

General Agriculture

Department Information

- **Department Location:**
315 Morrill Hall
- **Department Phone:**
701-231-8790
- **Department Web Site:**
www.ag.ndsu.edu/academics/ (<http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/academics/>)
- **Credential Offered:**
B.S.
- **Official Program Curriculum:**
catalog.ndsu.edu/undergraduate/program-curriculum/general-agriculture/ (<http://catalog.ndsu.edu/undergraduate/program-curriculum/general-agriculture/>)

The general agriculture program is designed to serve students who wish to pursue a college education in the broad area of agriculture. Traditionally, students who have been undecided about their future plans have selected this major to explore the various career options available to them in agriculture before selecting a major. Some students desiring to tailor a degree to meet their career objectives in production agriculture have majored in general agriculture. In addition, some transfer students from two-year institutions find the greater flexibility of the general agriculture major useful in obtaining a bachelor's degree.

The Program

General agriculture provides a broad-based program in agriculture for students who wish to have a diversified program of study that emphasizes several agricultural disciplines. In addition, general agriculture provides for an exploratory program in agriculture for students undecided about which of the 19 majors available in the College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources is best for their individual plans. General agriculture also provides the opportunity for students to pursue an agricultural major and to complete the requirements to be able to teach high school agriculture.

Students receive broad exposure to four or more disciplines and have a large number of unrestricted electives that may be utilized to prepare for specific careers. The flexibility of the curriculum is a point of interest for many students. Several students transferring from two-year institutions have found that they could complete the requirements for a bachelor's degree in general agriculture more quickly than other majors. However, transfer students are still encouraged to consider majors in the specific disciplines if that is their career objective.

Agriculture Disciplines

In addition to a broad set of general education courses, students complete course work in four agricultural disciplines. This is somewhat similar to completing partial minors in four of the academic programs in the College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources. Students must complete 15 credits in one of the disciplines, 12 credits in one discipline, and nine credits in two other disciplines. A capstone course must be completed in one of the disciplines. In addition, students take several electives in agriculture. Some students choose this option at the beginning of their university career while waiting to decide to have a major in one of the disciplinary areas.

Agricultural Education

NDSU offers the opportunity for a student to prepare for a career as an agriculture teacher in the public school system, in addition to a broad range of careers in the agricultural industry. The degree in agricultural education may be completed in the College of Human Development and Education. Students who wish to pursue agricultural education also have the option to have a major in general agriculture and choose agricultural education as a second major. The general agriculture degree program is sufficiently flexible that both majors may be completed without an increase in the total number of credits required for completion.

In addition, students pursuing this approach will be eligible for scholarships and all activities in the College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources.

Faculty and Facilities

General agriculture does not have its own faculty since the faculty in the College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources are housed in academic departments. General agriculture relies on departments to teach basic and advanced courses within their disciplines. A coordinating committee with faculty representing several areas of agricultural sciences administers the general agriculture program. Advisors for students are selected within various disciplines. These faculty members work with students in developing an appropriate plan of study and assist students in exploring various career opportunities.

Financial Aid and Scholarships

Loans, scholarships, grants, and work-study are available through the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. Students requiring financial assistance should contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships or One Stop directly. In addition, the College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural

Resources has several scholarships available for outstanding students based primarily on academic performance. Contact the Office of the Associate Dean, College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources for information and application forms.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Students are highly encouraged to become active members in at least one student organization, several of which are sponsored by the academic departments in the College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources.

Career Opportunities

Employment opportunities for students in general agriculture remain strong and are similar to those of other production agriculture majors. Generally, the demand for graduates from the College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources exceeds the number of available graduates. Students can greatly enhance their employability by obtaining at least one summer internship during their formal education.

Employers indicate that the most important characteristics desired in graduates include excellent oral and written communication skills, ability to meet and work with people under a variety of conditions, initiative, and work ethic. The USDA publishes a report every five years about prospects for careers in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources. These reports consistently say that the career opportunities for graduates in these fields are excellent.

General Agriculture Minor

A minor in general agriculture may be obtained by satisfactorily completing 24 credits with at least six credits in each of any four disciplines offered by the College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources.