

MSc Agribusiness Management – A509 (Subject to Approval)

1. Objectives

The agribusiness sector is undergoing profound changes and reforms and is moving towards a more market oriented environment with environmental pressures and changing consumer tastes and expectations. This will require managers who are able to undertake complex strategic tasks and decision making in the actual global agribusiness environment. This programme is designed to prepare graduates for careers typically in the following fields: public and private sector companies involved in upstream and downstream agricultural industries; national and international non-governmental organisations who are involved in the development of the agri-food economy; in commercial consultancy organisations in both rural and urban areas for developing countries. The programme is also appropriate for entrepreneurs who wish to set up their own business. Teaching and Learning will impart knowledge, skills and values to enhance employability and produce lifelong learners who can think and act creatively. Teaching methods will strengthen in-depth, reflective and integrative learning.

On completion of this programme, learners will be able to:

- develop agribusiness management skills;
- outline the economic, institutional, legal and social environment influencing the management of an agribusiness;
- recognise the need for optimisation of scarce resources while adapting to changing agricultural technology;
- acquire practical skills in the management of agribusinesses through case studies and site visits;
- review evolving national, regional and international market conditions for those products and services provided by agribusinesses;
- develop strategies in making an agribusiness an economically viable and profitable enterprise;
- generate innovative ideas to inspire the development and growth of small and medium agribusinesses;
- apply the steps involved in a research process to any research project in the discipline area;
- develop their ability to integrate knowledge acquired across functional areas and disciplines in Agricultural Management;
- prepare their continuing professional development plan towards lifelong learning.

2. General Entry Requirements

At least a Second Class degree from a recognised University, GPA not less than 2.50, or alternative qualifications acceptable to the University of Mauritius.

3. Programme Requirements

A Degree in Agricultural Sciences or any related fields.

4. General and Programme Requirements – Special Cases

The following may be deemed to have satisfied the General and Programme requirements for admission:

- (i) Applicants who do not satisfy any of the requirements as per Regulations 2 and 3 above but submit satisfactory evidence of having passed examinations which are deemed by the Senate to be equivalent to any of those listed.

- (ii) Applicants who do not satisfy any of the requirements as per Regulations 2 and 3 above but who in the opinion of Senate, submit satisfactory evidence of the capacity and attainments requisite to enable them to pursue the programme proposed.

5. Programme Duration

	Normal [Year(s)]	Maximum [Years]
Master's Degree (FT):	1	2
Master's Degree (PT):	2	4
Postgraduate Diploma (FT):	1	2
Postgraduate Diploma (PT):	2	4

6. **Credits per Year:** Minimum 12 credits subject to Regulation 5.

7. Minimum Credits Required for the Award of

Master's Degree: 37
 Postgraduate Diploma: 25

Breakdown as follows:

	Core Taught Modules	Project
Master's Degree:	25 credits	12 credits

8. Assessment

Each module will carry 100 marks and will be assessed as follows (unless otherwise specified):

Assessment will be based on written examination of 3-hour duration for all modules, carrying a weighting of 60%, and continuous assessment carrying 40% of total marks. Continuous assessment will be based on case studies; Problem-Based Learning, visits, student-led seminars, and literature based research and/or assignments, **and should include at least 1 class test.**

For a student to pass a module, a minimum of 30% should be attained in both the Continuous Assessment and Written Examination, with an overall total of a minimum of 40% in that module.

Module Agri6050Y(1) Project Appraisal and Risk Management for Agribusiness will carry 3 credits, whilst all the other modules will carry 4 or 6 credits. Module AGRI 6027Y(1) Applied Economics for Agribusiness carrying 4 credits will be taught over one semester. All the other modules will be taught over two semesters; the Project will carry 12 credits.

There will be a compulsory class test for the module taught over a semester at the end of the semester of the given academic year. Written examinations for all the modules, whether taught over one semester or one academic year, will be carried out at the end of the year.

Submission Deadlines for Dissertation:

- First Draft: End of July in the Final Year.
- Final Copy: Last working day of August in the Final Year.

9. Important Note

The rules as stipulated in this Programme Structure and Outline Syllabus will replace all other rules and regulations.

10. List of Modules

CORE MODULES

Code	Module Name	Hrs/Yr	Credits
		L+P	
AGRI 6027Y(1)	Applied Economics for Agribusiness	60+0	4
AGRI 6059Y(1)	Applied Management for Agribusiness	60+0	4
AGRI 6029Y(1)	Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods	45+30	4
AGRI 6050Y(1)	Project Appraisal and Risk Management for Agribusiness	30+30	3
AGRI 6031Y(1)	Agricultural and Food Marketing	60+60	6
AGRI 6051Y(1)	Agricultural Enterprises	45+45	4
AGRI 6000Y(1)	Project	-	12

11. Programme Plan - MSc Agribusiness Management

Full-Time:

<u>YEAR 1</u>			
Code	Module Name	Hrs/Yr	Credits
		L+P	
CORE			
AGRI 6027Y(1)	Applied Economics for Agribusiness	60+0	4
AGRI 6059Y(1)	Applied Management for Agribusiness	60+0	4
AGRI 6029Y(1)	Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods	45+30	4
AGRI 6050Y(1)	Project Appraisal and Risk Management for Agribusiness	30+30	3
AGRI 6031Y(1)	Agricultural and Food Marketing	60+60	6
AGRI 6051Y(1)	Agricultural Enterprises	45+45	4
AGRI 6000Y(1)	Project	-	12

