THEME: Vocational Agriculture And the Excellence Movement
The Pursuit of Educational Excellence

Excellence themes have dominated the American education scenario in recent years. While good ideas were and are still being raised in various quarters about the caliber of education America's schools provide, declining scores on popular standardized tests and other reports and writings imply that there is something wrong with our system of education. Without meaning to minimize the problem, educators have now realized that the current curricula and instructional methods are inadequate and that we need to look at the problem in new ways.

Judging Excellence

Status reports must be made on all phases of the educational delivery system. To understand the reports, however, several reports on the must be written, packaged, and carefully distributed through the mass media. Fortunately, Phi Delta Kappa, a professional education fraternity, prepared a 12-page brochure to summarize some of the major reports. This writer received two very clear messages from that summary report: (1) America must do a better job of educating its future generations and (2) gimmicks and quick-fixes will not work.

Unfortunately, several of the solutions being proposed and imposed have had a major negative impact on local vocational agriculture programs. The solutions forced America to think of the academic versus vocational education question. The result is that many students must decide by the 10th grade if they want to attend a four-year college. No matter which route students take, they should have quality educational experiences. Several mechanisms are now in place to evaluate educational quality.

Editorial Staff Named by Editor

Seven outstanding agricultural educators have been selected by the Editor to help produce the AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE for the next three years. Their term of service will end December 31, 1988 when a new editorial staff assumes responsibility for the publication.

Regional Editors
John D. Parmley of Kansas State University is the Central Region Editor. Parmley taught vocational agriculture in Colorado and has been active in several professional organizations. His interest area involves the undergraduate preparation of vocational agriculture teachers. Carroll Shry, a vocational agriculture teacher in Maryland, is the North Atlantic Editor. Shry is very active in the NVATA and his interest area is horticulture, a topic he has written about extensively.

Phil Zurbrick of the Department of Agricultural Education at the University of Arizona is the Pacific Editor. His outstanding classroom teaching has been recognized by several organizations. Zurbrick has written extensively about local vocational agriculture programs.

Willie J. Rawls of Fort Valley State College assumes the Southern Region. Rawls has a special interest in supervised occupational experiences for students and has written extensively about that topic.

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Special Editors
Joy Cantrell, a faculty member in Agricultural and
Extension Education at Pennsylvania State University, is the
Book Review Editor. Cantrell was a 4-H Youth Agent in Missis-
sippi and now works with the Extension Education
program at her university. She has a special interest in
computer applications for agricultural education.

Providing teaching experiences for agricultural edu-
cation undergraduates is the special interest area of the
Teaching Tips Editor, Jerry Peters of Purdue University.

Peters uses a strategy called Reflective Teaching so his
students can get laboratory teaching experiences.
The Picture Editor is Jacques Deeds of Mississippi State
University. She taught vocational agriculture in Oregon
and was very active in the NVATA. Deeds now works
with the Agcommunication majors and the student orga-
nizations in the Department of Agricultural and Extension
Education at her university.

Please contact these individuals if you have articles,
photographs, or related materials to submit. Questions,
comments, or concerns about the profession can have the best possible monthly journal of agri-
cultural education.

THEME

Vocational Agriculture
and the Excellence Movement

When we see friends, one common greeting is "how are you?" Sometimes we actually want to know, often we are making conversation. As we look back in another friend, vocational agriculture, "how is it?" We should really want to know.

About a dozen major reports and other minor ones have been issued during the past few years concerning the status of education, its problems, and proposed solutions. We reacted in varying ways to different reports — sometimes with fear and disdain and sometimes with pride or hope. One overall concern is that most of the reports failed to deal directly with vocational agriculture. In many cases one cure was offered for everyone and all alike, regardless of program purpose or career goals, abilities or interests.

We are a part of the public education system and are affected by the changes that take place — and there are several, with almost every state initiating significant reforms. Secretary of Education William J. Bennett recently told Congress that a groundswell of concern has been transformed into a wave of reform. Nearly all major reforms currently planned or underway have been developed and implemented at the local or state level, even though the reform reports were national in scope. This means that it is my responsibility to guide you to improve vocational agriculture at the local and state levels. We must be concerned, we must plan, and we must be proactive, not reactive.

Changes and Perspectives

This issue of THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE looks at changes and the need for changes in vocational agriculture. You will see reports from the perspectives of our top leadership at the national level, Dr. Larry D. Case, Senior Program Specialist, Agriculture Education, U.S.

Department and Mr. Coleman Harris, Executive Secretary, National Future Farmers of America.

You will see suggestions from agricultural industry pro-
vided by Ms. Carl F. Gerhardt, Senior Vice President, Alfa-Laval, Inc., Agri-Group, and Past Chairman, FFA Foundation Sponsorship Committee, and from Dr. Jan Henderson, The Ohio State University, who looks at the role of the local community in the excellence movement.

A vocational agriculture teacher perspective is provided by Mr. Walt Schuh, NVATA President and vocational agriculture teacher in Bows, Washington. Dr. David Cox provides a teacher education perspective.

THEME

Agricultural Industry and Vocational
Agriculture — The Excellence Movement

By Carl F. Gerhardt
(Mr. Gerhardt is Senior Vice President of Alfa-
Laval, Inc., Agri-Group, 13100 North Congress
Avenue, Kansas City, Missouri 64133.)

• Vendor relations - a partnership versus adversarial relationship with suppliers.

The companies with excellence movements underway to address these and other operational areas are making a successful return to profitability and have bright futures.

Moreover, they are finding great satisfaction in this suc-
cess. Anyone can successfully run a growing company in an expanding market. But, those who have built successes in a declining market are truly examples of the excellence movement in the agricultural industry.

Farming

We said earlier that commercialization was a move to
business versus production orientation. This certainly does not mean that production technology has any lesser impor-
tance in the future. In fact, it has equal or perhaps even more importance as breakthroughs in genetics, elec-
tronics, and other technologies find their way into prac-
tical farming applications at ever-increasing rates.

The message is: We must have farmers who are as astute in business management and finance as they are in the production of food and fiber. Said another way, we must have an excellence movement to bring modern business manage-

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The Cover

Students in vocational agriculture must acquire relevant skills so they can use the latest in high tech-
nology. These students are acquiring hands-on skills during the FFA’s Computers in Agriculture Confer-
ence. The students were writers in the computers competition their states held earlier in the year. (Photo courtesy of Dwight Horkheimer of the Na-
tional FFA Center.)
Agricultural Industry and Vocational Agriculture — The Excellence Movement

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ment practices to the farm in the 80s and 90s in the same way that production technology occurred in the 50s, 60s, and 70s. Nowhere in America industry has production excellence advanced to the degree as it has in agriculture. But, farmers have one of the lowest returns on investments of any industry.

