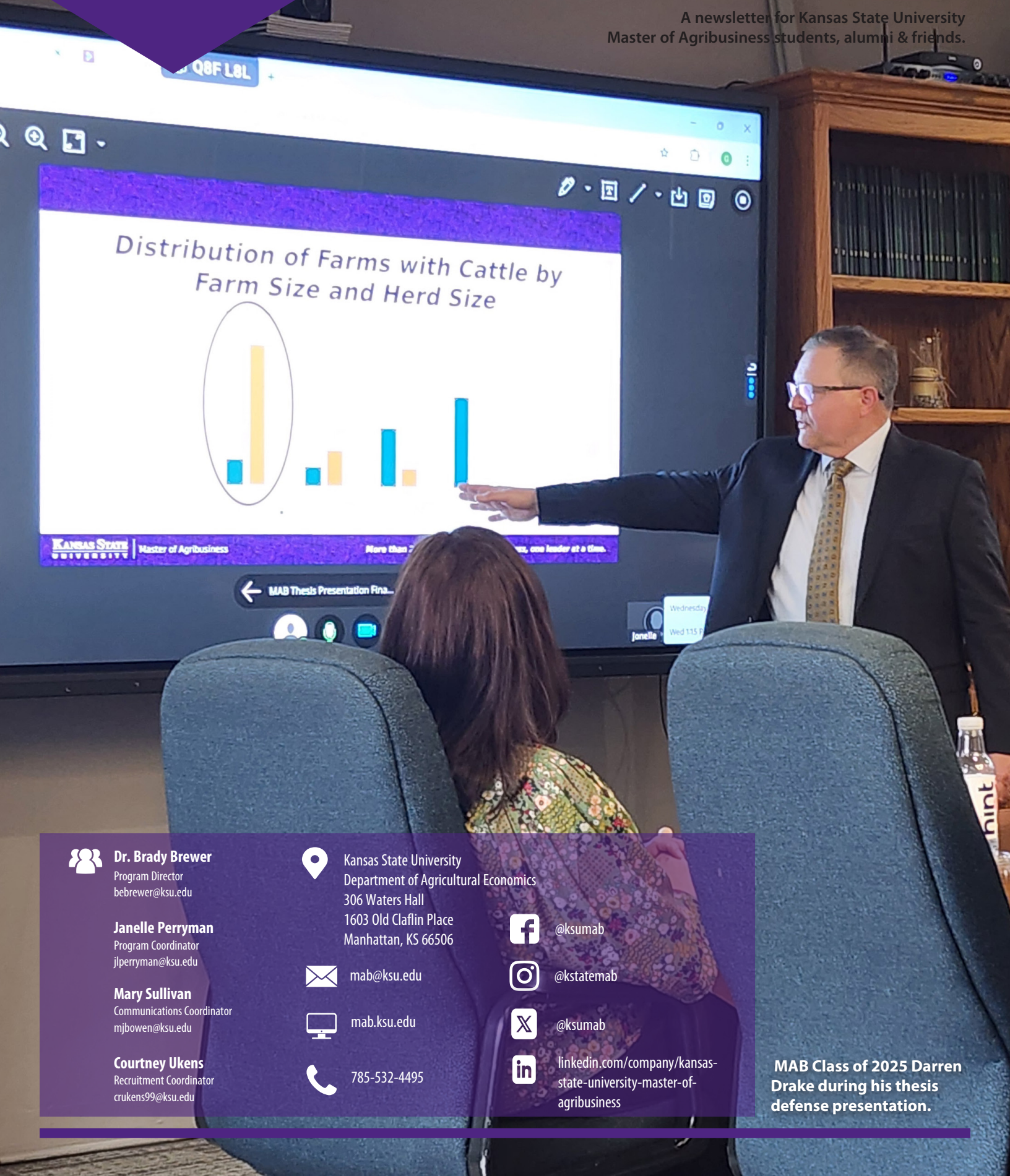


THE SYLLABUS

A newsletter for Kansas State University
Master of Agribusiness students, alumni & friends.



