Stories in Pictures

GILBERT S. GUILER
Ohio State University

Computers play an increasingly important part in research in agricultural education. Ralph J. Woodin (right) of The Ohio State University and Warner Nolen, a graduate student, examine a print-out at The Ohio State University Computer Center.

Oregon's three leading industries—agriculture, forestry, and recreational tourism—are depicted in this photograph of the mountains in Central Oregon.

Featuring—
THE IMAGE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN AGRICULTURE
THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE
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EDPRESS

EDITORIALS
Our Image: A Clear or Distorted Reflection?...

The Changing Image of Agricultural Education

The term image is fairly illusive. It can be defined in various ways. One definition—a big difference—is that image is "a mental concept held in common by members of a group and symbolic of a basic attitude and orientation." This definition seems to be applicable to the way it is used with respect to agricultural education or other education programs. People in agricultural education know that it is important how parents, school administrators, educators other than vocational educators, present and former students, and the public generally perceive vocational agriculture programs. Do they perceive these programs as being second class—as a dumping bin for students who may not be succeeding in academic studies (problem youth)? Or, do they hold the image that the students engaged in a study of vocational agriculture is simply following an alternate route to success—respectable, equal and often preferred to the so-called academic or college preparatory route? It makes a difference, for if the former is accepted, and fortunately, more and more people are moving to accept the latter concept.

There is much evidence available to support the position that the image of vocational education in agriculture has changed immensely in the past five years. The change has been dramatic, almost revolutionary, and this can be said of all vocational education.

The great stimulus for change was derived from the Vocational Education Act of 1963. This Act gave new meaning, scope, and status to all of the vocational fields. It made possible for vocational agriculture to modernize its institutional programs; to establish new programs; to build new facilities and to equip them facilities with appropriate teaching equipment; to engage in research and to establish pilot programs; and to hold training institutes for up-grading its personnel. All of these things have helped to improve programs in agricultural education, and thus to improve its image.

Some concrete evidence which suggests that vocational education (Continued on next page)
From the Editor ... 

In our writing and speaking we continue to describe public instruction in agriculture primarily in terms of production agriculture. Following this description we usually append a statement pointing out that instruction in agriculture is also appropriate for persons employed in preparing for employment in agriculturally related off-farm occupations. Those who hold an outdated image of vocational agriculture as education for farming even now do not hear our footnote to the definition. They have heard that they think or desire to be true, so why listen further. We must promote vocational education in agriculture as it should be—education for all occupations in business, industry, and on the farm that involve knowledge and skills in agriculture.

Most cases descriptions of vocational agriculture are accompanied by statements indicating farm youth as the primary group served. Occasionally girls are mentioned as potential enrollees; however, any mention of instruction in agriculture for urban youth is an afterthought. Those who continue to describe the FFA as an organization "of" by, and for boys" do little to enhance, or change, the image of vocational agriculture. This recent announcement of a proposed national Farm, Science, and Employment opportunities in farming and in off-farm agriculturally oriented businesses stated that the project was concerned with occupationally oriented opportunities for "rural youth." Shouldn't we be developing programs for all persons who can benefit from instruction in agriculture whether youth or adults, especially when we believe in the diversity of the goals we desire for others? Similarly, adult and continuing education in agriculture should receive increased emphasis when we describe our program to others.

The image of vocational and technical education held by many persons includes several stereotypes. For example, a popular perception is that vocational education is primarily oriented to persons prepared for a career in vocational agriculture or technical education as terminal schooling for most students. A commonly expressed view is that vocational education is a inferior program for inferior students. Technical education is usually interpreted as education in electronics and engineering related fields. Do these generalizations apply to agriculture?

We must be vigorous in our efforts to point out the unique features of vocational education in agriculture. We must show and tell others that vocational agriculture has not been in the past, nor will it be in the future, limited to skill training. We must make it clear that vocational and technical programs in agriculture attract academically talented as well as those whose primary interest and aptitudes are vocationally oriented. We must emphasize that there is technical education in agriculture. And above all, we can use the value of high school study of agriculture as preparation for further study of agriculture in post-secondary institutions, including colleges and university. Vocational education service can match vocational agriculture in the percentage of its high school graduates who pursue formal education beyond high school. These aspects of vocational agriculture that do not fit a stereotyped image of vocational and technical education should be emphasized in the image we project.

The Task ... To Be A Superior Teacher

FLOYD D. JOHNSON
Teacher of Agriculture
York, South Carolina

Guest Editorial ... 

What are the characteristics of a superior teacher? No attempt will be made to list the traits of a superior teacher in order of importance. Neither will any claim be made that the list is complete. It would seem, however, that the superior teacher's qualities and qualifications would include the following.

He knows his subject matter. He does not pretend to know more than he does. The student can be con

fident about what he does not know. He is interested in pursuing additional knowledge through his own self-education program of personal and professional improvement. He knows enough to command student respect. He learns new things each year than he teaches. He has his new knowledge to improve his teaching.

He is a plan for teaching. He has a daily plan, a weekly plan, a plan for the year, and a long-range plan for at least the number of years agriculture is offered in his school. His plans are flexible but only within the limits of high standards.

He is a thinker and he respects thought. He knows some definite things about thinking and he has the humility of a struggle with truth. He has an ability to stimulate student thinking on the part of students. He immediately grasps the opportunity to improve classroom instruction which might develop as a result of some response from a student. He can interpret facts, patterns, themes in an honest way and one designed to obstruct the teaching-learning process.

