

The Pennsylvania School for Excellence in the
Agricultural Sciences (PSEAS) at
THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY



The 2025 Pennsylvania School for Excellence in the Agricultural Sciences (PSEAS) summer residential program, formerly known as the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Agricultural Sciences, will offer 2 two-week sessions held at Penn State University Park campus for academically talented and gifted high school students (rising seniors) from throughout Pennsylvania.

Sponsored by Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences, full scholarships are available, making this program free to participants.

PROGRAM CONTACT

Mailing Address:

PSEAS
Attention: Jenneth R. Layaou
431 Curtain Road
Ag. Administration Bldg. Room 101
University Park, PA 16802

Phone: 814-867-0383

Email: PSEAS@psu.edu

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

- Application Data Form
- Agreement and Signatures
- Resume
- Personal Narrative
- Food Security Essay Draft
- Teacher Recommendation Form
- School Counselor Recommendation Form

ELIGIBILITY

- GRADE LEVEL:** Must be a current high school Junior at the time the application is submitted.
- SCHOOL ENROLLMENT:** Must currently attend a public, charter or non-public secondary school or be home-schooled.
- PENNSYLVANIA RESIDENCY:** The primary full-time residence of least one custodial parent or legal, court-appointed guardian of the applicant must be in Pennsylvania. Military dependents based in Pennsylvania are eligible.

PLEASE NOTE:

Trips home or other absences are not allowed.
Formal training unrelated to the curriculum (e.g. music practice, dance practice, or athletic training regimens for individual or team competitions) cannot be accommodated in the program.

GROUND FOR DISQUALIFICATION: Ineligibility (see above); lateness; failure to send application to the correct office; incompleteness of the application (it must be submitted in its entirety at one time); plagiarism; or falsification of information on the application.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

REVIEW ALL FORMS BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH THE APPLICATION PROCESS.

SUPERVISE COMPLETION: The applicant is responsible for staying in communication with the counselor and teacher reference to make sure the application is completed appropriately and sent off by the postmark deadline.

Homeschoolers should contact the PSEAS Program Office for specific instructions on who may complete the forms.

Participants are required to be covered by a medical plan. If he/she is not, please contact the program director for options.

DO NOT ADD UNSOLICITED REFERENCES, RECOMMENDATIONS OR MATERIALS.
Send only those requested. Do not add newspaper clippings, photographs, research papers, certificates or other un-solicited materials. Extraneous letters of recommendation other than the teacher reference and the counselor's recommendation and other unsolicited materials will be removed from applications.

UNDERSTANDINGS: PSEAS cannot provide individual assessments or grant appeals to the selection process.

Furthermore, PSEAS is not responsible for late, lost, and/or incorrectly addressed, incomplete or damaged applications

Please refer to our website, <https://agsci.psu.edu/school-for-excellence> for more information about the PA School for Excellence in the Agricultural Sciences!

DEADLINES AND DATES

Now offering 2 sessions!

Session 1: June 15-28, 2025

Session 2: July 6-19, 2025

Application Deadline:

February 21, 2025

Program Decision:

March 28, 2025

NOTIFICATION

Notification of final status of the selection process will be made via email by March 29, 2024.

PSEAS cannot respond to requests in advance notice, individual assessments or appeals.

COMMITMENT TO PROGRAM: If accepting an invitation to participate in PSEAS, the student must commit to being in residence for the full program.



APPLICATION PROCEDURES

PSEAS asks that applicants, teachers, and counselors use the fillable form tools of the application (if possible) for completion, then to print, sign, and mail to the program address. Please do not staple any pages together.

Please retain a copy of the what you submit to your teacher/school counselor.

• PART 1: PERSONAL DATA FORM, AGREEMENT AND SIGNATURES

Applicant will complete and sign pages 4 and 5 with a parent/guardian.

• PART 2: APPLICANT'S RESUME

Applicant must attach a Resume; 3 page maximum, typed, single or double-spaced, letter quality font no smaller than 12 points. Your name, address, and contact information should appear at the top of each page.

