

Exploring Extension Workforce Development One Step at a Time

A Peer-to-Peer Conversation



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Agricultural and Food Research Initiative - National Extension Clearinghouse for Industry and the Workforce (AFRI-NECIW) Grant



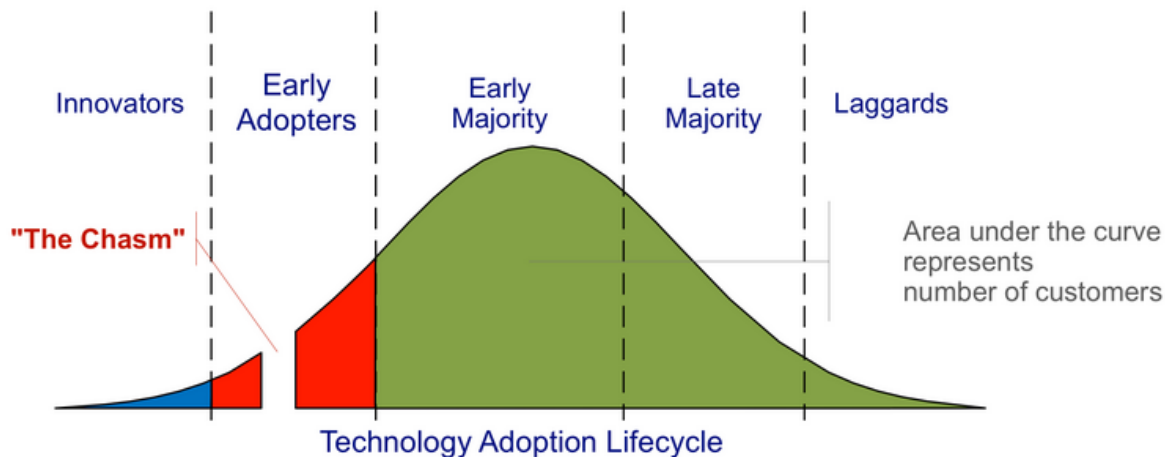
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- 5 year, \$10M grant (2023-67037-40533)
- A national EXF program open to all LGCUs regardless of EXF membership
- Raise profile of Extension's adult agricultural workforce development (AAWD) skill attainment opportunities through a Clearinghouse
- Uplift and enhance internal and external AAWD practice, partnerships, and networks across Extension

AgriProspects approaches adult workforce development from three key perspectives:

- *Everything Extension does is workforce development*
- *Skills are the building blocks*
- *All learning counts*

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AgriProspects Workforce Development Network

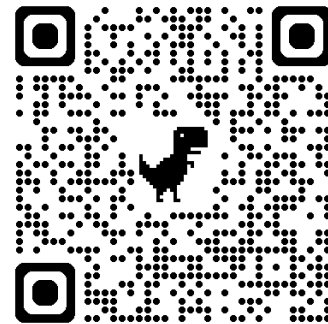
Network of Practice and
Professional Development

Learning & Credentialing
Opportunity Capture,
Analysis, and Support

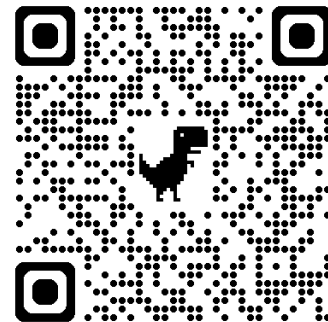


AgriProspects Marketplace

Mini-grant Program



Stay in the know through
our newsletter ↑ or
Connect Extension ↓



The Opportunity: The Skills Based Economy



Created with Microsoft Designer, 12/20/2024

“But what comes next won’t look like the past. The future of learning will be hybrid, credentialed, AI-infused — and driven by what students, parents, and employers *value*. Degrees, certificates, and credentials will compete for relevance based on cost, credibility, and career-readiness.”

