



Supervised Agricultural Experience

Supervised Agricultural Experience Fact Sheet Placement SAE

“As part of my SAE, I work for a research nursery station as a technician doing cross, self and inbred pollinations on corn test plots to develop better hybrids.” – Tyler Francis, Norborne FFA, Missouri

Placement SAE programs give students an opportunity to “learn by doing” by working for someone else. This can involve work on a farm or ranch, an agricultural business, government agency or community facility, as well as laboratory work and experimentation. These programs allow students to develop skills and gain knowledge in an area of interest while preparing them for future academic and professional endeavors. It also permits students to take what they have learned in the agriculture classroom and apply it to a real world situation. These SAEs, which can be paid or unpaid, may be conducted in any area of agriculture, agribusiness or natural resources.

One of the primary advantages of placement is that students receive supervision and instruction by their employer/mentor outside the classroom. They also have a chance to explore agricultural careers, build a resume and earn money. For employers, placement programs offer an enthusiastic and capable work force with the potential to benefit their business and the community. The placement SAE is very much a team effort between the student, parent or guardian, agriculture teacher and employer. Here are some things all parties need to know to make the program successful.

- Select a program that aligns with student interests and skills but has the potential for personal and career growth.
- Ensure the student uses and maintains a good record keeping system.
- Develop a training plan that includes competencies and skills to be developed.
- Create a placement agreement and obtain parental consent before starting.
- Discuss evaluation methods, grading and other program guidelines.
- Expand the program as additional skills and competencies are learned.
- Enforce local, state and federal laws and regulations.

Examples of Placement SAE Programs

- Media internships for an agriculture-related news program or publication
- Government agency based employment – USDA, USFWS, BLM, etc.
- Laboratory experience – hybrid crop research, soil testing, tissue culturing
- Machinery/equipment sales, marketing, repair, maintenance
- Employment by a greenhouse, nursery or landscaping business
- Farm or ranch work – livestock, grain, fruit, dairy, commercial trees
- Processing industry experience – meat, milk, feed, fruits, vegetables
- Parks and recreation jobs – park maintenance, pool worker, lifeguard
- Retail sales and service positions – feed store, grocery store, flower shop
- Large/small animal care and service – veterinary clinic, pet store, horse stable