



# AG Careers.com

## AG & FOOD CAREER GUIDE

2018 / 2019 • CANADIAN 11<sup>TH</sup> EDITION



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## WELCOME TO THE AGCAREERS.COM AG & FOOD CAREER GUIDE!

AgCareers.com is “Feeding the World with Talent” by connecting top talent with agricultural employers across the globe. The Ag & Food Career Guide is just one way we are helping young professionals familiarize themselves and connect with some of the top organizations in agriculture and food.

Within the Career Guide, you’ll find a variety of employers and organizations offering opportunities for students and young professionals. Plus, don’t miss out on the vast career education and advice featured within the articles in the publication. This Guide is a great resource to help lead you from the job search to assimilating in a new role and everything in between.

Be sure to sign up for the Student Career Success Kit from AgCareers.com (details on page 32). We’ll keep in touch with additional helpful resources throughout your career journey. Finally, visit [www.AgCareers.com](http://www.AgCareers.com) to start your career adventure today! Best of luck to you!

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**CLAAS**



# VP

## A DIFFERENT KIND OF

by Bonnie Johnson, AgCareers.com Marketing Associate

**NOT VICE PRESIDENT**, nor Most Valuable Player, we're talking about an alternative VP that you need to consider: EVP, or Employee Value Proposition.

Evaluating EVP is an important step in your job search, offer acceptance, and satisfaction as an employee. It's doubtful a company will clearly state, "This is our employee value proposition..." Essentially, in return for your work performance, an organization's value proposition answers the following questions:

- What will the employer offer you?
- Why would you want to work for their organization?

- What unique programs does the employer provide?
- How do you feel about the business' brand?

Why do organizations care about EVP? Employers want happy employees. A strong value proposition helps a business attract talented employees. An EVP that is effectively implemented increases employees' job fulfillment and encourages employees to stay.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Check out an employer's job advertisement, or career website and you

may notice basic benefits including insurance, paid leave, and retirement. However, most job seekers simply expect these to be included in a minimum compensation package. Past the expected responsibilities, location, salary, benefits and education/experience requirements, candidates tell us that a company's value proposition is very important to them. They want a company to "Tell me why I'd want to work here!"

An organization's EVP goes beyond the minimums to describe what that employer offers if you choose employment at their organization. >>>



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You may be able to glean an overall theme from the organization's mission and vision statement. The employment value proposition may also be shared in the job posting, on the employer's website, during the interview, in an employee handbook, and/or in the job offer. Employers could include the following in their proposition of value to potential employees:

- **ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES:** Career development plans, leadership development and trainee programs, coaching, promote-from-within.
- **SUSTAINABILITY & STEWARDSHIP:** Environmental initiatives, natural resource conservation.
- **DIVERSITY & INCLUSION:** Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), affinity groups, veteran programs, policies and training.
- **MENTORING:** Formal or informal mentoring programs, pipeline for sharing experience and knowledge with new employees.
- **LIFELONG LEARNING:** Continued education and training, tuition reimbursement, scholarships, employee development.
- **COMMUNITY SERVICE:** Time-off for volunteering, company-wide initiatives, nonprofit and charitable contributions, social responsibilities, support of humanitarian causes.
- **HEALTH & WELLNESS:** Work-life balance, on-site facilities, gym membership, vaccination programs, employee assistance programs which provide confidential counseling and advice services.
- **COMPANY CULTURE:** The atmosphere inside an organization. Value placed on relationships vs. products & services. Flexibility.
- **VALUE THE POSITION BRINGS TO THE EMPLOYER:** How the position fits into the overall organization and what/how you'll contribute to success, how performance will be measured, recognition received.
- **EMPLOYER BRAND:** Employment of industry experts, award-winners, and high-achievers. Familiarity with the employer's brand, including product and services, and general impressions.