He understands and communicates with students. He remembers what it was like to be fifteen. He is interested in his students and their world and he knows their attitudes toward them. He knows his students and their home conditions. He does not betray a student's confidence. He encourages his students to talk to him about their problems. He is fair and firm with his students. Neither does he show partiality. He does not enjoy punishing students but will do so when necessary. He tells students what he stands. He returns graded papers to the students. He gives grades often and helps students understand the grades. He accepts the challenge to assist each student in doing the best work of which he is capable. He has the patience to understand the failures to a minimum. He does not confuse behavior with scholarship. The superior teacher is an educational advisor. He takes a primary concern of the superior teacher.

He is a professional. He belongs and supports his professional organizations. He participates in the activities of the professional organizations. He is first an educator, then a teacher of agriculture. He becomes knowledgeable of the total educational program in his community. He does his part in making the school in which he works a good one. He establishes a harmonious relationship with his co-workers. He might become a bit irritable at red tape and certain regulations, bureaucratic teacher's meetings, committee assignments, some school policies and practices, and differ with some colleagues.

FLOYD D. JOHNSON
President of the American Vocational Association. This article is from an address given by Mr. Johnson to the Agricultural Education Division during the convention of the American Vocational Association in Cleveland, December 1967.

Floyd D. Johnson

on important issues, but he goes along in general with whatever does not violate his principles. He understands that a school's organizational needs, its finances, and its place in the community is a loyal employee.

He knows and compensates for his weaknesses. He is severe with himself. He recognizes that he cannot spell, he keeps a dictionary on his desk. If his discipline is bad, he is working at it tirelessly. He has a vision of teaching that is beyond his present skills, and his integrity is end

less in bridging the gap. He is honest in self evaluation. He does not give up in his attempts to improve on a weakness.

He has a sense of humor. He appreciates the real humor that is essential to human thought. He enjoys a good laugh and permits laughter on the part of students without participating. He discriminates very carefully between humor which is constructive and false humor which is cynical, destructive, and humiliating. He is not easily unctioned or inflamed with his own authority.

He uses resources efficiently. He sup

port of the person who is the most and most up-to-data instructional materials available. He has an effec

(Continued on next page)
A Dynamic Area of Vocational and Technical Education

ELIZABETH J. SIMPSON
University of Illinois

Agricultural education is one of the most dynamic areas of vocational and technical education. The potential for the growth and development of agricultural education is limitless. This chapter responds to the challenges presented today by some of the social problems facing the nation and the world.

Areas of Concern

Production agriculture in the United States remains an area of concern and concentrated attention. There are two hundred million Americans to be fed; this is certainly a challenge. To grow, with a higher level of technical knowledge, fewer persons need to be engaged in production agriculture. But these must be people with the technical know-how and managerial abilities to make use of the expanding knowledge of the field.

We, in the United States, have a responsibility for responding to the needs of the developing countries of the world. In these countries, education for appreciative and acceptance of technological developments for food production and for contributing to the production of a wide variety of crops. We must train the agricultural technicians who can work with and in the developing countries, using what is there, adapting, creating, and originating in order to help solve food problems. Certainly, this poses a problem for agricultural education. And, I submit that the field is only beginning to respond to the challenges inherent in this problem.

New Challenges

The field of agricultural education has many other new challenges, along with its traditional ones:

• the development of cooperatives in occupations related to farming and its related service area
• the development of knowledge and abilities in occupations of a non-farm agriculture-related nature, such as ornamental horticulture, urban park management, small animal laboratory technology, and other applied biological service occupational areas
• the development of cooperatives in the conservation occupational areas, such as forestry and tree services
• the development of cooperatives in such fields as fish farming
• the development of emerging areas such as ocean farming and the harvesting of the vegetation of the sea

Dr. Elizabeth J. Simpson is Acting Chairman, Department of Vocational and Technical Education, University of Illinois. She is the immediate past President of the American Vocational Association.

The Teacher... The Dominant Factor in Determining Image

E. A. COX
Superintendent
Mauzy County Schools
Columbia, Tennessee

The image which one perceives is very apt to be significantly influenced by one's experiences. Since any experiences include four years as a student of vocational agriculture in high school and ten years of teaching vocational agriculture, I will be the representative of administrators. In the event it is not, then this may not be of itself strange. This sort of conflict has made all of us keenly aware of the many differences of opinion prevalent in our midst, and which is capable of deciding just which opinion is the most valid. Despite the lack of agreement among us, the administrator must activate the decision-making process. Consequent to the lack of agreement but not yet readily accepted the idea that they have major responsibility for planning and conducting an educational program really geared to meeting individual differences for all children. Though the image of the teacher of vocational agriculture is a variable one in this regard, it is nevertheless considerably brighter than is the image of many other groups of secondary teachers.

Another part of the image which the writer views is the general utilization of the problem-solving approach to learning in content with which students.

To Be a Superior Teacher (Continued from page 221)

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H. N. Hunsicker (left), Chief of Agricultural Education, U.S. Office of Education, and Floyd D. Johnson, vocational agriculture teachers York, Sth Carolina, were invited to the Interagency Meeting among Facebook of Alpha Zeta. The ceremony was performed during the 1961 convention of the American Vocational Association.

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We need to consider some key questions in light of the "new" vocational education in agriculture before attempting to clue what can be done to improve the image of the FFA.

• Does the image of the FFA need improving?
• Is the FFA promoting agricultural education?
• What can we do as agricultural educators to change FFA activities to match the changing curricula in agricultural occupations?
• How much emphasis should be placed on the FFA?