Dr. Brady Brewer
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Program Coordinator
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linkedin.com/company/kansas-
state-university-master-of-
agribusiness

**MAB Class of 2025 Darren
Drake during his thesis
defense presentation.**

WELCOME TO THE CLASS OF 2027

Yeni Liliana Bernal Rubio
Principal Scientist
Zoetis
Portage, MI

Tyler Christopher
Field Representative
Bayer Crop Science
Twin Falls, ID

Sheila Hamlett
Senior Director of Food Safety and EHS
KLN Family Brands
Ottertail, MN

Alison Hurwitch
Veterinarian
Merck Animal Health
Gooding, ID

Adie McIntosh
Agriculture Credit Analyst
AgWest Farm Credit
Gilbert, AZ

Gretchen Montague
Asset Manager
FarmTogether
Merced, CA

Joshua Moore
Regional Precision Manager
Case IH
Fargo, ND

Dylan Oja
Capital Markets Credit Officer
AgWest Farm Credit
Mica, WA

Micaela Ort
Senior Research Analyst
Kynetec
Catawissa, MO

Rane Riley
Attorney
Park Law Firm
Huntsville, TX

Amy Robinett
Credit Manager
DFS Finance
Riverton, NE

Chloe Santos
Controller
Country Partners Cooperative
Gothenburg, NE

Daniel Strevey
Production Director
Wana Brands
Erie, CO

Kelly Waugh
Sales Account Manager
AgroLiquid
Sterling, KS

Jim Weidner
Plant Manager
Miller Milling Company
Stephens City, VA



MAB Class of 2027

Front Row Left to Right: Gretchen Montague, Adie McIntosh, Sheila Hamlett, Yeni Liliana Bernal Rubio, Amy Robinett, Chloe Santos, Micaela Ort, and Alison Hurwitch. Back Row Left to Right: Rane Riley, Tyler Christopher, Joshua Moore, Daniel Strevey, Kelly Waugh, Dylan Oja, and Jim Weidner.

THESIS DEFENSES



McKenzie Bear

Class of 2025

Economic Impact of Avian Diseases on the Turkey Industry: Implications on a Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG) Food Manufacturing Company



Jacob Bonwell

Class of 2025

The Effects of Political Policies in the United States and the Relation to Foreign Direct Investment



Darren Drake

Class of 2025

Creating a Blue Ocean Strategy for an e-Trading Start-up



Max Frederes

Class of 2025

Implications of Smart Spraying Technology on the United States Pesticide Industry



Lexi Freund

Class of 2025

The Impact of Rising Interest Rates on Farm Profitability and Debt Management Strategies



Zack Leist

Class of 2025

See and Spray Technology: A Cost Benefit Analysis to Determine Market Size and Impacts on Pesticide Programs



Hunter McNelly

Class of 2025

Development for Managers and Sales Staff



Lina Pham-Cook

Class of 2019

Momma Pham's Kitchen Business Plan



Rachel Scharplaz

Class of 2025

Forecasting California Milk Production



Claire Wingert

Class of 2025

Optimizing Business Growth: The impact of Integrated Sales and Marketing Teams with Strategic Training Programs

Thesis projects can be found at krex.k-state.edu or by logging into the MAB Community Page on Canvas.

Alumni Spotlight Erin Stickel 2020

by Haley Smith, MAB Communications Student

Growing up on a diversified livestock farm in northwest Ohio, Erin Stickel developed a strong connection to agriculture from a young age.

"I grew up in northwest Ohio on a diversified livestock farm, where I developed a passion for agriculture," Stickel said.

"During my youth, I was actively involved in 4-H, FFA and my high school sports teams."

That early passion eventually brought her to Kansas State University, where she completed a dual Master of Agribusiness (MAB) and a Professional Master of Business Administration (PMBA) in 2020. She is featured as this month's Alumni Spotlight.

"I have always been passionate about agriculture and supporting rural communities," she said.

Before K-State, Stickel attended Butler Community College as a member of the livestock judging team, then transferred to Bowling Green State University to earn her bachelor's degree in communications.

"During college, I interned for a commodity organization, which I thoroughly enjoyed," she said. "After graduation, I started a full-time role with the Ohio Beef Council/Ohio Cattlemen's Association. Although I loved the work, being near family was crucial for my effectiveness, so I joined The Andersons, Inc. as a product manager in the Grain Group

"I am grateful for the analysis tools, optimization education and writing skills I gained from the formal education portion of the MAB program. However, the true value of the experience lies in the relationships I built."

closer to home. Over eight years at ANDE, I held various roles in risk management and commodity merchandising, serving customers nationwide."

