



Memorandum of Understanding
Between the United States Department of Agriculture
and

The International Farm Youth Exchange Association of the USA, Inc.

I. PARTIES

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is between the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the International Farm Youth Exchange (IFYE) Association of the USA, Inc., hereinafter referred to individually as a “party” or together as “participants.”

II. PURPOSE

This MOU sets forth the general terms and conditions for the partnership between USDA and IFYE to promote the common goals of advancing the public interest through developing a highly prepared workforce for unique careers within the industry of international agriculture through rural-based international exchanges.

This MOU supersedes any previous MOU between the USDA and the undersigned party.

III. STATEMENT OF MUTUAL INTEREST

USDA’s mission is to serve all Americans by providing effective, innovative, science-based public policy leadership in agriculture, food and nutrition, natural resource protection and management, rural development, and related issues with a commitment to deliver equitable and climate-smart opportunities that inspire and help America thrive. The USDA Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE) develops and maintains partnerships focused on solutions to challenges facing rural and underserved communities and connects those communities to the education, tools, and resources available to them through USDA programs and initiatives.

The mission of IFYE association of the USA, Inc. is to provide unique and valuable learning experiences in international exchange programs for young adults.

IV. APPROACH

Collaborative efforts under this MOU may include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- a) Recruiting and retaining more students into careers in food, agricultural science, natural resources, and related fields.
- b) Increasing the number of students entering Federal employment within USDA.
- c) Leveraging available expertise and resources in areas of mutual benefit relating to teaching, research, and extension programs, library and information services, technology development activities, limited resources, small-scale and minority producer programs, urban agriculture and rural development programs.
- d) Exploring opportunities for consulting, planning, technical assistance, and implementing activities/initiatives in areas of mutual benefit.
- e) Equitably implementing USDA programs to further agriculture research, extension, and teaching programs and library and information services or other program areas of mutual interest and benefit.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

The participants will work together to identify activities and initiatives of mutual benefit.

a) USDA will:

- i. Recognize the importance of international cultural understanding of agriculture, food, natural resources, and nutrition.
- ii. Recognize the value of two-way exchange programs, furthering cultural understanding.
- iii. Acknowledge the role IFYE plays in preparing young adults to work in advancing international agricultural relations and the positive impact IFYE has delivered to rural America through program participants and alumni.
- iv. Identify short- and long-term interests of USDA and connect IFYE to those interests and other resources available to them through USDA programs and initiatives, which may include sharing information about IFYE opportunities with the Cooperative Extension System by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.
- v. Communicate available USDA Internship opportunities, including the Pathways Program, to IFYE and IFYE alumni.

b) IFYE will:

- i. Equip the next generation of young people with the tools they need to better understand international cultural understanding of agriculture, food, natural resources, and nutrition.
- ii. Promote global, agricultural relationships between agrarian producers in other countries and rural communities in the United States.
- iii. Provide opportunities for the Secretary or the Secretary's designee to meet with IFYE participants returning to the United States from international experiences.

- iv. Provide opportunities for the Secretary or the Secretary's designee to meet with IFYE participants in United States-based programs.
 - v. Provide informal feedback to USDA relative to the implementation of Federal programs for training, resources, and other related purposes.
- c) USDA and IFYE will handle their own activities and utilize their own resources, including the expenditure of their own funds, in pursuing these objectives. Each party will carry out its separate activities in a coordinated and mutually beneficial manner.

VI. AGREEMENTS

Before undertaking any collaborative activity that will require the obligation of federal funds or resources, the participants will negotiate and execute an appropriate instrument such as a contract, grant, cooperative agreement, Intergovernmental Personnel Act agreement, or other agreement to document the transaction and identify the legal authority underlying the particular transaction. Each collaborative activity shall be agreed upon and conducted in accordance with all applicable statutes and regulations.

It is also mutually agreed and understood by all participants that:

- a) Implementation of this MOU will occur at the highest level possible for all participants.
- b) All participants will work together to create an annual plan of work as it relates to these terms and develop a reporting system that reflects the effectiveness and impact of the partnership between all participants.
- c) Each participant will carry out its separate activities in a coordinated and mutually beneficial manner.
- d) A party may not use or reference the name or logo of the other party or any of its component agencies in any context, manner, or media now or hereafter to serve as an endorsement of the other party, or its employees, agents, parents, subsidiaries, and related companies, or any of its programs or products.
- e) This MOU in no way restricts either party from participating in similar activities with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals. Nothing in this agreement may be interpreted to imply that either party endorses any product, service, or policy of the other.

VII. COSTS AND IMPLEMENTATION

This MOU is not a financial or funding document. It does not impose any financial commitments on either party. Specific activities or initiatives that involve the transfer of funds, services, or property among the various agencies and offices of USDA and IFYE will require execution of separate agreements and will be contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds. An appropriate statutory authority must independently authorize such activities. This MOU does not provide such authority. Negotiation, execution, and administration of each such agreement must comply with all applicable statutes and regulations.

The participants are encouraged to identify funds and resources to support activities of mutual benefit.

VIII. AMENDMENT AND TERMINATION

This MOU takes effect when signed by all participants and shall remain in effect five (5) years from the date of execution. This MOU may be extended or amended upon written request of either party and the subsequent written concurrence of the other. Either party may terminate this MOU with a sixty (60) day written notice to the other.

IX. THIRD PARTY BENEFICIARY STATUS

This MOU is not intended to, and does not create, any right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity, by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any person.

X. AUTHORITIES

The USDA has authority under the following statute, regulation, and/or executive order to conduct the activities contemplated under this MOU: 7 U.S.C. 6934b and 7 CFR 2.38.

XI. KEY EMPLOYEES

The employees of all participants conducting activities under the terms of this MOU shall be as follows:

For USDA:

- a) Dr. Lisa Ramirez, (202) 720-6350, lisa.ramirez@usda.gov, will serve as the Designated Representative responsible for coordination of USDA activities associated with this MOU.
- b) Kenya Nicholas, (202) 720-6350, kenya.nicholas@usda.gov, will serve as the point of contact for USDA.
- c) Matthews Smith, (202) 720-6350, matthews.smith@usda.gov, will serve as the secondary point of contact for USDA.

For IFYE:

- a) Janet S. Wood, President, Board of Directors, jwood@ifyeusa.org, (513) 225-5300 (cell) will serve as coordinator and point of contact for IFYE.
- b) Carolyn S. Hansen, Interim Executive Director, chansen@ifyeusa.org, (309) 261-1705 (cell).

XII. SIGNATURES

THE IFYE ASSOCIATION OF THE USA, INC.

November 13, 2023
Date

Janet S. Wood
Janet S. Wood
President
The IFYE Association of the USA, Inc.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

November 9, 2023
Date

Thomas J. Vilsack
Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture