

Agriculture; Our Nation's Only Hope

Almost everywhere we look, we see agriculture. It is all around us. There is no way to hide from it, act as if it does not apply to you, or think your life will not change because of it. Many people have large misconceptions on agriculture. They believe agriculture is a farmer and his tractor. In a small way, they would be correct. However, it also applies to their lives. Without agriculture, we quite frankly would not be here today. It is greatly important to inform consumers on the true meaning of agriculture. Agricultural advocacy is something that is depleting in our nation.

Thankfully, there are organizations that teach agricultural education such as the FFA. Supporting the FFA not only benefits the young students and our future leaders, but gives these future agriculturalists resources to educate our consumers on the production of food and the need for agriculture.

Studies have shown that our population is rapidly growing, and will only get larger in the future. By the year 2050, the population is expected to be at 9.8 billion people. This means more people to feed, but less land to farm on. To put it into perspective, we would have a 60% increase in the production of agriculture. FFA members are one of our nation's greatest hopes for allowing agriculture to grow along with our society. Some consumers may not find it important to support FFA members, but they do not realize the impact agriculture makes on their lives. We must support our farmers and young agriculturalists for the sake of our nation.

Culver's, a family based restaurant known mainly for their butter burgers and frozen custard, does an excellent job of informing consumers on where their food comes from and supporting both the youth and adults involved in agriculture. Culver's has over 650 restaurants located in 24 states. They pride themselves on having quality food, and knowing where it comes from. They like to consider themselves a part of the agricultural industry because of their great relationships with each of their food suppliers. Beginning in 2013, Culver's began the Thank You Farmers Project. This campaign stretches much further than just showing gratitude to our farmers. Culver's uses this platform to benefit the future generations. They support the young people involved in FFA, for they are the ones to innovate farming techniques for our growing population. Through the Thank You Farmers Project, Culver's also informs consumers on where their food comes from and gives them an inside look on agriculture through videos and web stories. Culver's has raised over two million dollars for the National FFA Organization and various chapters. One example of ways they help the FFA would be the Scoops of Thanks Day. This is when, if a customer donates one dollar to the FFA, they will receive a free scoop of frozen custard. Culver's has raised over \$150 thousand over the course of three years. Culver's is continuously making an important change in our nation, and they set a great example for other businesses to promote agriculture.

The lack of knowledge regarding the agricultural industry in consumers is a large problem. We must encourage and support young agriculturalists for prosperity. Thankfully, great organizations

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such as Culver's are trying to battle this fight and create a more self-aware society. We must alter our ways in order to obtain a steady food supply for the next generations, and it is up to us, the citizens, to make that change.