

Minnesota's

AgEd Advocate



MAELC

Fall 2014

Kari Schwab, Editor

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By now you may have noticed there is something a bit different about MAELC's look. We are proud to introduce our new logo, which was designed to better reflect our priorities of agriculture, food, and natural resource education. We also unveiled a newly designed website this summer at www.mn.gov/maelc. The website's layout is designed to become your one-stop shop for information about Agricultural Education in Minnesota, including grant and scholarship opportunities.

Along with the new logo and website, we have redesigned our communications materials. Soon you will see the MAELC Minute, a short e-newsletter that will be sent out more frequently than the AgEd Advocate. If you have suggestions for topics to include in the newsletter or MAELC Minute, or wish to sign up to receive the MAELC Minute please feel free to contact Kari Schwab at opdah012@umn.edu or (612) 624-6256.



Agriculture



Food



Natural Resources



Education

Upcoming Events

Strategic Initiatives
Grant Applications -
Due November 15

MAELC Board Meeting -
December 12th
1:00 pm (Location TBD)

Undergraduate
Scholarship Applications -
Due January 15, 2015

Sarah Dornink
Executive Director

Co-Chairs
Dan Sparks
State Senator

Jeanne Poppe
State Representative

Board Members

Brian Buhr
College of Food, Agricultural and
Natural Resource Sciences - U of MN

Kevin Dahlman
Governor's Appointment

Gary Dahms
State Senator

Mike Dove
FFA Foundation

Tim Faust
State Representative

Brad Greiman
Agricultural Education - U of MN

Rod Hamilton
State Representative

Mary Hoffmann
President, MAAE

Lyle Koenen
State Senator

Joel Larsen
Minnesota Department of Education

Larry Lundblad
Minnesota State Colleges
and Universities (MnSCU)

ADawn Melbye
President-Elect, MAAE

Charlie Poster
Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Matthew J. Wolle
Governor's Appointment

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From the Desk of Sarah Dornink
MAELC Executive Director

As another school year started, Minnesota was once again scrambling to have enough agriculture teachers to fill all the positions across the state. At last count there were 42 openings/position changes, with only 15 agricultural education graduates licensed from the University of Minnesota. According to the National Association of Agricultural Educators, in 2013 there were 69 agriculture, food and natural resource programs that went unfilled and approximately 325 filled with an alternatively licensed teacher nationwide (based on 44 states reporting). If each teacher sees an average of 100 students per year, there were 39,400 students who did not experience agriculture, food and natural resource education from a qualified instructor.

So what are we doing about it? Minnesota was excited to be selected last March as one of eleven states to participate in the State Teach Ag Results (STAR) program. STAR is intended to look at recruitment and retention strategies to help fulfill the agriculture teacher shortage. STAR program state teams are responsible for implementing strategies, tracking impact, and reporting results of their plan to share with other states. The STAR Program is an initiative of the National Teach Ag Campaign, which is affiliated with the National Association of Agricultural Educators.

MAELC has agreed to serve as the primary contact for our state team, and I would like to take this opportunity provide an update on the project's status. Our state committee has determined nine strategies that we will be focusing on in the next two years:

1. Create one additional "Teach Ag" event, such as a career experience camp
2. Organize a committee to explore opportunities to engage with new and diverse audiences
3. Construct a teacher professional development continuum
4. Hire one to two regional agricultural education outreach coordinators
5. Provide student teaching scholarships (stipends, license fee, tuition reimbursement)
6. Initiate current and future teacher recognition/celebration programs
7. Provide an Agriculture, Food and Natural Resource (AFNR) summer teaching internship
8. Launch a state professional development program for mid-career teachers
9. Implement a "Teach Ag" messaging and tracking plan

An individual and/or group have been identified to lead each of these initiatives and planning has begun including the development of budgets and timelines.

Although these nine strategies were selected, there are many approaches to addressing the agriculture teacher shortage. If we work together, are creative, and keep the end goal in mind, we will be successful.



Minnesota Hosts National Teach Ag Day



On September 25, Minnesota had the honor of hosting the 2014 National Teach Ag Day celebration. Events took place over two days and included a dialogue and reception, an undergraduate symposium hosted by the University of Minnesota, and a live-stream celebration held at CHS headquarters in Inver Grove Heights.

