

# COMMISSION FOR AGRICULTURE EDUCATION EXCELLENCE

ANNUAL REPORT

20

23

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Conversations come in many different forms. They are powerful engines that can transform one thought or question into action and progressive change. The consistent dialogue for the Commission for Agriculture Education Excellence this year was/is, how can we do better at telling the story of Pennsylvania's agriculture education system. What makes our industry different than any other, is that we thrive off sharing our stories and the experiential learning opportunities we offer are boundless.

With over 12 million residents within the Commonwealth and over 500,000 across the agriculture industry, we must identify a way to connect not only with future generations, but our present generations. While Pennsylvania has adopted rigorous state academic standards establishing expectations for what students should know and be able to do at key points in their education, the Commonwealth also has a strong tradition of local control guiding K-12 public education, including agriculture education programs. This means that each local education agency (LEA) has the authority to tailor program offerings, aligned to standards and regulations, to the unique needs of their students and communities.

In 2022-2023, there were 167 PDE-approved agriculture education programs offered in nine categories (Ag General, Ag Mechanics, Ag Production, Ag Food Products, Applied Horticulture, Animal Sciences, Ag Operations, Natural Resources, and Forest Technology) in high schools and career & technology centers (CTCs) across the Commonwealth. Pennsylvania saw an increase of 50 agriculture educators in just a year.

Through support of the commission and stakeholder organizations like PDA/PDE, PA FFA Association & Foundation, Pennsylvania Association of Agriculture Educators, Penn State University College of Agriculture Sciences, PSU Center for Professional & Personnel Development there has been an investment of over 3.6 million over the last 3 years to support pre-service/in-service teachers, professional development, grants for capacity & program building, youth development organizations (FFA, MANRRS, 4-H), apprenticeship & pre-apprenticeships, workforce development, and trainings for Pennsylvania's agriculture education system.



# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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On behalf of the Agriculture Education Excellence Commission, I want to personally thank you for taking the time to read our 2023 Annual Report. The awareness and advocacy for ag education within the commonwealth has been surging and we thank each and every commission member, teacher, student, community, stakeholder, industry and organization for your continued commitment to the future of Pennsylvania Agriculture Education system. Now entering year three of serving as the leader of this commission, we remain committed to engaging those within the ag ed system in formal and non-formal education opportunities to increase their leadership opportunities, personal growth & success, and career readiness through a total program of agricultural literacy, experiential learning and community involvement.

With the challenges of advancing agriculture education to sustain the workforce being felt across the country, we remain optimistic and dedicated to ensuring that Pennsylvania remains a leader in the pursuit of advancing our efforts. I look forward to continuing to engage with all of our agriculture education stakeholders in the years to come.



**Stephon Fitzpatrick, ABD**  
**Executive Director**  
**Agriculture Education**  
**Excellence Commission**

# WELCOME FROM THE SECRETARIES

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Agriculture education has changed tremendously over the past few decades, by expanding to incorporate new disciplines fit for an increasingly technological workforce. During this time of transformation, we are at a critical moment here in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and across the nation, as we continually acknowledge the importance of the agriculture industry and how we can prepare today's learners for tomorrow's agricultural careers.

Working in tandem with our colleagues at the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA), the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) supports and champions the multifaceted learning opportunities in agricultural education. Our joint Commission for Agricultural Education Excellence is charged with developing a statewide plan for agriculture education and implementing related programming in our schools—a responsibility of paramount importance.

This annual Agricultural Education Report outlines the work accomplished to date, and future aspirations, as we plant the seeds to grow our future ag industry in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Our accomplishments and goals have been and will continue to be informed by a robust partnership with industry leaders, experts, and school practitioners.

These efforts will be implemented with fidelity, and we look forward to continuing this important work with our sister agencies and vested partners in the years to come.



Dr. Khalid N. Mumin  
Secretary, PDE



Russell Redding  
Secretary, PDA

2017

**Section 1549.1**

Amendment substituted "career and technical" for "vocational" and "vocational-technical" in the definition of "School entity."

2021

**Act 55-2017**

There is established a Commission for Agricultural Education Excellence as a departmental administrative commission under the concurrent authority of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Education

2019

**Executive Director Named**

1st Full-time Executive Director of the Agriculture Education Excellence Commission is appointed

**Act 55-2017**

Agriculture is a \$132.5 billion industry facing an aging workforce. Attrition, growing demand for certain products, and advancing technologies will result in a workforce deficit in a number of career paths over the next decade. Of those anticipated vacancies, the department has identified the 25 most in-demand occupations, which span sectors like production agriculture; animal health and veterinary services; landscaping; food manufacturing, forestry, lumber and wood products; and conservation and natural resources.

In recognition of future workforce needs, the Pennsylvania Departments of Agriculture (PDA) and Education (PDE) have produced a comprehensive agricultural education report for schools across the commonwealth and have created a 15-member Commission for Agricultural Education Excellence. The commission will operate under the concurrent authority of PDA and PDE, and is charged with assisting in the development of a statewide plan for agricultural education and coordinating the implementation of related programming with both departments.

As part of PDA's workforce development plan, the Department is working to identify gaps in education and training for those in-demand career paths; focus on work-based learning, including micro-credentials and apprenticeships; and help Pennsylvanians obtain meaningful careers on the way to finding solutions to the shortage of talent in the near and long-term.



# COMMISSION MEMBERS

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The **Commission for Agriculture Education Excellence** is comprised of a 15 member board comprised of stakeholders representing various facets of the agriculture education industry to **assist the Executive Director in the development of a statewide agriculture education plan**

**Stephon Fitzpatrick**  
Executive Director

**Secretary  
Russell Redding**  
PDA, Chair

**Secretary  
Dr. Khalid  
Mumin**  
PDE, Chair

**Sarah Meiss**  
Agriculture Science  
(Non-PSU)

**Senator  
Judy Schwank**  
PA State System of  
Higher Education

**Gary Swan**  
Business Community  
Member with Knowledge  
of Agriculture Education

**Clifford Wallacee**  
Crop Farmer,  
Retired Ag  
Teacher

**Raechel Sattazahn**  
Ag Processing/  
Marketing

**Anthony  
Honeycutt**  
Vocational Ag Teacher

**Michelle Meyers**  
Community College  
Representative with  
Knowledge of  
Agriculture Education

**Robert Hess**  
Business Community  
Member with  
Knowledge of  
Agriculture  
Education

**Dr. Tiffany  
Turrentine**  
Vocational  
Agriculture Teacher  
from Career &  
Technical Education

**Vacant**  
School District  
Administrator where  
Agriculture  
Education is  
Conducted

**Representative  
Barbara Gleim**  
School District OAC  
Member

**Dr. Kevin Curry**  
Agriculture Science -  
PSU Agriculture  
Science Faculty  
Member

**Note: Current commission members as of December 31, 2022**



# WHO WE ARE?

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This report highlights key objectives that the commission is charged to support and raise awareness for in the advancement of agriculture education throughout Pennsylvania:

- Outline agricultural education programs and achievements.
- Assess the trends and needs in secondary and both formal and informal postsecondary agricultural education and training.
- Investigate and assess work force trends of the agriculture and food industry.
- Assess and make programming recommendations for meeting the training needs for individuals not pursuing formal postsecondary education.
- Consider the manner in which funds are used to support agricultural education activities.
- Make recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly regarding legislative or regulatory changes to improve agricultural education.



# 2023–2027

## Work–Plan Objectives

In consultation between the Department of Agriculture & Department of Education, please see the following objectives in this work-plan according to Act 2017–55 (H.B. 178). Any proposed update to the objective shall be developed in consultation with the commission.

-  **01. Benchmark Key Variables**
-  **02. Increase Diversity of the Agriculture Education System**
-  **03. Identify Support Strategies for the Agricultural Related Career Pathways**
-  **04. Strengthen Agriculture Literacy for Traditional & Non-Traditional Students**
-  **05. Empower Agriculture Education Industry Stakeholders**

# 01. Benchmarked Key Variables

Use a set of benchmarked key variables to monitor progress in reaching Commission goals

- Percentage increase or decrease in the number of FFA chapters and students
- Ratio of participants to completers in secondary level, approved ag programs
- Percentage of students involved in Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAEs)
- Economic impact of Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAEs)
- Teacher recruitment, retention, and turnover data
- Number of industry certifications earned by students in the system
- Percentage increase or decrease in the number of MANRRS chapters and students
- Percentage of agriculture education programs by CIP code

# 02. Increase Diversity of the Agriculture Education System

Identify and explore opportunities to increase diversity of the Agriculture Education system and the various programs and opportunities within it.

- Continue to monitor the agriculture education system to determine who is being served
  - Identify groups/individuals not being engaged in the ag ed system
- Provide opportunities for continued education focused on diversity and inclusion best practices
  - Create resource guide for teachers and administrators that may need guidance on issues related to diversity
- Explore ways in which FFA & 4-H can continue reaching underrepresented students
- Explore ways in which the PA agriculture education system can support MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences) in reaching students typically under-represented students in agriculture programs.
- Explore urban agriculture opportunities and how these opportunities may allow the commission to reach a more diverse audience.
  - Increase focus on urban agriculture and identify opportunities to build or expand current programs
- Collaborate with Workforce and Other state programs that focus on serving under-represented populations



# 03. Identify Support Strategies for the Agriculture Related Career Pathways

Identify and support strategies to align the agriculture education system with the agriculture and food industry

- Use a thorough understanding of the career pathways that the industry uses for occupational advancement to map places for education and training interventions through formal and informal systems. Identify groups/individuals not being engaged in the ag ed system
  - Gather information on the Food Manufacturing, Forestry, Conservation & Natural Resources, Animal Science/Health Services, Farming and Agricultural Mechanics, Production & Operations and Horticulture Career Pathways.
  - Share this information with other government partners as appropriate
- Use industry feedback to identify gaps that may exist in curriculum, particularly caused by technology advancement
  - Solicit input from members of Occupational Advisory Committees regarding gaps in curriculum that they identify during their consultation with local programs.
  - Crosswalk industry input to similar Task Lists that are used in career and technical education.
- Propose and implement ways to fill the identified gaps through curriculum development and teacher training or retraining as needed
- Explore and advocate for changes that may need to be made in the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (AFNR) standards that relate to the gaps that are being identified in school-based agriculture education programming.

