



A Guide To **Local Program SUCCESS**



Master the seven keys
agriculture teachers say
are essential for success
in local agricultural
education programs.

Instruction

SAE

FFA

Partnerships

Marketing

Professional Growth

Program Planning



Building Quality Local Agricultural Education Programs



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

Visit ffa.org and click on the
Teachers icon and then Local Program Success
for ideas, promising practices and resources.

*Local Program Success
is a national initiative to
build quality agricultural
education programs.
At its core are tools and
strategies developed
by teachers and other
agricultural education
professionals to help
strengthen local programs.*

*Local Program Success
continues to grow,
providing teachers with
model approaches and
promising practices that
can successfully impact
students' lives. Local
Program Success is a
joint initiative of the
National Council for
Agricultural Education
and the U.S. Department of
Education, with cooperation
from the National FFA
Organization and the National
Association of Agricultural
Educators. For more
information, contact The
Council at 800-772-0939.*



Visit ffa.org for ideas, promising practices and resources.

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The Agricultural Education Mission

Agricultural education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

The National Council for Agricultural Education Mission

The mission of The Council is to provide leadership, coordination and support for the continuous improvement and diversity of agricultural education.

The FFA Mission

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for **premier leadership, personal growth** and **career success** through agricultural education.

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Only a **click** away



Looking for new ideas to challenges in your program?

ffa.org now features promising practices, real-world solutions and ideas to specific challenges faced by agriculture teachers in their local programs.

You can read about ideas to make your job easier or to enhance your program such as using student mentors to maintain enrollment or securing USDA youth loans to improve student supervised agricultural experience programs.

- **Practices and ideas** are listed according to the seven key areas that make agricultural education successful and one promising practice in each area is added monthly.
- **Resources are available** for you to download and adapt to your program and local needs.

It's only a click away. Just visit ffa.org and click on the Teachers menu listing and then on the "Local Program Success." The latest edition of *A Guide To Local Program Success* is also available on the Local Program Resource CD-ROM.



ffa.org

Watch for this logo.



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

Ideas and promising practices used in your program can also be submitted by faxing them to Jim Armbruster, the LPS Liaison, at (317) 802-6061 or sending them via e-mail to jarmbruster@ffa.org.

Local Program Success is a national initiative to build quality agricultural education programs. At its core are tools and strategies developed by teachers and other agricultural education professionals to help strengthen local programs. The Local Program Success initiative continues to grow, providing teachers with model approaches and promising practices that can successfully impact students' lives. Local Program Success is a joint initiative of the National Council for Agricultural Education and the U.S. Department of Education, with cooperation from the National FFA Organization and the National Association of Agricultural Educators. Call (800) 772-0939 for more information on the initiative and its resources.

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Local Program Success Registration Form

Welcome to Local Program Success (LPS). LPS was created by teachers, for teachers, and is designed to change the way we think about agricultural education.



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

Before you begin charting your course to success, please take a moment to fill out this form. We will use this information to send you updates on Local Program Success, seek your feedback on the initiative and give you future opportunities for recognition.

After you fill in the information, please give this form to your instructor or send it to the LPS Liaison, Teacher Services Team, National FFA Organization, 6060 FFA Drive, P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960; fax, (317) 802-6061.

Are you an:

- ☐ Agriculture Teacher (5+ years)
- ☐ Agriculture Teacher (1-5 years)
- ☐ Agricultural Education Student (college)
- ☐ Other (please list): _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

School: _____

FFA Chapter: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Date of LPS training: _____

Event during which training occurred (state teacher conference, class, etc.): _____

Check here if you received this guide without training. ☐

For Teachers:

Principal's Name: _____

For Students:

Expected Graduation Date: _____

Do you have a job already? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, where? _____

Thank you.



What's Inside

Local Program Success Introduction and How to Use This Guide



"A Grassroots Effort"



Credits



Where to Start Checklist



Chapter 1—Instruction (Contextual Learning): Preparing Students for Life



Effective classroom and laboratory instruction prepares qualified employees for the food, fiber and natural resources industry. Discover the critical steps to effective instruction as identified by local teachers. Learn how these steps can raise excellence in school-based learning, help students make a seamless transition from school to careers and prepare them for lifelong learning.

Chapter 2—SAE (Work-based Learning): Providing Hands-on Experience and Career Exploration



To be successful in today's world of work, students need practical skills, many of which can be learned only through hands-on, work-based situations. The strength of your program rests on your commitment to developing opportunities for students to build these skills through the work-based learning element of agricultural education—supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs). This chapter illustrates what constitutes a quality SAE and provides innovative tips for meeting students' career interests and goals.

Chapter 3—FFA (A Connecting Activity): Bringing Learning to Life



Active participation in FFA builds leadership skills for life, reinforces instruction, recognizes excellence and gives students opportunities to make a positive difference in their schools and communities. The heart of the FFA is the local chapter—a vital component of local instruction. Learn how to ensure local chapter success, keep members active, provide all students with leadership opportunities and show them how FFA helps them make connections between school, their lives and future careers.

Chapter 4—Partnerships: Becoming a "Manager of Resources"



Becoming a "manager of resources" allows you to focus your time and attention on the bottom line—facilitating learning. Chapter four presents tips on how to build partnerships and mobilize volunteers within the school and community who actively support and share responsibility for the program.

Chapter 5—Marketing: Charting Your Course for Success



The key to managing your workload and creating a successful agricultural education program is focusing on those activities that are important to your customers. Chapter five teaches you how to use innovative tools to identify and meet your key customers' needs, promote your program, manage an ever-increasing workload and plan your program's long-term growth.

Chapter 6—Professional Growth: Revitalizing Yourself and Your Program



Growth is necessary for teachers and programs to stay abreast of changing times. Competent and technically qualified agriculture teachers are the core of a successful program. Chapter six presents tips on how you can stay professionally prepared and motivated to teach your students. Find out how you can revitalize yourself and recruit students to become teachers and keep the profession strong.

Chapter P—Community-Based Program Planning



Planning the local program is most likely the last thing on your mind after a busy day. Through the three program planning phases—visioning, strategic planning and implementation—you can work with key partners to develop an agricultural education program that meets future industry and occupational demands.

Appendix: Resources and Key Contacts



Index of Subjects



How to Get The Most Out of A Guide To Local Program Success:

Heads up. When you see these symbols you know the facts to help you succeed are nearby.

Indicates lists of teacher-used and approved ideas you can use right away in your program.



Leads you to the chapter and page number where templates and information about resources are provided.



Takes you to books, curriculum, videos and other helpful resources.



Shows how to accomplish the key components and strategies of success in your local program.



Highlights how to easily incorporate the key components of each chapter into your program today.



You will begin to notice the model below appearing on all agricultural education materials. The component or strategy addressed by the materials will be highlighted showing you how everything you do fits into Local Program Success. Local Program Success and its logo are registered trademarks of the National Council for Agricultural Education and the National FFA Organization. All rights reserved.



"No matter how successful you are, you'll always find some little trick that makes your life easier, and helps your students achieve more."








Joe Correa, agriculture teacher, Mission, Texas, Teacher Recruitment, Development and Retention Work Group

Local Program Success continues to grow, providing teachers with model approaches and promising practices that can successfully impact students' lives.

Local Program Success: Building quality programs and putting school-to-career in action

As an agriculture teacher, you help students build successful portfolios, careers and lives. But no matter how successful you and your students are, you can always benefit from new ideas. Whether you are a new teacher or a seasoned pro, *A Guide To Local Program Success* offers strategies to help you:

-  Save time.
-  Maximize resources.
-  Build program support.
-  Enhance classroom instruction and experiential learning.
-  Prepare students for careers and life.

Ideas by Teachers, for Teachers

A Guide To Local Program Success represents the best thinking from teachers like yourself on what makes agricultural education programs successful. It lists the seven keys teachers say are essential for local programs and is full of real-world solutions offered by successful agriculture teachers. (For more on Local Program Success, see "A Grassroots Effort" on page iii.)

Chapters one through three highlight the key components of a successful agricultural education program: classroom and laboratory instruction (contextual learning in school-to-career language), supervised agricultural experience programs (work-based learning) and active FFA chapters (a connecting activity between school and careers). Chapters four through six describe the key strategies for achieving success: strong community and school partnerships, program planning and marketing as well as professional and program growth. Chapter P describes the strategy of community-based program planning and how it strengthens the other six keys.

This guide targets high school agricultural education programs. Schools that contain agricultural literacy, middle school and adult education components will find the ideas in this guide applicable to them as well. State agricultural education leaders have a copy of the guide on computer disk, so they can adapt it to meet local, regional and state needs. It is available on the Local Program Resource CD-ROM. Promising practices are available at ffa.org. Click on the Teachers icon and then on Local Program Success. Check with your state agricultural education leaders to obtain more information on middle school and adult education.

How to Use This Guide

1 Complete the "Where to Start" checklist and review the guide. Each chapter includes steps to success, a personal action plan, a list of promising practices and easy-to-use resources.



2 Identify which of the common sense ideas and resources will strengthen your program. Involve students, administrators, parents and community leaders in assessing your program.

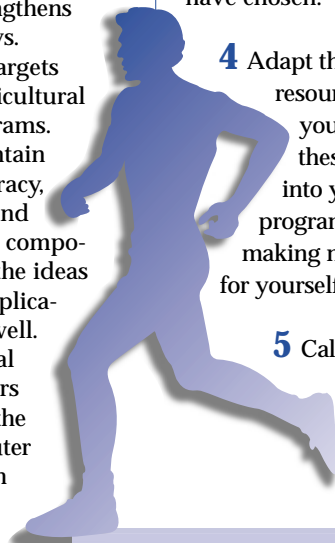
3 Use the action plans at the end of each chapter to implement the ideas you have chosen.

4 Adapt the easy-to-use resources to help you integrate these new ideas into your existing program without making more work for yourself.

5 Call teachers listed for more information or suggestions on replicating the ideas in your program.

Walk Before You Run

You decide which of the common sense strategies, ideas and resources will provide positive rewards for you and your students. Prioritize and plan to take one step at a time. Much like an athlete who runs the same course daily, and with perseverance and effort shaves a minute off his or her time, you will see steady improvements in your program.



A Grassroots Effort

Local Program Success is a national initiative to build quality agricultural education programs. At its core are tools and strategies developed by teachers and other agricultural education professionals to help strengthen local programs.

A national task force of teachers and other agriculture and education leaders identified the keys to success in agricultural education.

Three Components:

- 🍏 strong classroom and laboratory instruction (contextual learning in school-to-career language)
- 🍏 supervised agricultural experience programs (work-based learning)
- 🍏 active FFA chapters (a connecting activity between school and careers)

Four Strategies:

- 🍏 strong community and school partnerships
- 🍏 marketing
- 🍏 professional and program growth
- 🍏 program planning

To help teachers become more successful in each of those areas, work groups of agriculture and education leaders—including 30 teachers from 18 states—developed steps to success and researched promising practices used in the nation's top programs. Those ideas and strategies were combined with other tips collected from teachers across the nation in *A Guide To Local Program Success*. More than 600 teachers, state agricultural education leaders and teacher educators reviewed each suggestion.

Local Program Success is a joint initiative of the National Council for Agricultural Education and the U.S. Department of Education, with cooperation from the National FFA Organization and the National Association of Agricultural Educators.

More to Come

Local Program Success is a living, growing initiative intended to change the way we think about agricultural education. This is the second edition of this guide with enhanced promising practices. It will be modified and expanded as new ideas surface.

You are encouraged to add your input to subsequent editions. Please address ideas and suggestions to the following contact:

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"The initiative is bold. Some of the country's most successful agriculture teachers were asked to give input in creating a national model for marketing our program in our communities."



*Robert Moses, agriculture teacher, Indianapolis, Ind.,
Program Planning and Marketing Work Group*

To help teachers become more successful in the seven key areas, work groups of agriculture and education leaders—including 30 teachers from 18 states—developed steps to success and researched promising practices used in the nation's top programs.

"Local Program Success offers what is actually happening in schools today and comes at teachers from teachers themselves. It's comprehensive, well-rounded and covers all the bases. It offers teacher educators a powerful new tool for preparing tomorrow's teachers."



*Marcia Paterson, director of agriculture and environmental education, Hershey, Pa.,
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Where to Start

A Guide To Local Program Success is designed to provide ideas and resources in the seven key areas of agricultural education. Keep in mind that:

- 🍏 Although the guide outlines the foundation for a successful program, there are other resources available to help you go into more depth in specific areas. It is not all-inclusive.
- 🍏 Although there are seven separate chapters, the seven areas overlap and contribute to each other. Ideas you find in one chapter will apply to concepts discussed in another.
- 🍏 You don't have to read the entire guide at once.

A Step at a Time

To help determine where to start, review the list below and check off the things you are doing already. When you are finished, highlight the page numbers next to the boxes you haven't checked, and begin your review of the guide there. Those are the areas that probably need the most attention in your program.

Next, review the entire guide and create an action plan for success in all seven areas. There's always room for improvement, even in your strongest areas.



Instruction

- ☐ 1-2—Spend time on planning at all levels, including the lesson, activity and program levels.
- ☐ 1-2—Create an instructional program based on student interests and agricultural career opportunities.
- ☐ 1-4—Make “real-world” connections for learners.
- ☐ 1-6—Engage all students across all ability levels.
- ☐ 1-7—Care about students and be an advocate for their needs.
- ☐ 1-8—Accept and recruit students with diverse ideas, abilities, backgrounds and cultures.
- ☐ 1-9—Become part of your community on a personal level. Show a vested interest in the community.
- ☐ 1-9—Stay up-to-date on technology. Consider the equipment you use in the classroom and the agricultural technology you teach about as class content.
- ☐ 1-10—Be a student of teaching. Keep learning how to teach, not just what to teach.