Sponsored by CHS and AgriBank, the dialogue and welcome reception brought together over 50 agribusiness leaders, policy makers, and education professionals to discuss solutions-based strategies to ensure a quality supply of agriculture teachers. Topics covered ranged from the teacher shortage, to how and why businesses should support agricultural education, and what agriculture teachers are doing in their classrooms to help students succeed. MAELC Executive Director, Sarah Dornink, had the opportunity to bring greetings on behalf of Minnesota Team Ag Ed and provided a wrap-up during the event.

The undergraduate symposium invited current and prospective post-secondary agricultural education students to the University of Minnesota for a full morning of speakers. The day started with a key-note address titled "What's Your Why," presented by Jodee Bock (Business Communicator & Author of *The 100% Factor: Living Your Capacity*). Following the key-note address, students had the opportunity to attend three breakout sessions: "Putting Your 'Why' to Work" (Jodee Bock), "Technology for Teachers: 30 Tools in 30 Minutes" (Samantha Walder, Adjunct Instructor-University of Minnesota), and "Teacher Stress and Classroom Management" (Dr. Erica Theiman, Assistant Professor-University of Illinois).



The highlight of National Teach Ag Day was a live webcast from CHS headquarters from 12:00-2:00 pm. MAELC had the opportunity to create a short video highlighting Minnesota Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resource Education, which was shown after Sarah Dornink welcomed everyone to Minnesota. The event also included special appearances by leaders in agricultural education, panels of current and future agriculture teachers, and tips for pursuing a career in agricultural education. Individuals celebrating across the nation were able to chime in through social media and video conferencing. Before the live-stream event started, CHS announced a \$1.5 million contribution to the National FFA Foundation to help support the National Teach Ag Campaign, CASE (Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education) and FFA Core programs.



This year, 906 locations representing 48 states (compared to 496 locations in 2013) tuned in to watch the live stream event, each with their own audiences participating. Social media interaction was also encouraged during the celebration, reaching over 460,000 Twitter accounts (compared to just over 299,000 in 2013). Minnesota had 98 live attendees at CHS, representing 13 different states and 5 institutions.



If you would like to watch the recorded webcast, visit www.naae.org/teachag/teachag_day.cfm



Minnesota Teach Ag Day planning committee

MAELC Board Members Thank You & Welcome

Thank You

We would like to express our gratitude to T.J. Brown for his two years of service on the MAELC board as one of the Minnesota Association of Agricultural Educators (MAAE) representatives. His input and thoughtfulness about the future of agricultural education in Minnesota is greatly appreciated by all. Mary Hoffmann is the new MAAE President, and ADawn Melbye is the President-Elect. Both will serve on the MAELC board.

We would also like to thank Dan Smith for his sixteen years of service on the MAELC board as the Department of Education representative. Dan was instrumental in shaping MAELC and its many initiatives carried out since its inception.

Welcome

ADawn Melbye



ADawn Melbye is a Farm Business Management instructor at Northland Community College in Thief River Falls.

ADawn is currently serving as the President-Elect of the Minnesota Association of Agricultural Educators.

Prior to Farm Business Management, ADawn taught Agriculture and Natural Resources: Animal and Equine Sciences at the University of Minnesota-Crookston from 2008-2012. She was also the agricultural educator at Lincoln High School in Thief River Falls from 1998-2008.

ADawn received her Masters of Education in Agricultural Education from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. She also holds a Bachelor of Science in Equine Management and Animal Industry Management, both from the University of Minnesota-Crookston.

Joel Larsen



Joel Larsen is the Program Specialist for Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources at the Minnesota Department of Education. He has served in this role for over 20 years. Joel joined the MAELC board this past summer as an appointment of the Department of Education.



Grant Program Receives Make-Over

MAELC is pleased to introduce its new application for program grants called *Strategic Initiatives*. The new application combines the previous grant program areas and aligns more closely to the strategic initiatives developed from the Agriculture, Food and Natural Resource Education Blueprint. The grant committee has developed one application and updated its content to provide more details for applicants, such as general suggestions about items MAELC typically does not fund and what the committee prioritizes. The grant deadlines will be November 15, 2014 and April 15, 2015. The new application can be found on the MAELC website.