# 04. Strengthen Agriculture Literacy for Traditional & Non-Traditional Students

Engage students earlier and more completely in agriculture literacy and education during their academic careers

- Reach out to the parents of K-8 students as well as the students themselves with information about agriculture and food careers.
- Work with the PA Department of Education to establish a place for ag and food curricula on the Standards Aligned System (SAS)
  - Create an Agriculture learning community on SAS to provide a platform for communications among formal and informal educators and interested parties.
- Continue to support the Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE) as one of the three primary parts of agriculture education
  - Continue to support technical assistance on SAE improvement through the SAE Specialist position
- Explore the interface of agriculture and science and the availability of content in that space
- Continue to provide information on ag and food careers to high school and adult students
- Continue to work with Workforce Development Specialist to explore additional ways to connect with Labor & Industry and the agriculture workforce development system in PA.

# 05. Empower Agriculture Education Industry Stakeholders

Empower local agriculture education teachers, administrators, and other leaders in providing agriculture education programs that meet the needs of the industry for workers, the community for future leaders, and citizens who understand the role of agriculture in the food systems

- Increase funding support structures for the ag education commission
- Explore how local systems may be preventing participants in agriculture programs from becoming program completers.
- Explore the ways local school districts use the funding that comes from the state for agriculture education program, particularly how much is used directly for ag ed and how much goes into other programs
- Study why some districts use other funding streams (such as Perkins) and others don't apply for any funding.
- Explore the recent shortage of school-based agriculture education teachers and the future prospects for increasing those numbers
- Utilize expertise of Commission members to elevate recommendations and needs to strengthen and support agriculture education and agriculture workforce
- Present recommendations from Commission and stakeholders to the General Assembly

# 2023 AGRICULTURE EDUCATION EXCELLENCE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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- In partnership with the National MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources & Related Sciences) Organization launched two new Junior MANRRS Chapters at The Fox Chase Farm & Milton Hershey School
- Pennsylvania was one of nine states that participated in the inaugural National FFA State Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Collaborative. This group of state leaders met for a year to discuss and strategize on how to grow a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive FFA.
  - Awarded \$5,000 EDI implementation grant.
- Distributed over \$35,000 to support the PA FFA Foundation Learning by Doing initiative.
- Assisted PAAE in purchasing 10 Briggs & Stratton Engines for their Small Engine BriefCASE for 10 educators.
- Launched the Diesel Mechanics Level II Training for 10 agriculture mechanics teachers in partnership with Northeast Equipment Dealers and Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology
- Relaunched the PA Team Ag Ed Network - this group is comprised of educators and members of ag ed stakeholder organizations that serve as the boots on the ground voice for the needs of school-based agriculture education programs.
- In partnership with Hardwoods Council and Project Learning Tree, provided this group with \$5,000 to support their marketing campaign to provide counselors, educators, and administrators in urban areas literacy around forestry career pathways.
- Maintained an active presence at core ag ed stakeholder organization meetings (FFA, PAAE, PSU/CPPD, Advisory Council of Environmental Educators, Longwood Gardens Engagement and Learning Committee)
- Continue to visit traditional/non-traditional agriculture education programs across the state to ensure the voice of all stakeholders are embedded in advocacy efforts

# INVESTMENT INTO PENNSYLVANIA'S AGRICULTURE EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Since taking over the commission as the 1st full-time executive director in 2021, Stephon Fitzpatrick, commission members, and stakeholder agencies & organizations have been working diligently to streamline funding and investments made into Pennsylvania's agriculture education system.

## **Agriculture Education Excellence Commission**

- **\$750,000 (Since 2021)**

- Salary + Benefits Package for Executive Director
- Learning by Doing Grants through PA FFA Foundation
- Workforce Development/Industry Engagement workshops and trainings
- Professional development opportunities for agriculture educators
- Support for PA Agriculture Youth Development Organizations (FFA & MANRRS)

## **Bureau of Career & Technical Education (PDE): Average Daily Member Reimbursement (Agriculture Only)**

- **\$4,111,801 (2022)**

- Funds from the Bureau of CTE are given to schools as a reimbursement for students involved in career and technical programming.

## **Pennsylvania FFA Association/Foundation**

- **\$1,250,000+ (Since 2021)**

- has been invested to support state FFA officer team, career and leadership events, fundraising, scholarships, and professional development.

## **The Penn State University Center for Professional & Personnel Development**

- **\$1,280,196 (Since 2021)**

- Invested in pre-service and in-service teacher education.

## **Pennsylvania Association of Agriculture Educators**

- **\$400,000 (Since 2021)**

- Support for ag teachers, students, and ag education programs. scholarships, professional development, CDE sponsorship, FFA sponsorships, and support for national and regional teacher conferences.

# STATE LEGISLATIVE AGRICULTURE EDUCATION INVESTMENTS BEING MADE ACROSS THE COUNTRY

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## Illinois



- **SB 2975 - 2016:** created an agriculture education teacher grant program to fund personal services costs for agriculture education teachers in school districts.
  - Provides that a school district may apply for a grant to fund 50% of the personal services cost for an agriculture education teacher.
  - A school district that is creating a new agriculture education program may apply for a grant to fund 100% of an agriculture teacher's personal services cost in the first and second year of the new agriculture education program and 80% of an agriculture teacher's personal services cost in the third and fourth years of the new agriculture education program.
  - Allows a school district to apply for a grant for more than one teacher.
    - **Investment: \$9,320,228 (Annual ag education line item)**

## Oregon



- **HB244-2019** - created to increase student achievement and to improve graduation rates, college preparation and career placement for students enrolled in secondary agricultural education courses, the Department of Education coordinated with Oregon FFA to cover statewide membership of all FFA members, financial support for leadership development training, and administered a grant program for extended duty contracts in school districts to allow school district personnel to manage approved programs of study in ag ed during summer months
  - **Investment: \$2,030,000**

# AGRICULTURE EDUCATION INVESTMENTS BEING MADE ACROSS THE COUNTRY

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## Georgia



- **SB 330 - 2018:** Each year the General Assembly allocates funding earmarked specifically for 5 portions of the agricultural education programs in Georgia:
  - Extended day pay for teachers.
  - Extended year pay for teachers.
  - Young Farmers (adult education)
  - Area Teachers (staff positions in each region of the state)
  - Youth camps
    - **Investment: \$13 million (Annually)**
- Through the Georgia State Finance & Investment Commission GSFIC, Governor's Office of Planning & Budget (OPB) and the General Assembly, there are funds allocated each year for new schools, agriculture structures and equipment for local programs and facilities at GA's two FFA camps.

## California



- **Agriculture Vocational Education Incentive Grant Program** - Improve the quality of agriculture vocational education programs.
  - **Investment: \$4,000,000 (Annually)**
- Agriculture Career Technical Education Grant - Provides local educational agencies funds to improve quality of their agriculture CTE programs.
  - **Investment: \$6,134,000 (Annually)**





# AGRICULTURE EDUCATOR & PROGRAM DATA



# MESSAGE FROM BUREAU OF CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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Agriculture programs in Pennsylvania's schools have a rich tradition of serving their communities, often teaching generations of learners. This proud legacy promises a bright future for students, as the number of agricultural education programs has seen continuous growth. This, however, poses new challenges: as more programs are instituted and the size of programs grows, schools are faced with the need for more educators and resources.

Moreover, school administrators must stay apprised of legislation for program approval, an important step to ensure that those resources are available to schools. And schools increasingly have a greater need for interactions with business and industry. Students who gain experience working with local agriculture industries find greater success after graduation.

The Bureau of Career and Technical Education (BCTE) has been working to ensure that students are receiving the very best educational opportunities. BCTE's Program Standards and Quality Assurance division has focused on outreach, meeting teachers face to face, listening to their concerns, delivering opportunities for professional development, and providing technical assistance to meet new and evolving challenges. Governor Shapiro's administration has expressed strong support for career and technical education and has committed more resources to expanding it. BCTE is also supporting the reboot of PA Team Ag Ed, where members of the FFA, the Center for Personal and Professional Development, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education meet to pool resources, capitalize on strengths, and create better opportunities for students.

The Commonwealth recognizes that agriculture education is vital to schools and communities, and to the economic health of the state. BCTE is committed to working with its partner organizations to build on its agricultural heritage, to innovate and lead in the years to come.

**Christopher Davis**  
Specialized Career and Technical  
Education Advisor, [Agriculture  
Education](#)  
**PDE, Bureau of Career &  
Technical Education**



# AGRICULTURE EDUCATION INDICATORS

Indicator	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	% Change 2018-2023
Number of FFA chapters	144	146	147	152	154	6%
Number of Agriculture Education students	7,096	6,948	7,417	7,436	8,382	18%
% of completers among participants in secondary level, approved ag programs	9.79%	6.82%	8.97%	10.80%	10.52%	7%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants</li> <li>• Completers</li> </ul>	7,096 695	6,948 474	7,417 665	7,436 803	8,382 882	18% 27%
Students with SAE Records	6,203 63%	5,279 59%	5,738 69%	7,027 53%	6,776 51%	9% -19%
Economic impact of SAEs	\$4,485,717	\$4,339,540	\$4,472,306	\$5,311,043	\$4,890,714	9%
Open Positions	4	10	4	14	6	50%
Filled positions	4	7	10	14	26	550%
Number of ag and food industry certifications earned by students in the system	1,277	960	1,658	1,923	2,938	130.07%

# AGRICULTURE RELATED PROGRAMS AT HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

CIP / General Program Title	Total Students	Male	Female
Agriculture	2090	1012	1078
Agriculture Mechanization	699	642	57
Agriculture Production	2270	1234	1036
Agriculture Food Processing	141	61	80
Applied Horticulture Operations	816	419	397
Animal Sciences	335	75	260
Veterinary/Animal Health	725	108	617
Agricultural/Animal/Plant Environmental/Natural Resources	244	133	111
Forestry Technology	89	55	34
	27	27	*
	<b>7436</b>	<b>3766</b>	<b>3670</b>

**Note: Of the total students 388 identify as Black or African American, 434 Hispanic, 132 multi-racial, 1, 595 with an IEP. 2,847 are classified as economically disadvantaged.**

**Below are examples of approved agricultural programs:**

- **Middle School-Very few middle school programs are out there.**
  - **Rural-Athens- Athens, PA**-Northern, along the NY line: Mid-sized program that has a strong connection to forestry/maple syruping.
  - **Suburban- Cumberland Valley, Mechanicsburg, PA, South Central:** CASE centric high school program, Middle school focuses on agriculture literacy to help better prepare students to be successful in the high school.
  - **Urban-** No approved programs present.

