



# IMPACT REPORT

## College Aggies Online Agriculture Engagement and Scholarship Program



## 2022 COLLEGE AGGIES ONLINE PROGRAM

The 2022 College Aggies Online (CAO) program had 182 individuals and 13 collegiate clubs who participated. These students represented 37 states and 66 universities. Over the course of the competition, students' posts about agriculture reached over 8.5 million people on social media, more than doubling last year's number. The clubs hosted 18 campus and community activities reaching about 2,300 people. In the pre-survey, students rated their confidence in communicating about agriculture as 6.25 on a 10-point scale. After the program, students rated their confidence as 8.1.

The CAO scholarship competition would not be possible without the support of program sponsors and mentors. The 2022 sponsors include: Dairy Management Inc., CHS Foundation, National Pork Industry Foundation, Bayer Crop Science, National Corn Growers Association, U.S. Poultry & Egg Association, Institute for Feed Education and Research, Culvers Franchising System, Domino's Pizza Inc., Ohio Poultry Association, National Chicken Council, and Pennsylvania Beef Council.

The 2022 mentors who advised the students each week included:

- Jessica Peters, Pennsylvania dairy farmer
- Emily Shaw, Dairy Girl Fitness
- Lauren Arbogast, Virginia chicken farmer
- Liz Wilder, Idaho Wool Growers Association
- Allison Fitzgerald, Bayer
- Beth Breeding, National Turkey Federation
- Natalie Kovarik, Nebraska cattle rancher
- Amber Downer, American Farm Bureau Federation
- Eleanor Korum, Iowa Select Farms
- Katie Hayes, RDN, American Egg Board's Egg Nutrition Center
- Joe Proudman, CLEAR Center at University of California, Davis
- Lacie Dotterweich, American Feed Industry Association
- Brandi Buzzard, Kansas cattle rancher
- Sydney Mitchell, 2021 College Aggies Online winner



## STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

- “College of Aggies Online gave me the opportunity to put my skills and creativity to use. It gave me materials to add to my portfolio and something to share to future employers. I loved being able to share my passion for the animal agriculture industry while my friends and followers. It was rewarding to hear feedback from my friends and knowing they were learning with me!”
- “I thoroughly enjoyed every week of the competition, and I feel like I walked away with a lot of experience and knowledge. I'm definitely glad I participated. I have had numerous friends and family tell me they learned a lot from my posts and thought it was really cool I was spreading that kind of knowledge.”
- “I really thought the webinars gave me some really valuable information. Getting connected with real industry professionals was a privilege. I think the issues in ag was a great webinar topic and something to focus on in future webinars as well.”
- “I learned a lot about using my voice on social media through your presentation, and it helped me improve my posts over the course of the program. I appreciate you taking time to give me and the other participants advice and encouragement. I loved learning from you. Thank you for making this opportunity possible for me and for everyone else who participated in the program.”
- “I wish more people knew about the program. I only heard about it right before it started, but I wish there was more widespread knowledge about it. I think it is super beneficial and more college ag students should know about it!”
- “I really like it. I think it made things super personal and there were a lot of good things to learn.”
- “It was very helpful. I liked learning about the mentors and having the ability to talk to them whenever I had questions.”
- “I enjoyed the webinars with various speakers so we could hear a variety of inputs from the different sectors of agriculture.”
- “I wouldn't change anything. I really loved the program.”

## ABOUT COLLEGE AGGIES ONLINE

College Aggies Online, held for nine weeks in the fall, is an initiative of the Animal Agriculture Alliance to develop life-long advocates for agriculture. Participants receive training throughout the program from farmer and industry experts through webinars, a discussion forum, and feedback on submitted work. The Alliance provides the students with talking points, tips on engaging with consumers, sample content, and links to resources and tools.

Each week, individual participants receive assignments, such as posting about a particular topic, writing a blog post, creating an infographic, or making a video. Students engage on social media by posting about current and emerging issues facing farmers and ranchers and telling personal stories. Participating collegiate clubs host events on their campus and in their local community to engage with peers about agriculture.

Students earn points based on the quality and quantity of their work. The top six individuals and top three clubs received a scholarship along with weekly and club challenge prizes awarded throughout the competition.