One should not form the impression that big business or corporations are not necessary to bring on business management excellence. To the contrary, the family business unit is perfectly capable of this type of excellence movement and has proven to be the most efficient farming structure. But, it can no longer do it without modern business management. Education is the key to making this happen and in many cases it is already occurring today as long as we can keep key, well educated young people coming back to the farm.

Agricultural Education/Vocational Agriculture

Having served on the FFA Foundation Sponsors' Board for four years and Chairman in 1980, I have developed a special concern about the need to train our leaders of tomorrow. We have a dramatic structural change occurring throughout agriculture, including in the classroom, in vocational agriculture. The question is: Can we have an excellence movement occur in vocational agriculture fast enough to keep pace? The answer, in my opinion, is both yes and no.

It is no doubt occurring to the degree possible within the present structure. Just as many companies have adapted to current times and profitably by them, so have many vocational agriculture programs at the national, state and local level. But, let's look at the structure. Vocational agriculture programs in secondary schools are basically geared to teach for production agriculture as are most agriculture college curriculums. That must continue but where we train the prospective farmers and agricultural industry students how to survive/thrive in the business world? This is critical if you accept the premise that we must move our primary orientation from production to business management.

Forget tradition and all the bureaucratic reasons why change is difficult and let's be futuristic for a moment. Let's develop a whole new perspective to educate agricultural leaders of the future starting in high school. Give them the options to get as much or as little production agriculture and business management as they need, depending on career plans. They must have room for the needed college preparatory courses within these curriculums. Then, design post secondary education to continue where these leaves off. All the way through secondary and post-secondary allow for "ag" and "non ag" courses as necessary to round out the career needs. Further, and of special importance, include involvement in FFA leadership activities in respective of the career path or curriculum chosen, and regardless of what degree, allow FFA supervised occupational projects to be "managed" to allow for this participation. How many times have we heard, I got most of my leadership training and "real education" from the FFA, not "from school." Business executives, as well as farmers, constantly make that statement.

The National Council for Vocational and Technical Education in Agriculture (NCVTEA) was formed to address the very issue of excellence in this system. But, it will take some time. I would challenge the NCVTEA as well as all other leadership bodies in agricultural education to adopt a phrase from the book, "In Search of Excellence," "Do it, try it, fix it." This phrase was used to describe how excellent companies get results fast; they have a bias for action and constantly try. They have an attitude of "do it, try it, fix it."

The over-simplified and superficial "new perspective" suggested above is only intended to prompt someone new be tried. Progressive educators are in a much better position than I to say what should be tried. In no way was I attempting to chip with what I have and I am open to all suggestions. Three workable models. Then, design test markets in limited pieces of geography and establish a limited time frame long enough to produce identifiable results, but short enough to force decision making. By doing it, trying it and fixing it," a workable solution can be found that produces excellence and fast results. A plan like this should be put underway quickly to ensure excellence in vocational agriculture for years to come. The current geared to traditional agricultural revolution will not accept the status quo any longer.

The FFA creed is a brilliant piece of wisdom. It has stood the test of time and was far ahead of "In Search of Excellence." The phrase "achievements won by the present and past generations of agriculturalists; in the promise of better days through better ways" says it all. We can't wait for the "better days" of improved economic conditions to cure farmers' coughs or agriculture's colds. We must do it "through better ways." Better ways is what the excellence movement is all about.

Effect of Excellence Movement

The effect of the "ag" vs. "non-ag" programs has been widespread. It has caused many vo-ag teachers to spend many hours re-evaluating their local program, and upgrading them to meet the challenge. That is not all bad. Sometimes we tend to get into a rut and do the same thing year after year only because we feel comfortable doing it that way and being humans, fear the unknown. That's human nature. At times it takes something like the excellence movement to bring about the needed changes in programs. For as long as I can remember there has always been one challenge after another in our profession. I look at the excellence movement as another of these challenges.

Vo-ag programs have made many changes over the years since their beginning in 1917, when the primary objective was to give the student the needed skills to do a better job of producing food and fiber with the most up-to-date information available. Agriculture is still the number one industry in this country. No one has lost his or her "need for food or fiber." It is because of modern technology that one person can produce so much that we don't need as many people producing food and fiber. Instead we need a strong work force trained in the skills needed to supply,

THEME

The Excellence Movement and Local Programs

By Walter Schuh
(Mr. Schuh is a Vocational Agriculture Teacher at Burlington-Edison High School, Belfair, Washington 98227)

... process, distribute, and market what is being produced. And these people need a strong background in agriculture. Choosing this type of career starts at the secondary level. This is where I see the need for the vo-ag program at the secondary level to assist students in their career selection by giving them the necessary experiences.

Local Program Needs

The local programs must first be meeting the needs of the local community. Where are the graduates going? What are the graduates doing after high school? What careers are available in the local community for the graduate? And what skills are needed by the graduates to fill these careers? These are questions that have always been important to the local program. But today they are even more important. The student today is wanting to prepare himself or herself for a life's work. We need to be able to show the students that the vo-ag program does prepare them for a career that will allow them to remain in the local community. The effect of the excellence movement has also caused the local program to demonstrate how science is taught in vo-ag through fertilizer analysis.
The Excellence Movement and Local Programs

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Summary

The overall outcome of all of this will depend for a large part on the dedication, drive, and goals of the local vo-ag teacher. But I believe that when the dust settles and it is all over, vo-ag programs across this country will be a lot stronger because of the excellence movement.

THEME

The Excellence Movement and the FFA

Growing concerns about the quality of public education as reflected in student test scores and their ability to succeed in college were the primary factors which led to numerous changes in recent years regarding the quality of public education. The basic conclusion of most of these studies was that public schools should focus much greater attention on strengthening basic skills. These recommendations led state educational leaders and many of the state legislatures to increase graduation requirements. In addition, many colleges and universities have increased entrance requirements in areas such as science, math and foreign languages.

The excellence movement has resulted in increased student enrollments in academic subjects (math, science, English, and foreign languages) and decreasing enrollments in elective subjects which include vocational agriculture. In addition to these forces impacting on enrollment, the agricultural industry has been and is currently going through massive economic stress and restructuring. When the profitability of agriculture is down, it follows that enrollment in vocational agriculture will be down. This has been true in the past. Our best example is the 70s.

When the huge international grain sales hit and we pulled up the fences and started planting from road to road, we saw increasing commodity prices, increasing land values, increasing vocational agriculture enrollment, and increasing FFA membership. FFA record membership was 500,735 in 1967-68. It is also important to note that our total student population has been decreasing over the past 10 years. This is an important factor. We can feel good that our enrollment did not decline as much as the general high school population during the last few years, but unfortunately, that hasn’t been true the last two or three years. It has dropped because of the other factors affecting our program.

