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PRODUCT

DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

AT VILLA CROP PROTECTION

BScAgric (Viticulture & Oenology)

BScHons (Entomology)

MScAgric (Nematology)

PhD (Entomology)

MY STORY

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THIS CAREER PATH?

To be honest - I didn't know what I wanted to study, but whatever it was, I wanted it to include nature and the outdoors. I liked the idea of winemaking (I had a bit of a romanticised idea about it) so I started with that.

The golden thread of the choices I made throughout my academic career was that I was working with a science full of surprises, constant changes and wide open spaces of unknowns still to be discovered.

WHAT PARTICULAR SKILLS, TALENTS AND QUALITIES ARE ESSENTIAL TO BE EFFECTIVE IN YOUR POSITION/CAREER?

A relatively good understanding of statistics and experimental design.



WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU OFFER LEARNERS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN PURSUING THIS CAREER?

Speak to people in the industry and speak to people from various sectors within the industry. Make contacts and start building connections whilst you're at university. The variety of job descriptions in the agricultural field is vast.

WHAT IS THE FUTURE of the field in terms of opportunities?

How technology and data-driven insights are being harnessed to make better decisions: indirectly in my case for the production of food and directly i.t.o managing insect pests. How we will adapt and find ways to control pests, in a more sustainable manner without sacrificing yield by incorporating new tech and data-driven insights, is where the challenge and opportunities lie.

WHAT PART OF THIS CAREER DO YOU PERSONALLY FIND MOST SATISFYING?

That I'm learning something new every day and that I'm working in a science that's literally and figuratively alive.

HIGHLIGHTS

1. RECEIVING MY PHD.
2. MEETING AND MAKING AMAZING CONNECTIONS AND FRIENDS.
3. HAVING BEEN ABLE TO WORK ALL OVER THE COUNTRY IN MY SHORT PROFESSIONAL CAREER.

CHALLENGES

Balancing social and academic life! Working with people who thinks differently from you.
 Being a woman in agriculture still has its challenges as in any other male-dominated industry.
 Stand your ground, make yourself heard, lean in and give your opinion at the discussion table.

WHAT TYPE OF PERSON WOULD ENJOY THIS KIND OF CAREER?

YOU'RE ADAPTABLE - YOU'RE OFTEN DOING THINGS THAT YOUR UNIVERSITY STUDIES DID NOT NECESSARILY PREPARE YOU FOR, BUT YOU WILL BENEFIT FROM LEARNING IT. BE CURIOUS - YES THAT APPLIES TO MOST CAREERS, BUT IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN WHAT YOU'RE DOING, YOU ENJOY WHAT YOU'RE DOING AND YOU USUALLY DO IT BETTER AS WELL.