

“Diversifying Illinois’ Agri-Food Workforce Pipeline”

2023 IAVAT Conference

June 22, 2023



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ALLIANCE



The industry will experience as much change in the
next 10 years as it has in the **past 50**

– Accenture, “The Future of Food”

A Changing Landscape = New Realities/Possibilities

Innovations

- Accelerated advances in new technology, IoT, AI
- Explosion in entrepreneurial startup activity & investment
- Proliferation of data analytics and digital platforms
- New scientific research & discoveries
- Emerging business models, practices, and services
- Increased understanding of health & nutrition
- Rising development and use of novel, alternative, secondary products

Challenges

- Growing population + rising middle class
- Shifting consumer behavior
- Increasing urbanization + migration
- Climate change vulnerability
- Wealth inequality and food insecurity
- Obesity, malnutrition, and other diet diseases
- Natural resource scarcity + depletion
- Food inefficiencies and waste
- Supply chain disruptions + trade risks

A FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ROADMAP FOR ILLINOIS



FARM Illinois

Food and Agriculture RoadMap

- An effort begun in 2014 to re-imagine the future of food and agriculture in Illinois and assure its global leadership in the 21st century.
- Brought together for the first time the world class assets of Illinois' diverse and robust food and agriculture sector.
- Six high impact goals were identified that require systems-level collaboration to inflect. If addressed collectively, significant benefit will be yielded statewide and span the agri-food sector.



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Connecting Talent, Catalyzing Ideas, and Champion Solutions in a Time of Unprecedented Change

- Foster and sustain a world-class epicenter for agri-food system ideation and innovation
- Provide a neutral convening point to explore complex, systemic challenges
- Track trends, technologies, and developments in a rapidly changing landscape
- Enhance understanding and serve as a reference point for the public and professionals
- Catalyze and champion actions that support economic, environmental, & societal health
- Create impacts that are greater than the sum of their parts

A horizontal banner at the top of the slide featuring a close-up of several books. On the left, the spines of books in various colors (brown, green, blue) are visible. On the right, a stack of books with worn, yellowed pages is shown.

WORKFORCE AND EDUCATION



Challenge

An inadequate pool of qualified workers and a lack of awareness of the food and agriculture system's evolution will undermine the sector's sustainability and long-term growth.

Goal

Develop a high-quality workforce for food and agriculture and educate Illinois policy makers and the general public on sector innovation.



Agri-Food Jobs

Illinois Wages = \$120B+

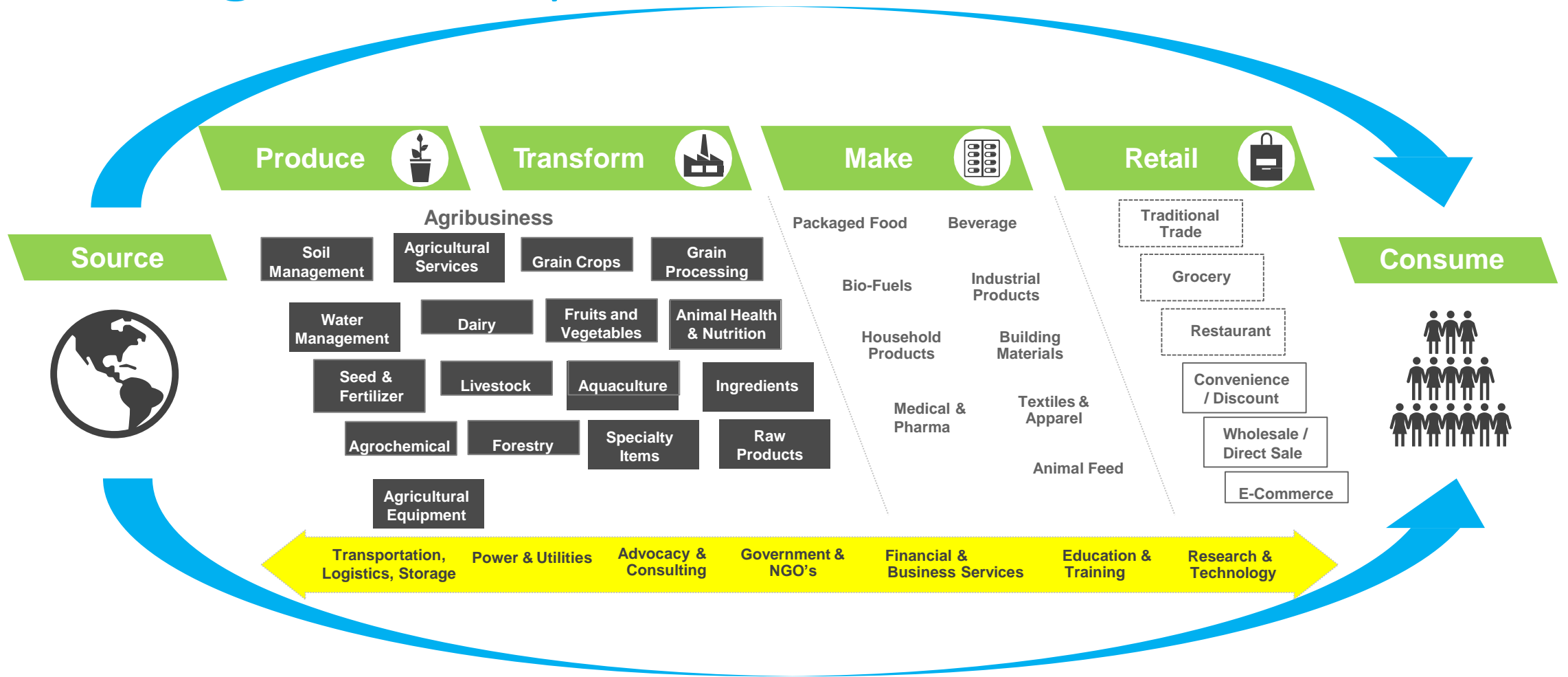
- Worldwide = 3B+
- U.S. = 43M+
- Midwest = 10.5M+
- Illinois = 1.7M+