Challenges and Opportunities

As a result of the excellence movement, the economic stress in agriculture, and the decreasing student population, vocational agriculture and the FFA are facing challenges at all levels. The National FFA is impacted first by the declining FFA membership. As stated above, the national membership high of almost 510,000 was in 1976-77.

The FFA membership count, 1984-85, is 434,000. A declining membership has caused the National FFA Organization to make some major adjustments. Three prime examples of these adjustments are as follows:

1. Adjustments to Reduce Cost. The National FFA dues are $2.50. This represents a major portion of the income available to run the organization and deliver six issues of THE NATIONAL FUTURE FARMER MAGAZINE to the homes of each student. With the membership drop, adjustments were made by:
   - eliminating selected travel
   - combining job responsibilities
   - reducing the size of the magazine
   - delaying building and grounds improvements
   - contracting for selected services.

2. Adjustments to broaden the financial base. Starring in 1981 the organization moved to a functional budgeting system. This called for all expenses to be applied against the function where the expense occurred. For example, the 1985 National FFA Convention registration fee was $15, up from $8 in 1982. This increase has occurred in order for those who come to the convention to pay for the convention, including all salary expense, travel, and all other costs occurring in Kansas City. Other moves to broaden the base include:
   - Leadership Conferences (WCC) and International Programs (WAE) fees are now set at levels which pay all direct and indirect costs.
   - Agriculture Computer Education Services (ACES) - A support subscription service for agricultural education provided by the National FFA Supply Service. This service will provide teachers the opportunity to preview and buy textbooks and supplies from the FFA Supply Service at reduced prices. This service also offers the opportunity to broaden the FFA’s financial base in the future.

3. Movement of selected projects, programs, and activities to the National FFA Foundation. With the shrinking National FFA Organization financial base due primarily to a decline in membership, many projects, programs, and benefits have been moved to the National FFA Foundation for funding. Most of these projects have been sold by the Foundation as special projects to business and industry.

Examples of activities once funded by the organization which are now funded by the Foundation are as follows:

- National FFA Week
- Convention Proceedings
- National Band, Chorus, and Talent
- FFA Center Interns
- Audio-Visuals
- Internships
- National Officer Scholarships

These moves have saved FFA members over $200,000 and have kept member dues from being increased because of inflation. Although Foundation sponsors fund the direct costs of these programs the organization still must cover the overhead expenses such as staff salaries, telephone, office, travel, and many other changes will occur on the National FFA level.

The organized approach is presently undergoing long-range strategic planning which will bring us the new ideas and changes to the organization.

The Future

The major concern regarding the effect of the excellence movement is not the impact on the National FFA, because through our continual campaigning our national support has never been greater. The question is, how do we continue to function and serve the needs of our students. The big question is, will students in cooperation with their parents select vocational agriculture as a part of their high school education? And, will we (Agricultural Education) adjust to meet the needs and societal and agricultural changes in order to appeal to tomorrow’s high school student? The FFA at the national level must be a part of the answer to this question.

To meet our goals, our program, the FFA has organized a National Educational Program to educate the public on the positive opportunities that agriculture offers. Following are selected moves and elements of the educational effort being made by the National FFA to help develop awareness and to promote the program.

Public Service Announcements. In 1984 the FFA developed a radio and television PSA campaign. A team of 238 vocational agriculture instructors and state leaders worked cooperatively to arrange for 650 TV stations and 2,500 radio stations to carry the message. In addition, over 5,000 newspapers and 200 agricultural magazines accepted the print PSAs.

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The Excellence Movement and the FFA
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Leaders for the New Fields of Agriculture, National FFA Week has a strong recruitment message. The message appeals to students who respect the leadership training of the organization and who may not realize the wide variety of career opportunities available in agriculture. This new theme and all of the communications vehicles that are available, including a student recruitment poster, will help reinforce the educational campaign. FFA Week is sponsored by Estech, Inc.

Your Help Is Needed
We will continue to do all that we can on the National level to assist chapters and state associations in promoting the positive aspects of agricultural education and the FFA. But, to do this, your ideas and input are essential. Share your thoughts and ideas about how the National FFA can help you. We exist to serve the members of the FFA and the agricultural education profession.

The Future Is Bright
Yes, agriculture is in transition today, but all the agriculture industry experts we visit with agree that following a few tough years, agriculture and our youth will experience another great period of agricultural prosperity. We must demonstrate to our students positive, constructive leadership and work together to meet our common goals.

Since the release of the National Commission Report entitled "A Nation At Risk," a major educational reform movement has swept the country. State and local boards of education have examined high school graduation requirements and made numerous changes which are placing a considerable amount of emphasis on what is known as the "new basics." At the same time, many colleges and universities have increased their admission requirements. This shift to the new basics puts a high demand on students' time and is gradually reducing the numbers of elective classes they have for elective courses. All of this has been done in an effort to achieve what the American public demanded — excellence in education.

Agriculture, however, has been undergoing many revolutionary changes. The crisis of an over-abundance of food stock is contributing to an unstable environment. The economic and political decisions associated with it are dramatically changing the structure of today's agricultural industry.

The National Study
On December 18, 1984, the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the President of the National Academy of Sciences signed an agreement stating that the three agencies would jointly sponsor a study to carry out the objectives outlined by the National Council. The research is currently under way. The Board on Agriculture of the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences is responsible for administering the study. The panel, which was appointed by the Board and is responsible for conducting the study, was selected to represent a wide variety of viewpoints on the issues.

Disclosures: The Federal regulations by the U.S. Department of Education had not been released at the writing of this article. The regulations will provide additional guidance and could change the interpretations given in this article. This article represents the views of the author, and not the official policy of the U.S. Department of Education is intended nor should it be inferred.
As stated earlier, decisions are as good as the information presented to the decisionmaker. The panel members need input from the professionals. Any person with relevant information which would aid the panel in answering any of these questions should write to: Dr. Charles Berbrook, Executive Director, Board on Agriculture, National Research Council, 2101 Constitution Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20418.

The Challenge

The process of change is beneficial. It challenges people to be creative and stimulates productivity. The creation of the Council on Vocational Technical Education in Agriculture, and the National Study on Agricultural Education are steps toward delineating the goals and objectives of vocational agriculture education. But, unless agricultural education professionals and others share ideas, concerns, and recommendations with decisionmakers, it will be impossible to make adequate information and, thus, will be unable to make proper decisions concerning the agricultural community of today, tomorrow, and the 21st century.