What may be valuable to one person, may be unimpressive to another. It's vital for you to review all possible employer offerings and determine what's really on your "must-have list". **AG**

The banner features a dark blue header with the Uniterra logo and logos for WUSC & CECI, WUSC & EUMC, and CECI. Below the header is a red section with the text "YOUR AGRICULTURAL SKILLS CAN TAKE YOU FAR". This is followed by a photograph of a man and a woman working in a field, with a vertical credit line "© CECI" on the left. Below the photo is a green section with the text "CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITIES IN AFRICA, ASIA AND THE AMERICAS". This is followed by a photograph of a man and a woman using a tillage implement in a field, with a vertical credit line "© DILIP CHINNAKONDA" on the left. Below the photo is a pink section with the text "BECOME AN INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER!". This is followed by a photograph of two men in a field, with a vertical credit line "© VALÉRIE PAQUETTE" on the left. The banner concludes with a dark blue footer containing the text "UNITERRA.CA" and logos for Global Affairs Canada and Affaires mondiales Canada.

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It is, good to grow.

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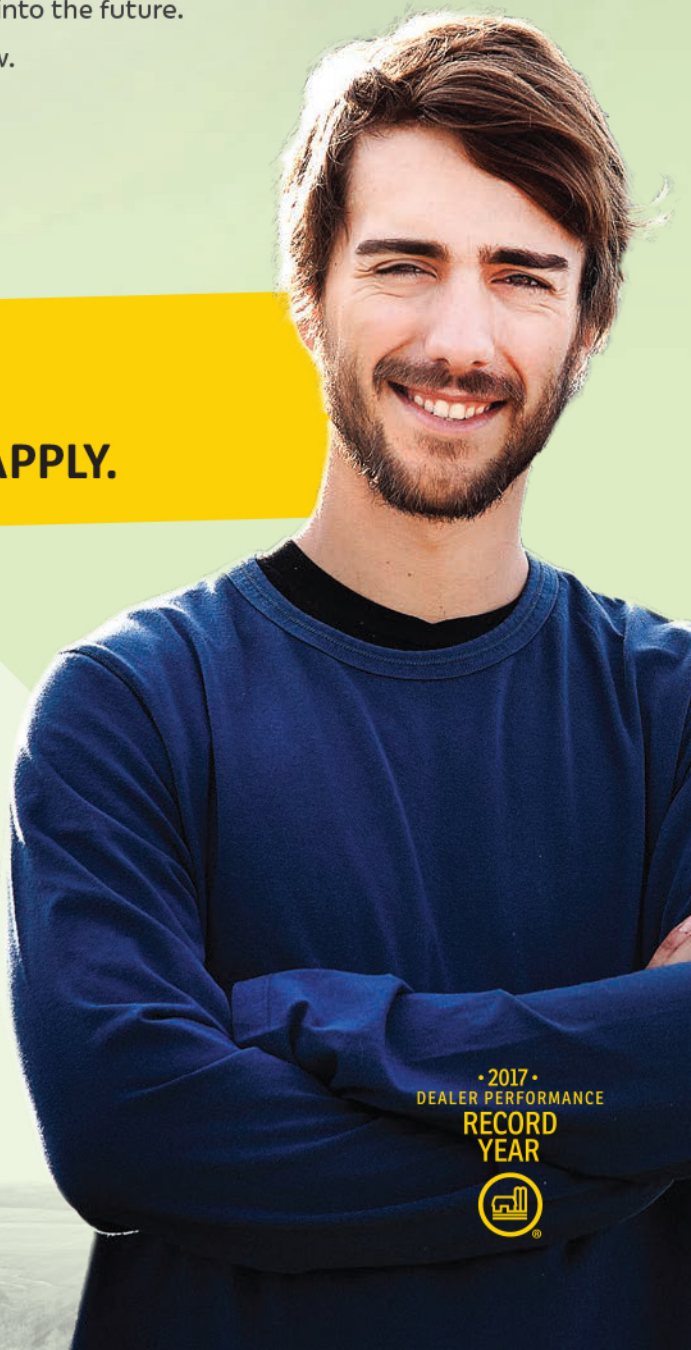
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# WHAT YOU *DON'T* HAVE!

by Erika Osmundson, AgCareers.com Director of Marketing & Communications

graduates. One focus area of this study was the importance of employability skill sets in the workplace for interns and new graduates. There are many studies out there around this topic, if you are interested in exploring. The results of the AgCareers.com survey aligned with what can be found in many of those reports.

