Secondary Course Description

COVER PAGE

1. Course Title: Biology and Sustainable Agriculture

2. Transcript Title / Abbreviation:

3. Transcript Course Code / Number (Office Use Only):

4. School: Davis Senior High School

5. **District:** Davis Joint Unified School District

6. Department: Science

7. Graduation Requirement it meets: Elective, Science, CTE

8. Length of Course: 1 year

9. Graduation Credits: 10

10. School / District Web Site: http://www.djusd.net

11. CBEDS Course Code:

12. School Contact:

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Title/Position: Teacher

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13. Subject Area:

- [ ] History/Social Science
- [ ] English
- [ ] Mathematics
- [x] Science
- [x] CTE
- [ ] Language other than English
- [ ] Visual & Performing Arts
- [ ] DJUSD Graduation Elective
- [x] College Prep Elective (will seek UC/CSU approval)

14. Grade Level(s): 9-12

15. UC/CSU Requirement:

16. Seeking "Honors" Distinction? [ ] Yes   [x] No

17. GPA Types:

18. Credit Value:

- [ ] 0.5 (half year or semester equivalent)
- [x] 1.0 (one year equivalent)
- [ ] 2.0 (two year equivalent)
- [ ] Other: _____

19. Was this course previously approved by UC?   [x] Yes   [ ] No

If so, in what year? _____   Under what course title? _Same title but in other districts_____

20. Pre-Requisites: none

   Co-Requisites:

21. Preliminary Approval - Secondary Site Principal Signature (**Must** be signed before proceeding to Step 22):

_____

22. Date Course Proposal with Preliminary Approval (Step 15) sent to Associate Superintendent, Educational Services: _____

23. Review & Approval:

Date		Signature
_____	Site Curriculum and Instruction Leadership Team	Signature/Title _____
_____	Secondary Department Articulation/Collaboration	Signature/Title _____

Secondary Principal Signatures: _____   _____

Date: _____   _____

Brief Course Description: Sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our environment. Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and the biotic world can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations. Sustainability is important to making sure that we have and will continue to have, the water, materials, and resources to protect human health and our environment. (adapted from http://www.epa.gov/sustainability/basicinfo.htm)

Context for Course:

List the State/District Standards addressed in this course.

Sustainable Agriculture is a one-year course designed to integrate biological science practices and knowledge into the practice of sustainable agriculture. The course is organized into four major sections, or units, each with a guiding question. Unit one addresses the question, what is sustainable agriculture? Unit two, how does sustainable agriculture fit into our environment? Unit three, what molecular biology principles guide sustainable agriculture? Unit four, how do we make decisions to maximize sustainable agricultural practices within a functioning ecosystem?

History of Course Development:
The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 committed the United States to sustainability, declaring it a national policy "to create and maintain conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations."
In the years since NEPA was enacted, the public's interest in sustainability has broadened. According to the National Research Council, there are many additional drivers for sustainability. In the areas where the US has seen considerable progress in sustainability, a common driver for sustainability efforts is citizens and other stakeholders concern. In addition, sustainability practitioners are becoming more ambitious in their sustainability efforts and are working together to share best practices to ensure the greatest environmental, economic and social impact. (adapted from http://www.epa.gov/sustainability/basicinfo.htm)

COURSE GOALS AND/OR MAJOR STUDENT OUTCOMES

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Within each unit specific life science principles will be identified with agricultural principles and practices guiding the acquisition of this knowledge, culminating in the development of a sustainable farm model and portfolio of supporting student research.

Course Content:

<u>**Unit 1: Driving Question: What is sustainable agriculture?**</u>
This introductory unit will focus on the biological classifications of agriculture and their associated industry sectors, what sustainability is, and how the scientific method is the driving force behind advancements and developments in sustainable biological practices within agriculture. Students develop an overview of agricultural industries and biologic
practices through research projects on facets of California agriculture, and identify what sustainability and sustainable practices are through individualized lab experiments relating to current practices. Ultimately, students will be able to use the scientific method to complete an extensive laboratory experiment that is designed to evaluate potential feed source varieties for sustainable success within their local community.

