

Life is all about the opportunities you are given, and there is only one place where opportunities are endless and that's in the agricultural classroom. The chance to provide these opportunities is a chance for agricultural teachers, including myself, to change lives and make a difference in our world.

I grew up on a farm and ranch operation, however, that's not what inspired me to be an agricultural teacher. The opportunities I was given showed me that there is a place for everyone. I simply just chose the opportunity to teach agriculture and provide this endless list of opportunities to my future students.

#### **Kyle Gilliam - Texas Tech University**

I have a love for agriculture and I feel it can teach students a wide array of knowledge and skills. I want to give students the tools they need to succeed in life. If I can make a difference in the life of just one student, then all my years of teaching will be a success.

I had agricultural teachers in high school, some who were not even at my school, who devoted time, encouraging and mentoring me. They opened many doors of opportunity for me that I never knew were there. They helped instill in me leadership skills and abilities that made me who I am today. I feel it is my duty to pass that on to others.

#### **Lisa Parker - Texas Tech University**

I want to help student to become more knowledgeable about aspects of agriculture beyond that of just farming.

My passion comes from my love of animals and wanting to be involved with helping students to be more involved with agriculture in the world.

#### **Kelsey Hawthorne - Texas Tech University**

I want to be an agricultural educator because I have a passion for teaching and agriculture. I want to positively impact the lives of students and educate them about the world of agriculture. I want to be an agricultural educator because I want to push students to achieve the highest and furthest their education in agriculture.

My passion for agriculture came from my upbringing on a farm and my passion for teaching came from my former agricultural instructor.

#### **Mary Ann Willeford - Texas Tech University**

I enjoy teaching kids life skills so they can some day teach it to younger generations. From the love of agriculture and teaching.

#### **Ty Duncan - Texas Tech University**

To me, being an agricultural teacher is an opportunity to educate and be there for students that love the field of agriculture.

My passion came from my teachers Tony Dunkerly and Shane Crafton. They were both very respectful toward me and pushed me to achieve the things I achieved. So, I want to follow their lead and help others achieve.

#### **Justin Parker - Texas Tech University**

To provide every student with the character and skills that agriculture has passed on to many generations.

I grew up on a farm, and I have always loved agriculture. I love working for everything I have and I want to pass my knowledge to younger generations.

#### **Justine Browne - Texas Tech University**

To teach students valuable skills that they will carry throughout their lives, and to make a difference in students lives in order that they might instill passion for agriculture in others. My passion for agricultural education originated from ten years of being involved in the 4-H program. I gained leadership skills along with many other skills, which encouraged me to pass this knowledge and passion on to the future of agricultural education.

#### **Porsha Yarbar - Texas Tech University**

To be in a position to positively influence the lives of students through agriculture. From the positive influence my agricultural teachers had on me, as well as my personal experience with agriculture in high school.

#### **Shawn Overton - Texas Tech University**

I believe it is imperative to the United States that our youth learn about agriculture. It gives them a sense of where our country came from and where we are going. Being involved with FFA & 4-H contributed to my love of agriculture. With these organizations I also learned that I love to teach others.

#### **Diane Mashburn - Texas Tech University**

Teaching agriculture is a solid profession with a great deal of challenges and hard work. I like the idea of positively impacting a student's life. Because being in agricultural courses taught me a lot about responsibility; for me, it would be a privilege to help a student find direction.

#### **Jerrod Kerr - Texas Tech University**

I want to be an agricultural educator because I believe it is vital for youth to know about the opportunities and importance of agriculture in our society. My passion to be an agricultural teacher came from being an active FFA member in high school. I had several great agricultural teachers, and I still look up to them today.

#### **Sandra Priest - Texas Tech University**

Agriculture is an important topic that occurs in every day life, but often time gets looked over. I want to be a person who tries to challenge stereotypes in agriculture. Being around agriculture... it is the raw world. There is nothing more pure. It is unsettling to talk with others my age and see how unclear they are with regard to basic agriculture.

#### **Cristen Fowler - Texas Tech University**

Because I have been involved in agriculture my entire life, I want to be able to pass my knowledge on to others.

I had agricultural teachers in high school who didn't really teach anything to us; this is what makes me want to be the best that I can be. I want to know that my students are learning.

#### Carey Taylor - Texas Tech University

To inform people about new aspects of agriculture, and to give back to the industry that gave so much to me.

The passion came from being involved in the industry all of my life and having a great respect for my agricultural teacher. My passion also comes from the "world of agriculture," which has supported my family for several years.

#### Riley Barnett - Texas Tech University

To help educate the leaders of tomorrow about the problems we experience today, so tomorrow will be better.

A love for the entire agricultural industry and the students who will be the leaders of tomorrow.

#### Keeton Ehnig - Texas Tech University

To help students learn the agricultural system, as well as to help them succeed as a student. My agricultural teacher influenced me to be what and where I am today.

#### Theron Oatman - Texas Tech University

I want to be an agricultural educator in order to teach students how to be leaders and productive citizens of a community.

My passion to be an agricultural educator came from my high school agricultural teacher, David Frazier.

#### Shannon Chambers West Texas A&M

Agriculture is changing everyday, unlike math or history. We cover so many topics in the classroom it never gets boring. FFA is a great foundation and I love being a part of it any way I can. Lastly, the students enrolled in agricultural courses are wonderful, and agricultural teachers have awesome relationships built with their students.

