



## The Best Job Ever

**New Jersey may be “The Garden State,” but it’s not usually considered the hotbed of agriculture.**

*Lisa Munniksma*

Wednesday, March 18, 2009

New Jersey may be “The Garden State,” but it’s not usually considered the hotbed of agriculture.

Still, living my first 17 years across the street from the Washington, New Jersey, farm my father grew up on had an impact on my high opinion of agriculture from the very start.

My immediate family wasn’t directly involved with the farm, but I kept a close eye on the animals that came and went.

It wasn’t until I was 13 that I fell in love with any of them—the horses. At that age, of course, I knew I was going to grow up and be a world-famous horse trainer. I thought that would be the best job ever.

My interest in horses led to agriculture classes in high school. I started my ag education with a class on horse care, and after this semester-long taste of the ag program, I wanted more. That led to classes in horticulture, landscape design, aquaculture, ag business and a class that still turns my stomach today: floral design. (I can’t put together a flower arrangement if my life depended on it.)

I remember having more fun in our ag classes and in FFA than probably should’ve been allowed. Among all the growing experiments gone-wrong and way-too-late nights finishing FFA projects, something odd happened. We actually learned a few things about agriculture’s possibilities and, more importantly, about our own possibilities.

My first real taste of writing was as the FFA club reporter.

I remember getting that giddy high after a newspaper would place one of my press releases—something that I’d written actually appearing in print.

That’s where a new idea started. I thought that if I could use my words to tell others about the wonderful things I was discovering about agriculture, that would be the best job ever.

My horse-training dreams were given a strong reality check, but I still have horses, including that first one I got in high school.

This horse—my real start to “farming”—has accompanied me through six states, college and several jobs, each in some form of ag communications.

Now I’m in Lexington, Ky., working on Hobby Farms, a magazine that I’ve admired since its start. And, I can honestly say, this is the best job ever.