THEME: Image Building
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The image of vocational-technical education is the impor-
tation of the public to the public. Further, this impor-
tation is a result of the practices and characteristics of
the people who are involved with it. It is the image
that is held by the public. How to vocational-technical
educate the one we want? If not, we can do some things
to favorably impact the image, known as "image building."

Program Quality at All Levels

Any effort in image building must be based on a quality
program that exceeds minimum standards. Without a
good educational program, efforts in image building will
be merely whitewash. Trying to conceal faults or defects
is superficial image building because a false appearance
is presented.

Substantive image building involves beginning with
the composition of the vocational-technical educational
program. It includes local, state, and national levels
of program input. It includes teaching, supervision, and
teacher education. The true test of image is at the local
level but, on the other hand, has considerable input. For
example, the characteristics of state supervision and the
individuals involved in it have strong impacts on many
influential groups, including legislators, leaders of
organizations and agronomic and officials of
agricultural and educational agencies. The same can be
said for national-level administration.

Further, the image held by other university faculty and
administrators of agricultural teacher education influences
the image of vocational agriculture. How agricultural
teacher education is perceived by others (especially faculty
members in agriculture and education) is part of the
total image. In many universities, agricultural teacher educators
need to work on improving their image. How can
agricultural teacher educators prepare teachers for image
building when they may have image problems of their
own?

Questions on Image

The subject of image building is one that probes to
the very heart of vocational-technical agriculture. It
raises some very cogent questions. Some of the
questions are:

- What should be the mission of the vocational-technical
  agricultural education?
- What should be the components of the program?
- What is the effect of the expertise of teachers, teacher
educators, and supervisors on image?
- What is the influence of the educational program on
  vocational-technical agricultural education?
- What is the best location for secondary programs?

The list of questions is almost endless. Regardless, the

need is for agriculture teachers to be competent
agricultural educators. The same can be said for
supervisors and teacher educators.

This Issue

The theme for this issue of The Magazine is "Image Building." L.H. Newcomb of the Ohio State University has served as Theme Editor. The articles he has compiled present several important areas and considerations in
image building.

Helping Students Prepare for Preparation

Most young students need help in how to prepare for
learning. This may sometimes be called "study skills." Vocational-technical agriculture teachers are often in
favorable situations to help students develop study skills. And when we help students learn study skills, we help
them learn skills needed for success! The book, Teaching
Study Skills, by Thomas G. Devine is an excellent refer-
cence for teachers.

The educational achievement of younger generations is
related to how well they have mastered certain skills. Among
these, according to Devine's book, are outlining, note-
taking, summarizing, using memory devices, reading and
writing, and using library resources. Frequently, students
enrolled in vocational-technical agriculture education tend to
be weak in English, history, science, and other
so-called academic areas. What the students probably
need is instruction in how to study.

It would be well worth the time to review Devine's book.
Not only will it help in understanding the import-
ance of study skills to the success of students, it will help
teachers to teach with students in mind. The book is
Teaching Study Skills by Thomas G. Devine, published
(1981) by Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 470 Atlantic Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02210.
What Evidence is Used in Image Building?

Emerson has said, "Your actions speak so loud, I can't hear a word you say." This may clearly be the situation with the case of the image of vocational agriculture. As all of us seek to develop memorable images of our programs, we must keep in mind that people will develop an image of us based more on our actions which they observe than on what we tell them our image is, or suppose it to be. This writer believes that the image of a vocational agriculture program is generally based on three types of evidence.

Hear-Say Evidence

The first type of evidence is hear-say evidence. This includes word of mouth reports and what people read about a program and hear about it on radio and/or television.

Direct Observation

The local citizenry also develops ideas about what vocational agriculture is all about based on their personal observations of vocational agriculture in operation. This occurs as the result of local recognition through local recognition banquets, project viewing at fair booths, and through local recognition vocational agriculture classrooms, laboratories, bulletin boards, and laboratory activity completed by students. In such situations teachers must not take lightly the opportunity to create and/or sustain the image they want for their program. The message which is delivered is controlled to a great degree by the local teacher and students who participate in full view of the public.

We need to strive to have our students conduct themselves as well educated youth. They must be capable of inheriting and successfully discharging the leadership responsibilities which will be theirs. Students need to act with decisiveness produced by careful preparation. They need to speak "the king's English." They need to demonstrate tact, humility, graciousness, and enthusiasm, and they need to be kind to one another. In so doing, students create a definite image of vocational agriculture; and one that we all desire to have projected.

When observers see awards presented, these awards need to be based on honest accomplishment and measure up to minimum standards that are relevant to current achievements in the agricultural industry.

In the final analysis, the image of vocational agriculture will be congruent with the impression current and former students convey with respect to their competence in agriculture and in leadership and personal development. However, the manipulation which is possible through news releases, radio and television broadcasts, and staged banquets must give way to the total picture of our program represented by the combined proficiency of our enrollies. This, in fact, is probably a rather true-to-life picture; and it is on this canvas which we all paint, whether we want to or not. This is the canvas on which the most complete image of our program comes into focus.

Summary

If we accept the fact that there are at least three types of evidence "hear-say evidence, direct observation, and the performance of our students," then let's not be guilty of only working to improve the first two types. We must work at the business of being outstanding teachers of agriculture in the fullest sense of the word.

Creating a Positive Public Image

Wouldn't it be great if every instructor, supervisor, and teacher educator in agricultural education was involved in a program with a positive public image? The attitudes, abilities, and goals of the individual largely determine the image which will be projected. One's image may be good or positive, fair or neutral, poor or negative. Regardless, we are labeled with an image that will be either beneficial or detrimental in our career as a professional agricultural educator.

