

Harvesting silage has been my family's way of life since I was five years old. Growing up, I spent my summers riding in silage harvesters, silage trucks and packing tractors, learning how everything worked. Though my roles in the harvest may seem minor to some, they are very important to the overall success of the season. I often assist when machinery is being worked on, doing anything the mechanics ask of me. I also help clean and wash machinery to keep it in good condition. Moving equipment from one job site to another is another part of my job. I help move the silage harvesters, packing tractors, pick-ups and service trailers so that the harvest crew can get started sooner. At times, I can be found weighing trucks at different sites and entering the data into the computer in a spreadsheet. I also assist in the office frequently gathering and filing paperwork and answering phone calls. The most important way I am involved with the harvest is cooking moisture samples of the feed. I collect the samples and test the moisture to see whether the feed is ready to be chopped. The moistures are also used in the billing process so these numbers are very valuable. Harvesting has been a hard way of life, but has taught me many life lessons and character traits I would not have learned otherwise. My parents are often out of town for months at a time for the harvest and living without them has taught me to be very responsible, respectful and independent. Participating in the harvest has helped me learn patience, leadership skills and work ethics. My experiences have helped me learn how to think outside of the box and be creative when developing solutions to problems. I thoroughly enjoy writing and have used the harvest life as inspiration to write a poem that has won multiple awards. I plan to attend Tarleton State University, pursue a degree in communications and journalism, and become a writer so that I can continue to use my experiences of the harvest life for future works.