

What Can I Do With a Major In...

Agricultural Business-Agribusiness Mgmt Concentration?

Agribusiness Management programs^{1,2} teach individuals to apply economic and business principles to the organization, operation, and management of agricultural enterprises. You will learn about the production, processing, marketing, and distribution of agricultural products. You will also study accounting, finance, management, and public policy, as well as technical agriculture, mathematics, life and natural sciences, social sciences, international studies, communications, and humanities. You will learn how to make the best decisions regarding production, management of crops and animals, marketing, finance, and business organization for agribusiness firms.

Agricultural businesses are those involved in producing, transporting, processing, and distributing food and fiber products. Almost 20% of the U.S. economy's output involves the food and fiber sector—90% of which occurs beyond the farm gate. Agribusiness is a dynamic industry with a high degree of global and technological sophistication. The agribusiness sector includes companies that are on the cutting edge in the use of Biotechnology, Strategy, Information Systems, Risk Management, Logistics, and International Trade.

Programs at Montana State University² teach the application of business and economic principles to farming and ranching and related sectors of the general economy. Training in agricultural business includes courses in agricultural firm management, marketing farm products, farm credit and finance, agricultural prices and outlook, agricultural policy, management science, agricultural law, technical agriculture, and the business aspects of industries serving agriculture. Surveys indicate that employers seek out graduates with expertise in communication, critical thinking, business management, and quantitative analyses. This program specifically develops each of these skills.

Many employment possibilities are open to students with training in agricultural business. Positions are available with businesses that process and market agricultural products. There is a large number of businesses that sell products and services to farmers and ranchers such as fertilizer companies, farm machinery companies, banks, and farm credit institutions. Also, opportunities exist to operate and manage farms and ranches. In addition, federal and state governments employ persons with training in agricultural business. Many graduates of this program 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 graduates continue their education by pursuing graduate degrees or attending law school.

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.

Characteristics associated with success¹ in this major include a strong interest in areas of agriculture and related businesses, and the ability to make good, logical decisions.

Occupations in this field require the ability to¹:

- Work with numbers and statistical concepts
- Observe and listen objectively
- Be a leader who can take initiative and who enjoys working with other people
- Communicate ideas effectively both orally and in writing

Related occupations include¹:

- Purchaser
- Aquaculturist
- Agricultural Business Technology
- Nursery/Greenhouse Manager
- Food Production Manager
- Farmer (Owner)
- Banker
- Foreign Services Officer
- Lender
- Appraiser
- Insurance Agent
- Agriculture/Farm Supplies Retail/Wholesale
- Extension Agent
- Farm/Home Management Advisor
- Farm Manager

What Can I Do With a Major In...

Agricultural Business-Agribusiness Mgmt Concentration?

MSU graduates (Bachelor's degree) were hired in the following selected fields³:

Accountant/Financial Analyst – Press Telegram	Market Management – Rodeo Production Company
Administration – Don Kelly Construction	Marketing Director – Rodeo Production Company
Agriculture Loan Officer – Bank of the Rockies; First Bank of Montana; Northwest Farm Credit Services	Noxious Weed Coordinator – Resource Conservation and Development
Ag Loan Officer Trainee – First State Bank of Forsyth	Owner – Montana Records Management
Assistant Investment Advisor – Sharp Financial	Personal Banker – Chase Bank N.A.; US Bank
Carpenter – J E Construction	Private Contractor – Self-Employed
Construction Worker – Barnard Construction	Product Specialist – John Deere Harvester Works
Credit Officer – Northwest Farm Credit Services	Production Supervisor – ConAgra Lamb Weston
Entry Level Supervisory Trainee – ConAgra Foods	Program Coordinator – Montana Stock Growers Association
Farmer – Self Employed; Wolf Corp Farms; Uffelman Farms	Purchasing and Training Assistant – Murdoch's Ranch and Home Supply
Farm Hand – Steve Leck Farm Inc.; Haynie Brothers Farm	Ranch Manager
Farm Loan Officer – Montana Farm Service Agency	Range Management Specialist – Natural Resources Conservation Service
Farm Manager – Inbody Farms Inc.; Brady Farms	Rancher – Mills Ranch
Field Scout – CENTROL, INC.	Regional Manager – Montana Farm Bureau
General Manager – S and S Sports	Salesman – Valley Crop Care
Implement Salesman – Moodie Implement Co.	Salmon Fisherman – Alaska Fishing Adventures
Insurance Producer – First West Insurance Agency LLC	Shipping Specialist – Cleanwaste
Loan Officer Trainee – Independence Bank	Vice President – ABM Ranch
Manager – Kenyon Noble Lumber	Western Montana Regional Manager – Montana Farm Bureau
Manager Trainee – Central Montana Co-op	
Management Trainee – CHS Incorporated	

Salary averages of survey respondents (# of respondents in parentheses)³:

2012: MT: \$41,000 (5)	Out-of-State: Insufficient Data
2011: MT: \$36,643 (7)	Out-of-State: \$31,700 (4)
2010: MT: \$47,682 (4)	Out-of-State: \$34,969 (6)
2009:MT: \$40,300 (3)	Out-of-State: \$52,500 (2)

In the field for “Farmers, Ranchers, and other Agricultural Managers⁴” the lowest 10% of salaries for 2012 (comparable to new college graduate starting salaries) was \$31,700 annually. The median wages in the nation in 2012 was estimated at \$69,300 annually. In 2012 there were 930,600 positions nationally with an expected growth forecast of –19% through 2022. In 2012 there was not enough data to report salaries for the State of Montana. In 2012 there were 2,340 positions in Montana with an expected growth forecast of –5% through 2022. Job openings in Montana and nationally are due to both growth and net replacement. Please remember when reviewing the salary information that it is the “median,” meaning 50% of reported wages fell below and 50% above the reported wage.

Other Sources of Information:

Center for Rural Affairs: www.cfra.org
National FFA Organization: www.ffa.org
American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers: www.asfmra.org
Department of Agriculture Economics & Economics - Montana State University: <http://www.montana.edu/econ/>

For more information contact:



Montana State University
177 Strand Union Building
Bozeman, MT 59717
(406) 994-4353
www.montana.edu/careers

¹University of Oregon. 2007. Created by intoCareers, a unit of the University of Oregon.

² Montana State University College of Agriculture

³ Montana State University Career & Internship Service

⁴ O*Net: online.onetcenter.org

Number of graduates/number of respondents: 2009: 13/9; 2010: 17/11; 2011: 15/13; 2012: 16/5