## TOP INDIVIDUALS:

### 1st PLACE

#### Alexis Main, Oklahoma State University

Alexis Main is a graduate teaching and research assistant in animal and food sciences at Oklahoma State University working under Dr. Jerry Fitch and Dr. Janeen Johnson. After working with the Animal Agriculture Alliance as a communications intern in the summer of 2022, Alexis began a new journey as a PhD candidate in animal immunology and animal well-being. This was her second year participating in College Aggies Online. Her passion has been to help improve agricultural literacy in her community, maintain and improve animal welfare, and learn more about the industry that feeds and clothes the world. She is originally from Modesto, California and currently lives in Guthrie, Oklahoma with her husband, Bryce.



#### Taylor Sondgeroth, Auburn University

Taylor Sondgeroth is a junior at Auburn University in Auburn, Alabama majoring in agricultural communications and animal Science with a concentration on equine. Originally from Stanford, Illinois, Taylor grew up in 4-H showing horses with projects in visual arts, photography, equine science, crops, and more. She decided to attend Auburn University to combine her interests in creativity and animal sciences in her education. At Auburn, she is a member of Collegiate Horsemen's Association and Ag Hill Communications. She is also a student photographer for Auburn Athletics and a part of the Course Production Team for Auburn Online. Outside of school, Taylor is a contracted artist for The Coyote Cowgirl, a western lifestyle brand. She enjoys training and riding horses, spending time with her dog, and trying new hobbies like leatherworking, woodcraft, and more. Taylor's portfolio can be viewed here:

<https://taysond.myportfolio.com/>



## 2nd PLACE

### **Morgan Elia, California Polytechnic State University**

Morgan Elia is a second year agricultural communications student at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo. She grew up in Gilroy, a little town at the very bottom of the San Francisco Bay Area in California. Ever since she was little, Morgan has spent her time outside caring for and riding horses. Her love for animals is what inspired her passion for agriculture. Photography and art are two of her favorite hobbies and combining those hobbies with agriculture was what led her to pursue agricultural communications!



### **Breanna Selsor, Iowa State University**

Breanna Selsor is a first-year junior at Iowa State University studying agricultural education and communications. She is from a rural agriculture community in Osceola, Iowa. Breanna has been deeply rooted in agriculture through showing and raising livestock on her family's small acreage farm. She received her associate degree at Southwestern Community College while graduating from high school. In high school, Breanna was heavily involved in extracurricular activities and her community. At Iowa State, she is involved in Agriculture Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT), Sigma Alpha Professional Agricultural Sorority, and the National Agri-Marketing Association (NAMA), where she serves as the treasurer. She has a strong passion for agricultural advocacy and enjoys connecting farmers to consumers. As she begins her career in the agriculture community, she hopes to continue growing her skills and learning about different aspects of agriculture to effectively share stories about the great community that feeds the world.





### 3rd PLACE

#### **Isabel Murillo, Oklahoma State University**

Isabel Murillo is a senior at Oklahoma State University where she is majoring in animal science with a concentration in biotechnology and a minor in microbiology. Her hometown is Santa Cruz, Bolivia, but she has been living in Stillwater, Oklahoma since starting college in August of 2019. She grew up on a ranch in Bolivia, which is where her passion for animal agriculture was born. She will be pursuing a career in sales with Cargill and is excited to use what she's learned in College Aggies Online to continue advocating for agriculture!



#### **Sheridan Wilson, University of Nebraska – Lincoln**

Sheridan Wilson is a sophomore at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln majoring in grazing livestock systems with minors in animal science and fisheries and wildlife. She was awarded a Regents Scholarship during her first year at UNL and has maintained a 4.0 GPA during her time there. Outside of the classroom, she is the vice president of the Range Management Club and a member of Block and Bridle Club and Navigators Student Ministry. After she graduates in 2025, Sheridan plans to use her degree to start a range management consulting business for Nebraska ranchers. She is passionate about helping ranchers and improving native rangelands to keep them intact for future generations. This passion began at home, where she helps on her family's ranch in the Nebraska Sandhills with her sister and parents.



