

# The Agricultural EDUCATION MAGAZINE

July-August  
1997  
volume 70  
Issue 1

## Local Program Success



*Building quality programs and putting school-to-career in action*

### 6 Keys to Success in Agricultural Education

#### 3 Components

🍏 **Instruction**

🍏 **SAE**

🍏 **FFA**

#### 3 Strategies

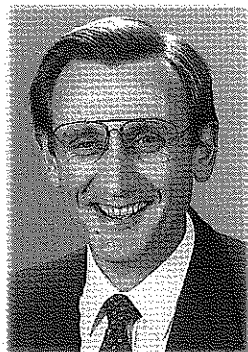
🍏 **Partnerships**

🍏 **Marketing**

🍏 **Professional Growth**

- Local Program Success Delivers Tools and Resources to Teachers
- Managing Human Resources With Local Program Success
- Partners for Success
- Achieving Local Program Success by Collaborating with Partners, Allies and Volunteers
- LPS... Just What Agricultural Education Needs, Another Acronym
- The Teaching Way
- Top 10 Action Steps for Local Program Success

## and Resources to Teachers



by Dr. Larry D. Case  
and Dr. Rosco Vaughn

Dr. Larry D. Case is the coordinator of agricultural and rural education for the U.S. Department of Education, and Dr. Rosco Vaughn is the executive director of the National Council for Agricultural Education. They are the co-directors of Local Program Success, Alexandria, VA.

**H**ow do we teach success? We arm our prospective teachers with lesson plans, teaching theories and discipline tips, but do we truly prepare them to go into a program and make it successful? Many of the best teachers have honed their approach during years in the classroom, a living laboratory that

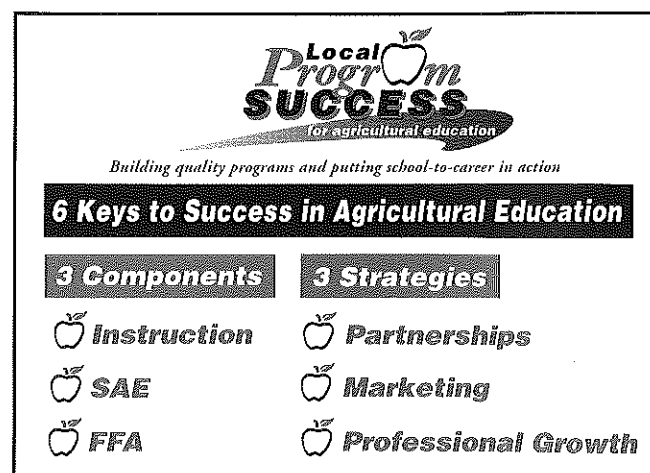
beginning teachers do not have the luxury of sharing. But what if we could take the knowledge, strategies and secrets those top teachers have learned on the job, and share them with other teachers and agricultural education majors?

That is the idea behind Local Program Success (LPS), a new initiative intended to change the way we think about agricultural education. LPS is revolutionary in that it is developed by teachers, for teachers and is a living, evolving initiative rather than a one-time approach.

Local Program Success addresses three key components of agricultural education—classroom and laboratory instruction, supervised agricultural experience programs (SAE) and FFA—and three key strategies—partnerships, marketing and professional growth. The diagram shown here outlines those six areas and shows how they fit together to form a solid, successful agricultural education program. This diagram will begin appearing on all agricultural education materials to show how everything we do fits into Local Program Success.

*“When our local programs succeed, agricultural education succeeds on every level.”*

The impact of LPS will be largely dependent on its use in university agricultural education methods courses. Agricultural education majors—our future teachers—are open to new approaches and eager for new ideas to try in the classroom. While LPS will help existing and new teachers, if we can get future teachers to adopt the ideas and strategies and to focus on those six key areas, we will see an impact for years to come. Local Program Success has the potential to change the way we think about



agricultural education by helping us focus on those things that truly make a local program successful. When our local programs succeed, agricultural education succeeds on every level.

### A Grassroots Initiative

The United States Department of Education and the National Council for Agricultural Education, in cooperation with the National FFA Organization and National Vocational Agricultural Teachers' Association (NVATA), initiated LPS a year ago. They knew that to

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The diagram shown on the cover outlines six areas and shows how they fit together to form a solid, successful agricultural education program. It will begin appearing on all agricultural education materials to show how everything we do fits into Local Program Success.

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# Professional Propagation:



## Recruiting Teachers for Agricultural Education

By William G. Camp

Dr. Camp is a professor of agricultural education at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg.

One of the assumptions underlying the Local Program Success initiative is that agricultural education must have adequate numbers of dedicated, qualified teachers. Without good teachers, nothing else will work.

Traditionally, the major source of new agriculture teachers has been the 80-plus teacher education programs at land grant and other state colleges and universities. Even before passage of the Smith Hughes Act of 1917, at least six colleges of agriculture in this country had specialized programs or majors designed to prepare teachers of agriculture. Many other colleges offered elective courses in professional education for potential agriculture teachers. Prior to 1918, there had been at least 283 graduates of professional agricultural teacher education programs. In 1920, 444 newly qualified teachers of agriculture graduated from these emerging teacher education programs (Jarvis, 1921).

### The Problem

From that small start, agricultural education grew to the point by the 1960s that more than one thousand potential teachers were com-

pleting teacher preparation programs each year. Throughout the 1970s, an average of almost 1,700 potential new teachers graduated from agricultural education programs annually to fill an average of fewer than 1,500 openings (Brown, 1997). Yet in 1995, only 625 newly qualified agriculture teachers completed teacher preparation programs in the United States (Camp, in press) compared to a total of 977 openings.

Clearly, our profession faces a serious problem in meeting the need for professionally prepared teachers for agricultural education's classrooms and laboratories. Teachers, teacher educators and other state and national leaders in agricultural education must work together to solve this very real, and growing, problem.

### Teacher Recruitment Program

To address the growing teacher shortage problem, a Teacher Recruitment Committee consisting of teachers, teacher educators, state and national administrators and representatives of FFA and NVATA met this February in conjunction with the Local Program Success workshop. The goals of the Teacher Recruitment Committee were to identify strategies and to develop materials that could be used to identify and then to recruit more potential teachers into teacher education programs. The work of the committee led to development of what we hope will become a comprehensive Teacher Recruitment Program, a model if you prefer that term, for agricultural education. The model will consist of strategies and materials in five broad areas.

### Telling the Agricultural Education Story

This part of the model involves a range of activities designed to compile and disseminate information about agricultural education as a career. In the broadest sense, this involves basic public relations activities such as brochures, videotapes, recruiting displays and booths, and other traditional public relations techniques—all designed to reach a broad audience. This might involve:

- state FFA officers can be asked to include information about agricultural education as a potential career when making chapter visits.
- national FFA officers could include similar recruitment activities in appearances at state conventions.
- student teachers can be asked to include lessons on careers in agricultural education as a part of their internship requirements.
- templates for brochures, flyers and sample news articles and radio spots can be developed on a generic basis, allowing for adaptation to local use.

### Targeting Non-Traditional Audiences

Most people tend to think of high school students in agricultural education departments as the primary audience for teacher recruitment. But, what the committee found was that most new agriculture teachers come from "non-traditional audiences." Many excellent agriculture teachers have come up

through high school programs of agricultural education and the FFA. Yet many of our very best teachers came to agricultural education from other backgrounds. As a former state FFA officer and having enrolled in vocational agriculture throughout my high school years, I am totally convinced that we must bring into the profession as much "new blood" and as many new perspectives as possible. Excessive inbreeding can be just as debilitating in a profession as it can be in a livestock herd. The following are examples of non-traditional groups that may be good sources of new teachers:

- mid-life career changers,
- persons leaving agriculture-related careers as a result of industry shifts and down-sizing,
- ex-military personnel, and
- post-bachelor's degree students from other majors, to name just a few groups.
- transfer students from community colleges and two-year agricultural technology programs should be encouraged to consider continuing their education to include teacher preparation.

At Virginia Tech, about one-third of our recent graduates have been majors in other fields, with agricultural education as a minor. Another third of our recent newly qualified teachers have been graduates from other degree programs who return to complete master's-level teacher licensure programs.

### Overcoming System Barriers

Generating good ideas and enthusiasm for recruiting potential teachers can go only so far in solving our teacher recruitment problem. Anybody who has worked as a teacher in a local school division or as a teacher educator at a university level understands the limitations imposed on individual initiative by

"the system." This component of the model will address strategies and provide resources for working with school counselors, principals and superintendents as well as college department heads, deans and other administrators. While certainly not complete, the following items might help in this area:

- A brochure designed specifically for college administrators which provides specific details regarding the career opportunities in agricultural education might be very useful.
- A regional consortium has already become essential to providing teacher education programs for several northeastern states where agricultural teacher education programs simply no longer exist. Such inter-state collaborative efforts may well become critical in other areas as well.
- Distance-delivered teacher education programs are being considered.

*"In 1995, only 625 newly qualified agriculture teachers completed teacher preparation programs in the United States compared to a total of 977 openings."*

### Building a Support Framework

A critical part of any successful teacher recruitment program is the ability to marshal all available resources. In this area, we believe there are two problems. First, we need to build an internal support framework. Too often, members of the profession are our own worst enemy. Members of the agricultural education family who "talk down"

the profession and who advise their best students away from the profession can be a serious problem. The second problem is how to identify and use resources outside our small agricultural education family.

- We need to be able to call on FFA alumni, agricultural extension agents and agricultural industry leaders to support our recruitment efforts.
- College faculty members in other departments can be an important asset in locating good potential teachers. This has been particularly true in filling our graduate licensure program and our agricultural education minor here at Virginia Tech. Our colleagues in other departments have come to trust us to be very careful not to encourage their students to change majors. Because of that trust, they can now encourage their "people-oriented" students to add agricultural education as a minor to increase the students' career options.

### Other Strategies

Many effective strategies for teacher recruitment simply do not fit into a category. For that reason, this "miscellaneous" category may well be the most important component of the Comprehensive Agriculture Teacher Recruitment Model.

This component will include such strategies as research into why teacher education graduates choose not to enter teaching, working to strengthen local programs, and writing articles such as this one to inform teachers and students of the growing shortage of new, qualified teachers for the agricultural education profession.

Another strategy that grew out of this effort was the National Job Clearinghouse for Agricultural Education. The clearinghouse is a web site that lists teaching openings from all parts of the country. It

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Local Program Success Delivers Tools and Resources to Teachers, continued from page 2

create something that teachers and teacher educators would value, they needed extensive input from the field.