Characteristics of Programs With Positive Public Images

Experience has shown the best way to define a program with a positive public image is to relate it directly to two primary objectives. The first is the quality of the program in preparing youth and adults with the competencies needed for successful employment in agricultural occupations. Positive programs do not just happen—they are developed through dedication and hard work.

As Portrayed in the Caliber of the Product

This is the evidence which is observed to be present at any given time by the public. Current and former students of vocational agriculture in action. While this is the ultimate measure, it is also the most contaminated. Too often, we in vocational agriculture are too critical, for a great performance or are saddled with the blame for a miserable performance. It must be remembered that the student who is being observed has benefited from as many as twelve years of schooling; the teaching of parents, relatives, employers, and churches; and participation in numerous other organizations. Nevertheless, at least some of the image of vocational agriculture will be created as a result of how current and former students conduct themselves at work, in their communities, and in churches. In particular, the image of vocational agriculture will be formulated based on the agricultural knowledge, skill, attitudes, and values of current and former students.

Secondly, the favorable support of and confidence in the program by the taxpayers are very important. Public approval is achieved when people look with favor on the program because they appreciate it, they like it, believe in it, and they request it. People talk about it with pride and the community demands more of the same program. Civic and school leaders soon get the word. They, too, are complimentary and supportive of the program to the extent they are willing to support it with additional funding.

It is said to observe local programs generating a negative public image by doing little of what they were designed to do. In fact, the final results may lead to diminishing the program. Very few quality programs of vocational agriculture have ever been abolished. It is generally those inferior programs with weak teachers that have been "laid to rest."

Areas of Concern of Those Who Judge Our Programs

In my responsibilities as Supervisor, I have observed that school administrators and community leaders are most concerned about three areas as they evaluate the vocational agriculture teacher and program. These were also quite evident to me when I was an instructor.

The Instructional Program. The first area of concern, (Continued on Page 6)
Creating a Positive Image (Continued from Page 5)

and certainly our major responsibility, is the instructional program. Hundreds of books and articles have been written and used in the effort to develop a strong instructional program. Yet, it is often the case that many of our students are not aware of the extent of our instructional program. This is often due to the fact that our students do not have the desire, ability, or knowledge to develop quality instructional programs. The ultimate results are minimal. This should be a real concern to educational leaders. Of course, we have more individuals in the middle or average group who are content with mediocrity or ordinary programs. They feel better than the first group, but certainly not meeting the standards we have set forth for vocational agriculture. Being aware of the teaching profession is absolutely not good enough!

There is also the group which excels. They deserve commendations because of their interest and concern. They often go far above the call of duty and give willingly of their time and talents in developing some of the finest positive programs ever enjoyed in vocational agriculture. They are the instructors who are working to develop a public image or winning a popularity contest, but it surely helps. Like and showing an interest in people can have a direct influence on positive relationships between the teacher and student. Those whom you teach soon learn your personality, attitudes, and character. It is disheartening to hear teachers complain that they are not getting the support of the students in their course work, race, sex, attitudes, or behavior. Although it may not be realistic, some students enroll in a course “to get the teacher” rather than to fulfill a need in acquiring certain learning opportunities on a particular subject.

Possessing a character of high ideas and ideals is a real asset in being respected in a community. People appreciate those educators of integrity and appropriate moral values. These in turn create a positive public image for both the teacher and the program because one cannot be separated from the other.

Being a professional is closely related to a positive public image. Professionalism deals with our relationships with others, our attitudes in the classroom as well as out of the classroom, and doing the best we can in one of the most noble professions in our society. Our accountability is judged by the quality of instruction and influence we have had upon the youth and adults whom we taught. Our professional status is important. A professional educator will accept every opportunity to improve personally as well as professionally. The professional is one who cares about doing the best job he or she knows how to do and cares about people.

Summary: Program Quality

Creating a positive public image is extremely important. This program is related to a quality program of vocational agriculture. Suggestions on how to actively and constructively shape the image of your program have been given in this article. It is worth repeating — a positive public image does not just happen. It has been said many times, and rightly so, the teacher is the program of vocational agriculture because no other program in education is so dependent upon the individual. The teachers in the local programs are the most important persons in our profession. What an honor and even a greater responsibility we possess!

Enthusiastic, dedicated, committed teachers are excellent teachers. Excellent teachers develop outstanding programs. Outstanding programs are the basis for a positive public image. There is no other way!
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back of the barn, it tends to foster an "I don't care" attitude. The pride that students normally strive to achieve is lowered and they do poor quality work. This attitude will most certainly be carried to their first place of employment. Hence, employers become hesitant about hiring graduates from programs with poor housekeeping practices because the students are already in the habit of practicing poor housekeeping and workmanship.

Poor housekeeping can also lead to situations where the safety of the student and the facility itself is seriously and grossly neglected. Have you allowed students with oily, greasy coveralls to work in the welding area? Have you allowed flammable materials to be stored near the welding area? Have you allowed students to use broken cups, receptacles, faulty switches, faulty extension cords, or ungrounded power tools? Are chemicals sometimes stored improperly and not labeled? If you can answer yes to any, or even a qualified maybe to any of these questions, you are asking for trouble. Why cause yourself extra grief — and possibly a liability suit — when a little time spent on housekeeping and maintenance will correct most poor situations. In addition, the positive image portrayed by good housekeeping will be worth the extra effort many times over.

Not being able to locate tools, equipment, or supplies needed because of poor housekeeping practices wastes time and consequently the efficiency of completing various tasks and skills. Likewise, not knowing how and when tools and equipment are to be stored will increase the chance of such items being stored improperly and damaged or stolen. The result is less of time for instruction or no instruction at all. Such a situation robs the student of maximum learning activities and causes people to question if you are performing the job a teacher should.

