IT TAKES ALL THREE...

THEME: SECONDARY-POSTSECONDARY ARTICULATION

Part Two: The National Opinion Poll on Vocational-Technical Education in Agriculture

- Keep it "Future Farmers of America"
- Uncertain about adult education
- Secondary programs should have four components
- Some say don't require FFA membership
- Much diversity in SOE
- Instructional materials are adequate
Secondary/Postsecondary Articulation

Postsecondary vocational-technical education in agriculture is typically offered at a variety of institutions beyond the secondary level. These institutions may be community colleges, junior colleges, or postsecondary vocational-technical schools. The commonality is that the schools usually deal with the thirteenth and fourteenth grade levels.

Secondary/Postsecondary articulation is a matter of vertical articulation. It is concerned with the interrelation of successive levels of education with the intent of facilitating the continuous education of students. It should result in the efficient and orderly progression of students from the secondary to the postsecondary level. Further, it should provide for progression on into programs in 4-year colleges and universities for those students who may wish to go further.

Achieving articulation is not easy. Secondary and postsecondary agricultural educators must cooperatively plan curricula and carry them out. Even when this occurs articulation breaks down when students enroll in postsecondary programs without having had the secondary level instruction.

We shouldn’t throw up our hands at vertical articulation and say it is impossible. We must work at it. To not strive to achieve at least some articulation is to give up on a serious educational challenge. Our students deserve a well-articulated program. Our tax payers should demand articulation. By working together, we can come close to achieving it.

October, 1982

The theme for this issue of THE MAGAZINE is "Secondary/Postsecondary Articulation." Dr. Richard Welton of Kansas State University has served as Theme Editor. His assistance in obtaining articles and photographs is greatly appreciated.

The Cover

"It takes all three: vocational agriculture teacher, student, and postsecondary instructor" was designed by Richard P. Welton of Kansas State University. Technical assistance in the design was provided by Mary Hammel of the Media Center, College of Education, Kansas State University.

1983 THEMES

The Agricultural Education Magazine

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Achieving Quality Classroom Instruction
Achieving Quality Relationships with Business/Industry
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Congratulations to AATEA!

The teacher education group of the vocational-technical education in agriculture family has achieved a major milestone with the publication of the book, TACTICAL EDUCATION IN AGRICULTURE. The second edition was released in mid-1982 and represents a major revision of the first edition published in 1967.

The book, a project of the American Association of Teacher Educators in Agriculture (AATEA), was edited by Arthur L. Berkey of Cornell University. Twenty-nine scholars contributed by writing the various chapters. The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., of Danville, Illinois, printed the book.

Why is such a book important? It represents the collective philosophy of agricultural teacher education. It stands as a benchmark for all members of the profession. It provides "legitimacy" to agricultural teacher education. The same type of thing needs to be done for the other major groups in our family: supervision, secondary programs, and postsecondary programs.
Articulation Aids Transition into Postsecondary Programs

An educational phenomenon happened during the 1970s for postsecondary agriculture: the number of institutions offering agriculture grew to 534 from 303 while student enrollment expanded to 68,171 from 32,602. These gains represent a 76 percent and 109 percent increase, respectively. Growth of this magnitude can be attributed to an increasing demand for persons with agricultural skills and the advances in agricultural technology effecting need for more highly skilled workers. As the general public became aware of the value of postsecondary education, students were more likely to enroll. Another contributory factor was a 23 percent increase in the number of persons in the 18 to 24 years of age group during the decade.

Out of this rapid expansion grew a number of concerns. The Agricultural Education Magazine was in the forefront in aiding the profession in identifying and discussing issues affecting the advance of postsecondary education. One issue that emerged was the need for secondary and postsecondary articulation. The importance was first recorded in The Agricultural Education Magazine in a 1966 editorial by Cayce Scarborough. At a time when the postsecondary movement was just beginning a meteoric rise in agricultural education, Scarborough expressed a concern that leadership should be exerted across the country to keep lines of communication open "...from teachers and leaders in vocational agriculture to nearby community junior colleges...these channels will be necessary unless a completely new agency in agricultural education is desirable." The leadership called for by Scarborough was provided by agricultural educators in arenas from local classrooms to national forums. The impact of this emphasis was verified in 1978 by AATEA President Drake. He reported to the National Agricultural Advisory Council that "articulation between secondary, postsecondary and four-year degree programs in agriculture appears to be improving." 

The Transition

With the expected impact of technological and population changes in both secondary and postsecondary agriculture during the 1980's, it is more important than ever before to articulate between the two programs. As agriculture students move from one stage of learning to the next in preparing for entry into the agricultural market place, we must provide a smooth transition. Some basic tenets that will aid in this transitional process include:

Developing guidelines. Guidelines are a necessity for the articulation process to function effectively and efficiently on a statewide basis. When these guidelines are developed cooperatively by agriculture teachers, state supervisors, and teacher educators, they will provide direction to the total state effort.

Striving for leadership. Agricultural educators share in the responsibility of providing coordination among various agriculture programs within a state. Considerable coordination between schools and teachers is ongoing without much formal organization. The efforts will continue, however, coordination can be strengthened by selecting directors at the local and district levels. It seems essential that such state should have a person or committee identified to conduct overall coordination. Leadership could come from the teachers' organization, state supervisors, and teacher educators.

Forging new partnerships. A natural bond exists among agriculture teachers. This strength is reflected in a common commitment for students to develop needed agricultural skills, competencies, and knowledge. However, we need to explore ways of forging alliances between teachers and programs. As we examine these possibilities, the role of professional organizations -- at district, state, and national levels -- must not be overlooked.

Improving communications. The cornerstone of the educational process is communications. The dialogue between teachers at secondary and postsecondary schools should be open and ongoing. Opportunity to share newsletter articles and events, curriculums, program requirements, scholarships, and just the chance to visit and exchange ideas should be exploited.

Increasing understanding. A better understanding of secondary and postsecondary agriculture program offerings and requirements will be of benefit to teachers and students. As the teacher provides sound advice and guidance, students will be better able to make wise career decisions. Teachers can enhance their understanding of programs by making the most of offerings to participate in a secondary advisory council or attending a community college field day.

Secondary and postsecondary agricultural program articulation has come a long way from the emergence of postsecondary education in the mid-1960's. How far we have to go and how much remains to be done is an unanswered question. It may be time for a nationwide assessment to look at what is happening with articulation. A study of the profession is needed dealing with the emerging issues and concerns that will be affecting agricultural education.

Improving Cooperative Efforts Between High School and Postsecondary Programs

Preparing high school students for a postsecondary program in an agriculturally related field requires cooperation; the student, the high school vocational agriculture teacher, and the postsecondary agriculture teacher are all involved in this cooperative venture. It is the responsibility of the agriculture teacher at the high school level to assume the major role in guiding the potential postsecondary student. With a spirit of cooperation among all persons involved, careful consideration can then be taken in developing the best career oriented curriculum for the student.

Coordinating Offerings

What kind of cooperative endeavors should be undertaken? A simple answer to this question might involve coordinated course offerings between the high school and postsecondary programs. This suggestion is easier said than done because not all vocational agriculture programs emphasize or concentrate on courses offered at the postsecondary level. A well established program in vocational agriculture can be a close link between the high school and postsecondary level. Well established high school programs can change drastically with the arrival of a new teacher with a different philosophy, different emphasis, or a different viewpoint.

The new agriculture teacher will develop the program much the same as he or she experienced in high school, college, or a combination of the two. This all leads back to coordinating course offerings between the two levels of education. The agriculture program in high school, under the direction of the teacher (with aid from the administration and agriculture club), should provide the background for courses to be taken at the postsecondary level.

