



The Importance of Careers in Agriculture

In light of misleading recent published articles, AgCareers.com wanted to share some current statistics regarding education and careers in agriculture.

The value of agriculture-related degrees cannot be underestimated. No other industry can feed the world's population that is growing at a rate where we cannot produce enough food for the number of people. According to research (Feedstuffs, October 26, 2009) our food production must double by 2050.

To do that, graduates in degree programs such as agriculture, horticulture and animal science are needed. According to the latest data from AgCareers.com, 81% of jobs in the ag industry require education beyond high school and almost half require at least a bachelor's degree. According to the AgCareers.com/ AgrowKnowledge Enrollment and Employment Outlook Report in 2008 there was a deficit of 9,317 graduates with agriculture degrees to fill open positions in the US. The [USDA](#) also estimates there are or will be 54,400 annual openings for individuals with baccalaureate or higher degrees in food, renewable energy, and environmental specialties between 2010 and 2015.

Although U.S. unemployment rates remained high in 2011, AgCareers.com experienced a significant increase in jobs posted on the site. In 2011, AgCareers.com had almost 40,000 job openings posted in the United States (up 16% from the previous year). That is more than 3,300 agriculture-related job openings each month.

Agriculture positions are not only production-based, but encompass a broad range such as sales representatives, research scientists, quality assurance, marketing and engineers, just to name a few. People may also be surprised to find out that the average starting salary for a graduate in the ag industry is almost \$49,000 (according to the AgCareers.com/ AgrowKnowledge Enrollment and Employment Outlook Report and the AgCareers.com Compensation Benchmark Review).

Job seekers also feel the agriculture industry is more stable (46%) or as stable (41%) as other industries, according to the last AgCareers.com Job Seeker Survey. For those of us inside the agriculture industry, it is easy to recognize that our careers are rewarding, however we need to do a better job of sharing this with our network and mainstream media. The general public views ag employment as hard work with little pay and limited opportunities as noted by job seekers in the last survey, but we all know this is NOT the case. We encourage you to spread the word of the fantastic opportunities in ag. Please share this with your "friends" and "followers" via social media, and post your feedback on the AgCareers.com [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) sites!

The AgCareers.com reports referenced are available on the [Market Research](#) page at www.AgCareers.com. Data for the new 2011 Agribusiness Job report is currently being analyzed and will be available soon. For additional information, please contact agcareers@agcareers.com.

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