# AGRICULTURE RELATED PROGRAMS AT MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL LEVELS

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**Below are examples of approved agricultural programs:**

**Middle School-Very few middle school programs are out there.**

- **Rural-Athens- Athens, PA-Northern**, along the NY line: Mid-sized program that has a strong connection to forestry/maple syruping.
- **Suburban- Cumberland Valley, Mechanicsburg, PA, South Central**: CASE centric high school program, Middle school focuses on agriculture literacy to help better prepare students to be successful in the high school.
- **Urban**- No approved programs present.

**High School Programs:**

- **Urban-W.B. Saul- Philadelphia, PA**: Most recognized urban agriculture school. A fully comprehensive school that continues to adapt to ensure students are meeting the needs of the local industry.
- **Suburban-Pequea Valley**: Program that continues to grow with extremely strong and selfless educators that ensure rigor and is shown through the success for their students.
- **Suburban- Derry Area**: A long running community supported program. So strong the community facilitated the purchase of a \$50,000 tractor. They have their own building on campus that has commercial greenhouses. Has two educators one newer to the profession and one at the end, bringing in the rich past and bright future. Also focuses on helping students succeed and host workshops for surrounding area students as well, bridging gaps.
- **Rural- Albion, Albion, PA**: In the northwest corner next to Erie. Large enrollment for the local population, excels at involving community and exposing agriculture to all levels of education. This includes students working with elementary students on a consistent basis. The high schoolers help introduce agriculture literacy with the students.
- **Rural- Central Columbia, Bloomsburg, PA**: Central/Central East A program that fully embraces the APTE process to ensure the betterment of their students. Extremely community minded and continuously advocating for the program in all aspects. Instructor, Doug Brown, was the 21-22 golden owl recipient, which recognizes the full commitment of the educators to their students. This is seen by this school having a state officer (Rebekah Lehman) and the success of his students and weekly blasts of how his students are in the community.

# AGRICULTURE EDUCATORS

Agricultural educators play a key role in schools, community, the agricultural industry, and society. Becoming an agricultural educator means to engage students in leadership opportunities, personal growth & success, and career readiness through a total program of agricultural education and community involvement. **The demand for agricultural teachers is higher than the current supply.** Additionally, agricultural educators are often on extended contracts, meaning they get paid during the summer months and could earn a higher salary than other teachers.

Not one day is the same as an agriculture teacher! Some days may include:

- Serving as an advisor for FFA students engaged in leadership.
- Evaluating students' wide variety of Supervised Agricultural Experiences.
- Connecting with the community through service.
- Fostering a classroom environment which allows students to explore the agricultural industry and related careers.

Agricultural education is a diverse field that welcomes new perspectives and experiences. Whether you are transferring from industry, alternatively certified, recently graduated, or just looking for a unique job.

**The below figure reflects the number of approved agriculture programs and agriculture teachers across the four regions of Pennsylvania's Ag Ed System.**

