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ARTICLE SUBMISSION
Articles and photographs should be submitted to the Editor, Regional Editors, or Special Editors. Items to be considered for publication should be submitted at least 60 days prior to the date of issue intended for the publication. Articles and photographs should be accompanied by a cover letter signed by the author. No items are returned unless accompanied by a written request. Articles should be typed, double-spaced, and include references

EDITOR'S PAGE
Examining Facts to Frame SOEP Philosophy

By LARRY E. MILLER, Editor

The type of student enrolling in vocational agriculture is changing dramatically. "Are they not users," you say. Professionals have been aware of these changes particularly since the 1968 Vocational Education Act. We now have many students who are not traditional SOE students that do not have traditional SOE programs, many that do not intend to pursue careers in agriculture; many who are not FFA members. Williams (1983) noted that a revival was needed in SOEP and that a workshop was held in 1982 to begin the evangelism. Plans for a second meeting are already underway.

The Problem

Why is there a problem? What is the problem? These questions should encourage the profession to investigate the evidence and facts we have accrued and consider our policies related to SOEP. McCracken (1983) observed that the quantity and quality of SOEP will decline unless effective alternatives are found for students that are too young for placement.

A study in the Southern Region revealed that 40 percent of the students did not have a SOEP program each year they were enrolled (Iosvlez, 1980). A New York study (Berkeley and Sutphen, 1983) showed that one-fourth of the programs did not have written SOEP policies for students; half of the programs had freshmen students with SOEP's; and, of the students involved with placement, only 27.6 percent had more than 300 hours of experience. In Florida (Arrington and Price, 1983), 68 percent of the students had SOEP for one year out of four; but only 42 percent had SOEP for four years; and 26 percent of the students surveyed had been involved in placement programs.

The evidence continues to accumulate which reveals that many programs are not fully utilizing SOEP and many students are not becoming involved. Some evidence is con-

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percent more than one and 30 percent had no summer visits.

Arrington and Price (1983) found that one-third of the students they studied in Florida did not have a SOEP program. Approximately 50 percent of these students were in agricultural courses but, some of these students could be in agricultural courses; overall 50 percent had achieved the Chapter Farmer degree in FFA (Arrington and Price, 1983). In a study in Ohio, 54 percent of the students in production agriculture, horticulture and agriculture mechanics reported that they lived on a farm, but 43 percent of those were less than 100 acres. The production agriculture students reported their first and second vocational choices, and 25 percent reported farming was their first choice and 36 percent as a second choice. Almost half of the voca-

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Why is there a problem? The answer, while complex, seems to center around the fact that many students enrolled in vocational agriculture do not have an occupational or career objective in the field. When vocational agriculture was solely training present and prospective farmers, the objectives were clear. "...to assist students in 'growing into farming'" (McCracken, 1983).

Sajjith (1981) found nearly 98 percent agreement among teachers, supervisors and teacher educators that production and non-production students should have SOEP programs. The profession is obviously not consistently practicing what it preaches, although some variability exists.

Reflection
Perhaps a revival to enliven an evangelical spirit for SOEP is not all that is needed. We may need to examine our philosophy and practice. Students continue to enroll in vocational agriculture even if it is not congruent with their stated career goals. The program must be doing something right. Perhaps the students are learning things other than technical agriculture knowledge, e.g., learning how to solve problems, learning basic skills, learning vocational skills, etc.

The SOEP concept may need to be more responsive to the students in the program. The evidence from the study in the Southern Region and numerous other states seems clear in that most of students not engaged in SOEP programs and actually do not have career objectives in agriculture. To expect every student to have a SOEP program under those circumstances may not be reasonable or fair. Perhaps our policies should reflect this and the total profession might find it beneficial to reflect on and redefine our philosophy.

Numerous proponents advocate the virtues of SOEP programs for vocational students. I do not object to this position, but to note that, as documented, not all students enrolled in vocational agriculture are truly seeking careers in the profession. The paucity of SOEP program involvement may reflect the reactions of teachers to two facts.

The Cover
Parent involvement with the placement program is an important key to success. (Photo courtesy of Sue Register, University of Nebraska)

RESOURCES
Vocational instructors and program administrators can gain a clear understanding of the dynamics of the potential purpose of the process of accrediting a course or program in Agricultural Occupations. TRAINING PROGRAMS, by Roland V. Stodelr, Jr., of New Hampshire Vocational-Technical College, is filled with knowledge and procedural knowledge for vocational educators, the monograph takes the reader through the three major steps in obtaining accreditation: (1) application, and the total profession may need to catch up with its teachers and students.

The Theme Editor for this issue was Dr. Michael F. Burnett, Assistant Professor of Agriculture Education at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803.

The Editor gratefully acknowledges his contribution.

References


The Teacher As Initiator

Myth: The Teacher As Initiator

The literature indicates that the most influential factor affecting supervising occupational experiences programs is the vocational agriculture teacher. The literature further suggests that teacher activities affecting supervised occupational experiences programs may be classified into three categories: (1) developing cooperative relationships, (2) providing instruction, and (3) providing on-site visitation/supervision.

By LARRY D. CASE
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Developing Cooperative Relationships

Philips (1980:214) states that: Cooperative relationships among an instructor, the parents, the employers, and the student have a very important bearing upon the effectiveness of the instruction. They are basic to all teaching and must be secure.

Kaczor (1983:6) also stated: Informing people is not sufficient in reference to achieving supervised occupational experience programs. A thorough education about the program allows the student's parents, administration, and employers to develop more concise understanding of SOE programs. Instructors must also establish cooperative relationships with these four groups to further enhance the programs' success.

In developing cooperative relationships, the teacher may wish to employ some of the following activities:

1. A good public relations program as to need and opportunities for placement SOEP for vocational agriculture students.

2. Support from the local school administration and board of education. This can be done by keeping the administrator informed about all facets of vocational agriculture. Such understanding and cooperative relationships are required since many placement SOEP students will have to leave school at various times during the school day.

3. Secure the support of parents and employers by involving them in identifying competencies to be learned by the student. This can be accomplished by developing a written agreement between the parents, employer, student, and the teacher which specifies competencies, activities, and responsibilities of all who are involved. In addition, group meetings should be held to inform parents and employers about SOEP.

