

For JOEER Tech's Possible



“Caring about the customers and keeping their best interest in mind, is key when you are building life-long relationships.”

Many young men have been influenced by agriculture all of their life. They have a love for farming, crops, and maybe, John Deere tractors.

Chris Snodgrass, owner of B.E. Implement, Inc., found himself passionate about the thought of selling the green machines at an early age. After 30 years as an agribusiness man, Snodgrass realizes that a few of his salesmen, whom are Texas Tech University College of Agriculture and Natural Science (CASNR) graduates, have brought a lot of great things to his company. John Deere, with the help of a Texas Tech education, has been a positive influence for a West Texas John Deere dealership.

By 2007, Snodgrass had completed an acquisition of six store locations in Brownfield, Lamesa, O'Donnell, Morton, Levelland, and Littlefield. With his experience in the business, he acknowledges the quality of employees that CASNR department has sent his way.

In addition to an endless amount of inventory and equipment, B.E. Implement prides itself on its personable sales staff and technology-driven business. Currently, B.E. Implement has a total of five Texas Tech graduates working for the company. A couple of Snodgrass' salesmen are graduates of CASNR, and each of them attributes their beginning career skills to the university.

One salesman in particular and a Lubbock native, Brandon Jones, graduated from Texas Tech with a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics. Upon graduation, Jones felt confident with his skill set and called on Snodgrass for a job opportunity. After weeks of trying to get an interview, inexperienced in the field altogether, Snodgrass saw potential in Jones and offered him a starting position at Brownfield – in the store's warehouse. Optimistic, Jones knew the only place to go from there was up. After a year of training in the warehouse and another year as a salesman, Jones is currently the store manager/salesman at the Morton branch. He enjoys the challenges encountered on a daily basis.

“He was willing to give me an opportunity when I had very little knowledge about equipment or the business,” said Jones, “and has taken the

time to teach me valuable skills that help benefit myself and those around me.”

Snodgrass is a firm believer that young people need to decide early on what they want to make of themselves. He has found a common denominator in all of his employees, and that is they are self-motivated, passionate about agriculture, and committed to the company and their customers. For this field of work, an individual must be honest and relational -- with the public and with God.

“They have to have servant-like characteristics,” said Snodgrass. “Caring about the customers and keeping their best interest in mind, is key when you are building life-long relationships.”

Another one of Snodgrass' salesmen is Brian Sellers, a native of Ralls, Texas, with a farming background. After living and breathing agriculture all of his life, Sellers wasn't completely convinced that he wanted to pursue it for a career until he tried something else first. After traveling across the state to attend Tarleton State University, with the intention of playing for the university's football team, he couldn't deny that his roots were in West Texas. After returning to Lubbock, Sellers never looked back, and graduated from Texas Tech in 1998 with a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary agriculture.

“I feel like CASNR polished my communication skills,” said Sellers, “so that I can professionally translate what our equipment can do and how it will benefit them the most.”

Snodgrass not only feels that CASNR is doing a great job of preparing their students for the work environment, but instills qualities that make them efficient when selling tractors and equipment. It is not

uncommon for B.E. Implement to have interns and individuals who are interested in sales positions shadow different salesmen during their college career. In addition to it being a quality learning experience, it also helps get CASNR graduates' foot in the door with the company. Snodgrass enjoys seeing people be successful at what they love, and highly respects what Texas Tech has done to make these individuals so marketable.

“The communication classes that they took and the things that they learned just from interaction, and being professional, I mean, that's important. If you are going to be successful, you've got to have a personality that's inviting,” said Snodgrass. “And if you don't have any personality, it's hard for me to tell you about this tractor. If you don't know anything about the tractor, it's hard to engage your personality.”

Although spread out across the Plains, Snodgrass believes that each of his employees are very well educated in the industry, and is proud of what the company stands for and its values.

“We are like a family, and we have a partnership with our employees, and our customers. We are more than a team, we are a family.”

Emily Sellers Jones | Ralls, Texas

