



Act 1131 of 2015
Regional Workforce Continuation Grant

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

DUE JUNE 1, 2018

To:	Arkansas Department of Higher Education
Requesting Institution:	Arkansas State University-Newport
Title of Project:	Northeast Arkansas EAT Continuation Grant Application
Project Partners:	1. Please see attached documents 6. 2. 7. 3. 8. 4. 9. 5. 10.
Requested Budget:	\$644,930.00
Date Submitted:	5/31/2018
Applicant Contact:	Dr. Holly Smith
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Authorized Signatures for Institution

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ASU-Newport

Lead Institution

Michael Nowlin

Authorized Official

Act 1131 of 2015
Regional Workforce Continuation Grant Application

*Please complete each section of this application and submit to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education by **June 1, 2018**. Applications should be emailed to ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu. Please note that only projects that were awarded an implementation grant are eligible to apply for a continuation grant.*

SECTION 1 – PROGRAM NEED

20 Points

Proposals will include a thorough description of the labor needs, as determined by the Local Workforce Development Board, and specifically identify the skills gap employers face in the selected region and will continue to face in the future. Entities seeking grant funds must outline the proposed program and/or equipment needed and how continuation of the program and/or acquisition of equipment will address those labor needs.

Essential Components:

- Regional data demonstrating the need for action - provide empirical data that illustrates needs of the local workforce, with a particular emphasis on anticipated or future needs.
- Clear linkages between grant activities and local needs- clearly illustrate how the proposed grant project is directly linked to addressing the workforce needs and deficits of the region. Successful applications will provide a thorough description of the region's high-demand and high-skill industrial occupations, and identify how the proposed activity will address job candidate deficits in those areas. **Applicants must also submit letters of support from at least two area employers for the proposal, citing need and outlining benefits for local industry.**
- Alignment with Arkansas economic and workforce goals- describe how the proposed project will increase overall higher education attainment in the region and provide clear linkages between a postsecondary credential and the needs of employers.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Program Need (20 Pts)	Significantly addresses a top 3 workforce need in the region. (18–20 Pts)	Addresses in a more limited way a top 3 workforce need in the region. (15–17 Pts)	Addresses in a limited way a less critical workforce need in the region. (11-14 Pts)	Identified labor need is too narrow or not in a critical area. (0–10 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

1. Regional data demonstrating the need for action – provide empirical data that illustrates needs of the local workforce, with a particular emphasis on anticipated or future needs.

Agriculture is the largest industry in Arkansas and accounts for \$16 billion of the state's economy (Arkansas Farm Bureau, 2018; Arkansas Foundation for Agriculture, 2018; University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, 2018). There are currently 14.5 million acres of workable farmland in Arkansas and 97% of those are family owned (Arkansas Farm Bureau, 2018). The state leads the country in rice production (University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, 2018). It is home to Tyson Foods and Riceland Foods, the largest poultry producer and rice exporter in the country respectively. Arkansas also produces a large portion of the country's sorghum, cotton, and soybeans (Arkansas Farm Bureau, 2018). An estimated projected harvest of more than six million acres of rice, cotton, soybeans, corn and sweet potatoes were harvested in 2017(Arkansas WIOA State Plan, 2018).

The demand for skilled workers for positions such as equipment operators, mechanics, and service technicians, agricultural equipment operators, and chemical equipment operators is expected to increase in Arkansas over the next decade (Figure 1). In addition to knowledge of how to operate new equipment and programs, workers must also understand other developing science related to the application of chemicals and the use of GMOs. Workers must understand and implement appropriate application techniques as new chemicals develop for use in farming. Regulation in the safety and use of these chemicals is increasing at both the state and federal level. Additionally, the public is increasingly aware of exposure to chemicals and desire food produced as safely as possible.

When a new technology is released, there is typically a delay in its use or mainstreaming. This is due to the differences in the adoption rate of individuals and the level of expertise that is available to accommodate the use of the technology. The level of expertise is directly related to the educational programming that is available in the local geographic areas. Those areas that have two year technical or four-year college degree will have graduates available with knowledge and experience in the use of the technology. Technical colleges must be at the very least, current with technology to meet industry demand. At most, colleges need to be looking forward to emerging technologies that will be impacting their local industries in the next twenty years.

Precision agriculture is an example of technologies that are quickly adopted and have been impacting agriculture for several years. Colleges are still in the process of catching up with industry needs. The key is to not only be reactive, but create programs keeping an eye for the future and build programs that can mitigate future programs. (Brase, 2016)

GMOs are increasingly in the public spotlight as more crops are modified to be pest resistant, drought resistant, and higher yielding. While these developments help to increase production and provide produce for an ever-expanding global population, people are

concerned about the safety of genetically modified foods for consumption as well as their impact on the environment. Farm workers need to understand these new crops and be aware of any regulations on their use and growth.

2. Clear linkages between grant activities and local needs – clearly illustrate how the proposed grant project is directly linked to addressing the workforce needs and deficits of the region. Successful applications will provide a thorough description of the region’s high-demand and high-skill industrial occupations, and identify how the proposed activity will address job candidate deficits in those areas.

In 2016, there were 21,801 farm related jobs in the eight counties in Northeast Arkansas served by Arkansas State University Newport (ASUN) (Craighead County, Cross County, Independence County, Jackson County, Lawrence County, Poinsett County, White County, and Woodruff County). 2016). The projected growth rate of agriculture and forestry related jobs for the state of Arkansas is 2.34% by 2024 (Arkansas WIOA State Plan, 2018), and the occupational classification “farmers, ranchers and other agricultural managers” is projected to increase by 13.76%, more than any other occupation in the state (Figure 2). There is a growing demand for skilled workers, but the educational needs of these workers are not being met, to full potential by the educational institutions in the area.

Since receiving the implementation grant in 2016, our findings continue to conclude the high demand for skilled workers in not only Jackson County, but also all of Arkansas. One year into the new program and we have already received calls from industry partners wanting to hire our students as interns with the opportunity of beginning full time careers. This in itself proves the need for this type of program to exist and grow in an agricultural dominated area. We have since gained over ten new partners from Northeast Arkansas and students from all over the state.

3. Alignment with Arkansas economic and workforce goals – describe how the proposed project will increase overall higher education attainment in the region and provide clear linkages between a postsecondary credential and the needs of employers.

In order to keep up with demands for the skills needed in today's agriculture sector, it is important for farming regions to have in place the educational base that prepares people entering the workforce to effectively and efficiently use these skills. Unfortunately, the velocity of the development of new technologies makes it difficult for educational providers to keep up with the types of training programs that are needed unless a concerted effort is made to do so.

The EAT initiative is providing agricultural science and technology training across three stages of education: in high school agricultural education programs, at the community college level at ASUN, and at the Baccalaureate level at Arkansas State University (ASTATE). The majority of high schools in the area do not have the capacity to provide modern agricultural education. ASUN is the only community college in the area with an agriculture technology program. To be well-prepared for the modern job market student in agricultural science need to be well versed in a variety of technologies, from geographical information system (GIS) to precision farming techniques to the safe application of appropriate pesticides and fertilizers to maximize production while minimizing damage to the environment. ASUN is now able to meet this need by offering the Ag Technology program.

Occupation	2012	2022	Change	An Change	% Change	Growth %
Farmers, Ranchers & Other Ag. Managers (In Demand)	5,022	5,713	691	69	13.8	1.3
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	1,272	1,386	114	11	9	0.9
Agricultural Workers	1,202	1,310	108	11	9	0.9
Grounds Maintenance Workers	714	784	70	7	9.8	0.9
Landscaping and Grounds keeping Workers (In Demand)	637	700	63	6	9.9	0.9
Animal Care and Service Workers	148	170	22	2	14.9	1.4
Chemical Equipment Operators and Tenders (In Demand)	81	103	22	2	27.2	2.4
Farm Equipment Mechanics and Service Technicians (In Demand)	111	130	19	2	17.1	1.6
Agricultural and Food Science Technicians (In Demand)	53	66	13	1	24.5	2.2
Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers (In Demand)	43	55	12	1	27.9	2.5
Ag. Equipment Operators (In Demand)	162	174	12	1	7.4	0.7
Animal Trainers (In Demand)	71	81	10	1	14.1	1.3
Farm and Home Management Advisors	41	46	5	1	12.2	1.2

Figure 1. Projected percent growth in agricultural related occupations in Arkansas from 2012 to 2022 (from www.discoverarkansas.net).

**Top Ten Growth Occupations, 2012-2022
Ranked by Net Growth**

Occupation	2012 Base Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Net Growth	% Growth
Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	5,022	5,713	691	13.76
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	2,247	2,918	671	29.86
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	2,231	2,647	416	18.65
Personal Care Aides	851	1,259	408	47.94
Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic	935	1,242	307	32.83
Team Assemblers	2,995	3,301	306	10.22
Registered Nurses	1,747	2,046	299	17.12
Nursing Assistants	1,786	2,055	269	15.06
Waiters and Waitresses	1,375	1,625	250	18.18
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,952	2,187	235	12.04

Figure 2. Top ten growth occupations in Arkansas from 2012 to 2022 (from www.discoverarkansas.net).

