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Young Farmer Education

THE
AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION
MAGAZINE

June, 1996 Volume 68 Number 12

Table of Contents

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 the article unless one is on file with the Editor. **Articles in *The Magazine* may be reproduced without permission.**

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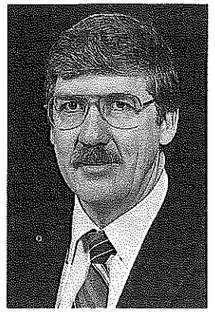
Our Challenge in Young Farmer Education



BY: MAYNARD J. IVERSON

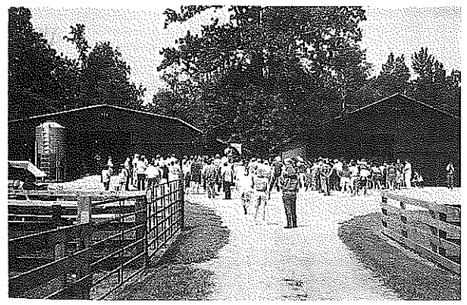
Dr. Iverson is an associate professor and head of the agricultural education program in the department of occupational studies at the University of Georgia, Athens.

Agricultural educators across the country are joining together, linking arms, and speaking with renewed gusto about our "community-based program...". In many states, agriscience is the wave of the future in a move away from the old production agriculture model. Still, the profession expresses concern that we not "throw the baby out with the bath water" and lose the many time-honored values of the traditional vocational agriculture/agricultural education programs.

At the same time, a number of states appear to be stepping back from the traditional commitment to adult education in their communities. This is evidenced by sharp decreases in enrollments in young farmer programs, reduced or eliminated executive director support for young farmer associations, and reduction in numbers of departments offering adult education of any kind.

What is happening to the spirit of the Smith-Hughes program—one that originated for "PRESENT and prospective farmers..."?!? It appears that we may have lost our zeal for truly community based programs—which means serving the needs of adults in our locales, too. This is a worrisome trend, if the aforementioned changes are indeed a prediction of things to come.

During the past six years, it has been my privilege to serve on the National Young Farmers Education Association (NYFEA) Board of Directors, representing the American Association for Agricultural Education. In this capacity, I have been involved in most of the major activities of the NYFEA. I have gained a great respect for the membership in this national organization, and an even greater appreciation for its leaders. The NYFEA has tremendous potential for a position of leadership in the industry of agriculture. The organization is at a crossroads, however, unless the agricultural education profession pulls together behind the NYFEA, the "association for educating agricultural leaders" is unlikely to reach its potential.



Farm tours are popular events for Georgia Young Farmers. (Photo courtesy of Maynard J. Iverson.)

How can we assist? There are many ways and means. State and national leaders can communicate the needs and benefits of the program to legislators and the U.S. Congress in order to get favorable legislation passed regarding the program. State staff can put a higher priority on young farmer programs, place primary responsibility for supervision of the program on one or more staff members, and seek the financial support needed to implement strong programs. Teacher educators can incorporate young farmer education into their pre-service and in-service education programs, conduct needed research on the program, and give leadership to the development and dissemination of appropriate instructional materials. Teachers of agricultural education—whatever their specialty or setting—can look for creative ways to provide technical instruction and leadership training for those seeking to enter and progress in the industry of agriculture (this will likely involve agribusiness entrepreneurs and service workers as well as producers!).

In this edition, dedicated to young farmer education, the reader will see a broad spectrum of ways for the profession to offer young farmer education programs under a variety of conditions. The spirit and dedication of the writers is a clear signal that there is clearly a clientele group out there for the profession to serve. The stories that this group of authors have to tell should serve as an inspiration to all of us. Let's do all that we can to make this the year of turn around for young farmer/agricultural education in America! ■

About the Cover

The photograph on the cover of this issue shows a group of Cook County, Georgia Young Farmers enrolled in a class of instruction on insecticide application. The Young Farmers were calibrating planters with inert materials as a practice exercise. The materials and equipment shown here were donated by the Rhone-Poulenc Company for use by the Young Farmers. *(Photo courtesy of Terrell Weeks.)*

The Light Is Green for Young Farmers and Agriculture Leaders

BY: GORDON STONE
Mr. Stone is the executive director of the National Young Farmer Education Association.

The title, "paradigm buster", serves as an accurate description of people who are trying to create a new means of defining traditional programs.

How do people become "paradigm busters"? A typical path starts with people who attend a seminar and listen to a meeting facilitator outline the challenges facing an organization. They prioritize the strengths and the weaknesses of the organization, then they use "possibility thinking" to identify the most appropriate means of addressing the problem. The facilitator stretches the thinking of the attendees so that ideas for solving the problem are creative and border on the impossible. The result of this synergistic "possibility thinking" is new ideas that are often outside of the realm of what the group had previously believed was possible. The individuals at the meeting suddenly become "paradigm busters".

"Paradigm busters" are becoming less difficult to find. Even traditional entities, like agricultural education, are becoming more populated with "possibility thinkers", and "paradigm busters" are especially visible in adult agricultural education.

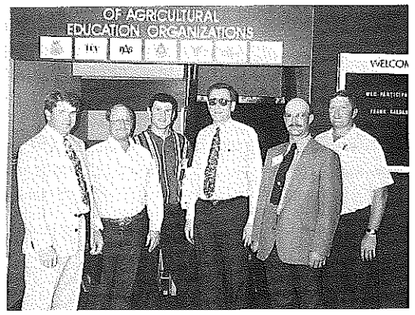
The circumstances that face organizations in adult agricultural education are leaving people no choice but to use "possibility thinkers". For example, shifts in the staff assignments at many state departments of education have changed the operating structure for the state associations of young farmers. Also, many agricultural leadership organizations are having to combine resources to find more efficient means of providing their training programs.

The overall system of agricultural education is experiencing changes. NVATA, FFA Alumni, NYFEA, and other agricultural education organizations have changed executive directors during the last three years. FFA is determining whether to move the national headquarters and relocate the convention from Kansas City. Change is also occurring in the administrative structures in Washington, DC and around the states.

The Missouri National Institute toured several large dryland farming operations. (Photo courtesy of Maynard J. Iverson.)

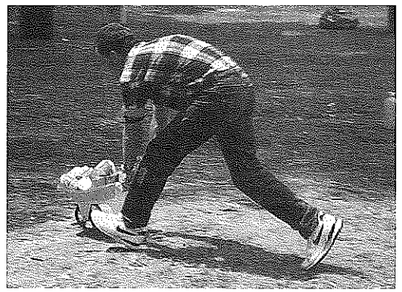
The changes in adult agricultural education have had a positive impact on NYFEA - The Association for Educating Agricultural Leaders (a. k. a, National Young Farmer Education Association). The development of the long range plan, Education for American Agriculture (EAA), occurred as a result of the many shifts in agricultural education funding. EAA has created a very strong direction for NYFEA. Other positives have occurred as well. NYFEA is pleased to have adjusted well to the move of the national headquarters to Montgomery, Alabama. The association has reduced the overall cost of operation, and it is standing on its own financial feet. NYFEA has a large menu of programs and activities that are member focused.

No longer is NYFEA simply an organization that provides an annual convention for young farmers, it is now a full service provider of leadership training, business skill development, and community service programs. NYFEA is pleased to offer two annual meetings. Along with the Winter Institute (convention), the Summer Leadership Conference is a second opportunity for NYFEA members.



NYFEA officers, Board members, and committee chairs were given a tour of the National FFA Center during the group's Summer Business Meeting in Alexandria, Virginia. (Photo courtesy of Maynard J. Iverson.)

The association is committed to providing the finest menu of leadership and business management training programs available for agricultural people. NYFEA provides opportunities for learning through programs at these conferences. However, the association also offers opportunities through participation in direct mail, educational activities. The direct mail program is extremely exciting because, for the first time, it allows NYFEA to deliver educational material directly to the members. Once members are exposed to leadership training and business management courses, they are offered opportunities to solidify their learning through participation in the eight different contests. Further, individuals are encouraged to apply their learning by the participating in community service programs. The NYFEA service programs promote agriculture and strengthen the rural community. For example, NYFEA has seen numerous state and local organizations raise food for the hungry by hosting nationally sponsored service projects that teach participants about the origin of food.

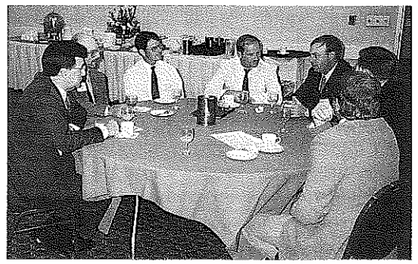


NYFEA members held a "Wheelbarrow Race for Hunger" at the Summer Business Meeting in Charleston, South Carolina. (Photo courtesy of Gordon Stone.)

Through the changes, NYFEA has also learned the importance of recognizing the individuals who participate. A person who successfully completes a full menu of educational programs, contests and service projects will earn a degree. The association is providing leadership and management degrees to those individuals who participate in the three areas previously described.

EAA is designed to offer individuals across the United States the opportunity to access the same quality of personal development program, regardless of their geographic location or the strength of their local chapter. NYFEA is proud to announce that over the last two years, more than 80 leadership and management degrees have been awarded to individuals successfully completing the EAA program.