They assembled a task force of teachers, teacher educators, state staff, National FFA staff and other education and agriculture professionals. That group developed the six key areas listed above and outlined a plan for helping teachers be more successful in those areas. Over the next six months, work groups made up of more than 60 teachers, teacher educators, state staff and other agriculture and education professionals focused on each area, brainstorming what leads



Rich Katt, director of agricultural education and state FFA advisor in Nebraska, discusses Local Program Success with Jacque Deeds, associate professor of agricultural education at Mississippi State University, during an inservice training for state agricultural education staff and teacher educators. (Photo courtesy of Jennifer Messenger, National FFA Organization.)

to success in that area and what teachers need to be successful.

The work groups came back together last summer to present their recommendations to the task force. It was gratifying to see the results of this process and to hear participants' support for the initiative. Teachers told us this was the best effort they had seen come out of agricultural education in years. Teacher educators told us these ideas would be an invaluable resource in their methods courses. State staff told us Local Program

Success would energize teachers in their states, and other education professionals told us this initiative was truly revolutionary in all of education.

### *The First Step to Success*

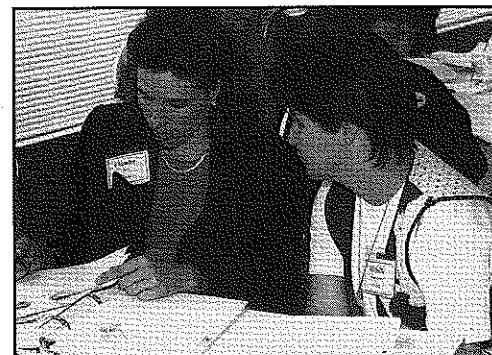
The first resource, and the foundation of the entire initiative, is *A Guide to Local Program Success*. This manual is based on the work groups' recommendations and is enhanced by interviews with more than 70 teachers across the country. It includes a chapter on each of the six key areas, each containing steps to success, best practices, success stories from teachers and worksheets and forms to use immediately. The final chapter is a list of resources, including organizations, publishers, Internet sites and more. This guide is intended to be a ready resource for teachers, and, more importantly, a key teaching tool for agricultural education programs. We are working on an Internet site, to be housed on National FFA Online, <http://www.ffa.org>, that will contain the worksheets and resources from the guide and other LPS information.

The guide was the basis for two training sessions this spring. In the first, state agricultural education staff and head teacher educators from each state attended a two-day session to review the development process for LPS and walk through each of the guide's chapters. The next month, each state had the opportunity to send one or several teachers to be trained as presenters on LPS; 38 states participated. Trained state staff, teachers and teacher educators are working together within their states to conduct LPS in-service training for teachers during summer conferences and at other times throughout the year.

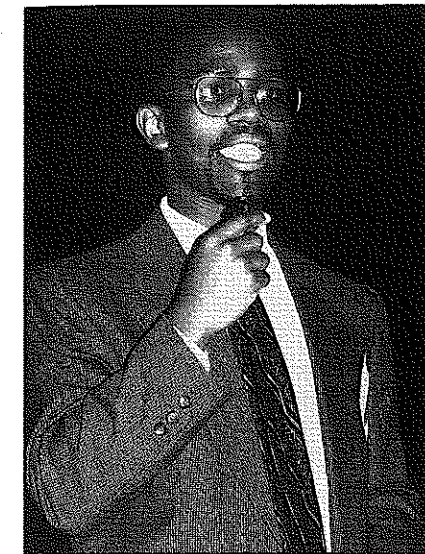
### *Local Program Success in the College Classroom*

While these groups are training new and existing teachers, we hope teacher educators will deliver LPS to future teachers. By working through *A Guide to Local Program Success*, our future teachers will explore the crucial concepts of classroom instruction, supervised agricultural experience programs and FFA, the triad of agricultural education. They also will begin thinking early about other, perhaps less obvious but equally important areas such as program planning and marketing, partnerships and professional growth. Most importantly, they will gain examples of real approaches used by real teachers, a "real world" supplement to theories and educational models.

In addition to learning the tenants of Local Program Success in the university classroom, students will be able to attend regional pre-service conferences, to be given twice a year beginning this fall. Presenters will walk prospective teachers through LPS and other professional growth resources such as the new *Agriculture Teacher's Manual*, and give them a broad perspective on teaching.



Selected teachers from 38 states attended a train-the-trainer session in March to prepare to work with their state agricultural education staff to teach Local Program Success to other teachers in their state. Chandra Scott (left), teacher at Sands High School in Ackerly, Texas, and Michelle Walker-Crawford, teacher at Trenton High School in Trenton, Fla., brainstorm effective ways to carry the initiative's tools and resources into the field. (Photo courtesy of Jennifer Messenger, National FFA Organization.)



Robert Moses, director and agriculture teacher at the STAR Academy in Indianapolis, presents the marketing component of Local Program Success to state agricultural education staff. Moses, whose program has achieved good visibility and recognition in the community, was a member of the Program Planning and Marketing work group that developed tools and strategies to help teachers market their programs. (Photo courtesy of Jennifer Messenger, National FFA Organization.)

Information on these conferences will be publicized as it becomes available.

### *A Continuing Effort*

Local Program Success does not end after state workshops this summer and pre-service workshops this fall. In fact, we intend for it to become a core part of agricultural education for years to come.

*“As Local Program Success grows, evolves and becomes part of our standard agricultural education vocabulary, we encourage all teachers and agricultural education majors to implement its ideas and focus on the six core areas.”*

In addition to supplying information for *A Guide to Local Program Success*, the six work groups developed proposals for new tools and resources to help teachers succeed in each area. Ideas include a best practices guide, SAE research and experimentation tools, a teacher recruitment package and more. The National FFA Foundation is seeking sponsors for those ideas and, as funding becomes available, the "toolbox" of resources will grow.

Local Program Success will be a core part of state staff in-service training for the next three years. To extend the reach of this training, we will invite teacher educators who have not had LPS training, and one to four teacher representatives from each state to attend these sessions. The goal is to have all state staff, all teacher educators and a core of teacher "trainers" fully versed in LPS by the year 2000, and for them to continue taking LPS to teachers and agricultural education students in their states.

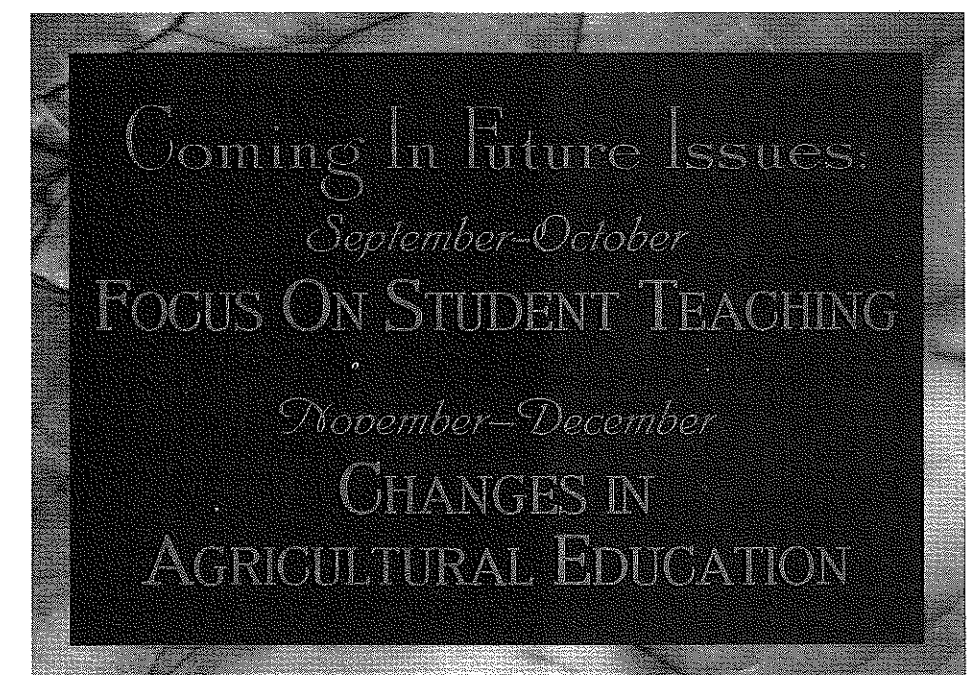
We will issue supplements to the guide each year, highlighting new best practices and resources. In 2000, we will publish the second edition of the guide, with changes and additions shaped largely by feedback from teachers who have

been using it. Again, this initiative is by teachers, for teachers.

An evaluation and recognition component will encourage teachers to implement LPS in their classrooms. We anticipate sending recognition from the U.S. Department of Education to teachers who show success, and to their administrators to enhance the perception of agricultural education as a leader in the local school and community.

As Local Program Success grows, evolves and becomes part of our standard agricultural education vocabulary, we encourage all teachers and agricultural education majors to implement its ideas and focus on the six core areas. In replicating the success of top teachers, they will develop their own strategies and determine what works best for them. Call it the ultimate teaching experience. Call it success.

For information on LPS teacher training sessions in your state, please contact your state agricultural education office. To order free copies of *A Guide to Local Program Success* to use in your program, contact Laura Thomas by calling 703-360-3600, ext. 203.





# Managing Human Resources With

## Local Program Success



By Douglas P. Daley

Mr. Daley is an agriculture instructor at Gilbert High School, Gilbert, AZ.

I can remember the first professional meeting I ever attended as an agricultural educator. I had just finished college and was one of those who was definitely considered "wet behind the ears." During the meeting, the agenda included a segment titled "Sharing Our Best." The segment was used for individual agriculture teachers to make presentations to their peers about what worked best for them in the classroom, laboratory, supervised instruction, community relations and the FFA. I was shocked that these teachers were giving away their best secrets. Some of the presenters were even proud to share their experiences and successes. They were providing everyone with the insight as to what made their local agriculture program unique and an asset to the community and school.

Whether it was a great introduction to a lesson, how to get counselors to enroll the best students in the agriculture program, tips for helping students win proficiency awards at the state level, securing quality placement opportunities for students, or conducting an effective chapter banquet, these teachers—these competitors—were helping

everyone improve their programs. This was being done while at the same time knowing that they, in turn, would have to come up with new and innovative methods to remain competitive with those who now had the secrets to their success.

