

The

Agricultural Education

August, 1986
Volume 59
Number 2

Magazine



**THEME: Staying Current —
Youth Organizations**

THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE



August, 1986

Volume 59

Number 2

MANAGING EDITORS

Editor

BLANNIE E. BOWEN, 203 Ag. Adm. Bldg., 2120 Fyffe Road, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210.

Business Manager

GLENN A. ANDERSON, 1803 Rural Point Road, Mechanicsville, VA 23111

Consulting Editor

LARRY E. MILLER, 204 Ag. Adm. Bldg., 2120 Fyffe Road, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210.

REGIONAL EDITORS

North Atlantic Region

CARROLL SHRY, Vocational Agriculture Teacher, 11622 Cragerstown Road, Woodsboro, MD 21798

Southern Region

WILLIE RAWLS, Dept. of Agricultural Education, Fort Valley State College, Fort Valley, GA 31030

Central Region

JOHN D. FARMLEY, Dept. of Adult & Occ. Ed., Bluemont Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506

Pacific Region

PHIL ZURBRICK, Dept. of Agricultural Education, College of Agriculture, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721

SPECIAL EDITORS

Book Review Editor

JOY CANTRELL, Ag. & Ext. Education, Armsby Bldg., Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802

Teaching Tips Editor

JERRY L. PETERS, Agricultural Education, South Campus Courts F-25, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907

Picture Editor

JACQUE DEEDS, Dept. of Ag. & Ext. Education, P.O. Drawer AV, Mississippi State, MS 39762

EDITING-MANAGING BOARD

Chairman

Douglas A. Pals, University of Idaho

Vice Chairman

William Dannenhauer, Delaware Department of Public Instruction

Secretary

Larry E. Miller, The Ohio State University

Editor

Blannie E. Bowen, The Ohio State University

Members

Glenn A. Anderson, Virginia Department of Education

Larry Case, U.S. Department of Education

Sam Stenzel, NVATA, Alexandria, VA

Duane L. Watkins, NVATA, Thermopolis, WY

E. Craig Wiget, NVATA, Mt. Blanchard, OH

Curtis Corbin, Jr., Georgia Department of Education

Myron Sonne, NVATA, Letcher, SD

Table of Contents

	Page
Editor's Page	
Those Who Become the Advisor	<i>Blannie E. Bowen</i> 3
Theme — Staying Current: Youth Organizations	
Staying Current: Youth Organizations	<i>Robert A. Seefeldt</i> 4
FFA: A Teaching Tool	<i>Dan Sample</i> 5
Staying Current in the FFA: Teaching the Teachers	<i>Michael G. Rush</i> 7
Telling the Vocational Agriculture/FFA Story	<i>Larry G. Nelson</i> 9
The FFA — A Pathway to Leadership	<i>Tammy Meyer</i> 11
PAS — Meeting the Challenge	<i>Kenneth W. Olcott</i> 13
The FFA in a Changing Curriculum	<i>Doug Rinker</i> 15
Keeping Current with 100% Plus Membership	<i>Don Erickson</i> 17
Building a Program of Activities for Today's World	<i>Osmund S. Gilbertson</i> 19
Proficiency Winners Survey Report	<i>Lawinna McGary</i> 21
Beef Breed Associations	
. . . A Valuable Resource for Teachers	<i>Robert Pascalar</i> 22
Stories in Pictures	24

ARTICLE SUBMISSION

Articles and photographs should be submitted to the Editor, Regional Editors, or Special Editors. Items to be considered for publication should be submitted at least 90 days prior to the date of issue intended for the article or photograph. All submissions will be acknowledged by the Editor. No items are returned unless accompanied by a written request. Articles should be typed, double-spaced, and include information about the author(s). Two copies of articles should be submitted. A recent photograph should accompany an article unless one is on file with the Editor.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE (ISSN 7324677) is the monthly professional journal of agricultural education. The journal is published by THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE, INC., and is printed at M & D Printing Co., 616 Second Street, Henry, IL 61537.

Second-class postage paid at Mechanicsville, VA 23111; additional entry at Henry, IL 61537.

POSTMASTERS: Send Form 3579 to Glenn A. Anderson, Business Manager, 1803 Rural Point Road, Mechanicsville, Virginia 23111.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscription prices for THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE are \$7 per year. Foreign subscriptions are \$10 (U.S. Currency) per year for surface mail, and \$20 (U.S. Currency) airmail (except Canada). Student subscriptions in groups (one address) are \$4 for eight issues. Single copies and back issues less than ten years old are available at \$1 each. All back issues are available on microfilm from Xerox University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. In submitting subscriptions, designate new or renewal and address including ZIP code. Send all subscriptions and requests for hardcopy back issues to the Business Manager: Glenn A. Anderson, Business Manager, 1803 Rural Point Road, Mechanicsville, VA 23111. Publication No. 7324677.

Those Who Become The Advisor

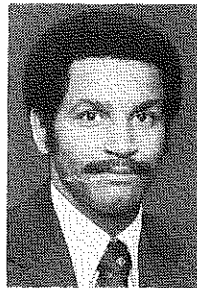
A pessimist argues that youth organizations such as the Future Farmers of America have lost their appeal to the youth of contemporary America. The eternal optimist proclaims that such organizations have not peaked. A point somewhere between the two extremes is probably where the strength of youth organizations is today. No matter which position is supported, few can dismiss how complex societal problems are making it increasingly difficult for youth organizations to meet the needs of contemporary youth. Some in agricultural education would have you believe the FFA is the only organization with this problem, but this is far from an accurate assessment.

If youth organizations such as the FFA are to be contemporary in their program, activities, and public image, the lion's share of the burden must rest with individuals who consciously decide to become "Advisors." As Mike Rush notes in this issue, some of today's outstanding advisors are not former members of the organization they now advise. Rush also notes that over 80% of the undergraduates enrolled in teacher education at Pennsylvania State University are not former vocational agriculture students. If this percentage holds true at other universities that prepare vocational agriculture teachers, significant changes must be effected in the way students are prepared to become advisors.

This position should not be construed to mean a teacher cannot be a good advisor unless that person is a former member. Most would agree, however, that being a former member has to help a person advise a complex organization such as the FFA, but the question is just how much? It is apparent that advisor training must not be provided in a cursory manner. Innovative approaches must be put in place by teacher educators and state supervisors to help potential teachers with the difficult and sometimes frustrating role of Advisor. Discussed below are some of the problems and concerns inherent in advising the FFA in contemporary America.

The Contemporary Advisor

Teachers who advise FFA chapters often complain that they are overloaded with an abundance of old contests, awards, programs, and meetings. Many become even more perplexed when new contests, awards, programs, and meetings are unveiled. Needless to say, administrative details that accompany each old or new activity consistently cause headaches. All too often, advisors lack the quality experiences needed to effectively implement the old, much less the new FFA activities that, if used appropriately, would definitely complement the instructional program. As a result, many advisors select activities by tradition or in a haphazard manner rather than on the justifiable needs and interests of students and the school community. Such a mode of operation tends to result in long hours,



BY BLANNIE E. BOWEN, EDITOR

(Dr. Bowen is an Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural Education at The Ohio State University.)

frustrated or burned-out teachers, and family oriented problems.

If the FFA is to function as a viable youth organization well into the next century, its advisors must have the experiences and skills to do quality advising of potential members who live in contemporary America. In many instances, FFA members are being reared in single parent families where production agriculture opportunities are exceedingly limited. High technology gadgets and gimmicks (video games, computers, laser and compact music disks, robots, etc.), shopping malls, sports, various motorized vehicles, and other clubs provide excellent distractions for rural as well as urban youngsters that the FFA must attract. Needless to say, no longer do teachers advise a single sex organization. This is the environment in which vocational agriculture teachers must compete as FFA advisors.

To survive into the next decade, teachers must be willing to say no to FFA activities that contribute in a minute and questionable manner to the aims, purposes, and mission of the vocational agriculture program. On the broader scale, the National FFA must help by abandoning contests, programs, and awards that have served their intended purposes. Unfortunately, recent unsuccessful attempts to abandon or revise questionable judging contests prove that this is much easier said than done.

Solutions to the above concerns and issues are not so easy to implement. First, the profession must be certain that the FFA Organization does in fact serve a meaningful role which contributes to the instructional goals of agricultural education. Second, if the advising responsibility is to be taken seriously, the profession must also be sure potential advisors have the skills needed to do the job. Having former FFA members become advisors seems like a logical, but unrealistic way to attack the problem because Rush writes that the number of students bringing FFA experiences with them to the teacher education program is declining. The universities have a professional obligation to provide the classroom, laboratory, and even noncredit experiences the FFA advisor role demands. State supervisors must also assume a more aggressive role in keeping advisors current once they are on the job.

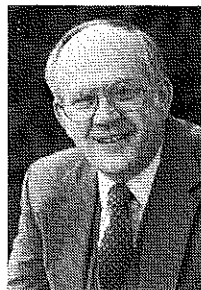
Staying Current: Youth Organizations

Due to the current economy, a company will need a very clear purpose for existing to remain in business in the 1980s. Successful companies provide a service or a product for which the consuming public has a perceived need. As soon as potential customers begin to exhibit a reduction in their desire for this service or product, the company must either develop something new, diversify, or risk the possibility of either being taken over by a competitor or eventually going out of business.

For business owners to be able to merchandise a product or service, they must have a sales staff that understands every conceivable use and has the ability to espouse its virtues to even the least interested potential customer. The vocational agriculture and FFA program is no different. It is a perishable product that has little value unless the consuming public — the students, parents, and the local community — can readily see the benefits and see a need to make a purchase.

Unfortunately, the publicity that has been hitting the front page of many newspapers has, by calling attention to the financial plight of the farmer, given the impression that the FFA and farming are unmarketable products. From this adverse, negative front page billing it is very easy for the uninformed taxpayer to scan the headlines and ask the question, "Why in the world do we need to train our young people to be farmers when those who are already farming are going broke due to overproduction?" These consumers feel that FFA is not a profitable product in terms on educational worth.

Because of the way that education is being viewed today, a good, well managed vocational agriculture/FFA program is considered to be expensive and to have no foreseeable returns. A community cannot be expected to continually pay for a program that is not meeting the current perceived needs of the students that are enrolled. In my opinion, the vocational agriculture/FFA programs that will survive will be those which are staying current and



By ROBERT A. SEEFELDT, THEME EDITOR

(Mr. Seefeldt is Program Specialist at the National FFA Center, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, Virginia 22309.)

meeting both the needs of the students who are enrolling and the community that is paying for the cost through higher taxes. However, staying current will require a major effort on the part of each member of the agricultural education profession.