**Western**  
**34 Schools/47 Teachers**

**Northern**  
**36 Schools/49 Teachers**



**South Central**  
**45 Schools/75 Teachers**

**Eastern**  
**52 Schools/95 Teachers**

# AGRICULTURE EDUCATOR DEMOGRAPHICS

266

Total Number of Ag Teachers

167

Total Number of Schools with an  
Ag Program/Ag Teacher

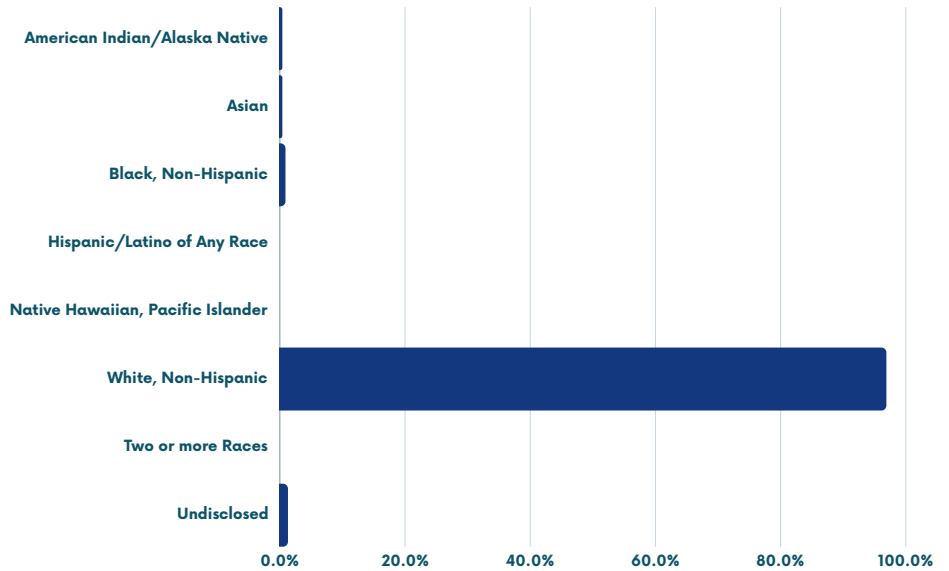
163

Female Ag teachers

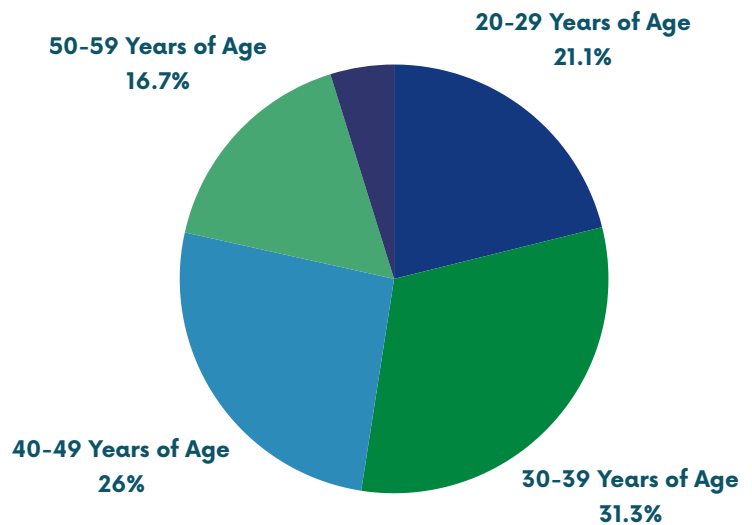
103

Male teachers

## Race/Ethnicity of PA Ag Educators



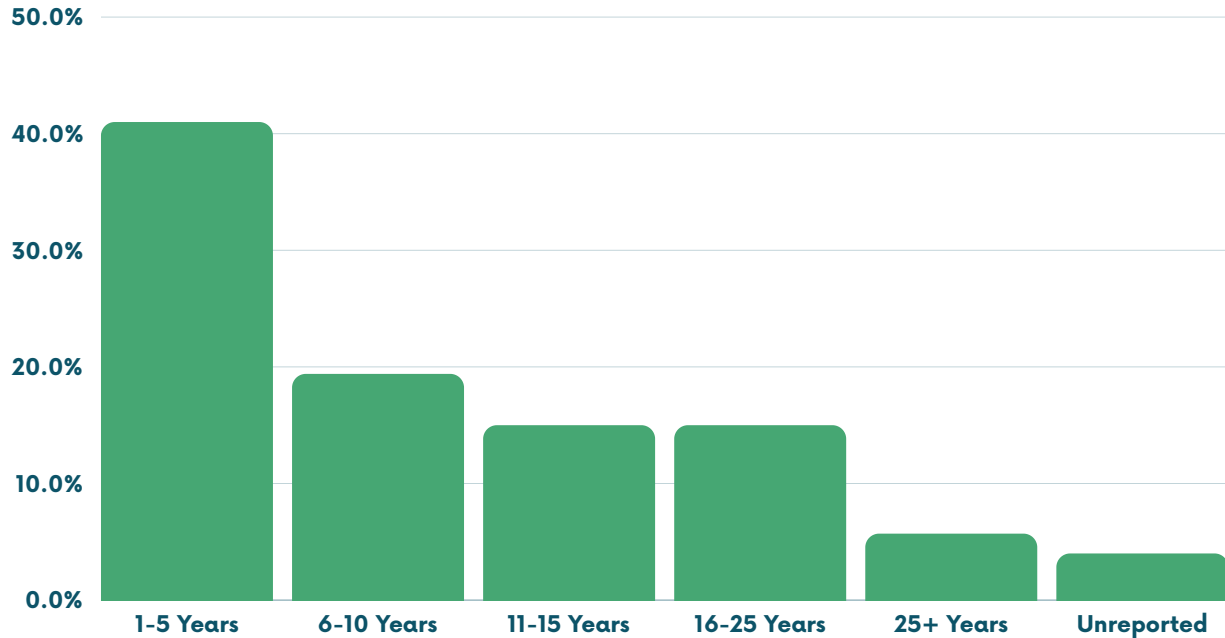
## Age Range of PA Ag Educators



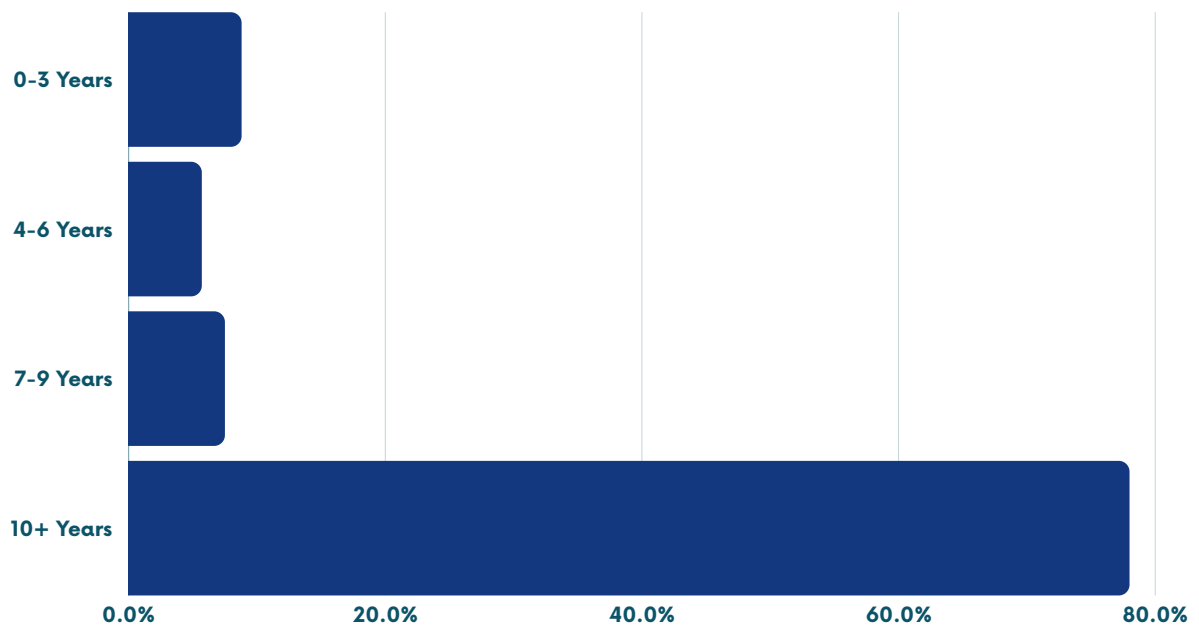
# AGRICULTURE EDUCATOR DEMOGRAPHICS

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## Average Years Teaching



## Retirement Eligibility



# SCHOOL BASED AGRICULTURE EDUCATION (SBAE)

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School-based agricultural education (SBAE) programs have become more diverse with the ever changing and growing agriculture industry. Agricultural education teachers are challenged with expanding their knowledge and competencies to effectively teach and design successful SBAE programs. Needs assessments aid in providing guidance for professional development to better equip teachers with adequate knowledge, experiences, resources and materials.

## Total PA SBAE positions in the last 3 years:

83 fulltime SBAE positions (this excludes long-term subs, part-time positions or those without a fulltime SBAE focus)

FISCAL YEAR	FULL TIME SBAE POSITIONS	SBAE POSITIONS THAT WENT UNFILLED
2020-2021	19	1
2021-2022	39	1
2022-2023	26	6





# Penn State TEACH AG

**The following information is a detailed break down of how these positions were filled during during the past three (3) years:**

- Penn State graduates filled 43 of the 83 fulltime PA SBAE position openings over the last three years.
- 9 of the positions were filled by graduates of another university.
- 5 of the positions were filled by professionals from industry.
- 18 positions were hired by individuals where their status is unknown.
- **8 positions were unfilled.**

## **Graduates in an ag education degree program**

- 38 of the 43 Penn State graduates completed the traditional 4-year Agricultural & Extension Education Program

## **Nontraditional licensed teachers in ag ed**

- 5 of the 43 Penn State graduates were nontraditionally certified (i.e. post baccalaureate program or instructional intern program)

**PSU Teach Ag has graduated 51 candidates during the five-year period from 2019-2023 (~10 per year)**

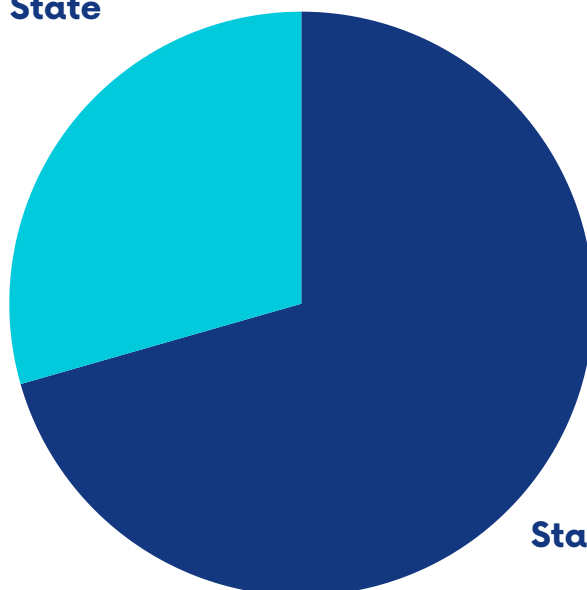
- 73% have entered the classroom at some point after graduation.
- 70% stayed in PA; 30% were employed out of state

# PENN STATE AEE (AGRICULTURAL & EXTENSION EDUCATION GRADUATE DATA

## Current Employment of PSU AEE Graduates (2019-2023)

Current Employment of PSU AEE Graduates (2019-2023)	# of Graduates	%
SBAE Teacher	36	70.59%
Teaching (Other Subject)	3	5.88%
Ag Industry	4	7.84%
Administration	2	3.92%
Higher Education	3	5.88%
Military	1	1.96%
Extension/Community Development	1	1.96%
Other (Not Specified)	1	1.97%
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Moved Out of State  
29.4%



State of Employment of  
PSU AEE Graduates  
(2019 - 2023)

Stayed in PA  
70.6%



## **STAR Program:**

Pennsylvania currently participates in the National Association of Agriculture Educators State Teach Ag Results Program (NAAE STAR) for recruitment and retention of agriculture teachers. Our team is comprised of AEE faculty members from both Penn State and Delaware Valley Universities, current PA agriculture teachers, and representatives from the Center for Professional Personnel Development, PAAE Leadership, and PA FFA Foundation representation. The funding that is received for this program is utilized in statewide recruitment efforts, pre-service teacher retention (NAAE Conference and AgI2), and in-service teacher retention (New and Beginning Teacher Program and the AgI2).

### **Retention Activities for Current Teachers:**

A yearlong thematic professional development series comprised of in-person hands-on workshops and virtual webinars.

New and Beginning Ag Teacher program for teachers in their first 3 years of teaching agriculture in PA.

Agriscience Inquiry Institute (AgI2) – This annual event is held in partnership with the Center for Professional Personnel Development (CPPD), PAAE, and the PA STAR program and is targeted at both pre-service and in-service teachers.

Professional Development Scholarships (award amounts of \$500, \$1,000, and \$1,500) available from the Pennsylvania Association of Agricultural Educators

PAAE Curriculum Library - shared digital library of unit plans, lesson plans, activities, and resources developed by PA ag teachers for PA ag teachers.

Fill the Cup Social Media Campaign - organized by PAAE Teacher, Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition Committee to challenge teachers to spend time investing in themselves for career sustainability

PAAE Annual Conference - annual meeting and professional development provided by Pennsylvania Association of Agricultural Educators in July  
Free first-year teacher membership in PAAE (cost covered by PAAE)



## Retention for College Pre-Service Teachers

Opportunity to attend NAAE Convention

Agriscience Inquiry Institute (AgI2) – This annual event is held in partnership with the Center for Professional Personnel Development (CPPD), PAAE, and the PA STAR program and is targeted at both pre-service and in-service teachers.

Student Teaching Scholarships (\$1000 award amount) from PAAE

Center for Professional Personnel Development - Teach Ag Avengers. Student employment opportunity for agricultural and extension education students that allows them to interact with teachers throughout PA by facilitating workshops and recruit prospective students into the PSU ag ed program.

PSU FFA Alumni and Supporters Club - way for FFA alumni and ag education students to connect and serve Penn State/Ag Ed community

Alpha Tau Alpha Conclave - opportunity for members of PSU FFA Alumni and Supporters Club to compete in events such as ag ed quiz bowl, debate, parliamentary procedure, essay competition, and more.

PAAE Annual Conference - annual meeting and professional development provided by Pennsylvania Association of Agricultural Educators in July

Free student membership in PAAE (cost covered by PAAE)



a project of



NATIONAL  
FFA FOUNDATION

funded by



CHS Foundation





## Overview of Program

The Global Teach Ag Network is led by two co-founders, Daniel Foster and Melanie Miller Foster and is comprised of a team of staff, affiliate faculty, graduate associates, and undergraduate interns. In addition to leading the organization as co-founders, Daniel Foster serves as the innovation specialist and Melanie Miller Foster serves as the global learning specialist.



**Dr. Daniel Foster**  
Co-Founder  
Agricultural Teacher  
Education / Innovation  
Specialist

The Global Teach Ag Network, housed within Penn State's Center for Professional Personnel Development, is a network of educators, professionals, and institutions focused on empowering educators to connect their learners to global agriculture and global issues. This is done through a variety of programs, including a digital community of practice, hybrid professional development programs for in-service and pre-service teachers, international immersion experiences, research, serving as a connector between teachers and industry, and more. These experiences are possible due to the support of our global learning partners.

