

National FFA Organization



Agri-Entrepreneurship Program

Student Program Guide

Program Contact: ag_ent@ffa.org
317-802-4255

Do you have what it takes?

So you think you want to be your own boss when you're finished with school? Great! Small businesses—including ag-related businesses—are the fastest growing part of America's economy.

Agri-Entrepreneurship is for you. You might not only find a great career...you could also win \$1,000.

As a student, you develop your plan and submit your application for state and national competition. The program provides awards to both students and their chapters.

The Agri-Entrepreneurship Education Program provides your chapter with educational and promotional materials to help you get into the entrepreneurial spirit. Let your teacher or chapter leader know you want to participate!

A Few Famous Entrepreneurs

So what exactly do entrepreneurs do? They're inventors... salespeople... restaurateurs... and a whole lot more. Here are a few interesting entrepreneur stories to inspire you.

Ray Kroc

One of the customers for Ray Kroc's line of milkshake mixers was a small California hamburger chain. Kroc was intrigued with the chain's potential, and bought the business in 1961. Fast-forward to today: that small chain is McDonald's, the largest restaurant chain in the world! Kroc grew by focusing on speed, cleanliness, quality, and consistency. He also developed innovative "assembly line" techniques that made it possible for even inexperienced workers to make and serve tasty food.

Walter Annenberg

Who would have thought people would want to read about TV? Walter Annenberg did. He created TV Guide with a national section that was distributed to different regions of the nation and combined with local TV listings. People responded in a big way: in the 1960s, TV Guide passed Reader's Digest to become the highest-circulation magazine in America. At its highest point, TV Guide sold 20 million copies every week!

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Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield

In 1978, childhood friends Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield decided to start a business in Burlington, Vermont. They thought they might open a bagel shop, but the investment was more than the \$12,000 they had. Instead, they opened an ice cream store in a renovated gas station. Today, Ben & Jerry's Vermont's Finest Ice Cream and Frozen Yogurt is sold in all 50 states through grocery stores, food service operations, and hundreds of scoop shops--which you'll find in Canada, Israel, and the Netherlands, as well!

Michael Dell

Michael Dell was a student at the University of Texas-Austin when he had the idea he could build a better computer. He started the business in his dorm room. Two years later, he had 250 employees; a decade after that, in 1996, Dell Computer Corporation opened its online computer store, which today sells more than \$14 million in computers and associated products a day. It just shows that you're never too young to put a great idea to work.

James Casey

Around the turn of the century, 19-year-old James Casey founded a package delivery service with a telephone, two bicycles, six messengers, and \$100 in cash. Merchants Parcel Service advertised "Best Service and Lowest Rates," and Casey was a success. Over the years, he moved from bicycles to Model T Fords, and eventually to fleets of delivery trucks and airplanes. He also changed the name of the company to United Parcel Service, or UPS--today, one of the largest and most respected delivery services in the world.

Leon L. Bean

When LL Bean advertised a money-back guarantee for his hunting boots, he wasn't quite prepared for what happened: 90 of the first 100 pairs he made fell apart! But Bean was true to his word. He refunded his customers' money, then borrowed \$400 to perfect the quality of his boots. Today, LL Bean is one of the world's largest and most successful catalog retailers...and they'll still give you your money back if you're not satisfied with their products.

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Possible Careers

- Yard and garden care service business
- Tree maintenance business (trimming/removal)
- Agri-Computer Systems Consultant (designing communications and websites, systems development and technical support, etc.)
- Seed Producer/Processor/Dealer
- Livestock dealer
- Fruit and vegetable stand/market
- Composting operation
- Landscape materials business (sale of decorative rocks, landscape timbers, ornamental fixtures, etc.)
- Nursery business
- Floral rental and sales business (design, rental for special occasions, etc.)
- Horse drawn coaches rental, historic area taxi service, guided tours
- Develop and operate campground
- Fishing/hunting guide business
- Fur trapping, processing
- Processing and/or marketing dried and cured meat products
- Soil testing and fertilizing service for lawns, gardens, etc.
- Custom harvest business
- Fishing bait raising and sales
- Laboratory animal production (rats, mice, etc.)
- Floral production/marketing (i.e. bedding plants, lilies, poinsettias)

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Possible Careers**

- Wood products processing/marketing (cedar shakes, firewood, pallets, lumber)
- Operate a packing llama/hiking business
- Market dairy embryos globally
- Process honey, beeswax and related products
- Operate a garden vegetable production and delivery based service (kind of along the lines of "vegetable of the month")

Getting Started

Visit your public library and look for books on inventors, inventions and entrepreneurs.

Is there a successful business you admire in your community? Ask the owner how the business got started - chances are, it's a great story.

Inventions grow out of need. What needs doing in your life? Think about the tasks you think could be done better

Encourage your FFA chapter to get involved with the Agri-Entrepreneurship Education program. FFA can provide you with great, thought-provoking materials.

Online Resources:

Small Business Administration
<http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/>

EntreWorld: Resources for Entrepreneurs
<http://www.entreworld.org/>

Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership
<http://www.celcee.edu/>

Marion Ewing Kauffman Foundation (site sponsor)
<http://www.yeo.org/kauffman/>

Powerpoint Presentation: Agri-Entrepreneurship for the Classroom
http://www.ffa.org/programs/ag_ent/documents/introtoageaward.zip

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