aitcla.org

Source: California AITC and LSU AgCenter

2011 Dates of Interest

Fun monthly themes to help you celebrate agriculture

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| January | • Soup Month • Oatmeal Month |
| February | • National Sweet Potato Month • National Heart Month |
| March | • National Nutrition Month |
| <i>March 1</i> | • Ag Literacy Registration Deadline |
| <i>March 10</i> | • Teacher of the Year Application Deadline |
| <i>March 15</i> | • National Ag Day www.agday.org |
| April | • National Gardening Month • National Soyfoods Month |
| <i>April 20</i> | • Louisiana Agriculture Literacy Day |
| <i>April 22</i> | • Earth Day |
| May | • National Hamburger Month • National Salad Month • National Strawberry Month • National Egg Month • National Beef Month |
| June | • National Dairy Month • Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Month |
| <i>June 22-25</i> | • AITC Nat'l Conference Ft. Lauderdale, FL |
| July | • National Blueberry Month • National Ice Cream Month |
| August | • National Catfish Month • National Peach Month |
| <i>August 3</i> | • National Watermelon Day |
| September | • National Rice Month • National Chicken Month • National Breakfast Month |
| October | • National Pork Month • National Pasta Month |

Recycled Newspaper Pots

Turn your need for growing containers into a lesson on waste reduction and recycling. Instead of buying expensive peat pots to plant seeds in, make your own out of newspaper.

Materials

Each student will need:

- 1) 3 to 3 1/2" strips of newspaper
- 2) Cans (8 oz. with bottoms still intact (vary sizes for different-diameter pots)
- 3) Scissors



Directions:

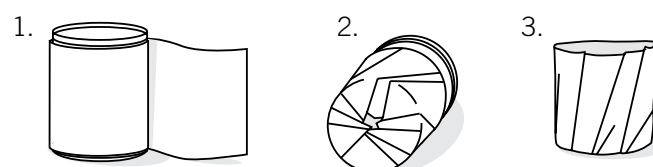
1. Place a can on its side and roll a 3" strip of newspaper around the can.
2. Push the can about 1" out of the roll. Then fold the bottom like an envelope toward the center of the can.
3. Remove the can and you now have a pot.

Tips

Stack the newspaper pots side by side in the flat so that they'll support each other and prevent the sides from

collapsing. Pots may be placed in a nursery flat and filled with potting soil. Plant the chosen seeds; when the seeds have two sets of leaves, plant (pot and all) into the garden. The pot will break down quickly in the soil.

Example



AG DAY 2011 Coming in March — Plan Now!

National AG Day March 15, 2011
National AG Week March 13 - 19, 2011



American Agriculture:
 Abundant. Affordable. AMAZING.

National AG Day is a day to recognize and celebrate the abundance provided by agriculture. Every year, producers, agricultural associations, corporations, universities, government agencies and countless other across America join together to recognize the contributions of 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.

While the Agriculture Council of America hosts the campaign on a national level, awareness efforts in communities across America are as influential — if not more-- than the broad-scale effort. To find ways to celebrate in your classroom and community, go to www.agday.org. There, you'll find event ideas, fun facts and more to share the tremendously important story of agriculture with students, teachers, parents and others in your home town.

YOU ARE WHAT MAKES AITC SO SPECIAL — LET ME HEAR FROM YOU!

LYNDA DANOS
 AITC state coordinator
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