



ARD Updates

ASSOCIATION OF 1890 RESEARCH DIRECTORS

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Message from the Chair DR. LOUIS WHITESIDES



The Association of Research Directors was extremely engaged in the 2023 Joint Council for Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching (CARET)/ Administrative Heads Section (AHS) meeting and advocacy visits to Capitol Hill.

With the theme, “Ag is the Answer: Building Land-grant Solutions to Global Food, Agriculture and Resource Challenges with Solutions for Life’s

Challenges for America,” the 1890 research directors and associate directors visited with Congress members and their aides. Additionally, the Association of Public and Land-grant University (APLU)/Board of Agriculture Assembly priorities and the 1890 priorities were presented to legislators and their staffers. Despite concerns about the upcoming debt ceiling discussions and the general state of the economy, our FY 2023 budget recommendations were receiving quite favorably, including our focus on agricultural infrastructure.

One interesting point that resonated well with the legislators was the data showing that the Chinese government is investing roughly twice as much in agricultural research and development (R&D) than the United States; consequently, the U.S. is losing its competitive edge. To be specific, in 2015 (*the last year for which the USDA, Economic Research Service has complete data*), China spent more than \$10 billion annually on agricultural R&D.

Just prior to our CARET/AHS meeting, President Biden’s FY 2024 budget was released. Briefly, this budget offered relatively stable funding levels compared to the FY 2023 enacted levels, except for some smaller programs that would receive significant funding increases for programs focused on agricultural Extension, research facilities, Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) and women in agriculture. The President’s budget request also demonstrated the continued emphasis on climate resilience, as prioritized by his administration and USDA.

The data in the accompanying table shows

Census data tells ag story; responses still accepted

The [Census of Agriculture](#) allows producers to tell the story of U.S. agriculture and it’s not too late to respond. Since data collection began last fall, over 1 million ag census recipients across the country have returned their questionnaires. USDA will continue to collect completed 2022 ag census forms through the spring to ensure all producers have the chance to be represented in widely used census data. Producers can respond online at agcounts.usda.gov or by mail.

Census data inform decisions about policy, farm and conservation programs, infrastructure and rural development, research, education and more. The stronger the response, the stronger the data. For America’s farmers and ranchers, the Census of Agriculture is their voice, their future and their opportunity.

USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is continuing to contact producers via mail and telephone to collect information.

Whether producers responded online or by mail, they can verify their reports were received by going to agcounts.usda.gov, entering their survey codes and checking the submitted date under the status column of the *My Surveys* tab. The status update is not always immediate and can take a few minutes up to several days, especially if the questionnaire was returned by mail.

THE AG CENSUS COUNTS
BECAUSE IT HELPS FARMERS GET THE RESOURCES WE NEED.

2022 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

THERE'S STILL TIME TO RESPOND
nass.usda.gov/AgCensus

YOUR VOICE. YOUR FUTURE. YOUR OPPORTUNITY.

USDA United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service

#AgCensus

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Visit us online at www.umes.edu/ard



Where are the ag jobs and ag students?

[Reprinted from Council on Food, Agricultural Resource Economics (C-FAR), March 27, 2023]

The barriers and challenges of recruiting and retaining students to focus on agri-food-related jobs come from different perspectives and resource limitations, especially the transition from high school to college[1].

For example, many rural high schools offer limited programs/curricula in agri-food subjects, particularly for socially disadvantaged students from underserved communities[2]. Some parents in rural areas prefer children seeking jobs outside of agriculture because of the unappealing conventional image of agriculture (i.e., dealing with hardship and adverse conditions).

Gaps and challenges exist for many college students to identify government agencies or industry positions, as suggested by conversations with the government and industry leaders. For example, (1) many students have a strong science background but lack soft skills; (2) students need to acquire more training in adapting to the interdisciplinary work environment and (3) many students are neither aware of various types of jobs in agri-food systems beyond farming practices and their benefits nor how to apply for them.