<u>**Unit 1: Key Assignments**</u>
1. "What is sustainable agriculture?"
Students groups will research the various biological divisions of what constitutes agriculture (plant science, animal science, forestry, horticulture, etc.). Within their research they will identify the subcategories of industry that fall within their topic, what career paths are available within each, what are currently identified as "best practices" (such as the three E's of sustainability -- economics, ecology and equity) and what are some of the sustainability issues and biologic concerns within each of these divisions. Students will then develop a multimedia presentation to introduce their particular area of agriculture to the class and identify the most prevalent issues facing their particular field of interest.

2."That's Ag - The Science Behind Agriculture" – Categorical Based Mini-Labs:
Student groups will design and complete an inquiry based mini-lab experiment to expand on their knowledge of the particular industry sector they researched from the previous activity. Choosing a focus from one of the areas of concern or issues within their sector, students will then design and implement an experiment that tests factors contributing to the issue and potential impacts they have on the population using scientific method learned in class. Examples might include a lab on animal production and energy flow, a lab on soil degradation and plant germination, a lab on food processing practices, a lab on post-harvest preservation, etc. The labs will introduce the application of inquiry within the agriculture sectors and the importance of the implementation of research in the industry. Design protocols, data, and analysis will be submitted in lab report format. As part of their analysis, students must use their data to make suggestions on how to improve efficiency or yield, or lessen the impact of processing, relevant to their finding of their particular experiment.

3. Scientific Method and Sustainability Lab – "Work Like a Scientist"
In this lab students are introduced to the scientific method, the basis for all scientific decision making. The native grasses research will provide students with the foundation of scientific investigation application as well providing key research that will be used in the final unit project as well as the end of course project. Students will research the difference between native grasses versus invasive grasses including specific species. Using this knowledge, they will hypothesize germination rates between these two variable groups. Students will then design and implement an experiment incorporating quantitative data collection, analysis, and draw conclusions reflective to their hypothesis, and evaluate the grasses for potential sustainability within their communities.
As a continuation of the germination experiment, given that the two variables have differing germination rates, students can identify other measures of "success" of a potential feed crop. They will then sample the community environment for the potential factors affecting the continued growth and development of grasses. Samples would include soil testing, (pH, nutrient composition, structure and texture, and water capacity), water availability, and ambient temperatures. Combining this information with the initial background research regarding natives versus invasive, students will hypothesize on the continued success of their germinating grasses, then transplant their seeds into test plots or fodder trays, and allow for continued growth. After a predetermined amount of time, sample plots will be analyzed for percent coverage and measurements of species biomass will be completed. Using this information, students will determine the most biologically suitable grass species to plant that would be the most sustainable within the local community through a written lab completed in their lab notebook and a PowerPoint presentation of their hypothesis, design, data and conclusion.

Unit 2: Driving Question: How does sustainable agriculture fit into our environment?

While unit one examined whole systems, unit two takes a closer look at components within that system. Students will use evidence gathered from a series of laboratory exercises to be able to describe the transfer of energy from one trophic level to another as well as the cycling of nutrients and energy through ecosystems. Students will be able to draw conclusions about these biogeochemical cycles and how they apply to sustainability of production agriculture. Specifically, students will conduct primary research in the areas of photosynthesis and chemical energy creation, nutrient cycling, transpiration and water use, ecological relationships and global farming practices in order to draw biologically-sound conclusions regarding the effects of agriculture on the natural environment. The students learning will culminate in a synthesis of concepts applied to the development of a three-year sustainable crop rotation plan.

Unit 2: Key Assignments

1. "Bacteria at Work" - Nitrogen Fixation

Students will analyze the effects of nitrogen fixation on plants initially by examining prior studies as well as industry publications regarding the role of nitrogen in plant growth and the methods by which farmers enhance nitrogen levels in soil. This should include a thorough look at the microbiology of nitrogen-fixing bacteria, plant and root physiology, nutrient cycling and uptake in plants, chemical processes and cellular respiration in plants and fertilization methods. After garnering that background information, students will conduct an experiment that compares the effects of added nitrogen fertilizer versus nitrogen fixing bacteria on the growth of clover. Students will grow clover plants in soil with no nitrogen added, in soil with nitrogen fertilizer added, and in soil containing nitrogen-fixing bacteria (in this case, a species of rhizobia called Rhizobium legominosarium, or R. legominosarium). Students will monitor the nitrogen levels in each type of soil using a nitrogen testing kit. The students will observe the effects of nitrogen on the health of the clover plants by measuring the increase in biomass of each plant during the experiment. Plants should be harvested, soil washed away, and weights taken on plant material produced. Students will use the data collected to create a graph showing the relationship between nitrogen availability in the soil and crop sustainability. This allows students to not only experience agriculture's role in the nitrogen cycle, but also provides necessary supporting data for decision making in the final end of course project.

