

AITC Collective Connection

April 2024



NATIONAL UPDATES

CALM 2024

The 13th annual Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month (CALM) ended on March 31. Hundreds of volunteers took agriculture into classrooms across Canada during the month of March. Thank you to everyone for making this year another great success with terrific initiatives and promotions in every province.

AITC-C National Team Meeting

The AITC-C team met in Montreal from March 11 to 14 to plan for the next year and learn more about Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) to develop a strategic plan for the organization. It was a great opportunity for the new team to meet in person and focus on team building.



I AM AG Wrap-Up

The I AM AG campaign wrapped up on March 31 after a four-month run across the country. Thanks to the efforts of AITC partners across Canada, the campaign promoted opportunities in ag careers to students from coast to coast. More than 3,000 videos were created with over 22,000 sessions on each of the I AM AG and I AM THE FUTURE websites. While the social media campaign wrapped up on March 31, the website tools will continue to promote careers in agriculture and connect students to thinkAG.

Sharing North American Ag Experiences

Kalysha Hanrahan will be participating in a panel discussion on April 9 for the North American Agricultural Advisory Network (NAAAN). The Conversation on NAAAN Connect - Hearing from the Next Generation of Leaders will have young professionals from across Canada, Mexico and the United States share about their experiences in agriculture. Kalysha is representing Canada on the panel and will talk about the work she is doing with AITC-C. You can learn more about the event or register [here](#).

NATIONAL UPDATES

National Workforce Strategic Planning Stakeholder Leadership Working Session

On March 20, Kalysha Hanrahan joined other leaders in the Agriculture and Food & Beverage Manufacturing sector and represented AITC-C at the National Workforce Strategic Planning Stakeholder Leadership Working Session in Toronto.

Starting in 2021, with funding from the Government of Canada's [Future Skills Centre](#), and led by the Canadian Agriculture Human Resource Council (CAHRC) and its partners the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) and Food and Beverage Canada (FBC-ABC), the National Workforce Strategic Framework will set out a comprehensive plan for Canada's agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing sectors to achieve workforce stability by 2030. The Strategic Framework will identify the root causes of the industry's labour shortages and skills gaps, identify concrete actions to address these shortfalls, and set meaningful goals and timelines to measure progress and success. AITC-C has a big role to play by raising awareness of the variety of occupations within the industry and continuing to be a part of the growing conversation.



PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

Great Canadian Farm Tour - Season 3!

Season 3 of the Great Canadian Farm Tour kicks off on April 11 in Ontario at an alpaca farm. The tour will be making 10 stops across the country, one in each province, throughout April and May. The [registration link](#) will remain open throughout the tour and works for all stops. Members of the CNN committee have received assets for social media, including graphics and social posts, for promoting the tour. So far, over 500 teachers and close to 10,000 students have registered for the program. Thank you to Farm Credit Canada for sponsoring this year's tour!

Project Reports Reminder

Project reports need to be completed by April 28. You can find the form [here](#). If you have any questions, please reach out to Mercedes Unwin (munwin@aitc-canada.ca)

FROM COAST TO COAST...

Newfoundland and Labrador



thinkAG Career Expo

AITC-NL has been expanding its reach into junior and high schools. As part of this initiative, AITC-NL hosted a thinkAG Career Expo on February 21 at Corner Brook Regional High School where there were over 500 students, teachers and volunteers.

By presenting junior high and high school students with interesting, engaging student learning experiences, the thinkAG Career Expo provided an ideal opportunity for students to explore various career options that link to provincial outcomes, as well as to enhance and expand their 21st-century learning and employable skills. Giveaways were provided to the students and teachers who participated.

AITC-NL provided a commodity matching activity and promoted the I Am The Future campaign. Students had the opportunity to interact with a variety of vendors and learn about agricultural careers.



Career Fair

AITC-PEI was invited to the First Annual Colonel Gray Science Career Fair. All Grade 11 and 12 students received thinkAG career information before choosing their preferred sessions, serving as an entry point for the student's awareness of agriculture. Participating had a direct connection with scientists, government programs and apprenticeship opportunities. Follow-up and mentorship possibilities are being explored for interested students.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Ag-Cellent Teachers Awards

AITC-PEI presented Ag-Cellent Teachers Awards, sponsored by Green Diamond, in March. Brian Carruthers of Kensington Intermediate Senior High School and Nancy Balderston of Greenfield Elementary School were presented with the awards for 2024. Their dedication, passion and innovative approach to teaching agriculture



has not only transformed classrooms but has sowed seeds of inspiration in the hearts and minds of countless students.

FROM COAST TO COAST...

NOVA SCOTIA

4-H Workshops

AITC-NS presented a workshop to 4-H members at the Atlantic Members 4-H Conference. There were 80 4-H members in attendance from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and PEI. 4-H members learned how to make felted soap using local wool, learned about seed identification, made butter and learned about the various jobs farmers do in different seasons.

