



State of Wisconsin
Governor Tony Evers

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
Secretary Randy Romanski

DATE: May 9, 2024

SUBJECT: Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council

FROM: Ashley Andre, Policy Initiatives Advisor - Executive

RECOMMENDATION: This is for informational purposes only.

SUMMARY / BACKGROUND:

Purpose

The purpose of the Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council is to encourage young people to engage with state government and increase their awareness of DATCP's interactions with Wisconsin's agriculture industry.

Goals

The four goals of the Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council are:

- Highlight the agricultural-related career opportunities available including those in government
- Share the state tools available to support Wisconsin farmers
- Provide insight on how to effectively engage in state agricultural policy development
- Increase networking opportunities for participants across the agricultural industry

Structure

The 2023-2024 Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council is comprised of Wisconsin high school seniors from across the state. Members serve a one-year term and receive a certificate at the completion of their year.

Current members are:

- Chance Austin, Milton
- Josie Bailey, Tomah
- Elizabeth Colburn, Viroqua
- Lilah Feyen, East Troy
- Tyson Gehrke, Stitzer
- Logan Guilette, Casco
- Abel Kooima, Waupun
- Emi McCarville, Mineral Point
- Samuel Mell, Waunakee
- Sonya Merrit, Arpin
- Layten Sobieski, Berlin
- Emily Sydow, Columbus
- Allis Teska, Auburndale
- Samuel Tuttle, Drummond

Wisconsin - America's Dairyland

2811 Agriculture Drive • PO Box 8911 • Madison, WI 53708-8911 • Wisconsin.gov

An equal opportunity employer

Selection

To be a member of the Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council, members nominated themselves by completing an application form, sharing a letter of recommendation, writing a brief essay, and making a one-minute video. Council members were selected based on their submitted materials and commitment to meet the determined goals.

Expectations

Council members participated in monthly sessions, held on the third Thursday of each month from 7:00 – 8:30 a.m., beginning in September 2023. All Council members completed a final written reflection about their experience. The May session and this board meeting are the conclusion of their year.

Leadership roles

For each session, members rotated in serving in four leadership roles. They were:

- Chair: Introduce and thank the speakers
- Vice Chair: Initiate the question and answer period and encourage others to ask questions
- Secretary: Take notes to draft a monthly news article about the session
- Social Media Manager: Submit two social media posts for the month about the session

Topics

The first Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council session included a DATCP and state government overview. Five sessions included program presentations from DATCP's divisions: Agricultural Development, Agricultural Resource Management, Animal Health, Food and Recreational Safety, and Trade and Consumer Protection.

Two sessions included agricultural career panels. Examples of careers highlighted include education, communications, finance, transportation, research, and agronomy.

The final session will include a presentation by Ashley Hagenow, the 76th Alice in Dairyland, and a member discussion. Each session is interactive, offering a question and answer period, Zoom polls, and breakout room discussions.

Board presentation

During the Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council presentation to the DATCP Board on May 9, 2024, Ashley Andre will provide a brief council overview before welcoming the members to introduce themselves. Several members will also read their final reflections. Finally, there will be time for the DATCP Board members to ask questions.