The Public's View of Agricultural Education

We've Come a Long Way — or Have We?
THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE

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Editor's Comments
The Public's View of Agricultural Education.

We have received mixed messages as we develop this issue and especially our comments for this issue. The feedback for this issue has been strong, but we know that there is a long way to go before we have a fully developed program.

The themes for the 1995 issues of The Agricultural Education Magazine have been published in the July, 1994 issue. We have a variety of themes, with the hope that one of the themes will be of interest to you. You will see a list of the themes and the magazines that they are in.

In addition, we will begin a new feature column each month where we will feature stories about innovative classroom teachers who have found new and exciting ways to help their students learn and achieve. Please contact Devereux with your suggestions of success stories.

Bob Martin, also listed on the title page, has agreed to continue to edit the feature column. Michael Newman has been appointed to serve as a special editor for educational technology and its use in agricultural education. We have asked Michael to identify and share success stories we can use as educational technology and its use in agricultural education. We ask Michael to identify and share success stories.
We've Come a Long Way — or Have We?

A few years ago, I was discussing with a group of students the importance of agricultural education. I asked them what they thought was the most important issue facing agriculture today. Their responses ranged from environmental sustainability to the declining number of young people entering the field. As I listened to their answers, I realized that we have come a long way in terms of addressing these issues. However, there are still challenges that need to be overcome.

To understand the importance of agricultural education, let's take a look at the history of farming. In the past, farming was a way of life. People lived in close proximity to the land and were deeply connected to it. Today, however, many young people are not interested in farming due to the perceived lack of opportunities and the perception that it is an old-fashioned profession.

As a result, there is a growing concern about the future of agriculture. Will there be enough farmers to feed the world? Will the land continue to be used in a sustainable manner? These are questions that need to be addressed.

So, what can be done to encourage more young people to enter the field? One solution is to improve the image of agriculture. This can be done by highlighting the opportunities available in the field and the positive impact that farming has on the environment.

Another important aspect of agricultural education is to prepare students for the workforce. This can be achieved by providing them with practical skills and knowledge that are applicable in the real world. By doing so, students will be better prepared to succeed in the field.

In conclusion, agricultural education is crucial for the future of agriculture. It is important to continue to invest in this field and to encourage more young people to enter it. With the right education and preparation, the future of agriculture looks promising.
If Agricultural Education were a Coca-Cola®...

By Diane L. Donahue

Dr. Donahue is assistant professor of agricultural education and student at Iowa State University, Ames.

I seriously doubt that there is anyone in our profession that, at one time or another, has not had to face the issue of cultural education and an aging mind. From family members to new acquaintances, simply telling them that you are in Agricultural Education often does little to increase that person's understanding of your occupation. Each of us has had to wonder whether our role in agricultural education is being shared and that the majority of the perceptions the public has of agriculture and agricultural education has not continued to be negative.

But We're Doing Agricultural Literacy Programs!!

The release of Understanding Agriculture (National Research Council) University of Agricultural Education in Secondary Schools, and its recommendation for all K-12 students "receive some systematic instruction about agriculture" (p. 2) has resulted in a flood of programs designed to increase the agricultural literacy of the general population.

During the 6 years following its report's release, the resulting agricultural literacy efforts have varied from state to state and within the school district in scope, content, target audience and undoubtedly, effectiveness. How these efforts focus on putting agriculture into schools in the hands of the non-agricultural perspective, how efforts have provided training, how meaningful agriculture information is to other 6th and 7th grade classrooms, extensions, and social activities. One common result that has been the intent of changing the perceptions about agriculture.

Many individuals within the Agricultural Education profession are quick to note that these programs have been successful; evidently increased enrollments in secondary agriculture programs over 60,000. But have we really made a difference? Are enrollment and membership increases in agricultural literacy efforts for the individual, another, smaller, increase in the local environment? Has anyone tried to determine if agriculture students taking agriculture are aware of the stigma that exists in our society that negative perceptions about agriculture and has been minimal, not removed. We are obtaining data on what agriculture students think about agriculture and how they feel about their major. We are asking students to state what their major is and that the major is probably not that important. We are finding that agriculture students are not those in agricultural education or all agricultural education programs.

Marketing Is Not A Sometime Thing

One of the "laws" of marketing is the Law of Permanence. To simply state that Marketing is not a battle of products, it is a battle of perceptions (Ries & Trout, 1993, p. 18). The goal of changing perceptions and the resulting battle of marketing is not a sometime thing—it is a constant! Every day Coca-Cola has some form of advertising in the "public's eye" and it has worked to their benefit. Coca-Cola is everyon'e knows about Coca-Cola. In certain parts of the United States, the term "Coke" is even used to generalize to all carbonated beverages. And while Coca-Cola has made mistakes (remember New Coke), they were quick to change when the public was expressing negative thoughts and perceptions.

This need for constant marketing has been very apparent in the automobile industry. Over the past 30 years, two damaging perceptions have caused massive changes in the industry. The first perception that "Japanese" cars were "better made," caused the "Big Three" US makers to drastically restructure administratively as well as in their product lines. The second perception that "buying import was un-American" has caused Honda and other foreign car manufacturers to build production and assembly plants in the United States in an attempt to become "American.