To learn more – please visit our website at [globalteachagnetwork.psu.edu](http://globalteachagnetwork.psu.edu)



**Dr. Melanie Miller Foster**  
Co-Founder  
International Development  
/ Global Learning  
Specialist





## Key Outcomes

### **Launch of new community platform**

2023 marked the first year of programming for the Global Teach Ag Network on the platform – Mighty Networks. This platform is available for any educator across the world to join and currently is comprised of over 1,000 educators representing over 40 countries. Within this community there are networking opportunities, live professional development events, asynchronous courses, and more.

### **Continuation of World Food Prize Foundation Global Guides program**

This hybrid professional development program, funded by the World Food Prize Foundation provides in-service educators with a week of food security education training at the Borlaug Dialogues in Des Moines, Iowa, virtual professional development sessions, and coaching on development of a reusable learning artifact (RLA) project to be shared with other educators for their use and development.

### **Launch of Global Orientation to Agricultural Learning (GOALs) program**

Funded by a USDA-NIFA grant, cohorts 1 and 2 of this program featured professional development experiences for pre-service candidates from Penn State and the University of Idaho. These students engaged in the Borlaug Dialogues in Des Moines, Iowa, underwent training relating to global citizenship and food security education, traveled to a different state to teach about global agriculture for a week, and completed two university courses. Cohort 3 – funded by a USDA-NIFA HEC grant, expanded the program to include pre-service teacher candidates from 1890s institutions and an international immersion experience to Belize.





## Key Outcomes

### Teach Ag Uganda

USDE Fulbright-Hays experience in partnership with Field of Hope – in July 2023, 12 US educators traveled to Ugandan to work with 5 secondary schools and their teacher teams to develop student agricultural projects. This work resulted in four poultry projects and one aquaculture project being developed and continually growing in student impact and learning.

### Growers of Today and Tomorrow

As part of a a USDA-NIFA grant led by the University of Tennessee-Martin, the Global Teach Ag Network led in the facilitation of the Growers of Today and Tomorrow internship program. This program connects high school agriculture programs with local vegetable producers for secondary student interns to complete a 3-week sustainable agriculture internship. In 2023, this included two placements of Millville Area High School and Brian Campbell Farms and Southern Huntingdon County High School and New Morning Farm. This program will have internship opportunities in 2024 and 2025.

### Teach Ag Nepal

Four of our team members ventured to Nepal in May 2022 to explore their agriculture and science education system in partnership with the Rebuild Nepal Education Foundation. Our team has taken data from this experience and translated it into research relating to identification of resources available for Nepal science educators.



Indicator	2021	2022	2023
<b>Global Learning in Agriculture Conference</b>			
• Participants	973	1,167*	1,078
• US Territories Represented	51	51	49
• Countries Represented	40	46	45
<b>Global Guides Cohorts</b>			
• Educators	25	23	24
• States Represented	18	14	17
• Territories	-	1	1
• Countries	-	5	3
<b>Global Orientation to Agricultural Learning (GOALs) Program</b>			
• Students	12	18	18

### Highlights of three-year update of participants in program

- 2021 Participants - Week long virtual conference
- 2022 Participants - Reflection of first year of long programming
- GOALs Students from 2021-2023 have participated from Penn State, University of Idaho, Tuskegee University, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, North Carolina A&T University, & Kentucky State University



A young woman with long, wavy brown hair is shown in profile, wearing a black graduation gown with a white collar and a yellow sash. She has her mouth open in a shout and her right arm raised high with fingers spread. The background is a blurred stadium with blue seats and other people, suggesting a graduation ceremony. The text "AGRICULTURE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS" is overlaid in the top right corner in white, bold, sans-serif font.

**AGRICULTURE  
YOUTH  
DEVELOPMENT  
ORGANIZATIONS**

# PENNSYLVANIA FFA

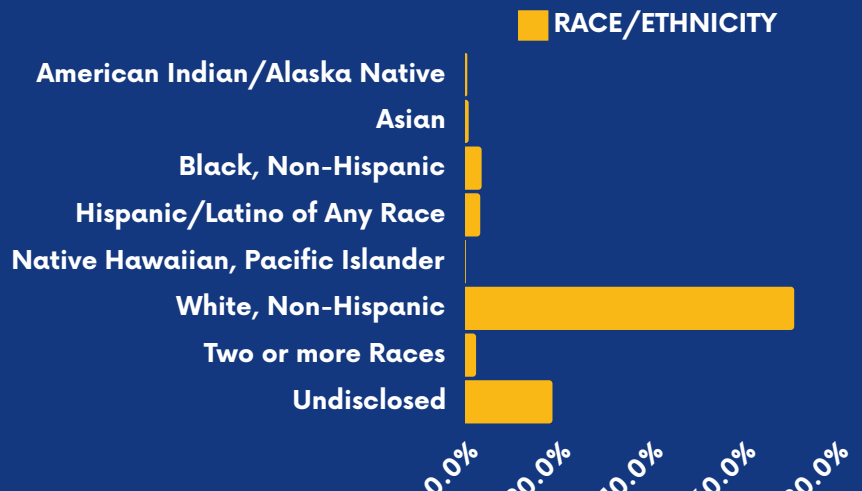
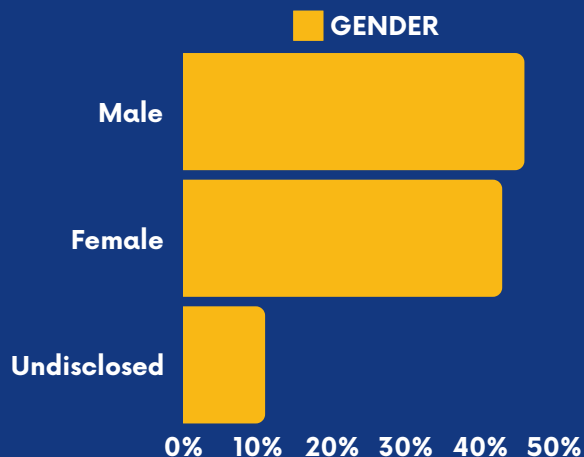
FFA membership is an investment in a student's future. **Participation** can be an **uplifting** and **community-building experience** that contributes positively to **personal growth**, including mental and emotional well-being.

In addition to personal gains, FFA membership also builds career skills and professional success for students as they network with industry professionals; explore options for careers; and develop essential skills like public speaking, interviewing, and networking.

FFA also makes a positive difference in communities. Strong chapters are built by strong members, and strong members who come together can have a greater impact on their school and community than they could ever have had independently. These are the primary returns on investing in FFA members -- premier leadership, personal growth, and career success. Join your local chapter to reap the full benefits of our wonderful organization!

## The Value of Leadership in FFA

There are many positive aspects of FFA membership. Ask any former member what they remember most about their time in the FFA, and you will likely get a different answer inspired by their unique experiences. FFA members take ownership in their experiences -- all of which develop leadership and teamwork skills. Competitive events, such as public speaking, parliamentary procedure, and agricultural issues, give members a voice in discussing important topics with their local chapter or the agricultural industry. These experiences give members confidence in handling real-world situations by sharing opinions, analyzing problems, or working with a team to make decisions.



## 2023 Pennsylvania FFA Membership

# 13,567

PA FFA MEMBERS FY 2021  
(UP 4%)

# 14,319

PA FFA MEMBERS FY 2022  
(UP 6%)

# 15,182

PA FFA MEMBERS FY 2023  
(UP 6%)





# PENNSYLVANIA FFA

## CHAPTER INFORMATION 2022-2023

**FFA CHAPTERS  
(158)**

### NEW CHARTERS

Avon Grove  
Warrior Run  
Lebanon County CTC  
Lankenau Environmental Center

### Middle School Chapters

3

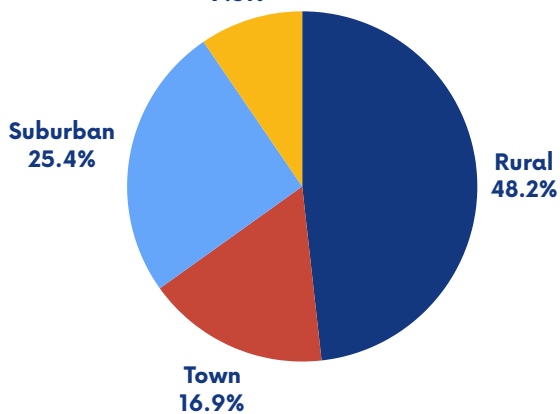
### High School Chapters

(Includes 2 private and 1 charter school)

129

### Career & Technical Center Chapters

22  
Rural Town  
Suburban City  
City  
9.5%



The Association is lead by a team of seven State Officers. These seven are elected by their peers to serve the organization for one year. They defer college/careers (take a gap year). They travel over 100,000 miles visiting schools, teaching classes, conducting workshops, conferences, conventions, etc. They are the students voice on the PA FFA Board of Directors. They also serve as state delegates at the business sessions of the National FFA Convention held in Indianapolis, IN.

Training starts immediately after being elected in June and continues all year. This year's group of seven were selected from a pool of candidates of 33 students. State Officers must be high school graduates.

This year, Pennsylvania is honored to have Jessica Herr serving as the National FFA Secretary. Jessica is the first female from Pennsylvania to be elected to national office. She is also the first to serve from the state, in 22 years. There have been 12 National Officers from Pennsylvania since 1929.

The PA FFA Association is staffed by one full-time employee. There are many teachers who volunteer their time and talent to help support FFA programming from Career and Leadership Development (CDE & LDE) events, to working committees, we would not be able to do what we do without their volunteer efforts.

However, as a result of the volunteer overutilization of our teachers, there has been an increased need for capacity building to ensure programs and events are properly staffed.