This study looked at 10 key employability skills and asked employers to rank their importance as they looked at candidates for hire. The next section will dive into some of the top employability skills listed and how to develop and demonstrate these.

## **DEVELOPING & DEMONSTRATING THESE SKILLS**

### **Teamwork**

Given youth involvement in activities, sports, church, etc., it is hard to believe that most interns and new graduates wouldn't have some experience with teamwork. On campus there are plenty of opportunities to be a part of a team – projects, organizations, intramurals, you name it! Get involved!

The challenge is that during an interview, we get so focused on showing the interviewer what we can do that we

rarely highlight our ability to be a productive team member unless specifically asked. Keep this in mind as you practice your interview question responses. Craft a few responses to not only demonstrate your accolades but successes of teams that you've been a part of and your role within that team. Find balance here, don't go extreme with the team talk, but demonstrate your teamwork abilities.

### **Verbal Communication**

We could probably argue that this one has changed over time, with email and text and all the other fun social media platforms. There are so many other ways to communicate that do sometimes seem easier, but let's face it, can be less effective in many scenarios. The best way to develop verbal skills is just to practice and make sure you don't fall back on your electronic communication too much. Get out there – network, talk to friends, take a class that requires you to present, take a leadership role within a club, pick up the phone and call your grandma. Talk properly. Not like you'd text or shoot the breeze with a friend. Think professional! The more you do it, the more you hone those skills. And the nice thing is that,

**COMMUNICATION SKILLS**, coping skills, time management skills...the list seems to go on and on when employers talk about young professionals entering the work world. But, most of what is claimed to be a problem with 'this' generation, are the same shortcomings of those that came before at this stage in their lives.

It is time to change the conversation from what we don't have to what we do have! Let's start with identifying the skills that young professionals need to develop and determine ways to enhance opportunities to hone those skills. Then let's figure out how to demonstrate your achievements in those key areas.

## **WHAT SKILLS EMPLOYERS WANT**

AgCareers.com recently conducted a survey (2017 – 2018 Intern and New Graduate Hiring & Compensation Report) with employers regarding intern and new

if you do the practice, those will shine through in your interview!

While we are here, let's just touch on written communication, since it isn't too far down the list. Biggest pet peeves heard from employers is that employees write like they text/too casual and that they choose an electronic form of communication when a phone call or in-person conversation would be more efficient. Know when to take an online conversation to in-person. Also, take a writing course or volunteer to write for your school publication to help enhance your writing skills. Demonstrate your good writing skills in your emails back and forth with the employer throughout the recruitment process. If appropriate for the role, take samples of your writing to the interview.

### **Problem-Solving & Decision-Making**

This is a tough one, because it isn't that young professionals do not have experience in these two areas, it is just a lack of applicable experience a lot of times, or so it may seem. Obviously, summer work experiences provide a wonderful growing opportunity in these two areas. But what about interviewing for that first work experience when you've had little experience? Don't worry, you have experiences from class projects, part-time jobs, clubs/organizations, etc. You just need to apply them!

This relates no matter the role, but is particularly helpful when you have little experience to draw upon. It isn't about the specific problem or outcome – it is about the process you took to get to your answer. Rather than just sharing a situation and what the result was of your decision, take the interviewer on a quick journey through your process. How did you identify the problem? What did you assess? Did you get input from others? How many solutions did you consider?

How was the decision ultimately made? And then, what was the outcome? It is more about your ability to work through a problem and make a decision than the decision itself!

### **“ADULTING”**

We are going to take a break from the list of skills from the survey and highlight one that has been coming up more and more in employer conversations these days. No, “adulting” is not an official term. The reference is to young professionals' inability to keep the personal stuff from getting tangled and mixed with the professional stuff. This is a slippery slope as the line between work life and personal life has gotten fuzzy, with the introduction of technology and even

**TALK PROPERLY.  
NOT LIKE YOU'D  
TEXT  
OR SHOOT THE  
BREEZE WITH A  
FRIEND.**

employer expectations. On the flip side it also has led to employers offering more flexibility in the workplace, which is awesome, but also leads to some gray areas. Here is some simple advice to address common gripes from employers.

