THEME: Achieving Quality Summer Programs
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Summer Teaching

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Consequences for Students

The competencies which many students of agriculture must have developed themselves are not doing their every mode of education during an academic year. The learning must occur at the teachable moment, when the situation is ripe. A lot of these experiences cannot be forced into a regular school year. The reduction or elimination of the summer programs directly and definitely affects the learning opportunities of students.

Our Response

Since we have not kept the administration informed of our activities, the usual criticism of the summer program is that teachers of vocational agriculture are not doing their job, teaching during the summer. We should first of all concede that federal and state monies do support our program. The programs are administered locally, however, as they should be. If a teacher is not doing the job, then the administrators must also assume a share of the responsibility.

Administrative Action

Administrators and other educators, accustomed to the traditional, perceive this unusual program component to cost extra money, time, and paper work to satisfy the bureaucracy, provide one more detail with which to be concerned, and be of dubious value. When vocational agriculture programs were located in small, single teacher departments emphasizing production agriculture, administrators were responsive to the agriculturalists in the community and little was said.

Today, however, a different environment exists. Few administrators have a background in or an appreciation for agriculture. Few are sensitive to the agricultural base of the community since it may constitute a small proportion of the population to be served in the school district. Few have been educated by their vocational agriculture teachers as to the instruction that occurs during the summer. The board of education they serve may contain a smaller proportion of agriculturalists. They have less time to interact informally with the community to gain an insight into the nature of the vocational agriculture program.

Admittedly, the role of the administrator has changed as we strive to have our job of state and federal reports, personnel problems, bigger districts and added pressure and stress. Few would admit to deliberately interfering with student learning. This is often the result, however.

Regarding the situation, the teachers are to be commended. We need to be willing to look open minded at our programs. A posture that all vocational agriculture instructors, regardless of taxation or option area, must be on twelve month contracts may it be implied. We can carefully examine each situation, determine the teacher time needed to adequately conduct the instructional program and sensibly respond to meet the needs.

A Quality Program

This issue addresses what should be done to achieve a summer program of high quality. High quality programs help students learn. The articles describe how we should plan and conduct our programs, how we should inform our publics of our activities, and what we should and should not be doing during the summer. The point is made that we should emphasize a total program and not just the summer segment of our program. From Alaska to Florida, our concerns are voiced as they may impact upon our students. We must continue to persevere and not let our students suffer. In the face of a diminishing number of persons that understand and support our efforts, we must continue with logic, reason and dedication to provide vocational education in agriculture.
THEME
Summer Programs —
From Whence Did They Come?
Where Should We Go?

Historically, the teacher of vocational agriculture has been the only teacher in the public school systems of our nation to be employed on a job, for a full, twelve month period. As Arrington suggests in his article, year-round programs in vocational agriculture are necessary because production in agriculture is year-round.

Actually, agricultural activities are highest during the summer months. Not only do the longer, warmer days of summer enhance and, in some crops, even allow growth and production, but also the service function of agriculture must increase to assist this increased production. All of this simplification of the industry of agriculture is merely to explain the idea of summer work for vocational agriculture teachers. If we do not use the unique nature of agriculture to justify summer employment, then how can we explain the uniqueness of the vocational agriculture teacher?

The Time to Learn

Yes, a laundry list of appropriate summer activities for teachers of vocational agriculture can be developed. But, which of these activities are unique to the teacher of vocational agriculture? Surely, other teachers need vacations, time to clean and repair their teaching stations, to plan lessons, etc. So, again, we are back to the question: Why summer employment for the teacher of vocational agriculture, and not for other teachers in the school system? The bottom line points to the natural wonder of agriculture — photosynthesis simply requires sunlight and warmth available in greatest quantities in the summer. No other teacher in the school system — not the English teacher, not the math teacher, not the cosmetology teacher — can identify a natural increase in the activity of their subject matter as a result of summer!

Let us suppose we can convince those who control and affect the "destiny" of the teacher of vocational agriculture of this unique feature of the subject matter of agriculture. As the Arrington article suggests, these people could ask, "So what?" In other words, would not agriculture go on without the vocational agriculture teacher? Would not photosynthesis continue to occur? Yes, of course it will.

Where does that leave the vocational agriculture teacher trying to justify a year-round contract? Ah, we have won the battle if questioners or distractors of our programs will recognize and admit the uniqueness of agriculture. But the war continues. We must explain to our non-believers that teachers of vocational agriculture simply cannot perform their function, to teach agriculture, without summer employment. Again, the job should be easy. Merely pose these questions to those who wonder:

1. How can I teach my students insect and disease control in soybeans?
2. How can I teach my students the pollination of corn and subsequent car development without summer employment?
3. Where and how can I teach students winter wheat harvest unless I do it in the summer?
4. When do crops grow and produce? When must weeds be controlled? When is hay harvested? When is most secondary cultivation performed? When are irrigation pipes moved, or levee ditches opened? Surely a little quiz on agriculture will show that real vocational education in agriculture must include summer teaching.

That brings us to the next step in explaining summer employment of vocational agriculture teachers. This step is the need, the requirement, that teaching be the justification of a summer program. In other words, just because agriculture is most active during the summer does not account alone for summer employment. The teacher of vocational agriculture is employed; what it is in September, March, or July, to teach. Parents and taxpayers should expect no less teaching during June than during January. In fact, as dictated with the nature of agriculture itself, the opportunities for teaching during the summer months are more abundant during August than during October. That is, there is just more agriculture "going on" in the summer than in the winter. The real job of the vocational agriculture teacher, then, is to capitalize on and to use those increased opportunities for teaching.

Capitalizing on Opportunity

The first, most obvious, and most fruitful means of "spur" agriculture to increase student learning during the summer is through supervised occupational experience programs. Again, you should refer to the Arrington and Hiltun's articles for additional information on SOPs in vocational agriculture. FFA activities such as shows and fairs provide other opportunities for teaching agriculture in the summer. Perhaps less traditional methods of capitalizing on "summer agriculture" need more attention by teachers.

For example, field trips to observe and learn agriculture first-hand should be more easily arranged in the summer than during "school months." FFA should be more easily sponsored, other classes need not be missed, and more agriculture is "occurring" from which to learn. Vocational agriculture teachers should schedule more field days and tours to teach agriculture in the summer. Social activities such as a weiner roast or swimming party could be coupled with the educational mission in order to attract students. Potential and incoming students, parents, administrators, and other adults in agriculture may be involved as well.

Might this idea be carried even further? Summer "classes" for credit in vocational agriculture might be a logical outcome of summer programs. (Some of us remember when some states rewarded vocational agriculture students with one and one-half credits for vocational agriculture. This stemmed from the summer learning, FFA, and SORP involvement of students.) Classes for summer school students may run eight to ten hours per day. A high school credit could be earned in short order with ten hours of instruction per day.