In 2016, Stickel began her MAB and PMBA journey at Kansas State University, motivated by a desire to grow her professional skill set and expand her network.

"I am grateful for the analysis tools, optimization education and writing skills I gained from the formal education portion of the MAB program," Stickel said. "However, the true value of the experience lies in the relationships I built."

While enrolled in the MAB program, Stickel worked on a thesis titled Certified Organic Cropland in the United States: Is Perceived Value Reality? Her professional background in organic and specialty grains inspired the research.

"I chose this topic due to the growing interest and perceived value in the organic agriculture sector," she said. "With guidance and patience from Dr. Elizabeth Yeager, I was able to delve deeply into the subject, supported by my sponsoring company, Mercaris."

The thesis process provided Stickel with valuable skills she continues to use in both her personal and professional life.

"This research has not only broadened my understanding of organic land valuation but also improved my ability to analyze



MAB program updates

The K-State Master of Agribusiness (MAB) program is experiencing exciting developments, including welcoming a new recruitment coordinator, transitioning program leadership, and revised scheduling designed to enhance the student experience.

Recruitment Coordinator

Courtney Ukens joined the MAB program in December as Recruitment Coordinator. Ukens holds a B.S. in Education ('97) from K-State and brings years of business development experience from various industries. His focus is on attracting talented professionals to the program and assisting them through the admissions process, driven by a passion for helping adult learners succeed



Courtney Ukens

If you know a colleague, friend, or family member who is considering a master's program, connect them with Ukens at crukens@ksu.edu, 785-532-3918, www.linkedin.com/in/courtney-ukens-75020a22/.

Program Director

Leadership of the MAB program is transitioning. Dr. Brady Brewer, who joined the K-State Agricultural Economics faculty last fall and teaches AGECE 700 (Applied Agribusiness Economics), began stepping into the Program Director role in early January 2025. He takes the helm from Dr. Allen Featherstone, the program's founding director who has

provided outstanding leadership since its inception in 1998. Dr. Featherstone will continue lending his valuable expertise to the program, teaching AGECE 713 (Agribusiness Financial Management).

"I am honored to step into the role of Director of the Master of Agribusiness program. Under Dr. Allen Featherstone's leadership, the MAB program has become one of the premier agribusiness graduate programs in the country. I'm excited to build on this strong foundation and continue expanding the program's impact on the agricultural industry and the hard working professionals that lead it," Brewer said.

Connect with Brewer at bebrewer@ksu.edu or 785-532-4502.

Course schedule and campus session dates

In response to student needs, particularly those balancing careers and family commitments, the MAB program is adjusting the schedule for the fall animal health cohort. The program start date will shift to September (from August), with campus sessions now scheduled for September and November. All animal health course dates will be adjusted with the shifted campus sessions.

The fall campus sessions will still offer a 100% online option for those students not able to travel. Students still need to be virtually present during the campus session weeks, but can do so from home.



Dr. Brady Brewer

and interpret technical data effectively," she said.

Today, Stickel is an account manager for dsm-firmenich Animal Nutrition & Health, supporting commercial swine and poultry clients across the eastern United States.

"Based in my home office in northwest Ohio, I serve customers in the eastern U.S., working closely with clients to address their feed and nutrition needs through supply chain management and collaboration with our skilled technical services team," she said.

Stickel remains a strong advocate for the MAB program and encourages others in agribusiness to pursue it.

"Higher education experiences are what you make of them," she said. "In my thesis acknowledgments, I expressed my gratitude for the program's support and functionality, which enabled those of us with day jobs, farms and families to pursue our educational goals while balancing life's constant demands. This sentiment remains true today."



Stickel and the MAB Class of 2020

MAB LinkedIn page update

For several years, we have had a MAB Group on LinkedIn, but have now transitioned to a company page. This will allow you to have better interaction with classmates, share updates, post job announcements for your company, and more. ***Make sure to link to the Master of Agribusiness page when you add MAB to your education!*** And don't forget to add the MAB initials after your name to show your credentials!