# PENNSYLVANIA FFA

## ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION AT STATE LEVEL ACTIVITIES:

State Level Career and Leadership  
Development Events (CDE & LDE) (Contests)  
(32)

Advance to the National level, Indianapolis, IN  
(26)

Advance to the Regional level (Eastern States  
Expo in Springfield, MA)  
(22)

## ATTENDANCE AT STATE LEVEL EVENTS

**PA FFA State Convention** –Penn State  
University Park (1624)

**ACES Leadership Conference** -  
Harrisburg Hershey Sheraton (1964)

**State Legislative Leadership Conference**  
– Harrisburg Hershey Sheraton (612)

**Fall Leadership Conference** – Blair County  
Convention Center - (511)

**Mid-Winter Convention** – Attended by  
over (8,000) students, teachers, parents,  
guests – PA Farm Show Complex during the  
PA Farm Show

**Photos courtesy of the PA  
FFA Association**



# SUPERVISED AGRICULTURE EXPERIENCE (SAE)

6,776

2023 Students w/ SAE Records

51%

2023 % with SAE

\$2,211,125

2023 Direct Investment

\$4,890,714

2023 Economic Impact

## Student SAE Engagement

39% Entrepreneurship SAEs

49% Placement SAEs

11% Research SAEs

## Projects by Pathway

6% Ag. Lead./Ed./Comm

3% Agribusiness Systems

46% Animal Systems

0% Biotechnology System

1% Environmental Service

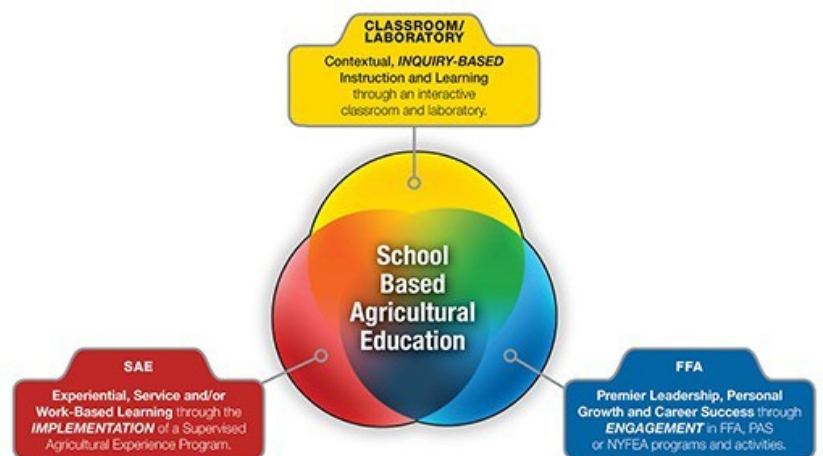
2% Natural Resources

8% Food Products and Processing

9% Plant Systems

7% Power, Structure, and Technical

The Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) program involves practical agricultural activities performed by students outside of scheduled classroom and laboratory time. SAEs provide a method in agricultural education for students to receive real-world career experiences in an area of agriculture that they are most interested in. Supervised Agricultural Experiences are an important component of agricultural education and are required element of all Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (AFNR) courses



Students may apply for funding to support their SAE project through the Learning by Doing Grant offered by the Pennsylvania Foundation. The agriculture education commission since 2018 has provided over \$120,000 in support of this grant program.

**Data made available by Carole Fay the Pennsylvania SAE Specialist**



# PENNSYLVANIA 4-H PROGRAM

“Empowering youth to be the leaders of tomorrow is one of the most crucial responsibilities that we have as adults.

The youth who are participants in the Pennsylvania 4-H program truly embody the spirit of leadership that is needed in the world today. The positive, youth-development experiences that the 4-H program provides to youth through the work of 4-H educators and dedicated volunteers are helping to shape the world that we live in.

Participation in 4-H is an opportunity for youth to develop critical thinking, teamwork and leadership skills. 4-H focuses on growing the whole person through hands-on learning opportunities that develop the head, heart, hands and health of participants. Your support will help to give future leaders the tools they need to make their communities stronger.

Because of the support the 4-H program receives from community leaders like you, we are able to offer new and innovative opportunities “

Joshua E. Rice, Ph.D.  
Assistant Director, 4-H Youth Development

2022 PA 4-H Membership  
Enrollment

**4,084**

NEW 4-H MEMBERS

**12,534**

TOTAL MEMEBRS  
BETWEEN THE AGES OF 5-18  
(INCREASE OF 17.21%)

**77,597**

YOUTH REACHED THROUGH  
SCHOOL ENRICHMENT  
PROGRAMS AND OTHER NON  
TRADITIONAL 4-H PROGRAMS  
AND EXPERIENCES

**1,612**

ACTIVE 4-H CLUBS

**1,911**

CLASSROOM VISITS





# MANRRS

**MINORITIES IN AGRICULTURE,  
NATURAL RESOURCES & RELATED  
SCIENCES**



**2023 PA MANRRS**

**Membership**

**400**

**TOTAL MEMBERS  
(BETWEEN HS & COLLEGIATE)**

**3**

**PA JUNIOR MANRRS CHAPTERS  
(9-12TH GRADE)**

WB SAUL AGRICULTURE HS  
LANKENAU ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE HIGH  
SCHOOL  
THE U SCHOOL

**2**

**PA COLLEGIATE MANRRS  
CHAPTERS**

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
DELAWARE VALLEY UNIVERSITY

**105**

**CHAPTERS NATIONWIDE**

**10,000**

**ACTIVE DATABASE OF STUDENT &  
PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS**

MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences) is a national society that welcomes membership of people of all racial and ethnic group participation in agricultural and related science careers. MANRRS members are encouraged to be full participants in other professional societies for their basic disciplinary and career interests. However, MANRRS attempts to provide networks to support professional development of minorities. It is a springboard for their entry into and advancement in careers where they otherwise could be lost in the sheer number and established connections of mainstream participants. For student members, MANRRS provides role models and networking opportunities.









MANRRS also offers students opportunities to enhance leadership and organizational and public speaking skills, and to experience professional critique of scholarly work in a "user friendly" environment. MANRRS professional members are often the only, or one of few, minority participants in their basic disciplinary societies or at their career locations. MANRRS provides them a network of counterparts from similar backgrounds with related interests and goals. More experienced members serve as mentors for newer graduates. The historical roots of traditionally formed networks within professions will prevent their replacement by MANRRS or any other alliance. However, MANRRS provides its members a similar inner circle of relationships to circumvent some of the exclusionary impacts of established professional lines of communication. Finally, MANRRS also serves employers in the broader agricultural sector. It provides them a platform to identify prospective well-qualified employees who are members of ethnic groups, which, when combined, are projected to be the new majority in the workforce in the not too distant future.

# MANRRS

**MINORITIES IN AGRICULTURE,  
NATURAL RESOURCES & RELATED  
SCIENCES**



## MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

	 JUNIOR	 COLLEGIATE	 COLLEGIATE	 PROFESSIONAL
	<b>HIGHSCHOOL</b>	<b>UNDERGRADUATE</b>	<b>GRADUATE</b>	<b>BEYOND COLLEGE</b>
    Secondary Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-college Assistance</li> <li>• Career awareness &amp; readiness</li> <li>• Scholarships</li> <li>• Priority Consideration Internships</li> <li>• Mentorship with local University</li> <li>• Contextual Learning</li> <li>• Community Impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Development</li> <li>• Professional Development</li> <li>• Social Skill Development</li> <li>• Internship and Jobs</li> <li>• Career awareness and readiness</li> <li>• Networking</li> <li>• Community Impact</li> <li>• Cultural Competencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Development</li> <li>• Professional Development</li> <li>• Career Coaching</li> <li>• Internship and Jobs</li> <li>• Career awareness and readiness</li> <li>• Networking</li> <li>• Community Impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Development</li> <li>• Professional Development</li> <li>• Mentorship</li> <li>• Jobs Opportunities</li> <li>• Networking</li> <li>• Community Impact</li> <li>• Cultural Competencies</li> </ul>
<b>INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT SPONSORS</b> Internships • Development • Access				



# **AGED DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION & ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**



# DEIA MISSION

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- **Foster** a culture that promotes opportunity and access to agricultural education and/or agricultural training opportunities for all diverse people across differences of race, age, color, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, national origin, migratory status, disability/abilities, political affiliation, veteran status and socioeconomic background.
- **Create** an equitable and sustainable climate where, justice, fairness and mutual respect are intrinsic, success-oriented, cooperative and supportive of the ag ed industry where we recruit and retain people and partners who feel comfortable contributing their unique wisdom, perspectives and experiences.
- **Establish** an inclusive agricultural education system that aims to ensure that every member of our ag education family feel valued, supported through education and outreach campaigns that reach more people.
- **Provide** continued education to agricultural teachers, employers and more on issues of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

## 5 Principles

**Explore**

Who We Are

**Evolve**

What We Do

**Establish**

Actionable Strategies

**Engage**

Vision & Mission

**Empower**

Everyone

# DEFINING DEIA

## DIVERSITY

Existence of individual and social differences that contribute to identity: Cultural, Racial, Religious, Age, Sex /Gender, Sexual orientation, and Disability

## EQUITY

Grounded in the principles of fairness, creating opportunities, and ensuring each individual has the tools and support they need to achieve their individual success

## INCLUSION

Intentionally fostering an environment in which each individual is valued and respected for their diversity, is empowered to engage and contribute, and is provided access to resources and opportunities

## ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility means making sure that people of all abilities can fully engage with every aspect of your organization, whether they're employees, vendors, customers, or partners.



# DEIA STRATEGIC GOALS

01

## DEIA Infrastructure and System Alignment

The Commission will help strengthen the DEIA infrastructure by ensuring alignment between other state agencies and working groups focused on DEIA in their perspective areas. The Commission will ensure that DEIA is woven throughout the work of the Commission through all of its projects and initiatives and embedded in the Commission's annual work plan.

02

## Foster a Diverse Agriculture Education System

Foster a culture that promotes opportunity and access to agricultural education and/or agricultural training opportunities for all diverse people across differences of race, age, color, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, national origin, migratory status, disability/abilities, political affiliation, veteran status and socioeconomic background.

Create an equitable and sustainable climate where, justice, fairness and mutual respect are intrinsic, success-oriented, cooperative and supportive of the ag ed industry where we recruit and retain people and partners who feel comfortable contributing their unique wisdom, perspectives and experiences.