Action-oriented involvement is a prerequisite in the achievement of excellence. Therefore, it is the responsibility of all professionals at all levels — to contribute their best to the Council, the National Study, and other activities. It is through these contributions that agricultural educators will be helped in their quest for excellence.

THEME

The Agricultural Community and Excellence

Excellence in education is often defined by the people directly involved with the educational process, such as teachers, administrators, or educational researchers. Interpretations of excellence are influenced by close associations with the teaching profession. How might educational excellence be characterized by those outside the profession? Representing diverse occupational backgrounds, advisory committee members offer a multitude of viewpoints regarding the excellence movement. Although committee members are not involved in the daily teaching process, they are interested in and support vocational agriculture programs. The perceptions of the agricultural community provide an important link in creating a more comprehensive definition of excellence.

National Trends in Education

Advisory committee members have varying opinions when asked to identify current trends in education and the main issues of the excellence movement. "Back to the basics, teacher accountability and competence, increased emphasis on math and science, student achievement, computer literacy, and use of classroom time," describe prevailing concerns about educational excellence. Committee members advocate basic skills education, they fear vocational education may be overlooked when dispensing funds and allocating classroom time. Although advisory committee members may have an interest in national educational excellence, they may have a more immediate and personal concern for their local school programs.

Defining Excellence

How do advisory committee members define excellence for a specific educational program, such as vocational agriculture? When relating the thought of excellence to vocational agriculture, committee members generate an array of images. Excellence to them means meeting the needs of the students and the community, preparing students for future jobs, competent decision making, not limiting instruction to on-farm occupations, emphasizing the relationship between agriculture and math and science courses, and balancing the three components of the vocational agriculture program, i.e., classroom/laboratory instruction, SOE, and FFA.

Standardized tests cannot adequately measure excellence; nor can excellence be determined solely by quantitative measures, such as the number of FFA awards received by a local chapter. Several criteria must be used to evaluate excellence in vocational agriculture programs. Depending upon a single measure will distort the true meaning of quality programs. Test scores, student involvement, and achievement in the FFA, the scope of individual SOE programs, and level of skill performance are all indications of excellence.

Excellence in vocational agriculture also may be characterized by the product that is produced: a trained agricultural worker the goals and objectives of vocational agriculture programs is to equip students for gainful employment in the agriculture industry, then the occupational success of program completers should be one criterion of excellence. Advisory committee members help to produce a qualified product by identifying the occupational competencies needed by young people preparing for agricultural careers. The agricultural community can provide relevant input and a new dimension during the program planning process.

The Future of Vo Ag

By its very nature, the issue of excellence promotes discussion on the future of formal education in the United States. Advisory committee members believe vocational agriculture programs face a variety of challenges as the 21st century approaches. Increased specialization of agricultural industries and rapidly changing technology are cited as major concerns affecting vocational agriculture. Immediate and long-term concerns and accentuating the breadth of agricultural careers are initial steps when moving towards the future. Financial concerns will continue to impact vocational agriculture programs. Price support, interest rates for new businesses, and funding for public education will be variables affecting the future of vocational agriculture.

Failure to broaden the scope of vocational agriculture will be a grave mistake. While the percentage of older adults in the United States continues to increase, the traditional target audience for vocational agriculture programs is diminishing. Adopting a more expansive agenda and developing innovative approaches for new clientele are critical activities for the continued existence of vocational agriculture. Advisory committee members contend that by focusing exclusively on the secondary program, and excluding all other interests, vocational agriculture is advocating self-destruction. Responding to the needs of a diverse population will be a continual challenge for the leaders of vocational agriculture.

Promoting Excellence

Realizing there is a gap between the ideal and current practice, advisory committee members volunteer advice on ways to promote excellence in vocational agriculture programs. Several members suggest eliminating outdated curriculum and equipment, upgrading course content to include math and science components, and fostering a more intense involvement of the agriculture industry. Members believe that legislative decisions will increasingly have an impact on vocational agriculture programs. Political support by the agricultural community may help to upgrade teacher salaries and contracts, and to highlight the importance of vocational agriculture within the school curriculum. Members note that the promotion and continuation of excellence in vocational agriculture will ultimately depend upon the ability of the leadership to accurately assess the local, state, and national political situation.

As direct links with the agricultural community, advisory committee members see themselves playing several roles in encouraging excellence in vocational agriculture programs. Members directly support vocational agriculture by serving on committees, acting as resource persons for classroom/laboratory instruction, or reviewing and evaluating the local program. Indirect support is accomplished by monitoring the relevancy of the vocational agriculture program in relation to current trends in the

THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE
Teacher Education and The Excellence Movement

By DAVID E. CONE

As an Assistant Professor in the Department of Agricultural Education at The University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona 85721

It seems teachers sit around conference tables, in teachers' lounges, and in halls of hay and discuss the latest movement to reform and improve education. Perhaps Teacher educators do likewise. We talk of educational excellence as if it is news, as if teachers aren't living it, as if we or we alone are talking about our contributions to such a movement, in an attempt to have a hand in shaping the reform to take advantage of what will surely be a shortfall of student numbers and political awareness and sensitivity to what we know as an ever-present, ongoing need for educational development. In fact, it is probably characteristic, and certainly shameful, that the movement to inject excellence into education has happened to us rather than happening because of us. It is not logical for educational improvement to occur in spite of teacher educators. We ought to be the catalysts, not the analysts.

Germs of the Next Reform

Perhaps in the next decade, or the next century, teacher education will be the germplasm of the next great opportunity to reform and advance the teaching profession. Now is the time to begin to prepare for such opportunity. In the meantime, the current movement has arrived. It no longer seems like an isolated event. One only needs to browse any newspaper or professional journal to realize state legislators and members of local, county and state school boards are enacting laws and policies to implement foundational reform in the name of educational excellence. However, the process involved in enacting laws and preparing policies seems simple when compared to the tougher task of deciding upon the components of educational excellence, agreeing to those components, and implementing real programs which deliver "excellent" results. Policymakers are now, or soon will be, finished with their agenda. How shall those of us responsible for delivery proceed?

