



South Dakota

Bringing farming up to speed for the next generation of talent

South Dakota is now looking to technology to bolster its largest economic sector, agriculture, and create a pipeline of talent that will drive innovation in the Mount Rushmore State.

South Dakota State University will be home to the country's first precision agriculture facility. The \$55-million center will bring together faculty in agricultural and biosystems engineering, agronomy, horticulture and plant science to train students to use tech such as drones to advance the state's agriculture industry.

The center is a step toward creating the type of workforce the state's agricultural industry will need to keep up with competition. "With more and more complicated technology, we need a more developed workforce who understand the challenges of precision ag. Workforce development is important to the progression of the state," said Sarah Waltner, director of operations for the Sioux Falls-based Raven Industries, one of the backers of the university's facility.

Beyond the agricultural sector, the state as a whole was second only to Wyoming in the Tax Friendly category, thanks to its lack of a corporate income tax or income tax on wages. That business-friendly climate is a healthy one for small businesses, which added nearly 68 jobs per 1,000 people from Q2/2011 through Q4/2016.

Sources: (Precision Ag) (SDSU Collegian) (Silicon Prairie News)

WHAT DID WE DO RIGHT?

Short-term rentals are largely operational and operators have a tax agreement with the Department of Revenue.

WHAT CAN WE DO BETTER NEXT YEAR?

A 2017 drone law set operational restrictions already covered under existing statutes, a set of redundant rules that dropped the state's grade in Drones from an 'A'.

WHERE HAVE WE MOST IMPROVED?

Over 60 percent of South Dakota households have internet speeds of at least 10 mbps, and 47 percent enjoy 25 mbps or more.

Best & Brightest	B
Fast Internet	B
Grants Advanced Degrees	D-
Tech Workforce	C
Tax Friendly	A+
Attracts Investment	D-
Entrepreneurial Activity	B+
Ridesharing	A
Short-Term Rentals	B+
Sustainable Policies	B
Self-Driving Vehicles	A
Drones	C



Tax Friendly

South Dakota is among the best performers because of its business-friendly climate and tax friendly policies.



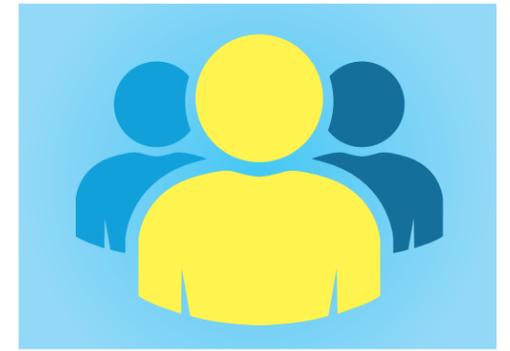
Ridesharing

The state supreme court struck down a law requiring out-of-state companies to remit South Dakota sales tax on in-state transactions, a welcome move for ridesharing.



Entrepreneurial Activity

Small businesses created roughly 67.56 jobs per 1,000 people in South Dakota, putting the state in the top 15 for Entrepreneurial Activity.



Best & Brightest

The state has Right-to-Work legislation but lacks state rules protecting workers from discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Turning to New Tech for Innovation in a Longstanding Mount Rushmore State Industry

The South Dakota School of Mines and Technology is partnering with a Rapid City High School to give students an introduction to advanced manufacturing.

The program, which will integrate the high school students' education with college engineering programs and the South Dakota workforce, grew out of a meeting between a Rapid City teacher and a School of Mines engineering instructor.

In the "modern revival of shop class," students at Stevens High School learn the basics of operating mills and manual machinery, using 3D printers, and designing software. The high school course closely mirrors what first-year students at the School of Mines are learning and creates a smoother transition for students from high school into early college, said Aaron Lalley, a mechanical engineering instructor at the South Dakota campus.

The School for Mines hopes to expand the program into other Rapid City schools in the future.

PHOTO CREDIT: South Dakota School of Mines & Technology | Sources: (SDBP)

