

Agricultural Engineer

Engineering for food, water and land. Machines, irrigation, grain storage and the systems that feed the country.

TYPICAL PAY

\$98,590

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$68k to \$166k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

4 to 8 years

after high school

DEMAND

Very high

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Equipment manufacturers, food processing plants, irrigation and d...

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Calculus, physics, chemistry and biology. Farm or shop experience is genuinely useful here in a way it is not in most engineering fields.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 4 years
Agricultural, biological or biosystems engineering, accredited by ABET (the accrediting body for engineering degrees in the United States). Purdue, Iowa State, Nebraska and Texas A&M all run large accredited departments.
- 3 Internships** Summers
A summer at an equipment manufacturer, a food plant or a conservation agency. This is how people get hired.
- 4 First engineering job** Year 1
Design, testing or project work under a senior engineer.
- 5 Professional Engineer license, if your work needs it** 4 or more years
The Fundamentals of Engineering exam, four years of experience, then the Principles and Practice of Engineering exam.

Pros and cons

- + Engineering pay with far less competition to get in
- + Real field work, not just a screen
- + Bright outlook with rapid projected growth
- A small field, so you may have to move for a job
- Jobs cluster in farm states, not big cities
- Seasonal deadlines follow the planting and harvest calendar

Optional boosts

Machinery design. Soil and water. Food and process engineering. Structures.

Good to know

The society writes the standards

The American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers publishes the technical standards the farm equipment industry runs on. It is why an implement built by one company hitches to a tractor...

One of the smallest engineering fields

There are far fewer agricultural engineers than civil or mechanical engineers in the United States. That makes job listings scarcer, but it also means a graduate from a good program is rarely unemployed for...

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Agricultural Engineers (17-2021.00)
American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers
NCEES: engineering licensure
ABET: accreditation

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/agricultural-engineer>



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