This example is exactly how the Local Program Success Program will work on a local, state and national level. It will provide local teachers and programs with the ideas, materials and techniques to make them successful. This, in turn, will make local agriculture programs a success through individualized improvement. In my estimation, the local agriculture program is no more successful than the local agriculture teacher. It is imperative that the teacher be able to manage all of the resources necessary to ensure that their program is productive and is considered by the community and school as an asset to the educational process. We must build locally to ensure the future as a whole.

*"LPS will provide local teachers and programs with the ideas, materials and techniques to make them successful."*

*Partnerships: Becoming a "Manager of Resources"*

Becoming a "manager of resources" allows you to focus your time, talents and attention on the bottom line—facilitating the learning process. In agricultural educa-

tion, we have much more to manage than the average teacher. We directly have to facilitate and work with classroom instruction, work-based learning, student development through FFA, recruitment, laboratory management, personal professional growth, other school responsibilities as well as balancing family and work. Through the building of partnerships and mobilization of volunteers within the school and community, we can gain support, free up time and have a shared responsibility for program success.

Why should we as teachers be concerned with involving others in our program? It seems as this is just more work and adding to limited time for other things. Well, we must consider that when community members, school staff, other teachers and administrators are involved, they find it easier to see your program's benefits to students and the community. Once you involve others in your program, they can help you to obtain needed materials, place students, plan activities, secure equipment, market your program and even provide moral support.

Yes, it takes some time to develop partnerships. The important thing to keep in mind is that you need to take it slow and work on those who are already allies to your program. These individuals should include local agricultural organizations and those involved in the agriculture industry. Once you have convinced these individuals of your program's benefits, they will sell it for you. Then you can go and recruit other supporters in the community and school. Once you have developed a strong base of partners working together and

using community resources, you can ease your work load. In turn, this allows you to focus more on what we are hired to do—facilitate learning.

You still may be wondering, "Why should I as a teacher build a network of partners, allies and volunteers to assist my program?" Well, consider some of the following we identified when developing the Local Program Success materials:

*"Through the building of partnerships and mobilization of volunteers within the school and community, we can gain support, free up time and have a shared responsibility for program success."*

### Partners, Allies and Volunteers will help you:

- Accomplish more because they will fulfill specific tasks that support your local program.
- Avoid burnout by having more time and resources to plan new activities.
- Increase the influence and impact of your program. You will benefit from school administrators and guidance counselors who steer students to your classroom and believe in your program.
- Ease your workload by becoming a "manager of resources." Get more done in less time.
- Build credibility with local administrators, legislators, school board members and business people.

### Steps to Success

Teachers who become "managers of resources" and develop a shared responsibility with local supporters effectively use their time, program dollars, facilities and community resources. The five steps identified in Local Program Success to accomplish this are:

#### 1. Identify potential partners.

Look beyond who you traditionally think would be supportive of your program. Remember that there are "key influencers" in all walks of life. In addition, one resource that is often overlooked in every community is those individuals who are retired. Many of these individuals have the time to help and just need to be asked to become involved.

#### 2. Identify benefits of involvement for partners.

Too often we look to others for what they can do for us. We look to them to sponsor banquet awards, donate equipment or employ a student. We need to look at ways we benefit them. In turn, this helps them to buy into the program and become supportive. The important key to this step is to individualize how we can benefit them personally.

#### 3. Present benefits to potential partners.

Once we show individuals all the benefits our program has to offer them, we can generally secure their support. Once again, it is important to individualize how we can benefit them personally.

#### 4. Establish a plan for involving core partners.

Just as you enter the classroom each day with a lesson plan, you must develop a plan for involving others in your program. Once you identify the partners and show them the benefits for their involvement, make sure you can provide them with meaningful ways to help.

#### 5. Reward partners by recognizing their contributions and support.

Everyone needs to be shown appreciation for their help and support. Through the FFA, it is easy to provide them with recognition. Remember some people just need a quick word of "thanks," while others may appreciate more public recognition.

*"The only way that agricultural education can have improvements at a state or national level is for us to improve locally."*

In agricultural education there is a great mechanism for involving partners, allies and volunteers in your program. That is through the establishment and utilization of a local FFA alumni affiliate. This can provide an organized manner for involving others in your program and program success. It also gives others a way to buy into the future of your program.

The materials developed by the Local Program Success initiative are a working document. It has been developed by local teachers "sharing our best." It is important that we as local agriculture teachers utilize the information provided and work locally to make improvements. The only way that agricultural education can have improvements at a state or national level is for us to improve locally.



# Profit Sharing with Local

## Program Success



By Robert E. Moses

Mr. Moses is the director of the Science and Technology of Agriculture and it's Resources (STAR) Academy, Indianapolis, IN.

Over the past decade, there have been many exciting reforms occurring in the agricultural education arena across the country. Some of the most important changes have been the efforts to integrate academic and agricultural education. The infusion of science principles and applications into agriculture classrooms has created new opportunities for students in agricultural education, particularly those in urban areas. Agricultural science, environmental science and related technologies have given programs across the country a face lift that has revitalized students, parents, teachers and local communities. However, agricultural educators nationwide have continued to face constant struggles of presenting these new innovations from such a traditionally strong area as agricultural education.

In the same time period, advocates for change, innovation and improvement shared continuous success stories and innovative teaching techniques at conference after conference, leaving colleagues to patch and piecemeal a potential cookbook for their own local pro-

gram. As a first-year teacher on Chicago's south side at the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences (CHAS), gaining and sharing ideas was not only a way of life, but also a matter of survival.

Teaching agriculture in an urban, non-traditional environment like Chicago, I expected and received, a myriad of challenges. CHAS teachers not only had to influence inner-city students, but also had to convince them that a program for agriculture was both powerful and interesting. There was no systematic approach to the urban agriculture situation, which left teachers to utilize their creativity and a number of instructional, technical and local resources. In an attempt to develop a model approach, teachers had to be innovative, organized, resilient and sensitive to the growing needs of students.

*“With Local Program Success (LPS), we are able to access a collection of the most proven practices in agricultural education, “profit sharing” if you will, to enhance and update local programs.”*

The idea came to the teachers—why not take that creativity and innovation along with the best success stories we know and compile some sort of guide? Talk of this approach went off and on for a lit-

tle while. However, the task of operating an agricultural program new to Chicago became too enormous. There have been programs and schools across the land that have these same thought patterns as we attempted to improve and enhance our local schools. Watman and Raymond (1990) indicated that a beneficial aspect of utilizing a sound and traditional educational activity is that it is already established and we do not need to “reinvent the wheel.”

With that type of philosophy in mind, agricultural educators need to remember that we are an indispensable resource to one another as sharing a number of our most practical successes can encourage team building and present a positive image to the local communities we serve. New educational approaches continue to arrive at a pace that attempts to meet the needs of students who are becoming more and more non-traditional. Agricultural educators need to be at the forefront of this changing climate.

With Local Program Success (LPS), we are able to access a collection of the most proven practices in agricultural education, “profit sharing” if you will, to enhance and update local programs. At the same time, we are able to provide traditionally strong instructional content without re-inventing the wheel.

### *Constant Changing Times*

Today's educational market is very diverse and increasingly high tech with sophisticated customers concentrating on every potential purchase of educational products. It is my opinion that we must transform ourselves to manage and

meet this growing customer need. While working with the Program Planning and Marketing work group of the Local Program Success initiative, we all knew agricultural educators wear up to five, ten and sometimes fifteen hats in fulfilling the duties of the profession we hold dear. With that in mind, we need to enhance our ability to incorporate the managerial approach to this new market as the focus continues on teaching and learning. Finding out what to learn and finding out how to teach what we learn is critical to establishing the buy-in needed to win over your staff and in helping them to master the hard sell of agricultural education, particularly to urban students, parents and community members.

This is why Local Program Success is so important, because as “managers” we become even more vital to the future of agricultural education. We should be actively positioning ourselves as drivers of a tool that will help capture our administrator's attention. Words such as “student achievement,” “successful student” and “excellent citizen” will establish the power needed to allow you to have impact with your administrator. Local Program Success will, as Dave Knau of Pioneer Hi-Bred International indicated, “capture the essence of what business is trying to do,” which is to create an environment of success through team building, program planning and marketing.

### *Impact on Local Programs*

As an urban program, the STAR (Science and Technology of Agriculture and it's Resources) Academy is viewed in the Indianapolis Public School system as one of the brightest examples of what is working in education. Indianapolis Public Schools Superintendent, Dr. Esperanza Zendejas, applauded “the successful efforts of the magnet program in partnering with the FFA to teach

students an appreciation of the important role agriculture plays in our society while steering students toward careers related to agriculture, Indiana's largest industry” (Zendejas, 1996, pg. 2).

I believe that the Local Program Success initiative can and will generate that type of powerful support for local programs. Dr. Zendejas eloquently states, “The initiatives that helped the STAR program gain this type of sudden notoriety can be found in Local Program Success. Imagine that if this systematic instructional resource were available at the inception of the program. The profit potential and possibilities for students would be endless!” Dr. Zendejas also took note of the effect STAR Academy was having on students and invited the district “to go see for yourself the incredible impact this program is making on students.”

### *Marketing Your Program*

We in agricultural education possess the tools necessary for a dynamic program. However, it will take promotion and marketing strategies such as mentoring programs (PALS), orientation programs, open houses, and news media contact to help you effectively chart a course for success. The superintendent's district newsletter article on the STAR Academy did more for the program than we imagined, as we are being flooded with calls daily from parents wanting their sons and daughters in the magnet program. Local programs can allow others to do the promotion and marketing for them which is what the “GASP for AIRR” process in the LPS initiative is designed to help agricultural educators do. Two simple steps allow for fundamental implementation:

First, identify key customers in each of the following groups:

- General Community
- Administrators/guidance counselors

- Students
- Parents

Then, establish a plan to:

- Ask
- Involve
- Recognize
- Report

An example of the GASP approach we use at STAR Academy is to compile a detailed database of key leaders in Indianapolis that includes names, titles, phone numbers, fax numbers, mailing addresses and e-mail addresses. The database does not necessarily need to be an item that you compile as you may have a very energetic board member or volunteer to gather this information and prepare it for you.

In the STAR program's AIRR approach, we ask by handing out an information packet that includes a commitment card which encourages a potential supporter to be involved with the Academy in a positive way to support local instruction. At STAR Academy, we have to implement intense market strategies due to the nature of our “customers”—urban students and parents who are not attracted to the concept of agricultural education immediately, but rather the many by-products of our program such as FFA, college prep, scholarship opportunities and advanced placement credit for college. The LPS initiative will assist our program and others to reshape and refine its systematic approach to meeting the needs of today's complex student customer.