Safety Program  
Have you critically examined and evaluated your safety program? Do you teach safety and practice it or is it just something that has to be done and you try to do it the fastest way possible? Business and industry spend millions of dollars a year developing and implementing safety policies, procedures, practices, and programs and place a high value on them. The same is true for students who have been trained in safety and have an appreciation for the safety and well being of themselves and others. According to the National Safety Council, agriculture is the most hazardous industry in America. Our responsibility for teaching and practicing safety and seeing that students practice safety cannot be transferred to someone else.

When someone walks into your laboratory, is there a positive safety image portrayed or does safety appear to be an afterthought? How do your students receive instruction in safety? Do you require all students to wear industrial quality eye protection when in the laboratory? Do you require the use of face shields in addition to eyewear when students are working with the grinder, drill press, portable circular saw, and other equipment? Do you require students to wear personal protective equipment such as rubber gloves, aprons, overshirts, and respirators when working with certain herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides? When working in the mechanics area, are students required to wear hard-toed shoes? Are all machines color coded? Does the laboratory have proper lighting and ventilation? Are all machines and tools maintained and kept in good operating condition? Are all guards kept in place? Is all power equipment properly grounded? Do you require students to demonstrate proficiency in operating power equipment before allowing them to use it? If you can answer no or a qualified maybe to any of these questions, you are not teaching or practicing the safety rules expected by employers or required by students. Teachers have a moral as well as legal obligation in the area of safety. Anything less than the best safety instruction is unacceptable and certainly does not portray a positive image.

Instructional Strategies  
Have you critically examined and evaluated the instructional methods and evaluation system? Do you use management or rotation schedules to keep all students productively engaged in a learning activity or do students just do what they want with no regard to whether some students actually being able to graduate from your program without completing all required skills and activities? By using rotation schedules, limited resources can be utilized in the most effective and efficient way possible while assuring all students the opportunity for participation in planned learning experiences. Education should be a series of planned, organized, and directed activities. Students and Instructor properly attired with industrial quality eye wear, creates and promotes a positive image of the vocational agriculture program should then be able to sequentially and effectively experience such activities rather than having to follow a hit-and-miss type of organization. The "job-shop" approach to training should not be tolerated in your program and most certainly does not lend itself to the systematic education of the student. Too many times this approach leads to instruction which is dictated by the materials, projects, and jobs that are readily available to the program without consideration of what is needed by the student. Teachers find themselves teaching so as to keep the students busy rather than teaching students to gain new competencies.

Without the use of rotation or management schedules, students do not know where they are to be or what they are to be doing. They may roam the laboratory trying to appear busy. They are not efficiently learning new skills. With a little effort, you can develop a rotation schedule which will allow all students to maximize their learning. It will also impress upon them the importance of planning and organizing their time. The appearance created by a laboratory where all students are productively engaged in the learning process will greatly enhance your image as well as that of your department and school.

Evaluating System  
Have you critically examined and evaluated the evaluation system? As you identify learning activities with the many associated skills and select those which are to be formally evaluated, do you explain thoroughly to your students the criteria which will be used in evaluating a particular activity or do you just assign a grade without fully explaining why? Teachers should use some type of evaluation form to show the student their criteria in evaluating each activity and the importance of the criteria in the overall evaluation. It is also important to evaluate an individual's performance in his or her presence. If you believe that evaluation is a part of the learning process and that learning is an active (not passive) experience, then why not evaluate with the student? During the process of evaluating in the presence of the student, he or she has the opportunity to clearly see why a particular grade or score was given and to ask questions. Additional time takes no additional time, and often less time, to evaluate with the student than it does to set aside all projects and evaluate them without the student present.

It is essential that quality standards of workmanship be established and enforced. By setting high standards, students are encouraged to strive for perfection. This demanding of quality work and the enforcement of high standards will become part of the image that students and others have of vocational agriculture. Employers are constantly looking for students who take pride in what they do, for they already have too many people trying to cut corners and do the minimum amount of work.

You need to remember that one poor quality product leaving your program does more harm to your image than anything else and that it may take years of hard work to get people to where they are willing to trust you enough to start over. Imagine your feelings if after loaning a piece of equipment on a vocational agriculture project, the equipment was returned in a condition worse than when you loaned it. You would not be very happy and neither would your employer. Thus, why not prevent these problems by routinely demanding high standards and quality workmanship.

Technology Used  
Have you critically examined and evaluated the technology used in your program? With the rapid growth in new technology, the complexity and sophistication associated with modern equipment has increased. It is imperative that you continually strive to keep your equipment up to date. By using obsolete equipment you are cheating the students and their employers will begin asking questions about the effectiveness and appropriateness of your instructional program. Employers will not be overjoyed at spending money to retrain or upgrade a student's skills.

As money to support education becomes tight and most school districts are faced with financial restraints, it will be more important than ever that you are prepared just in case additional funds do become available. Do you have a current, prioritized listing of needed supplies and equipment which you can give to the administration upon request or when asked about your needs do you reply, "I sure there is nothing that I need, but let me think for a few minutes." Such a reply certainly does not justify spending additional funds for your program.

As a vocational teacher, your responsibility is for teaching basic skills, but you dare not let technology pass you in this
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endever. If you do, students will immediately quit listening and learning before you even begin. For example, assume you are teaching the basic principles of hitching the moldboard plow. The horse-drawn walking plow is probably one of the best teaching aids available for this purpose, for it is hitched correctly there is no way that it will properly operate. However, can you imagine the reaction of your students to a walking plow? Technology has long since passed this era. As a consequence, students will not pay attention and learn the basic principles you are trying to teach. Remember, principles can be taught on modern equipment as well as obsolete equipment, but students are much more inclined to pay attention and learn if we use modern, up-to-date technology. If you do not keep your program up-to-date with modern equipment and yourself up-to-date technically and professional, your program and your students suffer. You cannot allow this to happen.

