



**Granite
Agricultural
Milestones**

Department of
Agriculture,
Food, and Forestry
public art
installation

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About the Art:

Artist: Andy Dufford, Chevo Studios

Title: *Granite Agricultural Milestones*

Media: Granite, Iron, Aluminum

Dimensions:

Location: Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry,
Oklahoma City, OK

The goal of the public artwork located at the [Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry](#) was to create an environment reflecting the importance of agriculture in Oklahoma. To accomplish this goal, Andy Dufford of [Chevo Studios](#) designed and installed a piece that utilizes beauty and simplicity to explore the history, work, and end product of the department's mission to advance the industry of agriculture in our state.

About the Artist:

Andy Dufford is the lead artist of Chevo Studios. He has a background in painting and completed undergraduate work in design and community development. Chevo Studios focuses on creating public art pieces that integrate the identity of the place and the community it serves.

How to Find It:

The artwork is located in front of the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture building on the south side facing Lincoln Blvd. On the right side of the main entrance, you will first notice the large plow and the largest granite tablet. Along the walkway to the right are three more granite panels. [View a map.](#)

A General Description:

The installation consists of a sculpture of a plow and four granite panels. The plow is iron and aluminum with a patina applied to make it appear weathered. It is larger than life-sized, but a faithful replica of the plow used by Native American and European settlers during the 19th century.

The largest granite tablet is located just behind the plow, and prominently features a relief of a windmill. Two smaller insets are portraits of a pioneer man and woman. An etching of a barn completes the panel. Together with the plow sculpture, these elements emphasize the importance of agriculture even before statehood and the role of hardy pioneers and equipment that made settling here possible.

To the right, the second panel represents Oklahoma's three largest livestock products with a large relief of a steer, insets of a chicken and a hog, and a detailed etching of a fence. The third panel represents the state's three main crops with the main relief depicting a large stalk of wheat, the smaller insets showing corn and cotton, and a light etching of the tops of corn stalks. The fourth and last panel symbolizes the result of bounty and benefit from agricultural work that is felt by all. The large relief of a hand holding a plate laden with fruits and vegetables, the insets of bread and a modern home, and the etching of silverware emphasize the benefits that society receives from the hard work of ranchers and farmers.

Before Your Visit



Relevant History/Facts

A plow loosens the soil and prepares it for seeds. It aerates the soil, shifts nutrients to the surface, and buries weeds and old crops. Plowing can contribute to soil erosion. One example of such soil erosion is the Dust Bowl, caused by irresponsible farming practices and the mistaken belief that "rain follows the plow." [More about plows...](#)

The Great Plains were once known as the Great American Desert. It was once believed that the region would never support agriculture. Westward expansion brought the belief that farming and settlement would bring better conditions, and seemed to be true during a period of abnormally rainy weather. Drought soon plagued the area again and would persist in making pioneers' lives extremely difficult. Today, many farmers rely on irrigation instead of the less-dependable weather.

Wheat is the number one crop in Oklahoma and the 4th most valuable commodity of 2010. It is the major ingredient of most breads and is also used in products like paper, cosmetics, soap, and concrete.

For more about Oklahoma's agricultural history, including lesson plans, visit [Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom](#).

During Your Visit



Practicing Art Criticism:

Describe:

What kind of art is it?

What objects are visible?

What shapes can you see?

What textures can you see?

Analyze:

How have lines been used in this artwork?

How does the artist use light?

What is the overall mood?

What audience is this artwork intended for?

Interpretation:

What is the purpose of this artwork?

What does it mean to you?

Is there any symbolism in this artwork?

Why did the artist choose this specific media?

Judgment:

Does this artwork have worth to you? To others? Why or why not?

Also see the Janice Mason Art Museum's *Four Steps in Art Criticism*, located [here](#).

More Sights to See:

Oklahoma State Capitol Building

The [State Capitol](#) is just down the street from the Dept. of Agriculture. The State Art Collection, located in the Betty Price Gallery on the first floor, and the murals and vignettes best visible on the 4th floor are must-sees, but don't forget to poke around the hallways for some wonderful paintings featuring Oklahoma scenes. *Arcadia Round Up*, found on the fourth floor, is a particularly relevant depiction of an agricultural setting and features a familiar landmark.

We Belong to the Land, Jeff Dodd



Oklahoma History Center

The [Oklahoma History Center](#) is located within a 10 minute walking distance from the Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry. The Noble Gallery in particular would connect well to the public art installation at the Dept. of Agriculture. It provides a wealth of information about the land run days of Oklahoma Territory.



Photo © Tim Hursley

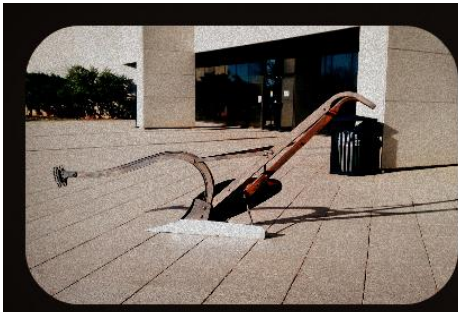
The Harn Homestead

The Harn Homestead is a historic land run property with a rich history. Students can learn about and participate in farm activities, tour the homestead, and have an outdoor picnic. See their [website](#) for field trip information.

[View this map for routes to each location.](#)



Photo by John Clanton/The Oklahoman Archives



After Your Visit

The Arts: Agriculture in Art

Study how other artists portray [agrarian life](#).