- **Expect to be at the office from 8 to 5 daily** unless directly instructed that hours are different. Yes, this means you stay even when projects are completed. Ask for something more to do.
- **Don't use your personal phone** during the day to text or talk for non-work purposes. This also applies to personal social media usage. Use your lunch time

to take care of these needs. Many employers are more lenient on this, so if you are questioning, ask your supervisor.

- It is good to build relationships with co-workers, but until that relationship is established, **keep the conversations on the positive side**. Your co-workers don't need to know all the serious stuff going on in your life!
- **If you have a problem with something/someone, deal with it**. Try to work it out with that person. If that is unsuccessful, talk with your supervisor/mentor. Don't waste time spreading negative vibes and gossiping with others.
- **Be financially responsible**. Your finances can impact you at work. You may need to carry a personal credit card for travel expenses that you get reimbursed for. Being able to hold that line of credit is crucial. Don't expect your employer to make decisions based on your financial needs. Raises, bonuses and such are typically based on company performance, not need.

- **Understand that it takes time to climb the ladder**. Building your experience and proving your value happens with time. Express your interest in advancement, but couple that with asking about ways to grow your knowledge base to better position you for advancement. Do those things and be patient. Leadership and authority are earned, not given.

Again, let's quit focusing on what we supposedly don't have and more on what we do. Knowing what employers expect or are seeking is half the battle. You have these skills or at least the framework. Grow, learn, look for opportunities! You have what it takes! **AG**

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# CUSTOMIZING YOUR resume

by Kacey Toews, AgCareers.com Talent Solutions Sales Specialist

**ARE YOU INTERESTED** in applying for several positions but scared that you won't stand out? The first thing you must understand is that a generic resume won't cut it. Having a solid and customized resume is key to move on to the next stage of the hiring process. Most job seekers claim they do not have time to put together or update their resume for one job let alone every job they are applying for, but it is vital when thinking about making a job change. Taking extra time crafting a customized resume will pay off in the end.

It takes about 10 seconds for the employer or hiring manager to scan your resume and decide if you are qualified or not, so standing out is a must. Most often, we do not get a chance to speak with the hiring manager before we apply for the position, so it is important to take time analyzing the job description, picking out keywords and building your resume. Finding the right words and phrases to sum up your education, experience and skills is not always simple, but if you keep these things in mind, it doesn't have to be overwhelming!

## UNDERSTANDING THE JOB DESCRIPTION

Before you even think about touching your resume, you must first read and understand the job description. Once you read through the job description, read it again, but this time take note of the job title, duties/responsibilities, and requirements. As you do this, pick out

keywords and phrases that stand out. I would recommend highlighting or underlining these keywords or phrases in the job description or even listing them out. Understanding the job description will also help you craft a perfect objective, if you choose to include one in your resume, by aligning your personal career objectives with key points from the job description.

## KEYWORDS AND PHRASES

Once you have picked out the keywords and phrases. Start organizing your education and experience and match them up with the key phrase and use similar language. Having similar language is important because the hiring manager will be able to pick those words and phrases out much easier than generic wording. Make sure you are careful with your word choice, this does not mean copy and pasting the job description in your resume. As you analyze the job description and pick out keywords, you may come across keywords or experience needed that you had left out of the previous version of your resume, so take some time to think through all your experience and its relevance to the current job you are working on.

## BE CONCISE

There is nothing worse than a cluttered resume and that is one of the first things the viewer will notice. Don't be afraid to combine your experiences and skills. For example, if you worked for a company but

held several different positions, instead of listing them individually, list them together or just pick the highest-level position. If you have skills that aren't relevant to the job in which you are applying, feel free to leave them out. This way, the hiring manager is not taking time reading over things that are not important and skipping the skills that are.

## DON'T EXAGGERATE

Even though you are picking out keywords and using similar language, it does not mean your resume should be exaggerated. Make sure your education, experience, and skills give an accurate depiction of your background and don't get too carried away. You might make it to the interview round because of an impressive resume but once you get to the interview, it may be hard to back up what was written on the resume.

