

BACKGROUND

Agriculture is a critical essential industry in the United States. Michigan's agricultural economy is 25th in the world with agricultural diversity 2nd in the United States just behind California. And there's more:

- The food and agriculture industry contributes \$101.2 billion to Michigan's economy.
- More than 52,000 farms in our state produce 300 agricultural commodities to feed people and animals.
- Michigan is home to 2,166 licensed food processors generating nearly \$25 billion in economic activity, making Michigan 19th in the nation for food processing.
- These facts are presented to students in the Talent Tour video. It is easy, with so much money and the large number of companies involved, to understand why our state needs so many skilled and committed individuals working in the agriculture industry.
- Students will have a very limited concept of career diversity in agriculture and food processing industries.

The goal of the lesson is to:

- expand their knowledge of career opportunities,
- develop their own metacognition regarding personal strengths, aptitudes, and desires in relation to their career choices,
- and use an online inventory to assess these qualities to connect with possible career paths.

Michigan Career Development Model: Grades 7-12; Career Interest Inventories and Activities; Target 5

Lesson: Star of the West Milling Talent Tour Video

The lesson has three parts:

1. **Setting the stage** is accessing pre-knowledge and their current brainpower on the subject of agricultural careers.
2. **A Talent Tour video** featuring Star of the West Milling of Frankenmuth to build their knowledge.
3. **Then a final career inventory** specific to agriculture with some exploration using the agexplorer.com website.

Length and extensions of activity:

Any of these parts can stand alone but using all three provides a thorough presentation for students to say, "eh this is probably not for me," or "wow, this is calling me to want more!" The agexplorer.com website provides many opportunities for expansion. There are virtual field trips with guides and several stand-alone lessons as well as many additional careers to explore.

Every career presented on the agexplorer.com website includes "agricultural education" as a suggested high school course. This would provide an excellent opportunity to discuss and provide resources for students to look into CTE (*Career and Technical Education*) as a high school option as well as local community college resources for dual enrollment or post-high school opportunities.

[Bay and Arenac County CTE](#)
[Clare and Gladwin Counties CTE](#)
[Gratiot and Isabella Counties CTE](#)
[Saginaw County CTE](#)
[Midland County CTE](#)
[Delta College](#)

Notes about Bingo board:

The Bingo concept is used to give students choice. The idea of "choice" is important to career prep. Many students will feel empowered to realize that career decisions are their own.

The board is meant to have interactive boxes but the restriction of trying to keep the box on the page may be stressful for some students. They may easily copy their box of choice and paste it onto a new page thereby giving them more freedom to type freely without regard to maintaining the integrity of the whole Bingo board.



Set the stage with students:

[\(Powerpoint slides are available\)](#)

Talk with students about jobs that are *(were, during the beginning of the pandemic)* considered essential.

What makes those jobs essential? Why is agriculture essential?

When we talk about the agricultural industry we are talking about all of work done to get food from the field to the table. So, we are talking about raw materials *(seed, animal breeding and birth)* and how growth and processing occur to get food to the form you see it on your table. *(If you or your students are familiar with a product Life Cycle Assessment/ Inventory, now would be a great time to apply the concept!)*

How does this . . . *(a seed)* become this . . . *(a hamburger)*

Activity:

Post a large sheet of poster paper in front of the group *(may use a whiteboard segment)*.

1. Title the sheet, "Careers in Agriculture."
2. Ask students to brainstorm and add their knowledge to the chart. You will probably get, "farmer" "elevator guy" "grain buyer" "grain seller" "fertilizer applicator" and in many cases, not even this many ideas. There may be some students who do see the bigger picture so you might get "butcher" "baker" "farm equipment sales" "farm equipment repair" and/or "truck driver" The size of this list is not important. These will be new learning for students regardless.
3. Ask students to connect these jobs with local businesses. Where, in Saginaw County, does the grain buyer work? Where, in Gratiot County does the fertilizer applicator work. Who pays them? Add some of these businesses to your chart.
4. Put up a new chart. Tell students this chart is to add to as they learn of more careers and local businesses related to those careers.

You are now ready to take a Talent Tour!

[Watch the video](#)

Ask students to add to the new chart the careers and business identified in the video.



To dig a little deeper . . .

Share the Bingo Card activity sheet with the whole group.

Discuss how they will use the Career Finder on the [agexplorer.com](#) website to learn more about how their own aptitudes, interests, and desires for the future can help them choose a career path.

They will then use that information to lightly explore 3 careers in agriculture with choices they make off the Bingo board.