

Florida Agriculture  
in the Classroom, In  
AGRICULTURE KEEPS  
FLORIDA GREEN

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Florida Agriculture in the Classroom (FAITC) contacted the Center for Public Issues Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (PIE Center) regarding the development of a new advertising campaign for the FAITC license plate. The most recent campaign, “Buy an Ag Tag and Watch Me Grow!” —which used billboards, print media, pop-up displays at conferences, and mailing inserts, — targeted a more general audience. Recently, FAITC license plate sales, the Ag Tag, have decreased, and FAITC wants to take a different approach.

The PIE Center conducted research with various Florida agricultural producers to (1) understand producer attitudes about the Ag Tag and Ag in the Classroom, (2) define a more specific target audience, and (3) understand producer attitudes toward the original campaign materials.

Throughout the research, participants provided the following recommendations:

1. The revised campaign should explain the purpose of the Ag Tag and highlight the \$20 donation to FAITC with the purchase of the Ag Tag. In addition, the promotional materials should contain specific information on how the \$20 has benefitted children in the past.
2. Promotional materials need to specify more than one way to donate. The promotional materials only referenced the Ag Tag but should also direct consumers to a

website for direct donations.

3. Promotional materials should be consistent regarding references to websites, logos, and phone numbers.
4. FAITC should develop a social media campaign.

This plan book proposes a “Teach Ag with a Tag” communication campaign to increase FAITC funding based on the PIE Center research recommendations. The objectives of the campaign are to 1) To increase Ag Tag sales by 10% within one year of implementation of the campaign and 2) To raise \$10,000 in direct donations to FAITC within one year of implementation.

To reach the objectives, the Teach Ag with a Tag campaign uses many different media strategies, including media kits, various promotional flyers, a vertical pop-up banner, a public relations special event, and social media to communicate with the target audience.

# Situational Analysis





# SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS: FLORIDA AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM

## ABSTRACT

*Florida Ag in the Classroom (FAITC) is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization focused on promoting agriculture literacy in school-age children in Florida. This report summarizes the background and organizational philosophy of FAITC, in addition to providing a description of the situation that calls for a communication campaign. FAITC is the Florida division of Ag in the Classroom, which started as a national task force by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in 1981. Today, FAITC reaches more than 11,750 teachers and more than 274,300 students annually through curriculum-based teaching of agriculture topics. FAITC also provides grant money to teachers and volunteers, hosts an annual agriculture literacy day, and provides workshops to encourage the teaching of agriculture literacy. Since the program's beginning, FAITC has awarded over \$400,000 in teacher and volunteer grants and has held over 20 workshops a year. FAITC's role in society is reflective of the mission statement, to "increase agricultural literacy through K-12 education." FAITC aims to educate children about agriculture by teaching core curriculum in science, social studies, language arts, and nutrition. Two people manage FAITC. The organization is dependent upon volunteers and teachers to spread the message of agriculture literacy. Each year FAITC hopes to reach more students and teachers than in the previous year. As a non-profit organization, FAITC is dependent upon fundraising, specifically the sale of the specialty license plate, the Ag Tag, for financial support. Recently, however, Ag Tag license plate sales have declined, and FAITC is taking a different approach to fundraising. FAITC will develop a new campaign with a "take pride in agriculture" themed message focused on 2013 research recommendations from the PIE Center. In addition, FAITC will host a "Farm to Fork" fundraising dinner and silent auction to add more financial support to the organization.*

## INTRODUCTION

Florida Ag in the Classroom (FAITC) is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization in the state of Florida focused on promoting agriculture literacy in school-age children. FAITC is the Florida division of Ag in the Classroom, which started in 1981 as a national task force by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Today, FAITC reaches more than 11,750 teachers and more than 274,300 students annually through curriculum-based teaching of agricultural topics. In addition to providing a description of the situation calling for a communication solution, this report intends to inform the reader on the background and organizational philosophy of FAITC.

## BACKGROUND

### HISTORY OF FLORIDA AG IN THE CLASSROOM

In the past, Americans were dependent upon their own food source, including having the knowledge of growing, selling, and processing food for personal consumption (Bellah, Casey, and Dyer, 2004). However, with increased urbanization of the United States, Americans became disconnected from the process of food production, and many Americans became "ignorant on most issues concerning agriculture" (Linder, 1993, p. 91).

As the farming community shrank further, fewer educators specialized in teaching agriculture to students. In addition, agricultural education began to focus on those who wanted a career in agriculture and not informing the general public on the importance of agriculture (History of Ag in the Classroom, 2013). However, in the 1960s and 1970s, educators and legislators began to realize the importance

of agriculture literacy. In 1981, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) developed a national task force to set up an agriculture literacy program (History of Ag in the Classroom, 2013). With this initiative, members of the agriculture, business, education, and government industries came together to coordinate a modern agricultural education program (History of Ag in the Classroom, 2013).

Because of the diversity of the American agricultural industry, a national task force was started to develop a program devoted to teaching agriculture. The program was developed to teach students about agriculture in each state in the United States (History of Ag in the Classroom, 2013). The USDA and the national task force coordinate regional meetings to help states organize their own programs. By creating literacy programs unique to each state, Ag in the Classroom is able to cater to the needs of each state's agricultural industry (History of Ag in the Classroom, 2013).

### **FLORIDA AG IN THE CLASSROOM TODAY**

Florida Ag in the Classroom is a non-profit organization dedicated to the training and development of teachers and volunteers in the agricultural industry. These teachers and volunteers use agricultural curriculum and materials to educate students about the importance of agriculture (More about FAITC, 2013). Students learn the core-curriculum concepts of science, social studies, language arts, and nutrition through teacher-taught agricultural-based content (About Agriculture in the Classroom, 2013).

FAITC's main classroom resource is "Gardening for Grades," a school garden curriculum that is free to all Florida teachers. In 2012, FAITC distributed 5,000 copies of "Gardening for Grades" with lessons on soil science, photosynthesis, and plant categorization using gardening techniques (2012 Annual Reports of State Reports, 2013). FAITC is beginning the development of the second in the series, "Gardening for Nutrition."

To help prepare teachers, FAITC provides grant money to both teachers and volunteers to pay for the materials to teach agricultural-based programs. FAITC grant money is used to teach students about where food comes from and the importance of Florida Farmers (More about FAITC, 2013). According to the

FAITC website, the grants that are available for the 2013 year include:

- Mini School Garden and Team School Garden Grant: Individual Florida teachers or a team of three teachers can apply for a grant to grow a school garden. FAITC has a list of approved fruits, vegetables, and herbs that can be grown using this grant. FAITC hopes to teach students the importance of where food comes from with the use of this grant.
- Teacher Grant Program: This grant may be awarded to any general education or agri-science teachers teaching pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Teachers must use agricultural concepts to teach core subjects to students.
- Mosaic School Garden Mini Grants: This grant provides more funding for school gardens but is available only in certain counties. (Grants and Grant Programs, 2013)

Since the program's beginning, FAITC has awarded over \$400,000 in teacher and volunteer grants. In 2012, FAITC distributed over 222 school garden mini grants (2012 Annual Report of State Programs, 2013).

In addition to providing grants to off-set the cost of teaching agriculture, each year, FAITC holds Agriculture Literacy Day. For the 2013 Agriculture Literacy Day, FAITC invited many members of the Florida agriculture industry to act as volunteers to read agriculture-related storybooks to elementary school children, celebrating Florida's 500 years of agriculture history (Ag Literacy Day, 2013). Volunteers for previous Ag Literacy Day event have included: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) employees, University of Florida IFAS Extension agents, 4-H agents and master gardeners, Florida Farm Bureau members and employees, Florida Cattlemen and Cattlewomen members, FFA teachers and students, and other agriculture-industry representatives. In 2013, more than 1,200 farmers, ranchers, industry representatives, and students read books to students statewide, helping to create more agriculture-literate students and teachers.

In addition to providing grants for agriculture literacy programs and holding a statewide Ag Literacy Day, FAITC sponsors more than 20 county workshops yearly, conducts farm tours, and sends teachers and administrators to the National Ag in the Classroom



conference.

## **PARENT AND/OR SUBSIDIARIES**

Florida Agriculture in the Classroom is a subsidiary of National Agriculture in the Classroom. The National Ag in the Classroom program supports each state program; however, each state determines its own structure and infrastructure. This structure allows for each state organization to address “agriculture education in a way best suited to its own needs” (State summary 2011 - Florida, 2013, para. 1).

## **NUMBERS AND TYPES OF KEY PUBLICS**

According to the 2012 Florida State Report, FAITC estimates it reached more than 11,750 teachers and more than 274,300 students in 2012 (2012 Annual Report of State Programs, 2013). In addition, FAITC reached 28,779 teachers and 575,580 students in 2012 through material orders and website hits (2012 Annual Report of State Programs, 2013).

In the future, FAITC hopes to reach more students and teachers. In the 2010-2011 school year Florida had 185,739 teachers (Education information & accountability service: Data Report, 2011).

Since FAITC targets elementary school-age children the most, it is important to know the number of elementary school teachers in the state of Florida. In 2010-2011 Florida employed 72,291 elementary school teachers (Education information & accountability service: Data Report, 2010). There are 2,587,554 students in the state of Florida (Florida public school directory, 2013).

## **GEOGRAPHIC AREAS OF OPERATION**

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, Florida has 47,500 commercial farms, utilizing 9.25 million acres of land across the state (Florida agriculture by the numbers, 2012). In addition, Florida ranks 19th among all states in number of farms. Florida agriculture provides the state with the second largest economic base. In 2011 Florida ranked:

First in the United States in the value of production of oranges and grapefruit.

- First in value of production of fresh market snap beans, cucumbers, bell peppers, squash, sweet

corn, tomatoes, and watermelons.

- Second in value of production of strawberries, tangerines, sugarcane, and cucumbers for pickles.
- Fourth in production of honey.

FAITC is headquartered in Gainesville, Florida. Teachers or volunteers from any school district are welcome to participate in the program by using the curriculum or applying for grants. The National Agriculture in the Classroom program is instituted in each state in the United States.

To educate students and the public about Florida agriculture, FAITC programming is present in all 67 counties.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL PHILOSOPHY, MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **ROLE IN SOCIETY**

FAITC's role in society is to create agriculture literacy in students and teachers. To do so, FAITC works to develop and distribute curriculum, create and host teacher-learning workshops, and host an annual Ag Literacy Day.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Agriculture in the Classroom is to "increase agricultural literacy through K-12 education" (About Agriculture in the Classroom, 2013). FAITC seeks to educate children about agriculture by teaching core curriculum concepts in science, social studies, language arts, and nutrition.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

Two people manage FAITC. Lisa Gaskalla is the executive director. She has been with FAITC since 2003, holds a degree in journalism from the University of Florida, and has a background in public relations, journalism, and agriculture. Becky Sponholtz, education program manager, is the newest member of FAITC. Sponholtz joined FAITC in June, 2013 after teaching agri-science at Keystone Heights (Contact FAITC, 2013). Both Gaskalla and Sponholtz are located in Gainesville, Florida.

A diverse board of directors supports FAITC. Board members are selected from different parts of the agricultural industry to create equal input from all commodity groups (Gaskalla, 2013). Current board members come from various agricultural organizations, such as the Florida Peanut Producers, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Florida Beef Council, the Florida Fertilizer and Agrichemical Association, UF/IFAS Extension, and the Florida Farm Bureau.

Teacher-volunteers also support FAITC. Teachers volunteer their time to help develop agricultural based curriculum and pilot test new programs (Gaskalla, 2013). In addition, these teachers help to facilitate workshops. Teachers who have previously used the curriculum and have gone through further training facilitate workshops statewide.

On top of teacher-volunteers, FAITC relies on volunteers to put on its statewide agriculture literacy day. Volunteers from all over the state take part in the event and read agriculture-related books to children. Agriculture Literacy Day would not be accomplished without the help of volunteers (Gaskalla, 2013).

### **ASPIRATIONS AND GOALS**

FAITC hopes to continue to reach more students and teachers than in the previous year (Gaskalla, 2013). In addition, FAITC hopes to publish the second curriculum series, Gardening for Nutrition, and redesign the current website.

Director Lisa Gaskalla said she wanted to increase funding for the program. Fundraising ideas include a revitalized campaign to promote the sales of the Ag Tag, designing and hosting a special fundraising event, and allowing donations online.



## THE SITUATION DESCRIPTION

### IDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEM OR OPPORTUNITY

Since FAITC is a non-profit organization, it relies on fundraising to support the organization. The main fundraiser for FAITC is the sale of the agriculture specialty license plate, the Ag Tag. Proceeds of the Ag Tag go to support FAITC grants and curriculum development. However, Ag Tag sales recently have decreased. FAITC determined that Ag Tag sales decreased due to 1) the economy, 2) lack of convenience to purchasing a tag at the tax collector, and 3) non-effective communication strategies (Gaskalla, 2013).

### BACKGROUND OR HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM (COMMUNICATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN)

FAITC contacted the Center for Public Issues Education in agriculture and Natural Resources (PIE Center) to help develop a new strategy for communication campaign for the FAITC license tag. The recent campaign, “Buy an Ag Tag and Watch Me Grow!” used billboards, print media, mailing inserts, and pop-up displays at conferences, targeting a more general audience. Since the tag sales have decreased, FAITC has considered taking a different approach, perhaps targeting industry members.

In the summer of 2013, the PIE Center conducted research with various Florida agricultural producers to 1) understand producer attitudes about the Ag Tag and Ag in the Classroom, 2) define a more specific target audience, and 3) understand producer attitudes toward the original campaign materials.

The following section outlines the key research findings that hindered FAITC’s communication strategies:

### BARRIERS AND INCENTIVES TO BUYING AN AG TAG

Focus group participants discussed incentives and barriers to purchasing a specialty license plate. Participants agreed that they would be willing to purchase a license plate due to allegiance to an organization, cause or industry. In addition, participants liked having the option to purchase a specialty license plate and donate to the charity of their choice. However,

the majority of focus group participants indicated that they were unaware that the Ag Tag financially supports Ag in the Classroom. Participants also said they would be willing to buy an Ag Tag now that they knew where the proceeds go.

Participants indicated barriers to purchasing specialty license plates, such as the Ag Tag. Barriers preventing participants from purchasing a tag included cost, lack of convenience, too many options, and lack of knowledge of where proceeds go. In addition, many participants discussed that cars purchased from the dealer are automatically given a default Florida tag. Due to the recent decline in the economy, many participants indicated that they are switching from purchasing excess products, such as specialty tags, to spending money on necessities.

The recent advertising campaign for the Ag Tag, “Buy an Ag Tag and Watch Me Grow!” that was placed on billboards, put in print media, used as inserts in mailings, and placed on pop-up displays for use at conferences, targeted a more general consumer audience and failed to identify where proceeds went and why FAITC needed support.

### SWOT ANALYSIS

<b>STRENGTHS (INTERNAL)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>FAITC has a variety of board of directors from all areas of the Florida agricultural industry.</li><li>FAITC provides free curriculum and workshops to teachers.</li></ul>	<b>WEAKNESS (INTERNAL)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>FAITC has a lack of money for advertising.</li><li>FAITC lacks over instructional quality.</li><li>FAITC does not have funds to redesign the tag as recommended.</li></ul>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES (EXTERNAL)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Opportunities for Direct Donations.</li></ul>	<b>THREATS (EXTERNAL)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>There are many specialty plate options available in Florida</li><li>Recession economy: people are worried about their own finances and are less likely to buy a plate.</li></ul>

## IMPACT OF THE SITUATION

Since FAITC's main source of funds is the Ag Tag, the program will experience a drop in funding if no communication program is implemented.

## KEY PUBLICS AFFECTED

If the program continues to lack funding, all parts of the organization will be affected. For example, FAITC will not be able to provide free curriculum to teachers or grants for teachers and volunteers, and students will not gain the information that is normally taught by FAITC.

## CONCISE PROBLEM (OPPORTUNITY) STATEMENT

Without a successful communication campaign, FAITC will not be able to sustain their program and increase the agriculture literacy of Florida's youth

## PROPOSED TARGET AUDIENCE

Research participants identified the proposed target audience as individuals associated with the agricultural industry. 'Individuals associated with the agricultural industry' is a very vague term. For the purpose of this campaign and report, the term will refer to individuals who are in the science, art, and/or business of cultivating soil, producing crops, and raising livestock. Individuals can be producers or growers, agri-science teachers, agricultural association members, food processors and distributors, or agribusiness associates. According to Florida Agriculture by the Numbers, Florida agriculture employs 750,000 people and contributes more than \$100 billion to the Florida economy annually (2012). From October to September, 12,515 Ag Tag plates were retained, 1,167 new plates were purchased, and a total of \$276,120 in revenue was made from the sale of the plates.

Secondary audiences for this campaign, identified by research participants, are educators and parents of elementary students who are involved with FAITC. According to faitc.org, there are more than 11,750 teachers who use FAITC curriculum and 274,300 students learning FAITC curriculum (2012 Annual Report of State Programs, 2013).

According to the Florida Department of Education,

in the 2010-2011 school year, Florida had 185,739 teachers ("Education information & accountability service: Data Report," 2011). In addition, Florida had a total of 72,291 elementary school teachers (Education information & accountability service: Data Report, 2010).

Since FAITC targets elementary school-age children the most, it is important to know the number of elementary school teachers in the state of Florida. There are 2,587,554 K-12 students in the state of Florida (Florida public school directory, 2013).

The new campaign will be designed to target Teachers, Florida Farm Bureau members, Farm Credit employees and UF/IFAS Extension workers.

## HOW COMMUNICATION CAN RESOLVE THE PROBLEM

### PROPOSED KEY PUBLICS

Recent research conducted using focus groups, group interviews, and personal interviews showed the revised campaign needs to have a primary target audience of those in the agricultural industry and a secondary audience of educators and parents. In addition to defining a more specific audience, the recent research resulted in recommendations on the direction of the new campaign:

### COMMUNICATIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The new campaign needs to display the purpose of the Ag Tag and highlight the \$20 donation made to FAITC with the purchase of the Ag Tag. In addition, the promotional materials should contain specific information on how the \$20 has benefitted children in the past.
2. Promotional materials need to specify more than one way to donate. Participants discussed how the past promotional materials only referenced the Ag Tag. Instead, promotional materials should also direct consumers to a website for direct donation to the program.
3. Promotional materials need to be consistent throughout in regards to websites, logos, and phone numbers.
4. FAITC should work to develop a social media campaign.



## DEMOGRAPHICS

### FLORIDA TEACHER DEMOGRAPHICS

(Statistics from Florida Department of Education for the 2010-2011 school year).

The average salary paid to a Florida public school teacher in the 2010-2011 school year was \$45,723. This represents a decrease of \$973 (-2.08%) from the average salary of \$46,696 for the 2009-2010 school year.

For all degree levels, Florida teachers currently average 12.29 years of teaching experience. The following table describes the education level of Florida teachers:

	Number	Percent
Bachelors	110,116	59.29
Masters	66,208	36.72
Specialist	4,965	2.67
Doctorate	2,450	1.32
All Degree	185,739	100.00

The following table describes the race of Florida teachers:

Race	Number
White	123,006
Black	22,927
Hispanic	19,480

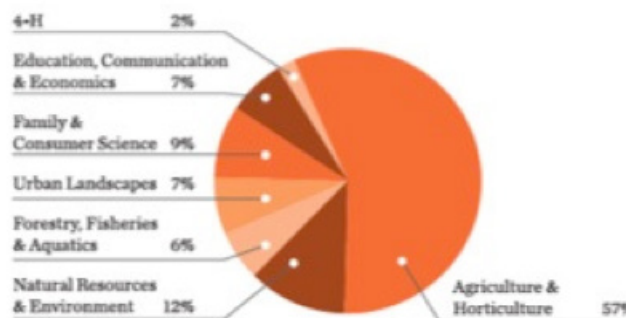
For the 2010-2011-school year, there were 35,413 male and 132,194 female teachers.

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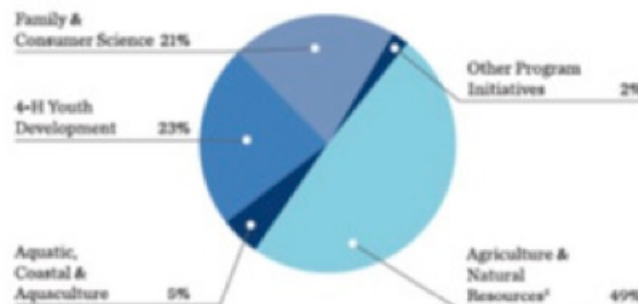
(ifas.ufl.edu, 2013)

Although information on the total number of Extension workers was unable to be found, it can be found that:

State Extension faculty works to deliver new information to clients in the various divisions of IFAS, as shown in Figure 1 below:



County Extension faculty delivers information and educational programs in the various divisions of IFAS as shown in Figure 2 below:



Extension faculty and staff work to deliver research and new information to the general Florida public. Since Extension faculty and staff communicate information about agriculture and natural resources, it is necessary to target Extension faculty and staff in a future campaign for Ag in the Classroom.

### FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

The Florida Farm Bureau Federation is the state's largest agricultural organization with 147,000 members. The Florida Farm Bureau Federation has offices in 60 counties throughout Florida. The Florida Farm Bureau Federation works to "increase the net income of farmers and ranchers, and to improve the quality of rural life" by being the "voice of Florida's Agriculture" (American Farm Bureau, para. 1, 2013). Florida Farm Bureau members would be likely to support an agriculture literacy and educational program. In addition, Florida Farm Bureau members have bought Ag Tags in the past. Therefore, it is necessary to target Florida Farm Bureau members in a future Ag Tag campaign.

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# Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Tactics





# GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

## GOAL

To increase funding for Florida Agriculture in the Classroom

## OBJECTIVES

### OBJECTIVE 1

To increase Ag Tag sales by 10% within one year of implementation of the communication campaign.

#### MESSAGE STRATEGY

In order to achieve this objective, the slogan 'Teach Ag with a Tag' will be used consistently on all publications throughout the campaign.

#### STRATEGY AND TACTICS

The campaign will persuade the target audience to buy an Ag Tag to support Florida Agriculture in the Classroom with messages delivered by social media, print media, and with a special event.

### OBJECTIVE 2

To raise \$10,000 in direct donations to FAITC

#### MESSAGE STRATEGY

In order to achieve this objective, the slogan 'Teach Ag with a Tag' will be used consistently on all publications throughout the campaign.

#### STRATEGY AND TACTICS

The campaign will persuade those in the target audience who don't want to buy a tag to donate directly to FAITC.

### OBJECTIVE 3

To raise \$5,000 through fundraising events, such as the Farm to Fork Festival.

#### MESSAGE STRATEGY

The media kit will be distributed out to the media in the Gainesville area to make the public more aware of the event.

## STRATEGY AND TACTICS

Although the Farm to Fork festival is free, VIP tickets can be purchased for \$30. Ticket sales plus raffle and silent auction proceeds will go directly to FAITC.

## MESSAGE TESTING

To test the message, slogan and logo focus groups were conducted.

## METHODOLOGY

A survey was distributed to students in AEC 3033, Business and Technical Writing in Agricultural and Life Sciences to respond to a short PowerPoint presentation. Of the 62 responses, student majors included the life sciences, such as biology; family, youth, and community sciences; biotechnology; microbiology; and the agricultural sciences. Since the focus of this campaign is the agricultural industry, the responses of those in the agricultural sciences were weighted more heavily.

Participants were asked to describe 1) their likes and dislikes about the slogan and two logos, 2) what they thought the message was conveying, and 3) whether it would influence the target audience of Florida agricultural producers to buy the tag. The following messages were shown to the AEC 3033 class.

## SLOGAN

Teach Ag with a Tag

## LOGO #1





## LOGO #2



## RESULTS

Participants in the life sciences were unaware of what “Ag” was and did not like the term “tag” for the licensee plate. Participants were undecided on which logo they liked better. Some preferred logo 1, as it related children with the agriculture truck, and said logo 2 was too plain, whereas others said logo 2 was more simple and clear, while logo 1 was very busy.

Of the 19 respondents with an agricultural major, the majority said they had seen the tag before, but did not know that it supported Florida Ag in the Classroom. However, many liked the idea that the proceeds went to support Florida Ag in the Classroom. The agricultural majors were also undecided about the two logos. They said the words on the truck needed to stand out more, perhaps be bigger or in a brighter color. Agricultural majors also stated that the tag needed to be larger on the truck. They tended to favor logo 1 over logo 2 as it showed children and agriculture together.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

From the message testing results, the illustrator should slightly revise logo 1 to include brighter fonts on the truck. In addition, the Ag in the Classroom logo on the book will be removed. The logo was revised to the following:



# Supporting Materials





## SUPPORTING MATERIALS

### CAMPAIGN SLOGAN

Teach Ag with a Tag

### CAMPAIGN LOGO



# SUPPORTING MATERIALS MEDIA STRATEGY

## MESSAGE STRATEGY

The campaign plans to use different media sources to reach its target audience.

Sample news releases, a backgrounder and a fact sheet have been created for the client's use. These examples could be "filled in" prior to and after events and used to inform others about this particular campaign and Ag in the Classroom as a whole.

In addition to the media kit, three different publications have been developed. The promotional flyer was designed for distribution to different tax collector offices around the state of Florida. In addition, these flyers can be used at different events and conferences. The vertical pop-up banner should be used at any Florida Ag in the Classroom events. The banner will display Florida Ag in the Classroom and will showcase what the organization does as a whole. The half page card stock flyers can be distributed at conferences and special events. This piece could be printed in-house, if necessary, on regular card-stock paper. The flyer can also be placed in student and teacher packets encouraging them to learn about Teaching Ag with a Tag.

Along with print materials, social media outlets should be used to reach the target audience. Prototype social media posts and infographics will target what, why, where, and how teachers can teach ag with a tag. In addition to posting these infographics, Florida Agriculture in the Classroom can develop a contest to get students, teachers, and parents involved with the program. Social media followers will be asked to take photos and then post them on FAITC website. These photos will show how FAITC teaches ag with a tag and will increase awareness of what the program actually does.





1352 Sabal Palm Drive  
Building 941  
P.O. Box 110015  
Gainesville, FL 3211

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## FLORIDA AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM CELEBRATES AG LITERACY DAY

Students in more than *[inset number of classrooms]* classroom celebrated the 10th annual Ag Literacy Day around the state on Tuesday (April 29).

*“[Insert Quote about Ag Literacy Day, about why this day is important, and how it teaches students about where their food comes from]”*

*[# of industry participants]* agriculture-industry participants, including farmers, ranchers, University of Florida IFAS extension agents, commodity groups, FFA students and college students, read a children’s book about the Florida agricultural industry to students in kindergarten through fifth grade.

The book, titled *Florida Farms at School*, discusses agricultural projects in classrooms. Books, bookmarks, stickers and teacher guides were provided to readers free of charge from Florida Agriculture in the Classroom.

*“[Quote from student about how much they enjoyed members of the community reading to them].”*

Florida Agricultural Commissioner Adam Putnam participated this year as Florida agriculture’s lead ambassador by reading to *[insert grade level]* at *[high school]* in *[city]*. Students asked him about Florida agriculture, his family farm, his job as the agricultural commissioner and took him on a tour of their school’s fruit and vegetable garden.

*“[Insert quote from Adam Putnam about FAITC Ag Lit Day],”* Putnam said.

Florida Agriculture in the Classroom ensures that students learn how food and other agricultural products are produced. Ag Literacy Day is an annual event to bring the agricultural industry into the classroom to show students the important contributions Florida farmers make to their communities.

###

*Florida Agriculture in the Classroom is a non-profit organization that develops and trains teachers and agriculture-industry volunteers with free agricultural curricula and materials, which in turn is used to educate students about the importance of agriculture. Florida Agriculture in the Classroom also provides grants to teachers and volunteers for projects that teach students where their food comes from and the important contributions Florida farmers make to their communities and state. Florida Agriculture in the Classroom depends on the sales of the agriculture specialty license plate, the Ag Tag, direct donations and special events. For more information visit [www.faitc.org](http://www.faitc.org) or like us on Facebook.*



1352 Sabal Palm Drive  
Building 941  
P.O. Box 110015  
Gainesville, FL 3211

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## GAINESVILLE FESTIVAL FEATURES LOCAL FOOD AND EDUCATION

Residents of Gainesville can enjoy locally grown food while learning how it gets from the farm to their dinner plate at a farm-to-fork festival this weekend.

[\[Location\]](#) will host the farm-to-fork festival on [\[date\]](#), in support of Florida Agriculture in the Classroom. The festival will be held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Gainesville's first farm-to-fork festival will show how agriculture plays a role in the lives of community members. In addition to local growers, producers and restaurants, the festival will feature live music and a kid-friendly zone.

Lisa Gaskalla, executive director of Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, said the event showcases local products and the people who produced them.

"The community will really get an understanding of how food is made," Gaskalla said. "People from all over the industry will set up tents and will talk to the public about how they made it."

More than [\[insert number of sponsors\]](#) tents will be set up for exhibits. Exhibits include food demonstrations, local grocery stores, commodity groups and a kid zone. Festivalgoers will have the opportunity to learn about the products first-hand from the people who produce them.

Agricultural commodity groups will present different recipes to incorporate fresh agricultural products, and representatives from the UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education will discuss current trends in agriculture. In addition, festivalgoers can play agriculture trivia and take part in a raffle and silent auction.

Florida Agriculture in the Classroom wants to educate adults, but the kid zone will be the highlight of the event, Gaskalla said.

"Although adults will have the opportunity to learn about agriculture, we really want to focus on educating our kids," she said.

-more-





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The kid zone will feature fun educational games and activities, including a find-your-food scavenger hunt, a Florida agriculture-coloring book and a grow-your-own-vegetable activity. Children of all ages can take part in these activities. Festivalgoers can also experience a typical Florida farm.

The farm-to-fork festival is free. However, VIP tickets include free food and drinks at select exhibits and a farm tour during the event. VIP tickets cost \$30. Proceeds go directly to Florida Agriculture in the Classroom.

###

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF FLORIDA AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM

Florida Ag in the Classroom (FAITC) is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization in the state of Florida focused on promoting agriculture literacy in school-age children. FAITC is the Florida division of Ag in the Classroom, which started in 1981 as a national task force by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Today, FAITC reaches more than 11,750 teachers and more than 274,300 students annually through curriculum-based teaching of agricultural topics.

To educate students and the public about Florida agriculture, Florida Agriculture in the Classroom works in all 67 counties of the state of Florida. FAITC is headquartered in Gainesville, Fla. Teachers or volunteers from any school district are welcome to participate in the program by using curriculum or applying for grants.

Teachers and volunteers use agricultural curriculum and materials to educate students about the importance of agriculture. Students learn the core-curriculum concepts of science, social studies, language arts and nutrition through teacher-taught agricultural-based content.

To help prepare teachers, FAITC provides grant money to both teachers and volunteers. FAITC grant money is used to teach students about where food comes from and the contributions made by Florida farmers.

Since the program's beginning, FAITC has awarded over \$400,000 in teacher and volunteer grants. In the past year, FAITC distributed over 222 school garden mini-grants in the 2012 year.

Each year, FAITC holds Agriculture Literacy Day. For the 2014 Agriculture Literacy Day, FAITC invites many members of the Florida agriculture industry to act as volunteers, to read agriculture-related storybooks to elementary school children in celebration of the 500 years of Florida agriculture. In the 2012, more than 1,200 farmers, ranchers, industry representatives, and students read books to students statewide, helping to create more agriculture-literate students and teachers.

In addition to providing grants to help teachers and volunteers teach agriculture literacy and holding a statewide Ag Literacy Day, FAITC sponsors more than 20 county workshops yearly, conducts farm tours and sends teachers and administrators to the National Ag in the Classroom conference.



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## FACT SHEET: FLORIDA AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM

### **What is Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc.?**

Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. is a non-profit organization that develops and trains teachers and agriculture industry volunteers in its agricultural curricula and material, which they in turn use to educate students about the importance of agriculture.

### **Who is it for?**

In addition to teaching students about the importance of Florida agriculture and the contributions Florida farmers make to their communities and states, Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. provides grant money to teachers and volunteers. Florida Agriculture in the Classroom grants support programs to help teach school-aged children about agriculture. Projects include school gardens, agricultural-based curriculum, and teacher workshops.

### **What is the impact?**

Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. has:

- Distributed over \$400,000 in teacher and volunteer grants since the programs beginning.
- Reached over 11,750 teachers and more than 274,300 students in the 2012-year.
- Distributed over 5,000 copies of the Gardening for Grades curriculum in the 2012-year.
- Reached over 28,779 teachers and 575,580 students through material orders and website hits.
- Held the 2012 National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference hosting 400 teachers and agriculture industry educators from around the country.
- Supported 1,400 volunteers as they read books to children for the 2012 Agriculture Literacy Day.

### **How to support:**

- Florida Agriculture in the Classroom is funded by the sales of the specialty agricultural license plate known as the Ag Tag, direct donations, and special events.
- To support, you can donate online at [www.faitc.org](http://www.faitc.org), purchase an Ag Tag at your local Tax Collectors Office or participate in the Farm-to-Fork festival.

### **For more information:**

Website: [www.faitc.org](http://www.faitc.org)  
Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/floridaaginthe classroom](http://www.facebook.com/floridaaginthe classroom)  
om

### **Contact:**

Lisa Gaskalla, Executive Director  
Phone: 352-846-1391  
Cell Phone: 352-745-0246  
Email: [gaskalla@ufl.edu](mailto:gaskalla@ufl.edu)



## SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

### TEACH AG WITH A TAG VERTICAL POPUP BANNER

This conference banner will be a very large, at 33.5 inches by 76.75 inches.

The banner should be used as a showcase promotional material to attract future supporters to the Ag in the Classroom booth.



The banner features a photograph of two women, an adult and a young girl, in a garden. The girl is reaching into a bush to pick a tomato, while the adult looks on. In the foreground, there is a green pickup truck with a license plate that reads 'I AM 4AG'. A cartoon character of a boy with a striped hat is sitting on the truck, reading a large red book. The text 'TEACH AG WITH A TAG' is written on the side of the truck. Below the photograph, the text 'TEACH AG WITH A TAG:' is displayed in large, bold letters. Underneath this, a paragraph of text reads: 'Everyone in Florida should know where their food comes from! Place an Ag Tag on your car, truck and/or trailer, and “teach ag with a tag.”'. At the bottom of the banner is the logo for Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc., which includes a stylized sun, a barn, and a school building, with the text 'Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. AGRICULTURE KEEPS FLORIDA GREEN'.

**TEACH AG WITH A TAG:**

Everyone in Florida should know where their food comes from! Place an Ag Tag on your car, truck and/or trailer, and “teach ag with a tag.”

 Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc.  
AGRICULTURE KEEPS  
FLORIDA GREEN

## TEACH AG WITH A TAG BROCHURE HANDOUT

The brochure will be used in a variety of locations including the tax collector offices, conferences, and for general information. The back and front of the brochure are illustrated below. Three different photo options, to add variety and diversity to the pieces, are shown on the following page.

Front



### TEACH AG WITH A TAG:


Everyone in Florida should know where their food comes from! Place an Ag Tag on your car, truck and/or trailer, and “teach ag with a tag.”

Proceeds from the Ag Tag (\$20 per tag) helps Florida Agriculture in the Classroom to teach kids about the importance of Florida agriculture.

For more information, or if you would like to donate directly, visit [agtag.com](http://agtag.com)



Back




Florida Agriculture in the Classroom (FAITC) is funded by the sale of the specialty license plate, the Ag Tag and direct donations to the program.

Your Ag Tag purchase allows FAITC to:

- » Provide free agricultural based curricula to teachers.
- » Hold Florida’s Annual Agriculture Literacy Day.
- » Award more than \$400,000 in teacher and volunteer grant money since the programs inception.
- » Sponsor more than 20 county workshops annually.
- » Send teachers and administrators the National Ag in the Classroom Conference.

These resources help teachers create interactive projects to teach students where their food comes from, and the important contributions Florida Farmers make to their communities and their state.



Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc.  
AGRICULTURE KEEPS FLORIDA GREEN





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## HALF PAGE PROMOTIONAL FLYER

This half-page flyer could be used in a variety of ways. It can be printed either in-house or at a print shop. The flyer should be used as an informative material and, for example, could be handed out during conferences, placed in “goodie” bags at conferences and events, and placed in parent/teacher information packets.

This promotional piece is an alternative to the tax collectors office flyer.

### TEACH AG WITH A TAG:

Everyone in Florida should know where their food comes from! Place an Ag Tag on your car, truck and/or trailer, and “teach ag with a tag.”

- » Proceeds from the Ag Tag (\$20 per tag) helps Florida Agriculture in the Classroom to teach kids about the importance of Florida agriculture.
- » FAITC uses the Ag Tag proceeds to help teachers create interactive projects to teach students where their food comes from, and the important contributions Florida Farmers make to their communities and their state.

For more information or to donate directly, visit [agtag.com](http://agtag.com)





## SOCIAL MEDIA PLAN

Social media needs to be a vital part of the Teach Ag with a Tag campaign. The following are examples of graphics and posts that could be used on social media. The goals of the social media campaign are to increase awareness of Florida Ag in the Classroom and to make members of the agriculture community more engaged in the Florida Ag in the Classroom Facebook page.

Below are two examples of a Facebook cover photo. These could be used in the cover photo section to highlight the campaign.





To the Right and Bottom:  
These graphics should be used as a post. These graphics have the call to action, of how do you Teach Ag with a Tag.

The purpose of these graphics should encourage Facebook followers to share their stories, photos or videos. By sharing teacher and student's own stories, Florida Ag in the Classroom will be able show the impact the organization has on Florida students.

These graphics should be accompanied by a brief description of what Florida Ag in the Classroom does, for example:

Did you know? Florida Ag in the Classroom uses the proceeds from the Ag Tag to provide free agriculture based curriculum to teachers.

Did you know? Florida Ag in the Classroom uses the proceeds from the Ag Tag to provide grants for teachers to teach students about the importance of Florida agriculture.





The following graphics should be incorporated into the social media campaign as interactive posts. These graphics are designed to catch the eye of the Facebook follower and encourage them to learn and talk about Florida Ag in the Classroom.





**DID YOU KNOW?**  
FLORIDA AG IN THE CLASSROOM USES THE  
PROCEEDS FROM THE **AG TAG** TO PROVIDE FREE  
AGRICULTURE BASED CURRICULUM TO TEACHERS.



TEACH **AG** WITH A **TAG**



TEACH **AG** WITH A **TAG**



TEACH **AG** WITH A **TAG**



TEACH **AG** WITH A **TAG**

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
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# Budget and Timeline
















# BUDGET

	Cost	Quantity	Total	
<b><u>Research</u></b>				
Develop Moderators Guide		1	\$150.00	
Report Composition	\$150.00	1	\$150.00	
Moderator	\$100	6	\$600.00	
Assistant Moderator	\$100	6	\$600.00	
NoteTaker	\$100	6	\$600.00	
Food	\$50	6	\$300.00	
Data Analysis	\$100	6	\$600.00	
Travel Cost	\$1,113.62	1	\$1,113.62	
Subtotal			\$4,113.62	
PIE Center Overhead (12% of Subtotal)	\$493.63	1	\$493.63	
<b>Research Total</b>			<b>\$4,607.25</b>	
<b><u>Printing*</u></b>				
Tax Collectors Office Pamphlets (3 per sheet)	Paper	Color	Cut	Fold
				<b>Cost per sheet</b>
				Number of Sheets of Paper
				Total Quantity
				<b>Total Amount</b>
1/2 8.5 x 11 Flyers	80 lb Gloss Cover	4:4	\$4.00	\$1.64
	Card Stock	4:4	\$2.00	\$1.34
	Banner with Bamboo Stand (33.5" x 76.75")			
Vertical Banner for Conventions				
		1		1
<b>Total Printing Cost</b>				<b>\$295.00</b>
				<b>\$909.88</b>
<b><u>Total Cost per Campaign</u></b>				<b><u>\$5,517.13</u></b>

\*Printing Estimates from Target Copy, Archer Road

## CLIENT TIMELINE

Activity	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Client Approval							
Social Media Campaign							
Placement of Flyers in Tax Collector Office							
Event Preparation							
Pitch Letter and Media Invites							
Main Event							
Clean Up							
Evaluation							



# Issue Tracking





# ISSUES ANALYSIS

## ABSTRACT

*On September 30, 2013, the Republican and Democratic parties failed to reach an agreement on government spending, leading to a partial government shutdown. Because of the shutdown, most “non-essential” government employees were furloughed, or were put on leave, beginning on October 1. During this time, the United States Department of Agriculture furloughed employees who produce statistical reports on the prices of agricultural commodities. In addition, the processing of H2-A migrant-worker visas was stalled. As the Florida harvest season approached, growers and producers worried: 1) how not having production statistics would affect the final price of crops and 2) if migrant-worker labor would be available to harvest the crops. Since Florida Agriculture in the Classroom depends upon members of the agricultural industry for support, the organization should continue to analyze government actions that impact the industry. From the results of this study, Florida Agriculture in the Classroom should focus on developing a “mini-grass roots” mission that would target teaching children and their parents the importance of agriculture. Since Florida Agriculture in the Classroom already works with educating children on the importance of agriculture, FAITC should create goals to increase organizational impact across the state. To do so, the organization must realize two goals: 1) to raise more funds to help implement the program and buy the organization’s materials, and 2) to make more individuals aware of the program by getting more teachers to teach for the program.*

## INTRODUCTION

On September 30, 2013, the Republican and Democratic parties were unable to reach an agreement on government funding, leading to a partial government shutdown. Because of the shutdown, most “non-essential” government employees were furloughed, or were put on leave, beginning on October 1. During this time, the United States Department of Agriculture furloughed employees who produce statistical reports on the prices of agricultural commodities. In addition, the processing of H2-A migrant-worker visas was stalled. As the Florida harvest season approached, growers and producers worried: 1) how not having production statistics would affect the final price of crops, and 2) if migrant worker labor would be available to harvest the crops. Since Florida Agriculture in the Classroom’s target audience and main donors are members of the agricultural industry, the organization should be concerned with how the government shutdown or future furloughs will affect their constituents.

## ANALYSIS OF ISSUE

### HISTORY OF THE ISSUE

In the fall of 2013, the government experienced its first furlough since the mid 1990s. For 17 days, from October 1 through October 16, the disagreement between the Republican and Democratic parties over government spending on the Affordable Health Care Act, led to a failure to fund other government services and a partial government shutdown. As a result, most “non-essential” government employees were furloughed, or put on leave, beginning on October 1.