## TOP CLUBS:

### 1st PLACE

#### Les Voyageurs, Louisiana State University

Les Voyageurs club members serve as the official student ambassadors of the Louisiana State University College of Agriculture and engages in recruitment events with prospective students, retention events with current students, and networking with alumni.



### 2nd PLACE

#### Dairy Science Club, University of Georgia

The Dairy Science Club engages students with a sincere interest in agriculture and the dairy industry in community service and other projects that support the dairy industry.



### 3rd PLACE

#### Young Farmers, Modesto Junior College

The Modesto Junior College Young Farmers club enjoys activities throughout the year that serve to bridge the gap between high school age and young adulthood by providing the students the opportunity to meet and connect with people of their same interests and general age.



## SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Every week students were tasked with posting on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and/or TikTok about a specific animal agriculture theme. Here is one of the top five posts selected each week by program mentors.

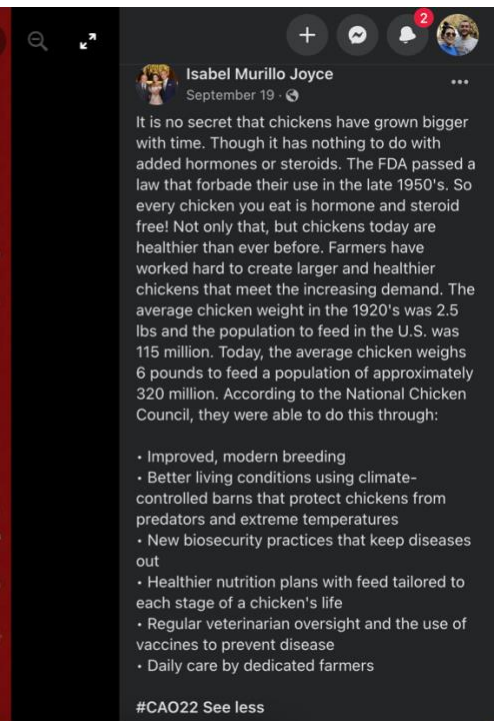
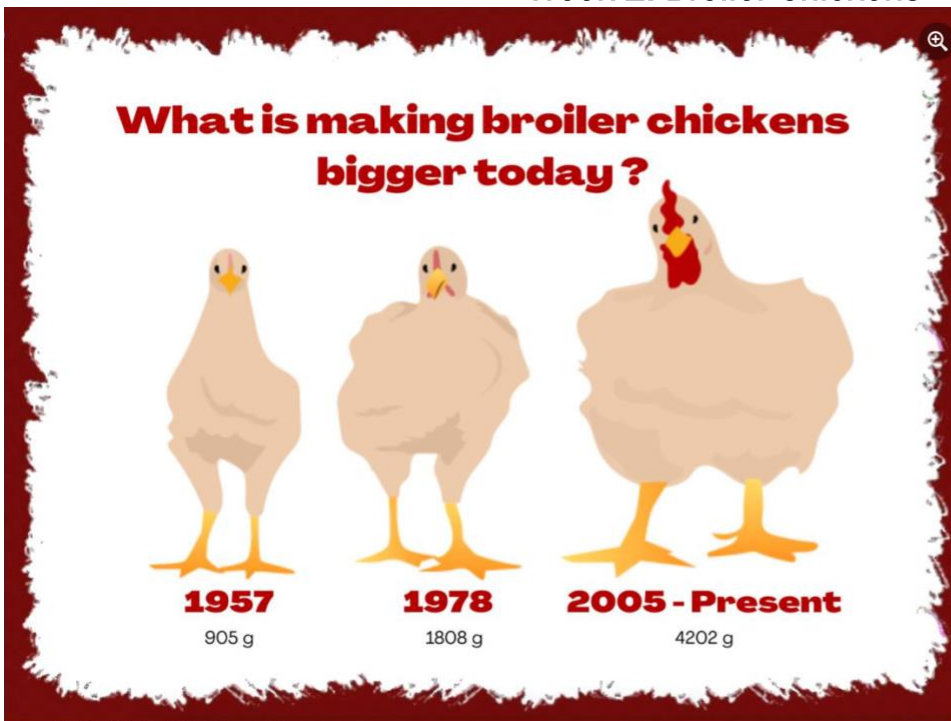
### Week 1: Dairy



[View full carousel post here.](#)



### Week 2: Broiler Chickens






## Week 3: Sheep



## Week 4: Turkey

### Let's Talk Turkeys


**EGGS** Turkeys lay significantly fewer eggs than chickens, so their eggs are used more for hatching than consumption. Turkey eggs are incubated for 28 days before hatching.