The term "staying current" leaves the connotation that the vocational agriculture instructors, teacher educators, state supervisors, and others know exactly where the vocational agriculture/FFA is and where it should be headed. However, for one person to stay current requires someone else to set the pace. Staying current requires the unique ability to adapt. This issue of your MAGAZINE is devoted to sharing ideas that will help youth organizations like the FFA stay current.

I believe that the articles included in this issue are a clear indication that vocational agriculture professionals have personally taken the responsibility to help set the course for staying current for the 80s and beyond.

The Cover

Every vocational agriculture student and FFA member can develop valuable job interviewing skills by participating in leadership activities. (Photo courtesy of Don Erickson.)

Coming in September . . .

Staying Current with High Technology

FFA: A Teaching Tool

Bill Edwards is a 17 year old FFA member. He is active in sports, likes girls and cars, and he participates in some of the activities of his FFA chapter. He is not the best yet not the worst. He is not at the top or bottom of many of the activities he participates in at high school. He is an ordinary person from an ordinary environment. He hopes for an ordinary future just like his past. Bill Edwards represents the majority of the members in the FFA organization today. If he is asked what the FFA has done for him, Bill would likely respond after some thought, "FFA has been a teaching tool." Bill is right.

The Future Farmer organization can be an excellent vehicle for teaching young men and women the practicality of classroom instruction, the necessity of community consciousness, and the development of leadership, personal pride, dignity of labor, and goal setting. To take full advantage of the educational opportunities of the vocational agriculture program, the student needs to be involved in all three facets of the program — organized instruction, supervised occupational experience (SOE) programs, and the FFA. The FFA can act as a catalyst between the SOE program and the organized instruction, providing the incentive for greater advancement of the student.

Accommodate Individual Differences

To be truly effective, the local FFA chapter must provide numerous avenues for involvement and success for its membership. No two FFA members are alike. Therefore, what each member seeks for increased education is likely to be different. This is what makes the FFA special. Leadership development, contest participation, recreational activities, social interaction, community involvement, and career exploration are just a few avenues which the average member can pursue. Bruce and Richard Durrant were brothers who were in the Kuna (ID) FFA Chapter and were in the same class in high school. Although there were similarities between the two, there were also significant differences. Bruce was very outgoing, enjoyed visiting with people, and competed in several FFA contests. On the other hand, Richard was more reserved, was most comfortable working in the shop, and did not seek much attention. It was easy for Bruce to find success in the FFA and he did by competing in state contests, serving as Chapter Vice President, and receiving recognition in the proficiency award area of agricultural processing. Likewise, Richard found success with talents considerably different than his brother's. Richard took his interest in agricultural mechanics as far as he could in the FFA. He was named the national winner in this proficiency award area. As this example demonstrates, the FFA organization can provide success and learning opportunities in a multitude of ways.

Practice Adds Relevance

It is difficult to make the organized classroom instruction interesting and relevant to the students without some



BY DAN SAMPLE

(Mr. Sample is a Vocational Agriculture Instructor at Kuna High School, Kuna, Idaho 83634.)

"hands-on" experiences. The FFA can help fill this void. Teaching parliamentary procedure in class without students being able to conduct their own meetings, judging dairy cows from slides without evaluating live animals, or discussing community problems without attempting to do something about them are examples of how the FFA can play an important role. Through participation at fairs, judging contests, or BOAC projects FFA members can apply what they have learned in the classroom and put it to good use.

By putting into practice what they have been taught in the classroom, the students learn to think collectively and independently. They learn to look at a given situation, consider the available options, identify advantages and disadvantages, and then make a decision. This training comes about from many situations — the evaluation of livestock, setting the agenda for a meeting, organizing a money-making project, or making decisions concerning the FFA member's SOEP. Most all FFA members excel over their peers in their high school in the ability to rationalize and logically arrive at an answer.

Goals Must Be Set

It is remarkable to watch freshmen grow into sophomores, sophomores into juniors, and finally juniors maturing into seniors. The four years of high school seem to disappear so quickly for a student. This is a time when most students are making decisions which will ultimately affect their futures. Students are scrambling to find out who they are and what they want to be. It is a time when the development of personal confidence and pride is necessary. Similar to other high school activities, the FFA can provide opportunities for student success and opportunities for the student to feel needed. The Future Farmers of America does not hold a monopoly on these attributes. Often times, it is best if the student will complement his/her experiences in the FFA with involvement in athletics, band, student government, or any other of the many high school organizations. Active participation in these organizations cannot help but act as a motivator for the student to better himself or herself.

It is impressive to watch a young FFA member set goals and then proceed to work toward them. The key to that

(Continued on page 6)

FFA: A Teaching Tool

(Continued from page 5)

young member's success is not whether the goals were accomplished, but rather how much was learned while trying to accomplish them. The FFA provides many carrots to entice members to reach levels of excellence. Monetary awards, trips, plaques, and publicity work to encourage greater participation. Additionally, the knowledge gained by the FFA members through active involvement motivates many of them.

The FFA as a Teaching Tool

When should the FFA begin to be used as a teaching tool for students? This question can be answered with another question. What unit of instruction taught in vocational agriculture cannot be tied to the FFA in some manner? FFA should not be the primary reason for instruction, but it can be a complementary reason for instruction. Used as a tool to motivate, reward, or encourage students to learn, the FFA can be effective. Therefore, like any teaching tool, the FFA should be used as often as deemed appropriate. Freshmen entering the vocational agriculture program should be exposed to all three facets of the overall program as soon as possible.

One educational concept which is difficult to teach in the classroom, but easy to teach in FFA is community consciousness. If the FFA chapter is involved in any community service or BOAC projects, the members quickly realize the importance of volunteerism in their community. How many beneficial projects have been undertaken by FFA members and completed? The nature trails, picnic facilities, restoration projects, community auctions for worthy causes, and the list continues about BOAC activities finished by FFA members. From this involvement, the average FFA member learns how important it is for a community to work together, that satisfaction can come from seeing a job done well without any monetary reward, and



A meeting with the Chamber of Commerce President early in the planning for a BOAC project proves helpful. (Photo courtesy of Dave Daniel.)

the improved quality of life in a community is the responsibility of each patron of that community.

The FFA in 1986

In November of 1928, a national organization for agricultural youth was born. The Future Farmers of America established its roots in production agriculture. Young leaders were developed who became spokespersons for the agricultural industry. Today, the roots of the FFA are still in production agriculture. However, the organization has branched into the ever-increasing fields of agribusiness. The demand has never been as great as it is today for young men and women to assume leadership and management positions in agriculture, and thereby striving to influence those persons establishing policies for American agriculture. The Future Farmers of America organization can be a prime contributor to this leadership development.

As the FFA advances into its future, efforts must persist to keep up with the changes in technology. Greater attention will need to be directed at developing comprehensive management skills by each member. Continued emphasis must be placed on each member's ability to think, evaluate, and generate appropriate decisions. However, as the FFA strives to maintain pace with advancing technology, those persons in roles of leadership will need to be careful not to expand the scope of the FFA at the expense of the current program. On the chapter, state, and national levels of the FFA, there are numerous programs which are operating effectively to extend the educational opportunities of each FFA member. Sometimes when a new program is initiated, the results weaken instead of strengthen the FFA because human or financial resources are stretched too far. Additionally, as the FFA changes, the concept of the students enjoying their membership must be considered. Activities must be planned for all members and achievement cannot be so difficult to acquire that it discourages participation. FFA activities and contests should be educational and fun, but not forms of punishment. If the FFA is truly a teaching tool, and it should be, then opportunities must exist for all students — the elite and the ordinary ones like Bill Edwards.



Classroom instruction becomes more meaningful if hands-on FFA experiences are provided. (Photo courtesy of Dave Daniel.)

Staying Current in the FFA: Teaching the Teachers

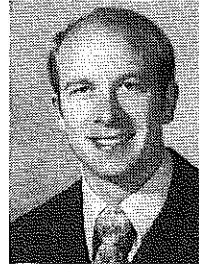
The game used to be played by a relatively simple set of rules. Rule A: Young people come into agricultural education teacher preparation having actively participated in a vocational agriculture/FFA program. Rule B: Teacher educators are responsible for honing already existing skills, capitalizing on the strong socialization that has already occurred. Problem: Rule A is being violated by most of the students entering agricultural teacher education programs. Therefore, Rule B cannot be followed either. Solution: Punt?

Teacher education in agriculture, including the many secondary agriculture teachers who participate in the preparation process, is facing its biggest challenge ever: how to prepare students as competent technicians, pedagogues, advisors, supervisors, and administrators without the prerequisite experiences that used to be taken for granted. The problem of keeping current has taken on a new dimension. Not only must teacher education struggle to keep up with increasingly sophisticated school and occupational environments, but it must do so by preparing students who are bringing fewer skills and experiences to the task. At The Pennsylvania State University, 80% of the students entering the teacher preparation program have never participated in secondary vocational agriculture. To compound the problem, economic constraints have dictated that the system take no more time than before. The predicament is obvious. The solution is not.

Success Stories

The situation is far from hopeless, however. Some of the most successful vocational agriculture professionals have not had the benefit of participating in a secondary agriculture program. One such individual is Dr. William Williams at The Pennsylvania State University. During his teaching tenure, Dr. Williams had eight American Farmers, numerous state farmers, students who won many state contests, and had a Gold Emblem Chapter. According to Dr. Williams, "The biggest problem was that I did the kids an injustice for about three years until I figured out how to fill out all the different records and applications. Our (college) preparation program (in FFA) was non-existent." Dr. Williams says he got all his experience on the job and got most of his help from area consultants and from other teachers at the teachers' meetings. "Without them? . . . Cripes, I don't know how these people (new ag teachers) operate," he questioned.

Another person without secondary FFA experience is Ron Frederick, agricultural teacher at the Twin Valley (PA) High School. Frederick's chapter received first place in the State BOAC contest this past year. He has had National Chapter Awards and BOAC awards, 60 state farmers, and seven American Farmers in his career. He explained how he got his FFA orientation. "The biggest fac-



By MICHAEL G. RUSH

(Dr. Rush is State Supervisor of Agricultural Education, 650 West State Street, Room 315, Boise, Idaho 83720.)

tor was the interest the kids showed in the organization. The principal was also very supportive; he was going to make sure it didn't fail." Frederick said that his biggest problem, like Williams', was not being familiar with the activities and opportunities available to the students.