Excellence All Around Us

It is not the role of this brief article to attempt to answer the question of "what is excellence in education?", although it is in a most profound and intriguing basic question. Each reader can describe one or more indicators of "excellent" vocational agriculture. Many, if not most, of the criteria used to identify excellence would be teacher-centered. The last few years have seen more than 30 national studies conducted and reported which highlighted problems in education. Although the reports varied and, interestingly enough, their recommendations also varied, the central object of criticism has been the public secondary school. As one reviews those reports, a second focal point emerges - school teaching. Such analysis appears logical for the teacher is central to instructional programs. We can look forward to the findings and recommendations from the 1985 Health and Science Study of vocational agriculture to provide insight and foresight in the delivery of relevant, high-quality vocational education in agriculture. The teacher's role is to expect this new study will, like those before, emphasize the role of the teacher associated with the "excellent" program. We know there are many characteristics of the master teacher, some observable and predictable, others not. We must perpetuate those observable and predictable pedagogical behaviors by instilling in prospective teachers of vocational agriculture. In fact, we must equip our majors with sufficient pedagogical competencies that they are comfortable with their science of teaching and can more rapidly develop their art of teaching. It is clear that the trail to excellent education is paved by master teachers, and master teachers originate at, or very near, the foundation of teacher education. Therefore, if we spend any time gazing into the crystal ball and attempting to prognosticate the impacts of excellence on teacher education in agriculture, we must do so from the perspective of the local teacher.

Impact on Local Programs

What are some of the manifestations of the excellence movement affecting the teacher of vocational agriculture?

1. Increased Requirements on Basic Skills in High School. Such increases leave less time in a student's class schedule for electives such as vocational agriculture. Compounding the situation is the fact that many teachers and administrators in secondary schools are less well prepared in the basics. Lowered enrollments results in increased pressure on already high cost instructional programs. The next step may be the elimination of those programs.

2. Emphasis on Academic Courses. Over-emphasis of academic courses and their weighted grades demeans vocational education as well as the vocational education teacher. The teacher's image and the program image may suffer both externally and internally, thus affecting the actual and perceived worth of both.

3. Increased Teacher Evaluations. Possibly a positive impact of teacher evaluation may come about. However, increased pressures are applied to the teacher of vocational agriculture who is evaluated more often, both formally and informally.

4. Increased Requirements for Teacher Certification. Increased requirements in both certification and recertification impact directly upon local teachers of vocational agriculture as well as employment in teacher education. Reduced productivity and/ or a qualitative, accessible inservice education will be more critical.

5. Incorporation of Basic Skills. Vocational agriculture teachers will be required to teach in ways which reinforce the application of basic skills to agricultural subject matter. Reading, computation, and written expression will be required by public school administrators. Teachers must be equipped to apply the basic skills in vocational agriculture. Certainly the five points highlighted above are not the only possibilities. The basic message is clear, simple, and the list is not meant to be exhaustive, only illustrative. Those issues which confront teacher educators are the same issues which should confront teacher educators. Little occurs in a secondary school which does not affect the program and teacher of vocational agriculture. In fact, the effects of local school responses to the excellence movement impact vocational agriculture programs directly.

It appears many responses by school administration, boards, state departments which affect teachers of vocational agriculture are geared at and/ or are estimated to improve the image of education by displaying test scores, increased time and/ or course required for graduation, and the like as a window dressing to create a stronger sense of accountability and public support.

Impact on Teacher Education

Beyond those factors which affect teachers of vocational agriculture, certain results of the movement will be specific to institutions of higher education. A few examples are shown on the following page.

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Teacher Education and the Excellence Movement

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Changes in Colleges of Education. Changes in both structure and content within the nation's colleges of education will affect agricultural education. Obviously, those programs administered in a college of education will be affected by reorganization, increased requirements and the like. Even those programs housed in the colleges of agriculture will experience spillover impacts.

Required Requirements for Teacher Certification. By increasing the requirements for admission and retention into teacher education programs and resultant increases in requirements for teacher certification, the time available in the curriculum for technical agriculture course work is affected. In addition, many states and institutions require education majors to pass standardized tests for admission to teacher education and/or licensure or certification for teaching. Increased lengths of student teaching time will affect the biology, chemistry, or experience programs, and placement on student teachers.

Emphasis on Research and Publication. Institutions of higher education expect faculty members, including those of us in Agricultural Education, to conduct scholarly activities and share those with colleagues via written publications. The worth of these activities is great, while the content and direction of many of our scholarly activities probably needs to be examined. Such activities impact the time which teacher educators devote to the preparation of teachers of vocational agriculture.

Service to Secondary Schools. Some states have initiated programs which mandate cooperative ventures between public school teachers and university faculty members in the areas of curriculum development, instruction, and evaluation. Faculty members are required, in some instances, to teach high school classes for a predetermined number of days. In other cases, they will be required to assist public school teachers in methods, materials and evaluation.

Teacher Education's Response

The action which teacher education in agriculture should take in continuing drive to excel has already been spelled out. Leaders in our profession are calling for us to assume research and educational leadership (content, and research. In only the past five years, teacher education in agriculture has been told we must “advance the work of our profession” (by applying research to the problems which confront us”) (McCracken, 1983), and research that which is “useful to the most important aspect of agricultural education, such as new cooperative classes which emphasize local vocational agriculture program” (Vaughn, 1983).

BOOK REVIEWERS NEEDED

Persons interested in reviewing books and related materials should contact Dr. Joy Cantrell, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education, Armas Building, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802. For your work, the reviewer will keep a copy of the book that is reviewed.

ARTICLE

Falling in Step with the Excellence Movement

By L. DeVere Burrow

Burrow is an instructor in the Agricultural Engineering Department and a Ph.D. candidate in the Agricultural Education Department at Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

America is embroiled once again in the oft debated controversy over what constitutes quality education. Feelings of educators are running high as criticism of the public schools are heard on all fronts. The conservative philosophy of education holds the upper hand as the call for "new basics" is heard throughout the land. Many states have reached the "teaching-to-passing changes in high school graduation requirements, and vocational programs are losing enrollments at alarming rates as vocational students are forced back into the academic programs.

What can be done to reverse this trend? Critics of vocational education accuse us of failing to deliver our product. Our students do not enter the agricultural labor force in high numbers. We are not teaching to satisfy traditional objectives. Does this mean that all vocational agriculture programs should be directed once again to address the philosophical beliefs upon which vocational agriculture was founded? Not! The problem runs deeper than that. In many cases it is necessary to change the philosophical beliefs to reflect what is happening in modern agriculture. A revised set of basic principles is needed to bring new direction to vocational education. We must become accountable by educating to fulfill sound objectives, and this adjustment we will fall into step with the current trend in education to return to the basics.

Philosophical and Traditional Beliefs

An old cliché which has frequently been circulated in the rural sector of America states that you can take a person out of the country...but you can't take the country out of the person. Many people tacitly cling to established ways of doing things, and have a particular regard for the rationale and values upon which traditional programs were conceived and brought into being. One such program is vocational agriculture. The agricultural industry in America has changed a great deal since the Smith-Hughes Congressional Committee studied vocational education in 1917. Theastic statements of the vocational education legislation in 1917 (Smith-Hughes Act) was based in part on the following premises:

Vocational education is required to:
1) conserve and develop natural resources
2) provide a supplement to apprenticeship
3) prevent waste of human labor
4) increase wage earning power
5) meet the increasing demand for trained workers
6) offset the increased cost of living (Kahler, 1985; class notes).