Perceptions have caused sudden and dramatic changes in all parts of our daily life. We must remember that agricultural education has not been exempt from the impact of negative perceptions. We must increase our marketing efforts to a near-daily activity if we are to avoid being blinded-sided again. These efforts include a constant review of perceptions of agricultural education and on how they are formed. This could be accomplished by:

- FFA chapter members annually surveying other students;
- FFA Alumni and advisory committee members questioning other community residents;
- State and national-level leaders and organizations conducting focus groups and other data collection activities with non-agriculture students (beyond the easily accessible school administrators and FFA sponsors) on an annual basis.

With accurate data on perceptions and how they are formed, "reform" efforts can be precisely targeted and formed. And the effort doesn't end. New factors each day can impact and quickly change the perceptions. Efforts to understand perceptions must be a constant activity.

To increase our program size and agricultural literacy efforts, we must take marketing from a sometime thing to a constant activity. This will take time, effort, and money. However, this does not have to come from the agriculture instructor alone. FFA chapters traditionally have a reporter—challenger them and the other officers to have at least one article prepared for the local newspaper every week that highlights...
A Final Challenge

While daily marketing activities are more
than sometimes efforts, the most powerful
marketing is an adrenalin rush. Given the
words computer, copycat, digital, and
idea, the four most associated words to IBM.
Hebrew's and Coke.

Some would say we have such a world and
found in the combined letters of "IBM.
"IBM" demonstrates that we can be
attractive and also deliver a product.
Again, another illusion. While "IBM" is
designed to be positive in the mind of our
consumers, it has also proven to be a model as
the classroom, laboratory, and workplace (i.e.,
Saratoga) of our program and to not exhibit
resulting perception of "potential" in the
market.

What if agricultural education, through its
tific creativity, could create an effective sales
package? What if we take that leap daily?
Buttons, billboards, direct mail, radio, TV,
tions--whatever is the most effective
means of reaching and persuading the
class. Then, perhaps, we could be like CocaCola, everyone would know what agricultural education is.

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State University:

"The unique educational opportunities of
vocational agriculture education is each
student's right to achieve his maximum potential, drawing from all
abilities of education rather than reproducing individual's more
goals and respect for his abilities all

The uniqueness of vocational agriculture education from the fact that all areas of knowledge teach a
person in the solving of problems. Mathematics,
English, history, science, art, music,
obtaining, symbolology, are all
be brought together for the understanding
of the subject we play. No subject this.
No other subject demands such a wide
knowledge in all its forms of understanding and

Sometimes the best direction we should be going. "What that
students were excellent columns written by
students who have similar columns in our publication, too. We should listen to what our public says.

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"Involving" versus "Show & Tell"

Most agricultural educators would agree with the
above heading, but how often do they involve the
public in their programs? The public's main exposure to
agricultural education is usually involuntary at
fairs, potting, and shows, and exhibits. Some volun-
tary activities include agricultural presentations at
service clubs, school functions and community
events. These exposures are fine, but they are usually
"Show and Tell" activities. The audience receive a
free presentation and some people may even remember a few items from the message.

Improvement on the "Show and Tell" method, and ultimately what the public remembers, can be achieved by increasing the public's involvement in
agricultural education activities (see Figure 1).

In Michigan, a "Blue Ribbon" panel was orga-
nized to judge the "Agriculture Teacher of the Year" award. The panel consisted of the College
of Agriculture and Natural Resources Associate Dean of Academics, the Assistant Dean of
International Agriculture, the Assistant to the Director of
Admissions for Michigan State University and sev-
eral department chairs. A tremendous amount of
planning was needed to ensure that the actual judging
was organized. The rewards are still being felt
today. The judges were extremely impressed with the
applications. Their images of agricultural educa-

Not only have the students (and instructors) in our classes
changes, but hopefully so has their vision of agricultural
education changed to reflect the current challenges in education
and agriculture with which agricultural education and
can deal.

(Courtesy of E.R. Bowen)

(continued from page 4)

must show that our global society demands a variety of
career opportunities for men and women through-
out the food and agricultural industry. Dynamic,
enthusiastic agricultural education programs must be
offered to give K-12 and college students the knowl-
edge and career awareness necessary to keep pace
with the demand for well qualified professionals.
We
must ensure that agricultural education helps meet the
employment challenges of the next century.

I believe we are heading in the right direction, but I'm not sure we know where to go. I think twenty years ago we knew what direction we should be
heading as exemplified in this comment made by

Figure 1. The Agricultural Education Image Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image scale</th>
<th>Public transformation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>involve them</td>
<td>Excellent image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>show them</td>
<td>they gain ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tell them</td>
<td>they understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do nothing</td>
<td>they are aware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>void</td>
<td>Questionable image</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Agricultural Education Magazine
Figure 2. Steps to Improve the Public Image of Agricultural Education

1. Decide on an image to be portrayed to the public; Note: It must be based on the program's philosophy.
2. Identify activities that enhance the desired image (see Figure 3); Note: Eliminate or improve activities that detract from the intended image. Activities may include: specific lessons or classes, leadership activities, judging contests, completing applications, fairs, concessions, etc.
3. Involve the public; Note: Target specific activities to audiences that will reap the greatest benefits from involvement. Responsibilities may include: the public becoming involved as judges, coaches, teachers, participants, chauffeurs, FFA Alumni members, committee members or chairs, concession workers, etc.
4. Reap rewards; Rewards may include school leivers passing, curriculum reforms agreed upon, high student participation, greater community support, increased professional unity, recognition changed drastically during the three hour evaluation meeting. A winner was selected, but the real winners was the Michigan Agricultural Education profession. They now had allies in very high and key positions within Michigan State University (MSU) and the State Department of Education.

