

# Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom 2007-2008 Accomplishments Report

As Reported for the Program Year September 1, 2007- August 31, 2008

The IFB Member Services & Public Relations Division Education Manager is responsible for development and implementation of the Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom (IAITC) Program. IFB budget covers expenses including staff, office, travel, printing, postage and supplies for the program. The IAITC Program Council works in conjunction with the IAITC Education Manager to develop a program of work that is approved by the IAA Foundation Trustees. The IAA Foundation funding continues to make many of the teacher and student programs as well as materials available to county Farm Bureaus, county Agriculture Literacy coordinators and others at no cost.



## IAITC Success Across Illinois

October  
2008

The 2007-2008 school year continued with the enhanced Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom Program. Work continues to exceed expectations at the county level. Teachers and students are utilizing resources as quick as they can be printed and stocked.

During the 2007-08 IAITC program year, **468,065 students** in grades preK-12 were reached with the IAITC message. **28,403 teachers** used AITC materials throughout the school year. This marks an 18% in-

crease from teachers involved in 2006-2007.

**\$2,202,689** was reported as county spending on the local IAITC efforts exceeding the county grants of \$375,000 to the 61 counties that participate in the IAITC Grant Program. Thanks to the generous support of a number of IAITC donors, \$75,000 was added to the county grant system in 2007-2008!

**2,796 volunteers** participated as classroom presenters, fieldtrip hosts, as well as advisory board members. The volunteers were involved in county programs across the

state at both the state and local level. This number includes 79 new volunteers to the programs in 2007-08.

County AITC Programs provided **1,624** (13% increase) of coordinated program training for CPDU hours, critical for teachers across the state to renew their teacher certification.

Continued county level coordination of the IAITC program makes for easier access at the county level for teachers to have immediate access to materials. IAITC is the one stop shop for Ag Literacy.

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## New On-Line Resources available to classrooms across the State

IAITC continues to post new classroom resources on the [agintheclassroom.org](http://agintheclassroom.org) website providing teachers with ready made lessons for immediate classroom use.

During the 2007-08 program year a variety of issues were discovered, including the following.

### Action Science through

**Agriculture** are science materials lessons easily implemented in the 3-8 grade science classroom.

**Explore Corn** showcases the variety of corn based products in conjunction with the new Corn Ag Mag.

**AG=E(5) Inquiry Based Activities** provides direct links between all Illinois

AITC Ag Mags and Inquiry Based Learning.

**The Super Soybean** provides access to soybean lessons as associated with the newly released Raymond Bial book.

**The Horse Lesson Booklet** provides lessons including new 'Google Earth' and ISAT reading activities

linked to the new Horse Ag Mag.

A USDA/AITC Consortium Grant provided a new **Nutrition Ag Mag** along with **Nutrition and Agriculture Lesson Plans**. These materials were featured in Train the Trainer sessions across the state during the Spring of 2008.

## Volunteers Recognized



Jane Hemann, Mt. Olive Elementary School, Macoupin County was selected the 2008 IAITC Teacher of the Year. Additionally, she was honored as one of 5 USDA AITC Excellence in Teaching About Agriculture Award winners in Costa Mesa, California..

A gifted 1st grade teacher, Hemann has developed a number of award winning agriculture initiatives for her students and community.

IAITC Programs reported **2,796 volunteers** active in IAITC programs in 2007-08.

Three of these volunteers were recognized for their efforts to the IAITC movement at the local level at the 2007 Illinois Farm Bureau

Annual Meeting in Chicago.

Awardees were Beth Engel, Kane County; Violet Poling, DuPage County; and Mike Wilson, Edwards County. These three volunteers have been instrumental in their county level AITC programs for many years with

various teacher and student education efforts including farm tours, classroom presentations and working to bring other volunteers to their county effort.

We salute all volunteers in our county programs who are critical components of the IAITC effort.

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## Teachers learn about agriculture and so much more!

Teacher training remains the backbone of the IAITC program. This year **28,403** (over 18% increase over last year) teachers across the state benefited from IAITC programs and materials.

IAITC state staff worked with **5,633 teachers** at 65 teachers workshops and conferences. An additional **739 educators** took part in 38 Summer Agricultural Institutes (SAI) across the state.

At every SAI, teachers in attendance are asked to complete a pre and post survey, gauging their knowledge of the Illinois Agriculture Industry.

The results remain the same year after year. Teachers show a sharp change in attitude when describing farmers in such areas as computer literacy (from 61% to 94%), environmentalist (from 77% to 95%), non-polluter (from 44% to 74%) and safe food providers (from 61% to 98%).