2. "Morning Jolt!"- Photosynthesis Lab

Photosynthesis is the basis for the creation of chemical energy in the natural world. Plants require light in order to transform one type of energy into another, and the quantity and type of light determine the optimal photosynthesis rates. Students will conduct a laboratory exercise that examines the effects of shade on the growth of plants and the rates of photosynthesis and will develop a written memorandum to the International Coffee Growers Association regarding optimal shade levels for the growth of coffee trees, including information regarding ecological sustainability involved in the practice. The process will begin by using industry journals to examine coffee production methods; primarily comparing and contrasting industrial coffee production with shade-grown, sustainable coffee production. Students should come up with the following information: Arabica coffee has the highest yields under 35 to 65% shade. In addition, growing coffee under shade also discourages weed growth, may reduce pathogen infection, protect the crop from frost, and helps to increase numbers of pollinators which results in better fruit set. However, in order to produce faster, higher yields and prevent the spread of coffee leaf rust (Hemileia vastatrix), many coffee plantations began to grow coffee under sunnier conditions. The fewer shade trees that are in coffee plantations, the less biodiversity there is in those plantations.

The laboratory exercise will use several small coffee plant starts (available for purchase online as seeds or a houseplant) and will grow them for a series of days under varying shade levels. Students will conduct visual assessments of plant health and growth, then conduct a traditional floating leaf disc assay protocol to assess photosynthesis levels under varying light conditions. Students will use both the previously gathered background information regarding industry practices, sustainability and plant growth as well results of the primary research to develop the memorandum regarding optimal shade levels for sustainable coffee growth.

3. "Move on Through" - Transpiration Lab

Students will initially conduct background research into water use in agriculture and the demands placed on farmers to be efficient and careful with this scarce natural resource. Students will then investigate transpiration as part of the hydrologic system, based on different genetic variations of plant structure (leaf type and shape, for example). Students will conduct a research exercise by examining transpiration in plants with various leaf structures. This can occur using locally-grown crops or by using exotic crops and adding a component regarding appropriate plant selection. In this lab, students will use the plant weight protocol to measure the transpiration rates of individual plants. Students give plants a predetermined amount of water, reweigh the plants, and continue weighing the plants over time to contrast weight differentials and determine water loss through

transpiration. Students will monitor observable physical changes in the different plants' condition as water is depleted, collecting qualitative data and measuring the diurnal transpiration rates. Students will apply the individual plant water usage data to larger scale acreage to analyze water usage. Students will create a written case study to justify plant selection within the context of the sustainability of the hydrologic system. Optional extension: include in the case study how trends in daily transpiration rates change if water losses were replenished through different irrigation management techniques (drip, flood, etc.).

4. "From Trash to Gas" - Sustainable Waste Management
Students will use both primary and secondary research to discover that food scraps, dead plants, manure, and other decaying organic matter, called biomass are a rich source of energy. Energy can be procured from biomass by turning it into a gas called biogas. The process will begin by students examining agricultural examples of biogas production (small scale composting, dairy lagoon gas extraction, codigestion, etc.) as well as the microbiological basis for biogas production, including aerobic and anaerobic fermentation, cellular respiration, lignocellulosic breakdown, etc. As part of this analysis, students will compare the amounts of biogas produced by different types of biomass. In order to quantify their findings, students will conduct an experiment with three soda bottles filled to the same volume with various types of biomass commonly used in biogas production. Bottle one will contain cow manure, bottle two will contain cow manure and household kitchen scraps, and bottle three will contain cow manure and a biological waste product of the students choosing (teacher approved). Bottles will be topped with a small balloon. Students will record the circumference of each of the balloons at the same time of day over a period of 10 days as well as record observations of the biomass inside of the bottles. Students will create a graph representing the circumference of balloons and the number of days. Students will compare graphs to determine which biomass type produced the fastest inflation of the balloon. Upon completion of the experiment, the students will then need to develop a written plan for how this naturally occurring byproduct can be harnessed to benefit a farming situation. In addition to incorporating their data, this plan should include: research on how the gas is used, the scientific processes behind biogas creation (fermentation, anaerobic digestion, etc.), biomass feedstocks that can be used to create efficient quantities of biogas, potential uses of biogas, and potential economic and sustainable benefits of instituting a biomass digester.