References

- Arkansas Farm Bureau “Arkansas Farming Facts.” www.arfb.com/for-consumers/arkansas-ag-facts. Accessed May 15, 2018.
- Arkansas Foundation for Agriculture. “Economy/Jobs.” <http://www.growingarkansas.org>. Accessed May 15, 2018.
- Arkansas Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan. Program Year 2018. www.dws.arkansas.gov. Accessed May 15, 2018.
- Discover Arkansas. www.discoverarkansas.net. Accessed May 15, 2018.
- University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Research and Extension. “Economic Contribution of Arkansas Agriculture 2014.” www.dividion.uaex.edu. Accessed May 15, 2018.
- University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Research and Extension. “Row Crops and Commercial Horticulture 2018.” www.uaex.edu. Accessed May 15, 2018.
- Brase, Terry. “Emerging Technologies as Applied to Agriculture.” May 10, 2016. Accessed May 15, 2018.

SECTION 2 – PROGRAM PLAN

25 Points

Program plans must be designed to meet the goals and core requirements of the Regional Workforce Grants program as well as the following Essential Components:

- Detailed project timeline and overview- provide a month-by-month overview of the critical convenings, activities, and actions that will comprise the project.
- Measurable objectives for each phase of the project- detail the metrics utilized throughout the project to track how credentialed job candidates possessing the skills needed by employers will be provided.
- Project governance and accountability plan- clearly describe the plan for governance, meetings, and decision-making structure; identify a project director; and identify members of a project steering committee that will maintain oversight throughout the project period.
- Pathways articulation and support- clearly describe the educational pathway(s) and support services that will be developed, or existing pathways that will be enhanced, to meet the identified workforce needs. Pathways should incorporate all appropriate student outcomes from short-term industry-recognized credentials through the highest certificate or degree programs appropriate to the identified career goals and include career step-out points at the completion of each credential.
- Role of equipment request- required only for those proposals seeking equipment purchases. Outline how equipment purchase will specifically address local labor market needs; provide detailed description of equipment, educational value of equipment in preparing workforce, and justification for purchase.
- Performance assessment- clearly define measurable outcomes to be achieved through continuation of the plan and strategies to measure and report achievement of those outcomes. Priority will be given to programs which prepare candidates for high wage jobs or which create capacity to move candidates from unemployment to employment.
- Program plans must be designed to meet the goals and core requirements of the Regional Workforce Grants program. At a minimum, the plan must include a detailed project timeline and overview, measurable objectives for each phase of the project, a project governance and accountability plan, pathways articulation and support, the role of any equipment requested, and a performance assessment.

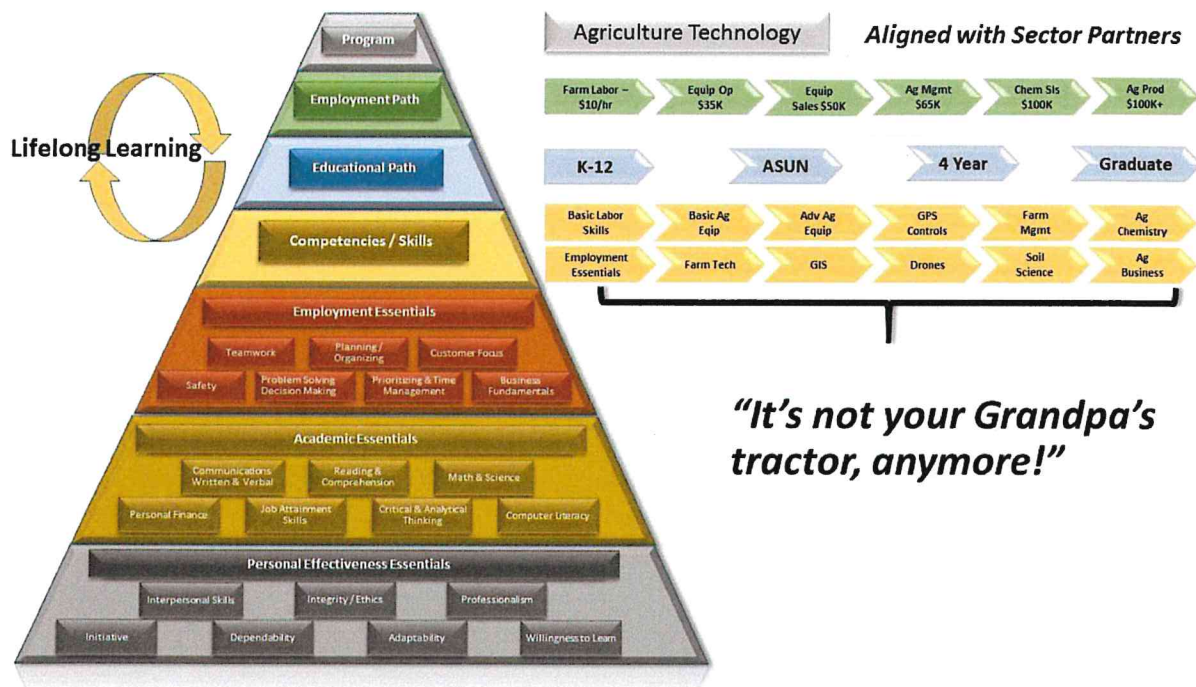
Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Program Plan (25 Pts)	Plan addresses all goals and core requirements and properly connects all activities to measurable outcomes that address workforce needs. (22–25 Pts)	Plan addresses most goals and requirements and substantially connects activities to measurable outcomes. (18–21 Pts)	Plan addresses many goals and requirements and connects some activities to measurable outcomes. (14–17 Pts)	Plan lacks significant requirements or connections of activities to measurable outcomes are not clear. (0–13 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Program Plan: Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) Initiative

Pathways Articulation and Support



Mission, Goals, and Objectives

Regional Workforce Continuation Grant Application

Mission

The Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) initiative is creating a collaborative process to address the current and future workforce- training needs of the Agriculture and Food Production industries in Northeast Arkansas.

Goals

1. Continue to enhance agriculture curriculum in partner high schools emphasizing in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) disciplines.
2. Improve and further our collaborative workforce development-training program that will mitigate the skills gap for mid-level farm and food production workers.
3. Sustain an integrated educational pathway for regional workers that seek employment in farm management, seed and chemical industry management, crop consulting, or other agriculture related management fields.
4. Integrate an AG Technology pathway through the IGNITE program to allow high school students to receive a Certificate of Proficiency in Agronomy.
5. Provide incoming students with scholarships to aid in tuition and books. This will allow us to continue working on acquiring privately funded scholarships to help in sustaining the program.
6. Increase our producer, industry and high school partner numbers. Our goal with this is to have numerous job opportunities as our students go through the program and after graduation.

Goal 1: High school students and recent high school graduates have traditionally filled the entry-level agriculture jobs in Northeast Arkansas. As agriculture practices have become more sophisticated, a skills gap has emerged and these entry level positions have become seasonal general labor with workers paid minimum wage with no benefits. Regional producers (letters of support attached) have committed to pay \$10.00 to \$12.00 hourly wages for entry-level workers if they are able to demonstrate good work ethic and use of existing farm technology.

Objective 1: Further enhance existing programs in partner high schools (\$4,000 for each partner high school with the addition of two schools= \$36,000)

- Implement the Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education (CASE) as an instructional system for regional high schools. The National Science Foundation recommends this curriculum. Through its system of professional development, curriculum, assessment and certification, CASE equips teachers to elevate student experiences in the agriculture classroom, and prepares students for success in college and careers emphasizing science, technology, engineering, and math. This system was researched during the implementation phase, but additional time for actual application is needed.
- Faculty from ASUN will visit each partner high school program each semester.
 - Participate in advisory committees

- Team teach and assist in STEM disciplines
- Provide instruction in team building, critical thinking, and conflict resolution to develop required employability skills for students.

Goal 2. According to local producers and ag industry, full-time farm workers in our region can earn up to \$42,000 annually and provided transportation, a cell phone and insurance. Seed production and storage, crop insurance, implement companies and consulting services are target employers (letters of support attached).

Objective 1: Create a pathway that will include a pathway for a Certificate of Proficiency in Agronomy and a pathway for a Technical Certificate in Precision Agriculture.

- Program completers will earn a Class A Commercial Driver's License.
- Program completers will also earn industry certifications in basic service maintenance, gain their private pesticide applicators license, grain bin-safety certification, and forklift certification.

Objective 2: Continue to fund the Applied Science agriculture instructor/Eat Program Coordinator.

- Coordinate with all EAT partners and be responsible for grant reporting.
- Instruct/oversee courses in the AAS Agriculture Technology Program.
- Coordinate collaborative learning/apprenticeships with local producers and industry.

Objective 2: Purchase lab equipment for workforce skill development (\$188,000.00)

- The EAT program was able to purchase most of our equipment needs during the implementation phase. However, we have found in the past year of actual teaching, we could greatly utilize other equipment for the program. Our current partners have offered resources to us, yet the timing is not always great when we need to borrow something. We developed the curriculum to follow a growing year with our producers and as we need some of their equipment, it is sometimes not readily available. These pieces of equipment will include a ½-ton truck to pull our precision mobile lab, an eighteen wheeler and hopper bottom trailer, which will prepare the students for taking the Commercial Driving Course, and a 6 inch sub well to be placed on our existing twenty one acres.

Objective 3: Build equipment shop facility (\$100,000) Facility will be required to maintain life cycle of equipment and as a lab for equipment use and maintenance. As a result of the implementation grant, ASUN was able to purchase two tractors with Autosteer, one tractor with a loader, cargo trailer as a piece of the mobile lab, a John Deere Gator with attached sprayer, multiple implements and needed tools to perform maintenance and service work on the equipment. However, we do not currently possess a permanent dwelling to store the equipment These facilities would also be used to teach Preventative Maintenance Checks and Services (PMCS) for each of the pieces of equipment.