Establish an inclusive agricultural education system that aims to ensure that every member of our ag education family feel valued, supported through education and outreach campaigns that reach more people.

Provide continued education to agricultural teachers, employers and more on issues of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

# DEIA STRATEGIC GOALS

03

## Recruitment, Talent Development, and Advancement Procedures

Successful recruitment and talent development strategies are key to securing future agricultural workers and engaging students in ag related training programs. Ensuring that these strategies for recruitment and development are welcoming and inclusive to all is critical in securing diverse talent from all backgrounds.

The Commission will review and assess current recruitment methods within the Ag Ed system focusing on the recruitment and advancement of educators and leaders as well as the engagement of students. The Ag Ed system within the state should have hiring processes, job descriptions, recruitment strategies and interview and evaluation processes that are diverse, equitable and accessible to all.

04

## Learning and Training Processes

Continued education is a critical component for educators in any discipline. Ensuring educators, administrators, Ag Ed Commissioners and other leaders within the Ag Ed System have access to quality trainings and educational programming focused on DEIA issues will give them the tools to maintain a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

The Commission will work with the PA Department of Education (PDE) to create and offer training and continued education opportunities for teachers, administrators and other leaders within the Ag Ed System that focuses on DEIA. These opportunities will be widely available and will ensure that educators have the tools necessary to provide a learning environment inclusive of all students and backgrounds.

# DEIA STRATEGIC GOALS



## Branding, Marketing, Digital Strategy

The Commission and Ag Ed System rely on branding and other outreach strategies to teach students and the general public about agriculture and the various careers that exist within the industry. These communications provide an opportunity to reach individuals typically underserved by the Ag Ed System.

The Commission will review past, current and future outreach campaigns to determine how they can be more inclusive. They will also study appropriate research to establish and develop a compelling story that raises awareness and reputation to drive recruitment of diverse representation. The desk-audit portion of the previously mentioned assessment shows an opportunity to improve upon current marketing tools and campaigns.

The Commission will involve industry representatives to provide feedback and insight on these strategies and share stories of diverse individuals within the field to give students and parents the opportunity to see people with similar backgrounds in agriculture.





# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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Workforce gaps and labor shortages have been a challenge within the agricultural industry for many years. Addressing these needs and filling these gaps is crucial to ensuring the success of Agriculture in the state.

The 2021 Economic Impact Study shows the major impact that the industry has on the state's economy. According to the study Pennsylvania's agriculture industry has a \$132.5 billion annual economic impact and supports more than 590,000 jobs, paying nearly \$33 billion in wages annually. As technology changes and older workers retire there is a continued need to develop the next generation of agricultural workers and upskill current workers to prepare for changing technology. There is a need for workers across the various subsectors within agriculture, with the PA Department of Labor and Industry (L&I) reporting openings in more than 30 different in demand ag occupations including Butchers, Loggers, Farmworkers, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers, Veterinary Technicians and more.

Over the last year the Department has worked closely with industry to determine the specific needs and opportunities available, hosting listening sessions with small to mid-sized meat processors, Ag Equipment dealers and more. This industry input will help to guide the Department's ongoing workforce initiatives and programming.

The Department has increased collaboration and connections with the Workforce Development system and L&I, hosting professional development events for Workforce staff, leading a new agricultural committee for the State's Workforce Development Board, and engaging with local Workforce Development Boards across the state. These strategies and initiatives have helped the Department raise awareness of the career opportunities within agriculture and to ensure that the industry and employers have a seat at the table in workforce discussions. More and more people are learning about agriculture careers and workforce needs as we help prepare the next generation of agricultural workers.



**Sara Gligora**  
Special Assistant  
Workforce Development  
**PDA**

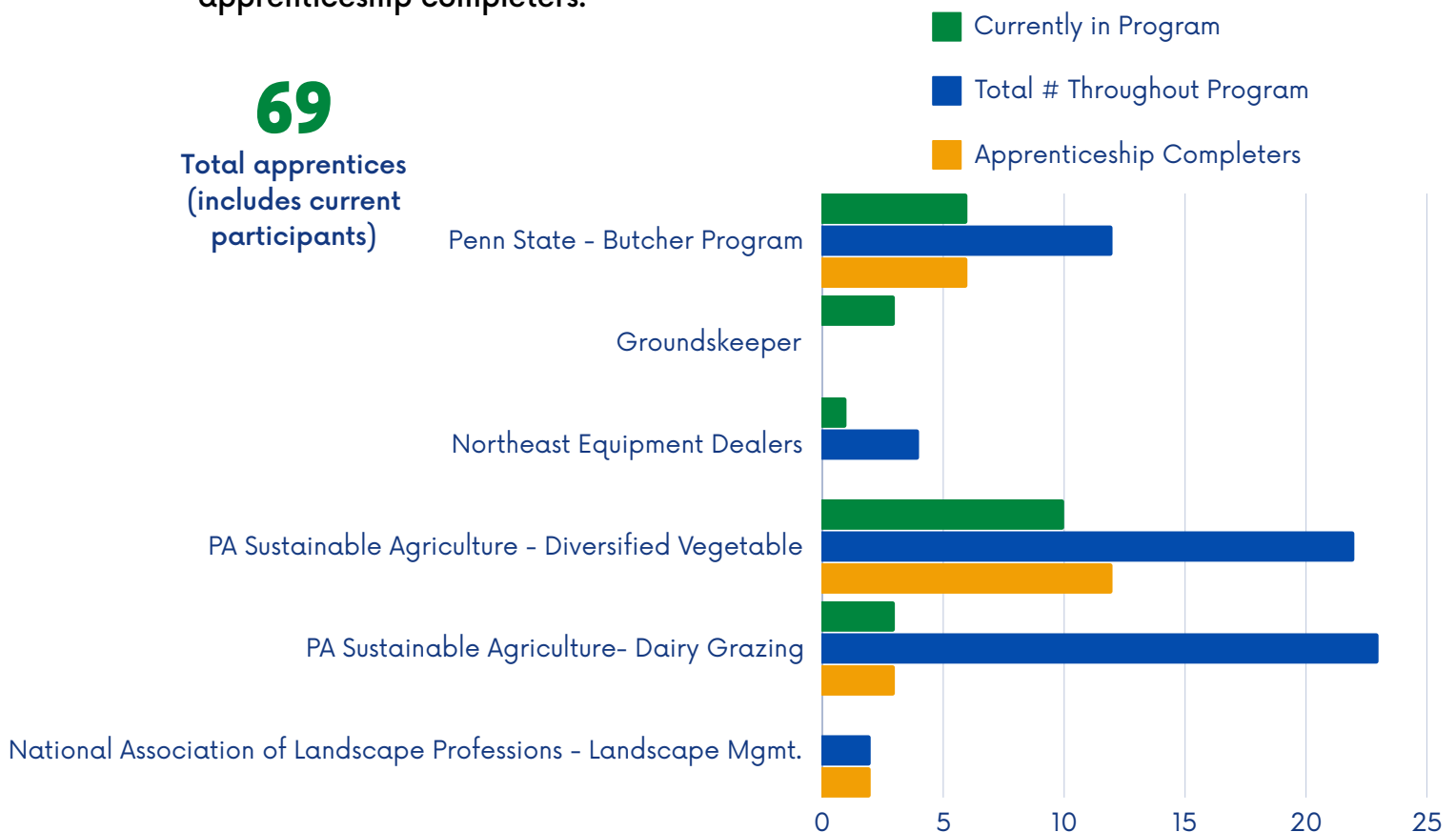


# APPRENTICESHIPS & PRE-APPRENTICESHIPS

The Department has been working hard to address these needs and identify solutions to the growing labor shortages. The department has focused on expanding and developing on the job training programs such as apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship, increasing outreach and awareness of the various opportunities within agriculture and ensuring access to migrant labor.

## APPRENTICESHIPS BY THE NUMBERS

The following chart reflects the statewide current, total, and apprenticeship completers.

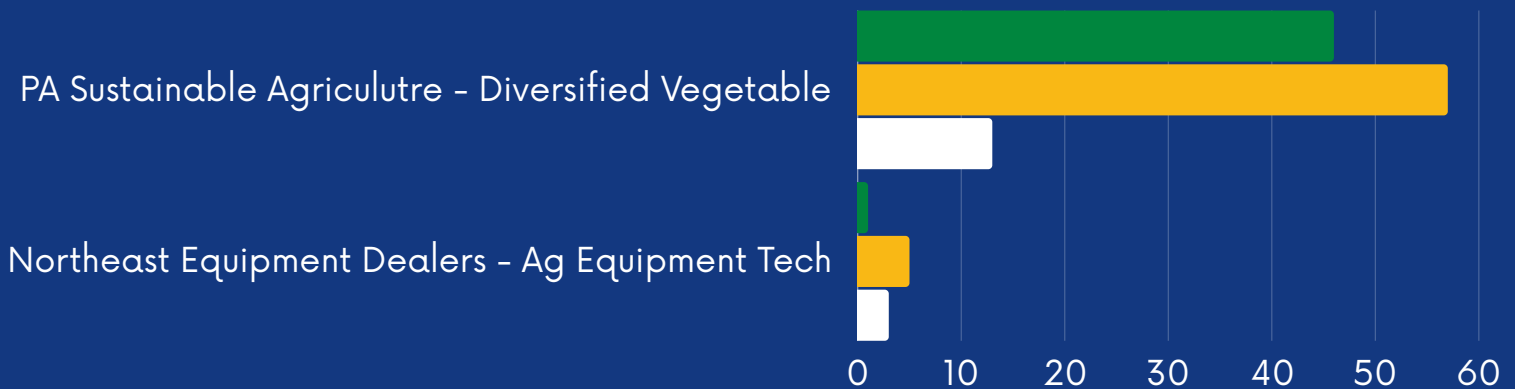
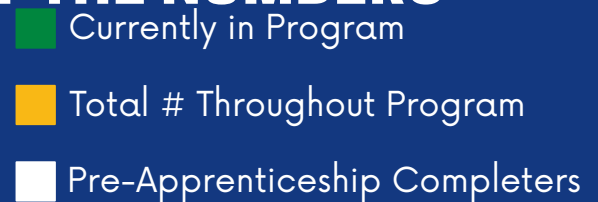


### Highlight

- Penn State Butcher Program - 3 completers now own their own businesses.

