

Matthew  
Annan



TEACHER

CHAMPION

## SEPTEMBER 2022 | MATTHEW ANNAN

In this issue of our BCAITC Teacher Champion series, we profile BC teacher Matthew Annan. Discover his passion for educating students about BC agriculture, food, and the environment.

**Q: What school do you teach at?** **A:** [Foundations](#), Education Services alternate program, Surrey School District.

**Q: What grade(s) do you teach?** **A:** Foundations is an alternate program that includes youth ages 14-18.

**Q: How and when did you first learn about BCAITC?** **A:** As a teacher, I am always looking for learning opportunities to share with our students. In searching for agricultural lessons, I came across BCAITC. These programs fit nicely into the goals and desired outcomes of Foundations.

**Q: How long have you been teaching students about BC agriculture and food?** **A:** Four years ago, we joined a local community garden. With the students, we have learned how to grow and harvest a variety of vegetables. Two years ago, we took part in the [Spuds in Tubs](#) program. The students took part in learning about potatoes and growing them - they very much enjoyed the mashed potatoes and fries that we made with them!

**Q: What are the most important things that you want your students to learn about BC agriculture and food?** **A:** At Foundations, we teach the students about healthy eating and the effects of poor eating choices. We feel it is important for the students to learn where healthy food comes from and how easy it can be to grow. Participating in [Ag Adventures](#) at Stable Harvest Farm highlighted how we can grow our own food and how much better fresh vegetables can be. We have also talked about supporting local farmers and the fresh food we can get in our own backyard.

**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:** There are many resources on the site. We look forward to incorporating them into our garden lessons as well as using the recipes in our cooking program.

**Q: What is your favourite BCAITC program and why?** **A:** Spuds in Tubs is a great program. The students enjoyed learning about potatoes and how they grow. Students were diligent about checking on them daily and watering them when they needed. Growing the potatoes showed the students how easy it was to grow our own food and how little space it takes up in our yard or even on a patio. We look forward to growing potatoes again next year.

**Q: What is an agriculture or food-based project you have recently implemented in your classroom?** **A:** At our community garden we have our students taking leadership roles in growing a variety of vegetables. We have carrots, radishes, herbs, peas, rhubarb, and more. We will be able to harvest these vegetables and share them with the families of the student gardeners.

**Q: Do you have any advice for other educators on how to integrate agriculture and food education into their curriculum?** **A:** As a teacher, I would suggest it is particularly important to include this education in the curriculum. Have your students help develop a plan for growing, ask them to pick their favourite vegetables. Having the students take responsibility for growing and maintaining the garden creates ownership and provides the students with something tangible to be proud of. Knowing that they will be able to share the harvested vegetables with their family is another benefit.

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