

Iowa Council on Agricultural Education



ANNUAL REPORT

2019

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Message from Council Chair

Dear Agriculture Education Stakeholders and Supporters,

In Iowa, agriculture and agriculture-related industries account for more than \$121 billion in output and more than \$39 billion in total value-added to the Iowa economy. There are more than 399,600 jobs in agriculture and the related industries in Iowa. With 1 in 5 jobs in Iowa in agriculture or the agricultural industry, it makes good sense why students would want to explore these opportunities.

Agriculture education with its three-circle model strives to develop well-rounded students who have the technical skills to step into careers in the agriculture industry. Through classroom learning, supervised agriculture experiences, and leadership programs through FFA, agriculture education students are ready to meet the demands of the work force.

With 242 student secondary agriculture education programs across the state and more than 21,400 students enrolled in agricultural education courses, agricultural education is growing! There have also been seven new FFA chapters chartered with more than 15,600 FFA members active within the state! More and more students are starting to experience agricultural education classes and see how they might lead to future career opportunities. As the number of programs grow, so too, do the quality of those programs. The Iowa Council on Agricultural Education helps determine those quality standards and recognize those high-quality programs that are modeling the way for others to follow.

The Council on Agricultural Education reviews, develops and recommends standards for secondary and postsecondary agricultural education. This essential work helps maintain the rigor of current programs and ensures that new programs live up to a standard of excellence.

The Council has not only been responsible for promoting best practices in teaching agriculture through its awards program, but it has also been responsible for researching and assessing existing programs. The Council will work with the Department of Education, Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, General Assembly, and other organizations or bodies to help agriculture education prepare students in years to come.

It has been my pleasure to serve as chair of the Council this past year, and I am excited by the work that the group has done to advance agriculture education in Iowa. I invite others to step alongside of us to see the continued growth of programs across the state and continue student success.

Thank you!

Will Fett



**Will Fett, Council Chair
Iowa Council on
Agricultural Education**

Mission

The Council on Agricultural Education will review, develop, and recommend standards for secondary and postsecondary agricultural education.

Background

The Iowa Council on Agricultural Education was formed as a result of legislation by the 72nd Iowa General Assembly and signed by Governor Terry Branstad in 1989 (HF2433). Council members are appointed in July and the Council meets at least twice a year. The Council is charged with the responsibility to study and make recommendations to improve the standards for developing and conducting agricultural education programs in Iowa – both curriculum and overall program quality.

For the period of July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019, the Council continued work in four key areas. 1) Awards to recognize outstanding agriculture education programs, 2) Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE) programs, 3) Teacher recruitment and retention, and 4) Quality program standards review.

Programs

Awards to Recognize Outstanding Agriculture Education Programs

The Iowa Council on Agricultural Education awarded Lone Tree Community School in Lone Tree, Iowa with the 2019 Excellence in Agriculture Education award. The award was presented at the Iowa FFA Leadership Conference held in Ames, Iowa on April 15-17, 2019.

The purpose of the award is to identify what makes a highly successful agriculture education program in schools and recognize those who model that success. Bridget Mahoney is the agriculture teacher at Lone Tree Community School and FFA advisor. The program was nominated for the award by a student in the agriculture education program, Molly Milder.

“The Lone Tree Agricultural Education Department opens the doors to many activities and opportunities for student within our school district,” wrote Milder. “These students have many options to learn about vast career opportunities within the agricultural field. The Lone Tree FFA Chapter welcomes kids from all backgrounds and encourage kids that live in more urban areas.”

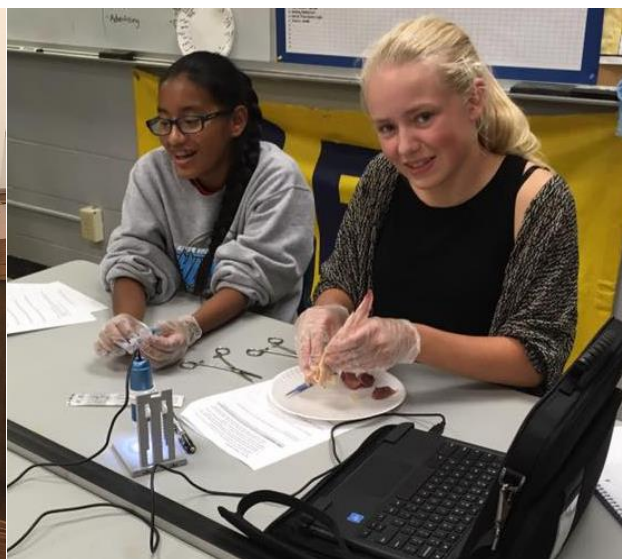


Council member and Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Naig, presented the awards at the Iowa FFA Leadership Conference in April 2019.

The council also recognized four other schools for excellence in agriculture education.