My grandpa is where I got all my motivation. He is my number one supporter. We have been a part of agriculture all my life because of hay and equine production. Also, to see how excited my agricultural teachers were everyday, caused me to be interested in this field of study. The fun I experienced throughout high school was enough for me to say, "I am certain I want to be an agricultural educator."

#### Tessa Lutz - The Ohio State University

The kids.

The kids. It's always all about the kids."

#### **Sarah Luthman - The Ohio State University**

I want to be an agricultural educator because the discipline lends itself to teaching hands-on concepts, which, to me, is the best way to get a student to learn. Being an agricultural teacher is a lifestyle, I admire the way my teacher has lived his life in such a fulfilling manner.

My passion stems from wanting to impact more than one person everyday, being a teacher allows me to tackle 50 to 100 minds a day. I thought of being a doctor, but I would rather be the guy teaching the student who will become that doctor.

#### **Ryan P. Curtis - The Ohio State University**

I want to be an agricultural educator because it combines my two passions in life, agriculture and the pursuit of knowledge.

My passion comes from being raised on a family farm; the enjoyment I got out of being actively involved in my home agricultural education program, the FFA and my love of learning.

#### **Gina Anderson - The Ohio State University**

I want to be an educator who teaches new concepts, not just specifics. For me, and hopefully my future students, agriculture will never lose its excitement, because it is forever changing.

Agriculture has forever been my way of life. Why not show other people how neat it really is? I saw how inspiring this profession was through the eyes of my two high school agricultural teachers. This is going to be my way enjoying agriculture.

#### **Deanna Lennartz - The Ohio State University**

I used to stay in at recess to tutor the other students, so I knew being a "teacher" was what I wanted to do but I only found out that I wanted to teach agriculture when I met my high school agricultural teacher. He was the man who was my surrogate father when I had none, the one who was always there for his students, and the only person who taught me life skills because they WANTED to, not because they were supposed to!

#### **Misty J. Wunder - The Ohio State University**

I want to become an agricultural teacher because the world needs to be educated about agriculture.

My passion came from my agricultural teachers. They loved their jobs, therefore, making students passionate about agriculture as well.

#### **Melinda A. McKay - The Ohio State University**

Being able to inspire students and instill in them a passion for agriculture is why I want to become an agricultural educator. Seeing students faces light-up when they finally get something and are interested in a topic is very inspiring and rewarding to me.

My passion to become an agricultural educator came from my own agricultural educators. Throughout my four years of high school I gained a wealth of knowledge from them. They encouraged me to try new things and helped me evolve to the person I am today.

#### **Kar-Lyn Lambert - The Ohio State University**

I desire to be an agricultural educator because I have a love for agriculture and a commitment to education. I wish to educate the leaders of tomorrow about agriculture today and practices of the past.

My family laid the foundation for my passion to be an agricultural educator as I grew up the youngest of fourteen children on a small grain farm. The frames and trusses of my future were set as I ventured through my high school career in agricultural education. I have most recently laid the shingles on my roof after completing student teaching. When you have a good thing going; you've built your house, it is time to start helping others lay their foundation. I plan on doing this as an agricultural educator.

#### **Laura Stacklin - The Ohio State University**

---

Being an agricultural educator will put me in a situation to share and transfer my passion for agriculture, leadership and service with young and inspiring minds of tomorrow.

I grew up with an agricultural educator as a parent and was inspired to shape the lives of others in the same manner he did. After being a state FFA officer, I solidified my lifelong goal of working in agricultural education.

#### **Ed McCann, Virginia Tech**

An agricultural educator is a person who takes the time to be aware of their students' attentive dispositions and development into young adults. Through programs offered in the FFA and under the direction of our curricula we will engage in an environment where learning explorations are lifelong building blocks for the successes our students.

My life for the past forty years has been encircled by agriculture. The hope of raising my family with the same appreciation for the values and way of life that I have experienced, has lead me to create a learning experience that will allow my students to relate to knowledge and the discovery of new concepts and skills only found in agricultural education.

#### **Randy Webb, Virginia Tech**

Agriculture is one of those subjects that everybody can find something in it to relate to.

My passion to be an agricultural educator came from my high school agricultural teachers. They were always so enthusiastic about agriculture and what it can do for you in your everyday life and your career.

#### **Callie McIntyre, Virginia Tech**

I want to be an agricultural educator so that my students can say "Wow, I didn't know there is agriculture in the city!!"

My passion to become an agricultural educator came from living in the busy streets of Philadelphia. Yes it's not the typical agricultural setting, but there are many agricultural motivations in the city I believe I can teach in urban communities.

**Tiffany Turrentine, Virginia Tech**

I want to be an agricultural science teacher so I can give every child who passes through my classroom a good knowledge base in some aspect of agriculture. My passion to teach came from my experience in a vet clinic, I loved to teach new technicians the procedures and why we did things the way we did.

**Lindsey Fitzgerald, Texas A&M University**

My passion for teaching comes from my mother and several teachers I had throughout school.

**Ty Morton, Texas A&M University**

I want to promote agriculture in Texas to the future leaders of this great state, and I want to be a role model just as my agriculture teacher was. I got my passion to teach from my dad. He had a sincere love for agriculture and it rubbed off on me.

**Ty Chumbley, Texas A&M University**

I want to be an agricultural science teacher because I feel I have a vast amount of experiences I can use as tools to educate students. I believe that in this role I can be a positive role model and make a tremendous impact on future generations. I always had an interest in teaching, but a college professor made me realize how much today's youth need positive influences. It was clear to me that I could serve as an agricultural science teacher and be that positive influence.

