

Agribusiness Careers Discussion Guide

Teachers: These discussion questions may be used at any point in exploring agribusiness with your students. If your students do not have significant prior knowledge of this career area, it may be best to use this guide after viewing some of the other links on our [Agribusiness career area page](#). At the bottom of this guide, there are “Suggested activities” to try with your class.

Discussion questions

1. If you have taken the Student Interest Survey for the career areas on our site, do your results align with this career area? What interests and skills do you possess that may be a good fit for agribusiness?
2. Which of the career opportunities in agribusiness do you think best fit your skills and interests? Which aspect of agribusiness appeals most to you, and why?
3. **Scenario Practice:** Use the following scenario and questions to explore the field of agribusiness and how it might relate to you. (Teachers: At the end of this discussion guide, a Scenario Practice Solution is provided as guidance in solving the practice scenario. A helpful infographic is also referenced in the solution).

You are an entrepreneur! Congratulations! You have developed a new ink derived from soybeans. The ink can be used for industrial printing or in smaller printers like those found in most homes. Your product can be made less expensively than other inks, and is more environmentally friendly. You must figure out at what price to sell your ink to turn a profit. You will want to invest your profit to ensure you will have money for your business in the future. Your product passes all safety and industry standards assessments. You must figure out how to transport your soy ink to distribution centers and develop a marketing campaign to sell your product to customers.

Problem solving:

- What steps are needed to bring your soy ink from your production centers (where it is made) to the marketplace? Brainstorm the step-by-step process.
 - What agribusiness careers will be involved in the steps of this business plan?
 - In which part of this business plan are you most interested? Would you enjoy doing the financial planning for the business? Would you like to be the person designing the soy ink? Would you like to negotiate the best price for materials or transportation? List the jobs that most interest you and their role in this process.
4. There are many ways to get involved in agribusiness even before you graduate. You could join a related school club or start one yourself. You may contact one of the GrowNextGen industry leaders and ask them to visit your school or share some resources. You could help coordinate a field trip to an agribusiness leader. What other ways can you think of to be involved in agribusiness as a high school student?

Curriculum connection question

- Please reflect on the material you have learned this year. Make one connection between the content you are learning and agribusiness. (Examples: The persuasive writing you practice in English class is often used in marketing. Statistics you study in math or science can apply to sales and trade careers.)

Suggested activities

- Use our lesson plan [Soy and World Hunger](#) to engage students in inventing an infographic advertisement to introduce soy products and their ability to aid in the fight against hunger. In this lesson, students are hired as marketing executives (a sample career in agribusiness), and challenged to marry their product knowledge with creative design.

- Ask students to select a favorite bio-based product. They may first need to research bio-based products and determine what some are. Then have students research, from farm to market, the steps the raw material goes through to become that bio-based product. Ask them to investigate how much money it takes to create that product, compared with its selling price. Students could prepare a mini-sales report on their product. They could also identify the steps in the production and marketing process that involve careers in agribusiness.
- As an entrance or exit ticket, ask students to brainstorm 3 ways they could take some “next steps” toward a career in agribusiness before they graduate.

Scenario practice solution

- To sell the ink, prices must be established, a marketing strategy and campaign must be created, the soy ink must be transported after production (a transportation system and route must be decided upon), and finally, the ink must be transported from the production center to distribution centers and finally to stores.
- Entrepreneurs/business owners (the students in this case), marketing professionals, financial planners and investors, chemists and researchers to design the ink, transportation specialists to design a route and drivers needed for transport. Lawyers could be involved to “patent” your ink and health inspectors or public health officials to examine your product to see if it meets all industry safety standards. Many more careers could be involved. Encourage students to explore all aspects of this business plan and think of even more examples of connected careers.