James Hively of Broadway (VA) High School is another successful teacher with no secondary FFA background. The Broadway FFA chapter has long been one of the most successful in the nation, winning the Gold Emblem Chapter Award the last eight years in a row. This past year Broadway was a Gold Emblem National Chapter Award winner, Gold Emblem winner in BOAC, and a Silver Emblem winner in Safety. During Hively's tenure, they have had over 150 state farmers - four Star State Farmers since 1977; 32 American Farmers; won the National Poultry Contest twice, and have won numerous state and local contests. Hively's daughter, who is now a senior in Agricultural Education at Virginia Polytechnic Institute (VPI), is a former state FFA president. Hively explained that when he went through the teacher preparation program, "We didn't have a class on advising the FFA. I came into the department as the third teacher. I had a couple of teachers with a good program who took me under their wings. If I'd gone somewhere where the other teachers hadn't given two hoots . . . well things might have been different."

A final success story is Coleman Harris, National FFA Executive Secretary. Harris credits his success to being "placed with a top flight FFA advisor - that was the real key. He had a Gold Emblem Chapter and I learned an awful lot." He also said that his teacher education program, principal (a former vocational agriculture teacher), other teachers, and simply just diving in and getting involved also helped him get started on the right track.

While each of the individuals cited got their initial help from slightly different sources - students, other teachers, administrators, area consultants, cooperating teachers - they all agreed that the key was seeing a successful program in action and having direct contact with people who were committed and actively promoting the program. What role, then, does teacher education have to play in preparing effective, up-to-date FFA advisors?

(Continued on page 8)

Staying Current in the FFA: Teaching the Teachers

(Continued from page 7)

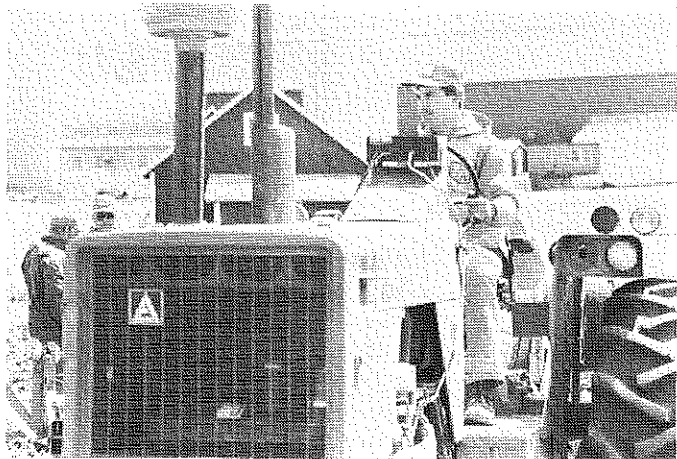
The Possibilities

The standard solution for most problems in education is to throw courses at them. In this case, it would be a course on how to advise the FFA. When Williams, Frederick, Hively, and Harris prepared to be teachers, none took a specific course in the FFA. Times have changed. At The Pennsylvania State University, it is called Coordinating FFA, SOE and YFA; at VPI — Planning and Conducting Co-curricular Activities; at Purdue University — Vocational Youth Leadership Development; at Nebraska — FFA Program and Leadership Development; at Iowa State — Leadership Programs in Agriculture and Coordinating FFA in Vocational Agriculture; in Florida — Agricultural Youth Programs. As more students enter teacher education without agricultural backgrounds, these courses are and will continue to be the primary tool of teacher education programs for preparing teachers. They are not sufficient, however.

As is evident from the success stories detailed in this article, students must get actual exposure to the FFA and how it works. Teacher education can provide this exposure in a variety of ways. At Penn State, the FFA class takes total responsibility for organizing and conducting a block of several leadership contests for a tri-county area. Students must arrange for the facilities, meals, judges, contest materials, tests and awards, handle all the correspondence, and physically conduct the contests.

Another tool used by most teacher education programs is a collegiate student organization. To be most effective, however, these organizations must be treated and organized as any quality educational effort. In a 1983 study by this author and John Hillison of VPI, 26% of the organizations in agricultural education did not have a current program of activities.

Student teaching is perhaps the most powerful tool available to teacher educators and can be enhanced by



Collegiate FFA members can gain valuable experiences by setting up FFA contests. (Photo courtesy of Mike Rush.)

screening cooperating teachers, requiring prior observance of student teaching sites, including FFA activities in operation, and active attention to the FFA component by university supervisors.

The opportunities for providing solid preparation for FFA advisors certainly exist. The biggest problem for teacher educators is organizing those opportunities so that they reach every student — particularly those who are not internally motivated to seek the opportunities themselves. Teacher education programs must become more than sources of information. They must become managers of opportunities.

A Model

The following model is offered as one solution for managing the educational opportunities available for use by teacher educators. It allows use of both university and non-university resources as well as taking into account the widely diverse backgrounds of students entering the program.

As the students enter the teacher education program, they are interviewed by a committee of teacher educators/graduate students/agricultural teachers to determine type and quality of experiences the student is bringing to the program. This interview covers FFA/vocational agriculture as well as technical agriculture experiences. The committee then makes recommendations on what types of experiences the students need to obtain before being certified. The advisor and the student take the committee recommendations and develop a professional development plan for each student. This plan is signed by the advisor and student and approved by the committee. The plan would not repeat all the required courses, but might recommend a specific elective course that would address a particular weakness. The plan might also include informal experiences with industry personnel, working with the state FFA officers, spending a few weeks in the summer with a teacher, working on the student farm, an internship, participation in specific collegiate student organization activities, etc. This plan then becomes a part of the student's college program just as his or her course of study is a part of that program.

This model recognizes the importance of out-of-class experiences, creates a systematic method for planning those



Some future instructors can sharpen poultry production skills while undergraduates. (Photo courtesy of Mike Rush.)

experiences, allows additional avenues for involving secondary teachers, and allows students flexibility in designing their own programs. It also provides the department with a way to multiply the educational opportunities without increasing the credit load or total time required.

Summary

Staying current requires innovation and adaptation, but most importantly, a genuine desire to keep programs relevant for the clientele they are to serve.

The FFA is one area teacher educators might be inclined to overlook because of its success in the past. The rules are changing, however, and all in the agricultural education business need to make sure the game plan reflects that fact.



Vocational agriculture teachers with excellent FFA membership experiences are getting harder to locate. (Photo courtesy of Mike Rush.)

THEME

Telling the Vocational Agriculture/FFA Story

Comments from State Legislators like, "Best meal function I attended during the Legislative Session," or "weren't those young people sharp and well organized" certainly has to improve the image of vocational agriculture and the FFA.

For the seventh consecutive year, the South Dakota FFA Association has hosted a successful FFA Legislative Breakfast. It is now considered an annual event which everyone, including most state legislators, look forward to attending. The FFA Legislative Breakfast is one of the best attended social functions held during the entire Legislative Session. There are some key activities that have been followed which have made this event successful. The primary purpose of this article is to explain those activities which may be helpful to other states planning to conduct a similar event.

Before explaining the organizational structure of the legislative breakfast, an explanation should be given as to the reason for such an event. Like many states, we have a difficult time developing the proper image of Vocational Agriculture/FFA. Many individuals, including elected state officials, think that vocational agriculture is a program strictly for farm boys who are planning to farm. This event has allowed us to tell the real story about a modern instructional program in vocational agriculture to some very important people. There has always been a large amount of confusion about how the FFA organization functions. Many individuals think a young person can just join the FFA like many other youth organizations, not realizing that the students must be enrolled in vocational agriculture before they are eligible for membership. We



By LARRY G. NELSON

(Mr. Nelson is State Supervisor of Agricultural Education and State FFA Advisor, Richard F. Kneip Building, Pierre, South Dakota 57501.)

receive good state financial support for vocational education, and the event allows us to show appreciation for the support. It is also a good opportunity to show the educational and economic importance of the supervised occupational experience program. A statewide summary of SOE data is distributed at the breakfast. The total amount of dollars earned by vocational agriculture students always far exceeds the amount of state or federal funds put into the programs.

The Legislative Breakfast

We start the breakfast at 6:45 a.m. and have averaged about 75% of the legislators attending the event. This is an excellent turnout, considering the number of meal functions the state legislators are invited to attend. The activities scheduled prior to, during, and following the Legislative Breakfast are:

1. Three weeks in advance of the event, the State FFA President sends a personal invitation to all state legislators

(Continued on page 10)

Telling the Vocational Agriculture/FFA Story

(Continued from page 9)

at their home address. Other key individuals are also invited, such as the Governor, Lt. Governor, State Superintendent, and State Vocational Education Directors, etc.

2. The Legislative Breakfast is held the first week of the Legislative Session. Most legislators are less busy during the first part of the Session.

3. The day before the Legislative Breakfast, Senate and House pages drop a reminder note into the legislators' mail boxes.

4. The evening before the Legislative Breakfast, the District FFA Advisors arrive in town with the District FFA Officers. We have 7 districts which involve 42 FFA members plus the State Officers. At this time, an orientation session is held for the District Officers. A legislator who is well acquainted with the Vocational Agriculture Program is invited to participate in the orientation session. The District Officers and the Advisors must be informed of the legislative process.

5. All FFA members arrive one-half hour before the designated starting time of the Legislative Breakfast. A seating arrangement is utilized whereby state legislators are placed next to FFA members and advisors from their home districts.

6. The program is conducted by the State FFA officers. This must be well organized and brief because most legislators have committee meetings that begin at 8:30 a.m. Legislators will not attend if the programs run too long, causing them to miss part of their committee meeting or they will not attend the following year for the same reason.

7. The program presented by the officers is a key activity. The State officers must be well prepared and must have practiced the program. Each year we invite a key legislator to give remarks. Be sure to alternate this invitation between the major political parties.

8. Following the program, pictures are taken of the District FFA officers and their local legislator and mailed to



Gov. William Janklow and other state leaders are informed about vocational agriculture/FFA stores in South Dakota. (Photo courtesy of Larry G. Nelson.)

their hometown newspapers. We have experienced excellent coverage of the event by local newspapers. Four photo stations are set up so this activity moves along as quickly as possible. This is an important activity as politicians love to have their pictures taken with FFA members and have them appear in the local papers.

9. The Legislative Breakfast is paid for by the State FFA Foundation with earmarked contributions from farm organizations, business and industry, etc.