In the Classrooms

AITC-NS celebrated Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month in March! In Nova Scotia, 250 Mystery Seed Kits were sent to Grade 3 classrooms across the province. More than 100 agricultural volunteers were matched with these classrooms to speak to their agriculture farm/business, and careers. Special thanks to the many volunteers as well as Greg Morrow, the Minister of Agriculture, who was able to visit the Chedabucto Education Centre to plant seeds with a class.



NEW BRUNSWICK



CALM in New Brunswick

Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month in New Brunswick saw many opportunities to engage with students, provide teachers with wonderful resources and engage the community. March started with six sessions at the 4-H leadership weekend for students from across the province and ended with 600 students from five schools participating in the Nackawic Ag Expo.

Teachers in Grades 5 to 7 signed up for Mystery Seed Kits. The newly translated Art and Agriculture mini unit in French supports teachers in Grades 3 to 8.

Our photo contest through social media has seen over 75,000 posts, over 12,000 in post engagement and 154 new page likes, which is a great springboard into the new fiscal year!

FROM COAST TO COAST...

QUEBEC



Welcome to the Team!

École-O-Champ welcomes Mélanie Barry as the School Programs Coordinator to assist in direct communication with schools and teachers.

Mystery Seed Boxes

École-O-Champ increased their reach by 459 per cent with the Mystery Seed Contest. This year 1,362 teachers participated in the contest. Additionally, there were 920 new sign-ups for the organization's newsletter. It was a success on all fronts, and EOC is eagerly looking forward to calculating its youth impact this month!

Celebrating a Great Year

The École-O-Champ team organized a trip to the sugar shack to celebrate an amazing year!

ONTARIO

CALM Virtual Field Trips

During CALM, AgScape hosted two exciting Virtual Field Trips for students across Ontario to learn about the province's innovative agriculture and food system. The first event allowed students to discover the world of maple syrup production at



Wheeler's Pancake House and Sugar Camp in Mcdonald's Corners, ON. The second event had students explore Ferme Butte & Bine Farm, a micro-bakery and farm stay in Williamstown, ON.

Welcome on board, Chrissy!

AgScape is pleased to introduce our newest member, Chrissy King, who joined the team as the Fund Development Coordinator. In her role, Chrissy collaborates closely with the AgScape team to synchronize fund development efforts with the organization's strategic goals and outreach initiatives. She is dedicated to advancing AgScape's mission through fund development and fostering positive relationships with stakeholders. Chrissy believes that cultivating relationships and effective storytelling are pivotal to achieving success in fund development endeavours. Outside of her professional role, Chrissy is a dedicated dance artist and podcast enthusiast and enjoys getting out in nature with her family.



FROM COAST TO COAST...

MANITOBA

CALM in the Classroom

As part of this year's Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month, AITC-M has been showing how dedicated volunteers are making farm-to-food connections with curious students. [Hear from volunteers, teachers and students in our Instagram video series!](#)



Welcome Alvin Dyck to AITC-M

Alvin Dyck is the newest AITC-M team member! Alvin is a former teacher who joins AITC-M in the role of Garden Education Specialist. He will support educators with their Little Green Thumbs and Little Green Sprouts gardens, as well as help create AITC-M's Garden Hub web resource, among other tasks. Welcome to the AITC collective!



Getting Ready to Celebrate

AITC-M is excited to celebrate 35 years as an organization at this year's AGM and Celebration Mixer on April 18. The mixer event will roll out the red carpet for partners, volunteers and educators to connect, enjoy interactive exhibits, and take part in a recognition ceremony for volunteers and our Educator Champion Award recipient.

SASKATCHEWAN

Garden Experience

A three-day program for elementary students in Saskatoon was reduced to half last minute due to the teacher strike. A total of 501 students from 19 classrooms in 16 schools were able to attend. We adapted an activity from the event and delivered Garden Experience classroom kits that included tomato planting supplies and a seed-ball-making kit to 621 students from 25 classrooms in 18 schools.



AITC-SK CALM Reach



7,271 students, 320 classrooms, 192 schools and 153 volunteers

FROM COAST TO COAST...

ALBERTA

Junior Garden Club

Ag for Life's Junior Garden Club exposes kids to a variety of fruits and vegetables and encourages taste testing straight from the ground. The club runs from March to October and provides instructions on how to plant, grow and harvest a garden, along with hands-on crafts and recipe ideas. Participants will learn how to grow food in small spaces and use gardening and food activities to support learning objectives. From planting a tiny seed to making a fresh salad, our Junior Garden Club connects children to food and their environment.



Poetry Month

Ag for Life is celebrating Poetry Month this April by bringing back the Joy of Agriculture Poetry Contest where students are encouraged to share their love for farms, animals and nature! Three classrooms and one home-school individual submission will be selected to receive a goodie basket loaded with farm-themed goodies, including books, toys and educational materials related to agriculture.



UPCOMING EVENTS

April 9 - Conversation on NAAAN Connect - Hearing from the Next Generation of Leaders

Virtual

April 11 - Great Canadian Farm Tour Begins

April 18 - Agriculture in the Classroom Canada Board Meeting

July 8-12 - AITC National Meeting

St. John's, NL