### ISSUE AFFECTING AGRICULTURE

The United States Department of Agriculture executes policy on agriculture, farming, forestry, and food. Throughout the government shutdown, the USDA furloughed employees who produce statistical reports on the prices of agricultural commodities. Although the delay of the agricultural reports did not cause immediate concern for growers and producers, packers and distributors use the information during harvest season to set prices for commodities. With many harvest seasons approaching, packinghouses must estimate bids for commodities. As the Florida harvest

season approached, growers and producers worried: 1) how not having production statistics would affect the final price of crops and 2) if migrant-worker labor would be available to harvest the crops. Since Florida Agriculture in the Classroom depends upon members of the agricultural industry for support, the organization should continue to analyze government actions that impact the industry.

Another issue affecting growers and producers during the government shutdown is the inability to file for H2-A visas, migrant-worker visas. Growers and producers rely on these visas for farm workers during harvest season, especially for specialty crops such as citrus in Florida. Since many of these crops must be harvested by hand, the harvest process depends on migrant-worker employment. After the government re-opened on October 17, growers and producers were still anxious that H2-A requests would not be fulfilled in time for growing season. State senators are urging expedited processing and warning Congress of the drastic impact the lack of visas will have on the agricultural industry and the price of food for consumers (Miriam, 2013).

### **SIGNIFICANCE TO ORGANIZATION**

Florida Agriculture in the Classroom teaches students about Florida agriculture. The majority of the supporters of the organization are those in the agricultural industry. If these members are affected financially by this or future government shutdown, they will be less likely to support Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, as they will be more focused on their own finances.

### **ISSUE MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Many stakeholders in the agricultural industry are paying attention to the actions by government officials. Agricultural stakeholders are interested in how these actions are influencing the way they do business: whether it is impacting the price of their crops or if these actions are changing rules and regulations regarding how they grow and produce their products. Articles such as “Government shutdown delays citrus prediction” detail how growers and producers are interested in the government actions (Foster, 2013). Not only were they affected by the lack of statistical reports, they were anxious and wondered when the

statistical reports would be issued for the month. Without these reports, prices for commodities would have to be estimated. With this price estimation, growers and producers could potentially lose thousands of dollars for the harvest season. In addition to price estimates, the whole industry was affected by the pause in H2-A visa processing. Without temporary migrant-worker visas, crops would not be harvested and could literally rot in the fields.

In addition to outlining how these actions affected growers and producers, these articles also illustrate how many legislators are unaware of how different policies can affect the agricultural industry, which then impacts consumers. During the government furlough, commodity groups and other agricultural groups sent representatives to speak with members of Congress to discuss the impact that a lack of agricultural visas would have on the industry (Miriam, 2013).

Since Florida Agriculture in the Classroom depends upon members of the agricultural industry for support, the organization should keep analyzing government actions that impact the industry. To do so, the organization should track key words such as government and agriculture, Florida agriculture, agriculture, and immigration, and should pay attention to what these articles are saying about the industry.

Florida Agriculture in the Classroom should focus on developing a “mini-grassroots” mission that will focus on teaching children and their parents the importance of agriculture. Although this mission will not fix the problem immediately, it will achieve the long-term goal of educating future generations of consumers and voters on the importance of agriculture and where their food comes from.



## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY: AGRICULTURAL RESPONSE TO GOVERNMENT SHUT DOWN

Gee, K. (2013, September 30). USDA expects to halt some reports if government shuts down. *Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved October 2, 2013, from <http://online.wsj.com/article/BT-CO-20130930-707659.html>.

*The USDA plans to furlough employees who produce information on prices of commodities such as pork, poultry, milk, and grains. Although federal meat inspectors will continue to report to work, the biggest industry impact will be on investors and traders in commodities and equities, who rely on USDA statistical reports to make investment decisions.*

Kim, S. (2013, October 1). Government shutdown starts to slow lending activity. *ABC News*. Retrieved October 2, 2013, from <http://abcnews.go.com/Business/lending-halted-due-government-shutdown/story?id=20432262>.

*The federal government shut down may disrupt loans supported by the government guarantee programs including Farm Service Agency guarantees. It could mean that fewer members of the target audience would be willing to support a charitable cause as they are dealing with their own finances.*

Wessler, B. (2013, October 2). Agricultural associations respond to government shutdown. *Ag Professional*. Retrieved October 2, 2013, from <http://www.agprofessional.com/news/Agricultural-associations-respond-to-government-shutdown-226028791.html?ref=791>

*During the session, agricultural economic and statistical reports and projections will be discontinued. Associations leaders are reassuring the public that inspections will still take place in packing plants. However, leaders are more focused on the long-term issues. Other leaders are concerned about the effects of not instituting the 2008 farm bill and the effects on consumers. American Farm Bureau President Bob Stallman stated, "Come January, consumers*

*once again face the impact of high food costs as decades-old farm policy kicks in." Industry leaders are focused on a bipartisan solution addressing legislation important to agriculture. Does the public understand why their food prices will increase? No. But what is one way we can change this? Agricultural Literacy.*

Evich, H. B., & Parti, T. (2013, October 2) Government shutdown stresses food inspectors. *Politico*. Retrieved October 2, 2013, from <http://www.politico.com/story/2013/10/government-shutdown-food-inspectors-agriculture-97691.html?hp=f2>.

*Meat inspectors still have their jobs on Day Two of the government shut down, but the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is halting routine food inspections. In addition to all foods, except for meats not being inspected, food-borne illness trackers and identifiers are also being forced into furlough. Smith DeWaal, director of food safety at the Center for Science in the Public Interest, said, "Make no mistake, the safety of our food supply will suffer if agreement is not reached on a continuing resolution that funds the government." Could consumers lash back against the agricultural industry due to lack of government funding?*

Nelson, K. (2013, October 8). Government shutdown could affect local food pantries. *Jacksonville News, Weather, Traffic, Spots, Entertainment*. Retrieved October 10, 2013, from [www.firstcoastnews.com/news/local/article/330894/Government-shutdown-could-affect-local-food-pantries](http://www.firstcoastnews.com/news/local/article/330894/Government-shutdown-could-affect-local-food-pantries)

*The government shutdown caused the USDA to stop funding local food pantries. Programs such as Second Harvest are worried about how a continued shutdown will affect them, as they will not be getting any food to their pantries. These programs are used to help support the hungry and those in need of food.*

Foster, B. (2013, October 9). Government shutdown delays citrus prediction. *Newssun*. Retrieved October 10, 2013, from [www.newssun.com/news/100913-citrus](http://www.newssun.com/news/100913-citrus)

*The USDA reported the shutdown will delay the forecast for the upcoming citrus harvest. Although citrus growers generally have an idea of what the citrus numbers are, growers and packinghouses generally use the estimates to set prices for the citrus harvest.*

Gray, L. (2013, October 9). Impact of government shutdown and small farms conference. *North West Ag information Network*. Retrieved October 10, 2013, from [www.aginfo.net/index.cfm/report/id/Washington-Ag-Today-26125](http://www.aginfo.net/index.cfm/report/id/Washington-Ag-Today-26125)

*The USDA shut down of National Agricultural Statistics Service has caused a delay not only on new agricultural reports on prices, exports, and supply and demand estimates, but has also caused a shutdown of all websites with past information, as they have been taken off-line.*

Moniz, J. (2013, October 9). Government shutdown takes farmers back in time. *The Free Press, Mankato, MN*. Retrieved October 10, 2013, from [www.mankatofreepress.com/local/x1612861288/Government-shutdown-takes-farmers-back-in-time](http://www.mankatofreepress.com/local/x1612861288/Government-shutdown-takes-farmers-back-in-time)

*Congress has set farms back due to its failure to pass the Farm Bill. Regulations have reverted to those of the 1940s. Farmers are now unsure how to proceed with selling their crops or planning next year's planting season. The Farm Bill situation originated with the Republican-controlled U.S. House demanding \$40 billion in cuts to the food stamp portions of the bill. The Democrat-controlled U.S. Senate opposes the cuts, which are 10 times their proposed compromise cuts, leading to a deadlock. With no new bill, the Farm Bill expired September 30, and federal laws automatically replaced it with the 1949 version of the bill.*

Reynolds, D. (2013, October 10). Government shutdown means trouble for farmers at harvest time. *CBS News*, retrieved October 23, 2013, from [http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18563\\_162-57606987/government-shutdown-means-trouble-for-farmers-at-harvest-time/](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18563_162-57606987/government-shutdown-means-trouble-for-farmers-at-harvest-time/)

*The government shutdown impacts farmers, as they do not know the estimated price of harvested crops due to the lack of statistical reporting. This lack of knowledge also affects commodity marketing and the bidding of futures crops.*

Hudak, S. (2013, October 18). Federal shutdown could lead to higher prices for citrus, other crops. *Orlando Sentinel, Orlando, Florida*. Retrieved October 23, 2013, from <http://touch.orlandosentinel.com/#section/-1/article/p2p-77845737/>.

*Government shutdown has delayed the processing of migrant workers' agricultural visas, H2-As. Because it is so close to the beginning of the citrus harvest, the processing could delay the number of workers available during the harvest season. With no labor harvesting the crops, citrus and other commodity prices will soar for consumers. Florida lawmakers want to speed the processing of agricultural visas so crops aren't left in the fields.*

Miriam, J. (2013, October 23). Shutdown hit visas for agriculture workers; Thousands of temporary foreign workers stuck in limbo; Growers worry about labor shortage as harvest looms. *Wall Street Journal (Online)*. Retrieved October 28, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1444454748>

*After the government shutdown paused the processing for thousands of temporary agriculture workers, growers and lawmakers worry about the amount of labor to pick specialty crops out of the fields. Groups representing growers in Florida, California, and Arizona are working with members of Congress to urge them to expedite the processing for H-2A seasonal agriculture visas. This issue is extremely important in Florida, as more than half of the state's 12,000 citrus workers have temporary visas. Congress is urging the expedition of the visas. Senators warned how crops could "literally wither in the field ... resulting in substantial economic losses, reduction of our domestic food supply and higher prices to consumers."*



# Appendix A

## Bridging the Gap Between the Classroom and the Industry: A Campaign Project Guide





# APPENDIX A:

## BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN THE CLASSROOM AND THE INDUSTRY: A CAMPAIGN PROJECT GUIDE

### INTRODUCTION

Although many master's students complete a thesis for a graduation requirement, others may choose a project in-lieu of a thesis. Some students are interested in using their graduate degree to enhance their professionalism and skills in their intended fields. A project may be more applicable for these degree candidates, as it demonstrates the student's ability to plan, design, and complete a substantial project from start to finish.

Students should pick projects that align with their professional career goals. For example, students pursuing degrees in agricultural communication may wish to specialize in public relations for agriculture related firms. Often, various organizations have issues related to agriculture that need to be communicated to the general public. By teaming up with an organization, students have the opportunity to work with real clients to develop research-based communication campaigns. Throughout this process, graduate students will learn the process of developing a campaign with the clients needs in mind. By working with the client, students will apply their knowledge and skills to specific issues outside the classroom, bridging the gap between classroom expectations and what is expected in the industry.

### METHODOLOGY AND STEPS

The first step is to identify a cooperative organization with a need for a campaign. Students should research different organizations and identify if they need a communications campaign to promote or support a particular product, idea or event. After organization selection, students should work with their advisors and organizations to develop a plan for the project including outlines and timelines of key steps and deadlines to complete the project. Steps should include preliminary research and reporting, message development, message testing, development of supporting materials and project finalization.

Before the campaign is started, preliminary research

should be used to identify organization and target audience needs. The research should be industry applicable, and similar to what a student may do in an industry job. As an example of preliminary campaign research, focus groups could be conducted prior to campaign development and launch to assess the target audience's perceptions of an organization's current branding and to test for other potential advertising options and elements. After preliminary research is completed, the student should develop the research report. The report, written in lay terms, summarizes the background, research methods, and findings to inform the organization about the findings of the completed research.

After the primary needs of the organization and target audience have been identified through research, a campaign plan book should be developed. The plan book is a document that includes all of the necessary materials to implement a campaign. The plan book should include campaign materials and an implementation guide. The plan book includes 1) goals, objectives, strategies and tactics 2) supporting materials, such as a campaign logo, slogan, and other publications 3) the budget or estimated cost 4) timeline and 4) a summary of issues that may effect the campaign.

### RESULTS TO DATE AND IMPLICATIONS

The project has the potential to benefit both the student and the organization. The project can strengthen student's strategic communication skills, as students will use critical thinking to develop technical and creative pieces to solve problems for a real organization. The project can also aid in developing the students portfolio. The organization will also benefit from the project by gaining campaign materials to promote their product, idea, or event.

The project will also help to bridge the gap between student work and the work the student will do in their future careers. As the student works with their selected organization, they will understand the



process of working with real clients, as the student must work carefully with the client to understand client needs when developing materials and timelines. The hands-on project can prepare the student and bridge the gap from the classroom to their careers.

### **FUTURE PLANS/ADVICE TO OTHERS**

At the beginning of a project, it is necessary for the student to complete a proposal with a contract/agreement with the organization. The proposal will address each step of the project and the contract will ensure both parties are in agreement of the steps to develop the campaign. Although the student themselves will not be implementing the campaign, the goal of the project is to produce a campaign plan that the organization could implement. The campaign plan book will provide an outline and a timeline that will guide the organization through the implementation process.

Organizations should be prepared to spend money to recruit participants for preliminary research. Organizations should use services, such as the [state] Survey Research Center, to recruit participants. This type of center will also ensure the target audience is accurately represented by using screening questions throughout the recruiting process.

### **COSTS/RESOURCES NEEDED**

The first resource needed to complete a campaign project is to find a client that is willing to work with the student and that is in need of a campaign. The student should then select an organization to be their client throughout the process.

The cost of completing preliminary research varies from project to project. For a campaign based on focus group research, the costs may include fees for the development of a moderator's guide, report composition, travel costs, and data analysis as well as the fees for participant recruitment and incentives. Costs may also include paying a moderator, assistant moderator, and note taker for their time. In addition, the student will develop a budget for the implementation of the campaign. The budget will include the prices for printing, special events, and other materials necessary for the implementation of the campaign.

The write up for the original research findings is not only costly for the organization, but time consuming for the student. The student will need to transcribe and analyze the data for themes, and then develop a final report including an executive summary with findings and strategic recommendations. Based on the strategic recommendations and findings, the research-based campaign plan book will be developed. The plan book will include examples of publication materials as well as a timeline for the implementation of the campaign.



# Appendix B

Center for Public Issues  
Education: Final Research  
Report

Marketing the Ag Tag







August 2013

## Final Report

### Marketing the Ag Tag

With Florida Agriculture in the Classroom

Written by Laura M. Gorham



Center for Public Issues Education  
IN AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

UF IFAS

PIE 2012/13-17B

## Marketing the Ag Tag

Gorham, L. (2013). *Marketing the Ag Tag*. PIE2012/13-17B. Gainesville, FL: University of Florida/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education.

## Acknowledgements

The development and distribution of this research would not have been possible without the support of the Florida Ag in the Classroom marketing board who supported guided the research. These individuals include

- **Lisa Gaskalla** – Florida Ag in the Classroom Executive Director
- **Jennifer Nelis** – Florida Nursery Growers and Landscape Association
- **Lyn Cacella** – Wedgworth Leadership Institute Graduate Class IV
- **Barbara Wunder** – Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association
- **Cheryl Flood** – Kissimmee Island Cattle Co.
- **Sue Harrell** – Florida Strawberry Growers Association
- **Tamara Wood** – Florida Citrus Mutual

Additionally, the following individuals were instrumental in conducting the research.

- **Joy Rumble** – Assistant Professor, Department of Agricultural Education and Communication
- **Tracy Irani** – Director, UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education
- **Kacie Pounds** – Graduate Student, Department of Agricultural Education and Communication
- **Caroline Roper** – Graduate Student, Department of Agricultural Education and Communication
- **Reba Hicks** – Graduate Student, Department of Agricultural Education and Communication
- **Rachel DeJesus** – Former Research Coordinator, UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education



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## Background

Florida Agriculture in the Classroom (FAITC) contacted the Center for Public Issues Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (PIE Center) regarding developing a new strategy for an advertising campaign for the FAITC license tag. The recent advertising campaign, “Buy an Ag Tag and Watch Me Grow!” that was placed on billboards put in print media, used as inserts in mailings, and placed on pop-up displays for use at conferences, targeted a more general consumer audience. Recently, license tag sales have decreased and FAITC has considered taking a different approach, perhaps targeting industry members with a “take pride in agriculture” themed message.

The PIE Center conducted research with various Florida agricultural producers to (1) understand producer attitudes about the Ag Tag and Ag in the Classroom, (2) define a more specific target audience, and (3) understand producer attitudes toward the original campaign materials.

## Methods

To conduct this study, a mixed methods approach was used. Researchers held two focus groups, one small-group interview, two personal interviews, and surveys. The two focus groups were held in West Palm Beach and had 13 participants. The small-group interview was held in Gainesville and four participants. One personal interview was conducted via Skype and the other was conducted in person. A total of 19 adults participated in the focus groups and interviews. The surveys were distributed by Florida Ag in the Classroom to participants at various agricultural industry meetings around the state of Florida. There were four survey participants. Due to the small number of surveys received, the surveys were not used in the results. The completed surveys can be found in Appendix B of this report. The participants consisted of six males and 13 females. Participants were recruited as agricultural producers or teachers and held various occupations, such as Ag teachers, Extension Agents, Cattle Ranchers, Horse Trainers, Organic Farm Managers, Entomologists, Farmers, or Ranchers.

PIE Center researchers asked participants about their purchasing habits of the specialty license plate, the “Ag Tag,” and their knowledge of the connection between the Ag Tag and Florida Ag in the Classroom. Participants were also asked their opinions of the specialty license plate and the campaign to motivate buyers to purchase the Ag Tag. To analyze the data, researchers recorded the results and analyzed the content using the constant comparative technique to identify emergent themes. Researchers analyzed each set of data and based findings on themes that emerged across the data sets. The results are presented below with themes that emerged from each data set, the common findings, the general recommendations, and the marketing materials recommendations.

## Results

### West Palm Beach Focus Group I Results

Participant occupations included family farmers, retired schoolteachers, retired farmers, nursery growers, and two participants who worked for Farm Credit.

### General Tag Discussion

In this section participants described their general tag buying preferences. General tag buying preferences included if they have bought or currently have a specialty license plate. In this discussion, the participants talked about what influences their decisions or what barriers prevent them from purchasing a specialty tag.

Of the seven people who participated in this focus group, three people in the focus group owned a specialty license plate and one had the Ag Tag. Participants stated reasons for why they had purchased a specific tag, such as the importance they felt toward the cause they were supporting.

- One participant discussed the importance that he/she associate with his/her tag and said, "I obviously, working at Farm Credit see what we do and how important agriculture is. For obvious reasons, I wanted to get that message out."

Participants also discussed different influences on the decisions to buy a specialty tag. The group determined that allegiance with an organization was the most influential when it came to decision-making.

- "I have the university tag, because UF is my school," said one participant who demonstrated allegiance to the University of Florida.
- A participant discussed different ways people support different causes, "They believe in a cause, my niece has the spy and neuter because she believes in it."

Those participants who had not purchased a specialty tag stated that they had never bought a specialty tag because of the added expense, lack of convenience, and too many specialty plate options to choose from. Others had not purchased a specialty tag because they were unaware of where the proceeds went. Additionally, some participants liked their current tag and would not consider buying another tag.

- A participant, who was unaware of the revenue generated by specialty plates, favored giving direct donations to organizations he/she supported. This participant said, "I never thought of buying a specialty tag because I did not know it was a source of revenue. . . . I figured it was better to give to the organization."
- A participant who had recently bought a new vehicle discussed the lack of convenience: "When I purchased my new car, the dealer just gave me a normal tag."

The participants discussed that they like to have the option to buy a specialty license plate because the money goes to support an organization, but they wonder what percentage of money goes to the organization.

- A participant who was unsure of what was done with the money generated from specialty license plates said, "I don't know where the money would go."

When asked what would make the participants consider purchasing a different specialty plate or purchasing one for the first time, participants said they would need more interest and information to identify which tag would be the best option.

### Specific Tag Discussion

In this section, participant discussed the specific license tag in Florida, the Ag Tag. Participants described what came to mind when they heard the words Ag Tag and their general opinions about the Ag Tag.

This theme included what the Ag Tag means. Participants discussed how someone in Florida agriculture uses the Ag Tag license plate:



- When discussing the meaning of Ag Tag, one participant stated, "That they support agriculture in their community, or they are involved in agriculture. I wish I had one because Ag is in my life."
- Another participant added, "The Ag Tag relays the message of what Florida is and what it stands for. Florida is not just tourism and construction."

Participants discussed that the general public or the consumer would understand that the tag goes to support agriculture.

- A participant said, "I think that they would understand that it would be supporting agriculture."

However, they also discussed that some consumers may look at the tag not know what it means:

- A participant commented about the lack of the knowledge for the general consumer, "You would have to do some explaining and tell that how important agriculture is in Palm Beach County or wherever."
- A participant commented on what the Ag Tag might mean to an everyday person and said, "I don't think the normal everyday person though, when you look at the design and what it says on there, I don't know if they would have a clue what it was about. First of all, we shorten agriculture to be Ag but not everyone outside does."