Courses at the secondary level need not go into depth that college courses provide, but should provide sufficient basic understanding to serve as the "introductory" phase until the college level course is taken more in-depth. An important course of this nature might include a unit on animal production, and the particular unit might benefit high school students toward a broad understanding of terms, concepts, and ideas. This knowledge can be applied in postsecondary courses such as biology, anatomy, physiology, and farm animal reproduction.

Classes taken outside the vocational agriculture classroom are also of great benefit to the student. The more English, biological science, mathematics, and chemistry students take in high school the better the preparation. Students will discover the background information obtained from these courses will ease their transition in keeping up with postsecondary courses.

Role of Vocational Agriculture Teacher

Agriculture teachers at the secondary level need to be aware and well informed of the programs available at the postsecondary level. Knowing the basis of students' interest will make it easier for the teacher to guide in preparing for a career. The agriculture teacher knows the job of preparing students for the related field lies not only with those going directly into agriculture after (Continued on Page 6)
Improving Cooperative Efforts Between High School and Postsecondary Programs

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High school and postsecondary agriculture teachers checking a research plot of sunflowers. (Photograph by Phil Grossault, Barton County Community College, Great Bend, Kansas.)

the high school should be to help students set goals for postsecondary study. Once students on choosing and selecting careers is a good time for students to determine some of those goals. Students involved in and aware of what they are studying will be easier to work with in preparing for postsecondary training. Articulation is much easier for the student who has set goals and works toward a satisfactory solution.

There are many programs and career opportunities awaiting the high school student through postsecondary training. However, before a student can realize that opportunity, some serious thinking, searching, and exploring are in order. The basis of helping the student achieve a smooth transition between the two educational institutions relies to a great extent upon the degree of student involvement. The student should realize that there is a direct relationship between effort put forth and help received in return. The student has to take the initiative and responsibility in deciding what is needed before any assistance will be forthcoming. Transition is a two-way street. The students have to maneuver the vehicle (themselves) onto the highway to get started before the teacher can help steer them in the right direction and then later into postsecondary training. The student may run out of gas several times down the road, but vocational agriculture teachers are usually carrying several extra gallons of patience, time, and effort to get students going again. Other means of preparing students for postsecondary programs include:

- Sponsoring career days in the high school vocational agriculture program for postsecondary agriculture staff members to explain their curricula
- Working closely with postsecondary faculty through informal contacts and meetings.
- Planning field trips and other visits to the postsecondary institution.
- Having postsecondary instructors to serve as judges for various chapter contests. This gives students and instructors a chance to become familiar with each other and the instructor to get a look at future prospects.
- Judging trips and contests sponsored by postsecondary agriculture institutions. Students will have the opportunity to talk with personnel and view the facilities.

Student Involvement

Up to this point, most of the emphasis has been on the role of the vocational agriculture teacher in helping to prepare high school students for postsecondary programs. There is also another viewpoint that needs to be taken into consideration. This involves the amount of input provided by the student. Part of the vocational agriculture teacher's job is to help prepare students for a career in agriculture. This may include the technical education aspect of the program.

As teachers provide guidance, input from the student is needed. Oftentimes as teachers, we are concerned with what we want for the student or what we believe what the student wants. Working in cooperation with high school guidance counselors will often uncover what particular career activities motivate the student as to desires, goals, and interests.

Units of study such as leadership and careers in the vocational agriculture classroom are ideal ways to discover student interests and goals. The role of career exploration in

Work With Postsecondary Staff

Through informal contacts and meetings with the agricultural staff at the postsecondary level, the vocational agriculture teacher can work much more closely in correlating the two programs. More than likely, ties will be strengthened the more frequently contact is made. This association will aid the high school teacher and be beneficial to the postsecondary instructors. Contact with the secondary teachers will allow the postsecondary instructor to become familiar with vocational agriculture program emphasis. It can then be determined how this training can be integrated into the agriculture curriculum on the postsecondary level.

The assistance postsecondary instructors can provide is often very effective in aiding the vocational agriculture program. These persons can provide an unbiased evaluation of the total overall program. If postsecondary agriculture faculty are utilized to the fullest, the cooperation, coordinating, and evaluation of the program can have a positive effect on the working relationship between the two levels of education. The vocational student and postsecondary agriculture personnel should be carried out with the best interest of the student in mind. These efforts will help assure a smooth transition for the student into the postsecondary setting.

The high school agriculture teacher can utilize postsecondary instructors and institutions through various activities and events. An asset to the vocational agriculture program is to add some "clout" to the advisory council.

This can be done by having a postsecondary instructor serve as a council member. The teacher presents a link between the two educational levels. There is no better way for the postsecondary instructor to see the framework of the vocational agriculture program than by actually being a part of the crew. At the same time, the high school teacher can also gain some insight into what the postsecondary program has to offer. Conversation with postsecondary instructors will include such things as livestock judging and academic scholarships, tuition and fees, curriculum concerns, and transfer credits.

Postsecondary instructors can also be used as resource people in the instructional phase of the high school program. These instructors most likely have training in a specialized field of agriculture. They would ideally be used as guest speakers in agriculture classes. One never knows the impression these instructors can make on the students. They have the potential to sell students on their program and institution. Utilization of postsecondary personnel can be a great asset to the high school in their presenting their educational topics, points of view and ideas, but also by conducting public relations work for the postsecondary institution. This can also provide additional opportunity for recruitment. If the students do have an interest in the postsecondary program, it will be of benefit to them to get an understanding of the postsecondary perspective. Contact between the instructor and student is another step in assuring a smooth transition for the student from secondary to postsecondary education.

Transitional Outlook

The vocational agriculture program, under the direction of the vocational agriculture teacher, is working with the institutions at the postsecondary level. This will help secure the high school graduate a smooth transition into the higher level of education and training. Benefits derived from this joint effort will brighten the outlook and boost the moral of the postsecondary bound student. It will also strengthen the postsecondary educational institutions. Coordinating the course development between high school and postsecondary programs can help assure that the continued and appropriate instruction be designed to the needs of the student.

Through contact and advisement with the students, the vocational agriculture teacher can encourage them to take high school classes that will provide the foundation information needed for postsecondary classes. Teachers should impress upon students that it is important to take classes that are challenging and require some extra studying. These classes would include English, biology, mathematics, and chemistry.

Keen on top of the programs offered at the postsecondary level gives the vocational agriculture teacher the edge when advising college bound students. Units of instruction in the classroom and agricultural mechanics can be directed to help provide the necessary start in their higher level of education. Vocational agriculture teachers should spend time with the seniors informally talking about what they should expect from college and college life. They should understand terms such as credit hours, transfer of credit, eligibility, and part-time and full-time students. Not enough can be said about students applying themselves and being responsible for their actions. The success of their educational training is riding on their shoulders.

Through use of informal contacts and meetings with postsecondary staff, the vocational agriculture teacher can work much more closely in helping to coordinate the two programs. Making use of the postsecondary staff as advisory council members, guest speakers to agriculture classes, evaluators of the program, and judges for local and area contests will strengthen ties. Before vocational agriculture teachers can actually help students prepare for postsecondary training, the students must first take the initiative to seek out the continuation of education.

A well-established cooperative effort is an important link between high school and postsecondary educational levels. This link provides the key to a student's smooth transition into postsecondary education.
Skills Needed by Students Enrolling in Postsecondary Agricultural Programs

Students graduating from high school are faced with a multiplicity of decisions that affect their future. Foremost in the minds of many is the question, "How can I gain further training in agriculture?" The answer to this question is clouded by the increasing cost of education, the effect of inflation on farm income, and the reduction of Federal loans and grants. Across the country, those persons who are solving the economic squeeze respond to this question by casting their lot with postsecondary education at community colleges or vocational technical schools.

