



ILLINOIS
AGRICULTURAL
EDUCATION

TEACHER GRANT
PROGRAM

Proposal for Funding Partners

Project Summary

The IAA Foundation, Illinois Farm Bureau's charitable arm, is seeking funding partners for a grant program that will address the agricultural education teacher shortage and encourage agricultural education teacher retention.

In conjunction with interested partners, the Illinois Farm Bureau has established an Agricultural Education Teacher Grant Program through the IAA Foundation. With this program, students who are entering the workforce as ag teachers will be eligible for grant support to help alleviate financial concerns, encourage them to continue on this chosen career path, and reinforce their decision to enter the noble teaching profession.

A successful, fully funded twelve-year program will support eight groups of new teachers, 32 in total, by granting each agricultural education teacher a total of \$10,000 in supplemental income during the first five years of his or her teaching career.

Background/Rationale

At a time when Illinois' population is becoming increasingly urban and disconnected from agriculture, it is essential that school-based agricultural education programs are strong and expanding to more schools. This effort would help to ensure a public that is capable of making informed decisions and to expose students to the expanding career opportunities in agriculture. A big threat to that vision is a shortage of qualified agricultural education teachers.

The state of Illinois has continued to see a severe shortage of agriculture teachers. In the last five years, on average, the four major universities in the state have only graduated 18 agricultural education majors per year, dipping as low as 11 total Ag Ed graduates in 2014. Of those 18 students, on average, only 13 went on to teach in a high school ag program, where on average there were 68 openings. That means that 30% of students graduating with an Ag Ed degree do not choose to go into the classroom. To compound this concern, Ag Teacher retention is also an issue, where over the last five years, we have seen an average of 27 teachers per year leave the classroom, not including retirees. It doesn't take a math major to see that some agricultural programs are in danger of extinction without teacher to fill upcoming vacancies.

More recently, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack reported a big demand for college graduates with a degree in agricultural programs.

Action needs to be taken to recruit and retain agricultural teachers in Illinois. Today, agriculture is a robust and thriving industry creating demand for industry professionals. It's that demand for agricultural production and business related jobs that are offering more lucrative career choices. When the demand for these types of jobs go up, the number of college students seeking agricultural education teacher positions go down.



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Project Intent

A teacher-retention incentive program has been developed to address the commitment required for qualified teachers to remain in the classroom. The program will financially support new teachers through an applied-for grant program.

Illinois Agricultural Education teachers completing their first year in the classroom are eligible to apply for the grant program. The amount of the grant payment will increase over the course of the teacher's first five years in the classroom, thus encouraging the teacher to remain in the profession.

Each year a group of four first-year agricultural education teachers will be selected. Each will receive a total of \$10,000 in financial support between year 1 and year 5 of his/her teaching career.

The IAA Foundation administers the grant program, assuming logistic responsibilities for fund management, communications, grant management and selection process.

A review committee comprised of designated funding partners helps review and select each year's group of teachers.

Teachers will not be obligated to repay any of the grant money awarded, as this is not considered a loan. Rather, after initial entry into the program, teachers will continue to receive annual funding if they meet the re-application process confirming they remain active as an agricultural education teacher.

Expected Outcomes/Project Beneficiaries

Eight groups of new teachers, 32 in total, will benefit through compensation to support their establishment in their career as an agricultural education professional.

Partners in Higher Education will benefit from increases in students selecting agriculture-related fields of study.

Agriculture industry partners will benefit from a more robust pool of qualified potential employees.

As one of many efforts to address and support the pipeline of agricultural education, this program can provide far reaching benefits to farming practices, advancements in science and technology, food nutrition and security, consumer education, and much more.

Budget Overview

- One fully supported teacher receives \$10,000 over five years
- A twelve-year program supports a total of 8 New Teacher Groups, or 32 teachers total, and in sum distributes \$320,000
- A fully operational program supports 20 teachers at any one time, and distributes a maximum of \$40,000 per year
- Illinois Farm Bureau has committed \$120,000 in funding to seed the startup of the grant program
- **A total of four (4) additional contributing partners are needed to fund the grant program in its entirety**



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Grant Program Funding Snapshot: Per Teacher

Years as Teacher	Annual Grant
YEAR 1	\$1,000
YEAR 2	\$1,500
YEAR 3	\$2,000
YEAR 4	\$2,500
YEAR 5	\$3,000
TOTAL PER TEACHER	\$10,000

Fully Funded 12 Year Grant Program

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	PROGRAM COMPLETE								
GROUP A	Year 1 \$4,000	Year 2 \$6,000	Year 3 \$8,000	Year 4 \$10,000	Year 5 \$12,000								PROGRAM COMPLETE								
GROUP B		Year 1 \$4,000	Year 2 \$6,000	Year 3 \$8,000	Year 4 \$10,000	Year 5 \$12,000								PROGRAM COMPLETE							
GROUP C			Year 1 \$4,000	Year 2 \$6,000	Year 3 \$8,000	Year 4 \$10,000	Year 5 \$12,000								PROGRAM COMPLETE						
GROUP D				Year 1 \$4,000	Year 2 \$6,000	Year 3 \$8,000	Year 4 \$10,000	Year 5 \$12,000								PROGRAM COMPLETE					
GROUP AA					Year 1 \$4,000	Year 2 \$6,000	Year 3 \$8,000	Year 4 \$10,000	Year 5 \$12,000								PROGRAM COMPLETE				
GROUP BB						Year 1 \$4,000	Year 2 \$6,000	Year 3 \$8,000	Year 4 \$10,000	Year 5 \$12,000								PROGRAM COMPLETE			
GROUP CC							Year 1 \$4,000	Year 2 \$6,000	Year 3 \$8,000	Year 4 \$10,000	Year 5 \$12,000								PROGRAM COMPLETE		
GROUP DD								Year 1 \$4,000	Year 2 \$6,000	Year 3 \$8,000	Year 4 \$10,000	Year 5 \$12,000								PROGRAM COMPLETE	
TOTAL	\$4,000	\$10,000	\$18,000	\$28,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$36,000	\$30,000	\$22,000	\$12,000									\$320,000

Contributing Partners

As a contributing partner, your organization will receive the following recognition and involvement:

- Logo or Name listed on the grant application
- Logo or Name listed in advertisements
- Logo or Name listed on webpage
- One representative to serve on the Grant Review Committee

As a contributing partner, your financial commitment to support the complete 12- year program can be made through one of two ways:

- \$10,000 per year for 5 years
- \$50,000 up front complete investment

Project Commitment

Illinois Farm Bureau is committed to serve as one of five contributing partners. The IAA Foundation is committed to serve as grant administrator.



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