### *Recruitment Tools—A Maximized Resource Through LPS*

An example of some of the tools used in helping us recruit a diverse group of students in the urban environment which Indianapolis' STAR Academy serves, FFA chapter members:

...continued on page 12

- Organized a school fair for potential students and parents and asked them what they wanted in a high school education.
- Created brochures using information collected from current students such as personal surveys and direct positive quotes, information from potential students and parents, showing how agricultural education and FFA can meet parents' and students' needs.
- Collected data on what interested non-member friends and polled parents and potential students over the phone to determine their interest level.
- Invited potential members to an open house where they could win prizes in a mystery raffle while they learned more about the program.
- Sent letters to open house participants and their middle school counselors to keep agricultural education on top of their mind when they registered for district high school programs.

## Results

Enrollment increased by more than 300 percent, or 140 students, in three years while maintaining an average retention rate of greater than 85 percent in all three classes of students in a very transient student environment created by the Indianapolis Public School's extremely competitive magnet system which consisted of 22 elementary, middle school and high school magnet programs. Additionally, these strategies have initiated planning at a newly established boundary middle school to Emmerich Manual High School, where STAR is located, to start a feeder agriculture/FFA program.

## Public Relations and Partnerships

Public relations has been defined as a way for business to indicate a social consciousness, building good feelings toward business for employees, customers and potential customers. Agricultural educators can modify this definition to lay groundwork for a successful local plan by stating that public relations is a way for agriculture programs to initiate social consciousness, develop good feelings toward the FFA and agriculture from parents, administrators, students and potential students.

Agricultural educators have discovered that one word, especially when attracting diverse populations of urban students, has become a stumbling block. The word is "agriculture." Why? Even though we in the profession realize that agriculture is the number one industry in America, boasts more than 800 related career opportunities, and offers the number one youth organization for agricultural education students with the ability to prepare, develop and promote their leadership skills and abilities like no other organization, we suffer from an image crisis—a barrier that could be effectively removed through positive public relations with our local community. In an urban program, no element is more critical. Working our way up toward the consciousness of the community is par for the course. Now that LPS has been established, we can save time, maximize our resources and build program support through enhanced practices that exist in this initiative to cultivate positive public relations.

## Encourage Positive Results

Changes are occurring in our agricultural education programs. Today's students are entering programs with less agricultural experience, even though they are more sophisticated and diverse than ever. Agricultural

educators need time-saving resources that are quick, effective, easy and user friendly as more and more future teachers and students will tend to emulate your every move in search of educational success and fulfillment. With an increasing number of school districts nationwide attempting to down-size agricultural education programs due to a lack of interest, poor exposure and a perceived lack of achievement in today's high tech market, we need to encourage partnership opportunities and a marketing attitude to get local communities on the side of agricultural education.

Lee and Thomas (1995) indicated that there are many wonderful things happening in agricultural education that must be giving "a positive image in the mind set of the public." In the urban setting, it is critical that agricultural educators orient the community on agriculture and FFA, thus becoming public relations authorities and positive image setters on agricultural education. The LPS initiative and the resources that accompany it will only be as good as you execute them. As a prominent Pioneer Hi-Bred executive so eloquently put it before a group of agricultural educators, "Success requires planning, planning requires execution, execution requires priorities, priorities require resources, and resources require commitment!"

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# Partners for Success

## Research, Industry and Education Come Together to Make Agricultural Biotechnology the SAE Opportunity of a Lifetime

High school students enrolled in the agricultural biotechnology program at the Carl Hayden Center for Agribusiness must complete a demanding curriculum. Not only are they required to complete extensive agricultural-based research, but they must also interact with industry and universities to complete internship experiences. Such standards have always been considered a deterrent in maintaining student enrollment in vocational programs, but in this program academic achievement is up, enrollment is on the rise and the dropout rate has decreased dramatically. Why? Much of the students' success is owed to mentors from industry and academia who donate hours of time, materials and support.

## Industry-Based Research

h.e.r.c. Inc. is a Phoenix-based corporation that develops biological solutions for industrial and agricultural challenges. The company employs students to conduct research studies and intern as laboratory technicians. Protocols are developed in cooperation with the company's research division and related university programs.

A senior agriculture student, Emma Gibson, spent the summer of 1996 conducting phytotoxicity studies to analyze the effects of bacteria (used to digest lime in commercial plumbing systems) on common greenhouse production crops. At completion, the product proved to be safe and can now be marketed to greenhouse growers for use with drip irrigation and evaporative cooling systems.

An advanced biotechnology student, Dawn Towery, evaluated the anti-transpirant, "Stressguard," as a potential flame-retardant for Christmas trees. The student worked with the local fire department to determine flash point and flammability of a group of trees treated with varying concentration levels of the product. As a result, h.e.r.c. will market the new product during the coming holiday season.

Another student, Timothy Miller, has worked with researchers at Seminis Vegetable Seeds to identify molecular markers that can be used in proprietary protection of the company's vegetable varieties. Students isolated DNA from 12 Seminis vegetable hybrids and used PCR with microsatellite primers to produce unique molecular "fingerprints." Seminis is the largest commercial vegetable seed breeder in the world. The company consists of the newly formed conglomeration of Petoseed, Asgrow, Royal Sluis and DNAP and has a large research facility located in Woodland, California.

The USDA Agricultural Research Service facility located in Phoenix, Arizona, is devoted to water conservation. Scientists at the laboratory are working to develop drought-tolerant, experimental oil crops. Carl Hayden students Aaron Moffett and Crystal Gillham participated in research internships using molecular markers to identify male sterile lines within these crops. The development of male sterile lines can protect and accelerate experimental breeding programs.

## University Liaison

When students begin the process of choosing an agriscience research



By Christy Mecey-Smith

Ms. Smith is a biotechnology instructor at Carl Hayden Community High School, Laveen, AZ.

project, they must first identify a career goal and then a specific area of interest. This process led Frank Jones, an agricultural biotechnology student and dairy goat farmer, to the concept of developing an "on farm" pregnancy test for dairy goats. Frank has worked with Dr. Coralie Munro at the University of California-Davis to develop an immunoassay that tests for estrone sulfate concentrations in goat urine. Hopefully this can be developed into a color-based test that can be used at the commercial level.

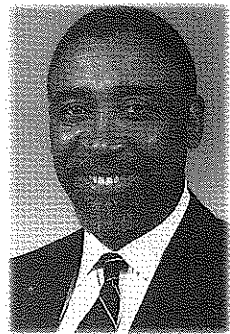
These examples just scratch the surface of what has been accomplished by this group of students and their mentors. All in all, this probably doesn't seem like your typical agricultural education program. Yet, all of these research applications lead back to increased, diversified production for agriculture. The occupational training provided to these students leads to skill development, awareness of current agricultural issues and direction towards career success. Industry, research and agricultural education are coming together to make a winning combination!





# Achieving Local Program Success

## by Collaborating with Partners, Allies and Volunteers



By James R. Oglesby

Dr. Oglesby is a research assistant professor, University of Missouri-Columbia.

### The Agricultural Education Crisis

The pending crisis in agricultural education should serve as a wake-up call for those of us interested in the youth of this great nation. The general problem is that we could possibly be faced with the last generation of people who know how to produce food from the soil. The connection between food production and providing a connected learning experience for students has been one of the mainstays of agricultural education and the National FFA Organization. The specific crisis, however, is reflected in the data that shows the rapid decline in the number of students who are choosing agricultural education as a career. The data regarding the decline in the number of agriculture teachers is even more significant.

The statistics produced each year by Dr. William Camp, professor of Agricultural Education, Virginia

Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia, reflect a drastic decline in the number of degrees granted for people preparing to teach agriculture. A number of states either have or soon will have agricultural education departments in K-12 schools without having fully certified agriculture teachers available to teach students. This is a serious problem that I did not think that I would see occur in my lifetime.

It appears that we have the most difficult time trying to convince the public, and sometimes even our education colleagues, that agricultural education is not just about farming. When the topic of jobs is raised, people think of jobs in agriculture as farm jobs or farming. Amazingly, the statement "nobody farms anymore" is made by persons as if they think beans originate from a can in the supermarket. In actuality, the number of agriculturally related jobs in the employment marketplace has increased and most are in support of actual farm jobs. The number of farmers, farms, farm-related employment and, ultimately, "farm kids," has decreased significantly in the past three decades. However, the production of food and fiber is up, the number of agriculturally related jobs has increased, and the American people eat better than any other nation in the world. So one might ask, "What is the problem? Why are we worried about agricultural education?"

### Foster Community Involvement

I am reminded of the line used in a United Airlines commercial. A company owner is distributing air-

line tickets to his sales force and instructing them to go visit their customers. A sales person inquires of the owner, "Where are you going?" The reply comes swiftly and candidly, "I am going to see an old friend who fired us today."

The parable is clear that just as big businesses can become distant from those they serve, agricultural education has in many communities become estranged from its constituency. Truth be told, agricultural education has always been more than just production agriculture. Agricultural education programs have been deeply embedded in the communities they serve. Components of the agricultural education program such as the in-school instruction program, the Supervised Agricultural Experience Program and the FFA incorporate many of the key concepts included in the U.S. Department of Education's School to Work initiative. It is the model for the "hands-on" connection between theory and practice, or applied learning. It furnishes work-based learning experiences through supervised agricultural experience programs.

Finally, it provides a connection between school, careers and a wide array of youth leadership development activities through FFA. In fact, many other disciplines such as science, mathematics and technology have adopted the teaching and learning strategies pioneered in agricultural education.

Early in 1996, several organizations, including the National Council for Agricultural Education, the U.S. Department of Education, the National FFA Organization and the National Vocational Agricultural Teachers' Association

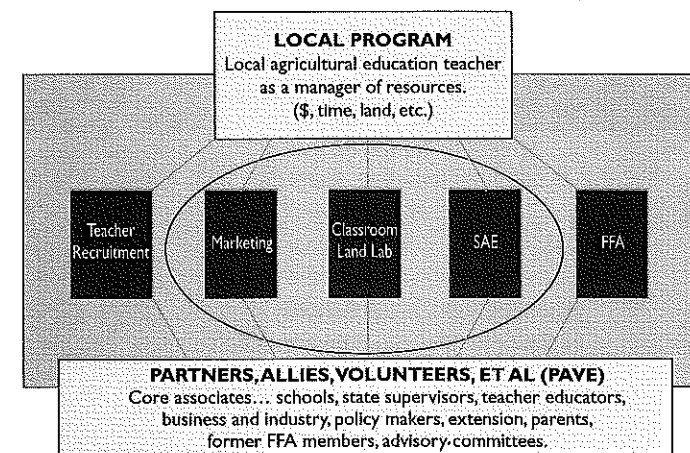
(NVATA), worked collaboratively to initiate a national task force. The stated purpose was to refine goals and develop a dynamic implementation plan to ensure the success of local agriculture programs. The national task force established a cadre of work groups made up of outstanding professionals who had experience with agricultural education and who possessed a strong desire to build successful local agriculture programs.

