

Press Release

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Ag Foundation Working to Bring Students Closer to Agriculture

MANHATTAN, Kan. – Many of today’s children and teens are at least one generation removed from the farm and may not be able to make the connection between the food on their plate, the dozens of other products they use each day, and agriculture. The Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom (KFAC) is working to change that by using activities and resources that make learning about agriculture fun.

Cathy Musick, executive director of the non-profit organization said that KFAC’s mission is to connect Kansas classrooms to agriculture. To achieve that goal, the organization provides teachers with the tools and resources necessary to teach students about the basics of agriculture – farm animals, crops and natural resources – the science behind it and the ways that it affects their daily lives.

KFAC offers a variety of educational resources for teachers and students including teacher guides and lesson plans, student magazines and school assembly programs, she said, all designed with state curriculum standards in mind.

In the assembly program for example, Kristin Goin, KFAC school assembly presenter and certified teacher, is combining subjects such as math and science with agricultural information and skill-building activities in problem solving.

Creating an interactive approach, with hands-on, “game show-like” activities makes learning fun, engaging and exciting, said Goin, who noted, whether in western Kansas or in Kansas City, “kids know equally little about agriculture.”

KFAC also partners with the Kansas Department of Agriculture to sponsor an annual postcard art contest with an agricultural-related theme, Musick said.

The postcard art contest is held every spring and is open to students in kindergarten through sixth grade. The 2008 theme is “Science in Your Shopping Cart.” One winner will be recognized from each grade level and an overall grand prize winner will be selected.

Winners will receive a U.S. Savings Bond and will be invited to an awards ceremony at the Kansas State Capitol Building in March during National Agriculture Week.

“I cannot overstate my support and belief in the Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom,” said Adrian Polansky, Kansas Secretary of Agriculture. “As Secretary of Agriculture, I see fewer and fewer people with an agriculture background and a natural understanding of agriculture and what it contributes to our state and world.”

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For more information about KFAC and resources available to schools and communities, interested persons can call Musick at (785)532-7946, or visit the KFAC Web site at www.ksagclassroom.org.

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