I shall not attempt to provide the answers to all these questions. But when speaking of the FFA's image, there are many other questions that are pertinent and need immediate consideration. Let me make my position clear, however, by saying that the answer to the first question is a resounding "yes."

Creating a New Image

The image of the FFA must be improved! Most FFA contests are oriented toward competitions, and the philosophy for the FFA is based upon the idea of improving the image of the agricultural programs, but this does not result in a nationally improved image of the program.

There is little need to list the many advantages FFA has provided as an integral part of vocational education. One aspect of the FFA which must be made more clear is that it has helped to encourage many boys who are potential dropouts to stay in school. However, with the emphasis on education for nonfarm agricultural occupations, we should be able to help even more boys and girls.

The Time is Now

We must begin to make changes in the FFA to meet the demands of today's youth. We cannot live on past laurels. There is a two-fold danger if we do nothing: Agricultural occupations will become less attractive, and a second youth organization will emerge for students interested in nonfarm occupations.

Since the enactment of the Vocational Education Act of 1968, an analysis of publicity about vocations in agriculture and FFA would probably show that local schools have not been capitalizing on changing taking place in the vocational agriculture curriculum. The FFA must not only understand these changes but work to keep them positive. It is our responsibility to make sure that you have a thorough grasp of what is going on and to be prepared to deal with it.

In "time" he reasoned, "you've been almost fifty years of program experience to get the message across. How much time does it take?"

"All right then, Fred," I replied, "looking as if I was about to run out of steam in a few minutes, "then you tell me. What is wrong with vocational education?"

What Is Wrong?

I will never forget his answer. The more that I think of it, the more significant and ominous it seems to be. Recently I had the experience of sitting across the desk from a rather distinguished professor at a well-known county superintendent of education as he methodically flagged what he referred to as his "pooped-out program" — vocational agriculture.

"Why the devil is it," he snapped, as he warmed up to his subject, "that you people in vocational agriculture don't have the good sense to realize what is happening to you? Can't you see that you are in trouble? Why just last week I had a practically no boys of my best principals not to phase out their vocational agriculture program."

Acquainted as I was to this type of talk, after having spent a number of years in supervisory and teacher education work as well as having the advantage of being on a first name basis with the superintendent, I forthwith put on my very best paternalistic attitude and said, "Now, Fred, let's be reasonable about this. I am not a he who has a few rough spots here and there in your vocational programs, but to have every student drop out."

"We've just got to work a little harder on some of our fellows, and in time..."

A Scientific Age

Life in a scientific agricultural age demands skills and disciplines not required in the primitive agriculture of only a few years ago. It also depends upon the development of a social character, social responsibility, and political competence. As a practical matter, however, in the life of vocational agriculture, the problem of food and fiber moves up to the head of the line. And not just the production of this food and fiber, but of equal urgency now should be the processing, transportation, and marketing of these products. No vocational agriculture teacher can afford the luxury of resisting innovation by excluding these activities in program planning and execution for space age agriculture.

Certainly, we have passed the point where we can feel comfortable in the adequacy of existing programs, methods, lesson units, and professional preparation. Things must constantly no...
"Agriculture is truly more than farming, and adjusting to this new idea might be your greatest challenge."

To teach sessions that deal with farm problems, you are the corresponding secretary; you provide the meeting and keep the records. 

The Community Needs

What the Community Wants

I think the greatest tragedy in America today is that people don’t really know what they want. Consequently, communities don’t know what they want. As vocational agriculture teachers, school administrators, and school boards try and plan for the future, they must not only ask “what does the community want?” but also “what does the community need?” And here we tread on pretty treacherous ground because what we think we want and what we need are not always the same. And so we have new board members elected, new teachers hired, administrators replaced, and because many are willing to sacrifice prestige, a raise in income or even their job, community change and becomes better places to live, to work, and better places to educate our children.

The program our community wants will be basically similar to that of the counties. We don’t want too much change from what we had when we had to go to school. It was good enough for you, it is good enough for my kids. The community will still want the FFA and an adult farmer class, or Adult Farmer Cooperative, or perhaps a 200-bushel corn club.

What the Community Needs

But what about the program the community needs? This is the challenge of the future. Our high school program must change just as drastically as farming changes. If farming is to be a leader in the next ten years than it has in the past ten years, then our high school program must change as drastically as farming changes. Our government report says by the late nineteen-thirties, 40 per cent of those now farming will have to go out of business and the price for corn will be 85 cents per bushel with other farm products at proportionally lower prices. If this is true, then our high school program will have to be geared almost totally to those students who want to be farmers, and if they want to be farmers, they will keep you up-to-date and on top of agriculture. Have you run out of ideas? Then have a meeting tonight by your local landscaper open to all owners of the community. You’ll have a board of rural-urban days. This is a meeting to bring rural and urban people together to learn. Agriculture is not just a call grown, it is a way of life. You’re going to this one idea might be your greatest challenge.

With all our modernization of programs — production programs, educational programs, vocational programs — there is one challenge and opportunity that stands out from all as we look ahead and try to give the community what it wants — rather what it desperately needs.

There are several attributes that our forefathers had when most of them were farmers and in basically anything else than production agriculture or farming.

We need a "Survey of Agriculture" course so that the guidance counselor can encourage all students to take this course as an elective to acquaint all students and future citizens with this greatest American industry. Our project system must be upgraded and changed to change away with what we suggest. Our program needs to be geared to the needs of the community, not their wants. When advisory boards are selected, include our farmer, one implement dealer, one nurseryman, one banker, one guidance counselor, not five of the old time highly respected farmers of the community.