As the national task force was presented with its mission, I was reminded of a Jeffersonian story. In Jefferson's writings to a friend in 1816, he states that a constitution should be examined and amended from time to time because "laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind." Jefferson further believed that "future leadership rests on the shoulders of present leaders."

The parallel here is that a group of leaders was assembled to examine and re-assess the future of agricultural education. The challenge of ensuring a strong future for agricultural education may be met by strengthening local programs and developing strategies and tools for teachers. These strategies can foster successful programs in an environment that has become less agrarian and more technological. A consensus emerged that "when local programs are successful, state and national programs will be successful."

### PAVE

Early in the discussion of the work group, a focus emerged which gained the consensus of the group, namely that agriculture teachers are managers of resources. The work group name, "Building Partnerships and Mobilizing Volunteers," evolved to a revised title of "Partners, Allies, Volunteers, Et al." (PAVE). The emphasis for a successful local agricultural education program can be linked directly to the teacher as a manager of human, financial and natural resources.



The PAVE work group targeted key components of successful local agricultural education programs as follows:

- strong SAE programs
- strong classroom and laboratory experience programs
- strong marketing programs
- strong teacher recruitment programs
- strong FFA program of activities

Each component of a successful local program needs a cadre of partners, allies, volunteers and core associates to insure success at the local level. Core associates involve people in disciplines other than agricultural education. These would include educators, business and industry professionals, policy makers, extension services, parents, former FFA members and advisory committee participants.

With the agriculture teacher serving as a manager of resources and a catalyst for igniting enthusiasm for supporting programs and services, the opportunity for success increases significantly. It should be recognized that the linkage between in-school programs and the community is the connection that makes classroom experiences more relevant.

Marketing the programs and services of any agricultural education program requires excellent communication skills. It would appear that not enough time is spent telling the

story of positive experiences students are receiving from their involvement with local agricultural education programs. The wide-spread availability of technology, including a mechanism for communication, dissemination and outreach, provides agriculture teachers with a unique opportunity to serve as a community resource.

Tom Jones, executive vice president of Grand Canyon Electric Cooperative in

Phoenix, Arizona, a member of the work group and an 11-year veteran agriculture teacher, characterized the traditional role of the agriculture teacher as a "circuit rider." This circuit rider role served many functions, such as providing program visibility, teacher as a resource person, communication link with the community and a recruiting link for future students. While print materials, web pages and newsletters may reach a part of the community, nothing yet created can exceed the value of face-to-face contact with partners, allies and volunteers as well as in-school colleagues.

The overall focus of the PAVE work group discussion was to identify successful practices used by agriculture teachers to gain the support of partners, allies, volunteers and others to provide a successful learning experience for students at the local level. The second phase of the discussion was to establish a basic approach to dealing with each issue and to recommend a set of "tools" for teachers to use in promoting PAVE's success at the local level.

The work group identified a long list of suggestions to guide the development of the "tools." Consider the following sample ideas:

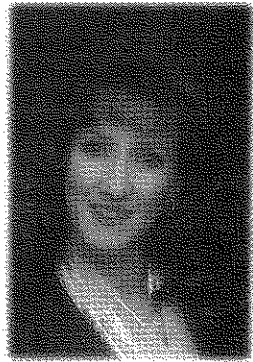
- Language should reinforce practices that exist in good local programs.
- Teachers must recognize the value of PAVE's and use them.

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# LPS... Just What Agricultural

## Education Needs, Another Acronym



By Linda A. Rist

Ms. Rist is an agriculture instructor at West Central High School, Hartford, SD, and the NVATA Region III vice president.

Let's see, we've got FFA, WEA, NVATA, AAAE, NASAE, SAE, PALS, CDE and the list goes on and on and on. Now they've come up with a new one to add to the already seemingly endless list. While it may be true that agricultural education is blessed with more than its fair share of acronyms, possibly even more than other professions, the newest, LPS, is one that deserves the attention of all members of the agricultural education family. As we in the profession adopt and take LPS into the fold, we shall soon realize the true benefit to all entities LPS provides.

Classroom and laboratory instruction is the first of six key components in the new LPS guide. This portion is essential to effective teaching within not only the agricultural education classroom, but throughout the kindergarten through adult education system. There are three primary markets or users for the information in the classroom and laboratory instruction section; pre-service student

teachers, educators already in the classroom and teacher educators at both the pre-service and in-service levels of instruction.

The LPS guide breaks down the classroom and laboratory instruction portion into nine key constructs. These principles were developed by and for teachers in an effort to help make our jobs not only easier, but to help us become more effective practitioners. Throughout the development phase of the LPS guide, the work group kept coming back to the importance of planning at all levels, including lessons, activities and programs.

In order to have success on the local level, we first must have a good solid program to build upon. Instructors must create an instructional program based on student interests and agricultural opportunities. Let's face it, kids don't beat down the doors to get into our classrooms if they're not excited about what's happening there. We need to allow students to help chart the course for the direction they want to go. Giving the kids ownership in their program enables and requires the educator to make real world connections for the learners. If we cannot show the relevance in what is being taught, should they really be learning it?

Teachers, at all levels, are individuals who truly care about kids. Agricultural education is blessed with the opportunity to touch lives for more than just a semester.

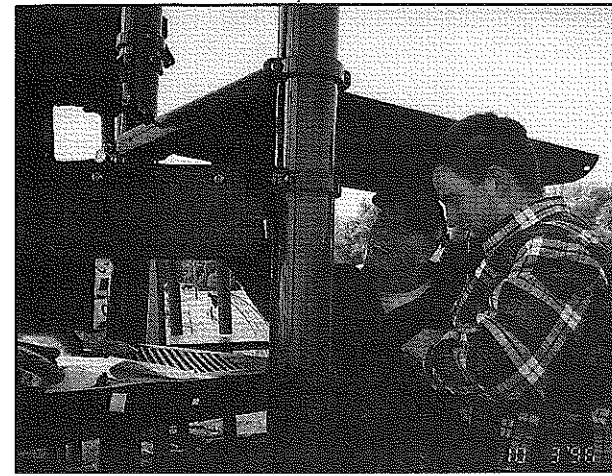
Many of our students remain enrolled in the agricultural education program throughout their high school careers. This unique difference from the average classroom teacher gives agriculture instructors an unusual bond with their students. In many programs, a family atmosphere takes over, not only does the teacher care for the students, but the students learn to care for each other.

In the real world, agricultural education programs do not get only straight "A" students. Therefore, instructors must learn to adapt for all types of students. The agricultural education program must find the value in attracting students of diverse backgrounds, abilities, cultures and ideas. Diversity is what makes us interesting, it sets us apart from the ordinary and strengthens the local program. Our classrooms need to be the one place where every child in the school can find success.



Community involvement by the instructor models behavior to get students involved in positive ways in their communities. (Photo courtesy of Linda Rist.)

Students model the behavior of their teachers. If we feel that community involvement and service are important, then we must show that to our students. Becoming part of



Community service is vital to agriculture students. (Photo courtesy of Linda Rist.)

the community on a personal level builds support for the agricultural education program and fosters fellowship. Playing an active role in civic and church-related organizations can also help to lend balance to the lives of busy agriculture teachers. Remember, there is life after FFA and PAS activities! The people we share our lives with want us to remember that fact a little more often.

Are you still teaching mathematical concepts with a slide rule and abacus? It's time to step into the 21st Century and update the technology available to your students. This is often easier said than done. All of the programs in our schools want and deserve the limited resources to use in their program. It is possible for us to be innovators without having a million dollars at our disposal.

Technology not only refers to hardware and machines, but to the concepts taught in the classroom. One of the greatest challenges of being an agriculture/agriscience teacher is staying up to date with the rapidly changing field of agriculture.



Caring about students is the first step in teaching them to care for each other. (Photo courtesy of Linda Rist.)

The concept that many of us are guilty of is perhaps the most critical. We spend countless hours learning new things to teach our students but spend far too few hours learning how to teach it. We must be students of teaching. We need to make a concerted effort to continue learning how to be more effective teachers. If we don't someone else will teach our students, and where will that leave us? After all, distance education is even coming to the great plains of South Dakota.

LPS is truly an acronym that needs to be embraced by the profession at all levels. Our programs 10 years from now will only be as strong as the student teachers we train today. If we fail to help the first-year teacher fall in love with this job, they will be elsewhere. Our seasoned professionals need support and motivation to help re-ignite that fire and keep them molding the minds of yet another generation. We are all in this together. Together, we have developed a tool that can help all agricultural educators answer the questions and solve the problems found in the day-to-day operation of a successful agricultural education program. That tool is Local Program Success.



*Achieving Local Program Success by Collaborating with Partners, Allies and Volunteers, continued from page 15*

- Communicate clear program expectations to PAVE constituents.
- Design an effective outreach program using technology.
- Include research-based ideas, not just "if FFA says."
- Develop slogans that stress community and family involvement.

The dedicated efforts of this work group and FFA staff contributed significantly to the development of the tools and strategies prepared to help strengthen Local Program Success. *A Guide to Local Program Success* was unveiled in July 1997, should provide agriculture teachers with specific ideas taken from the nationwide experiences of teachers with successful local agricultural education programs.

### Conclusion

This is the initial step in trying to re-invigorate a very successful program that has served a number of prominent national leaders. However, it is a program that is in serious need of updating. If we continue to do the same old things, the same old ways, we will most assuredly get the same old results. Students will be receiving 19th Century skills in the face of 21st Century competition. That is just not good enough to help students who are going to a place and time that most of us will never see. Good sense tells me that if I look at the changes that have occurred in the past 20 years and try to project the students' skill needs for the next 10 years, local programs must be redefined. We must rapidly accelerate the change process to use resources more effectively, expand the use of technology and the understanding of its tools, release the "we're already doing that" posture, be receptive to new ideas and put aside politics and petty bickering.



# The Teaching Way



By Billye B. Foster

Dr. Foster is an assistant professor of agricultural education, University of Arizona, Tucson.

