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Co-op Corner: D&C Vander Zaag Farms

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D&C Vander Zaag Farms was created after Harry Jacob Vander Zaag came to Canada from Holland to take on a farming opportunity in the Alliston area.

After years of potato farming in Alliston the farm became known as HJ Vander Zaag Farms and was later bought by his two sons Homer and David.

Homer and Dave later bought a potato dealership together. After many years of working together and purchasing and farming land in Melancthon and Alliston, the Vander Zaag's decided that it was best to split up and run separately. The farm in Melancthon became known as D&C Vander Zaag Farms. D&C mainly farms potatoes but other crops include wheat, barley, and canola. The farm is run by David's son Adam Vander Zaag (Farm Manager), along with many others like Ron Breadner, Marc Coe, and James Hoover.

My job title is currently a Shop Hand which means that I shadow the mechanic in the shop (James Hoover).

We work on and repair all the potato trucks for harvest and also many other small machines like pumps for irrigation, generators, servicing chainsaws and weed eaters.

James and I take care of the irrigation program which means we setup and maintain all the pivots, and we also run them when crops need watering.

Some special equipment we use a lot on the farm is the potato harvesting machines including the harvesters and windrowers, as well as skid steers and potato pilers a lot on the farm. They have trained me to use a forklift, skid steer, different tractor applications, and even a little on how to drive a tractor trailer.

Since I started at the farm I have learned of many jobs that have to do with agriculture. You can be an Agricultural Technician and work full time on, service, and repair all types of equipment such as tractors, combines, harvesters, windrowers, and skid steers.

Another occupation is a salesman for agricultural equipment. In this career you sell new and used equipment to farms across the province, as well as showing the customer how features work on the piece of equipment.

Another job you can pursue in the agricultural industry is an equipment operator. People in this career run all of the farming equipment throughout the year in planting and harvest and other small jobs all year long. Some equipment you may run on a farm is combines, tractors with tillage equipment, and planters pulled by tractors.

Another related career would be truck driver, hauling loads of new equipment or livestock. This does require an AZ license for tractor trailers. Overall, there are many job opportunities in the farming industry.

D&C has had quite a few co-op students throughout the years. They have an amazing facility with very supportive co-workers and great learning opportunities. They train and show you how to use everything and the work you do is always funand safe.

Overall D&C Vander Zaag Farms is one of the best places you can work as a co-op to learn a lot and have fun.