SAE

- ☐ 2-2—Plan comprehensive SAEs.
- ☐ 2-4—Link SAEs to the curriculum and a career.
- ☐ 2-5—Let students manage their SAEs.
- ☐ 2-6—Document the SAE by using recordkeeping and analysis.

- ☐ 2-6—Take an active role as supervisor of SAEs.
- ☐ 2-7—Recognize students for their SAEs.

FFA

- ☐ 3-2—Link FFA leadership activities, award programs and competitive events to high-quality agricultural education curriculum.
- ☐ 3-2—Recruit and retain new members from diverse populations.
- ☐ 3-4—Inform every student about the diverse opportunities in FFA.
- ☐ 3-4—Elect capable officers and train them well.
- ☐ 3-5—Ensure that all members share responsibilities and have access to leadership and other opportunities.
- ☐ 3-6—Formulate a workable constitution and bylaws.
- ☐ 3-6—Develop a challenging program of activities.
- ☐ 3-7—Secure adequate financing.
- ☐ 3-7—Build school and community support.
- ☐ 3-8—Conduct well-planned, regularly-scheduled chapter meetings.
- ☐ 3-8—Maintain proper equipment and records.

Partnerships

- ☐ 4-2—Identify potential partners.
- ☐ 4-2—Identify benefits of involvement for partners.

- ☐ 4-4—Present benefits to potential partners.
- ☐ 4-5—Establish a plan for involving core partners.
- ☐ 4-7—Reward partners by recognizing their contributions and support.

Marketing

- ☐ 5-2—Identify key customers in each of these groups: general community, administration/school, students and parents.
- ☐ 5-2 to 5-5—Establish a plan to ask, involve, and recognize key customers and report successes to them and the media.

Professional Growth

- ☐ 6-2—Create a vision for your program and teaching philosophy and develop a professional growth plan to accomplish it.
- ☐ 6-3—Commit to lifetime learning.
- ☐ 6-4—Revitalize the profession and your program. Recruit students you think would benefit from agricultural education and be good teachers.

Program Planning

- ☐ P-2—Involve key partners in the process.
- ☐ P-4—Develop a shared vision for your program.
- ☐ P-6—Create action plans to fulfill your program's vision (*commonly called strategic planning*).
- ☐ P-7—Implement your plan.



"Envision an airplane approaching a runway; that's students arriving on the first day of class. I keep them so busy, they never have time to scratch their heads. We just keep right on flying."

*Dr. George Vahoviak,
agriculture teacher,
Pleasant Gap, Pa.*

**The following topics are covered in Chapter 1
Instruction (Contextual Learning): Preparing Students for Life**

Benefits of Building Strong Classroom and Laboratory Instruction

Steps to Success

- 1 Spend time on planning at all levels, including the lesson, activity and program levels.
- 2 Create an instructional program based on student interests and agricultural career opportunities.
- 3 Make "real-world" connections for learners.
- 4 Engage all students across all ability levels.
- 5 Care about students and be an advocate for their needs.
- 6 Accept and recruit students with diverse ideas, abilities, backgrounds and cultures.
- 7 Become part of your community on a personal level. Show a vested interest in the community.
- 8 Stay up to date with technology. Consider the equipment you use in the classroom and the agricultural technology you teach about as class content.
- 9 Be a student of teaching. Keep learning how to teach, not just what to teach.

Promising Practices of Top Programs

Selected Resources

Action Plan

Worksheets and Other Tools

Promising Practices Update

Chapter 1

Instruction

(Contextual Learning):

Preparing Students for Life

Envision an airplane approaching a runway; that's students arriving on the first day of class," says agriculture teacher George Vahoviak, Pleasant Gap, Pa. "I keep them so busy, they never have time to scratch their heads and say, 'I'm bored.' We just keep right on flying."



Dr. George Vahoviak

Classroom and laboratory instruction must be the foundation of your program. National reports like the U.S. Labor Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) indicate that preparing students to succeed beyond your classroom is critical. With increased attention on connecting school-based and work-based learning, it is crucial that the instructional program teach *context* as well as *content* to prepare students for careers and lifelong learning.

By building strong classroom and laboratory instruction, you will:

- 🍏 Build *personal satisfaction* by instilling an interest in learning in students, and helping them reach their potential.
- 🍏 Gain a *sense of accomplishment* as your students not only survive, but thrive in the work world.
- 🍏 Renew a base of *support* from community members, parents and administrators who understand the value of your agriculture program.
- 🍏 Prepare *qualified employees* for the food, fiber and natural resources systems.
- 🍏 Empower students to learn in an environment *enriched with educational resources and technology*.

Think of instruction as the hub and other components as spokes in the wheel.

Keep in Mind:

- 🍏 "Classroom" can be anywhere.
- 🍏 "Laboratory" is not a place; it is an application of what is learned in the classroom.
- 🍏 The teacher is the key to instruction. Think of yourself as a motivator, coach and facilitator of learning.



Successful teachers use these key steps to effective instruction.

- 1 Spend time on planning at all levels, including the lesson, the activity and the program levels.
- 2 Create an instructional program based on student interests and agricultural career opportunities.
- 3 Make "real-world" connections for learners.
- 4 Engage all students across all ability levels.
- 5 Care about students and be an advocate for their needs.
- 6 Accept and recruit students with diverse ideas, abilities, backgrounds and cultures.
- 7 Become part of your community on a personal level. Show a vested interest in the community.
- 8 Stay up-to-date on technology. Consider the equipment you use in the classroom as well as the agricultural technology you teach about as class content.
- 9 Be a student of teaching. Keep learning how to teach, not just what to teach.

Tailor your instructional program to prepare students to fill community needs. Become a part of the community and make connections outside the classroom to increase the influence of your program.

Spend time on planning at all levels, including the lesson, activity and program levels.



Walking into your classroom without a plan is like starting a vacation without a map. In both cases, your kids get bored and restless and you get frustrated and lost. Extensive planning at all levels may take more time up front, but will save you time and headaches in the long run. Effective planning includes developing instructional goals for students, designing coherent instruction and assessing student learning.

Develop instructional goals:

- Goals represent high expectations for students, including concepts that they, the community and the industry see as important.
- Students are expected to help develop the goals they will strive to achieve.
- Students clearly understand the goals and know that they will be used to assess their success.
- Goals present opportunities for all types of learning.
- Goals contribute to a coherent, unified program.

Design coherent instruction:

- Instructional styles and content relate directly to goals.
- Instruction is supported by meaningful learning activities.
- The structure of the lesson, unit and course is clear to students.
- Students have the background knowledge to understand lessons.
- Instructional approaches allow for alternative ways for students to achieve.
- Instruction builds skills by arranging complex activities that follow simple ones.
- Instruction follows a logical sequence to the content in other academic courses.
- Activities correspond with facilities and resources available.

Assess student learning:

- Assessment is based on clearly defined goals.
- Students are aware of how they are meeting the goals and participate in planning next steps.

Used with permission from Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching, Charlotte Danielson, (ASCD, 1996); and Program Planning Guide for AgriScience and Technology Education, by Jasper S. Lee, (Danville, Ill., INTERSTATE PUBLISHERS, INC., 1994).

Create an instructional program based on student interests and agricultural career opportunities.



Assess students' needs and interests, determine the community's vision and examine future employer needs in the agricultural industry and our global society. Tailor your instructional program to fill those needs. Make connections outside the classroom to increase the influence of your program.



Ways to create a program based on interest and career opportunities:

- ☐ Share what is happening in your program with administration, community, students and parents.
- ☐ Establish and use a local advisory committee for program and instructional planning.
- ☐ Make students, parents, community members and administrators a part of the instructional planning process.
- ☐ Develop a plan for equipment and technology purchases over a three- to five-year period with advisory committee, industry and business input.



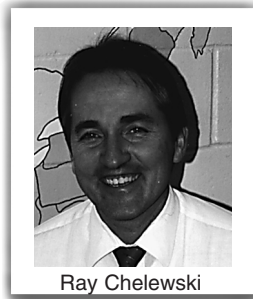
Continued on page 1-3 ➤

- ❑ Develop business and industry partnerships that directly support daily instruction.
- ❑ Support students in other programs and activities.
- ❑ Offer adult education courses to the community.
- ❑ Have students involved in community service projects.
- ❑ Assess community perceptions of the program.



Learn What Your Community Wants

When he first taught at **Presque Isle, Maine**, Ray Chelewski visited one parent or business person listed in the telephone book every night after school to learn what they expected of his program. He designed a diverse and technologically



Ray Chelewski

advanced curriculum based on their recommendations. Six years later, vegetables and fruit produced on a 38-acre farm are sold through a student-managed store. Students grow plants for resale in two state-of-the-art greenhouses and raise fish for retail stores in an aquaculture lab. The program was the first in the nation to grow genetically-engineered potatoes as part of a research program with Monsanto.

Results: In six years, enrollment grew by 489 percent and two teachers were added. A \$70,000 budget is assisted by nine local businesses that contribute more than \$1,000 each toward the program's success.

Ray Chelewski, (207) 764-0121

Instructional Planning and Advisory Committees

Establish a local advisory committee that includes community, industry and administration leaders who can offer assistance and counsel in planning and evaluating instruction. Instructional improvement needs to be an outgrowth of long-term planning and must relate to the overall program mission to gain community and school buy-in. Use the *Advisory Committee Checklist* to help in planning local instruction.



It takes new approaches to make instruction more relevant and to prepare students for specific career paths in the food, fiber and natural resource systems.

Integrating Instruction Across Disciplines

Integrating your instruction and other disciplines helps students make connections between what they learn in English or math and what is taught in horticulture or biotechnology courses. Instruction could include activities such as writing brochures for a local greenhouse or team teaching with the math teacher.

Arrange Cross-Discipline Credits

Students in Sheila Folan's **Sacramento, Calif.**, floral design classes gain art credit. Grassroots support and student recognition in local and district floral design competitions convinced administrators and art teachers of the program's value.



1. Get involved in the community:

- Survey the community, including potential industry partners, to see what type of skills are needed.
- Ask local businesses if students can visit their operations.

- Form a local advisory committee and make sure it has an active role in reviewing curricula.

2. Highlight skills you want to obtain credit for:

- Have students complete projects or make presentations to administrators, parents, school board and other teachers.

3. Communicate with school staff:

- Become familiar with performance standards in the discipline for which you're seeking credit. Use texts and reference materials that relate to that subject.
- Complete required paperwork after students prove themselves.
- Get official written agreements approved early, rather than handling the situation informally.
- Meet one-on-one with department heads first to discuss your goals and the mutual benefits of gaining credit for your agricultural course.
- Next, meet with small groups of teachers. Show them materials you plan to use and make them aware of your students' supervised agricultural experience programs, class and lab projects.

Sheila Folan, (916) 689-8600, ext. 6205

Helping students
make connections
between what they
learn in school and
how they will use
that knowledge in
the workplace is
one way to
increase student
interest in learning.

Make connections to
real-world situations
through student
SAEs, school-based
enterprises, grading
based on industry
standards and visits
to area businesses.

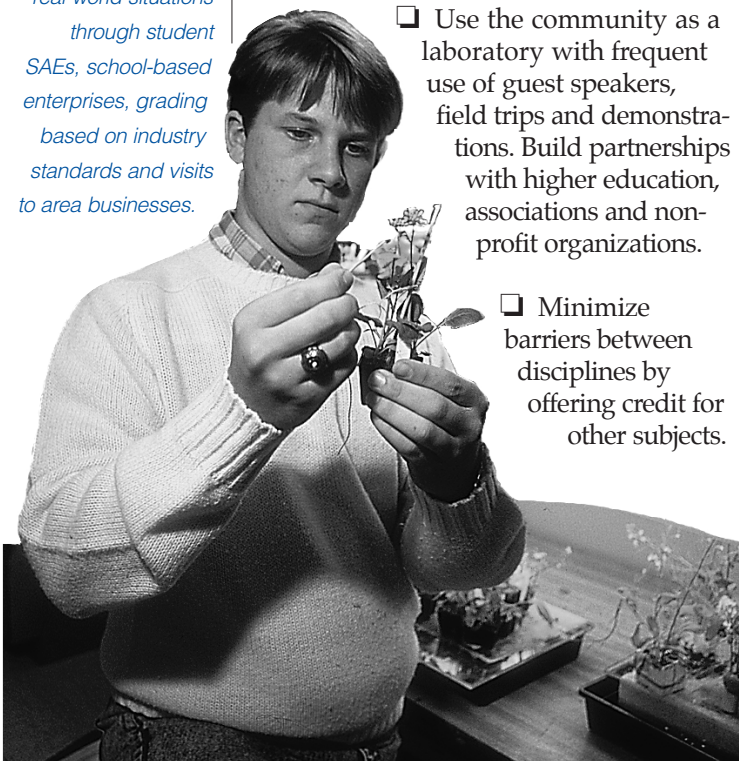


Make “real-world” connections for learners.

Agricultural education is the application and mastery of principles taught in the academic classroom. Make agriculture a part of the total learning environment for maximum impact. It provides an excellent tool for integrating academic and career-based education and making learning relevant. It improves learning in science, math and language because of the natural fascination of many youth with plants, animals and technology.

Ways to make real-world connections:

- ☐ Use an integrated approach by teaching across disciplines. Try team teaching with the biology or math teacher.
- ☐ Make instruction and course content the springboard for all FFA and SAE activities.
- ☐ Teach to “real-life” problems and engage students in hands-on activities that reinforce lessons and other subjects.
- ☐ Make connections to real-world situations through student SAEs, school-based enterprises, grading based on industry standards and visits to area businesses.
- ☐ Use the community as a laboratory with frequent use of guest speakers, field trips and demonstrations. Build partnerships with higher education, associations and non-profit organizations.
- ☐ Minimize barriers between disciplines by offering credit for other subjects.



- ☐ Be the innovator for new ideas in other disciplines. Share your expertise.