With increased agricultural activity during the summer months comes an increased need for agricultural mechanics instruction. (See the Daracy article for a specific example.) Repair, maintenance, and operation of agricultural machinery becomes more important and more frequent. So, teaching agricultural mechanics could be moved and timed during the summer. Again, summer school may be a possibility. The examples could go on and on.

Ornamental horticulture is a more viable industry during the summer months. Forestry activity increases. With increases in basic agricultural production come heightened needs for horticultural supply and services. And, ultimately, these activities lead to both an increased need and an increased opportunity for teaching vocational agriculture.

The unique aspect of the job of vocational agriculture teacher is their responsibility for teaching practical applied and, yes, vocational agriculture. The industry of agriculture itself shows some of its components only in the summer. In order to teach these summer-only components, the vocational agriculture teacher must be employed during the summer. Teaching, then, is the ultimate in making the job of the vocational agriculture teacher an accountable one. So, let us go forth when summer rolls around next month and teach our students some agriculture!

The Cover

Horticulture programs, with their live plants, necessitate an extended service component to maintain viable plants. These plants and facilities are also ideal to continue the teaching function during the summer. (Photograph courtesy of Meg Hopkins, Glen Allen, Virginia.)

BOOK REVIEW

FUNDAMENTALS OF ENTOMOLOGY

A well illustrated textbook with 71 chapters. The chapters include: The Anthropoid Plan, The Insect External, The Insect Internally, Development and Specialization, Ecology, Behavior, From Solitary to Social, Parasitism by Insects, Insects, Plants, and Humans, Classification, and Making an Insect Collection.

Excellent reference for anyone interested in insects. A textbook for college courses. Perhaps the most valuable chapters for a teacher of agriculture would be the last two. Both are clear, concise, and complete.

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SOE — The Center Of Your Summer Program

Probably no topic has been discussed more widely in recent years than the year-round instructional program. As more and more school districts have come under local constraints, many have looked at the summer program in agriculture as a possible means of reducing costs. Others have questioned the educational value of the summer program. While these problems have been more severe in some states, it is critical that we be conscious of the real reason that teachers are employed during the summer. We have a responsibility now, more than at any other time in history, to communicate to administrators, school board members, legislators, and others the importance of the year-round program.

Summer Programs Are Needed

The roots of the summer vocational agriculture program can be traced to the act that initiated federal support for vocational agriculture. The Smith-Hughes Act specifically mandated that all students engage in a minimum of six months of supervised farming. It was recognized that supervised farming programs and agricultural production activities continue beyond the normal school year and that teachers should be employed to utilize the opportunities for educational experience available during this time. Therefore, it is easy to see that the real reason we have year-round programs is because production cycles in agriculture are year-round.

SOE at the Center

A review of the many articles written on this topic reveals that numerous summer activities for teachers have been suggested. Suggested appropriate activities have included things such as:
- visiting incoming students
- professional improvement
- advising on FFA meetings and activities
- departmental housekeeping
- community service
- adult and young farmer activity reports
- vacationing

Each of these activities are entirely appropriate and the objective of this article is not to down-play that importance. However, as we look at the year-round program and the real reasons for the summer employment of teachers, it is imperative that the supervised occupational experience programs of students be put at the center of focus. After all, are not teachers hired for the purpose of teaching students? And is not the supervised occupational experience program the center of the instructional program?

THE CHALLENGE BEFORE US

The importance of accountability in the summer instructional program will increase. The major purpose of the summer program must be instructing students who are enrolled in our programs. If we are to be accountable for our time and activity, this instruction must focus on the supervising occupational experience program and must be as well planned and organized as instruction during the regular school year.

The following are some guidelines which might be used to aid in justifying the importance of the summer program:

1. Involve your advisory committee and school administration in developing the summer program.
2. Submit a written plan and calendar of activities to the principal.
3. Keep the principal and advisory committee informed of the activities that have been accomplished and of any changes in the plans.
4. Request that your principal accompany you on individual project visits.
5. Submit a written report of accomplishments at the end of the summer. This report should include a log of all students contacted.

If your summer program is based primarily on maintaining a school laboratory or developing curriculum materials for the coming year, perhaps you should re-evaluate the purpose of the summer program. Programs that are based on instructing and supervising students enrolled in the program can be easily justified. Start now in developing plans to make the supervised occupational experience program the center of your summer program.

Reference

Arington, L.R. Relationship of the Length of Vocational Agriculture Teacher Contact to Supervised Occupational Experience Program Scope and FFA Chapter Activity Level, Doctoral Dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1981.

BOOK REVIEW

The tenth chapter is the appendix. It includes names and addresses of seed suppliers, a list of periodicals for vegetable growers, weight and measurement tables, and conversion charts and factors for metric and U.S. dimensions. If you do not already have a copy, then you will want to get one. If you have a copy of the 1956 edition of Knott's Handbook for Vegetable Growers, then you will definitely want to get a copy of this updated version. This book should be a valuable reference to all who have an interest in vegetables.

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Energize Your Summer With Positive Time Management

By Chris Townsend

The work you have postponed. Second, when you finally get around to it, you will have so much work piled up, you can do only a mediocre job.

The good old days: They sure look good in comparison to today's woes, but were the days really that great? Those who spend valuable time reflecting on the past may not be remembering all the facts. It is simple to remember the guided events forgetting how tough it really was.

Placing the blame: A lot of us feel we must blame someone or something for every problem which turns sour. We tend to use a tremendous amount of energy blaming someone else or ourselves for a problem of which there is no blame.

A Positive Focus

Since we all are human, it is probable that we can identify ourselves with a few of the six de-energizing activities. But since you are in control of your situation, the challenge is to refocus all your energies toward the positive aspects of life. With a positive focus, you will find yourself motivated and on your way to a successful summer program.

Merit your work: Regardless of how long you have been an agriculture teacher, find some reason to pat yourself on the back. At times in the summer you are so far removed from the administration, no one ever comes around to thank you for the work you have done reorganizing the shop or keeping your students involved with agricultural events. You must stand back, reflect on the accomplishments, and relish in the fact that you have completed your jobs well.

Others can be a support: Do not let yourself be alone with a problem or situation. Find another agriculture teacher to talk with about areas of concern with your summer program. Sometimes an idea will help you initiate the necessary action toward successful completion. Trying to hold all your summer quandaries inside will lead to less productivity and possibly ulcers.

Time for recreation: Plan a vacation and take it! Leave work at work! Without a definite and organized time table for your summer, you could be in the trap of newness constantly finishing the day. Many teachers find themselves never separating work from home. During the day, you may also find the need-to-do schedule breaks from the tasks at hand.

