

A CAREER WHERE YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE



“The seed industry is global, diverse and very complex – significant investment is taking place which is driving development at a fast pace, and we rely on technology and innovation to become more efficient and competitive [...] At the end of the day we produce seed for people to plant so that they can produce the food, fibre and fuel that we all depend on. – Scott Horner, General Manager, HyTech Production Ltd.

Imagine a career where you have the opportunity to make a difference – where you can deliver health through food, feed a growing world population, grow more food using fewer resources, help protect the environment or find solutions to climate change. The seed industry offers you diverse opportunities to make a difference at home and around the world.

The seed industry is a fast-paced, constantly changing industry that faces global challenges and opportunities including:

- Food security – developing higher yielding plant varieties
- Health – breeding for more nutritious foods
- Climate Change – creating plants that can survive drought, salinity or flooding
- Environment – developing plant varieties that promote sustainable farming practices
- Biodiversity – producing more per acre so forests and wildlife habitats can be preserved
- Energy – using plants to create renewable fuel

Three distinct employment areas exist in the seed industry:

Research & Agronomy – Researchers use their knowledge of genetics to develop new and improved seed varieties. Plant breeders use various techniques from selection to modern biotechnology to achieve beneficial plant traits such as insect resistance or drought tolerance. Agronomists work to improve plant productivity and manage agriculture’s environmental impact. Researchers and agronomists are often responsible for recommendations regarding seeding techniques, fertility and pest management, soil and water management and crop rotations.

Production & Supply Chain Logistics – Careers in seed production can involve working with seed growers, performing field operations, growing the seed crop or providing advice on crop production and planning. Managers and technicians are needed in processing and manufacturing plants where seed treatments are applied and the seed is packaged for distribution. The area of supply chain logistics ensures the seed meets quality standards and product requirements. Quality assurance and regulatory managers evaluate the seed for purity, germination and fulfillment of government regulatory documentation.

“The seed industry has a wide range of careers that are very rewarding. I urge you to arm yourself with the nature of science principles that guide the scientific side of the seed industry. Tomorrow, you will be called upon to make decisions, as leaders, that have a direct bearing on the issues that society confronts today.” – Francis Kirigwi, Research Scientist/Wheat Breeder, Syngenta Seeds Canada

Business, Sales & Marketing – Marketing is often thought of as advertising and promotion however it can also include customer service, public relations, agronomy, product management and technical services. When involved in sales, employees need to understand their company’s products along with their limitations and unique abilities. Sales managers or sales representatives must use their broad base of knowledge to make specific product recommendations to farmers. Other career opportunities in this area include legal affairs; intellectual property manager; technology licensing; finance; human resources and information technology.

Educational background in the seed industry is broad and can include a Diploma, B.Sc., M.Sc., and/ or Ph.D. Several areas of focus can lead you to a career in the industry such as biology; plant science; plant breeding; genetics; agronomy; biotechnology; pathology; equipment operation; regulatory processes; quality assurance; supply chain management; business education; marketing and communications.

Companies in the seed industry range from large, multinational companies to small, family-run business and from grain companies to garden and herb seed companies. From research and agronomy to production and supply chain logistics to business, sales and marketing – the employment opportunities are endless.

Check out employment opportunities in the seed industry on the Canadian Seed Trade Association Website, www.cdnseed.org, or search our member companies’ websites.

Our industry is in the midst of changes, challenges and opportunities – be a part of the solution.

“The seed industry is evolving quickly as investments in traits are made that will improve yield, quality and food security to feed a growing population. The industry works with many players in the rest of the value chain which will allow you a broad perspective of the agricultural industry. There is an opportunity here that meets everyone’s interests – from sales, marketing, production, research and agronomy. – Brent Derkatch, Director of Operations and Business Development, Canterra Seeds