When shown an image of the Ag Tag, many participants indicated that they had seen the specialty tag before. Participants liked the colors in the Ag Tag. They also recognized the Fresh from Florida logo.

- Two participants discussed the Fresh from Florida logo. The first participant said, "I recognize Fresh from Florida."  
A second participant responded and said, "I like the Fresh from Florida logo; however, there are different ones. It must be consistent."

Participants identified that the tag had no direct reference to Ag in the Classroom and indicated that they would be more willing to purchase the tag if it was more directly associated with the program.

- Expressing confusion surrounding the connection between the Ag Tag and Ag in the Classroom a participant said, "This is a good program, but is it in anyway connected to the tag? I think it should be, and I would be more than happy to have the plate if it did."

When looking at the lettering on the sample license plate, the participants were confused with the letters "I AM 4 AG." The participants discussed that "SAMPLE" should be written instead.

Participants did not like the "Keep Florida Green" message written at the bottom of the sample Ag Tag. Aside from the message at the bottom of the plate, the participants generally liked the look of the tag.

- A participant discussed that the phrase could be associated with the "green movement." This participant said, "But your vendors don't have green products. The vendors are taking it literally. They are associating it with the green movement. The environmental green movement."
- Another participant responded and said, "I think keeps green could be modified."
- "I think its right to keep this [Agriculture], but the message at the bottom needs to be changed," said another participant.



Other participants said the message needed to stand out a little more and they offered suggestions for change, such as incorporating production, sustainability, or education. Some participants indicated that message should be changed to indicate what the money generated from sales was going to.

- When discussing the different options for change a participant said, “whatever the money goes to needs to go on the plate.”

When asked about the purpose of the Ag Tag, participants stated that the purpose was to raise money for agriculture and agricultural awareness, to “promote Ag.” Some participants did identify that the purpose was to support Florida Ag in the Classroom, however, several other participants were unsure.

- A participant discussed the purpose of the Ag Tag and said, “To get the message across, and a fundraiser for somebody.”
- Another participant said, “I hope the Commissioner of Agriculture has a department to allocate the money generated.”

When asked whom the Ag Tag was trying to reach, the participants stated the Ag Tag was trying to reach the general public to make them more aware.

- A participant discussed that spreading awareness was one of the reasons he/she bought an Ag Tag. This participant said, “When I purchased my tag I wanted to make people aware – like having a sign or billboard.”

However, when asked who would be most likely to purchase the Ag Tag, the participants believed those in the industry would be the most interested in purchasing the Ag Tag.

- Discussing those who would be likely to buy an Ag Tag, a participant said, “Those with a relationship with Ag. Whether they are Farm Credit, or growers, or suppliers. Some connection.”

### Florida Agriculture in the Classroom

In this section, participants discussed Florida Agriculture in the Classroom. Participants discussed if they had heard of Florida Agriculture in the Classroom previously, the purpose of the organization, and the audiences it is trying to reach.

When asked what the purpose of Ag in the Classroom was, the participants indicated that the purpose to educate the next generation about agriculture. Additionally, the participants discussed that people are born into agriculture, agriculture is not a wanted career, and how it is important to educate people about agriculture.

- A participant discussed the tradition of agriculture and said, “You don’t hear I want to be a Farmer. You don’t wake up and say I want to start farming. It is generations of people who start farming.”
- Another participant discussed how it was an extra commitment to teach agriculture, “When I came to Florida to teach, I had to specifically make plans to put any type of agriculture into our classroom. It takes a creative teacher to add agriculture in to lessons.”

People and teachers are looking for resources, Extension or 4-H, and funding to send people to the classroom to teach kids about agriculture. Participants discussed that Ag in the Classroom could supplement the FCAT to get kids out of the classroom and participate in hands on learning.





- A participant discussed how Extension agents or other people could serve as resources for teaching agriculture in the classroom and said, "The class teachers are so stressed time wise. We always looked for resources – people to help us – and maybe it can be the extension offices, I know that they do something with 4-H, I don't know what they do with FFA anymore; I am just wondering if that is a possible. It would mean funds to send a person out into the classroom. You know because many of the teachers need help doing it."
- A participant who favored fun learning said, "They are taking the fun out of school. If Ag in the Classroom helps to get kids outside even for fifteen minutes. If it brings fun back into schools, I am all for it."

In addition, the participants agreed early elementary school to junior high was the target audience of Ag in the Classroom. The participants indicated that those who are most likely to benefit from the organization were children, teachers through materials, and society in general.

**The participants were read a description of Ag in the Classroom, which said:**

"Florida Ag in the Classroom is a nonprofit organization that develops and trains teachers and agriculture industry volunteers in its agriculture curricula and materials, which they in turn use to educate students about the importance of agriculture. It also provides grant money to teachers and volunteers for projects that teach students where their food comes from, and the important contribution Florida Farmers make to their communities and their state."

After hearing the short description, participants discussed that they liked the idea of the program but were not aware of all that Ag in the Classroom does.

- "I wasn't aware," said a participant.

Some other participants had questions about the grant money and how the money can help volunteers.

- A participant showed interest in exploring how Ag in the Classroom grant money might be able to support his/her volunteer efforts. This participant said, "Grant money? I do farmers markets. I impact parents and families. I do not have the money to purchase materials and I think money is involved in all of this. I have student volunteers that distribute materials about different agricultural programs, but I've never had anything from Ag in the Classroom. I have never seen any materials from them."

During the discussion of Ag in the Classroom, the participants said they would be likely to support the organization in many different ways.

- A participant discussed several different ways that people like him/her would be willing to support Ag in the Classroom. This participant said, "There are several different ones [ways to support], financially, participation, volunteer with a tour or classroom visit, partnering with a teacher. There are several different ways to do it. One or all."
- Another participant added that he/she would be willing to distribute information about Ag in the Classroom. This participant said, "There may or not be materials, but I would be willing to distribute information."

Participants agreed information about Ag in the Classroom should be present on social media and the Internet, where kids could access and be exposed to the information.

When asked who would be most likely to support Ag in the Classroom, the participants agreed that those involved in the agriculture industry or educators would be most likely to support the program.



Participants were happy to hear that \$20 is generated for Ag in the Classroom from the purchase of the tag. However, some participants thought more should go toward the program.

- One participant shocked by the low contribution said, “But it’s not very much!”

Although the participants thought the Ag Tag was a good way to support Ag in the Classroom, they also discussed different ways to support the program, such as volunteering.

- A participant reflecting on the funding of Ag in the Classroom said, “It’s [funding from Ag Tag] part of the puzzle. I think it is a part of funding, but not all of it.”
- Another participant did not think the Ag Tag donation could ever be enough to support the organization: “I don’t think it could ever be that beneficial. Go to a foundation and donate.”

### Concept Testing

The participants were told that Ag in the Classroom was preparing to launch a new marketing campaign and were asked what audiences should be targeted through the campaign. The participants discussed that the primary target audience for an Ag in the Classroom campaign should be those involved with agriculture. They identified that secondary audiences may also include educators, local chapters of agricultural organizations, market and produce managers, as well as gardeners. To reach audiences through the campaign, the participants decided that social media would be a good communication channel to use.

- A participant identified some potential targets and collaborators and said, “They need to partner with Publix, Win Dixie, Sweetbay, Fresh from Florida.”
- Another participant added, “Markets. Market managers or local stores.”

The participants stated that with a new and improved campaign, agriculture industry members, parents of school-aged children, and the general industry would purchase the Ag Tag.

- A participant discussed getting members of the industry involved, “They need to do a better job than they are now. Send information to different associations, local chapters of the FLGNA, the local Fruit and Vegetable, etc.”

### Promotional material 1: Next Years Bumper Crop

Participants were asked to discuss Flyer 1 found in the Appendix A of this report. They were asked to discuss what they liked and disliked about it, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect their purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, participants were asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.

Participants said that they liked the slogan, “next year’s bumper crop” on the bumper crop flyer and the school bus to connect agriculture to kids.

- A participant said, “Bumper crop. Next year’s bumper crop is neat.”

Participants liked the Ag in the Classroom logo, with the paper barn and pencil silo, and said this same logo should be on the license plate.

- A participant recommended changing the logo on the license plate and said, “Change the license plate to match the logo [on the bumper crop flyer].”
- Another participant discussed the two different logos: “If that is where the money is going, and it is not promoting Fresh from Florida, you need to get your own logo.”

Additionally, participants believed the flyer was very personalized and would appeal to them. However, the participants believed there needed to be a stronger connection between agriculture and kids in the flyer.

### **Promotional material 2: Buy an Ag Tag**

Participants were asked to discuss Flyer 2 found in the Appendix A of this report. They were asked to discuss what they liked and disliked about it, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect their purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, participants were asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.

Participants agreed that they liked how the \$20 proceed amount to Ag in the Classroom was listed on the bottom of the flyer.

- A participant who liked seeing the how much money from the purchase of the Ag Tag would go to Ag in the Classroom said, “I think that [the proceeds] needs to go on there.”

Participants liked the diversity of agricultural products shown on the flyer. In addition, the participants liked the kids holding the sign. In comparison to the first flyer, Flyer 1 “Next Years Bumper Crop,” the participants indicated that the Buy an Ag Tag flyer was more attractive.

- A participant indicated that it was more attractive: “This one is more attractive. I like the kids holding the sign.”

### **Promotional material 3: Watch Me Grow**

Participants were asked to discuss Flyer 3 found in the Appendix A of this report. They were asked to discuss what they liked and disliked about it, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect their purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, participants were asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.

Participants agreed that they liked the bullet points on the back of the Watch me Grow flyer. However, participants said that there was a lot and maybe too much information on this flyer.

- A participant expressed concern with the amount of information on the flyer and said, “Too much information and not enough kids.”

Some participants said that the design of the flyer was too dark.

- A participant said that he did not find it attractive: “I don’t really like this pamphlet right here. Too dark and hard to read.”
- A participant critiqued the design of the flyer and said, “I like the watch me grow, but I don’t like the style.”
- Another participants discussed the simplicity of the bullet points and said, “But I like the bullet points on the back.”





## Promotional material 4: Billboard

Participants were asked to discuss the Billboard found in the Appendix A of this report. They were asked to discuss what they liked and disliked about it, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect their purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, participants were asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.

When shown the Ag in the Classroom billboard, the participants stated that they had never seen the billboard. They indicated that the billboard was, “too wordy” and that would be “hard to read when you are going fast.” Additionally, several participants discussed that the billboard needed to be simplified.

- A participant commented on the design and said, “This is okay. But it is hard to read if you are going to fast.”
- A participant discussed suggestions for simplifying the billboard and said, “I would still go back to something very simple, such as ‘it’s all about kids’ and then buy an Ag Tag.”

## Create a Message

In this final section, participants were asked to create their own message or campaign to increase the purchase of the Florida Ag Tag, targeted to an audience of people like them. Participants were asked to indicate what modes of communication should be used for this revised campaign. In addition, participants were asked to tell Florida Ag in the Classroom how to improve their current campaign and increase the purchase of the Ag Tag.

When given the task of creating a promotional message for Ag in the Classroom, the participants agreed the message needed to be “short and sweet” and have something to connect agriculture to kids. The participants referenced the messages of “It’s all about kids,” and “Buy an Ag Tag.”

To disseminate a message, the participants recommended using social media.

- A participant discussed how social media may be an effective promotional tool and said, “I will share what you put on your Facebook page, and I will tell others to share it too. To me, that is the coming thing for people to read.”

Other participants recommended partnering with organizations, such as the FNGLA, could help to disseminate information and promote the campaign.

Participants agreed the Ag Tag campaign needed to be revised. They recommended that the campaign contain simple graphics and information.

- “KISS, Keep it Simple!” said one participant.

Others recommended sharing the information with different commodity organizations for promotion. In addition, the participants recommended that the \$20 proceeds from an Ag Tag purchase be emphasized and predominate in future Ag in the Classroom campaigns.

## West Palm Beach Focus Group II Results

Participant occupations included Extension agents, farm equipment sales, horse trainers, agricultural fair managers, citrus growers, cattle ranchers, agricultural communicators, and educators.

### General Tag Discussion

In this section participants described their general tag buying preferences. General tag buying preferences included if they have bought or currently have a specialty license plate. In this discussion, the participants talked about what influences their decisions or what barriers prevent them from purchasing a specialty tag.

Participants started the discussion by telling the group their occupations and if they own a specialty license plate. Of the seven participants, three owned specialty tags. One participant owned an Ag Tag.

Participants stated various reasons for purchasing a specialty plate, including making a statement, love of an issue, and for work.

- A participant discussed their love of saving the Florida Panther: "We love wildlife in Florida. And with the development down here in South Florida, our panther was endangered and we wanted to help cats."
- A participant discussed that it creates a statement: "It actually makes a statement too."
- Another participant discussed how it supports the University: "I guess because I work for the University of Florida, I have the UF license plate."

Some participants had not purchased a specialty license plate before. These participants discussed barriers or reasons for not purchasing a specialty tag, such as convenience, cost, and too many choices.

- A participant discussed the convenience of renewing my mail and said, "I renew by mail, so I never go in, never see it."
- Another participant asked about the increased price of a specialty tag and said, "Don't they cost a little bit more than regular tags?"
- A participant discussed how there are too many license plates to choose from and said, "Coming from Texas I never had that many choices. . . . We never had that many choices, and never had any reason. So I just did mine by mail."

Participants were asked about how they feel about having the option to buy a specialty license plate. Participants generally liked the idea as the proceeds go to supporting an organization.

- A participant discussed how she likes to donate to charities and said, "I like it. Just because I know the money goes towards those different charities. Like I have an ATM card that has breast cancer so they are supposed to be doing something towards that. I never seen Ag offered there."
- Another participant stated why not if you can donate to an organization and said, "I think it raises a little money for a good cause, then what the heck."

Participants discussed different things that might influence the decision to buy a certain specialty license plate. Different factors included vanity, interest, charity, and identity.

- A participant discussed how he/she likes to be unique and said, "Vanity. I don't mind being noticed."

- A participant discussed interest as a reason and said, "If you are interested in something, and for me, its going to have to be easy to get it done."
- Another participant discussed charity and said, "Maybe charity is one reason. Impulsivity also has something to do with it."
- A participant discussed how it has to be something that you believe in and said, "Something that you have an allegiance with, whether that it is charity, colleges or panthers. You have to believe in it."
- A participant discussed how it can become a part of your identity and said, "Like your clothes it is your identify. If it's a college, it's because you are an alumnus. Or if you are a teacher you will get the school tag. My son's a fisherman and there are three or four different fishing tags, so it would be nice to show that he is a fisherman. So I guess there is a little bit of what you are into. Like your Facebook page."

Participants discussed different barriers that have prevented them from buying a certain specialty license plate. Topics included lack of convenience, ease of access, money, and lack of awareness about specific tags.

- A participant discussed the lack of convenience and said, "If there was some type of flyer in there [plate renewal notice] that says 'oh by the way, go online,' I might be more apt to do it. As it is right now, it is just remembering to go and pay it and get it done."
- A participant discussed lack of awareness as being a huge factor in the decision making process of the buyer and said, "Just knowing about. I have never ever gotten a flyer and I have been in the industry for a long time. But I have never actually been targeted and have never been said to oh if you renew think about this next time. And even though you see them at the tradeshow, that's not a booth you stop at. Never a big education process that I am aware of."

Participants were asked what would make them more willing to buy or purchase a specialty license plate. Topics included actually targeting audiences, creating interest, and educating the consumer.

- A participant discussed how he/she just needs to be asked and said, "Just getting asked. It's like asking someone for money. I have never gotten asked."
- Another participant discussed how creating interest would help increase sales and said, "Create interest. You need to know it was there and say by gosh it's there. I want to think about it and know that it is there."
- A participant discussed how more knowledge of the proceeds would help to increase the sales and said, "If you knew it was going to Ag in Schools I think more people would be interested in buying one."

### Specific Tag Discussion

In this section, participant discussed the specific license tag in Florida, the Ag Tag. Participants described what came to mind when they heard the words Ag Tag and their general opinions about the Ag Tag.

Participants were asked what comes to mind when they hear the word Ag Tag. Participants agreed agriculture, rural and farmer.

- A participant discussed how he/she thinks more of dairy than anything else. This participant said, "I think maybe dairy more than anything else in agriculture, where I come from there was more dairy than anything else."





- Another participant discussed that your reference point would influence the meaning of Ag Tag and said, "Based on your reference point, you have a room full of Ag people, what if you had someone here that wasn't, they might not think that way."

Participants were asked what the consumer or someone not involved in the industry might think the words Ag Tag meant. Participants stated that the consumer probably would not know the meaning of the Ag Tag.

- A participant said that consumers or non-agriculture related people do not understand the meaning: "I have people say 'oh what a pretty tag,' but they don't read the script, Florida Grows, on it."
- Another participant discussed how consumers do not associate food with agriculture and said, "I don't think they associate food with the words [Agriculture]."
- Another participant discussed how consumers might relate Ag Tag to produce: "Well I think because they have been using it [Fresh from Florida logo] so much in the produce area maybe they would have some type of tie in because of it. But that doesn't really say that. I think if it said 'Fresh from Florida,' maybe they would."
  - A participant responded and said, "Isn't this part of the Fresh from Florida logo in the label?"
  - The participant responded and said, "That's what I'm saying. They might relate it to the logo they see in the grocery store."
- Another participant discussed how consumers may associate the Ag Tag with the "green movement" and said, "More urbanized people think Keeping Florida Green, think green buildings ecological green, green cleaning products, not necessarily agriculture."

Participants discussed where they have seen the tag before:

- A participant discussed how Ag Tag flyers had been seen in agriculture journals and magazines, but nothing generic. This participant said, "It's in a lot of journals. But all of those journals, cattleman's, Fresh from Florida, these journals come out to people who are already in agriculture. But I don't know if I have ever seen it in just a general publication."
- Another participant discussed different counties that he/she had seen the tag and said, "In St. Lucie and India River and Martin County, there are a lot of Ag plates. The further west you go and you get out of the metropolitan, Carter, there are quite a few. So they are all seen."

Participants were then given the opportunity to look at the tag and to discuss what they liked and disliked about the tag. Participants generally did not like the message at the bottom of the plate.

- A participant discussed that they liked the colors of the tag and said, "It's colorful. I like the colors."
- Another participant disliked the positioning of the message and said, "The one thing that I see that I have the problem with is most vehicles now have the things that cut off the bottom. I am talking about the basic generic metal holder. And you can barely see it. So the bottom message will be gone."
  - A participant responded and said, "Everything needs to be moved towards the center of the tag."
- A participant stated that the message on the tag needed to support what the proceeds are supporting. This participant said, "I think the general public needs to be educated about it. Like with this tag if you purchase this tag the money goes to help schools. I think that is the real message we need to be sending. They need to know they help with the short comings."

- A participant discussed the message on the Ag Tag as being a concern and said, "When I see keeps Florida green, green means something completely different. Carbon footprint issues, windmills. It doesn't talk to food. The slogan may need to focus on something else."
- A participant discussed how the Florida Ag industry needed to continue its use of Fresh from Florida. This participant said, "Using the Fresh from Florida seems like a lot more sense. Because you are using it over and over again."
  - Another participant elaborated on the Fresh from Florida idea and said, "If nothing else, Fresh from Florida, makes people feel, like they are supporting the state or an industry in the state."

Participants discussed improvements that should be made on the tag:

- A participant discussed that the Ag Tag needed to make it clear what proceeds go toward. This participant said, "If it is supposed to focus on solely Ag in the Classroom, it might need to say something with Ag in the Classroom."
- Another participant discussed to re-use the Fresh from Florida idea and said, "I think Fresh from Florida would be best because there is only so much to say and do. And it is the same as marketing efforts at the grocery store."
- One participant did not like the "I AM 4 AG" on the tag, instead he/she suggested that it say SAMPLE. This participant said, "I do not like having the I AM 4 AG. Because it limits your audience and I think it would be better to do sample because many people don't know what it is. I don't think it is a good choice to show people, I think sample is better."

Participants discussed the purpose of the Ag Tag is to raise money.

- One participant said, "It is raising money for children's agricultural education."
- Another participant discussed how the Ag Tag was raising awareness and said, "And, it is raising awareness of agriculture in Florida."

Participants were asked what the money generated from the tag supports. Participants were unsure of where the money went.

- One participant stated, "I hope it goes towards educating children about agriculture number one, and I would not know where it would go if there was another."
- Another participant stated that it might go to support marketing efforts. This participant said, "It might go towards marketing in local grocery stores because that is where I see that logo the most. But I don't know."

Participants believed the target audience of the Ag Tag should be people in the agricultural industry.

Participants agreed that agricultural people would be the most likely to be the target audience, but they had other suggestions as well:

- A participant stated how the general public could purchase the tag and said, "If the general public knew that their purchase went to the education of agriculture in Florida, I think you would have a lot more people stepping up to the plate."
- Another participant discussed targeting those people who want to teach children about growing their own food. This participant said, "I think if they, even the people fighting obesity, it helps teach children how to eat



properly and grow their own food. And gardeners too. So I think it boils down to focusing on target markets outside of the current one.”

