

# CONSERVATION CLIPBOARD

Coles County SWCD  
6021 Development Dr., Suite 2  
Charleston, IL

Educational Liaison: Kristin Yager  
Phone: (217) 345-3901 Ext. 3  
Email: [kristin.yager@il.nacdnet.net](mailto:kristin.yager@il.nacdnet.net)

[www.colescountyswcd.org](http://www.colescountyswcd.org)

Welcome to a new school year! I know it is a busy time for you and the staff at the Coles County Soil & Water Conservation District appreciates your efforts to include conservation and agriculture topics in your classroom. We want to make every effort to assist you in this endeavor!

\* Did you know that the SWCD has over 30 kits on numerous topics related to agriculture & the environment available for loan to our Coles County teachers?

\* Did you know that use of these materials is FREE & a staff member will transport the kits to and from your school at no cost to you!

\* Did you know that all of the kits will be stocked with enough craft supplies and other materials for your entire class, all FREE of charge?

\* Want to learn more? ~ Contact Kristin at  
[kristin.yager@il.nacdnet.net](mailto:kristin.yager@il.nacdnet.net)

## **New from IAITC: ISAT Prep Materials**

Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom (IAITC) has prepared a complementary lesson booklet for the Ag Mags. The booklet is designed to aid students and teachers in their preparation for the ISATs, while still learning about agriculture and our environment. The lesson booklet is called *ISATs: 10 Minutes a Day the IAITC Way!* The goal of the lesson booklet is to spend about 10 minutes a day throughout the school year to prepare for the ISATs using the 20 different Ag Mags that are available in print or online. The booklet recommends spending a week on each Ag Mag. On Monday, you would spend 10 minutes introducing the Ag Mag and allowing the students time to read through its passages. On each day for the rest of the week, students would spend 10 minutes a day completing different activities that reinforce skills necessary for successful scores on the ISATs. The activities that accompany the Ag Mags include such topics as: vocabulary building, antonyms/synonyms, interpreting graphs and diagrams, reading comprehension, composing extended responses, performing mathematical functions using decimals and fractions, and more! The current booklet is designed to target 4<sup>th</sup> grade students and a second booklet for 6<sup>th</sup> grade should be available shortly. Consider scheduling an after-school workshop to learn more about these great new materials and to get your own copy (See story below).

## **Short, After-School Workshops Available**

The Coles County SWCD is available to present short (20-30minute) after-school workshops to the educators at your school. I can bring kits, Ag Mags, ISAT prep materials, and more to your school and introduce you to them and show you how to utilize these materials in your classroom. All of our kits come packaged in plastic tubs for ease and convenience and contain nearly all materials needed to

complete activities listed in the kits. Workshops can be scheduled on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays this fall. CPDU's are available.



## **Make-Over on SWCD Kits has Started**

With full understanding of the importance of achieving the Illinois State Learning Standards, the SWCD staff has begun to “make-over” some of our loan kits. The goal of the “make-over” is to make the kits more user friendly and to highlight activities that can be used to achieve the Learning Standards. Part of the update process has included better organization of the binders in each kit, the listing of Learning Standards for the popular activities in each kit, and the addition of Maze Reading exercises. The “make-over” has begun on the 2 Apple Kits, the 3 Pumpkin Kits, the Mammal Kit, & the Geology Kit. I welcome any comments on the updates and suggestions on how to further improve our classroom resources.

## **Fall Themed Kits**

Coles County SWCD has several kits that would be appropriate for welcoming fall and the harvest! Remember that there is no fee to borrow our materials and a SWCD staff member will transport the kit to and from your school at no cost to you! Please call SWCD at 345- 3901 Ext 3 or email me at [kristin.yager@il.nacdn.net](mailto:kristin.yager@il.nacdn.net) for more information or to reserve a kit for your classroom. See a complete listing and description of our educational materials at [www.colescountyswcd.org/edu\\_k12.htm](http://www.colescountyswcd.org/edu_k12.htm)

### **Fall Themed Kits:**

Beanie Babies	Insects	Insect MAGIC
Farm Animals	Worms	The Giving Tree
Adventures around the Farm	Plant MAGIC	Geology
Seasons of the Farm	Pumpkins*	Pizza
Soil to Hamburger	Apples*	Mammals

\* These 2 kits are extremely popular in the fall. Be sure to request them early!

## **Grant Opportunities to fund Ag Education in Your Classroom!**

Each year, the Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom Program and the IAA Foundation award several \$250 teacher grants to fund programs that increase agricultural literacy in your schools. Educators of grades preschool – high school are eligible. First year teachers are encouraged to apply for the separate First Year Teacher Grant. The Coles Count SWCD would be happy to make recommendations to help you in the grant process. The application deadline is October 1<sup>st</sup>. An application and more information can be found at [www.agintheclassroom.org/060605/Teachers/grants/grants.htm](http://www.agintheclassroom.org/060605/Teachers/grants/grants.htm)

## **Planning a Science Fair, Career Day, or other Special Event this fall?**

The staff at Coles County SWCD would be happy to present an agricultural or environmental program for you students. Contact Kristin Yager to schedule such a program.

