

## Lesson 22: CAREERS IN HORTICULTURE

**Script to Narrate the PowerPoint file, 23PowerPointCareer.ppt  
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PowerPoint Slide 1: Title Slide, "Careers in Horticulture"

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PowerPoint Slide 2: How Important is the Green Industry?

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PowerPoint Slide 3: Careers in Horticulture – The Green Industry

- Segment One – Career Opportunities in Minnesota
- Segment Two – Education Pathways Green Industry Careers

In this presentation we'll define the Green Industry and discuss its outlook in Minnesota, consider the wide variety of career opportunities, and outline an educational path to pursue your interests.

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PowerPoint Slide 4: Minnesota Landscape Interesting Facts

- Nation-wide, average growth rate predicted for horticultural positions
- Nation-wide, faster than average growth rate predicted for landscapers
- Minnesota some of the most productive soils in the country because of glaciers and prairies
- Minnesota leads the Northwest in horticulture

The "Green Industry" includes a wide variety of businesses involved in the chain of horticultural activities ranging from production – to distribution – to sales. It includes the nurseries that grow trees, shrubs, and other plants; retail garden centers that sell plants, tools, and supplies to the public; and the firms that design and install gardens and landscapes.

According to the U. S. Department of Labor, the employment rate in the horticultural field is expected to grow at a rate that is average for all occupations and there are over 60,000 professional jobs available. Over 40% of companies are hiring. (see slide for more facts)

According to the 1997 Census of Agriculture, Minnesota earned national ranking of number four in the number of farms producing nursery and greenhouse horticultural crops. In a 2003 survey by the United States Department of Agriculture, Minnesota greenhouse and nursery commodities ranked third in the state's leading agricultural commodities.

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## PowerPoint Slide 5: Segment Two – Career Opportunities

- Greenhouse
  - Bedding Plants
  - Floriculture Crops
  - Trees and Shrubs
  - Perennial Plants
- Nursery
  - Growing trees & Shrubs
  - Propagation
- Turf
  - Lawns
  - Golf Courses

Horticulture is a field having great diversity of career possibilities. It appeals to a wide array of interests, ranging from science to art, and from business to teaching. Some of the main attractions toward horticulture are the lifestyle, the camaraderie, and of course the beauty of individual plant specimens as well as the elegance created in a garden scene. There is a growing demand for landscape material, fresh flowers, and nutritious, tasty fruits and vegetables. As a result, horticulture jobs are increasingly available.

There are opportunities related to plant production, conservation of natural resources, parks and recreation, beautification of residential and commercial landscapes, and restoration and maintenance of public gardens and arboreta.

A large percentage of nursery growers in Minnesota are independent small businesses; As of 2000, independents numbered 70% of the 7500 certified nursery growers and dealers in the state. This is good news if you have an entrepreneurial slant.

Whether they are driven by an appreciation of beauty, or an interest in scientific research, or a talent for business management, horticulturists find a broad range of career choices. During a typical day, the professional might contribute to any combination of the following activities.

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PowerPoint Slide 6: Retail Garden Centers

Trees, Shrubs and Plants

Supplies and Equipment

Services Available

Professional Advice

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PowerPoint Slide 7: Education and Research

- University of Minnesota College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Sciences

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PowerPoint Slide 8-9: Landscape Design, Construction and Maintenance

- Minnesota Community and Technical Colleges
- Landscape & Design Programs
- Landscape Design Company
- MNSCU College Plant Science Programs

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Time Check: PowerPoint half-way mark.

- You should be about 10 minutes into this presentation.

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PowerPoint Slide 10: How Do I learn about Green Industries

- Courses – Plant & Soil Science, Landscape Design, Agribusiness & Leadership
- Supervised Agriculture Experience – Internships, hands on experience
- Competitive Career Development Events

The horticultural professional employs people from a wide variety of educational backgrounds. Depending on your career goals, you would enjoy educational opportunities ranging from half-day classes at a nearby arboretum, to certification programs, to junior colleges, to universities and post-graduate programs.

### **Seek Guidance**

If you are interested in a career in horticulture, begin discussions with your guidance counselor. Ask if there are any career assessment tests that you can take, such as the “Birkman First Look”. Such an assessment is a valuable tool in self-discovery, to help guide you toward appropriate career choices, and to pinpoint specific job tasks that interest you.

If any relatives or friends of the family are employed in the field, meet with them to learn more about the typical work day and the opportunities available. Go to your local garden center at a time when business is less hectic, and interview the salesperson or manager to see how they like the profession. Examine the cons as well as the pros of the horticultural field; the appeal of working outdoors has another side, since work continues not only in pleasant weather but also when it's rainy, muddy and extremely hot or cold. Many jobs can be exhausting.