The Image

In summary, many things are going to affect your image and the image portrayed by your department. Housekeeping, safety, rotation schedules, evaluation, and technology will have a major influence on creating a positive image of your program. The ultimate reward is that you can have a profound influence on your program's image if you will take the extra time and energy to make the necessary leadership to see that these areas are given the priority you deserve. That extra effort is all that stands between creating an outstanding image and having a mediocre image. Hopefully, you will not be satisfied with being mediocre and, will set the example for agriculture in your community by striving to be the best possible the choice is yours. Will you assume the responsibility?

BOOK REVIEW


This book is a collection of eight background papers written for a conference on "The Farm and the City" held in April of 1980 under the sponsorship of Columbia University's American Assembly.

The assembly has held some sixty conferences during the last thirty years to study important issues in American society and government. The eight papers summarize information and arguments in the area of loss of farm-land to urban uses. The conference was not intended to come up with answers to the problem, but rather to "clarify questions." The book includes a discussion of some policies and actions used by other nations. (The Netherlands, Israel, Sweden, France, and West Germany) to attempt to preserve farmland. The authors, all from eastern universities, include professors and researchers in such fields as urban planning, economics, ecology, and agronomy.

A good summary of the problem of disappearing farmland is provided by this book. The viewpoints are balanced, and the problem is certainly worthy of consideration, since about 3 million acres of American farmland are being converted to urban uses annually.

This book is aimed at persons who might have some role in policy making. Few students are likely to be interested in the subject matter. The book, however, does provide good background information about the problem. Anyone with a special interest in this area, or who is involved in research of the problem, would find the book of value.

Jack Harrison
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Using Newspapers in Image Building

BY BLAIRINE E. BOWEN
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Newspapers serve the informational needs of a particular circulation area, such as a county, town, or region. The information may be about current events, entertainment, or agriculture (as part of the "farm and home" sections). In many places newspapers are considered as "the facts" because of the freedom granted newspapers through the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Newspaper readers should be helped to build the image of vocational agriculture programs.

Characteristics of Newspapers

A newspaper is merely a collection of stories that occur from one edition of a paper to the next. This indicates that news must be current, not old. Exactly what makes news? Names, money, power, conflict, humor, and prominence are words that are used in describing newsy items. Another measure relates to what is known as proximity or the area served by a newspaper. This is more appropriately known as the local slant, flavor, or angle.

To illustrate this idea, the BLAINE JOURNAL newspaper in Clairemont, North Carolina, would not be interested in printing a story and accompanying photographs about the Carthage (Mississippi) FFA Chapter officers. The East Bladen FFA Chapter in Bladen County should have little difficulty getting a story and photographs printed in this newspaper. The same idea holds true when discussing the purposes and audiences served by daily and weekly newspapers.

Most newspapers that print at least four times per week consider themselves dailies. The dailies normally serve larger audiences and are more selective than weekly newspapers in terms of what gets printed. Dailies tend to print more "hard and fast" news while weeklies include more feature stories and local events not carried by dailies. The extent that vocational agriculture programs gain coverage in dailies or weeklies depends on the quality of the program and the relationship established with newspaper reporters and editors.

Working With Newspaper Professionals

Newspaper editors and reporters are very much like vocational agriculture teachers. Both have rigid time schedules that must be followed. The time schedule for teachers involves classes that must be met and taught at specified times. Newspaper professionals refer to their schedule as deadlines, just like not showing up to teach a class at the appointed hour causes problems for teachers, missing a deadline will have the same effect for newspaper professionals. This book is written to help you deal with this problem.

Since two groups share the same respect for rigid time constraints, it should be easy for them to work in a cooperative manner. From a realistic viewpoint, a vocational agriculture teacher has a vested interest in initiating and maintaining a good relationship with the press since most teachers have limited experience in journalism and photography.

One of the best ways of initiating a good relationship is to visit editors and reporters on their turf. This initiative shows a high degree of eagerness and desire to cooperate. During this meeting, explain what constitutes a total vocational-agricultural program: classroom and laboratory instruction, the FFA, adult education activities, and supervisory occupational experiences.

This initial meeting should answer several questions, such as what stories the newspaper will print, who should write them and in what format, and what deadlines the paper follows. Following this meeting with a time arranged for the reporter to visit the vocational agriculture program. A teacher who fails to take this initiative is going to have a hard time getting one and the prospective occupational experience.

Who Should Write About the Program?

It is usually expected to receive professional reports to have the time and desire to devote an article to a vocational agriculture teacher wants or needs printed. Most articles that need to be written follow journalistic routine and can be prepared with limited effort, consequently, many of the articles should be written by the teacher. Also, the FFA chapter reporter should be of valuable assistance as a writer.

The reporter is elected each year to perform this function and the vocational agriculture teacher has responsibility for seeing that the job is properly completed. A word of caution must be exercised because whatever is printed only represents the vocational agriculture teacher, but the vocational agriculture program and the school system as a whole. An English teacher at the school should be able to offer excellent assistance in this area because all articles submitted for publication should be in letter-perfect form. These articles should also present a positive yet accurate image of the program.

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The safest avenue to follow would be to call a newspaper reporter and have this person prepare the article. This idea appears sound on the surface. However, quantity as well as quality of coverage should be sought. A newspaper reporter should be asked to cover the more important activities while the routine activities or stories of lesser significance can be handled by the teacher or the FFA chapter reporter.