The strategic grants are focused to assist in the following areas:

Agriculture, Food & Natural Resource (AFNR) Literacy

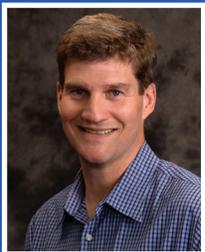
These grants are to promote agricultural, food and natural resource literacy initiatives across Minnesota in both formal and non-formal educational settings. Education institutions, nonprofit institutions, and government agencies are eligible to apply. Priority is given to grants that promote agricultural education to new audiences and projects that partner with other organizations.

Secondary/Post-Secondary/Farm Business Management

1. Align and enhance AFNR education courses for effective integration of science, math and economics standards and principles.
2. Implementation of new or expanding upon current AFNR education programs that attract new and underserved/underrepresented groups. May include cultivating program models that are innovative and flexible. Also supports the implementation of additional higher education institutions that offer a teacher training program in Agricultural Education.
3. Career exploration programs that recruit and retain students for the future workforce in agricultural education and agriculture careers.
4. Provide support for the career lifecycles of all AFNR educators (e.g. early, mid or late career). This can include professional development opportunities to expand and grow all AFNR educators' skills.
5. Address licensure issues and promote alternative pathways to licensure including strengthening transfer option relationships.
6. Programs that recruit, retain and transition instructors at the secondary, postsecondary and adult farm business management levels.
7. Assist in developing a fiscally sound Farm Business Management program with statewide program leadership.

Grant Spotlight-Commodity Challenge

Written by Ed Usset, Center for Farm Financial Management



Grain marketing is a difficult task and a hard topic to teach. There is nothing simple about the use of cash or futures and options contracts to price grain and manage risk. How would you prefer to learn about grain marketing - would you rather read it from a book or play a game that is hands-on, fun and educational?

Commodity Challenge is an online trading game (www.commoditychallenge.com). In addition to quotes for futures and options markets, the game features real-time cash quotes from hundreds of local markets from all corners of Minnesota. Players are asked to assume the role of a grain producer. Unlike speculators who buy low and sell high, Commodity Challenge players accept the challenge of marketing grain and learning to manage price risks.

Consider this example of how student players participate in Commodity Challenge. In a game that can last from a week to a full semester, each student plays the role of a soybean (or corn, or wheat) producer. Soybean prices are volatile - trading as high as \$18 and as low as \$8 per bushel in the last 5 years - and players have to make some difficult choices. They may choose to sell soybeans into the local market at the current price, or they may choose to store it for sale later in the year. Alternatively, they may choose to sell futures contracts to establish a price, or use option contracts to establish a minimum price. Players have many choices, and Commodity Challenge gives them the chance to explore pricing tools and learn about grain markets while playing a fun, competitive game.

Commodity Challenge is very popular in Minnesota. Since the website was redesigned in April 2013, 50 games have been started within the state (it is also available nationwide), drawing over 1,000 students/players. Of this total, 19 games were started for use within high school classrooms, and another 16 games were started for use in community college or university classrooms. The remaining 15 games have been used by farm or private groups - Commodity Challenge is an educational opportunity for all ages!

Article continued on page 8...

MAELC Common Fund Projects

In its eighth year, MAELC again provided agricultural education grants for statewide and regional projects in Minnesota through the Common Fund Grants program. Common Fund Grants are designed to encourage collaborative initiatives with an emphasis on agricultural education.

Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom (MAITC) - \$8,000

Empowering Agricultural Literacy Teacher Champions & Establishing Farm Family Classroom Connections

Funds will support six teacher champions in three metro elementary classrooms to utilize authentic agricultural examples as a context for student learning in science, social studies, language arts, and health/nutrition.

Minnesota Department of Education - \$32,500

MyCAERT-Online Agricultural Science Curriculum Library

This program gives all agricultural education pre-service and current teachers in Minnesota access to resources regarding Natural Resource Science, Plant Science, Animal Science, and Biological Science. These resources are all aligned with the state science standards.

