Table of Contents

Page

Seeing Rainbows .................................. Larry E. Miller 3

Theme: Achieving Quality Student Organizations
Achieving Quality Student Organizations .................. Richard L. Carter 4

Gaining Support for Member-Centered Organizations ... John Mann 5

Yes, It Can Be Done .................................. Joe Townsend 6

Wanted: Students to Join the Future Farmers of America ............ Chris Townsend 10

Developing Students in Member-Centered FFA Chapters .......... Gary Lene 12

Member-Centered FFA Chapters Begin ...................... Tom Jones 15

Member-Centered Public Relations .......................... Larry L. Studer 17

Food For America: More Than a Children’s Program .............. Barbara J. Malpedi and Carol Elgin 19

Involving More Members in FFA ................................ Richard F. Welton and Greg Schaefer 21

Successful FFA Field Day .................................. Bobby Walley 22

Stories in Pictures ...................................... 24

EDITOR’S PAGE

Seeing Rainbows

By Larry E. Miller

(Dr. Miller is a Professor in the Department of Agricultural Education at The Ohio State University.)

Student organizations are to vocational agriculture what baseball, apple pie, and motherhood appears to be to the typical American. These groups which are described as extracurricular or co-curricular have an almost spiritual fascination for the teachers and those that have been associated with them. The organizations have provided an outlet and a path for growth for numerous individuals.

The Individual

Articles in this issue focus on the need for these organizations to be member-centered and also serve the non-traditional student. Outstanding individuals emerge each year to provide leadership to national, state and local groups. These leaders constitute only a very small proportion of the total membership. A member-centered organization can provide for the development of not only these leaders but a larger proportion of the total membership.

Special attention needs to be provided to those individuals that have perhaps less innate talent, less aptitude, less motivation, and less ability. Are such individuals, with less than average potential, provided the same opportunities for participation and growth as the potential leaders? Awards, degrees, contests and recognitions concentrate most frequently upon those most gifted. The gift may be in socioeconomic status, intelligence or aptitude.

There are, most assuredly, success stories of individuals that have literally emerged from the depths of detrimental circumstances to reach great personal heights. These stories are heartwarming. However, for each of these stories there are numerous individuals whose candle is never lit or whose rainbow is never seen.

As student organizations have matured, their reputation has increased. They can now afford to take any risks inherent with becoming member-centered in order to help each individual in the organization grow. The growth may not be as significant as for some others, but may not result in holding offices, and may not result in awards for individuals. However, it will help provide for the growth of all members. Involvement and attention does instill pride.

The Organization and The Teacher

An often heard criticism of student organizations is that they become the driving force of the program and not the intended teaching laboratory. Do teachers really teach vocational agriculture or do they teach for contests and competitive events? Is the tail wagging the dog?

The situation is paradoxical. Teachers, like all people, seek recognition. Recognition comes most rapidly through the student organizations. Administrators, communities, school boards, state officials and national officials quickly heap plaudits upon the local student organization that garners attention. Outstanding local units of student organizations can be identified by numerous people, but can they likewise recognize the outstanding teachers and instructional programs? Are the two synonymous? Some teachers truly warrant the title of FFA teacher. Others fill this merely as a subset of the larger role of being a teacher of vocational agriculture.

As Tom Jones notes, the teacher determines how member-centered the organization becomes. The teacher tells the direction not only for the recognition that comes to the organization and its members, but also the degree to which the organization becomes a way for each individual to grow.

Synergism

Student organizations have attained great achievements. There is still room for growth. One way to continue to improve is to provide for the development of each individual. Organizations which are member-centered are not dominated by advisors or officers. The less talented and the non-traditional student has as much to contribute and learn. The organizations can accommodate the most and the least talented and help both. Achieving student organizations of high quality necessitates pulling together the talents of each individual in order that all can benefit.
Achieving Quality Student Organizations

Historically, student organizations have been an inextricable component of agricultural education programs at all levels. The belief of learning by doing has characterized these organizations and has enabled them to contribute toward realization of program goals and objectives. Although the intent of these organizations is clear, the question of whether these are indeed quality organizations at the local level remains to be answered.

Agricultural educators, as well as individuals outside the field, would generally agree that these student organizations have been effective. Educators at all levels cite events in which their groups have participated or the awards they have received as evidence of the organizations' accomplishments. While these are certainly partial indicators of quality programs, they are not exclusive or even the most important measure of quality.

What Is Quality?

What then comprises a quality student organization in agricultural education? According to the dictionary, quality refers to: (1) a degree of excellence; (2) superior in kind; and (3) a distinguished attribute. What separates the quality organization apart from the run-of-the-mill group? What is the distinguished attribute of a quality student organization?

The answer lies in whether the organization operates as a member-centered group. Member-centered groups achieve excellence by encouraging maximum involvement and participation of their members. The importance of member involvement has been substantiated by research findings during the last 10-15 years. Typically, local organizations are faced with a handful of students being involved while the majority of students are just dues paying members without the involvement of the organization. Participation cannot be expected on the exceptional achievement of a few.

Member Control

If the key to quality student organizations rests on the member-centeredness of the group, then educators and their students need a clear understanding of what comprises a member-centered group. The three basic characteristics of such a group are: (1) the organization is run by, for, and by its members; (2) development of members is a key goal of the group; and (3) leadership is provided by the membership of the group, not just the elected officers.

The importance of a member-controlled organization is evident in a review of related literature. Students need to realize that their involvement in the organization and that they have the privilege and responsibility of determining the destiny of the group. This point is supported by recent findings of a research project conducted at Iowa State University. Delegates to the 1982 Iowa FFA Association Convention were surveyed to identify factors affecting participation in local FFA chapter activities. Results were conclusive in that those factors related to increasing student control were perceived as increasing member participation. In contrast, factors increasing leader control were perceived as decreasing member participation and involvement.

Gaining Support for Member-Centered Organizations

Support for any successful organization must come from many areas, however two areas of support are essential. First, support internally from the current and potential membership of the organization itself. Secondly, support externally from the constituents with whom the organization comes in contact.

Internal Support

Before any FFA chapter can reach its full potential of success, it must have the support of the membership which the organization serves. How does a vocational agriculture instructor obtain that full measure of support from every member? Successful member-centered FFA chapters must have the following key elements:

a) a student centered vocational agriculture instructor/FFA advisor;

b) a philosophy which recognizes that every member has special and unique talents which can contribute to the success of the organization;

c) a structure which provides every student the environment and opportunity to capitalize on his/her talents in a learning, work, or service situation in or out of school;

d) a chapter structure and philosophy of leadership from the officers and advisor which actively seeks the involvement of each member in learning, service and recreational undertakings;

e) a philosophy of leadership from the officers and advisor which motivates the members to work to his/hers potential in developing and utilizing their special and unique talents;

f) a program which recognizes and praises the efforts of members' accomplishments, contributions and effort; and

g) a public relations program which publicizes the individual and collective success of the chapter.