- ⇒ Why is it a dominant theme in art?
- ⇒ Compare agricultural art to a book with agriculture as a dominant theme. How does the portrayal of farm life differ?

In the 1960's and 70's, land art became a mode of expression for artists that rejected museums as the only setting of art.

- ⇒ How do the elements affect land art? How would weathering affect the meaning of the art?
- ⇒ Can landscaping be a form of art?

Choose an agriculturally-sensitive topic (genetically modified crops, famine in Somalia, etc.) and create an artwork in response.

Type of Activity: Visual, Verbal

OK Pass Skills: 6th/7th/8th-1 (3,4), 2(1),3(1), 4(3); HS- 2(1),3(1),4(1,3)

Social Studies: Agrarianism- Group Activities

Have each student make a poster representing a different type of farming, then present to the class.

- ⇒ subsistence, slash and burn, commercial, plantation, organic vs. genetic modification, etc

Split students into groups to research and debate agrarianism versus urbanism as life styles.

Type of Activity: Interpersonal, Verbal, Visual

OK Pass Skills: 5th: 7(5); 6th: 3(2), 7th: 5(2), 8th: 2(1,2), World Geog: 4(3), 5(1)

Language Arts: Setting

Read one of the books listed in the relevant reading section.

- ⇒ What is the setting of the book?
- ⇒ What would be changed if the author had chosen a different setting?
- ⇒ How does agriculture play an important role?

Write a story about moving from the city to live on a farm, or vice versa.

- ⇒ What kinds of problems would you encounter? Would it be an easy adjustment?

Type of Activity: Intrapersonal

Mathematics: Percent Change

Study graphs and percent change by using the *Oklahoma Agriculture* worksheet.

- ⇒ For more math activities, try Ag in the Classroom's [Corn Math](#) or [Circles in the Landscape](#).

Type of Activity: Logical

OK Pass Skills: MS Process Standard 4; HS Process Standard 4; Alg I: 1(1D), 3(1)

Science: Cloud in a Bottle

Farmers are reliant upon the weather to bring rain for their crops. Study the importance of pressure systems by illustrating the difference between high and low pressure.

- ⇒ View this [video](#) of Steve Spangler on *The Ellen Show* to learn how to perform the experiment, or see his [website](#) for even more details.
- ⇒ What conditions are necessary for condensation? How does that affect a farm?

Type of Activity: Naturalist, Bodily

OK Pass Skills: Process Standards 1 and 3

Etc: Modern Agricultural Life

Get an understanding of life on a modern farms and ranches in Oklahoma.

- ⇒ Explore the Pioneer Woman's [blog](#) on ranching for posts on daily life, rodeos, and working cattle.
- ⇒ Watch a clip from *America's Heartland* about [harvesting winter wheat](#) in Oklahoma.
- ⇒ Prepare a [real cowboy meal](#).

[National Educational Technology Standards](#): Standard 3

Relevant Reading

Sanora Babb, *Whose Names are Unknown*.

A story about the Dunne family's struggle to survive on their Oklahoma farm through the Dust Bowl and Great Depression. Similar to Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, but Babb has the benefit of experience and tells her story with heart and empathy. *Recommended for high school students.*

Margaret McMullon, *How I Found the Strong*.

Frank Russell is too young to enlist in the Confederate army but he still experiences the effects of it when he loses several family members. He questions why the war is being fought and if slavery ethical. *Recommended for 7th grade and up.*

Karen Hesse, *Out of the Dust*.

Told through free verse poems, a story about a young girl's life during the Dust Bowl. *Recommended for grades 5-8.*

Gary Paulsen, *The Winter Room*.

Paulsen tracks a Norwegian family through the youngest son, Eldon. Using the seasons to break up the book into four parts, he tells about life on a Minnesota farm. The winter room is where the family gathers during the dark winter evenings to hear stories from Uncle David. *Recommended for grades 5-8.*

Seigniora Russell Laune, *Sand in my Eyes*.

An autobiographical account about Nonie's life in Texas, Nebraska, and Woodward, Oklahoma. Simple language and occasional anecdotes make this a fast read, packed full of what life was like to be among the first settling in Oklahoma after the Land Runs. *Recommended for high school students.*

Francisco Jimenez, *The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child*.

Drawing on his own experiences as an immigrant from Mexico, Jimenez writes from Panchito's perspective as his family moves from El Rancho Blanco to California and begins harvesting crops. The family migrates throughout California to follow crops in season and struggles to make a life in the United States. *Recommended for grades 6 and up.*

Additional Resources

[Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom](#): Everything you need to know about agriculture in Oklahoma; lesson plans and other teaching resources written by Pat Thompson. Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom is a program of the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, the Oklahoma State Department of Education and the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

[Oklahoma Art's Council](#): If you plan on taking a trip out to the State Capitol building, [preview the art](#) and find [teaching resources](#) on the Art's Council's website.

[The Pioneer Woman](#) by Ree Drummond: A blog about daily life on a ranch in Oklahoma; also features recipes, photography tips, homeschooling advice, and an entertainment section.

[Steve Spangler Science](#) by Steve Spangler: Supplies easy science experiments and inexpensive science supplies. Also, check out the videos on [youtube](#).

[America's Heartland](#) has several lesson plans and study guides to supplement their television show.

[Food Timeline](#) is a website created by Lynne Olver about food history, and includes trivia, recipes, and lesson plans.

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