



State of Wisconsin
Governor Tony Evers

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
Secretary-designee Randy Romanski

DATE: May 13, 2021

SUBJECT: Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council

FROM: Angela James, Deputy Secretary

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 2020-2021 Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council is comprised of 15 Wisconsin high school seniors from across the state. Students serve a one-year term and will receive a certificate at the completion of their year.

Current members are:

- Chad Achenbach, Eastman
- Haley Beukema, New Richmond
- Hannah Dahl, Columbus
- Charles Fahey, Sussex
- Kendra Goplin, Osseo
- Samantha Hammiller, Burlington
- Abigail Helbach, Amherst
- Sophia Larson, Reedsburg
- Adaire MacSwain, Hudson
- Jamison Meier, Windsor
- Natalie Ott, Berlin
- Natalie Roe, Monticello
- Lauren Thompson, Woodville
- Drew Tuttle, Drummond
- Randy Winch, Fennimore

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Selection

To be a member of the Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council, members had to nominate themselves, completing an application form, submitting a resume, 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 plan 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 2020. For each session, members had to prepare at least one question and complete a follow-up survey. All Council members also had to complete 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 three 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 and provide a summary to DATCP for distribution to the membership

Topics

Each Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council session included DATCP staff, speaking about a variety of programs. Examples of session topics included:

- Marketing Wisconsin agriculture locally
- From Wisconsin farms to global customers
- Wisconsin's food processing industry
- Safeguarding animal health
- Ensuring sound use of land and water resources
- Plants and pests

DATCP also coordinated optional office hours for the Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council members to meet with and ask questions to professionals who work in Wisconsin agriculture. Examples of office hour guests included Pam Jahnke of the Midwest Farm Report and Representative Dave Considine of the Wisconsin State Legislature.

Board presentation

During the Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council presentation to the Board on May 13, 2021, Deputy Secretary Angela James will provide a brief overview before welcoming the students to introduce themselves. Three students will also read their final reflections. There will be time for discussion, and the students have been encouraged to ask questions. We also welcome you as board members to ask questions of the members to make the conversation as valuable and interactive as possible.