**T**ony Hillerman has single-handedly brought the myth of the modern Navajo to life. His books can be purchased at almost any trading post or gift shop in the Navajo Nation. But even with his matter-of-fact descriptions and research driven information gleaned from years of living and working around the Nation, Hillerman still is unable to answer all our questions. All across the vast expanse of the Navajo Nation, 27,000 square miles to be exact, people live between times; between the modern world that surrounds their Nation and the ancient cultural beliefs they are taught from childhood.

The Dineh (The People) of the Navajo Nation have become legendary in their ability to glean the best from cultures with which they come in contact. Association with the Pueblo brought them their knowledge of sheep and their expertise of weaving. From the Hopi and the Zuni, they honed their skills in the art of jewelry making. Also from these peoples the Navajo learned to tame the land through farming. From the belagana (Anglos), they have

## "ELEANOR FRIEDMAN HYPHEN BERNAL."

*Thatcher spaced the words, pronouncing them evenly. I'm uneasy about women who hyphenate their names.*

*Lieutenant Joe Leaphorn didn't respond. Had he ever met a hyphenated woman? Not that he could remember. But the custom seemed sensible to him. Not as odd as Thatcher's discomfort with it. Leaphorn's mother, Leaphorn's aunts, all of the women he could think of among his maternal Red Forehead clan, would have resisted the idea of submerging their name or family identity in that of a husband (Hillerman, 1990).*

reached for agricultural education and the FFA.

The Dineh first drifted into the Southwest from the American Northwest. Related to the Athapascan tribes, they became part of the tribes that migrated south and are collectively called Apachean or Southern Athapascan. Throughout their migrations and for the hundreds of years that they have inhabited the area in Arizona, Utah and New Mexico that is known as the Navajo Nation, the Dineh have kept their cultural heritage.

It may not seem strange, in a culture where the women hold the land and the family names, for a young woman to become an agriculture teacher. However, Charlene Kirk is the first Navajo woman to hold this distinction. The youngest of six children, Charlene returned to her home town to help bring the light of education to the young people there. Charlene graduated from Ganado High School in 1989 and after finishing at Central Arizona College in 1992, moved on to the University of Arizona to complete her degree in agricultural education. Her parents, Edward and Helen Kirk, have always supported their daughter and her ambition to serve others.

Amid a vast area of unparalleled beauty, the Navajo Nation is home to a dozen national monuments.

Truly a land of contrasts, you may be in the most modern of school facilities one moment and in less than 30 minutes be standing next to a traditional hogan at the home of a student. Television and telephones are rare commodities on the reservation. Many towns and villages are reachable only by dirt road. However, true to their heritage, the Navajo continue to strive to maintain a strong economy while holding on to their cultural heritage. How does a young woman build a successful agricultural education program in this environment?

## Local Program of Success

Every first-year teacher struggles to become familiar with his or her new surroundings. Who are the key players in the community? Will they support the program? What about the students—will they accept me? Will I be in control? How will I ever keep up with my lessons and all the paperwork? These questions and many more inundate the days and nights of beginning teachers. Somehow, they generally rise to the occasion and solve the mysteries.

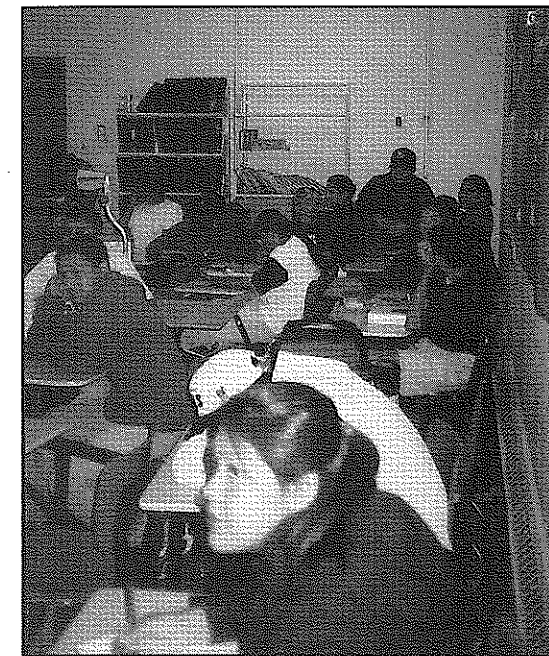
Remoteness on the reservation is an accepted fact. Charlene is building her program in Ganado, a small town on the reservation in Northeastern Arizona. While Ganado boasts the Hubbell Trading

Post Historical Park, it does not have a bank, a dry cleaner or even a lumber yard. Charlene must drive 50-60 miles in three different directions to find all of these businesses that are necessary for a successful program. Dry cleaners for blue and gold jackets, lumber yards for materials for the agricultural mechanics laboratory, even banking chores must be completed occasionally to keep the FFA running smoothly. All these and many more unique challenges face Charlene in her quest to create a successful local program. Along with the regular rigors of first-year teaching, she has learned to manage her time much more efficiently.

## Instruction

One of the key components of a successful program is instruction, both in and out of the classroom. Charlene is very adept at preparation and presentation of quality lessons. More importantly, she is gifted with the ability to communicate with her students on a variety of levels. Most of us struggle to attain that happy ground between student and teacher, not too friendly, but certainly reachable. The Navajo language is most intriguing. A language so complex and relatively unknown outside the Nation, that Navajo soldiers were used during World War II to baffle the Japanese. The famed Navajo Code Talkers were able to maintain communications that the Japanese were never able to decode! For Charlene, this was a simple matter. For her, English is a second language. Even today her mother speaks very little English.

In the classroom, Charlene moves easily between English and Navajo. Her students relate quite well to this, as it is often common for children from remote areas not to begin learning English until fifth or sixth grades. While they speak English, it is often hard for them to find the right words to convey their meaning. While an Anglo teacher might have difficulty learning Navajo, Charlene comes fully



Navajo students at Ganado High School. (Photo courtesy of Billye Foster.)

equipped to work within the language. Her students respond enthusiastically when she enhances an explanation in her native tongue.

## SAE

A second component instrumental in the development of a successful program is the Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE). Many of the students on the reservation raise cattle, sheep and horses at their homes. However, there are many students who live in government housing areas that limit their access to facilities for more traditional SAE projects. Ganado's agricultural education program boasts a new facility (less than six years old), complete with greenhouse and an outdoor land lab. Students are able to maintain a variety of projects here. This allows them to immerse what they learn in the classroom in a hands-on learning environment. For the Navajo this is extremely important, many of these young people will return home to pursue a career in farming or ranching. The skills they acquire in an agricultural education setting can prove to be very valuable.

But what about visiting homes? Navajo culture provides a strict

protocol regarding entering another's home or land. Fortunately for Charlene, she is also well versed in that area. When visiting her classroom, it becomes obvious she has utilized all the tools agriculture teachers have to develop positive relationships with their students.

## FFA

Creating a strong, viable FFA chapter is truly a challenge on the reservation. The Navajo by nature are a reserved, respectful people. Often, it is seen as unseemly for someone to be very outgoing, set apart from the group. Yet, the community support for the youth is outstanding. It is simply a matter of shifting some of the standard FFA paradigms to fit the Navajo. For example, in the Navajo culture, as well as many other native American tribes, the owl is considered a symbol of death or ill luck. Imagine a middle-class white family where the teenage son or daughter comes home and wants to buy or just wear a jacket that is embroidered with a Satanic cult's emblem. What would Mom and Dad say? Often young Navajo students wanting to wear the FFA jacket face the fear and frustration of the owl on the emblem. For them, it is not just a matter of style, it is a matter of culture.

In addition to those challenges, Charlene faced a dwindling chapter membership. When a previous Navajo teacher took early retirement, and an Anglo took his place, the style and personality of the Anglo teacher seemed harsh and unseemly to the Navajo. Consequently many students dropped out of the program. Charlene has worked hard to include all her students in many activities, blending the Navajo culture with the solid youth program offered by the FFA. Utilizing the 10 active members and recruiting other class members to help, the Ganado FFA held their first annual banquet with almost 175 persons

...continued on page 20



in attendance. Collaborative activities with neighboring Chinle High School's FFA chapter also provide a draw for the students. An end-of-the-year hay ride and picnic in the Canyon de Chelly was enjoyed by members from both chapters. By combining their native culture with the life learning skills developed through the FFA, Ganado's FFA actively brings learning to life.

Another challenge facing the Ganado FFA is the sheer distance required to travel to state activities. It takes members approximately eight hours to make the trip south to Tucson, where most of the statewide activities are held. Expenses for these trips become so elevated that for many students they are almost unreachable. Special funding to supplement these trips must continually be sought.

### Partnerships

If instruction, SAE, and FFA are considered the important components to a successful program, the three strategies suggested by *A Guide to Local Program Success* are absolute necessities! For Ganado FFA and Charlene Kirk, partnerships are crucial to survival. Charlene must weave her program into the life and culture of the community. One strong trait Charlene possesses is her ability to negotiate. Involving key players in the community is one of her best abilities.

One example that has proven positive was Charlene's active recruitment of a local school board member (and former agriculture teacher) to become active on her advisory committee. Charlene sought this man out and asked for his opinion on a variety of things, realizing his experience could prove to be a valuable tool. In addition, she has worked to develop a solid relationship with her administration and co-workers. This may all seem the obvious and simplest thing to do. However, the Navajo people cling strongly to tradition and there

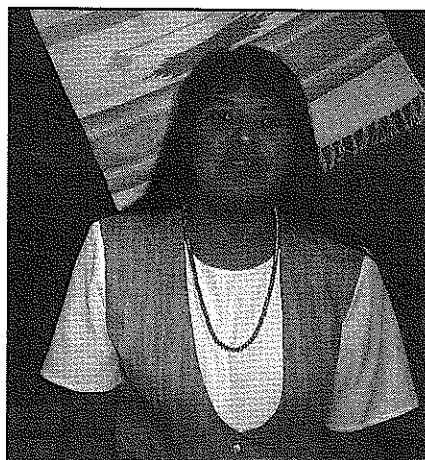
has been no tradition of a female agriculture teacher for them.

### Marketing

One of the most positive marketing strategies Ganado FFA employed this spring was to host an Equine Field Day. One Thursday was devoted to horse care and open to students and the community at large. The only Navajo veterinarian on the reservation spoke about health care and prevention. A Navajo farrier presented a program on proper care of equine feet and legs. Yet another Navajo, a horse trainer, gave practical tips and ideas for training young horses. How is this for marketing?