- Include extracurricular, ag/science-related activities, such as independent research projects, special study projects, or competitions in which you have been involved in the past two to three years in your school, or community or personal pursuits. Identify your role in each, list awards and honors for science and/or agricultural science related achievements and the source, reason and date of each.

• PART 3: APPLICANT'S PERSONAL NARRATIVE

Applicant must attach a Personal Narrative; Essay format, 2 pages maximum, typed, double-spaced, with letter quality font no smaller than 12 points. Your name should appear at the top of each page. Title the essay "Personal Narrative, Prompt (#)." Please choose one prompt to write about in your Personal Narrative.

- **Prompt 1:** Introduce yourself to the selection committee. Discuss why you wish to participate in the Pennsylvania School for Excellence in the Agricultural Sciences and what you hope to gain from participating in this program. Be as specific as possible about yourself and why you are willing to spend two weeks of your summer to come to PSEAS, and, in addition, why you think the committee should choose you. You may include information about your background, your interests, your pastimes (academic and nonacademic) and any other aspects of your life that will aid the committee in understanding who you are and why you want to participate in PSEAS.
- **Prompt 2:** Choose an important person in agriculture to research. Feel free to choose from the list below, or write about someone else you know. Briefly introduce the person you chose to the selection committee, then explain why this person is inspiring to you. Make sure to include their impact in agriculture, why you think this person is important, and how you intend to follow in their footsteps. You are encouraged to include personal details about your background, interests, pastimes, and any other aspects of your life that will aid the committee in understanding who you are.

- Dr. Muhammad Yunus	- Harriet Williams Russell Strong	- Dr. Yuan Longping	- Dr. Modadugu Gupta
- Dr. Temple Grandin	- Dr. Daniel Hillel	- Simon N. Groot	- Catherine Bertini
- Rachel Carson	- Shakuntala Haraksingh Thilsted	- George Washington Carver	- M.S. Swaminathan
- **Prompt 3:** Describe to the selection committee what agriculture means to you. Make sure to thoroughly explain your ideas and to give specific examples. In addition, explain how this point of view will help you be a fundamental participant of PSEAS. You are welcome to include information about your background, your interests and pastimes, and any other aspects of your life that will aid the committee in understanding who you are and why you want to participate in PSEAS.



APPLICATION PROCEDURES

• PART 4: FOOD SECURITY FACTOR ESSAY ROUGH DRAFT

As part of the program, selected students will participate in the Pennsylvania Youth Institute (PYI) with the potential of becoming a Borlaug Scholar upon completion. The required completed template on page 6 will act as the foundation of the PYI paper. Accepted PSEAS participants will be asked to develop the final paper to be submitted to the World Food Prize Foundation. Applicant must complete the Food Security Essay Template on Page 6.

- Select ONE country that is not your own, and ONE key factor affecting food security from our website.
- We will consider the submission of this application a rough draft of the PA Youth Institute paper that we will provide support with in the months leading up to the program.

• PART 5: TEACHER FORM AND REFERENCE STATEMENT

Applicant is responsible for selecting and requesting one science or one agricultural teacher to serve as a reference. Upon agreement, forward the form on page 7 to the teacher. Applicant should provide a copy of supporting materials to the teacher.

- The teacher should complete the form, sign, and seal in an envelope for the applicant.
- The applicant is responsible for collecting a sealed envelope from the teacher with the signed form and reference letter.

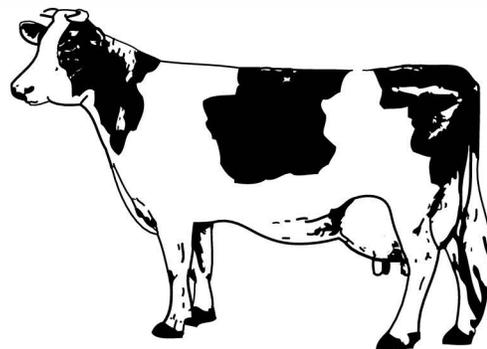
• PART 6: SCHOOL COUNSELOR FORM, REFERENCE STATEMENT, AND TRANSCRIPT

Applicant is responsible for requesting their school counselor to complete the school counselor form on page 8, sign, and include the applicant's transcript.