Teaching Teamwork

Students at **Avery County High School, Newland, N.C.**, are split into greenhouse teams that resemble real-life work crews, and receive a grade as a unit. Student “leaders” receive a tasks checklist, which is worth 100 points. They monitor work flow and check to see that tasks are completed. Every team member receives points if the whole team completes the checklist.

Results:

Teamwork thrives and students learn to delegate no matter what their learning abilities. They learn that high productivity and teamwork can mean increased earnings.

Gwen Clark, (704) 733-0151



Gwen Clark

Use Industry Standards for Grading

Willmar Senior High School, Minn., welding students don’t pass or fail, they’re either hired or fired. “Telling students, ‘You’re fired.’ is a serious motivator,” agriculture teacher Scott Thaden says. Here’s how the grading system works:



Scott Thaden

- Students are assigned six to 10 welds to complete at industry standards.
- Students decide when their welds are ready to present to the “boss.”
- Students schedule a mock job interview to see if their welds make the cut.

Results: The system gives students at all learning levels flexibility to work at their own pace. Employers tell Thaden his students are more knowledgeable about welding skills than most new employees.

Scott Thaden, (320) 231-8359

Integrating Instruction with Post-secondary Education

Career pathways (called Tech Prep in some states) offer new ways to make education relevant and prepare students for the work place and further education. Most career pathways programs organize courses around broad career areas or pathways such as natural resources.

Students explore various pathways their first two years of high school with intensive career guidance. Then they enter a program their junior year that offers integrated academic and occupational courses, college credit for high school agriculture courses or dual enrollment in high school and post-secondary courses. Students normally have three options:

- Prepare to graduate and move directly into the workplace.
- Move to specialized training programs targeted to a specific career (certificate or associate's degree).
- Move on to additional education including two- or four-year programs.

Contact your state's agriculture coordinator or your local principal to find out how to get involved.

Distance Learning and College Credit

The **College of Southern Idaho** (CSI) matched funds with the high schools across the state to build interactive classrooms for distance learning. A microwave system transmits video images



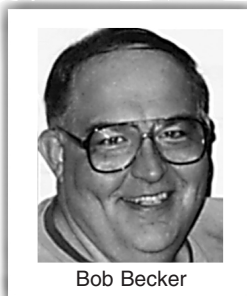
Tom Clifton

and audio to and from students and college instructors. "Students earn the full college credit for each of these courses,"

says **Jerome, Idaho**, agriculture teacher Tom Clifton. "Students can also use two or three of my high school classes to count for one credit at CSI."

Even FFA activities, verified by a state FFA degree or a letter from an advisor, as well as mechanics, welding, fabrications and/or structures lab work, can qualify as college credit.

Results: Students gain credit while in high school for post-secondary education. "We've had about a five percent increase in students at the College of Southern Idaho," says Bob Becker, CSI Region Four Tech Prep coordinator.



Bob Becker

Other benefits:

■ Since CSI lets teachers and students use lab equipment and machines they would not normally have access to, the quality of education is going up.

■ Parents, who see the financial benefits of their high schoolers getting free college credits, are very supportive of the program.

■ Enrollment is at maximum capacity. "Every class is booked to the hilt, you have a waiting line to get in there," Clifton says.

■ Students are gaining confidence and realizing they can handle college courses.

Tom Clifton, (208) 324-1269

Bob Becker, (208) 733-9554, ext. 2338

Idaho Integration Tips

■ Contact your state agriculture coordinator to get the ball rolling.

■ Set up an advisory committee that includes two business and industry representatives and an

instructor from each high school and college program.

■ Meet with the college's agriculture dean, your principal, the school board superintendent, college instructors and advisory committee members.

■ Compare your courses with the college's offerings.

■ After you see where courses overlap, determine how much credit students can attain for taking high school classes. "You sometimes have to be willing to redesign your course to make it match the college program," Becker says.

■ Write an articulation agreement that describes the program goals and courses, and includes:

■ Strategies to meet the needs of female, minority and other members of special populations.

■ Inservice training for teachers and counselors.

■ Involving an advisory committee.

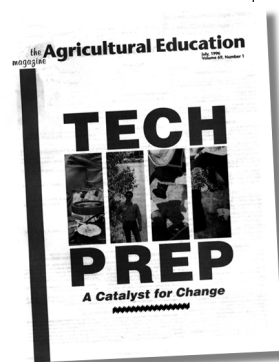
■ Measuring participation and success of students.

■ Integrating academic competencies in the occupational curriculum, such as academic and vocational team teaching.

The July 1996

Agricultural Education Magazine

includes career pathway models that teachers can use locally.



Keys to success in
engaging all
learners are
continually assessing
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performance and
adapting your
teaching to the
learning styles of
students.

Engage all students across all ability levels.



More than ever before, it's important to reach every student in your classroom and help each build a successful portfolio, career and life. But not all students learn the same way or have similar goals. Keys to success are continually assessing your teaching performance and adapting your teaching to the learning styles of students.

Ways to engage all students:

- ☐ Share and implement colleagues' methods that work.
- ☐ Set high expectations for students. Individualize goals for each student and assess where you can help him or her, and challenge each one to excellence.
- ☐ Treat students as partners in education by asking them for input on classroom topics.
- ☐ Build student ownership in lessons

by relating them to their interests and experiences.

- ☐ Use team-building and diversity curriculum and activities to recognize and appreciate unique student cultures and abilities.
- ☐ Use students as mentors to their classmates.
- ☐ Use a variety of student activities and testing methods such as oral, written, team projects, hands-on tests and problem solving.
- ☐ See teacher/student roles as interchangeable. Provide opportunities for students to research and present to their peers.
- ☐ Engage parents as partners in student education both in and out of the classroom.
- ☐ Create school-based enterprises where you function as a "manager of resources," guiding and facilitating student learning.



Integrating Instruction and the Workplace

Helping students make connections between what they learn in school and how they will use that knowledge in the workplace is one way to increase student interest. The U.S. Labor Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills Report provides a framework for teaching students workplace and life skills. To teach the competencies and personal qualities needed in the workplace, as identified by supervisors and employees:

- Restructure classroom and lab activities to reflect workplace safety, production and quality standards.
- Ask community and business leaders and

parents to assess local instruction and offer suggestions for improvement. Use the SCANS *Assessment Sheet* to evaluate your teaching style and instruction.

- Develop instructional activities and combine these with work-based learning opportunities (student SAEs) that highlight these skills.
- Evaluate and recognize student achievement in these areas, and reinforce these skills through FFA activities and award programs.

SCANS Workplace Skills

Competencies—Effective workers can productively use:

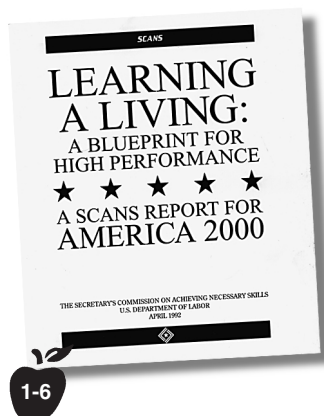
- **Resources**—They know how to allocate time, money, materials, space and staff.
- **Interpersonal skills**—They can work on teams, teach others, serve customers, lead, negotiate, and work well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- **Information**—They can acquire and evaluate data, organize and

maintain files, interpret and communicate and use computers to process information.

- **Systems**—They understand social, organizational and technological systems; they can monitor and correct performance; and they can design or improve systems.
- **Technology**—They can select equipment and tools, apply technology to specific tasks and maintain and troubleshoot equipment.

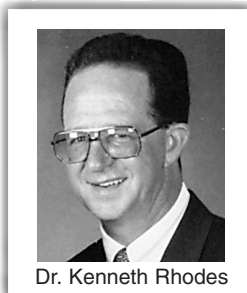
Foundation Skills—Competent workers in a high-performance workplace need:

- **Basic Skills**—reading, writing, mathematics, speaking and listening.
 - **Thinking Skills**—the ability to learn, to reason, to think creatively, to make decisions, and to solve problems.
 - **Personal Qualities**—individual responsibility, self-esteem, self-management, sociability and integrity.
- (Adapted from Learning a Living, A Blueprint for High Performance. U.S. Department of Labor, 1992, p. 5.)



Teacher as Manager Makes Students Active Learners

Floriculture students at **Derry Area High School, Pa.**, are expected to produce products that meet classroom and workplace requirements and that external customers will accept. Since the class arranges two or three weddings a year, an inferior or late product is a disaster. No late assignments are allowed.



Dr. Kenneth Rhodes

Results: Students learn conflict resolution through self-directed teams, accept responsibility for their products, are empowered by their success and the resulting revenues, see the relevance of their education and are motivated to work harder. Derry Area students consistently perform at a high level when pursuing further education or in the workplace post graduation.

Dr. Kenneth Rhodes, (412) 694-9797

Self-Evaluations Increase Students' Confidence

Students in **Enterprise, Ala.**, agriculture classes regularly evaluate their performances and attitudes.



Results:

"Our self-evaluations teach us about ourselves and build self-esteem," says student Dillon Parrish. "Self-evaluations allow us to

recognize our strengths, what we're capable of and areas for improvement."

Alan Waters, (334) 393-2514



Alan Waters



Care about students and be an advocate for their needs.

If you show students you care about them, they will be more apt to listen to your advice and be attracted to your classroom. Students often need someone outside their family to confide in and lean on.

Ways to be an advocate for students:

- ☐ Visit students at their homes at least once or twice a year.
- ☐ Encourage students to pursue appropriate career pathways based on their needs and career interests.
- ☐ Teach students for the "next step" after high school by using activities that highlight research, communication, problem-solving and decision-making skills.
- ☐ Attend student activities in other disciplines.
- ☐ Implement an individual education plan (IEP) for each student. Consult with parents, school counselors, administrators, specialists and other teachers and implement portfolios to track success and allow students to showcase their achievements.
- ☐ Monitor student achievement and goals and help individual students address problem situations.
- ☐ Recognize student success by having an achievement bulletin board.
- ☐ Discipline students individually to demonstrate that you are sincerely interested in their needs.

*If you show students
you care about them,
they will be more apt to
listen to your advice
and be attracted to
your classroom.*

Get to Know the Family

Students at **Marionville High School, Mo.**, become part of advisor Mark Estep's extended family. They come to him with their personal or school problems and they know he will listen. Estep has found that visiting each student's



Mark Estep

home at least once a year helps him to understand the underlying reasons for their behavior. It gives parents a name and a person to contact. "I feel that I have gained their respect by respecting them," he says.

Results: Forty percent of the high school's 180 students are enrolled in agriculture. All agriculture students are FFA members. And 98 percent of students who sign up for one agriculture class stay in the program for four years.

Mark Estep, (417) 463-2521

A key to recruiting all types of students and then helping them succeed in school is understanding the unique ways students learn. Students from different cultural or ethnic backgrounds possess different methods of interacting and learn in a variety of ways.

Accept and recruit students with diverse ideas, abilities, backgrounds and cultures.



When agriculture enrollment is representative of the student population, there are many rewards such as greater service to students, parents and community; broader community support; a more creative program through diverse input; and students who respect and embrace differences.

A key to recruiting all types of students and then helping them succeed in school is understanding the unique way each student learns. For example, students from different cultural or ethnic backgrounds may have different expectations about what is acceptable to do and say.

- To appeal to these students, never believe stereotypes.
- Be open to the benefits of diversity.
- Strive to learn about and be sensitive to different cultural communication norms that cause students to interact and learn in a variety of ways.
- Familiarize yourself with possible cultural differences such as students' level of comfort with communicating emotions and thoughts to you and their peers.
- Seek helpful books, classroom activities and curriculum.



Ways to accept and recruit students from all backgrounds and cultures:

- ☐ Position agricultural education to school leaders and other teachers as a solution to raise student learning levels and as part of the total school learning environment and mission.
- ☐ Support other staff and their activities.
- ☐ Offer a variety of courses, FFA activities and SAE options that recognize, value and interest students from all backgrounds and cultures.

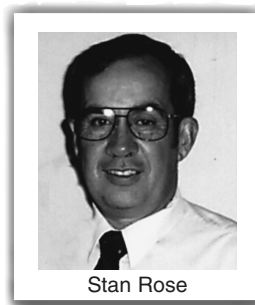
☐ Participate in seminars and workshops that increase your understanding of diversity issues.

☐ Promote an agricultural industry that has opportunities for all people by:

- Encouraging all points of view to be discussed.
- Using bias-free instructional and program materials.
- Using diverse role models in teaching and encouraging students.
- Disciplining in a fair and firm manner.

Offer a Variety of Courses To Entice Students

Righetti High School, Calif., agriculture courses offer something that fits every student's interests from meat processing to agricultural biology. Classes are designed to offer every student involvement in hands-on activities such as competitive teams, FFA events, community volunteer projects and supervised agricultural experience programs or student projects. And teachers represent the diversity of the student body: One teacher speaks Spanish; another is female. "We find a spot where every student can be successful," says instructor Stan Rose.



Stan Rose

Results: In 27 years, the program has grown from a two-teacher to a five-teacher department. Each year about 80 students are on competitive teams and more than 500 ethnically and culturally diverse students take agriculture classes. Stan Rose, (805) 937-2051, ext. 273



Become part of your community on a personal level. Show a vested interest in the community.

By spending time with community members outside your professional role, you will demonstrate your commitment to local students and form valuable connections to enhance your program.

Ways to become involved in the community:

- ☐ Join local, civic, sport and recreational activities that develop relationships outside the school.
- ☐ Attend open houses, receptions, block parties and other events. You'll have fun and become more visible in the community at the same time.
- ☐ Volunteer for community service projects. Bring along interested students.
- ☐ Seek out positions on the boards of local community organizations. You'll establish yourself as a leader and meet other leaders.
- ☐ Make the community your home. Put down roots as much as possible.
- ☐ Constantly assess community perceptions of your program through informal conversations and formal surveys.
- ☐ Be a role model in your community. Establish yourself as a resource for people looking for information on the Internet, gardening and other skills you have developed as an agriculture teacher.
- ☐ Contribute to community development and fund-raising efforts when possible. Consider "in kind" contributions of time and service instead of or in addition to giving money.

