

Agri-English

Incorporating Agriculture into Academia

Agri-English

*Communication
Telecommunication Tech-
nician*

Radio Broadcasting

*Agricultural
Journalism*

*Agricultural
Commodity
Marketing Specialist*

*Communication
Telecommunication Tech-
nician*

*Agricultural
Publication Editor*

*Information
Laboratory Specialist*

*Maintenance
Manager*

Ecologist

*Youth Program
Director*

*Automation
Specialist*

Extension Agent

Safety Inspector

FDA Manager

Livestock Inspector

*Writer for Farm
Publications*

Website Designer

Writing your way into agriculture!

If you have an interest in writing, creating websites, and mass media, then agriculture offers many opportunities for you!

This brochure showcases careers relating to English and language arts, introduces you to people working in various careers, highlights Wisconsin colleges and technical schools, and other opportunities that agriculture has for you!

It is designed as a guide along with "An Agricultural Career for



You" from the Wisconsin Agribusiness Council, which showcases the seven agricultural career pathways.

Language arts and communication skills are needed throughout the agricultural industry. From the companies that design and develop machinery and

products, to the farm media that help educate producers and the general public, or even the graphic artists that design the packaging for food products, the possibilities are endless!

With an industry that is changing everyday, the need to communicate to the students, farm community, and the general public is critical.

Everyone is affected by agriculture. We all need good, factual information. Your interest in writing can help fill these needs!

But I'm not from a farm . . .

A common misconception is that you must be from a farm in order to pursue an agricultural career!

That's not true!

Understanding agriculture will certainly help you pursue a career in agriculture.

How do you learn about agriculture if you're not from a farm?

- If your school offers them, take agricultural education classes.
- Get involved in FFA contests that offer you chances to develop your communication skills.

- Get a job working on a farm or in a related interest.

- Become a FFA reporter and put your skills to use!

What classes should I take?



My interests are-

- I like to write stories and papers
- I enjoy creating websites
- I like public speaking
- I enjoy meeting new people
- I am active in student groups
- I have helped with our school newspaper

If you enjoy writing, then a combination of classes from your language arts department and agriculture education department will help prepare you.

Developing good grammar skills and writing

styles is essential to all careers. Taking specialized writing courses (i.e., journalism writing, mass media) will help you decide what area to focus on.

If your school offers agriculture education, an introductory class to

agriculture will help you find areas that might be of particular interest.

Don't forget about FFA contests and activities that will help you develop your public speaking and communication skills!

Some people to meet

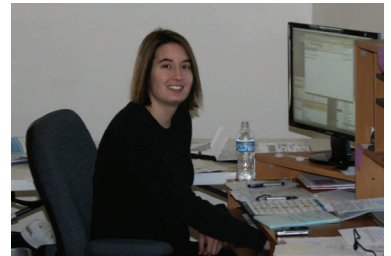
Karen Lee, Progressive Dairy Publishing

"I always enjoyed reading and writing, but it wasn't until I was in college and I had an internship with a newspaper that I considered pursuing a career in the field," said Lee. "English classes also helped develop my ability to formulate my thoughts and gather information for an article with a logical sequence and with transitions from one point to the next."

Lee added that she learned basic grammar skills in middle and high school.

"Whether I'm writing a story or editing someone else's writing, I rely on grammar rules that I learned years ago," said Lee. "Since I'm involved in dairy business the agricultural courses in high school helped

the most—they provided me with a broad perspective of the industry."



The ability to communicate through written word is a powerful tool.

"In addition to being able to communicate, agriculture is a field that will always be relevant to the world's population as it supplies three of our basic needs—food, fuel, and fiber," added Lee.

Jim Massey, *The Country Today*

"Every agricultural business and government agency needs communicators," said Massey. "Communication skills will take a person far in today's competitive careers."

Massey said that an English teacher encouraged him to write. Being a sports fanatic, he listened to basketball and football games and wrote articles about the games.

He added that the basic skills that he learned are what he uses every day in writing and

editing articles for *The Country Today*.

"It is the basis of everything I do," Massey said. "I need to know the basic grammar and sentence structure to put together stories and help improve the stories by our writers and correspondents."

Massey mentioned that each year as they look for an editorial intern, it is becoming harder to find a college-age student who has agricultural knowledge and writing skills.



"It's easier to teach someone about agriculture in three months than it is to teach someone to write."

Josh Hushon– Filament Marketing



“Journalism has always been an interest of mine,” said Hushon. “But my specific interest in writing didn’t first blossom until I was in college.”

Hushon recalled that it was during his second semester at Pennsylvania State University, when he took a composition class that rekindled his interest in writing.

“This was the first time that I recall writing and enjoying it, which clearly began to show as my writing improved,” Hushon said.

First and foremost, English and grammar classes provide skills to

effectively communicate in person, on the telephone, and written form.

“With the prevalence of email and other written communication in today’s workplace, a student who can’t compose notes and thoughts with proper spelling and sentence structure runs the risk of giving the impression that they aren’t as intelligent,” added Hushon. “This skill set was valuable in competing for scholarships and awards in college, and continues to be a key part of my career.”

Additionally, the science and math classes, which didn’t seem valuable at the time, provided a solid base to critically assess research and other scientific information.

“Our work at Filament often requires us to evaluate company and independent research so that we can read between the lines and determine how prominently to feature it in marketing efforts,” Hushon said.

The more you learn, the more you know.

“From food science to market analysis to even golf course management, agriculture provides a place for individuals with all varieties of interest,” said Hushon. “Better yet, since food is an essential part of life, agriculture is a stable career field with a bright future.

