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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Florida Agriculture in the Classroom funds 39 Teacher Grants in 2015

GAINESVILLE – Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. selected a wide range of school garden projects using raised beds, hydroponics, aquaponics and greenhouses for funding as part of its 2015 Teacher Grant program.

The Gainesville-based non-profit organization approved 39 Teacher Grant projects around the state that are expected to reach more than 13,000 students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Altogether, the organization will spend more than $30,000 on these projects.

"We're proud of the innovative school garden approaches Florida teachers are using to teach a variety of subjects such as reading, writing, science and math," said Tamara Wood, chairman of the Florida Agriculture in the Classroom board of directors and a representative of Florida Citrus Mutual. Approved projects include:

1. **"Kingdom Keepers"** – Transitional kindergarten and sixth grade helpers at Tropical Elementary in Brevard County will build an extension to their existing butterfly garden to model for the school how to build and utilize a butterfly garden.
2. **"Up in the Garden and Down in the Dirt" –** Elementary students at North Andrews Gardens Elementary in Broward County will build a school vegetable garden.
3. **"Growing Minds"** – Middle school students at Parkway Middle School of the Arts in Broward County will learn how climate change and population growth are influencing agriculture and students will research and develop efficient, self-sustaining growing systems.
4. **"Snap Dragon Garden"** – High school students at Stranahan High School in Broward County will continue their garden project to teach students the importance of a healthy diet and give students access to healthy food.
5. **"We Like to Play in the Dirt" –** Elementary students at Lecanto Primary in Citrus County will expand their school gardens and use them as a science teaching tool.
6. **"Aquaponics"** – Elementary students at Sea Gate Elementary in Collier County will learn about aquaponics and the growth and development of plants and animals.
7. **"Join us at our VegeTABLE!"** – Third grade students at West Elementary School in DeSoto County will start a school garden and create a VegeTABLE "dining room" where students will research and select nutritious fruits and vegetables from it.
8. **"Hydroponically Speaking"** – Elementary students at Chets Creek Elementary School in Duval County will design and build a five-tier A-frame hydroponics system.
9. **"Engineering a Greenhouse Classroom"** - Kindergarten through 12th grade students at Dimensions 3 Academy in Duval County will research, design and build a greenhouse for their school. Younger students will learn about plants using the greenhouse, and older students will learn how to design and build it.
10. **"STEAMing forward with Agriculture"** – Kindergarten students at Duval Charter School at Southside in Duval County will use hydroponics and aquaponics to teach students science, technology, engineering, art and math.
11. **"Hernando's Happy Horticulturist"** – Pre-school students at Brooksville Head Start in Hernando County will start a school garden to learn how food is grown and the importance of healthy eating.

12. **"Co-Operative Gardening through Florida's Access Points Curriculum" –** Middle school students at Ferrell Middle Magnet Girls Preparatory Academy in Hillsborough County will create a school garden to teach intellectually disabled students that a person's disability does not define them. They will learn how to create a garden, work co-operatively and act responsibly in management of the garden.
13. **"Here we 'Grow' Again"** – Elementary students at Hunter's Green Elementary in Hillsborough County will add eight new raised beds to their school garden.
14. **"Lee Magnet's Going GREENER!"** – Elementary students at Lee Elementary in Hillsborough County will add four additional plots to their school garden and refurbish their existing gardens.
15. **"Berry Patch"** – Elementary students at Muller Elementary Magnet School in Hillsborough County will expand their campus blueberry patch.
16. **"We All Need Plants"** – Elementary students at Robles Elementary School in Hillsborough County will replenish their existing fruit and vegetable gardens, and each grade level will be given a different real life situation they have to solve involving these gardens.
17. **"International Garden"** – Middle school students at Williams Middle Magnet School in Hillsborough County will create a garden to showcase all of the nationalities represented in the school's population. The garden will be used to teach students about sustainability, ecosystems, biotechnology and human impacts on the environment.
18. **"Clermont Elementary School Agricultural STEM Projects"** – Elementary students at Clermont Elementary in Lake County will conduct several STEM projects including growing fruits and vegetables in raised beds and hydroponic towers, creating worm bins, creating a rabbit habitat, raising tilapia and researching the nutritional value of fruits and vegetables.
19. **"We Plant, We Grow, We Succeed"** – Middle and high school students at the Alternative Learning Center Central in Lee County will plan, plant, harvest and prepare food with a school garden. They will use the school garden to increase comprehension skills across all subject areas.
20. **"If You Grow It, They Will Come!"** – Middle school students at Horizon Academy in Marion County will add a tunnel greenhouse to their current garden area. The garden is used to grow vegetables to send home with students.
21. **"Lettuce Grow and Feed our Minds"** – Middle school students at North Dade Middle School in Miami-Dade County will build raised beds and use concrete blocks to create an edible garden.
22. **"Learning as we Grow"** – Middle school students at Redland Middle School in Miami-Dade County will create an edible garden to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables. The garden will provide real-life experiences to help students make connections between how fruit and vegetables grow from seed to table.
23. **"A Special Hearts Farm"** – High school students with autism and intellectual disabilities at Dr. Phillips High School in Orange County will add sheep to their farm. The students will learn how to properly groom and show the sheep at the Central Florida Fair.
24. **"Growing Greatness"** – Middle school students at Gotha Middle School in Orange County will add a hydroponics growing system to their school garden with the goal of doubling their harvest to supply a farmers market for school faculty.
25. **"Bountiful Tiered Garden"** – Kindergarten through 12th grade students at Boca Raton Christian School in Palm Beach County will design and build a multi-tiered garden to hold 30 plants. All of the plants will be labeled so students can learn the names and species of plants being grown in the garden.
26. **"Inspiration through Perspiration: Growing the Future"** – High school students at Olympic Heights Community High School in Palm Beach County will create an outdoor agricultural and environmental learning center. Students will learn about realistic water conservation measures and research, design and build their own water system for the garden.

27. **"BHS Agriculture Department Garden"** - High schools students at Bartow Senior High School in Polk County will refurbish their existing hydroponics system with nutrients, vegetable seeds and seedlings and fertilizer and will replace broke garden tools.
28. **"Aquaculture Garden"** – High school students at Haines City Senior High School in Polk County will create a re-circulating aquaculture system.
29. **"Cardinals Care K-5 Garden"** – Kindergarten through fifth grade science students at Polk Avenue Elementary in Polk County will add hydroponics stackers to their existing school garden.
30. **"Roosevelt Farmers"** – Middle schools students at Roosevelt Academy in Polk County will add 40-feet of tables to their greenhouse to support 36 additional coir bags in which they will grow more fruit and vegetables.
31. **"BA Veggies for Cadets"** – Middle school students at Bethune Academy in Polk County will create a garden to use as a hands-on learning center and provide produce to local families who cannot afford these items.
32. **"The 'GREENHOUSE' Effect: Teaching our Future Farmers"** – Middle school special needs students at Martin Luther King Middle School in Santa Rosa County will get a new greenhouse with shelves and irrigation.
33. **"Let it Grow! Agriculture, Aquaculture, and Aquaponics in Second Grade"** – Second graders at Ashton Elementary School in Sarasota County will learn about agriculture by observing a classroom growing system and developing individual growing systems using two-liter bottles to take home.
34. **"Bushnell's Baby Botanist"** – Pre-school students at Bushnell Head Start in Sumter County will start a school garden to increase understanding of how food is grown and the importance of healthy eating.
35. **"Mrs. Simmons Garden Project"** – Third grade students at Point of Grace Christian School in Taylor County will make their school garden larger so other students can learn from it.
36. **"Taylor County Pre-K Gardening Project"** – Pre-school students at Taylor County Pre-K in Taylor County will start a school garden to teach students responsibility, the life cycle of plants and teamwork with classmates.
37. **"Learning from the Roots Up"** – Middle school students with physical and intellectual disabilities at D. Hinson Middle School in Volusia County will refurbish their existing garden to make it more handicapped accessible.
38. **"Kindergarten, Where Everybody Grows!"** – Kindergarten students at Forest Lake Elementary in Volusia County will refurbish their existing garden, and add new drip irrigation with a timer and hydroponics stacker.
39. **"The WOW Factor!" –** Middle School students at Galaxy Middle School in Volusia County will learn about the life sciences of plants and animals with the purchase of four plant growing systems and an embryology system.

FAITC's primary source of funding comes from sales of the agriculture specialty license known as the Ag Tag. Its mission is to educate K-12 teachers and students about the source of their food, fiber and fuel with curricula, workshops and farm tours, grant money and reading programs such as Florida Agriculture Literacy Day.

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