5. "Composting, Do the Rot Thing"
Students will examine the principle of composting organic material, and the process of converting complex organic matter into the basic nutrients needed by living organisms. Prior to conducting the experiment, students will use industry and extension publications to learn the processes of composting, as well as the benefits and challenges of compost production (available nutrient levels, community perceptions, hazardous materials, smell, storage, etc.). Following the background research, students will conduct a laboratory exercise that will examine the utilization of organic wastes (household) as nutrients for plants. It will allow students to investigate which waste products can be composted and best utilized by plants. Based off of prior knowledge of an ecosystem and how ecosystems regenerate as well as the interaction of food and fiber systems with natural cycles, students will justify specific nutrient requirements, as well as renewable and nonrenewable natural resources. Students will prepare three test plots, one plot with just soil, one with soil and household waste products collected by students, and one plot with animal waste products. Students will then monitor plant growth and development to graph their results. Students will create an informational, six paneled brochure that explains a waste management plan using compost. Included in the brochure should be information regarding the microbiology of compost production in addition to the practical household application of the research. Additionally, the brochure should outline the removal of organic matter to increase ecological sustainability while having the least environmental impact on the farm and community.

Unit 2. Assessment
Plant, Grow, Rotate, Repeat Sustainable Crop Management Plan
Students will apply concepts of the biogeochemical cycles as well as waste management to create a 3-year sustainable crop rotation plan that produces the highest crop yields for any given location with the least environmental impact. Students must analyze current soil conditions as well as community needs when considering their crops for production. Student focus should be on nitrogen fixation of specified crops. Students will use previous knowledge of ecosystems, invasive species, and producer and consumer relationships as well as research current market prices and local demands, to assess the environmental contribution and the economical impact from each crop. When creating the 3-year crop rotations students will defend their selections and the ecological impacts of their decisions. The synthesis of the students' research will culminate in written proposal to a local producer.

Unit 3: Driving Question - What molecular biology principles guide sustainable agriculture?

In this unit, students will examine the science of agriculture and evaluate the efficiency and sustainability of current methods. Students will explore the concepts of taxonomy of plants and nomenclature of animals, cell structure, cellular division, DNA, and chromosomes. Students will apply this knowledge to evaluate desirable inheritable traits in each species to artificially select characteristics to breed more efficient and productive offspring as a part of their created breeding plan. Students will be introduced to genetic markers, genetically modified organisms, and biotechnology. With this knowledge, students will examine and evaluate biotechnology, the ethics of genetic manipulation, and its implication on the sustainability of agriculture and our ability to feed a growing population. As a culminating project for the first two units, students will design, conduct, and interpret their own agricultural research project on a biological issue facing agriculture and present their findings with a visual, written, and oral report.

1. "Breed for The Need"- Sustainable Breeding Evaluation

Animal genetics play a role in sustainability. An animal that is genetically predicted to become heavier muscled in a shorter period of time will utilize less pasture and nutritive resources than one that takes longer to reach the same weight. A female who produces more milk to feed her offspring will utilize less resources for both her and her progeny. Therefore, summative phenotypic traits are important to evaluate in a sustainable ecosystem in order to efficiently utilize natural resources. By analyzing these traits students can determine the probability of the trait expression in an animal's offspring. After instruction on chromosomal physiology, multicellular organization, animal anatomy, basic heredity, and genetic expression, students will identify desirable characteristics from a group of four animals of the same species to create a sustainable breeding plan that will include: hybrid vigor, genetic efficiency and other genetic traits. Students will use three components to evaluate the group of four animals that include the farmer's sustainability scenario, expected progeny difference data and phenotypic evaluation of the animals. First students will read an agricultural producer's written scenario that describes the targeted phenotypic traits a farmer desires based on the environment that must sustain the health and nutrition of the specific animals while not depleting the natural resources within that biological system. The parameters of the traits the students will evaluate include milk production (the weight of the weaned offspring that was contributed to the amount of milk the mother produced), weaning weight (the weight of the offspring when removed from the mother), yearling weight (the weight of the offspring at eighteen months of age and birth weight (the weight of the offspring at birth). Next, the students will read and analyze Expected Progeny Difference (Summative phenotype expression) data. Finally, students will perform visual observations of the phenotypic traits in those four animals. Students will assess and prioritize the three analyzed components based on importance and collectively use them to place the four animals in phenotypic order from the most desirable for the environment to the least desirable according to the farmer's sustainability scenario. Students will give an oral defense with evidence to support reasoning.