Variety on the job is interesting, helps the day pass more quickly, and revitalizes you to be more productive in work activities. An important part of your summer, recreation or leisure time can boost your morale and enhance your work success.

Importance of work: Your job is important no matter who you are in the wheel of the school. If you do not realize how important you are, imagine the system without your input or help. When a teacher begins the day, he or she can either look on the day as "just another" or reflect on the accomplishments be/she will add to the goals of the students. But do not believe you are important, no one else will either.

Visualizing a better world: Negatively, we can look at today and grouch about all the problems and dilemmas of school systems, but why waste the time? Concentrate your thoughts and discussions with the agricultural community on the positive aspects of today's society, agricultural advances, and accomplishments of the schools. For example, our students have more opportunities today for education than ever before. The system of vocational education allows students to become skilled in skills that have ultimately led to jobs! Strike up a conversation this summer about the good things in agriculture. brag a little about the innovations of the FFA which add to the educational programs. It makes the time enjoyable for you and those around you.

Take small steps: As most summer activities are monumental in the initial stages, take small steps and break the task into manageable parts. If you reward yourself for each successful step, the succeeding steps do not seem so massive and unapproachable.

Encounter problems: Confront difficult situations head-on! Do not procrastinate. You have found out by now that by ignoring a problem it does not become solved or go away. This positive activity of encountering your problems seems so scary to avoid but more confrontation will eliminate tail spins and unnecessary worry.

Motivate yourself to a successful summer by decreasing your de-energizing activities and incorporating a positive focus on the tasks at hand.

Time Management Tips for Summer Programs

1. Pre-plan and organize your summer weekly or bi-weekly and slip a note into your administrator's mailbox with your tentative schedule.

2. Accurately account for your summer work by recording, at month's end, your mileage and activities. This task can be hastened if you use a calendar format and keep it up-to-date daily.

3. Avoid confrontations with your administration by keeping them informed in advance of your plans.

4. Set up a calendar at the beginning of the summer with all the "have-to" jobs listed. Do not get caught with 3 weeks of jobs and only 1 week left before the start of school.

5. Set real goals. What do you want to accomplish this summer? Write these goals down and then work toward their completion.

6. Allocate 3 days for supplies and equipment tasks. Use local sources so you know today's prices and can eliminate time delays changing purchase orders. Day 1: price local supplies; day 2: pick up supplies; day 3: install the equipment in the laboratory.

7. Take the vacation to which you are entitled.

8. Build flexibility into your schedule. If you must visit a student's home during, for example, use Monday afternoon as an exchange-"week end" day.

9. Have students give you their summer schedule. Are they working away from home, are they are vacations? Knowing this information will help you schedule visitations accurately and reduce wasted time on the road.

Planning Revitalizes

Most agriculture teachers have time management hints they have incorporated into their summer routine. Be friendly with your neighboring teachers and share your ideas; you will receive many ideas in exchange. By creating an effective summer program, you can accomplish many tasks which are impossible as soon as the students return to school and you may notice an exciting summer can revitalize your own attitude about the approaching fall term in school.

The Research Committee of the Agricultural Education Division, AVA
Proudly Issues

THIS CALL FOR PAPERS is to be considered for presentation at the Twelfth Annual NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION RESEARCH MEETING held on December 2, 1982, in Anaheim, CA. In conjunction with the American Vocational Association conference.

PAPER PROPOSAL SPECIFICATIONS:

Seven copies of the research summary (not to exceed five pages double spaced) should be submitted for use in determining the final program participants. The summary should include:

1. Methodology
2. Background
3. Literature Cited
4. Objectives or Importance of the Study
5. Research Result, Advancement of the Activity or results page

Deadline for Receipting Paper Proposals: July 5, 1982

Send Paper Proposals to:

Prof. R. M. Nagel, P.O. Box 1087
OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
Stillwater, OK 74078

THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE

MAY, 1983
Using Summers to Prepare Instructional Aids

By Chester Darcey
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Teachers of vocational agriculture historically have been confronted with the problem of not having enough time during the school year to perform their teaching and advising function. They have, however, always performed admirably in a job where endurance, skills, and dedication are a necessity. Since time is a premium commodity to the vocational agriculture teacher, many things must be done during the summer months. This is the time when lesson plans are revised and updated, courses restructured, violations are made, and much needed work on shop and facilities is undertaken. Although even the summer months are busy for the teacher, this is the best period to make improvements in the physical facilities used in their instructional program.

Teaching aids are an indispensable part of any teaching program and summers are time when these aids may be planned and constructed. These aids are probably the one best way to achieve accelerated understanding by students of operations and principles which may be somewhat technical in nature. Instructors of agricultural mechanics and tractor mechanics programs should consider including in their summer programs time for the construction of aids to increase the effectiveness of instruction.

A Diesel Example

A worthwhile teaching aid for general agricultural mechanics or tractor mechanics is one that we at Texas A & M conceived to help with the instruction in the area of diesel injection systems. We felt that a well constructed unit that contained all the components of an actual system and that was workable would be an invaluable aid in teaching. We also felt that this would lead, in many cases, to a more complete understanding by our students of the components and principles of operation of a diesel injection system.

Our unit is built around a John Deere injection system taken from an 8630 series tractor. This equipment includes pumps, lines, filters, and injectors; the major components of the unit, and are items which would be expensive to buy. However, we have found that most dealers and industry representatives are receptive to donating these items to schools for teaching/instruction purposes. Our components were donated by Deer & Co. for this purpose. This is the only way that this unit can be built for a price which is within reach of most schools.

Although this stand is built using Deere components, it would be very easy to change the basic plan using any manufacturer's components and it would not matter whether the set up was a 3, 4 or 6 cylinder. Since our unit is a 6 cylinder, a three or four cylinder unit could be put together for less money than what our figures indicate. The total cost of our unit less injection components was $173.07. Again, a small unit would require less money to build.

Constructing the Unit

As may be noted by referring to the pictures, the unit was put together keeping all components as they would be positioned on a tractor. The injectors are placed in plexiglass cylinders where actual operation of the nozzles may be viewed. A small reservoir was added to accommodate the diesel fuel and also a common return line from the injectors back to the tank. This will circulate the fuel and eliminate refilling the system on a continuous basis. The injection and return is accomplished by the 5 inch plexiglass cylinders with plastic funnels cemented to the bottoms. The fuel injected runs through the funnels of each cylinder, and into a ¾ inch PVC pipe which is cemented to each of the funnel ends to provide a common return of injected fuel to the tank.