**POULTS** A baby turkey is called a poult. They are tan and brown when they hatch.

Poults are raised in bedded growing barns with access to clean water and feed to help them grow.

Their bedding is replaced and used as fertilizer to help grow other crops.




**THE TRUTH ABOUT TURKEY PRODUCTION**

Turkeys are never introduced to hormones or steroids.

They also do not live in cages. Rather, they grow in large barns with access to water, feed, and bedding.

Farmers frequently walk through their birds to monitor for illness and injury.



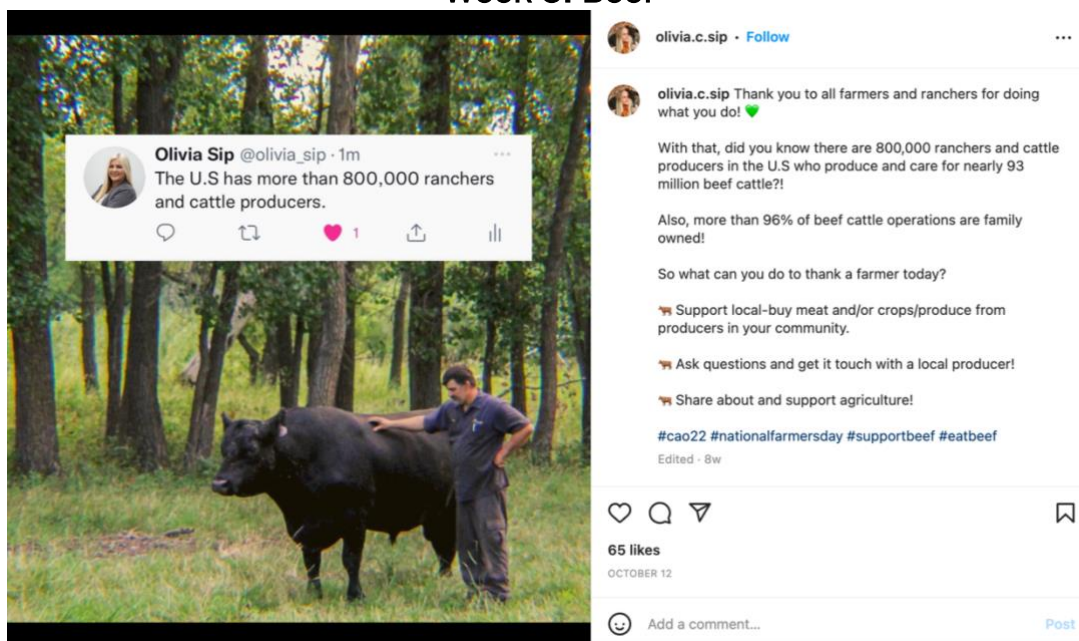
Taylor Sondgeroth  
October 8 · 🌐

It's time for another College Aggies Online post! Let's Talk TURKEYS:

- 🐔 Turkey eggs are speckled brown and larger than chicken eggs. They are incubated for 28 days before hatching.
- 🐔 Baby turkeys are called poults. They have tan and yellowish feathers with brown spotting. Poults are raised in bedded barns with access to unlimited clean water and fresh feed. Their used bedding is later used for fertilizer.
- 🐔 Turkeys are never raised in cages. They also are never introduced to steroids or hormones. Antibiotics can be used to fight disease, but are not present in the meat we consume.
- 🐔 Farmers monitor their birds by walking through the barns to look for disease and injury. This makes the birds familiar with people and reduces stress when they are handled.