Southwest Minnesota State University, Marshall - \$59,580

Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Education at SMSU

This grant will fund a program director for SMSU's new Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Education. The Agricultural Education Program Director will handle recruitment, develop marketing initiatives, and promote agricultural education and other agriculture opportunities at SMSU. For the new major, the curriculum has been approved at the campus and system levels. Next steps include receiving Board of Teaching approval.

University of Minnesota Agricultural Education - \$19,378

Professional Development for New Agricultural Teachers in Minnesota - Teacher Induction Program (TIP)

Faculty members at the University of Minnesota work with first-year secondary agricultural education instructors to ensure a smooth transition from college student to teacher. This program has been in existence for 15 years and has increased the retention rate of teachers in Minnesota. The first-year teachers are paired with senior mentors, who are retired agriculture teachers, to help guide them through their first year of teaching.





MAELC Awards Over \$58,000 in Grants

This past spring, MAELC awarded over \$58,000 in grants to Minnesota high schools, FFA chapters, and community organizations that work to improve agricultural education in the state.

Priority Issue:

Institution	Amount	Project Description
Children's Museum of Southern MN	\$9,500	Unleashing the Superpower of Play to Expand Agricultural Education in Southern Minnesota
Dassel-Cokato FFA Chapter	\$3,766	South Africa Agricultural Ambassadors
Kimball Area HS	\$4,877	Re-fabricating the Kimball Welding Program
MN Association of Agricultural Educators (MAAE)	\$4,780	Welding Workshops for Agriculture Teachers
Pierz Healy HS	\$2,265	Pierz School Garden Project
Plainview-Elgin-Millville Schools	\$8,950	21st Century STEM Laboratory
Southeast Service Coop	\$9,500	Mobile Science Lab Partnership



Quality Program:

Institution	Amount	Project Description
Chatfield HS	\$7,818	Science & Engineering in Agriculture (STEM)
Lake Superior School District-William Kelley Schools	\$7,204	Agriculture, Food & Natural Resource Program Development

Student Spotlight- Greta Tank



My name is Greta Tank and I am a sophomore majoring in Agricultural Education-Leadership and Communications. I grew up on a corn and soybean farm in Cottage Grove and raised cattle and hogs for 4-H and FFA.

I enjoy staying busy and do so through my campus involvement in Agricultural Education Club, Block and Bridle Club, Crops and Soils Club (Secretary), Gopher Dairy Club (Banquet Chair) and Alpha Omicron Pi Sorority.

Growing up on the edge of the suburbs provided me with a great opportunity to share my passion for agriculture and led me to the University of Minnesota to study Agricultural Education. My personal vision for agriculture is that consumers-young and old-are informed, aware, and educated as to where their food comes from and how it is produced. My plan is to continue my education with a Master's in Education following my undergraduate focus in Leadership and Communications.

This summer I had the wonderful opportunity to be an intern for Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom (MAITC). The mission of MAITC is to promote understanding and awareness of the importance of agriculture. Their educational programs provide opportunities for educators to embed agriculture into K-12 classrooms. One of my main projects this summer was coordinating details for a summer teacher tour that allowed teachers of all subjects to take farm and industry tours while learning about MAITC's resources that they can use in their classrooms. I also focused on updating materials, creating databases, gathering statistics and creating online archives of past MAITC materials. Another project I enjoyed was looking into using social media outlets to further MAITC's reach and image. I met so many great people this summer at the Department of Agriculture and really enjoyed working with Al Withers (MAITC Program Director) and Sue Knott (MAITC Education Specialist).

I am also fortunate to be serving as the student representative on the MAITC Board for the upcoming term. I am looking forward to working alongside educators, industry representatives and those passionate about the agriculture industry. I want to see even more educators use MAITC's materials to promote agriculture literacy in their classrooms as they apply authentic agricultural examples to teach core curriculum concepts.