We have rigged our unit to operate by hand, using a lever to turn the pump causing injection. However, the unit may also be set up to operate from an electric motor or a gear motor. For those who have these motors lying around, this would add a nice touch to the injection unit. It would be especially effective to run the unit at low speeds and even have a variable speed motor. We feel that to be effective a motor should be used that would turn the pump at speeds of 50-150 rpm. At faster speeds, the effectiveness of individual nozzles injecting may be lost.

The following is a list of materials and prices which we encountered building our unit. These may be adjusted, however, depending on what material is on hand in the shop, and price differences due to variations from area to area.

- View showing return line made of ¾" PVC. Collection funnels are cemented in holes in pvc and return line is angled slightly toward tank to allow for return by gravity flow.
- a 6 cylinder, three or four cylinder unit could be put together for less money than what our figures indicate. The total cost of our unit less injection components was $173.07.
- Again, a small unit would require less money to build.

- Donated Items:
  1. Robert Bosch, P series, fuel injection pump
  2. Robert Bosch, KDei 21 mm, nozzles
  3. John Deere fuel line set for 6679 engine
  4. Robert Bosch, DN/SA/5, fuel supply pump
  5. Fuel filter assembly — John Deere 8630

We also recommend that you involve your students in the construction of this instructional aid. Thus, not only are you preparing for classes in the fall, but also your students can learn much about the diesel fuel injection system and its operation. You may be able to have a kind of "open house" after completing the aid in which you incorporate an FFA meeting with an agricultural mechanics theme. Invite those people who donated materials to observe those students helping in the construction as they demonstrate its operation to the FFA chapter. Do not forget to involve the administration and local press in the unveiling. Finally, you may want to schedule an adult farmer's meeting to concentrate on this area of instruction.

Yes, teachers of vocational agriculture are busy. With this in mind there is value in the case, they must make the most out of their summer schedule. Preparation of materials, student involvement; and, most of all, teaching can be incorporated into agricultural mechanics activities during the summer. Nothing less can or should be expected of you, the ever resourceful teacher of vocational agriculture.

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Viewed Diesel Injection Stand

All components are positioned exactly as they would be on an actual tractor set up.

Collectors of injected fuel from nozzles are constructed of plexiglass cylinders with a plexiglass top cover. Nozzle action can be observed easily as injection takes place.

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MAY, 1983

THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE
Summer Programs In Vocational Agriculture: The Administrators' View

What will you be doing this summer? Is this a question that your administrator will be asking you soon? Will it be a question of business or just a curious comment concerning your well being? Will you be working for the school district or more importantly for students in a continuous 12 month contract with summer employment or will you be at home painting your house?

Do you have an answer for your administrator? Have you talked with your administrator lately about what you, the vocational agriculture teacher, are planning as a summer program? Do you have any basis to support your discussion, to report your proposed activities, any records? Can you explain the impact your summer program has on your students, and to the total vocational agriculture program? Do you know how your administrator views your summer activities, the summer program?

Have you ever involved an administrator in your summer activities? Have you ever invited an administrator on an SOE visit, to a county judging contest, to a regional activity, to an FFA or vocational agriculture teachers' meeting? Have you ever discussed program activities with your fellow vocational agriculture teachers? What are they doing, what are their views? Do you know how your administrator sees the summer program activities in which you are involved?

**Viewing Two States**

While these are not the questions asked the 160 plus administrators and teachers in parallel Iowa (1979) and Pennsylvania (1981) studies, these are the obvious questions that you must ask in a self-analysis of your summer program. But, how did administrators view the summer program of their vocational agriculture teachers in Iowa and Pennsylvania?

First, let me ease your apprehensions by saying, that of the 160 plus administrators questioned, there were none expressing a totally negative attitude toward the summer program. In fact, a summation of data indicated a rather favorable administrator response to summer programs with a 12.2 score on a 20 point scale. This may be interpreted as a rather strong agreement that quality summer programs are very important to administrators. The responses by administrators indicate their feelings to 63 summer program activities in eight summer program activity categories. Additional information concerning the administrators’ response to the four identified summer program categories is shown in Figure 1.

It is estimated that administrators feel that the SOE and FFA activities are the basis for a successful summer program. Administrators feel teachers should be working with students on an individual basis to assist with SOE and FFA activities. These SOE activities would include visiting and evaluating student SOE projects, providing individualized student instruction relative to the student's SOE program, assisting students in selecting crops and livestock, developing work experience stations with students and employers and supervising student projects. The FFA activities deemed important appeared to add continuity to the FFA program of work and included holding regular summer FFA meetings, working with FFA committees and supervision of FFA recreational and educational activities.

The remaining categories and activities were mainly considered to be supportive in maintaining a continuous ongoing program and included: scheduling of regular office hours and meeting with administrators; preparation of teaching aids for classroom and laboratory use and revision of curriculum; assisting in agriculture field days and working with local or county fair groups.

The repair of instructional aids and equipment and the inventory and maintenance of laboratory supplies were considered viable summer program activities as were the supervision of demonstration plots involving new agriculture practice and the conduct of adult/young farmer classes. Administrators believed the attendance at professional education in-service workshops and the participation in state and regional professional meetings were acceptable summer program activities. While the evidence shows support for summer program activities at the local level, with emphasis on SOE and FFA programs, the administrators, when asked to divide the agriculture teachers time among the eight categories, showed little change in their attitudes. In fact, their allocation of time to the program categories paralleled their attitude responses as shown in Figure 1. A correlation of the summer program category scores and the allocation of time figures indicated a consistent and parallel response from the administrators except in the instructional improvement may be noticed that gained a slightly higher percentage of the time allocation.

**Needed Communications**

When asked some demographic questions concerning the vocational agriculture program, administrator responses indicated a definite lack of communication between the vocational agriculture teacher and the administrator. When asked questions that would indicate some involvement with the summer program, administrators indicated that few had ever been on an SOE visit, with less than 10 percent actually accompanying the agriculture teacher. Many indicated a desire to visit a student's SOE project. When questioned as to how often the agriculture teacher would or should report to the administrator during the summer, the responses ranged from not at all (10%) to every day (22.4%) with an average of 12 visits over the summer.

In addition, 42 percent of the administrators did not require any formal report of the agriculture teachers’ summer activities and 10 percent required a report as part of an annual summary. This indicates a lack of communication between the agriculture teacher and the administrators. Let us face the real problem, it is your responsibility to get on the ball and promote and communicate your program to your administrator.

What are the keys to a successful summer program in vocational agriculture? From the administrators' viewpoint, it must be a vocational agriculture teacher committed to an high quality program of student involvement in SOE and FFA activities and a teacher able to communicate and sell the significance of SOE and FFA programs to the quality of a total vocational agriculture program.

