

AITC Collective Connection

FEBRUARY 2024



NATIONAL UPDATES

Mission Explorium is Ready to Launch!

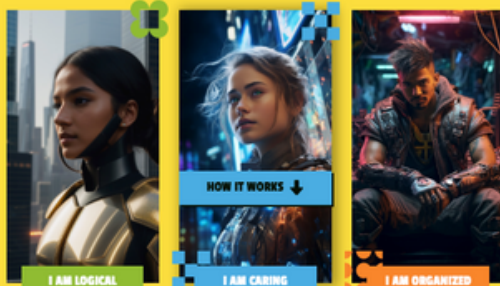
AITC's new national competition, Mission Explorium, gets underway this month. Over 215 classes from 187 schools across the country registered to take part in the pilot program. Registration closed on January 31 and selected teachers will be notified next week. When the journey kicks off on February 19, 200 schools from across Canada will compete against each other in this five-week sustainability challenge

Enhancing Our Communication

Thank you all who participate by contributing to this monthly internal newsletter. It is a great source for staying connected. Starting Monday, there will also be a weekly update! This communication will provide an outlet for more frequent updates, resulting in information being shared in a more timely manner.

YOU ARE THE FUTURE

and a whole lot more



You represent the future of Canada. Each of your unique skills and talents will come together to shape this next chapter. That's something worth celebrating!

Promoting Ag Careers

AITC-C continues to promote the I AM AG and I AM THE FUTURE tools to promote ag careers across Canada. Campaign metrics have shown that the most engagement comes from one-on-one interaction with youth and industry members, so the focus of the remainder of the campaign will be to promote the tools at events, through influencers and direct communication. Stay tuned for more details as we work with the CNN committee to reach our goal of 5,000 video creations by March 31!

Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month

CALM 2024 is right around the corner! AITC-C has shared a draft request that can be used to ask provincial ag ministers to proclaim March as Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month in your provinces. That document can be found [here](#). AITC-C is working to get a proclamation at the national level and will be sharing a national news release for CALM that will go out on March 1.

NATIONAL UPDATES

Supporting Provincial Members

Christa Wright and Kalysha Hanrahan attended the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture Symposium in Grand Falls Windsor, NL last week. They attended to promote the I AM AG campaign and presented on national initiatives such as Mission Explorium. It was a great couple of days networking with local producers and industry in Newfoundland and Labrador.



Welcome, Michelle!

Michelle Miller is the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture's new Manager of Regional Programming and will be overseeing AITC in Nova Scotia. Michelle has worked for the province for 14 years, most recently as the Manager of Climate Change Mitigation at the Department of Environment and Climate Change. She primarily worked on developing and implementing programs and policies related to carbon pricing and Nova Scotia's climate change mitigation goals. She has a PhD in agriculture and comes with both technical and managerial knowledge.

Promoting Careers in Ag

Kalysha Hanrahan attended the Building Awareness of Careers in Agriculture and Food & Beverage Manufacturing Symposium in Ottawa on January 31 hosted by CAHRC, the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council. She used the opportunity to network with industry in the food and beverage sector and with career counsellors from across Canada.

Celebrating Canada's Ag Day

What are you doing to celebrate Canada's Ag Day in your province? On February 13, people across the country will be celebrating agriculture in Canada. Executive Director Mathieu Rouleau, Christa Wright and AITC-C Chair Rebecca Sooksom will be celebrating Canada's Ag Day in the nation's capital. While in Ottawa, they will be promoting the I AM AG campaign and meeting with potential funders. AITC-C will also be issuing a news release about the importance of encouraging youth to consider careers in the agriculture industry.

PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

Questions About Programs or Resources?

Wondering who to call? As Manager of Educational Programs and Resources, Mercedes is the lead on the following programs and resources:

1. Operation Management System (e.g. Resource Library)
2. Impacts and Metrics
3. CALM
4. Journey 2050
5. Mission Explorium
6. Great Canadian Farm Tour
7. Fee-for-service resource development
8. Little Green Thumb Letter of Agreements and Reporting

Please direct any inquiries to Mercedes at munwin@aitc-canada.ca.

Project Applications

We have transitioned away from Simple Survey and will be releasing a new project application and reporting forms. These forms are important to ensure provinces get access to funds in a timely manner and for reporting to funders. The application will be sent out for CALM as soon as possible. Please note we are still waiting to hear back from AAFC regarding funding for this project, so it will be dependent on what is approved.