After attending the SAI teachers planning to incorporate agriculture into the curriculum jump from 31% daily or weekly pre-SAI to 58% post.

996 of teachers surveyed also plan on teaching the various careers related to agriculture after learning more about those careers compared to 42% pre-

SAI.

In addition to working with classroom teachers, IAITC state staff also work with Pre-Service teachers to help prepare them for their first year in the classroom.

**1,762 Pre-Service teachers** from 31 Universities at 52 presentations received training from IAITC Staff in the 2007-08 program year.

Louise Stearns, Southern Illinois University, shared after a Pre-Service Workshop. "The students are fortunate to have AITC presentations for their pre-service work. The way the AITC Staff shows how to easily integrate agriculture across the curriculum brings the methods we teach to life. I am fortunate to have partners in education like IAITC."

**56 teachers**, including five first year teachers, from 54 counties received IAITC grants totaling \$13,437.55 to use on agriculture related curricular materials in the 2007-08 program year.

Lindy Blair, Astoria, Fulton County used her grant money to discuss plant growth and specifically pollination with her students.

Susan Bozett, Central City, Marion County, used her grant money to help her stu-

dents understand the connection between the foods they eat and where that food is produced.

Ashley Jefferson, Thomas Jefferson, Joliet, Will County used her grant to teach her students about local agriculture.

Jane Hemann, Mt. Olive Grade School, Macoupin County was the IAITC Teacher of the Year. Hemann, a 1st grade teacher, developed a comprehensive farm unit focused on food production to help students learn how agriculture is a part of their everyday life. Hemann was also named a USDA AITC Excellence in Teaching Agriculture Award winner. In addition to a \$500 stipend, she also was awarded an all expense paid trip to the National AITC Conference in June 2008 to Costa Mesa, California.

Brenda Woker, Jefferson Elementary, DeKalb County was the IAITC Teacher of the Year Runner Up, who was selected as an AFBF White Reinhardt Teacher Scholarship winner, and also received a trip to the National AITC Conference.

9 Illinois County Farm Bureaus received \$500 county grants through the AFBF White Reinhardt County Grant Program. Illinois Counties received 9 of the 29 mini-grants offered this year.

**Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom provides teachers and students with accurate information about how Illinois agriculture impacts the world around them and their lives.**



IAITC conducted 52 Pre-service workshops at 31 colleges and universities around the state for 1,762 students. Pictured above, students at Western Illinois University experiment with cornstarch based packing peanuts. Programs this year focused on the Food and Fuel discussion, as well as Illinois farmers feeding people around the world. A greater understanding and appreciation for agriculture is the result.

## Conference Connections

The **Annual Agriculture Awareness Conference** took place in Mt. Vernon, Illinois at the Mt. Vernon Holiday Inn February 12, 2008. **117 participants** braved the blizzard to attend and learn more about Agriculture Literacy.

Participants chose from 16 different break out sessions on such varied topics as: Cultural Diversity through Agriculture, Sustainable Agriculture, the Illinois Equine Industry, Agriculture Biotechnology and many more. Keynote speaker Illinois Author Ray-

mond Bial, spoke on his book *The Super Soybean* and the importance of showing children across the state the valuable link between food and family.

Additionally, IAITC exhibited and presented to **1,635 teachers** including the Illinois Library Conference, Illinois Principals Conference, IEA Student Branch Fall Conference, IASCD Kindergarten Conference, Illinois Reading Conference, and the Environmental Educators Association of Illinois Conference.

IAITC had a special role at the Illinois Social Studies

Conference presenting the Illinois and United States History CD Roms Illinois Agriculture: Innovation and Invention and Growing a Nation. Both sessions received outstanding reviews and have resulted in additional presentations.

In addition to custom designed presentations for each conference, attendees are treated to an interactive exhibit booth manned by IAITC Staff and local county volunteers. At each conference, attendees participate in various make and take activities to further increase their awareness of IAITC.



*Illinois AITC released the Nutrition Ag Mag and new Nutrition and Agriculture Lesson Plans. Train the Trainer sessions on these activities were conducted in February and continued with direct teacher training through Summer Agriculture Institutes.*

*Picture above, teachers discuss the new food guide pyramid and the relationship to Illinois Agriculture. In addition to discussing nutrition and exercise, teachers learned how Illinois Agriculture contributes to the various parts of the new food guide pyramid.*

## Specialized IAITC Partnerships

The IAITC Program would not exist without the generous donations of many individuals and corporate contributors.

**GROWMARK** renewed its annual commitment to the IAITC Program. This year over \$54, 000 was divided between the state and county IAITC programs.