Award	School	City	Teacher
Advisory Committee Award	Eddyville-Blakesburg-Fremont	Eddyville	Melissa Appel
Program Promotion & Marketing Award	Central DeWitt High School	DeWitt	Amy Grantz
Agriculture Career Awareness Award	Lone Tree Community Schools	Lone Tree	Bridget Mahoney
Integration of Science Award	Lone Tree Community Schools	Lone Tree	Bridget Mahoney

Agricultural education is offered in 242 high schools across Iowa. Agriculture education employs a three-component model to deliver teaching through classroom instruction, supervised agricultural experience programs, and leadership development through FFA. Students who take an agricultural education class are eligible to join FFA. There are more than 15,600 FFA members in Iowa.



Teacher Recruitment and Retention

To enhance teacher recruitment and retention, the Council undertook submitting an application for potential funding to the USDA NIFA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative – Education and Workforce Development Program. If awarded, this grant would provide up to four years of funding to implement a number of workforce initiatives to grow agricultural education in Iowa. The program area priority that this application will most closely address is agriculture systems and technology. The title of this project was *Increasing Agriculture Education Teacher Workforce and Early Career Success*.



The rationale for this project is that agriculture teacher preparation programs face dilemmas such as shifting licensure requirements, challenging fiscal implications of pursuing a career in school-based agricultural education (SBAE), and an absence of diverse teacher candidates. As of 2018, in Iowa there were a total of 242 school-based agricultural education programs employing 262 teachers. During the reporting year 19 teachers left their positions. This is consistent with similar data from the previous four years. There are 17-24 graduates with Agricultural Education degrees each year, however 35% to 50% of graduates do not pursue full-time teaching positions leading to a deficit and shortage in agricultural education instructors. Additional teachers are needed to meet demand in SBAE. This trend is comparable with other states. This shortage is compounded with the number of school districts that are adding SBAE programs and staff. In 2018, there were four new SBAE programs established and six new positions hired.

Our goal for this project is to create a path for college students majoring in agricultural education to smoothly and easily complete their degree requirements and transition into full-time teaching positions. In addition to this, we hope to ensure early success for those early years through the mentor program which will then lead to long-term retention in the teaching field ensuring a robust workforce.

The scope of this project aims to accomplish several different specific objectives that all contribute to the increasing of agricultural educators in the field and their success in that profession. First, we will identify college students enrolled in the agricultural education major and develop an apprenticeship curriculum and program for them. This will give them more practical experience to complement their educational preparation. Secondly, this project will help supplement college students during their student teaching experience. This will help provide a smooth transition for these individuals as they finish their college preparatory experience and transition into full-time teaching jobs. This project will also train teachers in CASE (Curriculum for Agriculture Science Education), specifically the agriculture systems and technology module.

This module was piloted in Iowa in 2018, and five teachers were certified. This curriculum training will certify more teachers to be able to teach agricultural systems and technology. The final object of this project focus on early career success of agriculture teachers by supporting a

new teacher mentor program, their attendance to the Iowa Association of Agricultural Educators annual conference, and their attendance to a mid-year mentoring conference.

Our approach to this project will be to build on existing programs like the new teacher mentor program and develop new programs like an agriculture education apprenticeship program. Agriculture Education was recently approved as an apprenticeable occupation by the U.S. Department of Labor and this project will allow us to take advantage of that new designation.

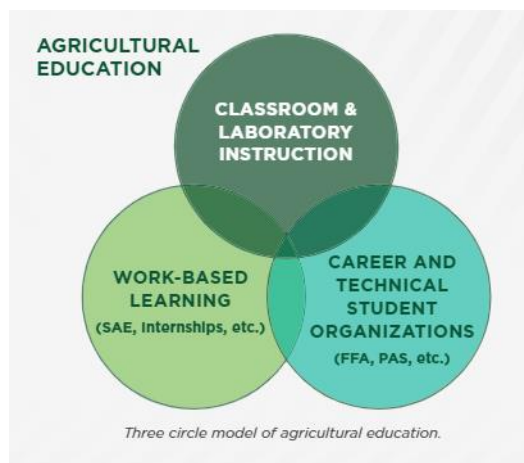
Potential impact of this project will be to have as many as six individuals participate in an apprenticeship program as part of their agricultural education career preparation. This project will see as many as 48 student teachers trained over the course of four years. The project will train 20 teachers in CASE modules including agricultural systems and technology. The project will see as many as 60 new teachers paired with mentors and support them as they begin their career. Expected outcomes for this project will lead to changes in knowledge/attitude/skills as individuals understand the path to become an agriculture teacher and use the resources provided. The project outcomes will see changes in behaviors/practices as more individuals graduate with agriculture education degrees and pursue full-time teaching positions. We will see increased placement, and also increased retention of early career teachers in the workforce.

