

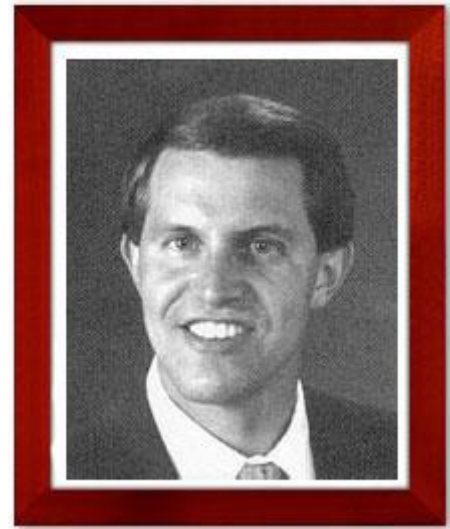
# Mark W. Bitz

**B.S., Agricultural Economics, 1980, Purdue University  
President and General Manager, Plainville Turkey Farm, Inc.**

Learning and Teaching are Lifelong Pursuits

Armed with a bachelor's from Purdue and a master's from Cornell Mark W. Bitz set out to take on the world. For him that means a life of learning and teaching, little of it in classrooms. By day, he's president and general manager of a 500,000-bird turkey farm and related businesses, where one of the company's 10 strategies is "learn, learn, learn."

He's also an avid reader and writer, particularly on practices for living and marriage. "I learn about what is universal and what is particular," Bitz says. "Some of the most critical conflicts in our time are the perspectives that come out of traditional religions versus science. I tried to glean from both some practices for living well and organizing a business, a family, and a culture."



Bitz also opens doors of earning for others. On the job, he developed a 20-week employee training program. Outside of work, he chairs the New York State 4-H Foundation Board and serves in a group at Cornell that is reformulating 4-H programs, both aimed at helping adults spend more time with children.

On the Purdue rowing crew he learned that play, too, has value." What I loved at Purdue was that people have good balance. I learned lots in the classes, and there was time for extracurricular activities. I got fully as much out of those experiences as I did out of the classroom." Today, he teaches that lesson by coaching youth soccer.

Bitz also helped develop and build The Pioneer Experience, a central New York facility replicating yesteryear, and Plainville Farms welcomes thousands of school children for tours each year.

" Usually, if I'm involved in something, it doesn't stay the way it was when I found it," he says. "I like to think I leave it better. For sure, it ends up different."

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| 1980 | B.S., Agricultural Economics<br>Purdue University                 |
| 1981 | Taught English in Poland                                          |
| 1985 | M.S., Cornell University                                          |
| 1984 | Vice President, Plainville Turkey Farm, Inc.                      |
| 1987 | Vice President, and General Manager, Plainville Turkey Farm, Inc. |

- 1987-89 Cornell University, Empire State  
Food and Agriculture Leadership Institute participant
- 1990 President and General Manager, Plainville Farms, Inc.

“ A Purdue field study in Latin America in the late 70s opened my eyes to other cultures and the differences in other countries. It got me thinking about a lot of things, so the next year I went to Western and Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and Scandinavia. From those experiences, I decided to live in Poland for a year and teach English. All of that came from going to Purdue and getting on the Ag Council. And, boy, has it had an impact on my life and thinking. You learn about what is universal and it really stretches you.”