



Amy Loudenbeck

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S 31ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony before Assembly Committee on Agriculture
Assembly Bill 874 and 876
Rep. Amy Loudenbeck

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and committee members, for the opportunity to testify in favor of Assembly Bill 874, relating to: requiring a study by the University of Wisconsin System of agricultural programs and issues and Assembly Bill 876, relating to: requiring the University of Wisconsin-Madison to conduct a research study on developing an agricultural science and technology program.

One of the longest and deepest traditions surrounding the University of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Idea, signifies a general principle: that education should influence people's lives beyond the boundaries of the classroom. Synonymous with Wisconsin for more than a century, this "Idea" has become the guiding philosophy of university outreach efforts in Wisconsin and throughout the world.

AB 874 and AB 876 seek to fully leverage the assets of the UW-System (AB 874) and UW-Madison (AB 876) by directing these institutions to inventory, evaluate, and enhance their offerings related to farming in Wisconsin, agricultural industries, and agriculture science and technology.

Specifically, Assembly Bill 874 requires the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System to direct a study that includes examining and evaluating all of the following:

1. Funding and staffing levels for agricultural programs both on a system-wide basis and at each institution or college campus, including addressing current and historical data for total authorized faculty and research positions and, of these, the numbers of filled and vacant positions.
2. Current curriculum for agricultural programs, including certificate programs offered at institutions and college campuses, along with proposals for enhancing this curriculum.
3. The financial, technical, and other problems that Wisconsin farmers currently face, along with proposals to solve or mitigate these problems.
4. The programs, approaches, and strategies implemented by other states to better support their agricultural industries. The study under shall include an evaluation and assessment of items 1 through 3 currently support Wisconsin farmers and Wisconsin's agricultural industry, along with proposals for strengthening or enhancing this support.
5. The study shall include all data considered in this evaluation and assessment and the data relied upon to support the study's conclusion.

I know the UW-System is an asset to our farmers. However, I also know the UW-System has changed, and farming has changed. It's important to know if the programs offered at UW-System institutions are what the farmers really need, or if adjustments need to be made to better reflect the way the industry

and education have changed over the years. AB 874 will provide the most comprehensive data available to help the Legislature and UW-System work together to meet the needs of today's farming industry.

The second bill I want to talk about today is Assembly Bill 876 which requires the University of Wisconsin-Madison to conduct a research study on developing a science and technology program specific to agriculture.

I graduated from UW-Madison in 1991 and personally experienced the robust cross-discipline nature of our flagship university. A lot of institutions of higher education take great pride in their multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary program offerings. But if you want to be an expert at ONE THING, or you aren't good at navigating a spider web of coursework offerings, it might be nice to choose one program that focused on science and technology specific to agriculture.

Let me be clear. AB 846 doesn't create a new program. It directs a "research study", or if I may explain it in my own words, an "inventory, evaluation, and recommendation" exercise that takes into consideration everything ag-related that is already housed within UW-Madison (which now includes UW-Extension). Under AB 846, a final report would include findings, conclusions and recommendations, including potential curriculum that includes enhanced farm practices and coordination between the UW-Madison program and any agricultural program offered at another institution or college campus.

I would be remiss if I did not recognize all of the educational, professional development, and research offerings at UW-Madison related to agriculture – the College of Agriculture & Life Science – 22 Degree Programs including Dairy Science, Agronomy, Animal Science and Soil Science, and the Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems; the Division of Extension (Discovery Farms, County educators and agents, 4-H development); Integrated Extension Faculty – integrated specialists with joint appointments from CALS and Extension; Department of Food Science – undergraduate programs focused on the physical, chemical and biological sciences related to foods; and the School of Veterinary Medicine to name of few.

One program offered at UW-Madison in particular, was the first program of its kind in the nation. Founded in 1886, The Farm and Industry Short Course (FISC) is a certificate program housed within the University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. FISC is a non-four year degree agricultural program "offering practical agricultural educational instruction and real world experience from academic and industry professionals at the University of Wisconsin." I know many FISC graduates that credit their farming success to the FISC program.

Perhaps the final report directly by AB 876 will include recommendations for another new "first in the nation" agricultural science and technology program at UW-Madison. Perhaps it will demonstrate a way to better align, share or leverage the assets we already have. I don't know the answer, but I know there will be value in this report.

If we want Wisconsin to lead the way in 21st century agriculture, let's enlist the talent within the entire UW-System to conduct a world-class analysis to help show us the way FORWARD in these difficult times.

Thank you for your time today. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.




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February 11, 2020

TO: Honorable Members of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture

FROM: Ray Cross, UW System President 

RE: AB 874 Testimony – For Information Only

Thank you, Chairman Tauchen and committee members, for holding this public hearing on AB 874.

The University of Wisconsin System's deep roots with the agriculture industry go back to the creation of the university. The UW System has three schools of agriculture in addition to Extension: UW-River Falls, UW-Platteville, and UW-Madison. For years, our universities have provided research, job training, and technical assistance to those involved in agriculture, and we continue to work closely with Wisconsin's agriculture industry to ensure it remains competitive and on the cutting edge.


