

Dept. of Workforce Development: Strengthening Wisconsin Agriculture: DWD releases SFY 2022 Wisconsin Agricultural Education and Workforce Development Council report

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MADISON – From adding new agricultural career pathways to preparing students through agricultural education programs, the Wisconsin Agricultural Education and Workforce Development Council (WAEWDC) highlights the importance of agribusiness in Wisconsin in its 2022 annual report.

The report showcases agriculture as a profitable and exciting career path and reflects the council's role in advising and informing state agencies, educational institutions, and the Wisconsin Legislature on matters related to agricultural education and workforce development. The council helps attract, develop, and retain the superior workforce required to grow Wisconsin's production in agriculture, agribusiness, food, and natural resource sectors.

Specifically, the council works to:

1. Increase the hiring and retention of well-qualified employees in industries related to agriculture, food, and natural resources.
2. Promote the coordination of educational systems to develop, train, and retrain employees for current and future careers related to agriculture, food, and natural resources.

3. Develop support for employment in fields related to agriculture, food, and natural resources.
4. Recommend policies and other changes to improve the efficiency of the development and provision of agricultural education across educational systems.

“Competition for workers is strong statewide and agriculture is no exception. Agriculture is a significant driver of the state’s economy, contributing \$104.8 billion in sales annually and accounting for nearly 12% of the state’s employment,” DWD Secretary-designee Amy Pechacek said. “Going forward, promoting these employment opportunities and working with partners to develop career pathways will be essential to attract young talent and maintain a thriving agricultural sector. DWD welcomes the recommendations of the Wisconsin Agricultural Education and Workforce Development Council as we continue to build and strengthen Wisconsin’s workforce for the 21st century and beyond.”

The WAEWDC annual report includes reviews of agricultural education programs provided by Wisconsin’s educational systems and institutions: the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI), Wisconsin Technical College System, University of Wisconsin System, and UW–Madison’s Division of Extension. It also includes details on the goals and activities of the WAEWDC during state fiscal year 2022.

“This council is composed of individuals dedicated to the future of Wisconsin agriculture,” Council Chair Sara Schoenborn said. “Together, we have developed goals that will strengthen the agriculture industry and its next generation of leaders. It is inspiring to see what a difference the council is making today and the plans they are making for an even greater impact tomorrow.”

Highlighted in the report is the Council’s commitment to its mission by setting attainable goals, with subcommittees focused on implementing and achieving these goals, which include:

- Supporting agricultural education instructors and finding effective ways to reach every student to highlight the opportunities available in agriculture in a positive, purposeful way.
- Partnering with DPI to embrace and promote the development of a statewide agriculture pathway.
- Researching current trends, evaluating established perspectives, and

developing a branding, marketing, and public outreach plan for careers in agriculture.

“The Wisconsin Agricultural Education and Workforce Development Council is focused on its three goals to support agricultural education instructors, develop a statewide agriculture pathway, and promote agricultural careers,” DATCP Secretary Randy Romanski said. “I am proud to collaborate with government, education, and industry partners to advance this work and develop Wisconsin’s future agricultural workforce.”

[Wisconsin Agricultural Education and Workforce Development Council Annual Report](#)