2. "Where Should I Make My Home?" - Sustainable Production Plan

The students will be put into groups and collectively evaluate the same animals from the previous activity with summative phenotypic traits for each of the bio-geological growing zones in California which are desert and high desert, coastal, valley, foothills and mountains. Instruction should occur on plant taxonomy and livestock anatomical suitability (large animals in areas with poor biomass production, genetic hardiness factors, etc.) prior to the secondary research being done. Research done on each zone will provide information on the possible sustainability plans in which the four animals could be raised. Students will research the ecosystem of each area, analyzing what crops, pasture and range can be grown and the effects of climate and rainfall on the availability of nutrients for the animals' sustainability. Based on the data accumulated from the research they will reevaluate the four animals from the previous lab including EPD data. For each zone they will place the animals in order from the one most suited and efficient to the least. Students construct a written defense for their decision in the placing of those animals in each zone based on their data and research. They will argue the merits of their placing based on the data from their zone research: native and nonnative grass and crop survivability in each zone that provides nutrition to the animals, biological merits and disadvantages of each zone on the animals. They will then use the zone information to reevaluate the EPD data and how it can be best utilized to meet the animal's biological needs. Using the research and accumulated data students can determine a class placing for each region of California.

3. "Battle of the Seeds" - Biotechnology Use in Agriculture

Crop decisions made by agricultural producers are often predicated on understanding the climate, rainfall and topography needs of their growing area. These decisions often prioritize crop yield, but also must take into account the biological health of each system. The previous lab focused on evaluating the efficiency of specific animals introduced into an ecosystem where the biological components were predetermined and consistent. In

this activity, students explore the introduction of new plants into predetermined, consistent ecosystems by investigating how germination, growth and efficiency of plants (crops) can be affected by genetic and environmental changes. Prior to the experiment, students should be instructed in cell division and structure as functions of organism growth, genotypic traits and variable expression, traditional hybridization methods and modern genetic manipulation.

For the primary research exercise, students will set up three demonstration plots to compare growth and yield rates of plants. Half of the class will grow unweeded plots of plants, manually weed-controlled beds, and chemically controlled beds with plants that have been genetically modified to withstand the effects of a widely-used herbicide. The other half of the class will grow hybrid seed, non-hybrid seed, and genetically enhanced seed of the same plant. Upon analyzing data of plant growth and yield rates students will calculate the cost in time and money for the methods demonstrated. Students will formulate a written opinion/thesis and defend from evidence the most sustainable method of growing food based on their experiment. Students determine the statistical, economical and biological differences of genetically modified organisms as compared to natural organisms. Students will then research public concern of genetically modified organisms to prepare for a class debate. Utilizing their experimental results and research students debate the use of biotechnology and genetically modified organisms playing one of four following roles; a leader of a developing nation where hunger is a problem among their citizens, a biotechnology company specializing in producing genetically modified plants, a farmer, or a parent who primarily purchases organic produce. Students will reflect on their original opinion and write what they learned as a result of this experience.

Unit 3. Assessment:
"Hypothesize, Analyze, Repeat" - Formal Research Project
Labs and activities have been done in this unit that represent the common applications of biological factors such as genetic potential and variability of plants and animals, the symbiosis of animals and plants within an ecosystem and the impact of new species introduced into an established environment. Students will utilize the science of nature they learned in unit three, how that science fits into the biological systems from unit two and how those systems contribute to sustainability in unit one to develop a comprehensive agriscience experimental research project. Students will identify a problem related to agriculture that is the result of completing the first three units of the course (plant science, animal science, natural resources). Students will utilize the empirical method to design an experiment that will test their own authentic hypothesis using the skills and processes learned throughout the course that include dissecting published research and studies, testing the hypothesis, collecting, synthesizing, analyzing and interpreting data, accepting or rejecting the hypothesis based upon the data, technical reading and writing, and scientific collaboration. Specific expectations for the written research project are outlined below:

1. Forming a Hypothesis
Students will use credible sources to conduct background research on the agricultural issue they are investigating, and they will use this research to generate a testable hypothesis related to the scientific problem they have identified. The hypothesis developed by the student will be constructed with the independent and dependent variables in mind.