Goal 3. Currently there are no educational pathways for regional workers that allows them to continue their employment while they pursue training that will lead to a position in farm management, consulting, seed and/or chemical industry management or independent agriculture producer. Upon research from producers and industry, we found that managers in agriculture and agriculture related fields earn from \$65,000 up to \$100,000 if they complete a Bachelor's or Master's degree and have applicable experience.

Objective 1: Create an Associate of Science Degree that will articulate to a university Bachelor of Science in Agriculture.

- Collaborate with Dean of Engineering and Agriculture at ASTATE or another accredited university in the state of Arkansas to develop an appropriate transfer curriculum.
- Establish a Memorandum of Agreement with 4-year universities to accept the AS Agriculture.

Goal 4: ASU-Newport currently offers the IGNITE program for high school students. The program allows juniors and seniors to complete a certificate of proficiency in different areas of study while dual enrolled in high school. The ag technology program would like to add a pathway for students to receive a certificate in agronomy, in conjunction with creating more enrollment into the college program. This addition would be added in Fall 2019.

Objective 1: Create concurrent program for juniors and seniors to pursue certificate of proficiency in agronomy.

Objective 2: Provide scholarships to students in the IGNITE Academy who are enrolled the Ag Technology pathway.

Objective 3: Recruit the seniors to the Ag Technology program as full time students.

Goal 5: Scholarships: We are actively working to grow our private scholarship funds through the agriculture industry. We have a very large support group in the agriculture community and in the industry. Local producers and agribusinesses are eager to support and help fund the Agriculture Technology program because they see the benefits of the program. However, these industries will take time to finalize funds and start the scholarship funding. We are asking for \$60,000 until private funding can be secured. This amount will partially fund 15 students at \$1,000 per semester for the entirety of the program.

Objective 1: Continue to reach out to our agriculture industries to provide scholarship funding for the program.

Objective 2: Have the program at least 25% funded through agriculture industries.

Objective 3: Start agriculture industry sponsored positions in the program. This will be written agreements between the Agribusiness owner and the student who will work for the agribusiness owner during and temporarily prior of school year. In return, the agribusiness owner or company will fully fund the student's college education while in the Agriculture Technology Program.

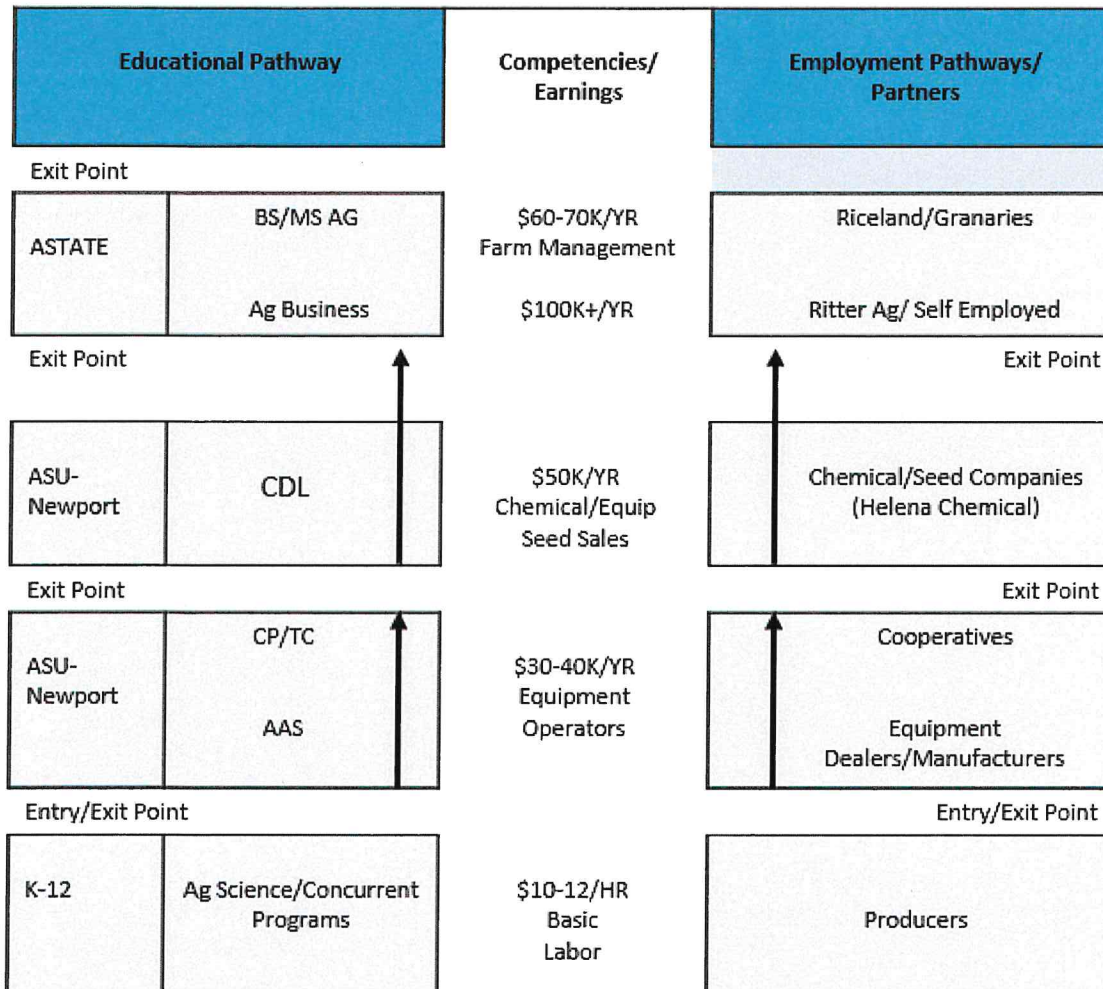
Goal 6: Industry/ Producer and High School Partnerships: When applying for the implementation grant, we had gained multiple partnerships for all aspects in agriculture: producers, industry, educational and government officials. Throughout this past two years, we have secured an additional ten new partnerships.

Objective 1: Retain our current partnerships and their resources to help further educate the students.

Objective 2: Work closely with new partners to secure needed ideas and resources. In addition, gain at least fifteen more new partnerships, as we work to build the employment opportunities for our graduates.

Objective 3: Gain two new high school partnerships within the next two years. This will be a lifeline for new ag students into the program. These high schools will be Cedar Ridge High School and Bradford High School. They currently have students enrolled on campus through the IGNITE program.

Agriculture Educational/Skills/Earning Pathways



Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) Project Timeline

July, 2018	Notice of Approval and Permission to Proceed
August, 2018	2 nd Year of Ag Technology Program begins 1 st Funding Disbursement (25%) Initial Meeting High School Equipment Committee
September, 2018	High School visits
October, 2018	Initial 2018 meeting of NEA EAT Advisory Committee
November, 2018	Set up Internship Opportunities Student Recruiting
December, 2018	Quarterly Report Due to Project Director
January, 2019	2 nd Funding Disbursement (25%) Purchase instructional Equipment
February, 2019	Delivery of equipment to nine partnering high schools
March, 2019	Quarterly Report Due to Project Director Student Recruiting
April, 2019	Potential Employers
May, 2019	Recruiting/Advising/Enrollment for Fall 2019
June, 2019	Quarterly Report Due to Project Director Progress Report due to ADHE
July, 2019	Internship Employer Initial Meetings
August, 2019	3 rd Funding Disbursement (25%)
September, 2019	Quarterly Report Due to Project Director
October, 2019	NEA EAT Advisory Committee Meeting
November, 2019	Internship Employer Meetings
December, 2019	Progress Report Due to ADHE
January, 2020	4 th Funding Disbursement (25%)
February, 2020	Progress update from Internship Employers
March, 2020	Quarterly Report Due to Project Director
April, 2020	Interview set up with potential employers
May, 2020	Update and Distribution of Survey to Regional Employers
June, 2020	Final Progress Report Due to ADHE
July, 2020	Grant Completion presented to Steering Committee
August, 2020	EAT Survey Findings Distributed Project High-lights Report Presented to EAT Partnership Implementation Grant Project Ends

Measurable Objectives – Participant (Student) Outcomes

The numbers in the table below represent Northeast Arkansas EAT's composite targeted participant outcomes. The projected outcomes data are also available for each year of the implementation grant period. Each partner's shares of the projected outcomes data will be included in a Memorandum of Agreement between ASU Newport and each of the partner high schools and Arkansas State University. EAT has a tracking system which applies consistent data definitions, and the partners will report participant data at designated intervals. Both Ag Technology instructors are tracking the students enrollment, grades and, through advising on a one-on-one basis, we will be able to follow the students from their entrance of the program to employment after graduation.

Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) Participant Outcomes	
Outcome	Participants
High School Students Served	280
High School Students Matriculated to ASUN	40
Academic Credentials Attained	50
Industry Certifications Attained	80
Work Based Learning	20
Employment	100
Transfer to University	20

Project Governance and Accountability

Arkansas State University-Newport will manage the grant and be responsible for fiscal and administrative processes. Northeast Arkansas EAT fiscal, programmatic, and reporting processes will be implemented through memoranda of understanding between Arkansas State University-Newport and the Northeast Arkansas EAT partner high schools and will be in compliance with state procurement regulations and Workforce Initiative Act grant requirements.

Meetings will be held no less than quarterly and will focus on project administration, accountability, and the accrual, monitoring, and reporting of data and other information related to project outcomes. These meetings are exclusive of meetings designed to present outcomes and engage stakeholders across the region.

