



Opportunities in Agriculture

Prepared by:

AFIA

**Networking, Education & Mentoring
in Agriculture Committee**





What is AFIA?

- AFIA is the American Feed Industry Association
 - and it is recognized as the feed and pet food industries' voice.
- Members include:
 - feed manufacturing companies,
 - pet food manufacturing companies,
 - feed ingredient suppliers,
 - equipment suppliers,
 - large producers; and
 - many service and sales marketing organizations.





Why Agriculture for your Career?

- **The Agricultural Industry**
 - is one of the largest industries in the U.S.
 - This may sound like a surprising fact –
 - However, consider that it involves everything from:
 - growing crops, feeding animals,
 - processing milk, meat & grains
 - to putting the final, acceptable food package on the grocery shelf that is safe for the American consumer.
 - In a nutshell, it's from seed – to feed for animals – to food for humans.





Ag Careers – What can they Be?

- Careers range from every facet from farm to the board room.
- Any career can be an “Ag” Career
 - Economist = Ag-Economist
 - Journalism = Ag-Journalist
 - Business = Ag-Marketing
 - Sales = Ag-Sales
 - ? = Ag-?
- Follow your interest and do what you want in life





Customer Service

- **Customer Service Managers**
 - oversee the customer service team with a goal of meeting or exceeding customer expectations.
- Customer Service job responsibilities range from:
 - Processing orders, arranging transportation of goods, fielding product complaints or processing sales support requests.
 - Essential for repeat customers & business success
 - Positions support all business aspects.





Finance

- **Chief Financial Officer**
- **Credit Manager**
- **Accountant**
- **Accounts Payable/Accounts Receivable Managers**

Skill Set Required:

- Strong organization and problem solving skills.
- Understanding of computers, accounting.
 - Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint and ERP systems.
- Financial analysis, interpretation and communication to management.
- Contribute to forecast and budget planning
- Interact with all functions in the company.





Human Resources

- **Human Resources Manager**
 - Develops and implements personnel policies and procedures.
 - Actively recruits and employs personnel.
 - Administers compensation & benefit programs.
 - Develops job descriptions and establish pay ranges for salaried positions.
 - Coordinates training programs with management input.
 - Ensures compliance with government regulations.
 - Provides management with turnover, staffing needs, union activities when required.





Laboratory

- **Laboratory Technician or Manager**
 - Receive in raw materials and finished products to the lab for testing and release.
 - Perform testing on raw materials and finished products in accordance with standard operating procedures.
 - Also, performs line inspections for production facilities.





Logistics/Transportation

- Purchase transportation services to obtain the desired level of customer service at the lowest cost.
 - Rail, truck, freight.
 - There are great challenges in logistics as it is a key function in all companies.
- Negotiating skills, interpersonal skills, computer skills and ability to multi-task in a fast paced environment are essential.

***It's all about getting the Right Product
to the Right Place at the Right Time.***





Marketing/Sales

- **Marketing Manager**

- This is a strategic position as marketing managers develop strategies for market presence consistent with company goals.
 - Develop pricing strategy, design sales and promotional information to support business strategy.
 - Work with sales to implement strategic initiatives.
- Skills needed include:
 - Communication & problem solving.

- **Sales Manager**

- Implements market strategy
- Skills needed include:
 - Highly motivated, strong interpersonal, communication and selling skills plus the ability to multi-task are keys to this position.
 - Understanding of products and the market are important in promoting the success of those being supervised.





Marketing/Sales (cont.)

- **Sales Representative**

- Develop and manage customer relationships
 - Requires organizational skills, planning and presenting information on products.
 - Reporting and travel are required weekly and/or monthly.
 - The key goal of this position is to achieve a budget that is tied to a territory or product group.

- **Product Manager**

- Monitors inventory levels, tracks inventory movement and restocking needs.
- Develop product pricing that meets the company goals and periodically reporting sales to senior managers for review.
- Skills include math, computer, communication, problem solving and multi-tasking
- Knowledge of logistics as a plus.





Mill Production

- A variety of mill positions are available:
 - **Engineer** for mill design and operation.
 - **Feed Mill Operator**
 - Handles inputs and mixing on computer monitors
 - **Quality Assurance Supervisors or Managers**
 - **Shift Supervisors**
 - **Production Schedulers**
 - **Plant Managers or Operations Managers**





Nutrition and Feed

- **Animal Nutritionist**

- Evaluates potential feedstuffs and economics to determine the desired performance by the target species.
- Works with producers to implement balanced feeding programs and improve facility management.
- Works with producers to understand economics and usage of new or novel ingredients.
- Works with purchasing to understand value of specific ingredients.
- Provides technical expertise from corporate to producers (all levels of the industry).





