The Faculty of Horticulture and Rural Development in Kecskeméť has been training future horticulturalists for six decades, while study programmes in rural development and agricultural economics were launched 15 years ago. Thanks to the Faculty’s high standard of practice-oriented and pragmatic training, its graduates are welcomed with open arms in all segments of agriculture. The practice orientated training is supported by demonstration gardens, training farms and product engineering factory units. The number of partners involved in dual training is increasing.

Why choose the Faculty of Horticulture and Rural Development?

“Our graduates are engineers who possess both an entrepreneurial spirit and specialised expertise that can be adapted even in the context of a rapidly changing industrial structure. Furthermore, they aren't intimidated by the need to regularly update their knowledge. Thanks to the pragmatic skills acquired at the Faculty, they can create a stable existence for themselves and their families, either as employees or as entrepreneurs, for there is a growing demand for highly qualified professionals who — in addition to their expertise in production — possess adequate knowledge in matters of organisation, marketing, logistics and EU affairs.

“The Faculty’s master’s programmes endow these new agricultural professionals with skills, competencies and knowledge that is applicable anywhere in Europe. Graduates may pursue their studies in the framework of doctoral programmes or post-graduate specialist courses as well. The latter are also open to students with a bachelor’s degree.”

— András Palkovics, PhD, dean, associate college professor, head of the Practice Farmland and Display Garden

Faculty location and environs

The buildings of the Faculty of Horticulture and Rural Development are situated in a comfortable residential suburb of Kecskeméť, close to the city centre. The facilities are only a five-minute walk from the train station and coach terminal, and the bus departing from the city centre lets students off at the Faculty “doorstep”.

BSc courses:

Bachelor’s programme in horticultural engineering

This is one of the Faculty’s longest-standing study programmes, and one that has evolved continuously over the decades as scientific knowledge is accumulated and environment-friendly technologies are gaining ground. The main aims of the programme are: to train professionals who will be able to plan, supervise and organise industrial-scale production processes; to manage tasks related to the preparation, distribution and storage of products;
to undertake specialised managerial core tasks in the horticultural domain; and to set up independent horticultural farms and operate them efficiently.

This bachelor’s programme is recommended to those who would like to participate in activities through which they can learn how the tastiest and most beautiful fruits and vegetables are grown, and how vineyard grapes are cultivated to produce fine wines. The Faculty especially welcomes those who are intrigued by the possibilities to better market Hungary’s top-quality horticultural products.

Bachelor’s programme in agricultural engineering

This study programme educates agricultural engineers who will obtain high-level core knowledge in agriculture-related areas, as well as relevant practice. Moreover, in possession of their high-level skills and competencies in the domains of natural sciences, specialised technology and economics, they will be able to produce value in the field of production and management on either an industrial scale or in their own business. Our graduates in agricultural engineering are prepared to undertake tasks related to production, distribution, organisation, and control and management, and can fulfil various positions as designer-developer engineers, researchers or managers.

This programme is recommended to those who wish to deepen their knowledge in the realms of natural sciences and agriculture, and have an affinity for agricultural production, farming, animal husbandry, and rural life as such, as well as to those who are interested in the ways of organic farming and in how to achieve sustainable and environmental-friendly agricultural production.

“My parents have worked in crop production for 30 years now, and a few years ago I also joined them actively in their efforts. Although fodder-growing is basically the same today as it was in the past, it is continuously changing with the development of technology. I hope that the knowledge I will have acquired at the university will enable me to manage my farm just as efficiently as my parents do.”

— Sándor Tajti, agricultural engineering BSc student

Bachelor’s programme in rural development and agricultural engineering

The aim of this study programme is to train rural-development agricultural engineers who can undertake complex organisational, managerial, administrative, and logistics- and production-related tasks in the domain of production, services, and consultancy. Through the knowledge acquired, they can provide professional expertise in line with labour market demands. Graduates will have the specialised knowledge necessary to interpret rural development in accordance with EU standards, and to design and execute rural development programmes.

The bachelor’s programme in rural development and agricultural engineering is recommended to those for whom the emergence of rural areas is a priority, who wish to acquire diverse, state-of-the-art and pragmatic knowledge, and would also like to learn how to write successful tenders and business plans.
“I recommend this study programme especially to those who are intrigued by how we might safeguard together the beauty of the countryside and the fruits of farmers' efforts.”

— Ferenc Tóth, economic and rural development agricultural engineer, 2018 graduate

**MSc courses**

**Master’s programme in horticultural engineering**

The aim of this study programme is to train certified horticulturalists who are familiar with and can readily apply the latest achievements of science and horticultural practice, and who are well-versed in those core sciences and social sciences which are indispensable for this profession. A further educational objective of this master’s programme is to equip graduates within this specialised professional field with knowledge that is generally applicable anywhere in Europe.

This study programme is recommended especially to those who aspire to apply progressive practical methods and solutions in the domain of horticultural engineering, to fulfil managerial positions, or to solve independent R&D and innovative assignments. It is also a good choice for those who would like to apply their complex, interdisciplinary expertise in horticultural crops — both in a Hungarian and in an EU context — and who are interested in R&D programmes, as well as in the elaboration and management of projects.

“My parents, siblings and I have all pursued our studies of horticultural engineering at either this Faculty or its legal predecessor. The excellent training and our network of relations established here have always allowed us to fare well in each and every segment of the profession. If you long to be part of a cohesive professional community, the study programme in horticultural engineering provided in Kecskemét comes absolutely recommended.”