Preposterior, you might say! All chiefs and no Indians! Rationale for this characteristic is based on the belief that each individual has something to offer a group and should be provided an opportunity to use those talents for the good of the group and the individual involved.

The challenge facing agricultural educators is determining how to achieve member-centered organizations. Such an organization will not just materialize or emerge. Advisors, officers, and members have important roles in developing a truly member-centered organization.

The theme articles in this issue approach the topic of achieving a member-centered organization from different perspectives and at different levels. The authors, all involved with student organizations, describe ways to realize member-centered organizations and therefore to achieve quality student organizations.
Gaining Support For Member-Centered Organizations
(Continued from Page 5)

Never can an FFA chapter reach its full measure of success if the chapter is the advisor’s organization and every activity hinges on the advisor’s decision. We must recognize that the organization is for the students. The more the students are involved in planning, decision making, implementation, and follow through, the more member-centered the organization will become. This will give the students the ability and capability to learn by doing. We must give them the opportunity.

External Support

Once the internal structure and support are in place for the member-centered chapter, linkages of external support must be cultivated.

Meaningful external support can easily be cultivated when the following items are in place:

1. The vocational agriculture curriculum for the program is viable and tailored to industry, community and student needs.
2. The FFA chapter organization is member-centered and a concentrated effort is made to involve all students in the organization.
3. Students involved in the vocational agriculture/FFA program exhibit avisible and enthusiastic pride of belonging, participating and learning.

Sources of external support for member-centered FFA chapters include:

a. Local advisory committees,
b. School staff and administration,
c. Local boards of education,
d. FFA alumni organizations,
e. Community and civic organizations,
f. Local and state farm organizations,
g. Agribusiness and industry contacts,
h. State legislators and local elected officials,
i. Governmental agencies, i.e., Department of Agriculture, Wheat Commissions, Dairy Commissions, etc.

The post-secondary educational institutions including vocational technical schools, community colleges and four-year degree granting institutions.

Support for vocational student organizations is vital at all of the aforementioned levels. Cultivating this external support is relatively easy and is limited only by our lack of vision at local and state levels.

We who are in the leadership role for the profession of agricultural education (which includes teachers, teacher educators, supervisors) must continually foster a visionary approach in gaining support for the vocational agriculture/FFA program. If we have strong support for our vocational agriculture programs and FFA chapters then we in the profession whether teachers, teacher educators or supervisors should be continually reminded of the importance of keeping informed of the changing technology of farming, ranching and agribusiness. If we do not keep our curriculums up-to-date then it becomes impossible to meet the needs of the students and the community which are served. It is very difficult to gain external support for FFA chapters since vocational student organizations are an integral part of the curriculum.

Involvement is the key word again in gaining external support. Involvement builds commitment! Involve fellow high school staff members, guidance personnel, school administrators and members of the community in chapter activities; they can serve as judges for contests and/or assist with special events and activities. Involve boards of education and advisory committee members in field trips, judging activities, or as chaperones for FFA activities. Involve agribusiness persons and industry or government agencies as hosts for local field trips or as guest lecturers for classroom or FFA activities. Involve FFA members in presentations to civic groups such as Kiwanis, Optimists, Toastmasters, Chambers of Commerce, and farm organizations. Remember, a student crispily dressed in the blue jacket is one of the very best public relation tools that we have. Convincing a student who is poorly dressed in the blue jacket presents a negative public image.

At the state level, good will tours by state FFA officer teams build tremendous support for vocational agriculture and the FFA. State Good Will Tours include stops at business and industry, governmental agencies and leaders of state farm organizations. This type of activity not only builds support for the FFA, but also is educationally enriching for the officers involved.

There is a ripple effect as the state officers visit local chapters during their tenure of office. State legislative appreciation breakfasts are an excellent way to publicly thank them leaders and government officials for their service and also display the products of vocational education in agriculture, the member in the blue jacket.

At all levels, we in the profession must continually give credit to and recognize the efforts of others in our behalf. At the local chapter level, FFA chapters must recognize the contributions of local community members who assist the local chapter with activities. The traditional FFA parent and member banquet is an excellent way to recognize these individuals. Other methods include appreciation break- fasts, award ceremonies at county fairs, and school student award assemblies.

At the state level, state associations must also recognize the efforts of those who help the vocational agriculture/FFA program as a whole. In many cases these are the leaders of state-wide associations which may include leaders of state school administrator associations, state farm organizations, i.e., Farm Bureau Federation, Farmers Union, Grange, National Farmers Organization, Cattlemen’s, etc., state legislators, leaders in agribusiness and industry.

If we in the profession; whether a teacher, teacher educator, or supervisor; will:
- work diligently to serve those with whom we work,
- involve those with whom we work,
- give credit to and recognize the efforts of others in our behalf,
then we shall continue to succeed in gaining support for vocational agriculture and the Future Farmers of America.

THEME

Yes, It Can Be Done

In order to adequately prepare agricultural education majors for the real world of teaching, a comprehensive program must be offered by the agricultural education department. One facet of a comprehensive program is provided by agricultural education student organization chapters.

Chapter sponsors include:

1. To conduct activities to foster leadership development of members;
2. To conduct activities that students can do today that will benefit them tomorrow;
3. To conduct activities which supplement coursework;
4. To conduct activities which provide an avenue for social interaction among students.

These basic purposes sound fine until it comes to the part of getting the members involved. A consistent problem with any organization is: How do we get everyone involved? Too many times, five to 10 percent of the members end up doing 95 percent of the organization’s work.

Can this problem ever be resolved? The task of establishing a member-centered organization is a continuous problem; each year brings new students and new problems. The frustration of trying to provide involvement for all members often becomes so great that the teacher educator or instructor takes on the responsibility of all club activities. Then, we hear: “I can do it better anyway;” “the students would not go;” “it is easier if I do it.” In this situation everyone loses. The organization becomes the instructor’s club rather than the member’s organization. Can this problem ever be resolved? Yes, I think it can. How can we create a successful member-centered organization and avoid the pitfall of a one-person operation? I be-
Yes, It Can Be Done

(Continued from Page 7)

5. Select a faculty advisor who is interested, energetic, and creative. Provide time for club advisors to advise club activities.

6. Involve all faculty in committee work of the club. Assign a faculty member to each committee and expect them to add to committee activities.

Building Membership

After the foundation has been poured, the carpenter must start construction of the house. Organizations must build membership, for without members the club will not exist. There are four building blocks used to build membership — awareness, interest, trial and evaluation, and adoption. Each of these is an important component of our organization; the exclusion of one will cause our organization to crumble even with a strong foundation. An explanation of the building blocks includes:

1. Awareness — How will we publicize our organization so that potential members become aware that it exists?
   a. Use mass publicity methods for widespread awareness.
   b. Write letters to all incoming students informing them of the organization.