Publication-Editorial/Sales

- **Agriculture Publication Editor**
 - The editor is responsible for the editorial content of the publication.
 - Conduct interviews, take photographs and obtain material for articles.
 - Compose articles as needed.
 - Coordinate and edit the work of columnists, product releases and press releases for the industry.
 - Work with graphic design, proofreaders, publisher and advertising to complete each publication.
 - Maintain the editorial budget.





Publisher

- The publisher is responsible for profitability.
 - Include circulation and editorial package.
 - Coordinate with the circulation manager to reach the right subscriber within the right industry.
 - Also works with the editor to get appropriate articles for the readers.
 - Focus is also on revenue, including advertising sales.
 - Promotion & marketing responsibility.





Purchasing

- **Director of Purchasing**

- It's not about buying cheap - It's about buying value.
- Quality comparisons, market assessment and big picture planning.
 - Factor what outside changes are affecting or will affect product(s)
 - Natural gas, speculators, world demand, stability of suppliers
- Strategy development
 - Contracting business? Short term / long term / not at all
- Direct impact on the company bottom-line.
- Also supports the end user [producer].
 - When ingredients are 'purchased right', products can be produced more economically.
 - producers can purchase better and become more profitable





Quality Assurance

- **Quality Assurance Manager**

- Releases raw material for production & finished product for shipment.
 - Resolve out of spec results and conduct necessary investigations.
- Supervise & review the Quality Control and laboratory procedures.
- Review standard operating procedures for production.
 - Insure compliance with internal and external standards.
- Maintain plant & laboratory records.





Regulatory

- Regulatory Positions:
 - **Regulatory Managers** insure compliance with feed regulations which includes product labeling and product literature.
 - **Product Registration Specialist**
 - Federal and State registration requirements.
 - **Workplace Safety Compliance**
 - **Food Safety compliance**
 - Processing and handling.
 - FDA requirements.





Research

- **Research Director-company/integrator**
 - Validates sound nutritional feeding programs.
 - Explores opportunities to improve production and/or lower feed costs.
 - Understands relevance of environmental impact.
- **Farm Manager**
 - Responsible for care of animals.
 - Production, procurement, profitability.





Technical Service

- **Technical Service Managers** can provide:
 - Field support at the farm level
 - Works with producers to implement new information / research on a practical level.
 - Technical sales support
 - Provides sales with information or joint calls on producers or company nutritionists.
 - Assist with research projects
 - Internal or external.





Safety

- **Safety Director**

- is responsible for ensuring a safe workplace.
- Compliance with federal and state regulations.
- Has potential for large financial impact.
 - Limits injury and lost time - Can help control insurance expense.
- Active in providing safety training to personnel inside or outside the company.
- Promotes safe behavior with posters and newsletters or other educational tools.
- Ongoing inspections of facilities for unsafe conditions will take place.
- Investigate accidents and provide corrective action.





Transitioning from School to Career

- **Don't underestimate yourself**
 - Ability is not gender specific.
- **Social skills need to be honed:**
 - Business Etiquette
 - Attire – dress appropriately for the position.
 - Behavior
 - In the office
 - Work-related – social
- **Go to Professional & Industry Meetings**
 - Introduce yourself to industry and professors.
 - Don't wait for introductions.





Transitioning from School to Career

Personal Attributes

- **Honesty**
 - All you have is your word
 - Don't sell it out.
 - Keep it when you give it.
 - Don't mistake speaking candidly with telling all.
- **Ethics**
 - “Do right even when no one is looking”
 - If you wouldn't tell your parents (or your boss) about it – Don't do it.
- **Communicate Well**
 - Learn to communicate crisply verbally and written.

***The feed business is small –
there are no secrets!***





Transitioning from School to Career

- **Pursue internships and volunteer**
 - You don't have to be paid to learn.
- **When applying for a job –**
 - *learn* something about the company.
- **Do the job to the best of your ability!**
 - Take ownership and responsibility
 - Don't just put in time
 - Be reliable
 - Get involved
 - Industry associations, local associations, FFA, 4H, others?

You may not start at the top, but you can get there!





AFIA Online Career Center

- Looking for a job?
 - Go to www.afia.org, then click on Career Center.
 - Post your resume, search for jobs and tools for professional development.





AFIA NEMA Mentoring Program

- Take advantage of networking and mentoring opportunities through AFIA.
- Contact Sarah Novak at AFIA to request a mentor contact in the field you are interested in.
 - **snovak@afia.org**
 - Web site for AFIA is www.afia.org





Thank you!

**We hope you will consider
pursuing an Ag Career!**

