

BE AGRICULTURE

A HOW-TO GUIDE FOR AGRICULTURAL CAREERS PROMOTION



Why choose an agricultural career?

The average age of a Michigan farmer is 57 years old. Through at least 2020, there is an expected average of nearly 58,000 job openings annually in agriculture, food and natural resources related careers. Of these positions, only 61% of the jobs are expected to be filled by individuals with experience in agriculture, food, natural resources or the environment. The remaining positions will be filled by those with more general expertise in business, biology, engineering, education, communications and consumer sciences (USDA, 2015).

Michigan Farm Bureau policy indicates support for agricultural career promotion, recruitment and training. As county Farm Bureau members, there is no better recruitment strategy than you speaking to students within your own communities about what you do in your agricultural occupation.

How to use this guide?

This guidebook centers around four common career promotion forums: speaking to a class/ group, interactive career fair booths, career panel participants, and farm tours focused on career exploration. Each set of instructions indicates modifications for each age group. Whether you have been contacted by a school or your county Farm Bureau is coordinating an agricultural career event, this guidebook has outlines, tips, and templates to set you up for success.

Tips for scheduling success

Both farmers and school systems have busy schedules that should be kept in consideration when working to plan an event. Here are some general tips to keep in mind.

☐ FOR SCHOOLS:

- O Farmers and agribusinesses are generally busy during the fall and spring months for planting and harvest.
- Often a phone call to a farmer will work best, as they may not have consistent email access.

☐ FOR FARMERS/AGRIBUSINESSES

- O Michigan standardized testing takes place in schools in April and May.
- O Career fair events are usually popular in the fall, and right before testing.
- O School counselors are a great contact to make at the school.

EXPO BOOTH AT A CAREER FAIR

TARGET AUDIENCE

Middle to high school students exploring career opportunities in agriculture.

Career fairs can be a highly effective event to showcase the vast number of opportunities within the agriculture industry. Typically these events are hosted by the school system or intermediate school district. Follow these steps to maximize your career fair ROI and effectively reach students. Remember high school students are most often exploring career opportunities for the future rather than applying for a job.

PRIOR TO CAREER FAIR

☐ SET YOUR GOALS

O What's the #1 reason your county Farm Bureau wants to participate in the career fair?

- Do you want to generally showcase agricultural careers?
- Do you see your role as serving as a liaison to local agricultural businesses?
- Do you wish to create a general awareness for your county Farm Bureau?
- What agricultural careers are you highlighting?
- · What skills do you wish to showcase?
- · What passions can you highlight to turn into an agricultural career?
- What job types (internships, co-op, part-time, etc.) are you promoting?
- What specific roles are you wanting to share with students?

O What needs to happen for your volunteers to see their participation as valuable?

- How many students need to visit your booth?
- What would be considered a meaningful connection with a student? How many meaningful connections do your volunteers want to achieve?
- Ask your volunteers for their own personal responses to these questions. Keep their expectations in mind as you plan your booth set up and interactive ideas.
- O Make sure everyone involved knows your goals both those on your team and your supporters within the county Farm Bureau. Your goals should drive all decisions as you plan for the event.

☐ RESERVE YOUR SPOT

- O Find out when career fairs are happening in your county.
 - During the end of spring semester, email county Farm Bureau members, agriscience teachers, or any school connection you have to find out dates or approximate times of year your area schools will be hosting career fairs and/or career type events (panels, class speakers).
 - Have Farm Bureau members keep an eye out on social media and/or in the schools for career event promotions.

• Once you have attended a career fair, you most likely will be asked to attend in the future. It may take some coordinating to get on the mailing list the first time around. Make sure the school has your most updated contact information for future invitations.

□ COORDINATE YOUR BOOTH SETUP

- O Make sure your booth's objective is clear and impactful.
- One or two key messages are ideal.
- O Physical Set Up: Remember less is more; professional is better than homemade.
 - · Consider investing in professional logoed posters, banners, and/or tablecloths.
 - Consider having signage that tells who you are looking for (majors/training, job titles, job types) to ensure you spend your time with interested students.

□ DECIDE ON ENGAGING ACTIVITIES

O High engagement should be a goal. Potential engagement activities include:

- Organizing an entire row of agricultural businesses and designate it the "Ag-'row'-culture Careers" at a career fair.
- Offer a resume critique option for students. This may take some coordination with a teacher, but Farm Bureau members could take time to provide three to four suggestions on student's resumes.
- Print the agricultural career questions/facts for a trivia wheel game. If a student spins and answers the question correctly they receive a prize.

O Invite local agricultural businesses to provide a demonstration or a separate booth.

- A grain elevator could have students create a trail mix snack as the business explains how they create specialized diets for livestock called Total Mixed Rations.
- A local greenhouse person could have a matching game with seed samples on one side of the table and the names of the plants on the other. They could ask students to match the seeds with the names to win a prize.
- · A veterinarian could have a dog and ultrasound machine for students to try.
- The local GPS service could demonstrate drone technology.

O Consider how to implement social media engagement.

- Make a photo backdrop with your county Farm Bureau logo and encourage students to use props (equipment and uniforms used in agriculture) to show how they could "Be Agriculture".
- Encourage students to like your Facebook page and post a photo of themselves at the career fair with a specific hashtag you create for the event.
- Run a social media contest asking students to share a specific career fair post on your social media page. Conduct a drawing of participants for prizes.
- Purchase a Snapchat filter for the day for students to use and share photos.

☐ SELECT AND ORDER GIVEAWAYS

- O Most other employers will have them. There is no "right" item, but it should be something useful, so your branding is visible. Give away ideas include:
 - · "Be Agriculture" ear tag keychains
 - Agriculture Looks Good on Me Sunglasses—"Be Agriculture"
 - Drawstring bags with county Farm Bureau and other agricultural logos
 - MFB headphones
 - MFB pop sockets
 - · Reusable water bottles
 - Magnetic locker clip or mirror for lockers with MFB logo
 - "Be Agriculture" stickers (see below)

Consider putting together a teacher's bag.

- Order your printed materials from MFB or a local vendor.
- A simple handout with details that may not be on your website can make their visit with you feel more valuable.
- Keep materials minimal; students and teachers don't like waste.
- Make sure that your website, social channel details, and any means to connect with your business are included.

