



Charlotte Thompson

University of Maryland – Eastern Shore

Growing up on my family's dairy farm was the best place to be. I was able to experience events in my childhood years most of the adult population never will. I was born into agriculture. My dad farmed, his dad farmed, even my great grandfather was a dairy farmer. Should this be the reason I choose agriculture as a career? Of course, I cannot be defined by my family but I can sincerely say that it is in my blood. Production agriculture is often the face of agriculture, although the business aspect would be the reason I chose a career in agriculture.

Overalls and mucky boots are often the image that comes to mind when one thinks of agriculture. I cannot say that I haven't displayed that image in the local grocery store or mall, but I can also say that I have worn suits, crowns, and sashes while promoting the agriculture industry as well. As I became involved in many agricultural organizations as part of my life growing up on a farm, I became knowledgeable of the agriculture industry beyond the farm. I had no idea people spoke about the agriculture industry in downtown Washington, D.C. I was amazed at the policies, regulations, and controversial issues which shape each and every American. There is no longer the farmer and wife couple standing in front of the house with the pitchfork in hand. Technological innovations have changed throughout time and will continue to shape the way we attain our food. Without the development of the agricultural industry, America would not be the dream it is. From the farm to the shelf, many hands touch commodities which feed the world. Through all of these findings throughout my teenage years, I decided that I wanted to be more than a farmer; I wanted to make a difference.

I first started making a difference by being the first person in my family to attend college. This was my first step to being a part of the industry in which I have loved my entire life. I had to stay home and work on the farm for the first few years to save money, and then I transferred to obtain a degree in Agri-business. I have worked hard and learned so much beyond what I had known growing up on the farm. There is actually a subject called Economics that relates to a farm? I have so much more to learn about the agriculture industry, and am eager to start a career in the business aspect of agriculture.

So given an industry which drives and feeds the world, how can one not want to be a part of it? I have chosen to take my background knowledge, and experience from the production aspect of agriculture and come to the world table. The future depends on the agriculture industry's ability to feed our expected world population of 9 billion in the year 2050. I have chosen to be a part of the agricultural business world in order to better inform the world's population of its importance. With this, I will take great pride and feel accomplished in my future career.