This bill requires the Board of Regents to direct a study of various ways UW System universities address the needs of Wisconsin's agriculture community, such as evaluating programs offered, funding and staffing allocated, and what other states do in this area. The bill requires this report to be submitted to the legislature within nine months of the bill becoming law.

Please find attached data on the UW System's three schools of agriculture. This data demonstrates the UW System's commitment to the agriculture industry. As the industry evolves and some sectors of it face daunting challenges, this data tells a good story of how the UW System is a partner in solving these issues.

Systemwide, we have grown enrollments and conferred more degrees over the years in agriculture-related programs and continue to train a strong number of students. We have also dedicated more faculty and staff than ever before to these programs.

The data provides a snapshot in time going back to 1995 and each succeeding decade until the present. The data provided is intended to give an idea of how our agriculture-related programs have evolved over time by the number of degrees conferred, enrollment in programs, and faculty/instructional staff. The data is broken down by university, bachelor/graduate/professional degree, program, and year. Since this is a snapshot in time, the blank spots could mean multiple things, including: the program was not created by that time or it was no longer offered at that point, or it may have existed but had not conferred any degrees or enrolled anyone at that time.

Please feel free to contact Jeff Buhandt at (608) 262-1312 or DeeJ Lundgren at (608) 262-5450 with any questions. Thank you again for the opportunity to submit testimony on AB 874.



University of Wisconsin System
Degrees Conferred in Agriculture, Agriculture Operations, and Related Sciences

		1995-96	2005-06	2015-16	2018-19	
UW-Madison	AGRICULTURAL AND APPLIED ECONOMICS	Bachelor		8	27	13
		Graduate/Professional	12	14	21	19
		Total	12	22	48	32
	AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT	Bachelor	20	9	31	40
	AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS	Bachelor	9			
		Graduate/Professional	6			
		Total	15			
	AGRICULTURAL JOURNALISM	Bachelor	13	37		
		Graduate/Professional	8			
		Total	21	37		
	AGRICULTURAL MECHANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT	Bachelor	5			
	AGROECOLOGY	Graduate/Professional			6	7
	AGRONOMY	Bachelor	4	12	14	6
		Graduate/Professional	4	4	5	3
		Total	8	16	19	9
	ANIMAL SCIENCES	Bachelor		20	46	39
		Graduate/Professional		7	11	3
		Total		27	57	42
	CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION	Bachelor	22	1		
	DAIRY SCIENCE	Bachelor	21	9	12	15
		Graduate/Professional	10	11	17	12
		Total	31	20	29	27
	FOOD SCIENCE	Bachelor	15	17	37	26
		Graduate/Professional	19	4	19	10
		Total	34	21	56	36
	HORTICULTURE	Bachelor	13	24	12	7
		Graduate/Professional	6	5	1	1
Total		19	29	13	8	
LIFE SCIENCES COMMUNICATION	Bachelor			68	47	
	Graduate/Professional		10	4	2	
	Total		10	72	49	
MEAT AND ANIMAL SCIENCE	Bachelor	20				
	Graduate/Professional	7				
	Total	27				
POULTRY SCIENCE	Bachelor	5		2		
	Graduate/Professional	3				
	Total	8		2		
SOIL SCIENCE	Bachelor	15	7	4	2	
	Graduate/Professional	11	9	5	7	
	Total	26	16	9	9	
Total	Total	248	208	342	259	
UW-Platteville	AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS	Bachelor	19	23	68	73
	AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY	Bachelor	8			
	AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES	Graduate	6	1		
	ANIMAL SCIENCE	Bachelor	29	38	60	47
	DAIRY SCIENCE	Bachelor				16
	ENVIRONMENTAL HORTICULTURE	Bachelor			8	9
	ORNAMENTAL HORTICULTURE	Bachelor		8		
	SOIL AND CROP SCIENCE	Bachelor	5	8	20	20
	TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE	Bachelor	1			
Total	Total	68	78	156	165	
UW-River Falls	AGRICULTURAL AND APPLIED ECONOMICS	Graduate	4			
	AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS	Bachelor	16	8	35	28
	AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS	Bachelor	5			
	AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY	Bachelor	13	5	20	20
	AGRICULTURAL MARKETING	Bachelor	4			
	AGRICULTURE (BROAD AREA)	Bachelor	39			
	AGRICULTURE STUDIES	Bachelor		19	5	6
	AGRONOMY	Bachelor	10			
	ANIMAL SCIENCE	Bachelor	48	42	101	125
	CROP AND SOIL SCIENCE	Bachelor		4	18	17
	DAIRY SCIENCE	Bachelor		20	31	27
	FOOD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	Bachelor	13	7	1	2
	HORTICULTURE	Bachelor	12	13	16	12
	SOIL SCIENCE	Bachelor	5			
Total	Total	169	118	227	237	

University of Wisconsin System
Fall Enrollments in Agriculture, Agriculture Operations, and Related Sciences