Another Michigan involvement activity occurred during the development of the Michigan Agriculture and Natural Resources Curriculum. Fifteen curriculums were written and each curriculum had a development team consisting of secondary school science and agriculture teachers, MSU faculty, agricultural personnel and State Department of Education staff. The team met for two or three days during the curriculum development phase. Again, their involvement and subsequent ownership (see Figure 1) created a very positive image about the future of agricultural education. This past spring Michigan's State Superintendent of Agricultural Education stated that the restructuring effort from production agriculture to agri-science was complete and that state funding supported restructured programs. Is involvement worth it?

Involving the public takes time and commitment. The previous examples indicate there is value when you involve others. Agricultural education has relevance, educationally sound curriculum, and effective delivery methodologies. The lives of young people are touched because of agricultural teachers being dedicated to their philosophies. No wonder frustration levels increase when the public only views agricultural education as training "farmers."

This fall the Artemis Board of Regents issued entrance requirements so that the 114,000 farm class can only take one elective if they want minimum standards. Arizona agriculture shows programs survive this latest challenge if its five image holds by the committee to entrance requirement. Two agricultural "Applied Biological Systems" and "Agriculture" will count as a "Biology" and as a "Life Science Laboratory Science" course during the entrance process.

This event moves the two agricultural classes from being elective to being alternative credit courses. The review committee is a subcommittee of university's "Science and Math Board Committee."

For two years faculty for the Department of Agricultural Education worked active committee meetings. They utilized a postal writing, presented in-service training at state and national level, relationships and a positive result cultural education.

Concurrently, several agricultural courses have been developed with the help of departments. Training of agriculture leaders, science and math teachers, students, and University of Arizona alumni. In addition, several graduate students from the science and agriculture teachers attended the time course for the review committee to get the time course for the new Board of Regents on the agricultural education program.

Involvement and being well prepared is worth it, ask any Arizona agricultural educator. Who else can be involved?

An untapped public are senior citizens. This group of people has tremendous amounts of experience and expertise, most of which goes unrecognized and unappreciated. Involving seniors has many benefits: 1) They can coach students preparing for a variety of contests in the comfort of their own homes. Their schedules are usually flexible. 2) They can teach specific lessons. 3) Students may learn to appreciate this segment of population. 4) Senior citizens appreciate being recognized. 5) Seniors may view school leivers more favorably if they have positive experiences with young people. Involvement with senior citizens is well worth it.

A Solution

Popeye, the gallant cartoon sailor, offers a tremendous philosophy for agricultural education. "I yam what I yam and that's all that I yam." Decide what you yam (sic) and then walk the talk. That is, agricultural education must decide what is the image they want the public to remember and then tell, show and especially involve the public in activities that emphasize a positive image.

Popeye does not apologize for who he is. He represents good, integrity and stubbornness (sort of like an agriculture teacher). He stands his ground based on a philosophy of right and wrong. Can agricultural education say the same thing? What is the definition of agricultural education? Does each agricultural education program have a philosophy and a list of principles that support it? These items are all part of the foundation that builds an image (see Figure 2). Arizona's agricultural education programs strive to portray a contemporary image that emphasizes relevant hands-on education, sincere interest in their students and utilization of up-to-date agricultural technology. Yet, if the only view the public has of a local program is that of a student spreading manure on the school farm, then that representation is what the program is. If manure spreading is all the public is exposed to, then the agricultural education program is nothing more than essence spreading, you yam (sic) what you yam (sic).

Fairs can be friendly or worst enemies to agricultural education. They are a tremendous opportunity to reach and involve the public, but what does the public see? Production agriculture is the typical image displayed. This image is fine, but it is probably not representative of the entire agricultural education program, nor is it supported by most philosophies in the only picture to portray reality. Agricultural education programs and activities must continue to be evaluated to ensure their relevance and importance (see Figure 3). Audits must be cut loose so that the profession can avoid being held back in today's highly technological world.

Agricultural education can improve its public image. The solution is living a sound philosophy, and involving others in it. The rewards are worth it. If Popeye were an agricultural educator, he would lead the way.

Figure 3. A chart for classifying FFA activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Sacred Cows</th>
<th>Anchors</th>
<th>Horizons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High need</td>
<td>Low impact</td>
<td>Time spent questionable impact is questionable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High impact</td>
<td>Low need</td>
<td>Time spent questionable impact is questionable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stars</td>
<td>High need</td>
<td>Potential for becoming a &quot;star&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This chart is designed for categorizing FFA activities (contests, camps, conferences, etc.) and determining their value. This may be helpful when determining program emphasis (or deletion) as resources (including time) become scarce. This chart was modified from a Cooperative Extension chart.
Let's Tell Our Story

Let us never forget that the cultivation of the earth is the most important labor of man. When agriculture fails the nation fails; when agriculture begins, other arts follow. The farmers, therefore, are the founders of human civilization.