2. Interest — What can we do to show potential members that our organization has something to offer them?
   a. Develop an audio-visual presentation to emphasize the value of the organization to potential members.

b. Structure the first meeting of the year to attract new members. Have a picnic, pizza party, watermelon feed, volleyball games, etc., to attract new students.

c. Initiate a Big Sister/Big Brother system to assign present members to contact potential members.

d. Use more personal approaches. Have present members contact new students about the organization and let them be responsible for getting the potential members to the first meeting.

e. Use flyers to announce the time, date, and agenda for each meeting. Put an announcement in the daily school newspaper and call each student to invite them to the meeting.

f. Use younger current members to give reasons they value membership in the organization.

g. Explain how the experience the members gain from the organization can be used after college.

3. Trial and Evaluation — How can we get potential members to come to a meeting?

a. Plan and conduct educational, worthwhile, entertaining, and professional meetings.

b. Recognize new attendees at meetings. Make them feel welcome.

c. Use correct parliamentary procedures.

d. Keep meetings short. An hour should allow enough time for the organization to conduct all of its business. If not, wait until the next meeting. Do not drag it out.

4. Adoption — How can we get potential members to join the organization? How can we keep them coming back? How can we get them to take an active part in the organization?

a. Involve all members in committee activities. Assign each member a committee responsibility and expect them to carry out their part.

b. Give responsibility to as many members as possible.

e. Use competition, curiosity, group enthusiasm, and other human drives in programs for meetings. Have a parliamentary procedure contest, an agriculture mechanics contest, or a cow milking contest. Force students to get involved by assigning them to a team.

d. Recognize contributions of members and their achievements in and out of the organization.

e. Follow recognized organizational procedures: solid construction, yearly revised program activities, active committees, etc. Have well organized executive meetings and perhaps give special credit for officers involvement in club activities.

f. Schedule meetings around competing activities such as final exams, sports events, etc.

g. Provide programs that are educational, informative and entertaining. Also have refreshments after the meetings to encourage members to interact with each other and the staff.

h. Work with the state teachers' professional association to achieve the goal of training teachers.

Using the suggestions listed above, the organization gains membership and becomes a viable asset for its members. Students become a part of the organization; therefore, benefiting the total agricultural education program. Then what happens? The leaders of the club graduate, leaving a void to be filled. Just as a college sports coach must recruit for the future, the organization must also build for the future. This will not happen automatically!

Building For The Future

To insure the continuation of a strong organization, the following steps must be accomplished:

1. All members must be trained as recruiters. Have students summarize benefits and responsibilities of the organization.

2. Make certain new leaders are recruited and trained.

3. Develop a rigorous procedure for the selection of new leaders — applications, interviews, nominations, elections. Members will attempt to achieve something which is more difficult to attain.

4. Use a summer retreat for leadership training and to plan the coming year's activities. Involve officers, committees, members, and staff.

5. Work with students and academic advisors to encourage prospective leaders to vie for leadership positions.

6. Reward and recognize leaders with intrinsic measures.

7. Involve members who might benefit most from leadership roles.

Quite a laundry list of ways to make our student organizations member-centered evolves. It is our responsibility as teacher educators to provide the necessary support for collegiate organizations in agriculture. The list provides teacher educators with the building blocks needed to build student clubs into member-centered learning organizations. We cannot give up or not try. The teacher educator who has the responsibility for the student organization must keep the following items in mind:

1. Must set a goal of a strong member-centered organization.

2. Must size up the current situation.

3. Must want to reach the goal.

4. Must believe it is possible.

5. Must focus attention on the goal.

6. Must take some risks to reach the goal.

7. Must work toward achieving it.

8. Must get feedback.

9. Must make adjustments.

10. Must risk and try again, and

11. Must celebrate accomplishments.

Yes, it can be done; build the proper foundation; build membership; and build for the future.

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Club activities such as Dairy Day offer members needed social interaction. (Photograph courtesy of Joe & Chris Townsend, Illinois State University.)

Planning for club activities requires involvement of members and staff. (Photograph courtesy of Joe & Chris Townsend, Illinois State University.)

Coming . . .

November: How Others Perceive Us

December: Assessing Student Performance

THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE
THEME

WANTED: STUDENTS TO JOIN THE FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA

How would you characterize respondents for this advertisement?

**lives on farm or **interested in livestock or **male

**ranch **career goal to be a farmer

**crops

Traditionally, Future Farmers of America members could be described by all of these statements. Today, however, things are changing and members which fit these descriptions are declining in number. Not too astonishing, right? But it is surprising that many vocational agriculture teachers and FFA advisors are reluctant to recruit and accept nontraditional members in the FFA.

The Nontraditional

Perhaps we can define a 'nontraditional' potential member as a person who does fit the mold of the typical. This person is someone from a different background who has different work ethics, goals, and aspirations and has never or above average intelligence. He or she may be that student not involved in other student organizations and may come from an unstable family situation. These types of students will allow him to function as they do in their chapters; their potential may be so hidden that everyone else in the school has quit trying to develop it.

After that definition, one may ask, "do we really want nontraditional students in our FFA chapter?" The answer has to be YES! These students can help 1) develop the chapter into a broader organization that can attract even more chapters in the real world, and 3) increase chapter membership. The FFA chapter can reciprocate and provide these students an oasis where they can learn and practice leadership, cooperation, and citizenship. The organization can be a place to call home for these students and can supply the nutrients they need to develop their self-esteems.

By Chris Townsend

(Editor's Note: Dr. Townsend is a recent graduate of Iowa State University and is currently working as a publicity specialist for the Agricultural Education Leadership Program at Bowling Green State University. She taught agricultural education at Illinois State University for 3 years.)

