



Florida Agriculture
in the Classroom, Inc.
AGRICULTURE KEEPS
FLORIDA GREEN

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FLORIDA TEACHER WINS NATIONAL EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING ABOUT
AGRICULTURE AWARD FOR 2010**

GAINESVILLE – John Chybion, a Central Florida elementary teacher who uses a school hydroponics garden as a teaching tool, has won the National Agriculture in the Classroom/United States Department of Agriculture’s Excellence in Teaching about Agriculture Award for the Southern Region for 2010.

John Chybion, a science teacher at Endeavor Elementary Magnet School in Cocoa on the east coast of Florida, teaches science concepts using a hydroponics school garden. He won the organization’s elementary school level award, overall Florida award and the national award..

Dianna Bone, a sixth grade science teacher at Electa Lee Magnet Middle School in Bradenton on the west coast of Florida, won Florida Agriculture in the Classroom’s Excellence in Teaching about Agriculture Award for the middle school level. She allows her students to role play as farmers

Both teachers exemplify the type of teachers Florida Agriculture in the Classroom looks for in its Excellence in Teaching about Agriculture Award. They strive to use agricultural concepts to teach their students science and other lessons.

“We’re lucky to have such high caliber teachers in Florida,” said Vina Jean Banks, chairman and Florida Beef Council representative for Florida Agriculture in the Classroom. “They have learned how effectively agriculture can be used to teach general education subjects. Their students see real-life applications in agriculture for why they need to learn these lessons and they apply themselves more willingly.”

Chybion has taught school for 10 years and has used Florida Agriculture in the Classroom curricula and materials in his classroom for much of that time. In fact, it was teacher grant money from Florida Agriculture in the Classroom that helped fund his school hydroponics garden.

“Because, in part, of the academic improvement and enthusiasm for learning demonstrated by my students, Endeavor’s grant focus included Plants and Animals, thereby establishing the concepts of Agriculture in the Classroom as a ‘mandate’ for the school’s more than 600 students and their teachers,” Chybion wrote referring to a federal grant he helped his school win.

Bone has taught school for 39 years, 10 of which have been spent at Electa Lee Magnet Middle School. To engage students, Bone uses an exercise in which they form several different farming cooperatives. Each cooperative is given \$500,000 to start their venture, and each one makes decisions based on different scenarios. "I believe that learning is irrelevant if it cannot be 'connected' to something of importance," Bone wrote.

Chybion and Bone will be honored at Florida Agriculture in the Classroom's 2010 State Teacher Workshop "Serving Up Florida Agriculture Education" June 17-19 at the TradeWinds Beach Resort on St. Petersburg Beach and at the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference "Pioneers of Ag: Sailing into the Future" June 24-26 in Baltimore.

Florida Agriculture in the Classroom is a non-profit organization that is based in Gainesville and charged with helping teachers in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade educate students about the Florida agriculture industry. It receives funding from sales of the agriculture specialty license plate called the "Ag Tag".

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