Total no. of credits: 37

Part-Time:

<u>YEAR 1</u>			
Code	Module Name	Hrs/Yr	Credits
		L+P	
CORE			
AGRI 6027Y(1)	Applied Economics for Agribusiness	60+0	4
AGRI 6059Y(1)	Applied Management for Agribusiness	60+0	4
AGRI 6051Y(1)	Agricultural Enterprises	45+45	4
AGRI 6029Y(1)	Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods	45+30	4

<u>YEAR 2</u>			
Code	Module Name	Hrs/Yr	Credits
		L+P	
CORE			
AGRI 6050Y(1)	Project Appraisal and Risk Management for Agribusiness	30+30	3
AGRI 6031Y(1)	Agricultural and Food Marketing	60+60	6
AGRI 6000Y(1)	Project	-	12

Total no. of credits: 37

12. Outline Syllabus

AGRI 6027Y (1) - APPLIED ECONOMICS FOR AGRIBUSINESS

The concept of opportunity cost. Why should managers study economics? Fundamentals of micro-economics. Analysis of different types of market competition. Models of Production economics principles. Introduction to production functions and productivity analysis. The role of managerial economics in the decision making process.

AGRI 6059Y (1) – APPLIED MANAGEMENT FOR AGRIBUSINESS

A review of farm management concepts and principles. The manager's environment (legal, social, political, economic, environmental). The nature of farmers' goals and objectives. The concept and principles of planning. Budgeting techniques: profit and loss budget, partial budget, cash flow budget, balance sheet. Optimisation techniques in management: Linear Programming. Use of Solver (Microsoft Excel). Systems approach to Decision Making: The nature of agricultural decision-making. The decision-making process. Agricultural enterprise control: Principles and Practices. Evaluation of agribusiness performance: comparative agribusiness analysis, balance sheet analysis. The farm business survey. Budgetary control. Human Resource Management. Class exercises, case studies and seminars.

AGRI 6029Y (1) - QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

The research process. Knowledge generation: inductive versus deductive approaches to research. Qualitative research methods: Participative inquiry, in-depth interviews, focus groups, case studies. Delphi method. Grounded theory. Review of basic statistical methods. Quantitative approaches to data collection: Sample designs. Questionnaire development, design and administration. Data entry and analysis using SPSS. Elements of scientific and technical writing. Farming Systems Research tools and Participatory approaches.

AGRI 6050Y (1) - PROJECT APPRAISAL AND RISK MANAGEMENT FOR AGRIBUSINESS

Project cycle. Impact Assessment. Capital: review of uses and sources. Investment Appraisal Techniques: discounting, Internal Rate of Return. Machine Acquisition Management. Benefit-cost analysis. Risk management in agribusinesses: Business risk and financial risk. Decision Tree Analysis for decision-making under uncertainty. Disaster management. Concept of simulation and simulation modelling. Class exercises and case studies on decision-making techniques.

AGRI 6051Y (1) - AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES

Productivity and yield assessment in crop enterprises. Orchard and garden management strategies. Greenhouse operations and management. Production management in plant nurseries. Packinghouse facilities. Cool chain maintenance and management in fresh produce supply chain. Resource management in crop processing enterprises. Consumer issues and consumption patterns in the fresh produce industry. Management of gardens and landscapes. Case Studies and Field Courses: Landscape design enterprises and import/ export crop enterprises. Problem-solving techniques in crop production management. Advanced food and crop technologies.

Production cycle and operational systems of the main livestock species (poultry, pig, dairy, beef) including production, breeding flocks, growth and finishing and preparation for the market. Indices for assessment of efficiency of production. Application to relevant examples and case studies. Food safety management. Quality assurance schemes in the food industry. Food chain management from primary production to consumer use with emphasis on food safety. Current issues related to production and consumption of animal products.

Characteristics and qualities of agri-business entrepreneurs. An entrepreneurial approach to management of an agribusiness. Strategic planning in the context of the entrepreneurial firm.

AGRI 6031Y (1) - AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD MARKETING

The marketing concept and marketing systems applied to agriculture. Links between agriculture and food industry. Marketing functions in the agricultural and food sector. Marketing channels and Marketing costs for agricultural and food products. Marketing Research and Information Systems: concepts and methods in marketing research, importance of market research in introducing and maintaining successful products in competitive markets; models of consumer and organisational buyer behaviour using examples of marketing research performed in agrifood markets. Commodity marketing. International trade in agricultural and food products: Focus on environmental analysis, competitive analysis in international markets, strategic options

for entering foreign markets, and marketing mix decisions such as pricing and distribution. Framework for the compilation of a strategic international marketing plan. Strategic and operational aspects of supply chain management. Agricultural and food production in the region. Food security in the region.

AGRI 6000Y (1) - PROJECT

The project provides an opportunity for the students to undertake and contribute to a piece of original research work in an area related to agricultural management, and may include the feasibility of setting-up of a new agribusiness. The students are required to design an investigation (survey or other means) to test a hypothesis or proposition, to plan and execute the research work, to evaluate the outcomes and draw valid conclusions. Students are encouraged to work in close collaboration (participatory approach) with the problem-owner such as farmers and agro-processor, to conceptualise the problem and validate the results obtained at the end of the research work.

The research work is carried out individually, under guided supervision. To support the project work, the Faculty has prepared a document on: *Dissertation Guidelines for MSc Degree*.

February 2010