

Molly Stanavage

Southington High School

Started Teaching in 2019

Livestock Management, Equine Science, Dog Grooming, Introduction to AgriScience



Experience

I began my path to be an agriculture educator with inspiration from my own high school agriculture teachers. I was an active member of the Lebanon Regional FFA chapter and wanted to give back to the Connecticut agricultural community that had done so much for me. Teaching agriculture is how I plan to give back and hopefully make a positive impact in the lives of students.

All of my postsecondary education was done through the University of Connecticut. I attended Ratcliffe Hicks School of Agriculture to earn an associates in Animal Science then transferred into the four year program in the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources to earn my bachelor's in Animal Science. My graduate studies to get my master's in Curriculum and Instruction was completed through the Teacher Certification Program for College Graduates (TCPCG).

For additional background, I grew up on a small backyard hobby farm with a layer chicken flock, vegetable garden and several honey bee hives. Currently, my fiancé and I have a small farm with pasture-based poultry as our center focus with plans to expand down other avenues in the future.

Hobbies

Beekeeping, maple syrup, gardening, horseback riding, regenerative farming, biking, hiking

What is your biggest challenge as an ag teacher?

One of the biggest challenges I had was being afraid of failure. My first year I wanted my lessons to be fantastic all the time. Not even two weeks into the school year I discovered this was not possible. As a teacher, no matter the experience level you have to learn to go with the flow. Have a back up plan, try your best to deal with the unexpected as events unfold and know that due to experimentation and implementing new methods you will not be perfect. The students understand and know you're trying your best, they know you care about them and they are thankful that you are there (even if they don't act like it). Enjoy the daily adventure?

What personal qualities or abilities do you think are important to being successful in this profession?

To be a successful teacher you need to remember F.R.A.P.P.E. Not the drink, but what it can stand for...what qualities a teacher should strive to be: Flexible. Situations can change in an instant and you have to be able to adapt. Reflective. Everything you teach you should take a moment to think of how you can make the experience better for the students and for yourself. Adventurous. Try different ways to deliver a lesson. Change the format, use a different technology, get the kids moving in a unique fashion. Patient. Students will not understand concepts on all occasions you have to take time to go at their pace. Passionate. Only you know if you love doing what you are doing. Enthusiastic. If you enjoy your career you will express this without any effort.