As an organization serving over 25,000 people with programs and services, NYFEA is committed to never losing the edge gained through these changes. It is the difficulty experienced over the past few years has produced the synergy which led to these positive changes. Organizational leaders could have easily turned and walked away from their troubles, but instead of ducking under the fence and escaping the pasture, they decided to fix the holes, repair the broken posts, rehang the gates, and put the field back into production. Taking ground that has been previously farmed for one crop and converting it to another is not an easy process. However, it does allow for new varieties (of ideas) to have a chance to be heard and jell into effective products. Farmers know that you never abandon those products that are winners for the farm. They have to learn from the successes and expand to find new products that are complimentary to the old ones. NYFEA has applied this "possibility thinking" and it has worked.



NYFEA officers and committee chairs met with American Farm Bureau leaders during the Summer Business Meeting held in Alexandria, Virginia in 1994. (Photo courtesy of Maynard J. Iverson.)

The updates given by a reporter on the traffic problems at rush hour in America's cities are often mind boggling. The intersections that travelers are to avoid are often too numerous to comprehend. The listener can learn about all the red lights that are creating backlogs on the highways of the city, but rural people used to not be concerned about red lights. Rarely did the roads have hindrances. They could go from point A to point B without the worry of traffic forcing them to stop for a fight to change. You might say the light was always green. The truth is that farmers no longer have that luxury. However, they do control how they look at the traffic lights, stop signs and other road blocks that are beginning to appear in rural communities. Farmers should consider a new way of defining traffic lights. Instead of the term red light, they should call them green lights. Red lights are a negative approach. Green lights are positive. Either way, people are going to have to deal with changes that are facing their daily routine. All people have the ability to control their outlook on life. Whether people find good or bad in their daily routine is the choice they make.

The following is a list of the programs that are presently available for the participants in NYFEA to utilize and enjoy:

Leaders Understand the Importance of Learning

NYFEA - The Association for Educating Agricultural Leaders is proud to present a series of leadership training programs. They are designed to help individuals develop their natural talents to the fullest. The programs offer helpful ideas that can be applied to the many different environments and challenges that face America's farmers and agriculture leaders.

Personal Organizational Power

This program focuses on techniques for saving time in the personal and professional life. Learn

(Continued on page 17)

Establishing a Collegiate Young Farmers Chapter

BY: LISA CHAUDION AND B. ALLEN TALBERT

Ms. Chaudion is an adult vocational education consultant and executive secretary/treasurer of the Indiana Young Farmers' Association, Indianapolis, and Dr. Talbert is an assistant professor of agricultural education at Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN.

The Indiana Young Farmers Association (IYFA) offers adult agricultural education to a wide variety of people. In our efforts to enhance our organization's outreach, we have extended to college students at Purdue University the opportunity to become members of IYFA. This effort allows the college students to gather together for a common purpose and provide the IYFA with a linkage to future agricultural production and business leaders. In the past IYFA has been thought of as "just a farmer's organization". This image has possibly kept young people involved in agribusiness from joining local IYFA chapters. Although farming is still a very important part of IYFA, all aspects of the agricultural industry play a vital role in IYFA's existence. Successful farming requires intense training combined with an intimate involvement with agribusiness. By linking with college students, IYFA hopes to meet the needs of today's growing society and establish a lifetime relationship with these young men and women.

Setting the Groundwork

During an evaluation of its membership demographics, the Indiana Young Farmers Association found that most of its members were engaged in production farming and were older than 25 years of age. When the IYFA looked at the possibilities of encouraging more young people to become involved in the organization, it took a serious look at the leading edge youth development organization, FFA. What happens to these quality young people after their involvement as an FFA member is completed? We found that those who went to college wanted to continue to be involved in learning about agriculture and developing their leadership skills, and these students also wanted to establish relationships with students in other discipline area. This mixing of students from different majors and career interests is lacking in most collegiate major-specific/career-specific student organizations.

Through cooperative work between the Indiana Young Farmers Association and the state and district offices of the Indiana FFA Association, many of the FFA members wanted to become involved in IYFA to continue their educational experiences and become important agricultural leaders in society. As IYFA looked at how best to meet the needs of these young people, we found that offering a quality young farmer program at Purdue University, Indiana's land grant university, would begin to meet this need.

A few of the interested students contacted the Purdue Agricultural Education staff and, consequently, a meeting was held between the IYFA Executive Secretary/Treasurer and the Purdue staff. At this meeting, goals, objectives, and potential members of the new student organization were discussed. We also discussed how the new organization would affect the current agricultural education student organization. We did not want to draw students away from it nor have two weak organizations if the same students tried to be heavily involved in both. It was also decided that the new organization should have one advisor from the agricultural education staff and one from another department within the Purdue School of Agriculture. This would provide the linkage to agricultural education, while also attracting students from other majors.

Purdue Students in Agriculture

Purdue University has a long tradition of supporting student learning experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Student organizations are encouraged because they help prepare students for their chosen careers and help students become better citizens. The School of Agriculture at Purdue University serves approximately 2,000 students in a total student body of more than 35,000. Student organizations in the School of Agriculture are typically major specific such as the Agricultural Economics Club or career-specific such as Block and Bridle. IYFA has a great opportunity to fill a niche by spanning across majors and careers.

Work on establishing a IYFA chapter at Purdue started in the summer of 1995. All of the research and groundwork on starting the chapter was done by a dedicated group of Purdue School of Agriculture students guided by IYFA state staff and Purdue Agricultural Education staff. One of the first tasks was to determine whether the goals and objectives of the IYFA were being met by an existing student organization. Students contacted advisors of School of Agriculture student organizations and the Associate Dean, who advises the School of Agriculture Club Council. After obtaining the "go ahead" from these groups, the next step was to write a constitution. This took the remainder of the summer as wording had to be coordinated with the Purdue Business Office for Student Organizations (BOSO) which approves new student clubs and organizations. Local high school agricultural education teachers/Young Farmers advisors were contacted to address any concerns they might have and to obtain suggestions from them.

Throughout the fall, interested students met to discuss and develop such processes as officer elections, dues structure, bylaws, relationship to IYFA, and advertisement for members. In Indiana, local IYFA chapters select names which describe the members such as "Young Entrepreneurs". The Purdue students decided on the name "Purdue Students in Agriculture" or PSA. This name describes who the chapter is for, but more importantly, does not limit membership to any particular major or career. Although not an official student organization yet, PSA members, acting as individuals, helped with the IYFA Indiana State Fair activities.

During the Spring of 1996, PSA obtained official recognition as a Purdue student organization and was also chartered by the Indian Young Farmers Association. PSA members were actively involved in the State Young Farmer Convention and two ran for state offices. At the state convention, other local chapters expressed excitement over PSA and indicated a willingness to work with the state's newest Young Farmer Chapter. At spring chapter meetings, the members elected officers, established committees, and began developing a program of activities.

Purdue Students in Agriculture members are planning to participate in state fair activities again this summer. They also plan to hold a Callout, an organizational meeting to attract new members, early in September and to begin following through on the program of activities. The goal of the PSA members is by the end of the 1996-97 school year, to have 40-60 members representing all of the majors in the School of Agriculture.

Long Term Plans

What are the long term benefits to the IYFA? Foremost is the establishment of the niche for college students for which IYFA had been looking. When these students graduate, they will be involved in diverse fields of agriculture across the state, nation, and world. It is our hope that their experiences in Young Farmers will not only help them in their chosen careers, but also encourage them to join, or work to start, Young Framer educational programs in the communities in which they live. As leaders and professionals in agriculture, we hope they will assist the local agricultural education teacher in providing educational opportunities in agriculture for the community.

Another benefit is the training that a collegiate young farmers organization can give to future agricultural education teachers who join. By establishing relationships with students from other majors and by working within an organization which promotes adult education in agriculture, future agricultural education teachers are encourages to teach adults and advise local Young Farmer Chapters. One note of caution is that if the majority of PSA members are agricultural education majors, then this benefit is reduced or eliminated. If this occurs, then the organization will probably be dissolved because it would be more effective and efficient to incorporate adult education activities into the existing agricultural education student organization.

If the chapter at Purdue is successful, it is our hope that similar chapters will be started at other agricultural universities across the United States. Anyone interested in starting a collegiate young farmer organization is encouraged to contact either of this article's authors. We are excited about the potential that this organization holds.

Continuing the education process past high school or college graduation is important to everyone, regardless of age, gender, or career. Young Farmers has a great product that everyone needs—adult agricultural education! ■

Georgia Young Farmer Programs Provide Life Long Learning

BY: TERRELL WEEKS

Mr. Weeks is the executive director of the Georgia Young Farmer Association, Tifton, GA.

Although agricultural educators in Georgia have been providing agricultural education on the post secondary level to adults involved in agriculture for at least fifty years, many state and national leaders blissfully speak as though the concept of life-long learning is a new idea. In Georgia, adult education for young farmers has been successful because agriculture education has provided adults in the agriculture industry with structured learning for many years and is positioned to continue well into the next century.

For several years, Georgia has maintained the largest state association involved in the National Young Farmers Educational Association (The 1996 membership for Georgia was 3,438). The remainder of this article will give a brief overview of why I think the Georgia Young Farmer Program has been so successful.

