

As countries develop, it is natural that the share of population working in agriculture decreases. In developing countries, a large portion of the population works in agriculture, whereas in developed countries, such as the United States, less than 5% does. This phenomenon, known as rural flight, is possible due to industrialization of agriculture and improvements of farm productivity. Small family farms that used to produce a variety of crops and livestock have been replaced by large and extremely specialized farms that apply the economies of scale and require a fraction of the labor per unit produced. However, it is important to acknowledge that the world's population is estimated to be 9 billion people by 2050, which will generate a substantial increase in food demand. Projections suggest we will have to produce more food in the next 50 years than in the previous 500 years combined.

Farm work can be labor intensive, seasonal, and migratory. All these factors contribute to the small number of Americans looking for positions in agriculture. Today, more than half of U.S. farm workers are immigrants, but the tougher immigration laws are driving immigrants to leave the country more than ever. A possible solution to attract more Americans to farms would be to increase the use of technology. Technological solutions can greatly impact labor intensity and farm workers' motivation. This would also attract those with higher levels of education, such as technicians and engineers. Drones are a good example of a technology that would be appealing to the younger generations. Drones can have several practical applications in a farm, such as mapping, crop monitoring, health assessment, crop spraying, and irrigation.

A hidden benefit is that technologies like drones could help to bridge the generation gap. The older generation farm owners want to use the data drones can provide, but do not typically know how to utilize it. The younger generations can take the lead on operating drones and learn from farm owners about how to best incorporate the data to benefit the business. Most importantly,

it could establish the relationship that leads to future farm succession plans by building a passion for agriculture in the younger generations.

As recent generations, namely millennials and generation Z, are less likely to consider a career in agriculture, the farming population is aging and shrinking at a high rate. Moreover, the majority of millennials experience a disconnection between the food they consume and the critical role of the agriculture professionals that produce it. It is our responsibility, as agriculture workers and leaders, to educate the new generations about the food chain and agriculture roles in the modern world. Companies like Feed Energy have a pivotal task as advocates for agriculture. A truly attainable goal is to expose young generations to the opportunities and challenges of an agriculture career. The utilization of social media is a valuable tool to achieve this goal. Today, businesses that wisely utilize social media have a clear advantage, especially with new generations – and agriculture is no exception. We should acknowledge the significance and purpose of agriculture and spread the message of its vital role in feeding an ever-growing world. In addition to drawing people's attention to farming and agriculture careers, judicious use of social media will ultimately increase consumer knowledge of food production and help address common misconceptions about agriculture.

Finally, it is important to break the agriculture stereotype. Although farming is a key and inherent element, an occupation in agriculture does not strictly mean working on a farm. That is true for all careers involved, such as agronomists, animal scientists, and veterinarians. There is a wide variety of positions one can occupy, from research and development to sales, that can potentially attract more young talents to agriculture. Agriculture is an important and exciting career. Today, more than ever, we need qualified individuals that through hard work and development of new technologies will continue to strive in agriculture, ultimately fulfilling our mission to feed the world.