Check out our "BE AGRICULTURE" sticker selection in our online store!













□ REVIEW THE LOGISTICS

- Most schools will provide a detailed agenda and logistics for the day. Make sure the following items are addressed in these documents:
 - What size is your exhibitor space?
 - Will tables and chairs be provided?
 - What items are prohibited: latex balloons, food allergy items, animals?
 - Do you have access to electrical outlets and Wi-Fi?
 - What are the set up times?
 - Is lunch provided and/or are there food rules for the event space?
 - Where do you unload?
 - Where should you park?
 - Do you need to enter through the school office first?
 - What items are you allowed to give out to students?
 - Will there be prize drawings and how can you donate items?
 - What grades will be participating?
 - How many students should you plan for the event?
 - · Can you provide materials and resources to teachers?
 - Does the school need your logo for promotional items or to share on their website/ social media?
 - Is this career fair exploratory or are students seeking actual job positions?
- O Reach out to the school if details are not provided to better prepare your volunteers for success.
- O During a phone call or email to the school, you may find "informal" information that is very good to know—better booth locations, signage details, and so on.



□ PICK THE RIGHT VOLUNTEERS

- O This is the most important section on this checklist. Are you bringing your best to recruit the best?
- O Your group has put all the planning into the booth, now it's time to put your most relatable volunteers front and center. These volunteers may not be on your planning committee and that is okay! You want to seek volunteers who are personable, relatable to students and can talk to anyone. These people may also change from school to school in your county. Consider members who are:
 - School alumni
 - Active in the school (athletics, PTO, boosters)
 - Business owners known by the students and their families
 - Youth group, 4-H, scouts, other organizational leaders in the community
 - School board member
- O Have enough people to provide relief. Fairs are exhausting; you need breaks, so make a schedule that ensures your booth is never too empty nor too crowded.
- O Provide water and snacks (if not provided by the fair).
- O Encourage volunteers to wear nametags, Farm Bureau logoed clothing, uniforms from their career, or purchase county Farm Bureau apparel to be worn only during career fairs.

☐ TELL THE WORLD...AT LEAST YOUR COMMUNITY... YOU ARE COMING

- O Maximize your time at the career fair by spreading the word that you will be there.
 - · Use your social media channels.
 - · Post on your website.
 - · Reach out to members to share any posts on social media.
- O Take advantage of any promotions the fair offers and be sure to provide your logo, short description or comments about involvement.



DURING THE CAREER FAIR

☐ GENERAL PRACTICES

- O Don't eat at your booth—take breaks for that.
- O Be sure to drink plenty of water.
- O Stay off your cell phone and focus on engaging with students.
- O Stand in front of your booth—better yet, create a booth that brings students in and has a hands-on aspect rather than paper handouts.
- O If you are relying on the venue's Wi-Fi, have a backup plan if it fails or is too slow.

☐ WHEN TALKING TO STUDENTS

- O Ask students what they love to do (hobbies, school subjects, etc.), rather than what they want to be.
- O Help connect their passions with a career in agriculture.
- O Focus on the WIIFM—"What's In It For Me"—factor.
- O Be ready to respond to concrete WIIFM questions: salary, benefits, learning and development, vacations, flex time, work-life balance, etc. (Reference page 23 for examples)
- O Do not assume they know a lot about the agricultural industry.
- O If you can, give them tips for getting hired into the agricultural industry. What local internships or job opportunities can they participate in? Be able to show them next steps.

□ WRAPPING UP THE EVENT

- O Although things may slow down near the end of the day, don't leave early. Wait until the coordinator gives you the go ahead to start taking down your display.
- O Thank the coordinator and ask to be on their list next year.
- O If there was a student/teacher evaluation, ask if you could receive those results to better prepare for the next career fair.
- O Ask the coordinator if there are other breakout sessions or guest speaker opportunities to showcase agriculture/your business. Could you be of assistance to provide any of those resources?

GIANT AG BLOCK GAME

Objective:

- O Students will check their block each turn to see if there is anything on the bottom.
- O Trivia on the blocks allow the students to learn more about agricultural industries and help them interact with the booth host.

Materials Needed:

- O Giant block set with agricultural trivia stickers
- O Rug, mat, or cardboard to set giant block game on
- O Prizes
- O Banner, logoed table cloth, or other supplies to make your booth look inviting
- O Handouts about agricultural careers or your specific company

Set Up:

- O Set up your booth with a table cloth, logoed banner, and other décor.
- O Place prizes on the table.
- O Place mat on floor in front of booth/table (use at own discretion).
 - Mat may be needed if the floor needs to be protected or to prevent loud noises when the tower falls.
 - Events outdoors/in grass may not need mat.
- O Set up game by layering sections of 3 blocks.
- O Set up blocks so the sticker is facing down and the logo is facing out.
- O Alternate the direction of each of blocks so each layer is perpendicular with the next.
- O Make sure the tower is aligned and not leaning!

How to Host the Game:

- O Once a group of students arrives to booth, explain the rules (listed below).
- O Students select blocks and answer the question on the block.
- O The student then places the block on the top of the tower, and then the next player goes.
- O Continue the game until the tower falls.
- O If prizes are available:
 - All students participating could receive a prize.
 - » Ex. Sticker, pencils, pens, pamphlets
 - The winner of the game (last player to successfully pull a block before the tower falls) could get a larger prize.
 - » Ex. Cup, shirt, bag

Rules:

- O Each player takes turns pulling one block from the tower.
- O Blocks cannot be pulled from the top layer at any point.
- O Players must check the bottom of the pulled block and inform the booth host of the trivia question.
- O Player answers the trivia question.
- O Players then have to place the block on top of the tower in an alternating pattern.
- O The game will continue until the tower falls!
- O The last player to pull a block successfully before the tower falls is the overall winner!

GIANT AG BLOCK GAME ANSWER KEY

Some blocks contain statements with agricultural facts. Use these as true or false questions. All statements are true. Other blocks have questions with answers that will vary by student. Provide prizes for responses at your discretion.

