Market to Market Classroom
Role of Government in Agriculture
Teacher Notes

Contents
The Teacher Notes for this module includes the following items:

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- Learning Goals
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Overview
The *Role of Government in Agriculture* module outlines the relationship among government agencies, policies and the agricultural marketplace. It describes the role and tasks undertaken by major federal agencies, as well as state and local levels and notes that there is much debate around the question of government influence on the agricultural marketplace.

This module introduces students to several big ideas. In the early 20th century, the U.S. government established several policies and programs regulating and supporting agriculture. Government involvement can be influenced by global issues, trade, economics, politics and other factors. Government programs and policies can result in actions such as tariffs, subsidies, environmental protection, and support for renewable energy. Some of these programs and policies may be controversial.

Learning Goals
This module connects with the following learning goals:

- Explain the role of government in multiple facets of agriculture including production, processing and retail.
- Discuss domestic and international laws and regulations associated with production agriculture.
- Analyze the impact of domestic and international law and regulations on agricultural businesses.
Standards and Cross-curricular Connections

The *Role of Government in Agriculture* module offers several standards and cross-curricular connections:

**Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (AFNR) Standards**

National Council for Agricultural Education

- Identify how key organizational structures and processes affect organizational performance and the quality of products and services. (CS.05)
- Compare and contrast issues affecting the AFNR industry. (CS.09)

**Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects**

Common Core State Standards Initiative

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- Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; trace the text's explanation or depiction of a complex process, phenomenon, or concept; provide an accurate summary of the text. (RST.9-10.2.)
- Translate quantitative or technical information expressed in words in a text into visual form and translate information expressed visually or mathematically into words. (RST.9-10.7.)
- By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend science/technical texts in the grades 9-10 text complexity band independently and proficiently. (RST.9-10.10.)
- Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes. (WHST.9-10.2.)
- Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital resources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation. (WHST.9-10.8.)

**Social Studies**

National Council for the Social Studies

*College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards*

- Evaluate citizens’ and institutions’ effectiveness in addressing social and political problems at the local, state, tribal, national, and/or international level. (D2.Civ.5.9-12.)
- Analyze the impact of constitutions, laws, treaties, and international agreements on the maintenance of national and international order. (D2.Civ.3.9-12.)
- Critique relationships among governments, civil societies, and economic markets. (D2.Civ.6.9-12.)
- Evaluate multiple procedures for making governmental decisions at the local, state, national, and international levels in terms of the civic purposes achieved. (D2.Civ.11.9-12.)
- Analyze how people use and challenge local, state, national, and international laws to address a variety of public issues. (D2.Civ.12.9-12.)
● Analyze how people use and challenge local, state, national, and international laws to address a variety of public issues. (D2.Civ.12.9-12.)

● Generate possible explanations for a government role in markets when market inefficiencies exist. (D2.Eco.6.9-12.)

● Describe the possible consequences, both intended and unintended, of government policies to improve market outcomes. (D2.Eco.8.9-12.)

21st Century Skills

Partnership for 21st Century Skills

Framework for 21st Century Learning

● Communicate and work productively with others, incorporating different perspectives and cross-cultural understanding, to increase innovation and the quality of work. (21.9-12.ES.1)

● Use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others. (21.9-12.TL.2)

● Apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information. (21.9-12.TL.3)

● Demonstrate critical thinking skills using appropriate tools and resources to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems and make informed decisions. (21.9-12.TL.4)

● Participating effectively in civic life through knowing how to stay informed and understanding governmental processes • Exercising the rights and obligations of citizenship at local, state, national and global levels • Understanding the local and global implications of civic decisions
Discussion Questions
Discussion questions provide you with opportunities to engage your students in the module topic.
1. What are the steps necessary for a piece of legislation to become a law?
2. What current federal, state and local policies impact your life?
3. What kind of long-term impacts can a government policy have on a business or industry?
4. There are many competing interests in agriculture. What role do you think the government should play in balancing these interests?
5. What role do you think the government should take in promoting agriculture products and services to the general public?
6. How can you take an active role in advocating for a specific change in government policy?
7. When advocating for policies, what kind of information or research do you need to acquire?