Phelps (1964) describes programs established through federal legislation as vocational education for farming. He points out that the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 was not the beginning of agricultural education, but rather a change in direction.

"The best known type of agricultural education in the public schools is vocational education for farming. Other types of agricultural education, however, have been present in the programs of the public schools since the beginning of public education. The first courses taught were academic, non-vocational courses. Thirty states had instigated agriculture courses in their public schools prior to 1917 when the Smith-Hughes Act was passed. The Smith-Hughes Act read: 'to promote vocational education in agriculture for present and prospective farmers' (Phelps, 1964, p. 3).

The Smith-Hughes Act and subsequent legislation promoted the proliferation of vocational agriculture. Federal dollars were matched by local and state funds, eventually overwhelming those programs which were established primarily to federal funding. A key question which must be addressed is: Are the philosophical beliefs upon which vocational agriculture was structured relevant today?

Philosophical Beliefs

The Smith-Hughes Act promoted vocational education in agriculture for present and prospective farmers. Few people would argue the fact that agricultural employment conditions have changed since 1917. Sweeping changes have occurred. Less than three percent of today's labor force are farmers, yet over 20 percent of U.S. workers continue to work in agricultural related careers such as agricultural credit, service, processing, and marketing. Some adjustment has occurred in vocational agriculture programs, such as new cooperative classes which emphasize experience programs in local businesses. Many of these activities have invigorated local programs, but some fundamental issues of the past need to be revisited.

1) Many local vocational agriculture instructors have refused to adopt any adjustments. They continue to teach as though every student will pull a plow back to the family farm.

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(Continued on Page 18)
Falling in Step with the Excellence Movement

(Continued from Page 17)

2) Should high school programs be vocational or pre-vocational? Very few high school students are prepared to make "life commitments" to a vocation at age 14, and it would be wrong to expect them to do so. We should use job placement activities as "exploratory tools" in teaching work ethic and promoting career awareness.

3) The career emphasis should be reserved. Rather than promoting agriculture as the career, we should educate youth in skills which will help them compete in an urban world. Today's problem is not putting farmers on the soil, but removing the unneeded from welfare rolls.

Vocational education is required to conserve and develop our natural resources. Conservation and orderly development of natural resources is more important today than it was in 1914. As available resources are depleted through soil erosion and lack of adequate resource management, it is incumbent on new generations to improve management and conserve for the future.

Vocational education is required to provide a supplement to apprenticeship. While it is true that some young people leave school during their teen years, no rational argument can be made in favor of technical education per se. Most high school dropouts are not mature enough to make a prudent decision about their educational needs, so how can they possibly demonstrate wisdom in career selection?

Providing high level technical education in high school may even contribute to the tendency of many of these students to leave school early, thinking that their skills will support a "lifelong" career. The stark reality is that without a high school diploma, they are seriously restricted in most career settings. A modest wage may look tempting to a teenager, but his/her earning power usually declines due to limited advancement opportunities.

The wise approach would appear to be establishment of vocational/technical education at postsecondary schools requiring a high school diploma or GED for entry. Such entry requirements would accelerate the maturity of those who leave high school without a diploma, and allow for more career exploratory activities in high school vocational programs.

In neither case should vocational education supplement apprenticeship. They should displace it by educating for the future.

Vocational education is required to prevent waste of human labor. Good work habits will always be important to society. Promotion of the work ethic is still a valid principle underlying vocational education, and it is one thing we do well.

Vocational education is required to increase wage earning power. This mandate to vocational educators really says that we must keep our programs relevant to the needs of society. This philosophy is sound today and will remain so. Needs assessment and program evaluation are useful tools at every level of education.

Vocational education is required to meet the increasing demand for trained workers. The world we live in will continue to develop new technologies in every field of endeavor. Vocational education in agriculture is becoming very technical as agricultural and industrial research identifies more efficient ways to produce food and fiber. As the cost of providing high tech skills accelerates, vocational education at the postsecondary level may need to develop stronger linkages with agriculture industry. Such alliances would help retain relevance in technical skills development, and provide higher outputs of skilled technicians.

Vocational education is required to offset the increased cost of living. The relative cost of farm commodities to consumers in the 1980s indicates that this principle is valid. Agricultural education is at least partially responsible for the tremendous increase in agricultural productivity we have experienced in America. In that sense, the viability of goods at competitive prices is a continuing challenge.

Conclusions

Many of the philosophical conflicts affecting vocational agriculture today are deeply engrained in the system and will be very difficult to change. Adjustment will require the following conditions:

1) Inappropriate philosophies must be identified.
2) Inappropriate philosophy must be formulated.
3) Individuals must assume leadership roles in promoting and orchestrating the adjustment.
4) Evaluation of philosophical beliefs with respect to changing vocational needs must be conducted.

As vocational educators make the adjustment effort, there is reason for new optimism in the profession. Gene Bottoms (1984) described the immediate future this way:

"It is my belief that some sense of reason and reality is beginning to emerge across the nation concerning the secondary schools. And with this new reality, there is a window of opportunity to reform, to improve, to make more effective the quality of vocational education in America" (Bottoms, 1984, p. 9).

References

Koik, Alan. 1986. Agricultural Education 60th Class Notes. Agricultural Education Department, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa.

Excellence: Our Best Tradition

By CLAYTON COFFEE

(Mr. Coffee, a vocational agriculture instructor for 10 years, is a graduate student at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale and resides at 105 West Street, Carbondale, Illinois 62903.)

America holds the torch high for the worth districts of work. This work ethic continues to be the envy of the world. Accordingly, the vocation of agriculture is a worthy calling. The passionate plea for excellence teaches that people ready and willing to set high goals. High goals and the ability to reach them will secure excellence. Why can vocational agriculture answer the plea for excellence? Because vocational agriculture offers students relevance, skill, and renewal.

Vocational agriculture is relevant to student life. Many proponents of classical basics would advocate one track for all and ignore the need for employment. Agriculture students elect to enter vocational agriculture because they want to know more about their chosen occupation. They have a need to learn about the pursuit that they want to become their life's work. Vocational agriculture course content comes from the business of agriculture. That is exactly what makes the course literally come alive for students. The students want to "know" something, not just "know about" a lot of things. Agriculture teachers are guides to the future for students who want something real from education.

