

Agriculture Literacy

Why ag advocacy is needed and important

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Tyren Harris and today I come to you all with a question. And I'm hoping this question kinda gets you all thinking a little bit, so here it is. Why is it that the majority of the time when I'm informing my friends, family, or even just people out in the community on the topic of agriculture, who don't usually know too much about ag. The usual response that I get is farming? Or I get the subtle, so you wanna be a farmer? And hey, I'm not opposed to owning some land, having a couple dairy cows or even some chickens. But the key takeaway from this observation is "Why don't people know more about agriculture, and why do so many only think that farming is the only thing agriculture has to offer?"

And yes, even with farming being the most vital career in the world according to Ag Funder News, I assume everyone in this room knows that agriculture is more than just farming. And I believe this lack of knowledge behind the word agriculture is creating an even greater issue, pushing people away from careers within ag because they think it is just farming. Under these circumstances, I believe we must find more ways to educate people on agriculture in order to show them that agriculture is more than what it is perceived to be while creating a sturdier foundation in ag literacy. Furthermore, in terms of what we in this room can do to be a part of the change, starting now, all of us must become key holders in the name of agriculture -- opening doors for people who have questions or don't know what ag is. We need to be ag advocates. As the public affairs of Farm Bureau says, "Advocating for farmers because they bring more to the table than food." As ag advocates, we must also advocate for agriculture because it brings more to the world than just farming.

Thank you.

(Speech presented by Tyren Harris of Carter G. Woodson Academy)