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Agriculture as a Career

As a student studying Human Nutrition and Dietetics, I’ve been questioned about my interest in agriculture. Many people do not understand the connection between modern agriculture and the health and wellness of our society. The relationships people have with their food source has slowly diminished throughout the past few decades. When that connection is lost, a basic skill in human survival is lost with it. The birth of agriculture was founded on the realization that the food we eat affects our quality of life. Understanding agriculture influences our understanding on the importance of wholesome food in our diet.

Life in America has changed dramatically in the past fifty years. Modern agriculture has maintained comfort and security in our population by providing a sustainable food source. People no longer have to grow their own food to feed their family. So, why is this a problem? The relationship people have with their food source has replaced the farmer with their grocery store of choice. This replacement has altered the image of food in our society. People have a vague perception of the time and energy it takes to produce the food they have unlimited access to in stores. Food is no longer looked at as a key ingredient to survival but rather a source of pleasure.

The altered image of food in our society has contributed to the rising prevalence of chronic disease we see today. Now, more than ever, people are choosing processed foods over the foods we are recommended to eat daily for quality health. The United States is facing a growing health concern in our population, the obesity epidemic. When people fail to recognize food as a source of energy, a source of life, they cannot understand the health consequences of eating unhealthy processed foods. I strongly believe that this epidemic is a result of the diminished relationship between people and their food source. Humans are dependent on agriculture for survival, when that connection is ignored the future of our people is in great danger.

My experience working on campus farms has allowed me to see the big picture when it comes to food production. There is a steady cycle that’s been successful since the birth of agriculture that involves the land, the farmer, the consumer, and the consumer’s health. This cycle is no longer functioning in our society. People have little connection with the land and the farmer, which contributes to their unexamined health. I believe the future of agriculture involves taking a step back, to remember why our ancestors started taming the land.

I choose agriculture as a career because I see it as an integrative industry that impacts the security, comfort, health, and wellness of our population. My interest in agriculture is to reestablish the relationship between people and their food source. My philosophy is that a truly sustainable food source involves sustaining the knowledge of the population involved. My goal as a future professional in the industry is to bridge the gap between the consumer and the farmer in order to bring back the realization of why we grow food in the first place, to improve our quality of life.