In the Navajo Nation there are few professional role models. Many of the people return to traditional farming and do not pursue outside employment. There is a need for opportunities to be made real and attainable for the young people. As the population grows, professionals are needed on the reservation. Students need to realize that they can become those needed professionals. Charlene is perhaps in a position to be one of their strongest role models. Certainly she is to be commended for her untiring efforts to provide a variety of examples for her students.

The Navajo way does not include flashy signs or colorful brochures. However, the Navajo people are very good listeners and miss little



Charlene Kirk, agriculture instructor at Ganado High School. (Photo courtesy of Billye Foster.)

that happens within their world. Consistent hard work, attention to student needs and a sincere desire to offer students a variety of options for their futures will not go unnoticed. Perhaps the Ganado agricultural education program will not grow as fast as some, but it will continue to grow steadily.

### Personal Development

Finally, the need for professionals to continue their personal development completes the suggested strategy list. Charlene is a young, single mother. She has overcome many barriers and sacrificed greatly to achieve her present degree and status. Already she has inquired about distance education opportunities available to her to continue in her personal improvement plan. A visionary young woman, Charlene realizes she must continue to learn herself in order to be the most effective educator she can be.

As the sun sets along the distant mesa, and the clouds streak a beautiful evening sky, it is easy to believe you have stepped back in time when you drive down the lonely highways that cross the Navajo Nation. Perhaps you have. Certainly you have stepped into a world where culture and history are considered second only to the value of the family unit. As the Navajo would say, "It begins in the hogan..."

The unique ability of one young woman to communicate with her people and touch their hearts can only preclude a very strong successful agricultural education program. If all of her methods do not fit into the traditional parameters of the outside world, they certainly fit within the framework of needs for her local community. With a role model like Charlene Kirk, the number of young Navajo men and women that choose the "teaching way" will no doubt continue to increase.



# Top 10 Action Steps for Local Program Success



### By Mee Cee Baker

Dr. Baker is the current NVATA president and an agriculture teacher at Greenwood High School, Millerstown, PA.

**A**uthor's note: I have compiled a different "article" of sorts. This is a top ten list I developed for Local Program Success. These ten guidelines have helped our program at Greenwood grow from 18 to 85 students over the past 10 years.

#### 1. Seek Community Support

- a. Advisory Committee
- b. School Board
- c. Faculty
- d. Administration
- e. Community
- f. Agricultural Profession

#### 2. Find a Mentor and Advocates

- a. Advisor
- b. Cooperating Teacher
- c. Colleagues in Field

#### 3. Formulate Department Mission and Goals Greenwood Agriculture Department Mission and Goals

*Professional Propagation: Recruiting Teachers for Agricultural Education, continued from page 5*

is managed under the auspices of NVATA and is maintained on the National FFA Organization's web-server.

### What Next?

If the Teacher Recruitment Committee is successful in its efforts, we will soon have a comprehensive model program for teacher identification and recruitment. But, nothing will happen if

*"Preparing Students for Placement in Agricultural Science Careers"*

- a. Technical Competence
  - b. Leadership Development
  - c. Personal Growth
- #### 4. Develop Sound Curriculum
- a. Classroom
  - b. SAE
  - c. FFA (appropriately integrated)
- #### 5. Take a Smorgasbord Approach to Activities
- a. Mission-Goal Oriented
  - b. Relevant
- #### 6. Use One Student-One Task Approach
- a. Teamwork Encouraged
  - b. Work Load Lessened
  - c. Everyone Wins
- #### 7. Maintain Consistency
- a. Grading
  - b. Discipline
  - c. Procedures

we stop at that. If we truly want to promote Local Program Success, the single most severe limiting factor to that success today is the lack of qualified teachers. As a professional family, we must accept responsibility for increasing the number of qualified, professionally prepared agricultural educators available to fill teaching openings in our local programs.


#### 8. Become Professionally Involved

- a. Associations
- b. In-Service Opportunities

#### 9. See Big Picture

- a. Win Battles, not Wars
- b. Remain Positive
- c. Accept What Cannot Change


#### 10. Separate School and Home Life

- a. Complete School Work BEFORE going home
- b. Maintain Priorities 

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## A View from the Agricultural Mechanics Laboratory Egress Opening (Shop Door)

By Jim Sorensen

Mr. Sorensen is an agriculture instructor, Kimberly High School, Kimberly, ID.

School is out for the summer and it is time to take a breath. This is a good time to look back at the past year and evaluate what happened. This fits right in to the theme for this issue of *The Agricultural Education Magazine*—Local Program Success. Just how does one go about determining a program's success? Well, I don't know. In fact, I doubt if anyone really knows. There will be those that pontificate on the subject and in the end, I doubt if they know either. When it is asked if a local program is successful, the first thing that must be done is to establish by whose standards the program is to be judged. Should we use the instructor's; the school board's; the administration's; the student's; the community's; the agriculture college's or the state department's criteria; or should we use our peers?

### Who's Standards

I know of no standard by which a department can be judged successful or unsuccessful. It was tried several years ago in Idaho, and it got exactly nowhere. Why? Maybe it was that some school boards and administrators were afraid that they might have to bring a program's equipment and teaching materials up to a standard, or maybe they were afraid that someone would say that 80 students was enough and enrollment would have to be

limited or another instructor would have to be hired.

While some instructors thought this was a good idea, they didn't like the idea that they could be held to a standard in their instruction. Perhaps they didn't like the idea that all the state reports weren't completed in a timely manner, that the accountability was theirs. Some administrators might be happy if the agriculture teacher was neither seen nor heard. Some instructors would only be happy if, through the FFA program, they were able to bask in the glory of their students. In fact, FFA success is the only standard used in evaluating an instructor or a department in some schools and communities.

Using my standard, an instructor must be a realist, and so should those individuals in the state departments, agricultural education departments, school administrations and neighboring departments. Each instructor must understand that they cannot do everything. Oh yes, some try. Usually it is a former FFA state officer that went right on to become an agriculture teacher. They last two to four years, and then they find a way out. Usually, it is banking or some other "advancement." Then it takes an instructor or two until the school is back to normal.

The facts are that one cannot teach a student to TIG weld if one does not have a TIG welder. One may not be able to justify the time or the money to train a forestry team if the nearest forest is 50 miles away (then again, maybe they can). In my case, I understand that I can't provide my students, all 170 of them, with the same personal

instruction that I did when I had 60. It is also very difficult to get a student to carry a quality SAE when one might only have that particular student for one trimester in one year. So, now I am back to the same question—by whose standards will a program be evaluated to determine its success? By my standard, I feel that I am moderately successful. The opinion of others? My guess is that it's a mixed review—some good, some bad.

### Suggested Criteria

Let me propose a few evaluation criteria that will probably not be included elsewhere in the magazine. First, does the school administration, staff and community refer to the program by the instructor's name, i.e., "Mr. Wolf's ag classes are great!" If they do, then it is a successful program. Second, do former students come back to visit the instructor and the agriculture classes? If they do, then there is success there somewhere. Third, do parents insist that all of their children take agriculture classes? If they do, then it is a successful program. I could go on, but I think I have made my point.

Now, don't get me wrong, we should have standards of measurement. If we are to improve and advance into the next century, we must have a target in order to establish our goals. Now, who should determine whether or not a program is a success? Let's leave it to the local advisory committee, that is, if I could remember who all is on it.



## Junior Livestock Shows 2nd Edition

by Roger Pond, (Goldendale, WA: Pine Forest Publications, 1997).

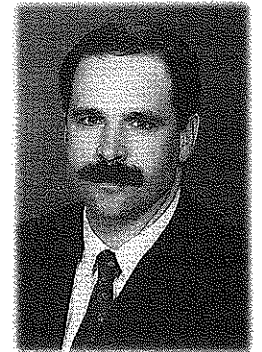
Written as though the author were sitting across from the reader talking over a cup of coffee, the *Livestock Showman's Handbook* is an easy-to-read guide to successful youth livestock programs and projects. Roger Pond lays out common sense principles based on sound animal husbandry practices to help 4-H and FFA members raise successful livestock projects.

While the bulk of the information in the *Livestock Showman's Handbook* is sound, the novice and beginner showman will probably gain the most from this book as many of the little details typically only learned through experience are explained. However, the more experienced showman will find some references to practices and strategies that may appear to be outdated and of only regional significance.

The *Livestock Showman's Handbook* does not promote the "win-at-all-costs" attitude of doing

whatever it takes to manipulate the visual appearance of livestock project animals. As Roger Pond explains on page 88 in the chapter on care and feeding of market lambs, "Ultra-short tail docking increases the risk of rectal prolapse and should be avoided when purchasing feeder lambs. Short docking is one of those show ring fads that goes against common sense." Experienced showmen who do not agree with everything in the book, or novice showmen on a steep learning curve can all learn from the no-nonsense, wholesome approach to youth livestock shows laid out by the author. This book is recommended as a basic foundation of knowledge and skills needed to successfully exhibit 4-H and FFA livestock project animals.

The *Livestock Showman's Handbook* simply provides back-to-the-basics information about raising youth livestock projects for show. With the book, Roger Pond also provides a sorting gate for the individuals who are involved with youth livestock programs for the



By Jeff Goodwin

Dr. Goodwin is a 4-H/youth specialist in the Idaho State 4-H Office, University of Idaho, Moscow.

right reasons, and those who are off on the "win-at-all-costs" tangent. As people read the book, they will automatically sort themselves into these two camps. Wouldn't it be great if we could have someone operate the sorting gate as the book is read? Those that see worth in Roger Pond's book would be in the "keep" pen, those who see no worth in the book would be in the "cull" pen.



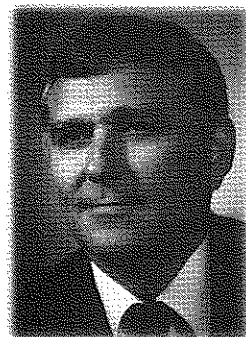
Here are the answers to the quiz on page 26 of this issue (July-August 1997) of *The Agricultural Education Magazine*.

1. D. 1938
2. C. 28 1/2
3. A. had at one time been part of George Washington's estate.
4. B. to provide a place for FFA chapters to stay when they visited the nation's capital.
5. D. The Holstein-Friesian Association gave the FFA two Holstein milk cows to provide milk to the campers.
6. A. Milton, Wisconsin
7. D. Washington's Old Grist Mill.
8. C. tomatoes were grown at the camp as part of the Food for Victory campaign.
9. A. house the FFA Supply Service and the staff of *The National Future Farmer Magazine*.
10. C. soil from each state was placed at the base of the flagpole.