See the Partnerships section for more information on working with your community.



Stay up-to-date on technology.

Today's students have grown up with technology. They are familiar with computers, the Internet and other new resources; they can probably even program a VCR! Teaching to their interests means including technology in both how and what you teach. Consider the equipment you use in the classroom as well as the agricultural technology you teach about as class content.

Ways to learn about technology:

- ☐ Use up-to-date technologies with strong instruction and real-life applications such as Internet, CD-ROM, industry-based tools and equipment and computers.
- ☐ Order the Data Transmission Network (DTN) for your classroom. This online resource features commodity market reports, current agriculture news and more.
- ☐ Network with other teachers in agriculture and other disciplines to find out about new technologies they have tried.
- ☐ Read computer magazines to find out about the latest hardware and software for the classroom.
- ☐ Volunteer with computer companies and software developers to test new resources in your school and provide feedback to the company in exchange for equipment for your classroom.
- ☐ Find a technology mentor. Possibilities include the information systems professional at a local business or university or another agriculture teacher who uses technology extensively.
- ☐ Attend technology briefing sessions at professional conferences.

Teaching to students' interests means including technology in both how and what you teach.

Electronic Services For more information:

DTN Service,
(800) 485-4000

For FarmDayta,
(800) 972-3939

For AgEd Network,
(800) 334-9779

Continued on page 1-10 ➤



❑ Spend a day "shadowing" a professional at a local agribusiness to see applications of current technology.

❑ Lobby your administration for Internet access in your agriculture classroom. A quick tour of the *ffa.org* (<http://www.ffa.org>) and links to other agriculture resources should show them what a valuable teaching tool the Internet is for agriculture.

❑ Read agriculture magazines and check Internet sites regularly for updates on the rapidly changing world of agricultural technology.



❑ Form a contact with someone in your state department of agriculture or local university who can help you understand new technology. Invite them to make presentations to your classes.

❑ Continue to expand your subject knowledge and experience base through high-tech internships and continuing education that focuses on new technology.

❑ Attend NAAE professional development workshops.

❑ Utilize the Council's Professional Growth Series Materials.

Stay In Touch With Technology

One great way to team with different teachers is to establish a committee to review their technology needs. By working together you may be able to take advantage of discounts, attain larger grants and increase understanding of your programs' goals, needs and successes. You will also ensure that you will be benefitting all students

instead of just a select few.

Ruben Alaniz, agriculture teacher in **Mission, Texas**, serves on his school's technology committee. He gathers information about needs and concerns from local teachers and presents them to the committee. His group then works with technology committee members from other schools in his district to apply for grants to fund new technology.

Results: "By banding together to get grants, we get the latest equipment. We recently were given \$250,000, and the district will match that to update old computers and buy some new ones.

Our whole school will be on the Internet by this fall."

Ruben Alaniz, (210) 580-5762



Ruben Alaniz

Be a student of teaching.



Agriculture teachers are constantly looking for new information about the agricultural industry so they can teach their students about the most current careers and applications. But how many take time to collect new ideas about teaching? If you keep learning *how* to teach, not just *what* to teach, you will find new ways to energize your classroom and laboratory instruction. Your students will be more excited about your class and you'll gain more satisfaction from teaching them.

Ways to study teaching:

❑ Make continuing education part of your professional growth plan. Look for courses or seminars on teaching.

❑ Read current education publications for information on new teaching philosophies and methods.



❑ Develop a relationship with a teacher educator at a local university or with one of your former college professors. Check in regularly for new ideas and approaches.

❑ Review current teaching textbooks to see how teaching philosophies have changed.

❑ Request a student teacher. College students arrive with new ideas and without preconceptions about teaching. They often will approach teaching from a different angle and can help you take a new look at your program.

❑ Spend a day attending your colleagues' classes to see how their styles differ from yours and what works.

❑ Watch for announcements of teachers who win awards, then call them to find out what they did to be successful.

See the Professional Growth chapter for more information about continuing education opportunities.



Best Practices

Below are ideas teachers across the nation can use to build an instructional program. Special credit for many of the ideas below is given to Dr. Joyce Povlacs Lunde, who wrote the article "101 Things You Can Do the First Three Weeks of Class" for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Teaching and Learning Center's August 1986 newsletter, *Teaching at UNL*, and to Dr. Dave Krueger of Michigan State University, who wrote on the same topic in the 1996 *ANR Educator*.

Create an instructional program based on student interests and agricultural career opportunities:

- Join professional organizations that promote improved instruction, such as NAAE and your state agricultural teachers' association.
- Conduct a focus group with six to 12 students who graduated in the last three years. Find out how to make instruction more appealing and what skills they learned.
- Attend a Professional Growth Series workshop conducted by the National Council for Agricultural Education and NAAE or an Advisor Development Workshop sponsored by the FFA that relates to your instructional needs.

- Contact publishers and volunteer to pilot test new courses, textbooks or curriculum software and present a workshop on the results and how you implemented them into instruction.
- Form a peer teacher support group or find a mentor in your region whose curriculum closely matches yours and share ideas and resources.
- Place a suggestion box in the back of the room and encourage students to make written comments about what's taught every time the class meets.
- Invite community members to serve as judges for FFA competitive events.

Make "real-world" connections for learners:

- Encourage students to interview agricultural professionals to identify skills necessary for the workplace.
- Discuss a current topic and how it affects students' futures or careers.
- Have students research industry topics for the Agricultural Issues Forum and present their findings to local civic clubs.
- Stage a change-your-mind debate on a current issue, with students moving to different parts of the classroom to signal change in opinion during the discussion.
- Encourage students to bring to class and discuss newspaper clippings on current course topics.



- Incorporate English into the curriculum by having students keep daily journals of experiments and class activities. They can prepare reports on topics discussed in classes and put them in their student portfolios.
- Encourage students to use the Internet to research information for extemporaneous and public speaking ideas, Agricultural Issues Forum topics and agriscience research projects. The website ffa.org (<http://www.ffa.org>) allows teachers and students to chat with other FFA advisors and chapter members across the nation and to share ideas.
- Implement extensive work-based learning or SAE programs.
- Integrate agricultural education and language arts by having each student write an article complete with cutlines and photographs for an FFA Week supplement to the local newspaper. Have each student assist local businesses in developing an advertisement saluting the FFA. Work with the local paper staff in design and layout.
- Work with natural resources personnel to offer "adopt-a-lot," where students work with the same lot of fish through a growing cycle to stream stocking. Or, offer to manage forest land for your state's game commission.

Engage all students across all ability levels:

- Have students write out their expectations for the course and goals for learning. Work with them individually to achieve those goals.
- Form a student panel to present alternative views of the same concept taught in class.
- Distribute a list of the unsolved problems, dilemmas, or great questions in each course and invite students to claim one as their own to investigate.
- Let students see the enthusiasm you have for your subject and your love of learning.



One way to make real-world connections for students is to encourage them to have an SAE program and explore those possibilities in class.

Continued on page 1-12 ➤

- Use students' names and call on them frequently.
- Assign students to do an independent group research project once a week. Pair students with a business mentor they can contact for help with their projects. Have them give oral presentations on their results.
- Challenge students to find something you do not know and give them extra credit. This will motivate them to search through books and other sources.
- Develop a special curriculum for students who have open class time. Assign specific responsibilities to each "student teacher." Both student mentors and those being taught learn more.

Care about students and be an advocate for their needs:

- Collect students' current telephone numbers and addresses in case you need to reach them.
- Check out absentees. Call or write a personal note.
- Interact with students before and after class by joining their conversations about course topics.
- Monitor students who are having academic or behavioral problems and direct them to appropriate resources for assistance.
- Set up a buddy system so students can contact each other about assignments and coursework.
- Post photos of all student activities in classroom, office or lab.
- Visit each student at his or her home at least once a semester.

Accept and recruit students with diverse ideas, abilities, backgrounds and cultures:

- Make sure recruitment materials—slide shows, brochures, videos and flyers—include images of diverse populations you are recruiting.
- Offer "non-traditional" courses such as leadership, environmental science, marketing and small animal care that appeal to a larger group of students.
- Provide student mentors who mirror school population. The

- more closely students relate to your class and FFA chapter leadership, the more likely they will feel comfortable within your program.
- Find out what students want and develop instruction and recruitment activities for this audience.
- Use the student interest survey to help place them in activities that interest them.



The following curriculum resources are available for use in your classroom. Specific publishers and a more complete list of instructional services and resource centers are listed in the back of this guide.

- Agricultural Issues: Food Safety video (FFA)
- Agricultural Issues: Global Competitiveness video (FFA)
- Agricultural Issues: Water Quality video (FFA)
- Animal Welfare instructional materials (National Council for Agriculture Education—The Council)
- *Anticipation and Preparation: Two Keys to Survival, A Guidebook for the Student Teacher and the Beginning Teacher* (Lowell E. Hedges, The Ohio State University, 1995)
- Applied Environmental Science instructional materials (The Council)
- Aquaculture Species Manuals (The Council)
- *Assessing Learning* (Lowell E. Hedges and Valija M. Axelrod, Vocational Instructional Materials Laboratory (VIML), 1995)
- Beef Marketing (The Council)
- *Culminating and Enabling Expectations for Selected National FFA Activities* (FFA)
- Decisions & Dollars instructional package (The Council)
- *Developing Your Curriculum Guide, From Competencies to Student Performance Objectives* (Lowell E. Hedges, VIML, 1995)
- *Discovering Learning Preferences and Learning Differences in the Classroom* (Curriculum Materials Services)
- *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* (ASCD)
- Equine Science instructional materials (The Council)
- FFA New Horizons magazine (FFA)
- Food Science, Safety and Nutrition instructional materials (The Council)
- *Leadership: Personal Development and Career Success* (Delmar)
- Lesson Plans: *Teaching For Connection: Critical Thinking Skills, Problem-Solving, and Academic and Occupational Competencies*
- Maximum Economic Yield/No-Till Ag instructional materials (The Council)
- *Methods of Teaching Agriculture* (Interstate)
- *Middle Grade Agricultural Leaders' Guide* (FFA)
- *Multiple Intelligences* (ASCD)
- *Performance Assessments for Horticulture Occupational Competency Analysis Profile* (VIML, 1996)
- Professional Growth Series workshops (The Council)
- *Program Planning Guide for Agriscience and Technology Education* (Interstate)
- "Tech Prep, A Catalyst for Change" theme edition (The Agricultural Education Magazine)
- *Reading to Learn in the Content Areas* (Wadsworth Publishing)
- *The Skillful Teacher, Building Your Teaching Skills* (Research for Better Teaching, Inc.)

Use the following worksheets to improve classroom and laboratory instruction:

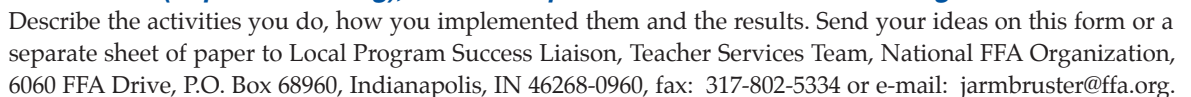
- SCANS Assessment Form, 1-14.
- Student Interest Survey, 1-15.
- Student Teamwork Evaluation Form, 1-16.
- Student Self-Assessment Form, 1-17.
- Advisory Committee and Planning Checklist, 1-18.



Use this simplified plan in your program today.
Write notes at left to get you started.

[illegible]

1. Spend time on planning at all levels, including the lesson, the activity and the program levels.
2. Create an instructional program based on student interests and agricultural career opportunities.
3. Make “real-world” connections for learners.
4. Engage all students across all ability levels.
5. Care about students and be an advocate for their needs.
6. Accept and recruit students with diverse ideas, abilities, backgrounds and cultures.
7. Become part of your community on a personal level. Show a vested interest in the community.
8. Stay up to date on technology. Consider the equipment you use in the classroom as well as the agricultural technology you teach about as class content.
9. Be a student of teaching. Keep learning how to teach, not just what to teach.



SCANS Assessment Form



Teachers: Give this form to key partners and advisory committee members or use it yourself to assess how effectively your program is in preparing students for careers. On a scale from one to five, please mark your approach on the range from one, conventional instruction, to five, innovative instruction. Then, work with your advisory committee to make instruction closer to the SCANS criteria in this area.

Conventional Classroom

Teacher knows answer.	1	2	3	4	5
Student routinely works alone.	1	2	3	4	5
Teacher plans all activities.	1	2	3	4	5
Teacher makes all assessments.	1	2	3	4	5
Teacher organizes, interprets, evaluates, and communicates to students.	1	2	3	4	5
Organizing system of the classroom is simple: one teacher instructs 30 students.	1	2	3	4	5
Reading, writing and math are treated as separate disciplines; listening and speaking often are missing from curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5
Thinking is usually theoretical and "academic."	1	2	3	4	5
Student is expected to conform to teacher's behavioral expectations: integrity and honesty are monitored by teacher; student's self-esteem is often poor.	1	2	3	4	5

SCANS Innovative Approach

More than one solution may be viable and teacher may not have it in advance.
Students routinely work with teachers, peers and community members.
Students and teachers plan and negotiate activities.
Students routinely assess themselves.
Students gather, organize, interpret, evaluate, and share information with appropriate audiences.
Organizing systems are complex: teacher and students both reach out beyond school for additional information.
Disciplines needed for problem-solving are integrated; listening and speaking are a fundamental part to learning.
Thinking is problem-solving, reasoning, and decision-making.
Student is expected to be sociable, responsible, self-managing, and resourceful: integrity and honesty monitored within the social context of the classroom; student's self-esteem is high because he or she is in charge of of his or her own learning.

Source: *Learning a Living, A Blueprint for High Performance*, U.S. Department of Labor, 1992, p. 42.