## GET CREATIVE

Think outside of the box when writing down your skills and experience. Take extra time to think and evaluate your past experiences. That one undergraduate research project, volunteer opportunity or even part-time job in college might come in handy someday and become relevant to a job you are applying for.

Following these steps when generating a customized resume cannot guarantee you the job, but it will sure put you a step in the right direction and even ahead of other applicants. **AG**

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# WHAT AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS ARE LOOKING FOR Today

by Kristine Penning, AgCareers.com Creative Marketing Specialist with help from Kate Boeckenstedt, AgCareers.com Marketing Intern

**IF YOU WANT A CAREER IN AGRICULTURE**, you'll want to impress agricultural employers specifically. Because employers in the realm of agriculture, food, and natural resources seek a slightly specialized set of skills and qualities, we wanted to provide you with a bit of insight into what agricultural employers are looking for today, straight from the source.



**SELENA HAINES**  
Director, HR Business Partners



**GARY JOHNSON**  
Executive Director of Sales



**RUSTY HARDER**  
Chief Marketing Officer

## UNIVERSAL SKILLS & QUALITIES

The main skills and qualities would be customer focus; strong communication and team effectiveness; **drive for continuous improvement**; having a safety mindset, and possessing business acumen.

The biggest attribute we are looking for is **grit**. The ability to keep persevering even during difficult times. Additionally, having great follow-up skills and the ability to connect with customers is critical.

We look for transferable skills when evaluating potential candidates. A prospective employee should be professional, **have a good work ethic**, be a team player, and possess strong communication and leadership skills.

## AGRICULTURE-SPECIFIC SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE

It is an advantage to have knowledge of the agricultural industry, but not always necessary. You should always make sure that you are prepared and have the **base knowledge** of the role to achieve the task that you are applying to.

Being able to **relate to the farmer**. Our salespeople that have come from a farming background do great calling on farmers because they can speak their language and understand their needs.

An employee should have a good understanding of how to **provide agronomic support** to growers. It is also essential to be proactive in business planning and marketing in order to plan for success.

## TIPS TO BOOST NEEDED SKILL SETS

Ensure you are an **active listener** and understand the goals and tasks that are put in place for you to meet. Don't be afraid to ask questions and if it is something you have never tackled before, look into what resources and people are there to support you through your first attempt at it.

For the most part, young workers are great today but social skills are not as good as they should be, following up in writing (i.e. hand written notes of thank you), looking people in the eye, and being consistent are all areas that could use some improvement. **Always be learning**. If you are not growing, you are slowing.

Continuing to learn and **gain knowledge about agriculture** as it continues to innovate is highly recommended. More specifically, taking classes focused on agronomy, precision ag, public speaking, and business would be beneficial in order to gain the necessary skills and knowledge to increase value. **AG**



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- Entomology
- Human Nutrition
- Renewable Resources
- Parasitology
- Animal Science
- Biotechnology
- Food Science/Food Safety
- Microbiology
- Plant Science

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# BEING WILLING TO AGVOCATE

by Kristine Penning, AgCareers.com Creative Marketing Specialist

**AGRICULTURE:** something that means so much to so very few. Keegan Kautzky, Director of National Education Programs for the World Food Prize Foundation, posed an excellent question at the 2016 AgCareers.com Ag & Food HR Roundtable: "Agriculture is key to solving the world's greatest problems, and it is not revered as it should be. How do we change that narrative?"

Those who work in agriculture or aspire to, know the countless benefits it produces and the fulfillment it brings. Because those of us who are employed by the industry are so passionate about it, it can be difficult to have an effective conversation with an individual that doesn't understand agriculture without emotions getting involved. How can we set the record straight? How can we encourage others to pursue agriculture >>>

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as we have (and we so desperately need others too as well) when they are uninterested or misinformed? Treat this AgCareers.com Ag & Food Career Guide as your toolkit for being an Advocate. Understand why it is important and beneficial to advocate for both the agricultural industry and agricultural careers, how to go about advocating, and the best resources for sharing agriculture with others.