Recruitment

Foremost, FFA advisors need to develop a recruitment plan listing the types of activities, FFA members' responsibilities, and the target audience. The plan should identify various strategies for different types of student groups. Obviously, in this type of recruitment, the breadth of the FFA should be stressed and representative FFA members who are broadminded should be chosen to help. It will be easier to turn off potential members than to motivate them to try agriculture and the FFA. The recruitment plan for nontraditional members may include activities like those in the following list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>slide presentation of BOAC project</td>
<td>community service committee</td>
<td>urban, middle school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trip to project site, organize class to help in part, recognize class at banquet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>visit livestock at school farm</td>
<td>committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students are scheduled to care for the animals</td>
<td>committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>help set up FFA week</td>
<td>committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>petting zoo</td>
<td>committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>offer independent studies, research at school farm, research at school laboratory</td>
<td>committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public relations committee</td>
<td>education committee</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>contest for artwork</td>
<td>leadership committee, officers, advisor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>depicting &quot;Youth in Agriculture&quot; awards at FFA banquet</td>
<td>high school, elementary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities such as these should be offered concurrently with a regular recruitment program which is presented to eighth graders, guidance counselors, FFA groups, school board members, administrators, and any interested students or parents. During the recruitment show, the activities of the FFA are identified by slides or actual examples. The FFA students may develop a role-play to help answer questions the potential members may have. (What is that blue jacket for? How much are dues? What can I do if I can't do a certain activity? Why can't kids do in FFA? What do the members do for fun?) It is also important to realize that the recruitment of new, nontraditional members will help the current members develop their leadership qualities.</td>
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Future Farmers

What will you do, as an advisor, do with the students who are turned off with the word farmer? Can you adapt, adjust, and be flexible? Or will you stand fast, respect the traditions of the FFA? Individual chapters have deliberated this semantics problem and many have incorporated minor changes in the words, not the concepts, of the organization in order to overcome this initial hurdle for some nontraditional members. For example, the members' response during open meetings might be, "To practice brotherhood and cooperation, honor our rural opportunities and responsibilities, and develop those qualities of leadership which in FFA member should possess." The treasurer's part may be worded, "I keep a record of receipts and expenses just as the father of our country, George Washington, kept his accounts — carefully and accurately. Washington was better able to serve his country because of his sound financial practices." As a final example, the secretary may respond, "I keep an accurate record of our meetings and correspond with other secretaries and friends of the FFA." It is a simple modification of phrases which may help eliminate a barrier to membership for some nonfarm students in your organization.

As an advisor, your job is to help these nontraditional members understand the principles of the FFA. After they have "had their coming on to the organization, you can easily show them the foundations, history, and purposes of the FFA. The students will probably become your strongest members and may help other students to overcome their problems with the semantics, words, and phrases which are foreign to their cultural background.

Getting Things Going

If the new, nontraditional members have a barrier with the words of the Future Farmers organization, the old members may have a much larger disparity about accepting these new members into the group. It may be wise to organize a get-acquainted activity in order to help all the members get to know each other better and understand how all can work together to form a great group. Develop an icebreaker to get all members to open up with each other. An example is to use Autographs.

Directions to the Advisor: Explain that this activity should be both useful and fun. Distribute an Autographs Work Sheet and a pencil to each member. Let the members work on the autographs for approximately 20 minutes, then help the group de-brief. As the leader, you should help the group understand the wide variety of interests in the group and how the variety can help the FFA become a better organization.

Instructs to the FFA members: During the next few minutes, your advisor will be meeting with other FFA members to find one person who fits each of the categories below. You will then obtain that person's autograph in the appropriate space. You must have a different autograph for each of the items!

1. Born in the same month as me
2. Enjoys gardening
3. Likes to eat liver
4. Reads poetry
5. Looks attractive to me
6. Believes in magic
7. Has a part-time job
8. Might be intimidating
9. Has a pet rabbit
10. Plays a musical instrument
11. Moved to our town this year
12. Appears to be friendly
13. Enjoys competition
14. Sleeps on a waterfront
15. Drives a 4-wheel-drive vehicle
16. Thinks the president of the U.S. is doing a good job
17. Has been 500 miles away from home
18. Has the same hobby as me
19. Likes to ride a horse
20. Likes video games

Advisors and chapter officers are free to adapt such an activity to their locality. Members can have some fun with an opener such as Autographs, and it will help them get to know each other a bit better.

Once the new, nontraditional members have been accepted into the group, it is important to place them in roles which are appropriate for their interests and abilities. For a part of the FFA, they must be a part of the program of activities formulation as they can add rejuvenating ideas to the traditional activities of the FFA. Be aware, however, that these students may have different values than the advisor or the members. Their work ethic may be weak or nonexistent and they may need guidance to help them understand the goals of the FFA. All the members should be aware of each others' motivations, goals, and values so that the decisions for the chapter can be better organized and all members can have constructive input.

Nontraditional students can be the untapped resource for the FFA. They can add a new dimension to a very stable organization and they can add numbers to a declining membership. Advisors and chapter officers will need to work hard to make these new members feel comfortable within an organization which may appear to be very foreign to them. They may need to work with current members to help them identify with the nontraditional members.

The success of any FFA chapter depends on the ability of the group to work together as a group. The recruitment, get-acquainted, and values activities suggested can help nontraditional members fit into the chapter and develop the FFA into a multicultural, super organization.

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October 1985
Developing Students in Member-Centered FFA Chapters

The instructional challenge set forth in the statement of aim for FFA—to develop leadership, cooperation, and citizenship—demands that vocational agriculture instructors think critically about how they function in their advisor roles.

While the vocational agriculture profession has declared, with great regularity, the integral role of FFA for at least 50 years: this has not meant that the FFA has been used as effectively and efficiently as possible. Development of a member-centered chapter is specified in the definition of FFA, “...an organization of, by, and for students of vocational agriculture.” The advisor’s part in the opening ceremony constantly reminds us of the concept of a member-centered chapter, “...I am asked to advise you from time to time as the need arises.”

The critical element in developing students in a member-centered chapter is not simply having the students run the chapter. The guiding principle is that the chapter should provide interesting activities of value to all vocational agriculture students. An advisor needs to believe and to sell this concept to the chapter members. The goal of meeting the leadership and personal development needs of all chapter members must be primary. If advisors do not seek to operationalize this principle, they become mere talent scouts seeking potentially big winners and forget they are teacher-advisors. Consequently, they sell their students and themselves short of what they individually can be.

Important Roles

Three critical factors in meeting the challenge of developing students in a member-centered FFA chapter are (1) the teacher’s style of advising, (2) a well-planned and executed program of activities, and (3) a focus upon all vocational agriculture students.

Advise an effective FFA chapter requires a great deal of teaching skill plus knowledge of FFA programs and activities. In addition, advising a member-centered chapter requires a unique style of operation. A comparison of advising to the process of parenting may take some liberties, but the consideration of parenting styles provides a useful frame of reference.

Permissive Style

Three styles of parenting have been defined: permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative. A permissive or laissez-faire parenting style is one of which the child is basically left alone, allowed to do as he/she wishes. The evidence does not show that this style is most appropriate in helping children become functional adults.

The permissive style of FFA advising appears to evolve in two primary ways. Some advisors, for lack of knowledge or personal commitment, elect to simply let the FFA chapter function on its own: the sink or swim approach. Other advisors subscribe to the statement, “..., an organization of, by and for students of vocational agriculture.” They rationalize that it is the student’s organization, and if nothing productive happens it is the student’s fault. It is inexcusable for a teacher, whose role is to help students learn, to assume students will know how to manage their organization to facilitate their personal development in an effective manner, much less an efficient manner.