- One participant discussed advertising to gardeners at Home Depot (or other gardening stores) and said, “One good way to maybe get these tags out there is if Florida wrapped this around the potted plant. And when you bought a vegetable plant at Home Depot, people could say you are growing your own tomatoes, here is something to support agriculture. There are a lot of gardeners that you are trying to get. Suburban gardeners that all believe that it is good to grow something like that in your backyard, be it small either starting from seed or potted. But if you could get one of the nurseries that home depot sells to put this [the Ag Tag] on the pot.”
  - Another participant responded and said, “Buy a plant for kids.”

### Florida Agriculture in the Classroom

In this section, participants discussed Florida Agriculture in the Classroom. Participants discussed if they had heard of Florida Agriculture in the Classroom previously, the purpose of the organization and the audiences it is trying to reach.

Participants seemed to be familiar with Ag in the Classroom. Participants agreed that they had heard of the program before the focus group discussion. When asked what Ag in the Classroom was, participants discussed different things that Ag in the Classroom does to enhance learning, such as Ag Literacy day, field trips, classroom gardens and agricultural presentations.

- One participant eagerly answered and said, “Taking Ag into the classroom.”
- Another participant discussed how they participated with the program and said, “We do presentations in schools for Ag in the classroom.”
- A participant discussed how people are involved with the organization and said, “People coming from outside to talk to kids.”
- Participants were asked what the purpose of Ag in the Classroom was. The participants generally agreed that the program was designed to “educate children about agriculture.”
- A participant discussed how Ag in the Classroom could teach science to kids. This participant said, “I think to give them some of the science, because when we do presentations, we try to incorporate the science that is involved in Ag either the soil science, or the plant science or what does it take for a plant to grow and that kind of thing.”
- Another participant discussed how Ag in the Classroom helped to enhance classroom learning and said, “I do school tours during the fair and send home a take-back so the teacher can teach along with the lesson plan that they have learned at the fair.”
- Another participant discussed how Ag in the Classroom introduces kids to agriculture and said, “I think also though that it is to introduce them to agriculture. Because many of these kids have never been on a farm, never seen an animal, they don’t understand where milk comes from, it’s not from the jug at Publix, and if they are introduced to that with a hands-on some type display or educational toolkit or something 3D, I think they can visualize it much more than watching a movie about. It might turn into something or someone that is actually interested in agriculture.”

Participants agreed that the audience of the program was educators, children, and children’s families.

- A participant discussed children and educators as the target audience for the program and said, “Well you have got two different audiences here: you have the people that are educators and then you got the children.”



- Another participant added the family aspect and said, "And then alternately, the take home pieces go back into the home, so that is the rest of the family."

Participants discussed the main people to benefit from the program were children and society.

- One participant discussed children as the main beneficiary and said, "Children certainly. It gives them an experience, maybe a different perspective or different insight. It certainly is beneficial to the teachers if we try to give them, kind of spoon-feed, I hate to use that term, but give them the lessons plans, the materials, the suggested activities, those kinds of things. It makes their life infinitely easier than trying to develop something on their own."
- Another participant discussed how the program could also benefit private school children if they were to target them as well. This participant said, "One thing that we miss, especially in Palm Beach County, is private schools. They don't get any of that and that is a huge market that we are missing that we need to address. A lot of them have more resources that could benefit us in agriculture and if you took it to private schools and you helped them, there is a whole other level there. These are people that are buying Fresh from Florida."
- Another participant added that Ag in the Classroom could benefit society as a whole and said, "The other group that I think benefits, is really all of society. Because if we can get children to be consuming more fruit and vegetables and healthier diet, we end up with less heart disease, lower incidents of diabetes and the whole gamut. We all benefit from that and we are not paying for that health care."

**The participants were read a description of Ag in the Classroom, which said:**

"Florida Ag in the Classroom is a nonprofit organization that develops and trains teachers and agriculture industry volunteers in its agriculture curricula and materials, which they in turn use to educate students about the importance of agriculture. It also provides grant money to teachers and volunteers for projects that teach students where their food comes from, and the important contribution Florida Farmers make to their communities and their state."

Participants generally liked the idea of the program but did not think that the program was doing enough and that many teachers would not like the program:

- One participant responded and said, "I don't think we do enough of it. Because by the time a child goes into the first grade, they are bombarded with recycling and slime in the water and you have to do this with your newspapers and so forth. And I don't think . . . we need to do better, one push a year is just not enough. This needs to become something that needs to be performed by a teacher. It is warm and fuzzy. Let's plant a bean and watch it grow and in April we will have a bean plant. And it needs to start in the first grade."
- Another commented about how kids love the program and don't even know they are learning. This participant said: "The kids genuinely love it. Why don't they do it? Make it part of the science curriculum."
- One participant liked the idea of the program, but thought that it was just one more responsibility for teachers. This participant said, "Teachers perceive this as one more thing that they do not have time for. There are some creative teachers who will embrace this and will make it part of their lessons but many don't know how."

Participants agreed that anyone could support the program, but primarily those that are involved with agriculture or local food would support the program:



- One participant said people involved with agriculture, but also others if they knew about the program. This participant said, "Other Ag people. But it still boils down to the more people that are educated about what they are doing, the more people that you find that cares about it."
- Another participant discussed how the target audience could be the general public and said, "There a lot of people living in condos that value the food they eat and buy local and try eat local and that's whole mind set. They may be willing to help with the program."

Participants were happy to hear that \$20 is generated for Ag in the Classroom from the purchase of the tag. Participants agreed that they would be more likely to purchase the tag knowing that \$20 is generated from the purchase.

- One participant stated, "I didn't expect it to be that much. They are getting the most of the vanity cost."

Participants agreed that the Ag Tag was an acceptable way to support Ag in the Classroom. However, participants suggested other fundraisers, such as volunteers and product fundraisers.

- One participant came up with the idea of a fundraiser for mud flaps for trucks. This participant said, "We came up with an idea one time, mud flaps for trucks. They have to have mud flaps. Put Fresh from Florida on everyone out there. Every citrus truck, every produce truck, every flower truck should have mud flaps that say Fresh from Florida."
- Another participant suggested farmers donating goods as a fundraiser and said, "Donate goods. I know that some of farmers in the area have donated corn, just to show that it comes right from the field."

### Concept Testing

The participants were told that Ag in the Classroom was preparing to launch a new marketing campaign and were asked what audiences should be targeted through the campaign. Participants agreed people in agriculture, educators, and those involved with gardening would be a target audience for the campaign.

- One participant answered that Ag in the Classroom should focus on targeting the agricultural industry. This participant said, "I think you ought to stick with the ones that know you. Because there are plenty of people in agriculture who don't know about the tag."
- A participant discussed educators of all types should be part of the campaign and said, "I think you should focus on educators, whether they are public school, private school, charter school, afterschool programs, recreational programs, community garden people, because there is such great interest on community and school gardening right now. And in 10 years from now there might not be but right now it is pretty hot across the country."
- Another participant elaborated on the educators comment and included gardeners as well. This participant said, "And also it might help you get some of your volunteers if you focus on garden clubs and educators."

Participants were asked how Ag in the Classroom should communicate with these specific target audiences.

Participants agreed that specific organizations should be targeted through the Ag Tag, mailers or take home flyers.

- One participant suggested the marketing should start with the Ag Tag. This participant said, "The first thing is the tag. Look at some of the comments people have made. I think – underneath 'Agriculture' [should be] 'In the classroom.' That may be too wordy. They may say you can only have two words, but without the 'In the Classroom' under 'Agriculture,' you don't really know what that tag is going for when you look at it. 'Keep



Florida Fresh' is great, but without the in the classroom on the tag, they won't see one of those and say 'oh, "Ag in the Classroom" I want one of those.'"

- Another participant discussed sending out information directly from the teachers that are using the Ag in the Classroom program. This participant asked, "Is there anyway that you could something with the teachers that are already teaching it? Where they send out something to the parents and to the entire school?"
- Participants discussed another fundraiser of a mother's day promotion. One participant said, "Another thing that might be interesting is to do a mother's day promotion. Buy a plant for your mom and you could do something inexpensive and it could go home with a flyer on it. It could be an educational piece to encourage them to do it."

### **Promotional material 1: Next Year's Bumper Crop**

Participants were asked to discuss Flyer 1 found in the Appendix A of this report. They were asked to discuss what they liked and disliked about it, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect their purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, participants were asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.

The participants noticed the different logo on the flyer at the beginning of the discussion.

Two participants discussed how much they liked the Ag in the Classroom logo:

- The first participant said, "I like this logo with the silo in the middle of it. I think that is great. I wish there was a little cow in the middle of it."
  - Another participant responded and said, "That silo is a notebook and pencil! That is awesome."

When asked about the two different logos, participants thought the logo on the flyer should be put on the Ag Tag.

- A participant wanted the Ag in the Classroom logo on the plate and said, "What if they did though? What if they put this one [Ag in the Classroom] on the plate?"

Participants tended to like the slogan, Next Year's Bumper Crop but felt there was too much information on the flyer:

- A participant stated, "There is just too much information."
- Another participant commented on the amount of information on the flyer and said, "No one is going to have time to read all of this."
- Another participant stated that he/she liked the slogan and said, "I like this year's bumper crop and the bumper of the bus."

Participants did not think that the message was clear enough for the consumer to understand.

- One participant discussed the clarity of the text on the flyer and said, "Even on this, I don't know if it is crystal clear. We know what Florida Ag in the Classroom is – but it says – if you think it is important for the next generation to understand Florida's diverse agricultural industry – I think most people would say yes – please show your support by purchasing the Florida Ag Tag – if it could just say to educate children about agriculture or something because it stops short of the whole message for me."



- One participant discussed how the flyer needed to be more direct and said, "Show your support, not please show support."

Participants agreed that the message needed to involve the amount of proceeds generated from the Ag Tag that go to Ag in the Classroom.

- One participant asked, "Would you go so far as to include \$20 goes to Ag in the Classroom?"
- A participant suggested what should go on the flyer and said, "\$20 of each tag purchase goes to educating children about agriculture. I wouldn't say call... I would say [www.agtag.org](http://www.agtag.org)"
- Another participant discussed including information about direct donations on the flyer as well. This participant said, "I would go so far to say – if you would like to send in a donation on here – if you are going to this extent anyways and asking to buy a tag and go the rest of the way to buy a tag and say donate here."

### **Promotional material 2: Buy an Ag Tag**

Participants were asked to discuss Flyer 2 found in the Appendix A of this report. They were asked to discuss what they liked and disliked about it, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect their purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, participants were asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.

Participants were happy to see that this flyer listed the proceeds that go to Ag in the Classroom from the purchase of the Ag Tag.

- A participant stated, "This does say \$20 goes [to Ag in the classroom]."
- Another participant responded and said, "I like the \$20 goes to, it could be even bigger. Because someone might think, oh I could do that, to support a good cause."

However, participants still thought the flyer needed to be more specific to get the message across. Participants also thought that the message needed to be clear in explaining the purpose of the Ag Tag:

- A participant described how he/she would be more willing to buy the Ag Tag if the flyer addressed what the Ag Tag was trying to support: "I see buy an Ag Tag first, well really I would be more inclined, if I knew nothing about this, to be more receptive about educating students about Florida agriculture. I would read it then if I saw that."

Participants also stated that the flyer had too much information.

- One participant stated that the amount of information was overwhelming: "This is overwhelming."

### **Promotional material 3: Watch me Grow**

Participants were asked to discuss Flyer 3 found in the Appendix A of this report. They were asked to discuss what they liked and disliked about it, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect their purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, participants were asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.

The participant's first comment referred to the kids in the flowerpot:



- One participant clearly stated, "The first thing you do is do something about the one with the stretched kid."
  - Another participant responded and said, "He is too stretched."
  - A third participant stated: "She is so Photoshopped, it's unbelievable! The kids going to grow anyways, so why stretch her!"

Other participants stated that the emphasis of the flyer was on the collector's office and not on the Ag Tag.

- One participant recommended taking the tax collectors information off of the flyer. This participant said, "Scratch the local tax collectors office, no one wants to go there."

Participants discussed how the flyer should direct people to the Ag in the Classroom website to provide them with more answers that they might need:

- One participant recommended giving the bare minimums and then list the website for more information. This participant said, "www.agtag.org that is where to go, that is where you get all of your answers."
- Another participant recommended minimizing the amount of information listed and said, "There is too much information. Just do the phone number and agtag.org and get rid of the ifas.ufl.edu."

Participants stated that there should be a way to give direct donations to Ag in the Classroom:

- One participant recommended including an option to provide donations on the flyer and said, "We forgot to tell them that they can donate. They don't have to have the tag. They can donate and call 352-gainesville."

#### **Promotional material 4: Billboard**

Participants were asked to discuss the Billboard found in the Appendix A of this report. They were asked to discuss what they liked and disliked about it, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect their purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, participants were asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.

Participants liked that they included the website on the Billboard; however, they believed that there needed to be consistency with the flyers:

- One participant noticed that they left out www. and in the flyers they used www.. This participant said, "I see you left out the www. There has got to be some consistency."
- Another participant felt the www. is unnecessary. This participant said: "www. Is redundant."

Participants tended to like the image of the orange and the kid holding the orange:

- One participant stated, "Here again they used the word food. It's on a plate. I like that there is food in this billboard. It's good."
- One participant stated that they needed to do more with the food and the flyers/billboards. This participant said, "Teach student where they're food comes from. Gives them a sense of ownership."

Participants agreed that the proceeds from the Ag Tag to Ag in the Classroom should not be put on the billboard:



- One participant thought it would be too busy to put the proceeds on the billboard and said, "No, don't put dollars and cents on a billboard."
- Another participant referenced the short amount of time that you have to read it and said, "You have three seconds to see that as you are flying by."
- A participant stated not everything needs to be on the billboard and said, "This billboard is going to make you aware, it has something to do with education. But you don't need to see everything on the billboard."

### Create a Message

In this final section, participants were asked to create their own message or campaign to increase the purchase of the Florida Ag Tag, targeted to an audience of people like them. Participants were asked to indicate what modes of communication should be used for this revised campaign. In addition, participants were asked to tell Florida Ag in the Classroom how to improve their current campaign and increase the purchase of the Ag Tag.

Participants agreed that they liked the message on the billboard and to continue with that message.

Participants agreed that the brand needed to be further developed:

- One participant believed that starting with the brand on the plate would be the best option. This participant said, "The plate is giving the message. If you are selling the correct message on the plate you are selling it every time someone looks at the plate."
- A participant elaborated on the brand idea and thought of branding the program from the top down and said, "If you think about Nike's check, every one knows that it is Nike, and they see the logo with the notebook barn and pencil silo that sink in after a while."
- Another participant stated to give children part of the logo, which can help to create a brand. This participant said, "Are the children who participate in the program getting anything with that logo in it? A badge, sticker?"

Participants recommended many different options for communicating the ideas of the new campaign:

- One participant decided to use grocery stores, home improvement stores, nurseries, and to use email. This participant said, "I would put it in the grocery stores on the produce isles. I would put it on the bags, the sleeves on the pots, and in your magazines. And you definitely need to use email."
- Another participant discussed developing a PSA to send out to television stations and said, "15-second PSA, if they look good then they will use them"
- A participant discussed the use of displays at different conventions and said, "Display. Use displays at industry trade shows."
  - Another participant responded and added, "State teachers association and conventions."

Participants discussed how they would suggest that Florida Ag in the Classroom improve their campaign:

- One participant summed up his/her ideas and said, "Keep the message throughout the entire campaign. Change this logo in the middle to have the notebook barn and pencil silo. Agriculture - Teach Florida Kids."
- Participants discussed how they would like the SAMPLE place to read, "4 KIDS"
- Another participant discussed how Ag in the Classroom should consistently use their logo. This participant said, "Always include the logo."





## Gainesville Group Interview Results

Participant occupations included a cattle rancher, a horse trainer, an organic farmer, and entomologist.

### General Tag Discussion

In this section participants described their general tag buying preferences. General tag buying preferences included if they have bought or currently have a specialty license plate. In this discussion, the participants talked about what influences their decisions or what barriers prevent them from purchasing a specialty tag.

Out of the four participants, one owned two specialty tags, one owned a vanity plate, and the two others did not have a specialty license plate.

- A participant discussed that he/she owns two specialty tags and said, "Yes, I have purchased a specialty license plate. I have the Ag Tag and I have a FFA tag."

The participants discussed what discouraged them from buying a specialty tag. The primary reasons were cost and lack of convenience.

- A participant discussed cost as being the major barrier to purchasing a specialty tag and said, "Primarily for me not buying one, I have just now have gotten my first vehicle, a F-350, and it is already 200 and something dollars so for me to get the specialty one and to pay the extra, I just can't justify it."
- A participant discussed that he/she owns a vanity tag but thought it would be too expensive to have a specialty tag and vanity. This participant said, "I put one on my car that says veggies. But I have never put a specialty plate on the car. I registered the car. I got it. I have never put a special plate on a car. I want my own thing. If I were to do both of them, it would probably cost a lot. And another thing with a specialty plate, it was cost a lot to renew every year. If I wanted to support something like that I would just donate directly."
- Another participant discussed lack of convenience when renewing their tag and said, "I am always in a hurry or late on buying my tag. So just doing what I have to do to get it legal."

The participant who owned a specialty tag discussed how he knew where the money was going to and wanted to support the organization:

- The participant said, "I originally got the Ag Tag for supporting Ag in the Classroom. I knew what it was for."

### Specific Tag Discussion

In this section, participants discussed a specific license tag in Florida, the Ag Tag. Participants described what came to mind when they heard the words Ag Tag and their general opinions about the Ag Tag.

Participants discussed what generally comes to mind when they hear the words Ag Tag.

- A participant referenced Florida agriculture in their description and said, "When I think of Ag Tag I think of focusing on Florida Agriculture, watermelons, and things like that."
- Another participant said that they had never thought of it before: "It doesn't trigger any references. I would have never thought of Ag Tag."
- Another participant questioned whether the Ag Tag was a special exemption just for farmers and said, "Is it a special exemption? Can only farmers get an Ag Tag?"

Participants were asked if they have heard the phrase before. Most of the participants generally agreed that they had heard the phrase before.

Participants discussed if they had seen the license plate before.

- One participant discussed that they had seen the plate before and said, "My grandfather had this on his vehicle."

Participants took a moment to look at the license plate. The participants were then asked what they liked and disliked about the plate.

- One participant was concerned that the plate did not reference where the proceeds go and said, "It does not say anything about where the proceeds go. It does for the most part keep Florida green."
- Another participant liked the general look of the license plate and said, "It looks good, is this the Fresh from Florida logo?"

The participants agreed that the Ag Tag is trying to reach an audience of farmers, ranchers, wives, and those who had something to do with agriculture. However, others believed the target population should be the entire state.

- A participant said those connected with agriculture would have the plate: "You see it more with your farmers or ranchers, or farmers ranchers wives. Like my wife, she drives the Expedition, and it is on hers. When I see the tag, I subconsciously think that they have something to do with agriculture."
- Another participant disagreed and said the entire population: "I think you would want to hit the populous in bulk. Change the perception of Florida from tourism to agricultural base."

Participants discussed different reasons people bought an Ag Tag. Participants discussed supporting an organization financially or to put yourself in a group.

- A participant stated monetary donation was one reason for buying an Ag Tag and said, "Main reason the ones that do support agriculture, to give as much financial support as they can, and this is one little way besides buying local produce and things like that."
- Another participant discussed how the Ag Tag puts you in a group and said, "You are representing just like a sports team."

Participants discussed barriers that keep people from buying a tag. The participants discussed convenience, lack of knowledge, and too many choices.

- A participant stated lack of knowledge as being the main barrier to buying an Ag Tag and said, "Not knowing would be the biggest. There is a lot of people that buy their tags not going into the place, or send a relative in the place."
- Another participant commented on the amount of license plate choices and said, "There are a lot of choices. Or you buy a vehicle from a dealership and they automatically order you a regular tag."

### Florida Agriculture in the Classroom

In this section, participants discussed Florida Agriculture in the Classroom. Participants discussed if they had previously heard of Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, the purpose of the organization and the audiences it was trying to reach.



Participants discussed different aspects of Florida Ag in the Classroom, such as what children learn through agricultural education, how it should be geared to kids, and the challenges associated with teaching agriculture:

- A participant discussed what he/she thought Ag in the Classroom was and said, "Knowing what it means to grow a crop, be it small or big."
- Another participant who previously worked with Ag in the Classroom in another state, said, "What kinds of things are grown in Florida. I am not that familiar with Florida Ag in the Classroom. But I have worked a bit with Ag in the Classroom in California. So I am seeing from similar lines. You take food to classrooms, take kids on field trips, there was funding for that kind of thing. Also, things like food-related education, telling kids where food comes from."
- Later on in the discussion, the previous participant explained the challenge of finding people to educate kids about agriculture and said, "It is very challenging to find people who have studied agriculture and want to do it and want to do the work. It is really challenging. Getting people interested in it. I went to a school in Pinellas County; we did not have FFA or anything to do with agriculture. I did not get involved with agriculture until I came to UF."
- Another participant thought the purpose was to educate people about agriculture in Florida and said, "A lot of people just don't realize how big agriculture is in the state of Florida. I mean it is huge. We are second only to tourism. I mean, I think as far as job market goes or something, you could get some kids that way."
- A participant discussed what Ag in the Classroom should focus on and said, "Alachua County is lacking in Ag education. It is very rudimentary focuses on beef, vegetable production, gardening. Ag business is no longer existing in Florida. As an entomologist, Ag is what I do. But, what we find is the focus, or what I think it should be focused on is what jobs are existent, such as chemists, entomologists, soil labs, etc."