- The school counselor will serve as a second reference using the lines provided or on an additional page. Counselor will also provide a copy of the applicant's official transcript.
- Homeschoolers should give the Counselor form to the Home-school Evaluator.
- The school counselor should complete the form, sign, and include the transcript in a sealed envelope.

• PART 7: CHECKLIST SUBMISSION BY APPLICANT AND SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Applicant should refer to page 9 for the complete checklist and submission directions.





APPLICANT PERSONAL DATA FORM

APPLICANT NAME _____
First Middle Last

PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS _____
Street or Box Number City, State, Zip Code

HOME TELEPHONE (____) ____ - ____ **APPLICANT CELL NUMBER** (____) ____ - ____

GMAIL ADDRESS _____ **SCHOOL EMAIL ADDRESS** _____

GENDER: MALE FEMALE **DATE OF BIRTH** ____/____/____
Month Day Year

APPLICANT'S CURRENT GRADE LEVEL ____ **PREFERRED SESSION:** **SESSION 1** **SESSION 2**
June 15-28, 2025 July 6-19, 2025

NAME OF HIGH SCHOOL _____

NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT IN WHICH YOU RESIDE _____

OPTIONAL INFORMATION: HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY YOURSELF?

Please check all that apply. This information is confidential.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian / Alaskan Native | <input type="checkbox"/> Black / African American | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian American |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Latino / Hispanic American | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander | <input type="checkbox"/> White American |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> 1st Generation Student | |

PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN CONTACT INFORMATION:

PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN'S NAME 1 _____

HOME TELEPHONE (____) ____ - ____ **CELL PHONE NUMBER** (____) ____ - ____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN'S NAME 2 _____

HOME TELEPHONE (____) ____ - ____ **CELL PHONE NUMBER** (____) ____ - ____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____



AGREEMENT AND SIGNATURES

APPLICANT'S STATEMENT AND SIGNATURE

- I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, all of the information I have provided is accurate and that the work submitted is my own. I acknowledge that information about my selection to the Pennsylvania School for Excellence in the Agricultural Sciences and the projects I may develop there may be shared with the public.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to return this form and the required attachments to my school counselor.
- I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to stay in touch with my school counselor to ensure that the application is submitted in complete form, postmarked by the appropriate date and mailed to the PSEAS Program Office at The Pennsylvania State University.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE _____ **DATE** _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN'S STATEMENT AND SIGNATURE

- I have reviewed the information on this form and give my permission for my child to proceed with the application procedures and authorize my child's school and its employees to release any information necessary for this application.
- I acknowledge that it is my child's responsibilities to ensure that the application is submitted in complete form, postmarked by the appropriate date, and mailed to the PSEAS Program Office at the Pennsylvania State University, University Park campus.
- I understand that the application becomes the property of the Pennsylvania School for Excellence in the Agricultural Sciences (PSEAS) and cannot be returned. I am aware that the PSEAS cannot respond to requests for individual assessments or appeals.
- I understand my child is required to be covered by a medical plan to participate. If he/she is not covered, I will contact the program director for options.
- I understand if my child is selected, additional permission and medical forms may be requested.

PARENT/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE _____ **DATE** _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE _____ **DATE** _____



FOOD SECURITY ESSAY ROUGH DRAFT

The Pennsylvania Youth Institute (PYI), part of the World Food Prize Foundation's youth programming, provides you the opportunity to identify, explore, and propose solutions to issues within agriculture and our global food system. After writing your Food Security essay, you will present your research at the PYI during the PSEAS program.

Using the below template, complete the sections as part of the application and as the foundation of the PYI paper. Your rough draft should use Times New Roman, 11pt font, single-spaced, double-spaced between paragraphs, one-inch margins, and references should be cited in APA format. Each section is important in the development of your paper. Please see the list of Food Security Factors at the PYI website.

Instructions Website: <https://agsci.psu.edu/visitors-and-public/youth-opportunities/pennsylvania-youth-institute-information/instructions>

First and Last Name, PA School for Excellence in the Ag Sciences

Name of High School, City, PA

Country, Factor #: Factor Name

Title

Introduce your country: How does your factor impact your chosen country? Things to consider: What is your country's population? Where is your country located? What is the general climate?