4. Develop a good public relations program. A good understanding of placement SOEP by the general public is necessary. Schools are often criticized because they visit students out of the classroom, and the general thought is.
The Teacher As Initiator

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that students are not learning unless they are in the confines of a school classroom. If programs of genuine educational value are to sur vive, the general public supporting the public schools must understand that an organized, worthwhile educational activity is occurring between the employer and the student on-the-job.

5. Conduct frequent visits to students, parents, and employers. Visitation may be the most effective means of developing understanding and cooperation. The teacher is put in a positive role of providing needed advice and establishing rapport with the community.

Providing Instruction

Classroom instruction is one of the major functions of the vocational agriculture teachers. In order to motivate students and assist them in understanding and developing a supervised occupational experience program, organized instruction is essential. Instruction must be based on identified, validated occupational competencies. Students must have a thorough understanding of the career opportunities available to them and an understanding of how they gather the necessary experiences to secure the occupation of their choice. Vocational agriculture departments must be in a position to offer a variety of occupational experience programs to students, and once they have chosen an occupational experience program, the students must receive the necessary classroom preparation to be successful in acquiring the necessary competencies for their chosen occupation.

Williams (1980) identified five ways teachers provide assistance to students in the supervised occupational experience activity. They aid students by: (1) assisting in record keeping on SOEP, (2) providing encouragement for the SOEP, (3) summarizing the records for the SOEP, (4) learning skills in agriculture, and (5) setting educational goals in agriculture.

Teachers must be organized and prepared each day in order to provide adequate classroom instruction. Technical information combined with knowledge of student needs are essential components of classroom instruction.

Providing On-Site Visitation/Supervision

Another responsibility of the vocational agriculture teacher in conducting a quality vocational agriculture program is providing on-site visitation/ supervision. The on-site visitation provides the teacher with the knowledge of the student's progress and problems. This information is used in planning and classifying the student's instruction which, in turn, aids the development of quality supervised occupational experience programs.

Students, parents, and employers need to be involved in the visitation/supervision process. All need to possess a thorough understanding of the purpose of visitation/supervision. Visitation/supervision should be planned and skillfully conducted in order to maximize educational benefits.

Summary

In order to make progress in developing quality placement supervised occupational experience program, supervising agricultural instructors must have a broad knowledge of the program. They must have a thorough understanding of the curriculum. They must also be familiar with the different programs available. They must also be familiar with the different programs available. They must also be familiar with the different programs available.

Supervised occupational experience programs have been a major part of the vocational agriculture program since the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917. As a matter of fact, the SOEP program was such a vital program component that the authors of that legislation mandated that each student participate in SOE activities. The Smith-Hughes Act stated: "Schools shall provide for directed or supervised practice in agriculture, either on a farm provided for the school or other farm, for at least six months per year." (2, 279).

As a result of this legislation and the belief that supervised occupational experiences are essential if the program is to be effective, SOE has developed into an essential component of the curriculum. Also, an integral relationship has developed between SOE, classroom instruction, laboratory practice, and FFA.

Supervised occupational experience is defined as planned, practical activities conducted outside of regularly scheduled class time whereby students further develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes learned in the vocational agriculture instructional program. The SOE is supervised by teachers, parents, and employers. It is directed toward developing competencies. It emphasizes learning by doing, it may be year long in duration, and is an integral part of the curriculum. The SOE has been described as the element "Bridge the Gap" between education and employment.

Types of SOE

Two major types of supervised occupational experience programs exist: ownership and placement. Ownership SOE programs involve students having personal ownership, either complete or partial, of the materials and other inputs required for an enterprise. Ownership SOE programs may involve production agriculture and it may not involve agribusiness. Ownership is the oldest and most traditional type of SOE. Examples of ownership would include such practices as raising and producing beef cattle, horses, other livestock, and crops; owning a cattle spraying service; operating a custom harvesting service; developing a roadside market; establishing a plant stand to sell plants; and operating a lawn maintenance service. In all of these cases, the student would have complete or partial ownership of the operation. These activities may be conducted at home, on school land laboratories, on rental property, or other appropriate locations.

Placement is the most recent type of SOE. In placement, students are placed on jobs or in work situations to gain practical experience. While gaining practical experience and developing competencies are the primary concern, in some cases students also earn money. The emphasis is on learning new skills and knowledge and applying them in practical, economic situations. It can be also supervised occupational program. Placement does not involve ownership and involves either production agriculture or agribusiness or both.

Florida's Model

Each state has defined the types of placement opportunities differently: however, common threads run through each. In Florida, three methods of involving students in placement have been defined and are currently being used and implemented. These three types of placement are employment experience; cooperative placement; and directed laboratory experience.

Employment Experience

Students involved in employment experience are employed or gain work experience in an agricultural occupation. This on-the-job educational program is designed to

RESOURCES

Occupational educators, whether in industry, public or private education, or government, will find insights and practical recommendations in Employer-Sponsored Skill Training, by Robert E. Wenig of North Carolina State University and William D. Weclansky of Iowa State University. The authors show how the lack of a comprehensive national human resources policy for employer-sponsored training is a core problem for employers, workers, and the entire economy. Having such a policy would eliminate unnecessary duplication of training programs and could help fill the training gap in hard skills in hard times. This program could also develop better linkages among trainers in companies, institutions, agencies, and others, and promote grassroots support of lifelong learning.

You may order Employer-Sponsored Skill Training (IN 250 — $4.95, 49 pages, from The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, The Ohio State University, Publications Office, Box N, 1960 Kenny Road, Columbus, Ohio 43210. 614-686-3655 or toll-free outside Ohio at 800/684-4815.)
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provide learning experiences related to the instructional program in which the student is enrolled. Employment experience may or may not involve release time from school. It is usually completed before, during or after school, and/or during the summer. While the word "employment" is used, it may or may not involve pay. The emphasis is on learning and gaining practical agricultural experience in either production agriculture or agribusiness or both.