What Should Be Written About the Program?

The image projected about a vocational agriculture program should be attractive in that all important components are covered. The FFA coverage will be more extensive because of the newsworthiness events resulting from the large contest and awards program of the organization. Excellent stories, however, are hidden in the other areas and are not so easy to locate. Some ideas for articles that the vocational agriculture teacher may wish to use are described here.

Adult Instruction. Innovative methods being tried by local farmers, unique activities with which an adult class may be involved, a feature on an outstanding young adult farmer, farm safety week, or outstanding guest speakers for an adult class may be used.

Classroom-Laboratory Instruction. Benefits of vocational agriculture to the community, what students do after graduation, what is vocational agriculture, unique methods of teaching, connections between classroom and laboratory instruction, and a helpful former students who now have professional careers in agriculture are a few examples.

FFA. Contest and award winners, officers, guest speakers for meetings, banquets, FFA week, special projects, FFA alumni officers and their activities, state and national conventions are several examples.

Supervised Occupational Experience. Definition of and benefits from supervised occupational experience program—earning potential and experiences, but constantly changing. This means that reporters and editors must be informed of these changes to the story is told as accurately and completely as possible.

One way to be certain this happens is to get to know reporters on a first-name basis. Another way is to invite reporters to meet functions such as banquets, cook-outs, and picnics even though newsworthiness is planned. No matter what strategies are used, vocational agriculture teachers have the responsibility for the image the general public has about vocational agriculture programs.

Using the FFA Reporter in Image Building

The news media can be used by the FFA Chapter Reporter to help create the appropriate image for the FFA in the community. Careful planning is important to get the right program which the Reporter will be willing to carry out and the media will be interested in printing. The plan should include the types of papers, newspapers, newsletters, magazines, and the state and national FFA publications. In many situations, the FFA is the window for vocational agriculture, it is through the FFA that the activities in vocational agriculture are often shown to the public.

Objective

The objective of publicity is to create a desirable image of the FFA in the community. In order to accomplish this, one must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Feature the projects of students.
2. Publish articles on activities of students and the results of their work.
3. Highlight the good deeds of young people through the FFA projects and programs.
4. Conduct a well-rounded program.
5. Display a belief in the basic good youth in Agriculture.
6. Show that the FFA has a sound influence in the community.
7. Realize that community support is there and can be encouraged and developed.

Planning

If the reporter is going to be effective, the chapter must have an active, well-balanced program of activities. Each committee must have planned activities which keep the members interested and involved. The program of activities should be planned annually and receive input from all chapter members. The news media and the public like to see progress being made and this should be kept in mind when planning the program of activities.

By Gary W. Raper

Editor's Note. Mr. Raper is County Agent (Agricultural Cooperative Extension Service, in Lima, Ohio, 45805). He is currently teaching vocational agriculture at Big Walnut High School and Mount Vernon High School in Ohio.

The public relations committee should receive special attention when planning the program of activities. The program for the public relations committee should be very structured and includes all activities for which the reporter is responsible and the dates on which each activity is to be accomplished. The following information should be included in this section of the program of activities:

1. Articles each month to local media
2. Pictures each month to local media
3. Articles to FFA publications
4. Articles to magazines
5. Newsletters and dates of publication
6. Radio programs
7. TV programs
8. FFA Week activities

The reporter should be chairperson of the public relations committee. The assistant reporter should also serve on this committee. These members should be willing to exhibit leadership and work the hours necessary to carry out the activities of their committee.

Reporter Qualifications

While advisors may have very little to say in who is elected as reporter, they can encourage members to elect someone who is enthusiastic and has reasonably good command of writing skills, especially spelling and grammar.

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The LaGrange Approach to Image Building

FEATURE

The LaGrange Approach to Image Building

Several years ago, Jim Clouse, as head agricultural teacher at Purdue University, admonished the beginning teacher to "work hard doing worthwhile activities half the time and spend the other half telling people what you've been doing." His advice can provide the beginning teacher with a good head start in understanding the scope of a public relations program and the teacher as well. The effort of creating a positive image takes time. Dr. Clouse also stated that "it takes four years in the community for the teacher to really learn the people, responsibilites, and become effective." It takes only a short time to show that image if some aspect of the local program goes awry. The task is one of attaining and maintaining a positive program image within the community. The teacher needs to have patience and persistence, yet never become complacent with the progress of the program.

The opportunity to initiate a program of vocational agriculture allows the teacher the opportunity to establish the image that is deemed appropriate. In the case of a teacher moving into a bad situation, he or she must seek to overcome past impressions and create the desired new image. Whatever the starting point, the teacher needs to inventory the image building resources which are available and make wise decisions in using them to attain program goals. Key resources include local news media, area correspondents, radio and television, and school media. The best image builders a program can have are satisfied students, parents, administrators, and local community leaders. Working effectively and cooperatively with these clientele will likely produce support for the program.

THE PEP Concept

A few years back, a group of Northeast Indiana vocational agriculture teachers, created what was termed a Public Education Program (PEP). It was later expanded and made available for the entire state. The PEP concept used pre-written captions on news releases which could be filled in with local information and used weekly in local newspapers. They were supplemented with photos. This method has worked well in our chapter. We are located on a county line about 10-12 miles from the county seat and news office. Editors have frequently indicated a need for news to copy, but have lacked the time
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and personnel to collect it. This program requires effort and encouragement by the local teacher in order to effectively utilize the FFA chapter reporter.

As programs grow and communities see their value, newspaper reporters will be more willing to cover important events and achievement. Taking a little extra time to cooperate with them can greatly enrich the overall program image.