In the early 50's, the Georgia General Assembly appropriated funds to begin eight pilot programs for adult education for young farmers. Primarily, the funds were for teacher salary and travel. These pilot programs proved to be very beneficial to the farmers involved. Currently, there are fifty-two full-time young farmer instructors in Georgia. These instructors are employed for twelve months, which allows agricultural education assistance to continue without interruption. Because instructors are employed year round, they serve not only as a teacher, but also as a leader and resource person. Their role in this leadership capacity is crucial to having a strong local association that is active in state activities. Georgia's success is due almost entirely to the fact that salaried people are in positions of leadership as advisors year-round on the local level, and a full-time executive director position is funded on the state level.

Cook County Young Farmer Advisor, Michael Benefield, organized a class of instruction on granular applicators, shielded sprayers, and conventional sprayers. Rhone-Poulenc and Dupont sponsored the luncheon meeting and provided technical support for the instruction. Rhone-Poulenc donated to the chapter a calibration kit which included an electrical drive unit that would enable the calibration applicators in a stationary location. (Photo courtesy of Terrell Weeks).

Young farmer teachers annually develop a course calendar that includes no less than twenty classes. The classes developed are based on local needs and trends in all phases of agriculture. The classes are normally conducted in the evening when farmers/agribusinessmen are more accessible. The backbone of the young farmer program is the organized instruction based on local needs as identified by participants and local agriculture leaders. To maintain close ties to the secondary agriculture education programs and to provide balance to the delivery of agriculture instruction in local communities, the Georgia Department of Education requires the young farmer teachers to teach one class of agriculture education at the 9-12 level. This class is normally conducted at the beginning of the school day which allows the young farmer teacher to have the remainder of the day to work with adults in the community on a one-to-one basis or in small group instruction. State Standards require a local system to operate a secondary agricultural education program to receive the 80% funding and benefits of the young farmer program. The State Department of Education has provided young farmer teachers not only financial support, but in addition, it has provided many staff development activities to keep them current with the changes in the agriculture industry.

In 1970, the Georgia Association was organized to complement the on-going instructional program. The primary purpose of organizing the state association was to coordinate local activities at state level and provide leadership opportunities. Annually during the last weekend in January, the association conducts a convention to recognize outstanding accomplishments by members of local chapters. Many activities are conducted during the convention to accomplish a broad array of goals. A typical schedule is as follows:

Convention Highlights

Friday, January 26, 1996

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Exhibitors Complete Set-up in the Atrium
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Registration in the Foyer
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Exhibit Hall Open in the Atrium
2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Business Session in Savannah "C"

The annual state convention provided ample opportunity for the fine tuning of leadership skills for the executive committee. Randy Branch (L) president, Wes Shannon (C) past president, and Allen Whitehead (R) president-elect take a break from their responsibilities while the audience listens to an awards presenter. (Photo courtesy of Terrell Weeks.)

3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Ladies Program in Savannah "D & E" Speaker: Jolene Brown, CSP
3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Spokesperson for Agriculture Contest
7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.	Awards Banquet in Savannah Ballroom. Farm Family Awards, Chapter Awards, Chapter President Awards Auction Entertainment: "Jolene Brown, CPS"
10:00 p.m. - Until	Line Dance School in Savannah "D & E"

Saturday, January 27, 1996

8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	Executive Committee Photo Session
8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Registration in the Foyer
8:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon	Exhibit Hall Open in the Atrium
8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.	Biscuit Breakfast in the Atrium
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Photo Contest Judging
10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	Farm Management Contest in Oglethorpe A
12:00 noon - 2:00 p.m.	Luncheon in Savannah Ballroom Photography Awards Farm Management Awards Speaker: U.S. Congressman Saxby Chambliss
7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.	Banquet in Savannah Ballroom Advisor Recognition State Officer Recognition Honorary Membership Auction Entertainment: "George Fields"
9:30 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.	Dance in Savannah "D & E" Featuring Danny Carter and the Southwind Band

Convention activities provide formal and informal opportunities for participants. Many awards are presented over the weekend. The trade show allows participants to garner information on the latest chemicals, seed, tillage practices, marketing, etc. for their farming enterprise. The trade show normally has seventy-five plus exhibitors each year. The convention participation averages 900 young farmers, spouses, young farmer teachers, and guests.

The convention serves as a showcase of the accomplishments of local chapters. The State Executive Committee works diligently to use the State Convention as a tool to promote the young farmer program to those individuals who can affect the funding and operation of the program.

The State Executive Committee annually holds its spring board meeting at the state capitol in Atlanta during the third week of February. While at the capital, the officers pay visits to their representatives and senators. Often the legislators will drop by the state board meeting to welcome them to Atlanta and the capital. Each year this event is scheduled to allow the Executive Committee to participate in the House of Representatives Agriculture Committee weekly meeting. Although the association is non-political, we feel it necessary to keep the legislators that are involved in education and agriculture aware of the accomplishments of the program.

Another major activity that has proven successful in stimulating interest and activity is the annual summer tour. Each year, a local chapter will serve as host to this event for young farmers and their families to interact with other farm families and view agricultural operations in other parts of the state. Normal attendance is 400 plus adults and children. A normal schedule of events is as follows:

Schedule of Events

Friday, July 14, 1995

1:00-5:00 p.m.	Registration - Lobby of Tift Hall, ABAC

Optional Tours

Pre-registration Required

(A minimum of thirty participants are required for the tours to be available.)

1:30-3:00 p.m.	Coastal Plain Experiment Station Animal Science Department
4:00-5:00 p.m.	Kelley Manufacturing Company Plant Tour
7:00 p.m.	Evening Banquet - ABAC Dining Hall "Reminiscing the 70's" Entertainment: Bill Clary, Musician, Magician, Illusionist

Saturday, July 15, 1995

7:15-7:45 a.m.	Breakfast - Tift County Junior High
7:45 a.m.	Tours Begin
1:00 p.m.	Barbecue Lunch - Tift County Junior High

Typically the tour will showcase members farms, as well as agribusiness in the local area. Tour stops would be as follows:

Tour Stops - Saturday, July 15, 1995

Georgia Vegetable Company, Inc.

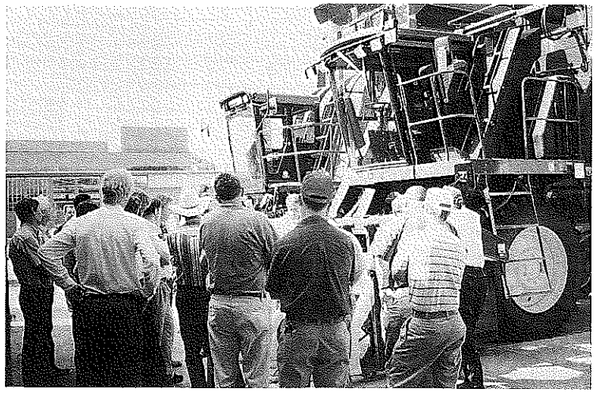
Georgia Vegetable Company, Inc. is a →

A trade show is conducted each year during the state convention to provide young farmer members and advisors with the latest information on all types of agriculture products. The one-on-one interaction with company representatives is always important to members. (Photo courtesy of Terrell Weeks.)

locally owned and operated vegetable grower, packer, and shipper of fresh vegetables. The Grist Family started the company in 1974. Since its inception, Georgia Vegetable has become a mainstay of the vegetable industry in the Tift County area. Georgia Vegetable not only packs and ships their own produce, but they handle produce for farmers located in several surrounding counties. Located on Highway 41 South, this well known company is endeavoring to meet the demand for the best produce for the consumer.

Lewis Taylor Farms, Inc.

Lewis Taylor Farms, Inc. is a grower and shipper of tobacco and vegetable plants. Pepper, cabbage, eggplants, collards and tobacco plants are grown in the seventeen greenhouses located on the farm. With the change from the traditional field grown plants to greenhouse plants, Lewis Taylor Farms has provided needed transplants to area farmers. Production of vegetables is also another viable enterprise for Lewis Taylor Farms. Many acres are devoted to plasticulture where they produce both tomatoes and peppers.



To help meet the challenge of providing current information to young farmers, a special in-service clinic was organized and coordinated by Dr. Freddie Waltz, area Mechanics Teacher on Cotton Picker Operation, Maintenance, and Adjustment. (Photo courtesy of Terrell Weeks.)

Kelley Manufacturing Company Farm

Kelley Manufacturing Research farm is located in Northern Tift County. The Kelley farm is a working farm enterprise used by KMC to test and improve new farm equipment designed under real farm conditions.

Shannon Farms

Shannon Farms is a diversified farming operation of approximately 500 acres of corn, peanuts, cotton, and cattle. New farming technologies utilized are conservation tillage. Monsanto is currently working with the Shannon's on some strip till cotton.

Tifton Peanut Company, Inc.

With more than 20,000 acres contributing nearly $15 million to Tift County's economy, peanuts are an important commodity. Tifton Peanut Company, Inc. is one of many peanut buying points located in the county. Not only a buying point, Tifton Peanut Company also has a shelling facility. Buying and selling for Hunt-Wesson is an important part of the business. Tifton Peanut Company provides a custom shelling service, as well as shelling and marketing peanuts for a farmer group.

Although the summer tours come at one of the busiest times of the year, it has always bridged the gap for educational activities during the summer months. The tour has also served as a strong component of the public relations activities of the association.