This type of placement may be used for students in all grade levels. For example, a freshman who is unable to have an ownership project may work in a plant nursery on weekends. Likewise, a student could work on a relative's farm, with or without pay, to meet his/her SOEP requirement. It is important that the teacher, student, and persons for whom the student works, develop a training plan to ensure that a variety of competencies are developed and the student participates in varied activities.

Other examples of employment experience SOE activities would include:

• A student working for pay at a local nursery on Saturday.
• A student working in a local veterinary clinic one or more afternoons per week, without pay, during the school year.
• A student working at home, with or without pay, on activities directly related to their instructional program at school. For example, a student enrolled in an ornamental horticulture class could work on various activities at home related to ornamental horticulture such as installation of an irrigation system, lawn maintenance, landscaping, and landscape maintenance. This type of activity would be more comprehensive than an improvement project or supplementary agricultural skills.
• Working for an agricultural supply company during the regular school year and during the summer.

Cooperative Placement

Cooperative placement (Co-op) involves release time from school. The student usually attends one or more regular classes at school plus a co-op related class taught by the vocational agriculture teacher. Students leave school during the regular school day and are employed by an agricultural firm for a pre-determined number of hours per week. Co-op is designed to provide students with on-the-job training and may be considered simply a job but an opportunity to gain additional knowledge and skills to apply to their knowledge and skills that have been learned in the instructional program at school.

Participants are usually juniors and seniors in school; and, as a general rule, employers pay the students while on placement. A formal training program must be formulated between the teacher, the parent, the student, and the employer outlining the competencies to be learned by the student. The program received for the placement experience. Examples would include: a student employed each afternoon for a tractor dealership in the area of agricultural mechanics; a student employed as a meat cutter's assistant; and a student employed as an assistant to a floral designer.

Directed Laboratory Experience

Directed Laboratory Experience (DLE) occurs on school facilities and is conducted other than regularly scheduled class time. Thus, it can occur in the school shop, land laboratory, school greenhouses, or school fields. The student may or may not be paid for their work experience and it may be for a long or short duration. The student does not have personal ownership. Notice, that DLE involves "other than regularly scheduled class time." This means that the DLE may take place before school, after school, on weekends, during study periods, during school release time, and/or during the summer.

What are some examples of Directed Laboratory Experience? The list is as endless as the imagination of teachers.

A few examples would include:
• A student working the school greenhouse one or more hours per day after the regular school day.
• A student working in the agricultural mechanics shop during study period.
• A student working on the land laboratory, for pay, during the summer or after school.
• A student working during a school release period to landscape the school grounds.

The list could go on, but the key to DLE is that students are receiving on-the-job training and experience designed to help them further develop the competencies they are studying in the regular instructional program.

Characteristics of Placement

Placement SOE programs have the following characteristics:
• They emphasize learning via experience.
• They provide on-the-job experience and training.
• Students may or may not be paid for their work.
• They may occur on campus, school greenhouse, agricultural mechanics laboratory, or other school facility.
• They may occur on community facilities.
• They occur at a time other than regularly scheduled class time.
• They provide a method to earn FFA degrees and awards.
• They may or may not involve release time from school.
• Students in any grade may be involved.
• Students do not own or have partial ownership of the enterprise.

Planning Placement Programs

The following factors should be considered when planning placement programs:

• Placement should maximize learning and minimize repetitious labor.
• Placement should be supervised by teachers, parents, and employers.
• Students involved in placement should keep a placement record.
• The placement experience should be related to the instructional program in which the student is enrolled.
• Placement should help the student make the transition between secondary school and the work environment.
• Placement activities should be used to help students earn FFA degrees and awards.
• Teachers should establish minimum standards for acceptable SOE placement programs.
• SOE programs should be incorporated into a teacher's grading system.

Placement and FFA

Placement not only provides learning experience for students, it also helps them satisfy some of the requirements for FFA Degrees, Proficiency Awards, and Achievement Awards. For example, to earn the Chapter Farmer Degree a member must have earned at least $80.00 or have worked 50 hours (other than scheduled class time) in a supervised occupational experience program. Likewise, for the State FFA Degree, the member must have earned and productively invested at least $1000 or have worked (other than scheduled class time) at least 600 hours in a supervised occupational experience program or a combination thereof (1). Thus, students with placement SOE programs gain occupational experience and can earn FFA degrees and awards whether or not they earn money as a result of their SOEP.

Summary

Placement SOE programs offer teachers additional opportunities to insure that vocational agriculture students develop and practice the competencies that are to be learned in the instructional program. Placement of place- ment provides additional SOE options for students, provides students increased opportunity to achieve FFA degrees and awards, provides students additional learning opportunities, improves the quality of the graduates, and helps students make a more successful transition from school to employment. The emphasis is on learning via supervised occupational experience program.

References

Preparing Students For Placement

Where do vocational agriculture teachers find time to accomplish everything? Classroom teaching, agricultural mechanics, farm management, community relations, FFA, and contests are only a few of their responsibilities. Another major responsibility of the vocational agriculture teacher is to assist students in selecting and developing supervised occupational experience programs (SOEP).

Today, students in vocational agriculture represent rural areas, urban areas, cities, and towns. Thus, to assist students in meeting their occupational objective, teachers must utilize various types of SOE programs. With these programs, how can all of these responsibilities be accomplished?

SOE placement programs are one vehicle teachers can use to provide vocational agriculture students with experience in an array of agricultural occupations. Before participating in these programs, students need to learn the "what," "why," and "how" of SOE placement. Teachers must provide group instruction that will help students identify the opportunities important to them and to prepare plans for becoming involved. However, a question commonly asked by teachers is "What should I teach?" Recognizing the need for instructional materials to aid teachers in preparing students for SOE placement programs.

By John W. Slocum

By John W. Slocum

(Editors Note: Dr. Slocum is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Extension Education at the University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho 83843.)

grams, a SOE placement instructional packet was developed and field tested in Iowa.

SOE Placement Instructional Materials

The materials present the content and procedures for teaching advanced vocational agriculture students to select and plan SOE placement programs. The packet or unit includes three parts or problem areas for approximately 10 periods (hours) of instruction either at the end of the school year for sophomores or at the beginning of the school year for juniors. The first problem area called "Identifying Opportunities for SOE Placement Programs," was designed to aid students in understanding and

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Preparing Students For Placement  
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A variety of learning activities direct students in obtaining a part-time job and developing plans for successful employment experiences.

