

## What does it take to become an **AGRICULTURAL TECHNICIAN?**

Agricultural technicians typically work on commercial farms and entities. Other than supporting the day-to-day farming operations and taking care of important functions such as maintenance and safety, they add further value towards improving overall farming productivity. They evaluate how the environment impacts farming in order to help improve overall farming operations. To do this, they conduct experiments, collect and analyse data and prepare reports based on their findings.

### **Skills & Knowledge**

Agricultural technicians' duties can vary across the job market, depending on whether they work in crop production or animal husbandry. Generally, technicians need to know how to maintain research, field and chemical application equipment. They often need to be able to operate vehicles or other motorized equipment and should have knowledge of procedures used in farming and land preparation. An agricultural technician has a well-rounded skill set that includes a knowledge of farming operations, the ability to maintain industry equipment and an awareness of various farming procedures. They also need to have excellent communication skills, be able to diligently record data for reports and be willing to carry out physical tasks, sometimes in inclement weather.

### **Training**

Training is offered at registered training institutions. Many technicians need on top of a regular driver's license, further licenses and training to operate specialised and often heavy farming machinery, such as tractors and harvesters. Prospecting employers prefer employees who demonstrate own initiative. Amassing practical and industry experience is of utmost importance in building resumes.

### **Working Conditions**

Despite the weather conditions, the work often involves some physical labor in addition to writing reports that accurately record information conducted from research readings and operations. Technicians may set up the feeding of plants and crops on a range, as well as maintain their inventory levels through purchasing chemicals, seeds and supplies required for use in their work. It is often necessary for them to be able to sterilize and clean equipment used in labs for the tests that they conduct.

### **Job Prospects**

As a priority growth sector, the agriculture sector continues to gain prominence and the need for skilled and qualified technicians continues to grow. Greenscheme projects countrywide employ qualified technicians, who can articulate into further and relevant qualifications. Postsecondary coursework for this field can include topics in animal genetics and nutrition, laboratory methods and machinery used in agriculture, whereafter lecturing and offering training in this field become viable career prospects for qualification holders. You too can live your passion and qualify as an Agricultural Technician. If you are detail-oriented, physically fit and strong and possess strong problem-solving skills, you are a good candidate.

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