The participants were asked who they thought was the target audience for the Florida Ag in the Classroom program. Participants stated different audiences including everyone and teachers.

- One participant discussed that he/she thought the audience was everyone and said, "For me it's everybody. The biggest thing about Ag, if there is no one doing Ag there is no food for the world. We have a growing population. We have to find out how to feed all of those people."
- Another participant discussed two types of audiences and said, "Teachers. I think also younger kids for the gardening is a good way to incorporate agriculture and teach kids about it."

The participants were read a description of Ag in the Classroom, which said

"Florida Ag in the Classroom is a nonprofit organization that develops and trains teachers and agriculture industry volunteers in its agriculture curricula and materials, which they in turn use to educate students about the importance of agriculture. It also provides grant money to teachers and volunteers for projects that teach students where their food comes from, and the important contribution Florida Farmers make to their communities and their state."

After hearing the descriptions, participants discussed what they thought of the description. Participants generally had questions to ask after hearing the statement.

- One participant discussed the facilitation of the program and asked, "It is a lofty purpose statement, but how is it facilitated?"



- Another participant asked how teachers get involved with program and said, "I guess I wonder what is the outreach and how do teachers get involved with it. Do they send stuff to every teacher or do teachers say they want to participate?"
- Another participant discussed if Ag in the Classroom was just for Ag teachers, or different types of teachers and asked, "Is it just Ag focused teachers. Or is chemistry and other teachers?"

Participants stated that description of Ag in the Classroom was too broad and needed to be more specific to get them to support the organization.

- One participant discussed focusing more on the end goal of the program and said, "Me personally? Just reading it, it is more of a broader generalization of what they are trying to do not exactly what they are aiming for. I would be less likely to support it if I was not already involved in agriculture. It would require a statement of what we are going to do for a pin point coverage."
- Another participant discussed that she would volunteer but would not buy something based on the description and said, "The description is kind of broad. If someone called me up and said do you want to be involved based on this description by having kids coming out to your farm or me going to the farm, OK yes. But in terms of buying something, like the Ag Tag, based on the description probably not."

Participants agreed the most likely person to support the organization would be people in agriculture.

Participants were told money generated from the Florida Ag Tag program goes to support Florida Ag in the Classroom. Participants discussed how this made them feel. Participants generally agreed that it made them happy. Participants said they would be more likely to purchase the tag because it helps to support the organization.

- A participant said that he/she was happy with the amount from the plate going to Ag in the Classroom but still had reservations. This participant said, "That's a higher portion than I was thinking would go towards it, but what are the statistics? Is it really worth it? Donating time and experience to be involved in Ag in the classroom would be better if it is not really going fully into the program."
- Another participant discussed that knowing where the plate proceeds went to made him/her more likely to purchase a tag. This participant said, "It makes me more likely to do it. Knowing that the proceeds go to help support education."
- A participant said, "I would be more likely to buy this over another specialty tag."
- Another participant discussed how knowing where the proceeds go to makes him/her more likely to purchase the Ag Tag and said, "Knowledge of existence makes me more likely to buy it [the Ag Tag]."

Participants discussed other ways to support Ag in the Classroom including volunteering time and experience.

- One participant said that it [the tag] was an acceptable way, but he/she thought volunteering would be better: "Yes, it is a good way to support. Especially for people who can't take the time to donate experience. But I think the hands-on portion of it is crucial. I know that for me, as soon as I had the opportunity I was in it."
- Another participant stated that he/she wished there were more ways to donate and said, "It's acceptable [Ag Tag]. I wish there were better ways to get more bang for your buck."

The participants also discussed the idea that the government was charging more money to facilitate the fundraiser through the Ag Tag.

- A participant said. "I would rather just donate \$35 dollars than giving part of it to the government and the rest to Ag in the Classroom."



- A participant discussed how people might be leery of spending more money and not all of it going to the organization and said, "The Ag demographic is all about limiting any excess margins with fees."
- Another participant discussed how having the tag helps to reach a large audience and said, "In terms of reaching a really wide audience, anyone that drives has to go to the tag office to get their tag, you will reach a lot of people."

Participants discussed other ways of supporting Ag in the Classroom.

- A participant discussed donating online and asked, "Is there somewhere to donate on a website? Everything is online."
- Another participant discussed volunteering and said, "People have a stronger connection to things they are personally connected with, like volunteering time. It will make people more invested. People more likely to donate if you have volunteered. It is continuing a relationship."

Participants agreed those involved in the Ag industry would be interested in visiting local classrooms to talk about their farms, but time may be a limiting factor.

- One participant discussed that farm visits would depend on the producer and said, "Its probably 50/50. Some do and some don't."
- Another participant discussed that class visits may correspond with harvest times making it harder for a producer to go in and talk to people. This participant said, "A lot of times it does happen during a big crop harvesting time. It is hard to bring people in during these times. But, if they want to do it, they will seek it out."
- Others discussed how it was hard to give that time. One participant said, "I am interested in being involved, but I have a relativity new business so it is hard to justify that time I have to take out. Like is there some other benefit."

The participants discussed that barriers that prevent people from supporting the program include lack of knowledge that support is needed and state laws on curriculum.

- A participant discussed that more needs to be done to show people support is needed and said, "Not having it out there. You need to show that support is needed. Everybody can have the opportunity to think other people are doing it, when in actuality there are not that many people doing it."
- Another participant discussed how teaching is dependent on state curriculum and said, "As far as barriers, it is probably the demand in curriculum. What are these teachers having to teach on a regular basis?"
- Another participant discussed that curriculum needs to be developed, if it isn't there already, to teach agriculture and the other subjects at the same time. This participant said, "The projects that I was involved in [when involved in Ag in the Classroom in another state] were developing curriculum to teach those other subjects. You are going to have to teach math and writing, and you should make your curriculum focused around agriculture to teach them both at the same time. If they had that accessible you know it might make it better."

### Concept Testing

The participants were told that Ag in the Classroom was preparing to launch a new marketing campaign and were asked what audiences should be targeted through the campaign.

Participants discussed that those in the agricultural industry and parents with kids should be the target audience for the campaign.

- One participant described how people throughout all stages of production and distribution of agricultural products should be included in the target audience. This participant said, "People that are connected to



agriculture. Even those that are connected indirectly, like selling produce, they are not directly in the production but in the end result.”

- Another participant discussed how parents could be the target audience when pushing the educational aspect of the campaign and said, “I would say a target group would be parents, that have young kids in school. Communicate that this is going to enrich their experience and tell them that this is a big industry in our state and this is where jobs are at, potentially. This is going to round out their learning. Or anyone that has kids.”

Participants discussed that social media would be the best channel to communicate the campaign. However, they identified that other methods of communication should still be used.

- One participant discussed Facebook and how advertisements could be placed to reach the target audience. This participant said, “Social media is huge. I know that Facebook is overwhelmed with ads. Some people may overlook them, but I know that a lot of people still see them.”
- A participant discussed how television commercials had been used in the past and said, “I think I have seen Ag Tag commercials on TV recently.”

### **Promotional material 1: Next Year’s Bumper Crop**

Participants were asked to discuss the Flyer 1 found in the Appendix A of this report. They were asked to discuss what they liked and disliked about the flyer, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect their purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, participants were asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.


The participants discussed the magazines that the flyers were placed in. Participants generally thought the flyers should not just be placed in trade magazines but in broader magazines in Florida.

- A participant discussed how placing the flyers in trade magazines minimize the target audience who sees the flyer. This participant said, “These are in trade magazines. You are preaching to the choir. It sounds like you are trying to broaden your demographics. I wouldn’t want to isolate them to a trade magazine.”
- One participant discussed placing the flyers in coupon books parents could pick up at the grocery store and said, “I would be more apt to put them in broader magazine tags. When you get people who are getting the Florida grower or citrus and vegetable they are already pretty involved. It’s still good to have them in there, but you should put them in things parents are going to pick up, that are not connected to agriculture. Like in supermarkets in their coupon things they give up. It would be nice to have that in there.”

Another theme that emerged was the discussion of the kids in the picture on the flyer.

- One participant made an observation and said, “This definitely looks like young kids. It doesn’t really get anything to me about FFA or 4-H or older kids being involved. It looks like young kids.”
- Another participant discussed how they would want more pictures of kids working with different agricultural products and said, “I would be more apt to want to see some kids actually doing something agricultural. These are pretty generic, these could be used for any type of classroom setting.”

Participants discussed how listing the proceed amount and more specifics about how the Ag Tag supports Ag in the Classroom could be beneficial in improving the flyer.





- This discussion between participants explains this theme:
  - “Maybe they could state what last year’s bumper crop was.”
  - “Or what do they do with it.”
  - “Yeah, you look on here it is to support the next generation and understanding it, but how much of a change is it really making?”
- Another participant questioned the relationship between Fresh from Florida and Ag in the Classroom. This participant asked, “It says to send me a Fresh from Florida bag. So, Fresh from Florida is the marketing campaign, so is the funding from Fresh from Florida going into Florida Ag in the Classroom? Or is totally separate? What is the connection between those two?”
- A participant stated, “Just more specifics [need to be listed on the tag]. It is kind of vague in terms of what the impact is and why is it important.”

When asked if they would be more willing to purchase an Ag Tag based on the flyer, participants discussed how they would not pick up this magazine, and would not see the flyer.

- A participant said, “I wouldn’t read any of these magazines so I wouldn’t see it.”
- Another participant discussed how he/she would purchase the Ag Tag, if the flyer was in a magazine that he/she read. This participant said, “If it was in something that I frequently pick up, yeah maybe.”

## Promotional material 2: Buy an Ag Tag

Participants were asked to discuss Flyer 2 found in the Appendix A of this report. They were asked to discuss what they liked and disliked about the flyer, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect their purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, participants were asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.

The participants generally liked the Buy an Ag Tag flyer more than the Next Year’s Bumper Crop flyer:

- One participant discussed how he/she liked the Buy an Ag Tag flyer more than the Next Year’s Bumper Crop because it actually showed the proceed amount. This participant said, “I like the second one [Buy an Ag Tag] better than the first [Next Year’s Bumper Crop]. But I think these are better at giving their actual mission. It is more generalized here; when they do see it they are more intent. It says \$20 goes to our kids. Which makes people more incentives wise to do it.”
- This participant liked how the kids were interacting with agriculture in this flyer. One participant said, “In terms of the interactive-ness of the kids with agriculture, it is the better image.” Later, the same participant stated, “Improvement over the last one, but I would still like to see it more hands-on.”

Although the participants liked this flyer, they still had reservations about the design and the message:

- One participant commented on the design and said, “This is like totally Photoshopped. They are not really there.”
- Another participant discussed the message and said, “It does a better job of explaining. But it still doesn’t do what you mentioned earlier, the facilitation of it. What are they going to do to accomplish these goals, or what have they done previously.”



Participants were made aware that two different logos were on the flyer. Participants were asked to identify which of the two logos, Ag in the Classroom Logo found in Appendix A of this report or Fresh from Florida logo found in Appendix A of this report, they liked better and why. Participants said that people would associate the Ag in the Classroom logo with agriculture and education.

- One participant discussed how they liked the Ag in the Classroom logo better and said, "I like this one [Ag in the Classroom Logo] better. This one [Fresh from Florida] could be general. It could be pasture anywhere."
- Another participant discussed how the Ag in the Classroom logo connects education to agriculture and said, "I think the one with the paper and pencils. It is a really good generalization because it does connect the agricultural tag to you know the direct education of it."

### **Promotional material 3: Watch Me Grow**

Participants were asked to discuss the Flyer 3 found in the Appendix A of this report. They were asked to discuss what they liked and disliked about the flyer, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect their purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, participants were asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.

Participants generally liked this flyer better than Buy an Ag Tag and the Next Year's Bumper Crop flyers.

- A participant discussed how the flyer was more specific about what the Ag Tag was supporting and said, "This one is a little more specific about the kinds of things, like supporting."
- A participant discussed how the flyer mentions previously discussed improvements and said, "I thought it addressed the things we have already addressed, where the money is going to, what they are doing with it."
- Another participant stated that the flyer catches your eye and gives information. This participant said, "I like how it this one really broadens and catches your eye with one side, and you can get more information on the other side. If they want to know more they still have to look further. When they are in these catalogs, it is really easy to skim through, whereas this they have to physically grab it and throw it away. You can't miss it."

Participants did not like the kid in the flowerpot.

- A participant stated, "It is kind of contrived. Like this kid in the flowerpot. They are still not really actual plants or anything actually agricultural in the picture. Even if they were just holding a vegetable or something. It's OK."

Participants continued to discuss the theme of adding specifics about the program and how the program will help to support kids.

- One participant discussed the improvement of adding more information about the educational aspect of Ag in the Classroom and said, "How does agriculture in the classroom help to benefit kids. How does agriculture help benefit kids more than another interest group saying we need kids to learn about this [agriculture]. Because there are a million things that kids can learn about."
- Another participant stated, "Just have more specifics, it's [learning where food comes from] more important than ever, but why?"

### **Promotional material 4: Billboard**



Participants were asked to discuss the Billboard found in the Appendix A of this report. They were asked to discuss what they liked and disliked about it, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect their purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, participants were asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.

Participants discussed the message and the design of the billboard.

- One participant stated, "It is very busy for a billboard."
- Another participant liked the connection with kids and agriculture but said that it would be hard to read driving down the interstate. This participant said, "I like that it has a better connection. A direct product that Florida is a staple at producing. You are on the turnpike that is all you are passing by, so it definitely connects that in the classroom a lot better. But, yeah, is it something that I would be able to read in the time I was driving on by, probably not."

When asked what message the Billboard was trying to convey, participants discussed how it was teaching kids where food comes from.

- One participant stated, "Teaching kids where food comes from. There are piles of them that have no clue. They will tell you Publix."

Participants discussed how the billboard could be improved.

- A participant discussed that the billboard needed to be: "Short sweet and to the point."
- Another participant stated that the website, agtag.org, needed to be more prevalent on the billboard. This participant said: "Make the agTag.org more prevalent. Because they are not going to look it up going down the interstate. They will think OK what is that web address. I would have that be the most prevalent on the board."
- Another participant liked the look of it, but probably wouldn't remember seeing it afterwards. This participant said: "The layout and the design of the ad is better than the previous ones. But once I am off the road, I have cleared my head of anything else. You have to remember to go look it up later."

Participants stated that the billboard would not convince someone to buy an Ag Tag, unless they had thought about in the past.

- One participant said, "I think that it would more likely for the people that have already been thinking about it. For something that someone that hasn't thought about it, I don't see why that this would motivate them to that point [of buying the product]."

### Create a Message

In this final section, participants were asked to create their own message or campaign to increase the purchase of the Florida Ag Tag, targeted to an audience of people like them. Participants were asked to indicate what modes of communication should be used for this revised campaign. In addition, participants were asked to tell Florida Ag in the Classroom how to improve their current campaign and increase the purchase of the Ag Tag.

Participants discussed the specifics and the statistics about Ag in the Classroom and how they should be part of the new campaign.



- One participant discussed the specific goals and accomplishments and how they should be listed in the campaign. This participant said, "State what your goals are, what we want to accomplish in the classroom, and how much money we have previously given in previous years to that."
- Another participant recommended listing the amount of kids benefited in the new campaign and said, "The amount of kids that have went through the program. Especially those who have gone into an Ag type degree, be it chemistry or whatever. That would be nice to know, even if it is not here, but at least on the information when you go to look it up."

Participants discussed new ways of reaching the target audience in the new campaign.

- One participant recommended targeting the horse industry. This participant said, "The horse industry. The horse industry is huge here in Florida. Due to the thoroughbred racing and things like that. That uses ag. We use god-awful amounts of feed and hay every year. With them, they would be more willing if you showed them how much of an impact that it makes."
- Another participant discussed making a video and said, "If I was one the website and I was like should I get it or not get it. Maybe a video – where you have teachers or students saying what the impact was. What is the impact of it? Ag ventures OK what is that?"

Participants discussed the modes of communication the new campaign should be channeled through:

- A participant discussed how advertisements, in local produce stores, would be the most beneficial. This participant said, "For me it would be of advertisements, not so much generalized, but broader where normal nonagricultural people are going to pick up, like at a grocery store you know and you are by Florida organic stuff and you are not getting organic stuff in Taiwan, having the direct correlation between that agriculture product and where it comes from."
- Another participant commented on the produce store statement and asked, "What if they just stuck them in the produce department?"
- A non-social media-savvy participant said, "Facebook would not work for me. I would never see it. I would see it in my trade magazine, like Florida Cattleman's magazine."
- A participant talked about having a representative at industry meetings to talk to the target audience about the Ag Tag and Ag in the Classroom. This participant said, "Industry meetings, like if you go to contest, you have a booth and you have someone representing it there. I went to Ag and small enterprises or alternative [small farms conference] last year and you go and look around, if there is someone there they talk to you, you will actually remember talking to that person about it. That to me is a good way to reach people. People have set time aside to talk to people, if I am not setting aside time, I am not looking at it. The things that comes to me in the mail, it goes straight to the trash."
- Another participant discussed using the Extension program as a resource and asked, "Can it be connected to 4-H or Extension?"

Participants discussed improvements that should be made to make a new campaign better. Topics included explaining where the money is going to and what the impact of the Ag Tag is.

- A participant stated, "Do a better job of explaining where the money is going."



- Another participant discussed that the new campaign should focus on the impact the program has on kids' lives, "What kind of impact that it has. Show much that impact really is. Is it going to make a difference in 20 years?"

### Personal Interview I: Gainesville, Fla.

This participant was a science teacher who has used Ag in the Classroom in the Gainesville area for the last 37 years. She owned an Ag Tag at the time of the interview and indicated that she has had it for over four years.

### General Tag Discussion

In this section the participant described her general tag buying preferences. General tag buying preferences included if she has bought or currently owns a specialty license plate. In this discussion, the participant talked about what influences her decision or what barriers prevent her from purchasing a specialty tag.

This participant liked having the option to buy a specialty license plate and believed those involved with agriculture would be the most likely to buy an "Ag Tag."

- This participant elaborated on who would be likely to buy an Ag Tag and said, "Farmers. Those who teach Agriculture and I hope others who realize the importance of agriculture would buy an Ag Tag"

The participant felt that cost was the largest barrier preventing people from buying a specialty tag.

- Discussing the cost associated with specialty plates the participant said, "The initial cost of just having a license plate is so expensive, technically they are not much more, but you add that on top of the plate and it is a lot."

The participant indicated that if the cost of the plate was less, then more people might be willing to purchase it. In addition, the participant identified that a lack of knowledge could be a barrier to Ag Tag sales and more advertising and information about what the proceeds of the Ag Tag support could help to increase sales.

- The participant discussed that there is probably a lack of knowledge surrounding Ag in the Classroom and said, "Maybe if they [potential Ag Tag buyers] understood what is happening more with the money. I know this is where I get my grant money, but unless you go to the Florida Ag in the Classroom, you will not know where the money comes from."

### Specific Tag Discussion

In this section, the participant discussed the specific license tag in Florida, the Ag Tag. The participant described what came to mind when they heard the words Ag Tag and their general opinions about the Ag Tag.

When asked what comes to mind when she heard the phrase Ag Tag, the participant indicated that the phrase reminds her of her vehicle, Lisa Gaskalla [Florida Ag in the Classroom – Executive Director], her curriculum, and her school. She believed the phrase was referring to the license plate.

- Describing the association of the Ag Tag with the license plate, the participant said, "The Ag Tag is pretty clever, and it is referring to a license plate."

When reflecting on the appearance of the Ag Tag, the participant discussed that she liked how the Ag Tag was not cluttered. Additionally, she really liked the word agriculture at the top of the Ag Tag because it made it obvious that the plate was about agriculture.

- Describing her reflections on the appearance of the plate, the participant said, “It kind of uses the Fresh from Florida symbol but in a different way, but it is clear, not confusing, and not too busy. It is really specific”

However, the participant stated that she would not know what the tag was supporting just from looking at it.

- The participant described the Ag Tag’s association to agriculture and not Ag in the Classroom and said, “I would think the money went for something in agriculture, but not for what, it makes me think of saving agriculture.”

The participant stated that she believed the Ag Tag was trying to reach everyone in Florida.

### Florida Agriculture in the Classroom

In this section, the participant discussed Florida Agriculture in the Classroom. The participant discussed if she had heard of Florida Agriculture in the Classroom previously, the purpose of the organization, and the audiences it is trying to reach

When asked what comes to mind when she hears the phrase Florida Ag in the Classroom, the participant stated that curriculum comes to mind. She stated that the purpose of the organization was “to help children and their parents to understand the importance of Ag in Florida.” The participant stated that the program was most likely to benefit school-aged children, but that it was trying to reach both children and their parents.

The participant was read a description of Ag in the Classroom, which said

“Florida Ag in the Classroom is a nonprofit organization that develops and trains teachers and agriculture industry volunteers in its agriculture curricula and materials, which they in turn use to educate students about the importance of agriculture. It also provides grant money to teachers and volunteers for projects that teach students where their food comes from, and the important contribution Florida Farmers make to their communities and their state.”