Happy Valley’s education remix: Where credentials now count more than degrees:

<https://happyvalleyindustry.com/happy-valleys-education-remix-where-credentials-now-count-more-than-degrees/>

Basic Agricultural Sector and Supply Chain

2022: FT & PT jobs in ag, food, and related industries: 22.1 million or **10.4%** of **TOTAL US employment** (USDA ERS)

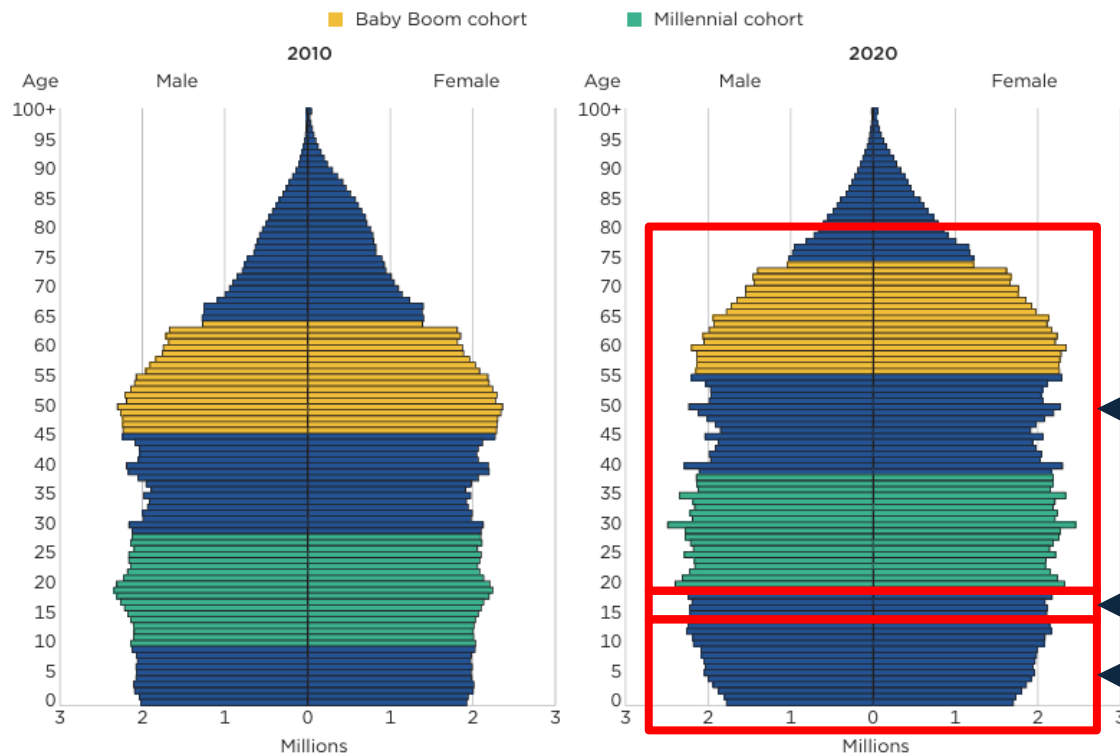


Is supported by and shares skilled labor with:

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas Extraction	Utilities	Management of Companies and Enterprises	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
Construction	Manufacturing	Wholesale Trade	Administrative and Support and Waste Management Services	Accommodation and Food Services
Retail Trade	Transportation and Warehousing	Information	Educational Services	Other Services
Finance and Insurance	Real Estate and Rental Leasing	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	Health Care and Social Assistance	Public Administration

The rest:
89.6%

Figure 2.
Age-Sex Pyramids for the United States: 2010 and 2020



Note: While generally accurate (refer to "2020 Census Data Quality" at <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade/2020/planning-management/process/data-quality.html>), there was notable age heaping in the 2020 Census. This has been previously identified by demographers at the Census Bureau (<www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2022/04/population-estimates-covid-19-impacts.html> and more recently <www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2023/05/age-heaping-2020-census-dhc.html>) and work is under way to investigate modifying future products based on the 2020 Census to address this phenomenon. For information on data collection, confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, refer to <<https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/technical-documentation/complete-tech-docs/demographic-and-housing-characteristics-file-and-demographic-profile/2020census-demographic-and-housing-characteristics-file-and-demographic-profile-techdoc.pdf>>.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census Summary File 1 and 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (DHC).