**Vocational Agriculture Under The Midnight Sun**

Agriculture in Alaska? You bet your butt! In fact agriculture began in the "Land of the Midnight Sun" even before our great nation achieved independence. In recent years development of a stable agriculture industry has received emphasis on a state-wide basis because the perpetuation of economic stability may depend on intelligent management of renewable resources (as opposed to the current rapid utilization of non-renewable resources). Within the last decade, vocational agriculture has evolved, paradoxically, as a force and a power to push the expansion of that Alaskan agriculture industry. Lord, cold winters in Alaska usurp a major portion of each school year. Extreme weather severely limits the use of outdoor hands-on experience-type activities as a practical instructional tool. Thus, although short and intensive, the summer becomes an invaluable extension of the school year. Vocational agriculture teachers have utilized the Alaskan summer to provide many opportunities for their students to gain the outdoor, hands-on experiences otherwise obtainable during the winter.

Utilizing Fairs Participation in fairs is a traditional summer activity. Palmer and Fairbanks host state fairs, while other communities such as Delta Junction and Ninilichik hold local "city" fairs. In this way, some students have the opportunity to become involved in more than one fair. Showing animals is a major attraction. Concepts and skills discussed and practiced in the classroom during the school year are (Continued on Page 14)
"put to the test". Each steer, pig, sheep, goat, rabbit and chicken represents the degree to which each student was able to apply those concepts and skills. In addition, students have the opportunity to receive recognition for producing a quality product.

Showing animals is not, and should not be, the only event in which vocational agriculture students take part at a fair. For example, several FFA chapters co-sponsor Old MacDonald Barn. It is designed as a project so the younger generation may become acquainted with common farm animals. This year plans are in the works for a new student attraction, a reiner.

In addition, a tractor safety contest sponsored by the FFA is gaining in popularity as the hazards inherent in farm machinery operations have become an unfortunate reality in recent months. Promoting the public's awareness and understanding of the goals and objectives of vocational agriculture programs is achieved by encouraging students to enter projects such as agriculturally related arts and crafts into competition. No doubt, the grossed pig contest sponsored by the FFA is also a big attractiongetter.

For the teacher, the idea of the S.O.E.P. in vocational education for new students. In the spring, new enrollees for the following fall are identified. The teacher contacts and often visits, each of the prospective students, explains the vocational agriculture program, and seeks their commitment to become involved in the upcoming fair. This innovative approach has several advantages. First, both the student and the parents are impressed by the teacher's enthusiasm and dedication. In addition, the new student is involved immediately in the program a summer is not wasted, and the new student is not a stranger in the vocational agriculture classroom by the first day of school.

SOEP

Many of the animals shown at the fair are products of supervised occupational experience programs (SCEP) which are conducted over several months. In some areas of the state, particularly the bush communities, the SOEP is completed as a shorter, more intensive summer activity. Many villages embark upon a community-wide gardening project each year to provide residents with a local supply of fresh produce. Students utilizing community gardens as an SOEP are not only applying principles of plant science, but are also assuming an active role as a contributor to the welfare of the community, an ideology held in high esteem in native cultures.

On the Seward Peninsula, range management and animal science can be applied to the various aspects of reindeer herding and management. In the interior, agriculture and forestry operations by producers and set net production are common. Production of vegetables such as lettuce and potatoes is accomplished in the Mat-Su Valley.

In any case, teachers make every effort to visit students during the summer to evaluate progress on the SOEP.

FAA

Special projects are also a part of summer activities. For example, several workshops participate in BOAC projects. This year, one school will be landscaping and renovating an already existing community park, while another, having entered into an agreement with the local department of parks and recreation, will design landscape and construct a new park "from ground up". Livestock fitting and showing clinics, farm and tractor safety programs, and activities. One FAA chapter by Bristol Bay has a commercial fishing permit; thus, fishing excursions are utilized as yet another example of extending the vocational agriculture program far beyond the classroom.

As usual, no summer is complete without recreation. FAA chapters engage in a variety of activities ranging from softball tournaments with the local FAA Alumni to canoeing and hiking excursions. Chapter meetings and officer workshops, interwoven with such recreational activities, prepare new officers and members for the upcoming school year.

Agency Involvement

Cooperating with business and agencies is an essential component of every effective vocational agriculture program. As a case in point, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) has provided students in the Fairbanks area with an outdoor laboratory. During the summer, students produce hay, much of which will be used for student's livestock projects. Besides these intensive agronomic experiences, ADF&G is interested in helping the students perform wildlife habitat studies and gain first-hand experience in wildlife management during other times of the year. Hopefully, this cooperative agreement will have some of a worthwhile profit, providing convincing evidence to the local school district administration that the purchase of agricultural machinery and equipment is a feasible and practical asset to the program.

Extended Contracts

At this point, the value which Alaskan vocational agriculture teachers place on extending the academic year into the summer should be obvious; yet, to further illustrate, consider the following: none of these teachers has a twelve month contract! In fact, while some have extended contracts of 10-20 weeks, others are employed only for four months. This speaks well of their commitment to their students and to their profession. If these are examples of their activities under the midnight sun (without pay), it makes one wonder to what lengths they would go to make their programs more effective (when they are paid) by the daytime light of the moon.

Summer Programs, Extended Service, Summer Contract: call it what you will, the portion of the vocational agricultural year that occurs during the summer has become a hot topic in some school districts. Many administrators with budgets to balance question its importance and many educators find themselves defending the necessity of a summer program.

Many researchers have studied what educators think about summer programs, their content and their importance, and while educators' views are important, there are other groups of people with a stake in the summer program who have received little attention. Knowing how the students, their parents, industry employers and administrators view the vocational agriculture summer program can help educators strengthen their case for summer programs or at very least, point to areas which need some attention.

Looking at Ohio

The focus of this investigation was on high school vocational horticulture programs in Ohio. Vocational horticulture students, parents, horticulture industry employers and school administrators from 20 of 66 high school horticulture programs during the 1980-81 school year were surveyed.

Each group was asked to respond to statements about summer programs in the otherwise by the students was that the continuation of the FAA program was definitely the least important benefit of the summer program.

Perceptions of Parents

Parents, too, indicated that the summer program is important to the vocational horticulture program and to the success of their student in a job. Their other responses paralleled the students' with two notable exceptions. Parents believed that teacher visits to their student were frequent enough, and that their student did receive help and support from the teacher during these visits.

Parents echoed the students in their ranking of summer program benefits. Moral support and encouragement ranked on top, and the continuation of the FAA program a conspicuously distant last.

Parents did, however, sound a very encouraging note: they responded that the extended service contract should be extended to schools where federal/state monies are withdrawn.