Certainly, it is possible for a chapter to be effective if a group of exceptional students happen to be members at the same time, but this fact does not suggest that the majority of the chapters will be composed of members who are able to run their own organization without assistance and instruction from their advisors. There is a better way than permissive advising.

Authoritarian Style

The authoritarian style of parenting is described as one in which the parents demand the children obey the parents’ wishes or demands. The parents insist the child respect, not question, their orders and beliefs because they are the parents. Children raised in homes with this style of parenting have been described as likely either to reject their parents’ value systems in an effort to become independent or to become models of parental acceptable behavior. Unfortunately, in the latter situations the children too frequently fail to become effective, independent individuals before they physically leave home.

The authoritarian FFA advisor can be very effective in accomplishment of the visible goals of FFA: chapter and member awards. The chapter will be active and members will be taught a number of things which the advisor selects. There will be personal development opportunities, but the advisor maintains too many leadership roles and functions. Consequently, students are denied opportunities for the experience critical to learning and personal development. Members may learn more about following than about leading and becoming effective citizens. They are not forced to think and make decisions for themselves.

The advisor decides the critical issues. A latent problem for the authoritarian advisor is the member’s potential loss of the feeling of ownership of the FFA chapter, which in turn leads to a loss of enthusiasm and pride, the sources of great motivation. The authoritarian advisor who succeeds addresses the needs of chapter members will be quite successful. The one who does not sense member needs creates a disaster. Authoritarian advisors also face the problem of failing to delegate enough work to chapter members. They make their chapter too dependent on their available time or use their own time inefficiently.

Authoritative Style

The authoritative style of parenting is described as one in which the parent explains or discusses items of concern allowing the child to make personal choices. The parent will risk the child making mistakes that will not produce major injury to the child or other parties to help the child develop independence, self-control and confidence. The evidence suggests that children raised in this style environment are likely to become independent, effective individuals.

The authoritative style FFA advisor will provide information, instruction, and the push to get activities started, the helping hand to pull members out of a problem situation when the need arises, and the support members need to make decisions and test themselves and others in the chapter. This style of advising will help the members run the chapter and accomplish their program of activities.

The authoritative style of advising is uniquely suited for student development in a member centered chapter. The authoritative style of advising is an excellent model for student development relative to citizenship, cooperation, and leadership in a democratic society. Can we teach citizenship by telling people what to do while ignoring their felt needs and interests? Do we model democratic leadership when telling people what to do without allowing them to question the activities?

We do not find ourselves. We develop ourselves. Think about your advising style. How does it affect the development of students? Are you becoming a better FFA advisor every day?

Chapter Activities

The second critical factor in meeting the challenge of developing students is a well-planned and executed program of activities (POA). The POA determines what opportunities for student development are to be provided by a FFA chapter. The critical questions in evaluating a POA are: (1) does member participation in chapter events A to Z (Continued on Page 14)
Developing Students in Member-Centered FFA Chapters

(Continued from Page 13)

average 25, 50, 75 or 100 percent, and (2) does each member participate in a reasonable percentage of the chapter activities?

The exact percentages are open to debate because each member is an individual. But, the POA must appeal to the needs and interests of all individuals in the chapter or there is danger of too much emphasis on quantity of activities, and a failure to provide learning opportunities of equal or more importance for a number of students.

The National Chapter Award Program provides a quality standard for a broadly based POA and is an excellent chapter goal structuring device. Every member should understand the significance of the Superior Chapter Award and National Chapter recognition. The challenge of this recognition goal will make POA planning and execution meaningful. It is a primary opportunity to teach goal setting for the corporate good. Citizenship and cooperation.

"Planning Your FFA Chapter Program of Activities" from the FFA Activity Handbook provides the basic steps for planning a POA and a number of key suggestions for developing it. The process works. Chapter members should use this guide or a similar process to insure a quality POA. Student involvement in planning is necessary to insure meeting their needs and to develop their ownership of the POA. Be sure all students have input in the planning process in a brainstorming format. All activities are accepted and prioritized, not quickly rejected by the leaders.

The execution of a POA may be positive or negative. Student members require structure to execute a POA. Objectives, ways and means, budget, dates, and assigned responsibilities are included. The structure will vary with the planning time frame, the efficiency of the planning team, and the membership participation.

Developing students in a member-centered chapter is a professional obligation. Think about your advising style, help members develop and execute the POA, and focus on all students. Remember, a potential problem in the FFA awards system is that it may lead teachers-advisors to devalue the many seemingly insignificant and unappreciated accomplishments that were major accomplishments for the individual members. To be effective and satisfied educators, we know, perhaps not as well as we should, that we must evaluate and celebrate the accomplishments of every student. I equally cherish the memory of two former chapter members as a Star Farmer of America and the other who became misty eyed and refused to wait on FFA concession stand customers, finally was able to directly look into the eyes of a customer and ask "May I help you?"

Photographs Needed

THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE needs quality photographs depicting the activities of agricultural educators, their students and their programs.

Clear, well-composed 5 x 7 black and white photographs should be sent to Roger D. Roediger, Picture Editor, Curriculum Materials Service, 524 Admin. Bldg., 2320 Fylde Road, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210.

A complete explanation should be attached to each photograph. Photographs are not returned unless specifically requested.

THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE

Member-Centered FFA Chapters
Begin With The Teacher

Quality is like buying oats. If you want nice, clean, fresh oats you must pay a fair price. However, if you can be satisfied with oats of lesser quality, they come a little cheaper.

This bit of horse-sense reminds one that, in most cases, we do get what we pay for. What we receive is determined by what we give.

The Future Farmers of America Organization offers unlimited paths of opportunity to the vocational agriculture student. The FFA also provides the teacher with a dynamic tool to make learning purposeful, enjoyable and rewarding.

I believe everything that happens in a vocational agriculture program begins with the teacher. The knowledge, skills, attitudes (competencies) the student masters and the value of leadership development provided through FFA participation can be no better than the combined efforts of the teacher and student.

Quality is like buying oats.

Education Vs. Activities

Being a 13th year teacher, I know how easily a vocational agriculture teacher can become an "FFA teacher" where the program becomes known as the FFA chapter. How SOE becomes the FFA project. And how the vocational agriculture student gains recognition only as the FFA member.

From the teachers' point of view, it is very easy to get caught in the myriad of available FFA activities so that educational purpose and value are lost to the shore of simply completing an event. And just as the FFA provides recognition for the member, it also serves as one of the few sources of acclaim for the teacher.

Yet, what a wonderful teaching tool the FFA is when wisely used by the teacher. For motivation, participation, recognition, decision making, leadership training, and human relations skill development; no other youth organization can offer the opportunities of the FFA.

Pride

Pride is a key ingredient to a quality FFA chapter and should be employed when working with FFA members: pride of accomplishment, pride in your work, pride in your chapter, pride in your school community, and pride in America and American Agriculture.