ANIMAL AGRICULTURE

- O What fast food chain sources all their eggs from Michigan for all their restaurants east of the Mississippi?
 - McDonald's
- O Michigan has 83 counties, how many of them raise beef cattle?
 - 80 counties
- O Apiculture is the term for raising what livestock insect?
 - Bees
- About how many gallons does the average dairy cow in Michigan produce each year?
 - · Around 3,100 gallons
- O How many stomach compartments do ruminant animals like cow and sheep have?
 - 4
- O What animals make up red meat products?
 - Beef, pork, lamb, and veal.

PLANT AGRICULTURE

- O How many gallons of sap are needed to make one gallon of maple syrup?
 - 40 gallons
- O What vegetable is grown in Michigan and is often used to make pickles?
 - Cucumber
- O About how many sugar beets does it take to make one 5 lbs. bag of sugar?
 - 7-10 sugar beets
- O What crop is used to make crayons, lotion, hand sanitizer, paint balls, livestock feed, biofuels, tofu, tires, and ink?
 - Soybeans
- O How fast can a stalk of asparagus grow?
 - · One inch per hour in certain growing conditions.

MICHIGAN AGRICULTURE

- O What percent of farms in Michigan are family owned?
 - 99%
- O What place does Michigan rank in the nation for agricultural diversity?
 - 2nd first to California
- How many different commodities (agriculture products) does Michigan produce?
 - Over 300
- O What percent of Michigan's population is employed in an agricultural-based career?
 - Nearly 25%
- O How much money does Michigan's food and agriculture contribute to the economy?
 - Over \$100 billion

BE AGRICULTURE

- How can you Be Business Minded in agriculture?
 - · Insurance Agent, Real Estate, Accountant, Safety Manager, Economist, Loan Officer.
- O How can you Be the Caregiver in agriculture?
 - Livestock Hauler, Animal Nutritionist, Pet Groomer, Feed Mill Operator, Veterinary Services.
- How can you Be Scientific in agriculture?
 - Geneticist, Pathologist, Microbiologist, Chemist working with plants or animals.
- O How can you Be the Process in agriculture?
 - · Dietician, Chef, Food Inspector, Packaging Engineer, Meat Processor, Supply Chain Manager.
- How can you Be Constructive in agriculture?
 - Electrician, Mechanic, Equipment Operator, Welder, Construction Foreman, Engineer, Drone Technician.
- How can you Be Grounded in agriculture?
 - Plant Breeder, Landscape Designer, Entomologist, Florist, Seed Salesperson, Turf Manager, Greenhouse Operator.
- O How can you Be Resourceful in agriculture?
 - Conservation Officer, Wind Turbine Technician, Aquaculturist, Waste Management Technician, Environmental Consultant.
- How can you Be the Change in agriculture?
 - · Agriscience Educator, Legislative Aide, Politician, Extension Coordinator, College Professor.
- How can you Be the Story in agriculture?
 - Public Relations Specialist, Graphic Designer, Journalist, Web Designer, Marketing Manager, Web Designer, Social Media Strategist.

AGRIBUSINESS SYSTEMS

SEED SALESMEN

Objective:

O Make your pitch for a new seed (or any other product) on the market!

Materials Needed:

- O Paper / posters
- O Markers
- O Pencils
- O Suit ties (for fun, not required)
- O Stopwatch

Budget: ~ \$25-\$40

- O Suit ties ~ \$15
- O 20 poster boards ~ \$20
- O Markers ~ \$5

Set Up:

- O Set out poster boards with assortment of writing utensils at each.
- O Give pencils and scratch paper for each group for brainstorming!

Rules:

- O Either individually or in groups
- O Students have 5 minutes to:
 - · Create a new product
 - Create a hook / tell a story
 - Include \$\$\$
 - Use ethos (credible source / supporter), pathos (emotion), or logos (facts) to influence pitch (or use all 3!).
 - Educate the "consumer" (booth host).
- O Convince the consumer that they must have the product!
- O Once 5 minutes is up players / groups will take turns pitching their product and sales technique to the consumer.
- O Booth hosts will decide what product they are most convinced to buy, that player / group wins!

ANIMAL SYSTEMS

PICKY COW - TOTAL MIXED RATIONS IN LIVESTOCK FEED

Objective:

- O Explain Total Mixed Rations
- O Show how livestock eat all parts of the feed when feed stuff particles are small and combined.
- O While it might be hard, livestock will be able to pick apart feed, unless it's milled together.

Materials Needed:

- O Livestock puppet
 - Realistic livestock puppet toy sourced from local toy retailer or favorite online store
 - Mitten or oven mitt would also work!
- O Human snack trail mix or various sized colored beads for a non-food example
- O Large bowl "feed trough"
- O Small bowl "livestock stomach"
- O Stopwatch

Budget: ~ \$20

- O Puppet ~ \$8
- O Trail mix ~ \$10 or Assorted beads ~ \$6-\$10

Set Up:

- O Large bowl filled with trail mix/beads
- O Smaller bowls next to larger bowl
- O Student with puppet/mitten on hand

Rules:

- O Can be multiplayer or individual.
- O Students will choose what ingredient/bead color they will be picking/ "eating" before the game begins.
- O With puppet on hand, student has one minute to take out as many of the same ingredient/ bead color out of the feed trough (large bowl) as they can.
- O Students will place ingredients/beads into the "livestock stomach".
- O After one minute, the ingredients/beads will be counted to see how many the student was able to get (or to see how picky the cow was)!
 - The more ingredients/beads the more points.
 - BUT, for each wrong ingredient/bead one point is deducted!



ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURAL RESOURCE SYSTEMS

FREIGHT FISH FARMING

Objective:

- O Teach about fisheries and aquaculture
- O "Salmon Cannon"
 - Teach how fish can sometimes be transported by using a fish transport tube system.
- O This can be used in fish farming or for conservation purposes
 - Ex. Transporting fish safely over a dammed area

Materials Needed:

- O "Salmon Cannon" video
- O Bowls / buckets
- O Plastic tubing, wide enough for a Goldfish cracker to fit
 - · Goldfish are 1in long and .5 in wide
 - · Test first to make sure Goldfish can pass through
 - · Don't want diameter to be too big
 - Scan QR codes for possible purchase options



Lowe's



Fresh Water Systems

- O Balloon pump
- O Stopwatch
- O Goldfish crackers

Budget: ~ \$26 - \$50

- O Plastic tubing ~ \$7–\$30 (depending on quantity)
- O Balloon pump ~ \$4
- O Goldfish crackers ~ \$15

Set Up:

- O Cut tubes into about 10 feet sections, all tubes should be the same length (longer tube = harder game)
- O Prepare bowl of Goldfish crackers
- O One end of tube taped to the inside of the other bowl / bucket
- O Taped bowl/bucket is place on the table

Rules:

- O Students must get as many fish as possible to the other bowl / bucket.
 - · Either:
 - » Set a time limit, and the most fish wins
 - » Or a set number of fish, and speed is recorded
- O Players must sit on the ground.
- O Players will place fish in entrance end of tube and used balloon pump to propel the fish in an upward direction.
- O The most fish in the ending "pond" (bucket) wins or the fastest time wins!