The Northeast Arkansas EAT Program Coordinator will continue to be responsible for: ensuring the project stays on schedule, that project partners share information and resources, that joint activities are arranged and well publicized for the benefit of partners and other stakeholders, that the project is monitored for maximizing outcomes, that project data is

collected and aggregated quarterly, and that reports and requests for information are submitted or responded to in a timely fashion.

The project will draw on the existing Northeast Arkansas EAT network of industry, advisory councils, training consortiums, post-secondary consortiums, K-12 educational cooperatives, and other partners to identify and recruit additional partners for addressing workforce needs. The project Steering Committee will continue to maintain oversight of the initiative and will be comprised of representatives from the ASUN, ASTATE, local producers and local industry leaders. They will seek input and guidance from other Northeast Arkansas EAT partners as needed.

The Steering Committee will include the following:

Committee Chair: Dr. Sandra Massey, Ed.D, Chancellor, ASUN or designated representative

Vice Chair: ASUN Interim Dean for Applied Science Mr. Michael Nowlin

ASTATE: Dr. Timothy N. Burcham, P.E., Ph.D., Dean, College of Agriculture and Technology

Local Producer: Mr. Dennis Haigwood

Local Producer: Mr. Tommy Young

Local Industry Leader: Mr. Randy Cooper

Local Industry Leader: Mr. Randy Chlepecka

Newport Schools Superintendent: Dr. Larry Bennet

Jackson County Schools Superintendent: Mr. Chester Shannon

Northeast Arkansas Career and Readiness Center: Mr. Eddie Crain, Director

ASUN Assistant Instructor of Agriculture Technology: Matt Hardin

High School Equipment Committee: The Superintendent of each partner School District will appoint a representative on the High School Equipment Committee. They will select a Chair and Recorder during the first meeting. ASUN will appoint a non-voting advisor for this committee.

Role of Equipment Requested:

Equipment costs were included in the associated Goals and their supporting Objectives to demonstrate their importance on student learning and their projected impact on our regional labor market. There are no community colleges in Arkansas whose program of study includes precision agriculture. We have clearly stated the need for a modern agriculture program in

Northeast Arkansas and have demonstrated that there is a growing skills gap in agriculture related industry. The main cause of this growing skills gap is the prohibitive cost of training. The primary cost for sustaining a training program continues to be equipment.

The Northeast Arkansas EAT partners realize that no single partner could sustain equipment costs with current emerging technology trends. The equipment funded through this grant will be shared by each education partner and will support students in a five county service area. Our local producers have signed letters of support that commit millions of dollars in equipment for training and cooperative learning experience. Our students need a basic understanding of the equipment, its operation, and general service maintenance prior to using equipment that is used on operational farms. Because of the implementation grant, we were able to purchase most of the needed equipment for teaching. However, once the program began, we saw a need for other pieces of equipment to further teach the needed skillsets. Our goal is to have exceptionally knowledgeable graduates at the end of the two-year program.

We are requesting the following equipment:

1. Equipment Facility: This will house our current and future equipment and serve as a classroom for the lab courses taught.
2. A ½-ton pickup truck: The implementation grant allowed us to purchase the needed equipment and trailer for a mobile precision Ag. Lab. However, we do not have a vehicle secured on the Newport campus that allows us to take the lab to local high schools. A vehicle purchased for the sole purpose of this program is highly needed.
3. Eighteen Wheeler and Hopper bottom trailer: Full access to this type of equipment will allow students to become successful drivers on farms and granaries. This equipment will also aid in preparing students to gain their Class A Commercial Driver's Licenses. ASUN's CDL instructors will give the actual driving course. The eighteen wheeler and trailer will be utilized to train both agriculture and CDL trainees.
4. Six-inch electric sub well: to be placed on the ten acres of farmland listed below for irrigation purposes.
5. Ten acres of farmland: We currently have access to multiple farms in Jackson County, but due to distance and timing, we are restricted as to when we can take our students for off- site teaching. Having ten acres of land that is ours, will allow us to have full access at all times. Our students will receive more training throughout the semesters.
6. Scholarships: We are asking for money to help partially fund our incoming students for the next two years until we are able to secure the remainder private scholarship and sponsorships.
7. Faculty Professional Development: These funds will allow the two faculty members to obtain their Part 107 license to properly teach and train using Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.
8. Two full-time faculty salaries: The continuation grant will fund both the grant coordinator position and benefits, along with the second Ag instructor salary for both 2019 and 2020.

Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT)
Initiative Partners

In addition to the current list below, we have gained eight new industry and producer partners in the past year. We also are asking for the addition of two new high schools.

Education Partners

Arkansas State University-Newport
Arkansas State University Jonesboro
Nettleton High School
Harrisburg School District
McCrary School District
Newport School District
Jackson County School District
Marked Tree School District
Northeast Arkansas Career & Technical Center

Producers

Holden Conner Company
G&G Farms
Haigwood Family Farms
Rutledge & Rutledge Farms
Connie J Waters
Generation Three Partnership Farms
Eagle Lake Farms
Currier Farms

Industry Partners

Young's Irrigation & Equipment, Inc.
Ritter Agribusiness
Farmers Supply Association
Helena Chemical Company
Greenway Equipment
Farmers Oil Corporation
BrASE, LLC
Farm Bureau
University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service
Crop Production Services

New Industry/Producer Partners

Zack's Flying Service
ProAg Services, LLC
Trey Hare Custom Spraying, Inc.
SFR Seed, LLC
Bell Flying, Inc.
Carroll Mears Farms, Inc.
Hutchinson Farms
Tupelo Planting Company

New High School Partners

Cedar Ridge High School
Bradford High School

SECTION 3 – STRENGTH OF PARTNERSHIP

20 Points

Proposals are required to address how the program plan incorporates each of the mandatory partners, as identified above, in a meaningful role.

Essential Components:

- Detailed description of role of each partner in continuation of the project- describe how each partner will continue to carry out components of the grant project; provide a description of assigned tasks for each of the mandatory partners; identify specific personnel and the roles they will play throughout the project; describe the integration of each role into the overall project; and describe the process for implementing fully articulated pathways from K-12 through a baccalaureate degree, as appropriate.
- Capabilities of each partner in ensuring project success- discuss the unique strengths of each partner in continuing the implemented project; describe how each partner is qualified to continue to participate in the project and how each partners strengthens the overall partnership.
- Consideration of all potential partners in the region – describe the process for identifying each selected partner, including the consideration of regional community colleges, universities, public schools, education service cooperatives, businesses and industries, career and technical education programs, multidistrict vocational centers, and private partnerships.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Strength of Partnership (20 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation and each partner has a defined role with identified critical contributions. (18–20 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation but partner roles are not clearly defined. (15–17 Pts)	Plan lacks one or two important partners or not all partners are critical to success of the plan. (11–14 Pts)	Partner participation is too narrow or some partners do not contribute meaningfully. (0–10 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Agriculture remains the economic underpinning of the Northeast Arkansas-Delta region. The industry of agribusiness has within the past two decades, undergone enormous technological changes, yet education providers have not kept pace with these changes. Nor, have they revised their curriculum to meet the changing demands and needs of the agribusiness community. As one of our farming partners said, "Mules are just a memory." This grant addresses filling this important gap through a strong alignment of partners.

ASUN has assembled a team of dedicated individuals who bring years of knowledge and expertise to the table and comprise the partners in this alliance for this initiative and pledge their support:

* ASUN's own administrative team: Chancellor, Dr. Sandra Massey; Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Dr. Holly Ayers; Vice Chancellor for Workforce and Economic Development, Charles Appleby; and Interim Dean of Applied Sciences, Michael Nowlin.

* Arkansas State University (ASTATE), College of Agriculture and Technology, headed by Dr. Timothy Burcham;

* U.S. Senator John Boozman, U.S. Congressman Rick Crawford, Arkansas Senator Arkansas State Senator, Ronald Caldwell, and Arkansas State Representative, Michael John Gray, legislators from the Northeast Arkansas-Delta region which these schools serve;

* Northeast Arkansas Career and Technical Center;

* Nine K-12 CTE/ school district partners;

* The White River Planning and Development District, Inc., the Newport Economic Development Commission.

* Ten area producers that own or control over 250,000 acres of production farmland.

*Regional Agri-Business leaders that represent chemical, seed, consulting, and insurance services.

The agricultural sector that comprises Northeast Arkansas EAT includes ten prominent, local farming families whose holdings represent more than 250,000 acres of Northeast Arkansas-Delta farmland currently under crops. These partner farmers all come from multi-generation farm-owning families, one going back to the establishment of the state of Arkansas. The land and farming are in their blood. Their commitment to keeping Arkansas a major agricultural producing state and keeping the brightest and the best of our children in Arkansas is sincere and unwavering. Our partners all believe that to build a stronger, better Arkansas tomorrow, we need to retain our youth. To do this, we must offer them an

opportunity to a better life and gainful employment. The letters of commitment are appended at the end of this proposal.

This partnership envisions a pathway to meet the needs of our agricultural community. Agriculture is the heart of our area's economic development. The commitment to strengthening and supporting the agricultural sector is evidenced in the letters from our legislators. This coalition is erected on three building blocks to provide a strong educational agriculture technology program that will, in turn, provide credentialed workers who meet the needs of all the members of this alliance:

- * Partners who help with determining the real world need;
- * Partners who will close the partner-identified skills gaps;
- * Partners who will be the employers of this product: credentialed completers. These are the youth of the Northeast-Delta, who will remain in Arkansas by virtue of increased agricultural productivity and a revitalized, thriving Delta.