2. Experimental design and conducting experimentation
Students will construct an experimental design to test their hypothesis. A written experimental design should be constructed consistent with scientific protocol using a systematic approach outlined in the previous units. Students will have their experimental designs reviewed by industry experts, agricultural instructors, local growers/producers, researchers or university representatives. After validating the design using the peer review process, students will move to the experimentation phase of their research. Experimental designs should include replicates, control groups, and determine the variables to be controlled and how. Additionally, a determination should be made as to the type of data that will be collected and in what ways, with the emphasis placed on quantitative data or quantifying data that is qualitative in nature. Students will use their experimental design to test their hypothesis. For example, in a study of primed versus non-treated seeds, seeds would be planted in identical environments, multiple test groups would be established and compared to a control group, and the number of germinated seeds would be counted and recorded to quantify the outcome. Raw data should be recorded using a field book or electronic device.

3. Analyzing data, interpreting data and forming conclusions.

Students will determine the best methods for organizing their data using tables. Students will use mathematical principles to synthesize their data, calculating a mean, for example. Furthermore, a statistical analysis of the data will help the student determine if the results are due to chance or the independent variable that was tested. Students will choose the best way to present their data using graphs they believe will most effectively demonstrate their findings, and will further summarize what each graph shows. Finally, students will interpret the data and formulate conclusions based on the results. In the written conclusion, students will use their data to either accept or reject the original hypothesis. Conclusions should be directly supported by the data and supported by previous research. Students will also identify the limitations of their research, improvements that could be made to the experimental design, as well as future studies that may be conducted that relate the study at hand.

4. Evidence of Performing the AgriScience Research Project
Students will submit their research in a written paper, and it will include the following components: problem/purpose, background research, hypotheses, methodology, results/data, and discussion/ conclusion. The paper will be written using skills associated with technical and scientific writing, for example, refraining from the use of personal pronouns or keeping discussion limited to what the research and data suggest rather than personal opinion and bias. APA format will be utilized to reference and cite sources. Students will create a visual display board, using a digital format that mirrors the use of research posters in higher education, which will also include all of the components of the paper, but in a condensed form. The peer group that reviewed the original experimental design will review the final research paper. The project and its findings will be shared with the class in an oral presentation, with the research board on display to aid in communicating the results of the research.

Unit 4: Driving Question: How do we make decisions to maximize sustainable agricultural practices within a functioning ecosystem?
Students will understand common practices in the agriculture industry that promote sustainability. They will evaluate and/or refine technological solutions that reduce impacts of human activities on natural systems by using practices that utilize cellular biology, genetics, energy cycles, biological systems, plant and animal nomenclature and how these units collectively create ecosystems that were covered in the previous units. Students will conduct production practices in the areas of animal science, horticulture, and natural resources. Students will experience how the biological systems can be changed at the cellular level, promoting the emergence of new energy cycles that produce useful, recyclable products that have a positive impact on the environment, thus decreasing the impact of agriculture on the environment and promoting sustainability. Students will investigate positive sustainable approaches to changing negative impacts agriculture has on the land by testing methods of efficiency in laboratory work. This experience will give students perspective on production costs and resource needs in relation to animal welfare, mechanization versus labor, and use of chemicals to non-use of chemicals. Students will utilize this hands-on production experience to develop their own sustainable farm as a culminating final project to illustrate the management of agricultural systems, management of natural resources, the sustainability of an ecosystem for the future while preserving biodiversity.

Unit 4: Key Assignments

1. "Show Me You Care" - Practice in Animal Health Management
Common animal production practices are done to ensure multi-system homeostasis and to foster productive animal growth and general welfare. Prior to conducting a laboratory exercise, students will engage in secondary research that seeks to correlate common livestock production practices to maintaining system health in animals. For example, castration, tail banding, hoof trimming and vaccinations prevent pathogen (viral, bacterial, fungal and parasitic) infections and thereby ensuring the health of the immune system, lymphatic system and respiratory system, among others. Shearing, clipping and dehorning are noninvasive procedures that provide recycling opportunities of animal by products but are also designed to maintain homeostasis and to protect vital organs throughout multiple systems (shearing reduces overall stress on the circulatory system, for example). Animal identification requires animals to have a traceable number like the scrapie tag that traces the animal to the breeder in case an animal tests positive for the genetic disease and ensure herd health (preventing disease outbreaks that can stress multiple systems).