Student Interest Survey

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

Teachers: Copy and distribute this form to students enrolled in agriculture. After they complete this form, use the information to determine if any instruction or program improvements are needed to meet their needs.

Students: Complete this form and return it to your agriculture teacher.

A. Name: _____ Male____ Female ____
(Print.) Last First Middle

B. Birthdate: ____/____/____

C. Year in School
(Circle one.) Fr. So. Jr. Sr.

D. Year in Agriculture Program
(Circle one.) 1 2 3 4

E. Course Title: _____
Teacher: _____

F. Vital Information:

G. Draw a map to your home for instructor visits. Be sure to include the four roads/streets nearest your home.

Address: _____

North

City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____

East

West

Parent/Guardian Name(s) (Print full name.)

Mr. _____

South

Ms./Mrs. _____

H. Ethnic Origin (Optional)

(Check box that applies.)

☐ Native American / Alaskan Native

☐ White (except Hispanic)

☐ Hispanic

☐ Black (not Hispanic)

☐ Filipino

☐ Asian or Pacific Islander

I. I am taking this course because: (Check one.)

1. _____ I plan a career in agriculture.

2. _____ Not a career, just an interest in agriculture.

3. _____ Not interested, placed in class.

J. What occupation are you interested in? If your dream is not agriculture, go ahead and name an occupation in agriculture you would enjoy and put a star ★ by it. (Example: ★ forest ranger, elementary teacher).

K. Please indicate your plans after high school. (Check one ✓ from choices 1 to 4 and answer additional questions.)

_____ 1. Go to work full time.
_____ a. no further education
_____ b. some college

_____ 3. Go into military service.

_____ 4. Other: _____

_____ 2. Go to college.
_____ a. community college
_____ b. four-year college
_____ c. technical college

_____ a. attend full-time
_____ b. attend part-time

_____ a. agriculture major
_____ b. non-agriculture major

L. List any involvement in agricultural work or projects.

Project	Size/Quantity	Hours Per Week
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

M. List FFA activities you would like to participate in as a member.

FFA Activity	Skill Development	Recognition
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Student Teamwork Evaluation Form

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

Teachers: Have students complete this form to identify places for improvement in teamwork.

Students: Assign points for your teammates in the categories below according to the key.

TEAM NAME: _____

Team Members' Names:

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Teamwork Scoring

10 points - *Excellent* • 8 points - *Above Average* • 5 points - *Good* • 3 points - *Fair* • 1 point - *Poor*

Teammate Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Overall attendance in meetings / classroom	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Was prepared to work and showed initiative	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Gave supportive / helpful suggestions / feedback	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Allowed / encouraged others to present their ideas; didn't dominate	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Completed task with satisfactory effort	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Met deadline on time	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TOTAL SCORE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Comments: _____

Source: Sylvester Dunn, agriculture teacher, Pineville, Kentucky

Student Self-Assessment Form

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

Teachers: Have students enrolled in agriculture complete this form to identify places for improvement in self-directed experiences. Compare your score with theirs.

Students: Assign points for your performance in the categories below according to the following key. Return to your teacher when finished.

Name: _____ Course: _____

Grade: _____ Date: _____

Self-Scoring

Please rate your performance at work or in independent school projects honestly from “one,” being the lowest score, to “10,” the highest. When you finish, your teacher will rate your performance and work with you to improve your scores.

	<u>Student</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
I am dependable, punctual and thorough when carrying out my duties.	_____	_____
I have a tendency to show initiative when working.	_____	_____
I maintain tactful relationships when working.	_____	_____
I inspire trust among fellow workers and students while working.	_____	_____
I inspire trust among supervisors and teachers while working.	_____	_____
I produce a consistent personal example from which others can observe the value of cooperation, fair play and respect for others while working.	_____	_____
I produce beyond minimum expectations and group output when working.	_____	_____
I use time wisely when working.	_____	_____
I follow instructions as given or make suggestions directly to my supervisor.	_____	_____
I demonstrate interest in the work.	_____	_____
TOTAL SCORE	_____	_____

Comments: _____

Advisory Committee and Planning Checklist

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

Teachers: An advisory committee can assist you in establishing program goals, meeting student needs and planning instruction. Use this checklist to get the most benefit out of a local advisory committee.

Key Points for Establishing an Advisory Committee:

- ☐ Ask yourself why you need an advisory committee. Set expectations for the committee and yourself.
- ☐ Secure administration and school board approval.
- ☐ Select committee members. Be sure to include a representative from each partner group—parents, students, school officials and community members. Involve community members who have no knowledge of your program. They can help you and other members see program weaknesses that need to be addressed.
- ☐ Send a formal letter inviting committee members to serve. Personally obtain a confirmation from each person.
- ☐ At the first meeting, explain expectations and determine goals.
- ☐ Prepare and deliver agendas prior to all meetings.
- ☐ Continually recognize members for their involvement.

Top Four Advisory Committee Contributions:

- ☐ Recruit students.
- ☐ Improve curriculum.
 - Gather tools, equipment, instructional resources and facilities.
 - Evaluate overall program effectiveness.
 - Assist in preparing and selecting course materials.
 - Recommend resources or guest speakers for courses.
 - Offer resources to assist the teacher's professional growth.
- ☐ Employ and train students.
 - Help secure training stations and placement of program graduates.
 - Identify employment trends in specific industries or career pathways.
 - Identify SAE and other work-based learning opportunities.
 - Serve as judges or chaperones for FFA and SAE activities.
- ☐ Publicize the program.
 - Recognize outstanding students.

Source: Dr. John Mundt, associate professor, University of Idaho Boise Center, Idaho; *New Teacher Owner's Manual*



Below are ideas from teachers across the nation that will help you build an instructional program.

PowerPoint® Teaching Units

Bill Peal uses Microsoft's PowerPoint software to digitize units for his aquaculture, natural resources, mechanics, leadership and agricultural issues curriculum. Projecting lessons on a screen instead of using the chalkboard has enhanced lessons for students and helped him become a better teacher, he says. Peal uses a digital camera to illustrate a variety of situations such as student SAEs and soil judging sites he rarely had access to before. The cross-platform program allows students to build their own programs and to present their outlines as a part of class research in topics such as waste disposal among others.
Bill Peal, Pendleton High School, Pendleton, Oregon, (541) 276-3621 or bill_peal@pendleton.k12.or.us

Student Contracts

Each student at Beaufort-Jasper Academy for Career Excellence Golf Course Technology program maintains a learning contract in order to build job-related skills and to simulate the workplace. Since students work on an individual basis, Jack Kolb prints out students' computerized contracts on a weekly basis, listing at least five competencies and activities that match their progress in their respective units. As they finish a competency, students record it as completed and Kolb initials the contract. When new contracts are printed, completed competencies are deleted and new ones added. Worksheets, tests and lab work are assigned on an add needed basis to coincide with the competencies on the contracts.
Jack Kolb, Beaufort-Jasper Academy for Career Excellence, Ridgeland, South Carolina, (843) 987-8108 or kolb@islc.net

Play Dough Landscape Designs

To help Caesar Rodney students visualize landscape design concepts, Allan Rathbun has them construct a three-dimensional (3-D) display using play dough for the different shapes and sizes of shrubs and other ornamental plants. After teaching a unit on the subject, he reviews a blueprint or a picture of a house or building with students. They then use play dough to convert the two-dimensional design into 3-D model. To help identify and visualize foliage native to their area, students purchase an economical shrub guide from a home project store or surf the University of Delaware's website where pictures of native species are listed. Seeing the design in 3-D helps all students, especially special education students, understand concepts such as focal points, sequence and groupings, Rathbun says.
Allan Rathbun, Caesar Rodney High School, Camden-Wyoming, Delaware, (302) 697-9313 or alrathbun@aol.com

Soda Pop Economic Lessons

Cory Wedel makes it easier for agribusiness students to grasp the law of supply and demand by auctioning off a can of soda and then graphing the corresponding offers to purchase. He starts by taking bids for a basic item such as soda, which appeals to most students and can be consumed after it is sold. Once the item is sold to the highest bidder and the prices offered are graphed using an overhead, Wedel uses the graph to discuss the factors affecting purchase. He also sells other products such as gum or a candy bar to discuss the concept of alternate goods. The techniques capture students' curiosity about economics, Wedel says. "Instead of dry numbers and budgets, students find it easier to understand the concepts discussed."
Cory Wedel (substitute agriculture teacher), Albany County School District, Laramie, Wyoming, (307) 742-8656

Real World News

James Spiess uses the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) classroom edition to help students make real world connections, sharpen their reading skills, understand our economy and become informed citizens. He uses the monthly issues to promote discussions in his agribusiness or marketing classes on topics such as work ethic or career advancement. Students may investigate topics further through classroom assignments. The 24-page paper supplements the daily edition and comes with videos and charts geared to students and contains articles on economics, agriculture and career tips. It also comes with a teacher guide. Best of all, the paper costs only \$186 per year for 30 students with a free subscription to the daily edition during the second year.
James Spiess, Wauseon High School, Wauseon, Ohio, (419) 335-0508 or wau_aca_js@nwoca.org

Science Immersion Based on SCANS

The U.S. Labor Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) has provided Marice Woodruff with a framework to teach workplace and life skills to a diverse range of students. Prior to enrollment, new students completed a packet that assessed their reading level, learning style and conceptualization ability. The packet included a checklist of course tasks such as magazine reviews, oral reports and projects, to name a few. During the first half of a two-hour block, Woodruff's 20 students worked in independent study on what interested them. Once a week, they reported to their fellow students what they learned from their research based on the scientific method. Group presentations and discussion were held during the second one-hour block, which consisted of teacher-facilitated activities such as brainstorming, debate and more research. Woodruff supplemented her teaching with books, videos, news and Internet data. Students used peer teaching and teamwork to complement each other's styles and abilities. Curriculum success can be measured in decreased negative student behavior, accelerated course work and early graduations.
Marice A. Woodruff, Lord School, Woodburn, Oregon, (503) 362-3546 or mawoodruff@worldnet.att.net

Instructional Partnerships

In 1993, instructors in both the agriculture and biology departments at Canby High School joined together to form an educational student-generated project called the Alternative Growing Biologic Environment (AGBE). The project focuses on biotechnology, specifically in areas related to aquaculture, hydroponics, tissue culturing and aquaponics. The project integrates the theoretical and practical application of marketing, mathematics, agriculture and the biological sciences. One project success includes the hatching of nearly 4,000 fish from eggs collected from the program's brood stock. Students have also established a market for fingerlings and developed plans for marketing basil, mint and Tilapia. The current project now includes 5,000 gallons of aquaculture tanks, over 200 square feet of hydroponic and aquaponic growing beds and a salmon hatching system. AGBE successes have led to more than \$150,000 in grants and program donations from private industry, the Oregon Department of Education and the USDA. A USDA Challenge Grant has funded the development of a micro-propagation laboratory specializing in plant tissue culturing. Together, the project attracts non-traditional students to both departments and provides adult community education programs.

Max Sherman, Canby High School, Canby, Oregon, (503) 266-5811, ext. 1021 or shermanm@canby.k12.or.us

Laboratory Learning Stations

To increase the rate of student learning in the laboratory, William Stanforth has established seven stations. Each station allows students to identify and to pace themselves based on a description of daily responsibilities. Several of the station demonstrations include video presentations. This set-up allows students as they rotate through each area or station to review a competency that they have observed earlier. Industry advisory committee members have volunteered for the video demonstrations. One example includes demonstrating how to maintain electrical grooming clippers and various types of scissors, as well as how to use them. Competency profiles are listed in each area to assist students in understanding and monitoring their progress toward mastering the skills at each station.

William D. Stanforth, Live Oaks Career Development Center, Milford, Ohio, (513) 672-4970 or stanbill@aol.com

Computer Applications in Agriculture

Liz Treptow has developed a course in which students learn about and apply computer skills related to agriculture. The course is approved by the Texas Education Agency and consists of units with student-driven projects. Students learn word processing while producing a simulated research paper concerning life skills. They use electronic technologies such as PowerPoint®, digital cameras and scanners to create a 10-minute presentation on a current agricultural issue topic. In addition, students publish bimonthly FFA newsletters. This year, they will create a

marketing presentation with computer-assisted design and electronic slides to illustrate possible developments for a vacant area in the local town. Students have learned accounting skills and are required to plot a local farm operation's assets and profitability status from its annual receipts. The Internet serves as the primary text for the course; students conduct a Web Quest through which they develop questions for crossword puzzles as an introduction to agriculture and its history. This year students are piloting a new Texas computerized record-keeping program for their supervised agricultural experience programs.

Liz Treptow, Weimar High School, Weimar, Texas, (409) 725-9508 or liztreptow@yahoo.com

Building Student Empathy

For one day a year, Anne Stewart Clark conducts activities aimed at developing student awareness of and empathy for disadvantaged or physically challenged students. Another goal of the activities is to raise students' awareness for farm safety and what can happen if they are not careful, especially in working with equipment hydraulic systems. To build appreciation for individuals who are verbally challenged, students may have to complete team assignments without talking. They may also spend time blindfolded or participate in exercises that simulate a loss of a limb.

Anne Stewart Clark, Fleming County High School, Flemingsburg, Kentucky, (606) 845-9801

Independent Study Programs

While teaching at Kofa High School, Jim Armbruster used an independent study program for juniors and seniors in the advanced agricultural course. The program consisted of a six-week period of class time in which students planned their own educational goals and objectives. Armbruster had three rules for independent study students:

1. The project must be related to the agricultural industry, the program or a student's supervised agricultural experience (SAE) program. Examples included study for articulation exams, agricultural mechanics projects, award and degree applications, speech development and preparation, plant production in the greenhouse and development of educational displays or presentations.
2. Independent study programs must be planned and approved by the instructor and parents. Program plans must include written goals and objectives, time lines or working drawings for mechanic projects with bills of sale for materials. Each student must keep a daily log of accomplishments.
3. Students are allowed four classroom days for planning; otherwise, they are assigned independent study or mechanics projects that will benefit the agriculture program.