OMS Training

Voluntary training sessions and manuals for the OMS are to come in the next few weeks. Additionally, one-on-one meetings are also being scheduled with Mercedes to discuss the system. If you are having any challenges in the meantime, feel free to contact Mercedes.

Great Canadian Farm Tour

Planning for Season 3 of the Great Canadian Farm Tour is underway. Please ensure you connect Mercedes at munwin@aitc-canada.ca with your provincial farmer for the Great Canadian Farm Tour. This goal is to have all confirmed by February 16.

FROM COAST TO COAST...

Newfoundland and Labrador

AITC-NL Participates in NLFA Symposium

AITC-NL had an educational booth at the NL Federation of Agriculture (NLFA)'s Agriculture Industry Symposium at Mount Peyton in Grand Falls-Windsor from January 23 to 25. The symposium focused on topics such as risk management, labour challenges and opportunities and industry updates. Farmers, agriculture professionals and NLFA board and staff were in attendance. Over three days, AITC-NL made new connections with members of the agriculture industry and recruited more volunteers for upcoming events, including Canada's Agriculture Day, thinkAG Career Expo and Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month. AITC-NL also hosted its AGM during the symposium and reported on 2023's successful year. The annual review can be viewed at www.aitcnl.ca



PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

The Fall Semester Comes to a Close

It has been another busy season bringing agriculture to life for PEI high school students across the province as the fall semester comes to a close! Students have explored the world of agriculture through a variety of thinkAG initiatives and activities such as our genAG program, career fairs, farm tours, AAFC presentations and tours, agri-business presentations and tours, Career Case Game presentations, Nutrients for Life Canada soil testing labs and various virtual opportunities.

Seventeen new classrooms have just received a light garden unit, while 22 new classrooms received vermicomposting units. AITC PEI is excited to partner with the PEI Dairy Farmers for CALM this year and is preparing for a busy; March.



FROM COAST TO COAST...

NOVA SCOTIA

Cultivate Your Future

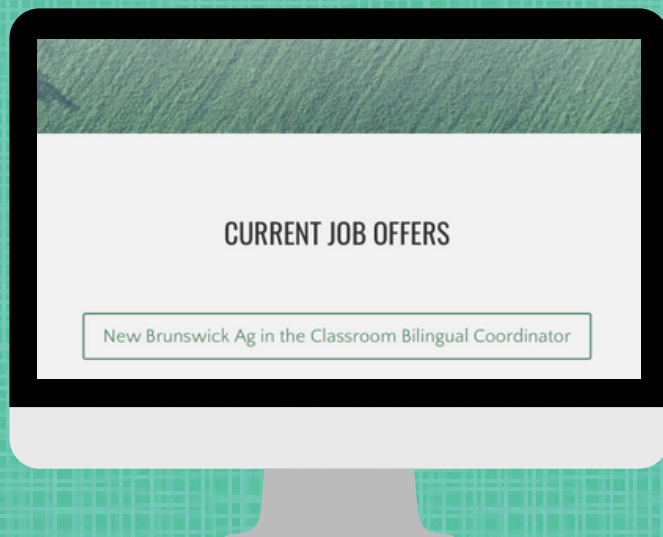
AITC-NS staff members, Lisa Patton, career coordinator, and Jacqueline Hoyt, program coordinator, attended the conference, "Cultivate your Future – Youth in Agriculture" put on by the Nova Scotia Young Farmer forum in January. AITC-NS was a part of the trade show and took part in the speakers and tabletop brainstorming sessions. It was a fantastic day of celebrating young farmers, their successes and challenges. Along with various guest speakers, there was a panel of young farmers who spoke about different ways they have found success with their farms. As a bonus to the day, a few new young farmers were recruited to volunteer in classrooms for Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month!



NEW BRUNSWICK

AITC-NB is Hiring

Agriculture in the Classroom New Brunswick is looking to hire a bilingual coordinator. The individual will support the organization's programs within the Francophone school district and support programming across the province. If you know a passionate AG advocate in New Brunswick, please share the job listing found at [Employment Opportunities | Agricultural Alliance of NB](https://www.fermenfarm.ca/employment-opportunities) ([fermenfarm.ca](https://www.fermenfarm.ca)).



FROM COAST TO COAST...

QUEBEC

Promoting Careers in Ag

On January 17 at the Salon de l'agriculture de Ste-Hyacinthe, Anne-Marie Saint-Germain, president of École-O-Champ, participated in a panel of industry experts focusing on strategies to enhance, recognize and promote agricultural careers in Quebec.



Training Agri-Ambassadors

In January, École-O-Champ trained 10 new Agri-Ambassadors to increase farm visit opportunities for elementary school children. The team is proud and happy to be surrounded by such great support!

