

Learning About Careers: Agriculture and Food Production

Top Things to Know

Are you curious about a career in agriculture or food production? Here are some important facts:

- In many places, people do not have enough food. Workers in agriculture and food production help solve this problem.
- Many jobs in agriculture and food production are on farms. People who work on farms like learning about living things and being outdoors. They also know farmwork is hard and risky.
- Others in agriculture and food production do NOT work on farms. They may have business or manufacturing jobs or do research in laboratories or universities.
- People working in agriculture and food production have different levels of education. Some start right after high school and are trained while they work. Others must go to college to get the job they want.



What You Can Be

Many kinds of workers are needed in agriculture and food production. Here are some examples:

- **Agricultural and food scientists** do research. They find out how farmers can produce more food for less cost and how food companies can make products taste better and be more healthful.
- **Agricultural engineers** improve agriculture. They figure out ways to use less energy on farms, build better farm buildings and machines, keep farms from polluting, and store and move farm products.
- **Agricultural managers** run places where crops are grown and farm animals are raised. Some do much of the farmwork themselves. Others direct employees.
- **Agricultural workers** take care of crops and farm animals. They inspect, irrigate, and fertilize plants. They feed, move, and clean up after animals and help them stay healthy.
- **Food processing workers** use machines to make batches of food products. Often the machines have computers in them. The workers also keep records and make sure the products are high quality.

Where You Can Work

Here are some places near you that are part of the agriculture and food production industries:

- **Franklinton Farms** is a system of places in a city neighborhood where people grow fruits and vegetables for those who live there. Some workers take care of the farms. Some make sure people get the foods that are grown. Others teach about how city farms help keep people healthy and improve neighborhoods.
- **Mote & Associates** is a company where agricultural engineers work. They design and build dams and water sources on farms and figure out ways farms can pollute less. They also design and build structures where farm animals eat and crops are stored.
- **SugarCreek** makes and packages products for name-brand food companies. Some SugarCreek employees use modern machines and work in new ways to make foods more easily and safely. Others make sure the foods are high quality. The company's food scientists help decide how to make new and better products.

A Day in the Life: Organic Produce Farm Manager

Learn more about a typical day for one kind of agriculture professional:

Elena is a manager of an organic produce farm. Foods grown on the farm include tomatoes, peppers, broccoli, and greens, such as spinach. Today, Elena arrived at the farm at 7 a.m. Her first task was to release ladybugs into a field of tomatoes where another bug was eating the plants. The ladybugs will eat this bug. The ladybugs must be released in early morning or evening when temperatures are cooler. Farmworkers helped Elena with this task. Next Elena checked other fields for dryness. She used a computerized device to test the amount of water in the soil. Then she told a farmworker which fields to irrigate. After lunch, Elena helped a worker fix a piece of equipment used to remove weeds from fields.



Later, she met with an agricultural engineer. The engineer is helping Elena make sure the farm doesn't harm the environment. They talked about a system that will let her use rainwater for irrigation. As the sun set, Elena headed home. Elena didn't grow up on a farm, but she always wanted to work on one. She loves growing things and being outdoors. She likes providing people with foods that are grown without chemicals. And she likes using her muscles and her brain to handle challenges. For these reasons, managing an organic produce farm is her perfect job!

Learn More

What else do you want to know?

Now that you have read this fact sheet, what are some questions you have about working in agriculture and food production?

What did you learn?

Do research online or talk to someone who works in agriculture or food production to answer your questions. Then write two new things you learned from your research.