Population Change, the Workforce, and Reskilling/Upskilling

2025

Ages 26 to 85

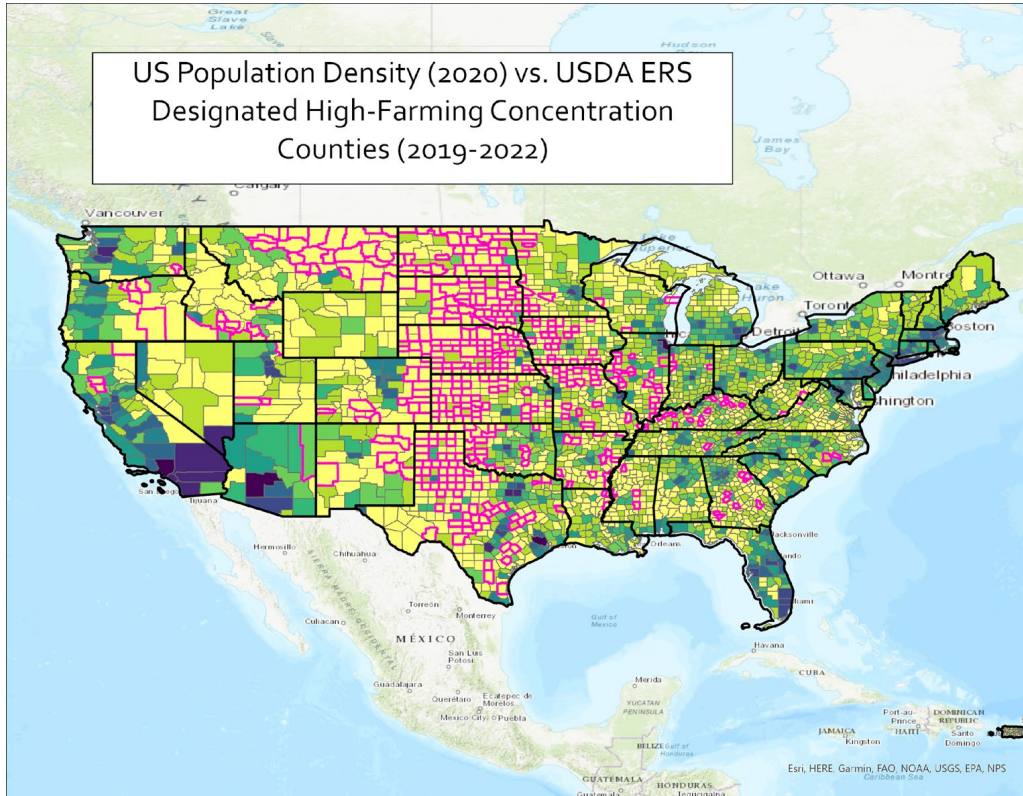
- Upskilling
- Reskilling
- OTJ Training
- Volunteer Training
- Other opportunities

Nontraditional learners seeking opportunities that fit their needs & lifestyles

Ages 19 to 25 (College or workforce)

Ages 6 to 18

Age and Sex Composition: 2020
2020 Census Briefs By Laura Blakeslee, Zoe Caplan, Julie A. Meyer, Megan A. Rabe, and Andrew W. Roberts C2020BR-06 May 2023
<https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2023/decennial/c2020br-06.html>