Reports and conversations with agricultural producers, supply chain operators, and community leaders have revealed concerns about the future of rural communities and workforce development[3,4]. For example, many farmers struggle to find skilled employees for general operations and technology implementation, particularly for small-scale and rural farmers. School job training may not meet industry needs due to curriculum/resource limitations, gaps in transferring course knowledge to practical skills and lack of access to immersive learning to truly integrate school lessons with real-world applications. Furthermore, many young people have mixed knowledge about the broad sciences embedded in food and agriculture and have been somehow disconnected from potential good jobs.

Recent job statistics and USDA employment report shared an upward trend of job demand in general agriculture, food systems, natural resource and family and nutrition, 'Nearly

60,000 High-Skilled Agriculture Job Openings Expected Annually in the US Yet Only 35,000 Graduates Available to Fill Them'. It is obvious that multiple fields are needed to create a prosperous and sustainable future for all businesses in food and agriculture.

Educators, mentors, and school guidance counselors need to guide students to explore opportunities, given the dynamic nature of the agri-food industry.

Industries also have opportunities to collaborate with colleges and universities to offer state-of-the-art training for new graduates and employees on jobs to re-tool their skill sets.

While brainstorming with industry representatives and colleagues from various backgrounds, some priorities in the agri-food job market could involve the interdisciplinary design of new pedagogy and immersive learning to motivate

and prepare the next generation of decision-makers in the agri-food system. For example:

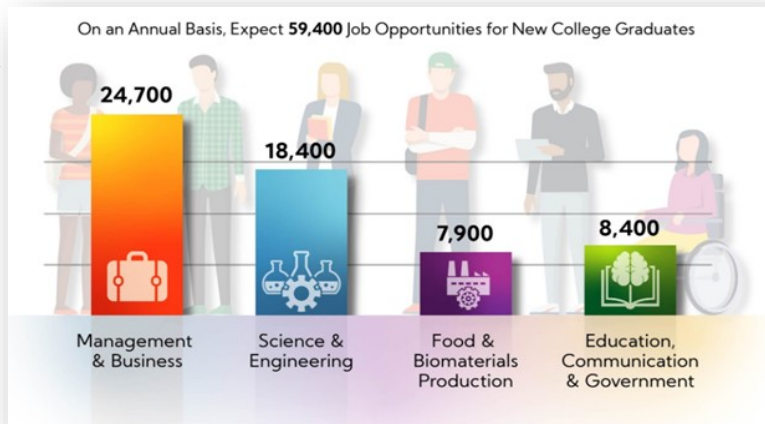
- Adaptive/sustainable farming linked to bioeconomy to improve students' and workers' knowledge of socially, economically, and environmentally sound approaches.

- Resilient food supply chain that would enhance intermediary connectivity (direct sale, farm to institutions, farmers market, food hubs, wholesale, and retail) via aggregation, processing, procurement, handling, food safety, waste management, etc.

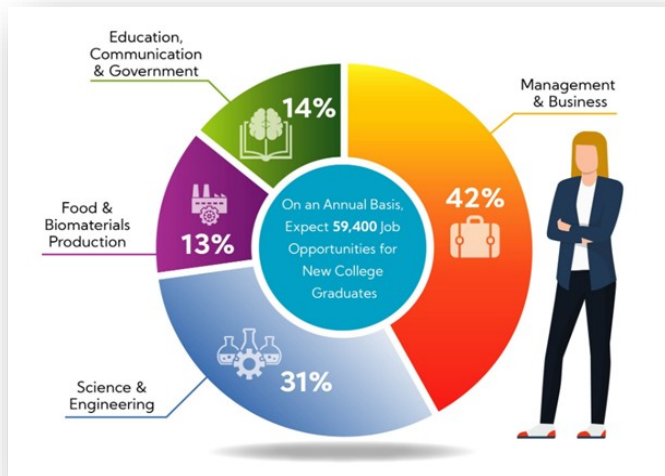
- Data analytics for communication to collect/compile/interpret heterogeneous data sources (e.g., published in reports and articles, Data.Gov, social media exchange, industry news, etc.) for diverse audiences.

- Healthy choices for all consumers with efficient and equitable access to food, information, and planning support.

- Equitable training and demonstration to transform research-based knowledge into hands-on activities grounded in an appreciation of racial equity and driven by diverse needs [5,6].



