

Senior Agricultural Leader Scholarship

Farming is important to me, my family and my community. I live on one of the last working dairy farms in my community. Working on our farm is my way of life. It has taught me discipline, responsibility, respect for life, and the value of hard work. Cows don't care if it's Christmas--they need to be milked no matter what you may want to do instead. This has taught me discipline and responsibility. Working with animals has taught me that you have to provide for all that they will need to stay alive and healthy. Being a farmer is hard work, from feeding to milking to growing and harvesting crops. Everything takes time and patience. My family has been farming for four generations. Each person has specific responsibilities on our farm. As you grow up, your responsibilities grow and change with you. Farming is important for my community because without farms, there would be no food. Farmers are active members of their communities.

Farmers need to responsibly maintain the land that they use. In order to have successful harvests to feed their herds or to feed people, they need to create sustainability. Farmers do this by creating a crop plan. These plans should include fertilizing, crop rotation, harvesting at the right time, and preventing erosion. Farmers need to protect the environment so that future farmers in their families can use the land too.

Protecting workers' rights and well-being is another job farmers do. This includes maintaining equipment, teaching workers to use things correctly, and staying up to date on laws that protect workers. Farmers work until the job is done. Making sure we stay healthy is important. In other parts of the country, farm workers' rights are sometimes overlooked. They aren't treated with the respect they deserve for the huge amount of work they put into their jobs. All farm workers are farmers and deserve to be treated fairly.

My grandmother tells me that she taught me these things: how to farm, how to shop, and how to eat chocolate. I was born into a farm family. As a young child, I can remember going to the barn every day to see the calves. Now, I go every day to feed and take care of the calves and am learning how to milk the cows with my grandmother. My dad and grandfather are teaching me about crops and equipment. As a 4-Her, I am learning how to properly care for livestock as well as our dairy. This includes nutrition, health and wellness, anatomy, and reproduction. I enjoy raising and showing goats, pigs and chickens. Being a farmer is important to my identity and my future.

By Autumn Madugno