Representatives from the Workforce Development Boards, the Economic Development Boards, and the agribusiness community have already come together to identify and clearly define the gaps. They have already presented real world needs and have met with ASUN to discuss best practices needed to formulate the parameters of this project. The first goal of this coalition was to obtain a clear understanding of the gaps in education and training to meet the needs of today's agricultural world and to identify the entire supply chain as it pertains to our region. These members are committed to continue to serve as an advisory board throughout the entire project.

ASUN will be the training collaborator and interface for the K-12 partners, A-State College of Agriculture and Technology, and the workforce and agribusiness community alliance. ASUN will integrate the partners into an educational pathway continuum that moves students from K-12 through employment. ASUN and all our partners will work together to develop and implement the EAT strategy and curriculum. This continuum will allow students to enter and exit to employment and then to re-enter to further advance their careers.

Core elements will begin with an assessment of existing skills and skill gaps. These will be addressed through basic skills instruction, student support, and will have ultimately a certification based on best practices. ASUN, in conjunction with the Workforce Development Board and the Agribusiness Advisory Board, will develop an agricultural workforce readiness program. ASUN will also work with A-State's College of Agriculture and Technology to provide a seamless pathway for a four year degree if students wish to pursue that option rather than going immediately into the workplace.

ASUN presently is engaged in a robust, vibrant, concurrent program partnerships with the K-2 schools in their service area. These collaborations have been integral to the ASUN-K-12 concurrent career pathway model since 2002. ASUN has served more than 5000

enrollments in little more than a decade. ASUN believes that this shows how well we work with our K-12 partners to help their students succeed.

The secondary technical center and concurrent enrollment programs with the eight high schools in our area that do not have career and technical centers are the means by which high school CTE students participate in college technical programs as the entry point to earning Certificates of Proficiency, Technical Certificates, and often the Associate of Applied Sciences. Those high school students who will participate in this program will earn concurrent college credits that will position them to scale the stackable credentials pathway that will ultimately lead to good jobs working or to continue in the agribusiness field at a four- year university. At every level, the agribusiness partners will be integrated into the program so that ASUN can provide earning outcomes for both the students and the region.

The EAT career pathway model includes a pipeline for high school students to enter into college technical programs through either a secondary technical center such as the Northeast Arkansas Career and Technical Center or from the concurrent CTE programs at the five participating high schools. These schools will engage with ASUN in this initiative in several ways:

- * Student Participation in concurrent college credit opportunities, including a career pathway that leads either to further education at both the two- year and four-year level or to gainful employment in the agricultural field.
- * Collaboration with ASUN faculty and staff in student recruitment, activities, and promotions of targeted pathways such as classroom presentations, parent nights, Future Farmers of America activities, college/program tours, and New Student Orientations.
- * Collaboration with Career Coach Program and activities.
- * Participation in ASUN's one credit hour College and Life Skills class to help students learn college and real world survival skills.
- * Access to students regarding admission/enrollment, financial aid, assessment measures, and other college-related processes to prepare these students for success.
- * Collaboration with Career Pathways to assist in providing their clients with opportunities in the agricultural technological fields.
- * Collaboration with workforce and agribusiness partners to assure CTE programs and employment relevance.
- * Participation on planning discussion.

The workforce and agribusiness employer level of engagement will vary based on capacity and time involved as indicated by their letters of commitment; future employer partners will assume significant roles:

- * Hiring of qualified credentialed graduates
- * Preferential hiring consideration of qualified credential graduates
- * Interviews with graduates and new completers
- * Mentoring
- * Work-based experiences; e.g. job shadowing, internships, apprenticeships, etc.
- * Subject matter expertise; such as, guest speakers in classes, event judges, skills requirements, and /or feedback regarding program content and direction; assessment, and credentials
- * Workplace tours
- * Participating in job and career fairs
- * Provision of program resources: career based materials, shop/lab supplies, equipment, instructors, and/or other donations
- * Participation in planning discussions.

The attached letters of support provide evidence of the strength of commitment pledged by the Northeast Arkansas EAT alliance.

SECTION 4 – BUDGET PLAN

15 Points

Proposals will include a detailed financial plan that maximizes efficient use of existing resources and a completed budget template.

Essential Components:

- Clear alignment between funding request and grant activities- detailed discussion of how each component of the grant budget supports the goals and stated outcomes of the program.
- Institutions may request up to \$1 million over two years that will provide resources to continue approved Phase 2 projects.
- Local match of at least 10% of the total request, with a maximum cap of \$50,000- all proposals will include a plan for local funding to match 10% of the total grant proposal. For example, a grant requesting \$400,000 in funding would be required to provide \$40,000 in matching funds. However, the local match is capped at \$50,000, meaning grants in excess of \$500,000 will have the same match as a \$500,000 project.

Note: With a submitted written commitment and payment guarantee from an industry partner, internship wages paid during the initial twenty-four (24) months of this program may be used to offset the local match amount on a dollar-to-dollar basis. Additionally, wages paid to incumbent workers of the employer while enrolled in academic training may be deducted from the match as well. Any entity wishing to utilize this method of funding the match must include the appropriate documentation with their proposal and, if selected for funding, will be monitored to ensure compliance.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Budget Plan (15 Pts)	Plan identifies efficiencies that take full advantage of existing human and physical resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (13-15 Pts)	Plan includes significant efficiencies from existing resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (10-12 Pts)	Plan includes limited efficiencies from existing resources or includes some questionable resource requests. (7-9 Pts)	Budget includes limited or no existing resources from partners or includes requests deemed unnecessary. (0-6 Pts)

Section 4.1 – Budget Plan Detail

Please provide your detailed financial plan in the box below.

PROGRAM LEADERSHIP SUPPORT COSTS

A1. Personnel/Stipend

\$233,930 (\$104,958.00, FY19; \$128,972.00, FY 20)

Salary/fringe benefits/stipends: Project Director/AAS Faculty (\$60,078.00 FY19/ \$63,194.00 FY20)

: Agriculture Faculty (\$44,880 FY19/\$45,778.00FY20)

ASUN will pay fringe benefits for this position.

: Adjunct Salary (\$0, FY19; \$20,000, FY20)

A2. Travel

\$5,000.00 (\$2,500,FY19; \$2,500,FY20)

Grant related travel, such as meetings, workshops, career development, conferences, dissemination of the EAT marketing materials.

A3. Other

OTHER DIRECT COSTS

B1. Equipment

\$288,000 All equipment will be purchased during FY19.

1. An equipment shop/facility (\$100,000) that will house current equipment and future purchases.
2. ½-ton truck: (\$40,000) this truck will be utilized to pull the already purchased mobile precision Ag lab to partnering high schools and to potential recruiting events. The college does not currently have a vehicle permanently housed on the Newport Campus for this type of use.
3. Eighteen Wheeler and Hopper Bottom Trailer: (\$80,000) will allow students to train and prepare for the Class A CDL driving test, which is embedded into the Ag Technology curriculum.
4. 6-inch electric well: (\$20,000) the well will be placed on the ten acres, if approved, to maintain proper irrigation and used as a precision Ag teaching tool.
5. We are allocating \$36,000 for each existing participating high school and for the addition of two new partnering schools to use towards the purchase of one needed piece of equipment. The High School Equipment Committee will evaluate and approve all purchases collaboratively to determine what equipment will support student training.
6. Greenhouse: (\$12,000) the greenhouse will be a teaching tool for agronomy, chemicals, fertilizers, soils and plant science projects. One of our goals for the future is to place a community garden on the campus and the addition of a greenhouse would allow students to grow plants from seeds and transplantation processes as we move them into the outside garden

B2. Materials and Supplies

\$40,000 (\$25,000, FY19; \$15,000, FY20)

Cost of program materials and supplies for Precision Agriculture will include, but not limited to, instructor instructional supplies, fuel, lubricants, irrigation needs, classroom lab supplies, seed and chemicals.

B3. Publication Costs/Documentation/Dissemination

\$3,000 (\$2,000, FY19; \$1,000, FY20)

The EAT partners have developed a logo and branding during the planning grant. The two new partnering high schools will receive banners supporting the initiative as well as handouts. This will include promotional including decals and other items delivered to high schools and business partners.

B4. Consultant Services

\$15,000.00 (\$7,500.00, FY19; \$7,500.00, FY20)

Funds will allow consultants to provide training and presentations on such areas of UAV software, John Deere software, etc. This will cover travel, hotel and cost of training.

B5. Other**Scholarships**

\$60,000 (\$30,000, FY19; \$30,000, FY20)

The scholarships will partially fund 15 students at \$1,000 per semester for the entirety of the Ag Technology program.

Student Support Services**Cost Sharing/Required Local Match**

ASUN will pay fringe benefits for the Assistant Instructor of Agriculture \$37,300.00

Seven high school partners that have a dedicated Agriculture teacher who has committed to this initiative: \$210,000.00

ASUN has thirty acres on the Newport campus that will be used for equipment labs, will be dedicating a classroom with plant science lab, 2 medium size tractors, and 40 acres of tillable land at our Marked Tree campus. Estimated contribution in excess of \$100,000.

Our partner producers have committed up to 20 internships, over 50,000 acres of farmland for lab use, and use of equipment that would be valued well over a million dollars.

Section 4.2 – Budget Plan Template

Please complete the budget template below. Totals will calculate automatically based on your input. Institutions may request up to \$1 million in grant funding for Phase 3 Projects.