- Daniel Webster

It is the Benjamin Franklin ethic, summed up in the quote. This belief made it possible for the United States to be what it is today. Agriculture was our initial base in foreign markets and today it is the industry that sustains our trade and growth. However, the public’s perception about agriculture has eroded through the years. Jim Guttinger, Coordinator for Facilitating Coordination in Agriculture Education (PCAIE) said it best “the problem looks back to the mid ’60s when the poor farm economy gave agricultural careers a bad name.” (Prarie Farmer, September 1994). Most in today’s youth are three generations removed from the farm, and they no longer have an accurate, first-hand knowledge of agriculture. The public believes, and so do many farmers, that agricultural education is for those who want to go back to the farm, and that there are no longer rewarding jobs in agriculture, financially, personally and mentally. Thus, because of this belief, they feel there is no reason for agricultural education.

The belief that agriculture and agricultural education carries a negative perception is perpetuated in our daily lives, from “Where are you going to teach, aren’t all the programs closing?” as stated by Jeff Bosley, a farmer from Central Michigan to his daughter in the College of Education at Michigan State University saying “Why do they certify you to teach agriculture?”

I am sure that all agricultural professionals and educators have felt this negative attitude from outside and inside the realm of agriculture. How long are we going to let the negative perceptions of agricultural education persist? Dr. Jerry Peters, Associate Professor and Head of Agricultural Education at Purdue University said “We in agriculture are our own worst enemies because we never tell our story” (New Horizons Magazine, May 1994).

It’s time that we in agriculture start telling our story. Articles have been written promoting agriculture, agricultural education, and careers in agriculture; however, for the most part, they are found in agricultural and trade publications. It’s time for agriculturists to be portrayed on the six o’clock news or 60 Minutes for something positive, like feeding the world, or saving the rain forest, instead of gloom and doom. The industry should hire an advertising agency to promote the positive story about agriculturists with concrete facts. It’s time to start educating people who are knocking agriculture. Let’s tell our story. Let us tell our story by facilitating curricula in schools from K-12. It can be formally presented by integrating agriculturally related course work, math, social studies, English and science.

Let’s start promoting agriculture instead of aggressively. An example is having a cultural literacy day in your school, with 6th graders learning about agriculture, or the Iowa 140, an assignment that is grades only on part of agriculture. Why get a test, when agriculture is really happening in agriculture and not test that.

It is evident that agricultural educators are quality people prepared for a job in the world. Nevertheless, it is vital to consider what kind of agricultural educators will be needed in the future. Many agricultural educators are leaving the profession because of the new and up-to-date agricultural production. As Jim Blair, Retail Sales manager of Northern Star Minerals, East Lansing, Michigan noted, “One problem with agricultural education students today is that they are book smart and lack the practical experience in the basics of agriculture. When we teach our classes we must be aware to keep the happy medium between the traditional agriculture classes and today’s agriscience classes, for it is when these classes begin, others begin to follow.”

Another way to try and change student’s perception of agriculture is to work with local agricultural businesses. Agribusinesses are realizing that without quality, knowledgeable people, the businesses will not last. “We can be all the best equipment and offer the best services in the world, but without quality people it will do us no good.” (Jim Blair, Northeast Star Minerals). Meet the agribusiness professionals in your area, discuss the mutual problems we are encountering and then work together to solve the problem of the negative public perception of agriculture and agricultural education. Agribusinesses should be encouraged to create educational scholarships to land grant universities, for students with a weak agricultural background and ones with a strong background.

The image of agriculture education has been fading for the last decade. The changing of the perception of agriculture may start with the perceptions of themselves. Can we be bold enough to suggest that we throw out the official dress of the FHA? Do we dare change it to meet the professional image of today’s fashion. If you look like a “kick back” to the 1940s and 50s, people will perceive you that way. Changing the official dress might be considered containing or is it updating ourselves to keep up with the times.

It is up to us as agricultural educators to take a stand, and be the leaders that agriculture needs, the leaders of change. The FHA has taken great strides to go beyond production agriculture, let’s retain the momentum. The implication is to not forget where we came from, but remember where we are going. John Hannah, former President of Michigan State University, had the vision of taking MSA into a small agricultural college to one of the largest dynamism universities in the world, however it is still known as one of the premier agricultural schools in the world. Agricultural education is half way there. Let us work together, borrow each other’s ideas, improve on them, get motivated and become Number One. Agriculture is the foundation for our society. However, it is the least known. It is time we get excited and start telling agriculture’s story.

References

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Perception, Reality or Idealism

The American education system is constantly evolving, changing and reacting to differing influences. It faces societal expectations, societal expressions and electronic media revolution. During the 1960's a number of national reports were developed and published identifying the need to revitalize the American education system. These reports essentially indicate that the system is broken and should be fixed. These reports have been a major driving force impelling efforts to reform education for students in the United States. The report A Nation At Risk (1983), prepared by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, emphasized the fact that rising unskilled at various levels has positioned the United States to lose its prominent position in the world concerning economic, service, industrial and technology. The Carnegie report, A Nation Prepared: Teachers in the 21st Century (1986), emphasized the need to provide better educational opportunity for America's growing minority populations and low income individuals. The Carnegie report also recommended the establishment of graduate curriculum for teachers that would basically reinforce the system for present teacher preparation. The Holmes Group released the report, Tomorrow's Teachers (1986), that stressed early field experiences in the schools for preservice teachers. Reports such as the ones cited above have been a major catalyst for change in the American education system.