PRIDE — Each letter begins a word which can serve to highlight the teacher who seeks a member-centered FFA chapter.

Plan — Insist that every chapter activity be planned. Teach logic and organization skills as a part of the value of planning. Center with officers and members to develop a usable program of activities (POA) at the beginning of every year and then use the POA as a guide throughout the year. Plan your work and work your plan.

Recognize — A simple but often overlooked principle of effective leadership is the need to recognize member achievement. Positive reinforcement promotes dedication and commitment among students and offers incentives for goal setting. The member-centered teacher seizes every opportunity to recognize and reward member accomplishments. The member-centered teacher is conscious of the importance of praising in public and criticizing in private.

Involvement — Every student must be exposed to leadership development as a part of their class. This is not to say FFA membership should be automatic. Membership in FFA must require a personal and financial commitment from the member. The organization should seek to involve all legitimate students through meaningful activities of sufficient variety to appeal to every member.

Develop — The vocational agriculture instructional program teaches the technical competencies needed by stu...
Member-Centered FFA Chapters Begin With The Teacher

(Continued from Page 15)

Member involvement in the planning of activities is an essential requirement of a member-centered FFA chapter. Here chapter officers and their advisor plan a portion of the chapter program of activities, during a summer officer leadership training session. (Photograph Courtesy of Marana, AZ Vocational Agriculture Dept.)

A variety of activities helps to involve all students in FFA activities. Events such as judging contests provide members the opportunity to learn in a way that is interesting, fun, and rewarding. (Photographs courtesy of Marana, AZ Vocational Agriculture Dept.)

2) Evaluation of the POA at the close of the year serves as a basis for future planning and:

3) Evaluation of student performance and progress towards individual goals makes the necessary tie of the leadership development to the total vocational agriculture program. The member-centered teacher will evaluate and assign grades for individuals who serve as officers, committee chairs, on judging teams, in speaking contests, BOAC projects, and realistically in any of the activities of the chapter.

If it is worth the teachers’ and students’ time to conduct the activity, then it deserves evaluation.

Conclusion

Member-centered FFA chapters, like everything in the program, do begin with the teacher. An educationally sound FFA program is one in which a cooperative effort between the teacher and the members leads to the attainment of individual and group goals. Planning, Recognition, Involvement, Development, and Evaluation, and PRIDE are important components of the member-centered chapter.

With thoughtful planning and hard work, post-secondary institutions can develop student organizations that can complement the educational process and help develop pride and personal growth in its agricultural technology students.

Kirkwood Community College has nearly 500 students enrolled in Agricultural Technology programs. There are nine student leadership groups established in the Agricultural Technology Area. They are: Airplane Technology, Animal Science, Botany, Chemical Processing, Engineering Technology, Horticulture, Plant Science, and Animal Technology.

Perhaps the existence of these programs emphasizes the need for, and creation of, member-centered groups.

Basic Principles

During my experience at Kirkwood Community College for the past fifteen years, I have witnessed the growing pains of member-centered post secondary student organizations as they develop over the years. In my opinion, there are five fundamental principles which are important for a member-centered post secondary student organization to survive and flourish. While these are some of the same principles as other groups, they are as follows:

1) The local agricultural leadership group should be allowed to retain its career goal, and participants should be encouraged to refer to their own careers.

2) The local agricultural leadership group should be guided in the preparation of a thorough annual plan of activities (program of service).

3) With several agricultural leadership groups organized within one institution, there must be a local agricultural leadership coordinating council.

4) Based upon the advice of program advisory committees, the functions of the local agricultural leadership groups should be provided as an intracurricular dimension of the total curriculum.

5) The local agricultural leadership group should be provided a mechanism for affiliating with other agricultural leadership groups on their own campus and at the state and national level.

Regarding the first principle, the more autonomy and identity allowed the individual agricultural leadership group, the higher the students’ level of interest. In my opinion, it is logical and natural that post secondary students think in terms of specific careers. They are usually attracted to the institution by a specialty area of interest. Frequently, the institution may act hypothetically by suddenly trying to group all career students together. This is not consistent with the job market. With groups organized by career interest areas, overall group cooperation and institutional goals can still be achieved. Institutions may

(Continued on Page 18)

The Themes for 1984

THEME

Member-Centered Post Secondary Organizations

By Larry L. Staley

(Editors Note: Mr. Staley is Assistant Dean of Agricultural Technologies at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52405.)

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(Continued on Page 18)

Themes for 1984

SOEB: Entrepreneurship January
SOEM: Placement Programs February
SOEP: Cooperative Experience Programs March
SOER: Laboratories April
SOES: Urban Programs May
SOEu: Recordkeeping June
SOEG: Sales and Service July
SOES: Horticulture August
SOEM: Mechanics September
SOEF: Forestry, Conservation and Recreation October
SOED: Adults November
SOET: Post Secondary December

Kirkwood Community College's student leadership groups develop pride through image-building. Each special-interest group has its own distinctive jacket for members.

Kirkwood students had to defend their ideas for judges after presenting papers on specialty topics at Leadership Day.
Member-Centered Post Secondary Organizations

(Continued from Page 17)

force cooperation among groups toward an overall goal.

Faculty members and administrators who do not understand that quality institutions function around an organized, logical plan are somewhat naive. Similarly, planning is important in realizing member-centered student organizations. I do not suggest that the local agricultural leadership group complete just another FFA program of work. I believe the local group should organize committees and establish an executive council. The dates and plans for the activities should be identified and as a matter of school procedure supported by an approved program of activities. At our institution, each local agricultural leadership group is organized around five committees.

Each committee has a chairperson who preferably is an officer in the local group. The chairpersons make up the executive council for the particular group. Our seven standing committees are:

a. Public relations and marketing
b. Cooperative activities and community development (customer service)
c. Technical information
d. Budget and finance
e. Social activity
f. Careers and opportunities
g. Local, state and national affiliation

It is expected that, by an assigned date, each local agricultural leadership group will establish, with their advisor and the program administrator, a plan of activities, including anticipated events, dates for the event, and tentative plans and procedures. Of course, the plan of the activities can be updated throughout the academic year.

Advisory Group

At Kirkwood, we have found that an activity of any agricultural group can fail if there is not a local agricultural leadership coordinating council. The council functions as an advisory body and its goal is to assist the groups in planning. Typically, the council meets with the agricultural technologies administrator. At Kirkwood, the council consists of the president of each local group (or his/her designee) and the advisor of the group. Any affiliated program administrator is also included. Again, I stress that ideas normally do not generate from this council. The council is active at certain times in the year when coordination is necessary for a local, state or national competition or for a major local activity which crosses program lines.

