

# Exploring Agriculture Through Young Adult Literature



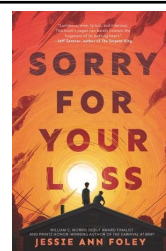
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## ***Sorry for Your Loss***

Author: Jessie Ann Foley

ISBN-13: 9780062571915

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 9-12



### **Book Summary:**

From Printz Honor winner and Morris Award finalist (and Illinois Author) Jessie Ann Foley comes a comitragic YA novel. As the youngest of eight, painfully average Pup Flanagan is used to flying under the radar. He's barely passing his classes. He lets his longtime crush walk all over him. And he's in no hurry to decide on a college path. Excellent emphasis on cultural food and dining differences.

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## ***Flip the Bird***

Author: Kym Brunner

ISBN-13: 9781328901040

Approximate Reading Level: Age 9-12



### **Book Summary:**

In this fresh and funny novel, a teenage falconer in training gets in trouble when he finds himself falling for a girl who is part of a radical animal rights group. Mercer Buddie wants two things: a girlfriend and the chance to prove himself to his master falconer father. With hunting season approaching, fourteen-year-old Mercer has only a short time to train his red-tailed hawk, Flip. Then Mercer meets Lucy and thinks his love life is about to take flight--until he discovers that she belongs to a fanatical animal rights organization called HALT. Although Illinois Author Kym Brunner deals with wildlife, there are great implications to livestock in this book.

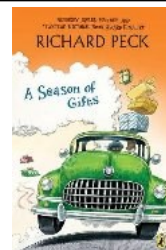
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## ***A Season of Gifts***

Author: Richard Peck

ISBN-13: 9780142417294

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 4-8



### **Book Summary:**

A must read. A look at 1958 life in a small, agricultural town. Ways to bring in various types of agriculture, gardening and livestock.

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## ***Among the Hidden***

Author: Margaret Peterson Haddix

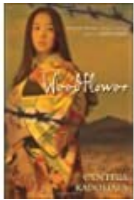
ISBN-13: 9780689824753

Approximate Reading Level: 6-9

### **Book Summary:**

Luke is one of the shadow children, a third child forbidden by the Population Police. He's lived his entire life in hiding, and now, with a new housing development replacing the woods next to his family's farm. Dystopian and agriculture!

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## ***Weedflower***

Author: Cynthia Kadohata

ISBN-13: 978-416975663

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9

### **Book Summary:**

With searing insight and clarity, Newbery Medal-winning author and Illinois native, Cynthia Kadohata explores an important and painful topic through the eyes of a young girl who yearns to belong. *Weedflower* is the story of the rewards and challenges of a friendship across the racial divide, as well as the based-on-real-life story of how the meeting of Japanese Americans and Native Americans changed the future of both.

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## ***Pumpkin Heads***

Author: Rainbow Rowell

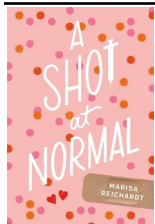
ISBN-13: 9781250269065

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 9-12

### **Book Summary:**

Rainbow Rowell's graphic novel linking agri-tourism, pumpkins and a look at seasonal employment. Mature themes.

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## ***A Shot at Normal***

Author: Marisa Reichardt

ISBN-13: 978037438095

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 9-12

### **Book Summary:**

A timely young adult novel about a teenage girl who sues her anti-vaccination parents after she contracts a disease that incurs devastating consequences. Links to small farms, farmers markets and animal vaccines.

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## ***Free Lunch***

Author: Rex Ogle

ISBN-13: 9781324003601

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 8-12

### **Book Summary:**

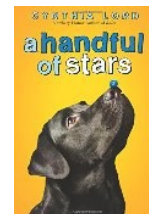
A distinctive new voice: Rex Ogle's story of starting middle school on the free lunch program is timely, heartbreaking, and true. Don't forget that USDA administers the school lunch programs!

