



# News Release

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## **SDSU Planning First-of-Kind Agriculture Degree**

PIERRE, S.D. – A first-of-its-kind agriculture major may be in the offing for **South Dakota State University**. The South Dakota Board of Regents this week gave its approval for SDSU to develop plans for an undergraduate degree in precision agriculture.

University officials say the program would prepare students for careers involving diverse work in agronomy, agricultural machinery management, and data sciences, as well as learning to use data in agronomic decision-making processes. “Precision agriculture is a quickly growing field, yet no other university currently offers the major,” SDSU officials wrote in their planning request. “Approval of the program would give SDSU a first-to-market advantage.”

The program being discussed involves strong collaboration on the SDSU campus among the departments of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering, Plant Science, Mathematics and Statistics, and Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.

SDSU will return to the Board of Regents later for official approval of the B.S. degree in precision agriculture, once plans for the new program are completed. If approved, the university estimates it will graduate about a dozen students a year in the new major, after full implementation.

In other action, the regents approved a new certificate program in criminal justice for **Black Hills State University** to create more professional development opportunities for law enforcement personnel in western South Dakota. Certificate programs package a small set of courses that allow students to develop expertise in a focused area of study, based on identified market and workforce development needs. This new certificate requires 12 credit hours of study and will be available through distance delivery.