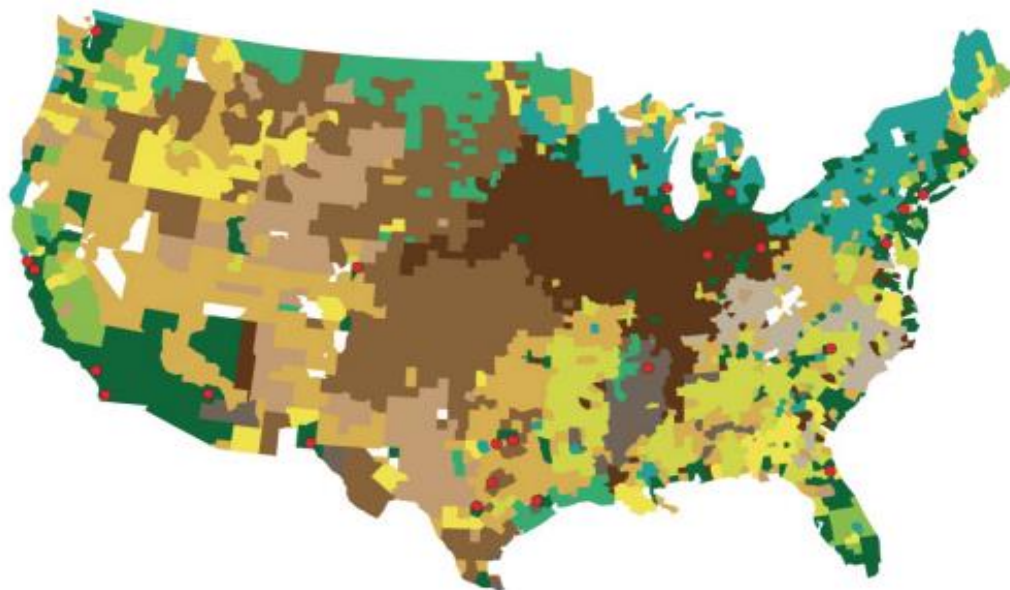
IL	1,701,424
OH	1,583,302
MI	1,129,416
WI	1,060,966
MO	954,846
MN	919,134
IN	902,764
IA	800,971
KS	577,105
NE	510,639
SD	222,341
ND	163,547
TOTAL	10,526,455



Source: feedingtheeconomy.com

The Agri-Food System





Source: Sommer, Judith E. & Hines, Fred K. Diversity in U.S. Agriculture: A New Delineation by Farming Characteristics. United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. Report Number 646. 1991.

LEADING PRODUCER OF:

SOYBEANS

CORN

SWINE

ILLINOIS ALSO PRODUCES:

CATTLE, WHEAT, OATS, SORGHUM, HAY, SHEEP, POULTRY, FRUITS AND VEGETABLES, SPECIALTY CROPS, BUCKWHEAT, HORSERADISH, OSTRICHES, FISH AND CHRISTMAS TREES.

THE AVERAGE FARM IS
375 ACRES

ILLINOIS
HAS

72,000 FARMS
ACROSS

27 MILLION ACRES
OF FARMLAND
REPRESENTING


75%
OF THE STATE'S
TOTAL LAND AREA

Source: <https://agr.illinois.gov/about/facts-about-illinois-agriculture.html>



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Urban Agriculture + Community Food Systems



Chicago Urban Agriculture Mapping Project

[What we are](#) [Add or edit a location](#) [Compost registration](#)

Find a Growing Space Near You

Search by location. Choose one location option.

Address ▾

1 mile ▾

Community Area ▾

Ward ▾

Cook County District ▾

Know the garden name? Enter it here.

Refine and filter your search results.