Quality Program Standards Review

After adopting the National Quality Program Standards for Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resource Education as the Iowa standards, the Council worked this year to begin communicating those standards to agriculture teachers. The Council presented the standards to the teacher audience at the Iowa Association of Agricultural Educators and their summer meeting.

The National Quality Program Standards for Secondary (Grades 9-12) Agriculture, Food and Natural Resource Education are a tool designed for local agriculture, food and natural resource education programs to analyze their program and develop clear goals and objectives for program growth. This tool is designed to be used by local teacher(s) in cooperation with, administrators, community partners, advisory committees, FFA support groups and/or an external assessment team. These standards reflect all components of an agriculture, food and natural resource education program including: Classroom and laboratory instruction; Work-Based Learning (Experiential, project, and work-based learning through SAE); Career and Technical Student Organization (Leadership and personal development through FFA). Just as agriculture varies throughout our nation and around the world, so will our agriculture, food and natural resource education programs. Adoption and use of these standards is voluntary; states and local entities are encouraged to adapt the standards to meet local needs. States should use these standards in conjunction with state and local advisory committees to determine the most relevant and appropriate quality standards for their programs.

The standards are laid out in the following 7 Keys to Local Program Success:



- Standard 1A: Program Design and Instruction – Curriculum & Program Design: A standards-based curriculum in agriculture, food, and natural resource education is delivered through programs of study that incorporates classroom and laboratory instruction; experiential, project, and work-based learning through SAE and leadership and personal development through FFA.
- Standard 1B: Program Design and Instruction – Instruction: Programs promote academic achievement and technical skill attainment of all students.
- Standard 1C: Program Design and Instruction – Facilities & Equipment: The facilities and equipment support implementation of the program and curriculum by providing all students opportunities for the development and application of knowledge and skills.
- Standard 1D: Program Design and Instruction – Assessment: Programs utilize multiple methods to assess student learning that illustrates academic achievement and skill development.
- Standard 2: Experiential, Project, and Work-Based Learning Through SAE: Student learning (or instruction) is enhanced through continuous experiential, project, and work-based learning through SAE.
- Standard 3: Leadership and Personal Development Through FFA: All students participate in intra-curricular leadership and personal development through FFA.
- Standard 4: School and Community Partnerships: School and community partners are engaged in developing and supporting a quality program.
- Standard 5: Marketing: Key stakeholders are continually asked, involved, recognized and informed about all components of the integrated program.
- Standard 6: Certified Agriculture Teachers and Professional Growth: Competent and technically certified agriculture, food and natural resource teachers provide the core of the program.
- Standard 7: Program Planning and Evaluation: A system of needs assessment and evaluation provides information necessary for continual program development and improvement.

Additionally, because of the Council's work in 2018 and the adoption of the AFNR content standards the Iowa Board of Education adopted those standards for Iowa schools. These standards were part of a larger career and technical education (CTE standards adoption for middle and high school students. The board based their recommendation on project management teams including the Iowa Council of Agricultural Education. The standards were established as part of HF 2392, state legislation signed into law in 2016, which is helping shape the future of CTE in Iowa. The new CTE standards and benchmarks will set clear and consistent foundational expectations for what students need to learn in high-quality CTE programs across the state. They will also serve as a guide for Iowa educators as they develop curriculum, courses and classroom activities locally.



In addition to input from team members, public input was sought through an online survey. More than 400 stakeholders participated in the public review with the majority of comments expressing support for the standards, as well as their connections to consistency, rigor and industry demands.



Leadership

The Council is made up of nine voting members appointed by the Governor of Iowa. The Council includes representatives from business and industry, farming, education, and agricultural agencies and organizations. Non-voting representatives come from a variety of agriculture stakeholder groups.

Council Membership (July 2018 to June 2019)

Kevin Blair, Griswold, Iowa - Council for Vocational Education Representative

Melanie Bloom, Marathon, Iowa - Representative of Agriculture

Ryan Burger, Earlham, Iowa – Representative of Agriculture

Will Fett, Des Moines, Iowa – Postsecondary School Program Instructor

Brea Harms, Eldridge, Iowa – Representative of Agriculture

Kent Klemme, Ankeny, Iowa – Representative of Agriculture

Caitlin Remington, Bondurant, Iowa – Secondary School Program Instructor

Mike Retallick, Story City, Iowa – Teacher Educator

Vacant – Representative of Agriculture

Ex officio Council Membership (July 2018 to June 2019)

Chandler Jahner, State FFA President

Nate Gibson, State FFA Alumni President

Lane Reifschneider, Postsecondary Agriculture Student President

Pat Thieben, Department of Education, State Consultant in Agriculture Education

Mike Naig, Secretary of Agriculture, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

Sen. Zach Wahls, Senate Democrat

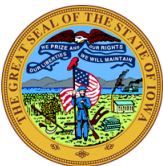
Sen. Annette Sweeney, Senate Republican

Rep. Bruce Bearinger, House Democrat

Rep. Tom Jeneary, House Republican

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