Postsecondary Benefits
Postsecondary schools are usually located close to home for many students and offer a number of advantages. Quite often the student will live at home and commute to classes. This arrangement reduces meal and housing expenses. If the students are unable to commute, they will still enroll in a postsecondary program because the tuition costs are lower than that of four-year institutions. There is also another advantage. With smaller student enrollment in the postsecondary institution, there is less competition for time, work. About 80 percent of the agriculture students at Barton County Community College have some type of a part-time job. The salaries for these jobs range from a minimum wage up to five or six dollars per hour, depending upon the type of work and the skills involved. Adjustments take place in the personal lives of postsecondary students as many of them are away from home for the first time. Leaving family, friends, and familiar social surroundings is only a part of these adjustments. Some students enroll in a community college or vocational technical school because they feel they are not ready for the transition from a small rural secondary school to a four year university with an enrollment that numbers in the thousands. They feel postsecondary education may work best for them by first getting college life experiences in a smaller setting. Classes are normally smaller and individualized help from instructors is more easily obtainable. Students from rural secondary schools are fearful of becoming just another face in the crowded university classrooms. They want to retain the identity shared with their classmates in high school. Without this identity they may not establish friendships and fail in their educational objectives.

By attending a community college the first year or two, most students can usually make an easier transition into the four year university. This transition period usually gives students a chance to mature, develop proper attitudes about education, and determine career goals. Because selecting their own life goals rather than conforming to those of parents or others wish, they gain confidence needed to enter and compete successfully in the four year institution. Another reason students enroll in the community college or technical schools is the teaching personnel. They are in their second or fourth year degree. They are interested in obtaining specialized training that prepares them for a career in a vocational area. They may complete this training in a one or two year period and then enter the job market.

Instructor Expectations
What do instructors at postsecondary schools expect from high school students? A common expectation is that students be able to read and comprehend what they read. Beginning postsecondary students should be able to write and communicate their thoughts effectively. They need to have the ability to take notes that can be used in class. This is important, especially in lecture classes. Students need to have a study plan and a study time to do. However, too much of either will prevent development to full potential. If students enter a postsecondary school without these basic skills, they need to be developed. Otherwise success will not come easy. Postsecondary schools have instructors and counselors who are willing to help students learn these basic skills if they were not developed in high school. Without these skills, student adjustment may be prolonged since the frustration level may increase.

Leadership Skills
Another area that instructors look for in postsecondary students is leadership ability. The FFA program at the secondary level can play an extremely important role in this area of development. At a postsecondary school, students have two years to develop and demonstrate their leadership ability. Without a good leadership background, it is difficult for students to develop into an outstanding leader.

It is the observation of the writer that students involved in leadership activities at the high school level do not want to continue their activities at the organization that is too structured. They want it more loosely knit and relaxed. Students are not looking for an organization that has a lot of competitive activities such as contests and conferences. Their interests seem to be in gaining information from outside sources such as speakers and seminars. However, the writer is interested in belonging to an organization where they can develop rapport with other agriculture students. The contacts made with outside individuals will be a base of information for them when they begin their own careers. This organization is a place for them to present their own ideas and promote their own theories and sell them through their leadership.

Educational Background
Students entering postsecondary schools in agriculture need to have a sound educational background in several areas. They need to have course work in mathematics and science. These courses will help the student to think and reason. They need all agriculture-related problems. Mathematics and science classes will also be a basis for many postsecondary courses. A background in biology is needed for the animal sciences; botany for the plant sciences; chemistry for the soil and fertilizers; and mathematics for the many formulas used in feeds and feeding, fertilizer formulation, and agricultural engineering equations. Above all else, a good understanding of English is needed so that students may write intelligently and knowledgeable letters, papers, and other forms of written communications. English and speech courses will help the student in oral communications with instructors and other students.

Proper Planning
One of the important areas of secondary education that is sometimes overlooked is that of pre-postsecondary planning. Before students enter postsecondary school, they should be aware of program availability. They need to know the meaning of a one-year certificate program, an associate two-year degree, and a four-year degree. Each of these programs should be explained carefully to the secondary student along with the job entry level that can be expected with education. Also important to the student is the salary expectations at each level of entry. Since many secondary counselors are not fully familiar with agriculture, this information must come from the secondary agriculture teacher. The postsecondary agriculture instructor may also help by visiting classes or FFA meetings. At this time, a review of postsecondary student job placement by educational level would be helpful.

Along with the level of postsecondary education is the area of study. Does the student wish to pursue production agriculture, and if so, in what area (animal science, agronomy, irrigation, horticulture or one of several others)? Many students entering a postsecondary school do not realize the potential in the areas of agriculture mechanics, agribusiness, and agricultural education. The selection of one of these areas would have a great influence upon the student as to what postsecondary school to attend. The student may choose a vocational school, a community college for a one year certificate or associate degree, or they may transfer to a four year institution at the end of two years.

Much has been said and written about the "lost" hours that do not transfer from a postsecondary school to a four year university. In most cases these hours come about because the student did not have the knowledge of levels of education and courses of study before enrolling in a postsecondary school. A great deal of confusion can be prevented if the postsecondary instructor and the secondary teacher work closely together. The writer prefers to think of these so-called "lost" hours not as something lost but rather knowledge gained. Another way to view these hours is education the student received that did not count toward a degree.

One of the greatest areas of education that the postsecondary instructors communicate to their students is that of attitude. If students do not have a positive, upbeat attitude, all of the education they have had or will receive (Continued on Page 10)
Skills Needed by Students Enrolling in Postsecondary Agricultural Programs

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The Young Farmer in the Eighties

As Dean of Instruction of a small rural-oriented community college with a strong program in agriculture, it has been interesting to observe the differing attitudes and feelings of the young farm people who pass through our institution with the intent of going back to the family farm or entering some phase of agriculture or agribusiness. The fact is that this group has been increasingly turned toward the transfer agriculture program after which the students will transfer to a university to prepare for one of the many careers available in the field of agriculture. Interest in agriculture is high, but discouragement can best be reflected by the following comments from students currently enrolled in the program at this institution.

"In the past, the good life of farming was not a question but a known fact. As a small boy, I dreamed of the good life I would have when I would take over my parents' farm. Now I see this dream fading more and more out of sight."

"Agriculture is big business; however, agriculture is sick. Although it is the single largest industry in the nation, agriculture has been stricken with an illness that has spread nationwide, shuddering down main streets in rural and small towns America.

"A lot of farm families have had to quit farming within the last few years... they didn't make enough money to break even."

"The problem is that it's so hard for a young farmer to get started in farming when dad has trouble making it with a job in addition to the farm."

"Some comments are from articles written by Cloud County Community College journalism students. They appeared in the Young Blades page of the Kansas Ag Other, a Manhattan, Kansas, based agriculture magazine. The rebroadcasting of the series of articles which appeared during the winter and spring of 1982 is "An Opinion on the Farm."

The young farm-oriented person is finding it increasingly difficult to ever even get into farming as a lifetime occupation. Indeed, the way a young person can acquire land today is succinctly expressed by Lee Doyen, Chairman of the Agribusiness Department at Cloud County Community College, when he states that one has to "marry it or inherit it." More and more young people are seeing their dreams of inheriting the family farm go the way of bank foreclosures and farm sales.

To substantiate the feelings of the young people, the New York Times in its March 28, 1982, edition stated that "American farms are being sold in record numbers, and farm bankruptcies and foreclosures have soared during the current recession." Also reported was the 58 percent delinquency on payment of loans to the Farmers Home Administration, the highest level in memory. The paper quoted Harold Bremerney, a University of Missouri agricultural economist, who stated that "for every farm being foreclosed, there are probably 10 others on the brink of insolvency. There are thousands of farmers who cannot survive another low-income year."