The Challenge

The real challenge for teachers is in connection with the adult education program. Young farmer programs — for those who have taken the time, effort, and patience to establish them — are among the most rewarding of any teacher’s experience.

These programs have been rather hard to establish and keep going because there are fewer and fewer young farmers. Those that are left are extremely busy. So to attract them is a real challenge, but if you don’t have one going and you are not afraid of the extra work you will have a challenge. If you have a young farmer program, as a young farmer myself I thank you for your interest in us, but I must warn you not to think that because your program is successful that it does not need work.

The day is gone when the vocational agriculture teacher teaches an agricultural education. The modern vocational agriculture teacher, the modern high school vocational student must be creative and think of new answers to new problems every day. Technology in agriculture is so fast it has created a new proverb, "if it works, it is obsolete." Agriculture’s electronic marvels, its newest and most sophisticated machinery, its newest potent chemicals, are all like today’s soybeans — they are obsolete date tomorrow when the next edition comes out.

Reaction to Change

The morning, constantly accelerating progress in agriculture is the reality with which we will spend the rest of our lives. The farmer must not try to stay alive at age thirty or pioneers of age seventy depends on how he reacts to change. Once upon a time, and not too many years ago, experience, middle-age, and a good memory were adequate substitutes for thinking. In today’s world much experience becomes obsolete almost as fast as it is accumulated. The modern farmer, the modern vocational agriculture teacher, the modern high school vocational student must be creative thinking how to think new answers to new problems every day. Technology in agriculture is so fast it has created a new proverb, "if it works, it is obsolete." Agriculture’s electronic marvels, its newest and most sophisticated machinery, its newest potent chemicals, are all like today’s soybeans — they are obsolete date tomorrow when the next edition comes out.

The AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE

Agricultural truly more than farming, and adjusting to this new idea might be your greatest challenge.

A CHARGE TO TEACHERS

If somehow the most important men in agriculture—the vocational agriculture teachers in our high schools—can develop a program that will interest the brilliant as well as the average student in a career in agriculture, if he can make adjustments in his program that will meet the wishes and the needs of the community; if he can accept the fact that agriculture is more than farming and forestry and that idea to his students; and if he can instill in his students the attributes that normally come from close contact with agriculture, then he has truly met the challenges of the future.

Pardon! Your Image is Showing

(Continued from page 225)

Yesterday’s newspaper finds itself relegated to either the archives or the incinerator. Yesterday’s teaching units and methods should face the same alternatives—but do they?

We Must Begin The Campaign

Because of the changing nature of the individual, today’s world of work is in constant flux, and because of its revolutionary implications, we must begin a massive campaign to create a new image for our profession. And I would suggest that the major responsibility in accomplishing this fairly early, the teaching profession must begin to think new answers to new problems every day. Technology in agriculture is so fast it has created a new proverb, "if it works, it is obsolete." Agriculture’s electronic marvels, its newest and most sophisticated machinery, its newest potent chemicals, are all like today’s soybeans — they are obsolete date tomorrow when the next edition comes out.

April 1968

Vocational Agriculture Faces a Challenge

T. Carl Brown, Supervision
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

A few years ago, I saw my friends in agricultural education in the peculiar position of being apologetic for having done an effective job. Agricultural education has earned major credit for the phenomenal reduction of man hours required per unit of production of agricultural comodities. To be sure, other agents such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Land Grant Colleges with experimental farms and extension, and state departments of agriculture did much of the experimental work to improve methods, but credit for the success of this work, knowledge amounts to little until it is implemented and practices are improved on a wide scale. Teachers of vocational agriculture carried the message to millions of boys and parents on farm or in town.

A Decade of Crisis

The decade preceding the passage of the Vocational Education Act of 1963 appeared to be one of crisis for agricultural education. Teachers were threatened by the fact that fewer boys were entering vocational agriculture. An ever smaller percentage of those enrolled in vocational agriculture were going into farming because of closely related agricultural occupations. Leaders in the field recognized the continuous reduction in the percentage of the working population engaged in agriculture and the trend toward farms to families to cities. The trend was threatening to consolidate small schools with a teacher of vocational agriculture in each case resulting in fewer high schools and fewer teaching positions. There were shortages of surplus farm products which could not be marketed or consumed. The Future Farm- ers of America high road was developed and farmed as a way of life. In addition to a means of making a living was advocated very successfully until it became all too apparent that the small farm with little equipment simply could not compete with mechanized farm businesses on a large scale.

With the passage of the Vocational Education Act of 1963, unnecessary handicaps were removed from agricultural education. It was my pleasure to serve as a member of the A.V.A. committee drawing guidelines for this Act and to have a small part in removing those restrictions.

The Future Is Bright

At the present time, I submit that the future is anything but bleak for agricultural education, not even for the farm. The problem of agriculture or rather the people it serves. Listed below are some of the reasons why I believe agricultural education faces a real challenge for improved service in the future rather than elimination or disintegration from the high school.

- Even in this time of high agricultural productivity in this country, the people have largely disappeared, especially surplus foods.
- With the rising world population, alarm over further population explosion, and the accompanying scarcity of food and production of famine, there will be need for far greater production of foods and other basic materials which come from farm, forest, and fisheries.
- In the future, the marketing of food products in order to assure world peace must precede our overemphasis on export of arms.
- The emergence of specialized agricultural occupations demand specialization in agricultural education. Agriculture is becoming more and more specialized rather than being diversified on one hand, at least on a large scale. This places a much greater need upon the teacher and the educational program in the future.