Employers' Views

Employers' responses showed that they believe the summer program in vocational horticulture is a necessity. Summer experiences contribute to the occupational success of the student and many of the experiences are impossible to gain at other times during the year, employers indicated. They also responded that they would employ students with valuable summer experiences, and teacher visits to on-the-job students were beneficial to the worker but might not be frequent enough.

Employers extended their support of the summer program to the schools in their area. The students in their company were in favor of the summer program, and encouraged encouragement was ranked as the number one benefit they expected.

Another rather conspicuous re-
Opinions of Administrators

As a group, administrators responded that the summer program had many benefits for the students; however, administrators had wider differences in their responses than any other group. Teachers should be primarily white and administrators, including directors of vocational programs, working with students during the summer, administrators responded. They also indicated that teachers should let their administrators know about their summer plans and that the manner in which extended service time is spent should not be left entirely up to the teacher. In addition, administrators responded that extended service should be continued even if state/federal funding is not available.

When ranking the benefits of a summer program, administrators placed one-to-fourth as the number one benefit. Moral support and encouragement ranked lowest (compare with the first ranking by students and parents).

Implications

While reinvesting the importance of the summer program to the total vocational education program, this survey pointed out several areas which improvements either in the summer program or the perceptions of the summer program need to be made. Knowledge of the summer vocational agriculture program, the summer FFA program, and the student's responsibilities seem to be lacking in the groups studied.

Communication lines need to be opened up between teachers, parents, employers, and administrators so that there is no misunderstanding as to what is to be happening during the summer. Teachers should be more attentive to one another to improve communication with employers and more sensitive to the perceptions of administrators.

The discrepancy between students and employers on job-related issues illustrated the need for more cooperative, active training agreements and plans, and their proper use. Also, the consistent ranking of the continuation of the FFA program as the least important benefit of the summer program raises questions as to the perceived value of FFA and its summer program to vocational agriculture, which should be investigated further.

As many actors will tell you, you have to know your audience. Vocational agriculture teachers must know how their programs are perceived in order to make sure that their program meets the needs of the students and the industry. The study only scratched the surface of summer programs in vocational agriculture, and provides few answers. It does, however, give the vocational agriculture instructor some direction on how to better the summer program, and provides insights into just what others are thinking.

Media Relations

The promotion of local vocational agriculture programs is enhanced greatly because of the availability of local newspapers, radio and television. But, that availability would be limited without cooperation from editors and station managers.

As part of a quality summer program, the teacher or agricultural education should take the time with local editors and station managers. The purposed program should provide appreciation for support during the previous year, to invite the editor to special vocational agriculture functions, and to explain the purpose of vocational agriculture and/or to discuss summer program plans for the new school year.

Assuming that this meeting is successful, the appreciation meeting will pave the way for increased cooperation in the future. This personal contact should make editors and managers more sensitive to information on summer activities the teacher provides them.

In some cases, supervisory visits can double as public relations visits to parents and employers. If this is the case, then a specific agenda should be discussed during the visit. Whatever the nature of the visit or setting, the most important thing is not to lose contact. Specific time allotments should be scheduled just as with any business meeting.

When making SOE visits, the teacher can select both summer students, FFA members, adult students, parents, and employers in supervisory situations. Many times the think of such a visit as one between the student and the teacher, but a meaningful visit should include all those involved in SOE.

Although these meetings should always be scheduled activities, the summer provides more quality time and even for the teacher and students to visit with prospective students, both youth and adults. The summer also allows more time for the teacher to take part in actual job activities with the students. In many cases, the actual sharing of these experiences assist in forming lasting relationships. The student can also help the teacher meet other members of the community. This informal contact is a very valuable part of the local public relations effort and should not be overlooked during the summer.

Summer also allows teacher contact with present and prospective employers. This contact provides a sound base for any benefits that are to be achieved during the school year and adds to total program stability.

Administrative Relations

One of the key individuals to any program is the administrator. One of the keys to a quality summer vocational agriculture program is keeping the administration informed of summer activities. It should be of high priority for the teacher to give the principal, assistant...
Public Relations Assists In Achieving A Quality Summer Program

(Continued from Page 17)

ant principal, vocational director, and superintendent a calendar of summer activities. This should be done at the beginning of summer and appropriately updated. This simple act can be one of the most important activities of the summer and cannot be overestimated.

When the calendar is delivered to the administration, the teacher can improve relations with the administration by taking the time to explain the calendar and the importance of a summer program. To further strengthen relations, teachers should always notify the main office whenever they leave school during the work day.

Another way of promoting positive administrative relations is by inviting administrators to accompany the teacher on supervisory visits during the summer. Not only will this involve the administration in the program, but it will also expand the community image of the teacher in the eyes of the administrator.

The key point to the above discussion is that the administration should be involved in a quality summer program. Administrators and teachers should use the public relations approach which is appropriate for their situation. The main point is to keep the administration informed and involved.

Professional Relations

Just as administrators are involved in quality programs, so are vocational agriculture and many summer activities. With involvement comes public relations opportunities. Public relations activities may be practiced through teachers' professional involvement. Teachers' personal involvement may include the school newspaper, instructional improvement, agricultural agencies and organizations, agricultural business and industry, civic clubs, and professional teaching associations.

Teachers should use their summer weeks wisely in the promotion of agriculture and professional education activities to attend. If possible, they should involve school projects of these organizations. These activities might include breed association field days, agricultural equipment demonstrations and civic group meetings.

Other activities may involve the local teachers participating in programs from the areas of: SCA, ASCS, Farm, Farm Credit/PCA, Cooperative Extension of the Division of Forestry. Within the vocational agriculture profession, public relations should be practiced at the state level: the state teachers conference, technical update workshops, the state FFA convention, and state FFA leadership and recreational camps.

The local teacher should never forget that we depend very much on other agencies, as well as, our fellow vocational agriculture teachers, supervisors, and teacher educators. Good relations within our profession and related professions are essential.

Informal Relations

Informal relations applies to all vocational agriculture programs, and allows the teacher to spread good public relations while maintaining high visibility. The teacher must be in a hurry, but take the time to talk with the manager and other employees.

Personal contact might raise the teacher to the top of the customer list which will reduce future problems, increase cooperation, insure better deals, and enhance quicker service.

The teacher should also spend some "unhurried" time when visiting a student or when the teacher is on the way home from work. It never hurts to stop and say hello to Mr. Jones, Mrs. Smith or little Johnny. The word spreads and the public relations builds.

Sometimes it is good to stop in at the local store for a few minutes just to say "hello." Be careful not to stay too long or the people will think you have nothing to do. But, the news of a friendly, hard working vocational agriculture teacher can hardly spread faster than from the country store.

These are just a few examples of how to informally promote vocational agriculture. Really, any time is a good time for informal public relations.

