



1 THING LEADS TO ANOTHER

**A ONE-TIME AGRICULTURE
NEWBIE FINDS HIS
FUTURE IN FFA.**

**STORY BY JESSICA WALKER BOEHM
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RUSSELL GRAVES**

Terren Moore in his
Winona, Texas, field
with a bushel of zipper
cream peas.





Left: Moore has a laugh in the field with his cousin, Nathan. “He has helped me a lot on the farm,” Moore says. Above: Moore harvests a purple hull pea by hand, as he does with all of his produce.

WHEN TERREN MOORE SIGNED UP FOR AN AGRICULTURE COURSE TO FULFILL HIS HIGH SCHOOL'S ELECTIVE REQUIREMENT AS A FRESHMAN IN 2010, HE HAD NO IDEA THAT DECISION WOULD CHANGE HIS LIFE.

“I didn’t have much experience in agriculture at the time,” says Moore, who attended Winona High School in the small community of Winona, Texas. “I just went to class every day, did what my teacher told me to do and hoped for the best. I was definitely out of my element.”

Despite his lack of experience, Moore’s agriculture teacher signed him up to participate in a local farm skills demonstration, and the rest, as they say, is history.

“I gave it a shot and I did pretty well,” Moore says. “I decided I liked this ag thing and wanted to see where it might take me.”

CULTIVATING AN FFA JOURNEY

Moore went on to compete in career development events (CDE) in live-

stock judging and agricultural mechanics, and during his junior and senior years, he participated in radio broadcasting CDE contests. In 2012, he advanced to the state-level competition.

In addition, Moore completed supervised agricultural experience (SAE) programs, during which he showed livestock.

Along with playing drums in the school band and running track, Moore served as his chapter’s treasurer during his sophomore year, and he was elected secretary for both his chapter and his district as a junior. He became his chapter’s president during his senior year.

“To become the president after starting out with no agriculture experience, especially as an African-American, was

a humbling experience,” Moore says. “I’m grateful to have had the chance to learn about leadership, because those lessons still help me today. Being a leader in FFA taught me how to stand up and let my voice be heard, and that’s something you can’t learn by reading about it in a book; you have to experience it.”

INSPIRED TO KEEP GOING

Throughout his time in FFA, Moore grew peas in a small garden on his family’s property, where his father formerly farmed, as well. Although he had no experience with production agriculture (aside from driving a tractor), he got his hands dirty and quickly found success.

“After I joined FFA, I felt like I should grow something to be truly involved,” he says. “I didn’t know what I was doing, but I had a great crop my first year, and that inspired me to keep going. I was lucky that everything went correctly. I had plenty of rainfall, no issues with pests and my field was nearly perfect. Because of FFA, I knew what hard work was all about. I knew I wasn’t alone out there sweating in the field because there were lots of other young people doing the same thing.”

“TERREN IS A REMARKABLE YOUNG MAN.”

– CASEY WILLIS, MOORE’S TEACHER AND FFA ADVISOR

INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THE 2018 NEW CENTURY FARMER CONFERENCE?

Application opens on Dec. 15, 2017. Visit FFA.org/newcenturyfarmer for more information.

The New Century Farmer Conference is sponsored by DuPont Pioneer, Case IH, CSX, Farm Credit Services and CHS with media partner *Successful Farming*.

Moore's hands-on experience in the garden piqued his interest in soil health, and to his surprise, his local Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service agent volunteered him to host an event educating seasoned farmers on the topic.

"I hadn't been growing peas for very long, but I shared how growing cover crops could help small-scale farmers improve their operations, and the response was fantastic," Moore says. "It was yet another humbling experience I was able to have because of my participation in FFA and agriculture."

A FUTURE IN AG

After graduating from high school in May 2014, Moore took general education courses at Tyler Junior College in Tyler, Texas, and played in the school's drumline. He graduated with an associate degree in December 2015, and then he moved on to Tarleton State University in Stephenville.

Moore will graduate from Tarleton State in December 2017 with a bachelor of science degree in agriculture services and development with a concentration in agri-industries and agencies. He is interested in pursuing a career as an agent with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Smith County, where he interned in college.

Moore also hopes to continue growing crops and expanding his business, Moore Peas Co., which provides him the opportunity to share his harvest with the Winona County and Smith County communities. He still operates the farm he started in high school that now covers approximately 5 acres. In addition to purple hull peas and cream peas, Moore recently started growing okra.

"I love production agriculture, and I want to keep growing vegetables as long as I can," Moore says.

Although he stays busy, Moore still participates in FFA events when time

allows. For example, he attended the five-day New Century Farmer conference in July 2017 after his high school agriculture teacher and FFA advisor, Casey Willis, encouraged him to apply for the program.

Because of the volume of applicants, Moore was sure he wouldn't get chosen, but Willis believed Moore had what it took.

"Terren is a remarkable young man," Willis says. "I had him as a student during his senior year of high school, and he was heavily involved with agriculture and FFA. When I saw on Facebook the opportunity for him to attend the New Century Farmer conference, I tagged him because I knew it would be a great experience. He is driven and self-motivated, and he always wants to learn more about agriculture. That's why he has been so successful, and it's why he'll be a wonderful asset to the industry during his career."

Moore says he is grateful for FFA and the many lessons he's learned along the way, and he hopes to share his journey with other FFA members in the future. He's already inspired

others, including his cousin, who has also served as the Winona High School FFA president. Willis says her students still look to Moore as an example of what success looks like.

"I'd love to show high school students how to grow crops in a self-sustained garden," Moore says. "In my years of farming, I've learned so much, and I would be honored to pass that knowledge on to other young people." •

Below: One of Moore's customers, Mrs. Jackson, visits the farm to pick up her order of fresh cream peas. Bottom: Moore and his father discuss customers who need to be served that day.