**Ingrid Oman Tusa, Texas A&M University**

I became an agricultural science teacher because my agriscience teachers inspired me. I love agriculture and I love to teach. I want to inspire students and motivate them to become the best that they can be. I also would like to keep agriculture alive. I have always liked to teach. I love to help people with whatever they need, especially students.

**Kelly Clardy, Texas A&M University**

It is a very rewarding job. To watch the light bulb go off in their head gives you that wonderful feeling that you have made a difference in their life. Coaching soccer led me to teaching. The way I look at it, it's coaching but in a different setting with different subject topics.

**Nicki Benningfield, Texas A&M University**

I like agriculture and teaching kids. I just like to help people out the best I can.

**Josh Eckert, Texas A&M University**

I want to help kids realize their potential and the opportunities that are available to them. Agricultural Education and the FFA opened up many opportunities for me.

**Cassie DeFiori, Texas A&M University**

I chose to be an agricultural teacher because the career will put me in the best position to inspire the uninspired. My passion comes from the thought of knowing I can help an individual find a their future.

**Travis K. Koether, Texas A&M University**

I want to be an agriculture teacher because I believe that agriculture is one of the best subjects to reach many different types of students. Agriculture has so much to offer in a variety of different areas. My passion to teach came from working with other kids through different volunteer activities. I love seeing kids strive and reach their goals, and I love being a part of the process of their success.

**Ashley Boehnke, Texas A&M University**

I want to be an agricultural science teacher because I want the chance to influence students' lives in a positive way. I also would like to help them realize their full potential and introduce them to the world of agriculture. I have wanted to teach since I was a young girl. I realize now that it was teachers like my first grade teacher and my agricultural teachers that truly inspired me to make a difference in students' lives like they did for me.

**Crystal Machacek, Texas A&M University**

I want to be an agricultural teacher because I would like to help today's youth achieve personal growth. I also have a passion for agriculture and would like to give students the opportunity that I had. Agriculture has something to offer to everyone! My passion for the agricultural sciences began at an early age. I was actively involved in Jr. FFA and began showing livestock and competing at events at the age of eight. I have always dreamed of working with children and hope to become a positive role model.

**Christy Melton, Texas A&M University**

I want to teach agricultural science in order that I can impact students' lives as a mentor. Agricultural science gives students the ability to learn with hands-on activities. My passion for teaching comes from my passion for learning.

**Kori Adams, Texas A&M University**

Many people don't understand how important agriculture is. I believe teaching agriculture classes will allow me to promote the future of the agricultural industry. My passion comes through experiences, and I love helping kids.

**Tashena Hicks, Texas A&M University**

I want to be an agricultural science teacher so I can positively affect the lives of young individuals, and share the wonders of agriculture with them. My passion to teach came from my grandfather, who taught agriculture for forty-five years. I aspire to impact the lives of my students on a daily basis as he did.

**Wendy Steele, Texas A&M University**

I want to be an agriculture educator to introduce those students to a world of agriculture that benefits them tremendously. My passion comes from my family's goal to see every opportunity was available to me.

**Randa Finch, Texas A&M University**

I would like to be an agricultural science teacher because I really enjoy working with kids and being able to teach something that I know so much about. My passion to teach came from my own agricultural teachers. Before I joined the FFA, I had no idea what I wanted to do. Therefore, I want to be able to inspire someone just like me one day.

**Jamie Masvero, Texas A&M University**

When I got to college all the jobs I had were in education. My best grades were in agriculture, so I put one and one together to make two. My passion comes from my desire to make a difference and change people's lives.

**Monique Virden, Texas A&M University**

To help kids reach their maximum potential, gain responsibility, set goals, and help them reach their goals. My passion comes from my high school agricultural teacher.

**Jason Gaas, Texas A&M University**

Growing up always wanting to be in agriculture and not be able to, inspired me to be an agricultural teacher. Now I can be involved and be able to help others achieve their goals. My passion comes from my dad. He is a pastor and is one of the greatest teachers I have known. He helps people succeed, understand their lives, and learns what they should do to succeed. He has been a father but most of all, a mentor and guide. Even though he doesn't teach a class, he teaches a lot.

**Tori Wellborne, Texas A&M University**

I came back to school to complete a masters degree in order that that I can make an impact in the lives of our youth. My passion to teach comes from my love of helping people.

**Wes Bauerschlag, Texas A&M University**

I want to be an agricultural science teacher because I would love to make a difference in students' lives. Hopefully, I will be able to interest those students who need encouragement or just a different twist on learning experiences. My passion for teaching came from my agricultural science teacher Larry Vinklerek. He impacted my life because he pushed me to become a leader and inspired me to want to have an impact on students as he did for me.

**Shandy Pick, Texas A&M University**

I chose to be an agricultural educator because agricultural education is more than just teaching students in a classroom. We are able to see students grow as individuals through the classroom, SAE and FFA throughout their high school career.

**Jennifer Nicely – North Carolina State University**

I have always loved to present material to people and watch them learn and I love to learn along with them. Agricultural teachers have a greater opportunity to work outside the classroom and accomplish more in the community as well. I hope to touch as many people as I can as I start up a program somewhere.

When I was on high school I knew I wanted a career that involved animals. But instead of being a veterinarian and operating on the animals, I decided I loved to learn about the animals instead. I also love to teach, so I believe that agricultural education is the best way to go.

