Sustainable Agriculture

B.S. degree

College of Natural Sciences, Forestry & Agriculture

Contact

Marianne Sarrantonio, Undergraduate Program Coordinator
Dept. of Plant, Soil & Environmental Sciences
5722 Deering Hall, Room 115
Orono, ME 04469-5722

207-581-2913
FAX: 207-581-2999

E-mail: marianne.sarrantonio@umit.maine.edu
Web site: http://www.sag.umaine.edu

Mary Fernandez, Student Coordinator
5722 Deering Hall, Room 104
Orono, ME 04469-5722

207-581-2938

E-mail: mary.fernandez@umit.maine.edu

Admission Requirements

(In years as established by the college)

A high school diploma with the following specific courses:

4	English
2	Algebra I & II
1	Geometry
2	Lab Science *(including chemistry or physics)*
2	History/Social Studies
	Academic electives *(to equal at least 17 total credits)*

To ensure current mathematical skills, students should take a mathematics course during their senior year of high school.

Major Requirements

37 credits	Sustainable Agriculture
9 credits	Communication *(English, writing, speech)*
12 credits	Humanities & Social Sciences
48 credits	Sciences & Mathematics
15 credits	Electives

121 Minimum total credit hours required for graduation

Program Description

This program is an interdisciplinary program offered cooperatively by the faculties of the departments of Plant, Soil and Environmental Sciences, Biological Sciences, and Resource Economics and Policy. The Sustainable Agriculture program emphasizes the building of healthy soil through crop rotations, organic soil amendments and erosion management; protecting water quality by reducing synthetic chemical use; managing pest and weed problems with integrated, ecologically-sound approaches; increasing farm profits and income stability through diverse, community-based enterprises; and using knowledge of scientific principles to propose and test farming practices that better mimic natural ecosystems. Opportunities are offered to allow students hands-on training on commercial and research farms.

The Black Bear Food Guild is a student-run organization that manages a three acre certified organic vegetable operation within the University of Maine's Roger's Experimental Farm, located approximately three miles from campus. The Guild markets their produce through a community share-holder plan, at the local Farmer's Market, and through a farm stand at the field site. BBFG members make use of Sustainable Agriculture faculty and staff as resources for planning and managing the operation, but the emphasis is on student cooperative decision-making. Students often fulfill their degree requirement for the Field Experience through a summer with the BBFG.

The **Sustainable Agriculture Enthusiasts** (SAgE) is an organization established by students from different disciplines drawn together by a desire to work toward more sustainable agriculture systems. SAgE members, which include faculty and staff in addition to students, meet for discussions and meals, as well as sponsor speakers and field trips to broaden their knowledge of work being done in Maine in sustainable food production.

Career Opportunities

Summer employment of SAG students: integrated pest management scout; field crew for local sustainable and organic farms; field crew member for organic seed companies; research field assistant; and intern with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Employment of recent SAG graduates: self-employed market gardener or dairy farmer; farm manager of University of Maine and other college farms; educational director at non-profit farm; staff member at local seed company; research technician for private and public institutions; public outreach coordinator for environmental education organization; Farm Service agent; and graduate students.

General Education Requirements*

ENG 101	College Composition
18 credits	Human Values & Social Context area *(a single course may satisfy more than 1 sub-category, but a total of 18 credits must be completed)*
	Western Cultural Tradition
	Social Context & Institutions
	Cultural Diversity & International Perspectives
	Population & the Environment
	Artistic & Creative Expression
2 courses	Designated Writing Intensive *(1 must be within the major)*
2 courses	Biological or Physical Sciences *(must include at least 1 laboratory course)*

General Education Requirements* (continued)

1 course	Ethics *(emphasis on discussion of ethical issues in 1 course or series of courses)*
6 credits	Mathematics
1 capstone	An approved experience in which the student integrates the components of his or her undergraduate training to perform at a professional level. The capstone experience is usually completed during the senior year in consultation with the student's academic advisor.

**All UMaine students must complete these general education requirements, which are counted in the total credit hours required for graduation and may be contained in the Major Requirements previously listed.*

Specialized Information

Under the New England Regional Student Program, administered throughout the New England Board of Higher Education, the Bachelor of Science degree in Sustainable Agriculture is open to applicants who reside in Connecticut, Massachusetts or New Hampshire for reduced tuition (in-state tuition plus 50 percent).

The Department of Plant, Soil and Environmental Sciences offers minors in Horticultural Therapy; Landscape Horticulture; Plant Science; Soil Science; and Sustainable Agriculture. The minors are open to all undergraduate, degree-seeking University of Maine students and requires the completion of 19-29 credit hours depending on the minor.

Graduate Study

The Department of Plant, Soil and Environmental Sciences offers a Master of Science degree in Ecology and Environmental Sciences; Horticulture; Plant, Soil and Environmental Sciences; and Resource Utilization. The Doctor of Philosophy degree can be pursued through programs in Biological Sciences, Ecology and Environmental Sciences; Forest Resources; and Plant Biology.