

Food + Farm Exploration Center: Requests state funding

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[PLOVER, Wis.] – Food + Farm Exploration Center Interim Executive Director Kathleen O’Leary today encouraged members of the Joint Finance Committee to add an additional \$10 million in funding in the 2023-2025 Capital Budget to move the Exploration Center one step closer to completion and opening in 2023.

Wisconsin has a rich agricultural history, and the goal of the Exploration Center is to help citizens understand how their food is grown and the importance of agriculture to the state. This world-class facility will provide hands-on learning opportunities and workforce development training for students as well as the public.

“This will be an investment in the future of agriculture, education and workforce development,” O’Leary told committee members. “The Exploration Center will provide collaboration with area growers, processors, food manufacturers and all levels of educational institutions from K-12, technical colleges and the UW System to plant the seeds for the next generation of the agricultural workforce.”

STEM education and the development of the next generation of the agricultural workforce are the primary focuses of the Food + Farm Exploration Center. There will be onsite and classroom curriculum consistent with the state’s STEM initiatives. Through its programs, the Exploration Center hopes to engage students by showing them why a career in agriculture can be rewarding as well as the vast opportunities available to them.

The Food + Farm Exploration Center will create new jobs and increase tourism into the state of Wisconsin and Portage County.

The Food + Farm Exploration Center, which will be 50,000 square feet, will be

located on 24 acres and include more than 16,000 square feet of hands-on learning space, 5,000 square feet of conference and indoor event space, 40,000 square feet of outdoor event space and four acres of agricultural teaching fields.

For more information or to join the effort, visit www.FoodandFarm.us