Requesting Institution:	Arkansas State University-Newport
Title of Project:	Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology

A. PROGRAM LEADERSHIP SUPPORT COSTS

1. Personnel/Stipend	\$233,930.00
2. Travel	\$5,000.00
3. Other (Explain Below)	\$0.00
Briefly Explain Other Costs	
TOTAL PARTNER PARTICIPANT COSTS	\$239,930.00

B. OTHER DIRECT COSTS

1. Equipment	\$288,000.00
2. Materials and Supplies	\$40,000.00
3. Publication Costs/Documentation/Dissemination	\$3,000.00
4. Consultant Services	\$15,000.00
5. Other (Explain Below)	\$60,000.00
Briefly Explain Other Costs	
TOTAL OTHER DIRECT COSTS	\$406,000.00

C. TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (A & B)	\$644,930.00
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D. COST SHARING (Minimum 10% of C; up to \$50,000)	\$347,300.00
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Total Continuation Grant Budget	\$992,230.00
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Other Notes

Memoranda of Agreement will be executed between ASUN and each partner high school. Each partner high school's detailed working budget will be included, and financial reporting/reimbursement requests will occur on quarterly basis. If funded, ASUN will seek permission from ADHE to administer a reasonable measure of line item flexibility, so that the partners can be fully responsive to unanticipated project needs and the use of funds can be maximized to benefit the initiative.

**Other costs explained in Budget Plan Detail*

SECTION 5 - SUSTAINABILITY

20 Points

Proposals will include a commitment and detailed plan for sustaining grant activities beyond the twenty-four (24) month continuation period. Equipment requests will clearly specify how purchased equipment will continue to be linked to addressing labor and workforce needs beyond the grant period.

Essential Components:

- Detailed plan for sustaining the program beyond the twenty-four (24) month continuation grant funding period- describe how the work supported by this grant will continue beyond the grant period; outline the roles and funding sources of each partner after the grant period.
- Detailed plan for maintaining communication and sharing resources among all the program partners beyond the twenty-four (24) month funding period;
- Identify availability of long-term resources to maintain and/or repair any equipment requested.
- Describe plan for redistribution of equipment to meet additional workforce needs once the employer needs addressed by the proposal have been satisfied.

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Sustainability (20 Pts)	Identifies existing resources to continue the program with no reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (18–20 Pts)	Identifies significant resources to continue the program with limited reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (15-17 Pts)	Identifies limited resources to continue the program or proposes significant reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (11-14 Pts)	New funding sources must be identified for continuation of program at the end of grant funding. (0-10 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Sustainability

Each of the Northeast Arkansas EAT workforce training partners has a proven record for sustaining programs.

Each of the high school partners have agriculture programs that are well established and have robust student enrollment. Their programs are already sustainable, but they need assistance from this initiative to become relevant in the current highly technical agriculture workplace.

Newport High School: In 2015, Newport High School was recognized as the top agriculture program in a seven state area. Newport employs two Agriculture instructors and averages over 200 students in their programs each year. Newport HS has initiated an Agriculture Power Plants program that is being used as a model for programs across the state. They also have a strong animal husbandry program. In order to stay relevant and support our regional workforce, they have joined this initiative to begin a precision agriculture program. Newport School District was recently selected as a School of Innovation and their students will have flexible schedules that will allow them to attend college and workforce programs during the normal school day.

<http://www.newportschools.org/>

Tuckerman High School: Tuckerman High School has a strong agriculture and Future Farmers of America program. They often win state competitions and have sent students to national competition for the past 5 years. Tuckerman HS averages over 100 students in their agriculture programs each year. Mr. Chester Shannon, Superintendent, has established workforce training as a priority for the Jackson County School District. As of May 2017, Tuckerman hired an Agriculture teacher that has a lengthy career in Agriculture, of which he is passing the experiences and knowledge to his students.

<http://bulldogs.k12.ar.us/>

McCrory High School: McCrory's agriculture program is one of the most popular programs on their campus. Their class enrollment is over 100 annually. They currently teach traditional agriculture science and agriculture mechanics courses but are adding precision agriculture to meet the growing needs of their community.

<http://www.mccrory.k12.ar.us/>

Harrisburg High School: Harrisburg School District incorporated the Wiener School District in 2011. Both districts have a strong tradition of agriculture education and this initiative will help residents from both former districts find a common purpose.

<http://www.hbgdsd.org/>

Nettleton High School: Nettleton HS has the greatest potential to build a modern agriculture program. The school district owns a 40-acre farm with shop buildings and some equipment. Like many schools across the country, they changed their focus under the requirements of No Child Left Behind legislation and their agriculture program had less emphasis. It is still one of the most popular program on one of the largest high schools in Northeast Arkansas, but the program has not been updated in nearly 20 years.

<http://nettletonschools.net/>

Northeast Arkansas Career and Technical Center: The Career and Technical Center serves students from 12 schools districts in four Northeastern Arkansas counties. The Center strives to instill in every student the skills necessary to compete for high demand, high wage earning positions in order to lead successful lives in the ever-expanding global marketplace. The Center is one of only 2 high schools in Arkansas that have an approved Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) program. If awarded, they will use the initiative to add courses in Agriculture Applications.

<http://www.neactc.com/>

Arkansas State University-Newport: ASUN serves over 2,500 students each term and has concurrent programs with 9 area high schools. ASUN has two viable programs that have curriculum that is being incorporated into this initiative.

1. Commercial Driver Training. ASUN has the most successful CDT program in Arkansas. Area producers have identified the CDL credential as a required skill.
2. Diesel Technology. ASUN has a viable Diesel Technology program that includes a Certificate of Proficiency in Service Maintenance. Area producers have identified service maintenance as a required skill.
3. ASUN has been approved by the Arkansas Career Education (ACE) Board to initiate a 3-year pilot program to deliver four career programs to high school students on our Newport Campus. Two of our EAT partners (Tuckerman/Newport) will be included in this pilot. When the initial student surveys were conducted, Agriculture was one of the most requested programs. If the pilot is successful, ASUN plans to include agriculture as a future program offering.
4. ASUN has multiple faculty with credentials to support an agriculture program. ASUN currently offers transfer coursework in Plant Science and Soils that are requirements for an AS Agriculture and will be incorporated into the AAS Agriculture.

Projected program budget:

By the fourth year of the program ASUN projects the following annual program costs:

Faculty Salaries with benefits	\$214,000
Adjunct Salaries	20,000
Supplies	20,000
Administrative and overhead	<u>20,000</u>
Total	\$274,000

By the fourth year of the program ASUN projects that there will be 30 active students in the program with annual program cost (tuition and fees) per student of \$12,000 for a total program budget of \$360,000 per year. After this grant has expired, we intend on having enough funds through private scholarships to aid in partially funding all enrolled students. The high school partners will use Perkins funds to further grow their ag programs. Based on this projected budget, ASUN will be able to sustain the program and invest in equipment upgrades when necessary.

Arkansas State University: Over the past 100 years, ASTATE has evolved from a regional school of agriculture instruction to a comprehensive university. While education is still the primary focus of the college, they also have extensive public outreach and research activities. ASTATE offers both undergraduate and master's degrees within the college and participate in doctoral education through the interdisciplinary Environmental Sciences and Molecular Biosciences program.

<http://www.astate.edu/college/agriculture-and-technology/>

SUBMIT BY JUNE 1, 2018

Email to ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu

Applications will only be accepted for projects that were awarded an implementation grant.

CONTINUATION GRANT SCORING RUBRIC

Critical Elements	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Value
Program Need	Significantly addresses a top 3 workforce need in the region. (18–20 Pts)	Addresses in a more limited way a top 3 workforce need in the region. (15–17 Pts)	Addresses in a limited way a less critical workforce need in the region. (11–14 Pts)	Identified labor need is too narrow or not in a critical area. (0–10 Pts)	20 Pts
Program Plan	Plan addresses all goals and core requirements and properly connects all activities to measurable outcomes that address workforce needs. (22–25 Pts)	Plan addresses most goals and requirements and substantially connects activities to measurable outcomes. (18–21 Pts)	Plan addresses many goals and requirements and connects some activities to measurable outcomes. (14–17 Pts)	Plan lacks significant requirements or connections of activities to measurable outcomes are not clear. (0–13 Pts)	25 Pts
Strength of Partnership	Plan includes broad representation and each partner has a defined role with identified critical contributions. (18–20 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation but partner roles are not clearly defined. (15–17 Pts)	Plan lacks one or two important partners or not all partners are critical to success of the plan. (11–14 Pts)	Partner participation is too narrow or some partners do not contribute meaningfully. (0–10 Pts)	20 Pts
Budget Plan	Plan identifies efficiencies that take full advantage of existing human and physical resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (13–15 Pts)	Plan includes significant efficiencies from existing resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (10–12 Pts)	Plan includes limited efficiencies from existing resources or includes some questionable resource requests. (7–9 Pts)	Budget includes limited or no existing resources from partners or includes requests deemed unnecessary. (0–6 Pts)	15 Pts
Sustainability	Identifies existing resources to continue the program with no reduction in services at the end of grant funding period (18–20 Pts)	Identifies significant resources to continue the program with limited reduction in services at the end of grant funding period (15–17 Pts)	Identifies limited resources to continue the program or proposes significant reduction in services at the end of grant funding period (11–14 Pts)	New funding sources must be identified for continuation of program at the end of grant funding. (0–10 Pts)	20 Pts
Total Points Possible					100 Pts

April 17, 2018

Workforce Initiative Act Grant Review Committee
Attn: Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE ACT OF 2015 GRANT

Please accept this letter in support of Arkansas State University—Newport's (ASUN) application for a continuation grant for the Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) initiative. We received the implementation grant in 2016, which allowed ASUN to create the program and begin securing our partners and resources. A continuation grant will allow ASUN and our regional partners to continue building and sustaining the Agriculture Technology program. Agriculture related industries make up the majority of Arkansas' economy and agriculture technology has advanced significantly in the last ten years. With the exception of ASUN's program, there are no two-year agriculture programs in the region and many of our high school programs are not able to teach modern agriculture practice. The EAT initiative is helping build a successful agriculture program of study at ASUN; enhance technical education at area high schools, and build a pathway for students to a four- year degree at ASTATE. The continuation grant will help ensure that we have a collaborative program that addresses the growing skills gap in our regional economy.