In 1976, the association began the publication of its quarterly magazine, the Georgia Young Farmer. The Executive Committee felt that developing a magazine to keep local members informed was important as to activities and events taking place around the state. Since its inception, the Georgia Young Farmer has been well received. It has given the association opportunity to publicize itself to a broad audience, as well as keeping members informed. The Georgia Young Farmer is a 20 page color cover publication produced by the executive director's office. The current circulation of the magazine is 4,300 mailings each issue.

There are many other factors which have led to the success of the Georgia Young Farmers Association other than the few eluded to in this article. This writer feels that young farmer education programs in Georgia and other states have been well received because they met the needs of several generations of farmers with life long learning in agriculture. ■

Women's Changing Role in the Young Farmer Association

BY: ANGELIA WEBB

Ms. Webb is a middle school agricultural education instructor at Hahira Middle School in Hahira, GA.

Young Farmer Education Programs, and the associations with which they are affiliated, were originally designed to meet the needs of farmers. However, at the time of their establishment, it was assumed that all farmers were men. The contributions of women in agricultural society have been largely ignored throughout time. However, times are changing and today, more women are leading the way in agriculture and agribusiness than ever before.

Why is the number of women entering agriculture increasing at a time when the percentage of farms and farmers is decreasing? Many different factors come into play, one of which is that capable daughters are no longer routinely ruled out when a family decides who will inherit the family farm. Secondly, modern agriculture is full of possibilities for anyone trained in state-of-the-art farm practices, which opens now doors in the industry. Areas such as food brokerage, marketing, sales, food inspectors, dietitians, managers, financial specialists, engineers, animal scientists, and researchers have jobs going unfilled because of a shortage of graduates in these areas of agriculture. Thirdly, many women, when faced with divorce or death of their spouse, are capable of taking over the family farm. According to The Census of American Agriculture (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1992) there are more than 145,000 female farm operators in the country, up 11% from 1987. Women now run 7.5% of all U.S. farms and own 40,806 agricultural firms. More than one half of all these female farmers live in the South (Kalbacher, 1985). So what does this information tell us as educators? We, as educators, need to be aware of women's increasing participation in farming and resultant educational and social needs, in order to design programs that will help this important part of the population develop appropriate farming and managerial skills.

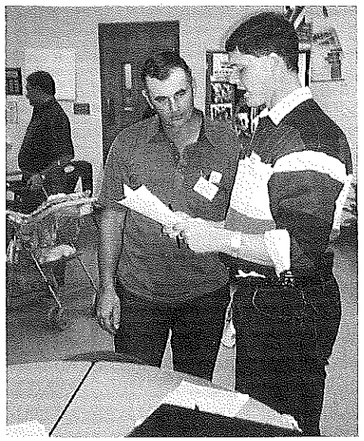
Agricultural groups such as the Young Farmers Association need to be increasingly sensitive to the special needs and problems facing this growing population.

So how did I become interested in the topic of women in the Young Farmer organization? It started at home on my father's South Georgia tobacco farm the first time the local Young Farmer teacher, Ron Smoak, came to visit. Ron became a familiar face at our house over the years, stopping by to discuss farm improvements or inviting my dad to the next monthly meeting. Later in high school I began taking agricultural classes and showing livestock in the FFA, which brought me into daily contact with Ron as well as the other agricultural instructors. By the end of high school I knew my future would be in agriculture. Due to the influences of teachers like Ron Smoak, Joe Lineberger, and Tim Gibson, I became a teacher of vocational agriculture.

Upon graduating from college and entering the job market, I discovered that my gender was occasionally viewed as a disadvantage. Many teachers and administrators assume vocational agriculture/agricultural education teachers are male. Thirty years ago, only boys took agriculture classes and joined the FFA, and only men taught agriculture. Upon further inquiry, I discovered that not only does Georgia have a small percentage of female agriculture teachers, but it has **absolutely no female Young Farmer Advisors**. After obtaining a teaching position, I inquired about joining the local Young Farmer chapter and discovered that there were no women members or even a women's auxiliary. Recently, State Executive Secretary Terrell Weeks discussed the role of women in the Georgia Young Farmers Association with me. He explained that the state association has no policy prohibiting women from being members. The association is there to serve anyone actively engaged in agriculture, farming, and agribusiness. The advisors in each individual county are in control of recruiting new members, conducting classes, and, ideally, trying to tailor their program to the individual needs of the community. The advisor is also in control of the role women are encouraged or not encouraged to play in the chapter. One county could have no female members and no female participation, whereas the next county could have an active ladies auxiliary or even husband/wife →

memberships. If women who actively participate in farming, agriculture, or agribusiness happen to live in the wrong county, this program could be unavailable to them. Just 60 out of 159 counties in the state of Georgia have a Young Farmer Chapter.

Why should the Young Farmers Association encourage women to join and participate in their organization? The percentage of women involved in farming, agriculture, and agribusiness is growing nationally. Researchers at the National Opinion Research Center concluded that farm women occupy virtually every point along the farm participation continuum, from noninvolvement to sole management of an operation. The majority have some responsibilities for bookkeeping, running errands, gardening, and tending the livestock. In addition, many operate machinery, and more than one third are involved in field work, harvesting, making major farm decisions, marketing, and supervising labor. In livestock operations, two-thirds are involved in herding cows and running milk operations. The researchers also found that while few women made major decisions alone, most considered themselves to be partners with their husbands in the farm. Fifty-five percent considered themselves to be partners in the farm operation, and 60% said that if their husbands died, they felt confident that they would continue to run the family farm (Ross, 1982). These women represent not only a new source of membership, but a growing population in need of information and skills to help them survive in an ever changing, increasingly competitive, male-dominated industry.



Research data collection has become a common part of Georgia Young Farmer Association events. Here, David Burton (right), a Young Farmer teacher at Bainbridge High School, asks a GYFA chapter officer attending the summer tour to answer questions for Burton's Educational Specialist thesis topic. (Photo courtesy of Maynard J. Iverson.)

Not only are women gaining ground in agriculture and sharing responsibilities on the farm, they are also increasingly sharing in farm-related injuries and health problems. The Minnesota Farming Health Project conducted a two years study in ten Minnesota counties and surveyed 383 farm families. The families surveyed reported 75 injuries among men and 31 among women. More than half the injuries were fractures, cuts, crushed limbs, amputations, and dislocations serious enough to force the farmer from work, sometimes for three months or more. Public health nurses tested 201 men and 270 women under the age of 60; 65% of the men and 32% of the women suffered some hearing loss. Thirty-six percent of the men and 10% of the women suffered severe hearing loss. Lung tests were abnormal for about 17% of the men and 9% of the women, and most respiratory problems occurred with people who worked with grain.

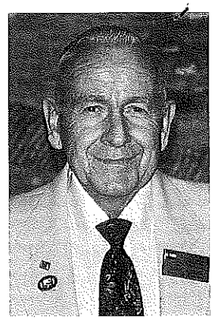
The 1980 National Farm Women Survey measured the satisfaction of women with the community where they live, with farming as a way of life, and with farming as a way of making a living. In general, women were satisfied with farming as way of life, but less satisfied with farming as a way of making a living. The employed wives were less satisfied with farming as a way of making a living, or as a way of life, than were the farm wives. Women who were working to subsidize the farm operation were significantly less satisfied than women who worked for different reasons (Draughn, Godwin, Little, and Marlowe, 1991).

How do the women that participate in the Young Farmer activities in the state of Georgia feel about the organization? The role of women in the nation's young farmer educational associations is a topic that has received very little attention in the literature. Since women currently make up a major segment of the work force in the industry of agriculture, Dr. Maynard Iverson, of the University of Georgia, Athens, and I felt that the topic merited the attention of researchers in agricultural education. We designed a descriptive survey instrument that targeted females married to members, or otherwise affiliated, with the state Young Farmer Association. The primary purpose of the study was to assess the characteristics, needs, and concerns of women associated with the Georgia Young Farmers Association. Specific objectives were to: 1) determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents; 2) secure knowledge of the participant's farming activities; 3) ascertain the nature and extent of female involvement in the GYFA; and 4) elicit the respondent's attitudes toward issues regarding farming and the GYFA.

Since no specific list of women was available, it was decided to gather data at the state convention, which over 900 young farmers and their wives attend each year. Also, no specific data gathering instrument was found in the literature, so the researchers designed a four-part questionnaire which included: a demographic section, farming activities, participation in the GYFA, and attitudes about women's issues. The instrument was reviews by the UGA Agricultural Education staff for technical content and by local female faculty for clarity. The instrument was then approved by the

(Continued on page 16)

Colorado Young Farmer Program: A Unique History and Funding Procedure



BY: ERNIE GILL AND JACK ANNAN

Mr. Gill is the program manager for agricultural education and Mr. Annan is the executive secretary for the Colorado Young Farmers Education Association.

In 1968, representatives of Northeastern Junior College, Colorado State University, and the State Vocational Agriculture supervisory staff began discussing and planning ways and means to increase the amount and quality of adult education in agriculture which was occurring in the state. Out of the discussions and planning evolved an idea which involved several concepts:

1. Regionalizing coordination of efforts through Northeastern Junior College.
2. Providing in-service training to vocational agriculture teachers in adult education teaching content (Farm and Home Planning initially).
3. Promoting adult education in agriculture with school administration as well as vocational agriculture teachers.
4. Providing instructional materials to vocational agriculture teachers to support their efforts in adult education.
5. Providing assistance to vocational agriculture teachers in locating and securing resource persons and materials for adult education.