Agricultural Education is an integral part of the education system and it too has been evolving and changing accordingly to the change. The nature and substance of change in Agricultural Education is basically influenced by community leaders, state mandates and the socio-economic and political environment that exist during the change process. The perception of Agricultural Education held by change facilitators relative to reality and idealism—what is and what ought to be, play a major role to changes proposed for the Agricultural Education program.

The remainder of this article will focus on: (1) theoretical concepts of perception, (2) perceptions of College Deans and Agricultural Education, and (3) impact of perceptions on the program.

Perception Concepts

In an attempt to discuss the public's view of Agricultural Education, it is important to discuss the illusion or idea of "perception" in a theoretical content. The theoretical discussion of "perception" processes with a context of which to understand the systemic impetus perceptions have on Agricultural Education program change, development, and implementation.

Many writers and scholars suggest that "man" has a natural desire to know. To a large extent man's desire for knowledge comes in conflict with reality, idealism, and truth. What is the truth? What is the ideal? How should man acquire knowledge?

Many agricultural education graduates are very realistic. The agricultural education profession should make more use of their experiences, influences and expertise. (Courtesy of Larry Powers)

Some inner principles exist in the brain. These principles often differ from the outside world. It is quite possible that man can be greatly different from the world in which he lives. Perception is often discussed as the difference between the person and the world. These perceptions are very illusive ideas that often disprove a individual's perception of reality. This may seem strange to you. Therefore, you must learn to adapt and make the best from what you determine is present.

What is perception? How do we observe and how does it affect our behavior? Albousi (1981) defines perception as "the process by which individuals interpret their experiences. It is the process of transforming, organizing, and structuring information from experiences of the inner and outer world, the individual's cognitive and sensory processes, and the individual's interpretations to determine the perception as well as the result of experience. Cognitive abilities and experiences are probably the most important factors in individual perception. Therefore, persons expect and interpret experiences differently and need different perceptions or the same event. Albousi (1981) states that "because of changes in the individual and environment, everyone's world is a slightly different way."

Albousi (1981) indicated that not only are personal and cultural perceptions of the world defined by "cognitive maps." According to Albousi, scholars believe that the future is not predictable and man will have to be correct to perceive information in the future in order to make wise decisions. If this is true, we can assume that perceptions may be different from what is perceived in the environment. These perceptions may not be realistic to new information or change their perceptions if they receive an inaccurate stimulus from their environments.

The literature has very little evidence of an individual's change in opinion of an individual without direct change in an individual's perceptions or without an individual's change in personal views. What is the evidence of a person's change in opinion of an individual's change in opinion of a person is limited to the experiences of the person. Researchers need to conduct further research to determine the cause of personal change in opinion.

Problem Implications

Further in this document we discuss perceptions, the way experts indicate perceptions are developed, and the idea that perceptions may not necessarily represent reality. However, according to the study, the perceptions that college and university deans have of Agricultural Education is reality. Given the decision-making position deans occupy in higher education, these perceptions could be very damaging for the Agricultural Education program.

The teaching program in Agricultural Education is rigorous, challenging, theoretical, and becomes an integral aspect of the college-level education. The perception of Agricultural Education is reality to many deans. The decision-making position deans occupy in higher education, these perceptions could be very damaging for the Agricultural Education program.

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The agriculture education student is at the core of the total program. Most people tend to agree that the proof to the pudding is in the eating—our graduates are very successful委副书记. This is true, how do we explain the perceptions college deans have of our students? This question is the most obvious and easiest to answer. Traditionally, agricultural educators philosophically believe in the American dream, that individuals have the inalienable right to self-government and the pursuit of happiness and the way to achieve it is through education. Through the agricultural education program many students have been provided educational opportunity that they might otherwise have never received. What we should do is to improve the image of our students. The systematic utilization of alumni serving in professional decision making positions should be used to help the system amplify the contributions made by Agricultural Education graduates.

Research has traditionally been the vehicle through which we gain the respect of our peers and colleagues. Agricultural educators and agricultural education should engage in more collaborative research with colleagues in other behavioral sciences. More research should be conducted by selecting other professionals from other groups pertinent to the program which should be presented to diverse behavioral science audiences.

Summary

Agricultural educators and their affiliates with the program are convinced that the program has quality, good students, and is a contributing partner in higher education. Many of the perceptions that exist about our programs may not necessarily represent reality; however, these perceptions are reality to those that hold the influence. The responsibility of the professional to determine what these perceptions are and to initiate activities and programs that remove the stimuli that develop these perceptions. Program leaders and scholars have the opportunity, challenge and responsibility to develop a positive image for the Agricultural Education program.

