



For Immediate Release

Agriculture in the Classroom's Executive Directors Coming and Going

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA – March 29, 2016 - **Johanne Ross**, long time agriculture education advocate and Executive Director for Agriculture in the Classroom-Manitoba, will move on to become the new Executive Director of Agriculture in the Classroom-Canada (AITC-Canada) effective May 21st, 2016.

With Ross's departure from the provincial organization, **Sue Clayton**, agriculture awareness and education supporter and current Associate Executive Director of Agriculture in the Classroom-Manitoba, will move into the Executive Director position of Agriculture in the Classroom-Manitoba (AITC-M).

"Johanne has worked passionately over the past 10 years to help AITC Canada formalize officially as a not-for-profit organization. She has gained the respect of partners and stakeholders, which has allowed her to champion national AITC-Canada initiatives like Canadian Agriculture Literacy Week, introducing the importance of agriculture to over 30,000 students in 2016. Her collaborative nature and knowledge of agriculture issues across Canada makes her the ideal leader to shepherd AITC-Canada as we reach new heights in ag education delivery nationally," said Christa Wright, (Agriculture in the Classroom-Newfoundland and Labrador) vice-chair of the AITC-Canada board of directors.

Ross has lead AITC-Manitoba over the past 16 years, fostering its growth in membership, financial resources and programming, reaching over 40,000 students and teachers each year. She has also been instrumental in the success of AITC-Canada initiatives including the development of a new storybook "*Stewards of the Land*" for elementary students and the *All about Food* high school resource (<http://allaboutfood.aic.ca/>). Ross's new role as AITC-Canada Executive Director will continue to be based in Manitoba as she develops the national organization further and generates AITC-Canada funding support, partnerships and interest in national agriculture education initiatives and projects.

"I am motivated by my AITC colleagues and encouraged by the support of the current AITC-Manitoba board of directors to take on this exciting role. It has never been a more important time to bring accurate, balanced and current information on agriculture to young people across Canada through the important work that provincial AITC organizations deliver. By leading the way with a strong national organization, we can support provincial activities, raise awareness of the importance of curriculum linked agriculture education, and bring this critical effort to the national stage," said Ross. "AITC-Canada represents and will support the provincial organizations that bring agriculture to life in classrooms across Canada."

Clayton has been working as AITC-M's Associate Executive Director, alongside Ross, since May 2015 and will transition to the lead role on May 21st.

"Sue has a proven track record in the agriculture awareness arena in her successful work developed and delivered at the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences at the University of Manitoba. She joined the AITC-M board of directors in 2013 and has dedicated significant time to the agriculture education effort through partnering on programming between the faculty and AITC-M and volunteering at events.

Sue is a passionate, dedicated champion for agriculture, who loves to partner, collaborate and get things done. AITC-M couldn't be more pleased to see Sue transition into the lead role in our organization!" stated Brian Kenyon, AITC-M president.

Clayton has managed the Community Liaison role at the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences at the U of M as well as acted a school board trustee for 16 years. Her experience at several board tables, including roles of chair and vice chair will bring extensive experience to the role of Executive Director for AITC-M. Sue's new role will continue to ensure quality AITC-M resources and programming are maintained and expanded to students and teachers across Manitoba.

"Having an agriculture degree in combination with my industry experience and strong interpersonal skills has enabled me to be extremely successful in my current position building long term relationships with industry stakeholders. My knowledge of the initiatives in place to increase the agriculture education in classrooms has been expanded over the past few years while working at the University of Manitoba in partnership with AITC-M and I have been fortunate enough to serve on the AITC-M Board since April, 2013". Added Clayton. "I am extremely passionate about the work that AITC-M carries out and am thrilled to be able to lead this invaluable and dynamic organization."

AITC-M and AITC-Canada invite interested stakeholders to get in touch and get involved in these critical initiatives.

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