



Florida Agriculture
in the Classroom, Inc.
AGRICULTURE KEEPS
FLORIDA GREEN

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New book to help teachers create, teach with school gardens in Florida

GAINESVILLE – When is the best time to plant tomatoes? Is fertilizer necessary? How does hydroponics gardening work? What commodities grow where in Florida? How can a school garden help teach core subjects? When should commodities be harvested?

To answer these questions, and in response to the growing popularity of school gardens, Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. has developed a comprehensive guide for Florida teachers called *Gardening for Grades*, which is now available.

The full color, 142-page book has been written with educators in mind and shows teachers the entire process of starting and maintaining a classroom or schoolyard garden.

The book begins with the planning stages of a garden, such as how to secure support from school administrators to use school property and how to find grant funding to pay for supplies. The book then helps teachers decide what types of commodities to plant depending on where in the state their schools are located and helps them use the garden to teach core subject areas.

There are a dozen lessons and activities in the book that show teachers how to use the garden to teach language arts, math, science and social studies concepts.

Florida Agriculture in the Classroom chairman Vina Jean Banks said the book is a unique resource that is needed as more teachers plant school gardens.

“This book will give educators valuable information that will help them make the most of their school gardens,” Banks said. “This book shows teachers that agriculture can be used to teach all subject areas.”

Gardening for Grades will be offered free of charge to Florida teachers thanks to a special partnership with the Florida Department of Education’s Coordinated School Health Partnership and Food & Nutrition Management. Florida teachers are invited to visit the organization’s website at www.flagintheclassroom.com to order a book.

Grant funding for the project is also coming from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), among others. Florida Agriculture in the Classroom’s primary source of funding is from sales of the specialty license plate known as the ‘Ag Tag.’ Ag Tag money is being used for this project as well.

Workshops are being held around the state in the spring of 2011 to train teachers on how to use the book.

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Florida Agriculture in the Classroom is a non-profit organization based in Gainesville and charged with helping teachers in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade to educate students about the Florida agriculture industry. The group receives funding from sales of the agriculture specialty license plate called the “Ag Tag.”

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For more information on this press release, contact Florida Agriculture in the Classroom Executive Director Lisa Gaskalla at 352-846-1391 or via e-mail at gaskalla@ufl.edu

For more information on Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, visit:
www.flagintheclassroom.com

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