Explain what a typical family/lifestyle looks like: Think about family size and composition, diet, and education, how does the average person/family live? Is there adequate access to healthcare?

Describe either a typical farm or urban area: What is the average farm size? What crops do farmers grow? Animals farmers raise? What agricultural practices do farmers use? In urban areas, consider employment and wages, access to purchased food, and urban food production: are urban citizens able to maintain a healthy diet?

Describe and explain the barriers facing the typical family: Are there any barriers related to your factor that the typical family faces regarding food production, employment, or accessing food markets? How are they trying to work around these barriers?

Describe your food security factor: What is the food security factor you will address? What is the current status of this factor? Is the trend of this factor improving, worsening, or constant?

Explain possible solutions and improvements: What solutions or ideas do you have to improve food security for the typical family? How could these be realistically implemented? Where would you find funding? Consider individual, community, and large scale solutions.

Conclusion: Conclusion. Recap factor, barriers, and solution.

Bibliography should be in APA format.



TEACHER REFERENCE FORM

This form can be found electronically at <https://agsci.psu.edu/school-for-excellence> for easier completion.

APPLICANT'S NAME _____ TEACHER NAME _____

TEACHER EMAIL ADDRESS _____ TEACHER SUBJECT AREA _____

1. How does the applicant compare in overall promise with other students whom you have taught during your career? Please click one statement below:

- Among the very best I have known
- Very good, but not the very best
- Average
- Below Average

2. Please check one selection below to indicate your recommendation for the applicant for the Pennsylvania School for Excellence in the Agricultural Sciences:

- Highly Recommended
- Recommended
- Recommended with Reservations
- Not Recommended

3. For each item below, please assess the applicant by assigning one of the following values: (A=exceptional, B=above average, C=average, D=below average, E=no opportunity to observe)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| _____ Analytical Ability | _____ Appropriate Reaction to/use of Criticism |
| _____ Oral Expression | _____ Initiative and Independence |
| _____ Leadership Qualities | _____ Written Communication Skills |
| _____ Interaction with Others | _____ Personal Organizational Skills |

4. Please write a statement about this applicant's strengths and weaknesses, explaining why you rated the applicant as you did. Please cite examples of outstanding contributions, achievements, or challenges. Your response is important and will assist the selection committee in understanding if this student is ready for a sustained intensive living/learning experience. Check this box if attaching a letter

Please complete the form, sign, and seal in an envelope for the applicant.

TEACHER'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____



SCHOOL COUNSELOR FORM

This form can be found electronically at <https://agsci.psu.edu/school-for-excellence> for easier completion.

APPLICANT'S NAME _____

COUNSELOR'S NAME _____ **EMAIL ADDRESS** _____

1. Transcript

Include the applicant's transcript to this form.

2. Attendance Record

Number of absences in the last full academic year: _____

(IMPORTANT: If the number exceeds 10, please state reason(s) and whether the number has remained high this year)

Number of tardies in the last full academic year: _____

(IMPORTANT: If the number exceeds 10, please state reason(s) and whether the number has remained high this year)

Comments: _____

3. Please check one selection below to indicate your recommendation for the applicant for the Pennsylvania School for Excellence in the Agricultural Sciences:

- Highly Recommended
- Recommended
- Recommended with Reservations
- Not Recommended

4. Please comment on the applicant's special qualities, challenges, or problems of which the selection committee should be aware. You are strongly encouraged to attach a separate letter.

Check this box if attaching a letter

5. Signature

The information I have provided is complete and correct. I have read the Procedures and the Deadline and Submission Information. I understand that an application may be disqualified if it is late, incomplete or sent to an incorrect agency. I understand that the applicant can be disqualified on the basis of grade level ineligibility, residency ineligibility, and previous program participation, plagiarism, or falsification of information.

Please complete the form, sign, and include the transcript in a sealed envelope.

COUNSELOR'S SIGNATURE _____ **DATE** _____