Zack's Flying Service has happily donated \$500.00 to the H.G. "Gus" Graham, Jr. Scholarship Fund. I plan to continue donating each year to help further the advancements in educating the region about modern agriculture practices. I have had the honor of lecturing students about the benefits of an agricultural flying service and it is my hope that I get to continue working with ASUN to help further the discussion not only with ASUN students, but with area high schools and our community.

Thank you for your positive consideration for this proposal. Zack's Flying Service supports this proposal and will continue to partner with ASUN throughout the continuation process.

April 17, 2018

Workforce Initiative Act Grant Review Committee
Attn: Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE ACT OF 2015 GRANT

Please accept this letter in support of Arkansas State University—Newport's (ASUN) application for a continuation grant for the Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) initiative.

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This program has my full support, and I will provide recourses and information to help insure its continued success. I have and will continue to provide support to the faculty by assisting in technical information to build curriculum as well as access to current technology used in agriculture. I will make myself and my staff available for guest lectures as well as any other support this program needs.

Thank you for your positive consideration for this proposal. I support this proposal and will continue to partner with ASUN throughout the continuation process.

Sincerely,

Brent Lassiter
ProAg Services, LLC
6009 W. Main
Newport, AR 72112
870-217-1825

April 17, 2018

Workforce Initiative Act Grant Review Committee
Attn: Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE ACT OF 2015 GRANT

Please accept this letter in support of Arkansas State University—Newport's (ASUN) application for a continuation grant for the Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) initiative.

We received the implementation grant in 2016 which allowed ASUN to create the program and begin securing our partners and resources. A continuation grant will allow ASUN and our regional partners to continue building and sustaining the Agriculture Technology program. Agriculture related industries make up the majority of Arkansas' economy and agriculture technology has advanced significantly in the last ten years. With the exception of ASUN's program, there are no two-year agriculture programs in the region and many of our high school programs are not able to teach modern agriculture practice. The EAT initiative is helping build a successful agriculture program of study at ASUN; enhance technical education at area high schools, and build a pathway for students to a four- year degree at ASTATE. The continuation grant will help ensure that we have a collaborative program that addresses the growing skills gap in our regional economy.

I, Trey Hare, would like to take this time to offer any future support of your program that I can. In the past we have allowed your classes to learn hands on about the new types of application equipment that we use in our business. As well as training in operation, maintenance, and the ever changing use of precision agriculture. We must have educated young men and women to operate these complex and expensive pieces of machinery so that we may provide safe and accurate fertilizer and pesticide applications. Please contact me if I can assist you in any way to improve and grow your program.

Trey Hare

Trey Hare Custom Spraying, Inc.

3500 Jackson 37

Newport, AR 72112

E-Mail: treyhare@thcspraying.com

Office: 870-217-1469

EFax: 1-870-292-3495

Thank you for your positive consideration for this proposal. Trey Hare Custom Spraying supports this proposal and will continue to partner with ASUN throughout the continuation process.

April 19, 2018

Workforce Initiative Act Grant Review Committee
Attn: Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE ACT OF 2015 GRANT

Please accept this letter in support of Arkansas State University—Newport's (ASUN) application for a continuation grant for the Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) initiative.

We received the implementation grant in 2016 which allowed ASUN to create the program and begin securing our partners and resources. A continuation grant will allow ASUN and our regional partners to continue building and sustaining the Agriculture Technology program. Agriculture related industries make up the majority of Arkansas' economy and agriculture technology has advanced significantly in the last ten years. With the exception of ASUN's program, there are no two-year agriculture programs in the region and many of our high school programs are not able to teach modern agriculture practice. The EAT initiative is helping build a successful agriculture program of study at ASUN; enhance technical education at area high schools, and build a pathway for students to a four- year degree at ASTATE. The continuation grant will help ensure that we have a collaborative program that addresses the growing skills gap in our regional economy.

SFR Seed supports this program and will continue to do so including access to our research farm property of about 1000 acres and grain conditioning facility for educational purposes. We will also accept qualified interns from the program and lecture on either agricultural research or grain conditioning when requested.

Thank you for your positive consideration for this proposal. SFR Seed supports this proposal and will continue to partner with ASUN throughout the continuation process.


Hallie Shoffner

SFR Seed LLC

6355 Hwy 17 South

Newport, AR 72112

April 17, 2018

Workforce Initiative Act Grant Review Committee
Attn: Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE ACT OF 2015 GRANT

Please accept this letter in support of Arkansas State University – Newport's (ASUN) application for an implementation grant for the Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) initiative.

This grant will allow ASUN and their regional partners to implement the EAT initiative. Agriculture related industries make up the majority of Arkansas' economy and agriculture technology has advanced significantly in the last ten years. There are no two year agriculture programs in the region and many of our high school programs are not able to teach modern agriculture practice. The EAT initiative will help build a program of study at ASUN; enhance technical education at area high schools, and build a pathway for students to a four year degree at ASTATE. This grant will help ensure that we have a collaborative program that addresses the growing skills gap in our regional economy.

My support of this program will include access to my aerial agricultural application business and equipment as well as my willingness to serve on an advisory committee. I consider this partnership to be of vital importance for the agricultural based economy of the region and its future success.

I support this proposal and will continue to partner with ASUN throughout the implementation process. Thank you for your positive consideration for this proposal.

Charles Bell, Jr.

Bell Flying, Inc.

4390 Hwy 384 E

Newport, AR 72112

870-523-5111

April 26, 2018

Workforce initiative Act Grant Review Committee

Attn: Arkansas Department of Higher Education

423 Main Street, Suite 400

Little Rock, AR 72201

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE ACT OF 2015 GRANT

Please accept this letter in support of Arkansas State university-Newport's (ASUN) application for an implementation grant for the Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) initiative.

This grant will allow ASUN and their regional partners to implement the EAT initiative. Agriculture related industries make up the majority of Arkansas' economy and agriculture technology has advanced significantly in the last ten years. There are no two year agriculture programs in the region and many of our high school programs are not able to teach modern agriculture practice. The EAT initiative will help build a program of study at ASUN; enhance technical education at area high schools, and build a pathway for students to a four year degree at ASTATE. This grant will help insure that we have a collaborative program that addresses the growing skills gap in our regional community.

My support of this program will include access to two grain facilities, a ground application spray business, soil fertility and grid sampling business, and our 2700 acre farm and all the equipment associated with it as well as my willingness to serve on an advisory committee. I consider this partnership to be of vital importance for the agricultural based economy of the region and its future success.

I support this proposal and will continue to partner with ASUN throughout the implementation process. Thank you for your positive consideration for this proposal.

Dee Mears

Carroll Mears Farms Inc.

7057 Hwy 384

Newport, AR 72112

870-217-9404

Jackson County School District

Member of North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
Chester Shannon, Superintendent
(870) 349-2232 • (870) 349-2355 Fax

PRINCIPALS

Michael Holland, *Tuckerman High School*
Kristy Metzger, *Swifton Middle School*
Pharis Smith, *Tuckerman Elementary*

DISTRICT TREASURER

Laura King

P.O. Box 1070

Tuckerman, Arkansas 72473

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ada Person
Randy Wagner
Dennis Neal
Sandra Provence
Phil Zuber
Brian King
Tammie Clausen

May 7, 2018

Workforce Initiative Act Grant Review Committee

Attn: Arkansas Department of Higher Education

423 Main Street, Suite 400

Little Rock, AR 72201

Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Grant

Please accept this letter in support of Arkansas State University—Newport's (ASUN) application for a continual grant for the Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) initiative.

We received the implementation grant in 2016 which allowed ASUN to create the program and begin securing our partners and resources. A continuation grant will allow ASUN and our regional partners to continue building and sustaining the Agriculture Technology program. Agriculture related industries make up the majority of Arkansas' economy and agriculture technology has advanced significantly in the last ten years. With the exception of ASUN's program, there are no two-year agriculture programs in the region and many of our high school programs are not able to teach modern agriculture practice. The EAT initiative is helping build a successful agriculture program of study at ASUN; enhance technical education at area high schools, and build a pathway for students to a four-year degree at ASTATE. The continuation grant will help ensure that we have a collaborative program that addresses the growing skills gap in our regional economy.

The Jackson County School District will be supportive of all interns sent from ASUN campus. Our faculty and staff will be willing to provide assistance to the interns when needed. Our staff and faculty will be available to be a guest lecturer in support of this program. The use of the Jackson County School District's facilities will be available to enhance their hands on experience and develop skills needed for the future.

Sincerely,

Chester Shannon, Superintendent
Jackson County School District

April 22, 2018

Workforce Initiative Act Grant Review committee
Attn: Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE ACT OF 2015 GRANT

Please accept this letter in support of Arkansas State University—Newport's (ASUN) application for a continuation grant for the Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) initiative.