References


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Agricultural Education Under the Bright Lights

A few weeks ago I lost my baby boy. Maybe not unexpectedly, but we definitely experienced a relationship change. My son is fifteen years old and is a member of the starting offensive line on the varsity football team at his high school. In Texas, this gives legal bragging rights to fathers, grandfathers, and any interested uncle or cousin. After his first win on a row, Daniel was waiting anxiously on the edge of the field. He had a fertile, anticipatory look in his eyes as if to say, “Did you see me? Did I do a good job?” As I walked up to congratulate him I realized that I wasn’t even meeting him. His first thoughts were, “Mom, was I good?” I was crushed. Daniel has shown market lamb and heifers for eight years. That special look of “How did I do?” has always been mine. But it now appeared I had lost out to peer pressure and a much world. As I brooded over my loss I watched the crowd gather around the local heroes. Practically everyone in the small community was on hand to congratulate the teens. They actually felt a “part of” the action that had gone on under the lights of that field.

The next day I helped with a junior livestock show in a neighboring county. There were about 100 entries entered and maybe a total of 30 spectators to watch them (that included all the ring help). The crowd for the most part was a rather dismal lot. Sitting there stone-faced, waiting, as it appeared to be ageless, for someone they knew to enter the ring. I could not find that air of excitement around them. No one seemed to be “feeling” the anticipation of the exhibitors in the ring. No spark of enthusiasm grew within the crowd, like it had the night before.

What was the difference? What drove the crowd from the previous night? Obviously, the football team worked hard and put in many long hours of practice to perfect their skill. On the other hand, the livestock exhibitors had also worked hard. Countless hours and considerable expense had gone into the development of those heifers. So, why didn’t one event spark enthusiasm and the other week of spectator presence through parental responsibility?

Thickening back, I remembered the excitement at Friday night’s game. Anticipation was actually palatable before and during the game. Why? I reviewed the scene. First, an inventory of the prey used: senior pretty teenage girls in cheerleader suits, full of enthusiasm; a hand-playing fight songs; radio and live announcers giving play by play updates to the fans; bright lights and lots of banners—even a student in a mascot suit, all of these added to the atmosphere. But, more than that, the audience was invited for the event. At least three articles about our football team appear weekly in the two-page sports section of the daily area newspaper. In addition, the school holds a pep rally for the entire school, kindergarten through twelfth grade, every Friday before home games. Yes, I asked those department had done their homework. Everyone had been informed and great ideas pumped with enthusiasm.

So what about the livestock event? No one had been assigned to the area agricultural education on the county or 4-H fair. I’m fairly sure that even the county agent knew nothing about local 4-H. What about the school? I guess it was too much to expect to get even a handful of students interested. I’m pretty sure you have interest in anything that could possibly be of interest to anyone, I’m not sure. As a new teacher I found in the in the jargon of the profession that meant “rarely enough.” But it was obvious that a handful of students were interested. And how can we develop leaders and producers for the future, when many potential students are still unaware of what we offer? The question today, perhaps, should be “How can we sell our program?” and “How does the public view agricultural education?”

Parliamentary Procedure

(continued from page 5)

HARRY: Mr. Chairman!

CHAIRMAN: Harry.

HARRY: That is the most sensible motion I have heard today. I am very much in favor of sending it out to the cleaners.

DICK: Mr. Chairman!

CHAIRMAN: Dick.

DICK: That would cost us money and I really don’t have much right now. I move we table the motion.

PAUL: I second the motion to table.

CHAIRMAN: You have heard the motion to table and the second. We will now vote on the motion to table the main motion. The main motion is to have the hat cleaned.

CHAIRMAN: As there is no further discussion we will now vote on the amendment to strike out the word “cleaned” and insert the word “powdered with chalk dust.”

HARRY: Mr. Chairman!

CHAIRMAN: Harry.

HARRY: Who ever heard of cleaning a hat by powdering with chalk dust? I urge the assembly to vote the amendment down.

CHAIRMAN: Is there any further discussion on the amendment?

GROUP: Question!

CHAIRMAN: As there is no further discussion, we will now vote on the amendment to strike out the word “cleaned” and insert the word “powdered with chalk dust.”

HARRY: Mr. Chairman!

CHAIRMAN: Harry.

HARRY: I move we keep the hat as is.

CHAIRMAN: As there is no further discussion, we will now vote on the motion to keep the hat cleaned.

HARRY: Mr. Chairman!

CHAIRMAN: Mr. Chairman!

HARRY: I move we keep the hat as is.

CHAIRMAN: As there is no further discussion, we will now vote on the motion to keep the hat cleaned.

HARRY: Mr. Chairman!

CHAIRMAN: Mr. Chairman!

HARRY: It is very sturdy in here. Maybe I open a window.

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The Changing Face of Agricultural Education: The Educational Triad of Business, Education and Parents

By John Bill
John Bill is chairman and CEO of Quality Stores, Inc., North Muskegon, MI.

In less than one generation the changes in agriculture have been incalculable. There was a time, not too long ago, when the farm was automatically handed down from parent to child. Then the lure of the city and manufacturing jobs changed many farming communities. Today, another dramatic change is taking place. In the past few years, the farming lifestyle and occupation has become a more complex field. Computers are used to manage dairy herds and are even tied in to satellites for precise center pivot farming. Government regulations and programs have become more restrictive and complex, yet many offer greater opportunities for the farmer, or farm family, who is looking to take advantage of what's available.

It's more important every year for farmers to increase their education and awareness. For example, Michigan State University offers a wide variety of undergraduate and graduate coursework in areas like horticulture, animal science, crop & soil science, agricultural economics, engineering, forestry, resource development, parks & recreation resources and agronomy education. The public today demands that the next generation have the knowledge and skills to compete in the agricultural industry.

