



Lesson 6 of 8

Careers with Plants: Sales, Service and Support

Created: 06/2025 by the National FFA Organization

Description of Lesson: *In this lesson, students will explore the key roles of sales, service and support in the plant science industry. Through group activities, role-playing and real-world scenarios, they'll learn how these careers contribute to agriculture. Students will also practice essential skills like communication and problem-solving while reflecting on the skills needed for success in these fields. By the end of the lesson, students will understand how these roles work together to support farmers and companies like Syngenta.*

Student Learning Objectives:

After completing these activities, students will ...

1. Understand the roles of sales, service and support within the plant science industry.
2. Identify skills needed for careers in sales, service and support and how these contribute to the agricultural value chain.

Suggested Grade Level:

Grades 9 and 10 (This lesson is written so instructors can scale up or down based on class needs.)

Suggested Time: 60 minutes (*Time requirements may vary based upon student understanding and class schedule.)

Resources/References:

1. Website: AgExplorer (2023), AgExplorer.FFA.org
2. Website: Syngenta, <https://www.syngenta.com/>

Related Resources:

1. AgExplorer Implementation Guide, <https://FFA.box.com/s/w3o6ep5l2509qtw1fsgrkc7l8o3d143m>
2. Who is Syngenta? <https://FFA.box.com/s/rnlaabyi6ndcils1lmp4x4ewk340j>

Equipment and Supplies Needed:

1. A copy of the "Sales, Service and Support Showdown" worksheet for each student.
2. A copy of the "[Career Role Posters](#)" printed out and hung up around the room.

Vocabulary:

1. Agronomist
2. Plant Systems
3. Sales Representative
4. Supply Chain

Cross-Curricular Connections:

English/Language Arts

- Research careers and the role they play.
- Write a podcast script to explain a career.

Name: _____

SAE and FFA Connections

1. Agronomy CDE, [FFA.org/participate/cdes/agronomy/](https://ffa.org/participate/cdes/agronomy/)
2. Floriculture CDE, [FFA.org/participate/cdes/floriculture/](https://ffa.org/participate/cdes/floriculture/)
3. Nursery/Landscape CDE, [FFA.org/participate/cdes/nursery-landscape/](https://ffa.org/participate/cdes/nursery-landscape/)
4. SAE Idea Cards, <https://ffa.box.com/v/saeideacards>

Student Activity Sheets:

Direct access to student activity sheets without lesson plan or answer key for easy upload to a learning management system or printing for classwork.

<https://ffa.box.com/s/hvbi0ujaw03xnj9bu5f2cz0fnm124n4z> (Word)

<https://ffa.box.com/s/olvj2gp1bmjsrarfuwfvye8xjlimmp7z> (PDF)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1veMYcYlx9JYEINIRYdKRrXpJgvqzI7PzIZqPYtrrOu4/copy> (Google)

These Activities Are Aligned to the Following Standards:

FFA Precept

- FFA.PL-A.Action: Assume responsibility and take the necessary steps to achieve the desired results, no matter what the goal or task at hand.
- FFA.PL-C.Vision: Visualize the future and how to get there.
- FFA.PL-E.Awareness: Understand personal vision, mission and goals.
- FFA.PL-F.Continuous Improvement: Accept responsibility for learning and personal growth.
- FFA.PG-I.Professional Growth: Assume responsibility for attaining and improving upon the skills needed for career success.
- FFA.PG-J.Mental Growth: Embrace cognitive and intellectual development relative to reasoning, thinking and coping.
- FFA.CS-M.Communication: Effectively interact with others in personal and professional settings.
- FFA.CS-N.Decision Making: Analyze a situation and execute an appropriate course of action.

AFNR Cluster Skills

- CS.05. Describe career opportunities and means to achieve those opportunities in each of the Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources career pathways.

Common Core – Speaking and Listening

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.

Common Core – Science & Technical Subjects

- AG5 Describe career opportunities and means to achieve those opportunities in each of the Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources Career Pathways.

