

Relevance of Current Agricultural Education among Today's Youth-An Overview

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Agricultural Education is the teaching of agriculture, natural resources and land management to the students. At higher levels, agricultural education is primarily undertaken to prepare students for employment in the agricultural sector. The curriculum of the agricultural education system includes agronomy, horticulture (pomology, olericulture, floriculture and landscaping), plant breeding and genetics, soil science, plant physiology, plant pathology, entomology, nematology, agricultural microbiology etc. Disciplines closely tied to agricultural education include agricultural communication, agricultural extension education, soil and water conservation engineering etc.

A bachelor's degree in agricultural education generally leads to employment in teaching agriculture at the high school level or in the agricultural sector. An agricultural education degree also gives the qualifications to do extension work for universities and agricultural companies and organizations.

Remarkable changes have blended the contemporary agricultural education system in our nation. The agricultural students expand the science, technology, engineering and practical application while optimizing the effective and efficient utilization of land and labour wastes, energy and other resources to have a bountiful yield and productivity. The students solve real-world challenges and provide thorough experimental learning in an interdisciplinary setting with global impacts. They are to discover and acquire new knowledge through the integration of research and scholarly endeavors.

Current agricultural students can re-orient and restructure the academic programmes. Graduate education would focus on strengthening professionalism and entrepreneurship, and postgraduate education would conduct research and provide consultancy and extension services relevant to current and emerging socio-economic needs.



Today's youth can also serve as active scientists and research fellows. They can resolve plant production challenges such as harsh conditions of drought and flood. Strategic research can be made for climate-resilient agriculture. Youth can create new technology to enhance productivity and improve resource use efficiency, ensuring livelihood security. They can create business opportunities, utilizing available technology. A systematic approach can be made to technology generation systems rather than specific commodities and focus can be shifted to Integrated Farming systems.

Besides these, emphasis can also be put on product conversion and value addition rather than ending in production alone. Technology is applied as an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable agricultural option. Refining location-specific efficient production systems are also being practiced based on agro-climatic suitability. Today's youth can also undergo training for entrepreneurship beyond the production process rather than adding skills.

Besides teaching, research; an extension is also an attractive option for contemporary agriculture and allied disciplines' students. Agriculture students and young professionals can ensure that extension services are responsive to farmer's needs and can assist them to help themselves. The young workers can strive to disseminate new knowledge, scientific information and innovations through formal and non-formal programmes for students, farmers, faculty, financiers and industries. The young extension officers create and adopt crop selection and production tools for small farmers in undeveloped regions to help grower operations.

It is the agriculture sector that is reliable and can be a ray of hope for our nation's dwindling economy. So lastly, it can be said that continuous and comprehensive agricultural education when properly provided to the young students can alleviate all hardships and our nation can once again march ahead in the path of progress.