



**For Immediate Release**

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**Dongola USD 66 receives \$25,000 grant for WeatherBug system**

*America's Farmers Grow Rural Education grants support math and science education*

DONGOLA, Ill. (August,27, 2015) – Dongola USD 66 has received a \$25,000 grant from America's Farmers Grow Rural Education, sponsored by the Monsanto Fund. The district will use the money to install a WeatherBug system that will allow students to track changing weather patterns and use the data to enhance classroom lessons and interact with the community.

The WeatherBug's cutting edge technology will provide a hands-on math, science and engineering curriculum to all students in the district. Each grade level will be able to engage in age-appropriate lessons in weather investigation. Elementary students will collect data, middle schoolers will analyze seasonal weather patterns and high school students will solve problems related to natural disasters using engineering skills. Students will also use the results to provide daily weather reports to the local community; community members are then encouraged to interact with the students through the WeatherBug app.

"It is an excellent opportunity to provide ongoing, meaningful and relevant data for our kids to work with," said Paige Maginel, district administrator. "We are a rural, farming community and weather plays an important role in our lives."

Farmers who nominated the school district and representatives from the school and the Monsanto Fund attended a check presentation to celebrate the grant during a school-wide assembly August 24.

"We wanted to show how thankful our district is for this opportunity and express the importance of agriculture in our school," said Maginel. "We are a farming community and proud of it!"

This year, winning school districts also received materials to help educate students on the importance of bees and butterflies in the pollination of plants, production of crops and to the ecosystem generally. A starter kit was provided to help the school district establish a pollinator garden, which will give students first-hand knowledge of the critical role habitat plays in providing bees and butterflies with food, shelter and places to lay eggs.

Since 2011, Grow Rural Education has awarded more than \$9 million to help keep rural public school districts growing. The program works with farmers to nominate public school districts to compete for math and science grants of \$10,000 or \$25,000. Grant applications are reviewed and finalists selected by a panel of teachers. Winning applications are chosen by an advisory council comprised of farmers from across the U.S.

Visit [www.GrowRuralEducation.com](http://www.GrowRuralEducation.com) to see the full list of winners for this year. A sister program, America's Farmers Grow Communities, is currently enrolling farmers for 2016. To sign up, visit [www.GrowCommunities.com](http://www.GrowCommunities.com) before Nov. 30.

These programs are part of the America's Farmers initiative. The America's Farmers campaign and programs have advocated on behalf of farmers and their efforts to meet society's needs through agriculture. Today, consumers are more interested than ever in agriculture and how food is grown. Farmers and others in the industry are joining in on the conversation to help raise awareness about agriculture and share their stories with their communities. Learn more at [cfiengage.org](http://cfiengage.org).

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### **About America's Farmers**

The America's Farmers campaign highlights the importance of modern US Agriculture through communications and community outreach programs that partner with farmers to impact rural America. To learn more, visit America's Farmers at [www.AmericasFarmers.com](http://www.AmericasFarmers.com).

### **About the Monsanto Fund**

The Monsanto Fund, the philanthropic arm of Monsanto Company, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the communities where farmers and Monsanto Company employees live and work. Visit the Monsanto Fund at [www.monsantofund.org](http://www.monsantofund.org).