AFNR Career Ready Practices

- CRP.04. Communicate clearly, effectively, and with reason. Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal and/or visual methods.
- CRP.07. Employ valid and reliable research strategies. Career-ready individuals are discerning in accepting and using new information to make decisions, change practices or inform strategies.
- CRP.08. Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. Career-ready individuals readily recognize problems in the workplace, understand the nature of the problem, and devise effective plans to solve the problem.
- CRP.10. Plan education and career path aligned to personal goals. Career-ready individuals take personal ownership of their own educational and career goals, and they regularly act on a plan to attain these goals.

Partnership for 21st Century Skills

- Communication
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Initiative and Self-direction
- Leadership and Responsibility

Name: _____

Lesson Plan:

1. **Bell Ringer:** Imagine you are heading to the local greenhouse to purchase a new plant for a friend's birthday, but you have no idea which plant would be best. You approach the greenhouse worker to get help. What type of help do you expect to receive? How do you expect to be greeted?
2. **Introduction:** *Sales, service and support roles are crucial in the plant science industry. Without these careers, products wouldn't reach their full potential. In this lesson, we'll break down these roles and explore what skills are needed to succeed in each.*
3. **Activity:** Each student needs a copy of the worksheet "Sales, Service and Support Showdown."
 - a. **Part 1:** Warm-Up: "Sales, Service or Support?"
 - Start with a quick, interactive quiz where students guess whether specific tasks belong to sales, service or support roles in plant science.
 - After each scenario, ask students to briefly explain why they chose the role they did and the correct answer.
 - b. **Part 2:** Exploration Stations
 - Divide the class into three groups. If you have larger class sizes, print off multiple of the same poster to hang up around the room. Each group will rotate through three stations, each focused on sales, service and support roles.
 - After 10 minutes at each station, groups rotate to the next station.
 - They should complete the student worksheet at each station.
 - c. **Part 3:** Reflection
 - Instruct students to complete the reflection questions.
 - When done, they will choose one of the reflection prompts and complete the activity.
4. **Optional – Extended Learning Opportunities (Not factored into time requirement):**
 - a. Assign students to research and present on how a major agricultural company handles sales, service and customer support.
5. **Exit Ticket:** If you had to choose, which career would you prefer: Sales, Service or Support? Why?

Name: _____

Sales, Service and Support Showdown

Part 1

Directions:

Directions: Read each task below and decide whether it belongs to a sales, service or support role. Circle your answer, then explain your reasoning.

- 1) A farmer wants to buy a new crop product. You explain which option fits the farmer's needs best.

(Sales | Service | Support)

Why?

- 2) A product doesn't seem to be working in the field, and you go out to troubleshoot the problem.

(Sales | Service | Support)

Why?

- 3) The customer is angry because the delivery is late. You help the customer calm down and find a solution.

(Sales | Service | Support)

Why?

- 4) You're at a trade show answering questions about a new planting system.

(Sales | Service | Support)

Why?

- 5) You get a call from a farmer needing help installing a product.

(Sales | Service | Support)

Why?

- 6) A farmer asks for help setting up a mobile farming app. You walk the farmer through it.

(Sales | Service | Support)

Why?

- 7) What is the difference between sales, service and support careers?

Name: _____

Part 2

Directions:

You will rotate through three stations: Sales, Service and Support. At each station, work with your group to complete the prompts below. You have 10 minutes per station.

Sales Station

Career Focus: Sales Representative

What does a sales representative do?

What skills are most important when explaining a new product?

What would you do if a customer was unsure about switching to a new product?

What is one challenge a sales representative might face?

Soundtrack for a Day in the Field:

Choose three songs and explain how each one fits a different part of the day.

1.

2.

3.

Name: _____

Service Station

Career Focus: Agronomic Service Representative

What three skills are important for this role?

-
-
-

What would a technician or agronomist do to help the farmer?

What types of problems might an agronomist solve?

What about this career interests you?

"What's in My Bag?" Character Sketch

Create a backpack of what this role carries on a daily basis. Include tools, traits, snacks, paperwork and one symbolic item. Label and explain each. Include at least five items.

Name: _____

Support Station

Career Focus: Customer Service Specialist

What does a customer service specialist do in the plant industry?

What is one tool (phone, email, website) a support specialist might use, and how would they use it?

Why is good communication especially important in customer service?

How does this career support the Plant Systems industry?