5. What opportunities exist for SOE placement programs in the community? 

Problem Area 2: Planning SOE Placement Programs. 
1. What are the elements of an effective SOE placement program? 
2. Why is employment experience in agriculture valuable? 
3. What is required to be a successful student employee? 
4. What are the alternatives for SOE placement programs? 
5. What legal regulations pertain to SOE placement programs? 

Problem Area 3: Starting SOE Placement Programs. 
1. Why is student information important to an employer? 
2. How is a job application made? 
3. How is a job interview conducted? 
4. What should a SOE placement program agreement include? 
5. What should a SOE experience plan include? 
6. What records are required for a SOE placement program? 
7. How can student progress in a SOE placement program be determined? 

The problem areas are subdivided with study questions. Each set of questions is preceded by a paragraph identifying the teaching situation. The study questions are followed by a list of references and instructional materials, a list of learner needs, an interest approach, learning activities, a conclusion, desired outcomes for evaluation, and optional learning activities. A variety of individual and group instructional methods are suggested. 

Effectiveness of the Instructional Materials 

Do they work? This is a question teachers commonly ask in reference to instructional materials. To answer this question the instructional packet was field tested in central Iowa in the fall of 1982 as part of an Agricultural Experiment Station project. Fifteen Iowa vocational agriculture teachers and their sophomore classes were selected to use the packet. An additional fourteen teachers and their sophomore classes following their normal procedures for preparing students for SOE placement programs served as a control group. At the close of the instructional unit, teachers using the packet evaluated the quality and value of the instructional materials.

The group of teachers using the instructional packet indicated the content of the packet was very appropriate for preparing students to enter SOE placement programs. Teachers revealed that the student handouts and transparencies included in the packet greatly reduced preparation time. The study questions, interest approaches, and learning activities assisted teachers the most in preparing students for SOE placement. One teacher described the materials as "convenient to use." Another one said "the instructional packet was valuable in assisting students with SOE placement programs." Another teacher said "the materials are excellent in reducing preparation time and ensure that appropriate content is being taught."

The field test revealed the group of teachers using the packet spent more days teaching their students about SOE placement programs than the control group. These results indicate that the instructional packet was effective in assisting teachers to prepare sophomore students for SOE placement programs.

Acceptance of Materials by Teachers 

During the 1983 summer conference, the instructional packet was delivered to Iowa vocational agriculture teachers through an in-service workshop. The workshop focused on the content of the packet and how to use it in preparing sophomore vocational agriculture students for SOE placement programs. At the close of the workshop, teachers expressed positive comments about the packet. One teacher stated "the instructional packet provides a systematic approach for teaching students the knowledge and skills common to all agricultural occupations." Another teacher said, "Using the instructional packet will increase student interest in SOE placement programs."

Since the materials were well received by Iowa vocational agriculture teachers, copies of the instructional packet have been made available to people in other states through the Iowa Association for Vocational Instructional Materials. 208 Davison Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011, at a cost of $10.00 plus postage.

Summary 

Vocational agriculture teachers need to assist students in selecting and developing a SOE placement program related to their occupational objective. To effectively prepare students for these programs teachers must have the content and procedures to do the job. SOE placement programs are an effective method of preparing students for an array of agricultural occupations. However, before participating, students must know the what, why, and how of SOE placement programs in vocational agriculture.

References 

An Expanded View of SOE: Placement

For years, production agriculture teachers have been placing students on farms for supervised occupational experience (SOE). Today, however, as the number of farms continue to decline, coupled with students not wanting to return to the home farm and more non-farm students enrolled in high school production agriculture programs who seek agribusiness entry skills, the production agriculture teacher is truly in a dilemma. How does a production agriculture teacher meet the needs of students that have occupational objectives in agricultural business? What type of SOE can a production agriculture teacher develop for these students?

The answer to this problem may seem quite simple: "Just place them in an agribusiness instead of on farms." The solution, however, is not quite that simple. Many agricultural businesses are reluctant to hire a young 15 to 18 year old high school student as part of the student's SOE. This is especially true with today's economic slump. Employers are also hesitant to cooperate with a student who may sometimes be only an observer, due to hazardous working conditions or lack of experienced skills. Thus, many production agriculture teachers discourage SOE placement because of the limited number of training stations and because of their students' lack of skills deemed necessary for agribusiness employment.

Placement Laboratories

Agribusiness educators continue to support the idea of utilizing school land laboratories in order to provide students with the experience needed to enable students to become more vocationally competent in production agriculture. Since land laboratories have proven valuable in applying related instruction, it would seem that school agribusiness laboratories would fulfill an equally valuable role.

How Does It Work?

Students would begin their first two years of vocational agriculture as entry level agribusiness workers. Aside from the daily classroom routine, they would be responsible for overseeing the work necessary for their agribusiness SOE. The third and fourth years of vocational agriculture would be spent moving into mid-management and management positions in the agribusiness. Students would be allowed to rotate through all the agribusinesses the school had to offer.

A single school might have a variety of agribusinesses. A general farm store could be the outlet for marketing the grain and livestock produced on the school land laboratory. This agribusiness would provide vocational agriculture students and others the opportunity to purchase high quality products at a reasonable price. The general farm store could be very similar to that of a cooperative store. The inventory of such a store could also include FFA materials and supplies needed in the school agribusinesses.

BY JERRY PETERS AND STACY GARDIN

FEBRUARY, 1984

SOE For A Changing Population of Students

Many areas in Ohio and nationally have experienced significant changes in the nature of the population. Previously rural areas now contain many residents who are enjoying the opportunity of living in the cities. This has been an increase in the number of large farms and small farms, with an accompanying decline in the number of middle-sized farms.

These changes have been apparent to teachers of vocational agriculture. A greater percentage of the students in vocational agriculture are not from family farms. These students are interested in agriculture, but often are preparing for occupations other than in production agriculture.