Seeking Answers

It is from this type of economy that young people are coming to the community college seeking answers about their future in agriculture. It is interesting to note that student interest has changed over the last four years from that of primarily seeking training to go back to the farm or enter agribusiness to that of seeking a bachelor's degree. Of the 76 freshmen and sophomore agriculture students enrolled in this institution in 1978-79, only 15 were planning to transfer to seek a bachelor's degree in agriculture. The other 61 were going back to the farm or were seeking employment in the agriculture community. By contrast, for the year 1981-82, 23 students planned to transfer to seek a bachelor's degree, and 30 students planned to farm or work in agribusiness. When the agricultural economy becomes strong, it is expected that this ratio of students will again turn in favor of production and/or agribusiness preference. Current students see the decreased opportunities on the farm and in the job market and, thus, are seeking more education in hopes there will be a place for them in agriculture with a four-year college degree. It remains to be seen whether or not that hope will be fulfilled.

Act or React!

The postsecondary institution receiving these students can act or react to the dilemma facing these people. They can react and join the chorus of depression one hears on every side or they can act in a positive manner with the realization that by its very nature agriculture has to have an important future in this country. The challenge of the 1970's in agriculture was the management of production. As I see it, the challenge of the 1980's will be financial marketing and management. The age old question of marketing and/or flexibility of international markets must be addressed and resolved during the coming decade. This is beyond the scope of the educational institution other than as it can effect legislation.

The area of financial management is one that must be addressed if the family farm is to survive as we know it today. A number of colleges across the country are offering courses in modern management which are critical to the area of financial management. This program is aimed primarily at the younger farmer. Many of these farmers have set up parents and have little or no knowledge about financial management. Cloud County Community College currently employs two full-time farm business analysis instructors whose entire time is spent in classes or with small groups or individual farmers enrolled in the program. Currently enrolled are 55 young farmers in a multi-county area. This three-year program revolves around the concept of farm records and bookkeeping, farm records analysis, and farm organization. Through this and other programs of a similar nature, education programs must teach farmers and prospective farmers the necessity of keeping accurate farm records which will help them analyze their farm operation to determine what is profitable and what is not.

As financial management becomes more crucial during the 1980's, so will the necessity for the farmer to obtain some computer literacy. Microcomputers are already an integral part of some farm operations and programs are available whereby an operator can keep financial records on the computer and with the proper software analyze any part of the operation to determine if it is profitable or not. Through the use of the computer, farmers can have access to marketing information and other services which are available to the home via a computer hookup.

These services provide minute-by-minute updating so the farmer has immediate access to management information. The payoff is going to be in doing a better job as an agriculture manager. The computer is rapidly becoming a necessary tool in management decision-making. Banks and financial houses will work with the farmer who is adept at managing. A new tractor, an additional forty acres, or a new piece of equipment is going to cost you more money and an adept managing is the key. Farmers are going to have to be highly skilled managers, and this is where the postsecondary education in agriculture institutions should place their emphasis. It is the only alternative open to educators in the production end of agriculture.

The FFA and NPASO

A Collection of Perspectives

Since the National Postsecondary Agriculture Career Organization (NPASO) was founded in 1979, several questions have arisen about the similarities between it and the Future Farmers of America. Are they basically the same? Do they complement or compete with one another? Does the Postsecondary Agricultural Career Organization (NPASO) have an advantage over the Future Farmers of America member not having been an FFA member? Does the individual with a strong background in the FFA have anything to gain from membership in the NPASO? Does industry see the two organizations fulfilling the same role? Is there a progression of experiences and skills found from the FFA, over to the NPASO?

The following perspectives prepared by various individuals associated with postsecondary programs provide answers to these and other questions. Each individual shares insight based on experience with both organizations.

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The FFA and NPASO — A Collection of Perspectives

(Continued from Page 11)

Byron F. Rawls
National FFA Advisor and National NPASO Advisor

I have a feeling that the connection between FFA and NPASO membership is broken too often. We encourage our young people at the high school level who are in FFA to continue their education for the agricultural industry. We assist them in making choices pertaining to occupations and careers. Many of them do. This choice is manifested in enrollment in postsecondary education in many instances. There seems to be a cleavage when young people leave high school and enter postsecondary institutions as far as FFA participation is concerned. I know there are many who retain their membership. Many are working directly toward the American Farmer Degree. For this reason, they feel FFA membership is important enough to retain and that the degree will be the result of that membership. There are others who should retain their membership for the purpose of reaping the benefits which they deserve from the FFA.

The FFA Proficiency Awards Program, which is a direct outcome of the instructional program in vocational agriculture, covers almost all areas of the agricultural profession. Many young people who are in FFA in high school carry on those experiences in college. Yet, some others do not. Many students who leave high school without having received an award but had their SOP program in one of the proficiency areas do not retain their FFA membership. However, they expand their program to the extent that they could make application at a later date, but are no longer eligible to do so because they have not done this, but it is my belief that encouragement is lacking both at the high school and the postsecondary level.

Many times instructors at the postsecondary level are not aware of the opportunity that is available from the experience that their students have received in high school. Through this process, it seems to me, we are losing some of the strongest applicants, especially in the area of business. I hope that we can encourage young people coming out of high school and going into postsecondary education to continue their program in FFA or a career in agriculture. These students should be encouraged to retain their FFA membership as long as possible in order not only to receive the American Farmer Degree, but to receive recognition through other FFA programs.

We have good examples of this in the past. In 1982, a National FFA officer candidate had previously served as a National NPASO Officer. We also had an individual who had been National President of NPASO and received the American Farmer Degree as the National FFA Convention. As he spoke on the stage, representing NPASO to the thousands of FFA members, he wore his gold blazer as a National FFA Officer. He reminded the blazer to reveal he was wearing a jacket of the FFA. As he indicated, this was a special example because of the strong relationship between the National FFA Convention to receive the American Farmer Degree. It is my hope that this type of dual benefit for young people can be realized in the future. It can only be that way if we try.

James Leuenberger, Director Advertising and Public Relations
Midwest Breeders Cooperative

It is expected that a high school student enrolled in vocational agriculture as an FFA member will be made aware of agriculture in general. This should be the case even though he or she may specialize in an area like dairy production, or production crop, or marketing, or technical services. The FFA should at least look at the big picture of agriculture and the job opportunities available. At the same time, it helps them decide what their future career plans may be. Certainly, it will be necessary to plan a four-year college career or a technical college two-year program would be appropriate.

Also, during high school, the students should get the necessary basics in math and English. As a potential employer representing industry, it is my feeling that industry in general is looking for people who can communicate well, both orally and in writing. If the students apply themselves in the specialized fields they have chosen for postsecondary education, they should be ready for employment in that area upon graduation.

Getting back to communications, no matter what area you seek employment in, whether it be sales, management, or technical services, you should have worked hard at improving your communication skills. It will pay off.

When two potential employees with similar education and interests for a job, the one who can communicate well, that is, sell himself or herself to the potential employer, will likely be the one who gets the job. An ability to organize thoughts clearly and correctly, starting with the basics of spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure, will be important in any job.

Industry expects NPASO graduates to have the technical expertise in their chosen field to readily move into the work force. Obviously, in many areas, no additional on-the-job training would be required.

The PAL/PEER projects available through NPASO will be very beneficial in helping students prepare for immediate employment following graduation. Schools which are not currently NPASO members should strongly consider becoming members as soon as possible to give

students the advantage of the PAL/PEER projects and the advantage it gives the graduate.

Industry expects postsecondary graduates to have received and learned the specialized training for the job they are taking (supplemented of course with on-the-job training) and be able to communicate about the job in a clear, concise manner.