FOOD PRODUCTS & PROCESSING

FLOUR MILL

Objective:

- O Join the flour production industry!
- O Portion out flour to be "packed" then shipped out for commercial purchasing.

Materials needed:

- O Flat bottomed bowl/container
- O Plate
- O Flour
- O Knife, playing card/business card, spackle/putty knife
- O Penny

Budget: ~ \$4

O Flour ~ \$4

Set up:

- O Place penny in bottom center of bowl/container.
- O Fill bowl/container with flour.
 - Pack tightly
- O Cover bowl/container with plate and carefully flip.
- O Slowly remove bowl/container leaving a flour stack with the penny on top.

Rules:

- O Multiplayer (if only one student, booth host can play)
- O Each player takes turns taking a section of flour off the stack with their utensil.
- O There is no maximum or minimum amount that needs to be taken off the stack.
- O Play until the penny falls off the stack.



PLANT SYSTEMS

IRRITATING IRRIGATION

Objective:

- O Teach students about precision agriculture and water use efficiency (WUE) using variable rate irrigation (VRI).
 - WUE: the ratio of water used in plant metabolism to water lost by the plant through transpiration. How much water the plant needs is based on how quickly they use it.
 - VRI: applies the right amount of water to the land or soil to help plant growth.
- O Set up a VRI system and allocate the right water to each plant cup!



Materials Needed:

- O Styrofoam cups (enough for each student you project to visit the booth)
- O 3 Plastic cups
- O Variety of straws
 - Coffee straws, regular straws, and jumbo/smoothie straws.
- O Scissors
- O 16 ounces of water per each student you project to visit the booth
- O Measuring cup

Budget: ~ \$21-\$25

- O Styrofoam cups ~ \$5
- O Plastic cups ~ \$5
- O Regular straws ~ \$2
- O Coffee straws ~ \$3
- O Jumbo/smoothie straws ~ \$6-\$10

Set Up:

Before Event

- O Fill a plastic cup with 8 ounces of water.
 - Mark the spot where the 8 ounces of water reaches on the outside of the cup.
- O With the second cup, repeat with 6 ounces of water.
- O With the third cup, repeat with 2 ounces of water.

At Event

- O Set out Styrofoam cup, straws, and scissors.
- O Place plastic cups in clover shape on table.
- O Obtain water.

Rules:

- O Goal is to fill plastic cups to their given amounts by channeling the flow of water using different straws and locations.
- O Set Styrofoam cup on top of the three plastic cups.
- O Puncture straws of different sizes into the cup at different heights and angles to make channels for water to exit the Styrofoam cup.
- O Configure the straws in a way that you think will fill each plastic cup up to the desired level.
- O Straws can be cut.
- O Once straws are set, fill Styrofoam cup with 16 ounces of water.
- O Once water stops draining from Styrofoam cup, measure how accurate the student was by pouring each plastic cup of water into a measuring cup.

POWER, STRUCTURAL, & TECHNICAL SYSTEMS

CFO - CERTIFIED FORKLIFT OPERATOR

Objective:

- O Learn how operating machinery is an intricate and important part of all agricultural industries!
- O Players must stack up as many pennies as possible in one minute.

Materials Needed:

- O Narrow popsicle sticks
- O Pennies (50-100, depending on number of players at a time)
 - Other small items could be used as a substitute

Budget: ~ \$2

O Popsicle sticks ~ \$2

Set up:

- O Place pennies on a pile on the table.
- O Have pairs of popsicle sticks ready.

Rules:

- O Players have 1 minute to stack.
- O Stacks have to be at least 10 pennies high, then a new stack can be made.
- O Only the popsicle sticks can touch the pennies.
- O Must pick up pennies using the thin edge of the popsicle sticks.
- O Stack must remain standing to go towards penny count.
- O Total number of pennies added up after the minute has ended.

EXPO STATIONS REFERENCES

- O Michigan Agriculture Facts | Michigan Farm Bureau Family of Companies (*michfb.com*)
- O MI Ag Council Michigan Grown. Michigan Great. (michigangrown.org)
- O Fast Facts About Agriculture & Food | American Farm Bureau Federation (fb.org)
- O Michigan: The Hands that Feed You | Michigan Business (michiganbusiness.org)

CAREER PANEL PRESENTATIONS

TARGET AUDIENCE

Middle or high school students who have an interest in agricultural careers or teachers/counselors wish to showcase different types of careers in one forum.

PRIOR TO PRESENTATION

□ QUESTIONS TO ASK

Consider asking the organizer/teacher the following questions to prepare for your visit:

- O What time am I presenting and what is the expected length of the presentation?
- O Where is the presentation?
- O What are your expectations of the panelists?
- O What's the structure?
 - **Example:** Is this a table of five people answering questions from the audience?
- O Will there be questions asked by a moderator? If so, can we have those questions in advance?
- O Who are the other people on the panel?
- O Why do you want me to be on the panel? What are you hoping to hear from me specifically?
- O How many students will be present? May I bring handouts/give away items?
- O Will all students be in the same grade? If not, what grades should I expect?
- O How have the students been prepared for my presentation?
- O Are the students exploring all careers or have they identified agriculture as a career path?
- O Have these students heard other career speakers? If so, who and what did these speakers share about their jobs?
- O What is an appropriate dress code for the event?



□ LAYOUT YOUR ANSWERS

Taking 15-30 minutes prior to the panel helps you gather your thoughts and gives you notes to refer to. If a teacher doesn't provide sample questions you could prepare notes from the following questions.

