Improved Tracking & Forecasting of Agricultural Education and Careers

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MD Ag Commission Meeting – Dec 11, 2024

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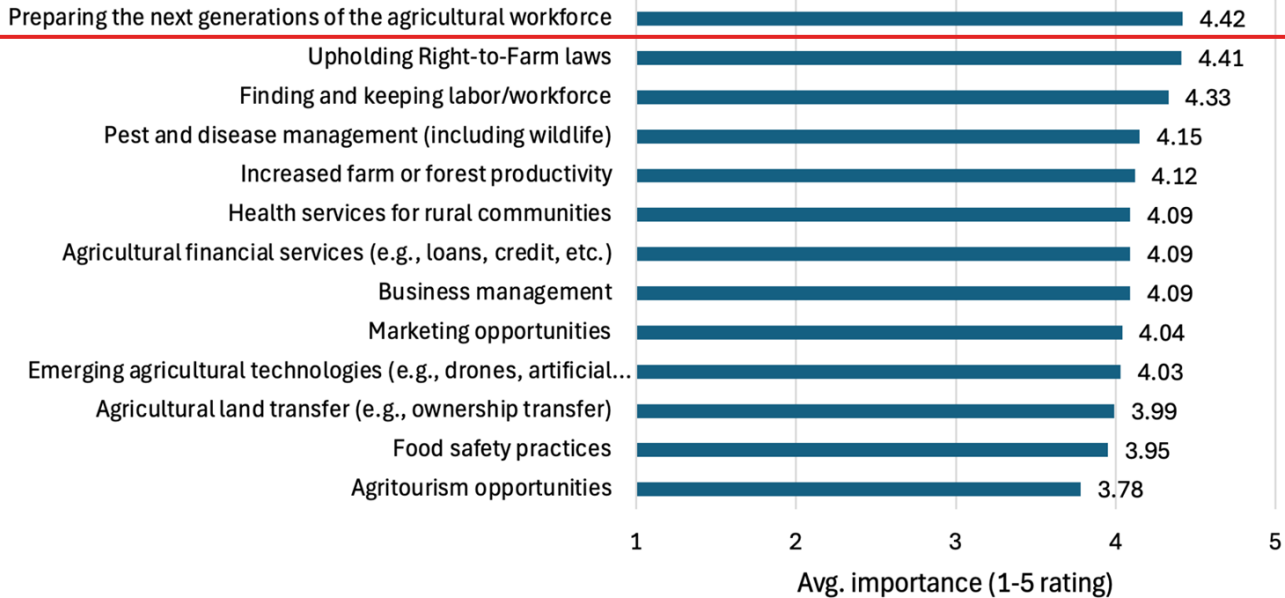
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Why? The Need and Opportunity

- A need for updated and representative data on agricultural jobs and training/education

- Data can be used to:
  - Identify both opportunities and gaps in the workforce
  - Align education and training curricula and policies
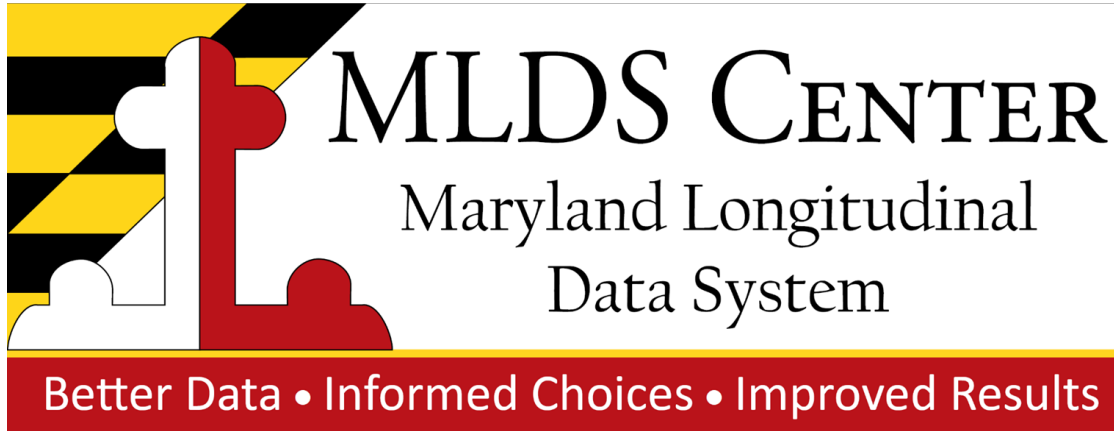 - Forecast and promote the diversity of opportunities in agriculture