Darker Colors = Higher Population Density

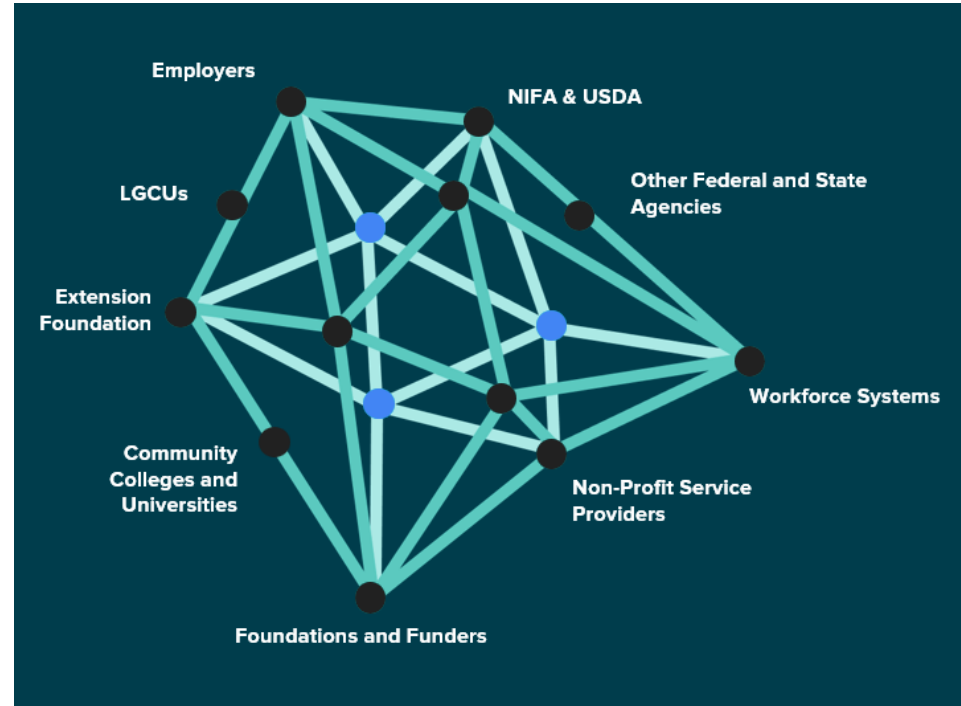
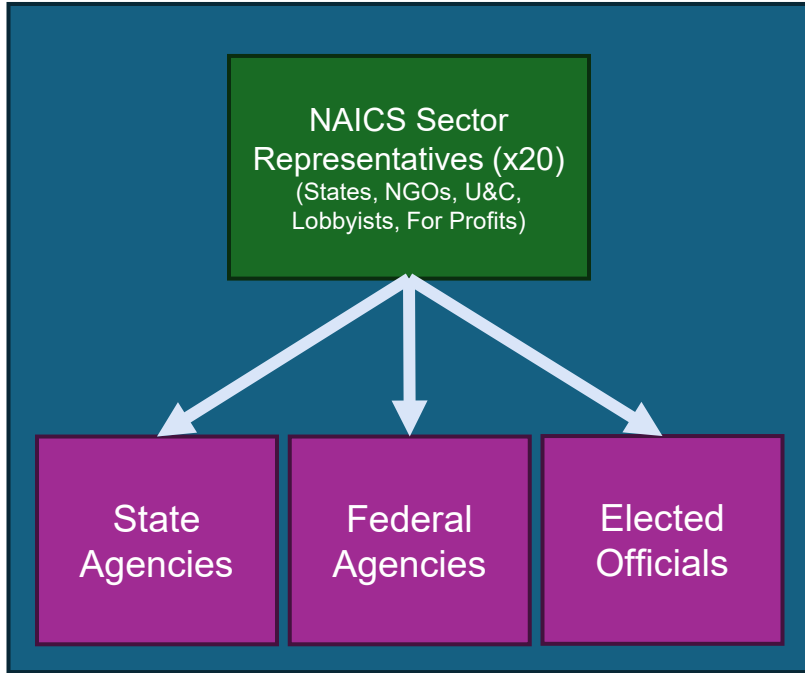
Extension Regions	High-Farming Concentration Counties	Total Counties Within Region	Percent of Total Counties Within Region
Northcentral (Including 1994 & 1890)	253	1019	25%
North East (Including 1890)	2	293	1%
Western (Including 1994)	61	439	14%
Southern (Including 1890 & 1994)	136	1327	10%
Total	452	3078	15%

High farming-concentration counties: Farming accounted for at least 20 percent of the county's earnings or 17 percent of the county's jobs averaged over 2019, 2021, and 2022.

Remember - just because something 'works' in one region doesn't mean it has any relevance in others.

Braided Ecosystem

Moving from Competition Across Sectors to Co-opetition Across Sectors



Competition vs. Co-opetition

Hi, I'm from the (Institution) Extension. USDA funds us to do workforce development in the ag sector. We have a labor shortage in the ag sector and we need your help in making sure our programs are known and people want to work in this sector.