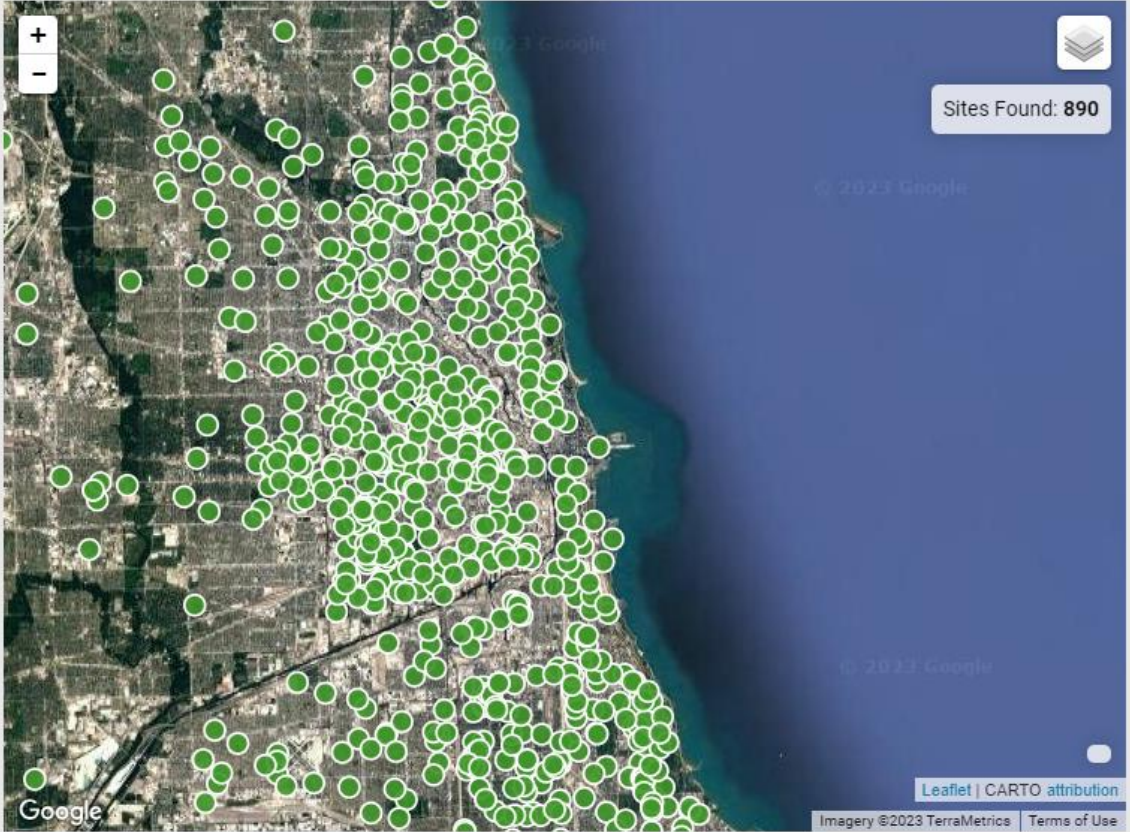
▾ Advanced Search

🔍 Search

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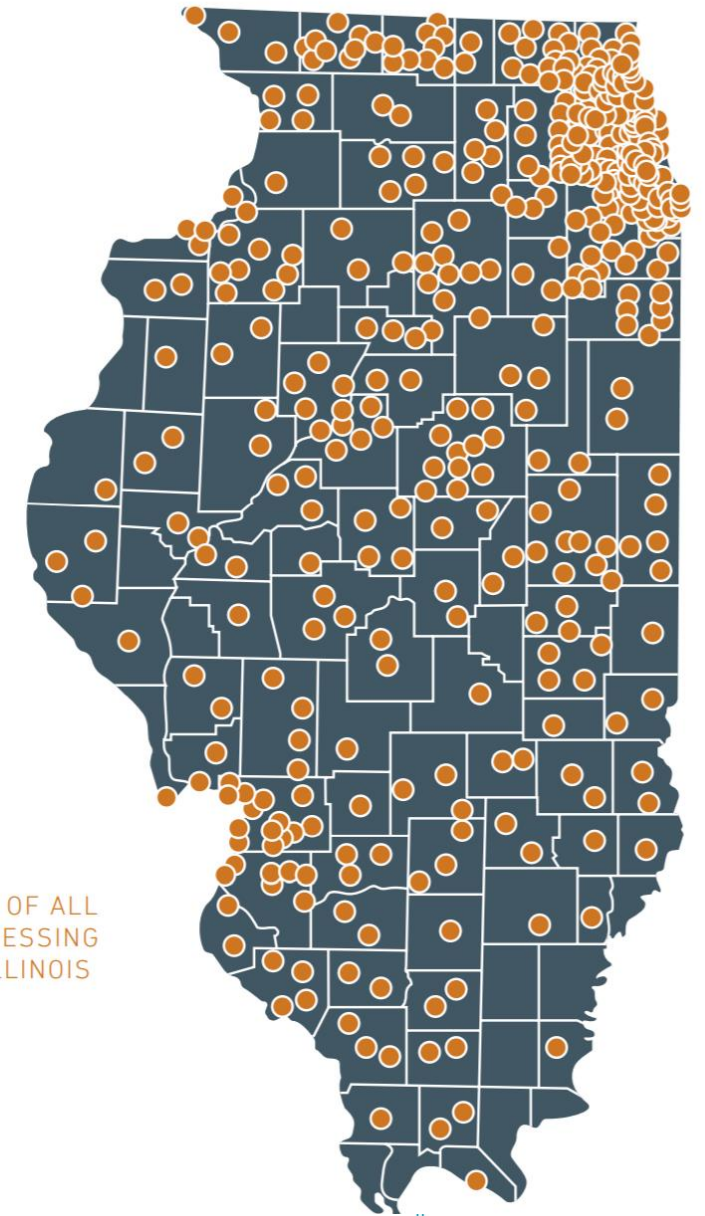