Trend Toward Specialization

The new approach of agricultural educators toward curriculum has been forward looking and innovative. We have seen the emergence of specialized courses on production of swine, poultry, sheep, small grains, and in horticulture, forestry and other fields. One exception in practice is noted. There is no knowledge of the differences between an industrial arts shop and agricultural shop in many schools.

Friction Inexorable

The Vocational Education Act of 1963 strengthened vocational education by providing funds for the expansion, and broadened the challenge of agricultural education. At the same time, the increasing importance of internal reconstruction of agricultural education was emphasized. This has included the farm and requiring farm programs to provide restrictions on discriminatory practices in the farm shop.

Friction Inevitable

The strength and reputation which vocational education has achieved is based primarily on the fact that teachers and administrators have been conducting programs, either by policy or by law, to assure that the programs meet the standards of educational programs for youth whose educational goals require competencies in the agricultural occupations. This has been true in all educational programs. The child and society will be the beneficiaries. Is there any reason for existence of our profession??
Some Ideas About The Image of Vocational Agriculture

BRUCE W. EMANUEL
Vocational Agriculture Teacher
Glenville, New York

Change in vocational agriculture is an emerging force of this decade. The demand for the teacher of agriculture to remain alert and flexible in this contemporary shuffle is essential. Yet, these changes do not have to detract from the panorama of the whole of agricultural education nor do they eliminate our past and present successes. Ours is a success story brought about primarily by the teacher with unprecedented federal funds and curriculums remaining secondary. Perceiving only that our story is not fully understood. This is true. Vocational agriculture is meeting its challenges with great effectiveness and is slowed only by mediocrity of individual standards.

It is blind folly to think that a teacher of agriculture can cast himself in the routine pattern of the other faculty members in his school system. To no program is it more evident that we must do more, not simply in the amount of time spent, but also in the effective use of this time in achieving well defined goals. These must include a favorable projection of our vocational field and the public in general. These five points are to be considered in this projection are the following ideas that, in my opinion, develop continuity and fail students.

Standards of Excellence in the Classroom

First, I feel it is imperative that each teacher maintain a high standard of excellence in the classroom. Unmet stress should be placed on high standards of English and mathematics in teaching agriculture. Once these high standards are established and the students challenged, school administrators and guidance departments will readily allow all students, including those in the high honor groups, to be scheduled for your classes. It sounds trite, I know, but the chief motivating force for these teen-age boys and girls is not teacher personality, but enthusiasm for the subject and pure joy of agriculture. In every aspect of this field we are dealing with one of the most fundamental and truly creative industries in the world. Consistent with these high standards and enthusiasm is presentation of subjects matter to encourage more of what has been taught. Instruction must be handled in such a way that the material will be remembered for future occupational experiences, not simply for final examinations.

Future Farmers of America Organization

Educators whom I hold in the highest esteem have told me time and again that one of the best things we have for going for us are the Future Farmers of America organization. FFA should be a synonym with vocational agriculture education but basically, I feel, it should be kept out of the classroom.

All students in a local program should be dues-paying county, state, and national members. Let this become "in the field of so that the one has no hesitant ninth grade students, who we know will in the future gain much from the organization, will not feel like being negative and reject membership. For the teacher, the FFA is a tremendous educational tool that he can use to provide opportunities for his students to operate at many levels, according to their abilities and needs. The FFA is also dedicated to developing leadership in young men. To retain this fundamental objective of leadership in young men, the FFA can be a major force for those situations for the teacher to develop strong personal relationships between himself, his students, and their parents. Community activities should be an integral influence, too. For example, last year our chapter donated over $100 to worthy organizations. Such projects help our local image, but efforts and results must be communicated.

Public Relations

A well-planned program of public relations will aid in winning public acceptance and support, without which vocational agriculture cannot exist. Publicize the activities of your program through your local newspapers. Stories about new and innovative units will stir public interest in modern vocational agriculture. Use well-planned pictures of students in active learning situations wherever possible.

The FFA plays an important part in your public relations program. FFA awards are available in many areas and provide an important goal for students. The awards recognize hard work to achieve success under a planned program carefully guided by the teacher.

A summary of these opinions is represented by the following statement: "What factors are we and people in the new look for in the program which is geared to assisting young people in becoming better prepared for the vocations in which they earn their livelihoods, then criticism will cease, and enthusiasm will demand all those programs." Although the number of persons contacted was probably not large enough to make the results statistically valid, we believe one can make a safe assumption that the image has really improved greatly within the past few years.

Factors Responsible for Change

What factors are largely responsible for the change in the image?

Needless to say the Vocational Education Act of 1963 provided the legal basis for change. Before this date, Federal regulations had a tendency to stifle efforts to update and redesign programs to meet current and developing needs. The Vocational Education Act of 1963 not only provided the latitude and opportunities long needed by the program, but it also provided the stimulus needed in the form of a great many programs to be continued by other programs in meeting the occupational needs of students. As important as the Vocational Education Act of 1963 might be, we must not overlook the fact that the role of the professional educator is in agriculture realized the need for reorienting the program in many cases and were willing to accept the challenge of developing a program which once again places vocational agriculture at the forefront in vocational education.

What is the image of vocational agriculture? Has it really changed during the past few years? What factors are largely responsible for any change in the image? No doubt these and similar questions are on the minds of all involved in the profession of vocational agriculture.

