

Agronomy Branch Manager

WHO WE ARE- AgBest, LLC is a farmer owned cooperative with Agronomy and Energy branches located throughout East Central Indiana since 1930. AgBest offers a broad range of agricultural inputs and custom services to support the varied farming operations in our market. We provide major product lines including petroleum and LP gas, feed, fertilizer, crop protection and seed. In addition, we offer related services that include custom application, grain marketing and consultation. AgBest serves patrons in Delaware, Blackford, Jay, Wells, Eastern Grant and Western Randolph Counties and we distinguish ourselves from our competitors by providing efficient service, excellent products, and superior customer service. Additionally, our AgBest Express division includes self-service gas station and convenience stores offering top tier CountryMark gasoline refined from American crude oil. AgBest strives to develop meaningful relationships with our customers and employees. AgBest employees are essential in maintaining our values and continuing our growth. At AgBest, we look for individuals who are committed to excellence, integrity, and safety.

AgBest is currently searching for a well-qualified Agronomy Branch Manager who is a dedicated professional able to lead an established and profitable Agronomy Center located in Hartford City, Indiana.

Job Summary

Reporting to the President/CEO, the Agronomy Branch Manager is a high-level position for a multi-location Ag retailer offering long-term career growth opportunities. This role requires customer relationship development, personnel growth, facility and equipment optimization, financial management and short and longer-term planning for the branch. AgBest is searching for an individual who will improve efficiency, achieve AgBest's mission and goals, and whose work will result in outstanding customer service.

The Agronomy Branch Manager is responsible for oversight of the branch by planning, organizing, and directing all agronomic services for a team of Sales Agronomists, Custom Applicators, and Support Staff. Responsibilities focus on overall operations and the financial results of the branch including staffing, budgeting, asset allocation, equipment and facility maintenance, and inventory control. Successful candidates will have a strong operations background and the ability to be a coach, mentor, and manager of people while providing direction and strategic planning. The ideal candidate will have extensive knowledge of Retail Agronomy, a versatile skill set, and chemical, seed, and fertilizer knowledge.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

The essential functions include, but are not limited to the following:

- Responsible for oversight of the daily operations, financial results, staffing, equipment and asset maintenance and allocation, budgeting, inventory control, and projecting a positive image of AgBest at all times. Demonstrates the ability to maximize efficiency in branch operations to reduce downtime.
- Develop and maintain relationships with current and prospective customers by providing excellent customer service and assisting, as needed, by resolving issues and addressing complaints promptly and professionally.
- Drive sales growth including assigning accounts to salespeople, calling on and consulting on accounts, monitoring customer satisfaction through ongoing dialogue, and identifying potential prospects.
- Develop annual budgets and capital expenditures. Manage facility finances by providing oversight of billing, accounts receivable and payables, and managing prepaids.
- Manage facility inventory for proper seasonal levels including forecasting product needs, anticipating inventory needs, and purchasing products through approved suppliers.

- Work with executives on asset allocation and recommend repairs and improvements by evaluating needs and prioritizing maintenance, upgrades, and purchase requests. Oversee preventative maintenance on all branch equipment to obtain the maximum efficiency possible and ensure the longevity of all fixed assets.
- Maintain appropriate staffing based on business needs and interview, hire, and release staff accordingly. Manage employee programs such as annual performance management, payroll, and employee relations that include conflict resolution and rewarding and disciplining employees according to performance.
- Work collaboratively, cooperatively, and in coordination with fellow team members and with others in the organization. Treat others with respect, courtesy, and consideration and show understanding and the appropriate support of other team members to help get the job done.
- Responsible for communicating with staff concerning pertinent corporate directives and policy, related regulatory expectations, employee safety requirements, and other information as directed by corporate.
- Ensure a safe working environment and oversee compliance with applicable OSHA and other laws, regulations, and work rules concerning environmental safety and health by employees. Assist with accident/injury investigations as directed by Safety or HR team.

Minimum Qualifications (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities)

- Bachelor's or Associate's degree in agriculture or business, or high school diploma (or the equivalent thereof) and five years or more of related work experience preferred.
- Demonstrate essential abilities including business knowledge, personnel management, collaboration, communication, customer focus, decision making and skill development.
- Ability to work across business functions, handle multiple tasks, follow established process, and communicate effectively with a wide variety of individuals to achieve business targets while maintaining a high level of professionalism.
- Ability to organize and participate in strategic planning sessions and ability to deal with problems involving several concrete variables in standardized situations.
- Knowledge of basic accounting and financial principles including reading and understanding financial statements. Ability to calculate figures and amounts such as discounts, interest, commissions, proportions, percentages, area, circumference, and volume.
- Previous supervisory experience managing staff, operations, and sales teams with the ability to influence without authority, coach team members, build relationships, and instill strong work ethic, high sense of urgency, and resilience.
- Experience in agronomy management preferred. Previous experience and knowledge of agriculture and/or agronomy with basic knowledge of insect, weed and disease identification, and fertility required.
- Experience operating heavy machinery, farm machinery, tractors, spreaders, sprayers, tender trucks, semi-trucks, etc. along with experience working with chemicals, fertilizers, anhydrous ammonia, and seed preferred.
- Knowledge of accounting software, database software, internet software, spreadsheet software and word processing software. Proficient with Microsoft Office suite and company specific software and the ability to understand and utilize additional technological tools and resources.
- Must have and maintain a valid driver's license with an acceptable driving record and have access to reliable transportation to and from work.
- Must have, or be willing and able to obtain, a Class A CDL with Hazardous Material Endorsement along with a Commercial Pesticide License including CORE and CAT I certifications.

Physical Demands and Work Environment

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this position. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the functions.

Physical Demands:

- Ability to write and speak effectively to individuals and groups. Ability to read and interpret documents such as safety rules, operating and maintenance instructions, and procedure manuals.
- Ability to apply common sense understanding to carry out instructions furnished in written, oral, or diagram form.
- Ability to walk, stand, stoop, crouch, crawl, kneel, bend, reach overhead with hands and arms, finger keys (like keyboarding, controls on a scanner, fax, etc.), climb, balance, or sit for extended periods of time. Ability to work for extensive periods at computer keyboarding.
- Ability to lift, carry, and push up to 50lbs.
- May be required to work at varying heights.
- Ability to hear within normal range.
- Specific vision abilities include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and ability to adjust focus.

Work Environment:

- Ability and willingness to work extended hours, weekends, and on-call as business conditions warrant (primarily Spring and Fall).
- Ability to work both indoors and outdoors in possible extreme weather conditions including cold, heat, wind, rain, etc. while scouting fields.
- Ability to travel independently to customer locations.
- Possible exposure to dust, fumes, chemicals, and electrical hazards with appropriate safety measures in place.
- Work conducted in an office environment can be noisy and will involve interacting with team members and serving customer needs in an open area.
- Job location- must be able to reliably commute or plan to relocate prior to beginning work.
- Must be able to work in a drug-free environment.

AgBest offers a competitive salary and excellent benefits package including Health, Dental, Vision, 401K Match Plan, Paid Time off and Life and Disability coverage for those who qualify.

As part of our pre-employment hiring process, background checks and drug screens are performed.

All applicants must be willing to submit to a background check and drug test. Evidence of work authorization upon employment is required in compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. Completion of USCIS form I-9 will be required to verify employment eligibility within 3 business days of the first day of employment.