For these students, the traditional production project in vocational agriculture may not be sufficient in preparing them for their future careers. What types of supervised practice would be more appropriate?

By J. DAVID MACCRAGEN

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Supervised practice is helpful to students in many ways. It provides opportunity for them to work, earn money, gain a degree of financial independence, and assume greater responsibility. Students on work experience programs work under the supervision of employers, the teacher, and parents in establishing desirable work habits. Abilities are also developed in cooperation, initiative, human relations, and flexibility. Work experience is advantageous to students as they seek employment. It also enables students to develop specialized areas of expertise that may not be available in the group setting of the classroom.

Report from One Ohio County

A survey was recently conducted of the students in vocational agriculture of a suburban county in Ohio. One of the outcomes was data concerning the types of supervised occupational experience programs conducted by the students. Data indicated that 23 percent of the students were for full-time farms, 41 percent were part-time farms, and 36 percent were not from farms. Fifty-six percent of the parents owned or rented less than 10 acres. The majority of the students had limited resources for traditional supervised occupational experience programs.

One would program that would be heavily used in this county. In the five vocational agriculture departments, 12 percent of the students were placed in supervised work experience programs. Only 2.5 percent were placed in agricultural business with the remainder on farm placement. Sixty-three percent of the students maintained a traditional production project, with the majority being of limited scope. Twenty percent of the students maintained non-traditional production projects, such as pleasure horses, gardening, and small animals.

Helping the Disadvantaged . . .

SOE for “Hard to Place” Students

Supervised occupational experience is for all students enrolled in vocational agriculture. Some students have characteristics which make it difficult for them to have placement programs. They differ from the other students to such an extent that they are said to have special needs. It is rare for a vocational agriculture class not to have some special needs students.

These students need help. The potential for some measure of success in agricultural occupations is often there. The challenge to the teacher is one of how to appropriately direct these students in the development of SOE programs. A teacher who is successful with special needs students can reap considerable personal gratification by observing them make substantive growth. Sometimes involvement in SOE is just the spark that is needed to help them overcome their special needs conditions.

The category of special needs is too broad to be addressed in this article. The characteristics which cause students to be disadvantaged are not always easily observable. Yet, special consideration is needed if these students are to make satisfactory progress in supervised occupational experience.

How Are Students Disadvantaged?

Disadvantaged students are those who have educational, socio-economic, or other conditions which prevent them from succeeding in vocational agriculture without special programs or services. Such students are often over age for their grade placement, have a low level of ability, lack motivation to achieve, and may have high absentee rates from school. These students can and should be helped. They can often gain considerable benefit from SOE programs.

Many disadvantaged students are unaware of what is needed to be successful. This applies to both school and later in work. Through appropriate SOE programs, they can gain many of the needed skills. The vocational agriculture teacher can often assume a powerful role, especially with students from disadvantaged home backgrounds.

Students who have low levels of academic performance may be turned off to school. SOE programs may be the key to helping them find themselves and the important relationships of education and career success.

Students from deficient socio-economic backgrounds can often derive considerable benefit from contact with the working world. SOE can aid in developing an appropriate work ethic and contribute to economic self-sufficiency.

Students from farm backgrounds where there is considerable reliance on welfare and other forms of aid may be exposed to work so that new values are formed. They may learn the importance of work and be a productive worker.

Cultural differences may act as barriers to work. SOE can help overcome these barriers. It is important for teachers to understand cultural diversity. It is not the role of vocational agriculture to eliminate cultural diversity, but to prepare individuals from diverse backgrounds to enter and advance in agricultural occupations.

What Special Considerations are Needed With Disadvantaged Students?

Disadvantaged students need opportunities to prove themselves. Prove SOE programs can help solve situations in which they can experience success. Placing such students into an employment situation before they are ready can be detrimental to the student, school, and employer. A little success may be all the motivation that is needed to help students overcome their disadvantages.

A first principle with disadvantaged students is to require SOE programs. By not requiring SOE, the student will likely become more disadvantaged.

SOEP planning is particularly critical. Exploratory experiences in the school laboratory may be needed in the early stages of planning. Assessment of these experiences by the student and teacher will be valuable in SOEP planning.

Some students may only be capable of school-based, directed laboratory SOEP. It is advisable to place students in agribusinesses or on farms if they lack fundamental skills. Placing students who are not ready can result in damaged relationships so that future placement of other students is impossible.

Employers should be aware of student capabilities. The teacher may need to discreetly discuss student deficiencies with employers so that employer expectations will not be too high.

Individual instruction and supervisory visits are more important with disadvantaged students. Greater attention to helping students adjust to work situations is often required.

(Continued on Page 16)
Helping the Disadvantaged . . .

SOE for "Hard-to-Place" Students

(Continued from Page 15)

What Strategies May Be Useful?

A teacher who is prepared to help disadvantaged students may need to use strategies appropriate to student traits. A few traits and possible strategies are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Trait</th>
<th>Possible Educational Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Exhibits poor language development</td>
<td>A.1. Counsel into SOE program which initially requires BIE use of language skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.2. Provide individual remedial instruction in language skills.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.3. May need to encourage child, directed laboratory SOE until problem is overcome or reduced.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Frequently absent or tardy at school (and likely to drop out of placement station)</td>
<td>B.1. Encourage student to get adequate sleep at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.2. Instruct that sleeping at school and over-the-job is inappropriate behavior.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.3. Refer to school psychologist or other professional for counseling.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Frequently absent or tardy at school (and likely to drop out of placement station)</td>
<td>C.1. Instruct student that reporting to work on time is essential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.2. Make supervisory visits to assess student behavior and counsel as needed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.3. Refer to professional for counseling.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Occasionally absent from school</td>
<td>D.1. Counsel/instruct the student about this problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.2. Use school-based, directed-laboratory SOE.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>D.3. Provide frequent and regular supervision.</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. From interpolated home</td>
<td>E.1. Counsel into a placement SOE since home resources are not initially available. Ownership SOE programs might be used after earnings from placement are sufficient to finance ownership needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.2. Assist student in getting a loan or grant, such as from FHEA.</td>
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<tr>
<td>E.3. Select placement station convenient to student's home if transportation is a problem.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Comes to school dirty</td>
<td>F.1. Counsel/instruct student about proper bathing, grooming and use of deodorant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.2. Provide for student to bathe at school. (May be physical education shower facilities.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Clothes dirty or in adequate</td>
<td>G.1. Counsel about the problem as related to work expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.2. Arrange for student to get needed clothes from a local charity or church.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>G.3. Place at a station that provides uniforms for workers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Uses tobacco, drugs, and/or alcohol</td>
<td>G.4. Help student budget income from SOE so that needed clothes can be bought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.5. Instruct student in proper use of on-the-job equipment, if appropriate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.6. Counsel student about problem as related to successful employment at training station.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.7. Establish a directed laboratory SOE when problem is overcome.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>H.8. Refer to appropriate authorities (counselors, chemical dependency professionals, and others) for assistance with problem.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A good understanding of each student's background and limitations. Use this information as the basis for individual student SOE instruction and planning. (This information might be gained by interviewing the students, visiting students' homes, talking with parents, discussing individually with counselors or school psychologists, and in other ways.)