For more information about turkey production, visit <https://www.eatturkey.org/>

## Week 5: Beef

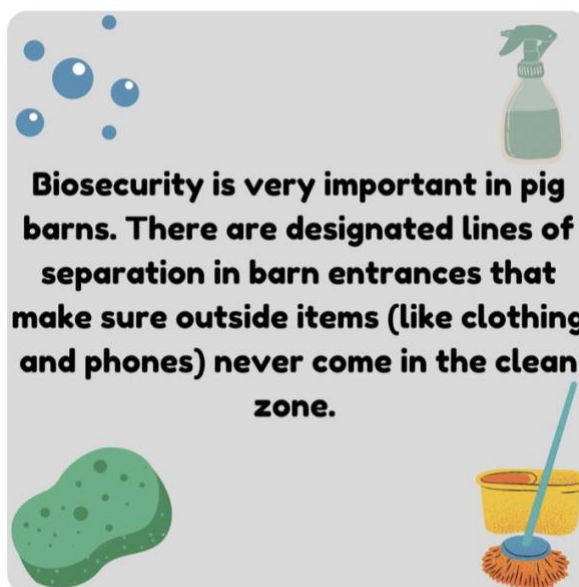


## Week 6: Pigs



**Sheridan Wilson**  
@she\_wilson91

Biosecurity is very important in pig farms. To keep things clean, barns often use a tool called the line of separation to keep outside items from contaminating the clean barn. This website provides great information on lines of separation.  
[healthyagriculture.org/prevent/traffi...](https://healthyagriculture.org/prevent/traffi...)  
#CAO22 #pork



## Week 7: Eggs

 **Breanna Selsor**  
1m · 🧑

Eggs pack a nutritious PUNCH! Here are 3 reasons to add eggs regularly to your diet!

- Eggs have 6 grams of high-quality protein! A protein packed breakfast helps sustain mental and physical energy throughout the day!
- Eggs are rich in choline! Choline promotes normal cell activity, liver function, and transportation of nutrients throughout the body. (The "commuter train" for vitamins and minerals)
- Eggs contain zero carbs and no sugar!

#CAO22 #eggs #healthyliving  
#iowaeggproduction #thankafarmer

🔍 Comment below your favorite way to eat eggs

📌 You can find great recipes at <https://www.iowaegg.org/recipes>



## Week 8: Animal Feed

**OVER 900 SAFE AGRICULTURAL INGREDIENTS** 0:25



**ARE APPROVED FOR USE IN ANIMAL FEED IN THE US.**

[View insights](#) [Boost post](#)

🤍 💬 🗑️ 📌

taysondart 🌾 Did you know? 🌾

More than 900 safe agricultural ingredients are approved for use in animal feeds in the US. This allows feeds to be specialized for species and dietary requirements.

Drawn & Designed in Adobe Illustrator  
#FeedFacts#Agvocate#CAO22

[View full reel here.](#)



## Week 9: Student Choice



alexissmithmain • Following  
hoppybunnycioppa • Original audio



alexissmithmain Yeah. This is the good stuff...it's a high-quality and balanced diet!

But there is more than just hay to provide the nutrients dairy cattle need - they eat better than we do!

Here are some fun facts about 🐮 nutrition!

👩🏫 Diets are formulated by a nutritionist - it's a science!

🕒 24/7 access to feed and clean water!

👩🏫 Provided the perfect, balanced amount of the 6 major nutrients to the cow for bodily functions and productive purposes (protein, carbohydrates, lipids, vitamins,



44 likes

NOVEMBER 12



Add a comment...

Post

[View full reel here.](#)



## CHALLENGES

Every other week the students were tasked with a different challenge to help them craft their communication skills. Here is one of the top five challenges selected each week by program mentors.

### Video Challenge



alexissmithmain • Follow

Original audio



alexissmithmain • M • I • L • K • It's a dairy cow's super power! 🐄

Dairy cows eat feed ingredients that people can't and that would otherwise go to waste!

Since they are ruminants, their unique stomach has 4 compartments and allows them to ♻️ upcycle 📈 these unusable resources into a nutrient-packed food we lovingly refer to as milk and dairy products! 🥛🥛

#CAO22 #UndeniablyDairy #GotMilk #DairyCow #FunFacts

12w



464 likes

SEPTEMBER 16

Comments on this post have been limited.