10. As a follow-up of this event, all FFA chapters are encouraged to invite their local state legislators to their chapter banquets and other activities. This is also an important activity so state legislators realize that legislation affecting vocational education will have a direct effect on their local constituents.

Concluding Comments

Without question, the most effective level to tell the vocational agriculture/FFA story is at the local level. Local effects, however, can be augmented by an effective state association program. A well organized legislative meal function can have far reaching effects and is an effective method of telling the vocational agriculture/FFA story.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

Use this form to renew your subscription to THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE. If your subscription is separate from your professional dues package, you will need to subscribe now to continue receiving each issue of the magazine. Subscription prices are \$7 per year. Foreign subscriptions are \$10 (U.S. Currency) per year for surface mail and \$20 (U.S. Currency) for airmail (except Canada).

Please enter my subscription NEW CHECK OR MONEY ORDER IS ENCLOSED.
 to THE AGRICULTURAL RENEWAL PLEASE SEND BILL (PLEASE ENCLOSE PURCHASE ORDER).
 EDUCATION MAGAZINE

Mailing Address:

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Post Office: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____

Billing Address (if different from mailing address):

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Post Office: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____

Send this subscription form to: Glenn A. Anderson, Business Manager 1803 Rural Point Road
 THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE Mechanicsville, Virginia 23111

The FFA — A Pathway to Leadership

"Play ball," is the umpire's command in baseball and it is what good coaches want from team members. Their number one priority is to have all members participate. The coaches know only if you swing the bat can you get a hit or a homerun. The same is true of a good FFA coach (advisor). This person knows that to use the FFA as a pathway to leadership and success in life, each team member must bat and score as many runs as possible.

The Bases

To reach the first base on the pathway to leadership, each member must participate and "learn to do." Just as baseball players never learn to hit if they do not step-up to the plate, FFA members will never speak confidently in front of people if they do not step-up to the podium. After all members master that first step of participation, they need to cover the rest of the bases. An individual is already beat if he or she does not begin.

The next base is "doing to learn." Learning is made easier by obtaining practical hands-on experience. Life is a learning process and FFA members learn much more and get further in life by participating in the activities offered to them!

After the first two bases are reached, the third, "earning to live," is just around the corner. Vocational agriculture and the FFA teach students about over 200 agricultural careers and help them develop their leadership skills. These students can then use their agricultural and communications talents to select an agriculturally-related career they wish to pursue.

Every student knows baseball has three bases and homeplate is next. FFA goes by those same rules, only the FFA homeplate is "living to serve." Students in vocational agriculture and the FFA learn to serve at an early age by participating in the Food for America, Building Our American Communities, and various other community



Using the FFA as a pathway to leadership in developing management skills applicable in an SOE project - a custom airspray operation. (Photo courtesy Cando FFA Chapter, North Dakota.)



BY TAMMY MEYER

(Ms. Meyer, a former FFA member from Mad-dock, is Executive Director of the North Dakota Association of Cooperatives, 4023 N. State Street, Bismarck, North Dakota 58501.)

service projects. They learn that serving others is a very important part of becoming an asset to society. That is success.

The Coaching Staff

Now that you have heard about the game plan, you are probably wondering what happens behind the scenes. Who supports the team members as they practice for their times up to bat? Unfortunately, it seems as if we are always hearing about the stars in baseball and the achieving FFA members, but rarely about the integral parts the Rookie, Manager, and Coach play in the success of the veteran FFA member. These are the team members who help successful FFA members cover all of life's bases.

1. Rookies — The students who decide not only to enroll but to participate in a vocational agriculture class. They do not want a permanent spot on the bench and prove it by practicing regularly to make the final outcome their best. These active members will not always be rookies, but will always have that same winning attitude.

2. Managers — The parents and family who are very helpful with the overall training and performance of the team. They were rookies themselves at one time, and offer encouragement, understanding, and support.

3. Coaches — The vocational agriculture instructors who train the rookies, help improve the game, and inspire all of the players to do their best.

All three positions are very important, but often overlooked aspects of the game plan. Together, they are the team that determine what the players will do when they come up to bat — hit the ball, make a home run, or strike-out. By stepping up to the plate and hitting the ball, one can "do and learn," "earn to live," and "live to serve," but when all three are combined to reach a goal, a home run is achieved. As it takes desire, practice, and determination to be successful in baseball — it also takes the same attributes for leadership in the FFA. The only way an FFA member can strike-out is by not trying.

A North Dakota Team

An example of how this FFA team can be used as a pathway to leadership is seen in a small town in central North Dakota. The freshman vocational agriculture class started with 20 interested students, but dwindled to nine as

(Continued on page 12)

The FFA — A Pathway to Leadership

(Continued from page 11)

their senior year began. And yet, these were the nine who were interested and wanted to be there. To look at their class record is impressive: nine State Farmer Degree recipients, one State Star Agribusinessman, one State Proficiency Award Winner, two state officers, and one American Farmer Degree recipient. Even though this sounds impressive, does it really tell the true story of how this class used vocational agriculture and the FFA to provide their pathway to leadership? Or is the real story seen in what they are doing now in their chosen careers?

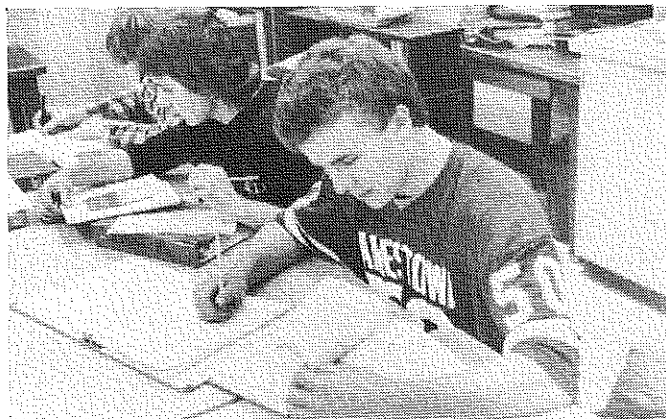
Looking at their team's game plan can easily tell us how they used the FFA activities to develop the leadership they now have. As they began their freshman vocational agriculture class, each was open to the many opportunities that lay ahead. The vocational agriculture department was known for the many leaders it has produced, but that didn't guarantee them the same results. Their vocational agriculture instructor realized that whether age 14 or 94, everyone has the same basic needs. Everyone feels that need to belong, be independent, achieve, be recognized for accomplishments, and to experience new adventures.

The same way a coach always thinks long and hard on ways to improve the game and discusses it with the players, so must the vocational agriculture instructor. The teacher must inspire the students and then give them the tools and methods to utilize every ounce of their ability to reach that goal. Since its founding in 1928, the FFA has been that important teaching tool for the practical application of lessons in leadership, cooperation, citizenship, and a motivator for student recognition. But, two important elements needed along with the FFA are the organized classroom instruction and supervised occupational experience (SOE). The three make the program vocational and an integral part of the educational system.

These students' vocational agriculture instructor helped them combine their FFA and agriculture lessons and stressed that knowledge gained through their classroom instruction should be the foundation in using this practical application outside the classroom in their SOE program. The SOE program would give valuable hands-on experience in an agricultural area of interest to them. Each student was given the same basic foundation. And they built — they seized the opportunities that could help them become leaders in their own way. They participated in field trips, contests, chapter meetings, state conventions, SOE programs, etc. This is a story of a team that excelled both individually and as a team. Some excelled in public speaking, some in agricultural mechanics and some in crops judging. Showing livestock was a common interest. They traveled as a team to livestock shows across the state.

Teamwork Required

In baseball, there are many stars. Each has achieved a goal with a unique style. Each has a real love for the game, the ability to have fun playing the game, the total dedication to practice, and the desire to condition the body to the fullest. They have confidence because they are prepared.



FFA helps develop good record keeping practices necessary for good management. (Photo courtesy Jamestown FFA Chapter, North Dakota.)

They know they have given it their best in hours of batting practice, extra conditioning, running, weight lifting, and special practices. They have courage - the greatest virtue to pursue and attain their goal. And yet, they always keep in mind the important role their teamwork, coach, and manager have played.

This FFA team also remembered the importance of teamwork. The rookie (student) practiced with desire and determination. Their coach (vocational agriculture instructor) brought out the best in the team by recognizing their individual ability and helping them grow in their own way. The manager (parents/family) always gave encouragement and provided advice when needed.

Most Valuable Professionals

Each has a different game plan now - their career choice. But, the training they received helped them choose a plan that made them a leader in their own special way. Participating in FFA activities gave confidence and maturity that is vital for successful employment today.

Some chose college - some did not. They are in a variety of occupations - farmer, vocational agriculture instructor, soil conservation worker, trucker, and agricultural trade association director and each is considered a leader. But, why are they leaders in their fields? What factors helped them gain this respect? Characteristics of your ideal leader could include:

- ability to write and speak effectively.
- dedication to ideals
- good attitude
- honesty
- courage
- enthusiasm
- faith
- dependability
- loyalty
- friendliness and courtesy
- humor
- good moral character

Becoming the MVP

Most agree that a good leader should have all of these characteristics, but do we know someone who lacks some of the characteristics and is an effective leader? Chances

are we do. We may also know someone who has most of these characteristics and is not really an effective leader. Leadership does not depend entirely on the amount of ability a person has. What a person does with that ability and how that person relates to other people are more important. Leadership is the ability to influence the thinking and actions of people and to tackle a new job and see it through.

If an individual has the desire, the willpower, and the urge to develop the qualities and abilities that make a leader, he or she can become one. There are special qualities that set leaders apart from others, but people are not born with these qualities. They are developed, just as athletes develop their skills and knowledge. A leader is often the person with whom others like to work and play. Every community, school, church, club, or group needs leaders. FFA can be the vehicle to develop leadership qualities. The first purpose for which the FFA was founded was to develop leadership.

That small vocational agriculture class used the FFA as its vehicle to teach self confidence, time management, public speaking, human relations, and much more. Maybe they are now leaders in their professions because of their poise and confidence under pressure, their ability to think clearly and use the skills necessary to carry out responsibilities, and many other traits they developed in becoming

competent professionals. They advance in their professions because they can deliver an address without batting an eye, conduct meetings in an organized and efficient manner, and hold important leadership positions in local farm organizations and community groups.