Illinois' Unrivaled Food Industry

TOP 50 FOOD COMPANIES BY REVENUE

ARCHER-DANIELS MIDLAND | BERNER | BIMBO | BRANDING IRON |
CAPITOL WHOLESALE MEATS | CARL BUDDIG | CHICAGO MEAT
AUTHORITY | CONAGRA | DANISH CROWN | DEUTSCHE POST | EL
MILAGRO | FERRARA CANDY | FURST-MCNESS | GONNELLA |
GRIFFITH HEARTHSIDE | HORMEL | INGREDION | JACOBS STIFTUNG |
JEL SERT | JOHN B. SANFILLIPO | JOLINA | K+S | KARLIN | KRONOS |
LITTLE LADY FOODS | LE PETIT PAIN | LIFEWAY | MARS | MARY LEE
PACKAGING | MCCAIN | MEAD JOHNSON | MONDELEZ | MULLINS |
NATION PIZZA & FOODS | NATIONAL BEVERAGE | NATIONWIDE
FOODS | NESTLÉ | OSI GROUP | QUALITY BAKERIES | STAMPEDE
MEAT | TATE & LYLE | TEYS | TOOTSIE ROLL | TREEHOUSE FOODS |
TYSON FOODS | UNIBEL

- Illinois ranks top in the U.S. with \$180B in process food sales
- Chicago has the 2nd largest food processing cluster in the nation
- 2.6K+ food manufacturing companies with over 130K employed



LOCATIONS OF ALL
FOOD PROCESSING
FIRMS IN ILLINOIS

Fortune 500 Agri-Food Companies in IL

Food Processing



Kraft*Heinz*



Food Distribution



Advanced Manufacturing



Largest concentration of **Fortune 500**
Agriculture + Food companies

Food Service



Price Discovery



Insurance and Finance



Healthcare



Entrepreneurial Resources & Investment

Accelerators & Incubators



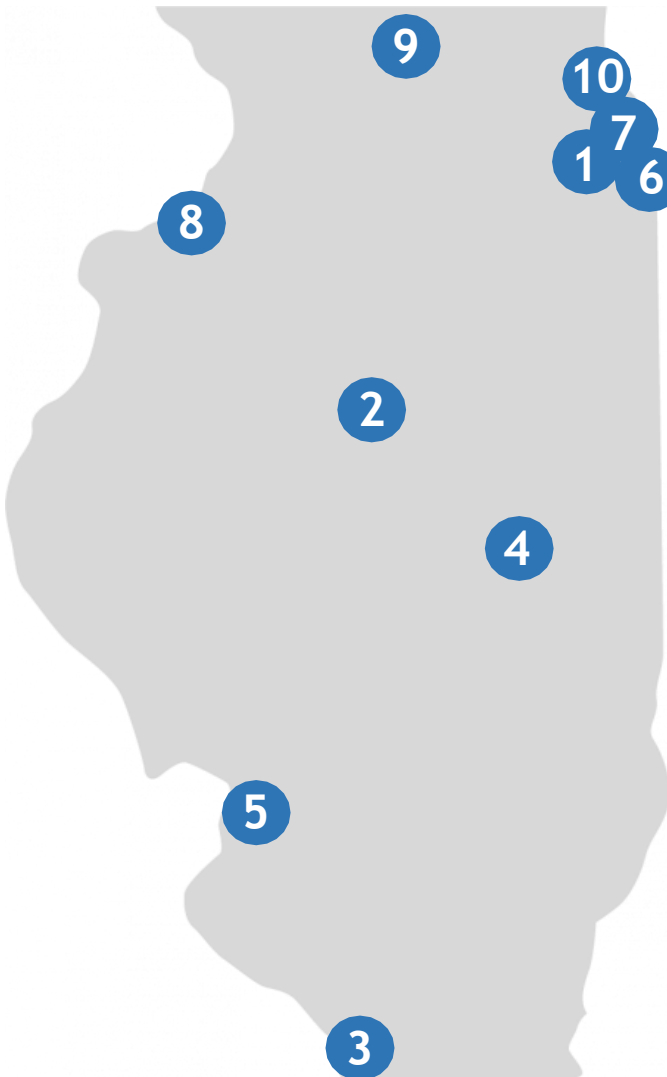
Investment



Financial & Insurance

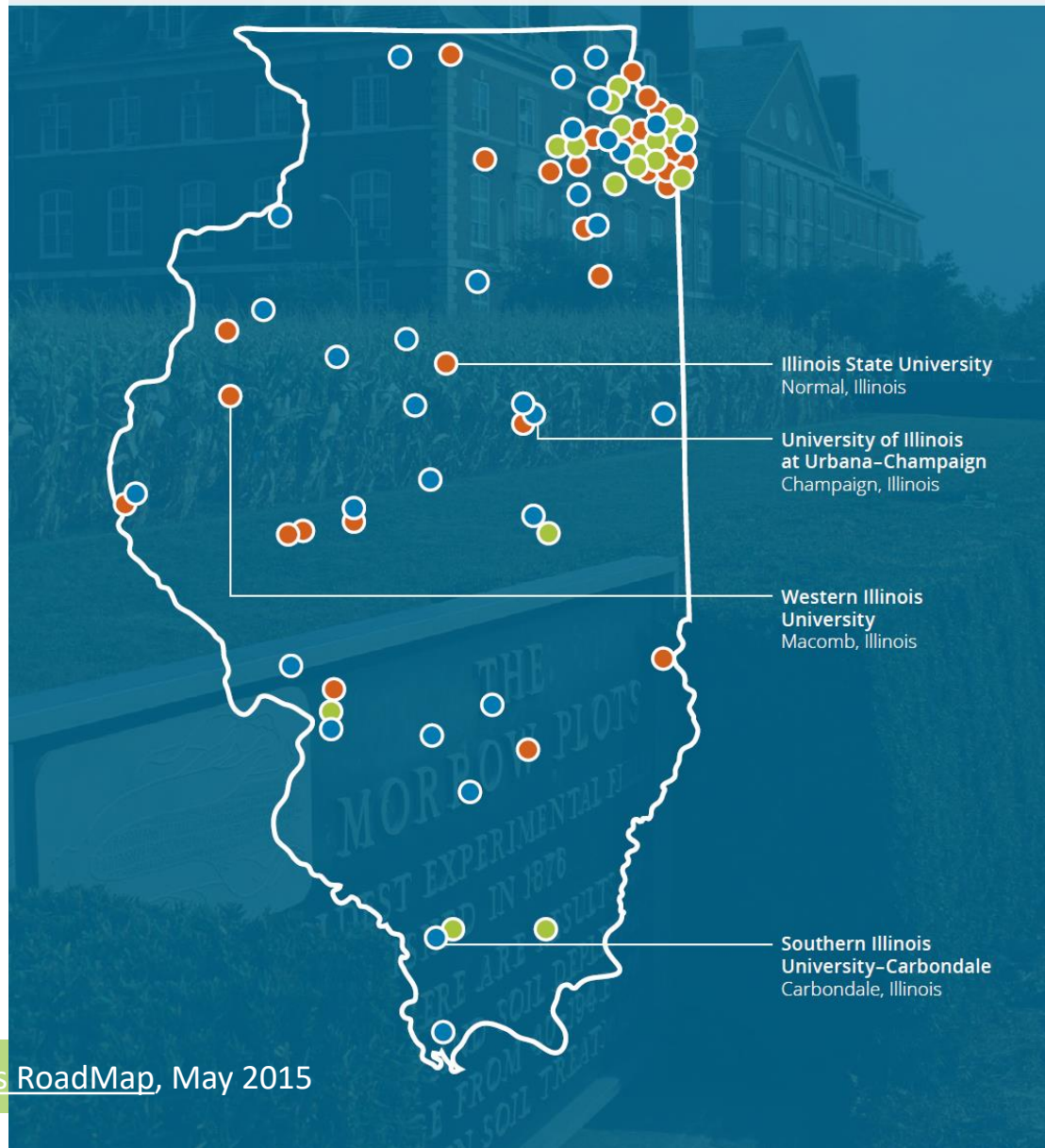


University Incubation & Tech Parks

- 
- 1 **University of Illinois at Chicago:** EnterpriseWorks Chicago, Health, Technology & Innovation (HTI) Center
- 2 **Bradley University:** Peoria NEXT
- 3 **Southern Illinois University - Carbondale:** The Southern Illinois Research Park
- 4 **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign:** Research Park, EnterpriseWorks
- 5 **Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville:** Research Park
- 6 **Illinois Tech:** Tech Park, Idea Shop, Kent Law Clinic
- 7 **University of Chicago:** Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- 8 **Western Illinois University:** Quad City Manufacturing Lab
- 9 **Northern Illinois University:** EIGERlab
- 10 **Northwestern University:** The Garage

Higher-education food and agriculture programs in Illinois

● Agriculture ● Culinary ● Both



Black Hawk College
College of DuPage
College of Lake County
Danville Area Community College
Heartland Community College
Highland Community College
Illinois Central College
Illinois Valley Community College
John Wood Community College
Joliet Junior College
Kankakee Community College
Kaskaskia College
Kishwaukee College
Lake Land College
Lincoln Land College
Lincoln Trail College
McHenry County College
Parkland College
Rend Lake College
Richland Community College
Sauk Valley Community College
Shawnee College
Southeastern Illinois College
Southwestern Illinois College
Spoon River College
Triton Community College
Wabash Valley College

Source: [FARM Illinois RoadMap](#), May 2015



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Illinois Agri-Food Workforce Initiative

The Vision

Illinois should be a premier global destination for attracting, training, and retaining a top qualified skilled, creative, diverse workforce for the agri-food sector

The Need

Systemic challenges need to be addressed with innovative solutions via a cross-sector public-private workforce initiative



ILAFA formed a flagship Workforce Initiative to identify needs and ideate solutions



- Agri-food businesses
- Secondary and post-secondary institutions
- Community-based organizations

Identify **systemic challenges**

Examine **root issues**

Define the **target population**

Conduct research to **determine needs**

Strategize **cross-sector solutions**



Working Group Members



A World of Food Solutions



Dwayne O. Andreas
AG ACADEMY



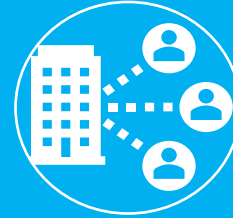
I ILLINOIS
College of Agricultural, Consumer
& Environmental Sciences