- O What does your typical day look like?
- O How did you get started in your role? (Briefly explain your journey. No need to disclose your life's story, but share impactful tidbits of who you are and why you picked this path.)
- O What training and education (formal and non-formal) do you have? How do you continue your learning/education (formal and non-formal) to stay current in your job?
- O What aspects of this field drew you to this occupation?
- O What aspects or tasks are not your favorite and how do you manage them?
- O What does your work environment look like?
- O Do you work with a lot of other people daily? Do you mostly work alone?
- O Do you report to an office or are you out and about?
- O Do all the people you work with regularly have the same training/background as you or different?
- O Are your work hours flexible and varied or are your work hours consistent and set daily?
- O What passions, hobbies, and interests would someone have to enjoy this career?
- O What would you tell someone just getting started in your industry? What are some things a person could do to prepare?
- O What classes, extracurricular activities, school programmming, etc. do I need to participate in to have your job?
 - Example responses: X,Y or Z training is required for this position. However, other experiences that would help you be successful include: being a part of a community or school organization, volunteering in your community, attending professional conferences if available, network with professors and advisors to build relationships and express desired direction following your program, initiating a job shadow with a professional in your field, post-graduation joining a community group such as Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, etc., building a professional reputation (be on time, be respectful, be trustworthy, show up, be willing to take on small tasks that could build into larger responsibly, etc.)
- O Be genuine. Your story has brought you success in the ways that are meaningful to you. Each panelists' path is different and you all were invited to show examples of varied occupations and experiences. Be proud of what you have to say.
- O Have specific examples for many of these questions that provide details of who you work with, what tools/programs/technologies you use and expectations of results (or examples of results that didn't go as anticipated). Be relatable and specific.

□ PREPARE FOR TRICKY QUESTIONS

- O Have a plan on how to answer questions asking personal information you may not want to reveal.
 - Sample response: "I'd prefer to keep my exact salary private however, I can tell you I make a set salary annually (or I am paid hourly) and receive some benefits from my company such as health insurance, a shared contribution to a retirement plan, and a bonus structure. Sometimes we also receive fun things like a polo shirt or discounted tickets to a MSU game."
 - If your income is based solely on commodity sales an example response could be: "My family and I rely on selling our grain for our farm's income which a portion of those sales, after our farm expenses are paid, is my income. This fluctuates year to year based on commodity prices, weather and harvest yields."
 - If your income is based on commission: "My income is based on the success of my sales. My company sets a pay scale based on number of items sold. So, for example in simple terms, if I sell 10 items the pay scale determines I receive \$100 dollars but if I sell 20 items I may receive \$200 plus a bonus for selling more than anticipated. To retain customers, I also receive a bonus for return customers' sales. Bottom line, if I sell things I make money, if I don't sell I don't make money."
- O Offer contact information in follow up, if desired.



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CAREER PRESENTATIONS

TARGET AUDIENCE

Elementary teachers may invite careers speakers as a way to teach students about their community and local businesses. The objective of these presentations ties to building awareness of jobs and broadening students' view of their communities. Presentations may also be in coordination with other celebrations such as holidays, "promotional holidays" (i.e. safety week, reading month, etc.), or school wide celebrations (i.e. March is Reading Month, STEM night, etc.)

PRIOR TO PRESENTATION

☐ QUESTIONS TO ASK

Consider asking the organizer/teacher the following questions to prepare for your visit:

- O What time am I presenting and what is the expected length of the presentation?
- O Where am I presenting?
- O How many students will I be presenting to?
- O Will all students be in the same grade? If no, what grades?
- O Will I repeat my presentation multiple times for different students?
- O Do I have access to the internet, projector/smart board, screen, etc. (if desired)?
- O How have the students been prepared for my presentation?
- O Have these students heard other career speakers? If so, who and what did these speakers share about their jobs?

□ PROPS TO BRING

- O Consider dressing for your job. Wear clothing you would wear on an average work day that are clean and appropriate for a school setting.
- O Consider reading a children's book that showcases characters like you/your job.
 - Visit the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture's Recommended Publications list for book ideas: www.agfoundation.org/resources.
- O Consider bringing equipment, tools, or samples of items you work with on a daily basis.
- O Create a powerpoint slide show with 5-10 photos of your job. Even better, have someone take photos of you doing different aspects of your job!
- O Bring a small take-home piece for each student. Items could promote your specific job or business, be food items you raise, or items from your county Farm Bureau or the Michigan Farm Bureau online store: <u>www.miagclassroom.org</u>.



☐ WHAT TO SAY

Use this outline as a guide to build your presentation. Remember young students cannot sit still very long and will not understand complex jargon. Keep it simple!

My name is:		
l work at	as a	a
	(company)	(title)
In my job I am respo	nsible for:	
1.		
2.		
3.		
My day looks like: (p	rovide a brief overview o	of the things you do each day)
I like my job becaus	e I like to do these things	5 :
1.		
2.		
3.		
To do my job, I had t	:o:	
1.		
2.		
When I'm not worki	ng I like to:	
1.		
2		



☐ WHAT TO SAY, **EXAMPLE**

Use this outline as a guide to build your presentation. Remember young students cannot sit still very long and will not understand complex jargon. Keep it simple!

	(company)		(title)	
l work at	Michigan Farm Bureau	as a	Program Specialist	•
My name is	: Sally			

In my job I am responsible for:

- 1. Helping farmers share their plants and animals with people who don't live on farms.
- 2. Helping volunteers plan events.
- 3. Promote these events by writing newsletter articles, creating websites and posting on social media.

My day looks like: (provide a brief overview of the things you do each day)

Most days I work at my desk in an office and work on my laptop. I research projects and activities on the internet ways to use these activities to help my farmer volunteers. Often, I meet with other coworkers in our office to plan events together or to share ideas. I have to think about the instructions for these activities so that I can teach our volunteers how to do them and I have to think about things like cost and where I can buy the supplies.

I like my job because I like to do these things:

- 1. I love agriculture! I love raising plants and animals so I like to help farmers.
- 2. I like teaching people things.
- 3. I like a varied work day, sometimes I'm in the office at a computer, sometimes I'm traveling sometimes I work indoors, sometimes I work outdoors.

To do my job, I had to:

- 1. My job requires a four-year college degree or more.
- 2. I have to like working with people. Whether I'm working with my coworkers or visiting farms, I have to enjoy working with others.

