



**MINNESOTA STATE**  
Northern Agricultural Center of Excellence



Keith Olander is the Executive Director of AgCentric, (a MN State Agricultural Center of Excellence). He also oversees strategic agricultural partnerships at Central Lakes College as a Dean of Agricultural Studies.

As Executive Director of AgCentric, Keith's major responsibilities are to augment the capacity and enrollment in comprehensive agricultural education from K-12, through post-secondary to industry. Workforce development includes building partnerships, developing seamless educational pathways, and informing audiences of the agricultural web that surrounds every person who enjoys a good meal and an environment that is sustainable. Directing the work of Minnesota Farm Business Management is also a major part of his role for Minnesota State Colleges and Universities with 67 faculty at 7 colleges with nearly 3,000 students (farmers). A key component of this program is farmer well-being and rural mental health.

The Strategic Partnerships with the Ag & Energy Center includes operating 1,800 acres of research and demonstration with multiple industry partnership that promote economic development across the region and state. Integrating the latest in technology and investigating the most current issues farmers face in sustaining the environment while remaining viable in the marketplace.

Additionally, these partnerships connect to the classroom in areas in Farm Business Management, Specialty Crops, Animal Science, Horticulture, and Natural Resources.

Keith is married with 3 children and they reside in rural Staples. Keith owns and operates a 450 acre crop farm consisting predominantly of a corn and soybean rotation along with a family sized garden. Faith, family, and his passion for agriculture consume his schedule.

[Agcentric.org](http://Agcentric.org)

# Keith Olander

## Professional Experience

---

### ***Dean of Agricultural Studies***

Central Lakes College  
1830 Airport Road  
Staples, MN 56479

***April 2014-Present***

- Agriculture Program Oversight and Growth
- Foster Strategic Partnerships
- LCCMR Grant Projects Lead PI
  - Cover Crops
  - Hemp
- National Science Foundation Grant – PI (2000787)  
-Technical Applications in Agriculture

### ***Executive Director of AgCentric***

Minnesota State Agricultural Center of Excellence

***July 2014-Present***

- Facilitate growth in Agriculture Career Pathways
  - Literacy
  - Advocacy
- Coordinate Professional Development of  
Statewide FBM Program
- Supervisor of Professional Excellence Program,  
Post-secondary Mentorship program
- Supervisor of Federal Benchmarking Grant  
Program for MN FBM
- Facilitate Database Construction of over 2200  
Farms
- Manage mentorship programs
  - Post-Secondary
  - Farm Business Management
- Total grant portfolio management in excess of  
\$4.0 million dollars

### ***Farm Business Management Instructor***

Central Lakes College  
1830 Airport Road  
Staples, MN 56479

***August 2008 – April 2014***

- Completed over 40 Student Farm Analysis annually
- Provided guidance for Cash Flow Plans
- Developed Business Plans annually for 40 farms,  
exceeding 8 million in sales

### ***Agricultural Education Teacher & FFA Advisor***

Long Prairie- Grey Eagle High School  
August 2002 – August 2008  
510 9<sup>th</sup> Street NE  
Long Prairie, MN 56347

***August 1994-August 2008***

New Ulm Public Schools  
August 1994 – June 2002  
414 South Payne Street  
New Ulm, MN 56073



## **Areas of Instruction**

---

Agribusiness Management  
Resources of Agriculture/Wildlife  
Horticulture/Landscaping

Animal Science  
Welding/Construction/Wiring  
Community Leadership and FFA

## **Education**

---

### **Master of Education, Agricultural Education, 2006**

*University of Minnesota, Twin Cities*

Thesis: Leadership & Self Efficacy of Agricultural Education Instructors

Published: Journal of Agricultural Education 2006

### **Bachelor of Science Degree, 1994**

*University of Minnesota, Twin Cities*

Major: Agricultural Education

Licenses: Vocational Agriculture

Teacher/Coordinator Business Occupations Co-op Program

## **Related Experience**

---

Good Food Access Fund, Advisory Member, MN Department of Agriculture  
Federal Farm Bill Working Group, Senator Tina Smith Convening, 2018  
Chair, Central Region University of Minnesota Sustainable Partnership Board  
Member, Region V Resilient Region Energy Team  
State Coordinator, Ag Ed Curriculum Frameworks  
Member, Team AGED, Minnesota  
Education Liaison, Central Minnesota Irrigators Corporation  
Member, STAR (State Teach Ag Recruitment) Team  
Member, MN Association of Agricultural Educators  
Member, National Association of Agricultural Educators  
Member, Association of Career & Technical Educators  
Member, Staples-Motley High School Agriculture Program Advisory Board  
Member, MN FFA Alumni

## **Community Contributions**

---

2021 Minnesota Farm Bureau Post-Secondary Educator of the Year  
2021 Minnesota FFA Hall of Fame Inductee  
2017 National FFA Honorary FFA Degree award recipient  
Member, Motley Free Methodist Church  
Member, MN Farm Bureau  
Member, MN Farmer's Union  
Member, MN Corn Growers Association  
Member, MN Soybean Growers  
Member, Irrigators Association of MN  
Member, Headwaters Agriculture Sustainability Partnership