## ***A Handful of Stars***

Author: Cynthia Lord

ISBN-13: 9780545700276

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9



### **Book Summary:**

Explores a friendship between a small-town girl and the daughter of migrant workers during blueberry-picking season. Specialty crops, pollinators, farm labor and a beauty queen contest. Set amongst the blueberry barrens and by the sea, this tackles themes of prejudice and friendship, loss and love with an ag background.

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## ***Prairie Lotus***

Author: Linda Sue Park

ISBN-13: 9781328781505

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 4-9



### **Book Summary:**

Illinois author Linda Sue Parks explores the Dakota Territory in the 1880s,. The story of half-Chinese Hanna and her white father face racism and resistance to change as they try to make a home for themselves. Links to fiber, agriculture and history. Outstanding author note in the book.

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## ***Chirp***

Author: Kate Messner

ISBN-13: 9781547605705

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 7-12



### **Book Summary:**

Insects as a protein source in a look at urban farming, with the background of sabotage and a slightly mature theme.

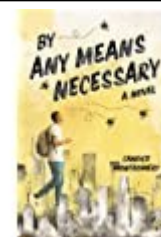
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## ***By Any Means Necessary***

Author: Candace Montgomery

ISBN-13: 9781624147999

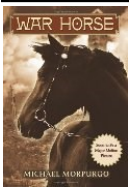
Approximate Reading Level: Grades 9-12



### **Book Summary:**

An urban apiary is the setting for this coming of age novel. Pollinators play a role in this look at a young man trying to maintain a farm legacy. Mature themes.

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## **War Horse**

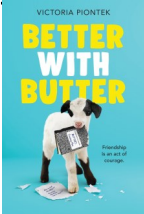
Author: Michael Morpurgo

ISBN-13: 9780439796644

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9

### **Book Summary:**

A powerful tale of war, redemption, and a hero's journey--this is NOT the MOVIE..but so much better! In 1914, Joey, a beautiful bay-red foal with a distinctive cross on his nose, is sold to the army and thrust into the midst of the war on the Western Front.



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## **Better With Butter**

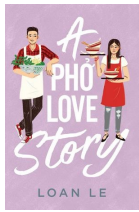
Author: Victoria Piontek

ISBN-13: 9781338662191

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9

### **Book Summary:**

Outstanding addition to your SEL library. Agriculture, farms, goats in the classroom and severe anxiety. A great read.



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## **A Pho Love Story**

Author: Loan Le

ISBN-13: 9781534441934

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 9-12

### **Book Summary:**

Vietnamese-American teens fall in love and must navigate their newfound relationship amid their families' age-old feud about their competing, neighboring restaurants. Emphasis on food service, nutrition and farm to table.



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## **Steering Toward Normal**

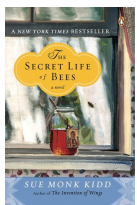
Author: Rebecca Petruck

ISBN-13: 9781419707322

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9

### **Book Summary:**

Not your nuclear family as Diggy Lawson finds a step-brother in eighth grade when he is set to show at the Minnesota State Fair. Great emphasis on animal care and rural life.



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## **Secret Life of Bees**

Author: Sue Monk Kidd

ISBN-13 780142001745

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 6-12

### **Book Summary:**

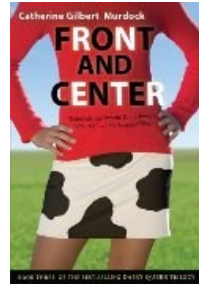
When a young city boy is sent to spend the summer at the farm with his aunt, uncle and cousin, Harris, in a post World War II Minnesota, trouble ensues! PG-13 rating for language and some 'boy' humor.