The idea was then formalized into an experimental project proposal called "Project 21" which was to begin January 1, 1969 and continue through August 31, 1970. The purpose, as stated in the proposal, was "to demonstrate the effectiveness of a coordinating agency in promoting and developing effective adult education in agriculture in a prescribed region of the state."

Northeastern Colorado, because of its strong agricultural industry and the number of schools offering vocational agriculture, was selected as the region. Twenty-one schools offering vocational agriculture were located in the region, and thus the name "Project 21" was selected.

The proposal was submitted to the Colorado State Board for Vocational Education to be considered for funding, and the Board agreed to allocate the funds requested.

Upon notice that the State Board of Vocational Education had approved the funding of "Project 21", Jack Annan was selected to serve as the project coordinator.

At the completion of "Project 21", Jack was selected by the State Board of Vocational Education to serve as the first Executive Secretary of the Colorado Young Farmers Education Association, and he continues to serve in that capacity, even though he retired from Northeastern Junior College.

The results from "Project 21" led to the following conclusions:

1. Regional coordination of efforts through an institution such as Northeastern Junior College will improve the quantity and quality of adult education in agriculture.
2. Providing in-service training to vocational agriculture instructors is important to the success of adult education in agriculture.
3. Providing instructional materials and assisting in locating resource persons will contribute to the success of adult education in agriculture.
4. Involving local administrators in the promotion and development of adult education programs in agriculture will result in programs of high quality.
5. The type of agricultural adult education programs preferred by most communities will be young farmer programs.

Developing the Colorado Young Farmers Education Association

The last conclusion became evident early in the conduct of "Project 21". The number of schools offering adult education in agriculture among the 21 targeted schools increased significantly, and the vast majority of the programs were young farmer programs.

This led to giving Jack Annan, the coordinator of the project, a new duty which was not anticipated when the project was designed: promoting the development of a Colorado Young Farmers Education Association. It was thought that a state organization such as this would promote additional interest in young farmer programs throughout the state and would improve the quality of young farmer programs by providing a forum to facilitate the exchange of ideas. However, the most important reason for promoting a Colorado →

Young Farmers Education Association was to increase the emphasis on leadership development which could be provided through local and state young farmer programs and activities.

Although the desire to form a state Young Farmers Education Association was not shared by all of the local chapters, most of the local chapters were interested in at least exploring the idea further.

Consequently, Mr. Darrell Anderson, who was then the state supervisor of agricultural education in Colorado, put out the call throughout the state to attend a two day institute to be held in Sterling, Colorado on February 27 and 28, 1970. Answering the call to this organizational institute were representatives from 15 young farmer groups.

It is interesting to note that of the 15 young farmer groups represented at this organizational institute, 10 came from the schools included in "Project 21". A total of 141 young farmer, 109 young farmers' spouses, and 60 guests attended this meeting.

Formation of the Colorado Young Farmers Education Association

The first item on the agenda was to decide whether or not to form a Colorado Young Farmers Education Association. For the discussion, it was apparent that most of those in attendance were in favor of forming a state organization. Thus, it was no surprise that when the vote was taken, all 15 local groups supported the formation of a state association and the first Colorado Young Framers Education Institute was officially underway, and a state institute has been held annually since that time.

Electing a slate of state officers became the next item of business. Because the number of young farmers in attendance from each chapter varied, it was decided that each chapter would be allowed two delegates who, from that time on, would be allowed to vote. This practice would ensure that each chapter would have an equal say n the decisions made.

The institute was then recessed in order to allow each of the local chapter to caucus to elect their two delegates and to decide what each local chapter wanted in the way of nominating young farmers for state office or supporting those to be nominated by other chapters. It was most enjoyable to observe the leadership development which occurred when the local chapters caucused with themselves and with other local chapters in deciding upon their actions when the institute was called back to order.

Following the local chapter caucuses, the two official delegates from each chapter were seated, nominations for the various offices were made, campaigns for each nominee were allows, and an election was conducted. These officers then assumed their offices and began to function.

Who is a Young Farmer?

A Young Framer can best be described as someone who has an interest in improving themselves and the industry of agriculture through their interaction and involvement with a group of people who have similar goals and objective in agriculture. Many times, the word "young" can be viewed as one's willingness to continue to learn and grow in the industry of agriculture. The Young Farmer program offers tremendous opportunities for all, regardless of age or gender. With the pace at which agriculture is changing, it is imperative that all agriculturists maintain an attitude of life long learning.

What is the Mission of the Colorado Young Farmers Education Association?

Agriculture has become one of the most intense and technologically advanced industries in the world. With this in mind, one must agree that those actively involved in the industry must keep abreast of these changes. It is the mission of the Young Farmer program to provide the opportunity for agriculturists to enter the industry, as well as to upgrade the skills needed to be leaders in their chosen occupation, Leadership and community development are also important components of the Young Farmer program. Programs offered through the Young Farmer organization foster the development of these skills, with the goal of participating members becoming leaders in their community, state, and nation. The organization is NOT intended to be a political organization in any way. There are other organizations available to agriculturists if that is their intent.

What are the Objectives of the Colorado Young Farmers Education Association?

1. To provide the opportunity for enhanced skill development related to agriculture and the community through group instruction and customized training programs.
2. To develop quality leadership skills in those who are enrolled so they can better represent themselves, the organization, and the agriculture industry in a more deliberate and effective manner though effect operation of a Young Farmer Chapter.
3. To develop a sense of community and service among its members through involvement in local, state, and national activities.
4. To encourage a healthy balance of work and recreation among its members though activities that reflect the shared views and values of its membership.

What Are the Major Components of the Colorado Young Farmers Education Association?

The Young Farmer program is divided into three major categories: instructional program, customized training program, and the Young Framers Education Association and its activities. Each of the components is equally important to maintain a balanced program that can best meet the needs of all enrolled.

Instructional Program

The instructional program is provided under the direction of the advisor. The program is planned, based on the needs of the Young Farmers as they relate to successful establishment or improvement in business. The instruction is usually given at the high school or other locations where facilities are available and adequate contingent on the content of instruction given. In most situations, programs are required to have 15 educational meetings per year, or an equivalent of 30 hours of classroom instruction. The meetings are determined based on the needs of the students enrolled in the program and the relevant agriculture and community situations that may exist. Because of the nature of agriculture, most programs hold their educational meetings during the winter months while there is not such a demand on the time of those enrolled. However, each program is given the freedom to determine how often and when the meetings will be held.

Customized Training Program

The customized training program is critical to the success of the programs. It is designed to allow each individual student the opportunity to get individual assistance in areas of their agricultural business where they feel that they are most in need. Most programs have the minimum requirements of 10 contact hours per student enrolled. There have been some variations of this by reducing the hours of contact between student and instructor and having the student agree to self improvement though involvement in seminars or activities that address their own unique goals and needs.

Young Farmers Education Association and its activities

The Young Farmers Education Association bears the same relationship to the Young Farmer Program as does the FFA to the secondary agricultural education program. This integral part of the program allows students to receive the desired leadership skills through operation of the local chapter and its activities, speaking at various public and state meetings, institutes, and representing the organization at professional seminars and functions. Members have the opportunity to gain personal recognition through the awards program at local, state, and national levels.

Each category has specific components to make the program complete. Without each, the program cannot reach the level of success as those who incorporate all three into an entire program.

How are Young Farmer Programs Regulated and Administered?

Most Young Farmer program are regulated and administered under the supervision of the Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System and its branch community colleges, through local junior colleges, or vo-tech centers. It is important to note that if the program is offered by an agriculture instructor at a local high school, it should be approved by the administration of that school district. Each individual community college, junior college, or vo-tech center has specific guidelines that must be followed in order for funding to be approved by the administering agency. Each semester or year, the advisor to the young farmers is responsible for submitting the required paperwork to the supporting agency to receive payment for themselves and funding for the program.

Unique Funding Procedure

The Colorado Young Farmers Education Association has enjoyed a tradition of success, quality, and stability over the past 27 years. For nearly 15 years, quality of instruction and program stability has been enhanced by funding through generation of FTE (full time equivalent) by enrolling students in a Community/Junior College or Area Vocational Schools. This process is supervised and approved by Ernie Gill, the state Program Manager for Agricultural Education at the Colorado Community Colleges and Occupational Education System. Each year, as the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education sets the funding levels, the colleges and Area Vocational Schools will then determine their respective tuition rates. Once the tuition rates are set, the State Program Manager meets with the State Fiscal Office to determine the amount of the "categorical scholarship" approved for that academic year. The scholarship amount is a maximum and is the same whether the college chooses to register the students each term or once per year. The net tuition cost per student (less that $50) will be virtually the same for all Community Colleges. Local District College and Area Vocational Schools may, at their option, choose to offer similar scholarships to their Young Farmer students.

This funding process becomes economically feasible and attractive for the Colleges and Area Vocational Schools to offer Young Farmers →

through the generation of FTE and collection of tuition. The state reimburses each institution, at their institutional rate, for the FTE generated. The student can utilize these credits toward an earned degree. It takes approximately 7.5 Young Farmer students to generate one annual FTE when they enroll for 4 credit hours. This process allows sufficient funding for the colleges and Area Vocational Schools to contract one of their staff for delivery and coordination of Young Farmers in their service area. These funds are also utilized to contract with the area secondary agricultural education instructors to deliver the instructional component and site visits. The colleges and Area Vocational Schools also provide a budget for materials, supplies, and operational expenses. The by-product for the secondary agricultural education instructor is the support and involvement generated by offering the Young Farmer Program.