This grant will allow ASUN and their regional partners to implement the EAT initiative. Agriculture related industries make up the majority of Arkansas' economy and agriculture technology has advanced significantly in the last ten years. There are no two year agriculture programs in the region and many of our high school programs are not able to teach modern agriculture practice. The EAT initiative will help build a program of study at ASUN; enhance technical education at area high schools, and build a pathway for students to a four year degree at ASTATE. This grant will help ensure that we have a collaborative program that addresses the growing skills gap in our regional economy.

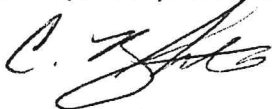
Jackson County Farm Bureau will continue to support this program by offering office internships to students to help them understand and learn the role that insurance plays in agriculture. We can provide classroom presentations and guest lecturers to help students gain insight to the insurance needed in a farming operation. Jackson County Farm Bureau also will continue to support the program with the funding of an annual scholarship earmarked to the EAT program for a deserving student.

The mission of Arkansas Farm Bureau is to:

- Advocate the interests of agriculture in the public arena.
- Disseminate information concerning the value and importance of agriculture.
- Provide products and services which improve the quality of life for our members.

This is what Farm Bureau is obligated to do. The EAT program at ASUN without a doubt meets all of the above parts of our mission statement. Jackson County Farm Bureau supports this proposal and looks forward to a continued partnership with ASUN and the EAT program.

Thank you for your consideration for this proposal,



C. Bryan Smith
Jackson County Farm Bureau Agency Manager
206 N. Harwood St.
Newport, AR 72112
870-523-8946

May 22, 2018

Workforce Initiative Act Grant Review Committee

Attn: Arkansas Department of Higher Education

423 Main Street, Suite 400

Little Rock, AR 72201

Workforce Grant

Please accept this letter as my confirmation for continued support for ASU-Newport and its efforts
To better serve the Newport community.

The Educating Agriculture Technology Initiative will allow ASUN to continue to serve the agricultural
Community. This is a one of a kind program that is necessary to keep our students updated. Rapid
Growth in the technology area of agriculture is rapidly advancing and could out pace our ability to
Train our students. I am willing to assist in any way needed to help this effort. My family farms about
12,000 acres near Newport. We are all willing to support ASU in any way needed. Our farm is
Available for any training necessary in this program. We currently employ the use of modern technology
On our farm including, gps guidance, variable-rate application, and gps land leveling. Also, I am willing
To continue to be available for any guidance for the program.

We appreciate all that you do for this initiative and ask that you continue to advance this project.

Dennis Haigwood

D and M Farms

2808 Stewart

870-217-2424

April 17, 2018

Workforce Initiative Act Grant Review Committee
Attn: Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE ACT OF 2015 GRANT

Please accept this letter in support of Arkansas State University—Newport's (ASUN) application for a continuation grant for the Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) initiative.

We received the implementation grant in 2016 which allowed ASUN to create the program and begin securing our partners and resources. A continuation grant will allow ASUN and our regional partners to continue building and sustaining the Agriculture Technology program. Agriculture related industries make up the majority of Arkansas' economy and agriculture technology has advanced significantly in the last ten years. With the exception of ASUN's program, there are no two-year agriculture programs in the region and many of our high school programs are not able to teach modern agriculture practice. The EAT initiative is helping build a successful agriculture program of study at ASUN; enhance technical education at area high schools, and build a pathway for students to a four-year degree at ASTATE. The continuation grant will help ensure that we have a collaborative program that addresses the growing skills gap in our regional economy.

We need your help for paragraph 3. Please include any support you can give to our program. Here are some examples:

- Use of Equipment - Greenway personnel will meet on a semi-annual basis with the instructors and administration to determine equipment needs for different classes that will be conducted. Greenway will work with John Deere Corporate to provide loaner equipment of tractors, combines, planters, and other farm equipment that might be needed during the training.
- Precision Ag Equipment – Greenway will provide current precision ag technology on a demonstration basis each semester and year. Technology changes rapidly thus the demonstration period for the equipment will help to ensure that students are receiving training on the newest technology that is in the marketplace.
- Internships – Greenway Equipment is committed to working with ASU Newport to provide internships. We routinely have four to six internships on an annual basis. Many of these student interns earn an offer for full-time employment at the end of their internship. Greenway will commit to interviewing ASU Newport students for internships opportunities.

- The leadership of the Greenway Precision Ag Department, Jeff Barnes, will be available to serve as a guest lecturer for different agronomy or precision ag classes. Additionally, Jeff Barnes will facilitate other members of the Precision Ag Team at Greenway to also be guest lecturers and/or assist with different laboratory or field exercises.
- Jeff Barnes will commit to serve on any advisory boards that ASDU Newport needs him to serve on. His specialties are agronomy and precision agriculture.

Thank you for your positive consideration for this proposal. Greenway Equipment supports this proposal and will continue to partner with ASUN throughout the continuation process.

Best Regards,

Jeff Barnes, Ph.D.

Greenway Precision Ag Department Manager

Marshall Stewart

President Greenway Equipment

RICK CRAWFORD
1ST DISTRICT, ARKANSAS

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
CHAIRMAN OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON FARM
COMMODITIES AND RISK MANAGEMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NUTRITION

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS
AND TRANSIT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER
RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

HOUSE PERMANENT SELECT
COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
2422 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

April 19, 2018

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JONESBORO, AR 72401
PHONE: 870-203-0540
FAX: 870-203-0542
- ☐ CABOT
112 SOUTH FIRST STREET
CABOT, AR 72023
PHONE: 501-843-3043
FAX: 501-843-4955
- ☐ MOUNTAIN HOME
1001 HIGHWAY 62 EAST
SUITE 9
MOUNTAIN HOME, AR 72653
PHONE: 870-424-2075
FAX: 870-424-3149

WWW.CRAWFORD.HOUSE.GOV

Arkansas Department Of Higher Education
Attn: Workforce Initiative Act Grant Review Committee
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201-3828

RE: Ms. Lindley Gilliam

Dear Grant Review Committee ,

I write with pleasure in support of Arkansas State University-Newport (ASUN) officials who have applied for a continuation of a Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Implementation Grant to support their Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) Initiative.

Funding for this grant will allow ASUN and its regional partners to continue building and sustaining the university's Agriculture Technology program. Agriculture-related industries make up the majority of Arkansas' economy, and agriculture technology has advanced significantly in the last ten years. With the exception of ASUN's program, there are no two-year agriculture programs in the region, and many of our high school programs are not able to teach modern agriculture practices. The EAT initiative helps build a successful agriculture program of study at ASUN by enhancing technical education at area high schools and building a pathway for students to a four-year degree at Arkansas State University. Furthermore, the continuation grant will help ensure the region has a collaborative program that addresses the growing skills gap in our economy.

I proudly support ASUN's grant application as part of an ongoing plan to improve our region's agricultural workforce and ultimately, our quality of life. Thank you for your time and attention, and I request that you give this worthy project serious and all due consideration when making final funding decisions.

Sincerely,



Member of Congress

April 23, 2018

Workforce Initiative Act Grant Review Committee
Attn: Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE ACT OF 2015 GRANT

Please accept this letter in support of Arkansas State University – Newport's (ASUN) application for an implementation grant for the Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) initiative.

This grant will allow ASUN and their regional partners to implement the EAT initiative. Agriculture related industries make up the majority of Arkansas' economy and agriculture technology has advanced significantly in the last ten years. There are no two year agriculture programs in the region and many of our high school programs are not able to teach modern agriculture practice. The EAT initiative will help build a program of study at ASUN; enhance technical education at area high schools, and build a pathway for students to a four year degree at ASTATE. This grant will help ensure that we have a collaborative program that addresses the growing skills gap in our regional economy.

My support of this program will include access to my farm and equipment as well as my willingness to serve on an advisory committee. I consider this partnership to be of vital importance for the agricultural based economy of the region and its future success.

I support this proposal and will continue to partner with ASUN throughout the implementation process. Thank you for your positive consideration for this proposal.

James Darren Hutchinson, Jr

Hutchinson Farms

1227 Jackson 16

Newport, AR 72112

870-217-3619

April 17, 2018

Workforce Initiative Act Grant Review Committee
Attn: Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE ACT OF 2015 GRANT

Please accept this letter in support of Arkansas State University—Newport's (ASUN) application for a continuation grant for the Northeast Arkansas Educating Agriculture Technology (EAT) initiative.

We received the implementation grant in 2016 which allowed ASUN to create the program and begin securing our partners and resources. A continuation grant will allow ASUN and our regional partners to continue building and sustaining the Agriculture Technology program. Agriculture related industries make up the majority of Arkansas' economy and agriculture technology has advanced significantly in the last ten years. With the exception of ASUN's program, there are no two-year agriculture programs in the region and many of our high school programs are not able to teach modern agriculture practice. The EAT initiative is helping build a successful agriculture program of study at ASUN; enhance technical education at area high schools, and build a pathway for students to a four- year degree at ASTATE. The continuation grant will help ensure that we have a collaborative program that addresses the growing skills gap in our regional economy.

My support of this program will include access to our farm property for education and demonstration purposes as well as any support that I may provide. This program is of vital importance for our community. There is no other program providing this type of hands on education in the ever-changing world of agriculture. Education and training such as this is necessary to keep up with the technology required today.

Thank you for your positive consideration for this proposal. I support this proposal and will continue to partner with ASUN throughout the continuation process.

Susan Hardin Morrison

Tupelo Planting Company

802 4th & Front St.

Tupelo, AR 72169

870-512-8230

Batt



ASU

AGRICULTURE TECHNOLOGY

Funding and
equipment
provided by