From all your advisors, whether guidance counselors or acquaintances in the business, gather advice on which education path is most appropriate, so you can determine the most appropriate school and the most appropriate certificate or degree to pursue.

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PowerPoint Slide 11: Education Path (continued)

Try It Out

- Summer jobs
- Internships
- Volunteering

### Try It Out

You can test the waters with summer jobs, internships, and volunteering. Consider searching for a summer job with a nursery, flower shop, county park, arboretum, or landscape design-build firm. Consider searching for internships. One way to identify internship opportunities is to become a student member of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta; visit the website at <http://www.aabga.org> and click on the link "Membership" to learn about two membership options for students; as a student member you can access an extensive list of internship opportunities, with many listings for Minnesota. A much smaller number of internship opportunities can be found if you visit <http://www.hortjobs.com/> and follow the link for "Internships". A third way to test the waters is to volunteer in public gardens, arboreta, and in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). A CSA is a farm that has customers who subscribe for a full growing season to come pick up produce at the farm. Many interns and volunteers are involved in farm operations; locate a CSA near you by running a search on "Community Supported Agriculture" in your web search engine. To find a list of botanical gardens and arboreta in your vicinity, visit <http://www.aabga.org> and click on the link "Public Gardens". Near the bottom of the page you'll find the Search criteria; just use the pull-down menu to find "Minnesota", then click the Search button.

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PowerPoint Slide 12: Education Path (continued)

- Non-Degree Programs Industry & Evening Programs
- High School Agriculture and FFA
- Associate's Degree – Community Colleges
- Bachelor's Degree- Colleges and Universities
- Master's Degree – Colleges and Universities
- Ph. D. Degree - Universities

### **Non-Degree Programs**

Whether or not you pursue any of the options below under “Degree Programs” and “Certificate Programs”, you may wish to register for classes in various arboreta and public gardens.

### **High School**

Several entry-level jobs are available for high school graduates, particularly in the fields of landscaping and turf grass management. For these positions, the training takes place on the job.

### **Degree Programs**

For positions in management and more technical areas, many employers prefer job candidates who've earned an associate's degree in applied science. Yet, many nursery and landscape managers acquire skills on the job, and advance as their knowledge grows. Other managers bring to horticulture the job skills they acquired while preparing for or working in a different career.

*Associate's Degree* - Two-year associate degree programs are available at a number of junior and community colleges, as well as some other schools. Technical courses there will apply directly to careers and often include hands-on experience and training in the field. Two-year programs tend to involve lower costs and more flexible schedules.

*Bachelor's Degree* - Bachelor's degree programs at four-year universities and colleges offer broader educational experiences and more thorough preparation for a career path. Specialty areas offer deeper experiences in disciplines such as nursery and landscape management, design, agricultural and plant sciences, and business courses.

*Master's Degree* – A Master's Degree can offer even broader career opportunities, such as teaching at the university level.

*Ph. D. Degree* – Advanced positions in research and teaching are open to those who have earned a Ph. D. degree.

For a description of Minnesota schools offering programs in horticulture, go to the home page for Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association, at <http://www.Landlovers.biz> . On the left, click the link for “Resources” and proceed to the page marked “Student Center”.

For a list of 71 Land-Grant university departments across the United States, visit <http://www.ashs.org/colleges/index.html>.

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### PowerPoint Slide 13: Minnesota Certification Programs

#### Certification Programs

- Certified Landscape Professional (CLP)
- Certified Landscape Technician (CLT)
- Minnesota Pesticide Applicator Certification
- Others

#### **Certificate Programs**

*Minnesota Certified Landscape Professional (CLP)* - One of your objectives may be to become a Minnesota Certified Landscape Professional. The program is a formal path for the landscape or nursery professional to obtain training, testing, and certification in order to gain professional credibility. After certification, you’ll have to complete three credits in approved educational programs within a one-year period in order to maintain your certification.

*Certified Landscape Technician (CLT)* – If you become a landscape professional, you may wish to become certified through a nationally recognized testing program developed by the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) and administered in Minnesota by the Minnesota Landscape & Nursery Association (MNLA). The exam consists of written and hands-on components. A CLT has acquired the accepted standard of excellence in landscape installation, landscape maintenance, or irrigation.

*Minnesota Pesticide Applicator Certification* – For exam information and schedules, fact sheets, publications, and educational materials.

**Others** - Other certificate programs are available???