After the conclusion of the background research, students will engage in a laboratory experience where they will conduct common livestock production procedures practiced in the United States through the application of: castration methods, dehorning practices, vaccination protocols, identification systems and shearing techniques. Students will divide into groups to demonstrate one or more of the common livestock production practices

within several species of livestock and small animals. After the conclusion of each of these demonstrations, students will choose one method they demonstrated and write an explanatory position paper that correlates the production practice to physiological health in the animal, highlighting homeostatic mechanisms and system nomenclature.

2. "If You Root It, They Will Grow" - Sustainable Practices in Horticulture
The ability to graft, increase growth rates and clone species of plant, trees and crops is an option that can increase the number of organisms that can be planted in a shorter amount of time. Using one plant to create many or the ability to grow different varieties of fruit on one tree maximizes the efficiency of each organism within an ecosystem. The ability to utilize this technology increases species diversity while positively affecting land biomass. Students will experience a laboratory activity, conducting propagation techniques that make plants more efficient and in return contribute to the energy cycles within the ecosystem potentially maximizing sustainability of the plant and its production. This laboratory lets students use asexual propagation through the application of auxins directly onto plants used as a common practice in the horticultural industry. Students will also research the role of auxins and make predictions on its effectiveness on their assigned mother stock plant. Through teacher demonstration, students will learn the proper steps of asexual propagation and make cuttings of their plant. Each student will test the effectiveness of auxins (rooting growth hormone) with one row in a flat being a different concentration of hormone and one control. After two weeks, students will collect data every three days and record the rate at which their plant cutting roots. Students will calculate the cost of hormone treatment versus the time for cuttings to root to recommend the use or non-use of auxins on their assigned plant in their lab report.
In the next step of the laboratory students will practice the proper steps of transplanting and fertilizer use as regular practice in the horticultural industry. Students will take their rooted cuttings and transplant them to a larger container. After direct instruction on types of fertilizers, students will make predictions on the most effective type of fertilizer for their rooted cuttings; liquid, slow release, and organic. Students will be assigned a growing area (landscape plot, or one gallon-containers) to conduct their experiment. Students will test each type of fertilizer with four rows of plants. One row will be the control, without fertilizer application and the other three rows will have liquid, slow release, and organic fertilizer applications. Students will take daily measurements and make final conclusions of fertilizer effectiveness for their plant. Students also compare cost of fertilizer to effectiveness to determine final recommendations in their lab report.

3. "It's Easy Being Green - Growing Green Communities" - Landscaping
Students will utilize the Horticulture report and experience to create a landscape plan in groups. Students will utilize the original cuttings from the previous activity which are now grown plants. Each group will use those plants in designing a landscape for a specific area designated by the teacher that could include areas around the school and/or community. Students must consider plant growth requirements, resources such as water, soil quality, and fertilization needs. Students must address the long term needs of their landscape and write a reflection on the positive and negative aspects with recommendations for more sustainable qualities. The students will submit their designs in a written proposal to the school and or community organizations for approval. Those approved will be planted and maintained by the group for the rest of the year.

4. "Use Me Responsibly or Lose Me Forever" - Using Nature's Natural Resources
Students will delve deeper into natural resources conducting research on bioprospecting. They will use the knowledge gained within this unit regarding the potential to change the future through bioprospecting and the need to prevent the exploitation of those resources to preserve the biospheres for future generations. Students will read articles about the use of plants and animals in nature like coral producing a natural sunscreen named, "Sunscreen 855". To prevent the harvest of coral in order to save the barrier reef they isolated the compound and produced it in a lab that will be the most naturally occurring sunscreen developed. Students will discuss the importance of bioprospecting, as well as how the prospect of products from plants and animals argues for the continued maintenance of biodiversity and sustainability as long as the resources are not exploited. (Biology, Prentice Hall) After the discussion students will research other types of bioprospecting happening in agriculture. They will choose one material (natural resource) being prospected and find the following information from their research: what research is being done on the material, how are they utilizing the material and how does the research and use of the material play a role in sustainability. The information accumulated on the material bioprospecting will be utilized in a flyer created by each student. The flyers will be set-up in a walking gallery where the students will use a bioprospecting rubric to score the importance of each natural resource presented as a valuable material for continued research. The students will have a class discussion about which three natural resources are the most valuable source of bioprospecting to contribute to sustainability of the human population.