Beth A. Spencer
Agricultural Education Major
Cornell University

Thinking back to that day that I first entered and sat down in a vocational agriculture class at Perry Central High School in New York, I never would have believed my agriculture teacher if he had told me, that someday I would have the opportunity to earn the American Farmer Degree, be a candidate for a National FFA Office, continue my leadership as a National FFA President of the NPASO, and prepare myself to become a teacher of vocational agriculture. But now, seven years from the day that I first sat in an agriculture class, I am preparing to become a vocational agriculture educator. I sincerely believe in the articulation, the leadership, and the educational aims of the FFA and the NPASO.

Participation and achievement in the FFA sparked my desire to teach vocational agriculture. The NPASO strengthened and confirmed not only that desire, but also my belief in the validity of America’s heartland, agriculture, and education. It was through the FFA that I realized the immense diversity of agriculture and further came to understand that agriculture was more than the plowing and tilling of the soil, growing corn, and watching the sun rise on a new day.

Randall Roberts
Dairy Farmer
Fayette, Iowa

Having been an active member of both the FFA and the NPASO, I have a wealth of background to draw upon for whatever I face in the future. The FFA gave me instructions and two responsibilities while I was at home. My work with the NPASO was more independent, increasing my readiness to be on my own.

I was an active member of my local FFA chapter (Starnton Chapter of Strawberry Point, Iowa). As a chapter officer, I learned about handling the affairs of a large organization and the cooperation that has to be involved. I gained experience in working with local business persons and getting them involved in chapter programs. I also learned of the valuable leadership skills that are needed in business meetings.

Another advantage of my participation in the FFA was learning to control my fear of speaking in front of a group. With many activities and responsibilities, I had a lot of opportunities to practice and build a little confidence.

My FFA work was mostly at the high school with my advisor and my parents encouraging me along when I needed it. That changed when I moved off to college. I attended Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. I stayed with agriculture, but I had to do most of the proding myself.

I got involved with the agriculture clubs on campus and their activities. What state and national organization forming for postsecondary agriculture students, the NPASO, I thought it would be a way for me to continue the growth I started in the FFA. It would also be a way to help those students that didn’t have that type of agriculture.

I was active on the state organization steering committee and then a state officer and national committee chairman. For the first time I was helping build a national organization not just an active local member helping one group.

I utilized my FFA background as we worked to put together a constitution and a set of rules and bylaws. I got to know the leaders in agricultural education. I learned more of what agriculture is and how much they care about young people like me.

Then came my biggest honor and involvement, being selected to take on another challenge as the National Advisor, Executive Secretary, and the directors. I can not forget my parents either for keeping everything going at home on the farm while I was gone so much. Things got pretty tough at times, but by working together we always managed to make it through. Confidence in myself made me look forward to the new challenges every day.

During my second year on the board of directors, things seemed to be going much easier and I realized that the NPASO was really taking off on its own.

Now I am farming in a family partnership on our dairy operation. I still have challenges to face but I have a terrific background of experiences to draw from to help me overcome them. I take a lot of pride in the things I have learned and the people I have met while working with those two organizations. Every day I use a part of that experience and knowledge and I look forward to what is coming up next.

Larry L. Statler, Assistant Dean Agribusiness and Natural Resources
Kirkwood Community College

Does an FFA member stand to gain more from the (Continued on Page 14)
The FFA and NASPO—A Collection of Perspectives
(Continued from Page 13)

PAL/PEER program then a student who has not had high school vocational agriculture? These questions are best answered by looking at some unique characteristics of the PAL/PEER program.

1. PAL/PEER is an agriculture and industry designed program. It reflects a portion of the major goal of the sponsoring agriculture education organization.

2. PAL/PEER, precisely stated, provides an incentive for a postsecondary student to design a thorough and comprehensive education plan for completion during their formal training period. It has as its ultimate evaluation a motivated student worker placed in a productive agricultural career.

3. PAL/PEER speaks strongly of vocational and technical education criteria. Again, the major component is goals set and goals attained while the student is progressing in the postsecondary career development.

ARTICLE

Setting Standards for Written Assignments at the Two-Year Technical College

The "single mission" of the University of Minnesota Technical College, Waseca (UMW), is "to prepare students to earn a living as semiprofessional, midmanagement personnel in the broad fields related to agriculture as well as in service to rural communities." As part of their training, students must take one-third of their course work in the Related Education Division—a unit composed of biologists, chemists, horticulturists, sociologists, and control over their communications teachers. The courses that students enroll in from this division are simultaneously "related" to their major fields of study and "basic" to their development as well-rounded individuals.

Two of the specific courses that students are required to take—Introduction to Communications and Introduction to Technical Reporting—are designed to help them prepare for effective communication, especially written communication. Yet, many a written assignment in these essential courses is submitted in such a way as to diminish the impact of the communication.

Because of the lack of attention to matters that complement the content of the assignment, the final document is often less effective than it could be. We can encourage our students to submit their assignments in a professional manner by setting standards in the mechanics of the paper, and by adhering to these standards. By doing so, we can help students to prepare for excelling in the "semiprofessional" positions that they assume upon graduation, perhaps eventually to become fully "professional."

Elements of Form

Some of the mechanical elements that constitute the form and which complement the content of a document include:

- neat overall appearance;
- a title in all capital letters and centered over the prose, not over the width of the paper;
- ample margins, preferably 1 1/2" on all sides (top, bottom, left, and right);
- appropriate identifying information, if the document is in a professional manner by setting standards in the mechanics

unadorned number in the upper right-hand corner of a standard 8 1/2" x 11" paper, either a good grade of bond (not erasable or "Correct-o") and a black pen; a lined paper without a jagged left edge; written on one side of the sheet only; double spacing; if typed, a dark ribbon; if handwritten, black or blue pen (not pencil); a paper clip joining multiple pages; evidence of careful proofreading; and delivery on time.

These matters, although relatively minor, do have an impact on the reader. Hence, they deserve the careful attention of the writer who expects a favorable reaction from the reader.

Admittedly, there are problems associated with setting such standards and adhering to them. For example, the writer who is not in that sets the standards? It could be argued that students with excellent writing skills could set their own standards. Many two-year college students, however, have only limited writing experience. It is, therefore, more practical for the teacher to prepare guidelines for use in the classroom. The following are more standard reference works, like the University of Chicago Manual or Style of the Council of Biology Editors Style Manual.

Such guidelines can be most helpful in familiarizing students with generally accepted standards. The teacher, of course, is further obligated to explain that there are many standards and that she will only be requiring one with an accepted set of criteria. Moreover, the teacher should prepare the student for the fact that, in the job situation, employees are often expected to follow company guidelines for reports, memoranda, etc. Students should, therefore, be alerted to the probability of having to adjust to different standards in different jobs and that they should feel confident that the classroom guidelines are sufficiently like "real world" criteria to be accepted as reliable.

The initial strictness in following the guidelines, then, is merely training in the establishment of a workable method of operation, which may later have to be altered somewhat. Like the trumpet player who has become accustomed to reading the treble clef but who later decides to take up the cello only to discover that he or she must now master the bass clef, one can adapt to new notation.

Not Picky

Another problem that is likely to surface is: Why should these arbitrary (and, therefore, probably annoying) standards be followed? Isn't it just being "picky" to insist on following standards? An appropriate response might be: "No, it isn't 'picky' (with the connotations of the teacher's being small-minded and incapable of lofty thought); rather, it is simply being 'precise.' And it is that precision of thought and expression that may well propel you into a successful position."

As Joseph Conrad observed in "The Secret Sharer": "...exactitude in small matters is the very soul of discipline."