**WHY AGVOCATE**

Have you ever overheard conversations that made you wonder if more people today think their food comes from the grocery store than the farm? Or have you had someone tell you that your favorite food is not okay to eat because of the chemicals or antibiotics they've been "contaminated" with?

Misconceptions about food and farming can be dangerous, as they spread quickly and threaten the reputation and wellbeing of the

agricultural industry. Negative opinions and false information can lead to both legal and economic issues for industry employees.

Furthermore, agriculture being cast in a negative light can be attributed to the very real agricultural labor shortage. According to the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council, the agricultural industry could be facing up to 114,000 unfulfilled jobs by 2025.

**APPROPRIATE APPROACHES**

It's easy to get worked up about negative portrayals of agriculture, the industry we know and love, but it's harder to effectively advocate for it. It might be intimidating to speak up, or it may be difficult to get involved without anger.

If you find yourself in a conversation with a misinformed consumer, first ask them where they heard this information. Next, listen to their perspective and why they feel the way they do. It does no good to rush into a rant about why

they are wrong. Typically, there is a very emotional root to their opinion. Finally, after you've listened to them and asked questions, calmly and rationally share your own perspective.

Here are some other instances where you can effectively advocate:

- Reading accurate agricultural books to youth and young students.
- Meeting with local groups about agricultural jobs in the community.
- Working with legislators to inform them about an upcoming vote on agricultural policy.
- Participating in #AgChat discussions on Twitter.
- Speaking to clubs and organizations in your area about your agricultural career or the industry.

No matter how you "advocate," sharing your passion for our industry can make lasting impacts for our future.

**RESOURCES**

One of our core values at AgCareers.com is "bleed green." We are passionate and committed to what we do: agriculture. Part of that includes promoting excellent careers in agriculture. Share these resources with your peers in order to create a positive and motivational dialogue around agricultural careers.

**AGCAREERS.COM CAREER PROFILES & INFOGRAPHICS:**

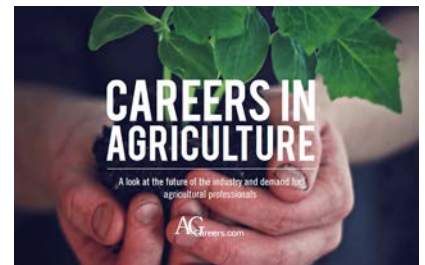
The AgCareers.com Career Profiles were created as a resource to increase learning and understanding around the great variety of opportunities in agriculture and food. Explore more than 250 different careers organized by pathway.



Our infographics were modeled after our Career Profiles and provide a more visual and shareable form. These are great tools to share with youth.

**CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE DIGITAL E-BOOK:**

We created the Careers in Agriculture digital e-book to promote agricultural careers. This publication features interviews with agricultural



professionals, industry leaders, and advocates concerning the various challenges facing the agricultural workforce. Find versions with or without the Career Profiles included.

All of these resources and many more can be found on AgCareers.com under the Job Seeker menu, then under "Resources." **AG**



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# HINDSIGHT IS 20/20

by Kristi Sproul, AgCareers.com Education & Marketing Specialist

**WHEN I SET OFF FOR SCHOOL** the best advice my sisters gave me was, “You don’t have to make all the mistakes on your own, you can learn from others’ mistakes as well.” While my university years weren’t fault-free, at the time I felt like I had really checked all the boxes for collegiate success: summer work experiences, honor roll, scholarship recipient, and a job secured before graduation. However, as the expression goes “hindsight is 20/20,” meaning that when we look back we see what we could not see when we were in the past.

There will likely be no other time in your life that you have the freedom to explore outside of your comfort zone like you do while in school. With that in mind, here’s what I wish I would’ve known; consider this your opportunity to learn from others!

## **TAKE THE SUMMER WORK EXPERIENCE 1,000 MILES AWAY.**

It may seem scary and hard to imagine being so far away from what you’re familiar with, but what a cool opportunity! You get to experience another part of the country, likely on your employer’s dime, and it’s only temporary. We tend to grow the most when we are

put in unfamiliar situations. I waited until graduate school to take the job far away and realized then I should have done it a lot sooner!