There should be a well-rounded vocational agriculture program if the appropriate image of the program is to be developed. In as much as all activities (whether contests, community service, or some other activity) filled the scarce time of the teacher, wise choices of activities to be conducted must be made. Once the momentum of a program is established, the program can be strengthened greatly by the alumni and students. Still, the teacher needs to provide the appropriate guidance and direction.

Activities Which Create A Proper Image
Activities our vo-ag department uses which strengthen the image of the program center on the operation of a 230-acre school farm. Each year 1500 visitors — kindergarteners through adults — take wagon tours of the farm, trek the two mile nature trail, and view the wildlife area with its buffalo, deer, and wild burros. Each October, a Sunday afternoon fall festival serves as the chapter's annual community open house. The Furrow took wagon tours and visited the Farmstead Park Festival. Steam engines, antique tractors, apple butter, candy-making, and mountain men were featured. Frequently, adult field days are held at the farm, such as a full-scale fage day complete with specialists who are at the forefront of the field. This year, the community center built by the FFA members at the farmstead near the farm museum has been the site of many school gatherings and reunions. The chapter was operated as a seedling source and has planted seedlings for many years. This past year, 35,000 trees were brought to the community and planted. All 5th graders are given two seedlings with planting instructions on Arbor Day. Each day the chapter completes the U.S. Weather Bureau observation from the school farm site and reports it to Indianapolis.

An annual chapter-sponsored Canadian achievement trip honors members and local adults who have contributed to the current farm and chapter program. These activities have been successful in helping our program gain and maintain the good favor of our community.

Vocational agriculture teachers who create a positive image usually become part of other community organizations and activities. Unselfish involvement in a Lions Club, church, or other community organizations frequently provide opportunities to help develop a healthy human and natural resources which can be used to improve the local vocational agriculture program.

A local advisory committee is an excellent ambassador group for the local program. A recent timber sale by our school provided some extra funds. The local school board challenged the agriculture advisory committee to suggest projects that would benefit the entire community. The agriculture advisory committee accepted the challenge. We now have a new 48 x 50 community center and wildlife ponds on the school farm. Just as importantly, we also have a deeply involved local committee.

A Teacher's Actions Influence Image

To be totally successful, the vocational agriculture teacher must work in cooperative harmony with associated teachers and departments, promoting unity throughout the total school program. This goal may be accomplished through a combined cooperative activities, projects, and a variety of common concerns to maintain open lines of communication.

The vocational agriculture teacher may encounter situations requiring diplomacy. Taking a stand on divided issues may be difficult, but it is sometimes necessary to maintain the image of the local program and district offices.

Without a doubt, the most essential positive ingredient will be the teacher's (the genuine dedication of the teacher(s)) is fundamental to success. This need to be accomplished by an attitudinal family, a positive far-reaching vision, uniting enthusiasm for people and challenges, and a firm faith in a force beyond human limits.


Farm power enthusiasts will enjoy the 200 pages of quality pictures showing, in miniature, the history of agricultural mechanization. Nostalgic recollections of generations of tractor operators will bridge the age gap as child and adult search together for "new like I had as a child." Fully documented, the book is well written and informative.

Collecting Model Farm Toys combines an appreciation for educational value and economic interest in their increasing value.

Information on collecting, manufacturing, refinishing, customizing, and mini-tractor pulling are covered in the text. There are 724 illustrations plus a directory of terms, collector's check list, and a price guide.

Authors are Ray Crilley, production agriculture instructor in the Albion, Pennsylvania Schools, and Chuck Burkholler, agriculture mechanic teacher at Lenawee VOTEC Center in Michigan. Their volume will contribute to many pleasurable moments of personal and educational reading.

John H. Avery
Richland Community College
Decatur, Illinois

Using Professional Dress in Image Building

By Pixel Burjak and Joe Harper
Editor's Note: Mr. Burjak and Mr. Harper are graduate teaching assistants in the Department of Agricultural Education at The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43221. They are pursuing doctoral degrees with specialization in agricultural mechanization.

Recall those times when you had bad contact with a professional working person, such as a physician, veterinarian, or attorney. What was the basis of your first impression? Did they act like a professional? Did they look professional? How important was the professional image they portrayed to you? Would you, as a user of their service, have felt as secure and comfortable with them had they not impressed you with their professional image? The image they portrayed was an important aspect of their profession. As an educator, you should also recognize the importance of the image you portray to your students, other faculty members, parents, and community members.

Everyday life styles are now more liberal. Educators have tended to follow this trend, not only in teaching, but also in dress and overall appearance. The professional image created by appropriate dress and appearance has been altered and, in some cases, eliminated. Further, the importance of professional image on the teaching-learning process and the entire educational professional has long been overlooked.

Establishing a Learning Environment

The teacher of vocational agriculture is the most important component in the development, maintenance, and control of the classroom environment. Research has shown that classroom environment, or climate, does have an effect on learning as measured by student achievement (Dunkin and Biddle, 1974). It should be obvious that by being the catalyst of the climate in the classroom, the teacher sets a mood conducive to learning with the professional image created by dress. For effective student learning, create the appropriate climate for it by dressing professionally.

Have you ever gone to a banquet, dinner, or party

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THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE

BOOK REVIEW

Student management is in important aspect of the classroom environment. The image we portray to students influences the manner in which students behave. If teachers do not present a respectable, professional image in the classroom, laboratory, and community, students will tend to disregard the teacher as an effective disciplinarian. Imagine a teacher dressed in jeans and a flannel shirt. Can you really expect the students to treat the teacher like a professional when he/she does not appear to be one? The beginning teacher of vocational agriculture may achieve added advantages from dressing to project a professional image. Professional attire will afford beginning teachers the opportunity to establish and maintain the "professional distance" which is necessary for professional effectiveness.