## ***Front and Center (The Dairy Queen Trilogy)***

Author: Catherine Gilbert Murdock

ISBN-13: 9780547403052

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 7-10



### **Book Summary:**

After five months of sheer absolute craziness I was going back to being plain old background D.J. In photographs of course I'm always in the background . . . But it turns out other folks have big plans for D.J. Like her coach. College scouts. All the town hoops fans. A certain Red Bend High School junior who's keen for romance and karaoke. All while balancing life on a dairy farm.

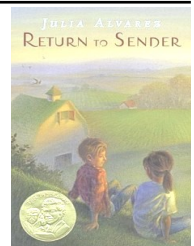
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## ***Return to Sender***

Author: Julia Alvarez

ISBN-13: 9780375851230

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9



### **Book Summary:**

In just the last 6 months, Tyler's grandfather has died, his father has been injured in a farm machinery accident, and his brother goes off to College (UVM--Go Catamounts). Who is going to help run the dairy? What about migrant labor? This story takes a look at the issue and it becomes personal for Tyler.

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## ***...and now, Miguel***

Author: Joseph Krumgold

ISBN-13: 9780064401432

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9



### **Book Summary:**

Every summer, the men of the Chavez family go on a long and difficult sheep drive to the mountains. All the men, that is, except for Miguel. All year long, twelve-year-old Miguel tries to prove that he, too, is up to the challenge—that he, too, is ready to take the sheep into his beloved Sangre de Cristo Mountains. When his deeds go unnoticed, he prays to San Ysidro, the saint for farmers everywhere. And his prayer is answered . . . but with devastating consequences. A great novel with vivid imagery of the farming area of New Mexico.

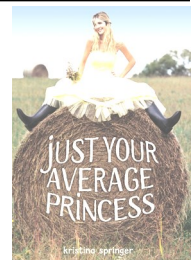
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## ***Just Your Average Princess***

Author: Kristina Springer

ISBN-13: 9780374361501

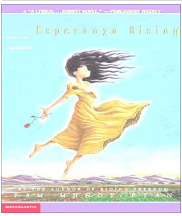
Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9



### **Book Summary:**

Trials and tribulations of life in a pumpkin patch, when your parents are the owners, and your cousin from sunny California is new in town! Set in Average, Illinois, this is a great book for junior high or high school girls!

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## ***Esperanza Rising***

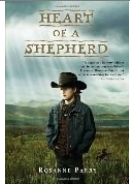
Author: Pam Munzo Ryan

ISBN-13: 9780439120425  
Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9

### **Book Summary:**

Listed in the exemplar text for the Common Core Standards, this book takes a look at California harvest during the Great Depression.

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## ***Heart of a Shepherd***

Author: Rosanne Parry

ISBN-13: 9780375848032  
Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9

### **Book Summary:**

When Brother's dad is shipped off to Iraq, along with the rest of his reserve unit, Brother must help his grandparents keep the ranch going. He's determined to maintain it just as his father left it, in the hope that doing so will ensure his father's safe return. The hardships Brother faces will not only change the ranch, but also reveal his true calling.

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## ***My Louisiana Sky***

Author: Kimberly Willis Holt

ISBN-13: 9780312660956  
Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9

### **Book Summary:**

Surviving life in small town Louisiana in the 1950's, including a hurricane. Small town themed foods, jobs and concerns, including Mom and Dad who are mentally slow. Dad and his job at the nursery show the importance of a good work ethic.

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## ***Squashed***

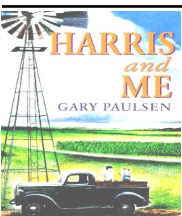
Author: Joan Bauer

ISBN-13: 9780142404263  
Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9

### **Book Summary:**

Set in an Iowa pumpkin patch, specialty crop production, a local festival and a giant pumpkin take center stage in the excellent novel by Illinois Author Joan Bauer.

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## ***Harris and Me***

Author: Gary Paulsen

ISBN-13: 9780152058807  
Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9

### **Book Summary:**

When a young city boy is sent to spend the summer at the farm with his aunt, uncle and cousin, Harris, in a post World War II Minnesota, trouble ensues! PG-13 rating for language and some 'boy' humor.



