

## New Students Excited About Agriculture Career Options



September 12, 2014: Walking around the Ridgetown Campus, it's easy to meet first year students that are excited about their new learning environment and their possibilities for a future career in the agri-food industry.

For the sixth consecutive year, it's another strong enrolment at OAC's Ridgetown Campus with agriculture diploma program enrolment the largest of all programs. In fact, agriculture students are close to 50% of the total student body of 625 full-time students.

Students in this image shared their future career aspirations during a walk around campus.

**Left to Right - New Students: Cydney Smith, Nick Martin, and Matt van Veen**

**Cydney Smith, from Cardinal**, already has some post-secondary education experience. She's recently moved in to the campus residence and is excited to be at Ridgetown. Cydney comes from a 450-head dairy operation near Ottawa and after her two years at Ridgetown, her dream is to find a rewarding career on a dairy farm, either on the home farm or another dairy operation.

**Nick Martin** grew up on a beef operation on **Manitoulin Island**. He finds the farm land of Chatham-Kent a little flat compared to home, but he's excited to be at Ridgetown and meeting so many folks with a passion for agriculture. After two years at Ridgetown, Nick plans to complete the B.Sc. (Agr.) at the Guelph Campus. After Guelph, Nick wants to gain more knowledge and experience by working on different beef farms in Western Canada or the United States. Nick's long-term goal is to return to the family farm, when the time is right.

**Matt van Veen, of Listowel**, worked as an apprentice trainee and also volunteered in Central America after completing grade 12. Now, one year since high school, Matt has just started his agricultural studies at

*From Communications, University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus*

Ridgetown. Matt has chosen to live off campus and as he settles into the Ridgetown community for the next two years he wants to keep an open mind and investigate his many career options. Right now, he's keen to learn, and to explore careers in dairy genetics or barn construction.

These new students and their classmates exude an enthusiasm for agriculture and are settling into full-time studies and extra-curricular activities including intramural sports, campus clubs and leadership opportunities at Ridgetown Campus.

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