**Jenny L. Hinson, North Carolina State University**

To be honest, I really did not want to be an educator when deciding my future. However, my passion for becoming an agriculture educator came from combining the two most familiar activities to me, which were agriculture and teaching youth.

**Laura King, North Carolina State University**

I want to be an agricultural educator to make a difference. When I was in high school I had a, "not so good experience" in the agricultural education program and decided that the only way I could change that for others, and the only way that I had room to complain was if I did something about it - so I decided, (after figuring out I did not want to be a vet as I had originally intended), that I would teach agriculture.

**Laura Hubman, North Carolina State University**

I want to be an agricultural teacher because my agricultural teachers made a big difference in my life, and I want to give something back in their honor. My passion for teaching comes from knowing that I am going to be able to touch someone's life like they did for me. Simple yes, but meaningful to me.

**Daniel Beasley, North Carolina State University**

I want to teach students something that will be of meaning to them in their future. Even if they don't choose an agricultural occupation, they will be knowledgeable consumers and be aware of how much agriculture is a part of their every day lives.

I have always loved animals and been interested in agricultural topics. I decided that I'd like to try to instill that same passion and interest for agriculture in my students who are our future.

**Tiffany Dickens, North Carolina State University**

I want to be an agricultural educator because it is the one subject area that I feel students can get a true learning experience that encompasses all learning areas. My passion to become an educator came from my mother who is currently an agricultural educator and my own desire to teach youth.

**-Camber Howard, North Carolina State University**

Growing up on a farm, I had so many great opportunities right at my fingertips. I realize that not everyone has this advantage; I want to share a little bit of agriculture and how it changed my life, with students.

My passion for agriculture came from my mom and my passion for teaching came from my soccer coach in high school, who was also my English teacher. He had a way of encouraging us to always do our best. Putting these greatest influences together brought about a passion to inspire kids with something I truly love, agriculture.

**Lori Jones, North Carolina State University**

I want to be an agricultural educator because I believe that involvement in agricultural education can better the lives of all students by developing in them an appreciation for the way things work. Whether in agricultural mechanics, horticulture, or any other agricultural course, agricultural students gain a knowledge of real life that most students are unable to get from core academic courses.

My passion for agricultural education came from my intense curiosity about the world around me. I want to instill that curiosity into my students and guide them to find their own answers through studies in agriculture.

**Elizabeth M. Dale**

**North Carolina State University**

I remember the fun I had as an agriscience student and as an FFA member. I wanted to be able to share those same feelings and experiences with young people, so they are able to grow and mature in a positive way.

My passion for teaching comes from my 5th grade teacher, Athena Sullivan, she never gave-up on me when I was failing her class.

**Tamara Crum**

I would like to be an agricultural educator because I would like to have the positive influence on students the way my agricultural educators had on me. The bond that most teachers build with students will never compare to that of an agricultural student and their advisor.

My passion came from the experiences I received under the instruction of Mr. Ricky Burgess in Covington, Texas. I learned a great deal about not only agriculture, but about life as well.

### **Bradley Lindsey**

I want to be an agricultural educator because of the great experiences that I had as a student going through a good program. I want future youth to have the same experiences, plus some that I didn't have, namely my Lone Star and American FFA degrees.

My passion is bred into me, because over half of my family was in either education or agriculture at some point in their lives. I also have passion that stems from my high school agriscience teacher who showed me many things, and still to this day, assists me in almost anything I need.

### **Bruce Pickens**

Agricultural education is a way of life. It involves helping others and working in a field of science I enjoy.

My passion comes from wanting to make a difference in the world.

### **Bryan Chisholm**

I wanted to become an agriculture science educator in order that students would have every opportunity to increase their knowledge of the vast world of agriculture. I want students to see that agriculture went beyond the field and barn; into communications, leadership and any career that they put their minds to.

My passion to be an agriculture educator began when, as a freshman in high school, I noticed that other students did not understand the full scope of agriculture. That day, I vowed to give students a chance to see every aspect of the agriculture and show students how they could apply these principles to their lives.

### **Brady Rasco**

I want to touch lives. I want to see those lights turn on and watch a student's face light up when it happens. Being an agricultural educator is my life and my passion. As I've grown up it has been "my fit" and "my dream." I want to be a teacher like no other, and with agriculture that is possible. I am able to utilize so many great things and great students to increase learning for others. I am blessed to have the opportunities offered up to me and I am ready to take those opportunities and make them even greater for my students. I would love to know that the lives I touch will blossom into great leaders and people. This is why I don't just want to be an agriculture teacher I strive to do the best for my students.

My passion comes from inside. I am a strong willed and very determined person. I go after what is in front of me with full force and don't hold back what is necessary to succeed. I was given insight into the career by individuals such as my agricultural teacher, county extension agent and my parents. Each of these exposed so many aspects of agricultural education, but each in their own way. I am grateful for the extensive days in the woods studying forestry with my agricultural teacher, the long sleepless incredible trips buying pigs with my county extension agent, and always knowing that whatever I was busy with in my life, my parents were there to

help and support me, even if this meant driving all over Texas just so I could participate in an event. I love all of these people and they are the reason I know that my passion stems from great teaching!

### Jessica Stutes

When I was young and needed the guidance, there was a teacher I that really helped me out and taught me not only things I did, but gave me the confidence to do anything.

My love for all kinds of agriculture makes me want to share the things I have learned, which makes me hopeful that one of my students might do the same someday. It's a chain that goes on forever and its open to anyone with an interest, anyone that has a drive to achieve and learn by doing.