February, 1982

Teacher effectiveness is enhanced by the image portrayed by the teacher. Observe the obvious effect that professional attire has upon the images of the instructor in the two situations. In which instance do you believe that the teaching-learning process is enhanced?
Using Professional Dress In Image Building

(Continued from Page 17)

viding effective instruction. Students are not looking to be taught by an instructor who dresses like and appears to be another student. Students will respect a teacher who portrays the ideal teacher image, not the ideal student image.

Shaping Attitudes

Effective benefits, although many times unseen and unmeasurable, will result from the appearance projected by the instructor. Specific positive attitudes may be encouraged by the professionalism displayed through the instructor's attire. This may include simply the awareness of students that they are now a part of an educational setting and not at home or with a group of friends. More specifically, the attitudes of students about career choices in a technical area of agriculture may be influenced by dress. For example, imagine two instructors in a meat processing laboratory. The first is dressed in jeans and a T-shirt. The other is in a white laboratory coat, lab hat, and too appropriate eye protection. Which instructor projects a more positive image about meat processing occupations? Obviously the instructor who is dressed professionally sets the best example. This image will affect students' attitudes regarding professionalism. Such attitudes will also be taken by students to their first employment opportunity.

Rosenshine and Furst (1971), in a notebale review of research on teacher effectiveness, listed task-orientation, general knowledge, behavior, and personal characteristics as having positive effects on student achievement. The image created by dressing professionally will promote this businesslike atmosphere. A business-like atmosphere can also encourage business-like behavior by students and the instructor's time will be spent actively involved in learning tasks. Rosenshine and Berliner (1977) linked this "time-spent-on-task" to positive gains in student achievement.

Safety instruction is greatly influenced by the appearance of the instructor. Can you expect students to follow safe practices when the instructor does not instruct students to wear personal protective attire while in the laboratory? We often overlook the importance of laboratory attire. An appropriate example for our students must always be demonstrated. While in the laboratory, we must be as safe as we appear professional. The addition of a laboratory coat will enhance the professional image. Too many times, instructors will dress down when going from the classroom to the laboratory. The laboratory environment in the laboratory is as important as it is in the classroom.

Teachers must never lose sight of this fact if they expect their laboratories to possess the same professional environment as the classrooms. Proper appearance is a key to effective safety instruction and instructors can best display this appearance by their professional protective attire.

The Obligation

We must not forget the obligation of professional attire in the teaching-learning process. Teachers of vocational agriculture have an obligation to the students, fellow teachers, supervisors, and communities for providing the optimum learning environment. This includes portraying a professional image through our professional attire.

References


THEME

Using A Mirror in Image Building

Mirrors allow us to see how we appear to others. One of the problems that we as students and look into a mirror is that the closest we stand to the mirror, the less we are able to see of our surroundings. In some respects, looking into a mirror can create a tunnel vision. We, in agricultural education, and agriculture, in general, need to step back from our mirrors now and then, to see what is going on and take a look at what we see in the mirror the same one that is seen by those who are not necessarily engaged in agricultural pursuits! The answer to this question is unequivocally "Yes. Let's look at a few examples of how our agricultural image is seen by those who are not agriculturally oriented.

As We Are Seen by Others

Each year, many students from across the nation are given, as a matter of course, interest tests to try to determine what they consider to be their best speciality in what they go through high school. Many of the sources of the tests have

BOOK REVIEW

Vegetable Growing Handbook, by Walter E. Splittstoesser. Westport, Connecticut: AVI Publishing Company, Inc., 1979, 298 pages, $12.50. The Vegetable Growing Handbook provides information for home and community vegetable gardeners. It is written in simple non-technical terminology. Chapters one and two deal with planning and planting the garden. Tables in these chapters provide useful information on vegetables, fruits, and dates of killing frost. Nutrition and pest control management are discussed in chapters three and four. General information on storage and preservation of vegetables is covered in chapter five. The sixth chapter makes up approximately one third of the book. Chapter six deals with the plant characteristics, culture, and types of vegetables associated with individual vegetable plants. Sixty-three plants commonly grown in a vegetable garden are discussed. Growing herb is discussed in the final chapter.

The appendix provides listings of additional sources of information on vegetable gardening. Tables of measurements, nutritional values, and vitamin content are included.

The author, Dr. Walter E. Splittstoesser, is professor of plant physi- ology in horticulture at the University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois. He has conducted research with both tropical and temperate vegetable crops.

The Vegetable Growing Handbook is written on a high school level. The principles and practices of growing vegetables, as outlined in this book, would be useful to the teacher and students in vocational agriculture.

Fred W. Renau
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, Illinois

Sandra Mauer, a student teacher in Ohio, takes pride in a neat and attractive classroom where she is teaching plant identification. (Photograph by Leon Bouchet, The Ohio State University)
Assistantships & Fellowships in Agricultural Education

The 1982-83 survey by the Publications Committee of the American Society of Teacher Educators in Agriculture of assistantships and fellowships in agricultural education reflects the reporting of 26 institutions. The findings are published to help prospective graduate students select institutions for study and obtain financial assistance.

Key to Understanding
The information is provided in the following order: Name of assistantships (number available); number of months available during year; beginning month of employment; amount of money worked; and length of employment. The information is provided by the recommendations of the American Council of Teacher Educators in Agriculture.

Cornell University
Assistantship (12 months; June or September 15: $250 per month; $3,000 per annum) with tuition and fees: master’s; January 1, 1982; contact as above.

University of Illinois
Assistantship (12 months; June or September 15: $250 per month; $3,000 per annum) with tuition and fees: master’s; January 1, 1982; contact as above.