Relevant Skill Development

Realty demands skill. Skill is what we provide the beginning agricultural professional. High school students should be ready to put the "3 Rs" to work, and then add other basic skills to their craft. Agriculture teachers pursue excellence by teaching. Agriculture teachers teach people. Agriculture teachers teach people the skills and knowledge of agriculture. The agriculture teacher is close by the student, helping the beginner succeed by carefully planned steps. As a mentor of the craft, the agriculture teacher guides planned practice until the Unsure apprentice becomes a skilled master. Young people need to know that they can, indeed, do something right and worthy of distinction. In a word, students want to have PRIDE in what they do, pride in what they are. Nothing separates us from the huddled masses like knowing that we can do the job right. It is the sense of not knowing what can be done, that holds so many down.

Vocational agriculture renews a lost spirit in students who may see few ways to succeed in their immediate life. Students lost in the shuffle need a place to discover and sell worth. Before we can have great merit, we must believe we have merit. Vocational agriculture will not be all things to all people, but for those wanting to work in agriculture, we can help. Vocational agriculture offers an abundance of opportunities to learn worthy skills, and gain real recognition for a job well done. The program, at all levels, allows students a window on the world through the FFA.

Summary

The constant push to set goals, and working to achieve goals is the main idea in educating for excellence. Vocational agriculture does not stop with one set of short term goals. Each accomplishment is followed by a renewal of goals and objectives. If agriculture students see further, it is because they stand on the shoulders of their achievements.

Vocational agriculture is one response to the search for excellence. It is a relevant curriculum for students wanting performance skills. Vocational agriculture shows it is dynamic by continually renewing the goals of both students and teachers. Programs of vocational agriculture are truly worthy of distinction, and they educate for excellence. Excellence must be our best tradition.

ARTICLES ON FILE FOR TWO YEARS

The editor inherited several file drawers of articles submitted to THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE. Many of these articles were written and contain excellent content for the time period in which they were prepared. However, they cannot be used with dated content. To relieve the situation, all articles submitted will be kept under consideration for two years. Articles not used during a two year time frame will be discarded unless the author(s) of the article(s) have made prior arrangements with the Editor. Authors who wish to have articles returned that are dated 1983 or earlier should contact the Editor before May 1, 1986.
Are your state leaders members of an FFA alumni affiliate? Do you have problems with alumni affiliate members who enroll members who drop out? Do you have problems collecting annual dues from alumni? Are prominent agriculturists reluctant to join your local alumni affiliate because they serve agriculture in a statewide capacity? Do you have a local affiliate that has as its main purpose the support of statewide FFA activities?

Maryland's solution to the above problems has been the formation of an organization called the Maryland FFA Alumni Life-Member Affiliate. According to Robert Cox, National FFA Alumni Administrative Director, the Maryland organization is the first of its kind in the United States. The approach attracted chapter members of prominent statewide business, industry, and education leaders.

The unique aspects of the organization are:

1. Membership is reserved for persons on regional, state, or national levels. It is not the purpose of the organization to compete in any way with local affiliates.

2. Those who wish to join the statewide affiliate must also be lifetime members of the national alumni association.

3. The dues structure is based on a one-time life membership fee for affiliate dues as well as national.

4. Activities of the organization are financed from the interest accrued from the dues.

5. Annual and special meetings are held in conjunction with FFA state leadership events.

The major thrust of this affiliate is to support regional and state FFA activities. The details of structure and operation are spelled out in the following constitution and by-laws of the organization.

**Constitution of the Maryland FFA Alumni Life-Member Affiliate**

**Article I. Name and Purpose**
Section A. The name of the organization shall be the Maryland FFA Alumni Life-Member Affiliate.

Section B. The purposes of this organization shall be:
- To provide a Future Farmers of America alumni association for individuals who are involved in Maryland agriculture on a regional or statewide basis.
- To support and promote the FFA organization, FFA activities, and vocational agriculture at local, state, and national levels.
- To cooperate with FFA chapters, the Maryland Alumni Association of FFA, the National Future Farmers of America, the Maryland FFA Foundation, state FFA alumni associations and other organizations that support vocational agriculture.”

**Article II. Organization**
Section A. The Maryland FFA Alumni Life-Member Affiliate is a chartered affiliate of the Maryland FFA Alumni Association and the National FFA Alumni Association.

Section B. The Maryland FFA Alumni Life-Member Affiliate accepts in full the provisions of the constitution and by-laws of the Maryland FFA and Maryland and National FFA Alumni Associations.

Section C. The area to be served by the Maryland FFA Alumni Life-Member Affiliate shall be the jurisdiction of the Maryland FFA Alumni Association.

Section D. This is a non-profit organization.

**Chapter 3. Membership**
Section I. Membership shall be open to former active, collegiate, and honorary FFA or Pennsylvania Farm Education Association members entitled to vote.

Section II. Persons become life-time members after they have paid National FFA Alumni Association life membership dues and Maryland FFA Alumni Life-Member Affiliate dues.

**Chapter 4. Officers**
Section A. The FFA emblem with the word “Alumni” below it shall serve as the official emblem of the Maryland FFA Alumni Life-Member Affiliate.

**Chapter 5. Executive Body**
Section A. All officers of the Maryland FFA Alumni Life-Member Affiliate shall be the Executive Committee consisting of the president, president-elect, secretary, treasurer, and past-president. The State FFA Alumni Association shall serve as its ex-officio chairman.

Section B. All officers of the Maryland FFA Alumni Life-Member Affiliate shall be members of the organization and shall serve annual terms.

Section C. Duties of the officers shall be consistent with those usually pertaining to the position.

**Article VI. Amendments**
Section A. The constitution of the Maryland FFA Alumni Life-Member Affiliate may be changed by a two-thirds vote of the active members present providing such change is not in conflict with the constitution or by-laws of the State or National FFA Alumni Association. Any proposed changes must be mailed to the membership no later than at least twenty (20) days prior to the voting meeting.

Section B. Proposed amendments to the constitution of the Maryland FFA Alumni Life-Member Affiliate may be submitted by any active member of the organization. No amendment recommended by the membership for voting by the executive committee shall be placed before the votes of the organization for adoption.

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BOOK REVIEWS

MINNESOTA FPA FROM THE BEGINNIN
N. A. Potocnik, Consultant, written
by W. J. Korteinaki. Apollo Books, Inc., Winona, Minnesota, 1983. $9.95

MINNESOTA FPA FROM THE BEGINN
ING is a chronology of the activities of the
Minnesota Association of the Future Farmers of America since its in-
ception in 1929 and concluding with the National FFA Convention in
1982. The compilation and validation of the book's information was accomplis
by its author, W. J. Korteinaki. Mr. Korteinaki was Minnesota FFA's Ex-
ecutive Secretary from 1947 until his retirement in August of 1977.