One of the most successful experiences of my career occurred last February when our local agricultural council, in cooperation with the faculty and staff, conducted a Kirkwood Agricultural Leadership Day. The purpose of that day-long conference was to begin planning the upcoming state and national leadership conferences. Each group nominated contestents in the various competitive areas. A reception was sponsored by the local Federal Land Bank and Production Credit Association. This event was successful because it focused on the importance of personal development enhanced by leadership development activities.

Leadership Development

Advisory committees at Kirkwood Community College have continually encouraged us to provide educational opportunities for students beyond specific technical-skill and competency areas. This important goal should not be left to happenstance.

Agricultural leadership is included in the academic curriculum of every vocational technical program in the Agricultural Technologies Area. Students can elect to enroll in the course for either one or two credit hours of instruction, depending on the program. There is a limit to the number of credit hours allowable toward program completion and graduation. However, students may elect the course each academic quarter they are enrolled. An appropriate instructor is assigned as the advisor to that class, and it is re-taught as an agricultural leadership group or section if we had our preference, we would require the course of all students. However, our experience has shown that approximately 10 percent of the students are not truly interested in the course. Students are graded in the course, and their grades in the course are computed in their academic grade point average. We believe that including agricultural leadership education as a part of our curriculum is necessary and that offering it as we do is the only way we can maintain a level of awareness or at least a profound dimension of the student's growth and development.

Finally, it is very important that the local agricultural leadership group provide a forum for expressing personal feelings or belonging. A clear sense of mission and purpose at the state and national level enable the local agricultural leadership group to become better organized.

Food For America:
More than a Children's Program

The ACI (Agricultural Career Training) organization in Iowa provides a sense of identity at the state level. Similarly, the PAS (Post Secondary Agricultural Student) organization is established to provide the necessary and valuable sense of mission and identity at the national level.

At the very center of the PAS is a program entitled PAL/PEER. PAL stands for Persons in Agricultural Leadership while PEER stands for Personal Education Evaluation and Recognition. The PEER program provides recognition and monetary reward for post secondary students whose individual educational career portfolio plans are submitted for local, state and national competition. The portfolio is a self-evaluation tool developed from the evaluation of PAL/PEER competition. The PAL/PEER program provides a means for realizing that objective.

By Barbara J. Maluf and Carol Elgin

The primary objective of the Food For America program is to provide planning, organization, and execution of activities through which FFA members can communicate to elementary school children the complex and significant role of the agricultural industry. A closer look at each chapter's Food For America program not only reflects the notion of educating children on the need to participate in utilizing community resources and establishing positive public relations.

Planning Food For American Activities

The Fauquier Technical Center FFA chapter, located in Warrenton, Virginia, decided early in the school year to make the Food For America program part of their annual program of activities. The Horticulture IV class was designated the committee responsible for planning the appropriate activities.

Chapter members were well aware of the agricultural industry's complex role. Their own vocational training stemmed from enrollment in production agriculture, horticulture, and agricultural machinery programs. To adequately communicate the role of agriculture to Fauquier elementary school children and their teachers, Food For America activities needed to include the production, processing and distribution of food and fiber farm products.

In addition, the role of agribusiness individuals including those in the fields of horticulture, forestry, wildlife, soil and water conservation, and agricultural machinery service needed to be emphasized.

With these considerations in mind, the committee worked closely with the advisor to identify specific activities, potential community resources, and to establish a time line for completing preliminary activities. Steps involved during the early planning period included securing the Food For America education kit from the National FFA Center, requesting administrative permission, inviting selected resource people throughout the community to participate, and setting tentative dates for activities.

One of the major purposes of this early planning process was to enable the advisor and committee members to design realistic activities, taking into consideration available resources and chapter limitations. The result of such planning was the selection of meaningful activities and the establishment of a communication network among advisors, students, administrators, and community resource people.

The final planning stage involved assigning specific duties by the committee to chapter members, informing individuals of their responsibilities, and contacting the six participating Fauquier elementary schools to make necessary arrangements. (Continued on Page 20)
Food For America: More than a Children's Program

(Continued from Page 19)

Executing the Plan

The Waupiker Food For America program had three phases: pre-activity classroom visits, an agricultural exhibition day, and a follow-up to the activity.

Classroom Visits

The first phase involved classroom presentations. FFA members in groups of three with lesson plans, audio visuals, and Farm Art coloring books in hand visited each fourth grade classroom. The children were taught a lesson relating to the role and importance of agriculture. They were also oriented for a field trip to the Waupiker Technical Center for participation in an agricultural exhibition field day.

The Agricultural Exhibition Field Day

A great deal of time and cooperation was involved in the successful execution of the field day. The coordination of program publicity, student and resource people responsibilities, and agricultural products and animal exhibits was the responsibility of the chapter advisor. However, planning and an efficient student committee eased the job.

Orchestrating the exhibition involved many people. Chapter members were responsible for doing the following:

1. Construct animal pens from gates supplied by area farmers.
2. Bring in animals for children to see and pet, such as ducks, pigeons, chickens, goats, hogs, beef and dairy cattle.
3. Set-up vegetable and bedding crop displays.

5. Distribute products such as balloons, ice cream cones, rulers, and printed materials.
6. Operate equipment including a cider press, log splitter, and farm equipment used in the past and present.

School administrators were involved not only in granting permission for the activity, but also as was the case of one enthusiastic administrator—a former vocational teacher—a personal log splitter was loaned.

FFA Alumni and local agribusiness leaders also contributed. They supplied the tractor and haywagon for the children's hayride, loaned additional animals, displayed farm grains, and most importantly donated their time to demonstrate expertise in their respective agriculture professions.

Agricultural organizations and agencies including the Virginia Division of Forestry, the local Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Mid Atlantic Milk Producers Association donated materials for distribution. Local businesses donated ice cream, ice cream cones and balloons to the festivities.

The day was an exciting and beneficial tour for approximately 400 fourth graders and their teachers. Imagine all the agricultural goodwill carried to households throughout Waupiker County.

The Follow-up Visit

In most cases, a follow-up visit facilitated answering any additional questions and thanking the students and teachers who participated in the activity.

Teachers were also asked at this time to evaluate the program. The feedback served to help plan for next year's Food For America program.

The Payoff for Quality Youth Activities

From the Waupiker example, it is evident that the Food For America program served more purposes than the primary one of educating children about the role of agriculture in the community. Another purpose was to strengthen community relations as vocational agricultural teachers and their students worked cooperatively with others to promote agriculture's somewhat complex but important role in the community.

Quality activities should benefit members. In this case members learn many human relations skills as they worked together to achieve a purposeful goal. The activity was also a source of pride for work well done.

The underlying purpose for sponsoring such activities was one of influencing public attitude toward the vocational agricultural program and the school. Developing a positive public image may be well the purpose that best serves students, their program and their school in the years to come.

