Engaging Educational Professionals and Students on the Viability of AFNR Careers

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Overview: 39% more available AFNR jobs than AFNR graduates

How It Works: **Explore**→**Learn**

- Teachers and other educational professionals are exposed to various career opportunities within AFNR through a series of workshops.
- Workshops are held in two stages: **Explore** and **Learn**.
- **Explore** workshops focus on exploring various career opportunities within AFNR and take place in the form of a statewide career day.
  - Surveys are conducted and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the **Explore** workshop and to determine specific AFNR areas for **Learn** workshops.
- **Learn** workshops provide educational professionals with an opportunity for hands-on experiential learning in the determined AFNR areas of interest.
  - Curriculum and resources (e.g., lesson plans for teachers, brochures and other promotional/informational materials for guidance counselors, etc.) are developed and provided to educational professionals about AFNR careers.

Results to Date

Participants* in the **Explore** workshop indicated the highest needs for professional development in the following areas:

1. Biotechnology in Agriculture
2. UAVs in Agriculture
3. Urban Agriculture

*Participants at the **Explore** workshop included high school youth and education professionals.

Future Implications

- Deliver at least three **Learn** workshops over the next three years.
- Deliver workshops in conjunction with other professional development conferences already in place to maximize participation, help promote continued growth in AFNR career areas, and potentially expand the **Learn** workshops beyond the three funded by the grant.
- Curriculum and resources will continue to be developed and shared with educational professionals to promote and educate students on AFNR careers.

Costs & Resources

- Funding for this project was supported by a USDA-NIFA grant.
- Grant funds support two university educator faculty salaries for about two weeks each; travel for administrative faculty involved in the project (four total); one undergraduate and one graduate student assistant for assessment, planning, and development of workshops and curriculum for one year each; and travel stipends for participants.
- Partnership with university faculty and extension, businesses, and other individuals directly involved in AFNR careers.

Poster at a Glance

- A large shortage of qualified individuals going into agriculture, food, and natural resource (AFNR) careers.
- Two stages of workshops—**Explore** & **Learn** workshops—students and educational professionals are exposed to AFNR Careers.
- Needs are identified in **Explore** workshops.
- Educational professionals are provided with the curriculum and resources they need to promote and educate students on AFNR careers through a series of **Learn** workshops.