Summary

These individuals would not have benefited from the FFA if they did not participate, did not have cooperative attitudes, and were not willing to work toward the desired goals. FFA was their pathway to leadership as they reached the world series as a team. The teamwork in baseball and the FFA will never go out of fashion. The basic ideals that baseball and the FFA were founded on are still in use. Baseball uniforms have been updated and FFA jackets have evolved, but those major bases (1st) "Learning to Do," (2nd) "Doing to Learn," (3rd) "Earning to Live," and (Homeplate) "Living to Serve," are just as important and necessary to stay current in vocational agriculture.

As youth organizations look at staying current, they should not forget the basics learned when the game plan was developed. The vocational agriculture instructor, parents, and students should respect each other, and grasp the opportunities vocational agriculture and the FFA provide to challenge students to cover all of the bases. And, as the umpire says, "Play ball!"

THEME

PAS — Meeting the Challenge

"A rut is a grave with the ends knocked out.

"If you aren't going forward then you are going backward."

The above two philosophical sayings come to mind as I think about the Postsecondary Agriculture Students Organization (PAS) meeting the challenge of staying current as a youth organization. It is so easy for an individual to stop moving forward and get in a rut. Likewise, organizations have to continually work to keep up the forward momentum. I will describe the steps being taken by PAS to avoid falling into the rut that just sets there waiting for us to succumb.

First, PAS is a relatively new organization. With only six years of history, it is hard for anybody to stop looking for new ways of getting things done by saying, "But, we've always done it this way" or, "We tried that once and it didn't work." Once either of these attitudes sets in, the organization is starting to have one foot in the grave.

Bylaws Require Changes

Second, in designing the PAS Bylaws, measures were built in to encourage new ideas and new directions as much as possible. The organization is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of seven student officers, four faculty members, one state supervisor, one teacher educator, and



By KENNETH W. OLCOTT

(Mr. Olcott is Executive Director of the National Postsecondary Agricultural Student Organization, Box 34, Cobleskill, New York 12043.)

two industry representatives. The National Advisor and the Executive Director serve as non-voting ex-officio members of the Board. In practice, the balance between the student and non-student members is maintained by transacting all business on the basis of two separate bodies with the requirement that either group may pass a motion and the other must sustain it before the action becomes official. This procedure ensures input from everyone is considered.

Election requirements in the Bylaws are designed to prevent any group from gaining control and keeping it over a period of years. Student officers are limited to one per state. Faculty, state supervisors, and teacher educator Board members are limited to two terms of two years each,

(Continued on page 14)

PAS — Meeting the Challenge

(Continued from page 13)

thus, insuring a turnover of membership and the infusion of new ideas as Board membership changes.

Probably the most significant built-in requirement to insure keeping PAS up-to-date is the industry representation. By having one-fourth of the non-student members of the Board come from agricultural industry, the organization has guaranteed a source of "real world" ideas and concerns. Experience has shown the value of our industry representatives in causing the educators to face issues as they exist in the real world rather than as they seem in academic circles.

PAS Activities

National activities of PAS have been planned to address current needs of the postsecondary agriculture student and rules of the various contests and activities have been designed to reflect current situations and to change when needed.

The Employment Interview Contest was the first national contest developed by PAS. Procedures for this contest duplicate the steps a student would follow in applying for an actual job beginning with the preparation of a resume', carrying through the writing of a cover letter, completing an employment application, and concluding with a mock interview. By choosing people from the agribusiness community to serve as judges for the written work and to conduct the interviews, the contestants are exposed to up-to-date conditions and situations as they exist in the business world.

The Prepared and Impromptu Speakers for Agriculture Contests have several features to make certain they are keeping up-to-date. As in the Employment Interview Contest, careful selection of judges from agricultural industry maintains the technical accuracy and currentness of the material in the speech as winners are selected. Keeping current is especially important in the Impromptu Contest. Since these contestants are given the topics to be discussed, it is relatively easy to make sure up-to-the-minute topics are selected. Part of the scoring procedure involves questions from the judges — another opportunity for the judges to determine the timeliness of the contestant's knowledge.

PAL/PEER Project

The PAL/PEER project is an excellent example of ways the organization can stay current by helping its members stay current. As a matter of fact, it can help maintain currency of the whole instructional program in the postsecondary school. This project consists of two parts: Partners in Agricultural Leadership (PAL) and Personal Education Evaluation and Recognition (PEER).

PAL is the career exploration and planning phase of the project. Here the student studies workers in a chosen field of production agriculture or agricultural business to determine the tasks performed by those workers. This is accomplished by each student participating in 3-5 interviews which are summarized into a comprehensive list of tasks the student will need to know in order to work in that par-

ticular field. Self-evaluation is the next step whereby the student determines her or his current level of competency for each of the identified tasks. This self assessment becomes the basis for PEER where the student develops a Personal Educational plan where he or she describes how to learn the competencies needed in the chosen field of agriculture. Some things will be learned in formal educational courses. Others will be achieved by on-the-job training. Many will be a combination of formal instruction followed by hands-on experience. Since each student's goals and objectives are different and the student's level of competencies are different at the beginning of the training program, the resultant personal educational plans will be different for each student in the class. The Evaluation and Recognition parts of the project come after the student has participated in classes and job training experiences. At that time, the completeness of the plan and the degree to which it has been achieved are evaluated and recognition is given for outstanding success on the local, state, and national levels.

In addition to each student's personal part in PAL/PEER, that person must also complete a prescribed project related to the chosen field of agriculture. Such a project may involve such things as comparing minimum tillage with conventional tillage in growing a crop, the identification and evaluation of improvement practices in a dairy herd, or evaluating the use of computers in farm and ranch management decision making.

Keeping current is built into PAL/PEER. By selecting workers who are up-to-date in their methods, the student is identifying the current competencies in the chosen field of agriculture. Since the content of the PEER supplement is determined by industry people, they are representative of current practices in that taxonomy area. Evaluation of the PEER projects is done by a team of judges from industry, again insuring that winning students are current in their understanding and training. At the present time, PEER projects are available in agricultural chemicals, agricultural equipment, beef industry, corn production, dairy production, farm and ranch business management, nursery/landscaping/garden center management, and swine production.



The PAS Board of Directors is structured so input comes from a variety of individuals from all segments of agriculture/agribusiness. (Photo courtesy of Ken Olcott.)

New Activities

A new award was initiated with a demonstration at the 1985 National PAS Conference in Jackson, Mississippi — the Agricultural Machinery Service Technician Award. The first awards were presented at the 1986 National Conference in Bismarck, N.D. This awards program evaluates the proficiency level of the agricultural machinery technician in the subject matter areas of hydraulics, power trains, engines, air conditioning, electrical systems, and machinery through a written examination and demonstration of diagnostics, calibration, and identification. Rules for this award have been developed by a committee of postsecondary faculty and personnel from the award sponsor, John Deere Company. The written test and demonstrations, likewise, depended heavily on Deere Company input.

At the 1986 National Conference, the College Bowl was instituted on a trial basis. This, too has been designed with features to keep it up-to-date. By soliciting new questions each year from schools and industry, it can be kept current. At this time, we are not certain if the College Bowl will continue as a national activity. Conference evaluations have indicated the trial was well received by the membership so it is very likely an effort will be made to find a sponsor and continue this contest.

Most of the focus of this article so far has dealt with contests and projects that are on-going throughout the year with the final selection of national winners occurring

at the annual National Conference. In addition to recognizing individual achievement, other activities at the National Conference are planned to help attendees stay current with the latest trends in agricultural technology. One day is set aside for educational activities. The morning is devoted to seminars led by some of the top people in the field of agriculture. Here students and instructors can learn latest research findings and state-of-the-art management practices. Other sessions deal with personal growth and development where they can learn people skills such as goal setting, communications, self confidence, etc. In the afternoon of education day at the conference, there are several tours to nearby farms and agricultural businesses.

Concluding Comments

In the opinion of the Executive Director, PAS is meeting the challenge. With a set of bylaws designed to insure a constant change of membership on the Board of Directors, the organization stays current in its direction and activities by staying attuned to the wishes of the membership. The inclusion of two industry representatives further prevents the organization from becoming ingrown.

As various national activities have been developed, they have been designed to prevent stagnation by built-in flexibility in rules and procedures and by using people from the agricultural industry as judges, seminar leaders, and tour hosts. This system has worked six years and should serve to keep PAS current in the years to come.

THEME

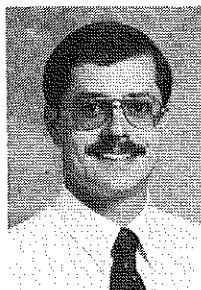
The FFA In A Changing Curriculum

For both of my grandfathers who made their living from the soil, change was looked upon with suspicion. Many times they (like many farmers) were scornful of technology to the point that they missed out on a number of years of improvement, increased productivity, and probably higher profits.

Certainly we cannot adopt change for the "sake of change." We would all agree, however, that new directions, methods, and/or technologies are often necessary in order to meet conditions in this fast changing world in which we live. The rapid advancement and growth of knowledge, human relations, and technology have put humans into the cockpit of a rocket that they may not necessarily know how to safely pilot.

Just how do we pilot this rocketing program of the FFA in an everchanging vocational agriculture curriculum?

Realize that change does not always create more work. Industry rapidly accepts changes in technology and knowledge if it is A — Profitable, B — Productive, and/or C — Efficient. By computerizing the American Farmer degrees, we have saved an estimated 20 hours on just two applications! Through computerizing Proficiency Awards, we have had greater student interest. We have also saved valuable instructor time since students are taking greater



BY DOUG RINKER

(Mr. Rinker is a Vocational Agriculture Instructor at James Wood High School, Winchester, Virginia 22601.)

initiative in researching the answers to their questions. While new curriculum usually equates to new lesson plans, are there FFA activities that may relate or even provide help to us as instructors? With creative thinking, maybe a current FFA program can be adapted to meet the test of providing greater productivity and/or efficiency for our instruction.

FFA and the Curriculum

Develop an instructional program that uses the FFA as a motivating force for improvement and self development. No matter how much our curriculums change, we see the

(Continued on page 16)

The FFA In A Changing Curriculum

(Continued from page 15)

need of students to develop human relations skills. Committee work, oral and written communications, cooperative activities, meeting skills, interviewing, and other confidence builders are easily incorporated into our curriculums. With a prepared instructor, the related FFA activities that develop the above areas can be readily incorporated into the class schedule without a great deal of time commitment, often providing motivation for students to learn.

Are Achievement, Proficiency, and/or Degree Award applications used to measure improvement for students' SOE programs? Do we have students establishing goals as a result of participating in these programs?