[View the full reel here.](#)

## Blog Challenge

# **“It’s Corn!” A viral TikTok sound meets a leading agricultural commodity!**

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Chances are, if you have a cell phone, internet access, or are around someone who does, you’ve heard the recent viral TikTok sound, “It’s Corn!” Not only is the agricultural industry going crazy for this sound that features a young boy enjoying corn on the cob, but the entire internet is talking about how amazing corn is.

Being from Iowa, where we lead the way in corn production, I see this as a great opportunity to share just how delicious, and important corn is to the American economy and food system.

Before we talk about how amazing corn is, let’s talk about the types of corn. There are two common types of corn, field corn, which you will most likely see if you are driving across the midwest in the summer, and sweet corn, the juicy, yellow kernels we all love!

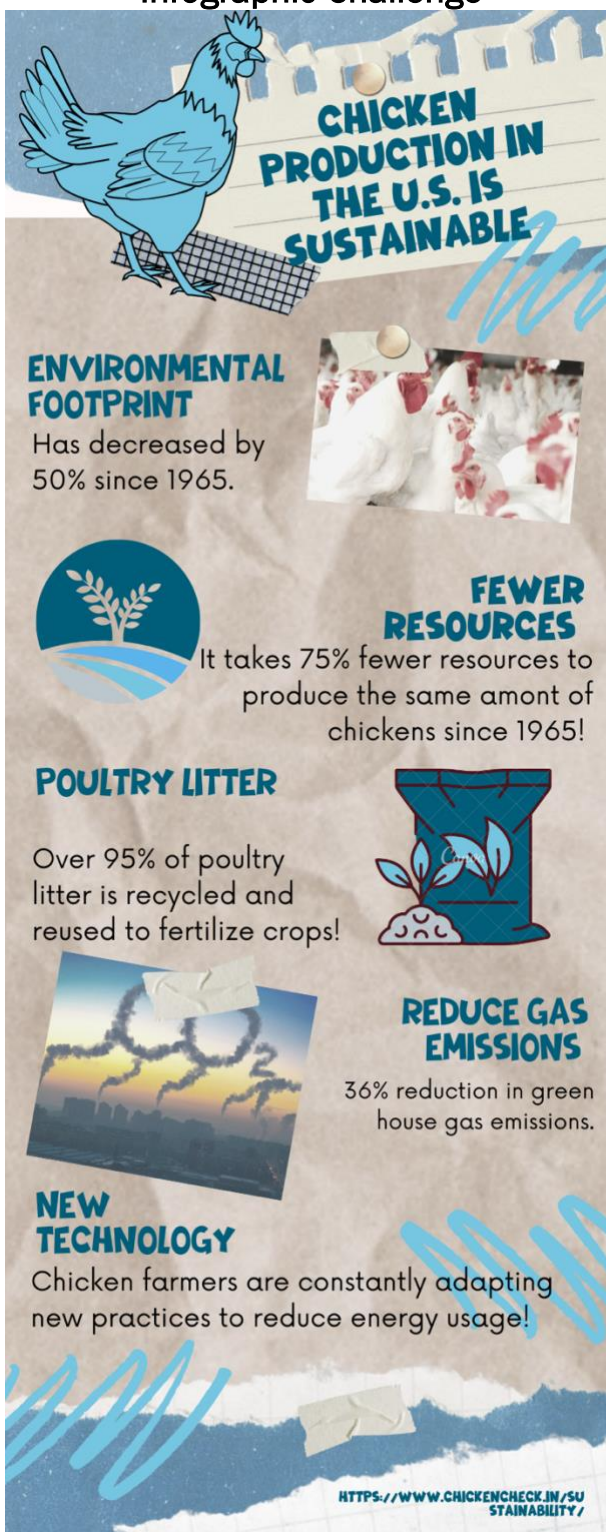
Each year in the U.S. more than 90 millions acres of corn are planted in the U.S. and account for more than 95 percent of total feed grain production, according to the [USDA-ERS](#). Corn is one crop that can be grown in almost every state in the U.S., most of its production is centered in the Midwest region. Also, known as the Corn Belt.

Corn is the most abundantly used livestock feed, accounting for a third of the United State’s corn crop. Corn serves as carbohydrates in the diets of poultry, swine, and cattle. Many animals are raised in the Corn Belt regions because of their close proximity to feed.