Over the years, the number of chapters and enrollment in Young Farmer programs has remained constant due to this unique funding procedure.

Conclusion

We, in Colorado, think that we have developed and delivered a model Young Farmer Program. Our history speaks for itself, and we hope to enjoy another 25 years of educating our farmers, ranchers, and agribusiness students through the Colorado Young Farmers Education Association. ■

Women's Changing Role in the Young Farmer Assocation

(Continued from page 12)

Institutional Review Board of the University of Georgia. After corrections were made, the final instrument was duplicated for distribution at the 1993 GYFA Convention.

Data collection was conducted in the registration area of the convention. A special incentive was offered: those who filled out the instrument were eligible for a drawing at which a large gift basket was given away. A prominent sign, the gift basket on display, a table, comfortable chairs, and pencils were also provided to enhance data collection. There were 143 completed questionnaires secured during this phase. Responses were received from 38 of the 55 chapters. In order to increase responsiveness, advisors of the 17 non-represented chapters were given or sent six copies of the instrument to randomly distribute to their female affiliates. Twenty more responses were received using this technique. The researchers compared the late responses with those collected at the convention, and no major differences were found. Therefore, the returns were combined, totaling 159 responses. Although missing data was a problem on nearly half of the responses, a return was considered useable if partial data was provided. A Cronbach Coefficient alpha of .79 (moderately high reliability) was calculated on standardized variables, and primarily, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data.

What were the characteristics of the respondents? Females affiliated with the state YFA appear to parallel other studies in terms of demographic characteristics. They were middle aged, married with two teenage children, employed, and have had some college. They were somewhat independent, judging from the majority who had their own credit cards and checking accounts. Seven out of ten are employed off the farm, typically in non-agricultural jobs. Conversely, less than one half of their spouses were employed off the farm. Of these, a majority were employed in agriculturally related jobs. Record keeping is the most universal job performed by YFA wives. This is consistent with the findings of Ross (1982).

What type of farm activities are the respondents involved in? Females affiliated with the GYFA were typically from farms with both owned and rented land. Corn, soybeans, and peanuts were typical crops grown. Commonly raised livestock were cattle and swine. These activities are typical for farmers across the state.

How involved are the respondents with the GYFA? Nearly all respondent's spouses were paid members of the GYFA. However, fewer than one half of the women were paid members. This indicates an area for membership expansion for the GYFA. The level of attendance at local and state meetings indicates strong interest in the YFA on the part of female affiliates. District activities were not as attractive to females as local and state events.

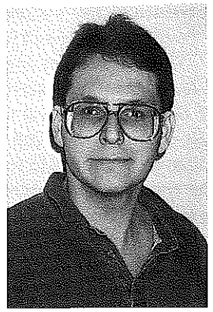
What were the respondents' attitudes toward the issues? The respondents' high level of agreement with 28 statements caused the researchers to conclude that women associated with the GYFA were very positive toward farming, their part in the family business, and their own lifestyle. The fourteen items that fell in the neutral category indicated concerns with their

(Continued on page 19)

BOOK REVIEW

Small Animal Care and Management

Warren, D.M. (1995). Delmar Publishers, Albany, NY.



REVIEWED BY: TOM BOLLES

Mr. Bolles is a graduate student in the department of agricultural and extension education at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg.

American consumers spend more money every year on pet food than on baby food. The pet industry is strong and growing, and a number of universities are considering offering small animal production courses. Small animal care courses are also becoming increasingly popular in secondary agriculture programs.

Small Animal Care and Management is an extensive guide to the subject. The text is divided into two sections. The first covers generals topics such as pet ownership, animal rights and welfare, safety, careers, and basic digestion and nutrition. The second section deals with individual species (e.g. dogs, cats) and species groups (e.g. reptiles, birds). I was surprised at the number of species included in the text. The author has included information on anatomy, behavior, handling, reproduction, housing, and diseases. The text is fairly readable, and it is mostly written on an eight to nine and a half grade level. However, some of the passages I examined were a bit higher in readability level.

While generally comprehensive, I found the text lacking in certain areas. Feline AIDS was not mentioned with the cat diseases, chocolate was omitted from the list of dog poisons, and information on the age of the rabbit species conflicts with other sources. I was surprised that with the inclusion of a chapter on animal rights and welfare, there was no mention of the controversy surrounding the ownership of certain exotic birds. I felt some mention should have been made of aquatic plants and invertebrates for symbiotic and/or decorative use in the section on fish, and was disappointed by the suggested activities at the back of the chapters, as few of them involved higher-order thinking. A number of the picture captions didn't seem to match their pictures. I'm not sure that many of the species covered on avians, reptiles, and amphibians are readily available for pets.

The text has a great number of black and white pictures, but few pictures have humans in them. Of these, there is a good mix of ages, but a poor mix gender and race. (Most of the people in the pictures are white females.) There is a picture of two students and an adult on the cover that, when the picture is used again in the text, the black student is cropped out, and this can cause concerns with textbook adoption committees.

Small Animal Care and Management has it's faults, but is still a valuable classroom resource. It contains a lot of good information. I don't believe curriculum should be driven by the textbook. I will be using the text during my student teaching, and will supplement areas which I feel are lacking in the text by electronic and other print sources. ■

The Light Is Green for Young Farmers and Agriculture Leaders

(Continued from page 5)

to deal with time wasters, manage paper and paper stacks, deal with decision makers, and avoid procrastination and burn out.

The Management Alternative

This program concentrates on developing the four alternative styles of managing one's interactions with others. Participants learn to manage and motivate other people to peak performance.

The Complete Communicator

Everyone can improve their communication skills and this session focuses on techniques for improved written (visual), oral (auditory), and face-to-face (kinesthetic) interactions.

Power Charges for Life—A Championship Attitude

A powerful session on "how to" manage, eliminate, cope, and avoid negative stressful situations and people.

An Opportunity to Test Your Skills Through Contests

Making the decision to be a leader is simple. Learning to be a leader involves practicing and applying new ideas.

"Successful Farming" - Spokesperson for Agriculture Contest

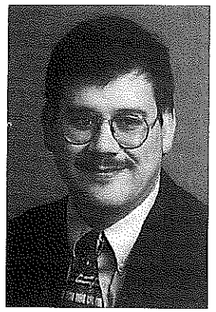
The spokesperson contest encourages American agriculturists to practice their communication skills by delivering a prepared speech, writing agriculturally positive letters and informing the media about agriculture.

(Continued on page 19)

BOOK REVIEW

Ecology of Fish and Wildlife

Burton, D. (1996). Delmar Publishers: Albany, NY.



Reviewed By: Donald Peasley

Dr. Peasley is a lecturer in agricultural, extension, and adult education in the department of education, Cornell University, Ithaca.

In the preface to *Ecology of Fish and Wildlife*, author DeVere Burton states that "the basic premise of this textbook is that decisions regarding the management of fish and wildlife populations should be based on reliable research subjected to the peer review process" (p. vii). Having stated this premise, he then lays out the structure of the content contained in the text—namely five sections which discuss 1) Ecology Basics, 2) Ecology of Mammals, 3) Ecology of Birds, 4) Ecology of Fishes, Reptiles, and Amphibians, and 5) Conservation and Management. Overall, each chapter within the major sections is well formatted, with clearly defined objectives, lists of new terminology, and subheadings that are logical in their nature. Also, there are several sidebars in each chapter that provide relevant additional information about the chapter topic (usually a career profile or a case study).

This division of content has sound logic, particularly when an author sets out to provide a comprehensive presentation of basic information about a wide variety of fish and wildlife. The author accomplishes this with this book, in my view. However, the focus on presenting these "basic facts" result in certain constraints which may limit the text's viability as a primary classroom resource for an environmental science or natural resources technology class, especially if student understanding of the complex nature of ecological systems is a curricular goal.

Burton defines ecology as "the branch of biology that describes relationships between organisms and the environments in which they live" (p. 2). Having said this, the development of discussion would be well advised to focus on these relationships throughout the book. Instead, the author proceeds to provide topical presentations of facts about each of the five sections listed above. Each chapter provides a compartmentalized treatment of the main chapter topic in much the same way as an encyclopedia presents factual information. As a result, the content of any one chapter does not build upon the content of a previous unit in a synergistic way.

Treatment of the content in this fashion leads to predictable end of chapter exercises, i.e., "List the characteristics that . ." or "Describe the . . ."; or "Predict the effects of x on y, if x increases". These exercises are appropriate for the way that content is presented: The objectives for each chapter are at a fairly low level of cognitive difficulty, the content is presented in a manner appropriate to those objectives, and the end of chapter exercises reflect this. However, the result is that while students may learn many basic facts about the components of ecological relationships, they may have difficulty gaining an understanding of the complex nature of these relationships.

Since ecology is essentially a subject that embodies complex interactions, any approach to teaching ecology should reflect this complexity (as a learning outcome). If a teacher were to use this text as a primary student resource for an ecology or natural resource class, I believe that that teacher would find it difficult to provide adequate intellectual depth to the class content. This text is probably better suited as an additional reference for a teacher (or student).