The Former Image

Chances are that most persons in the profession of vocational agriculture will agree the image of the program was at a low ebb only a few years ago. Probably the image was the worst it had been during the many years of the program. Many, including school administrators, students and lay people, thought of vocational agriculture as a relic of the past and stated it had fulfilled its purpose. They openly stated that since the number of farmers had decreased the program of vocational agriculture was now of minor importance and needed in only a small percentage of our secondary schools. Many school administrators were ready to cut the program and implement other programs they considered to be more suited to the needs of the students.

Other school administrators were more lenient in their programs and were more favorable toward the program as long as the teacher retired or consolidation prevented a more favorable opportunity to change to another program. Still others, and fortunately a minority, realized the importance of vocational agriculture and the role it could play in the curriculum for meeting the educational and vocational needs of the students. Much credit is due these school administrators for the wisdom they provided in helping bring about needed changes in the vocational agriculture program and the creation of a new image.

The New Image

What is the image of vocational agriculture today and how does it differ from the image of a few years ago? The program has returned to first class status with those in North Carolina who are familiar with the course offerings and the flexibility of the program to meet current and developing educational and vocational needs and interests of students. No longer are many school administrators, guidance counselors, teachers and other people who participate in the program as a dumping ground for the problem and disadvantaged students. Instead they see the program as one with definite purposes and objectives no longer limited to teaching production agriculture. They view the program as an essential element in the educational process provided by the public school system for providing trained personnel for employment in the agricultural segment of the economy. Recently a school superintendent in a system that consolidated several of its small high schools into one large high school without solicitation stated that in his opinion the agricultural education program, taught in high school and for which credit will be allowed by any other program in meeting the occupational needs of students. In order to ascertain the thinking of the public and realize the image of vocational agriculture is developing in North Carolina, a sampling of opinions was recently taken among several school superintendents, principals, agricultural business people familiar with the program and students enrolled in agriculture.

A New Image for Vocational Agriculture

V. B. HARR, Supervision
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

BRUCE W. EMANUEL (right), the author of this article, was presented an award for his membership in the American Vocational Association during the 1967 convention in Corvallis, Oregon. Deputy director of educational services for the association, Mr. Emanuel is the vocational agriculture teacher of the 1967 State Farmer of America.

(Continued on page 205)
Perception of Others: An Indication of Our Role

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Business executives, politicians, and others carefully consider the opinions of the public when charting their courses of action. Why shouldn't we consider our public's opinion in developing vocational agriculture programs? As there is no single design or role for vocational agriculture that can be applied on the national level, each state and each local community must through careful study and planning develop an agricultural education program that will meet its needs.

Traditionally, programs in vocational agriculture have been based upon the needs and interests of the people served. This is still the goal in program development. But who are the people to be served and what are their needs and interests? The perceptions of others, particularly those intimately involved, should provide an indication of the role to be assumed by the program.

The article reports the results of a study which had the purpose of comparing the opinions of three groups—school administrators, teachers of agriculture, and lay citizens—concerning the role of vocational agriculture. A basic assumption of the study was that the respondents, groups who were recognized as community leaders and as being knowledgeable of the agricultural educations programs and its needs, could provide an indication of the clientele to be served, their needs and interests, and thus the role of vocational agriculture within the state. Although data were collected within Mississippi only, the study has implications for the succeeding states and other regions as a result of the jury used in developing the instrument used for collecting data.

The sample for the study consisted of 20 percent of all the schools offering vocational agriculture in Mississippi. The schools were selected at random and were stratified to show major differences in situation due to geographical regions or size of school. The respondents consisted of 55 school administrators, 61 vocational agriculture teachers, and 220 members of the lay public. Slightly over 10 percent of the respondents completed and returned questionnaires that indicated the degree of their agreement or disagreement with each of sixty-four statements.

Generally, the respondents indicated more disagreement concerning the high school program than they did concerning the junior or adult programs. However, there was a strong consensus of opinion, indicated by agreement of a large majority of the respondents in all three groups, regarding the role of vocational agriculture.

CLIENTELE

That vocational agriculture must provide programs for and serve off-farm agriculture was supported overwhelmingly by all three groups of respondents. The respondents agreed that some form of agricultural activity, although not necessarily vocational, should be offered at the seventh and eighth grade levels.

While significant differences of opinion existed (most disagreement occurring within the administrator group), a large majority of all respondents agreed that the vocational agriculture program should be open and serve all students regardless of their residential background and/or sex; that separate class should be provided on the basis of academic ability; and that specializations offered should involve instruction which, while somewhat each program, should be as nearly the total vocational agriculture program, taking into consideration the differences of the school as the aspect of the program.

Separate classes of young and adult farmers should be considered as one unit. Out-of-school class or group drives should be made only according to subject interest.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Less disagreement existed among the respondents regarding the instructional program of vocational agriculture in the junior high school level. A strong consensus of opinion indicated that a complete instructional program should be provided in the five years of instruction. However, the majority of the respondents supported the position that the instructional program should consist of at least five-fourths of instruction, be based on a state-wide core of subject matter and content adapted to local agricultural needs, interests, and be broad enough to prepare students for entry into several agricultural occupations.

The first year of instruction should be exploratory or general in nature and include basic instruction in plant, animal, and soil science, and agricultural education. The second and succeeding years of instruction should be in one or more specialized areas.

ORGANIZATIONS

It was agreed by a majority of all respondents that the FFA should be an integral part of the instructional program, should be involved throughout the total educational experience of the student and should be continued after graduation. The state and national organizations, particularly in the lay public and vocational agriculture teacher groups of respondents, the majority of all respondents agreed that the name of the FFA should be changed to a name that is more descriptive of the total vocational agriculture program, taking into consideration the differences of the school as the aspect of the program.