# APPRENTICESHIPS & PRE-APPRENTICESHIPS

## PRE-APPRENTICESHIPS BY THE NUMBERS



### Highlights:

- Northeast Equipment Dealers Ag Equipment Tech - 2 pre-apprentices were hired directly by employer, 1 transitioned into full apprenticeship
- A new apprenticeship is in development with the Center for Dairy Excellence

## Programming Recommendations for Meeting the Training Needs for Individuals Not Pursuing Formal Post-Secondary Education

Continue to explore interfaces with the growing registered apprenticeship system in the United States, negotiating articulations where possible with a broad understanding of career pathways and how they work:

- Encourage every agriculture-related registered apprenticeship to develop a pre-apprenticeship that reaches into not only the K-12 system but also into other manpower pools (veterans, ex-offenders, unemployed workers).
- Assist apprenticeship planners in understanding gaps in using agriculture educators as teachers in apprenticeship and plan together to acquire the needed knowledge and skills.
- Support all apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship programs equally

Work with industry (public/private) to identify career pipeline opportunities to help sustain the agriculture workforce

# 2022-2023 COMMISSION EXPENDITURE PLAN

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- **Small Gas Engine BriefCASE - \$13,000.** PAAE hosted a Small Gas Engines BriefCASE on Thursday, July 13 – Saturday, July 15, 2023 (directly following their PAAE Conference) at Cumberland Valley High School. The BriefCASE consisted of 18 hours of professional development that leads participants through 12 weeks of curriculum, suitable for students in grades 10th through 12th grade. The curriculum included units on Safety and Expectations, Engines, and Diagnostics.
  - Funds were allocated to PAAE for the following:
    - Purchased 10 new Briggs & Stratton Engines were provided to Pennsylvania teachers upon completion of the training (\$4000)
    - Covered registration for 10 teachers from Pennsylvania (\$9,000)
- **Hydraulics Training for 10 Educator (Northeast Equipment Dealers/Thaddeus Stevens) - \$10,000.** Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology, in partnership with The Northeast Equipment Dealers Association, and The Pennsylvania State University's Center for Professional Development collaborated to deliver innovative professional development training session on agriculture & diesel mechanics. The commission provided support for 10 educators to register for this training.
- **Hardwoods Council (Project Learning Tree Materials) - \$5,000.** Funds were distributed to the Hardwoods Council to purchase ag literacy booklets from Project Learning Tree and the Sustainable Forest Initiative to provide to guidance counselors a resource to advocate for forest careers and increase awareness for opportunities in the agriculture industry.
- **Statewide AET Support - \$17,000.** The AET system is designed for students to track their experiences in agricultural education and includes national and state educational content standards, teacher grading tools and students developing career portfolios. This line item helped to pay 50% of the annual subscription costs for all FFA programs in the commonwealth.
- **PA FFA Association Support (State Officers) \$15,000.** The PA FFA Association is the leading agriculture youth organization that promotes leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. Our FFA State officers are vital to ensuring students across the commonwealth are engaged in agriculture education programming. This funding helped support our state officers in ensuring they can meet their financial obligations to ensure they can continue to service our next gen agriculture leaders.

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- **SAE Specialist Contract - \$10,000:** This was used to support the SAE Specialist who is responsible for the support and increase the number of Supervised Agriculture Experiences (SAE) within the Commonwealth continues to be a priority to support the advancement of agriculture education programming.
- **Philadelphia Junior MANRRS Coalition Program Support \$15,000.** A key objective of the agriculture education commission is to aid in Identifying, supporting and exploring opportunities to increase diversity of the Agriculture Education system and the various programs and opportunities within it is a critical charge of the ag education commission. This funding was used to support high school MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences) chapters that serve underrepresented students by providing them opportunities to attend statewide agricultural events and learning activities. The following schools are included in this coalition:
  - WB Saul Agriculture School,
  - Lankenau Environmental Science Charter School,
  - The U School
- **Industry Engagement - \$9,200.** These funds were allocated to Sara Gligora in her role as the Workforce Development Specialist as she worked to help create and expand new and current agricultural industry partnerships. These funds helped develop new partnerships across the state and gave partnership conveners the ability to engage stakeholders in their region including employers and educational institutions.
- **Learning by Doing Grants - \$35,000.** This funding was distributed to the FFA Foundation to replicate its Learning by Doing grants process that has been done over the last two years. 1,000 grants for teachers, \$1,000 grants for FFA chapters, and \$350-\$500 grants for student SAE project.

# RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNOR AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO STRENGTHEN AGRICULTURE EDUCATION IN PENNSYLVANIA

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- Existing funding for the Commission has been provided by the Department of Agriculture at a level of \$250,000 annually. To fully implement the Action Plan created by the Commission it is recommended to increase the appropriation to a minimum of \$500,000.
- Capacity building to-date remains the number one priority for stakeholders that support the growth of agriculture education. As our agriculture education system has seen exponential growth, we have to ensure we have the people power to support the growth aged programming across the commonwealth.
- Introduce legislation that will boost resources for agriculture programs at community and technical colleges. Funds will help to establish workforce training, education, research, and outreach programs in agriculture.
- Allocated funding each year for non-traditional agriculture schools/programs. Agriculture shows up different across the state and to ensure the now-generation is empowered to help fill our workforce gaps, we must be intentional with providing funds to support the growth of agriculture education especially in our urban/metro areas.
- Invest funds to support the growth of apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships across the diverse agriculture disciplines.



# RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSION FOR AGRICULTURE EDUCATION EXCELLENCE TO STRENGTHEN AGRICULTURE EDUCATION IN PENNSYLVANIA

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- Develop framework for statewide agriculture education plan.
- Provide financial support for leadership development and training through multiple programs, including but not limited to: FFA & MANRRS local, regional and national leadership trainings and conferences.
- Assemble a group of private sector agricultural employers who could send representatives to public schools and introduce students to career paths in all aspects of agriculture.
- Increase agriculture education advocacy and engagement in community colleges.
- Develop an annual scholarship for students pursuing a degree in agriculture education.
- Agriculture Education Advocacy Tours – a key recommendation from the PAAE summer conference was to hold Ag Education Advocacy Days during CTE Month (February).
  - Invite PDA & PDE Secretaries, local politicians and state FFA officers to visit to 3-4 programs a day for just an hour, depending on program and availability. This could take place twice a year, as schedules allow, and be rotated through different regions each time.
- Support the development of an urban agriculture CIP code & pre-apprenticeship/apprenticeship program.
- Establish an incentive grant program for agriculture educators that meet program standards.
- Develop an agriculture fellowship for collegiate students interested in agriculture education policy advocacy.
- Support to increase agriculture education presence in community colleges.
- Develop an ag ed marketing and branding campaign around advocacy of agricultural related career pathways.
- Work with PDAs workforce development specialist and Department of Labor & Industry to ensure industry is engaged with educators and ag ed programs to support the transition of students into the agriculture workforce.
- Establish tracking system for ag ed post graduate employment.
- Develop professional development trainings for district administrators. on the importance and benefits of an agriculture education program.
- Identify strategic ways to increase K-8 engagement in the ag education system.



The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture encourages, protects and promotes agriculture and related industries throughout the commonwealth while providing consumer protection through inspection services that impact the health and financial security of Pennsylvania's citizens.

**Secretary: Russell Redding**



The Global Teach Ag Network's Team is composed of faculty, staff, graduate students, undergraduate students, and volunteers committed to collaboration around empowering educators through quality professional development in global agriculture and food security.

**Co-Founder: Dr. Daniel Foster**



The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) oversees 500 public school districts, more than 170 public charter schools, public cyber charter schools, Career and Technology Centers/Vocational Technical schools, public Intermediate Units, the education of youth in State Juvenile Correctional Institutions, Head Starts and publicly funded preschools, and community colleges.

**Secretary: Dr. Khalid Mumin**



MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences) attempts to provide networks to support the professional and leadership development of minorities in agricultural related spaces. It is a springboard for their entry into and advancement in careers where they otherwise could be lost in the sheer number and established connections of mainstream participants.

**National President: Dr. Derris Burnett**



The Pennsylvania Association of Agriculture Educators supports agriculture education by recruiting and retaining agricultural educators through professional, social and recreational programs. This grassroots organizations promotes agricultural education and the professional aspects of teaching agriculture as well as plan for the future of agricultural education by working closely with the postsecondary systems in articulating courses in agriculture and maintaining worthwhile relationships with other professional organizations and agencies.

**President: Sherisa Nailor**



The center is committed to the operation of a comprehensive program of professional personnel development for career and technical education. The Center for Professional Personnel Development is one of three centers recognized by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Bureau of Center and Technical Education (PDE/CBTE). At Penn State, the Center is housed in the College of Education and the College of Agricultural Science.



The Pennsylvania FFA Association is a student-led organization whose mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education.

**President: Crystal Bomgardner**



The mission of Pennsylvania 4-H is to help young people reach their full potential through learning, leadership, service, and friendship. 4-H members work with dedicated, caring adults to complete challenging, rewarding projects that develop real-world skills that will serve them for life.



The Pennsylvania FFA Foundation cultivates partnerships and secures resources to enhance Agricultural Education and FFA. The Pennsylvania FFA Foundation is affiliated with The National FFA Organization.

**Executive Director: Sarah Sparks**

# CONTACT

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For more information on agricultural educations resources and opportunities see the contact information below:



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Executive Director

Agriculture Education Excellence

Commission

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