5. Bioprospecting - "Motoring with Microbes" – Discovering Cellulose Microbes for Biofuel Efficiency
The students will then conduct a research lab on Bioprospecting for Cellulose-Degrading Microbes: Filter Paper Assay Method where Students collect samples that they predict will contain communities of cellulose-degrading microbes and test for the ability of microorganisms in their samples to break down pure cellulose (filter paper). In the process, groups collect evidence to test predictions about which environmental microbial samples will be the most effective for degrading cellulose. By comparing results across groups, students can begin to uncover patterns and develop explanations about the types of environments that support cellulose-degrading microbes. This lab method is nearly identical to that used by researchers and student results could help scientists discover new enzymes for efficient biofuel production that is key in agriculture's ability to remain sustainable in the next century. Students will turn in a completed lab using scientific method and write an abstract of their research to send to the Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Center as part of their ongoing research on biofuel.
https://www.glbrc.org/education/classroom-materials

Unit 4. Assessment and End of Course Project
"I Believe in the Future of Agriculture" - Sustainable Farming Project
Students will design a solution for developing, managing, and utilizing energy and resources through the development of a completely sustainable farm on 400 acres that must include a minimum of three crops and two species of animals. A comprehensive farming portfolio will be created. The portfolio will include data and research done from each unit within the course to be used to create their farm as well as provide evidence to defend the sustainability of that farm and thus, the best representative of sustainability. The students must research genetic varieties of crops and species of animals based on genetic efficiency and commensalism. Attention to how soil nutrients and deficiencies affect vegetative reproduction, germination, plant growth and crop adaptation within an environment must be utilized in the research. Based on the data the students will determine the crops to be produced. They will research and evaluate the species of animals that will have a symbiotic relationship with the crops they have chosen above. Phenotypic and genotypic traits, hybrid vigor, commensalism, and other variables should be used to determine the two species of animals that will be best suited for the designed environment while providing for the welfare of the animals' health and nutrition. Animal welfare must be addressed in the decisions made to create a farm that is positive and biodiverse in nature. Environmental impacts based on the crops and animals raised on the farm need to be identified dealing with biological magnification, depletion of soil /plant nutrients, use of natural resources, pollution issues dealing with waste and desertification. The students will use this information as well as the data and labs from the previous units to determine the carrying capacity of livestock and acres of crops to be grown on the farm. Biological methods of reducing the identified environmental impacts will then be designed by the student, which could include methane digesters, aquaculture, CO_2 collectors and irrigation water recycling. Finally, students will address the management decisions made to reduce the farm's carbon footprint over a decade of production. The portfolio and presentations will be presented to the local farm bureau as well as other agriculture associations and businesses.

TEXTS AND SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Title, Author, Publisher, Edition:

District Approved Biology Text
Example: Joe Levine and Ken Miller. Biology. Prentice Hall, New Jersey. 2008

Previously Adopted? ☒ **Yes** ☐ **No (If no, provide information directly below)**

Cost per book	Total Cost	Budget Source

Other:

Herren, Ray V. The Biological Approach to AgriScience. 4th edition. Delmar Thompson Learning. 2012. New York.

Herren, Ray V. Introduction to Biotechnology: An Agricultural Revolution. Delmar Thompson Learning. 2005. New York

Camp, William G. and Thomas B. Daugherty. Managing our Natural Resources. Del Mar Publishers. 1998. New York

Baker, MeeCee and Robert Mikesell. Animal Science: Biology and Technology. 3rd edition. Delmar Cengage Learning. 2011. New York

Bidlack, James and Shelley Jansky. Stern's Introduction to Plant Biology. 12th edition. McGraw Hill Publishing. 2010. New York.

Supplemental Materials:

Burton, Devere L. and Elmer L. Cooper. Agriscience: Fundamentals and Application. 3rd edition. Delmar Thompson Learning. 2002. New York.

International Food Information Council. Biotechnology: A Communications Guide to Understanding. 2003 edition. Washington D.C.

Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Center. 2007-2013. Bioprospecting Laboratories
https://www.glbrc.org/education/classroom-materials Wisconsin.

United States Environmental Protection Agency. 2000-2014. What is Sustainability?
https://ipa.gov/sustainability/basicinfo.html. Washington D.C.

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND/OR STRATEGIES

ASSESSMENT METHODS AND/OR TOOLS

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

HONORS COURSES ONLY

Indicate how this honors course is different from the standard course.