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Illinois' \$120B
Agri-Food
Industry is
facing a
significant
challenge with
an underlying
root issue

The Challenge



Agri-food employers
need a diverse labor
force from low to
high skill



There is a lack of a
diverse workforce
supply in the pipeline



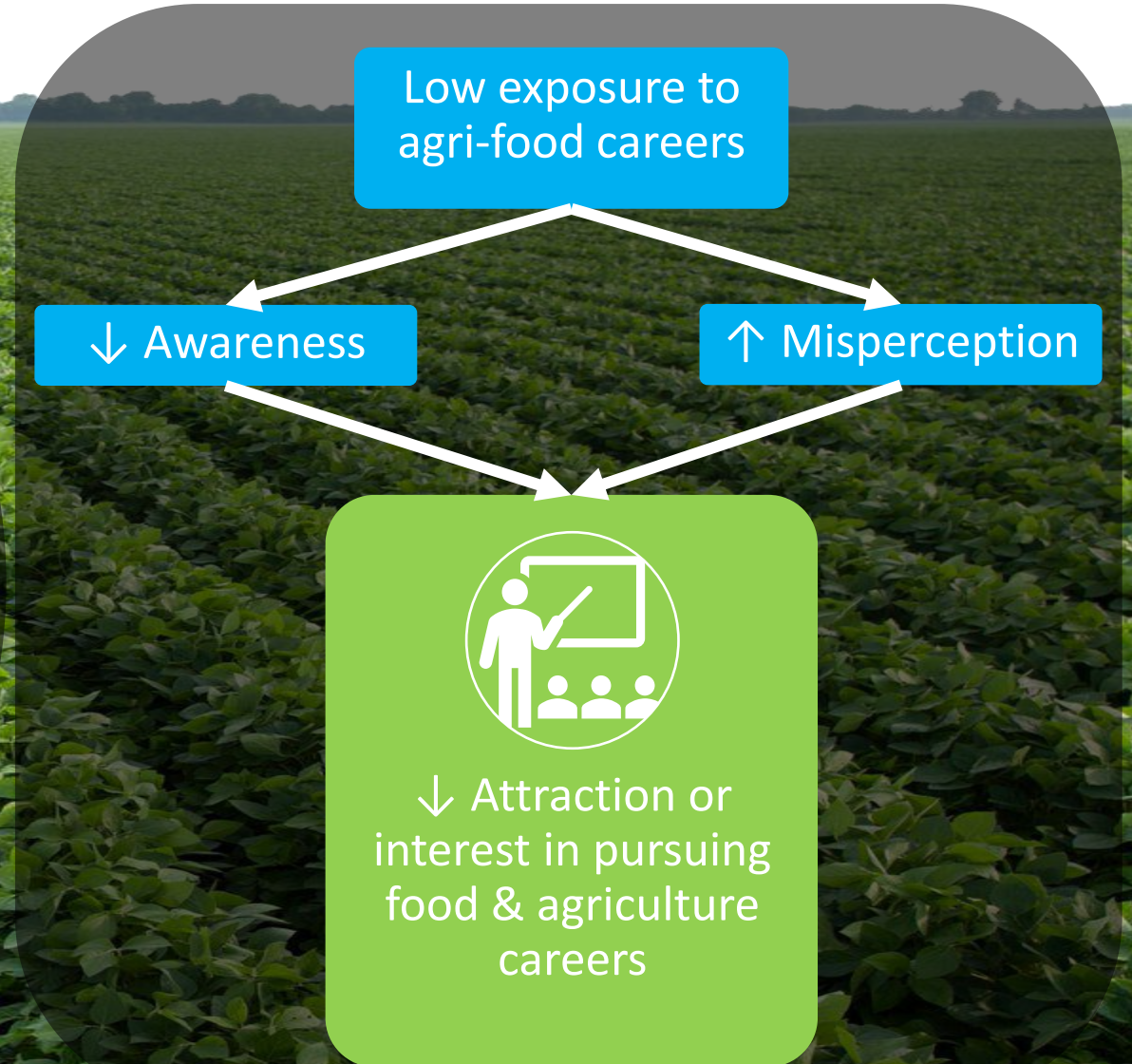
People are not
seeking
opportunities in food
& agriculture

The Root Issue

The “**workforce journey**” is non-linear and overlaps, but ultimately starts with an individual’s level of interest or attraction to a certain industry or job.



One’s **attraction** is influenced by their awareness and perceptions of opportunities.



High school students are a key population

Students are exploring careers and preparing for post-graduation plans, particularly in 10th and 11th grade.

However...

If they can't see it, they can't be it.

And...

Access and exposure to agri-food related career content in high schools is limited.