Separate classes of young and adult farmers should be considered as one unit. Out-of-school class or group drives should be made only according to subject interest.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Less disagreement existed among the respondents regarding the instructional program of vocational agriculture in the senior high school level. A strong consensus of opinion indicated that a complete instructional program should be provided in the five years of instruction. However, the majority of the respondents supported the position that the instructional program should consist of at least five-fourths of instruction, be based on a state-wide core of subject matter and content adapted to local agricultural needs, interests, and be broad enough to prepare students for entry into several agricultural occupations.

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By way of summary, it was the opinion of the respondents that agriculture should be offered at the seventh and eighth grade level. However, the respondents believed age fourteen or the ninth grade to be most appropriate for beginning students of vocational agriculture.

Adult education, on-job instruction, and other special activities received strong support from the respondents. They suggested that teachers should have some released time for on-job instruction and supervision of both in-school and out-of-school student activities. The program should be considered as part of the teacher's regular load.

The use of an advisory committee in program planning and development, the submission to school authorities of a yearly planned program of work, and either a daily or weekly travel agenda for the time spent in on-job instruction and supervision was deemed essential by the respondents.

A FINAL WORD

For a program to have the full support of the citizens of a community, area, state, or nation, it must meet the requirements of the students. The perceptions of others, particularly those intimately involved, should be carefully analyzed and considered when developing programs.
There is evidence that the image of vocational education in agriculture is not satisfactory. Too many are critical of the program. The reasons for this situation are not known. It must be recognized, however, that people learn vocational agriculture by what they have experienced it to be through observation and participation. In some cases the poor image may be due to inferior programs or inadequate information. Undoubtedly, bias and prejudice enter into judgments and conclusions made.

Personnel in the profession have been guilty in not telling the story of vocational agriculture. We have limited too much of our communication about the program and new developments to ourselves. We have been negligent in securing, analyzing, and disseminating reports to the lay public and particularly to decision and policy making groups. It isn't any wonder that people have not been told and written about vocational agriculture is offensive or uncompromising.

INACCURATE INTERPRETATION

Recently, the writer noted statements in two publications of national scope and significance that were undesirable interpretations and observations about vocational agriculture. The publication, The People Left Behind, a book published by the National Commission on Rural Poverty, was published September 1967. The following two paragraphs in the summary section:

Some of our rural programs especially farm vocational agriculture programs are still reeking from an earlier era. They were developed in a period during which emphasis was placed upon the well being of rural communities and of all rural people. This no longer is so.

The Student Guide

A vocational agriculture department must justify itself also by its enrollment. In most school systems, low enrollment is regarded by the administration and taxation as providing very expensive education in terms of per pupil cost. The question will be raised as to whether or not special programs and policies indicate a general lack of interest in the course. Talk with eighth graders informing them of the courses of study and opportunities available. Become acquainted with students interested in agriculture, and through talking with them and their parents, counsel individuals to follow this interest through high school vocational agriculture courses. Report with the guidance counselor is essential in this area. Remember that the only requisite for admission of a high school student is his sincere interest in agriculture.

Interrelated with this is an awareness by the teacher of exactly what opportunities are available for his graduates. The teacher should have a strong feeling of responsibility for each student taking his courses concerning placement occupations and future guidance for enrolling in college. A recent study estimated that there would be 4,800 jobs available in off-farm agricultural occupations in New York state each year in the foreseeable future. Presently when high school agriculture cannot begin to meet this demand.

The study also pointed out that there is a wealth of different occupational families that involve knowledge in agriculture. I am convinced that more information on such study have stronger convictions and greater enthusiasm for their programs.

Record of Accomplishments

The results of follow-up surveys of graduates are important because they show that vocational agriculture produces young people for whom there is a demand in the agricultural world. How many other fields of education can claim records as outstanding as ours? And, more important, how many agriculture teachers are aware of these records? Many of our students are communicating with the public.

In my own school, 46 per cent of the vocational agriculture students over a six-year period are employed on farms or in related occupations; 26 per cent attend full-time school after graduation, with all but two of these continuing their studies in the agricultural field. In the last two years Greenfield's agriculture department has had over 90 per cent of our graduates affiliated with some phase of agriculture.

A follow-up study of 4,578 boys and girls in the state would show 76 per cent of agriculture graduates from 250 schools in New York state from 1964 to 1966 revealed that only 4 per cent were unemployed. (Continued on page 238)

CREATING THE CORRECT IMAGE

Something must be done by the profession to keep create a correct image of vocational education. This is a national, state, and local problem. Everyone engaged in the profession should be involved. There is no one best way; however, it appears that leadership and coordination are needed at the national level in collecting, analyzing, and disseminating appropriate information concerning our programs and their students. Much as the U.S. Office of Education does not have the necessary resources to accomplish this task, the American Vocational Association must assume this responsibility. A start has been made through Operation Impact. Complete local committees have not been helped enough in articulating and communicating their programs in a complete and effective manner. Some of our resources should be used for this important task.
MODERN PROGRAMS—MODERN IMAGE

J. DAVID McCRACKEN, Vocational Agriculture Teacher
and
DAN MALLARO, Guidance Counselor
Charles City, Iowa

Never before in history have farmers substituted capital for labor as rapidly as we presently observe. Implications of this trend will affect all agencies dealing with the rural segment of our economy. When one recognizes the intensive farming practices and labor employed, it is obvious that those involved in industries which are a function of agriculture business will continue to increase even as the number of farmers continues to decline. Specifically, the sales of such items as fertilizer, chemicals, feed, and machinery will continue to increase as new businesses open in the foreseeable future. As these businesses and industries produce for and sell to a better educated, specialized audience, it becomes necessary for them to employ personnel who are equally well educated and specialized.