Give the new page a follow at

www.linkedin.com/company/kansas-state-university-master-of-agribusiness

The screenshot shows the LinkedIn profile of the Kansas State University Master of Agribusiness. The header features a group photo of students and faculty, with the text "KANSAS STATE Master of Agribusiness #NotYourAverageMBA". Below the photo, the page name "Kansas State University Master of Agribusiness" is displayed, along with the tagline "More than 25 years building agribusiness, one leader at a time." and location "Higher Education · Manhattan, Kansas · 107 followers · 501-1K employees". A notification indicates "Elizabeth & 101 other connections follow this page". Action buttons for "Message" and "Following" are visible. The "About" tab is selected, showing an "Overview" section. The overview text describes the program as an online, business-focused master's degree built around the busy lives of food, animal health, and agribusiness professionals. It highlights the innovative online delivery of the program, which breaks down barriers associated with earning a master's degree, such as access to a university campus, job changes, relocations, and job-related travel. The program is structured to appeal to professionals employed in all segments of the industry and is geared toward adult learners. A note clarifies that it is not an MBA in agribusiness, nor an M.S. in Agricultural Economics, but a professional degree program training managers for one of the most rapidly changing industries today. A website link is provided: <https://mab.k-state.edu/>. A profile picture of Rita Ramirez is shown, with her name and title: "Rita Ramirez, MAB · 1st Chief People & Sustainability Officer at Batory Foods Inc".

Kansas State University Master of Agribusiness
More than 25 years building agribusiness, one leader at a time.
Higher Education · Manhattan, Kansas · 107 followers · 501-1K employees

Elizabeth & 101 other connections follow this page

Message Following

Home **About** Posts Jobs People

Overview

The Kansas State University Master of Agribusiness program is an online business-focused master's degree built around the busy lives of food, animal health and agribusiness professionals. The innovative online delivery of the program breaks down barriers associated with earning a master's degree such as access to a university campus, job changes, relocations, and job-related travel. Our program is structured to appeal to professionals employed in all segments of the industry, and is geared toward adult learners.

Not an MBA in agribusiness, and not an M.S. in Agricultural Economics, but a professional degree program training managers for one of the most rapidly changing industries today.

Website
<https://mab.k-state.edu/>

Rita Ramirez, MAB · 1st
Chief People & Sustainability Officer at Batory Foods Inc

Students and Alumni

Catia Jorge ('08) started a new position as CEO at Sadot Group Inc.

Seth Post ('12) is now the Vice President of Soybean Processing at CGB Enterprises, Inc.

Lydia (Mtchotsa) Russell ('13) was promoted to Principal Engineer at Hazen and Sawyer.

Jacob Bailey ('14) is now the CEO/GM at Plans Grain and Agronomy.

Nicole Peter ('14) is now the Senior Plant Director at PepsiCo.

Cary Fry ('16) is now a Senior Relationship Manager at CoBank.

Carrie Gregoire ('16) recently started a new position as a Tissue Acquisition

Specialist with Saving Sight.

Jaime Hernandez ('16), started a new position as Plant Manager for OPAL Fules Inc.

Tiffany Ligtenberg ('16) started a new position as Director of Sales - Animal Health Products at IBA, Inc.

Geo Ceratti ('18) is now the Head of Sales - LATAM at CFP Energy.

Tyler Rouse ('18) has started a new position as a Marketing Director at BioZyme Incorporated.

Jody (Wendt) Herchenbach ('19), and her husband, Jeff, welcomed their first child, **Everett, on December 31, 2024.**

Scott Marckini ('19) has a new position with Batory Foods Inc. as the Director of Arbitrage Research.

Cassie Schneider ('19) is now a Business Development Manager at Veolia Water Technologies and Solutions.

Logan Hooyer ('20) is now a Senior Renewables Trader at Musket Corp.

Amy (Varner) Schweizer ('20), and her husband, Austin, welcomed their son, Stetson James, on April 4.

Megan Espinda ('21) and her family were honored with a Hoosier Homestead Award by the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA)

Ethan Taube ('21) is now the VP of Operations for Agtegra Cooperative.

Riley Travis ('24) is now a Clerk for Coe Township, while still working as an Agribusiness Lending Credit Analyst for GreenStone Farm Credit.