When I'm not working I like to:

- 1. Travel.
- 2. Hangout with friends and family.

MIDDLE SCHOOL CAREER PRESENTATIONS

TARGET AUDIENCE

Middle school students may have participated in some career exploration activities. The objective of career exploration at this level is helping students to pick applicable courses for high school as well as provide exposure to future potential jobs.

PRIOR TO PRESENTATION

☐ QUESTIONS TO ASK

Consider asking the organizer/teacher the following questions to prepare for your visit:

- O What time am I presenting and what is the expected length of the presentation?
- O Where am I presenting?
- O How many students will I be presenting to?
- O Will all students be in the same grade? If no, what grades?
- O Will I repeat my presentation multiple times for different students?
- O Do I have access to the internet, projector/smart board, screen, etc. (if desired)?
- O How have the students been prepared for my presentation?
- O Are the students I am presenting to exploring all careers or have they identified as interested in an agricultural path?
- O Have these students heard other career speakers? If so, who and what did these speakers share about their jobs?

□ PROPS TO BRING

- O Consider dressing for your job. Wear clothing you would wear on an average work day that are clean and appropriate for a school setting.
- O Consider bringing equipment, tools, or samples of items you work with on a daily basis.
- O Create a powerpoint slide show with 5-10 photos or videos of your job. Even better, have someone take photos/videos of you doing different aspects of your job!
- O Bring a small take-home piece for each student. Items could promote your specific job/ employeer or business, be food items you raise, or items from your county Farm Bureau or the Michigan Farm Bureau online store: <u>www.miagclassroom.org</u>
- O Showcase the Agriculture Career Explorer Resources for students to browse on their own time, to further investigate career opportunities: www.agexplorer.com

PRESENTATION BINGO

OBJECTIVE

To keep students engaged in presentation and add an element of competition, students will play BINGO using a list of words from the presentation.

□ SUPPLIES

- O Copies of blank bingo cards for each student (see page 40).
- O List of words that will be spoken in your presentation listed in a powerpoint slide or to write on a marker board for students to write in bingo spaces
- O Several trinket prizes for BINGO winners. Consider food items related to your commodity, logoed items from your employer, or items from the Michigan Farm Bureau P&E online store: www.miagclassroom.org

□ PREPARATION DIRECTIONS

- O Write an outline for your presentation. Consider using the Elementary School Career Presentation outline on page 12 and ramp up your terminology just a little for middle school ages. Remember, students will not understand complex jargon.
- O Based on your outline, make a list of words you will use in your presentation. Consider words that are unique to your job, yet comfortably incorporated into your presentation. A BINGO card has 24 blanks so you will need 30 or more words.
- O Add this list to the beginning of your powerpoint or be prepared to write it on the marker board in the classroom.
- O Make enough copies of the BINGO card for all students.
- O Obtain prizes.

□ IN-CLASS DIRECTIONS

- O Prior to the start of your presentation, explain to the students you have a friendly competition to help them listen for important words related to your profession.
- O Explain to students they will need to fill in words on the blank bingo cards using the list you provide.
- O Pass out the cards and tell students to fill in the blanks. Remind students it is not in their best "BINGO interest" to put the words in the same places as their neighbors.
- O Once everyone has their card complete, tell students to cross out words as they hear them. If they get a BINGO, raise their hand. Show students qualifying BINGO patterns. Consider using the horizontal and vertical rows, diagonal and four corners.
- O Begin your presentation, awarding BINGOs as appropriate!

FARM TOUR WITH CAREER FOCUS

TARGET AUDIENCE

4-H or FFA members as a part of career exploration modules within these existing programs. *If your target audience is not one of these two groups, we suggest seeking out additional farm tour resources within the Consumer Conversations Training materials including training on appropriate messaging.

PRIOR TO TOUR

Consider what locations of your business/farm are most interesting to external audiences and showcase what you do daily.

☐ GENERAL SAFETY

- O Clearly outline safety expectations at the outset of tour. Prior to arriving, ensure that any requirements for special clothing (i.e. closed toe shoes, sunscreen, and bug spray) are communicated to the visitors.
- O Clearly indicate any potential hazards on signs throughout the facility. This might include uneven ground or low doorways. Make visitors aware that signs, locks and rope barriers are used throughout the facility for their safety and protection.
- O Keep all passages and stairways safe and unobstructed.
- O Rope off areas you don't want visitors to go; add signage to ensure areas are clearly marked.
- O Check for nails, loose railings, syringes, sharp tools, loose tin/siding etc. and take care of these things before guests arrive.
- O Never leave any toxic products (sanitizers, pesticides) open and accessible.

□ QUESTIONS TO ASK THE ADULT LEADER

- O How many students and what grade levels will be attending?
- O What date and time will they arrive?
- O How will they be transported to the farm? Is it one bus, several cars, two vans? Explain parking and if there is a need to travel from one location on the farm to another.
- O What knowledge of the farm do students already have? Have they discussed any of the areas listed on the next page so you can reference their learning in your tour?
- O What is the teacher/leader's overall goal? If they are unsure, suggest this: To show what I do daily and to display the connections to other agricultural occupations that help me do my job.

DURING TOUR

□ LOCATIONS TO SHOWCASE

- O **Business office:** Share the importance of understanding finances and the team of individuals who assist—lawyer, banker, accountant, insurance company, etc.
- O **Equipment/shop:** maintenance, cost of equipment, various uses of equipment.
- O **Animal feed:** Have examples of the feed components for students to touch and feel. Discuss how you decide what to feed your animals, how often they are fed, if and when feed changes. Share the individual careers who assist with feed—elevator, feed sales rep, etc.
- O **Animal health:** Share your health protocol. What do you take on? Who do you call when issues arise? How important are the relationships you build with veterinarians and how do you build it?
- O **Commodity location:** Take students to where your commodity is grown/raised. This could be a couple different locations and may include a pasture, various barns, fields, orchard, greenhouses, etc.
- O **Soil health:** Discuss the importance of soil health and sustainability. Take students to a nearby field and consider demonstrating a soil test.
- O **Plant growth/harvest:** If a crop is planted in the field during your tour, show students the plants and dicuss items you looks for as the crop continues to grow. Allow students to look at harvest equipment.
- O Commodity storage and sales: (silos, bunks, packing shed, etc.)
- O **Chemical storage:** Discuss the safety aspect of chemicals. What regulations must you follow? Explain the roles of various chemical sales reps, entities who teach and administer application testing, inspectors and additional individuals involved in chemical use on the farm. Have students try on safety equipment used in application.