University of Minnesota-Agricultural Education Curricular Redesign

Written by Dr. Brad Greiman, Academic Program Leader

Change is all around us. Technology, climate, population, consumer preferences, land prices, and student demographics in our schools have and will continue to change. This fall, our proposed change for the agricultural education undergraduate major will begin to make its way through an approval process that involves college and university curriculum committees. The faculty has diligently worked on this curricular redesign the past two years. There will be new and redesigned courses and a new name for the major as part of our proposal. This name will describe the expanded vision and mission of our program.



Goals of Our Redesign

There are several goals of our curricular redesign. One is to assist undergraduate students to value and develop education, communication, and leadership skills. The application of educational principles to formal and non-formal contexts, development of effective communication by writing and presenting, and demonstration of positive leadership skills are outcomes that all of our students will accomplish as a result of our redesign. This skill set will form the basis for core courses in our major and is valued by employers who hire our graduates.

A second goal is to offer students more experiential learning opportunities earlier in their undergraduate program. Multiple field experiences that are integrated into new courses will provide students with relevancy and an opportunity to connect course content to the real-world of their future career path. These experiences will better prepare our students for their future careers.

In addition, students will be encouraged to seek and complete professional development experiences outside of courses. These experiences will occur during each year of students' university program. For example, the summer may be the best time for students to gain additional knowledge and skills at a workshop, interact with professionals at a conference, or learn more about their selected career path by volunteering at a county fair or organizational event. The intent of these experiences is for students to embrace lifelong learning and continuing professional development.

A third goal is to design a course sequence for each specialization in the major that better meets the learning needs of our students. The intended result is for students to build a greater sense of self-efficacy and passion for their agricultural education career path at an earlier point in their undergraduate program. Our course sequence provides the opportunity to develop a spiral curriculum. The intent of this approach is to present key concepts throughout the curriculum but with deepening layers of complexity. Examples of key concepts are reflective thinking, collaboration, working together across differences, critical thinking, and time management.

I am enthused about the potential results of our redesign efforts and look forward to sharing the outcomes of this project in a future issue of Minnesota's Ag Ed Advocate.

SAVE THE DATE - Agricultural Education Sneak Preview

Monday - November 10, 2014

Registration starts at 8:30 am with a program from 9:00 am-12:00 pm

High school (grades 9-12) and post-secondary students are invited to spend the morning on the St. Paul campus, exploring career opportunities in Agricultural Education, Communications & Leadership.

Teachers, Career Counselors, & Family Members Encouraged to Attend!

To register, visit <http://z.umn.edu/p2x>

Or, contact Sara Jensen (sjensen@umn.edu) with any questions



MAELC Hosts Farm Business Management Meeting

MAELC hosted a meeting about the statewide Farm Business Management program on Tuesday, August 12 in St. Cloud, MN. Two instructors (a newer instructor and a seasoned veteran) from each FBM institution were selected to participate in the meeting. Cindy Bigger, an outside facilitator, led the meeting conversation around curriculum, delivery models and communication. For each topic, instructors broke into working groups to brainstorm possibilities. After instructors identified a list of ideas, they determined priority areas. Also during the day, an open discussion was held to determine key messages about the status of the FBM program.

University of Minnesota

*Minnesota's
AgEd Advocate*

Minnesota Agricultural Education
Leadership Council
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In addition to the game, the website features lesson plans and videos on how to create pre and post harvest marketing plans. Are you a grain buyer? There is also a buyer's version of Commodity Challenge, giving livestock and dairy producers the chance to explore grain procurement strategies.

With the assistance of a MAELC grant and other supporters, curriculum was developed to go along with the game. A series of videos on writing marketing plans, along with short, instructional guides to help players understand the basics of commodity marketing are available to supplement classroom activities.

The response from teachers and students has been fantastic. One high school teacher wrote, "This game is PERFECT. It gives students real life situations and practice for those who are going to be farmers and those who are not. Also farm business management can be difficult to make hands-on lessons online. I have found that kids join other games and end up playing this game for fun because they enjoy practice."

Thanks to generous support from CHS, Commodity Challenge is free and open to anyone who wants to learn more about commodity marketing. Simply send an email that says "I want to start a game." Note a start and end date and send it to Edward Usset at usset001@umn.edu. You can take the challenge too!

Grant Spotlight - Commodity Challenge (continued)