Clemson University
Assistantship (12 months; June or September 15: $250 per month; $3,000 per annum) with tuition and fees: master’s; January 1, 1982; contact as above.

Colorado State University
Assistantship (4-8): 9-12 months; August 15: 20 hours per week; $450 per month; tuition: master’s and Ph.D.; university contracts and grants; May 1, 1983; contact as above.

University of Missouri-Columbia
Research assistantship (3): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; May 1, 1983; contact as above.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $1,000 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 1, 1983; contact as above.

University of Tennessee
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 15, 1983; contact as above.

University of Wisconsin
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 1, 1983; contact as above.

New Mexico State University
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 15, 1983; contact as above.

University of Arkansas
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 15, 1983; contact as above.

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Assistantship (2): 12 months; June or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; January 1, 1982; contact as above.

University of Illinois
Research assistantship (2): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; January 1, 1982; contact as above.

University of Minnesota
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; January 1, 1982; contact as above.

University of Nebraska
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; January 1, 1982; contact as above.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Research assistantship (2): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; January 1, 1982; contact as above.

University of Pennsylvania
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 1, 1983; contact as above.

University of Tennessee
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 1, 1983; contact as above.

University of Missouri-Columbia
Research assistantship (2): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; January 1, 1982; contact as above.

University of California
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 1, 1983; contact as above.

University of Maryland
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 1, 1983; contact as above.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 1, 1983; contact as above.

University of Washington
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 1, 1983; contact as above.

University of Wisconsin
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 1, 1983; contact as above.

University of Michigan
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 1, 1983; contact as above.

University of Illinois at Chicago
Research assistantship (1): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 1, 1983; contact as above.

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Research assistantship (3): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 1, 1983; contact as above.

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Research assistantship (3): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 1, 1983; contact as above.

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University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Research assistantship (3): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 1, 1983; contact as above.

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Research assistantship (3): 12 months; July or September 15: $250 per month; tuition and fees: master’s; August 1, 1983; contact as above.
Teaching assistantships (2) for teaching undergraduate professional courses, working with state vocational-technical staff, assisting with undergraduate student advisement; 10 months; September 1; 20 hours/week; $585-$620 per month; out-of-state fees waived, possibility of partial fee waiver scholarships; doctoral; University funds; August 1, 1982; Dr. Robert Terry, Professor and Head, Department of Agricultural Education, 235 Agriculture Hall, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078; telephone (405) 624-5129.

Pennsylvania State University Teaching and research assistantships (1); 20 hours/week; $1834 per 10-week term; remission of fees; master's and doctoral; Dr. Samuel M. Curtis, Head, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education, 102 Armey Building, University Park, Pennsylvania 16802.

Texas A & M University Teaching assistantship (3); 9 to 12 months; September or January; 20 hours/week; $515-$575 per month; out-of-state fees waived; possibility of partial fee waiver scholarships; doctoral; University funds; August 1, 1982; contact as above.

Teaching assistantship (1) for assisting with introductory and advanced Ag Mech classes; 10 months; September 1; 20 hours/week; $585-$620 per month; out-of-state fees waived, possibility of partial fee waiver; master's or doctoral; Agricultural Mechanics funds; August 1, 1982; Professor George Cook, Department of Agricultural Engineering, 109 Agriculture Hall, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078; telephone (405) 634-5129.

Research assistantship (1) for assisting in computer programming and ERIC searches, writing NSF's development of literature reviews for staff research and possibly assisting in teaching research design course in Agricultural Education; 10 months; September 1; 10 hours/week; $585-$620 per month; out-of-state fees waived, possibility of partial fee waiver scholarship; doctoral; Experiment Station funds; August 1, 1982; Dr. Robert Terry, Professor and Head, Department of Agricultural Education, 235 Agriculture Hall, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078; telephone (405) 624-5129.

University of Vermont Research fellowship (1); 9 months; September 1; half-time; $4,400; remission of tuition; master's Agricultural Experiment Station and Graduate College; June 1, 1982; Professor Gerald R. Puller, Chairperson, Vocational Education and Technology, College of Agriculture, Agricultural Engineering Building, Burlington, Vermont 05405.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Instructor (2); 12 months; July 1; 20 hours/week; $900 per month; doctoral, with three years experience with at least two years teaching agricultural education; University funds; March 1; Dr. John Crunkilton, Agricultural Education, Room 222 Lane Hall, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061.

Assistant (1); 9 months; September 1; 20 hours/week; $500-$570 per month; master's or advanced graduate student; University funds; March 1, 1982; contact as above.

University of Wisconsin Platteville Assistantship (1) for two semesters or 2 for one semester each; 10 months; September; 20 hours/week; $560 per month; out-of-state fees waived; master's in agricultural science in agricultural industries; bachelor of science in agricultural education; teaching experience desirable; April 1, 1982; Dr. Charles DeBure, Dean, College of Agriculture, 210 Ulrich Hall, UW-Platteville, Platteville, Wisconsin 53818.

University of Wisconsin River Falls Assistantship (4); 9 months; September; 12-15 hours/week; $3,700 per month; remission of tuition; master's, February 1, 1982; Dr. Marvin D. Thompson, Chairman, Department of Agricultural Education, University of Wisconsin, River Falls, Wisconsin 54022.
The Prairie Heights (Indiana) vocational agriculture program uses a number of resources in image building. The left photograph shows a discussion during a field day hosted on the school farm. The photograph on the right shows a hog trial facility used during the field day. (Photographs courtesy of Ned Stump, LaGrange, Indiana.)

A wall cabinet showing storage of woodworking hand tools and clean-up supplies helps to promote good housekeeping and build image for the program. (Photograph by Joe Gliem, The Ohio State University.)