CAREER PROFILE

PROFESSOR (AGRONOMY, CROP & SOIL SCIENCE)

Shape minds, make key scientific discoveries and be a thought leader.

WHAT IT IS

Imagine turning your love of science into a career that teaches, discovers, and leads. Professors in agronomy, crop, and soil science do just that by teaching the next generation while conducting research that advances the science of agriculture. As a professor, you will educate future scientists and agronomists and conduct hands-on research in the field and lab. This career blends passion for science, mentorship, and discovery, letting you influence both people and the future.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

As a professor, your work is a mix of teaching, research, and outreach to a wide variety of people. Your day might include:

- Teaching lectures and labs to undergraduate and graduate students
- Meeting with advisees and research students to guide projects
- Writing research papers and grant proposals
- Analyzing data from field trials or experiments
- Designing research projects and monitoring long-term studies
- Presenting findings at conferences and collaborating with colleagues
- Serving on university committees

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READY FOR SUCCESS

Your success begins with curiosity and a passion for both science and teaching. Build deep expertise in your specialty, strong communication skills, and the ability to mentor others. Develop writing skills for papers and grants, time management for balancing teaching and research, and curiosity to keep learning. Collaboration with colleagues and students is essential—professors solve big agricultural problems by working with others.

Seek mentors, assist in labs, and get experience presenting research. Teaching, research, and leadership experiences during graduate school set the foundation for a successful academic career.

EDUCATION REQUIRED

This career is rooted in scientific expertise in agronomy, crop science, and soil science, paired with research and teaching skills.

- **Ph.D. in Agronomy, Soil Science, Crop Science, or Plant Science** is required
- Many complete **postdoctoral research** before faculty appointments
- **Graduate coursework and research** build specialized expertise
- **Teaching experience** as a graduate assistant is valuable
- **Research productivity** (publications) is essential for competitive positions

GETTING STARTED

Excel in science, math, and communication courses. Join STEM clubs, FFA, or science competitions. Seek undergraduate research opportunities with professors. Apply to graduate programs at universities with strong agricultural research. Gain teaching experience and present research at conferences. Build relationships with faculty mentors and consider postdocs to strengthen credentials.

GROW BY **7%**

JOB OUTLOOK

The job outlook for post-secondary teachers is good, with jobs growing by 7%, a much faster pace than average, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

$106K

AVERAGE SALARY

The median pay for post-secondary science teachers is $106,100, higher than non-science professors.