



# FLORIDA Agriculture IN THE CLASSROOM

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **EMBRYOLOGY PROJECTS, FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GARDENS RECEIVE FAITC VOLUNTEER GRANTS FOR 2015**

**GAINESVILLE** – Educating Florida students about how to raise chickens and grow vegetables were just a few of the local 4-H and Farm Bureau projects Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. approved for funding as part of its 2015 Volunteer Grants program.

The Gainesville-based non-profit organization approved 13 projects around the state for funding totaling about \$19,000. It estimates the projects collectively will reach 12,000 students.

“These projects were the best examples of programs that educate students in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade about the source of the food, fiber and other items they use every day,” said Tamara Wood, chairwoman of Florida Agriculture in the Classroom and the Florida Citrus Mutual representative on FAITC’s board of directors. “We applaud these local organizations in their efforts to educate students about agriculture in their communities.”

Agricultural literacy projects selected for funding are:

1. **‘School Enrichment Embryology’** – Baker County 4-H students will learn about the life cycle of chickens by observing chicks hatching in an incubator. The project will help students build their record keeping, animal husbandry and critical thinking skills.
2. **‘Sustainable Heritage Poultry Cooperative Coop and Heirloom Garden Education Center’** – The Panther Paw 4-H Club in Brevard County will expand the size of its poultry coop and add an aquaponics system to raise heirloom plants with which to feed the chickens.
3. **‘iFarm’** – Clay County Farm Bureau will expand stations at a crop maze visited by students in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade in Clay County. The interactive displays use QR codes to educate students further about the commodities produced locally.
4. **‘Sowing My Seeds School Enrichment Program’** – Clay County kindergarteners and first graders will learn about growing vegetables by planting seeds, watching them grow and then taking the seedlings home to educate their parents about growing vegetables. They will be required to submit ‘observation reports’ back to teachers after they take the plants home.
5. **‘Hill Top Heritage Community History Garden’** – Students will learn how to grow fruit and vegetables, the importance of healthy eating and the historical significance of agriculture in Middleburg in Clay County as part of this project carried out by the non-profit group Hill Top Heritage Development, Inc.
6. **‘Agriculture Literacy and Awareness for Third Graders in Columbia County’** – Third graders will develop an appreciation of agriculture in Columbia County by participating in a local Agriculture Literacy Day reading event in which volunteer

readers will visit elementary classrooms and read children's books about Florida agriculture.

7. **'4-H Literacy in the Garden'** – DeSoto County 4-H will educate students about agriculture by planting a literacy garden at the DeSoto County Public Library where students will tie books they're reading back to the garden.
8. **'Go Green Eat Healthy Gardens'** – Non-profit organization Jacksonville Gullah Geechee Nation will help students in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade at St. Claire Evans Academy expand their school garden, which currently consists of 20 raised beds. Students will be involved in planning, planting and harvesting fruit and vegetables from this garden at their school.
9. **'Jackson County 4-H Ag Adventures'** – First graders will learn about commodities grown in Jackson County by visiting stations at this AgVenture field trip program.
10. **'Blue, Gold and GREEN'** – Students in pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade at St. John Lutheran School in Marion County will learn how to grow food by participating in a school garden program organized by the Marion County Junior Cattlemen's Association. Each grade level will receive a garden plot as part of the project.
11. **'Okeechobee County Ag Venture'** – Fourth graders in Okeechobee County will participate in an AgVenture program in which they will learn about local agriculture production at different stations.
12. **'ABC's of a Beef Cattle Byproducts Facts Poster'** – Fourth and fifth graders in Polk County will learn about the items they use every day that come from a cow with this poster that will be copied and circulated to students at AGRI-FEST and other elementary school programs throughout the county.
13. **'Fall Harvest Farm Experience for Suwannee County Youth'** – The Suwannee County Extension Office will create an outdoor classroom as part of this fall event that will educate elementary school students about local agriculture production and the commodities grown in the fall in this county in Florida's Panhandle.

FAITC is charged with educating Florida K-12 teachers and students about the importance of Florida agriculture. It does so by providing curricula, materials, workshops and grant money like its Volunteer Grants program to help educators teach students about an important industry. It is funded by sales of the specialty license plate also known as the 'Ag Tag.'

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