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2021 NAITC CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY IN DES MOINES, IOWA

DES MOINES, IOWA – Hundreds of educators from around the country will learn how to use agricultural concepts to teach reading, writing, math, science, social studies and more at the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference “Fields of Dreams” to be held in person and virtually June 29-July 1, at the Iowa Events Center in Des Moines, IA.

The National Agriculture in the Classroom Organization (NAITCO) and the Iowa Agriculture Literacy Foundation program will hold three days of workshops showing pre-kindergarten through 12th (Pre-K-12) grade teachers how to use agriculture to teach core subjects. It receives partial funding for the conference from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Institute for Food and Agriculture (USDA/NIFA).

The conference will be held as a “hybrid” event with an in-person option for people who can travel and a live streaming/virtual option for people who cannot travel. Social distancing measures, including mask wearing, will be implemented to make sure everyone remains safe at the conference.

Keynote speaker Dr. Anton Treuer, a professor who specializes in Native American studies, will talk about infusing equity tools into classroom instruction and is being sponsored by the Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF). Another keynote speaker is True Food TV host Nicole Jolly who will talk about using storytelling to describe how different food items are grown and the farmers who produce them.

Pre-conference tours on Monday June 28 will stop at the American Gothic House with the iconic painting of the farmer and his wife depicting 20th century farm life, Herbert Hoover’s birthplace and presidential library and Amana Colonies, a long-standing German communal society. The post-conference tour on Friday July 2 tours the Bridges of Madison County, among other stops.

Traveling workshops the afternoon of Tuesday June 29 will tour the World Food Prize Hall of Laureates, a raspberry farm, and a John Deere manufacturing facility, among other stops. On-site workshops will cover renewable energy (ethanol, wind), conservation (water quality, soil health) and biotechnology (GMOs, cross-breeding), among other subjects.

To learn more about the conference and register, please visit [Home \(eventscloud.com\)](http://Home.eventscloud.com). The early registration rate of \$435 for the in-person conference will be available until June 1. Registration for the live streaming/virtual conference is \$50.

CHS Foundation once again offered scholarships to help Pre-K-12 teachers attend the conference. The scholarship covers the cost of early registration of \$435. A new scholarship offered this year by the Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF) will help teachers of Native American students attend the conference by covering their travel to the event.

The conference will honor national teacher winners and a national Partnership in Agricultural Literacy winner for the innovative ways they use agriculture to teach students about this important industry.

“The NAITC conference moves around the country each year so teachers can experience agriculture in different states and learn how to use it as a teaching tool,” says Tammy Maxey, president of NAITCO and programs director of Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom. “This year we will get a chance to learn about Iowa agriculture and participate in workshops, awards programs, and traveling workshops that show how effectively agriculture can be used in formal classroom instruction.”

“The Iowa Foundation for Agriculture Literacy team is honored and excited to welcome educators from around the country to learn about Iowa’s unique agriculture,” said Will Fett, executive director of Iowa Agriculture Literacy Foundation. “Our state’s location in the Midwest will allow us to showcase corn and soybean educational resources, the animal sciences, renewable energy and more.”

NAITCO and Nutrien, Ltd. will announce new developments with its online games called “Journey 2050” and “Farmers 2050,” which allow players to become virtual farmers who make day-to-day decisions about growing food sustainably.

Of the hundreds of conference participants expected to register, about half are teachers from around the country. In addition, American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture will honor teachers and agriculture industry educators for using agriculture as an effective teaching tool as part of its White-Reinhardt Fund for Education program. The winner of the National

Grange's Partnership in Agricultural Literacy will also be recognized at the conference.

A big "thank you" to national conference sponsors USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA/NIFA), Nutrien, Ltd., CHS Foundation, Iowa Farm Bureau, National Pork Board, Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF), Smithfield Foods, American Egg Board, Ardent Mills, Bayer, Corteva Agriscience, Del Monte Foods, Inc., Farm Credit, Pivot Bio, 2445 Organics, American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture, The BRANDT Foundation, Dairy Farmers of America, Ford Motor Co., Iowa Corn Promotion Board, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, Protect the Harvest, and Vermeer, Corp. and others. Their support keeps registration costs low so more teachers can attend.

NAITCO is a non-profit organization representing Agriculture in the Classroom programs in most of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Its mission is to educate Pre-K—12 teachers and students about the importance of agriculture by providing them with educational resources, grant opportunities, awards programs, and a national conference that demonstrate how agriculture can be used to effectively teach core subject areas.

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