

## Can you introduce yourself and share what drives your passion for agriculture?

I'm Barbu Andra, a 25-year-old agronomist engineer from Romania, proudly representing the third generation of female farmers in my family. I manage our 1500-hectare family vegetable farm. My dedication to agriculture was cultivated from a young age by my grandparents, who instilled in me a deep appreciation for this essential work and nurtured my love and respect for the natural world.

## What challenges have you faced in your career and how did you overcome them?

Driven by a desire to maintain complete oversight of farm operations and employee management, I initially stretched myself too thin, leading to physical and mental exhaustion. Realizing the need to delegate tasks and embrace technology, I invested in fleet-monitoring applications, direct work-recording systems, high-performance equipment, and drones. These tools keep me informed about field activities, ensuring tasks are completed accurately, wherever and whenever they occur.



## What led you to your current role? Was there a defining moment?

I always knew farming was my calling, but two pivotal moments solidified my path. The first was the passing of my grandfather when I was just five years old. Later, at thirteen, my parents divorced, and I realized I needed to support my mother and grandmother even more. What had once been a childhood pastime transformed into a significant responsibility and eventually became a way of life. Growing up immersed in farm life provided invaluable experience, preparing me for the realities - and challenges - of being a farmer.

**Andra Barbu**  
Agronomist Engineer  
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I've often faced condescension in male-dominated business circles due to my youth and gender. However, once I confidently demonstrate my beliefs, knowledge, and capabilities, perceptions begin to shift. Through social media, I aim to reshape the narrative of agriculture into a women's world.

## What advice would you give to women entering your field today?

“ My advice is to always trust your instincts. Women in agriculture are not solely farmers; we are business leaders, engineers, mothers, and wives. This entails significant responsibilities and concerns. Prioritize self-care and nurture your feminine energy, as it's easy to lean too far into masculine traits. Strive for balance to maintain a healthy mind and harmonious relationships, both personally and professionally. ”

## How does your work contribute to the future of agriculture?

I manage agronomic practices, crop technology, and marketing while overseeing operations, supervising teams, and organizing activities. I also step in as a mechanic and machinery operator - an essential farm skill. My 76-year-old grandmother, an accomplished engineer, remains active and an invaluable advisor. With my mother handling finances, I focus on implementing cutting-edge technologies and sustainable practices, reducing fertilizer and pesticide use to minimize our environmental impact—especially vital as soil drought worsens each year.

## Can you share a moment when you felt particularly supported or uplifted by other women in your field?

“ My biggest supporters are my mother and grandmother, who have unwavering faith in my ability to overcome any challenge in agriculture. I'm also part of a nationwide young farmers' community, inspired by like-minded young women. It's rewarding to share a common language and mutual encouragement in such a supportive network. I love being a woman, especially in agriculture! ”