Teaching ecology and natural resources effectively really requires that the teacher take a holistic "systems" approach in selecting teaching resources. Teachers of agriculture, who should be accustomed to using inductive problem solving strategies in their curriculum, are well suited to this. New teachers of agriculture often complain that they can't "use just one text" in preparing their lessons, that they have to rely on a variety of sources in building their curriculum. This text can, in my opinion, be a good source of basic information for any teacher looking to add to their list of instructional materials for a course in natural resources or environmental science. ■

Women's Changing Role in the Young Farmer Assocation

(Continued from page 16)

ability to continue farming in the case that tragedy struck, doubts about the place of women in the GYFA, and indications of possible discrimination against women in agriculturally related fields. The five items on which the respondents disagreed indicated that most women associated with the GYFA did not feel that they have been discriminated against, nor did they feel that they have been sexually harassed within the organization or in the agricultural industry. The women also indicated that agriculture was not a career choice in their youth. This response may be an indicator of negative attitudes toward women in this traditionally male-dominated field.

The following recommendations were made, based on the findings and conclusions:

1. Classes should be offered to help members deal with stress, increase marital tranquillity, and how to recognize and deal with sexual harassment and discrimination.
2. Efforts should be made in the GYFA to recognize the contributions of women to, and their importance in, the farm business.
3. Career counseling should be provided to females in order to raise their confidence in being able to enter into, or continue in, agriculture as a life's work.
4. Instructional materials developed or selected for young farmer classes should be gender neutral and appealing to both sexes.
5. Women in agriculture should be polled as to their interests and needs for instructional and social development through GYFA.
6. Women need training in handling rural stress, computers, marketing, communication skills, and balancing commitments. ■

References

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The Light Is Green for Young Farmers and Agriculture Leaders

(Continued from page 17)

Essay Contest

The essays should promote agriculture and encourage an appreciation for the quality and quantity of food available in the United States.

Photo Contest

A contest that enhances agriculture's image by inspiring photography of farms, agribusinesses, etc. NYFEA will utilize the photos to educate the general public about the issues facing agriculture.

Chapter Community Service Project of the Year

Winners will be selected for hosting creative projects that accomplish significant good for their local area. Projects generate a positive image for agriculture.

John Deere Credit's—Farm and Ranch Management Contest

By competing in the contest, participants will apply economic, marketing, and management principles to decisions and analyzing the total farm business.

Reporter of the Year

The contest provides a means for documenting creative projects and programs.

Outstanding Member

A program honoring the top members from each state affiliate.

Outstanding Advisor

The nominee must have an active NYFEA chapter and be recommended by May 1 by a state association in good standing with the NYFEA. A state association may submit one nominee. The national winner receives a life membership plus $ 100.00. Winners are selected based on the local adult agricultural education program.

Have a Desire to Help Others and Strengthen Your Community at the Same Time?

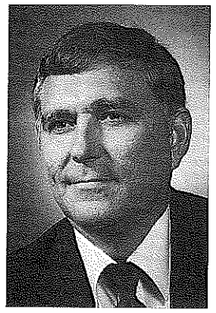
The list of needy people is endless—this fact is illustrated by the ever growing number of charities. Further, as more and more of America's agricultural practices are being regulated, farmers must recognize that it is critical for them to share the good stories of American agriculture. The list of projects allows for agriculture's positive story to be told while assisting the needy.

Wheelbarrow Race for Hunger

Local organizations will host community service projects that will provide food for the hungry while delivering a positive message to the general public about American's bountiful food supply.

(Continued on page 23)

What do you know about the NVATA?



BY: GARY E. MOORE

Dr. Moore is a professor of agricultural and extension education at North Carolina State University, Raleigh and historian for the American Association for Agricultural Education.

Most readers of The Agricultural Education Magazine are members of the National Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association (NVATA). How much do you know about your professional organization? The answers will be included in the next issue of *The Magazine*. GO TO THE HEAD OF THE CLASS if you know the answers.

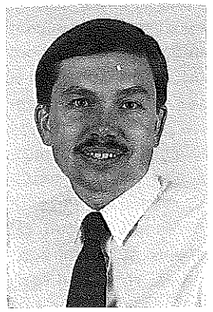
1. An organization for agriculture teachers was established at the AVA convention in 1928. This organization lasted only two years. What was the name of this organization?
   a. Agricultural Teachers Association of the AVA.
   b. National Association of Vocational Agriculture Teachers.
   c. National Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association.
   d. American Association for Agricultural Education.
2. The current NVATA was established at the AVA convention in:
   a. 1930.
   b. 1940.
   c. 1948.
   d. 1952.
3. The first Executive Secretary of NVATA was:
   a. James Wall.
   b. Sam Stenzel.
   c. Glen McDowell.
   d. Lionell Cross.
4. The original headquarters for the NVATA was in:
   a. Blacksburg, Virginia.
   b. Pomona, California.
   c. Manhattan, Kansas.
   d. Lincoln, Nebraska.
5. The NVATA is incorporated in this state:
   a. Virginia.
   b. California.
   c. Kansas.
   d. Nebraska.
6. In the early years, the small pocket calendar booklet carried by NVATA members was sponsored by:
   a. D-Con..
   b. Interstate Publishers and Printers.
   c. John Deere.
   d. Farm Journal.
7. On the 25th anniversary of the NVATA, the officers wore:
   a. Silver nugget lapel pins.
   b. Metallic colored caps.
   c. Custom designed Western boots.
   d. Mink bow ties.
8. In what year did the NVATA move their Executive Secretary and Headquarters to Alexandria, Virginia in order to be closer to Capitol Hill?
   a. 1963.
   b. 1975.
   c. 1979.
   d. 1984.
9. Which past NVATA President also served as AVA President and will soon serve as the FFA Alumni President?
   a. Jim Guilinger.
   b. Paul Day.
   c. Dale Butcher.
   d. Glen McDowell.
10. The first female president of the NVATA will take office in December, 1996. This person is:
    a. Brenda Oldfield.
    b. Vickie Lantz.
    c. MeeCee Baker.
    d. Linda Rist.

The following are the answers to the questions published in the May, 1996 issue of The Agricultural Education Magazine.

1. b. Baltimore Hotel
2. d. Hung above the secretary's station
3. a. Each state bringing some type of food item from their state
4. c. Present the president with a gavel made of wood from the farm of Dudley Hughes
5. a. A prize winning lamb from the American Royal
6. a. General Order on Profanity Issued by George Washington in 1776
7. d. Smoking.
8. b. A bomber
9. b. Sleeping bags
10. d. Atlanta, Georgia ■

Keeping Agriculture in Agriscience

Editor's Note: This article first appeared as a theme article in the April, 1996 issue of The Agricultural Education Magazine. Due to an inadvertent error in the layout of the article, the column headings of the self-assessment instrument (at the end of the article) Dr. Moss had prepared for the reader, were in reverse order. The article is reprinted again in this issue to correct the error.



BY: JEFFREY W. MOSS

Dr. Moss is an adjunct associate professor in the department of agricultural education at the University of Illinois, Urbana.

For agricultural education, the decade of the 90s belongs to agriscience. Schools now offer agriculture classes which count for science credit towards high school graduation, and in some states these courses are also recognized as laboratory science classes for college admission. Six years ago there was one agriculture textbook with agriscience in the title, today there are nearly a dozen. The National Council for Agricultural Education has provided instructional materials and teacher in-service on agriscience using Fast Plants and Bottle Biology, Food Science, and Applied Environmental Science. The attention given to agriscience is significant; curricular changes are occurring rapidly.

Actually, the merging of science and agriculture isn't just a 1990s phenomenon. Agriculture was taught as a science when it first became part of the school curriculum, and that was 20 - 25 years before the Smith Hughes Act of 1917. The concept of learning science principles through agricultural applications was being written about in the 1890s as well as the 1990s. Although the concept of agriscience may be 100 years old, the content is certainly different, as the knowledge level for both science and agriculture has become more sophisticated.

Benefits of Agriscience

Does agriscience represent an improvement in agricultural education? Most people seem to think so. Agriscience programs are attracting a new group of students to agricultural education. These students aren't particularly interested in a career as a farmer, driving a combine or managing a farrow-to-finish swine operation. But, they are enrolling in agriscience courses because you can *learn* [science and agriculture] *by doing* [science and agriculture] in these classes. In general, agriscience has given agricultural education its new image of being more than farm animals and machinery (you know, the sows and plows metaphor). Agriscience is also perceived as a more rigorous curriculum, probably because of its non-vocational focus and link to a traditional academic subject, science. In an era of school reform, a more rigorous curriculum is another positive for agricultural education. And finally, agriscience is providing education about agriculture, functioning as an agricultural literacy course which is recognized as a critical need for the future. With all these benefits it's hard to imagine any drawbacks to agriscience.

But wait a minute. In our attempt to integrate science and agriculture and in our rush for a new more sophisticated image are we sacrificing anything? I think it's possible that we are. Unfortunately, I believe what's being lost from a few of our agriscience programs is the agriculture. I don't think it has happened by design. But, as attention shifted towards upgrading the science content of agriscience classes, it shifted away from agriculture in some programs. As new agriscience curricula evolved, it focused on the content and process of learning science primarily through experiments conducted in the classroom. If students get science credit, they need to learn the science, agreed. Does that mean learning less agriculture? Is FFA less intracurricular in agriscience? Is SAE less important for agriscience students? I don't believe so, and it may only require that we re-examine our methods of teaching agriscience. In our search for something new, we don't have to leave behind certain components of agricultural education which have made the program unique. A strength of agricultural education for the past 70 years has been the integration of classroom instruction, FFA, and supervised agricultural experience. We need to be sure that the curriculum for agriscience includes the proper mix of all three of these components. If agriscience is to serve a function of agricultural literacy, then agriculture must remain a focus of agriscience courses.