The exercise of discipline suggests an ability to exert control over the chance, an ability to shape things finely.

Moreover, the demonstration that one can follow directions and pay attention to details attests to a mind that cares about the work at hand. To follow guidelines is the sign of a dedicated, not a trivial, mind. On the other hand, to disregard guidelines suggests a careless approach to the written presentation and may imply an equally unconcerned approach to the content. Of course, a person could deliberately follow Ray Bradbury's advice in the epigraph to this letter: "For the reader: 451 ("If you give them ruled paper, write the other way."); but to do so smacks of senseless rebellion. Although the disregard or transcending of conventions is often essential in artistic activities, it is bothersome to the reader who expects conventions to be observed—either the teacher or the recipient in the world of work.

One who observes such matters is not weak or unimaginative, but rather considerate of the reader, who has the right to expect these characteristics in any manuscript. To disregard such conventions suggests a lack of consideration for the audience, whom the writer is presumably trying to reach.

In fact, each departure from standard spelling, for example, subtly disregards the energy of the reader by distracting him or her from the content of the piece. The writer's attempt to reach the reader can thereby be undercut, each blander being a minor self-inflicted wound.

Failure to present a written communication

(Continued on Page 26)
munication in first-rate condition may even be construed as an affront to the reader. The writer does well to remember that every document—whether intended to inform or persuade—can be viewed as rhetorical, at the very least to convince the reader that what he or she is spending time on is worth reading. It is polite to permit minor annoyances to undermine that impression.

Teacher's Responsibility

The teacher's first responsibility before evaluating a paper is to insure that written assignments are turned in according to the guidelines. This aspect of the writing process is at times difficult, because students often forget or disregard the guidelines. When this difficulty arises, it is best simply to reject the manuscript outright. If the student's effort and work are truly minor, this practice sooner rather than later will achieve its purpose: to insure that work is submitted in a professional manner. If the teacher possesses the good qualities of the other traits that make for successful teaching—enthusiasm, a knowledge of the subject matter, a sense of humor, a variety of teaching techniques, to name a few—then this modicum of discipline will be taken in stride.

The benefits from submitting written assignments in excellent condition are many, both to the writer and to the instructor. The writer profits from the knowledge that he or she has produced a fine piece of work (assuming, of course, a meaningful content). For the satisfaction that one gets from a writing job well done there is no substitute. A person impressing himself or herself by producing an attractive and professional-looking manuscript, and that reason is perhaps the most cogent one for doing it.

In addition to impressing oneself, the writer may well impress the recipient. By doing so—especially if a person establishes a pattern of submitting excellent written products whenever called upon—the writer influences the reader to trust his or her work. Upon his or her appearance and self-confidence, building-activity successes in based.

Finally, the teacher who sets and adheres to standards of manuscript submission, despite the occasional moans and groans from student and staff, accomplishes a useful purpose for both student and teacher. The student is able to accept the work not only in the least copious manner, but the minimum mechanical specifications serves the long-run interests of the student by instilling an attitude of responsibility for what one submits and, in a small way, helps to preserve the integrity and credibility of the teacher. Both student and teacher can savor each paper as a kind of victory that will, in its way, help to preserve professionalism.

Institutes


ARTICLE

The Status of Postsecondary Agriculture Education

By James M. Garrison

Editors' Notes: Dr. Cor- rigan is Horticulture In- structor at Carroll County Vocational High School, 1073 New- mon Highway, Carrollton, Georgia 30117.

The advent of community colleges in the last few decades has brought changes in the delivery of agricultural education, land-grant university research and service, and professional organizations. These changes are not in the professional development for agricultural education, land-grant university research and service, and professional organizations. These changes are not the result of a single strategy but rather the result of many "short-term" and "long-term" strategies employed by educators and policy makers.

A national survey was made to study the nature of public junior/com- munity/technical colleges offering agricultural courses. This article reports some of the findings.

Program Identification

The identification of specific agriculture programs in public junior/com- munity/technical colleges was essential for further study. The American Vocational Association was contacted to determine if a professional organization existed that could provide a directory of colleges which included agriculture courses in their curricula. None was identified from this source. The National Association of Agricultural Teachers Association was contacted and produced similar results. The directory of the Agricultural Association of Junior and Community College's (AACC) was searched and no specific data were identified.

Population and Methodology

The population for the study consisted of the membership of junior/ community colleges/technical colleges listed in the 1980 Technicians Educa- tion Yearbook. (Reprinted by permission of the Agricultural Education Foundation.) Each program represented a specific sub-division in agricultural programs. Ours was a voluntary, random selection of programs within each category. A fifty percent sample was used. The survey was conducted by mail.

A descriptive survey instrument was designed to collect key characteristics regarding the curriculum, the faculty, and the students. One person from each institution responded for all agricultural programs offered.

Selected Findings

Data were received from 132 programs. The predominant programs were agribusiness, agriculture, and horticulture. Three areas represented 63.2 percent of the programs.

Staff Development. Department heads were asked to list their most impor- tant concerns for improvement of the faculty. Some interesting aspects of the programs evolved. The study in- dicated a high rate of turnover for public junior/community/technical college faculty. From 1980 to 1985 each program expects to have about two (2.8) openings for full-time faculty. With the average faculty size of 2.4 per program, the turnover rate is very high. The department heads expressed concern in basically two areas. The two areas reported as major concerns are: (a) pedagogy, or teaching abilities of the faculty, and (b) program, or on- going professional development of the staff. The largest percentage of the work force reported pedagogy as their major concern, and the second concern was listed as cur- riculum, with a 77 percent responding in this category.

Department heads were also asked to specify the most important strengths of the faculty. They indicated that the strengths were primarily centered around three areas: (a) work experience of the faculty prior to employing ment (25.7%), (b) dedication of the faculty to the program (4.5%), and (c) the faculty members professional preparation (13.1%).

It is noteworthy when comparing concerns against strengths that all con- cerns are in relation to current faculty. All strengths relate to characteristics of the faculty brought into employment. Continued faculty renewal continues to surface as major concern for teachers in postsecondary agriculture programs.

Agricultural Work Experience for Faculty. Approximately half (46.5%) of the programs required some prior agricultural work experience of its faculty prior to employment. The range was from one to nine years. Six- teen (22.1%) of the programs did not require previous agricultural work experience to be hired for teaching at the postsecondary level. Three (4.2%) of the programs required six or more years of previous work experience. The majority of the programs required one or two years of work experience.

Articulation. It was interesting to note that 32 percent of the programs indicated some type of association between the secondary program and the postsecondary program. Only 40 percent indicated a moderate level of articulation.

Recommendations

Each postsecondary education institution is affiliated with its state agricultural education association. This association, in collaboration with its constituent land-grant university, is up-to-date and lead the faculty in planning the development of educational curriculum and professional organization, namely NVATA, should reach out to include and perhaps create divisions for the agricultural personnel in the junior/ community/technical colleges. Close attention to the involvement and the support of postsecondary agriculture teachers through appropriate delivery systems such as workshops and graduate courses should be considered.
IDEAS UNLIMITED

Test Item File

How many times do you go to make up a test and you're short of time and end up with a second rate test? I keep a file of test questions on the back of computer cards. The questions are typed on in a uniform manner. Drawings are made in black ink. The cards are then filed by unit.

To keep the file current, I keep a bundle of blank cards handy. At the end of a lesson I often jot down a test question or two from that lesson. A student aide then types these up in the proper form. They are then added to the file.

When the time arrives to make up a test, I simply pull the cards for the unit and select questions. They are quickly arranged into the proper sequence and placed face down on the copy machine. On the copied page I can number each question if desired. Multiple copies of the test are then made.

