

Agriculture Advisory Meeting Minutes
March 23, 2023
11:30 AM
Tech Center 134

ATTENDANCE	Dr. Carl Bridges, VP of Academic Affairs-DACC; Amanda Brown, Illinois Extension Office; Terri Cummings, Dean of Business & Technology-DACC; Steve Fourez, Owner-Fourez Farms; Mitchell Killough, Vermilion County Soil & Water Conservation; Lisa Leigh, Vermilion County Soil & Water Conservation; Brandy Marron, Agriculture Instructor-DACC; Ted Olson, Nutrien Ag Solutions; Larry Tracy, Precision Agronomics; Mynda Tracy, Illinois Extension Office; Kerry Wienke, Vermilion County Farm Bureau
OLD BUSINESS	No new courses were added this year, instead Brandy is focusing on completing the Aquaponics Master Course Certification. At 47 modules, she is about 40% complete. Once she has her certification a new course will be developed that will include hobby and commercial aquaponics.
NEW BUSINESS	<p>A new Ag Technology Certificate was presented to the members. This 3-semester certificate is a response to students that need to learn specific ag related applications that they would implement on their farms. This certificate would include cross curricular training in machining, welding, and pneumatics/controls courses that are already offered at DACC. The students would be using Drone Deploy to be able to analyze crop data. Three or four certifications will be obtained by the students on this path: 1) The Ag Technology Certificate 2) Applicator License (separate aerial applicator certification) 3) Part 107-Drone License 4) OSHA General Industry Certification.</p> <p>The college express program at DACC would offer 4 of the courses needed toward this certificate. This would allow them to finish the certificate in a year after graduation from high school.</p> <p>The members approved of this certificate and the certifications included in it. A discussion between Ag Econ and Ag Marketing and Sales generated thoughts that those going to work for another company would need the marketing and sales course and those working on family farms should take Ag Econ. Some suggestions were to offer CDL. An agreement between CDL would need to be put together, but it would clearly be beneficial to Ag students.</p> <p>Improvements/Advancements. The Farm Bot was purchased for the Ag Program. It is basically a CNC Machine run by a Raspberry Pi and requires programming and robotics. The Bot can plant, water, weed, and measure in different quadrants. The students will be using the Bot, the aquaponics system, and Drone Deploy to focus on experiments and data analysis that have been lacking in the high schools.</p>

	<p>Drone Contest. With the collaboration between DACC’s Ag Program and local 4-H Chapters, DACC held the 1st Annual Drone Contest in 2022. This contest brought local high schools and agriculture businesses together. Business and educational connections were made.</p> <p>Students and teachers took a 3-week drone course that was a paired down version of Brandy’s curriculum. Students and teachers participating in the program all received drones to take back to their high schools.</p> <p>The resulting data from the evaluation of students included increased interest in obtaining drone certification, most students stated they learned about a new career opportunity, over half of students are interested in Precision Ag and specifically drones, and 80% of students found one or more careers that might be a good fit for them as a result of the program.</p> <p>Teachers said the curriculum was easy to use and follow, slideshow/lessons and hands-on, and group activities were the most beneficial, 80% of the teachers said they plan to complete the unit in 2023.</p> <p>The interest in drones expands beyond agricultural use. They can be used by industries using robotics and other technology, it also includes police and security applications.</p> <p>The next contest is May 11, 2023 at DACC. The team (4-H and Brandy) anticipate more schools participating and more businesses setting up tables in the DACC Gym. A letter will go out to local businesses asking for support in the form of sponsorships or participation at the event.</p> <p>The PAS Chapter will assist with the drone competition.</p> <p>Interns. The ag program is always looking for internships for the students. Several are already in place with WITY, Hubner Industries, some of the pork producers. Plant based interns would be a great addition.</p>
<p>ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR</p>	<p>Courses are being offered out at Danville Correctional to persons in custody and Brandy has been teaching a team Life Science course and Ag Econ. She is working to develop paper based labs for Animal Science so she can offer that course. Terri explained to the members that DACC has a relationship with EIU to provide students with transfer programs.</p>
<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p>	<p>2024 TBD</p>
<p>MINUTES SUBMITTED by</p>	<p>Respectfully submitted,</p> <p><i>Lisa J. Osborne</i></p> <p>Lisa J. Osborne Administrative Assistant</p>