Jim Armbruster, National FFA Staff (while at Kofa High School in Yuma, Arizona), (317) 802-4334 or jarmbruster@ffa.org

Biotechnology Materials/Equipment

One barrier to offering a biotechnology curriculum is that materials and equipment are often too expensive to purchase. While some teachers feel that biotechnology applications are too advanced and costly for high school students, John Stables, of Hillsboro, Ore., reports that his students “enjoy the challenge and application of concepts as they relate to biotechnology.” For this reason, he searches for cost-effective options to infuse biotech applications into his classrooms and offers these tips to other teachers who want to do the same.

Cost-Effective Options

1. **Cooperative Purchases.** Teachers interested in pursuing a comprehensive biotech program can form partnerships with neighboring school districts to cooperatively purchase “share-ware” in order to spread the costs among many different schools and classrooms.

2. **Foundations and institutes.** Stables encourages teachers to inquire about foundations that offer biotech institutes or seminars. He cites as an example a week-long summer institute, offered through the Oregon Biotechnology Foundation and Association in cooperation with Oregon State University, that provided hands-on training of biotech applications at the secondary level. Stables plans to use the activities and labs from the institute to teach biology, horticulture and natural resources at Hillsboro.

Some of the benefits of these workshops:

- Lab materials are available on a loan basis to teachers to use with their students.
- A consortium of teachers often exists to buy biotech consumable supplies in volume that are paid for by corporate sponsors and foundations.
- Teachers, like Stables, generally receive reimbursement and credits toward recertification or a graduate degree.
- The workshops allow agriscience teachers to create networks and alliances with science teachers across the state, including within their own school district.

3. **Science catalogs.** Stables says another cost-effective way to begin is to purchase some of the lab kits listed in science supply catalogs. While not a long-term solution to a comprehensive biotech program, this option allows teachers to build an instructional track record that can be used to persuade administrators and school board members that biotech-based courses offer a lot to students.

4. **The Web.** Stables works with local science teachers to search the Internet for information on biotechnology education and research opportunities within the state. Sites to surf for resources, lesson plans and links include the following:

- www.public.asu.edu/~langland/index.html
- www.explorer.bio-rad.com (biotechnology supply company with lesson plans and kits)
- www.babec.org (educational consortium with materials for teachers)

John Stables, Hillsboro High School, Hillsboro, Oregon,
(503) 648-8561 or stablesj@hsd.k12.or.us

Simulated Student Enterprises

Students who enroll in the semester-long Agriculture Construction II course receive training in work-related skills such as agricultural sales, customer relations and how to develop a marketing plan. After interviewing all students, teacher Lee Ann Daugherty divides them into teams according to their skills, strengths and weaknesses. Each team of about five students represents a company that develops a name and marketing plan based on popular items such as unfinished outdoor furniture or livestock feeders. Students in each team or company select a foreman from their peers who oversees the collection of orders for its products and the building of the final products to customer specifications. Bids include the cost of materials and labor. Daugherty maintains a standing agreement with a local feedmill to build livestock equipment. Profits from sales are kept in a subaccount at school for the students to use on school items at the end of each semester.

Lee Ann Daugherty, Butler County High School, Morgantown, Kentucky, (270) 524-2204

Ruminant Digestion Lab Increases Interest

As a part of a study on feeds and animal nutrition, Denton freshmen dissect the digestive system of two steers. After a local butcher shop slaughters the animals, students don protective clothing and gloves to collect samples from every segment of the ruminants' system, including bacteria found in the rumen. Under close supervision by teacher Ken Mapston, they use a video microscope to record their findings and transfer them to video or use specimens to produce slides for review under a microscope. “The activity creates discussion because students can literally follow the entire digestion process,” Mapston says.

Ken Mapston, Denton High School, Denton, Montana,
(406) 567-2370

Record Keeping System Encourages Students

Don Thorn has developed a computer template to teach students record keeping and management for their supervised agricultural experience (SAE) enterprises, and to encourage them to complete award applications and obtain the recognition they deserve. Existing record books were incompatible with state and national applications, adding to student frustration. The template operates in Microsoft Excel® and closely matches national applications. It holds 16 months of records, two placement stations and six entrepreneurship enterprises. After test runs and a conversion period to the new system, McClave teachers hold two or three record book days a month. Students work from a hard copy draft and print a final version at the end of the fiscal year. In the last three years, the FFA chapter has seen two star winners and an increase in state proficiency applicants with 13 state winners! The system is now available for \$125.

Don Thorn, McClave High School, McClave, Colorado,
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Teaching Special Needs Students

The horticulture program at Edinburg, Texas, offers special needs students a practical approach to learning. Teacher Vilma Gomez's main objective is to instill basic and horticulture-specific skills to prepare all students, especially those with physical or medical conditions that affect their learning, for future employment. The two-year program is run as a simulated business, which addresses the diversity of learning styles among enrolled students. Students are graded on both their academic achievement and mastery of certain skills, the latter being an area in which special needs students often succeed. During their first year of study, students spend two hours daily receiving hands-on instruction in greenhouse management, gardening, landscaping, floral design and lawn care. They also interface with greenhouse customers on a daily basis; they answer phones, communicate with customers, receive orders and dress appropriately for the occasion—skills needed by all employees. During their second year, students specialize in one area of study and spend time improving their employment skills related directly to a horticulture-related occupation. Near the end of their second year, they spend two days per week for a total of six weeks in an unpaid and mostly unsupervised experience at various community businesses like Wal-Mart. There they shadow employees in horticulture-, gardening- or floral-related jobs. Liability insurance is provided for all students through the Boy Scouts organization. Second-year students also complete a plant project, where they produce 100 plants and market them through the greenhouse. A portion of the profits is shared with students after expenses are paid. While Gomez freely admits that many special needs students do not pursue postsecondary education, she does stress that the program allows all students to develop basic skills that they can use after graduation, no matter which path they choose. Gomez also says the program's practical approach boosts special needs students' confidence in their abilities. Besides assisting special needs students, the program's structure compels Gomez to teach a curriculum that prepares students to meet the needs of employers.

Vilma Gomez, Edinburg Career Center, Edinburg, Texas,
(956) 316-7748 or kirbykay2000@yahoo.com

International Research Projects

Gary Grey, South Dakota's supervisor of agricultural education, participated in an international program sponsored by the Jerome Foundation. After spending weeks learning about his options, Grey selected the Earthwatch Institute Bahamian Reef Survey Project. The 10-day project consisted of collecting data for researchers to monitor the health of coral reefs surrounding the San Salvador Island, approximately 450 miles east of the Florida Keys. Access to telephones, television, radio, newspapers and even other researchers was limited. Grey says he had time to focus and discuss how learning really occurs with other participants, who included students and teachers. Some lessons he learned:

- Educators have an obligation to guide students and let them make their own decisions.
- A good mix of theory and application can help students find purpose in their studies.
- Understanding different learning styles that exist within a classroom may be as important as knowing students' names.
- Learning should be fun while providing students opportunities to see the world as a community.
- A student's success or failure relies not on one instructor; instructors should share in a team approach to teaching.

Grey saw a direct parallel in how research was conducted in San Salvador and how teachers could adapt the practices used to High Plains grassland ecological studies. He intends to share his experiences with South Dakota instructors and students by:

- Incorporating the lessons learned into inservice workshops.
- Demonstrating how the research processes used can be adapted to the hands-on learning used in agricultural education technical programs.
- Working on an educational initiative to enhance academic studies through applications taught in technical fields.
- Identifying technical skills needed in career fields and considering how they can be taught to meet state math, science, language arts and social sciences standards.

Gary Grey, State Supervisor of Agricultural Education, Pierre, South Dakota, (605) 773-4726 or garyg@deca.state.sd.us.

E-mail Assignments

For three years now, Les Linegar has sent assignments, worksheets and notes via e-mail to students in his agricultural computer course and on independent study. The practice teaches them how to use e-mail and computers, as well as reduces paper use and cost. Worksheets are developed in programs to which students have access and are attached to e-mails. Upon completing their assignments in class on one of the 16 online computers or at home, students return them to Linegar for grading. He has established free accounts on services such as Juno or Yahoo for those students without access to e-mail. Students are allowed only to work on class activities while online at school. Those who abuse their privileges lose computer access in degrees based on the severity of the offense. Parents like the practice because children who are ill can readily receive their assignments. Students like the process because they can work ahead and don't have to manage excess paperwork.

Les Linegar, Ontario High School, Ontario, Oregon,
(541) 889-5309 or llinegar@ontariosd.k12.or.us

Travel Seminar Instructional Tips

After attending a 12-day travel seminar to Costa Rica, Lori Steward was motivated to implement several activities based on her experiences in that country. Some of these have implications for all programs.

1. Steward plans to encourage students to learn a second language as a communications tool for their future careers. She regularly uses both English and Spanish in teaching her students; she works closely with her school's foreign language teachers in developing assignments for students who are enrolled in both courses.
2. Steward plans to use more simulated activities, field trips and invite bilingual guest speakers that represent the diversity of agriculture, not just high tech industries. She hopes these additions will help urban students develop a passion and personal satisfaction for their involvement in agriculture, especially the production side. The travel seminar instilled in her a respect for every facet of the industry. While in Costa Rica, she and several other seminar participants worked on a cattle ranch. Steward says the ranch owner was a 65-year-old native who took pride in his accomplishments.
3. She also plans to develop more problem-solving activities in her science labs. While on the seminar, Steward witnessed Costa Rican workers throughout the industry "doing more with less." This resourcefulness and sensitivity to the budget is what she hopes to instill in her students by inviting them to participate in determining what equipment is needed and then acquiring it for the program's science labs.
4. Steward plans to require students during their junior and senior year projects to work directly with a farm family or in an agribusiness. While in Costa Rica, she saw that juniors and seniors at EARTH College lived and worked with a farm family before graduation, giving them a first-hand perspective for future careers.

Lori Steward, Tracy High School, Tracy, California,
(209) 831-5100, ext. 1704

Classroom Discipline

Horacio Garza Jr. believes that classroom discipline is an essential part of open communication between teachers and students and part of building a successful agricultural education program. Besides trying to keep everything he does as simple as possible, Garza follows three general principles to build a successful classroom atmosphere:

1. Limit the classroom rules to no more than five and be sure to enforce them. Garza has found that too many rules will only confuse students and frustrate the teacher.
2. Draw a clear distinction between yourself the teacher and students. Don't let the lines of teacher and friend become blurred. Never allow yourself to be a "buddy" with students.
3. Always respect your students. If you develop ways to respect them, they will respect you in return.

Horacio Garza Jr., Sharyland High School, Mission, Texas,
(956) 580-5307 or g4lachogarza@yahoo.com

International Seminar Expands Instruction

Jimmy Zamora plans to incorporate his experiences on the FFA Costa Rica Travel Seminar into an international trade unit in his agribusiness course. Zamora will use a PowerPoint® presentation of photos he took while on his trip to discuss imports/exports, international crop production practices and how the United States benefits from Costa Rican research universities. In addition, he will use brochures and handouts acquired during his trip to stress the importance of learning a second language to interact with a growing global agricultural economy. Zamora hopes that his presentation will serve as a motivational tool for FFA members to participate in international programs and encourage ESL (English as a Second Language) students in his classes to continue practicing their culture and language. Jimmy Zamora, Mountain View High School, Vancouver, Washington, (360) 604-6100, ext. 2305 or jzamora@groupwise.egreen.wednet.edu

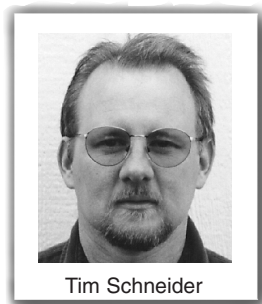
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Science-based Courses

In 1993, Tim Schneider of Elma, Wash., started an aquaculture program with a strong emphasis on science, mathematics and problem-solving. His reason was to increase the program's chances of survival and to make education practical to students, especially those with special needs.

Aquaculture Provides Context

Elma's aquaculture program consists of two 4,000-gallon recirculating systems of five tanks each for raising salmon and trout and are housed in a 40 foot by 60 foot enclosed pole building. The program received nearly \$100,000 in school and grant monies and became one of the first facilities of its kind on the West Coast.



Tim Schneider

Though that big of an investment is not needed to teach math and science, Schneider feels that future agricultural classrooms need to focus on these subjects to help students. He regularly finds students who do not perform well in academic courses and some who don't even know how to compute basic math problems. Elma's aquaculture curriculum provides students

- with real-world experiences to apply math and science and
- with transferable skills that are relevant to their future jobs or personal lives.

The curriculum includes calculations used daily in the industry:

- daily water sampling to determine water cleanliness, which is critical to recirculation systems
- pond weight (calculated from the number and average weight per fish)
- pounds of feed needed based on pond weight
- conversion of feed from pounds to grams

Elma also has a science-based forestry program, which includes related math problems and a cooperative contract with industry giant Weyerhaeuser.

Heavy Science and Math Focus

Administrators approved Elma's aquaculture course for science credit because of its heavy emphasis on science and related math problems. The course gives an overview of the industry and covers units including these topics:

- history of aquaculture,
- a comparison of agriculture and aquaculture,
- career skills including résumé and cover letter writing,
- types of species as well as their growth and care,
- fish anatomy and physiology (students dissect shrimp and other crustaceans and view fish scales under the microscope to determine their age),

- cooperative work study or job shadowing in local hatcheries, and
- an oyster and clam feed at semester's end for students to taste the ocean's delights.

Last year alone, students collected more than 10 million salmon eggs in two local hatcheries and helped restock nearby rivers and lakes for recreational purposes.