If alternate forms of the test are desired, then two alternatives are possible: (1) use the same questions but rearrange the sequence of the cards, (2) select similar questions from the file for the "B" form.

These cards work with true-false, multiple choice, matching, labeling, essay and other types of questions.

The advantages of the file are numerous and include the following:

1. A variety of types of test questions are available.
2. The questions are well-written.
3. More likely to test all areas of the unit.
4. Different levels of questioning are available.
5. A great time saver.

The actual FFA convention is held in:

a. Virginia
b. Kansas city
c. New York
d. Lincoln, Nebraska

The usual FFA convention is held in:

a. Virginia
b. Kansas city
c. New York
d. Lincoln, Nebraska

ARTICLE

An Open Letter to my Cooperating Teacher

As I look back upon my experience as a student teacher, there are a number of things I should be grateful for and a number of things I wish I could have had in my experience. It's not that your heart wasn't in the right place. As a cooperating teacher you really tried to do your best, and I appreciate that.

I really don't know how I managed to make it through student teaching. The sheer weight of the job overwhelmed me. If I could wish anything and have it granted, I wish I would not have had to take the weight teaching load the first day I showed up. It seemed to go downhill from there. There are a lot of other "wishes" I had. I hope you won't mind reading them. I don't want to bore you, but here goes.

Dear Cooperating Teacher:

I wish someone had helped me budget my time better. This time thing really overwhelmed me. It seems we did an awful lot of running around. Is it all necessary? Is this really what it is to teach vocational agriculture?

I wish you and I could have just once spent some time on how you developed your course of study — I know you gave me a copy — and it helped me — I think — but I really would have liked to have gotten into how it was made and how it might be or should be used.

I wish I could have gotten to a student's home, or farms or place of work just once — but I knew you were too busy to help me.

I wish I could run an adult meeting just once — to see if I could have done it. You sure had enough of them.

I wish you would have had an advisory committee meeting while I was at your school — just so I could know how it was done.

I wish you could have helped the FFA reporter write a news article — but I know it had to be perfect, so it was best your aides did it. I'd be happy to do a bragging good job, but it scares me to think how I'm supposed to write one. Maybe I could do it.

Just once I wish I could have had the opportunity to schedule a bus for a field trip and contact the trip participants. It couldn't be done completely in charge, just once! I wish I knew more about the community and how to use community resources.

I wish I could have visited with the superintendent and principal and really talk to them. I'm afraid to do that because I am concerned, I realize they are busy running the farm and the schools, too busy teaching agriculture to worry about little people problems.

I wish I understood SOE better than I do. Sometimes I feel I could develop a decent lesson plan — one that you and the university would both like and I could do it.

I wish I could have gotten the supervision and feedback I thought I deserved. I need to know how I'm doing.

I wish I knew how to " feasible" FFA members. We were always too "busy," I'm still not sure I know how to "advised" students and be an FFA advisor.

I wish I knew what the state professional agriculture teacher organization really stands for and what is supposed to help me as a teacher. I heard the "lock" teachers talking about strikes, money and bargaining at one time, but I don't really understand all this. Does being a teacher mean I have to be mad at my principal and super-intendent? Just once I wish someone had asked me how I felt about my teaching, instead of always lecturing to me. Do this, do that — it's so confus- ing.

I wish I could have attended at least one eg teacher's meeting and a high school staff meeting. I really don't know what to expect and how to cope with it.

I wish someone had told me about the laws and rights of students — and teachers for that matter.

I wish I knew how to plan and carry out an FFA program of activities. Oh, you gave me a copy of yours and it looks great. I can tell you and your chapter spent a lot of time on it.

I wish I could have had an idea where to go with the Frank's. I wish you would have graduated some handicapped students in that class I took over the first week. I could have planned for it, maybe.

I wish I would have known I had to have a homeroom, and help sponsor the freshman class just like you do.

How do you ever find the time to coach wrestling?

Of course, you meant well and you obviously are an outstanding teacher. You are always so busy and on the go.

And finally, I wish I just had 1/10 of your enthusiasm, confidence, and knowledge. However, I really value my experience with you and your department. I wish I could have gotten more of the one thing you seemingly had little to give — your time.

Yours sincerely.

Your Student Teacher

BOOK REVIEW


Landscape: Principles and Practices includes a text and an Instructor's Guide. The text is divided into eight sections: (1) the scope of the landscape business, (2) principles of residential design, (3) the selection and use of plants, (4) the scope of the landscape business, (5) selecting enrichment items for the landscape, (6) lawn installation, (7) developing cost estimates, and (8) maintaining the landscape.

Each section is divided into units relating to the section title. Section one contains three units: (1) landscape design, (2) landscape installation, and (3) landscape maintenance. Section two includes five units: (1) using drawing instruments, (2) symbolizing landscape features, (3) the outdoor room concept, (4) designing plantings, and (5) completing the landscape plan. Section three has four units: (1) trees, (2) shrubs, (3) ground covers and vines, and (4) flowers.

The fourth section contains two units, one of which is a discussion of enclose material. The other is concerned with surfacing materials. The fifth section is divided into two units: one is on natural enrichment items such as trees, etc. while the other unit is on manufactured enrichment items. The sixth section contains two units: (1) selecting the proper design, (2) the proper plant structure and composition. Section seven is divided into two units: (3) pricing the proposed design, and (2) pricing landscape mainte- nance.

The eighth and final section is divided into three units: (1) planting trees and shrubs, (2) care of the lawn, and (3) winterization of the landscape. There is a glossary of common landscape terms included at the end of the book.

Each of the units contains a list of objectives for the particular unit, an achievement review (test), and a few suggested activities to aid in the teaching/learning process for each unit. Also included in each unit are pictures or drawings of landscapes, tools, computations, examples, etc., for further clarification. There are 25 color pages which add a distinct quality to the text, which include good examples to follow in landscape design.

The Instructor's Guide is divided into six sections: (1) pretest, (2) test and key, (3) posttest, (4) test and key, (5) answers to critical questions, (6) class exercises. As is readily seen, the instructor's Guide is a definite asset to the text.

The text serves as an introductory text to landscape and could be used as a basic text for beginning students. I wish you would have gotten some of your student teachers wishing to receive a practical yet professional approach to landscape design. It is an easily read text with photographs and drawings throughout to assure understanding of content and skill learning.

James M. Garrison
Horticulture Instructor
Carroll County Vocational H.S.
Carrollton, Ga.
Conducting A Pit Greenhouse

By Louise Worm
Editor's Note: Mr. Worm is Vocational Agriculture Instructor at Freeborn High School, Freeborn, Minnesota 55931. This article is based on her entry in the Ideas Unlimited Contest of the National Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association, Alexandria, Virginia.

The inside dimensions are 118" wide by 13' long by 4' below ground. It is attached to the west wall of the agricultural mechanics laboratory and slopes to the south. The pit wall is 8" of solid concrete. The floor is 4" of coarse gravel. The north wall is 52" above ground, sided with weather-treated pine, insulated with 2" of blue styrofoam (R equals 10), and covered on the inside with marble. The west wall houses the peak-like door, angled to the ground, and is constructed of the same materials as the north wall.

Winter heat is provided by two methods: a passive solar energy system and an active solar heat ducting system. The passive system consists of the gravel floor and 12, 50 gallon drums of water. These two components naturally collect the sun's heat, and then release it at night. The active system is a two way duct system. The cool air from the pit is moved up to a solar panel located on the top of the school building. This air is heated within the panel and moved back to heat the pit. Fans in the duct are thermally controlled.

Summer cooling is accomplished by pulling cool air from the shaded north side of the greenhouse into the pit. This is done by a thermally regulated fan. The hot air is exhausted out of the building by a vent in the west wall.