Quality PR Appeals

Vocational agriculture has many publics. They are very different and a quality public relations program will appeal to all of them. However, a good public relations effort will be based on the community of students who are ordering or picking up supplies, they should not be in a hurry, but take the time to talk with the manager and other employees.

Personal contact might raise the teacher to the top of the customer list which will reduce future problems, increase cooperation, insure better deals, and enhance quicker service.

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These are just a few examples of how to informally promote vocational agriculture. Really, any time is a good time for informal public relations.

One of the most neglected parts of a superintendent's or teacher's program is the part which deals with public relations. This is despite the fact that summer is an ideal time to involve vocational agriculture teachers to bolster this aspect of their program. One reason is to make sure that everyone holds the view that there is just not much going on during the summer and therefore not much to publicize.

What a critical error! That viewpoint, if projected to the local citizenry, can only lead to one conclusion: the agriculture teacher does not do anything in the summer. Everyone in the local community should realize that summer is one of the busiest times of the year for the vocational agriculture teacher. The responsibility for letting them know about it rests with you.

How does one go about strengthening the public relations program in the summer? By doing some simple thing which informs people about your vocational agriculture program. It is impossible to put too much emphasis on the following activities. You should consider the fact that the most common thing intelligent teachers can do to ensure that their program is received is to give the attention that it deserves.

The summer is an ideal time to sit down and talk with your school principal and superintendent. School is out, and the opportunity is there to go over all the everyday crunch of disciplining students, arranging for sports events, events, etc., and have more time to meet with you.

Arrangements for a meeting are usually made during the summer. The purpose of your administrator is to provide you with your plans for the upcoming months. A written plan of your activities is extremely helpful in this regard, and all FFA meetings and activities should be outlined at this time in order to ensure that they are placed on the school calendar.

It may be possible that your administrator will indicate that they are not concerned about what you are doing, but let them know anyway. Ask them for suggestions as to what they feel the vocational agriculture program should be accomplishing during the summer. At the end of the meeting, the administrator should be made aware that you have a job to do during the summer and you have the plans for doing it.

Many vocational agriculture teachers try to get their administrator(s) to go on several SOPE visits during the summer. This is an excellent idea. Again, the summer is ideal as the administrator will have a much more flexible schedule and will probably enjoy the opportunity to get out of the office.

During the visit, an opportunity is provided to discuss some of the accomplishments of students in the program and to point out the value (and necessity) of SOPE's. We must not over emphasize the tremendous return (in terms of good public relations) that can be gained by this activity. The few hours you spend with your administrator will pay many dividends in the future.

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ARTICLE

Summer The Time To Strengthen Your Public Relations Program

Community Visibility

There are a number of indoor jobs that many agriculture teachers can take care of during the summer. Inventorying supplies and equipment, washing plants, cleaning, and preparing instructional materials are worthwhile and necessary activities to conduct during the summer. However, make sure that you are not spending all your time in the office or in the classroom. A portion of your time should be spent visiting students, parents and prospective students. It is not a bad idea to visit the local coffee shop on occasions to talk with some of the local people and discuss the vocational agriculture program.

Summer is an excellent time to meet with employers to discuss the possibility of hiring the students for work experience programs. This time of year is also a good time to drop by the county office to discuss new developments in the field and to coordinate various programs. Remember that the idea is not to be seen doing your job. You do not have to tell people what you are doing, if they can see what you are doing.

Facility Use

Many successful production agriculture and agricultural mechanics teachers have reserved periods of time during the summer where individuals in the community can use some of the facilities of the program. One individual with whom we are familiar has a shop day once a week where students (and parents) can bring in equipment to be repaired or reconditioned, and individualized instruction can be provided. Other activities might include demonstration plots on the land laboratory or in the greenhouse. The community could be invited in to view the results and discuss the various techniques which are being utilized.

BY PAUL VARNHORN AND DANN WARE

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BOOK REVIEW

PLANT PROPAGATION AND CULTIVATION

By William A. Hutchinson, Westport, Conn.: AVI Publishing Co., Inc., 1980, 271 pp., $18.00

This text-manual was written for a one-semester course in horticulture. It elicits an excellent service for the high school or junior college student seeking a horticulture degree.

The first five chapters deal with plant structure and organs, their function, uses, and taxonomy. Chapters 6, 7, and 8 stress florala, floral anatomy, floral usage, floral design and sexual reproduction in plants. A listing of the important soils, soil fertility, and potting methods is contained in Chapter 9. A detailed calendar for planning yard and garden activities is given in Chapter 12. Chapter 13 discusses plant growth regulating compounds while Chapter 14 concerns pest controls.

Plants that reproduce by seedless means are taught in Chapter 15, and the various types of propagation are covered in Chapter 16. A series of tables provides information on the many plant materials used in landscaping. The last chapter covers container gardening with the major emphasis on the Oriental art of bonsai.

This text was written by an expert and shows that the author has a keen knowledge of his subject. It is written in a manner that is easy to read. The author indicates the importance of demonstrating the material covered in the text, and the reader is encouraged to be creative in doing so.

Inform the Administrator

The summer is an ideal time to sit down and talk with your school principal and superintendent. School is out, and the opportunity is there to go over all the everyday crunch of disciplining students, arranging for sports events, etc., and have more time to meet with you.

Arrangements for at least one meeting (early in the summer) primarily for the purpose of letting your administrator know what your plans are for the upcoming months. A written plan of your activities is extremely helpful in this regard, and all FFA meetings and activities should be outlined at this time in order to ensure that they are placed on the school calendar.

It may be possible that your administrator will indicate that they are not concerned about what you are doing, but let them know anyway. Ask them for suggestions as to what they feel the vocational agriculture program should be accomplishing during the summer. At the end of the meeting, the administrator should be made aware that you have a job to do during the summer and you have the plans for doing it.

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Summer — The Time To Strengthen Your Public Relations Program

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While there are some inherent problems with such activities, they are extremely worthwhile in terms of public relations. Always be sure to gain the approval for any such activity with your administrator beforehand as there may be school regulations which prohibit them.

Publicize FFA Activities

The number of activities in which you and your chapter might participate during the summer and they should be publicized. Summer camp.

ELIMINATE YOUR SUMMER PROGRAM

Summer programs have long been the subject of discussion between vocational agriculture instructors, administrators, and others. There have also been perceptions of summer programs by administrators and vocational agriculture instructors (Holmes 1979, Hilton 1979).

The academic year program and the summer program seem to be treated as separate components of the vocational agriculture curriculum. This has been a factor in causing some administrators to consider the summer program as less important (Marvin, 1981). A commitment needs to be made for the development of a total year-around program of vocational agriculture. Let us examine the merits of the year-around program and the need to eliminate the summer program concept.