The **USDA/Agriculture in the Classroom Consortium** awarded IAITC with a grant for the development of a Nutrition Ag Mag and Nutrition lesson plans.

During the 2007-08 pro-

gram year significant donations have been made by **Anderson Foundation, Archer Daniels Midland, Aventine Renewable Energy, BP America, Caterpillar Foundation, Cargill, Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, CBOT, Chicago Farmers, COUNTRY Financial, Fresh Express, Farm Credit, Illinois Beef Association, Prairie Farms Dairy, and Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural Education (FCAE), Illinois Equine Industry, Illinois Pork Producers,**

**Illinois Beef Association, Illinois Specialty Growers, JP Morgan Chase, John Deere, Midwest Dairy Association, Monsanto, Pioneer, Rural King, Illinois Department of Agriculture and Sustainable Agriculture Grant, Soy Capital Ag, US Bank, University of Illinois Extension, Illinois Corn Marketing Board and the Illinois Soybean Operating Board.**

IAITC is grateful for the support of the IAA Foundation. For more information visit [iaafoundation.org](http://iaafoundation.org), or contact Steve Newman, Executive Director, (309)557-2230.



*Introducing classroom teachers to producers across Illinois has been a standard of the IAITC Summer Agricultural Institute Program. Teacher training allows IAITC To multiply the effect of classroom presentations alone. Providing teachers with educationally sound information allows them to further integrate IAITC lessons in their classrooms.*

## What is in store for 08-09?

Plans for 2008-2009 include the following: (pending funding)

\* 40 University Pre-Service Workshops.

\*30 SAI, and 10 special Summer Ag Workshops.

\*Updated Soybean, Pizza, Illinois, Soil, Poultry and new History, and Tree Ag Mags .

\*Lesson Plans highlighting the Illinois Corn Industry linked to "Corn" a newly released book by Gail Gibbons .

\*Lesson packet related to the Illinois Pork Industry and the newly released book "A Hog Ate My Homework" by Gary Metivie.

\*Lesson packet and a new Renewable Fuels Ag Mag...

\*Sustainable Agriculture lessons relating to the rich, fertile soil of Illinois..

\*Continued support and guidance to county coalitions and AITC efforts.

\*2009 National AITC Conference Hosts of "Meet Me In St. Louis-Gateway to Agriculture" June 24-27, 2009.

\* and much, much more!



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*Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom supports local educational and outreach efforts by providing high quality, standards based, scientifically sound agriculture information that can be easily integrated by teachers into the existing classroom curriculum. The goal is that Pre-K through High School teachers will continue to teach required subjects while infusing their existing resource materials with agriculture related topics.*

*Through the generous support of the IAA Foundation the following are made possible: County Ag Literacy Grants, Ag Mags, Teacher Resource Guides, Summer Ag Institutes, and Teacher Grants, Ag Related Lessons and Units, and much more! Check out [www.agintheclassroom.org](http://www.agintheclassroom.org) for more information.*

## ***IAITC to host National AITC Conference in 2009!***

Illinois AITC will co-host the 2009 National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference June 24-27, 2009 in St. Louis, Missouri with the Missouri AITC program.

Hosting this conference is an honor for the program, and provides the opportunity to showcase the IAITC program to other educators and AITC programs across the nation. It also provides a chance to showcase the unique agriculture systems of Illinois and the Midwest.

The 2009 Conference will feature pre and post conference tours for the estimated 500 conference attendees to historic St. Charles and to a St. Louis Cardinals/Minnesota Twins baseball game.

A highlight of each National Conference includes taking all conference attendees on day long

'traveling workshops'. In 2009, 11 buses will provide our conference attendees with various tours including stops at the St. Louis Science Center, Anheisuer-Busch, Monsanto, ADM-Growmark, Cargill, the Lock and Dam Museum, Horseradish Farms, Corn and Soybean Farms, as well as Dairy, Beef and Pork production facilities. Assistance from the IAITC Program Council Partners are assisting in securing these outstanding showcases.

2 days of workshops and mini-workshops will feature speakers from the trenches of Agriculture Literacy from around the nation. 30 distinct 1½ hour long sessions and an additional 40 miniworkshops (45 minutes each) will provide teachers and agriculture literacy providers with new hands-on activities and lessons for immediate implementation in their class-

rooms.

Speakers will include Dr. Jim Painter, Eastern Illinois University, speaking on Nutrition Education and noted children's author Gail Gibbons author of such classics as 'Milk Makers', 'The Vegetables We Eat' and 'From Seed to Plant' and recently 'Corn'. The USDA will honor 5 exemplary teachers, and 10 states with innovative grants.

All roads lead to St. Louis in 2009, The Gateway to Agriculture.