Most Important Topics Related to Supporting Farmers and Rural Communities

Topic	Avg. importance (1-5 rating)
Preparing the next generations of the agricultural workforce	4.42
Upholding Right-to-Farm laws	4.41
Finding and keeping labor/workforce	4.33
Pest and disease management (including wildlife)	4.15
Increased farm or forest productivity	4.12
Health services for rural communities	4.09
Agricultural financial services (e.g., loans, credit, etc.)	4.09
Business management	4.09
Marketing opportunities	4.04
Emerging agricultural technologies (e.g., drones, artificial...	4.03
Agricultural land transfer (e.g., ownership transfer)	3.99
Food safety practices	3.95
Agritourism opportunities	3.78

Note: Average level of importance illustrated in chart (1= least important and 5=most important)

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MLDS CENTER
Maryland Longitudinal
Data System
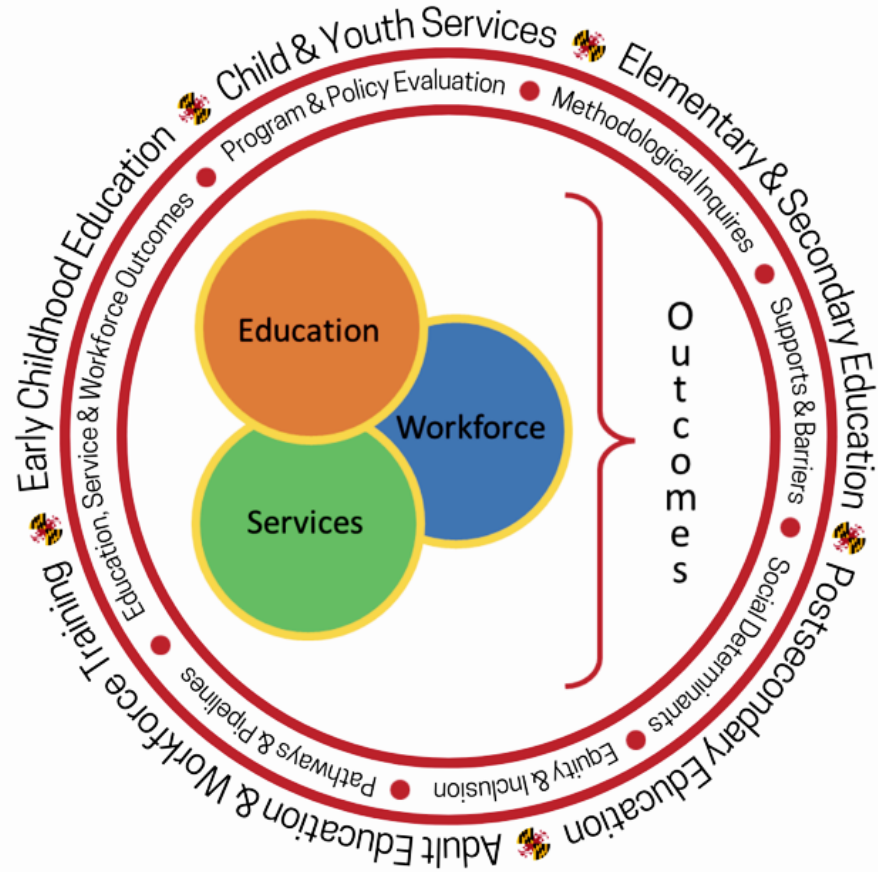
Better Data • Informed Choices • Improved Results

"The purpose of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) is to generate timely and accurate information about student performance that can be used to improve the State's education system and guide decision makers at all levels. To accomplish this task, the MLDS collects and organizes individual-level student and workforce data from all levels of education and the State's workforce." (MLDS, n.d.)

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MLDS Research Agenda (2023)

Our Purpose and Objectives

Our overall purpose is to better <mark>align</mark> **agriculture-focused training and education** with **professional opportunities and gaps** related to the Maryland agri-food system. Specific objectives are to:

- Identify current gaps in reporting/tracking of agricultural careers
- Identify current gaps in reporting/tracking of agricultural education and training
- Obtain data in order to effectively forecast professional tracks in agriculture
- Refine educational and training programming based on improved agricultural tracking and forecasting

Methods and Timeline Overview

- Proposal development and initial stakeholder engagement
- Identification of current k-career coding for agriculture:
  - CIP for education
  - NAICS
- Survey stakeholders to determine gaps: where is MLDS missing jobs and training?
- Return to MLDS to refine their coding
- Develop strategies with MDA, UMD, stakeholders to invest in agricultural education and training based on the updated data

Proposal Submission
Dec 2024

Feedback from MLDS
By Feb 2025

Data Analysis
Feb - March 2025

Stakeholder Survey
Spring 2025

Use of Findings
Spring - Summer 2025

Ways YOU Can Help

- Feedback on plans shared today
- Identify agricultural jobs, training, and educational tracks
- Promote survey to stakeholders early spring 2025
- Work together to use improved data towards curriculum and policy decision-making

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