Develop effective communication skills. The ability to communicate with students of varying cultural backgrounds and handicaps is particularly important. Make needed adjustments in teaching style and rate.

Have a good knowledge of potential SOE placement stations. Some employment opportunities are not as receptive to student differences as others. Knowledge of employer expectations and preferences can aid in advising students on placement stations. (Of course, it would not be appropriate to openly discuss employment preferences with students. Handle this discreetly.)

Know the competencies required in agricultural occupations. This will help match students with an appropriate placement SOE. By knowing the competencies, students will not be advised into SOE programs they might be incapable of successfully performing.

Follow good personal practices — be patient, optimistic, creative, success-oriented, analytical, flexible, and understanding. Never rule anyone out as incapable of success in SOE.

**THEME**

Placement Businesses In The School

By Richard L. Cooper

(Recipient of Mr. Cooper's Vocational Agriculture Instructor at Mountain View High School, Yancey, Washington 98906.)

Agriculture programs in suburban and urban schools are presently facing the challenge of fulfilling the mandate require that all vocational agriculture students will have a SOE project. This will continue to be a problem in the future. Possible solutions to this problem that have been suggested include: group projects (which are normally nonsalaried and occur in the school laboratory), home improvement work (such as painting a room or writing an addition to the house), work experience projects (which may be placement but are primarily student initiated school year and summer jobs), and school operated businesses (which produce profits).

**Benefits**

School operated businesses are placement projects which could be the best answer to the suburban and urban agriculture programs' SOE project dilemma. They have the following strengths:

1. Close student supervision.
2. High levels of product quality.
3. Immediate feedback on business decisions.
4. Monetary returns for the school agriculture program.
5. Monetary returns for the student.
6. Clear and immediate evidence to school officials that the program is preparing students for wage earning and job entry.

**Process**

When developing a school business placement program, the teacher or administrator must be concerned with the type of business, day-to-day operation, profit distribution, conflicts with local businesses, getting started, perpetuation, and the advantages and disadvantages of the business. A cooperative with student shares. The success of obtaining financing, by any method, is based on a professional approach to the financial source. (Continued on Page 16)
The final step to making the supervised occupational experience school placement project successful is to provide profit or salary incentives. The income from the business must be sufficient to provide a reasonable wage for the student employees. The student employees or workers must be given a return on their time and labor investment. The end product of most jobs or occupations is job enjoyment or satisfaction, continual learning, and income or wages to reward the employee for effort put out to make the business successful. They could be paid by varying methods:

1. Hours worked times a set wage.
2. Commissions on sales, profits, and sales incentives.
3. Shares could be bought in the business with income based on the share which the employee owns, and
4. Hours worked based on the total income and employee hours worked.

THEME

SOE... Some Considerations

On July 25-30, 1982, in Washington, D.C., over 200 teachers, teacher educators and state supervisors from 45 states attended the first National SOE Conference. The four day workshop was described as the "rebirth of SOE" and the "SOCIAL EDUCATION." Regardless of the words used to describe it, the workshop was deliberately the beginning of better emphasis of SOE for the 80's. Perhaps a revival is the appropriate time to reexamine the basic components of the SOE system and decide whether any of the basics are in need of an overhaul to make them compatible with present day SOE standards. Supervised occupational experience, in the most basic sense, is a method of instruction which emphasizes learning by doing. If we define learning as epiphenomenal during which motivated individuals attempt to adopt their behavior so as to succeed in a situation which they perceive as requiring action to obtain a goal, then it logics that since SOE programs are to be successful, they must motivate students towards goals (occupational) which they (students) perceive as important. With this basic assumption in mind, we might begin examining SOE in terms of:

a) meeting the needs of the clientele group being served;
(b) motivating the student to succeed;
(c) the occupational focus of traditional SOE program.

THE CLIENTELE GROUP

Who are the clientele we serve in vocational agriculture? Population and demographic data suggest that less than three percent of the American population is engaged in production agriculture. School population data suggest that secondary school populations are declining and that approximately 42 percent of the enrollment in vocational agriculture classes are female. In addition, we are experiencing an increase in the number of ninth grade students with avocational intentions as 72 percent of the students enrolled in vocational agriculture are from non-farm backgrounds.

The Motivating the Student to Succeed

Atkinson and Feather (1966) suggested that the potential of any task to motivate is a function of three factors:

a) a person's motive to succeed, i.e., a good record of success highly motivates students to continue to succeed;
(b) the probability of success, i.e., what are the chances of actually being successful; and
(c) the incentive value to succeed, i.e., if successful, what is the reward?

They suggested that the motivational strength of any...
over 90 percent of students currently enrolled in vocational agriculture will work in agricultural related businesses.

Supervised occupational experience programs, both production and placement, should reflect occupational experiences in the major areas of agricultural employment. In addition, occupational experiences should emphasize the development of communication, writing, and employability skills necessary for survival in the modern day agriculture business community. While many skills can only be learned through hands-on experience, other cognitive skills (thinking and reasoning) can be taught through intensified classroom teaching including simulation and games. A careful review of occupational experiences, both placement and production, would lay the groundwork for providing instructional alternatives for tasks which are rule-to-know but not absolutely essential for completely performing the job.

