

The definition of the word passion, it is a strong and barely controllable emotion. This is a good way to describe how I feel about agriculture.

Being raised on a family farm that was regarded as a business as well as a lifestyle has made me appreciate all agriculture can offer. Having the opportunity to help bring a newborn calf to life, as well as the sadness of losing one, is all in a day's work. Part of this recognizes being human and appreciating life with everything it has to offer. Part is the economic loss knowing the farm doesn't have that calf to eventually sell for the profit of the business. Every spring at seeding there is renewed optimism about what the year will bring. Everyone works hard to get the crop in and cattle to pasture. Then you hope for rain. Not just because you love the smell of how fresh the air is after, but because it is necessary for life of the crops and grass.

My parents have a strong passion for agriculture and there is no way you couldn't be around them without developing the same passion. Go for a drive to check crops and cows. The endless discussions of which genetics are working, what should be done to make the pastures better, check water, and what could be done better for the next year. It is all about raising a quality product that will make our business better for our land and our family. There is always research being done about new ideas and new products that could be implemented on the farm. But there must be an expectation of profit. Discussion often takes place at the dinner table with everyone having some input. When we were younger it was Grandpa and Dad. Now Dad includes us because he understands the importance of input.

I know how passionate I am about agriculture as I get very defensive when I see false statements on social media depicting agriculture as evil and unfairly affecting the environment. I know that in my future I will have to stand up, promote and defend the industry as strong voices have only been heard on the opposing side versus the farmers. Just the thought of non-meat burgers makes my blood boil. If their product is so good, it shouldn't have to taste like a beef burger, it should be a stand-alone product. Much of social media is making us out to be factory farms that don't care for our animals which couldn't be further from the truth.

Growing up on my farm and helping the family business grow, makes me appreciate and love what goes on in the day to day operations of our farm. After I finish my education in future, I would like to come back and have a part in my family farm.