Integrate the FFA into your curriculum so that it supplements and complements instead of becoming your entire instructional program. Danger is always present for a tightrope walker who is not properly balanced. We can all slip into that trap that makes the FFA more than an integral part of our total vocational agriculture education program. Yes, outside time is necessary to help the FFA become successful. Are your students planning and following through on activities or are you directing and doing? Our curriculum is supposed to change to meet the needs of an evolving industry. As advisors, we will no longer have the time to run everything ourselves. Give the students a chance; train them to be the leaders of the chapter. Remember our title — Advisor.

Come to grips with the fact that the FFA is a national organization with interests far more diverse than what you may teach. Because of the expanse of our country and interests, the needs are not as simple as in 1928. We no longer have all farm boys. Many programs have few, if any students, from full time farms. Our National FFA Board of Directors, Student Officers, and National Consultants realize their responsibilities of providing programs in areas of greatest need and interest — much as our local boards of education. Contests, awards, and programs are developed and implemented only when the need exists; and so it should be with our local chapters.

Set Priorities

Prioritize your FFA activities to avoid "FFA Burnout." Students and advisors can become victims of this disease that creeps up on people who want to succeed and excel. As advisors, we often rush to provide as many opportunities as possible to members and as a result, quantity does not necessarily equal to quality. We can also fall short of involving the "quiet, shy" student who usually does not come forward without some coaxing. In our rush, we have less time to encourage and nudge the "borderline" member.

There is no "National Directive" that forces us to do and participate in everything. Key-in on students and community needs and use the appropriate FFA activities to accomplish a set of vital preplanned goals. Stick to the basics; do them well and interest will be maintained. Only so many plaques will fit on the wall. Why try to do everything? Our program does not participate in dairy or poultry judging because of our lack of producers or business needs in these areas. As our curriculum changes over time, so does the priority and applicability of FFA activities. Sometimes even our "favorite" ones have to be reviewed and let go.

Students are often led by their instructor's attitude to change. When I was an FFA officer visiting a local chapter, I once witnessed an Advisor discussing a new program to the FFA members. As I recall, he basically told them that this program was going to be a lot of extra work and wasn't all that necessary. Did the students want to carry out or even consider the program? OF COURSE NOT! I have never met a strong instructor who fully realizes how much students look to him or her for direction and even attitude. When I was a vocational agriculture student, I certainly did! Students perceive a lot of our outward and inward attitudes and we must not prejudice them, but rather try to guide them through necessary changes. Most of these changes are new award areas or skill contests or other incentive programs. Maybe they will provide more opportunities to more students.

Summary

The FFA has grown from a small struggling organization to a multi-million dollar international corporation. We have never seen it veer from its primary aim and purpose — the development of agricultural leadership, cooperation, and citizenship. As growth continues and new programs develop, we need to keep that aim and purpose in our sights and hold close to the fact that the seed we plant in our students may not germinate immediately — rather it may be years before the results of our work have sprouted.

If my grandfathers were alive today, they would be seeing an agricultural industry that has made tremendous strides in productivity and efficiency. Even though the future may look bleak, it will be better. If the founding fathers of the FFA were alive today, they would view an organization that has continuously made phenomenal gains in providing opportunities for its diversified membership.

As our curriculum changes and more technology is brought into our classrooms and laboratories, we will continue to experience the FFA's ability to help all of our students in some way. Let's not give up this motivational and educational tool no matter how much our program changes!

BOOK REVIEWERS NEEDED

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

Keeping Current With 100% Plus Membership

The FFA is dedicated to leadership development. Its scope of activities is so broad that every member may find a place in the sun. Advisors concerned about every student in their department should have little difficulty securing 100% plus membership. For those advisors, their rewards will include significant member and chapter success stories. The potential high school drop-out who found a friend and useful citizen. . . This is the FFA's greatest reason for being. This is why excellence in education is not a new idea for vocational agriculture/FFA.

Achieving 100% plus membership may mean much more than one might expect. Like it or not, the "numbers game" is a dominant factor. The more active members at the chapter, state, and national levels, the greater the sphere of influence. FFA membership may be the determinant as to whether or not a local vocational agriculture program will survive. State and national support often hinges upon the number of people involved. If every secondary vocational agriculture student belonged to the FFA, the numbers would be impressive. For example, in 1983-84 100% membership would have increased the FFA membership from 452,569 members to 582,003. An easily reachable 100% plus, say 110%, would bring the total to more than 640,000 members.

How to Keep Current

Keeping current conveys a variety of connotations. Does it mean following the herd? Does it mean moving ahead? Does it mean "not rocking the boat?" Usually the best defense is a good offense. The many publics involved see vocational agriculture through windows provided by the FFA. A resurgent increase in membership would be reflected by more positive support of vocational education in agriculture.

A forward looking attitude must include forward moving action. A 100% plus membership total is vital to the image of our total program. Reversing the present membership decline should be the highest priority. Positive news releases — positive indications of growth — FFA success stories — these must be supported by actual increases in membership. To remain current, we must maintain and retain increased membership.

The goal of 100% plus membership is the responsibility of all levels of those involved in the FFA. At the National FFA Center, a positive approach is needed. Important as increased membership must be, as of now the national organization's response is little more than tokenism. A special placard at the delegate stations at the national convention is faint praise for a major achievement. So much could, and should, be done to bring 100% plus membership into focus.



By DON ERICKSON

(Mr. Erickson is an FFA Consultant from Mankoti, North Dakota 58756.)

It seems counter-productive to witness FFA chapters receiving major awards when they could not "sell" the FFA to all of their own students. If a chapter is given an award in the National Chapter Contest, BOAC, Safety, and other competitive events when they fall below the 100% plus mark, there is something lacking in the evaluation process. Recognition for excellence in any chapter-centered contest should require 100% plus membership.

The elimination of Regional or National FFA "Updates" has created a communications void. Unless the total picture is taken out to the field, there is little hope for a resurgence in the FFA.

At the National and State conventions, states and chapters with 100% plus membership should be given VIP recognition. Those states and chapters who reverse the negative trend deserve more than a "thank you." Incentives, awards, "favored status" and other avenues are open to encourage 100% plus membership.

Professional Commitment Needed

University departments of agricultural education are charged with the responsibility of preparing potential FFA advisors for the profession. Technical skills and abilities are, and should be, the bottom line. Yet many new instructors enter the field poorly equipped for their roles as FFA advisors. Of primary importance is their need to appreciate what the FFA can do for their students and for themselves.

State advisors and executive secretaries have a pipeline to local chapters. Declining FFA membership places their positions in jeopardy. Through department visits, correspondence and telephone contacts, leadership from the state level can do much to reverse the negative trend. The expertise these officials possess should become tools of value to local advisors. If there is a commonality in the goal to keep the FFA current, there will be positive reactions.

The front line remains at the local level. This is where the battle will be won or lost. To paraphrase a late and great football coach — "maintaining and increasing FFA

(Continued on page 18)

Keeping Current With 100% Plus Membership

(Continued from page 17)

membership isn't everything — it's the only thing." All of the leadership development opportunities available have little meaning if the FFA members are not there. But, understanding the problem does not provide solutions. Fortunately, there are a number of tools at hand that advisors can use to change the tide.

An active, all-member-involved FFA chapter is the magnet that draws the best of young Americans. There are many vocational agriculture departments whose classes are filled because enrollment there opened the doors to the FFA. Not every member can reach the "top of the mountain," but the broad spectrum of the FFA offers every member a road to success.

Typical of the FFA's concern for all members is the FFA achievement award program. It offers something for all students. It provides them the opportunity to personally select their occupational area to progress to the winner's circle. With the degree advancement program, 29 proficiency areas, judging teams, public speaking, and so much more, every member should be an active member. Those advisors who have discovered the positive values of the mini-chapter system find that several sets of officers multiply leadership skill development.

Securing Dues and Members

What about FFA dues? Thoughtful advisors help their program of activities committee select an earning activity whereby each member can pay dues. No students should receive money from an FFA fair exhibit unless they are FFA members. Dues must be deducted before premiums are paid. The sponsors designated the premium money as an FFA award. To present it to non-members raises a question of ethics.



An extra year of membership gave the winning edge to these FFA members. Having 100% plus membership could do likewise for non-members. (Photo courtesy of Don Erickson).

The greatest untapped reservoir of potential FFA members is the pool of graduates. There are local chapters who retain all of their graduates for their full three years of eligibility. Unless graduates are retained, no chapter could ever have an American Farmer or a National Officer. Most regional and national proficiency awards are won by graduate members. National band, chorus, and talent organizations include many former students. If the FFA is to achieve 100% plus membership, it can happen only by tapping the graduate pool.

Summary

"Staying" current with 100% plus membership really means "getting" current. As long as any state association's membership falls below 100% plus, the goal has not been reached. The future of vocational agriculture/FFA is in the balance. In a world where change is the only constant, we do not stand still. We advance or we regress. The decision rests with the National FFA Center, teacher educators, state staffs, and local advisors. They will decide if the FFA can complete its second 50 years.

ARTICLES ON FILE FOR TWO YEARS

The Editor has several file drawers of articles submitted to *The Agricultural Education Magazine*. Most of these articles are well written and contain excellent content that will be of interest to agricultural educators around the globe. However, all articles cannot be published in this professional publication. To relieve the situation, articles submitted will be kept under consideration for two years. Articles not used during that time period will be sent to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education at The Ohio State University. ERIC staff members will contact authors to obtain their permission to use the materials since ERIC materials are distributed worldwide. Authors who want their materials returned or discarded rather than being submitted to ERIC should make a written request to the Editor.

Building A Program of Activities for Today's World

The FFA has advocated the development of a program of activities for as long as we can remember! It used to be called a Program of Work, but evidently the term "work" suggested something unpleasant, cumbersome, an unnecessary evil, or a task with negative connotations. We now refer to these events as "activities," a term which may be more positively received.

Numerous manuals, handbooks, and books outline the procedure to follow, most of which have a very logical rationale to support their unique approach. Phipps (1980) identifies an FFA program of activities as an "outline of activities covering approximately one year, based on the interests, needs and desires of the chapter members." Bender et al. (1979) emphasize that the program of activities should be "planned to supplement the vocational agriculture program, whether it be preparation for production agriculture or agribusiness."