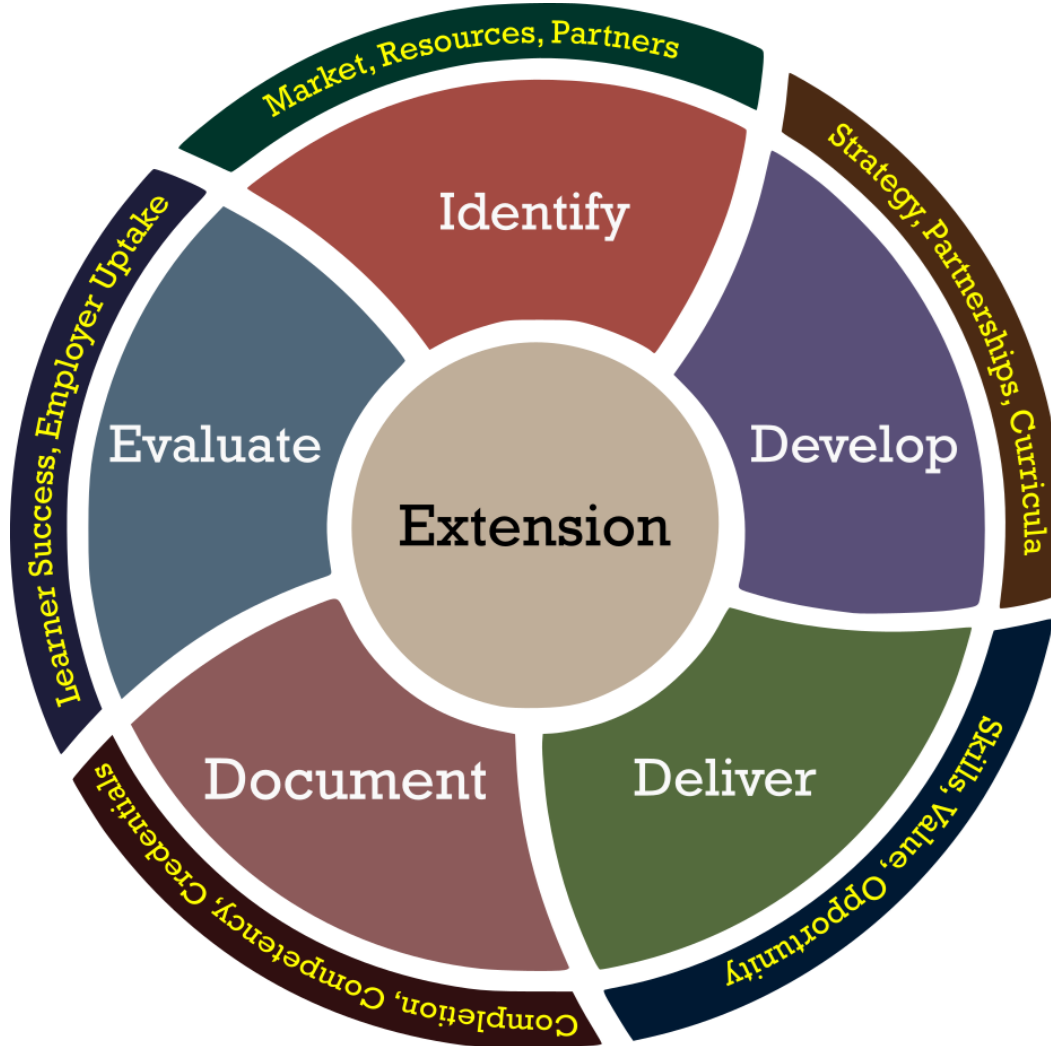
Hi, I'm from (Institution) Extension. USDA funds us to do workforce development in the ag sector. We have a labor shortage in the ag sector. We realize the skills that the ag workforce needs are also in demand in other sectors. We can deliver programming which provides these skills for not only the ag sector but the other sectors as well. How can we work together to build and enhance our skilled labor pool?



Skills Focused Approach

- Skills are the building blocks
- Skills are durable, transferable, marketable products
- Build tailored program stacks at skill intersections

How Extension Can Engage



Extension's Unique Value Proposition

- National scale
- Wide range of skill attainment opportunities
- Access to new and emerging technologies
- Focus on adoption and diffusion of technology
- Spillover Effect

How CES engages the emerging national dialogues and ecosystems around digital credentialing and skilled labor is part of the challenge and opportunity. Many online and community colleges/universities have cracked the code and figured out how to build fit-for-purpose, easily accessible portfolios of training and practice which supports **customers in finding the skills they need at a price they can afford and in the timeframe they need them in.** *Extension can be part of the solution.*



National Registry of Cooperative Extension Prog...



Urban Extensio...



Climate & Extre...



FCS Programs



Tourism, Recre...



4-H/Youth D



Search

Filter



WVSU 4-H Youth- Volunteer Program



Last Update Date

Not updated yet

Logo or Branding

Add attachment(s)

Name of Program, Project, or Curriculum

WVSU 4-H Youth- Volunteer Program

Active?

No

Description

iTIPS Food Safety



Last Update Date

Not updated yet

Logo or Branding



Name of Program, Project, or Curriculum

iTIPS Food Safety

Active?

Yes

iTIPS Food Safety



Last Update Date

Not updated yet

Logo or Branding



Name of Program, Project, or Curriculum

iTIPS Food Safety

Active?

