

# AG: SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

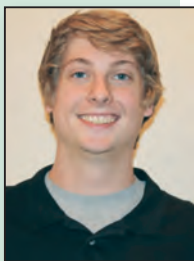
by Kristen Faucon, Marketing Intern, AgCareers.com

**Name:**

Dylan VanBoxtel

**Education:**

University of Minnesota – Twin Cities, Applied Plant Science with an emphasis in Agroecology, Independent Studies (combination of English, Journalism, TV & Film Production)



**Describe your background and how it led you to be interested in a career in the agricultural industry.**

**VanBoxtel:** I'm originally from Seymour which is a rural, dairy producing community in Wisconsin. I wasn't raised on a farm but I did grow up helping my uncle on the VanBoxtel Family dairy farm.

After my freshman year of college, I really got involved with agriculture. I took a lot of environmental science courses at the **University of Michigan** and they interested me.

For one class, I had to do a project where I made a **YouTube** video about small local dairy producers and the issues they were facing. After that experience, mixed with the other courses I had taken, it made me think that ag was somewhere I could make an impact. I then wanted a more specialized education in the ag industry so I transferred to the **University of Minnesota**.

**What work experiences do you have?**

**VanBoxtel:** I was a communications/public relations intern for the University of Minnesota Extension Service and then I was in a marketing/sales position as a PrimaTech Ambassador.

I've recently been in an undergraduate research position at the university on their Applied Weed Science team while working as a video production intern for a professional soccer team. I have been trying to

navigate whether I'll be ending up in the communications/ marketing field or more science and research.

**What is it you hope to gain from your internships?**

**VanBoxtel:** With my part time research position, I'm trying to absorb all of the information that I can. In my major, we sit and talk about science in the classroom, but this is me actually doing it and applying it. Through this experience, I'm trying to see if research is something I want to be involved with.

As for my internship with the soccer team, I'm trying to push the envelope with my video production skills. They have really nice equipment and I'm hoping to gain credibility and enhance my skills to make me more marketable to ag companies in the future.

**What skills have you found most useful and/or hard to refine?**

**VanBoxtel:** One of my most valuable assets has been my writing/ communication skills. No matter which avenue of communication it is: writing, video, social media, or if it's for producers or another audience, I've had experiences in those different situations and the ability to apply my skills.

Sometimes the hardest thing for people to improve on is their oral communication skills. Originally, I wanted to take the position with PrimaTech because it was an opportunity to get in the ag industry and talk about ag products. It was more for personal enrichment to keep improving those oral communication skills.

**What extracurricular activities are you involved in and how have they been valuable to you?**

**VanBoxtel:** In a very traditional sense I have not been involved with many clubs and organizations that most students would stereotypically

associate with a collegiate extracurricular experience simply because I have not had time in my schedule.

Understanding the value in establishing and fostering on-campus relationships and networks, I have however utilized my internship experiences and unique skill set to still remain very active within the campus community.

For example, I have been working on an independent project with faculty in the agronomy and plant genetics department, helping to develop videos that will provide insight about their research to those outside of the scientific journal/ peer-reviewed community.

**What do you look for in a prospective employer?**

**VanBoxtel:** For me, it really depends. I try to look for employers/positions that are on the same page I am about what their needs are and that keep different lines of communication open also.

PrimaTech has been open to hearing my ideas and what I can do to help them, but helping to push back so I still meet their needs and know what they want.

**What advice do you have for freshman?**

**VanBoxtel:** First and foremost, you should get on the internship hunt early. I know I didn't do it as early as I should have and a lot of prospective employers are looking for that experience on your resume.

As a student it can help you learn a lot more than you ever will in the classroom. It's the best way to learn about the industry and gain those skills and feedback.

Also, don't be discouraged about how your interests will translate into the ag industry. You'll be surprised at how a particular employer's needs fit with some of your skill sets in really interesting situations.