Most people in agricultural education are familiar with the purpose of a chapter program of activities and the recommended procedures for developing such a document. We could get into a lengthy discussion on format and procedures, but won't. I challenge you, however, to think critically on some other issues regarding program of activities as we plan for the future. First — **The reasons for having a program of activities.** Second — **How to utilize it properly.** Third — **The broader picture.** And fourth — **Doing a more effective job of planning.**

Why A Program of Activities?

A long list of reasons can be created which will identify advantages to the members, the advisor, the chapter, school, and community. But the key individuals concerned with a chapter program of activities are the members and advisor. If one were to have them identify the reason(s) why they develop a program of activities, frequently the response would be, "Because we are required to send a copy to the state office." That is the perceived reason all too frequently! Why? Because the membership (and perhaps even the advisor) has never been adequately convinced that the program of activities can be and should be a **working document.**

Too many chapters merely go through the motions. They put a new cover on last year's program, identify it as the current program of activities, and then either allow it to collect dust for another year or occupy space in the already crowded file drawers!

There are several messages being sent if this is happening. Which of the following do you see as the probable cause?

1. The teacher preparation program is doing an inadequate job of preparing FFA advisors and in the ways in which a program of activities a) should be developed,



By OSMUND S. GILBERTSON

(Dr. Gilbertson is Professor and Head of Agricultural Education at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska 68583-0709.)

and b) how it can be used as a working document. Either there is superficial coverage or the subject is not covered at all!

2. State departments are not effectively utilizing the submitted program of activities. Teachers are not receiving feedback regarding the need for the submission of chapter programs and/or state FFA officers do not promote effective use of the chapter program of activities when working with chapter officers.
3. Teachers see the process as something that "has to be done," but do not see the reasons why. The proper use of the program of activity has not been identified as a priority item.
4. Chapter officers see it as a "necessary evil — Let's do it and get it over with!" They have not been instructed on the potential uses of the document.

In any event, if one or more of the above are prevalent, steps should be taken to correct the problem.

Using the Program of Activities

For a printed program of activities to be a working document, one must reflect on the developmental process as well as the implementation process. Perhaps the term "working document" needs to be better explained. Here are some examples of how the program of activities can be used as a "working document."

1. Each committee chairperson has extra copies of his or her section in the FFA file for use by committee members. As each activity is planned and conducted, the "work copies" become marked up, including notations regarding income or expenses, appropriateness of identified timelines, degree of accomplishment, and suggestions for the future. This becomes the basis for revising the program of activities for next year and can be a very useful tool with activities which are to be continued.
2. Committee chairpersons provide a monthly update on their program area at executive committee meetings regarding the meeting of the requirements for the National Chapter Award Program.
3. Activity worksheets as recommended in the National

(Continued on page 20)

Building A Program of Activities for Today's World

(Continued from page 19)

Handbook are developed and used. These worksheets outline operational procedures, (detailed ways and means of the steps to be followed) and are tremendously useful for continuing activities.

4. Activities are identified with which the FFA alumni, young farmers, or other support groups can assist. Comments regarding the involvement of other groups are noted later in this article.

The Broader Picture

Too often we tend to look at the FFA and its program of activities as an entity in itself. The FFA is, however, only one of three student organizations in vocational agriculture. Consideration should be given to the linkages with the Postsecondary Agriculture Student Organization and the Young Farmer and Rancher's Organization, if either group is active locally. The collaborative efforts of various organizations can have a very positive effect on the transition from high school to young farmer/rancher participation (which may include Post-secondary Agriculture Student Organization participation enroute). This transition is quite often difficult, and sometimes almost traumatic for students who are "late bloomers."

What kind of linkages are possible with these organizations? Are we encouraging "continued" involvement in the Postsecondary Student Organization and/or the Young Farmer's Organization? Do we see these organizations as an integral part of the total agricultural education program and member involvement as a part of community leadership development? All three organizations should be considered an integral part of the total student developmental process. Agriculture teachers have the opportunity to develop strong linkages between the respective student organizational activities and smoothen the transitional process.

Effective Planning

When more than one agricultural education student organization exists, the activities should be planned on a coordinated basis for the betterment of the agricultural program, the community, and the organizational members. This enhances a smooth transition from the FFA to the other program(s). What process should be followed to best provide the transitional movement?

An approach deserving consideration involves a steering committee or advisory committee. This group is not directly involved in the decision making of program activities, but is deeply interested in future agricultural leadership. The steering/advisory group should be capable of futuristic thinking. The committee can also help keep the program current; on the "cutting edge" rather than permitting a program to continue to conduct the same activities year after year.

Steering committee members should not be too involved with any one student organization because they may not be able to focus on the "bigger picture." Individuals deeply involved in organizations often times are similar to many of today's stockholders who are more concerned with



A program of activities should include plans for National FFA Week Activities. (Photo courtesy of Dave Daniel.)

short term profits (quarterly gains) that may be at the expense of long-term, programmatic development which will be more beneficial in the long run.

The program of activities planning process should involve one of the time honored problem solving techniques involving an analysis of the situation as it is, and as it ought to be. Considering that learning is a continuing process, the steering/advising committee can concentrate on long-term, futuristic "goals" for each committee included in the program of activities. Consideration would be given the desired final outcome, the activities appropriate to achieve the goals, and the type of partnerships which should be developed or maintained for maximum personal development.

When the desired final outcomes (goals) have been identified, a realistic assessment of the current situation must be established. This assessment of the current situation must be established. This assessment includes human resources available and their existing capabilities, plus the physical and the financial resources which can be activated. This inventory is critical because you cannot chart your course unless you know where you are and where you want to go.

Your **needs** are thereby established. Stakes have been driven for planning purposes. The gap between what is and what ought to be identifies the "needs" which should be fulfilled. As the planning progresses, each organization's responsibility and program of activities is charted. The distance between the two stakes should be thought of as a continuum along which the activities are routed, similar to a long block of cheese with each activity removing a "slice" - some considerably larger than others. The target (the ought to be stake) is the desired outcome.

The decision is now made as to the appropriate activities to be undertaken to fulfill the program needs. Representatives of each participating group are involved in determining the activities in which their organization will participate. Each organization will determine involvement based upon interests and available human physical and financial resources.

The FFA executive committee should identify specific ways in which the FFA alumni and/or young farmers and

ranchers, or other support groups may render assistance to their respective activities. This list is then shared with the support group leadership and they in turn review the requests and decide the appropriate program support they will provide. If there is more than one group assisting with FFA activities, representatives of these groups should meet jointly with the FFA leadership and, in a spirit of cooperation, decide the activities with which each organization will become involved. The responsibilities of the various organizations are thereby clearly identified in advance.

Summary

Cooperative efforts permit much more rapid fulfillment of program goals. As the saying goes, "There's no limit to what can be accomplished when one is not overly concerned with who gets the credit." Through effective planning and a collaborative effort, our programs can become even

more effective and all players in the process are winners! In addition, the community comes out ahead!

In light of our approach to activity planning, it appears that this article title should be changed to "Building a Program of Activity for Tomorrow's World." The format and process used will be a local determination. The traditional processes and other techniques successfully time-tested should not be discarded. That would be similar to throwing the baby out with the wash water. Build on experience! The foundation is solid; we're only changing the floor plan to accommodate future needs.

References

- Bender, Ralph E.; Taylor, Robert E.; Hansen, Chester K., and Newcomb, L.H. (1979). *THE FFA AND YOU, YOUR GUIDE TO LEARNING*. The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., Danville, Illinois.
- Phipps, Lloyd J. (1980) *HANDBOOK ON AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS*. The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., Danville, Illinois.

THEME

Proficiency Winners Survey Report

A survey was taken at the 58th National FFA Convention concerning the characteristics of the 114 National Agricultural Proficiency Award finalists. The data from the surveys were analyzed, revealing some interesting statistics.

The winners who were polled revealed that the climb to the national level is a long one. Over two-thirds of the 105 winners who completed the survey indicated that they had set their goal to compete in Kansas City while they were freshmen, almost 25% were sophomores, 8.6% juniors, and only one percent a senior when this goal was set. However, even though most set their goals early, there is usually a long period involved between the time they set their goal to compete and the time they actually won the award. In 1985, there were no freshmen or sophomore winners as opposed to nine juniors, 47 seniors, and 49 high school graduates who won.

The majority of these upperclassmen who were national finalists with the SOE programs also did well in the vocational agriculture classroom. Almost 90% received mostly A's while 10.7% earned mostly B's. None of the students received mostly C's. The male to female ratio of these honor students was approximately the same as it was in 1984 with 88.6% males and 11.4% females.

In 1985, 14.2% of the winners' high school instructional programs were agribusiness related and 76.4% were agriculture production oriented. This can be compared to the 1984 survey that shows that 8.0% of the students were enrolled in agribusiness classes and 85.2% were in classes involving agriculture production.

Also in 1982, only 27% had career plans in agricultural business while 57% involved farming. But the 1983-85 findings show a heavier emphasis toward agribusiness careers as shown in the table.

These figures suggest that the career trend for young agriculturists is definitely toward agribusiness, and possibly toward diversification. Last year 36 finalists or



BY LAWINNA MCGARY

(Ms. McGary is a Contests and Awards Intern with the National FFA Center, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, Virginia 22309.)

33% of the participants received recognition in four or more different proficiency awards at the chapter level.

Career Plans of Proficiency Award Finalists

Year	Production Career		Agribusiness Career	
	Count	%	Count	%
1982	25	56.8	12	27.3
1983	35	40.2	34	39.1
1984	35	37.7	43	46.2
1985	50	43.1	46	29.7

Twenty-four received recognition in three areas, 22 in two areas, and 23 in one. This can be compared to the 1983 figures of only five who received recognition from four or more contests, seven involved in three, 13 in two, and 19 who entered one.

A majority of the vocational agriculture students (95%) plan a career in their award area, but many of them also plan to further their education. Over 62% have decided to attend a four-year college, which is almost identical to the 63% in 1984. The number of students attending a two-year technical school has increased from 15% in 1984 to 22% in 1985. Only 16% in 1985 versus 22% in 1984 do not plan to further their formal education after high school.

Fortunately, one survey question has been answered the same way since 1982. Over 86% of the FFA members indicated excellent support from their vocational agriculture instructors.

Beef Breed Associations . . . A Valuable Resource For Teachers

Anyone having the responsibility of instructing our nation's youngsters has a formidable task. Vocational agriculture teachers are no exception. Their challenge in many ways is much more difficult because every teacher is required to be knowledgeable in a wide variety of areas. I remember my vocational agriculture teacher in Upstate N.Y. covering topics like tractor maintenance, farm facilities, pigs, chickens, dairy cattle, parliamentary procedure, financing, woodshop, metal shop, etc. I will never forget him because I thought he was one of the most intelligent individuals I had ever met. I was 14 at the time and at a very impressionable age.

