



2008 NEW YORK AITC AG LITERACY DAY April 8, 2008



 Cornell Agricultural Outreach and Education

WHAT IS NY AG LITERACY DAY?

New York Agriculture in the Classroom is pleased to announce the third annual **NY Ag Literacy Day** in support of its mission of fostering awareness, understanding, and appreciation of agriculture and the food and fiber system. On April 8, volunteers throughout the state will go into classrooms to read a book with an agricultural theme and talk to students about agriculture. The book will be donated to the school library with a special bookplate recognizing the donor and **NY Ag Literacy Day**.

WHO WILL PARTICIPATE?

Partners and sponsors to date include:

- New York Agriculture in the Classroom
- NY Farm Bureau
- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- NYS Department of Ag & Markets
- NYS Education Department
- New York State Maple Producers' Association
- Cornell Farm to School Program
- NYS Agricultural Educators and FFA
- NYFarms!
- LEAD NY
- Spoons Across America
- The Agway Foundation

Let us know if you are interested in becoming a partner or sponsor.

Please help us foster agricultural literacy and educate students about the significance of our food and fiber system by participating in **NY Ag Literacy Day**. We are asking our friends throughout New York's agriculture industry and food system to volunteer to go into a local elementary classroom, read the designated book and talk to students about the importance of New York agriculture to their daily lives.

THE BOOK:

The designated book for 2008 is *Sugarbush Spring* by Marsha Wilson Chall (Lothrop, Lee, and Shepard Books). Chall's timeless story and Jim Daly's glowing paintings invite children to share in the pleasure of making maple syrup – a process that's the same today as it was two hundred years ago. Maple sap is an important crop in New York State, which is ranked second in the U.S. in maple production.

GRADE LEVEL:

We are targeting second grade classrooms. If it works better in a particular school, it could be read in first or third grade as an alternative. Ideally, reading will take place at the classroom level so there is an opportunity for students to ask questions and participate in discussion.

HOW WILL THE EVENT BE FUNDED?

We are currently seeking funding to purchase books and will be seeking product donations for related activities. Supplemental activities will be funded on the local level.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

- **SPONSORS AND PARTNERS** - If you would like to help with state-level planning or publicity, or become a sponsor or partner, please contact Ag Outreach and Education Director Perry Dewey. A sponsor might provide materials, funding for books, or product donations. Partner organizations will help publicize the event, provide local coordination, and/or recruit readers.
- **COUNTY COORDINATOR** – We will designate a coordinator or co-coordinators in each county. This person will help promote the event, recruit readers, handle books, and provide a communications link with schools and readers.
- **TEACHERS** – If you are interested in having someone read in your classroom, contact the designated County Coordinator or NY Ag in the Classroom. A list of county coordinators will be posted on the NYAITC web site at www.nyaged.org/aitc.
- **READERS** – If you can volunteer to be a reader, contact your local school/schools to make sure they will be able to accommodate a visit and then send in the Volunteer Reader form and you will be contacted with more information. It is your responsibility to schedule the visit with the school.

WHAT OTHER SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES CAN BE PLANNED AT THE LOCAL LEVEL?

- Sponsor a tasting of one of the many foods mentioned in *Sugarbush Spring*
- Involve the local Dairy Princess or Ambassador
- Invite FFA or 4-H members to bring tools or products into the classroom
- Partner with the cafeteria to make one of the foods in the book, or other foods using NY products.
- Organize an Ag Field Day or field trip to a local farm (most likely later in the spring)
- Use Ag Week materials to plan additional activities, (www.agday.org)
- Additional activities will be made available on the NYATC website (www.nysaged.org)

RESOURCES AVAILABLE:

NY Ag Literacy Day web page
Reader guidelines
Publicity ideas

County Coordinator guidelines
Additional lessons for teachers
Letter to school administrator

Ag Week materials
Press release template to use locally
Lesson plan and activities