☐ START WITH AN INTRODUCTION

- O Give background of yourself, your family, and your business/farm.
- O Provide details of training and/or education you received.
- O What is your farm's current main focus? (i.e. to raise apples for processing, to raise replacement heifers for a local dairy farm, etc.)
- O Hand out any biosecurity items and/or perform safety tasks. Explain why they must wear/perform the task.



☐ START YOUR TOUR!

O Start your tour by following your main commodity's process from start to finish on your farm.

- Livestock or dairy example: Start with a maternity pen and walk the group around your facility to follow the lifecycle of a calf to a mature cow.
- **Specialty crop example:** Start with your youngest apple trees, move through building trellis systems, to oldest trees, and finish with storage and/or distribution.
- Row crop example: Begin in your seed storage barn. Move to equipment for planting/ field work; then show the crop in the field. Wrap up with commodity storage and transportation off your farm.

□ ENGAGING STRATEGIES

O Clipboard Bingo

- Use the provided bingo sheets to add an interactive component to your tour.
 - » Greenhouse bingo sheet (page 34)
 - » Livestock and Row Crop bingo sheet (page 35)
 - » Specialty Crop bingo sheet (page 36)
 - » Blank bingo template (page 40)

○ Job Responsibility: Who am I?

• Use the sheet provided on page 37 to introduce students to a wide array of individuals who impact the success of a farm and the tasks they perform.

O Consider providing a takeaway:

- Hand out swag from your respective commodity group have a handout or swag item?
- · Provide a Farm Bureau career booklet.
- Give away samples of your commodity. (Be aware of food allergies)
- Some commodity groups have grants for providing products to farmers for the purposes of promotion.



ANIMAL SAFETY

- O Keep sick or dangerous animals confined and out of view of guests.
- O Encourage children not to have direct interaction with animals. If any interaction is allowed, be certain they are gentle animals housed in a way that controls their movement.
- O Do not bring cows or horses out of their stalls. If animals suddenly startle this can become a dangerous situation while guests are present.
- O Farm pets, such as dogs, should not have interaction with the guests.
- O Provide hand sanitizer and/or hand washing facilities for guests, especially if there is animal interaction.

MACHINERY SAFETY

- O Shut off all machinery if unattended or avoid areas where machinery is in operation.
- O Remove all keys from tractor ignitions.
- O If machinery needs to be in operation while guests are present take the necessary precautions and avoid touring guests where the machinery is in use.
- O If you are demonstrating the use of machinery ensure it is in good working condition and guests are at least 20 feet away from the working machine.
- O Do not allow guests or children to climb on the machinery.

LOGISTICAL SAFETY

- O Inform all of your workers that visitors will be touring the farm.
- O Provide bathroom facilities and hand washing stations for visitors.
- O Provide plastic booties, if necessary, to ensure biosecurity.
- O Make sure someone is on hand who knows basic first aid and CPR and always have a wellstocked first aid kit available.
- O If providing food samples, be sure you meet local public health regulations—Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations food and animal set up—find more information at www.cdc.gov.

GREENHOUSE/TURF GRASS TOUR BINGO SHEET

As you participate in our tour, cross out the squares as we share about the various agriculture careers our farm interacts with on a regular basis. Haven't crossed out a word yet? When it's appropriate, ask a question related to the type of career you still need to cross out. For example, "Please explain how you work with a drain commissioner." Or "What tasks would a waste handling technician complete on your farm?" At the end of the tour, we will see how many BINGOs you earned for take home prizes!

USE THESE CAREERS TO FILL IN YOUR BINGO CARD

- 1. Insurance Agent
- 2. Marketing/Communications Manager
- 3. Entomologist
- 4. Plant Breeder
- 5. Safety Officer
- 6. USDA Compliance Officer/Inspector
- 7. Information Technology Manager
- 8. Certification Instructor
- 9. Accountant
- 10. Irrigation Specialist
- 11. Researcher
- 12. Mechanic/Service Mechanic
- 13. Loan Officer
- 14. Sales Representative: Grass Seed, Fertilizer
- 15. Fuel Supplier
- 16. Meteorologist
- 17. Manager
- 18. Elected Officials (Local, State, and Federal)
- 19. Drain Commissioner
- 20. Equipment Dealer
- 21. Pesticide Applicator
- 22. Lawyer
- 23. Transportation/Hauler
- 24. Direct Marketer
- 25. Statistician

FARM TOUR BINGO SHEET: LIVESTOCK & ROW CROP

As you participate in our tour, cross out the squares as we share about the various agriculture careers our farm interacts with on a regular basis. Haven't crossed out a word yet? When it's appropriate, ask a question related to the type of career you still need to cross out. For example, "Please explain how you work with a drain commissioner." Or "What tasks would a waste handling technician complete on your farm?" At the end of the tour, we will see how many BINGOs you earned for take home prizes!

USE THESE CAREERS TO FILL IN YOUR BINGO CARD

- 1. Insurance Agent
- 2. Marketing Communications Manager
- 3. Veterinarian
- 4. Plant/Animal Breeder
- 5. Elevator Manager/Feedlot Operator
- 6. State and/or Federal Inspector
- 7. Information Technology Manager
- 8. Certification Instructor
- 9. Accountant
- 10. Waste Handling Technician
- 11. Farm Manager
- 12. Mechanic/Service Technician
- 13. Loan Officer
- 14. Sales Representative: Feed, Seed, Fertilizer, etc.
- 15. Fuel Supplier
- 16. Agronomist
- 17. Human Resource Manager
- 18. Elected Officials (Local, State, and Federal)
- 19. Drain Commissioner
- 20. Equipment Dealer
- 21. GPS System Provider
- 22. Lawyer
- 23. Transportation/Hauler
- 24. Manager
- 25. Nutritionist



FARM TOUR BINGO SHEET: SPECIALTY CROP

As you participate in our tour, cross out the squares as we share about the various agriculture careers our farm interacts with on a regular basis. Haven't crossed out a word yet? When it's appropriate, ask a question related to the type of career you still need to cross out. For example, "Please explain how you work with a drain commissioner." Or "What tasks would a waste handling technician complete on your farm?" At the end of the tour, we will see how many BINGOs you earned for take home prizes!

USE THESE CAREERS TO FILL IN YOUR BINGO CARD

- 1. Insurance Agent
- 2. Marketing Communications Manager
- 3. Plant Breeder
- 4. Safety Officer
- 5. Food Quality/Safety Inspector
- 6. Information Technology Manager
- 7. Certification Instructor
- 8. Accountant
- 9. Waste Handling Technician
- 10. Farm Manager
- 11. Mechanic/Service Technician
- 12. Loan Officer
- 13. Sales Representative: Supplies, Seed, Fertilizer
- 14. Fuel Supplier
- 15. Meteorologists
- 16. Human Resources Manager
- 17. Elected Officials (Local, State, and Federal)
- 18. Drain Commissioner
- 19. Equipment Dealer
- 20. GPS System Provider
- 21. Lawyer
- 22. Transportation/Hauler
- 23. Electrical Engineer
- 24. Agronomist
- 25. Entomologist

JOB RESPONSIBILITY: WHO AM I?

As one of the careers within the word bank is mentioned during the tour, write down the career from the word bank and make note of two tasks that they perform within the chart provided below.

WORD BANK:

O Insurance Agent	O Loan Officer
O Marketing/Communications Manager	O Sales Representative: Feed, Seed, Fertilizer
O Veterinarian	O Fuel Supplier
O Plant/Animal Breeder	O Meteorologist
O Safety Officer	O Manager
O Inspector	O Elected Officials (Local, State, and Federal)
O Information Technology Manager	O Drain Commissioner
O Certification Instructor	O Farm Equipment Dealer
O Accountant	O GPS System Provider
O Waste Handling Technician	O Lawyer
O Farm Manager	O Transportation/Hauler
O Mechanic	O Marketing Director

Career	Task	Task

TEMPLATE EMAILS

COUNTY FARM BUREAU TEMPLATE EMAIL

Use this template email to let local schools know the county Farm Bureau has career resources and is willing to engage with local students! Search schools websites for a high school counselor, career counselor or agricultural teacher to build these relationships. Often, school administration must approve of activities but contacting a counselor or teacher directly will be a more effective in-road.

Dear (insert high school counselor name here),

The average age of a Michigan farmer is 57 years old. Through at least 2020, there is an expected average of nearly 58,000 job openings annually in agriculture, food and natural resources related careers. Needless to say, Michigan agriculture is seeking talented young professionals to consider post-high school training or higher education to fill this demand.

If your high school has a career fair or invites guest speakers to showcase local career opportunities, local agricultural professionals would like to be included! (insert county Farm Bureau name) would be happy to make the connections with these community members.

If you have questions or would like to brainstorm ways to connect with the agriculture, food and natural resources sector, don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you,

(insert name)

(insert role with insert county Farm Bureau)

TEACHER TEMPLATE EMAIL

This email is for teachers or career event organizers. The structure will help line up your ask, as well as provide necessary details to your potential presenters.

Dear (insert business/organization name here),

Studies have shown students are making decisions about their intended career paths as early as third grade! At (insert school name here) we value community partnerships and want to show our students the many career opportunities right here in our local area. We would like to invite (insert number of people) from (insert business/organization name) to participate in a (insert type of career activity) on (date) at (location) from (insert time range).

(Insert further expectations of booth, presentation or panel members, see previous activity instructions for suggestions of supplies, questions and set up)

We look forward to showcasing your involvement on our school's social media and parent newsletters as we value our community partners.

If you have questions, don't hesitate to reach out to me at (email) or (phone).

Thank you again, (insert name, position)

I N G O **FREE SPACE**

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Michigan Agriculture in the Classroom

○ miagclassroom.org

National Agriculture in the Classroom

○ agclassroom.org

Michigan Grown, Michigan Great

○ *michigangrown.org*

American Farm Bureau

○ *fb.org*

My American Farm

○ myamericanfarm.org

Journey 2050

○ *journey2050.com*

Food Dialogues, U.S. Farmers & Ranchers Alliance

○ <u>fooddialogues.com</u>

GMO Answers

○ *gmoanswers.com*

American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture

○ *agfoundation.org*

Best Food Facts, Center for Food Integrity

○ bestfoodfacts.org

Common Ground

○ <u>findourcommonground.com</u>

COMMODITY ORGANIZATIONS

Our state commodity organizations are a great resource for commodity-specific facts, handouts, guest speakers, give-away items and even sometimes monetary donations.

Cherry Marketing Institute	<u>choosecherries.com</u>
Corn Marketing Program of Michigan	<u>micorn.org</u>
GreenStone Farm Credit Services	greenstonefcs.com
Michigan Ag Council	<u>michigangrown.org</u>
Michigan Agricultural Commodities	<u>michag.com</u>
Michigan Allied Poultry Industries, Inc	<u>mipoultry.com</u>
Michigan Apple Committee	<u>michiganapples.com</u>
Michigan Asparagus Advisory Board	<u>michiganasparagus.org</u>
Michigan Bean Commission	<u>michiganbean.org</u>
Michigan Beef Industry Commission	<u>mibeef.org</u>
Michigan Beekeepers Association	<u>michiganbees.org</u>
MBG Marketing-The Blueberry People	<u>blueberries.com</u>
Michigan Christmas Tree Association	<u>mcta.org</u>
Michigan Floriculture Growers Council	<u>mifgc.org</u>
Michigan Forest Resource Alliance	<u>michiganforest.com</u>
Michigan Craft Beverage Council	<u>michigancraftbeverage.com</u>
Michigan Horse Council	<u>michiganhorsecouncil.com</u>
Michigan Maple Syrup Association	<u>michiganmaple.org</u>
Michigan Pork Producers Association	<u>mipork.org</u>
Michigan Potato Industry Commission	<u>mipotato.com</u>
Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee	<u>michigansoybean.org</u>
Michigan Sugar Company	<u>michigansugar.com</u>
United Dairy Industry of Michigan	<u>milkmeansmore.or</u> g
Michigan Wheat Program	<u>miwheat.org</u>