He added that for students with an interest in writing and journalism, all sectors of the agriculture economy demand students with effective communication skills that have an interest in writing.

Hushon also encourages students to find something that they’re passionate about, and pursue a career in that area.

“Employers can quickly tell if you are passionate about the work you are doing,” he said. “Better yet, going to work won’t feel like work!”

Brock Havens, Midwest Family Broadcasting

“Like many other industries, agriculture needs people who can successfully communicate their story,” said Havens. “There are so many opportunities within agriculture that involve English, whether it is agricultural journalism, agricultural broadcasting, and politics . . . from the State Capital to the farm . . . there are people involved in agriculture who need to communicate how agriculture affects our daily lives.”

Havens added that people with an interest in English, who can make information easier to understand for the general public have a lot of potential for success.

“The best speaking experiences that I had in high school were through



FFA by being an officer, attending conferences, and participating in the contests,” said Havens. “Never turn down an opportunity to speak—like anything else, the more you do it the better you get.”

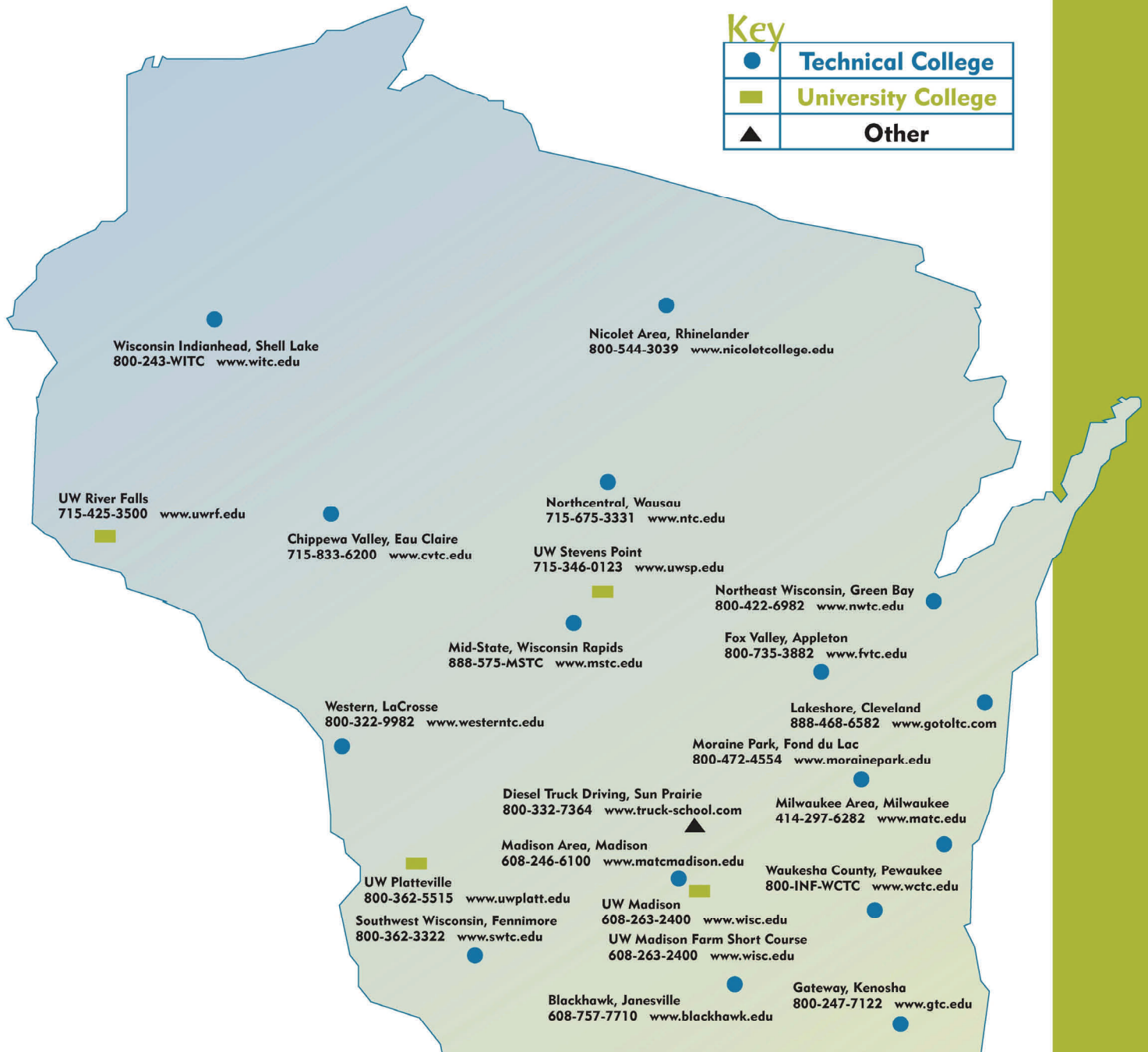
Havens also recalled that he started his radio broadcast career by working at the college radio station.

“I appreciated my English classes more in college when I spent more time learning how to tell a story or communicate a message, in classes such as public speaking and basic writing,” Havens said.

Communicating and communicating well is the key to any career.

“With a career in broadcasting I have to speak in front of people daily,” said Havens. “I do show-preparation, gather information, and present my information, and have to write news stories from interviews for our website—I enjoy the variety of everything I do.”

After You Graduate



“Incorporating Agriculture into Academia” is a project coordinated by the Wisconsin Farm Bureau– Ag in the Classroom Program and the Wisconsin Agribusiness Council. The project was funded with a USDA Ag in the Classroom Enrichment Grant. To learn more about these programs, visit their websites–



www.wisagclassroom.org



www.wisagri.com



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