Source of Information: [Employment Opportunities for College Graduates in Food, Agriculture, Renewable Natural Resources and the Environment, United States, 2020-2025.](#)



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Scholarships available for precision livestock conference

NIFA-funded scholarships are available to attend the 2nd U.S. Precision Livestock Farming Conference (USPLF 2023) for farmers in underserved communities and researchers, faculty and Extension agents at minority-serving institutions. The conference theme is *Field Implementation of PLF* and will be held on May 21 – 24, 2023 in Knoxville, TN.

In addition to presentations on the latest PLF efforts, the conference will also include panel discussions by industry experts and livestock and poultry producers and includes a mentoring luncheon for students and young professionals who are interested in working in PLF. Full [information on the conference](#) is available online.

Please note the following information and deadlines regarding the conference:

- Discounted registration is available for students and livestock/poultry producers.
- A block of rooms is available for \$159 per night at the [Marriot Knoxville Downtown](#) until April 15, 2023.
- [Applications](#) for attendance scholarships will be accepted until April 15, 2023.
- [Sponsorship](#) opportunities and a limited number of vendor tables are available.

Contact the USPLF2023 Conference Chair Robert Burns (rburns@utk.edu) with any questions you may have regarding the conference.

Ag. students . . . From page 2

The food and agriculture industry is like any other industry that needs talented employees to support the overall infrastructure. We could work on many strategies across disciplines to nurture students and uplift the spirits of on-job employees (e.g., offer summer interns to food and nutrient students to work on a real farm or for business administration students to engage in food price analysis). Breaking the barriers to accessing information and opportunities is key across K-12 schools, higher education, industry partners and community groups to increase the visibility of job and skill gaps, update job

postings, post and share training curricula and establish an immersive learning environment to bring knowledge to the field. Building on our existing programs and resources, we will inspire a competent and competitive workforce for the agri-food systems that will be well-prepared, equipped and informed to build a prosperous future.

Chyi-lyi (Kathleen) Liang, C-FARE Board Member, Kellogg Distinguished Professor of Sustainable Agriculture, Director of Center for Environmental Farming Systems, NCA&T, Greensboro, NC

Whitesides . . . From page 1

the FY 2023 final enacted budget, the FY 2024 budget requests and the President’s budget requests for 1890 universities and colleges.

Appropriations Account	FY 2023 Omnibus Final	FY 2024 Ap-props Request	FY 2024 President Budget Request
Evans-Allen Research	\$89 M	\$108 M	\$98 M
1890 Extension	\$72 M	\$88 M	\$76 M
Education Grants	\$28 M	\$30 M	\$30 M
Facilities Improvement	\$21.5 M	\$100 M	\$25 M
Centers of Excellence	\$10 M	\$10 M	--
1890 Scholarships	\$10 M	\$10 M	\$10 M

Our capacity programs appropriation requests (1890 research and Extension) were, on average, \$11 million more than Biden’s requests, while the budget requests for the education grants (capacity building) and the 1890 scholarship program were identical. As expected, although much needed, the 1890 facilities budget request was significantly higher than the President’s budget request, but President Biden did request a 16% increase in 1890 facilities. As in past years, funding support for the 1890 Centers of Excellence was not mentioned on page 93 in the President’s budget, but it was mentioned the [USDA Budget Summary](#).

Relative to the Research Facilities Act (RFA), one of our

funding priorities, the President’s budget requested an increase from \$2 million to \$10 million, specifying a focus on MSIs, inclusive of the 1890s. Justification for the funding request referenced the APLU-Experiment Station commissioned-Gordian Report. This report determined that 70% of research, education and Cooperative Extension facilities at U.S. public colleges of agriculture are at the end of their useful life. It assessed a need of \$11.5 billion for deferred maintenance for university agricultural research, education and Extension facilities. The report also acknowledged that \$550 million annually is needed just to keep up with facilities challenges.

Increased funding for the RFA will allow for construction of modern facilities at agriculture mission-based colleges that support and conduct agricultural research. Infrastructure investments at 1862, 1890, 1994 and insular land-grant and non-land-grant colleges of agriculture will enable the recruitment of diverse talent into the agricultural innovation enterprise, yield at least 200,000 new jobs nationwide and allow the U.S. to rebuild its global position as the agricultural science research and education leader.