Forty percent of all corn produced in the U.S. goes towards ethanol and produces almost half as many emissions as gasoline, as reported by the [Iowa Farm Bureau](#).

[Read full blog post here.](#)

## Infographic Challenge



## Letter to the Editor/Op-Ed Challenge

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Washington Post

Washington, DC

October 29, 2022

Laura Reiley,

I wanted to comment on your September 5, 2022, article “The summer drought’s hefty toll on American crops”. Being an agricultural student from Oklahoma State University, I am seeing the impact of the drought across the United States and wanted to thank you for sharing the struggle of American farmers. I often see agriculture betrayed in a negative light, so to have someone passionate about food security working in at the Washington Post is like a breath of fresh air. The Coronavirus Pandemic aided in shifting the customer's perception of agriculture, but it was only a band-aid solution to an ongoing problem.

In the article, you touched on fertilizer costs in the United States and how demand cannot keep up with inflation. As prices reach a record high and the European battlefield continues to escalate, I fear farmers and ranchers who rely on crops/animals as their primary source of income will not overcome this economic hardship. The impacts of crop prices have impacted my family's small poultry farm as dried cracked corn we feed has almost doubled in price, yet our clients expect us to produce high quality free-range eggs while maintaining low prices.

I truly wanted to praise you for taking on the challenge of educating the public on a national scale. Food should not be political – unfortunately, it is.

Destiny Hamilton

Oklahoma State University



## Student's Choice



morganc.elia • Follow

angelaliggs • summer recap 🌞



morganc.elia Animal agriculture feeds the world...every single day!

If you want to know more about where your food comes from, ask a farmer, rancher or industry professional. They are your trustworthy sources for accurate information 🐮

Find out more information about animal ag at [animalagalliance.com](https://animalagalliance.com) 🐷  
@animalagalliance

#CAO22 #animalagriculture  
#farmersfeedtheworld #cowstagram  
#agvocate #farmlife

Edited · 4w



Liked by beyondthefarm1 and 18 others

NOVEMBER 11



Add a comment...

Post

[View full reel here.](#)

## CLUB EVENTS

Student organizations hosted virtual and in-person events to engage about agriculture with their peers. Here are the events hosted during this year's CAO program.

### Aggies at the Capitol

Familiarizing yourself with the legislative process in your state is a great way to elevate the importance of agricultural issues to your representatives. For this challenge, clubs were tasked with connecting with a state agriculture association to learn more about important agriculture issues in their state and then visiting their state legislature. Participating clubs could also write a letter about a topic important to agriculture in their state or schedule a virtual teleconference if they were unable to meet in person.



Louisiana State University (LSU) Les Voyageurs had the special opportunity to tour Louisiana's capitol building with Speaker of the House Clay Schexnayder. While touring, the club learned about the history of the building, explored the Senate chamber, and admired the incredible view on the capitol's upper balcony.

### Campus Dining Collaboration

This challenge encouraged clubs to develop a relationship with their school's campus dining leaders so they can turn to the club as a resource when they have questions about how food is produced.

LSU Les Voyageurs were able to tour the LSU Athletic Foundation's performance nutrition building where they met with the executive chef, Michael Johnson. While there, they talked with dining leaders and learned more about how their campus is becoming more sustainable regarding food waste. They were able to discuss how athletics and agriculture intersect and how they can increase sustainability on their campus.

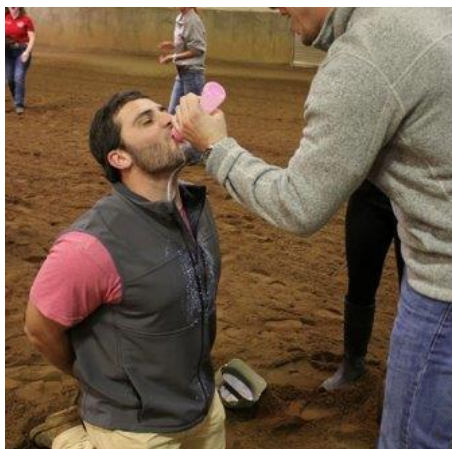


### Campus Event

For this challenge, participating clubs were asked to host an agriculture event on campus to engage with peers who aren't involved in agriculture.