The benches are constructed from 1 1/2 inch pipe and covered with hardware cloth. It is calculated that this facility will be totally self-heating and cooling. The only expense is the electrical bill for running the fans.

BOOK REVIEW

The student-constructed pit greenhouse at Freeborn, Minnesota.

The AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE

Maintenance Is Key To Better Round Bale

Proper lubrication, adjustments and some standard operating practices will greatly increase a round bale's chain life, and will also result in better bales.

To maximize the life of roller chains, lubricate them twice a day, preferably after the last bale at noon each morning. At these times, the chains are warm and better penetration of the lubricant is possible into vital areas between the sides, between rollers and bushings and pins. Proper lubrication, even in abrasive soils and crops will greatly lengthen the chain life. Floor and apron chains should be adjusted as described in the operator's manual.

Operating Practices

To understand the best methods of travel to assure good bale shape, refer to the round baler operator's manual. By failing to operate the equipment as described it is possible to reduce bale chain life as well as making poorly-shaped bales.

A Variety of Crops

Round balers with chains will consistently bale a variety of crops reliably. However, when crops such as corn stover, alfalfa hay, maize or sorghum stubble are baled, they may introduce soil into the bale chamber area. These types of crops can reduce bale life much quicker than legume-type or grass hay crops.

Some changes can be greatly reduced by raking two or more rows together, particularly in residue crops where winds tend to be small. By following these guidelines, along with reading over the routine maintenance information provided in the round baler operator's manual, chain life will be prolonged while making better round bales.

The SOE-FFA Relationship

During student teaching I became curious about the relationship between SOE and the FFA. I wanted to determine the relationship and gather ideas about what that relationship should be.

Questions which arose were: How many FFA members are conducting SOE programs? How many SOE members applied for Proficiency Awards? What is the value of SOE Does SOE increase FFA membership?

To answer these and other questions, I made a study at Alvire High School in Hudson, New Hampshire. It was limited to students enrolled in the fall.

The initial step was to determine how many students were conducting SOE programs and how many of these students were members of the FFA. The answer was found by simply checking the roster for FFA membership and comparing it to the list of students with SOE programs. The files were next checked to determine the number of Proficiency Award applications which were completed by these students.

As work began with the vo-ag students, several things became apparent. Most students did not want to fill out the Proficiency Award applications unless they received teacher or parental assistance. It appeared that they either did not understand the applications or that their records were incomplete. The best record keepers seemed to be those whose parents had helped them, as these records were more complete.

As for those students who did not have an operational SOE program, it was obvious that not everyone understood the SOE concept. Most of the students had not applied for their Greenhand and Degree, so I explained individually to those members who wished to be Greenshands. Some were conducting projects that could easily have been SOE programs had they made minor changes in them.

The study revealed that 50 percent of the FFA members conducted SOE programs. Twenty percent of the membership applied for Proficiency (Continued on Page 2)
Block Says:

Rural America Is Growing Again

In a recent editorial directed to rural youth, U.S. Agriculture Secretary John R. Block said that young people interested in agriculture careers need leadership training to equip them for the complex issues facing the agriculture industry.

"Rural America is growing at a faster rate than the nation's cities, for the first time since 1820," Block said, citing one example of demographic changes affecting agriculture. "Land used for agriculture production is shrinking by up to one million acres a year. "U.S. farmers lead the world in productivity today, but that leadership is bound to show the strain of continued world demands for increased food production," he said. These issues "call for a foundation of leadership that must be built today to meet the serious challenges that agriculture faces."

Block cited the Building Our American Communities (BOAC) program of the Future Farmers of America as an example of what young people can do to prepare themselves for agriculture careers.

BOAC is a national community development program carried out by FFA members in more than 1,500 communities each year. It is sponsored by R.J. Reynolds Industries Inc.

The SOE-FFA Relationship

(Continued from Page 21)

Awards at the chapter level. Students who conducted SOE programs were found to be more involved in FFA and were more serious about their participation.

This involvement was measured by the number of meetings attended, committee membership and participation, and judging contests attended. SOE seemed to reinforce students' class work, and were motivating forces. Often they carried out projects that could not be done in their classes. The students with SOE programs would often become the role models in class, providing information and helpful hints to the other students.

I believe more students should carry out SOE programs. This can be accomplished by utilizing class time to explain SOE to them as a group. SOE should be included in the curriculum for each class. Classroom instruction could then be carried out to the "doing" level. This would keep the students involved and keep the "use" of the mini chapters for each specific area. This would divide the visits and guidance tasks among all the SOE instructors, not just one FFA advisor. This is advisable, as the teachers would work in their specialty area. This would allow frequent SOE visits, more extensive feedback, and follow-up visits. The teachers could also assist the students in filling out Proficiency Award applications in their area of specialty. More students would be encouraged to fill out these applications.

My observations provided answers that led to ideas for the author's teaching methods. For instance, SOE should be incorporated as an integral part of soil ag instruction, right from the start. Students should receive the teacher's assistance in their record keeping. FFA officers should be encouraged to explain and show examples of SOE program to members. FFA and SOE can and should be mutually supportive. FFA members can share their experiences with other chapter members, thus serving as tutors. One individual should be the SOE learning experience for all FFA members.

If the vo-ag program has a multiple teacher staff, the SOE programs should be divided up so that each takes charge of an area of specialty. One way to accomplish this is using the mini chapters for each specific area. This would divide the visits and guidance tasks among all the vo-ag instructors, not just one FFA advisor. This is advisable. As the teachers would work in their specialty area. This would allow frequent visits, more extensive feedback, and follow-up visits. The teachers could also assist the students in filling out Proficiency Award applications in their area of specialty. More students would be encouraged to fill out these applications.

This is the second part of a three- part report on the National Opinion Poll on Vocational-Technical Education in Agriculture. Part One was published in the September issue of THE MAGAZINE.

The report is based on an opinionnaire published in the May, 1982, issue of THE MAGAZINE and returned by 251 subscribers and non-subscribers who are teachers, supervisors, teacher educators and other professionals affiliated with the program. Approximately 13,000 people received THE MAGAZINE; therefore, this represents a return rate of about 2 percent. Due to the small return rate, the data is merely reported without interpretation. Readers can draw their own conclusions.

Part Three will be published in the November, 1982, issue of THE MAGAZINE.

By JASPER S. LEE

The National Opinion Poll was compiled by the editor under direction of the Editing- Managing Board of THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE.

Kinds of Supervised Occupational Experience to Use in Secondary Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploration, ownership, planting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ownership, and in-school laboratory</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership and in-school laboratory only</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership only</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others</td>
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Opinion on Place of Supervised Occupational Experience

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<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Required of all in-school</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary only</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postsecondary and university</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postsecondary and university and in-school</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a part of curriculum</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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Effectiveness of State-Adopted Core Curriculum Guides

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<th></th>
<th>N %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very effective</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective</td>
<td>53.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very ineffective</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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Adaptability of Instructional Materials Available for Vocational-Technical Agricultural Education

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<tbody>
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<td>Very effective</td>
<td>67.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>147.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective</td>
<td>33.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Very ineffective</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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The Name of the Future Farmers of America (FFA) Should Be Changed

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<th></th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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Stories in Pictures

Plant science class checking laboratory work at Cloud County Community College, Concordia, Kansas. (Photograph by James Douglass, Cloud County Community College)

Meats evaluation school at Barton County Community College, Great Bend, Kansas. (Photograph by Byene Wood, Barton County Community College)

Instructors Jerry Gee, Jr., Lee Lancaster, and Paul Young of Dodge City Community College, Kansas, are inspecting milo on the college farm. (Photograph by Louise Jambor, Dodge City Community College)