

My name is Brody Nestorovich and I am a first-year student at Olds College. I am currently enrolled in the Agriculture Management diploma.

Looking to the future of agriculture in Red Deer County there are many challenges and opportunities ahead. The consistent development of new technologies and the need to enhance all types of crop production will be important. Producers must stay abreast of the constant changes while finding ways to create efficiencies and higher yields to meet future demands. Diversification and data management are two key elements that could have a positive impact for producers.

In my first four months at Olds College, I have been learning about the trends in agriculture. One key concept I have learned is that the demand for agricultural products will increase due to a global population expansion over the next 30 years. It is estimated that by 2030 agricultural products will be needed for over 10 billion people. From my perspective, the only way this will be accomplished will be by using innovative technology and crop modification techniques. In addition, the identification of new food sources will be needed.

The future will have to be focused on ways to help producers create production efficiencies with fewer resources in a cost-effective manner. This is important due to the impact of urbanization and misinformed perspectives of many consumers. This concept was reinforced by Robert Saik, author of *The Agriculture Manifesto*, which identifies ten trends in agriculture that are required to increase efficiencies. I was fortunate to hear Robert speak and his forward thinking and future perspectives are very inspiring. I have also gained awareness of the need for diversification and the positive impacts this has had for well-known local producers like Beck Farms and Edgar Farms. Touring these farms has supported my awareness of how utilizing 50 - 100 acres from their traditional farmland to produce specialty crops has met a market need, as well as having a positive impact on their farm business. Given the fact that there is only 3% arable land globally and there is a need to increase production by 70% by 2050, more innovative approaches like these successful Red Deer County producers have created need further investigation. Another concern that I have learned about from Wayne McAllister of Antler Valley Farm, is that many consumers are misinformed about the agricultural industry. The lack of education about agriculture and its importance are having negative impacts for producers. To improve these misinformed perspectives a great deal of work needs to be done to help educate people on how important agriculture is to our future.

As I begin pursuing a career in the agriculture industry, I believe education is required to help producers stay knowledgeable on how new technologies can support their businesses, by creating efficiencies that are cost-effective and will ultimately provide higher yields to meet market demands. Education will also be needed to change the perspectives and awareness of how important agriculture is to not only our local area but the world. Red Deer County has some of the best farmland in the world and by supporting local producers we can be world leaders by being progressive and leading by example to make the needed changes. I am excited to be a part of these important and progressive times for agriculture.