Some Considerations

As we search for a solution to the SOE dilemma amidst declining resources, populations and dollars, we are constantly tablets by the prevailing tradition. Should we tamper with an integral component of a highly successful system which has helped produce the most efficient system of agriculture in the world? In the light of shifting and declining populations and resources, the answer is yes.

We must modernize SOE programs to meet the needs of a changing clientele. Programs which have been traditionally production oriented must expand their curriculum and include course offerings in such areas as horticulture, small animal care and agribusiness sales and service would open up new vistas of occupationally related SOE. In programs with large numbers of students from non-farm rural and urban populations, consider the use of existing facilities, resources and laboratories to provide group and individual SOE. We offer the following suggestions, for your consideration, which may improve the quality of SOE programs:

- Grow two crops in your greenhouse. One crop would be for school use, the other for SOEP use. Set up your SOE training program in a business-like manner. Students would share in profits in a direct relationship to the success of the production and sale of the crop. Rotate the students so they perform various job skills. Sales to the public should be involved so the students can develop proper communication skills.
- Use a resource which is unique in your geographic area as a training station. In the northeast, many FFA chapters operate maple sugar houses. This type of situation may also be used as a group SOE program.
- Subcontract with an agriculturist (nursery, landscape, horticulture, or agricultural mechanics business) to perform services for group SOE programs. Mail order agriculture companies may require workers to set up facilities which have been ordered in the area.
- The floriculture students who need SOE programs can serve the needs of the school and faculty with year-round crops and designs. Consider small jobs in floral design for the holiday seasons, and at special functions such as reception clubs.
- Students can meet the needs of the community by designing and producing custom farm equipment to meet the specific needs of the farmer.

Hopefully, this will promote closer ties with agriculture and industry to insure that every placement or cooperative occupational experience is in fact a "quality" experience which provides the student with necessary employability skills after graduation. In short, we must retool the system to meet the needs of a diverse student population and a growing agribusiness community. We must seek a new, cost effective ways to develop occupational proficiency in our students, and we must provide SOE experiences which have the potential of success... for our students, ourselves and the agribusiness community.

Reference


ASSISTANTSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS

1984-85 Report...

Assistants and Fellowships in Agricultural Education

The 1984-85 survey by the Publications Committee of the American Association of Teacher Educators in Agriculture of assistantships and fellowships in agricultural education reflects the reporting of 23 institutions. The findings are published to aid prospective graduate students in selecting an institution at which to study and to help them obtain financial assistance.

Key to Understanding

The information is provided in the following order: Nature of assistantships (number available); number of months available during year; beginning month of employment; amount of work expected; monthly remuneration; and other considerations, such as remission of fees; whether aid is for master's, advanced graduate program or doctoral students; source of funds; the 1984 deadline for application; and

(Continued on Page 22)
Assistantships & Fellowships In Agricultural Education

the person to be contacted. Slight variations in this pattern are due to the nature of the data provided by reporting institutions.

University of Arizona
Research Assistantships (2); 9 or 12 months; June or August; one-half time; 20 hours/week; $650 plus per month; out-of-state fee waiver; master’s; no departmental budget; March 1 or 6 months prior to enrollment; Floyd G. McCormick, Department of Agricultural Education, The University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona 85721.

Auburn University
Research and Evaluation (2); 12 months; June or September; 10 hours/week; $480-$550 per month; doctoral; March 1 for June appointment and July 1 for September appointment; Richard A. Baker, Vocational and Adult Education, Auburn University, 2526 Auburn Center, Auburn, Alabama 36849.

Colorado State University
Research Assistantships (3-4); 9 months; September; 20 hours/week; $450-500 plus per month; tuition waiver for GTA’s; master’s and doctoral; university and contracts and grants; April 15; contact as above.

Teaching Assistantships (3); 9 months; September; 20 hours/week; $460 per month; tuition waiver for GTA’s; master’s and doctoral; university and contracts and grants; April 15; contact as above.

University of Colorado
Assistantships (1); 9 months; September; 20 hours/week; $480 per month; tuition waiver for GTA’s; master’s and doctoral; university and contracts and grants; April 15; contact as above.

Teaching Assistantships (2); 10 months; June or September; 15 hours/week; $724 annually ($257.89 bi-weekly); waiver of tuition and fees; state funding; April 15; William E. Drake, 204 Stone Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853, (607)274-2197.

Research Assistantships (3); 9 or 12 months; June or September; 15 hours/week; $4,900 for 9 months; $6,724 for 12 months ($257.89 bi-weekly); waiver of tuition and fees; doctoral; Harriet A. Reactor, Horace Mann, Inc., 150 Farmington Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut 06117.

Michigan State University
Graduate Teaching Assistantship (1); 12 months; September 15 through August 15; 20 hours/week; $1,000 (negotiated); fee remission; master’s and doctoral; April 15; O. L. Gilhousen, Agricultural Education, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 302 Hall Agriculture, Lincoln, Nebraska 68583.

Graduate Teaching Assistant (GRA) (1): 9 or 12 months; July 1-September 15; 20 hours/week; $580; fee remission; master’s; April 15; contact as above.

Mississippi State University
Research Assistantships (2); 10 or 12 months; July or August; one-half time; $650 per month minimum; out-of-state fees waived; doctoral; March 1, 1984; Jasper S. Lee, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education, P.O. Box 3643, College Station, Texas 77691.

Teaching Assistantship (1); 9 months; August; one-half time; $600 per month; out-of-state fees waived; master’s educational specialist or doctoral; March 1, 1984; contact as above.

University of Florida
Assistships for research, plan and co-ordinate in-service activities: curricular development (3-5); 9-12 months; August; 14-20 hours/week; $450 per month; out-of-state portion of fees waived; master’s; varies depending upon position; April 12; C. E. Biehler, Department of Agriculture and Extension Education, 305 Rolls Hall, Gainesville, Florida 32611.