Agriculture is the Application

Agriculture and science are a natural →

combination. Jill Bucher, a science teacher in Pekin, Illinois who recently took her first agriculture course, a methods of teaching biological science applications in agriculture class, said it quite well. "The key to science education today is to not only have a general understanding of the biological vocabulary and processes but to be able to apply this information to solve problems. [Agriscience] lets the student go beyond just the basic knowledge and actually apply the biological information." The real understanding of science comes through associating science concepts and principles with relevant applications to life. Agriculture happens to provide the food and fiber for everyday living.

To maintain a balance of science and agriculture, I recommend using real agriculture problems as an approach for introducing science content. Problem-solving has been used in agricultural education for a long time. Be aware, however, that to be effective the problems must be meaningful to the students. You will have to look beyond the familiar production-oriented problems we solved in the past when teaching agriscience for the future. It can be done with perseverance and patience according to Mindy Elvidge, a first year agriculture teacher at Monticello, Illinois. "I just keep hitting them with problems until something is relevant to their life and grabs their interest."

Keeping the proper balance of agriculture in agriscience also requires teachers to keep current with new agricultural technology. New developments are reported monthly in agricultural magazines, journals, and newspapers. *Agricultural Research*, a publication of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is an excellent resource available free to all members of the National Vocational Agricultural Teachers Association. Multiple copies of *Agricultural Research* can also be requested for classroom use. Keeping current in agriculture requires investing time in learning about the new developments. You may also keep subject matter current by inviting resource speakers and scheduling field trips to agricultural businesses, allowing students to see first-hand how science is helping to solve important agricultural problems.

FFA has recognized a change in its customers, the students, and is responding by developing new programs and activities for members. Agriscience student competition, agricultural science fairs, and an overhaul of career development events are examples of making programs relevant to the agriscience student. As a teacher, if you have changed your curriculum to agriscience but still participate in exactly the same events (FFA contests) of five years ago, maybe it's time to shift priorities and try some new activities. It requires some extra effort and won't be easy, especially if you've won the section poultry contest the past five consecutive years. If we want agriscience students to benefit from the FFA experience, we need to provide those opportunities which match their interests. FFA should be as intracurricular to agriscience as it has been to vocational agriculture for the past 68 years.

A fresh look at Supervised Agricultural Experience may also be required for agriscience. Agriscience students may show little interest in crop and livestock projects for an SAE. Consequently, they may not need to learn the finer details of keeping a production record book. However, in agricultural research, record keeping or documenting the research protocol is as important as the results of the experiment itself. There's definitely a place for SAE and record keeping for all students in agriscience. The idea of providing planned, practical activities conducted outside of scheduled class time in which students develop and apply agricultural knowledge and skills is as appropriate for agriscience as it was for traditional vocational agriculture. I recommend you obtain a copy of *Experiencing Agriculture: A Handbook on Supervised Agriculture Experience,* and review the nature of supervised agricultural experience and your responsibility for planning, conducting and supervising SAE's in light of the changing times and interests of students in agriscience programs. Done well, supervised agricultural experience provides a powerful learning experience for agriscience students.

Student achievement in agriscience is commonly measured in two ways, performance on quizzes or tests and student laboratory reports. In both situations it's important to assess what students have learned about science and about agriculture. Test questions covering how an agricultural practice is impacted by a science concept or principle is as important as defining the principle. As an example, students should be able to explain common planting practices for local crops in addition to listing the environmental factors affecting seed germination. Similarly, when students write conclusions in their laboratory reports they should be able to relate information learned in the experiment to management practices followed by producers. Once more, it's a matter of balancing agriculture and science in the evaluation of student performance.

A good method of evaluating teacher performance is through self-assessment. If you teach an agriscience class, rate yourself on the following statements about how agriculture is treated in your agriscience courses.

(Continued on page 24)

The Light Is Green for Young Farmers and Agriculture Leaders

(Continued from page 19)

Pizza Party

The program also provides insight into the role of the farmer in producing food. The program is designed to inform consumers about the origin of the food they eat.

Agricultural Exchange

The purpose of this project is to provide information that will support the role of agriculture as an integral part of the overall business and economic community.

Adopt-A-Class

This program is designed to provide farmers and agribusiness persons the opportunity to work closely with a class at a local school.

Product Delivery Though Communication

Through the national magazine, The Leaders for Agriculture, and the newsletter, Essentials of Leadership, the association delivers leadership and business skill training, agricultural issue stories, features on local chapters, clubs, and individuals.

Product Delivery Through Travel

At the annual Winter Institute, Summer Leadership Conference (SLC), and European Exchange, NYFEA delivers educational programs, contests, and service opportunities. Educational seminars, tours, videos and first hand experience are the most common means of providing the information. At the Institute and SLC, contests are conducted and service projects are illustrated.

Members are the Lifeblood of an Organization

NYFEA has designed a membership program for people of all ages. Each program fits the NYFEA mission to provide continuing education to the agricultural community and to motivate the participants to serve others. Membership costs are intentionally low to provide broader access to the programs.

National Ag Leaders Club (Individual Membership)

An individual desiring an opportunity to compete in a nationwide program of service may join the National Ag Leaders Club. The members also receive a free guidebook for hosting a service project. Further, they have free access to the magazine—The Leaders for Agriculture, the newsletter—Essentials of Leadership, and contests. The annual leadership conference, annual convention, educational seminars, and selected videos are available at reduced costs. Members in this category also are able to participate in the leadership degree program. The dues are $40.00 a year.

NYFEA Regular Members (individual membership)

A participant in this category will receive the newsletter and access to Contests for the $10 ($5 if affiliated with a local/state chapter) membership cost. The magazine, educational seminars, community service projects, annual leadership conference, and annual institute (convention) are available at discounts. Members in this category are also able to participate in the leadership degree program.

Corporate Members

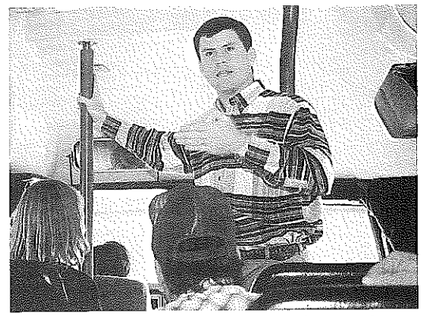
Corporations and businesses are eligible to show their commitment for the cause of adult education. A $500 annual contribution will allow them the chance for exposure in each issue of the magazine, The Leader for Agriculture. They are also eligible to provide coupons to NYFEA members.

Council of Ag Leaders

Individuals making annual contributions of $1500 or more are eligible to serve on the Council of Ag Leaders. They will be invited to attend an annual event designed to produce a position statement on adult agricultural education. They will help shape the future of NYFEA programs and projects and point the organization toward the key issues facing American agriculture. They will provide scholarships for deserving young people to the NYFEA Leadership Conference. It is an elite council that will have no more than 100 members annually.

Community Ag Leaders Club (club and chapter membership)

Community clubs may be formed by simply organizing a group of five or more individuals. To register a community club, just submit a roster of members and dues. The president will serve as a national contact. A quarterly package featuring a project for the club members to host, press releases, and postcards will be sent to the club. The package will contain community specific service projects. Dues for a community club are $50 per club per year plus $40 per member per year. ■



NYFEA Executive Director Gordon Stone discusses the next stop on an Agricultural Leadership bus tour. (Photo courtesy of Gordon Stone.)

Keeping Agriculture in Agriscience

(Continued from 22)

Is Agriculture Making the Grade in Your Agriscience Program?

Directions: Grade your performance for keeping agriculture in agriscience. Circle the letter of the grade you deserve.

	Always True	Mostly True	Sometimes True	Seldom True	Never True
1. Agricultural applications are discussed in classroom instruction prior to student experiments/activities.	A	B	C	D	F
2. The percentage of students with SAE's is as great in agriscience classes as other agriculture classes.	A	B	C	D	F
3. The percentage of students in agriscience classes who join FFA equals that of other agriculture classes.	A	B	C	D	F
4. Students in agriscience classes are given equal opportunities for participation and achievement in the FFA.	A	B	C	D	F
5. I keep current with new agricultural technology by reading agricultural magazines, journals, and newspapers.	A	B	C	D	F
6. I include resource speakers and/or field trips to agricultural businesses in agriscience classes.	A	B	C	D	F
7. I include information on agricultural careers in the curriculum for my agriscience classes.	A	B	C	D	F
8. Students are required to write about agricultural applications of science concepts in lab reports.	A	B	C	D	F
9. A problem-solving approach is used in agriscience classes with real problems encountered by producers.	A	B	C	D	F
10. Quizzes/tests include questions on agricultural applications of science concepts.	A	B	C	D	F

How did you do? If you earned an A-B average, congratulations. You've successfully developed an agriscience program with the proper perspective on the importance of agriculture in agriscience. I encourage you to share how you teach with others in the profession. If your average for the ten statements is barely passing, I encourage you to pick one or two of the statements and go for the A next year. By keeping agriculture in agriscience, we will all be keeping a bright future for agricultural education.