"Agricultural education can play an important role in school reform," Schneider explains, "because the work-based learning helps the high percentage of students who don't go onto college and don't function in traditional academic settings to perform well in subjects such as science and math."

Implementing Science-based Courses

Schneider offers these tips for starting a science-based aquaculture program:

- **Allow students to demonstrate how courses meet science credit criteria.** Local administrators were impressed by how much real-world science was taught in Elma's aquaculture courses.
- **Develop strong relationships with science teachers.** Science teachers initially toured the facility to learn how the subject was taught throughout the curriculum. "After that contact," Schneider recalls, "they [science teachers] could see the program's value and how it helped students."
- **Conduct an open house to gain support.** Schneider invited the community and school board members to view the facility and see how students actually experienced science through hands-on activities.
- **Use the Aquaculture Curriculum Guide to design your course.** The instructional guide, available from the National Council for Agricultural Education (item AQ-CURR-W/NB), provided Schneider with lessons in teaching aquaculture. It costs \$50, plus shipping and handling.

Tim Schneider, (360) 482-2860 or
schneiderelmahighschool@yahoo.com

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Internet Lesson Plans

Besides boosting student learning, Mike Kamrath says using the Internet and its World Wide Web (Web) provides other teaching options for his Washburn, N.D., program.

Internet Raises Student Interest

Kamrath's classroom was one of the first in the school to receive Internet access almost a year ago. Since that time, students have learned about animal breeds or careers and have monitored daily commodity prices or weather patterns via the Web.

"The Internet has pushed cognitive skills to a different level," Kamrath says of its use in his agribusiness course. "The Web provides students access to current information from credible sources such as the Chicago Board of Trade."

Though no hard data exists to document a rise in learning, Kamrath cites increased student excitement, enthusiasm and activity as proof of the Internet's benefits. He says the Edustock website peaked interest in commodity markets so much that students were regularly logging onto the site after school, during study hall and at home. At one point, students became so absorbed in tracking grain prices that they used computers at local grain elevators or their neighbor's homes during school breaks just to stay up to date with price changes.

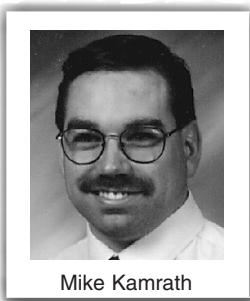
Reading has also risen with Internet use, Kamrath notes. Students must assemble a portfolio of their market decisions as a final class project. Web access to market analyses in newspapers such as the *Wall Street Journal* gives students more time to read and use this information in making their simulated decisions.

A Practical Teaching Tool

How does Kamrath incorporate the Internet into his agribusiness lesson plans?

- He first previews three or four websites in preparing to teach about topics such as commodity options.
- During class, students log onto these designated sites as Kamrath monitors their progress and notes questions for later discussion.
- Students review each site's information, answer predetermined questions or complete certain pre-assigned tasks and exercises.
- The class then discusses its findings, while Kamrath fields questions about unfamiliar topics or terminology students observe online.

Students are not allowed to surf the Internet during class, Kamrath says. All students and parents sign an agreement at the start of the school year, explaining the Internet's use and outlining the consequences for random surfing.



Net Opens New Learning Avenues

The Web has provided other teaching options as well. Starting this fall, Kamrath, biology teacher Kyle Hegre, and their students will create a plant science website with money from a U.S. West Communications grant. Students will conduct experiments on plants, photograph their procedures and compile their findings for display.

"The Internet opens up a world that students are more comfortable in," Kamrath says. "Projecting a four-color, three dimensional computer image on a screen makes learning more enjoyable."

Web Strategies and Sites

One challenge of using the Internet is identifying useful sites. "You have to do your homework ahead of time," Kamrath says. "You may visit several websites before locating a few good ones."

To compensate for this shortfall, Kamrath regularly spends time before and after school locating appropriate sites to match his lesson plans. He offers these strategies:

- Assign FFA officers the task of locating potential marketing- or animal science-related sites.
- Use search engines like Yahoo (<http://www.yahoo.com>) to access a world of information and data on the stock market and other topics.

Kamrath routinely uses these websites:

- Edustock (<http://tqd.advanced.org/3088/>) is an educational website designed to teach users about the stock market through tutorials and real-time simulations.
- The Chicago Board of Trade (<http://www.cbot.com>) website features updates, news and data about commodities traded on the exchange.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture website (<http://www.usda.gov>) offers news and information about commodities and other government programs that affect markets.

Contact Mike Kamrath first via e-mail at mkamrath@sendit.nodak.edu or at (701) 462-3221 (school).

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Animal Tissue Cultures

While animal tissue cultures are not new to the agricultural and pharmaceutical industries, their use in the agriculture classroom is a relatively recent event. Lisa Konkel of Big Foot High School in Walworth, Wis., uses cultures to introduce her students to the high-tech world of cell regeneration which serves as the basis for animal cloning and transgenic animals—topics hotly debated today by scholars, bioethicists and media commentators.

Course Meets High-tech Challenge

Konkel's biotechnology course, where she uses animal tissue cultures, is no sleeper. All 23 University of Wisconsin campuses accept it as science credit for admission. The National FFA Organization recognized her as the 1998 Agriscience Teacher of the Year, providing yet another marker of how far the course has come since its inception four years ago.

Demand for the course is high. Konkel teaches two sections with 38 students. Besides cell regeneration, students learn about gene transformation, allele patterns and migration, among other topics.

"Graduates who attend college frequently comment how much they already understand because of the course," she says.

Animal Cultures Heart of Unit

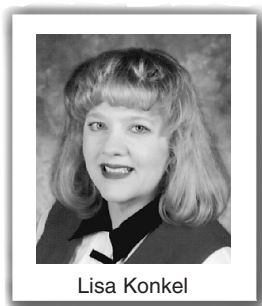
During the three-week cell regeneration unit, Konkel covers:

- the differences between plant and animal growth,
- new technology in the field,
- transgenic animals such as cows that produce milk with human genes or sheep that manufacture medicines, and
- cell regeneration, using animal cultures to demonstrate how tissue is grown.

Students conduct a lab using 18-day-old duck eggs to examine the optic nerve, lungs, intestines, heart and other duck embryo parts.

"Urban students especially find tissue cultures challenging when they have to dismember embryos," she says. "But I don't dwell on the issue."

Next, students isolate cells from each part and culture them for incubation in carbon dioxide. Cells are subcultured after two or three days, at which time students can already see results. "The point really hits home when students see the microscopic chambers of the animal cells beating after four days of incubation," she says.



Lisa Konkel

Ethical Questions Debated

Bioethics is a large part of the unit. Following tissue culture experiments, students view the movie, "GATTACA," which focuses on genetic engineering. Next, students divide into two groups, taking sides in debates on cell regeneration in organ transplants, transgenic animals and human cloning. Topics include:

- Should rats be used to grow human ear replacements?
- Is it okay to use the technology to grow artificial skin for burn victims?
- Should the pharmaceutical industry use transgenic animals to grow medicines for human use?

"Students are informed and usually in favor of regulating technology," she reports. "They see the benefits and the results of going too far through the experiments we do."

Tips on Using Animal Cultures

Lessons Konkel has learned from her experiences with animal tissue cultures include:

- **Locate a local egg supplier.** Konkel found that commercial chicken embryos were not mature enough for the experiment to work. Duck eggs from a local supplier worked much better and were available for free.
- **Use regular eggs for practice.** Konkel says students should first practice opening eggs from the grocery store to reduce the trauma to the duck embryos during the experiment.
- **Use old egg cartons as inexpensive egg holders during the lab.**
- **Use alcohol burners.** If Bunsen burners are not available, Konkel suggests buying methyl alcohol burners, which can be purchased through science catalogs.
- **Keep current.** Konkel reads as much as possible from publications such as *Genetic Engineering* and *Agricultural Research* magazines. She also copies and distributes articles to students to keep them up to date with today's technology.

Lisa Konkel at (414) 275-2116, ext. 143

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Advanced Tech Prep Learning

Liberty Union High offers the first advanced agriscience tech prep program in Ohio. Teachers Christi Bachman and Tim Turner manage an integrated college prep program with English and mathematics linked to agriscience. The junior-level Ag Science Tech Prep I course is designed for college-bound students, 75 percent of whom enter a specific field of agriculture or the fields of medicine and business with a link to agriscience. Supported by an initial state tech prep grant of \$15,000 and a expansion grant of \$30,000, Bachman, Turner and the team of teachers coordinate topics related to international agriculture, global position system (GPS), hydroponics and genetic modified organisms, to name a few areas of study. Here are a few examples of how study topics are coordinated:

1. International agriculture: Students study foreign exchange rates and their impacts on domestic commodities in their agriscience course. Concurrently in their English course, they develop a sales packet on a United States agricultural product tailored for a particular foreign country. Meanwhile in mathematics, students gain a more in-depth review of foreign exchange rates by calculating the value of foreign currencies in relation to the dollar.
2. Agricultural science fair. Students conduct experiments on turf grass in their agriscience course, write their research study paper in their English class and calculate their findings and develop appropriate graphs in math class.
3. GPS: In agriscience, students first learn about the concepts and study the technology on-site through the school land lab. They then write a research paper on the subject and develop a website in their English class to share technology information to a nonagricultural audience. In math class, students study about x and y coordinates and how they relate to field location.

Bachman says students gain an in-depth study of agriscience topics and math and English become more interesting. Turner and Bachman say the key to a tech prep program is having the time to collaborate with the other teachers. Liberty Union administrators give release days to the team of teachers, so they can meet regularly to discuss course progress and planning issues. Turner and Bachman also encourage other teachers to complete and submit applications for grants.

*Christi Bachman or Tim Turner,
Liberty Union High School, Baltimore, Ohio
(740) 862-4107 or luagscience@hotmail.com*

Online Curriculum Modules

To teach numerous skills as outlined in the state Agricultural Education Competency Profiles, Darold Hehn uses online training modules. The approach allows Hehn to teach more skills with less equipment. The modules com-

prise a large part of the curriculum and currently all students are taught through this method. With this approach to learning, no one student covers the exact topic at the same time. Each student must accomplish competencies in order to complete the overall unit. While the Rapid City, S.D., curriculum centers on horticulture, natural resources, agricultural sales and marketing, students may select from almost 50 individual units, depending on their interests. Discussions based on themes, which occur at the beginning of each class period, supplement the online units. Hehn says the new curriculum takes extra time to develop and organize.

Hehn originally developed the modules to allow several students to access the same information from multiple computers. The modules allowed Hehn to cope with a lack of program funds to purchase equipment and supplies for each student in each course. He was able to teach specific profile skills en masse by using the Internet. Though students need to be trained to learn in a different way, Hehn has found that they prefer the new approach. "Students cannot help but learn. They are involved in their own education rather than being an observer," he says.

*Darold Hehn, Rapid City Central High School,
Rapid City, South Dakota
(605) 394-4023 or dhehn@rapidnet.com*

Filing System Organizes Student Work

Amy Megan Cox uses two expanding folders as a convenient way for students to access their assignments quickly. The portable folders allow her to transport and grade student assignments at home or on trips. Kept at the front podium, each folder has six index sleeves that hold assignments for each class period. One folder holds incoming papers for grading and the other contains graded papers for return to students. Selected students collect and distribute papers as they all work on individual projects during class time. The practice helps students focus on completing their assignments. It also encourages them to discuss their grades and course progress with Cox individually, rather than during class.

*Amy Megan Cox, Peoria High School, Peoria, Arizona
(623) 486-6300 or MCox@peoriaud.k12.az.us*

Student Classroom Managers

At the beginning of each school year, Megan Cox distributes applications and allows students to apply for classroom managerial positions, including that of “make-up manager.” The student in this position assists his or her peers whose course performances have slipped or who have fallen behind in their assignments. This same student also collects completed assignments for grading and files them in the correct class folder located on the podium. Cox has found that having students in these various managerial roles motivates other students to complete their course work faster, so they too can oversee tasks such as distributing papers. She says that students who serve in these positions gain a sense of responsibility and self-confidence by managing certain tasks. In short, having classroom managers allows Cox to share responsibility with her students and to focus on managing her classroom.

*Megan Cox, Peoria High School, Peoria, Arizona
(623) 486-6300, MCox@peoriaud.k12.az.us*

Indoor Acreage Calculations

Ann Newhouse has created a lesson plan and equipment to teach students how to measure land and calculate acreage in the classroom. Her lesson has allowed her to teach students the basics, before they actually try it outdoors, or if the weather is uncooperative. Students build their own miniature acreage wheel using a round piece of cardboard from a frozen pizza, two paint stir sticks, a brad or small nail and some electrical tape. They then lay out various shaped fields on the classroom floor using masking tape. In groups of two, students then use the wheel to measure their “fields” by counting the revolutions. Once the measuring with the wheel is complete, students convert the revolutions into mathematical distances and continue calculating the acreage of their miniature field. The tape can be pulled off the floor and a new field created.

*Ann Newhouse, Bainville High School, Bainville, Montana
(406) 769-2321 or anewhouse@metnet.state.mt.us*

Wireless Technology

Lanny Seebeck’s classroom has begun to utilize wireless Internet connected to laptop computers (one per student) to enhance learning. Students take notes and conduct research for assignments on the laptops, storing their work to either floppy disks or the school server. They develop PowerPoint presentations for classroom reports and use scanning and photo imagery capabilities to import visuals into written products. Students and faculty also use e-mail to communicate with each other. Many students consider the use of computers to be an extension of hands-on learning, appreciate the wider research vistas and enjoy an increased sense of status since the program has become “high tech.” Wireless technologies have allowed Seebeck to individualize instruction activities for students. Seebeck has used the new technologies to establish a program homepage on the school’s website. He is also in the process of

automating students’ record books. He plans to incorporate precision farming programs and management systems into his courses by using an interface with management programs and GIS and GPS systems.