Meme Reaction Library

Create a meme that represents this role's daily moments (e.g., "when the farmer says it worked perfectly" or "when a delivery is late"). Add captions explaining the emotions. Include at least two memes.

Name: _____

Part 3

Directions:

Answer the following questions based on your experience rotating through the career stations. When done, choose one of the reflection prompts below.

1. What career role did you connect with the most during this lesson? Why?
2. What was the most surprising or interesting thing you learned about how these careers support farmers?
3. How do these roles work together to help solve agricultural challenges?
4. Which three skills (empathy, problem-solving, communication, science, etc.) did you see as most important across all careers?

Reflection Prompts: Choose **one** of the following creative prompts and complete it on a separate sheet or in digital format:

- **Podcast Clip Script:** Write the script for a one-minute student podcast where you summarize what you learned and how a career in Plant Systems might fit into your future.
- **Career Vision Poster:** Design a poster or slide that shows how your strengths (skills, interests, personality) could be used in one of the careers you learned about.
- **Letter to Future Me:** Write a letter to yourself five years from now. Reflect on this lesson and imagine how what you learned could impact your future job, community or goals.



Name: _____

KEY: Sales, Service and Support Showdown

Part 1

Directions:

Directions: Read each task below and decide whether it belongs to a Sales, Service or Support role. Circle your answer, then explain your reasoning.

1. A farmer wants to buy a new crop product. You explain which option fits the farmer's needs best.
(Sales | Service | Support)

Why?

Answers will vary.

2. A product doesn't seem to be working in the field, and you go out to troubleshoot the problem.
(Sales | Service | Support)

Why?

Answers will vary.

3. The customer is angry because the delivery is late. You help the customer calm down and find a solution.
(Sales | Service | Support)

Why?

Answers will vary.

4. You're at a trade show answering questions about a new planting system.
(Sales | Service | Support)

Why?

Answers will vary.

5. You get a call from a farmer needing help installing a product.
(Sales | Service | Support)

Why?

Answers will vary.

6. A farmer asks for help setting up a mobile farming app. You walk the farmer through it.
(Sales | Service | Support)

Why?

Answers will vary.

7. What is the difference between sales, service and support careers?

Answers will vary.

Name: _____

Part 2

Directions:

Directions: You will rotate through three stations: Sales, Service and Support. At each station, work with your group to complete the prompts below. You have 10 minutes per station.

Sales Station

Career Focus: Sales Representative

What does a sales representative do?

Answers will vary.

What skills are most important when explaining a new product?

Answers will vary.

What would you do if a customer was unsure about switching to a new product?

Answers will vary.

What is one challenge a sales representative might face?

Answers will vary.

Soundtrack for a Day in the Field:

Choose three songs and explain how each one fits a different part of the day.

Answers will vary.

Name: _____

Service Station

Career Focus: Agronomic Service Representative

What three skills are important for this role?

- Answers will vary.
- Answers will vary.
- Answers will vary.

What would a technician or agronomist do to help the farmer?

Answers will vary.

What types of problems might an agronomist solve?

Answers will vary.

What about this career interests you?

Answers will vary.

"What's in My Bag?" Character Sketch

Create a backpack of what this role carries on a daily basis. Include tools, traits, snacks, paperwork and one symbolic item. Label and explain each. Include at least five items.

Answers will vary.

Name: _____

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Career Focus: Customer Service Specialist

What does a customer service specialist do in the plant industry?

Answers will vary.

What is one tool (phone, email, website) a support specialist might use, and how would they use it?

Answers will vary.

Why is good communication especially important in customer service?

Answers will vary.

How does this career support the Plant Systems industry?

Answers will vary.

Meme Reaction Library

Create a meme that represents this role's daily moments (e.g., "when the farmer says it worked perfectly" or "when a delivery is late"). Add captions explaining the emotions. Include at least two memes.

Answers will vary.

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Answers will vary.

2. What was the most surprising or interesting thing you learned about how these careers support farmers?

Answers will vary.

3. How do these roles work together to help solve agricultural challenges?

Answers will vary.

4. Which three skills (empathy, problem-solving, communication, science, etc.) did you see as most important across all careers?

Answers will vary.

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