Challenge
The Role of Government in Agriculture module Challenge invites students to select an agricultural-related business and examine how it is influenced by government policies. Students identify specific government programs or policies connected with their business, and then analyze the purpose, agency responsible, stakeholders, and impact. The project-based framework requires students to think critically, creatively and to communicate their learning. The rubric can be used for student formative self or peer-evaluation, or for summative assessment by the teacher.

View the Challenge
Download and View the Rubric
Vocabulary

This is a list of vocabulary terms used throughout the *Role of Government in Agriculture* module. Students may use trusted sources to define each of the terms.

- Authorize
- Civic
- Commodity
- Conservation
- Credit
- Domestic
- Foreign
- Infrastructure
- Jurisdiction
- Legislation
- Municipal
- Policy
- Sector
- Subsidy
Classroom Activities

There are several ways the Role of Government in Agriculture module can be used in your class. Here are a few activities ideas to consider using with your students.

Vocabulary: Define vocabulary words and then play an association game. Put words on a paper or card, one student gives hints, the other tries to guess the word.

Social media: Engage with Market to Market (@markettomarket) and government sources using social media. Utilize social media platforms to follow or interact with state and federal Departments of Agriculture, Secretaries of Agriculture, House and Senate Agriculture Committees and members, etc. Create a #FF (Follow Friday hashtag commonly used on Twitter) list of notable government, academic and agriculture connections. Brainstorm a list of potential offices/positions to look for. If students are able to use Twitter or other social media platforms, encourage them to follow such accounts for a few days or weeks but remind students about social media etiquette.

Review government branches: Define the roles of each of the three branches of government in the United States (legislative, executive and judicial). Have students create skits/videos explaining each. You may want to have students create a chart with three columns to research the following list:

- Role of branch (responsibilities)
- Leadership
- Relationship to other two branches
- Structure of branch
- Discuss differences between federal, state, and local levels
- Effects/relationship/utility for agriculture industry

Compare/contrast: Research the various government types and types of economies. Have students debate the merits and drawbacks of each compared to those found in the United States.

150-word essays

Consider using these essay topics as assessments or as general writing prompts:

- Pick an international or foreign law/regulation/treaty and describe its’ impact on the U.S. or agriculture industry in your state. What will businesses have to do differently? (Ex: GATT, NAFTA, banned GMOs, swine flu, etc.). This could all be presented as a cause and effect charge if further differentiation is needed.
- Subsidies: pro or con argument. Give reasons with evidence to substantiate claims. Are all commodities/producers equal? (Ex: compare corn to fruit to livestock to Christmas trees.)
- Renewable energy pros and cons: Choose one and explain government involvement.
- Research examples of rural development initiatives. Create your own initiative for a rural area you are familiar with. State the goals of the initiative and defend them.
**Draw a diagram:** Include detailed explanations showing the process(es) of development, passage, enactment and enforcement of a new law. Compare the federal process to that of your state/province/commonwealth and local city/county/parish government.

**Acronyms:** Use the list below to create a list of 20-30 of the most important ag and government-related acronyms. Have students research basic information about each using a site such as www.allacronyms.com/agriculture/topic. Play a game to help students learn the meaning and importance of each. This could include sorting the acronyms into groups based on their affiliations. Games such as Bingo or Around the World may also be useful in learning these organizations.

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**Role play:** Have students draw for roles in government. For a class of 20, consider 9 representatives, 5 senators, 3 Supreme Court Justices, 1 Secretary of Agriculture, 1 President, 1 Vice President. Have students research the roles and identify the associated responsibilities. Present an problem such as an issue, bill, or trade agreement to the class and have students model how it would pass through the three branches of government. Examples of items to use could include: land use, public lands, water resources, pollution, food safety, nutrition, food security, international trade, school lunch program, subsidies, or farm bill items. Guide students to follow the following path: House->Senate->Cabinet/Agency->President->Supreme Court. Refer students to Ben’s Guide bensguide.gpo.gov/9-12/ for help. When finished, discuss the following questions with students:

- Where does the item start?
- How is the item discussed/evaluated/acted upon?
- During each phase, which group(s) need to take action on an item in order to move it to the next step? Which group(s) provide guidance or information?
- If a constituent (not an elected official) wanted to comment or promote an agenda during the process, which role(s) would be best to contact and how is that done?
- How is the item passed from one group to another? (Ex: what action(s) must take place in order for the President to sign a bill into law? What action(s) must take place in order for the Supreme Court to consider a law?)