Opportunity to Increase Exposure



Illinois

>600k

High school students

<6.5%

with access to AFNR courses



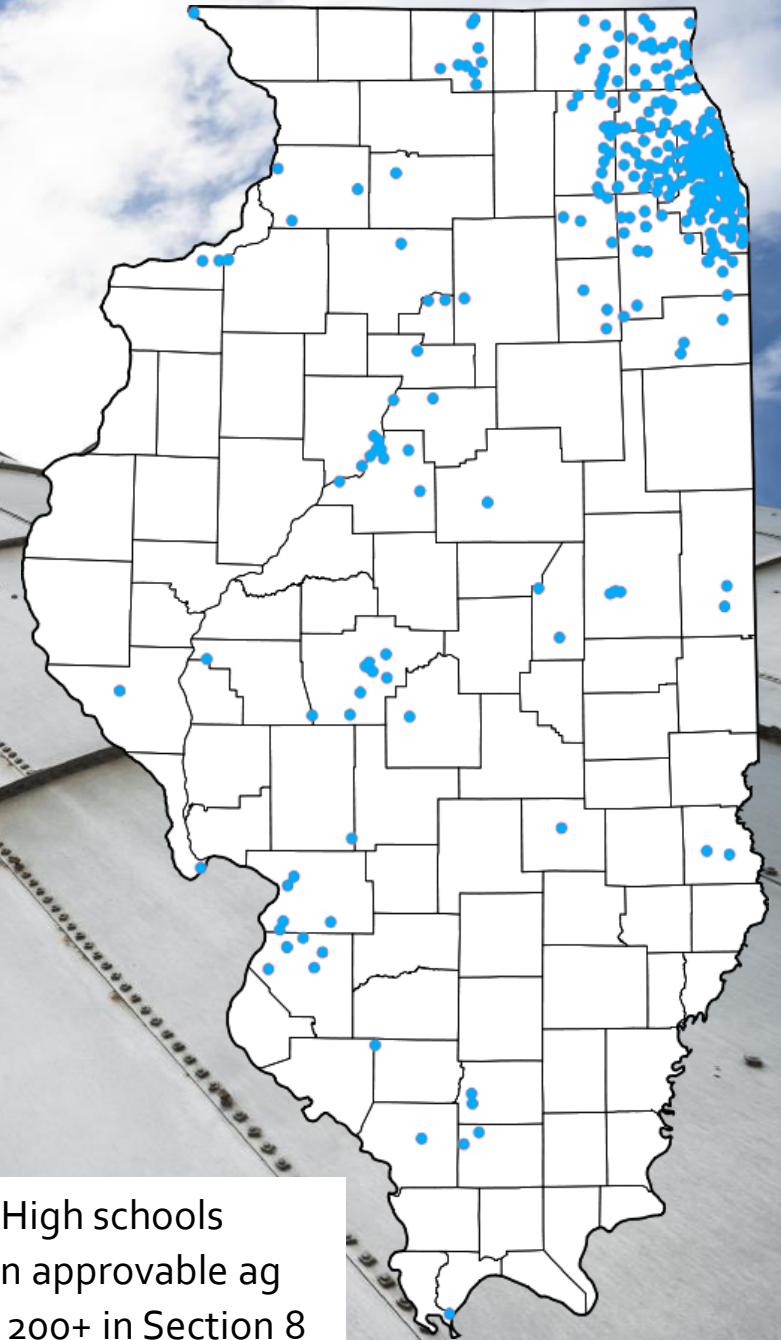
Chicago

>100k

High school students

<1%

with access to AFNR courses



- Over 300 High schools without an approvable ag program; 200+ in Section 8



To increase
and diversify
the agri-
food talent
pipeline, we
must **spark**
student
interest

A Diverse Workforce is a Strong Workforce

Diversity is a key asset to any company or industry. Currently the agri-food industry is gravely lagging most top industries in diversifying the workforce.

The AFNR workforce should more closely reflect the demographics of the world it feeds. Just as a farmer understands the value of diversifying his or her crops, the AFNR industry should increase efforts to include minorities into its workforce ecosystem.



According to Western Growers Association, of the 3.4 million farmers nationwide, roughly 7% are minorities
<https://www.wga.com/wgs-magazine/the-value-of-diversity-in-agriculture/>

The **AGNITOR**

A PILOT INITIATIVE TO

SHARE a Career

SPARK an Interest

IGNITE a Passion



AGNITOR Goals

- **Provide Equitable Access to Career Awareness + Exposure** on a broad range of AFNR jobs
 - Address Misperceptions & Lack of Awareness
 - Enhance “Like-Me Representation” within the AFNR Pipeline with concentration on DEI
 - Reach students across IL with a focus on underrepresented students in urban and suburban communities
- **Spotlight IL Agri-Food Companies & Industry Professionals via career chats**, helping to enhance student awareness about the industry and opportunities here at home
- **Grow AFNR Career-focused resources (videos, materials, hands-on learning kits, etc.)** that can be accessible to teachers and students (locally, regionally, and nationally)
- **Strengthen Partnerships** between IL agri-food industry, schools, and communities

The AGNITOR

MAY 11

EAST ST. LOUIS
HIGH SCHOOL

The AGNITOR Dakarai Howard

Illinois Department of
Agriculture - Policy Director

Dakarai is a farmer, organizer, and food justice advocate. He has a passion for food accessibility and civic engagement and has worn many hats to pair the two concepts over the years. He currently serves as the Policy Director at the Illinois Department of Agriculture. He plans to continue uplifting sustainable agriculture to advance policy reform and further promote community economic development and land stewardship throughout Chicago.