- Referencing the description, the participant said, “This is why I started using [Ag in the Classroom], it sounded like a sensible way to market a product.”

When discussing who could support Florida Ag in the Classroom, the participant identified that farmers and teachers would support the program. Additionally, the participant really liked the idea that the Ag Tag supported the Ag in the Classroom program.

- Discussing who would support Ag in the Classroom, the participant said “One, Farmers, those in the agricultural industry, that’s who I think financially support the program. And two, teachers, particularly science teachers.”

The participant believed there could be other ways to support Florida Ag in the Classroom, such as different fundraising and monetary donations. The participant was already highly involved with Ag in the Classroom. The main ways she supported the program was by owning an Ag Tag, being a member of the advisory board, field-testing curriculum, and volunteering at different events.

The participant identified that the main barriers to supporting Ag in the Classroom were knowledge of the program, money, and donations. She stated that educating people about the program was essential.





- When discussing the lack of knowledge people have about Ag in the Classroom, the participant said, “People just don’t know. People don’t know about Ag in the Classroom or they may think that is not important to teach about agriculture and keeping our state green and healthy.”

### Specific Teacher Questions

In this section, teachers were asked specific questions about Florida Ag in the Classroom including how they have used the program in the past and what are ways that the program could be improved to help teachers like themselves.

The participant discussed how she had used Ag in the Classroom in her classroom. She stated that she had field-tested curriculum, worked with Ag literacy day and had people read books in the classroom. The participant also helped find the graphic designer for the Ag Literacy Day books and had received many Ag in the Classroom grants.

- Discussing some of the things she had done with her Ag in the Classroom grants, the participant said, “When I first started with Ag in the Classroom, my colleague and I bought student version of the Land Remembered (Volumes one and two), and that was the first Ag in the Classroom grant we received. We bought books and tied it to our Florida studies and social studies. We also grew a garden for our math and science [classes]. We also have all of my science equipment through Ag in the Classroom since we don’t get much money from the state. I get enough to buy one balance from the school system and that is not enough, so all of my beakers, graduated cylinders, microscopes, and balances are from Ag in the Classroom grants.”

The participant stated the curriculum and the grant money was a key reason to support Florida Ag in the Classroom.

- Explaining the benefit of Ag in the Classroom to her classroom, the participant said, “I would not have my science equipment or the novels or the food to cook for cattle drives without Ag in the Classroom. It enriches our program tremendously.”

The participant identified that there was a need to educate other teachers about the program.

- Expressing this need the participant said, “Letting teachers know the curriculum is out there, and that it is easily accessible since it is online now.”

### Concept Testing

The participant was told that Ag in the Classroom was preparing to launch a new marketing campaign and was asked what audience(s) should be targeted through the campaign.

The participant stated everyone should be the target audience for the new Ag Tag campaign. However, she did identify those most like to buy the Ag Tag, including “Farmers, people in the Ag industry, teachers, other people.” The participant discussed that many communication channels that could be used in the campaign including TV advertisements, social media, newspaper, radio, gator sporting events, and online newspapers.

Due to lack of time, the promotional materials section was not completed during this interview.

### Create a Message

In this final section, the participant was asked to create her own message or campaign to increase the purchase of the Florida Ag Tag, targeted to an audience of people like herself. Participants were asked to indicate what modes of communication should be used for this revised campaign. In addition, participants were asked to tell Florida Ag in the Classroom how to improve their current campaign and increase the purchase of the Ag Tag.



When asked to create a message for Ag in the Classroom's new promotional campaign, the participant stated a message, such as "Grow with Florida Agriculture" might do well as a campaign. In addition, she stated that it might be good to promote the gardening aspect of the program. The participant suggested using online communication as the primary communications tool because "everyone's online."

## Personal Interview II: Gainesville, Fla.

This participant was a Florida Extension Agent. He owned at the time of the interview an Ag Tag and indicated that he had it for more than a year.

### General Tag Discussion

In this section the participant described his general tag buying preferences. General tag buying preferences included if he has ever bought or currently owns a specialty license plate. In this discussion, the participant talked about what influences his decision or what barriers prevent him from purchasing a specialty tag.

The participant had purchased two different specialty tags before, including the University of Florida tag and the Ag Tag. The participant stated that he has had the Ag Tag for around three years and decided to get it to support the agriculture industry.

- When describing the specialty plates that he had owned, the participant said, "My first was the UF, the Gators, and my second when I got my current vehicle, I purchased the Ag Tag . I deal with a lot with agricultural producers and commodity groups, and so when I got my new vehicle and had that option I made the choice to switch to support agriculture in someway. Contribute to agriculture."

### Specific Tag Discussion

In this section, the participant discussed the specific license tag in Florida, the Ag Tag. The participant described what came to mind when he heard the words Ag Tag and his general opinions about the Ag Tag.

When asked what comes to mind when he heard the phrase Ag Tag, the participant said the phrase reminded him of agriculture. However, the participant indicated that he had not heard of the phrase Ag Tag before the interview. The participant had seen the Ag Tag before, especially in the Gainesville area, but did not see it regularly in Nassau County where he was originally from.

The participant seemed to like the look of the Ag Tag. However, there was one thing he disliked.

- Discussing his dislike toward the message on the Ag Tag the participant said, "The one thing that pops out of me is 'Keeps Florida Green,' and there might be confusion because people think go green, no pesticides, no herbicides."

The participant did not know where the money generated from the tag went but felt that the audience could be anyone that owns a vehicle.

### Florida Agriculture in the Classroom

In this section, the participant discussed Florida Agriculture in the Classroom. The participants discussed if he had heard of Florida Agriculture in the Classroom previously, the purpose of the organization, and the audiences it is trying to reach.

When asked what comes to mind when he hears the phrase Florida Ag in the Classroom, the participant thought of specific terms and indicated that the organization is most likely to benefit school-aged children

- The participant explained that Ag literacy was one of the things that came to mind when he heard Ag in the Classroom and said, "I think of Ag literacy. And I know that we have an Ag in the classroom department and they make curriculum."
- The participant stated that the purpose of Ag in the Classroom is to increase Ag literacy in the classroom and make more Ag competence. He said, "Increase that competence and awareness with Ag information."

The participant was read a description of Ag in the Classroom, which said

"Florida Ag in the Classroom is a nonprofit organization that develops and trains teachers and agriculture industry volunteers in its agriculture curricula and materials, which they in turn use to educate students about the importance of agriculture. It also provides grant money to teachers and volunteers for projects that teach students where their food comes from, and the important contribution Florida Farmers make to their communities and their state."

After hearing the short description about Florida Ag in the Classroom, the participant stated words like partnerships, resources, and training.

- The participant discussed these words and said, "Partnerships. Partnerships are key. . . . Resources. Training, training teachers to use curriculum."

The participant indicated that he would support the organization and recommended that organizations such as 4-H, FFA, Florida Farm Bureau, and the school board may also be willing to support the organization.

- Describing his willingness to support the participant said, "I think first professionally because I am the 4-H agent, and we have the same goal. And secondly I would support the organization personally. If I were asked to give money, I definitely would."

The participant liked learning that the money from the Ag Tag went to Ag in the Classroom.

- Displaying excitement toward the proceeds of the Ag Tag the participant said, "Now I know where the money actually goes, that I spent towards the Ag Tag. I like it better now that it goes to Ag in the Classroom instead of Ag research or something. I like that it goes to school-aged children."

After learning that the proceeds of the Ag Tag went to Ag in the Classroom, the participant said he would be more likely to support the organization and would be more willing to tell others to buy an Ag Tag because it does support children.

The participant stated that the Ag Tag was an acceptable way to raise money for the program but suggested that there may be additional alternatives, such as luncheon fundraisers with commodity groups. The participant stated people needed to be more aware of what the Ag Tag is and how the Ag in the Classroom program is related.

- Discussing the funding for Ag in the Classroom the participant said, "[Ag Tag] is an easy way to earn money or proceeds, but I think there are a lot of other ways that they could be supported."





The participant stated he would be willing to support the program in other ways, but he is not sure how else he can support the organization.

- Highlighting the need for more information about ways to support Ag in the Classroom, the participant said, "Knowing ways that I could contribute. Do they have initiatives? Do they have a newsletter? I feel like I have to go out of my way to support, and it should be the other way."

### Concept Testing

The participant was told that Ag in the Classroom was preparing to launch a new marketing campaign and was asked what audiences should be targeted through the campaign.

The participant thought Ag in the Classroom should make different partnerships and sell the Ag Tag to these groups.

- The participant referenced certain groups that should be targeted to buy the Ag Tag and said, "Agricultural commodity groups should be a big target if they are not already, as well as Farm Bureau."

The participant thought people that work or are interested in agriculture would be the most likely to buy the Ag Tag. Additionally, he thought Ag in the Classroom should use social media or mailers to communicate with their target audience.

### Promotional material 1: Next Year's Bumper Crop

The participant was asked to discuss Flyer 1 found in the Appendix A of this report. He was asked to discuss what he liked and disliked about it, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect his purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, the participants was asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.

The participant liked that the flyer showed children in the photos. The participant believed that flyer was trying to convince someone to buy an Ag Tag but identified that only the Ag Tag was referenced.

- Identifying that there may be other means of support that were not highlighted on the flyer, the participant stated, "There is no where to send a check. Could we just send in money?"

### Promotional material 2: Buy an Ag Tag

The participant was asked to discuss Flyer 2 found in the Appendix A. He was asked to discuss what he liked and disliked about it, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect his purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, the participant was asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.

The participant liked that the Buy an Ag Tag flyer showed where and how much of the proceeds were going to the program.

- Discussing the clarity of the Buy an Ag Tag flyer, the participant said, "I like this because you know where the money and how much is going."

### Promotional material 3: Watch Me Grow



The participant was asked to discuss Flyer 3 found in the Appendix A of this report. He was asked to discuss what he liked and disliked about it, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect his purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, the participant was asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.

The participant liked the slogan, the photo, and the ease of reading in the Watch Me Grow flyer.

- Showing his favoritism toward the Watch me Grow flyer, the participant said, "It's the cutest one. I like the kids in the pot."

However, the participant did not like that the flyer did not discuss where the proceeds of the Ag Tag went.

- Identifying the opportunity to promote the program in the flyer, the participant said, "There is nothing about what has been done. There are no success stories. There are no numbers about how many youth had been reached."

#### **Promotional material 4: Billboard**

The participant was asked to discuss the Billboard found in the Appendix A. He was asked to discuss what he liked and disliked about it, what message it was trying to convey, and how it would affect his purchase of the Florida Ag Tag. In addition, the participant was asked to discuss what improvements could be made to reach a target audience and increase the sales of the Florida Ag Tag.

- The participant really liked how children and agriculture were put together on this billboard and said, "I like how the orange is cut open."

The participant also liked the phrase "Ag Tag" on the billboard. However, the participant indicated that he did not like billboards.

#### **Create a Message**

In this final section, participant was asked to create their own message or campaign to increase the purchase of the Florida Ag Tag, targeted to an audience of people like him. The participant was asked to indicate what modes of communication should be used for this revised campaign. In addition, the participant was asked to tell Florida Ag in the Classroom how to improve their current campaign and increase the purchase of the Ag Tag.

The participant liked the message from one of the flyers shown during the interview.

- Explaining his favoritism toward the message, he said, "I like buy an Ag Tag, watch me grow. It makes me think about children and growing."

The participant recommended that the promotional materials need to be more simple and clean, but he did like the bullet points because it gives the message in a short and concise way.

The participant stated that social media should be the main focus of the future campaign. In addition, the participant recommended that Ag in the Classroom develop a listserv to send out newsletters, dates, and other fundraising events in order to "keep the audience engaged."



The participant suggested partnering with different agricultural commodity groups to see if they will help to support the Ag in the Classroom program. The participant stated that additional types of fundraising should be pursued.

## Key Findings

The results of these focus groups, group interview, and individual interviews provide a detailed look into public perceptions of the Florida Ag Tag and Ag in the Classroom. The summary below compiles the results.

### General Tag Discussion

- Participants purchased a specialty license plate due to allegiance to an organization, cause, or industry. Participants discussed how people would purchase a tag if they believed strongly in the message the plate had.
- Participants liked the idea or the option of buying a specialty license plate.
- Participants agreed that they liked to have the option to donate to a specific charity or cause if they wanted to.
- Barriers preventing participants from purchasing a tag previously included cost, added expense, lack of convenience, too many options, and lack of knowledge of where proceeds go. In addition, many participants discussed that cars purchased from the dealer are automatically given a default Florida tag.
- Participants stated targeting audiences, creating interest, and educating the consumer would make consumers consider purchasing a different specialty plate, or purchasing one for the first time.

### Specific Tag Discussion

- Participants were asked what the Ag Tag means to them. One theme that emerged from these discussions is that the tag would be used for someone in Agriculture.
- Participants agreed that general public would understand that the tag was made to support someone or something in agriculture. However, participants stated they would still have to explain to the general public the importance of the industry.
- Most of the participants had seen the Ag Tag license plate in the past.
- Participants agreed that the purpose of the tag was to financial support something in agriculture. A few participants knew that it was used to support Ag in the Classroom, but the majority of participants did not.
- Participants had a lack of association with Florida Ag in the Classroom and the Ag Tag.
- Participants lacked knowledge of the plate's proceeds.
- Most participants liked the colors in the Ag Tag and thought the overall design was attractive. However, participants did not like the message "Keep Florida Green" at the bottom, as it brought up images of the green movement, and thought this should be changed to align more with the Ag in the Classroom program.
- Participants tended to be confused with the letters, "I AM 4 AG" and suggested SAMPLE should be written instead.
- Participants agreed those most likely to purchase the Ag Tag would be those involved with agriculture, educators, and parents of children in the Ag in the Classroom program. Participants suggested that the primary audience for the Ag Tag would be the agricultural industry. Participants suggested that the secondary audience for the Ag Tag would be the elementary school educators and parents.

### Florida Agriculture in the Classroom

- Participants agreed that they have heard of Florida Ag in the Classroom before taking part in the study.



- Participants were aware of the program; however, participants were unaware of the scope of the program. Participants referred to 4-H and FFA instead of directing toward Ag in the Classroom.
- Participants agreed the purpose of Florida Ag in the Classroom is to educate children about agriculture. Those who were more familiar with the program believed that this program would be a good supplemental program to prepare kids for the FCAT and their futures and brought up specific activities, such as Ag Literacy Day, field trips and classroom gardeners.
- Participants agreed those most likely to benefit from the program are children, parents, and society.
- Participants stated a variety of audiences for Ag in the Classroom including elementary school to junior high students, parents, educators, and the entire society.
- Participants added that the brief description was a very lengthy mission statement, and it needed to be more specific to overall goals of the program/organization.
- Participants discussed how they would be likely to support the organization in many ways, including donating financially, volunteer work, and distributing information.
- Participants believed social media needed to be a communication channel, where kids and educators could have access to the information.
- Educators and those in the agricultural industry were those who participants agreed would be the most likely to support the program.
- Participants generally agreed that the Ag Tag was one way to support the organization. However, participants suggested many different types of fundraising such as direct donation, volunteering, luncheons, farmers, or organizations donating food for events and partnering with grocery stores or industry groups.

## Concept Testing

- Participants agreed that the primary target audience for the campaign should be those in the agricultural industry and educators.
- The secondary audience should be the general public or parents of school-aged children, especially with a campaign emphasis on education.
- Participants believed social media would be a good communication channel to use. In addition, participants discussed partnering with stores, such as Publix, industry organizations such as FNGLA, and local markets, as well as distributing take home flyers, mailers, and emails.

## Promotional Materials

- Participants tended to like the slogans, such as “Next Year’s Bumper Crop” on the flyers.
- Participants liked the Ag in the Classroom logo, with the paper barn and pencil silo.
- Participants stated that the Ag in the Classroom logo should be used on the plate.
- Participants stated that the flyers had too much information. In addition, the message tended to be unclear due to the excess amount of information.
- Participants questioned the idea of the \$20 proceed amount not being on the majority of the flyers. Participants strongly agreed that this needed to be listed on all promotional materials.
- Participants stated other ways to donate needed to be placed on the flyers.
- Participants liked the diversity of agricultural products shown on the Flyer 2 and the kid holding the sign.
- Participants noticed the child in the pot on Flyer 3 was stretched out and not proportional. Participants stated that this was not a good design and needed to be revised.



- Participants agreed materials had too much information and consumers should be directed to a website, such as [agtag.org](http://agtag.org), to find more information.
- Participants discussed the presence of unwanted information on the flyers, such as emphasis on the collector's office.
- Participants did not like the idea of the flyers or advertisements being solely placed in industry magazines. Participants agreed that the flyer needed to be placed in general informational magazines, such as coupon books at grocery stores or other Florida magazines.

### Create a Message

- Participants believed there needed to be more of a focus on children or educating students in a future campaign.
- Participants gave recommendations on being more specific on goals and accomplishments of the program, such as money generated from the Ag Tag. Participants agreed that the brand needed to be more fully developed and to be used consistently on messages and curriculum.
- Participants discussed communication channels, such as social media, informational videos, PSAs, mailers, and emails to distribute information.
- Participants agreed the campaign needed to be revised into simpler messages and more attractive designs.
- The campaign needed to focus on the agricultural education aspect of the Ag Tag and participants suggested adding the \$20 proceeds amount on the campaign materials.

## Recommendations

Based on the results and findings of this research, the following recommendations have been made.

### Campaign Recommendations

- The revised campaign needs to have a primary target audience of those in the agricultural industry. Participants identified the target audience as those who work with agriculture.
- The secondary audience should be educators and parents of elementary students. Participants discussed how these educators and parents of elementary students are involved with Ag in the Classroom.
- Communicators should improve advertising of the Florida Ag Tag to include the purpose and highlight the \$20 proceeds donation to Florida Ag in the Classroom. Several participants indicated that they did not know the purpose of the Florida Ag Tag and where the proceeds go. Participants identified a need for further advertising to highlight the purpose and where the proceed donations go.
- Promotional materials need to specify more than one way to donate. Participants discussed how the promotional materials only referenced the Ag Tag; instead, promotional materials should also direct consumers to a website for direct donation to the program.
- Promotional materials should contain specific information on how the \$20 proceeds amount has benefited children in the past. For example, one participant described how they liked that the promotional material said next years bumper crop but wondered what was this years bumper crop was.
- Promotional materials should have limited information. Participants agreed the promotional materials contained too much information. Bullet points will help to limit and list important information.
- Promotional materials need to be consistent throughout in regards to websites, logos, and phone numbers. Researchers identified two different phone numbers on one promotional material. In addition, participants



noted on some materials agtag.org was listed and on others www.agtag.org. All materials should contain the same information.

- Communicators should develop a short promotional video highlighting the benefits and reasons to buy an Ag Tag. Participants tended to be unaware of what the program supports. In addition, participants were unaware of the plate supporting Ag in the Classroom grants.
- Ag in the Classroom should work to develop an online campaign. Participants discussed the benefits of communicating online to all types of audiences and that the new campaign should be focused to an online audience.
- Campaign materials should be listed in industry specific magazines as well as generic Florida magazines or coupon books. Participants discussed how promotional materials placed in industry magazines would target the agricultural industry; however, more promotional materials need to be placed in generic magazines to target parents and educators.

### License Plate, Ag Tag, Recommendations

- Ag in the Classroom should improve advertising of the Florida Ag Tag. Several participants indicated that they did not know the purpose of the Florida Ag Tag and where the proceeds go.
- The Ag Tag needs to have a stronger association with Florida Ag in the Classroom. Several participants indicated that they did not know that plate supports Florida Ag in the Classroom.
- The Ag Tag should be revised to include the Florida Ag in the Classroom logo. Participants generally liked the Florida Ag in the Classroom logo, and could identify education with agriculture, and suggested it should be placed on the plate.
  - Participants also confused this logo with the Fresh from Florida logo. Since, the plate does not support Fresh from Florida, this logo needs to be revised.
- The message on the bottom of the plate, Keep Florida Green, needs to be revised. Participants tended to associate the message with the “Green Movement” and suggested the message needed to incorporate educating children about agriculture.
- The sample license plate should have SAMPLE written instead of I AM 4 AG. Participants tended to be confused with this lettering.
- Florida Ag in the Classroom needs to be aware of the barriers preventing consumers from purchasing an Ag Tag, such as cost, inconvenience, and lack of knowledge. Participants agreed that the major limiting factor for consumers to buy a tag is that they did not know about the tag.

### Programming Recommendations

- Awareness of the Florida Ag in the Classroom needs to be raised. Participants had heard of the program but were unaware of the scope of the program.
- The audience needs to be made aware of the difference between Ag in the Classroom and other agricultural organizations, such as FFA and 4-H. Participants tended to be confused on the difference between organizations.
- Programmers should develop relationships with agricultural commodity groups, such as Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association, etc. Participants agreed that if Florida Ag in the Classroom partnered with these organizations, there would be higher awareness of Florida Ag in the Classroom and more support toward the program.

- The mission statement needs to be revised to be much shorter in length. Participants agreed this statement was too lengthy and wordy.
- Other ways to support the organization need to be emphasized. Other support options include volunteering, donating directly, or other fundraisers. Participants agreed that not everyone will want to buy an Ag Tag or they already have an Ag Tag and would like to support the program further.