### Andy Davis

Agriculture has been a large part of my life since I can remember. It is what made me the person I am today. The experiences that I gained through the 4-H and FFA has helped me become a leader, a teacher of agriculture and a great citizen.

Since the day he graduated high school, my father has been a rancher and farmer, which is where his passion lies. Through the years, this passion rubbed of on me and has made me want to pursue a career in the industry. My father's mother started the 4-H program in our little community many years ago, and with my mother's help, as well as our community's, it is the largest in our county. It will give me great pride to one day share that passion of agriculture with the kids of our community.

### Jennifer Lockwood

I want to become an agricultural educator because I want to make a difference in the lives of students who were like me.

My passion for agriculture came from my family, because in some way or fashion, my family has been involved in agriculture for as many generations as I can count.

### Joel Webb

I enjoy being around children of all ages. If I can help change one child's life for the better, then I have fulfilled my purpose in life.

My passion for agriculture came from my father. I will never be as knowledgeable about agriculture as he, but I am at peace when I'm around animals.

### Kelly Fortenberry

I want to be an agricultural teacher so I can have the same influence on students that my agriculture teachers had on me. I want to be able to teach them life skills, similar to what I obtained through my agriculture classes, which helped me achieve my goals.

My passion to be an agricultural teacher came from the experiences I had while enrolled in my agricultural classes. It also came from my mentor Leon Stewart, who was always there when I needed him.

### Melissa Thornton

My passion is agriculture and the promotion of it. I believe it is very important and vital to our nation.

My love for agricultural comes from several “father-like” friends who are kings in the ranching industry.

**Aaron Rogers**

I want to be an agricultural educator so I can help students learn more about agriculture. I want them to be able to use the knowledge gained from my courses to get a good job and promote the importance of the agricultural industry.

During part of the time I was taking high school agriculture classes, I felt as if I was not exposed to everything there was to know about agriculture and the FFA. I want to be able to help my students learn a large amount of information about agriculture and not miss any opportunities the FFA has to offer.

**Ashlie Cousins**

I want to be an agricultural educator because I want to make a difference in the lives of young Americans, and ensure a healthy future for agriculture in the United States.

My passion for becoming an agriculture educator stems from my country roots, as well as the quality of life this lifestyle has provided my family.

**Kevin Mock**

I want to be an agricultural educator because I think it is vital that everyone learn about agriculture, so future generations can carry on with making the industry great.

I want to be able to teach what I didn't have the opportunity to learn myself. I didn't have agricultural courses in school; I want to give the opportunity to others, so they can share in my love for agriculture.

**Sara Anderson, Utah State University**

I wanted to become an agricultural educator because of the passion I have for agriculture. I have always been involved in agriculture and know how much I have benefited. If I would not have been involved in agriculture and the FFA, I don't know where I would be today. Agriculture is important to me, and I want to share that importance and my passion for it with young people.

My passion to become an agricultural educator came not only from my agricultural teachers that I had in high , but from the great experiences I had in agricultural classes and activities.

Throughout my high school career, I participated in many different FFA activities that started friendships that last today. Because of my participation in these activities I have met others who share the same passion for agriculture as I do.

My passion to become an agricultural educator also came from my passion for agriculture in general. I grew up on a farm where we worked closely with family, which includes my grandfather and uncles. All of my family members have a great passion for and knowledge of agriculture, I am thankful they have passed both on to me.

**Nicole Anderson, Utah State University**

Three passions I have in life are being a part of agriculture, contributing to my community, and working with youth. Being an agricultural teacher will allow me to combine these three passions. Everyday I will have the chance to influence students' lives and be an example. My students and I will be a positive influence in our community. I will continue to increase my knowledge in agriculture and will be an active agriculturist.

The creed competition is designed to allow new FFA members to explore the program, learn public speaking skills, and gain a passion for the FFA. I competed in the creed contest as a new student and won second at the Utah FFA Association Convention. The skills I learned from practicing, promoted me to training the new creed speakers. I grew close to Demsey McQueen as we prepared for her creed competitions. We worked daily on her presentation and answers to questions. She won the area contest and competed at the state contest. My hard work was realized as I read my thank you note; the joy and accomplishment I felt that day was worth more than any accomplishment I had ever had. My love for developing drive within students started with this experience. My passion to be an agricultural educator comes from the success of my students. The growth and development of members in an agriculture classroom and in the FFA makes my time and efforts worthwhile. My passion to be a teacher comes from students' achievements.

#### **Dusty Ercanbrack, Utah State University**

I want to be an agriculture teacher to reach those students that may not be excelling in other classes. Hands-on agriculture classes changed my life. I believe I can help others through teaching agriculture.

My passion for education and teaching developed as I was serving as a missionary for my church.

#### **Coby Champneys, Utah State University**

It gives me the opportunity to learn about what I enjoy - agriculture. Since my family doesn't own a farm or ranch, it is a way to keep me involved with what I love. It will also allow me to stay up to date with the industry.

My passion comes from loving agriculture and wanting to instill that love in future generations. I also want to be an educator to assure success in my own children and the children of others.

#### **Brian Fredrickson, Utah State University**

Agricultural education develops premier leadership, personal growth, and career success in the lives of students. I learned these concepts when I was in agricultural classes, and I want to share these wonderful opportunities with others who might benefit from the program.

My passion came from my high school agricultural teachers. I loved going to my agriculture classes, and I really feel that I learned everything I needed to know from those few classes. I learned to be a leader and many other skills necessary to enter the work force.