The University of Georgia (UGA) Dairy Science Club hosted a Dairy Fun Night, where they challenged teams of students from across all majors and areas of campus to compete in dairy themed events like milk chugging, ice cream eating, heifer relay, and heifer dress up. Teams had to pay \$20 to enter the competition, which was donated to the Georgia Dairy Youth Foundation. Teams were also encouraged to bring food items to donate to a local community shelter and earn extra points. Almost 20 teams competed, and the club was able to reach 100 people from all different backgrounds. They were also able to donate over \$300 to the Georgia Dairy Youth Foundation.





## Community Event

In this challenge, clubs were invited to reach out beyond their college campuses and host an agriculture event in their community to engage with people about agriculture.

The UGA Dairy Science Club partnered with UGA's Cattlemen's Association to host an annual trunk-or-treat known as Halloween Havoc. This event consists of all the college's agriculture-related clubs, who give out candy and speak with community members about their organization's involvement in a specified field of the agriculture community. The UGA Dairy Science Club even brought a dairy calf to the event to interact with kids!



## Connecting with Kids

This event type challenges clubs to engage with grade school students (K-12) to become better informed about the production, distribution, and daily impact of agriculture.

The LSU Les Voyageurs presented to 190 students at Dutchtown High School in Geismar, LA. The club spoke about the programs offered at LSU's College of Agriculture, the wide variety of job opportunities in agriculture, and the importance of agriculture in every aspect of life. Students were encouraged to ask and answer questions about agriculture and have them consider its daily impact in their own lives.



## Food Drive

Food banks are always in need of donations and support. For this challenge, CAO clubs were encouraged to raise awareness about food insecurity and encourage donations to a local food bank.

The UGA Dairy Science Club decided to create a fundraiser for No Kid Hungry, a non-profit that provides low-income families with food. Professors were asked to volunteer by having a jar that students could donate money in. The professor that accrued the most money had to wear a blow-up cow suit to teach in for the entire day. The club was able to engage with 200 students and collected over \$1,500 for No Kid Hungry!



Modesto Junior College (MJC) Young Farmers hosted a milk drive and challenged their community members to bring a gallon of milk for a family in need. JNM Dairy and Alberto Dairy matched each gallon donation (up to 100 gallons of milk). The event took place in September for Hunger Month, and the club was able to collect 1,114 gallons of milk! They raised awareness about hunger and food insecurity with 170 members and community members who contributed to the milk drive as well as built relationships with local food banks and dairy farms.

### Movie or Guest Speaker

For this challenge, clubs are encouraged to engage with students not involved in agriculture by watching a movie promoting agriculture or listening to a speaker emphasizing the accurate and positive message of agriculture.

Louisiana State University Les Voyageurs invited alumna Alison Dumas to talk with students about her career path in agricultural industry. Free food and beverages were provided to all who attended. At the end of the event, a total of 12 non-agriculture students had attended to learn more about the speaker's position as the assistant director for food quality services for the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry.

### Scary Food Myths

Just like many consumers, college students are getting a lot of information about food from social media and unfortunately there is also a lot of misinformation about food and farming online. The Scary Food Myths challenge asked participating clubs to share facts about meat, milk, poultry, and eggs with peers on their campus.

The MJC Young Farmers were able to partner with their college's ag sales and service class to develop Instagram posts that debunked a common food or agriculture myth. They were able to create more than 15 posts and share them weekly on Instagram, reaching over 700 people.

...and many more!



## Undeniably Dairy

For the Undeniably Dairy challenge, students were asked to share the nutritional benefits of dairy and how it's produced with students on campus who may not be familiar with agriculture.

Louisiana State University Les Voyageurs set up a table during their homecoming week and handed out milk and granola bars for students on their way to class. They partnered with Kleinpeter Farms Dairy LLC, a local dairy farm, who donated milk for the students to take. When students received their milk and granola bar, they also received a sheet of paper with a fun and informative dairy fact on it. Facts included things like the nutritional value in a glass of milk and how much milk it takes to make certain dairy products. They were also able to answer any dairy questions that students had. Students were surveyed and the club discovered that 70% of students did not previously know the facts they were provided!

