

Where and what level do you currently teach and why did you choose to become an educator?

I am a first grade teacher at Houston Elementary School. I chose to become an educator because every single day of my career is challenging and rewarding. I have the opportunity to help children grow to be good citizens who care for others and think critically about the world around them.



How has agriculture and the Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom Program impacted your students and instruction?

As the daughter of dairy farmers, I grew up sharing my passion for agriculture and my family's way of life with others. As a teacher, it came natural to continue to share my passion for agriculture with my students by connecting agriculture to what they learn in our classroom. I teach in a rural farming community so some of my students do have a family connection to farming. However, many of my students have very little personal experience with agriculture. During lessons that connect agriculture to my students, I love to see the confidence and pride that the children from farming families show as they share their knowledge of agriculture with their classmates. At the same time, my students with little personal experience show lots of curiosity and wonder. My goal is that each of my students know that farmers care about providing quality and healthy products and they do that by taking care of their animals and land.



Describe any agriculture based projects you have been involved in lately.

I have been lucky to receive many quality resources for my classroom through Minnesota Farm Bureau events such as a teachers' workshop and the Young Farmers Leadership Conference. Some of the resources I continuously use in my classroom are the Awesome Agriculture A to Z books. These books are perfect to use during science units on animals and plants and during social studies units on economics. They also contain many informational text features that help me teach essential English Language Arts Standards. One of my favorite writing lessons to do with my first graders is writing letters to farmers to thank them for the products they provide us. This lesson is ideal to do

around Thanksgiving because the students are able to connect the farm to their plate.

What advice do you have for other teachers on implementing agriculture into their classroom/program?

Using Ag Mag and Ag Mag Jr. is a great place to start! They are high quality, engaging, and easy to implement. Using children's literature that connects to agriculture is also great to do in primary classrooms. Hands on activities such as examining different types of soils and planting seeds also engage students. I would also recommend connecting with local farmers and your local Farm Bureau organization to bring people from the field of agriculture into your classroom.

Why do you believe it is important for our students to be agriculturally literate and aware in today's society?

Unfortunately, there are many misconceptions about agriculture in today's world. The more children who grow up learning and experiencing that farmers care about providing quality and safe products, the better.