#### **Justin Thornley, Utah State University**

The reason why I want to be in agricultural education is that it gives me the opportunity to work with younger members of our society in order to teach them that agriculture has such a huge impact on our lives. To get students interested in this lifestyle will help sustain and improve agriculture through the years to come. They are the future of agriculture and I want to help to plant that seed with my students in this profession.

Agriculture has always had a huge impact in my life. If I didn't have it I don't know what kind of person I would be today. My grandfather has played a large role in my decision to become an agricultural educator. You could say he planted the seed in me. He imbedded his passion of working the land and raising livestock in me. My 4-H leaders and my FFA advisor helped me along the way when I was "fine tuning" my passion. Each showed me how to accomplish the goals I had in life by being a good leader and showing others what agriculture could do for them as well.

### **Tiffany Guptill, Utah State University**

I love the agricultural education program. Upon graduating high school I was having a hard time dealing with the fact that my FFA career was over. I decided to be an agricultural teacher in order to teach future generations about agriculture, and most importantly, to help them develop their own leadership skills.

In high school, I had an agricultural teacher that really hated teaching. I always heard stories of the FFA from my dad and couldn't wait to join. I was really disappointed when my teacher had no interest in the FFA. He was the person who inspired me to teach. The agricultural education program is too valuable to have poor teachers. It is my mission to provide students with great stories of how much the FFA did for them. Even though my teacher wasn't the greatest, I worked hard in the FFA in order to succeed. I feel that it is my turn to give back to the FFA and  
Agricultural Education

### **Joshua B. Evans, Utah State University**

I like agriculture and thought that maybe I would like teaching it to others.

Well, my dad was an educator, but he was not in agriculture. So I guess the idea of being a teacher really came from him, while my love for agriculture came from growing up on the family farm.

### **Ross Bailey, Utah State University**

I want to be an agricultural educator because I believe it is one of the most important jobs that anyone can do.

My passion for agricultural education came from living on my ranch and watching things grow. I knew from that moment on that I wanted other children to grow up with the same AMAZING experiences that I did as a child.

### **Bridgette Wilde, Utah State University**

I want to become an agriculture educator to make a positive difference in students' lives through agriculture.

My passion came from being involved in my school's agricultural program. I saw all the opportunities it gave me, and I want to be able to give my students those experiences and opportunities.

**Aimee Smith, Oregon State University**

Agricultural education gives me the opportunity to reach a diverse group of students and instill in them the knowledge and skills necessary for success after high school. For this reason, I want to be an agricultural educator.

My passion for being an agricultural educator is a direct result of the positive impact agricultural education has had on my own life. Through agricultural education, I was able to develop knowledge and skills that otherwise wouldn't have been presented to me. Just as my high school agricultural educator prepared me for the challenges of life, it is my passion to do the same for today's youth.

**Nichole Scholz, Oregon State University**

I want to be an agricultural teacher to inspire and encourage students to get involved in the FFA and agriculture, just as my agricultural teacher did for me.

**Chad Weaver, Oregon State University**

Agricultural education provides a diverse and evolving platform for teaching the principles of language, mathematics, science and technology in a contextual format. I am fascinated by the opportunity to 'sneak up' on an opportunity to convince students (let the students convince themselves?) that they can become far more than they'd previously believed possible. I have been taught to believe in success, and the success of others. I would hate for this message to stop, even for an instant, as a result of my silence.

**Keith Frost, Oregon State University**

I want to become an agricultural educator because as our culture becomes increasingly urbanized and people lose touch with where their natural resources come from, I want to help the public recognize the significance that agriculture plays in our daily lives.

My passion for agriculture grew from my upbringing on our family farm. My passion for education stems from my joy of sharing what I know about agriculture with others and how much it helps people when they are more aware of the world around them.

**Tracy Martz, Oregon State University**

I have always had a passion to teach. However, I was never able to find an area of study that appealed to me. It wasn't until my sophomore year of high school that I learned about agricultural education. Agriculture has played an important role in my life, and I want to have the opportunity demonstrate to students what a great thing agriculture is. If it weren't for the inspiration of my high school agriculture instructors Jennifer Henning and Chuck Miller, I don't think I'd be here today.

**Daniel Kent Bolen, Oregon State University**

My own experiences easily persuaded me of the value of guiding students' personal and professional development. The satisfaction that comes from their successes, not your own, is what makes teaching agricultural education worth every minute of it!

**Wes Crawford, Oregon State University**

I want to be able to help instill an appreciation and respect for agriculture in young people. My passion to become an agricultural educator came from my appreciation for agriculture, my FFA experiences, and my high school agricultural instructor.

**Jared Bitzan, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities**

I want to be an agricultural educator because I want to be able to shape lives and continue the tradition of agriculture. My passion came from my high school agricultural teacher. He has been a great influence in my life and has helped shape my life. His passion for agriculture has made my passion grow.

**Justin Boike, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities**

I want to be an agricultural educator because I want to influence the lives of youth, by engaging them in agriculture. I want my students to enter the classroom ready to learn, and leave ready to serve. My passion for agricultural education came from my father who was a teacher at one time, and my family living on a farm.

**Kaleb Kromann, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities**

Agriculture is a passion of mine and I would like to share this passion with others. We are all consumers and all need to be educated as to where our food comes from.

**Magnus Nelson, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities**

I want to share my knowledge and passion of agriculture with the next generation of agricultural consumers, producers, and policy makers. I want to share a world of opportunities with young people so they can fulfill their potential.

