

# Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline Agriculture Industry Forum

## Meeting Notes

Date: 10/25/2019, 9:00 a.m.

Location: Department of Labor and Industry, 443 Lafayette Rd, St. Paul, MN

Welcome and introductions; introduce new staff member and Pipeline Specialist  
Katherine Fischenich

### Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline Updates: Annie Welch

- Show new video and encouraged others to share
- Offered refresher on dual training and talked about PIPELINE's connection to Youth Skills Training

### Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline New Recognition Badge: Annie Welch & Dan Solomon

- We are launching a new PIPELINE Program recognition badge for employers and providing details on the process to apply for the recognition. We realize that there are many organizations who have successfully implemented a dual-training program for their employees, even without grant funding.
- Companies who already use the Dual Training Grant program for funding will receive a message with the PNG file of "the badge"; they are already recognized and do not have to apply. The application is for companies who are offering dual-training programs without grant funding.
- We also discussed how Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline partners in education can also be recognized with a PIPELINE Partner Badge.

### Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline Community Partnerships Conversation: Annie Welch & Dan Solomon

Hosted a conversation with two prompting questions:

- Who do you currently connect with to help with your workforce needs in the community?
- How can we better connect work of community-based organizations with employers to help find, train and retain talent?

Discussion:

- Farm Cooperatives have been identified as a community partner that could provide an "exchange group" and help develop relationships with employers.
- Scarcity in the workforce and challenges with finding a talent pool were identified as a huge challenge within the Agriculture industry especially within the Dairy farming communities.
- Several solutions to challenges around workforce and talent pool were discussed:
  - Pathways to citizenship were identified as a current solution in dairy farms that have a workforce shortage.

- Increasing broadband access in the rural communities would help with making information available and access to resources for farmers.
- Increased connections and access to childcare is necessary.

## New Occupations - Competency Validation Work Coming in January 2020

Brief group conversation; the Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline team identified occupation needs that we've heard and asked for feedback and suggestions. Attendees reviewed current occupational competency pyramids and the process for creating models for new occupations. Attendees discussed the following as potential occupations to possibly add going forward:

- Farm Manager – Organic Farming Specialty
- Farm Manager (Non-Animal)
- Agriculture Loan Officer
- Agriculture Business Manager
- Animal Processor / Butcher

Attendees also discussed at length the need for some specific training for careers in organic farming.

## Young Farmers and Mentorship: How do we get more interest in agriculture and dual training?

- Attendees discussed how providing the right exposure in education would help youth have more awareness of the wide range of occupations within the agriculture industry.
- Several attendees recommended that teachers take tours of the farms, so they have more knowledge of the agriculture industry and are better able to teach students about future career opportunities.
- Attendees discussed the current educational programs that are available for farmers that don't fit into the traditional production farming.
- Attendees also discussed at length the need for some more organic farming education.
- There were several available programs identified for certifications in organic farming:
  - Sustainable Farming Association-Organic Certifications available
  - SE Tech-Sustainable Agriculture Degree
  - Dairy Grazing Association-Organic Dairy Farming Federal Grant

## Dual Training Grant updates: Dan Solomon & Annie Welch

- OHE awarded \$2.8 million in 2019 to 58 different companies with fewer than 10 in I.T.
- The next Dual Training Grant Round 9 for new and existing employers will open for application on March 23, 2020 and close on May 1, 2020. (Contact [Jacquelynn.Mol.Sletten@state.mn.us](mailto:Jacquelynn.Mol.Sletten@state.mn.us) at the Office of Higher Education for more information). Award notices will be given out by June 15, 2019.
- Dual Training Grant workshops will be held in February and March of 2020.

## Next Steps

- Next Agriculture Industry Forum: Early February 2020
- Speaker Series on December 5, 2019. If anyone has any ideas for speaker topics, please let us know.
- If anyone has suggestions for agenda items for next Industry Forum, please let us know.