A   NEW   AGRICULTURE  
  
3-4-16  
  
That's right, "a new agriculture" is on the horizon. Being spurred by aging ( 55 to 60 yrs. of age ) farmers/ranchers and the acres of land owned or managed are poised to change ownership or management in the next decade. Today, 95% of U.S.A. farms and ranches are family owned and operated, having been so for three to five generations.  
  
Many younger or potential farmers/ranchers see this as an opportunity to be involved in the new agriculture or "food production."  
  
A large number of younger people ( 20 to 35 yrs. of age ) ask: "Where and how is my food raised, handled and cared for ?" Also, "how does today's technology influence food production and our environment ?"  These questions will influence agricultures future and our food supply.  
  
Technology - i pads, i phones, dna, gene mapping and computers - are moving agriculture faster than some of us "old geizers," like myself, can comprehend, but the younger generation were weaned on these technologies. Technology, environment and sustainability all go hand in glove together, offering new challenges and opportunities for these younger generations.   
  
These younger farmers/ranchers welcome the challenge that new technology offers, along with agriculture business for the future. It's estimated food production will need to increase by 70% to meet the demand of an ever growing population, estimated to be 9 billion by 2050. The challenge, they will always have a demanding job to reduce hunger and raise more food.  
  
Education, today's colleges and universities are developing new programs to meet these challenges. The University of Tennessee College of Agricultural Science and Natural Resources has developed an introductory booklet describing many agricultural opportunities.  
  
During a recent conservation with sisters - an 8th grader and a communication student at East Tennessee State University - I was relating these agriculture  opportunities and gave them a copy of the booklet for their consideration. Received a note from the younger sister,"I didn't know all this was agriculture, I thought agriculture was working in the field."  Many people may think the same. Agriculture affects our daily lives in many ways - meals, cloths, shelter, health and transportation.   
  
If we as farmers/ranchers do not have these younger technology developers working on research and development, it will be most difficult to meet these challenges in the future.  
  
Should anyone know a young person ( girl or boy ) interested in science, business or technology, encourage them to contact an agriculture college or university to explore or investigate these possibilities and be introduced to A New Agriculture."  They are our future agriculture leaders.  
  
Related articles   
  
1- [Agriculture Opportunities](http://weebly-file/1/8/9/9/18991133/agriculture_opportunities_to_know_2-5-15.docx)  
2- [My Useless Degree](http://weebly-file/1/8/9/9/18991133/my_usless_degree_2-15_comments.doc)  
3-[My Useless Degree #2](http://weebly-file/1/8/9/9/18991133/my_useless_degree_pt_2_want_to_know.doc)  
4- [Why I Ranch](http://weebly-file/1/8/9/9/18991133/why_i_ranch.docx)