Happy Anniversary!

In December, École-O-Champ celebrated its seventh anniversary. Seven years ago, Mathieu Rouleau founded an incredible and inspiring organization with his friend, Valérie Toupin-Dubé and teacher Caroline Begg.

ONTARIO

A Remarkable Milestone

AgScape is thrilled to announce a significant milestone. Over one million educational experiences were provided across Ontario in 2023! The AgScape team is grateful for all the dedicated educators and supporters who have joined AgScape's mission to ensure youth in Ontario get the opportunity to learn about their role in the agriculture and food system and discover meaningful careers.



Partnership with FoodGrads

AgScape announced a new partnership with FoodGrads, an interactive platform focused on closing the gap between students, graduates and employers in the food and beverage industry. This collaboration marks a significant step forward in ensuring youth in Ontario have access to educational experiences to learn about Ontario's food and beverage processing (FBP) sector and discover diverse careers within this robust sector.

FROM COAST TO COAST...

MANITOBA

Celebrating Manitoba Ag Days

In January, members of the AITC-M team headed to Brandon for Manitoba Ag Days, Manitoba's largest exposition of agricultural expertise, technology and equipment. The adventure got off to a fantastic start at Heritage Co-op's Kick-Off Breakfast, where they raised over \$2,500 in donations as the event's charity of choice. AITC-M also received a \$10,000 Ag Days Gives Back grant in support of next year's programming, which AITC-M sees as a huge honour. Over the next three days, the team hosted the ever-popular Ag Days Adventure program for Grade 7 and 8 students, including their World Game and scavenger hunt, which challenged students to gain a wider perspective on agriculture, science, social studies and career opportunities. Despite the winter weather, 282 students from 13 schools took part! Through it all, the team had an amazing time connecting with partners, forging new relationships and sharing the AITC-M story with local media.



SASKATCHEWAN

Western Canadian Crop Production Show

AITC-SK was given a booth in-kind at the Western Canadian Crop Production Show, a leading show in the field of crop science and technology. Over three days, our team had the opportunity to chat with producers and agriculture members at the booth and make connections with agri-businesses and potential future donors and partners.

Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month in Saskatchewan

This year, AITC-SK is offering a copy of "All The Farmers You Will Know" to every student in Grades K to 4 who is registered for CALM. The storybook comes with companion learning activities tailored to Kindergarten, Grades 1-2, Grades 3-4 and Grades 5-6. The storybooks are provided courtesy of Cargill.

FROM COAST TO COAST...

ALBERTA

Why I Love Alberta

Ag for Life is excited to announce the 'Why I Love Alberta' Youth Challenge - a contest that celebrates creativity and passion! This contest is for students in Grades 9 to 12. Students are encouraged to dive into this thrilling competition by crafting a captivating video that showcases why Alberta is the ultimate place to study, work and live. Whether it's the breathtaking landscapes, diverse communities or vibrant culture, we want to see their unique perspectives. Winners will be rewarded with fantastic cash prizes, adding an extra layer of excitement to this engaging experience. Find more information at lovealberta.ca.



BRITISH COLUMBIA

Pacific Agriculture Show

In January, BCAITC attended the Pacific Agriculture Show, a premier event in the B.C. agricultural community. The event started with an opening gala on January 24, offering an excellent platform to engage and network with current and prospective sponsors and donors. One of the highlights of the evening was the presentation of the BCAITC's 2023 Outstanding Teacher in Agriculture Award to Aaron Veenstra, a Grade 6 educator at A.S. Matheson Elementary in Kelowna, in recognition of his commitment to integrating agricultural and food education within his curriculum.

The three-day exhibition, which took place from January 25 to 27, drew over 8,000 attendees, providing a valuable opportunity to showcase BCAITC programs, resources and initiatives to attendees, educators and parents alike. It also allowed members to engage with stakeholders present at the show, fostering valuable connections.

BCAITC had a booth where they promoted the I AM AG campaign, which generated significant interest from visitors eager to learn more about the initiative and participate. The Pacific Agriculture Show proved to be the highlight of the month, enabling BCAITC to extend the reach of their mission and deepen their connections within B.C.'s agricultural community.



UPCOMING EVENTS

February 13 - Canada's Ag Day

February 14 - AITC Canada Board Meeting

February 19 - Mission Explorium competition begins

February 27-29 - Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) Annual Meetings
Ottawa, ON

March - Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month (CALM)

July 8-12 - AITC National Meeting

St. John's, NL