



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**FLORIDA STUDENTS USE STEM SKILLS WITH FLORIDA AGRICULTURE IN
THE CLASSROOM TEACHER GRANT PROJECTS**

GAINESVILLE – Florida students will use their math skills and engineering abilities to build school garden growing systems and irrigation systems along with other projects funded with Florida Agriculture in the Classroom Teacher Grant money for the 2013-14 school year.

The non-profit organization based in Gainesville agreed to fund 22 projects for a total of more than \$25,000.

“Our teacher grant program helps teachers and students connect agriculture concepts directly to the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) areas of study,” said Ken Barton, chairman of Florida Agriculture in the Classroom and executive vice president of the Florida Peanut Producers Association. “We’re happy to see these grant funds put to good use.”

Projects selected for funding are as follows:

1. “Mulching Manatees”- Pre-K through fifth grade students at Meadowbrook Elementary in Alachua County will be creating a garden with six raised beds to enhance student learning by using hands on activities.
2. “Gardening to Inspire Academic Success”- Kindergarten, second, fourth and fifth grade students at Lawtey Elementary in Bradford County will install raised vegetable gardens and create a native plants bed in the area near their music building.
3. “How Many Ways Can We Grow?” – Second and sixth grade students at Surfside Elementary School in Brevard County will be exploring five different ways that fruits and vegetables are commonly grown in Florida. They will be planting in the ground, in

- grow bags, in hydroponics systems, in horse troughs, and in outdoor water culture gardens.
4. “Red, White and Blueberry” – Kindergartners at Tropical Elementary in Brevard County will be completing at least 12 activities of the Junior Master Gardener program. They will be adding to existing beds and hydroponics growing systems.
 5. “Growing STEM Roots at SLMS” – Seventh grade students at Silver Lakes Middle School in Broward County will research, design, assess a garden environment, and plant a school vegetable garden with a student built irrigation system. Students will then sell their crops at the school store.
 6. “Ramona Boulevard Elementary Reading Garden?” – Fifth grade students at Ramona Boulevard Elementary in Duval County will construct three raised beds. Students will develop water conservation techniques and design, plant, cultivate and harvest their own plot.
 7. “Which Comes First? A Life Cycle Study” – Fifth grade students at Chets Creek Elementary in Duval County will be incubating chicken eggs while studying embryology. Once chickens hatch students will be responsible for raising the chicks.
 8. “Raising the Knowledge Level of Middle School Students” – Middle and elementary students at John E. Ford PK-8 School in Duval County will be building eight new garden boxes, one for each grade level, and replenishing soil in other boxes.
 9. “River City Science Academy Courtyard Garden Project” - Middle school students at River City Science Academy in Duval County were given an area in the school courtyard where the students will learn how to grow plants and vegetables, learn about the benefits of fresh foods and being good stewards of the land.
 10. “Edible Education” - Ninth grade students at Pensacola High School in Escambia County will be comparing the efficiency of soil versus hydroponics based gardening. The project will increase the knowledge of Florida horticulture and agriculture through an interactive and engaging project.
 11. “Where Does Our Food Come From?” - Elementary students at Robles Elementary in Hillsborough County will continue to improve their edible garden. The garden tasks will rotate through each of the grade levels teaching them the importance of working as a team, experiencing new foods and educating them about the health benefits of consuming fruits and vegetables.
 12. “Hobe Sound Horticulturists” – Elementary students at Hobe Sound Elementary in Martin County will plan and initiate raised garden beds on school property. Students will

- become aware of where their food comes from and explore imports and exports of Florida agriculture.
13. “Frederick Douglass Garden” – Elementary students at Frederick Douglas Elementary in Miami-Dade County will be researching plants they will grow, construct and maintain each grade level garden to increase students’ knowledge of agriculture by growing their own food.
 14. “Dr. William A. Chapman Botanical Gardens” – Elementary students at Dr. William A. Chapman Elementary in Miami-Dade County will create an elevated garden and plant seeds in pots. They will be installing a fence around the garden to eliminate theft.
 15. “Project Green” – Seventh and eighth grade students at Horace Mann Middle School will be engaged in raised bed design, soil science, irrigation methods, plant spacing, nutrition, plant morphology, physiology and reading activities that will spur an interest in agriculture.
 16. “Aeroponics Gardening” – Fourth and fifth grade students at South Grade Elementary School in Palm Beach County will be creating a state of the art aeroponics tower garden growing system that will integrate curriculum and provide expanded learning opportunities.
 17. “Earth to Table” – Middle school students at Tradewinds Middle School in Palm Beach County will learn about the benefits of eating healthy, nutritious foods from their own garden.
 18. “Mickens Pickens” – ESE students at Moore-Mickens Education Center in Pasco County will continue with their project that began four years ago. They will grow flowers and vegetables from seed, and plant flowers and shrubs in an area they will design. They will hold at least one plant sale to sell the plants they propagated.
 19. “Oh! The Places You’ll Grow!” – First grade students at Academie Da Vinci Charter School in Pinellas County will cultivate fruits and vegetables in a school garden, and also learn about a food co-op, community garden, farmers market and a working farm.
 20. “Cardinals Care Community Garden?” – Elementary students at Polk Avenue Elementary in Polk County will be expanding their community garden which includes eight small garden plots by adding more Coir growing bags, a few growing stands and a trellis system.
 21. “Critter’s Spectacular Senses Garden” – ESE CBSA (communication, behavior, social, and academic) students at Bagdad Elementary are building three raised bed gardens. They will use the garden to enhance students’ understanding of the five senses.

22. “Let’s Dip That” – Kindergarteners at Forest Lake Elementary in Volusia County will plan, prepare, plant, maintain, harvest and cook fruits, vegetables and herbs from their garden.

Florida Agriculture in the Classroom’s teacher grants and other programs are funded with proceeds from sales of the agriculture specialty license plate called the “Ag Tag.” FAITC’s mission is to educate Florida teachers and students in kindergarten through 12th grade about where their food, fiber and fuel comes from and the importance of the Florida agriculture industry by providing grant money, curricula, workshops and other programs like Agriculture Literacy Day..

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