The AGNITOR Selma Sims

Gardeneers - CEO

Selma is the CEO at Gardeneers, a program that builds and maintains school gardens in 17 Chicago Public Schools and involves more than 1,700 middle-school student participants from Chicago's south and west sides. Previously, Selma served as the Farm Manager, where she pioneered new food safety policies and protocols for the organization's school gardens. Selma majored in Agronomy and Agroecology while studying at Iowa State University.



Agnitor is with Ball Horticultural and 2 others.

13m · 🌐

Illinois Agri-Food Alliance's Shanell Rainey-Jacob is at Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences today kicking off virtual career chats with professionals in the Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Industry.

Interested in having us join your students? Shoot us a message for more details.

#ILAFA #AGNITOR #AFNR

The AGNITOR

MARCH 14

CHICAGO HIGH SCHOOL
FOR AGRICULTURAL
SCIENCES

The AGNITOR

Shanell Rainey-Jacob
Illinois Agri-Food Alliance

Shanell is a workforce development professional with a track record in career coaching, employment services, training and curriculum development, and program management. She has experience cultivating employer and school relationships, facilitating programs and resources for youth and adults around job readiness, student internships and training, and more.



The AGNITOR Taylor France

Ball Horticulture

Taylor studied horticulture at North Carolina State University. She has experience working for a lab on the nutrition of pollen and for a hydroponic greenhouse operation. In her previous roles Taylor worked for Hydroponic Farm and an ornamental wholesale greenhouse called Metrolina Greenhouses. She moved to Illinois in June 2022 to grow breeding stock for Ball Horticultural.



The AGNITOR Alex Zook

GROWMARK, Inc.

Alex is the Associate Product Manager at Growmark, Inc. He has a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in Agronomy and Crop Sciences.



The AGNITOR Rod Riech

BRANDT

Rod is the Marketing Director: Sponsorship and Agriculture Retail Marketing at BRANDT. Rod has a degree in Crop Science. He is a member of the Illinois Agri-Food Alliance Workforce Collaborative.





Agnitor

April 19 · 🌐

...

Our Careers Coordinator Shanell is out at East Aurora High School for a career fair. She is bringing agriculture, food and natural resources career knowledge to students, many of which don't know the breadth of great opportunities that exist.

Want to get connected? We're always looking to connect industry professionals with schools.
Email: shanell@ilagrifood.org

[#AGNITOR](#) [#ILAFA](#) [#AFNR](#)



Agnitor

April 5 · 🌐

...

The Illinois Agri-Food Alliance is at Illinois Institute of Technology today tabling with Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural Education. We're talking with students about their career goals while introducing them to the breadth of careers in agriculture, food and natural resources.

[#ILAFA](#) [#AGNITOR](#) [#FCAE](#) [#AFNR](#)



ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL
RESOURCES

Career Exploration Day

**Sunday
July 30th
Noon- 8pm**

**Kankakee River
State Park**

Open to all 6th -12th Grade Students at no cost

Learn About: Natural Resource Careers
To Register

Volunteer Opportunities
Archery & Fishing Basics
IDNR Wildland Fire Equipment
Airboat & Nature Center Tour
Build bird houses for habitat

**Snacks & late afternoon dinner
will be provided**

or contact:
CPO Tom Davis (847)404-3596
Thomas.Davis@illinois.gov
Must Register by July 1st






JJC SCHOLARSHIPS ARE DUE MAY 15TH

DON'T FORGET TO LOOK
FOR THE "WILLIAM B.
JOHNSON MEMORIAL
SCHOLARSHIP" THAT IS
SPECIFICALLY FOR OUR
AGRICULTURE STUDENTS!

**JOLIET
JUNIOR COLLEGE**
1901—
Agricultural, Horticultural
& Veterinary Sciences
Department

Fill out just ONE application to
apply for MANY scholarships! Make
sure to fill out any additional
information asked by some of the
scholarships!

**FIND THE LINK TO APPLY
IN THE COMMENTS!**



THE GROWMARK FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

55 scholarships
available
\$2,000 each

DEADLINE TO APPLY – MAY 12, 2023

APPLY NOW!

**THE GROWMARK
FOUNDATION
SCHOLARSHIP**

American Farmland Trust

MANRRS - Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences
May 17 · 🌐

The application for the American Farmland Trust Summer 2023 internships closes soon.

Link to apply: <https://hubs.ly/Q01QhMHv0> ?

Remember these are paid oport... See more

apply today for the

CYNTHIA HAYES MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

\$5000 SCHOLARSHIPS FOR:

- ▶ 2 undergraduate students
- ▶ 1 graduate student

DEADLINE:
May 12, 2023

tiny.cc/cynthiahayes

**NATIONAL
SUSTAINABLE
AGRICULTURE
COALITION**
SAAFON
BLACK FARMING. BLACK HISTORY. BLACK CULTURE.



AG Agnitor
April 19 · 🌐

APPLY TO JOIN OUR

COUNTY MANAGER TRAINEE PROGRAM

**ILLINOIS
FARM
BUREAU.**
Farm. Family. Food.™

<https://bit.ly/3mKRj04>

0:07 / 0:12

Illinois Farm Bureau
April 18 · 🌐

Are you graduating this May? And are you seeking a career in agriculture? Illinois Farm Bureau's County Manager Trainee program may be just what you're looking ... See more

Contact Information

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Managing Director
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www.ilagrifood.org

Shanell Rainey - Jacob
Careers Coordinator
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