Kayla Allen ('26) has been promoted to Senior Credit Analyst at Wilbur-Ellis.

Veronica Bourne ('26) started a new position as Business Development Director, Food and Beverage, USA at Nuritas.

If you'd like an MAB shirt or jacket, we have a storefront at <https://www.companycasuals.com/MAB/start.jsp>.

SAVE THE DATE

May 16

Spring Commencement at Bramlage Coliseum in Manhattan, KS

June 1

Application deadline for August 2025 cohort

June 1-3

MAB at KVMA in Manhattan, KS

July 13-16

MAB at IFT FIRST in Chicago, IL

July 19-21

MAB at AVMA in Washington, D.C.

August 5-7

MAB at AgCareers.com HR Roundtable in St. Louis

August 19

Defense ballot and final copy of thesis due to be Summer '24 graduate

August 21-22

MAB at Risk and Profit Conference, Manhattan, KS

August 22-24

MAB at Fetch in Kansas City, MO

September 7-11

Animal Health cohort Campus Session at K-State Olathe

September 22-25

MAB at Women in Agribusiness Summit, Orlando, FL

September 25

MAB at KC Ag Outlook Forum in Kansas City, MO

October 1

Last day to schedule Final Defense for name to appear in commencement program

October 11

MAB/AgEcon Tailgate before K-State/TCU football game - be watching for more details!

October 15

Application deadline for January 2026 cohort

November 1

K-State Online scholarship application due

November 5

MAB at Chicago Section IFT in Chicago, IL

November 7

MAB at AFA in Kansas City, MO

November 16-20

Animal Health Cohort Campus Session

November 18

Defense ballot and final copy of thesis due to be Fall '24 graduate

December 1

Spring MAB/Ag Econ scholarship applications due

December 12

Fall Commencement at Bramlage Coliseum



Spain and Portugal 2026



Kansas State University's Master of Agribusiness program is offering a farm and agribusiness tour of Spain and Portugal June 6-18, 2026. Anyone interested in getting a better understanding of this region is encouraged to join us.

Day 1 - Saturday, June 6th: Madrid (D)**

Arrive Madrid. City sightseeing tour on arrival and a welcome dinner in hotel tonight.

Day 2 - Sunday, June 7th: Madrid - Toledo (B)

Depart after breakfast for a visit to the beautiful city of Toledo with a sightseeing tour on arrival. See the impressive Alcazar, medieval Gothic cathedral, Synagogue, and Church of San Tome. Damascene, embroidery and pottery feature strongly in Toledo province, and a visit to a craft centre will be included.

This afternoon visit a sheep farm making traditional Manchego cheese. Overnight, Madrid

Day 3 - Monday, June 8th: Madrid - Granada (B/L/D)

Depart Madrid this morning. Continue to the region of Castilla La Mancha remains permanently associated in popular imagination with the adventures of Don Quixote, and the windmills he famously charged there.

Visit a vineyard in the Valdepeñas wine region, situated in the province of Ciudad Real and which covers an area of 30,000 hectares. It consists of 47 vineyards (Bodegas), which produce 50 million litres of wine annually. Overnight Granada

Day 4 - Tuesday, June 9th: Granada (B)

This morning, visit a family-run Holstein dairy operation, producing milk, yoghurt and cheese that is processed and supplied to the province of Granada.

Enjoy an afternoon guided visit of the famous Alhambra

Palace. Return to your hotel. Overnight, Granada

Day 5 - Wednesday 10th June Granada - Estepona (B/D)

This morning visit an agricultural cooperative where a variety of activities take place including an olive oil mill, composting plant, cattle feedlot, and storage facilities for cereals and animal feed.

There will be free time for lunch and independent exploration in Ronda. Overnight, Estepona

Day 6 - Thursday, June 11th: Estepona - Seville (B/L)

This morning visit one of the top fighting bull ranches in Spain, where you will enjoy learning about the breeding and selection of the bulls, the daily work at the farm, along with history and anecdotes about the family.

Afterwards continue to Jerez de la Frontera for a visit to the Royal Andalusian School of Equestrian Art (Spanish Riding School). See the riders going through their dressage paces. The Spanish Andalusian horses are known worldwide for being a pure breed with incredible grace, speed, stamina and above all beauty.