## FFA Camp/Center?

By Gary E. Moore

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



The recent decision by the National FFA Board of Directors to move the National FFA Center signals the end of an era and the start of a new one. How much do you know about the current National FFA Center? Did you know it was originally an FFA Camp? Go to the head of the class if you can answer the following questions about the National FFA Camp/Center.

- In what year did the delegates at the National FFA Convention vote to establish a National FFA Camp?
  - 1929
  - 1932
  - 1935
  - 1938
- How many acres of land were bought the following year for the camp?
  - 6
  - 15
  - 28 1/2
  - 35
- The land that was purchased for the FFA Camp:
  - had at one time been part of George Washington's estate.
  - was owned by the federal government as part of Fort Belvoir.
  - had been part of the Woodlawn Plantation.
  - had been inhabited by the Narragansett Indian tribe.
- The original purpose of the FFA Camp was:
  - to serve as the national headquarters of the FFA.
  - to provide a place for FFA chapters to stay when they visited the nation's capital.
  - to have a location where the National FFA could conduct leadership conferences similar to the present Washington Leadership Conference.
  - to serve as an educational center where students could come to learn more about agriculture.
- All of the following statements about the original FFA Camp are true except one. Which statement is false?
  - The water from the camp came from a 126-foot-deep well.
  - The Ferguson Sherman Company of Dearborn, Michigan gave a tractor to the camp.

- The dining room was finished in pecky cypress.
  - The Holstein-Friesian Association gave the FFA two Holstein milk cows to provide milk to the campers.
- The National FFA Camp officially opened on May 30, 1941. The first FFA Chapter to use the camp was from:
    - Milton, Wisconsin
    - Danville, Virginia
    - Shawnee Mission, Kansas
    - Storrs, Connecticut
  - During the camping season, the FFA operated:
    - a ferry boat to help FFA chapters from the south cross the Potomac River.
    - a bus that carried visitors to the nation's capital.
    - a farming program that featured the newest technology of the time.
    - Washington's Old Grist Mill.
  - During World War II, travel restrictions curtailed the use of the camp by FFA members. In an effort to help the war effort:
    - the FFA allowed nearby Fort Belvoir to use the camp for training troops.
    - the camp served as a depot where chapters would bring scrap metal and old tires to be recycled for the war effort.
    - tomatoes were grown at the camp as part of the Food for Victory campaign.
    - the Civil Air Patrol established an observation tower on the property which they staffed to watch for enemy aircraft.
  - The camp reopened and operated for several years after World War II before it was determined the camp was not cost effective. The camp was closed to FFA chapters. A new use for the camp emerged. The new use was to:
    - house the FFA Supply Service and the staff of the *National Future Farmer Magazine*.
    - serve as a private retreat for the national FFA officers and federal agricultural education officials.
    - house the National FFA Foundation Staff.
    - provide housing for employees of the FFA.
  - Since the camp was originally designed for use only in the summer, it was decided during the 1950s that a more permanent, year-round facility was needed and more space was needed. Ground was broken in 1956 for a new building which is now the primary building at the National FFA Center. The building was completed in 1958, but was not dedicated until the cost of the building had been completely paid. As a part of the dedication ceremony in 1959:
    - a Narragansett Indian holy man consecrated the ground.
    - a relative of George Washington led the invocation.
    - soil from each state was placed at the base of the flagpole.
    - the United States Postal Service issued an FFA commemorative stamp.



The answers to this quiz are located on page 25 of this issue.

## Leadership Unites

In a unanimous decision, the National Council for Agricultural Education Board of Directors voted July 11 to unite agricultural education leadership by restructuring itself and adding the president, president-elect and immediate past president of the National Vocational Agricultural Teachers' Association (NVATA), National Association of Supervisors of Agricultural Education (NASAE) and American Association for Agricultural Education (AAAE) to its list of voting members.

This move is designed to strengthen and streamline agricultural education leadership and increase the capacity to implement ideas and strategies. It will bring The Council's Board of Directors together with the Agricultural Education Policy Committee of the American Vocational Association (AVA) and provide a more unified voice for agricultural education (the policy committee consists of the president, president-elect and past president of NVATA, NASAE and AAAE, plus an elected division vice president).

Historically, the policy committee addressed national agricultural education policy issues, determined legislative platforms and coordinated the professional convention. The Council was charged with providing leadership, coordination and support through creating instructional materials, providing inservice training and planning and conducting conferences. Much of this work was done using task forces consisting of representatives from across the profession. This division of responsibilities tended to create redundancies and did not facilitate strong communication between different segments of the profession.

### Consolidating the Process

"This decision will unite the national agricultural education policy-making process with the programmatic decision-making process and strengthen our profession," says Marshall Stewart, North Carolina state coordinator of agricultural education, Raleigh, N.C., who is serving as vice president of the AVA, Agricultural Education

Division, and is a member of The Council's Board of Directors. "Bringing the policy-making authority and the program development capacity together will help us more effectively manage limited resources and, in return, benefit our students, the profession and the industry of agriculture."

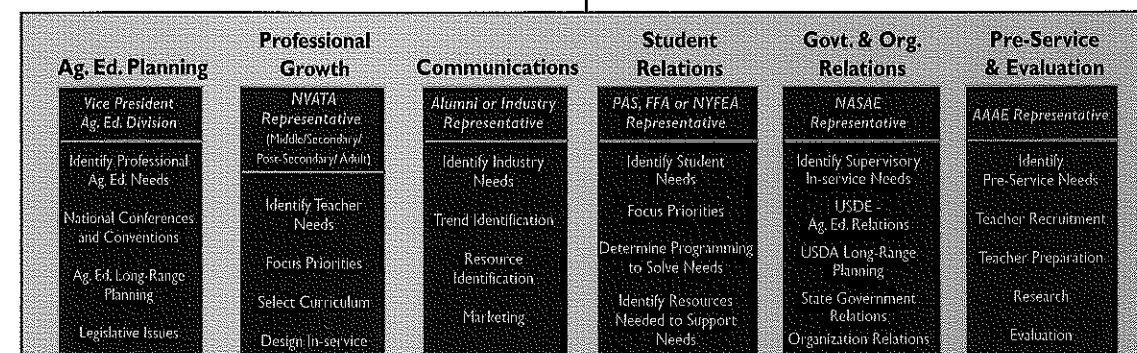
Dr. Larry Case, coordinator of agricultural and rural education for the U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C., and advisor to The Council, agrees. "Adding the top elected officials of NVATA, NASAE and AAAE to The Council's board will help agricultural education leaders consolidate their thinking," Case says. "It will result in better responsiveness to our constituents and our partners."

Dr. Maynard Iverson, coordinator of the agricultural education program at the University of Georgia, Athens, and president of AAAE, adds, "I think this will do a lot to help bring the profession together. Over the years, teacher educators have expressed concern

... continued on page 28

### Task Force Organization Chart

Council Board of Directors





*Agricultural Education Leadership Unites, continued from page 27*

about some of The Council's activities. This will help facilitate communication between the groups and put us in a better position to cooperate as a profession."

The change, which will take effect January 1, 1998, will increase The Council's Board of Directors from 12 to 18 members. Of the 18 board members, 11 will be appointed by virtue of their positions and seven will be nominated by their respective organizations to The Council board to represent students, alumni and business and industry sponsors (refer to the attached By-laws for further detail).

"This decision is in line with a growing trend in the business community and industry organizations," says Ken Gregersen, president of The Council's Board of Directors, Bella Vista, Ark. "Within the last

several years, the sheep, cotton, rice and cattle industries have each merged all their respective organizations into singular entities which represent all sectors of the industry. Each of these groups is reaping the benefits of having a more efficient, effective industry organization."

The change is scheduled to occur just ahead of the Agricultural Education Headquarters formation in Washington, D.C. "This will bring unity to the headquarters operation and help the staff more effectively serve the profession," says Dr. Rosco Vaughn, executive director of The Council, Alexandria, Va.

### *Clear Voice*

Dr. Mee Cee Baker, president of NVATA and an agriculture instructor at Greenwood High School in Millerstown, Pa., concurs. "The formation of a Washington head-

quarters coupled with the merger of The Council Board of Directors and the policy committee will give agricultural education a clear and concise national voice," Baker says.

While the decision was unanimous, it was not easy nor taken lightly. "By supporting this action, three members of The Council board voted to end their tenure," says Jim Sipiorski, immediate past president of The Council board, Green Bay, Wisc. "I have the utmost respect for the individuals who set aside their personal interests and voted to provide an opportunity to improve agricultural education. That type of selflessness doesn't happen very often," he said.

The National Council for Agricultural Education provides leadership, coordination and support for the continuous improvement of agricultural education.



## *Revised National Council for Agricultural Education Bylaws*

*Note: Changes are in italics*

### Article III Directors

SECTION 1, GENERAL. The affairs of The Council shall be managed by a Board of Directors, (*henceforth referred to as Director/s*) consisting of 18 persons, selected as follows:

- A. The Coordinator of Agricultural and Rural Education, U.S. Department of Education, who shall serve as an ex-officio member, without vote and as National Advisor to The Council.
- B. The Vice President of the Agricultural Education Division of the American Vocational Association, or the persons holding the equivalent successor offices of the AVA or a successor organization.
- C. *The President, President-Elect and Immediate Past President of AAEE, NASAE and NVATA*

*or the persons holding equivalent successor offices of the organizations listed or any successor organizations.*

D. One person, appointed by The Council's Board of Directors, from each of the following areas of vocational and technical education in agriculture:

- (1) A representative of production agriculture recommended by the National Young Farmer Educational Association.
- (2) An adult representing secondary students in agriculture who has been recommended by the National FFA Board of Directors.
- (3) An adult representing postsecondary students in agriculture who has been recommended by PAS.
- (4) An Alumni representative who has been recommended by the National FFA Alumni Association.

(5) An agribusiness representative recommended by the National FFA Foundation Sponsors' Board.

(6) *An adult-level instructor recommended by the Agricultural Education Division of the American Vocational Association.*

(7) *A two-year postsecondary-level instructor recommended by the Agricultural Education Division of the American Vocational Association.*

E. At least sixty (60) days before making any recommendation under Paragraph D, the President shall invite recommendations from the organizations listed in Paragraph D.

F. All appointments of directors under Paragraph D shall be made by a majority of the directors then serving (initially the directors described in Paragraphs A, B and C).