

Joe Massie



TEACHER

CHAMPION

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In this issue of our BCAITC Teacher Champion series, we profile secondary school teacher, Joe Massie. Discover his passion for educating students about BC agriculture and food.

Q: What school do you teach at? A: [Sardis Secondary School](#) in Chilliwack.

Q: What grade(s) do you teach? A: 9-12.

Q: How and when did you first learn about BCAITC? A: I first heard about BCAITC in 2010 when I met Lindsay Babineau, the former Executive Director. She helped me with some resources for teaching in my agriculture courses at Sardis. In 2011, I was invited to join the board at BCAITC where I served for 8 years.

Q: How long have you been teaching students about BC agriculture and food? A: I began teaching agriculture in 2007 when I took over the agriculture department at Sardis Secondary School.

Q: What are the most important things that you want your students to learn about BC agriculture and food? A: I want my students to understand that having a strong food system is a vital part of the healthy society we enjoy. They need to understand that the choices they make and the farmers they support have a profound effect on their own lives and can affect change locally and globally.

Q: BCAITC has over 500 free downloadable resources including lesson plans, activities, videos, recipes, and more! What is your favourite BCAITC resource and why? A: I really like the [Grow BC: A Guide to BC's Agriculture Resources](#) because it provides an awesome way for students to quickly access great information about a vast array of BC products.

Q: What is your favourite BCAITC program and why? A: There are many great programs offered by BCAITC. Of course, for me the [Summer Institute](#) is a favourite, because I have the honour to teach the course and it affords me the opportunity to meet so many wonderful teachers and farmers. I also get to work alongside the staff of BCAITC!

Q: What is an agriculture or food based project you have recently implemented in your classroom? A: My colleague (Tania Toth) and I have developed a 5-acre piece of land owned by SD33 into the Sardis Secondary School Farm. This project offers year-round gardening programs for ages K-12 in our district. We have a CSA fundraiser, a partnership with [UFV](#), and donate hundreds of pounds of food to the local food bank. Most importantly, the farm gives students the chance to engage in real-life, hands-on learning opportunities. They learn about food production and really get the whole farm to table experience.

Q: Do you have any advice for other educators on how to integrate agriculture and food education into their curriculum? A: Regardless of the size and scope of your project, having students engage in activities they can take ownership of really encourages them to buy-in to their learning. Having them be responsible for growing food, flowers or whatever it may be forces them to apply their learning and take on the responsibility of creating something truly meaningful.

ABOUT THE TEACHER CHAMPION SERIES: This monthly BCAITC series features BC teachers who are passionate about providing agriculture and food education to K-12 students. For more information, please contact our Communications Coordinator, meghan@aitc.ca.

