

NYFEA UPDATE

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Share Your Passion

What drives you to succeed in life? Is it wealth? Is it power? Is it the accolades from your fellow agriculturists? Is it recognition? It really doesn't matter what drives you to be successful in your career, it is the fact that you are passionate, that you set goals for yourself, and you do what it takes to achieve them.

Is it enough just to be successful in your own career? Or do you want to share your enthusiasm with others? When you attend an event in your local young farmer chapter, do you extend an invitation to others to attend with you? When you go to the NYFEA website to register for the national institute do you think about forwarding the link of the agenda to someone else in your chapter, your community or within one of your other ag commodity organizations? Let's not keep the great things that the young farmer chapters, state associations, and national associations do a secret. Share your passion for our organization with everyone. Extend an invitation...forward a link...tell others why it is important to you to leave the farm, early in December, to travel to a state hundreds of miles away, to learn about other agriculture commodities, and to share your concerns with other attendees.

I attend a zumba class in town and follow the gym's announcements on their facebook page. I kept seeing these posts about beef sticks being thrown around during class. Of course, being curious I clicked on the name of the gal who was bringing the beef sticks to class. I recognized the last name as we have members of our local young farmer chapter with the same name. I looked over her facebook page for a little while. I noticed that her and her husband raise steers and sell freezer beef. I read on and saw that she works for the extension office in a neighboring county, sells her beef products at local farmers markets and writes a blog. I click on that link and am immediately drawn into numerous articles about the joys of living on a farm, about why their family chooses to use GMO's, funny stories about their dog and his daily excursions. What I love most about what I am reading is that this young woman takes time out of her busy life to tell their story to others. Her passion for what they have chosen to do, with the life they were blessed with, is shared through her words, pictures, and stories to anyone who is interested in listening, and learning. Not everyone is technologically savvy. Not everyone can write a blog post. But each and every one of us has a story to share with someone else. Share your passion. Share your story. If your local newspaper contacts you about an issue, don't say you are too busy. Don't think someone else will do it. If you, and I, aren't willing to express why things need to be done on our farms,



why we do things that others deem negligent, then who will?

I am going to take this particular story one step further. I see an extreme amount of value and commitment in this individual. I love her enthusiasm and desire to be successful. I want to see her expand her horizons and to become involved with a program that will further educate her and offer her other experiences. It is my desire to sponsor her as a participant in the NYFEA Ag Communications program in Louisville, KY this December. I know she will benefit greatly from this program, and she will also have experiences to share with the other attendees. She will have the chance to visit with other agriculture advocates and learn from them. I will also sponsor her as a participant in Agriculture's Promise, in Washington DC next spring. Here she will be able to share her story with her national leaders on capitol hill. She will work with other attendees in developing the top 5 issues that young people, and all people, involved with agriculture are facing. I will share my passion, for our organization, with a young person that has already established a strong foundation for her and her husband's future. It is my hope that she will be able to share what she has learned with others: on her blog, through her facebook posts, or while talking to customers at their farm market stand.

Why not find a person in your community who would benefit and add their experiences to the programs that NYFEA offers? If you cannot sponsor an individual yourself, seek out a financial sponsorship from those people you do business with. Show them the value in educating the future of our industry. The NYFEA office has materials available for you to use when seeking corporate sponsorships. All you need to do is contact the NYFEA office and adapt the documents for your sponsor. If you have a participant in mind, ask them to write a letter to the business too. They can start sharing their personal story and why the community and industry would benefit from their participation.

Share your passion with others. Tell your story to everyone. You might be amazed at how interested others are about agriculture. We are the 1% of the population that is feeding the world. If we aren't sharing our story...who is? I, for one, do not want the other 99% to be the one telling my family's story.



Denise Sanner, and her husband Ken are the third generation to live on their family farm in rural south east Pennsylvania. They are parents to 2 boys, Brett (30) and Ethan (12), and a rowdy 8 month old Bernese Mountain Dog, Maggie. They farm over 300 acres of mostly corn, soybeans, alfalfa, and wheat, and raise around 50 steers. Ken also custom harvests over 1,000 acres a season. Denise is President Elect of the NYFEA organization and also an independent consultant of a thriving direct sales business.