Iowa State University
Research Assistantships (4); 12 months; July or September; 20 hours/week; one-half time; fee reduction; master’s or doctoral; Agricultural Experiment Station and special projects funded by the Federal Government; March 1; David L. Williams, Department of Agricultural Education, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

Fellowships (2); 12 months; September; 20 hours/week; $600 per month; half paid; master’s or doctoral; USOE for Minorities and Women, Double Major or Major/Minor Program — Agricultural Education and a selected Technical Agriculture Area; March 1, 1984; contact as same as above.

Kansas State University
Teaching Assistantship (1); 9 months; academic year; $2,200 plus per month; 20 hours/week; $912 per month; out-of-state fees waived, in-state fees reduced; master’s and doctoral; March 15, 1984; Ralph Field, Department of Adult and Occupational Education, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506, (913) 532-5553.

Research Assistantships (2-3); 9 or 12 months; August; 20 hours/week; $450-$650 per month; tuition waived; master’s and doctoral; March 15; Gary Moore, School of Vocational Education, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70703.

Michigan State University
Graduate Teaching Assistantship (1); 12 months; September 15 through August 15; 20 hours/week; $1,000 (negotiated); fee remission; master’s and doctoral; Carroll H. Warnhoff, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824.

Mississippi State University
Research Assistantships (2); 10 or 12 months; July or August; one-half time; $650 per month minimum; out-of-state fees waived; doctoral; March 1, 1984; Jasper S. Lee, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education, P.O. Box 3643, College Station, Texas 77691.

Teaching Assistantship (1); 9 months; August; one-half time; $600 per month; out-of-state fees waived; master’s educational specialist or doctoral; March 1, 1984; contact as same as above.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Teaching Assistantship (1); September; one-half time; $650.00 for Office Design/11426.

Teaching Assistantship (1); 9 months; July 1-September 15; 20 hours/week; $580; fee remission; master’s; April 15; contact as above.

New Mexico State University
Teaching Assistantship (1); September; one-half time; $650.00 for Office Design/11426.

Teaching Assistantship (1); 9 months; July 1-September 15; 20 hours/week; $580; fee remission; master’s; April 15; contact as above.

University of Mississippi-Columbia
Research Assistantships (2-4); 9-12 months; July and September; 20 hours/week; out-of-state fees waived; doctoral; May 1; Curtis W. Westom, Agricultural Education, Mississippi State University, College of Agriculture, University of Mississippi, Columbia, Mississippi 66211.

Teaching Assistantships (2-3); 9 months; August; 20 hours/week; $700 per month; out-of-state fees waived; doctoral; May 1; contact same as above.

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University
Assistships (3); 9 months; Aug- ust 15 through May 15; 20 hours/week; one-half time; $600 plus per month for University budget; July 1, 1984; A. P. Bell, Head, Department of Agricultural Education, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Greensboro, North Carolina 27411, (919) 379-7711.

Teaching Assistantships (2-3); 9 months; August; 20 hours/week; $700 per month; out-of-state fees waived; doctoral; May 1; contact same as above.

Ohio State University
Teaching Assistantship (1); 9 months; July 1-September 30; 20 hours/week; $325 per month; in- and out-of-state fees waived; doctoral; February 1; Dr. J. Robert Warnhoff, Department of Agricultural Education, The Ohio State University, 2120 Fyffe Road, Columbus, Ohio 43210, (614) 292-5775.

Teaching Assistantships (3-4) in Agriculture; 9 to 12 months; July 1 or later; one-half time; $450-$765 per month; in- and out-of-state fees waived; doctoral; February 1; Dr. J. Robert Warnhoff, Department of Agricultural Education, The Ohio State University, 2120 Fyffe Road, Columbus, Ohio 43210, (614) 292-5775.

Oregon State University
Teaching Assistantship (1) supervise student teachers and teach undergraduate courses; 9 months; September; 20 hours/week; out-of-state fees waived; master’s in agricultural education level; February 1; contact as same as above.

Teaching assistantships (1-2) in已经达到学士学位

The Pennsylvania State University
Teaching and Research Assistantships (4); 12 months; August; 20 hours/week; $510 supervi- sion of fees; master’s and doctoral candidates; March 1; Samuel M. Curtis, Department of Agriculture and Extension Education, 102 Armory Building, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania 16802, (814) 865-1688.

Purdue University
Teaching Assistantship (1); 10 months; August-May; teaching under graduate courses and supervising student teachers; $600 plus per month; supervision of fees; master’s and doctoral candidates; March 1; Daniel C. Holcomb, Department of Agricultural Education, Purdue University, South Campus Court F-25, West Lafayette, Indiana 47907.

Utah State University
Teaching Assistantship (1) 10 months; August-May; 20 hours/week; $550 per month; out-of-state waivers; Teaching and student teacher visits, manuscript studies, preparation of curricul- um resource materials; B.S. Degree: minimum of three years’ teaching experience; minimum of two members; Teaching; summer; limited to able to meet Utah State University re-quirements for graduate study: have completed GED examination; Master’s degree only; March 15, 1984; Gilbert A. Long, Department of Agricultural Education, Utah State University, UMC 48, Logan, Utah 84322, (801) 733-2230.

University of Wisconsin-River Falls
Graduate Assistantship (1); 9 months; September; 15 hours/week; $475 plus per month plus remission of out-of-state fees; master’s; September; February 1; Richard A. Jensen, Department of Agricultural Education, University of Wisconsin-River Falls, River Falls, Wisconsin 54022.
National FFA Officers Elected

The FFA elected six new national officers on November 12 in Kansas City, Missouri. The six were selected at the 56th National FFA Convention and will lead the organization for a year.

Seated (left to right): Bill Caraway, 19, of Clovis, New Mexico, National Secretary; Ron Weininger, 20, of Marion, Kansas, National President.

Standing (left to right): Rhonda Schuelen, 20, of Loose Creek, Missouri, National Vice President, Southern Region; Chuck Duggar, National Vice President, Central Region; Melody Lawson, 20, of Peoria, Arizona, National Vice President, Western Region, and Carol Irvine, 19, of Gaithersburg, Maryland, National Vice President, Eastern Region. (Photograph courtesy of the National FFA Center.)