

Hello my name is Brian Saccardi, I am a senior at Housatonic Valley Regional High School. I'm here to tell you about the most amazing educational program available in Connecticut. The Agriscience and Technology program is by far the best program I have ever been in. It offers so much, from animal sciences to forestry, mechanics to horticulture and everything in between. These programs are an endless supply of knowledge offered to every high school student in the state of Connecticut.

Throughout my four years in the agriscience program I have taken many courses including landscape design and architecture, mechanics, forestry, and environmental science. This program has helped me in countless ways; not only has it brought me to places such as New Brunswick Canada, Pennsylvania, and Indiana it has also taught me lifelong skills such as parliamentary procedure and public speaking. More importantly, though, is that it has not only taught me these skills, it has given me countless opportunities to use them. These opportunities include two international and one national environmental science competitions, a national landscape competition and countless other state competitions in agriculture. I am also able to use the skills I've learned in many town meetings such as fire department and agricultural committee meetings. Perhaps the greatest thing this program has done for me is to help me find my future career. Every student enrolled in an Agriscience and Technology program includes an SAE or supervised agricultural experience component. This is meant to help students explore and find a career path that is right for them. It accomplishes this by having students work with a professional in the field they would like to go into. During my SAE I have worked in the fields of mechanics, landscaping, aquatic studies, and forestry. Throughout these experiences and opportunities I have decided to pursue a future in the field of forestry. I have been accepted to the University of Massachusetts Forestry program and plan to attend in the fall. The Agriscience and Technology program has helped me so much, so please increase funding for these programs by adopting the ECS task force school choice funding recommendation into the governor's proposed budget. Doing so would allow this wonderful program to help many more students as it has helped me.