My passion came from my parents, my grandparents, my peers and my coworkers. I have immersed myself in the world of agriculture and have been steeped in the principles and values that agriculturalists live by.

**Christopher J. Ovrebo, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities**

I want to be an agricultural education teacher because I want to make a difference in the lives of students, just like the influence my agricultural education teacher had on me.

**Christina Learn, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities**

I want to be an agricultural educator because I want to share my love and passion of agriculture with others, especially people that don't have a background in agriculture.

My passion for agricultural education came from my parents and my agricultural teacher, who stressed the need and importance of agriculture and education.

**Lisa Sackreiter, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities**

I believe that the most important career in the world is to give students a reason to feel accomplishment. Agricultural education provides the widest spectrum of opportunities for students to find something that they are good at and that they can feel pride in.

Two fold: my passion for agriculture came from deep roots embedded in me by my dad, while my passion for education came from the single most influential person in my educational career, my agricultural teacher and FFA advisor.

**Eric Sawatzke, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities**

Being an agricultural educator will allow me to step into the position of a role model for students. If I can make a positive difference in their lives to achieve their dreams, I can live out my own dream of serving others.

A close neighbor of mine was the agricultural instructor for a nearby school and took the time to invest in me when I had no guidance from my own instructor. I began to realize that I wanted to invest in students like he invested in me.

**Cara Soper, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities**

The passion for agriculture and teaching both lie deep within my heart and soul. It only made sense to me to combine the two and thoroughly enjoy my profession.

**Katie J. Shaw, University of Minnesota Crookston**

Agricultural educators guide students through life-like situations and prepare them for life and not just academic success. My passion to be an agricultural educator comes from the love of agriculture and the true belief in work-based learning.

#### **Amy Konradi, University of Minnesota, Crookston**

I want to make a difference in the life of at least one student as agriculture education has done for me!!

Agriculture Education gave me a home when my family was falling apart. It was because of Agriculture Education teachers like my high school instructor that I have this chance.”

#### **Shell Franks, University of Minnesota - Crookston**

I want to be an agricultural educator because I want to share my passion for animals and the changing technology of agriculture with my students. I might be the only one who would be able to give some students an insight into agriculture.

My passion for being an agricultural educator came when I transferred from the University of Arkansas – Monticello where I studied for two years in general agriculture. When I came to the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville, I had to become more specialized, so that is when I chose to study Agricultural Education.

#### **Dilynn Dodd, University of Arkansas**

I want to be an agricultural educator because I believe that the appreciation of agriculture in general is declining over the population as a whole. As teachers, we need to justify our presence and the need for agricultural sciences in the schools more than ever.

My passion to be an agricultural educator came from my own experiences on our family farm and my experiences in agricultural science classes and our FFA chapter in high school. Being part of my heritage, I knew that when I started college my major would be agricultural education.

#### **Brian See, University of Arkansas**

I care about the future of agriculture and strive to keep the energy of education alive. To accomplish my goals, I realized I needed to teach the leaders of tomorrow.

I have a zeal for California agriculture along with a love for students. I wanted to find a career that combined my two passions.

#### **Katie Reid – Chico State University**

Two percent of the U.S. population is directly involved in agriculture, which feeds and provides for the other 98% of our population and 50% of the world. Agriculture is our future. If no one is there to educate future generations, who will be there to feed and provide for them?

I grew up knowing very little about agriculture beside my love for animals. Through my time at Cal Poly, I've come to understand the importance of agriculture and our nation's dependency upon the agricultural industry. Children are the key to our future and without agriculture we would not be able to survive. I want to be an agricultural educator because I know how dependent we are on agriculture and I believe that younger generations will provide for the future generations. Without an education in agriculture, no one will be there to provide for us. –

**Myndi Muzic, California Polytechnic State University**

To make a difference, work with students, and be a part of the awesome agriculture industry! Turlock High School! I was in the agricultural program there. It was great and inspired me!

**Robin Bailey, California Polytechnic State University**

I want to become an agricultural educator because I have a passion to see the growth in students and the involvement of being with the high school age kids. I have a passion for agriculture and the students.

My passion to be an agricultural educator came from the time when I was in 4-H. Being able to involved in activities such as Junior Leaders inspired me.

**Eric Morasca, California Polytechnic State University**

It is an opportunity to combine a love of agriculture with the joy of reaching out and working with young people.

My passion for agricultural education stemmed from my own experience growing up, but was encouraged and fostered by two college professors who saw my potential to formally teach.

**Jennifer Tereba, California Polytechnic State University**

To work with students in the field of agriculture. I want to make sure students are educated in the life sustaining industry of agriculture and hope to make them better citizens and consumers that promote the future of the industry.

My passion came from my own agricultural educators from high school. Not only did they allow me to see and learn about the world's strongest industry, but taught me with such a passion that I was able to develop my own.

**Heather Borgia, California Polytechnic State University**

I love horticulture. With all my work experience, I have a plethora of information to share.

I have always had a strong feeling that I should teach. Gathering information and sharing it with others is what I have always done; even as a manager.

**Paul Rios, California Polytechnic State University**

I want to share my passion for agriculture with students and be able to help them achieve their goals.

My passion came from growing up in 4-H and FFA and the person I have become because of my experiences in both organizations.

#### **Shaina Leach, California Polytechnic State University**

I want to be an educator and agriculture seems to be a very important, yet overlooked, industry. I want to educate, earth science is my passion and without agriculture there is no society, I hope to combine my passion of earth with what keeps us clothed and fed.

