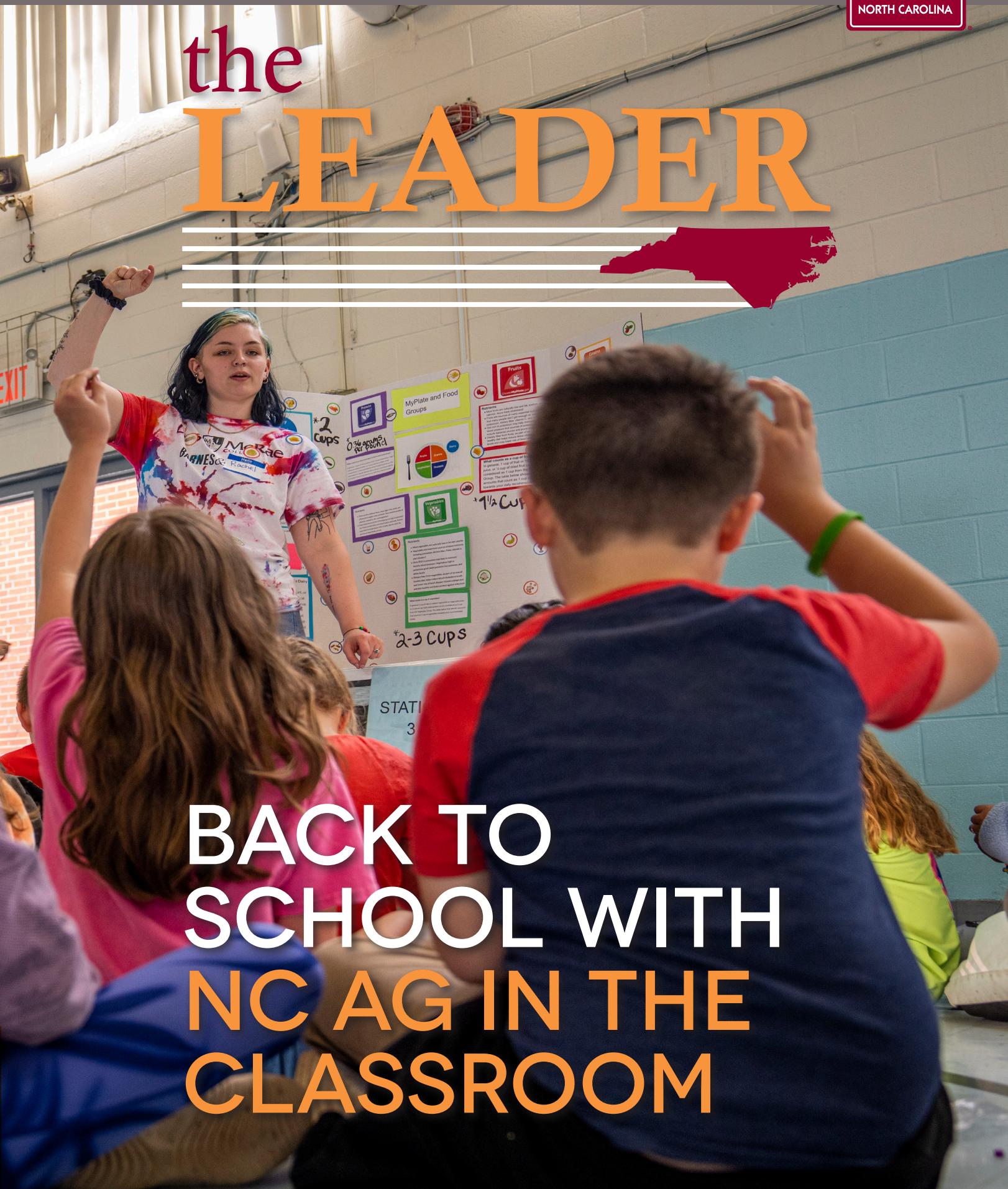




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the **LEADER**

BACK TO SCHOOL WITH NC AG IN THE CLASSROOM

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THE CLASSROOM



BACK TO SCHOOL WITH NC AG IN THE CLASSROOM

When you were in school, did your teacher always start the first day with a review of content you learned the year before? Or maybe your teacher reviewed the layout of the classroom or school. The Back to School months are a perfect time for your Ag in the Classroom review! Class is in session!

Ag in the Classroom began in North Carolina in 1985, after the NC Farm Bureau State Board of Directors voted to adopt the program. Ag in the Classroom is like a bridge between county Farm Bureaus and educators. Sometimes the two groups need a connector to help facilitate conversations, education and relationships. Since 1985, the program has adapted and changed with the needs of our county Farm Bureaus and educators across the state. The pandemic created new challenges, and we worked hard to create new digital resources and opportunities during a time when we could not meet in-person. However, our mission has remained the same: to promote the importance of agriculture to all North Carolina teachers and students. How important that is! We often say that we can't expect grown adults to have an understanding or appreciation for agriculture if we don't teach it to our children. Imagine how different our world would be if everyone learned the importance of agriculture as young students. That's where Ag in the Classroom comes in.

CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE!



How can you get involved with educational outreach in your local schools? Below, we've highlighted some Ag in the Classroom programming that you will find is easy to share and implement. Some of these programs and initiatives might be new to you, or you might just need your Back to School review to jog your memory.

Book of the Month – Each month, we feature an agricultural book appropriate for Kindergarten through 5th grade. Twice a year, in April and September, we feature chapter books appropriate for grades 4 – 8, along with our regular offering. We write an activity sheet that is aligned with North Carolina educational standards to accompany the book. The cost is \$5.00 per book (that includes the book, activity sheet and shipping). Many county Farm Bureaus purchase these books to donate to local teachers or schools, but we have many teachers and individuals purchase these on their own. This program started in 2014, and we have distributed over 24,000 books!

Going Local Grant – This is a grant we offer to teachers to fund up to \$500 for agricultural projects in classrooms and schools. We offer the grant twice a year—in April and November—and fund up to 25 grants per cycle. Since the start of the Going Local Grant program in 2013, we have funded over 450 grants in 81 counties for a total of over \$210,000!

Ag Mags – These 4-page, colorful agricultural magazines contain information about North Carolina commodities, careers, and educational activities. They come in packs of 25 and cost \$5.00 per pack. We currently have five editions: Christmas Trees, Sweetpotatoes, Peanuts, Pork, and Strawberries. Beef is coming out in April 2023. These are perfect for community events as giveaways, or for students as an informational text for learning.

Lesson Plans – We offer free lesson plans on our website. We have North Carolina-specific lessons based on commodities, such as strawberries and sweetpotatoes. We also have the National Ag in the Classroom Curriculum Matrix linked on our website that offers over 1,000 lesson plans and resources—all free and downloadable! This is a great place to start if you need an activity for a classroom visit.

Teacher of the Year – Every year we honor a North Carolina teacher who emphasizes agricultural concepts into non-agricultural curricula (i.e., reading, writing, math, social studies, etc.). This teacher is recognized at the NC Farm Bureau Annual Convention, and gets a stipend to attend the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference in June. The deadline for applications for this award is February 15.

We'll leave you with this quote from the renowned writer of parenting and family books Denise Witmer:

“A new school year means new beginnings, new adventures, new friendships, and new challenges. The slate is clean and anything can happen.”

What type of educational outreach will you do this year? Perhaps your county Farm Bureau can sponsor a Book of the Month for a local teacher, or you can host a teacher appreciation event and share some Ag in the Classroom resources. Maybe you'll do something new and different that will lead to new adventures and advocacy! We can't wait to see how you shine in your educational outreach!