Finally, our next steps are to continue our advocacy efforts by following up with the legislators that we visited and schedule appointments with legislators that were unavailable during our Hill visits. We must remain vigilant in our efforts to increase our funding to address the needs of the people that we serve. They deserve no less.

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1890 Land Grant Universities

[Alabama A&M University](#)
[Alcorn State University](#)
[Central State University](#)
[Delaware State University](#)
[Florida A&M University](#)
[Fort Valley State University](#)
[Kentucky State University](#)
[Langston University](#)
[Lincoln University](#)
[North Carolina A&T State University](#)
[Prairie View A&M University](#)
[South Carolina State University](#)
[Southern University and A&M College](#)
[Tennessee State University](#)
[Tuskegee University](#)
[University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff](#)
[University of Maryland Eastern Shore](#)
[Virginia State University](#)
[West Virginia State University](#)

ARD Updates is published monthly by the Association of Research Directors. To suggest articles, contact Dr. Alton Thompson at athompson1@ncat.edu



The Experiment Stations Section/ESCAP introduces their new website, AgInnovation.info - Land-Grant University Research: Science That Feeds the World.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

JOB

SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER (SRDC) is seeking a [post-doctoral associate](#) to join their organization to advance collaboration with the 1890 land-grant system. This position will be located on the MSU campus. Minimum qualifications include (1) terminal degree (PhD, EdD, JD) in the social sciences (e.g., sociology, economics, community development), public policy and administration, law, or a closely related discipline; and (2) prior experience with an 1890 land-grant university in a student and/or staff/faculty position.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE, School of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

[Assistant or Associate Professor: Bioinformatics and/or Biostatistics](#)

[Assistant or Associate Professor: Precision Agriculture](#)

[Assistant Professor of Biology: Cell Biology/Immunotoxicology/ Metabolism](#)

[Assistant or Associate Professor: Fashion Merchandising and Textiles Program](#)

[Assistant or Associate Professor: Nutrition and Dietetics](#)

[Assistant Professor and Agribusiness /Resource Economist Specialist Chair, Department of Agriculture Food Resources Science](#)

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY, College of Agriculture and Human Sciences

[Research Associate Professor \(Ruminant Nutritional Physiology\) \(myworkdayjobs.com\)](#)

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT PINE BLUFF, School of Agriculture, Fisheries and Human

[Assistant Professor – Ag Economics](#)

[Assistant Professor – Ag Engineering](#)

[Assistant Professor – Animal Science](#)

[Extension Specialist III – Horticulturist](#)

[Extension Specialist II – Project/Program Manager/Communications Director – School of Agriculture, Fisheries and Human Sciences](#)

VIRGINIA TECH, Center for Food Systems and Community Transformation, Department of Agricultural, Leadership and Community Education. Research Assistant Professor
[Department of Agricultural, Leadership, and Community Education \(ALCE\), Center for Food Systems and Community Transformation. For a full position description and information to apply.](#)

CALENDAR



MANNRS CONFERENCE | April 13-16, 2023 | [Additional Information.](#)

HBCU ENGAGE | April 18-19, 2023 | Nashville, TN. [Registration open.](#)

NERAOC 2023: Hitting the High Notes | April 30—May 3 | Nashville, TN

2023 JOINT COPS SUMMER MEETING | July 18-20, 2023 | Loew's Kansas City Hotel, 1515 Wyandotte St., Kansas City, MO 64108 | Phone: (816-897-7070)

2023 New Administrators Orientation | July 19-21, 2023

SAVE THE DATE: Joint Southern CARET/AHS Meeting | July 28-30, 2023 | Knoxville, TN

2023 JOINT CARET/AHS MEETING

**AG IS THE ANSWER:
BUILDING LAND-GRANT SOLUTIONS TO GLOBAL
FOOD, AGRICULTURE, AND RESOURCE CHALLENGES**

MARCH 12-15, 2023 | OMNI SHOREHAM HOTEL | WASHINGTON, DC