#### **Laurel Taylor, California Polytechnic State University**

I have always enjoyed working with students and believe in the values and life skills taught to students in agricultural education.

My passion for agriculture and education began when I was very young. My father, an agricultural educator, would take me, and my brother, to the high school to help out. My passion has only grown since then.

#### **Ginnie Bushong, University of Arizona**

To give students added possibility and opportunity in life.

My passion for agriculture comes from my heritage and the day-to-day interactions with other agriculturalists. My passion for education comes from its potential for leadership and positive influence.

#### **Dee Wear, University of Arizona**

I've considered other professions, but keep coming back to this one because I feel like I have a lot that I could offer a program. I think it would be a good experience.

My passion stems from my agricultural educator, Mr. Lewis, in Chandler. He encouraged me to be a teacher.

#### **Jennifer Oseland, University of Arizona**

I want to be an agricultural educator to teach students about agriculture and help them in developing a love for the FFA.

My passion for Agricultural Education came from my high school experience. Through my education in agriculture I developed leadership skills, self-esteem, and a love for agriculture.

#### **Melissa Parsons, University of Arizona**

I want to have the opportunity to mold the young minds of today's and tomorrow's agricultural leaders.

My father, Gilbert Zamudio, is an agricultural education teacher at Benson High School. I have been involved in agriculture and the FFA since before I can even remember. I guess you could say Agricultural Education is in my blood.

#### **Michael Zamudio, University of Arizona**

I want to help students become informed and well-rounded agriculture students. My passion comes from being in my local agricultural program and seeing how my teacher made a difference in students' lives.

#### **Jenna Clark, University of Arizona**

I believe that the agricultural education program encompasses all the learning and teaching styles that help achieve student success. Being an agricultural educator allows you to have connections with your students that are irreplaceable.

I joined my high school agricultural program freshman year and fell in love with all the aspects of the program. It helped me grow intellectually as well as personally. My high school agricultural teacher was probably the biggest influence in my decision to join the profession because he was someone who always had faith that I could achieve anything I desired.

#### **Michelle Garcia, University of Arizona**

I want to use my skills and knowledge to prepare students for successful careers and develop community leaders.

My passion comes from my parents, and my background of agricultural education that I learned in Mexico.

#### **Jose Antonio Yanez, University of Arizona**

First and foremost, I want to be a positive role model to those around me. Secondly, I want to pass my knowledge of agriculture and life skills on to the younger generations.

My high school agricultural teachers (Mr. Clint Sanborn and Mr. Curtis Willems) are two of the most influential and positive role models in my life. They inspired me to be that same kind of teacher.

#### **Brita Groves, University of Arizona**

I would like to share my knowledge and passion for agriculture with others who may not otherwise hear about it.

My passion for being an agricultural educator comes from my own passion for agriculture and from a great experience in my agricultural education program in my high school.

#### **Nikala Mayberry, University of Arizona**

I believe strongly in the future of agriculture and believe a large majority of our nation's population is not well educated on its importance. I also believe Agricultural Education provides many opportunities & various content delivery systems that address all students' different educational needs.

A combination of working on the family ranch and simply the enjoyment I receive from sharing knowledge with others is the source of my passion.

#### **Holly Schindler, University of Arizona**

I want to be an agricultural educator in order to help students become productive leaders in their community, whether they go back and work on the family farm or ranch, at the local mine or off to college. My goal is to teach through hands-on, practical application and I want to be the teacher that I adored and trusted for advice on life, academics and agriculture. I want to teach leaders about the future of agriculture and how they can benefit from all aspects of agriculture. I had a teacher in high school, Mr. Aaron Ball, who is now an elementary principal. Mr. Ball taught me how to be independent in my thinking and decisions. Mr. Ball was one of my agricultural education teachers and he truly cared about me and what I did after college. He was the one who told me that I NEEDED to become an agricultural education teacher because I am a natural born leader and love to help. Also, growing up on a working cattle ranch helped nourish my passion for all aspects of agriculture.

**Katee McSpadden, University of Arizona**

“I would like to be an agricultural educator to make a difference in the lives of students and help students learn about the ways to become successful in life. My passion for this job is to help students better help themselves.”

**Jennifer Crump, Sam Houston State University**

“Education is the future and it is vital to the industry that people become interested in pursuing careers in the agricultural field. I loved agricultural classes in high school and want to give other students the opportunity that I had and loved.”

**Stephanie Morris, Sam Houston State University**

“I want to be an agricultural educator to give the students in my class the knowledge and passion for agriculture that I have myself. My passion for being an educators stems from my childhood as well as the experiences in had in high school in events and activities and the general understanding of the world around me.”

**Dustin Nance, Sam Houston State University**

“I want to be an agricultural educator because it is my calling to give students an opportunity of a lifetime, and teaching is my way of doing so. My passion for being an agricultural educator came from the encouragement and support that I received from one of my high school agriscience teachers.”

**Lindsey Hill, Sam Houston State University**

“I want to be an agricultural educator because I want to make a positive difference in a child’s life. I have had a love for agriculture as long as I can remember and would like to pass my love of agriculture on to as many children as possible.”

**Amanda Gilbert, Sam Houston State University**

“I was raised in an agricultural background and community. I worked for several years outside of the agricultural industry and quickly realized how much I missed it. I am drawn to teaching America’s youth about the importance of the continuance of agriculture in the world.”

Jennifer Council, Sam Houston State University