

# National Teach Ag Campaign

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## NEWS RELEASE

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**May 13, 2016**

## TWELVE FUTURE AGRICULTURE TEACHERS SELECTED FOR NATIONAL TEACH AG AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

The National Teach Ag Campaign has selected 12 future agriculture teachers from across the nation to serve as Teach Ag Ambassadors during the next year. The selected students were chosen from a nationwide pool of applicants this spring. The primary goal for the ambassadors will be to promote agricultural education in an effort to address the national shortage of agriculture teachers. Specifically, the ambassadors will represent the National Teach Ag Campaign at the 2016 National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Ind. October 19-21. The ambassadors will also work with local and state leaders in agricultural education to encourage students to pursue a major in agricultural education.

The Teach Ag Ambassadors will spend their year of service developing a cohort of future and current agriculture teachers who will inspire the next generation of leaders, problem solvers, entrepreneurs and agriculturalists. The ambassadors will be responsible for promoting the National Teach Ag Campaign through emails, social media, presentations, and other various outlets. With nearly 700 agriculture teachers expected to retire within the next three years and new programs opening each year, there is a real demand for high-quality and diverse agriculture teachers all across the nation. Through the ambassador program, these 12 future educators will be able to share their passion for teaching agriculture, begin to build their professional network, and develop leadership and communication skills that they will need in their future careers as agriculture teachers.

“One of our primary concerns right now is encouraging others to become agriculture teachers,” said Ellen Thompson, National Teach Ag Campaign Project Director. “The ambassador program allows us the opportunity to reach high school and college students who would be great agriculture teachers one day. The ambassadors can use their stories and motivations to help others see the importance of agricultural education and why becoming an agriculture teacher is so rewarding.”

In return for their hard work and service to the profession, the ambassadors will receive over 20 hours of specialized training and professional development from the National Teach Ag Campaign. These opportunities will help them enhance their knowledge and skills as they prepare to enter the classroom and become lifelong learners and educators.

The 12 Teach Ag ambassadors for the 2016-2017 academic year are Jacklyn Bennett, Washington State University; Matthew Bernia, Lansing Community College; Joshua Calhoun, Purdue University; Tyler D'Angelo, University of Florida; Cody Dawson, Oklahoma State University; Kristen Fristoe, Morehead State University; Tiffany Harper, University of Kentucky; Jordan Johns, University of Illinois; Anna Mink, Clemson University; Mattison Sullivan, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Josh Toft, Montana State University; and Tara Wolfenbarger, University of Kentucky.

The National Teach Ag Campaign is an initiative of the National Council for Agricultural Education led by the National Association of Agricultural Educators. Funded by the CHS Foundation, DuPont Pioneer, and Growth Energy as a special project of the National FFA Foundation, the campaign is designed to raise an awareness of the career opportunities in agricultural education, encourage others to consider a career as an agriculture teacher and celebrate the positive contributions that agriculture teachers make in their schools and communities. For more information about the National Teach Ag Campaign, visit <http://www.naae.org/teachag>.

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