As I look back over the 30 years since I was in his class, I realize that he was probably very average in intelligence, but excelled in preparation. Being well-prepared in each of the various topics must have taken a great deal of his time. Gathering information from wherever it could be obtained, updating his information and translating it into understandable teenage language took a very special person. I do not know what all his resources were, however, I do know that when anyone requires information on beef cattle, the various beef breed associations are indeed a valuable resource.

It has been documented that there are over 50 different beef breeds. Most of these breeds have associations that are quite willing to freely supply promotional material that will describe why their particular breed is the best, has the only advantage, and is the sole answer to whatever your breeding problems are. I will not discuss promotional material in this article. As beef breed associations become larger, their staff becomes larger and their ability to develop "specialized departments" beyond those solely devoted to promotion grows as well. When gathering information that most closely accomplishes teaching objectives, it is advisable to select 1 or 2 of the large Beef Breed Associations as your resource. The areas covered in this article include General Breed Information, Audio-Visual Materials and Informative Literature, Junior Activities, and Association Staff Members (Fieldmen).

I am most familiar with the services available from the American Angus Association since I have been very active as director and officer of several state and regional Angus Associations. Allow me to give you a briefing of the magnitude of this Association and what it does for its members and industry. The American Angus Association was founded in 1883 and today has more than 20,000 members plus nearly 7,000 Junior members in all 50 states. By every measure, membership or annual registrations of cattle, the American Angus Association is the largest beef registry association in the world. It is the only organization of its kind to market its end product — Angus beef. This is done through the Certified Angus Beef Program. Our magazine, *The Angus Journal*, carried 990 pages of

BY ROBERT C. PASCALAR, JR.

(Mr. Pascalar is a former director and officer of several state and regional Angus Associations, and owner of Pascalar Angus Ranch, 40524 Hwy. 228, Sweet Home, Oregon 97386.)

editorial information to every member in 1985. This magazine was named the best breed association publication in the U.S. by the Livestock Publications Council, so members not only received a large quantity of editorial material to help them in their business, but it was top quality information that was professionally presented.

In the following paragraphs are several ways teachers might utilize the information and services from the specialized areas or "departments" of a large breed association. The first of these areas I named "general information" because it encompasses what I feel is the most important service rendered by a breed association to its members. That service is providing access to performance data and breeding evaluations. In addition to Herd Improvement Records, which will be discussed later, the Angus Association publishes many pamphlets and reports relating to performance data and breeding evaluations. These publications are available free of charge just for the asking.

Before giving a detailed explanation of these evaluations and data, their importance as a teaching tool should be explored. In order for anyone to approach breeding beef cattle as a profitable business, that person must have information concerning the traits in his or her beef cattle that will be most apt to produce profit. A beef breeder must find ways to raise cattle that are efficient, relatively trouble free, and consistently profitable. The various evaluation reports and data available enable anyone to make sound choices concerning trait selections based on hard objective data and not on subjective data alone.

One such evaluative tool is the *Angus Sire Evaluation Report*. It is a complete cataloguing of all registered Angus bulls for which performance data are available. The 1985 Report, issued in October and free to all in the *The Angus Journal*, contained detailed information on 2,896 sires. The information on these bulls includes statistics on birth, weaning, and yearling weights of their offspring as well as data on the milking or maternal traits passed on to his daughters and information on the carcass quality of his offspring. This *Sire Evaluation Report*, in addition to being included annually in the pages of *The Angus Journal*, is also available in pamphlet form.

In the May issue of *The Angus Journal*, the American Angus Association publishes its annual *Pathfinder Report*. This report lists all the superior cows of the breed based on the herd improvement records of registered breeders nationwide. This report, also available in pamphlet form,

identifies cows that stand in the top 5% of a given registered herd for a period of at least three years based on factors such as calving interval and weaning weights of calves. An important part of this report is the list of bulls that have sired five or more qualifying females. In 1985, over 3,500 cows and over 100 bulls were identified as pathfinders.

Another important informational resource is BIF or the "Beef Improvement Federation" fact sheet. BIF is a federation of organizations, businesses, and individuals interested or involved in performance evaluation of beef cattle. The purposes of BIF are to bring about uniformity of procedures, development of programs, cooperation among interested entities, education of its members and the ultimate consumers of performance evaluation methods, and to build the confidence of the beef industry in the principles and potentials of performance testing. The fact sheets published by the federation and distributed by the various member breed associations provide invaluable information for using and interpreting data compiled in reports such as "Sire Summaries and Herd Improvement Records."

Although I have mentioned several ways breed associations proliferate important information, no doubt the greatest contributions they give their members are the computer programs and information for maintaining accurate herd improvement records. Never before have individual breeders, students, and teachers had so much information to instruct students or to apply in evaluating and developing very individual breeding programs.

Audio-Visual Materials

The next area of information I call "audio-visual materials and informative literature" is filled with useful teaching tools. The Angus Association offers booklets, film strips, slides, and 16mm films that can be used in the classroom. All film strips, slides, and 16mm films are available on a free-loan basis or they can be purchased. The free literature covers such topics as *A History of the Angus Breed*, *How To Be Successful With Your Small Angus Herd*, *Angus Breed Improvement Manual*, *Learning to Judge Angus Cattle*, *Star of Your Future* plus many other titles. Our 16mm films include such titles as "Your Best Beef Buy," "Your First Step Tomorrow," "Angus in the U.S. — A Century of Progress," and "The Good Life — Breeding Registered Angus." These movies run 11 to 14 minutes and cover USDA beef grades, an interview with an FFA Star Farmer of America, and one gives an accurate portrayal of the registered beef cattle business. The slide shows available include "Judging," "Fitting," "Showmanship," and "Merchandising Cattle" to mention a few. For a complete list, write: The American Angus Association, 3201 Frederick Blvd., St. Joseph, MO 64501.

Junior Activities

Unless our young people can be encouraged and inspired to work toward goals and take leadership positions, the beef industry and the nation as well can only look forward to a grim future. Junior members are the lifeblood of the beef industry and every effort should be made to help them realize their potential and reach their goals. I am particularly pleased to talk about the Junior Angus Association because its Junior Activities Program is probably the

most comprehensive of its kind. In July, 1985, Junior members from 35 states and their families met in Tulsa, Oklahoma, for the National Junior Angus Show. The event provided valuable experience and plenty of fun for all involved. Sixty delegates met to elect six new directors to the National Junior Board. The show itself attracted 497 head of cattle from 30 states. The National Showmanship Contest attracted 60 winners from 32 states. In addition to this national event, the American Angus Association co-sponsored Junior Shows in nearly every state, including regional shows in Nevada and Pennsylvania, regional preview shows in Wisconsin, Louisiana, and Oregon, and numerous state fairs and field days nationwide. We also have a full-time Junior Activities Director, Mark Wyble, who is responsible for all Junior activities on a national basis.

Association Staff Members

There are 13 regional managers and they represent the Association in all fields from helping plan and execute local Angus activities to assisting with herd consultations. Their names, addresses, telephone numbers, and the areas they cover are listed below:

WAYMON ASHLEY — *Arizona, New Mexico, Texas*
3213 Cheryl Lane, Ft. Worth, Texas 76117, (817)834-6552

JOHN BARTON — *Missouri*
Rt. 1, Columbia, Mo. 65201, (314)449-3051

STEVE BURNS — *California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Western Canada*
P.O. Box 255668, Sacramento, Calif. 95865, (916) 972-8111

RICHARD DYAR — *Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi*
Rt. 1, Crossville, Ala. 35962, (205)659-6305

CHUCH GROVE — *Kentucky, Tennessee*
Rt. 2, Box 182, Forest, Va. 24551, (804)525-4687

DON LAUGHLIN — *Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma*
P.O. Box 8847, Wichita, Kan. 67208, (316) 686-7670

BILL POWELL — *Delaware, Maryland, New England States, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia*
8332 Revelation Ave., Walkersville, Md. 21793, (301)845-2154

JIM SHIRLEY — *Manitoba, Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota*
1021 Vine St., Brookings, S.D. 57006, (605)692-1613

DON TRIMMER — *Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin*
1706 Rockingham Drive #1, Normal, Ill. 61761 (309)452-1669

BRUCE WEETER — *Alaska, Central Canada, Montana, North Dakota, Wyoming*
Bar W Ranch, Pray, Mont. 59065, (406)333-4444

SCOTT WELLER — *Florida, Georgia, North & South Carolina*
10941 Carmel Crossing Rd., Pineville, N.C. 28134 (704)541-0195

JEFF WINDETT — *Eastern Canada, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio*
425 Shagbark Court, Pickerington, Ohio 43147 (614)837-1805

They can give the who, what, and where information for specific locations.

As you can see, breed associations can provide the classroom instructor with new and meaningful information. What makes this resource so valuable is that it is an ever-growing and changing body of objective data constantly being updated by the performance records of its membership.

Stories in Pictures

FFA Must Meet the Needs of Contemporary Youth



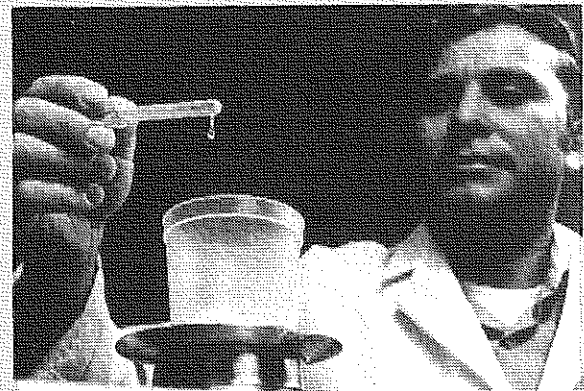
FFA contests must be modern and allow students to advance toward their career goals. (Photo courtesy of Dave Daniel.)



FFA can develop skills necessary to guide members to important leadership positions such as a state FFA officer. (Photo courtesy of Berthold FFA Chapter, North Dakota.)



Community development is easily taught with BOAC experiences. (Photo courtesy of Dave Daniel.)



To be effective advisors for FFA, PAS, YFA, and collegiate organizations, instructors must stay current with the latest technology being used in agricultural industry. (Photo courtesy of Doug Rinker.)