Involving More Members In FFA

For as long as most agriculture educators can remember, vocational agriculture programs have been in a state of continual growth. Annual reports have indicated that record numbers were enrolling in vocational agriculture and becoming members of the FFA. For the peak year for vocational agriculture students and FFA members was in 1977 when 720,509 and 500,735 respectively were reported. Since then, enrollment and membership have been in a decline. The accompanying figure illustrates these trends.

As student numbers have decreased, FFA membership as a percentage of vocational agriculture enrollment has remained fairly constant at 71.5 percent. Recent vocational agriculture and FFA data from the Department of Education show that 175,571 vocational agriculture students elected to forego membership in the FFA. The extent of this abandonment is vividly dramatized when we consider that nearly one out of every four eligible students declined to join the ranks of the FFA.

Inviting Students

Against this backdrop, the authors ask several vocational agriculture officials, FFA executive secretaries and a former national FFA officer to share their thoughts and ideas on what can be done to reduce the membership gap and involve additional vocational agriculture students in the FFA.

Here is a sample of their comments:

"10 Chapters are recognized at our state FFA convention. This is done by placing a 10+ card on the delegate sign of qualifying chapters. One hundred percent membership is also stressed at FFA state vocational agriculture teacher meetings."

Emerson P. Dietman, FFA Executive Secretary/Treasurer for Iowa

By Richard F. Welton

and Greg Schaper

(Editors' Note: Dr. Welton is a Professor of Agriculture Education at Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506; and Mr. Schaper is the Executive Secretary of the Kansas FFA Association, Kansas State University.)

'The following are some specific factors which I believe are significant in FFA membership:

1. Students who enroll in vocational agriculture must have an understanding and interest in the vocational agricultural FFA package.

2. Once enrolled, students must be led and guided into a stimulating and exciting program of activities which is designed around their interests and needs.

Charles Keefe, FFA Executive Secretary for North Carolina

'Before 1969, vocational agriculture and FFA membership was not a big problem in Illinois. One solution is the implementation of the Century Award for 100 percent chapters. This award is presented annually at the state FFA Convention. Another is the use of beginning teacher workshops where an understanding of vocational agriculture/FFA relationship is stressed. Since 1969, funding which is based on student enrollment and no longer requires a supervised occupational experience program and loose certification standards for vocational agriculture instructors has affected membership.'

Biden Whit, FFA Executive Secretary for Illinois

'The vocational agriculture/FFA membership has been a real problem because of a strong tradition in our state. Vocational agriculture instructors stress FFA at the local level. The philosophy of vocational agriculture and FFA being intracurricular is strong throughout Wisconsin.'

Cliff McClain, State Director of Agriculture Education from Wisconsin

THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE
Involving More Members
In FFA
(Continued from Page 21)

"Vocational agriculture teachers with 100 percent membership can be attributed to the increase of non-traditional programs. Students are not encouraged to complete a four-year program. They are in and out of a program over the course of four years. Therefore, it is difficult to maintain continuity in both the vocational agriculture programs and the FFA chapter."

Paul Day, state Supervisor for Agricultural Education for Minnesota

"We have over 100 percent membership for the second consecutive year. I feel certain the national campaign helped immensely. We have also made a major effort to include the interests of all students in all program areas. We have made changes and adaptations such as:

2. Giving State degrees by tax-
onomy, program areas.
3. Recognizing in every way possi-
ble (FFA publications, speeches, displays, etc.) the importance of the total agriculture family."

Earl Keen, FFA Executive Secretary for Ohio

"Membership in the FFA is a pro-
blem we have been wrestling with in California for a long time. Students want all their teachers to share in the student load. As a result, vocational agriculture teachers leave their doors open to anyone. Probably 50 percent of our total vocational agriculture students are in the class to fulfill a science requirement. We think the answer in our state is to obtain pro-
gram standards which will keep the students out who are not strictly voca-
tional agriculture students. We are try-
ing to separate general agriculture classes with FFA for the science re-
quirement students and vocational agriculture with FFA for vocational agriculture students."

Jarrod L. Davis, Assistant State FFA Advisor for California

"The use of incentives has helped to narrow the gap in Georgia. These in-
clude: (1)The recognition of 100 percent chapters; (2) A luncheon at the voca-
tional agriculture teachers conference for those instructors with 100 percent chapters; and (3) Recognition of the first quarter with the greatest in-
crease in membership percentage."

Representative from Georgia

"The key is emphasis on the local level. If the vocational agriculture in-
structor insists on FFA membership, it will happen. The state should in turn
emphasize the importance of mem-
bership to the local level. If there is more involvement of hands-on in the local, district, and state levels, there is a better chance for their continued membership in years to come."

Jack Stewart, 1981-82 National Vice President, Western Region

However, most of the forests are com-
posed of shortleaf, loblolly, slash or spruce pines. It is because of the impact of forestry on community life that the Greene County Forestry Field Day had its origin.

Cooperative Planning
Although the planning of the forestry field day centers around the county administration and the five teachers, other professional people from timber companies and agricultural agencies help make this event successful.

The Greene County Forestry Field Day is divided into both educational and recreational events for adults and students. The morning events center around the educational part of the program. It is composed of timber esti-
mation, tree identification, regeneration, and wildlife food identification. All these events are conducted by professionals from vari-
ous timber companies and the Missis-
sippi Game and Fish Commission.

There is a barbecue for all in at-
tendance which is provided through dona-
tions from interested businesses.
The food is prepared by volunteers. The

By Bobby Walley
(While he was Vocational Agri-
culture Instructor at Lakeview High School, Lakeview, Mississippi (98451))

Greene County Forestry Field Day
The Greene County Forestry Field Day has grown in attendance and pop-
ularity because of its superb organiza-
tion and publicity. An event of this magnitude presents special problems for advisors and FFA members. All four FFA chapters work jointly to plan and organize the field day, but on the day the event takes place, each chapter competes for trophies and ribbons. Not only do the schools compete against each other, but the teams of each school compete for a place on the team going to the district contest.

Greene County is very rural; being composed of three small towns, the largest having a population of about 1,000. About 88 percent of the county is in forest land, a large part of which is owned by paper companies and the National Forest Service. A combination of both hardwoods and pines make up the forest of the area.

The forestry field day includes log rolling competition.

OCTOBER, 1983
Stories in Pictures

Contests Evaluate Learning

The collegiate FFA members perform the tasks needed to make the contest run smoothly. (Photograph courtesy of Fred Reneau and John Smith, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.)

Teamwork and cooperation are essential to exhibiting competency in many contest areas. (Photograph courtesy of Paul Vaughn, New Mexico.)

Skills learned through vocational agriculture are performance tested through many types of contests. (Photograph courtesy of Gary Leske, University of Minnesota.)

A vocational agriculture student earns an award for participation in a contest. The teacher shares the joys of success with the student. (Photograph courtesy of Fred Reneau and John Smith, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.)