

My Career in Diploma Agriculture



With a *Diploma in Agriculture*, graduates may have the possible *career options* of the following:

- Owner/Operator – Farm
- Owner/Operator – Nursery
- Crop Consultant
- Propagator
- Sales/Marketer of Agricultural goods

Nursery/Greenhouse Worker/Owner - Crop Farmers/Farm Owner and Propagators

The job descriptions and job specifications for these careers are as follows:

Career Overview

Involves the planning, organizing, directing, controlling and coordinating activities of workers engaged in propagating, cultivating, harvesting and marketing horticultural specialties such as trees, shrubs, flowers and other plants.

Typical Duties:

- Manage operations that grow horticultural plants and or vegetables and garden herbs for sale to trade or retail customers, for display or exhibition or for research.
- Determine the optimal growing condition for each plant and the quantities of each plant selection required.
- Determine growing conditions, greenhouse, hydroponics or natural setting and set up planting and care schedules.
- Make decision about when to plant, fertilize, harvest or sell products.
- Prepare soil for planting and plant, transplant seeds, bulbs and cuttings.
- Identify plants as well as problems such as diseases, weeds and insect pests.
- Ensure appropriate conditions for the growth of individual plants by inspecting crops, evaluating plants and soil conditions for diseases, insects, wildlife damage and weeds to protect the health of the garden.
- Position and regulate garden irrigation system (manual or computerized).
- Graft plants, propagate plants.
- Recruit, hire, train and oversee and terminate employees.

Typical Duties Cont'd:

- Provide proper gardening equipment and teach correct techniques and procedures for plant care.
- Delegate responsibility to ensure that employees execute their job properly.
- Schedule and prepare the payroll and manage other accounting and management aspects of the business.
- Ensure a safe working environment for all.
- Construct structures and accessories as needed.
- Provide information to customers on the care of trees, shrubs, flowers, plants and lawns.
- Cut and prune trees, shrubs, flowers and plants.
- Coordinate managerial activities and execute marketing strategy for sale of products.

Work Environment

Work is normally outdoors but some time must be spent in the office. Most farmers, agricultural managers and owners work full time which is from sunrise to sunset during planting and harvesting seasons, public holiday may also be included. At other times, they are planning the next crop, marketing output, doing repairs and maintenance to the farm/nursery or doing other administrative duties like paying bills and preparing payroll.

This work may be hazardous with the use of heavy and sharp equipment. Attention to detail and alertness is required. Exposure to chemicals and the elements is a constant and as such health and safety precautions must be taken, protective gear worn and regulations followed. Valid driver's license may be required. Travel between sites or to visit suppliers and customers may be required.

Qualifications and Licenses

No formal education required, however, vocational and degree programs are available. The more certified are in a stronger position to deal with the day-to-day activities and demands of

these positions. If working with an agricultural company, certification will be required; these are available through SJPP, City and Guilds or C/NVQs.

Essential Qualities and Skills

- ❖ Ability to do strenuous work
- ❖ A thorough knowledge of plant and animal life
- ❖ Organizational and planning skills
- ❖ Good written and oral skills
- ❖ Business and commercial awareness
- ❖ Communication and management skills
- ❖ IT skills

Other work options may include:

Sales/Marketing jobs are typically the same in any industry with the added twist of having specific knowledge of the agricultural industry and its products. Persons with this training may serve well working with suppliers of agricultural products and equipment.

Crop Consultant workers who may freelance given their knowledge on crop raising, providing advice, guidance and support to those in the agricultural industry on general and or specific plant diseases, fungi or insect treatment issues.

References

Barbados Standard Occupational Classification, Minor Group 611 section 6112 page 148-149 – Government of Barbados, Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development (1990)

<http://www.myplan.com/careers/nursery-and-greenhouse-managers/description-11-9013.01.html>
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<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobprofiles/Pages/horticulturalmanager.aspx> Retrieved December 2015