Essential Components

There are four key components to an effective vocational agriculture program. They are day classes, supervised occupational experience (SOE) programs, the Future Farmers of America (FFA), and adult/vocational agriculture programs. The analogy of a four cylinder engine can represent a vocational agriculture program. If this engine will represent one of the key components.

Eliminate Your Summer Program

By Lawrence B. Bemis

Editor’s Note: Dr. Robert Rohrdanz is the current director of the Institute for Agricultural Education at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. He has been an influential figure in the field of agricultural education.

As our program operates and completes the cycles of operation each component will create a positive driving force. If our engine is operating efficiently and in correct proportion, the cycle will be a vocational agriculture program which operates smoothly and at peak performance. However, if one or more of the program components gets an disproportionate share of resources the result is rough operation and a noticeable lack of power.

Is your program a powerful, finely tuned engine or do some of your cylinders cut out during certain times of the year? Do you teach day classes only during one part of the year? Are all or most of the SOE visits made during the summer months? Do FFA activities take priority over all other program components during certain times? If your answer is yes to any of these questions, then your program is out of balance and may need to be overhauled.

Peak Learning Season

Prior to overhaul a good mechanic will “toughen” an engine to determine exactly where problem areas are located. Part of your advisory council’s responsibilities should include “toughening” the total program. Your council members should be selected with a wide diversity of interests and experiences which will uniformly represent your community. (Hipp 1980)

Scheduling Learning Activities

The new program should be developed by scheduling each of the program components on a 12 month basis. Currrently the peak labor demands of agriculture occur during the spring and fall months. It would seem there is no reason for not scheduling all the program components for the summer months. (Frederick, 1981)

Class scheduling during summer months would allow greater flexibility than scheduling during the academic year. Classes one morning per week would allow an in-depth look at topics that are currently being studied and other instructional methods would lend themselves to this type of scheduling.

Young/adult programs could be scheduled on a year-around basis for maximum impact. Orientation meetings for maximizing harvest can be scheduled during the winter months. These meetings should be scheduled to meet before the next business year. Plan for unexpected events. Allow time for current concerns, or if necessary, add a meeting to deal with crop damage, insect control, or other areas of immediate need.

Establish Objectives

Program goals and objectives based on student needs should be established in consultation with your advisory committee. These goals and objectives form the link that connects each of our program’s components into a total operation. Simply state what you want to accomplish, and outline skills that students should develop. Avoid "flowery" language and jargon that cannot be measured. Each of the vocational agriculture program components (day classes, SOE, FFA, and young/adult farmers programs) should be evaluated to allow maximum student participation. Provide opportunities for students to participate in a variety of activities while providing challenges as they develop skills in leadership, citizenship, and cooperation.

Calibrate the Plan

A calendarized plan is like the timing chain of an engine controlling the position, sequencing, and timing of all parts. Prepare an outline on a calendarized basis for your total program and include course topics, tests, activities, meetings, SOE visits, conferences, contests, vacation periods, etc. Critically evaluate all four key components represented throughout the year. Are certain time periods over-loaded? If you can, reorganize events into a less demanding time period only if program goals and objectives are not sacrificed. If program reorganization is impossible, eliminate those items contributing the least to student interest or objectives. Be especially critical of items involving or benefiting a small number of students. Develop a total process of evaluation, reorganization, and elimination until you have a workable program.

Methods Selected

Selection of teaching methods. A spark directed to the wrong cylinder may cause a backfire.

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Visit Prospective Students

A key part of any well-planned summer program is the schedule of project and home visitations. As you develop your goals, objectives, and schedule of supervised activities, do not overlook the "new blood" about to be infused into your introductory classes next September.

Strategy

Initially you must determine who those new students are. The three major resources for accomplishing this include fall rosters of class enrollments, counselors, and students already in your program. Once you have the newcomers identified, state your intention to visit them in your summer program plans and plan to visit 100 percent of those new students. To keep track of your success in fulfilling this goal, post a list in your office of all new students' names, leaving a section on the list next to each name to record the date of your visit.

By Gary Varehla
Editor's Note: Mr. Varehla is a former Vocational Agricultural Instructor at Petaluma, California, and is currently an Associate in the Agricultural Education Unit, and graduate student in the Masters of Education program at the University of California, Davis, California 95616.

If your program is located in a large community, it may be wise to post a map with pins identifying the location of each new student. As you plan your SOE visits, look for new students along the route of travel so you can more effectively manage your time by increasing the number of students per trip. The initial two or three hours you spend mapping out this part of your strategy will save many hours during the duration of the summer.

What To Do When You Visit

Develop a packet of information to give each student and their parent. Included in the packet should be a copy of the vocational agriculture course description for the previous year's FFA Program of Activities; an outline including the description and background on the FFA, and SOEP; and a discussion of how the classroom, FFA, and SOE fit into the vocational approach of teaching agriculture: a copy of the FFA Handbook; a brochure about your chapter; and listings and illustrations of other germane activities.

Schedule your visit when at least one parent is home and plan to stay no more than 30 minutes; do not wear out your welcome. Parents are pleased to have teachers take an interest in their children. Particularly, parents unfamiliar with the "vocational agricultural approach" are excited to find an instructor who will make house calls. In that brief visit, your goal should be to increase the student's and parents' awareness of the role of vocational agriculture in preparing young people for the world of work.

As a follow-up, if you are on the way to make a home visit, call the student's home, invite him or her and his or her parent to accompany you. This provides an excellent opportunity for you to effectively show them one important facet of vocational agriculture firsthand. End on a positive note with a brief letter thanking them for their time and interest, and include a special invitation from your FFA president to join the local chapter.

As A Final Follow-up

Have an incoming freshman ice cream social, inviting students and parents. If you have a relatively small chapter, it might be an activity in which all active members and parents could be included. Be certain that all of your officers are in attendance and are in official dress. Have the FFA officers convene a special meeting whose sole purpose is to welcome the new agriculture students. Include a representative from your high school administration in your invitations and remember to introduce him or her.

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Robert G. Crain, Kroey's Vice President of Marketing, Center Division, expressed confidence about the new lettering system. "We've always had a unique and valuable product in our Type-on-Table lettering. The challenge was to develop a lettering system affordable for even the smallest office. This is the system the marketplace demanded. Compact, affordable and equipped with our new self-loading supply cartridge, the Kroey desktop lettering system is the product that we are proud to put our name on."
Teachers can improve their own technical competence through workshops and courses which are often available in the summer. (Photographs courtesy of the Department of Agricultural and Extension Education, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida; and Dr. Stanley R. Burke, Department of Agricultural Education, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.)