FAQ – Laos / Indiana Agribusiness Internship – A life changing experience

**Who should apply?** Any student within the College of Agriculture (ie Animal Science, FNR, Agronomy, and Horticulture) who is hardworking, passionate about helping others, and doesn’t mind getting dirt under their nails is welcome to apply. Accommodations will be adequate and safe but basic. Your Laos experience will push you out of your comfort zone. If you haven’t traveled abroad before, this may be a difficult first trip.

**Is the Laos internship a paid internship?** No. However housing and foods is included.

**Are the Indiana internships paid?** Yes. Pay rates range between $10-12 per hour. Housing is included. These internships were created for the express purpose of complementing the SAH Laos farm experience. Also, take some time to check out Beck’s Seeds, BioTown Ag, and Whiteshire Hamroc. These are rock-star internships in the agri-business world, especially for an undergrad.

**Are the internships for academic credit?** No. However, students wishing to earn academic credit can make arrangements with Dr. Alan Mathew, Department Head of Animal Science prior to their departure to arrange for an independent study.

**Can I use a Purdue Moves Scholarship?** Possibly. First, you may have already used your $1,000 or $2,000 short-term study abroad scholarships. Second, these scholarships can only be awarded for credit-bearing international activities. Since there isn’t an official academic component of the course, you must work to set up an independent study before you leave.

**What about travel insurance?** If you make arrangements for an independent study you are eligible to purchase Purdue’s travel insurance for $32. Otherwise, you should secure your own travel insurance. Most plans are very reasonable.

**Will there be a Purdue faculty member leading the trip?** No. This is not an official Purdue sponsored program. SAH board members will be leading the program. However, Purdue staff and faculty are helping to facilitate this opportunity and traveling to Laos to inspect the farm. A faculty-led effort may be a possibility in the future.

**Is the cost of travel to Laos paid?** No, but roughly half of the Laos experience has been subsidized in order to keep the cost as low as possible. Also, keep in mind - one week of the Laos experience in entirely comprised of travel excursions. You can’t expect a paid vacation as an intern!

**Can I do the paid internship and not take part of the Laos program?** No. These internships were created specifically to entice Purdue students learn and contribute at SAH in Laos.

**Could I only complete the Laos portion? I already have a two-month internship this summer arranged.** Possibly, but it depends on the time frame. Contact Ken Perkins.

**Will we be traveling to Laos alone?** No. Ken Perkins or another SAH member who has traveled to Laos many times will escort interns to the farm.
**Will we be on our own at the farm?** No. In fact, the reason we have two groups of two to three interns instead of one large group is to allow the SAH farm managers, Neil and Liz Peterson, contact time to instruct and direct interns on a highly individualized basis. The Petersons each have over 12 years of experience within Laos and have been managing the farm for seven years.

**Where will we stay?** Interns will be staying in gender specific cabins (beds, showers, a/c) close to the farm.

**What will we eat?** There is a farm cook. You will eat a lot of rice-based dishes. Interns’ diets will be augmented with additional proteins to suit western sensibilities. You’re welcome to try exotic Laotian dishes during trips to the market!

**Is Laos safe?** Laos has no US State Department travel warnings or advisories. Laos is a safe place for independent travel, and many find it much safer than their hometowns in the west. There are occasional reports of petty theft, and the occasional bag snatching, but these can be avoided by being cautious with your belongings. Interns will be given safety briefing prior to departure.

**What vaccines should I consider?** It is a good idea to get a [hepatitis A & B](#) shot (schedule these well before departure), as well as to update your [tetanus](#) shot. Since you will be spending a good deal of time in rural areas on farms, working with livestock and in areas with rice paddies, you may want to look into getting a [Japanese encephalitis](#) vaccine. See the CDC homepage for detailed information on these diseases.