The primary purpose of this publication is to fill the historical story of the
Minnesota FFA. The initial chapters focus upon the FFA's origin and subse-
quent growth, its activities, and the individuals who have helped to write the
story. This information is simply divided into sections entitled "The Early
Years", "The Twenties", etc... up until "The Eighties." Within these
pages, the state president, state star farmer/ag-businessperson, outstanding
students, and other individuals who influenced the FFA record are
sited in their respective year of affiliation. Thousands of names are noted
and remembered for their contributions to the association. These chapters
are also highlighted with photos after photo of the event or noticeable person
being remembered.

These chapters are then followed by a "State and National Appendices." The
true purpose and strength of the book is evident in these sections of the
book, since all official records of the Min-
nesota FFA are summarized here. The
following listings (from their initiation
to the present) are made: state board of
directors, agricultural proficiency
awards, miscellaneous awards and
citations, state board and chair direc-
tors, state contest winners, district ad-
visors, state fair results, state degree
winners, state officers, triple crown
award winners, national proficiency awards, American farmer degrees, national
and chapter members, national judging contest results, and Star
Farmer/Ag-businessman of America
recipients.

The author is to be commended for his dedication to preserving the
heritage of the Minnesota Association of the FFA. We are all guilty of assum-
ing that the past will remain forever in our hearts and minds, but we all know
that this seldom occurs with accuracy. Korteinaki's publication, however, allows us
to keep these good intentions alive. We are fortunate to have this accounting
as a useful reference in studying the his-
tory of the Minnesota FFA. This book
should be placed on the bookshelf of
every vo-ag classroom in Minnesota
and in the personal library of many an
FFA enthusiast.

Louise Worm University of Minnesota St. Paul, MN

Updating Teachers for Tomor-
row's Technology: A Strategy for
Action presents an overall strategy for
retooling the technological updating
needs of secondary and postsec-
ondary vocational/technical teachers. The
document is designed for use by those
faced with providing technological up-
date: local school and district adminis-
trators; professional development lead-
ers; business-industry representa-
tives; and State and Federal depart-
ment of education personnel.

Concerned with the design and im-
plementation of technological update
programs, the strategy offered consists
of nine characteristics:
* Structure for Action
* Roles and Responsibilities
* Policy
* Resources
* Incentives and Rewards
* High-potential Techniques
* Alternative Technological Configurations
* Incorporation of Update in Programs
* Continuing and Self-renewing Activities

Development of the characteristics
stemmed from a panel of experts' recom-
recommendations. The panel, representing businesses, industry, and
education, also formulated recommenda-
tions for Federal, State, and local
policymakers.

You may order UPDATING TEACHERS
for Tomorrow's Technology STRATEGY FOR ACTION (R242 - $4.95), 71 pages, from the National
Office for Research in Vocational
Education, The Ohio State University, Publications Office, Box N, 1560 Ken-
nebec Road, Columbus, Ohio 43210-1000;
800/848-4815 (toll free outside Ohio)
or 614/466-3655. A companion publi-
cation, UPDATING TEACHERS FOR
TOMORROW'S TECHNOLOGY: PROGRAMS & PRACTICE (R241 - $5.75), is also available. Development
of these publications was sponsored by the Office of Vocational and Adult
Education, U.S. Department of Educa-
tion.

The Hobart School of Welding Tech-
ology recently announced a new
series of training courses designed to
develop skills and techniques using
continuous wire (semiautomatic) pro-
processes. In addition to the popular two
week Basic Gas Metal Arc Welding
which covers short circuiting transfer
on carbon steel plate, three new courses
are available:
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troduces welding skills using spray,
globular and pulse transfers on carbon
steel (one week course).
2. Gas Metal Arc Welding Aluminum prents welding skills on
aluminum plate (one week course).
3. Flux Cored Arc Welding using small and large diameter wires on car-
bon steels with and without gas
shielding (two week course).

Gas Metal Arc Welding Pipe com-
pletes the expanded family of carbon
steels. These courses provide maximum effec-
tiveness through 80% laboratory work
developing skills and welding tech-
niques. For further information as to
starting dates, tuition and course con-
tent, write to: Registrar at the Hobart
School of Welding Technology, Trade
Square East, Troy, Ohio 45373 or call
513/539-6000 extension 4124 or 4609.

ISSUE AND THEME

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Staying Current: Horticulture

1986 Themes

How to stay current with technical agriculture is the focus for the remaining 1986 themes.

THEME EDITOR

At Press

DR. ROGER D. PERRITT
S.F. Austin State University
Dept. of Agricultural Ed.
Nacogdoches, TX 75962
Dr. Edgar L. Persm
Dept. of Vo & Tech. Ed.
University of Minnesota
320 Vo Tech Building
St. Paul, MN 55108
Dr. Doug Bishop
Dept. of Agricultural & Industrial Education
Montana State University
Bozeman, MT 59717
Dr. Danny L. Cheatham
Agricultural & Extension Education
P.O. Drawer A
Mississippi State, MS 39762
Dr. Ray Herren
Oregon State University
Extension Hall 125
Corvallis, OR 97331
March 14, 1986
Dr. Gary Moore
Ag. Ed. Department
Louisiana State University
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
April 11, 1986
Mr. Robert A. Seefeldt
National FFA Center
P.O. Box 1318
Alexandria, VA 22308
May 16, 1986
Dr. Fred Reneau
Agricultural Education
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, IL 62901
Dr. James A. Knight, Jr.
The Ohio State University
208 Agricultural Admin. Bldg.
2120 Pyffe Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1099
July 11, 1986
Mr. Roscoe Vaughn
Vocational Ag. Education
State Department of Education
Box 5501
New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, NM 88003
August 15, 1986
Mr. Carroll Shry
Vocational Agriculture Teacher
11622 Crescent Road
Woodboro, MD 21798

JANUARY, 1986
Vo-Ag and FFA Stories Must Be Told

The 1985 FFA TV special provided an opportunity for agricultural education and FFA to catch opinion leaders' attention. Here U.S. Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole receives a broken plate from Maryland and Virginia state officers. Broken plates were distributed on Capitol Hill to promote the TV special's Washington, DC airing.

Public Service Announcements produced the past two years featuring Eddie Albert have attempted to broaden the public's perception of agriculture. Millions of dollars of space and air time have been contributed to the FFA for placement of the PSAs.

(Photographs courtesy of Coleman Harris of the National FFA Center.)

The 1985 National FFA TV Special featuring Eddie Albert was filmed to create awareness of agriculture's "brain drain." Over 5 million people viewed the special which was aired in over 124 television markets.

The advent of the Ag Ed Network, the National FFA Computers in Agriculture programs, and FFA's new Agriculture Education Computer Services (AESC), will all assist agricultural education in taking advantage of the opportunity of educating agriculture on the value of the computer and information management in agriculture.