Enjoy a visit to a Sherry wine producer. The visit will include a tour of the winery and a tasting + lunch based on typical tapas of the area paired with the wines. Overnight, Seville

Day 7 - Friday, June 12th: Seville (B/D)

Visit a farm growing and exporting organic citrus fruits (about 30 varieties) including their famous Seville Oranges, used in the popular marmalade of the Great Britain. There will be a tour of the farm with explanations of the different types of citrus fruits, their cultivation, flora, fauna, biodiversity, ecology, etc.

Depart for a visit to a producer of extra virgin olive oil. Walk through the olive trees to learn about harvesting and growing. Visit the family museum, the packaging area, the mill and the cellar (where the olive oil is stored in tanks)

Return to Seville with a chance to get a quick lunch before your afternoon city tour.

Enjoy an afternoon guided walking tour of Seville. The tour includes the massive cathedral, burial place of Christopher Columbus, the Moorish Giralda Tower, the Santa Cruz quarter and Alcazar.

Tonight enjoy dinner and a flamenco show. Overnight Seville

Day 8 - Saturday, June 13th: Seville - Evora (B/L/D)

Depart Seville this morning and drive across the border into Portugal.

Visit the UNESCO world heritage town of Evora, an ancient settlement in the heart of the Alentejo. On arrival there will be lunch followed by a guided tour of the historic city centre including the ruined Temple of Diana and Evora cathedral. Enjoy time at leisure to explore this fascinating town independently. Overnight, Evora

Day 9 - Sunday, June 14th: Evora - Lisbon (B/D)

This morning visit a farm in the Alentejo Region with Alentejo pigs, sheep and cork production.

Cork production in Alentejo, Portugal, is a significant industry, as the region is one of the world's major cork-producing areas.

Continue your journey to Lisbon. Enjoy an afternoon sightseeing tour featuring the Monument to the Discoveries and the Belem Tower. We'll also visit Jeronimo's Monastery with the tomb of Vasco da Gama. Overnight, Lisbon

Day 10 - Monday, June 15th: Lisbon (B)

This morning enjoy some free time or a walk through the cobbled alleys of Alfama to see Sao Jorge Castle (exterior).

This afternoon we'll travel to the countryside near Samora Correia to visit a state-run agriculture and forestry company on 20,000 hectares, producing rice, wine and livestock. The focus of the afternoon tour will be cork oak forestry and management, and cattle. Overnight, Lisbon

Day 11 - Tuesday, June 16th: Lisbon - Oporto (B/D)

This morning we'll continue north to visit Fatima where we'll see the great white Basilica commemorating the appearance of the Virgin Mary to three children in 1917.

Lunch independently in Coimbra, overlooking the Mondego River, with some time at leisure to explore its old quarters.

Proceed to Porto and visit a Port Wine Lodge, one of the oldest of the founding Port houses, dedicated entirely to the production of some of the finest Port wines. Overnight Porto

Day 12 - Wednesday, June 17th: Oporto (B/L/D)

Excursion to the Douro Valley. Visit a charming family-owned wine estate "Quinta" for a tour of the winery. Enjoy a tasting session featuring some of their finest wines.

Next take a leisurely boat trip along the Douro River in Pinhão. Relax and soak in the picturesque surroundings as you glide along the tranquil waters.

We'll head to a village for a lunch before returning to Porto. On return the rest of the day at leisure. Farewell dinner. Overnight Porto (B/L/D)

Day 13 - Thursday, June 18th: Oporto (B)

Depart for airport this morning.

Estimated Trip Rates:

- Double Occupancy Rate:
 - Single = \$4,400*
 - Couple = \$8,800*
- Single Occupancy Rate = \$5,600*

** These are based on current estimates and exchange rates. The final cost will depend on the number of travelers.*

Cost Breakdown:

- Registration fee: Includes in-country logistics, hotel rooms (4 star where available), entrance fees for sightseeing as indicated on the itinerary, and most meals.

Additional Expenses:

- International Economy Airfare - Group flights may be available
- Additional meals, souvenirs and personal items
- Optional trip insurance
- Tuition if participating in the trip for class credit

Online registration form will be available soon!

****Indicates meals provided:**
B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner

A shorter option ending in Lisbon is available.