			1995-96	2005-06	2015-16	2018-19
UW-Madison	AGRICULTURAL AND APPLIED ECONOMICS	Undergraduate	25	28	55	44
		Graduate	61	43	79	
		Total	86	71	134	44
	AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT	Undergraduate	71	49	82	66
	AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS	Undergraduate	25			
		Graduate	61			
		Total	86			
	AGRICULTURAL JOURNALISM	Undergraduate	42	95		
		Graduate	25	31		
		Total	67	126		
	AGRICULTURAL MECHANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT	Undergraduate	14			
	AGROECOLOGY	Graduate			20	16
	AGRONOMY	Undergraduate	14	22	42	20
		Graduate	22	14	8	9
		Total	36	36	50	29
	ANIMAL SCIENCES	Graduate		24	26	23
		Undergraduate		142	179	157
		Total		166	205	180
	CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION	Undergraduate	86	2		
	DAIRY SCIENCE	Graduate	27	28	31	28
		Undergraduate	53	54	78	65
		Total	80	82	109	93
	FOOD SCIENCE	Graduate	76	45	39	41
		Undergraduate	45	61	138	100
		Total	121	106	177	141
	HORTICULTURE	Graduate	18	16	11	6
		Undergraduate	49	69	29	43
Total		67	85	40	49	
LIFE SCIENCES COMMUNICATION	Graduate		31	11	12	
	Undergraduate		95	185	143	
	Total		126	196	155	
MEAT AND ANIMAL SCIENCE	Graduate	25				
	Undergraduate	54				
	Total	79				
POULTRY SCIENCE	Graduate	7				
	Undergraduate	11	2	1		
	Total	18	2	1		
SOIL SCIENCE	Graduate	36	26	17	18	
	Undergraduate	42	17	13	9	
	Total	78	43	30	27	
Total	Total	889	894	1044	800	
UW-Platteville	AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS	Undergraduate	102	96	306	228
	AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS	Undergraduate	3			
	AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY	Undergraduate	19			
	AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES	Graduate	9			
	ANIMAL SCIENCE	Undergraduate	119	159	273	175
	DAIRY SCIENCE	Undergraduate				57
	ENVIRONMENTAL HORTICULTURE	Undergraduate			31	38
	ORNAMENTAL HORTICULTURE	Undergraduate		41		
	SOIL AND CROP SCIENCE	Undergraduate	46	29	86	67
	TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE	Undergraduate	1			
	Total	Total	299	325	696	565
UW-River Falls	AGRICULTURAL AND APPLIED ECONOMICS	Graduate	16			
	AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS	Undergraduate	108	78	171	178
	AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS	Undergraduate	6			
	AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY	Undergraduate	49	52	87	64
	AGRICULTURAL MARKETING	Undergraduate	10			
	AGRICULTURE (BROAD AREA)	Undergraduate	181			
	AGRICULTURE (BROAD AREA-EDP)	Undergraduate	22			
	AGRICULTURE STUDIES	Undergraduate		54	51	42
	AGRONOMY	Undergraduate	52			
	ANIMAL SCIENCE	Undergraduate	368	361	536	780
	CROP AND SOIL SCIENCE	Undergraduate		23	73	67
	DAIRY SCIENCE	Undergraduate		106	139	118
	FARM MANAGEMENT	Undergraduate	2			
	FOOD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	Undergraduate	48	20	1	24
	HORTICULTURE	Undergraduate	105	107	50	52
	SOIL SCIENCE	Undergraduate	14			
Total	Total	981	801	1108	1325	

**University of Wisconsin System
Fall Instructional FTE in Agriculture**

	Faculty				Instructional Academic Staff			
	1996	2005	2015	2018	1996	2005	2015	2018
UW-Madison -- College of Agricultural & Life Sciences	82.6	78.8	71.9	65.2	52.6	50.9	58.6	61.4
UW-Platteville -- School of Agriculture		10.2	9.5	15.5		2.0	1.8	2.5
UW-River Falls -- Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sci	36.0	36.6	35.1	37.7	8.7	6.1	9.5	10.0

1/30/2020; Policy Analysis and Research

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture
FROM: Jordan Lamb, DeWitt LLP
DATE: February 11, 2020
RE: **Support for Assembly Bill 874, UW-System Study of Agriculture Programs**

Chairman Tauchen and members of the committee, I am writing in support of Assembly Bill 874 on behalf of the following farm organizations:

- **Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation**
- **Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association**
- **Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association**
- **Wisconsin Pork Association**
- **Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association**
- **Wisconsin Soybean Association**

Assembly Bill 874 will require the Board of Regents of the UW-System to direct a study that examines a number of facets of educational resources and challenges in current agricultural programs. We appreciate that the legislature and Representative Loudenbeck are asking to look closer at these programs

We believe that there is a strong and undeniable connection between the strength and health of our UW system agricultural research and education programs and the health of the farm economy in Wisconsin.

We believe that when funds are invested in applied agriculture at our research institutions, returns are seen in a stronger farm economy.

Further, we know that farmers are experiencing increasing pressure to modify farming practices to protect the environment. However, we need our university system to assist with the development of farming practices that are sustainable from both an economic and environmental perspective.

We believe that the study directed in this AB 874 will help document the economic connection between UW System and our agriculture economy and support our continued efforts to strengthen the funding and programming for applied agriculture within UW System.