The Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics offers two degree programs: a major in agricultural business and a major in economics. This brochure describes the agricultural business major.

Our Location

Montana State University is located in scenic Bozeman, Montana.

As cited in National Geographic Adventure Magazine: “...Bozeman, Montana, sits at the center of a picture-book American landscape: a Western town, plugged into a golden valley rimmed by peaks dusted with snow. Head any direction out of town and year-round adventure awaits.” Bozeman is the home of the American Simmental Association and is host to the Western Regional National College Rodeo Finals.

In August 2010, Outside Magazine ranked Bozeman among the top “25 Dream Towns” to live and play in, and the No. 1 Best Skiing in the West.

Agricultural Business

Agricultural business is a dynamic industry that is becoming increasingly global and technologically sophisticated. A degree in agricultural business at Montana State University provides students with skills that allow continued personal and professional growth as this industry progresses.

More Information

We encourage you to contact us or visit us on the web for more information about our exciting programs.

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Montana State University is an ADA/EO/AA/Veteran’s Preference Employer and Provider of Educational Outreach.
The growing complexity of the global food system, coupled with advances in food production, processing, biotechnology, and changes in government policy will spur demand for agricultural business majors. Indeed, the growing need for well-trained students with knowledge of agricultural production, marketing, finance, and policy is expected to result in additional jobs in the future.

**Agribusiness Management Option:** The agribusiness sector of the economy, which produces and sells goods and services to farmers and ranchers on one hand, and processes and markets agricultural commodities on the other, is growing rapidly. In the United States, for every job in agricultural production, there are approximately three jobs in agriculture-related businesses. The MSU agribusiness management curriculum has established an excellent reputation with employers and is specifically designed for management training with emphasis on finance, accounting, and managerial economics in agriculture-related businesses and industries.

Many of our graduates work for regional, national, and even international agribusiness firms that market, process, and transport agricultural products. Other graduates work for companies that service agriculture by supplying inputs to producers. Agricultural credit institutions employ many of our graduates. Some of our graduates continue their education by pursuing graduate degrees or attending law school.

**Farm and Ranch Management Option:** For a student who expects to work in agricultural production and eventually own and operate a farm or ranch, the farm and ranch management option provides a vital set of management skills for success in undertaking the investment and complicated business aspects of farming and ranching. The future farm or ranch manager needs to be familiar with marketing, finance, business management, and the global agribusiness system in which production agriculture operates. Farm and ranch management is a strong academic program designed to provide marketing, management, and finance skills. This curriculum is supplemented with courses that emphasize technical agricultural issues.

Many of our agricultural business and economics graduates are employed by a wide variety of agribusinesses. Others successfully manage their own farm or ranch. Many have used their degree as a foundation for advanced study.

Placements of recent graduates include:

- CHS, Inc.
- Northwest Farm Credit Services
- Archer Daniels Midland
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- U.S. Bank, Denver CO
- Northwestern Mutual Life – Financial Services
- Columbia Grain Company
- Montana Department of Agriculture

Graduate school placements of our recent graduates include:

- University of California Berkeley
- North Carolina State University
- University of California Davis
- Purdue University
- University of Maryland
- University of Washington
- Washington State University

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), while employment of self-employed farmers and ranchers is projected to decrease slightly through 2018, employment of farm, ranch, and other agricultural managers is expected to grow by about 6 percent between 2008 and 2018. As more farms are owned by either corporations or absentee owners, agricultural managers will play a relatively larger role in the operation of farms. The completion of a bachelor’s degree at a college of agriculture is becoming increasingly important for farm managers and for farmers and ranchers who expect to make a living at farming.

Earnings

The BLS reports that full-time, salaried agricultural managers had median annual earnings of $41,000 in 2010. The median annual wages of purchasing agents and buyers of farm products were $50,500 in 2010.

Placement of Recent Majors