

Agronomist

The science of soil and crops. You tell farmers what to plant, what to feed it and why the yield dropped.

TYPICAL PAY

\$78,850

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$49k to \$138k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

4 to 6 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Farm fields, seed and fertilizer companies, universities, governm...

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
Biology and chemistry matter most. Agriculture classes and a Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter help you get noticed.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 4 years
Agronomy, crop science, soil science or plant science. Land-grant universities run the strongest programs.
- 3 Summer internships** Each summer
Crop scouting, detasseling, or a research plot job. This is how almost everyone gets hired.
- 4 First job** Right after graduation
Field agronomist, crop scout, seed sales agronomist, or a research technician.
- 5 Certified Crop Adviser** 2 to 4 years in
A voluntary credential from the American Society of Agronomy. Two exams plus work experience. Many employers expect it within a couple of years.

Pros and cons

- + Outdoors most of the growing season
- + No graduate school needed to start
- + Real responsibility in your first year
- Brutal hours from April to June and again at harvest
- Heat, mud, ticks and long solo drives
- Jobs cluster in rural areas, not cities

Optional boosts

Certified Crop Adviser. State pesticide applicator license. Remote pilot certificate. Precision agriculture skills.

Good to know

Your school was built for this

The Morrill Act of 1862 gave every state federal land to fund a college teaching agriculture and engineering. That is why almost every state has a big public university with a serious agronomy department, and...

Corn yields have gone up about six times over

American corn averaged roughly 30 bushels an acre in the 1930s. Today it averages around 175 to 180. Breeding, fertilizer, pest control and agronomy advice did that, on mostly the same land.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Soil and Plant Scientists (19-1013.00)
American Society of Agronomy: Certified Crop Adviser program
Purdue University, Department of Agronomy
USAJOBS, the federal government's official employment site

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/agronomist>



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