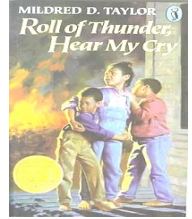
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## ***Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry***

Author: Mildred Taylor

ISBN-13: 9780140384512

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 4-6



### **Book Summary:**

Listed as exemplar text in the Common Core Standards, this is the story of a family's fight to stay together in the deep south in the 1930's.

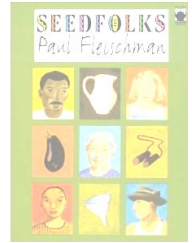
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## ***Seedfolks***

Author: Paul Fleischman

ISBN-13: 9780064472074

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 4 & up



### **Book Summary:**

Set in urban Cleveland, Ohio, this story is about a vacant blighted neighborhood that is transformed when one girl plants lima beans.

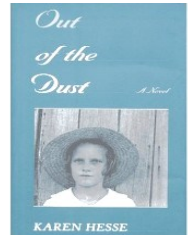
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## ***Out of the Dust***

Author: Karen Hesse

ISBN-13: 9780590371254

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 4-9



### **Book Summary:**

This Newberry Award winner focuses on the dust and hard times of the dust bowl era.

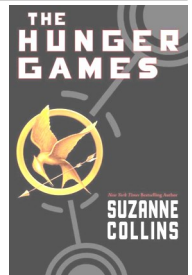
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## ***The Hunger Games***

Author: Suzanne Collins

ISBN-13: 9780439023528

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9



### **Book Summary:**

This dystopian novel for young adults features a strong heroine in a fight for survival, in a world where food, and the control of food, is power.

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## ***The Year Money Grew on Trees***

Author: Aaron Hawkins

ISBN-13: 9780547577166

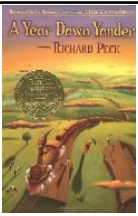
Approximate Reading Level: Age 4-8



### **Book Summary:**

1980's look at an apple orchard, and the first real work for a kid living in the country, but not quite a farmer.

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## ***A Year Down Yonder***

Author: Richard Peck

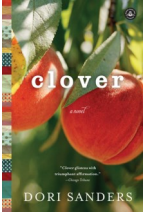
ISBN-13: 9780803725188

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9

### **Book Summary:**

Newberry Medal winner, life in a small agricultural community is highlighted in this sequel to *A Long Way From Chicago*. Great historical ag references.

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## ***Clover***

Author: Dori Sanders

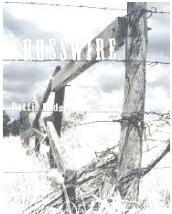
ISBN-13: 9780449906248

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-9

### **Book Summary:**

Set in South Carolina, is a newly orphaned 10 year old black girl, being raised by her newly minted white step mother, whom she hardly knows, in the midst of peach orchards.

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## ***CROSSWIRE***

Author: Dotti Enderle

ISBN-13: 9781590787519

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 4-9

### **Book Summary:**

A Calulkins Creek novel, based on Texas cotton farmers at odds with Texas cattlemen. A unique look at the Texas cattle wars and the Texas Rangers.

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## ***The Beef Princess of Practical County***

Author: Michelle Houts

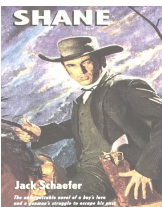
ISBN-13: 978044042270

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 4-8

### **Book Summary:**

Outstanding look at what it takes to show cattle. The ups, the downs and everything in between. Be sure to follow up with *The Practical County Drama Queen* by the same author.

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## ***Shane***

Author: Jack Schaefer

ISBN-13: 9780553271102

Approximate Reading Level: Grades 5-8

### **Book Summary:**

The classic western on which many say set the standard for westerns. Shane rides into town, and those around him won't be the same.

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