## **GO TO THE CAREER FAIR, EVEN AS A FRESHMAN.**

Few organizations offer summer work experiences to freshmen, so you may wonder if it’s even worth your time to attend the career fair. I promise you, it is. Approach the companies that interest you and ask them what type of things you can be doing as an underclassman to prepare yourself to be a competitive applicant when the time comes. Start building these relationships early and you’ll be remembered.

## **DRESS FOR CLASS LIKE YOU MAY MEET YOUR FUTURE BOSS.**

You never know when a guest speaker will show up and be the contact you need to open doors for your future. Now, if you approach that speaker in your pajama pants and “beer pong champion” t-shirt you’re not going to be taken very seriously. I am not saying you must be in business casual attire every day, but at the least take a shower and put on an outfit that doesn’t double as gym wear.

## **BLOW OFF SUMMERS ARE NICE, BUT WORK EXPERIENCES ARE BETTER.**

You’ve worked hard, and spending a summer at the pool seems well deserved. The problem is, that time off is difficult to spin for a resume. The experiences you’ll have with a summer work experience will be rewarding and will give you insight into your future career.

## **YOUR PEERS WILL EVENTUALLY BE YOUR COLLEAGUES.**

There will be people in university that you don’t click with and that’s okay. Remember, however, that agriculture is a small world. The likelihood of you having to interact with the people you went to school with in the professional world is very high. Treat everyone with respect knowing that you may need their cooperation for a work-win in a few years.

Ask anyone who’s been in the working world for a while what they wish they would have known while in university and you’ll likely get a different answer from each. So, ask the question! Learn from others’ experiences to help make your journey successful. **AG**

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# Looking to the **FUTURE**

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Time to rethink your career direction? The AgCareers.com University Partners program provides universities with graduate and distance education programs in agriculture the opportunity to reach out to students and professionals. Find out more about these programs: click on the University Partners icon on [www.AgCareers.com](http://www.AgCareers.com). **AG**

*“I wanted to use my love of agriculture to make a living.”*

Sarah Burris, Agricultural Business B.S. Graduate



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## SETUP AN ACCOUNT

- Click “Setup Your Profile” under the Job Seeker drop-down menu at the top of the page.
- Enter your contact information; uploading a resume and cover letter at this point is optional.
- Browse and apply for jobs or internships, update your profile, view saved jobs, view your application history, and post your resume so employers can seek you.



## APPLY TO A JOB

- Once you have searched for a job and viewed the description, click “Apply to This Position.”
- Add your email address. If you create an account, you may streamline this process and record your application in your application history.
- Fill out the required fields. Attach an optional cover letter by clicking “Browse” or copy and paste into the text box.
- Attach your resume in .doc, .docx, or .pdf format by clicking “Browse.” You may also select a resume from your account if logged in and if you have uploaded a resume.
- Click “Submit Application.”
- Some employers may require applicants to complete the application process on their site. If this is the case, you will see a note in a red box and be redirected. Follow directions given on their site.
- You may view all the positions you have applied to in your “Application History.”



## POST A RESUME

- Login to your account. Select “Post Your Resume” from the main job seeker drop-down menu at the top of the homepage.
- Fill out the resume profile form on the new page. The fastest way to fill in the “Resume” box is to copy and paste your resume from a Word document.
- You also have the option to upload a .doc, .docx, or .pdf file by utilizing “Upload Resume File” below the resume box. Browse and select from your documents.
- Click “Process & Preview Resume.” If you need to make changes, click the back button. Once satisfied, click “Save & Exit” at the bottom.
- You can update or add resumes any time by clicking on “Manage Resumes.”

# 4 WAYS TO SEARCH



Conduct a simple search by typing keywords in the first search box at the top left of the homepage.



Search by location using the top box labeled “Job Location” or by using the interactive map on the homepage.



Search by industry type by selecting the industry from the drop-down menu in the top box labeled “Industry Type.”



Conduct an advanced search by clicking on the “Advanced Search” option in the top right corner of the homepage.



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