Yes

National Registry of Cooperative Extension Programs and Assets (NRCEPA)

<https://extension.org/tools/registry/>

The AgriProspects Marketplace & Opportunity Generator

The Inputs: Extension & LGCU Opportunities



Data Integration

API Hooks
Input Forms
Delimiter-separated
Values

The AgriProspects Marketplace



List opportunities
Find opportunities
Stack opportunities
Store opportunities

The Consumer



Learners
Earners
Employers
Intermediaries

Digital Wallet



Resumes
Job applications
Training records/portfolios
Experience verifications

The Outputs



Employment
Up/Reskilling
Entrepreneurship
Volunteer opps.
Self-enrichment

What is a Digital Credential?

An electronic representation of competencies, knowledge, and achievement

Why Use a Digital Credential?

They are portable, shareable, and verifiable credentials which can open other learning pathways for learners, earners, and employers

Key Terms

Badge

Credential for single competency or achievement

Micro-credential

Two or more badges

Stacked credential

Combination of multiple micro-credentials

Implementation Steps

1. Identify skills to be credentialed
2. Create badges and criteria
3. Award digital credentials
4. Monitor and evaluate impacts

Closing thoughts: Think like an Entrepreneur

- Understand and talk the talk - learn the vernacular
- Skills are durable, transferable, marketable products
- Build tailored program stacks at skill intersections
- Badge the brand - [Nebraska LEAD program](#)
- Use free to create paid (YouTube/Patreon Model)
- Credential stacks
- Engage in intentional Co-opetition within and outside Extension



AgriProspects SUMMIT

Many Paths, Endless Opportunities



June 24-25, 2025



Virtual
Free Registration



AgriProspects
Workforce Development Network
A Division of the EXTENSION
FOUNDATION

Connect with us

Professional Development Opportunities

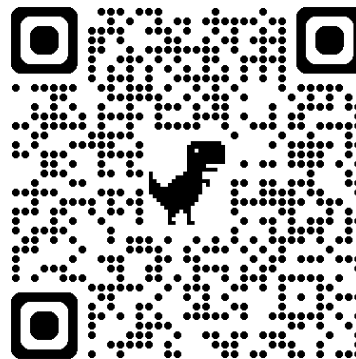
<https://agriprospects.extension.org/events/>

Quarterly Newsletter

<https://agriprospects.extension.org/news-updates/>

AgriProspects Summit

<https://agriprospects.extension.org/agriprospects-summit-2025/>



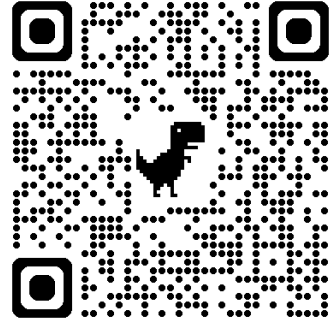
AgriProspects
Workforce Development Network

EXTENSION
FOUNDATION

Round 2 - AgriProspects Mini-grant Program

- Five (5) grants of up to \$200,000 each (\$1 million total)
- Two tracks focused on national/regional/multi-institutional projects whose work focuses on building:
 - Extension's capacity and readiness to engage in evolving and expanding national digital credentialing initiatives for adult agricultural workforce development in rural and urban areas
 - Extension's capacity and readiness to educate around and leverage Artificial Intelligence tools and resources to support the agricultural sector and supply chain and the adult agricultural workforce in rural and urban areas
- Variety of resources and tools available and support webinars planned
- Website: <https://agriprospects.extension.org/mini-grant-round-2/>
- App Portal: <https://registry.extension.org/app/251341709101849>

Website



Application Portal



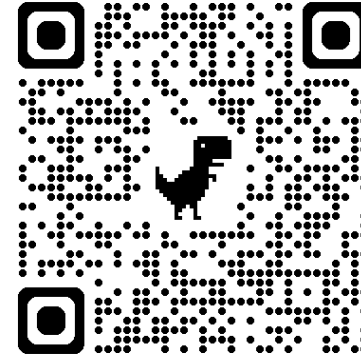
Let's Talk!

1. What workforce development efforts are underway or emerging at your institution? How have you aligned them with employer needs?
2. What are the main barriers (institutional, community, or otherwise) you've encountered in advancing workforce development initiatives?
3. In what ways could you or your team be a stronger internal advocate or connector for workforce development within your institution? What support would be useful for you?
4. Where do you see the greatest opportunities for collaboration - either within Extension, across departments, or with external partners - in building workforce development programming?
5. Do you or your institution use digital credentials (badges, micro-credentials, stacked-credentials, etc.) to meet the needs of adult learners and employers? Do you plan to use them in the future?

Thank you!!!



<https://agriprospects.extension.org/>



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