

## **Agricultural Government Scholarships for High-quality Taiwanese Agricultural Talents**

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The Council of Agriculture (COA) and the Ministry of Education (MOE) are jointly studying ways on how to minimize the gap of academia and industry in the agricultural sector in order to accelerate the cultivation of young agricultural talents operating in Taiwan. Starting from the fall semester in 2015, MOE agrees to recruit 30 students awarded by the government scholarships in studying Bachelors of Continuing Education at Farm Management Division of Department of Gardening in National Chiayi University. In addition, COA will provide these enrolled students with related subsidies. Any senior high school (or with equivalent degrees) graduates, in particular, the young generations from farm households or from agricultural schools, are very welcome to apply for the selection before May 6, 2015.

COA refers to the previous experiences from Farm Management Division at past Chiayi Agricultural College (then the present National Chiayi University) in order to systematically educate high-quality agricultural talents nowadays and in the future. In the first stage, COA plans to collaborate with the National Chiayi University in the coming fall semester in 2015 with the project of government scholarships implemented by Bachelors of Continuing Education at Farm Management Division of Department of Gardening in National Chiayi University. In addition, COA takes into consideration the operational scale and resource allocations specifically for enhancing capabilities for the second or younger generations from farm households and graduates from agricultural schools.

COA announces the benefits for the government scholarship winners. During the first three years, they will be treated to full scholarships in the same way as teachers' education programs (including major and minor food expenses, annual spending on books, uniform fees, and visiting travel costs). During the fourth year, the students will be required to do the practical training on family-owned farms or other related agribusinesses for one year while only tuition fees will be fully paid by the government. Meanwhile, the related authorities will provide counseling and examinations during the practical training. Students who passed all the above requirements will be awarded graduation certificates. To those graduates who are committed to agricultural operations, the government will actively provide further counseling for operating farms with privileged rights to access the public resources in buying farmlands

and in getting new venture startup loans.

COA further emphasizes the practical operation and business management in addition to conventional courses in agricultural theories and production techniques. Moreover, COA also clarifies the related obligations for these students after their graduation for specific periods staying in different farms. For example, they must return to their family-owned farms or be hired to other related agribusinesses. By the post-graduate practical work, the government also combines the continuous counseling and support mechanism, the systematic cultivation of agricultural talents with innovative capabilities in agricultural operations, and their feasibility on the basis of the young successors in the agricultural sector.

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