



Kansas Food & Agriculture POLICY FELLOWSHIP

policy • leadership • advocate • mentor • connect • experience

The Kansas Food & Agricultural Policy Fellowship Program (Ag Fellows) provides a premier leadership opportunity for Kansas undergraduate or graduate students studying a food and agricultural field to serve the state's agricultural industry and gain valuable public policy experience at both the state and federal levels. Ag Fellows will develop a deeper understanding for the legislative and regulatory processes and about how laws and regulations impact the entire food chain — from farm gate to consumer.

While this experience prepares students to enter the workforce serving Kansas agriculture, it also enhances their ability to advocate for laws and regulations that allow Kansas farmers, ranchers and agribusinesses to thrive and grow.



Purpose & Goals

Agriculture is the largest economic driver and employer in Kansas. Like virtually all other segments of the economy, agriculture is affected by public policy decisions at the local, state and federal levels. Who makes those decisions, where and from whom they receive information, and the process under which these decisions are made are critically important to the future of the industry. Further, the challenges facing the entire agricultural industry are growing more complex and interconnected than ever. Ag Fellows will gain a first-hand understanding of policy and regulatory challenges facing food and agriculture production, will be challenged to develop strategic solutions to these challenges, and will participate in the policy process during their experience in the program.

Ag Fellows will complete two separate experiences – one at the state level and one at the federal level – with either a legislative or congressional office, a state or federal agency, or a food or agricultural membership organization or business. Upon completion of the program, Ag Fellows will be equipped with necessary skills and knowledge to be productive leaders in the agricultural industry.

The goals of the program are:

- To develop undergraduate and graduate students studying an agricultural field to be prepared for careers in the food and agriculture industry
- To provide valuable service to the agricultural industry and valuable support to policy makers
- To establish a long-term, sustaining Ag Fellows program that develops premier leaders in Kansas agriculture and the industries that support it

Selection & Structure

Students applying for the Ag Fellows program must complete the following application and selection process:

- Submit a completed application packet, including an application, a professional resume and cover letter, an issue essay, an official college transcript, and two letters of recommendation.
- Complete first-round interview with Kansas food & ag steering committee and attend a reception with program supporters.
- Students selected to advance to the final step in the selection process may have an opportunity to attend an agricultural issues briefing to become familiar with pending agricultural issues.
- Finalists will have the opportunity to connect with host office representatives. Host offices will make their selections based on the application packet, recommendations from the steering committee and additional interactions.

State & Federal Experience

Successfully completing the state level experience requires fellows to complete a fellowship experience with one of the following entities during the spring semester:

- Kansas State Legislature: Ag Fellows may choose to work directly with a lawmaker in a leadership position (within his or her respective party or a committee chairman or ranking member);
- Kansas State Agency: Ag Fellows may choose to work directly with a state agency (Kansas Dept. of Agriculture, Kansas Water Office, Kansas Dept. of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, Kansas Dept. of Health and Environment, Kansas Attorney General, etc.) during the legislative session.
- Kansas food and agricultural membership organization: Ag Fellows may choose to work with an agricultural membership organization (Kansas Farm Bureau, Kansas Livestock Assoc., Kansas Wheat Growers, Kansas Grain and Feed Assoc., etc.) providing support to the organization's policy team.

Successfully completing the federal level experience requires fellows to complete a 10 to 12 week fellowship experience with one of the following entities:

- United States Congress: Ag Fellows may choose to work within an office of a member of the Kansas congressional delegation, or with a congressional committee;
- Federal Agency: Ag Fellows may choose to work with a federal agency (U.S. Department of Agriculture, United States Trade Representative, EPA, Department of the Interior, etc.) providing support to the agency's policy team;
- Food and Agricultural membership organization: Ag Fellows may choose to work with a food and/or agricultural membership organization (Nat'l Cattlemen's Beef Assoc., American Farm Bureau Federation, National Assoc. of Wheat Growers, National Milk Prod. Federation, National Pork Prod., etc.) providing support to the organization's policy team.

Upon completion of the program, Ag Fellows will be required to present significant learnings to the advisory board and to at least one student organization at K-State. They will also be required to draft a letter to the editor on a food or agriculture issue on which they worked during their fellow experience.



Eligibility & Benefits

To be eligible to apply for the Ag Fellows program, candidates must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be a U.S. citizen; permanent residents are not eligible.
- Be a currently enrolled (undergraduate, masters or Ph.D.) student pursuing an agricultural degree at Kansas State University.
- Have completed at least two years of college.
- Be in good standing (academic and conduct) at Kansas State University.
- Be able to complete a minimum of two fellowship experiences, one at the state level and one at the federal level.
- Be able to serve the entire length of the Kansas Legislative Session (convenes the second Monday in January and typically concludes in early May but may extend into the summer months) for the state level experience, which may exceed K-State academic semester dates (minimum of 15 hours per week).
- Be able to serve a minimum of 10 to 12 weeks during the Washington, D.C., experience.
- Attend all preparatory events in Manhattan prior to Washington, D.C., experience.
- Have valid health insurance during the internship semesters.

The program offers benefits ranging from networking and resume building to paid fellowship experiences and the opportunity to build a strong working knowledge of the public policy process.

Program partners that host fellows will be expected to provide a competitive stipend as well as challenging and tangible work expectations for fellows.

During the state experience, Ag Fellows will be provided a stipend to cover personal vehicle mileage, paid by the employer. Fellows are considered full-time students and may be eligible for federal financial aid. Fellows will also have the chance to work and network with top leaders in Kansas agriculture who will serve as mentors as the fellows finish their education and start careers in agriculture.

Steering Committee

Dalton Henry	Sharon Schwartz
Jon Hixon	Mary Soukup
Terry Holdren	Wayne Stoskopf
Jackie McClaskey	Michael Torrey
Susan Metzger	