



Hey there, I'm Cassy England, a farmer from Pinal County, Arizona! My family has been farming here for a really long time, since way back in 1932. It's pretty amazing, right? My great grandfather, Grandpa Albert, was a fantastic cotton farmer who loved trying new things.

When I was a kid, my Papa Don worked at a farm called Ak-Chin Farms. But in the 1990s, he started farming on his own in Eloy, Arizona. I've always loved farming, and I've been out in the fields for as long as I can remember. And you know what's even cooler? My husband Matt now works with me on the farm too! Teamwork makes farming even more fun.

After finishing high school, I went to college to learn about Massage Therapy. But you know what? I missed farming so much that I decided to come back in my twenties and work alongside my awesome Uncle. Together, we have our own farm called Sierra Farming. We grow all sorts of crops like Arizona cotton, winter wheat (durum), barley, corn sometimes, and of course, alfalfa! We make sure to switch things up and plant different crops each season to keep our soil happy and healthy.

Now, let's dive into the exciting world of cotton! We plant it in the spring, usually between March and April. First, we water the fields, and then we carefully plant the cotton seeds in the soft soil. After that, we wait patiently for about 6-8 weeks without watering because the soil needs time to do its magic. But when the time is right, we start watering the cotton every 7-10 days until September. We also give the plants special things, like plant growth regulators, fertilizers, and herbicides, to help them grow strong and healthy. It's like giving them a boost! These things help us get big crops while being smart about using our resources.



Now, let's talk about alfalfa! We plant it in November or December, and it stays in the field for a few years. It's a pretty cool crop. We water it every two weeks and cut it every month from March to October. After we cut it, we make small bales that weigh around 90-100 pounds each. Horses love eating them! In the winter, we sell the alfalfa to a dairy. They chop it up, bag it, and store it for feed. Did you know that alfalfa has really deep roots? Those roots help the plant resist drought and prevent soil erosion. Plus, after growing alfalfa, it leaves behind natural fertilizer for the next crop. Nature is pretty amazing!



Being a farmer is so much fun, and I feel lucky to be a fourth-generation farmer in my family. It's incredible to see how our hard work and love for the land make things grow. I hope you had a great time learning about what we do on our farm!

Farming is super important here in Arizona, especially where we farm in Pinal County and Pima County. Our state has a special climate and soil that make it perfect for growing all sorts of crops, like cotton and alfalfa. Farmers play a big role in providing food and resources for our communities. We make sure that our plates are full, and our bellies are happy!

If you are interested in farming, there are so many cool ways for kids like you to get involved too! You can start by learning about different types of crops and how they grow. Maybe you can even start your own little garden at home with some seeds and soil. It's a great

I look forward to getting to know you all a little better through the questions you have on cotton and farming here in Arizona. Have your teacher send an email with all of your questions to aitc@azfb.org and I will be sure to get you the answers. Hopefully you can join me for a Virtual Tour of my farm Tuesday, November 14th. The tour will be live from 9am-9:45am. If you can't make that time or jump on for the whole time, we will provide your teacher with a link to the videos so you can watch it when it works in your schedule. <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81094781335>

Sincerely,

Cassy

Cassy England