

Special Features of the Program -Experiential Learning

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA): As part of your education, you will work on the College's certified organic CSA Farm at the Horticultural Research Station in Lexington. A CSA farm is unique in that every week an equivalent portion (or share) of produce is delivered to customers (shareholders) who have paid in advance for a full season's harvest. You will learn to grow and market organic produce while interacting with students, staff, and faculty from across the University as you collaborate on a sustainable food system.

Internships: As part of the curriculum, Sustainable Agriculture majors receive academic credit for completing an internship relevant to their area of specialization. Internships may be in local, national, or international settings and generally lasts for up to three months. The internship enables you to apply the knowledge gained from your degree program in a professional environment and strengthen your career opportunities.

International Travel and Study Abroad: While not required, opportunities exist for you to receive academic credit for study abroad in countries including France, China, and Thailand.



DISCOVER Your Future

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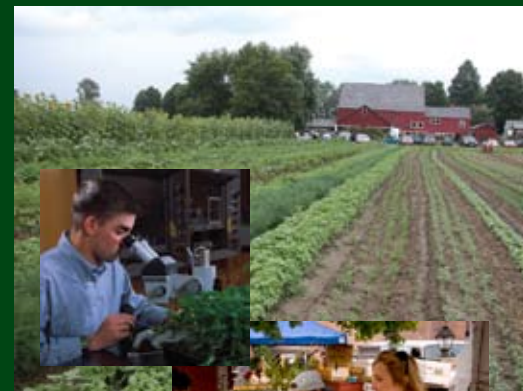
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UK UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY
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Sustainable Agriculture



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Would you like to work at the interface between nature, food, and people? Do you have an interest in local food production and integrated farming systems? Would you like to study and manage agroecosystems that have reduced environmental impacts? If so, then a degree in sustainable agriculture is right for you!



What is Sustainable Agriculture?

Sustainable agriculture integrates environmental stewardship, economic profitability, and social responsibility. Ecosystem-level understanding and analytical skills help land managers to cooperate rather than compete with nature. Managing a farming system ecologically can lessen adverse impacts on natural resources, wildlife, and human communities. Food production begins with a living soil and there remains much to learn about protecting this resource from water and wind erosion, pollution, and degradation. Diversifying production, reducing off-farm inputs, and creating new markets invigorates the family farm and strengthens the agricultural economy. It is vital for today's agricultural professionals to understand the emerging consumer demand for healthy food that supports environmental stewardship and local communities.

Your College Courses

Courses in the sustainable agriculture curriculum are chosen to combine practical, in-the-field knowledge with a scientific understanding of agricultural ecosystems, including social and economic considerations:

- soil management and conservation
- crop physiology
- livestock production
- integrated pest management
- agro-forestry
- human nutrition
- community food systems

Sustainable Agriculture requires a holistic, interdisciplinary approach that uses scientific principles to enhance traditional farm management practices. Expertise gained in natural sciences including chemistry, biology, and plant and soil sciences provides the foundation that students need to understand the complex interactions within agricultural ecosystems. Complimentary work in social sciences including sociology, economics and philosophy instills an appreciation of the cultural connections that link farmers and consumers.



Career Opportunities

Graduates in Sustainable Agriculture will have practical and theoretical experience in integrating multiple disciplines to assess and improve the sustainability of a farming system. Challenging career opportunities include:

Private sector crop and soil consulting: with expertise from this program, you could advise farmers and other land managers on ways to maintain productivity while reducing inputs and protecting soil, water, and wildlife resources.

Agricultural extension: with the broad perspective of this program, you could provide insightful guidance to farmers and other clients seeking to improve agricultural sustainability and develop local food systems.

Sustainable food production: with the practical skills and training acquired in this program, you could contribute to a successful agricultural enterprise or manage one of your own.

Education and research: with an advanced degree in a field related to sustainable agriculture, you could be at the forefront of understanding how to produce foods that are healthy for people and the environment.