From a business standpoint, it's a business. We publicize the support of agriculture in the community and encourage the community to support agricultural education. We help support organizations like us, with a particular program so that the community seems "ownership" in that program.

American work ethic is alive and well in the farm community. We see good, bright, hard-working young people coming through the system.

In order to get the support and attention the Agricultural Industry will need in the coming years, the best way we can, we need to get the word out to the public that, yes, the times are changing and we are.

Why support youth? Why support the young people of 4-H and FFA organizations? Perhaps the most succinct answer to these two questions comes from the eloquent pen of Abraham Lincoln. To paraphrase Mr. Lincoln: "Young people are the persons who are going to carry on what we have started. They are going to sit where we are sitting, and when we are gone, attend to those things which we think are important. We may adopt all the policies we please, but how they are carried out depends on them. They will assume control of our cities, states and nations. They are going to take over our churches, schools, universities and corporations. The fate of humanity is in their hands."

With business, education and parents joining forces, the youth of today will have the strong direction and encouragement they'll need to succeed.

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CHAMPION: You have permission. (Pause, then Harry opens the window.) Is there any additional new business?
PAUL: Mr. Chairman!
PAUL: Harry has told me a number of times that this is the only hat he has, so I will say how likely wear it in the summer, and I think it is a bit hot for summer wear. We wouldn't want him to lose his hat, so we move we ventilate the hat.
DICK: I second the motion.
CHAMPION: You have heard the motion and the second to ventilate the hat. Is there any discussion?
HARRY: Mr. Chairman!
HARRY: I rise to a point of question.
CHAMPION: State your question.
HARRY: How do you resign from this organization?
CHAMPION: The chair refuses to answer the question. Is there any other question?
DICK: May I have permission to ask Paul a question?
PAUL: You may.
DICK: Paul, just how do you propose to ventilate the hat? (Paul answers by displaying a large pair of scissors.)
CHAMPION: Does that answer your question?
DICK: Yes, sir.
CHAMPION: If there is no further discussion, are you ready for the question?
GROUP: Question!
CHAMPION: We will now vote on the motion to ventilate the hat. All those in favor of the motion say "Aye" (Tom, Dick, and Paul say Aye). All those opposed say "No" (Harry votes a loud No). The Ayes have it. Paul, as you
The 1995-1996 Report — Assistantships and Fellowships in Agricultural Education

Key to Understanding
The information is provided in the following order: nature of assistantships (number available), number of months available during the year, beginning date, amount of employment, amount of work as expected, monthly remuneration and other consideration such as remission of fees; whether aid is for master’s, advanced program doctoral, or doctoral; Hatch Act and other restrictions; contact name and address.

University of Minnesota
Research assistantships (2-5); 9-12 months; July or September 15; 10-20 hours per week; $950 - $1,172 per month ($36,000 - $48,000 per year); tuition waived plus remission of tuition; master’s or doctoral; contact: Dr. Gary Throop, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education, Extension Building, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55108, Telephone: (612) 624-3748.

Graduate School Fellowships in Agricultural Education (2); September 15; $1,150 - $2,000 one-time payment; master’s or doctoral students; contact: Graduate School, April 15; contact: Graduate Director, Department of Vocational and Technical Education, University of Minnesota, 1956 Buford Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108, Telephone: (612) 624-2258.

University of Nebraska
Graduate Teaching Assistantships (2); 9-12 months; July; 20 hours per week; $500 - $700 plus remission of tuition; master’s or doctoral; contact: Dr. Allen G. Bleske, Department of Agricultural Economics and Business, 601 Ag Information Center, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68588-0805, Telephone: (402) 472-2807.

Graduate Project Assistant (1); 9-12 months; July 1, 20 hours per week; $900 - $1,000 per month plus remission of tuition; master’s or doctoral; contact: Dr. Allen G. Bleske, Department of Agricultural Economics and Business, 601 Ag Information Center, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68588-0805, Telephone: (402) 472-2807.

University of New Hampshire
Equal Access Grant to encourage females to become agriculture teachers. Approximately four (4) fellowships for females for two years and possible summer funding beginning August 30 with 4 hours/week of expected work. Students receive in-state tuition and monthly stipend based on financial need. Total value: $4,400 per year. Provides student certification as part of the master’s program. Source of funds: Federal Equal Access Grant. Contact: Dr. David L. Howitt, Adult and Occupational Education Program, College of Life Sciences and Agriculture, 102 James Hall, 56 College Street, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824-3589, Telephone: (603) 862-1670; E-mail: dbh@unh.edu.

New Mexico State University
Graduate Teaching Assistantships (2); 9 months; August 1, 20 hours/week; $900-1,000 per month; master’s or doctoral; contact: Department of Agricultural Education, Box 3000, Dept. 350, Las Cruces, NM 88003-8000, Telephone: (505) 654-4511.

North Carolina A & T State University
Graduate and Research Assistantships (3); 9 - 10 months; August 15; 20 hours per week; $500-620 per month; Contact: Dr. A. F. Bell, Department of Agricultural Education and Extension, North Carolina A & T State University, Greensboro, NC 27411, Telephone: (910) 336-7711.

The Ohio State University
Teaching Assistships (2); 12 months; July or later; one-half time; $1,030 per month plus out-of-state fees waived; master’s or doctoral; contact: Dr. Kirk Bierack, Chair, Department of Agricultural Education, The Ohio State University, Agricultural Administration Building, 2120 Fyffe Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1067, Telephone: (614) 292-6321.

Teaching Assistantships (1); 12 months; July or later; one-half time; $650 - $750 per month plus out-of-state fees waived; master’s or doctoral; contact: Dr. Kirk Bierack, Chair, Department of Agricultural Education, The Ohio State University, Agricultural Administration Building, 2120 Fyffe Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1067, Telephone: (614) 292-6321.
Research Associateships (4-6); 9-12 months; July or one-half time; summer only; $865 - $1,050 per month; master's or doctoral; February 1; contact as above.

Administrative Assistantships (2-3); emphasis in Extension Education; contact as above.

Teaching Associateships (5-10); 9-12 months; July or one-half time; $3,030 per month; in- and out-of-state fees waived; doctoral; March 1; Contact: Dr. Joe Gillen, Department of Agricultural Engineering, 590 Woody Hayes Drive, Columbus, OH 43210, Telephone: (614) 292-9356.

Research Associateships (3-5); 9-12 months; July or one-half time; $750 - $845 per month; in- and out-of-state fees waived; master's or doctoral; February 1; Contact: Dr. Ray Ryan, Center for Education and Training for Employment, 1960 Kenny Road, Columbus, OH 43210, Telephone: (614) 292-4352.

Graduate Assistantships (1-2) in Rural Sociology: doctoral; 12 months; starting at $1,030 per month; contact as above.

Oklahoma State University

Teaching assistantship (1); 9 months; starting September 1; 20 hours per week; remuneration; beginning at $380 per month and possible increase second year; out-of-state fees waived; partial fee waiver scholarships and competitive college fellowships available; application deadline August 1; Duties would include: teaching undergraduate professional courses, working with state vocational technical staff, assisting with undergraduate student advisement.

Research assistantship (1); 12 months; starting September 1; 20 hours per week; remuneration; beginning at $380 per month and possible increase second year; out-of-state fees waived; partial fee waiver scholarships and competitive college fellowships available; application deadline August 1; Duties would include: assistance in writing REPs, computer programming, conducting literature searches, developing literature reviews for staff research, and assisting with a research design course.

Persons interested or requiring additional information concerning these assistantships should contact: Dr. Robert Terry, Professor and Head, Department of Agricultural Education, 448 Agriculture Hall, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078, Telephone: (405) 744-5126.

The Pennsylvania State University

Teaching and Research Assistantships in Agricultural and Extension Education (15); 12 months; starting August 20; 20 hours/week; $6,800 per semester; remission of fees; out-of-state; master's and doctoral; applications are due February 1; Contact: Dr. Robert Terry, Professor and Head, Department of Agricultural Education, 448 Agriculture Hall, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078, Telephone: (405) 744-5126.

Liberal Arts and Education Building Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47906

Research Assistantship (2); 9 months; starting August 1; one-half time; $40 per month; in- and out-of-state fees waived; doctoral; March 1; Contact: Dr. Joe Gillen, Department of Agricultural Engineering, 590 Woody Hayes Drive, Columbus, OH 43210, Telephone: (614) 292-9356.

Texas A&M University

Assistantship (1); 9 months; starting September 1; or January 1; $1,500 per month for degree-seeking master's or $1,500 per month for teaching or research assistantship; doctoral; April 1 for master's; out of state; applications are due February 1; Contact: Dr. Don R. Herson, Graduate Assistant, Department of Agricultural Education, College Station, TX 77843, Telephone: (979) 845-2040.

Fellowships: doctoral; 9 months; generally September 1; one-half time; $600 per month; full-time; $600 - $650 per month for master's; out of state; applications are due February 1; contact as above.

East Texas State University

Graduate Assistantships (1-3); 8-12 months; starting September 1; 20 hours/week; $6,250 per year; $8,300 for 12 months; waiving of fees; master's candidate in Agricultural Sciences; late in; applications are due September 1; Contact: Dr. Jerry L. Kiplinger, Department of Agricultural Sciences, East Texas State University, Commerce, TX 75429, Telephone: (903) 886-5578, FAX (903) 886-5990.

Southwest Texas State University

Graduate Scholarships in Agriculture (12); 12 months; September 1; application deadline May 1; $2,500; minimum 3.0 GPA; applications are due February 1; Contact: Dr. Bob Smith, Chairman, Department of Agriculture, Southwest Texas State University, San Antonio, TX 78299, Telephone: (512) 245-3338.

Texas Tech University

Assistantships: teaching (1); 9-12 months; generally September 1; 20 hours/week; $700; $800 per month; tuition and fees; $2,500 - $3,000 per year; private funding; applications are due February 1; Contact: Dr. Paul Vought, Chairman, Department of Agricultural Extension and Community Development/Central Agricultural Sciences and Extension, Texas Tech University, P.O. Box 4131, Lubbock, TX 79409-4131, Telephone: (806) 742-7426.

Perception, Reality or Idealism

(continued from page 15)


We’ve Come a Long Way—or Have We?

As we look back to where we have been, we find that many times change is not as rapid as we anticipate. One thing, however, is certain—we have been there!

(Pictures courtesy of David E. Knapp)