



# Quick Facts

## Preservice Internship Program

### Who is eligible to apply to administer this grant program?

Eligible applicants must be partnerships consisting of at least one education entity serving elementary and secondary schools (such as school districts, private schools, or Regional Offices of Education, or community based organizations that serve agricultural education programs) and at least one postsecondary institution that offers postsecondary credit-bearing internship opportunities.

### What is the purpose of this grant?

The purpose of this grant is to address the educator shortages experienced by middle school and secondary agricultural education programs in Illinois. The internship is designed to develop a highly qualified and effective agricultural education candidate pool that is sufficient in size to meet the needs of Illinois schools. The intent is to provide a statewide internship program for preservice agricultural educators in Illinois that will strengthen the relationships among preservice teachers from all colleges and university agriculture teacher preparation programs, enhance preservice teachers' agricultural content knowledge, and increase the integration of industry partnerships in agricultural education statewide programs.

### When is the deadline for applying for an internship opportunity?

The annual established deadline for this internship will be published by the current administrator of this grant program -- Richland Community College in Decatur. Jess Smithers, director of Agricultural Programs at Richland, can be contacted directly for more information. See contact below.

Jess Smithers, Director of Agricultural Programs  
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### What can I expect from the internship experience?

Each intern's experience will be individualized based on a needs assessment and will be a combination of both in-classroom and hands-on, applied learning. Experiences will encompass all eight recognized educational pathways in the Advance Career and Technical Education career cluster for Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources. Interns can expect to travel throughout the state working with industry partners for short, exploratory periods.

### Why should my I participate in this grant program?

Aspiring agricultural education teachers should view this internship as an opportunity to grow in personal confidence, gain new content knowledge, and develop relationships outside of their current college or university. This internship is designed and managed by agricultural educators, meaning that interns can expect to gain experiences, discussion, and resources with their chosen career in mind.

### Who is eligible to apply for an internship opportunity?

Interested applicants must reach out to Mr. Smithers for exact eligibility requirements, but, generally speaking, the internship program is designed for students currently enrolled in an agricultural education teacher preparation program and who have completed Introduction to Agricultural Education ([AG 911](#)) before the start of the internship program. Those further along in their teacher preparation pipeline are preferred, but all candidates are encouraged to apply for consideration.