## Appendix A: Marketing and Promotional Materials

The Ag Tag License Plate





## Flyer 1: Next Years Bumper Crop

### EDUCATE STUDENTS ABOUT FLORIDA AGRICULTURE!



If you think it is important for the next generation to understand Florida's diverse agriculture industry, please raise your hand and show your support by purchasing a Florida Ag Tag.

For more information, contact your local tax collector's office, visit [www.agtag.org](http://www.agtag.org) or call Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. at 352.846.1391



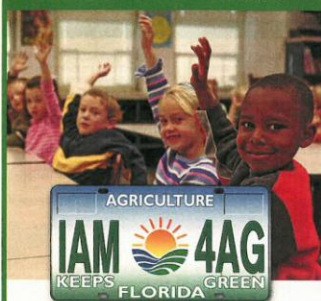
Your purchase of a Florida Agriculture specialty license tag provides support for Florida Agriculture in the Classroom which:

- Helps preserve Florida's farming heritage
- Educates Florida pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students about food and fiber production
- Supports agriculture-related classroom projects, school gardens and Ag-venture educational events through grant funding

For more information, please call Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. at 352.846.1394, email [faic@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:faic@ifas.ufl.edu) or visit [www.agtag.org](http://www.agtag.org)

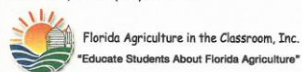


### NEXT YEAR'S BUMPER CROP



If you think it is important for the next generation to understand Florida's diverse agriculture industry, please show your support by purchasing a Florida Ag Tag.

For more information, contact your local tag office, visit [www.agtag.org](http://www.agtag.org) or call Florida Ag in the Classroom, Inc. at (352) 846-1391.



YES, send me a free "Fresh from Florida" gift bag and tell me more about the Florida Ag Tag.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State (FL only) Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Fax this form to Florida Ag in the Classroom at (352) 846-1390.

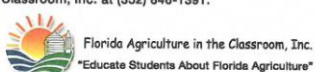
FG 06-6

### NEXT YEAR'S BUMPER CROP



If you think it is important for the next generation to understand Florida's diverse agriculture industry, please show your support by purchasing a Florida Ag Tag.

For more information, contact your local tag office, visit [www.agtag.org](http://www.agtag.org) or call Florida Ag in the Classroom, Inc. at (352) 846-1391.



YES, send me a free "Fresh from Florida" gift bag and tell me more about the Florida Ag Tag.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State (FL only) Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Fax this form to Florida Ag in the Classroom at (352) 846-1390.

CV 03-08

## Flyer 2: "Buy An Ag Tag"

**Educate Students about  
Florida Agriculture**



Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. is a non-profit association funded by the agriculture specialty license plate with the mission of expanding youth awareness and understanding of our agriculture and natural resources in Florida.

For more information, call (352) 846-1391, visit [www.agtag.org](http://www.agtag.org) or contact your local tax collector's office.


Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc.




**\$20 of your purchase goes to our kids.**

AUGUST 2008 | CITRUS & VEGETABLE MAGAZINE 19



**Educate Students about  
Florida Agriculture**



Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. is a non-profit association funded by the agriculture specialty license plate with the mission of expanding youth awareness and understanding of our agriculture and natural resources in Florida.

For more information, call (352) 846-1391, visit [www.agtag.org](http://www.agtag.org) or contact your local tax collector's office.

Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc.

**\$20 of your purchase goes to our kids.**

FLORIDA GROWER | JUNE 2008 | 7



## Flyer 3: "Watch me Grow"




**BUY AN AG TAG AND WATCH ME GROW!**

If you think it is important for the next generation to understand Florida's diverse agriculture industry, please show your support by purchasing a Florida Ag Tag.

For more information, contact your local tax collector's office, visit [www.agtag.org](http://www.agtag.org) or call Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. at 352.846.1391


 **Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc.**  
AGRICULTURE KEEPS FLORIDA GREEN



Your purchase of a Florida Agriculture specialty license tag provides support for Florida Agriculture in the Classroom which:

- Helps preserve Florida's farming heritage
- Educates Florida pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students about food and fiber production
- Supports agriculture-related classroom projects and Ag-venture educational events through grant funding

For more information, please call Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. at 352.846.1394, email [faic@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:faic@ifas.ufl.edu) or visit [www.agtag.org](http://www.agtag.org)


 **Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc.**  
AGRICULTURE KEEPS FLORIDA GREEN

**Renew Your Ag Tag and Watch Me Grow!**

It's more important than ever to teach our youth the value of Florida's agriculture products. Please purchase a Florida Ag Tag.

**Growing Instructions for Florida Students**

- Apply Agriculture in the Classroom lessons
- Begin with seedling stage and continue to maturity (K-12th grade)
- Recap lessons at frequent intervals for optimum growth and knowledge
- Adaptable to indoor and outdoor conditions

 **Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc.**

**Buy an Ag Tag**  
\$20 of your purchase helps educate our kids!


For more information, call (352) 846-1391, visit [www.agtag.org](http://www.agtag.org) or contact your local tax collector's office.

**Renew Your Ag Tag and Watch Me Grow!**

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 **Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc.**

**Buy an Ag Tag**  
\$20 of your purchase helps educate our kids!

For more information, call (352) 846-1391, visit [www.agtag.org](http://www.agtag.org) or contact your local tax collector's office.

# Teach Students Where Food Comes From

- Buy an **Ag Tag**  
[agtag.org](http://agtag.org)



Florida Agriculture  
in the Classroom, Inc.



Public Service Provided by the Florida Outdoor Advertising Association





## Appendix B: Marketing the Ag Tag Survey

CENTER FOR PUBLIC ISSUES EDUCATION IN AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES  
& FLORIDA AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM  
PRODUCER SURVEY

1. County of Residence: Seminole 2. Occupation: retired teacher
3. Have you ever bought a specialty plate? (Circle one of the following) Yes ☐ No ☒
4. If you answered No to question 3, why have you never bought a specialty plate?  
Not affiliation driven, do not use bumper stickers either.
5. If you answered Yes to question 3, which specialty plate(s) have you purchased?
6. If you answered Yes to questions 3, why did you buy a specialty plate?
7. How do you feel about having the option to buy specialty license plates?  
Like the option, but there are too many choices
8. What things do you think influence the decision of people like yourself to buy a certain specialty license plate? (Circle one of the following)  
Hobby Friends Allegiance Support a group Other: \_\_\_\_\_
9. What barriers prevent people like you from buying a specialty license plate? (Circle one of the following)  
Money Time/convenience Don't support any of the specialty plate groups or causes Other: \_\_\_\_\_
10. What comes to mind when you hear the words Ag Tag? Supporting Agriculture
11. What do you think the phrase Ag Tag is referring to?  
It is not clear - tagging fruit, veggies, cattle?

Here is a picture of the Ag Tag. Please take a moment to look at it.



12. Have you seen this license plate before? (Circle one of the following)

Yes

No

13. How do you feel about the Ag Tag?

I like seeing it on vehicles

14. What do you like about it?

It is colorful & centered

15. What do you dislike about it?

16. What do you think is the purpose of this Ag Tag?

To raise funds for Ag

17. What do you think the money generated from this Tag supports?

not sure

18. What audience(s) do you believe the Ag Tag is trying to reach?

All non-Ag people

19. Who do you think is most likely to buy this specialty license plate?

farmers, ranchers & growers

20. What barriers have prevented you from buying the tag? (Circle one of the following)

Money

Interest in alternative plate (i.e. FFA)

Farm truck tags Appearance

Other: must go into office & too much competition

21. What comes to mind when you hear Florida Agriculture in the Classroom?

reading books to students

22. What do you think is the purpose of this organization?

educate the youth

23. What audience(s) do you believe this organization is trying to reach?

all non-ag people

24. Who do you think is most likely to benefit from this organization?

any open-minded teacher & her students

Florida Ag in the Classroom is a nonprofit organization that develops and trains teachers and agriculture industry volunteers in its agriculture curricula and materials, which they in turn use to educate students about the importance of agriculture.

It also provides grant money to teachers and volunteers for projects that teach students where their food comes from, and the important contribution Florida Farmers make to their communities and their state.

25. After reading this description, what thoughts come to mind about Florida Ag in the Classroom?

keep it going!

26. How likely would you be to support this organization based on the description and why?

very likely

27. Who do you think is most likely to support this organization?

open minded people

28. Money generated from the Florida Ag Tag program goes to support Florida Ag in the Classroom. How does this make you feel?

good fund raiser, but may need more support

29. Knowing that the proceeds of the Ag Tag go to Florida Ag in the Classroom, does this affect your preference to buy an Ag Tag in any way? (Circle one of the following)

☒ Yes ☐ No

30. Is buying an Ag Tag more or less acceptable than other means of supporting Ag in the Classroom? (Circle one of the following)

Yes Neither No

31. What other ways you would be willing to support Florida Ag in the Classroom? (Circle one of the following)

Monetary by direct donation ☒ Volunteer time ☒ Visit local classrooms and talk about my farm or business  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_

32. What other types of fundraisers would you suggest implementing statewide to provide additional support to Florida Ag in the Classroom?

Contact each county for donations from a fundraiser of their choosing.

33. Who do you think should be the target audience of Ag in the Classrooms campaign to increase Ag Tag sales? Why?

the consumer buying food in store

34. What communication channels should Ag in the Classroom use to reach the target audience you suggested? (Examples: Print, radio, tv, social media, email?)

social media, in-store demo

35. Who do you think is most likely to buy Ag Tags? Why?

people who know about it - from farmers, ranchers growers

CENTER FOR PUBLIC ISSUES EDUCATION IN AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES  
& FLORIDA AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM  
PRODUCER SURVEY

1. County of Residence:

Seminole

2. Occupation:

Self empl

3. Have you ever bought a specialty plate? (Circle one of the following)

Yes

No

4. If you answered No to question 3, why have you never bought a specialty plate?

Support Ag., UF

5. If you answered Yes to question 3, which specialty plate(s) have you purchased?

Ag Tag, UF

6. If you answered Yes to questions 3, why did you buy a specialty plate?

To support the programs and to show support for others to see

7. How do you feel about having the option to buy specialty license plates?

I like the options

8. What things do you think influence the decision of people like yourself to buy a certain specialty license plate? (Circle one of the following)

Hobby

Friends

Allegiance

Support a group

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

9. What barriers prevent people like you from buying a specialty license plate? (Circle one of the following)

Money

Time/convenience

Don't support any of the specialty plate groups or causes

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

10. What comes to mind when you hear the words Ag Tag?

Friends of Ag

11. What do you think the phrase Ag Tag is referring to?

Support of Ag

Here is a picture of the Ag Tag. Please take a moment to look at it.





12. Have you seen this license plate before? (Circle one of the following)

Yes

No

13. How do you feel about the Ag Tag?

Like

14. What do you like about it?

what it supports

15. What do you dislike about it?

16. What do you think is the purpose of this Ag Tag?

Provide funding for Ag in Classroom or other Ag programs

17. What do you think the money generated from this Tag supports?

Ag in Classroom

18. What audience(s) do you believe the Ag Tag is trying to reach?

Selling = ag people      seeing = anyone

19. Who do you think is most likely to buy this specialty license plate?

Ag people

20. What barriers have prevented you from buying the tag? (Circle one of the following)

Money

Interest in alternative plate (i.e. FFA)

Farm truck tags    Appearance

Other:

Bought it!

21. What comes to mind when you hear Florida Agriculture in the Classroom?

Teaching young kids in classroom

22. What do you think is the purpose of this organization?

organize the program

23. What audience(s) do you believe this organization is trying to reach?

kids not exposed to Ag.

24. Who do you think is most likely to benefit from this organization?

everyone!

Florida Ag in the Classroom is a nonprofit organization that develops and trains teachers and agriculture industry volunteers in its agriculture curricula and materials, which they in turn use to educate students about the importance of agriculture.

It also provides grant money to teachers and volunteers for projects that teach students where their food comes from, and the important contribution Florida Farmers make to their communities and their state.

25. After reading this description, what thoughts come to mind about Florida Ag in the Classroom?

Like the program

26. How likely would you be to support this organization based on the description and why?

work in a classroom

27. Who do you think is most likely to support this organization?

Ag Tag

28. Money generated from the Florida Ag Tag program goes to support Florida Ag in the Classroom. How does this make you feel?

Great!

29. Knowing that the proceeds of the Ag Tag go to Florida Ag in the Classroom, does this affect your preference to buy an Ag Tag in any way? (Circle one of the following)

Keep doing it!  
☒ Yes ☐ No

30. Is buying an Ag Tag more or less acceptable than other means of supporting Ag in the Classroom? (Circle one of the following)

☒ Yes ☐ No

31. What other ways you would be willing to support Florida Ag in the Classroom? (Circle one of the following)

Monetary by direct donation      Volunteer time      Visit local classrooms and talk about my farm or business  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_

32. What other types of fundraisers would you suggest implementing statewide to provide additional support to Florida Ag in the Classroom?

\_\_\_\_\_

33. Who do you think should be the target audience of Ag in the Classrooms campaign to increase Ag Tag sales? Why?

All ag commodity groups.

34. What communication channels should Ag in the Classroom use to reach the target audience you suggested? (Examples: Print, radio, tv, social media, email?)

social media

35. Who do you think is most likely to buy Ag Tags? Why?

Ag people

CENTER FOR PUBLIC ISSUES EDUCATION IN AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES  
& FLORIDA AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM  
PRODUCER SURVEY

1. County of Residence: Pasco 2. Occupation: Sales + marketing
3. Have you ever bought a specialty plate? (Circle one of the following) Yes No
4. If you answered No to question 3, why have you never bought a specialty plate?
- 
5. If you answered Yes to question 3, which specialty plate(s) have you purchased?  
Ag plate
6. If you answered Yes to questions 3, why did you buy a specialty plate?  
Because my husbands family is in the Timber, citrus and cattle industry
7. How do you feel about having the option to buy specialty license plates?  
I like to show support and glad we can have options
8. What things do you think influence the decision of people like yourself to buy a certain specialty license plate? (Circle one of the following)  
Hobby Friends Allegiance Support a group Other: \_\_\_\_\_
9. What barriers prevent people like you from buying a specialty license plate? (Circle one of the following)  
Money Time/convenience Don't support any of the specialty plate groups or causes Other: \_\_\_\_\_
10. What comes to mind when you hear the words Ag Tag?  
Ag in the classroom
11. What do you think the phrase Ag Tag is referring to?  
Agriculture in Florida

Here is a picture of the Ag Tag. Please take a moment to look at it.



12. Have you seen this license plate before? (Circle one of the following)

Yes

No

13. How do you feel about the Ag Tag?

I like the design and feel proud

14. What do you like about it?

the colors

15. What do you dislike about it?

the tag line - Keeps Florida Green

16. What do you think is the purpose of this Ag Tag?

Support Agriculture

17. What do you think the money generated from this Tag supports?

Ag programs

18. What audience(s) do you believe the Ag Tag is trying to reach?

Educators + Farm Families

19. Who do you think is most likely to buy this specialty license plate?

People in the Ag industry

20. What barriers have prevented you from buying the tag? (Circle one of the following)

Money

Interest in alternative plate (i.e. FFA)

Farm truck tags Appearance

Other:

NONE

21. What comes to mind when you hear Florida Agriculture in the Classroom?

education for kids to learn about industry

22. What do you think is the purpose of this organization?

To promote Florida's Agriculture Industry + Educate

23. What audience(s) do you believe this organization is trying to reach?

Consumers + Teachers + Kids

24. Who do you think is most likely to benefit from this organization?

School Kids

Florida Ag in the Classroom is a nonprofit organization that develops and trains teachers and agriculture industry volunteers in its agriculture curricula and materials, which they in turn use to educate students about the importance of agriculture.



It also provides grant money to teachers and volunteers for projects that teach students where their food comes from, and the important contribution Florida Farmers make to their communities and their state.

25. After reading this description, what thoughts come to mind about Florida Ag in the Classroom?

Themed Books

26. How likely would you be to support this organization based on the description and why?

Very likely,

27. Who do you think is most likely to support this organization?

Florida Farmers + Industry reps

28. Money generated from the Florida Ag Tag program goes to support Florida Ag in the Classroom. How does this make you feel?

good

29. Knowing that the proceeds of the Ag Tag go to Florida Ag in the Classroom, does this affect your preference to buy an Ag Tag in any way? (Circle one of the following)

Yes

No

30. Is buying an Ag Tag more or less acceptable than other means of supporting Ag in the Classroom? (Circle one of the following)

Yes

No

31. What other ways you would be willing to support Florida Ag in the Classroom? (Circle one of the following)

Monetary by direct donation

Volunteer time

Visit local classrooms and talk about my farm or business

Other: Nominating Teachers

32. What other types of fundraisers would you suggest implementing statewide to provide additional support to Florida Ag in the Classroom?

on line store

33. Who do you think should be the target audience of Ag in the Classrooms campaign to increase Ag Tag sales? Why?

Teachers - to buy into the program

34. What communication channels should Ag in the Classroom use to reach the target audience you suggested? (Examples: Print, radio, tv, social media, email?)

print - email

35. Who do you think is most likely to buy Ag Tags? Why?

same as question #19

CENTER FOR PUBLIC ISSUES EDUCATION IN AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES  
& FLORIDA AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM  
PRODUCER SURVEY

1. County of Residence: Hillsborough 2. Occupation: Ag. program assistant.
3. Have you ever bought a specialty plate? (Circle one of the following) Yes No
4. If you answered No to question 3, why have you never bought a specialty plate?
- 
5. If you answered Yes to question 3, which specialty plate(s) have you purchased?  
Firefighter and University of Central Florida.
6. If you answered Yes to questions 3, why did you buy a specialty plate?  
Firefighter in the family and daughter went to UCF.
7. How do you feel about having the option to buy specialty license plates?  
I like the specialty plates.
8. What things do you think influence the decision of people like yourself to buy a certain specialty license plate? (Circle one of the following)  
Hobby Friends Allegiance Support a group Other: \_\_\_\_\_
9. What barriers prevent people like you from buying a specialty license plate? (Circle one of the following)  
Money Time/convenience Don't support any of the specialty plate groups or causes Other: \_\_\_\_\_
10. What comes to mind when you hear the words Ag Tag?  
a license plate promoting Agribusiness.
11. What do you think the phrase Ag Tag is referring to?  
same as above.

Here is a picture of the Ag Tag. Please take a moment to look at it.



12. Have you seen this license plate before? (Circle one of the following)

Yes

No

13. How do you feel about the Ag Tag?

I think it's fine.

14. What do you like about it?

I like the phrase Agriculture keeps Florida green.

15. What do you dislike about it?

nothing really.

16. What do you think is the purpose of this Ag Tag?

to promote Agriculture in the state of Florida

17. What do you think the money generated from this Tag supports?

Ag in the Classroom

18. What audience(s) do you believe the Ag Tag is trying to reach?

Ag employees, ranchers, farmers, Ag teachers

19. Who do you think is most likely to buy this specialty license plate?

same as above

20. What barriers have prevented you from buying the tag? (Circle one of the following)

Money

Interest in alternative plate (i.e. FFA)

Farm truck tags Appearance

Other: ☒ already have another specialty plate

21. What comes to mind when you hear Florida Agriculture in the Classroom?

Field trips & in class teaching

22. What do you think is the purpose of this organization?

to teach young children where their food comes from.

23. What audience(s) do you believe this organization is trying to reach?

elementary age students

24. Who do you think is most likely to benefit from this organization?

same as above

Florida Ag in the Classroom is a nonprofit organization that develops and trains teachers and agriculture industry volunteers in its agriculture curricula and materials, which they in turn use to educate students about the importance of agriculture.



It also provides grant money to teachers and volunteers for projects that teach students where their food comes from, and the important contribution Florida Farmers make to their communities and their state.

25. After reading this description, what thoughts come to mind about Florida Ag in the Classroom?

Besides field trips - teaching in the classroom.

26. How likely would you be to support this organization based on the description and why?

I feel this is a worthwhile organization.

27. Who do you think is most likely to support this organization?

Ranchers, farmers, parents, teachers

28. Money generated from the Florida Ag Tag program goes to support Florida Ag in the Classroom. How does this make you feel?

The specialty tag supports a worthwhile program. That's a good thing.

29. Knowing that the proceeds of the Ag Tag go to Florida Ag in the Classroom, does this affect your preference to buy an Ag Tag in any way? (Circle one of the following)

Yes

☒ No

30. Is buying an Ag Tag more or less acceptable than other means of supporting Ag in the Classroom? (Circle one of the following)

☒ Yes

No

31. What other ways you would be willing to support Florida Ag in the Classroom? (Circle one of the following)

Monetary by direct donation

☒ Volunteer time

Visit local classrooms and talk about my farm or business

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

32. What other types of fundraisers would you suggest implementing statewide to provide additional support to Florida Ag in the Classroom?

For those who don't wish to purchase a license plate because they already have another plate - make donations an option when renewing plates. Have a box to check for donations and amount.

33. Who do you think should be the target audience of Ag in the Classrooms campaign to increase Ag Tag sales? Why?

People who work in the Agriculture business and share in promoting Ag in Florida.

34. What communication channels should Ag in the Classroom use to reach the target audience you suggested? (Examples: Print, radio, tv, social media, email?)

Print - maybe fliers sent home from school and social media, because it is very popular, as well as tv.

35. Who do you think is most likely to buy Ag Tags? Why?

Farmers, ranchers, parents, teachers. They are interested in supporting Agriculture in Florida.