A Broadened Program

Agricultural businesses and industries seeking potential labor and management personnel are interested in the pool of talent made up of boys and girls with an agricultural background who can be assembled to engage in farming. Students who accept the challenge of agricultural businesses are able to employ a career that is both interesting and background. By properly updating training at the local level, vocational agriculture programs will be able to increase student interest in agricultural careers by the development of training programs geared to the broad range of occupational opportunities.

The idea of providing instruction in vocational agriculture for students who are not prospective farmers may be alarming to many teachers. We believe a broadened program of vocational agriculture provides an opportunity which can not be ignored. Teachers who have returned to the farm a few years ago and who find the "home place" marginal as a productive unit. To this extent we are not training a new student, but instead we are finding a new, more reliable role for the same type of individual. The agricultural education program which seeks these boys and trains them in agricultural business occupations as well as in farm business methods develops prospective employees who can relate to the farmer and his problems and thus serve his employer and customer well.

A Flexible Program

Our experience indicates that the program which offers greatest flexibility includes selected elements of the basic vocational agriculture course of study and related business training which is supplemented by intensive supervised field experiences in businesses whose management is sympathetic with the goals of the program. These businesses which support the field experiences of the boy become learning laboratories, which are modern and progressive. They offer a far more adaptable and flexible than any school sponsored, simulated experience could be. Careful guidance of the boy and constant evaluation of his needs are necessary to make optimum use of the work stations available. The image that the job is primarily a teacher—learner experience rather than an employer-employee situation needs to be carefully cultivated.

Post-High School Education

Even with the support we have enjoyed from our local community, we believe additional post-high school education is a necessary step in a boy's preparation. Again, we feel it is important in conflict with our traditional concept of vocational agriculture since more boys are entering college and before starting to farm and we have historically followed our so-called "ter-
Expectations of the Vocational Agriculture Program

LEO P. HERNDON
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University of Nevada

This article is based on Dr. Leo P. Herndon's doctoral dissertation, "Expectations of Selected Aspects of a Vocational Agriculture Program," which was completed at Cornell University in 1960. The study involved responses from 165 school administrators, 127 school board presidents, and 272 parents of vocational agriculture students in 170 high schools offering vocational agriculture in New York State.

The great changes taking place in agriculture, the shifts in population, and changes in sources of income have created conditions which are interpreted by many to indicate a need for change in the program, philosophy, and policies of vocational agriculture. Change for the sake of change, without determining what should be changed and the direction in which the change is to take place, is unwise and unwise.

Formulation of policy and execution of the local programs of vocational agriculture is under the direct supervision of the local school administrator and board of education. Parents in the local school district also have a very important part in the vocational agriculture program for it is they who ultimately support the program.

What is Expected at the Local Level?

This article reports the major findings of a study conducted in New York State to determine the expectations of school administrators, school board presidents, and parents of vocational agriculture students concerning selected aspects of the vocational agriculture program. In general, there was not as great a difference in the expectations expressed by the three groups. The major expectations expressed by the groups are as follows:

Role of Vocational Agriculture. Not only is the traditional function of training for farming to continue but vocational agriculture is expected to provide a basic foundation of knowledge and skills that prepare students for occupations in business closely related to farming.

Supervised Experience. Persons at the local level realize that many students in vocational agriculture will not come from farms nor will they have realistic possibilities to become engaged in production agriculture. Supervised farming programs were recognized as essential for students preparing for production agriculture; however, there was a reluctance on the part of the persons responding to require uniform boys, especially those whose goals were not related to production agriculture, to complete supervised farming programs. It was indicated that these students should be provided supervised work experiences in businesses closely related to farming.

General Education. Local people, especially school administrators, recognize that many students are interested in agriculture as a vocation but are interested in agriculture courses for personal interest. There was agreement that courses in agriculture should provide general education which is valuable to students other than those who will pursue a vocation in agriculture.

The success of any local program is directly dependent upon its acceptance and support by people at the local level. People accept and support programs they think and feel are worthwhile. So in developing future programs it is imperative that local people's reactions to a program of vocational agriculture by known.

Some Ideas About The Image of Vocational Agriculture (Continued from page 235)

played. This compares with the well known 1 per cent unemployment figure for all high school graduates in the nation. In the more rural states with less competition from the urban centers, I am sure the record is even more favorable.

State, regional, and national surveys and studies of the employment status of vocational agriculture graduates reveal a favorable image for agriculture students in high schools. Each of us should take the responsibility for learning the facts and putting them to effective use.

Conclusion

If agriculture is to remain a dynamic part of our society, it must have an abundant supply of trained personnel. Vocational education in agriculture fulfills this need. The challenge is expansion of current programs and the emergence of new ones. It must maintain and balance itself through the efforts of the individual teacher. New programs should solidify existing departmants and develop greater variety of vocational needs. All teachers must work together to strengthen and develop the whole of agriculture education. Enrichment and success are our responsibility, and the sharing of ideas and achievements projects a true image to all segments of our society.
Stories in Pictures

GILBERT S. GUILER
Ohio State University

Terrariums prepared by vocational horticulture students at Jackson High School, Michigan, as part of their laboratory experience. (Photo by Walter McCollom)

Fertilizer demonstration experiments prove to be an effective teaching technique in Kansas vocational agriculture departments. (Photo by Wiegand)

The first woman student teacher in agriculture from University of California at Davis instructs a class at Yuba City High School, California.