— Nóra Marosi, MA student in horticultural engineering

**Master’s programme in rural development and agricultural engineering**

The aim of this study programme is to train professionals who will supervise production, distribution, and regulation processes, in addition to any related organisational and management processes. Those who complete the programme will have a comprehensive understanding of European and Hungarian rural and regional development functions, the role of agriculture in the development and preservation of the countryside, as well as causal understanding of related specificites. Programme graduates can advance to careers as designer-developer engineers, researchers or managers.

This study programme is recommended to those who would like to learn more about the impacts of corporate, institutional, and community projects on the countryside, and about basic principles of sustainable management and technical and technological development.

“I began farming on 4,000 square metres in autumn 2014. Now I have five hectares of
vineyard, four buildings for tourist catering, and my own small-scale winery. I am in charge of growing, production and marketing, as well as sales. My farm has been developing more and more dynamically. The fact that I have been able to make my dream come true and that I can do what I’m passionate about can be largely put down to the Faculty, my teachers, and the practice-oriented educational regime.”

— Gábor Barcza, certified rural development agricultural engineer

Accredited higher educational vocational training

- Horticultural engineers
- Farming and rural development engineers

Organisational structure of the Faculty

Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development

“Members of the Faculty of Horticulture and Rural Development teach courses in economics, rural development, and work organisation in all of the available study programmes. Seventy-five per cent of the instructors at our Department have an academic degree, while 25 per cent possess a post-doctoral degree (habilitation). The main research interests among our faculty members are: work organisation and economic analysis of agricultural sectors, working conditions and livelihoods of young Hungarian farmers, economic and marketing analysis of ‘Hungaricums’, and short supply-chain operations in Hungary.”

— Árpád Ferencz, PhD, college professor, head of department

Department of Agricultural Sciences

Department faculty members participate in all of the study programmes available at the Faculty, while also conducting extensive research in the Environmental Science and Analytical Workshop. The Department takes part in the Faculty’s service activities (Practice Farmland, Laboratory), and has implemented numerous successful projects through awarded tenders.

“The Department takes an active role in teaching both core and specialised subjects. My colleagues are engaged in complex academic endeavours and have extensive professional relations. Our services contribute to the pragmatic training that the Faculty offers, and also enhance its reputation.”

— Attila Hüvely, PhD, associate college professor, head of department

Department of Horticulture
“The faculty members of the Department of Horticulture primarily assure the teaching of production-related subjects (Growing of Ornamentals, Production of Vegetables, Production of Fruit, Viticulture); and in addition to teaching, they also take part in the research projects of the Horticultural Workshop. Forty-five per cent of the instructors at our Department have an academic degree, 45 per cent are doctoral students, and 10 per cent are habilitated doctors.”

— Zsuzsa Turi-Farkas, PhD, college professor, head of department

The Faculty offers popular scientific conferences, further education training courses and unique products made in its food producing factory units.

Organisational units

Practice Farmland and Display Garden

The 270-hectare Practice Farmland located in Kecskemét-Kisfái serves as the educational base and venue for high-level, practice-oriented training of students attending the Faculty seeking to learn the basic tasks of production. Through taking part in Faculty-led R&D activities, students can apply their newly acquired knowledge to modernise production, and are able to provide professional consultancy for market actors in the agricultural sector. The Faculty provides a versatile range of practical education: studies of crop production, production of vegetables, viticulture, and the production of fruit are embraced in equal measure.

Newly planted crop-lands, vineyards and orchards of the Faculty’s Display Garden are ideal sites for field trials and the observation of plant varieties. Such improvements support the modernisation of technologies. In the Display Garden, students attend trainings related to the growing of vegetables, fruit, grapevines and ornamentals, thus familiarising themselves with the operations of growing equipment and the problematics of storage.

Soil and Plant Examination Laboratory

The Soil and Plant Examination Laboratory carries out regular soil, plant, irrigation water and cereal screening for thousands of customers, in addition to providing counselling and advice to farmers. In recent years, the Laboratory’s scope of activities has widened to include the implementation of an Environmental Protection, Food Ingredient, and Microbiological Laboratory, which has bolstered the success of practical training. Also, a tender-funded PCR laboratory was created in 2017.

“As our students learn about the various growing technologies, they will be able to select the tools and machinery most suitable for a given growing technology. They will also become familiar with the individual plant subspecies that are exploited in agricultural production. On their own family-run farms, students can put to good use the practical knowledge they acquire during their courses on the Practice Farmland. As professionals, they will be able to successfully accomplish, supervise or have others carry out the individual agricultural and horticultural work processes.”
Practical courses and experiments

“Currently I’m working on our family-owned farm. The success of my work can be largely put down to the fact that instructors at the Faculty do their utmost not only to transfer theoretical knowledge, but also to complete that knowledge with practical courses and farm visits. During my years of study, I conducted an experiment for which I received both financial and professional support from the institute. My thesis supervisor, Dr Ildikó Király, helped and supported me all along. Two academic articles and a TDK paper were born from this endeavour. The paper won first prize at the Scientific Student Conference of the Faculty, and has been promoted for consideration at the 2019 national TDK conference.”

— László Károly, BSc graduate in horticultural engineering, 2018

“László Károly prepared his TDK paper and thesis work under my supervision. He demonstrated sophisticated research competencies in the design and execution of his experiments. He carried out the experiments on his own, and enriched the examinations with numerous original ideas in the implementation phase. He thoroughly reviewed and synthesised the relevant literature in the process of drafting his paper, offering an independent analysis of the findings in accordance with the requirements.”

— Ildikó Király, PhD, thesis supervisor