*Lanny Seebeck, Mid-Buchanan High School, Faucett, Missouri
(816) 238-1646 or seebeck1@mail.midbuchanan.k12.mo.us*

Windbreak Models

Ann Newhouse asks her students to design their own windbreak as part of a unit on protecting livestock in north-eastern Montana. After reading two articles on the subject, students hold discussions on the studies and the structures highlighted in the articles. Students attempt to prove or disprove the articles’ findings. They write their ideas first on paper, including structure dimensions. Next, they build scale models using a variety of materials to simulate the windbreaks. Upon completion, they contact lumber yards to develop a bill of materials for what an actual size windbreak would cost a rancher. The model windbreaks are then evaluated outside by erecting them on a frozen pond or on the track/field near the school. Students then watch the effect natural elements have on their structures. The models can also be evaluated by taping cardboard “walls” on three sides of a butcher-block table and using various foodstuffs as forms of precipitation. Finally, students study the bill of materials and test results for each windbreak. They select an overall top windbreak using the criteria of practicality, cost efficiency and amount of protected area.

*Ann Newhouse, Bainville High School, Bainville, Montana
(406) 769-2321 or anewhouse@metnet.state.mt.us*

Simulated Business Enterprise

To teach teamwork and business skills, Sue Wade divided the freshmen class into teams that were required to create a simulated construction company. Part of the students’ assignment was to develop a company logo, letterhead and business cards. They also selected a slate of corporate officers. Each simulated company had to design a greenhouse, researching the type of greenhouse and crop best suited for that structure. Each team determined how long it would take for the FFA chapter to pay the cost of construction from the crop’s profits. Part of the design included floor plans for an economy, mid-range and luxury greenhouse. In turn, each team presented their bids to a panel of three community members, who reviewed the presentations, made suggestions for improvement and awarded the bid to the successful team. Placing of the bids determined the team grade.

*Sue Wade, Young Public School, Young, Arizona
(928) 462-3244*

Promising Practices continued on page 1-29 ➤

Market Animal Slide Show

Ann Newhouse uses a slide show to teach students to recognize backfat, rib and loin eye areas, percent muscle and USDA grades on live market animals. Students then check their findings against actual data. The slide show offers a creative tool as a follow-up to the fair, a supplement to an animal science unit or an instrument for preparing students for competition. During the local livestock sale, Newhouse uses a digital camera to capture the side and back views of market animals with their owners. Following slaughter, information, including the students' name, carcass weight, rib and loin eye areas, backfat, muscle score, etc., is written on a small board or on a piece of paper attached to a clipboard. At the same time, a ruler is placed in position to measure the backfat and the length of the rib and loin eyes. This information is held up near the rib/loin eye while a digital image is taken. Another image of the entire carcass showing the external and internal sides is taken. Having students in the various images aids in matching live and carcass shots. Using the digital camera makes it easy to merge and place the sets of carcass and live animal images in order in PowerPoint®. Students observe the "live" images, verbalize their animal evaluations and then check their findings against the actual carcass shots. *Ann Newhouse, Bainville High School, Bainville, Montana (406) 769-2321 or anewhouse@metnet.state.mt.us*

School-based Enterprises

School-based enterprises comprise an integral part of several Polk County agriscience curricula. The funding for resources to start each of these school-based enterprises came from a grant administered through Carl Perkins funds. Students involved in the school-based enterprises are required to keep detailed income and expense records, inventory records and cooperate with advisors in making management decisions. In addition to being a learning experience, the school-based enterprises are good marketing tools for the various local agriculture programs. Here are a few examples:

Kathleen High School has three school-based enterprises: a greenhouse plant production program, an animal science program and an agricultural mechanics program. The greenhouse program grows foliage and landscape plants to sell to the public. The animal science program raises purebred Simmental cattle for student exhibits. The agricultural mechanics program consists of a metal fabrication shop, custom welding and a fabrication operation.

The Bartow Senior and Haines City Senior FFA Chapters have implemented plant rental businesses. Foliage plants and palms are grown in the school greenhouses. They are rented to the public for weddings, banquets and other special occasions.

The Mulberry Senior and Frostproof Senior FFA Chapters raise purebred Herefords for show and sale. Each individ-

ual chapter maintains a herd of purebred cows that are artificially bred to top-quality bulls. The offspring are sold for show projects.

The Lakeland High FFA Chapter operates a pet grooming service as part of their animal science program. Students learn proper grooming techniques. On Fridays, the Naughty Tails Grooming Service is open to the public. Students trim and groom patrons' animals.

At Lake Region High School, the agricultural mechanics program has incorporated mechanical repair into the curriculum. Students have restored an older tractor and performed other mechanical repairs as well.

The Lake Wales FFA Chapter raises greenhouse plants to sell to the public. Members maintain a school citrus grove. The fruit is sold to a nearby juice processor.

David Byrd, Polk County Schools, Polk County, Florida (863) 534-0518 or david.byrd@polk-fl.net

Career Exploration

As a beginning teacher, Doug Raymakers struggled to locate speakers and tours to supplement the local curriculum. To address his need, he piloted an idea, which he adopted from a colleague, on a limited basis the first year. Basically, Raymakers required students in one course to explore a career related to the subject matter. He gave them three options: 1) Invite a guest speaker to class, 2) conduct an on-the-job shadowing experience or 3) interview an employer and create a video presentation. His efforts met with great success. Students formed vital links to agriculturally-related jobs and served as valuable resources. In turn, Raymakers gained numerous contacts for tours and guest speakers.

Doug Raymakers, Bonduel High School, Bonduel, Wisconsin (715) 758-4850 or raymadou@bonduel.k12.wi.us



Work-based
learning
experiences such
as SAEs prepare
students for useful,
interesting and
challenging
careers.

**The following topics are covered in Chapter 2
SAE (Work-based Learning): Providing Hands-on
Experience and Career Exploration**

Benefits of Quality SAEs (Work-based Learning Experiences)

Steps to Success

- 1 Plan comprehensive SAEs.
 - Explore students' interests.
 - SAE types.
- 2 Link SAEs to the curriculum and a career.
 - How to help students apply classroom and lab learning to work-based situations.
 - Base SAEs on instruction and skill development.
 - Making shadowing a part of instruction.
- 3 Let students manage their SAEs.
 - Twelve steps to launching a cooperative.
 - Secure loans for student projects.
- 4 Document the SAE using recordkeeping and analysis.
 - SAE portfolios and career fair.
 - Career passport.
- 5 Take an active role as supervisor of SAEs.
- 6 Recognize students for their SAEs.

Promising Practices of Top Programs

Selected Resources

Action Plan

Worksheets and Other Tools

Promising Practices Update

Chapter 2

SAE (Work-based Learning): Providing Hands-on Experience and Career Exploration

To be successful in tomorrow's workplace and life, students need SAEs: planned, supervised, work-based applications of concepts and skills learned in agricultural education instruction.

Research has shown that participation in SAEs has a positive effect on students and correlates to career maturity. According to Dr. Walter Edling, vice president and chief education specialist at the Center for Occupational Research and Development in Waco, Texas, most people learn best through experience. This may involve personal participation, physical or hands-on activities and opportunities for personal discovery. Edling also says that learning is enhanced when concepts are presented in a context using familiar relationships, and that most people relate better to concrete, tangible examples and experiences as opposed to abstract, conceptual models.

SAEs make learning relevant. Instead of just talking about agriculture or the environment, students learn by conducting experiments, working in a greenhouse or agribusiness or raising animals and plants.

Work-based learning experiences such as SAEs prepare students for useful, interesting and challenging careers. Over the next five years, there will be a five

percent shortage of qualified graduates to enter key food, fiber and natural resources occupations.

SAEs, an integral part of successful agricultural education programs, offer students a competitive advantage.

SAEs or work-based learning experiences can help you:



Motivate students as they see the real-world connections between what they're learning and what they'll be doing when they graduate.



Know your students possess marketable skills that give them a head start for career success.



Reinforce classroom and laboratory lessons while students are at worksites or exploring careers.



Provide students with opportunities to explore and become established in agricultural careers.



Develop valuable links between your program and business, industry and community supporters.



Build your students' financial responsibility and recordkeeping skills.

SAEs are planned, supervised, work-based applications of concepts and skills learned in agricultural education instruction. Students are supervised by agricultural education teachers, in cooperation with parents, employers and other adults, who assist them in developing and achieving their educational and career goals. The National FFA Organization does not select, control or supervise student SAE activities.

SAEs are an integral part of a local program. Successful teachers follow these six steps:

- 1 Plan comprehensive SAEs.
- 2 Link SAEs to the curriculum and a career.
- 3 Let students manage their SAEs.
- 4 Document the SAE by using recordkeeping and analysis.
- 5 Take an active role as supervisor of SAEs.
- 6 Recognize students for their SAEs.



A quality SAE
contains many
experiences that
help students
select a career or
prepare for further
education.



Plan comprehensive SAEs.

To qualify as an SAE a student's program must be:

- ☐ planned and comprehensive
- ☐ curriculum-based
- ☐ student-managed
- ☐ documented
- ☐ recognized by peers, teachers, parents and/or employers at the chapter level and above and through public and school media.

To build comprehensive SAEs that help students select a career, secure employment or prepare for further education:

- ☐ Survey local agribusiness and production personnel to gain a knowledge of what SAE opportunities are available and skills students need to succeed in the workplace. The SCANS Report already provides a preview of skills supervisors and employees say are needed.



- ☐ Help students design SAEs that address skills needed in the workplace. Use the examples below to brainstorm possible SAE options that match student backgrounds and interests. See your guidance counselor for interest inventories to use with students.

- ☐ A quality SAE contains a variety of experiences. Use the *Work-based Learning SAE Rating Sheet* to provide a clear definition of what constitutes a quality work-based experience.



Explore Students' Interests

Students at **Wayne County Schools Career Center, Smithville, Ohio**, follow these steps in exploring their career interests:



- Prepare a report on their career choice, including salaries and educational requirements.
- Interview the management and employees of an agricultural business and report on the types of decisions they make.
- Observe or assist someone who works in the agricultural industry for a day.

Continued on page 2-3 ➤

Types of SAEs

Exploratory

Students broaden and then clarify their interests in agriculture and the environment through carefully planned experiences. Exploratory SAEs are a foundation for research, ownership and placement SAEs.

- Assist on a farm for a day
- Shadow a veterinarian
- Observe a florist
- Interview a seed salesperson
- Tour a fish hatchery

Research/Experimentation and Analysis

Students conduct carefully planned, curriculum-based and long-term investigations of applied or basic areas related to agricultural and environmental science.

- Water pollution remediation
- Fertilizer loss based on application methods
- Feed nutrient retention
- Media for tissue culture

Ownership/Entrepreneurship

Students create and/or own agricultural businesses to meet unique market needs.

- Raise ornamental fish
- Own and operate a lawncare service

- Grow and sell poinsettias
- Operate a roadside fruit stand
- Raise swine
- Own and operate a tree farm
- Run a pay-to-fish operation
- Grow and sell vegetables
- Grow apples and make jam from fruit
- Grow an acre of corn
- Raise dairy heifers
- Operate a custom combining service

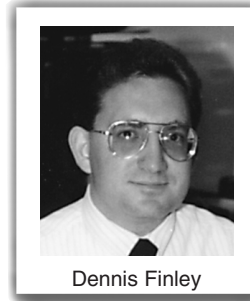
Placement

Students work for others or in a common setting to develop career skills in agricultural or environmental areas, and does not require earning a wage.

- Sell farm supplies
- Work as a riding stable attendant
- Work as a floral designer
- Secure an apprenticeship with a landscaper
- Work as an apprentice to a biotechnology technician
- Propagate plants for a nursery
- Work on a farm (crop or livestock)
- Work in a fish hatchery
- Work at a farm supply store
- Form an internship arrangement with a local business or farm

- Write to a college or university for information about courses offered in agriculture.
- Collect magazine and newspaper articles on opportunities in a specific career area of interest.
- Use the Internet to research up-to-date information on careers. Go to

ffa.org at
<http://www.ffa.org> and click on "careers" for more information.
Dennis Finley,
(301) 669-2134



*SAEs not only
provide hands-on
experience for
students, but also
contribute to
success in career
pathways.*

Learning Activities That Can Lead to SAEs

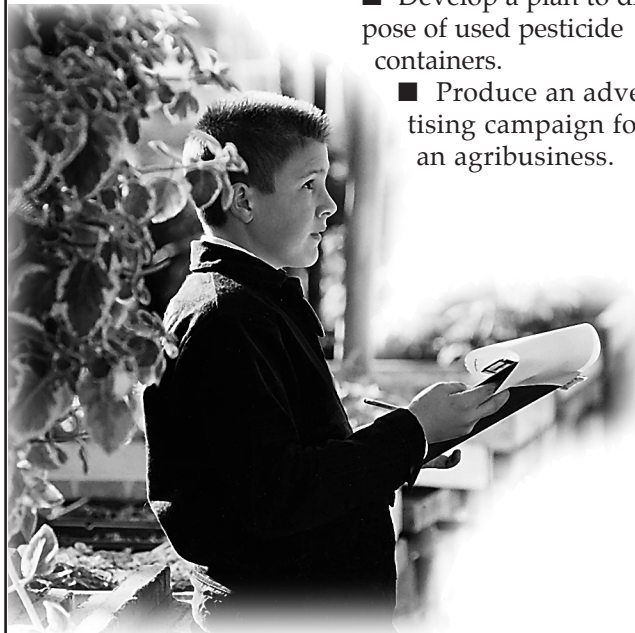
The following activities can help students decide what type of SAEs they would like to pursue.

While any one of these activities is not an SAE, a combination of the activities can add up to one if they are planned, supervised, work-based applications of concepts and skills learned in the classroom or laboratory.

Science-based Activities

Students plan and conduct agricultural experiments in biotechnology, agriscience and other courses.

- Determine the impact of protein levels and fish growth.
- Analyze display method effectiveness on garden center plant sales.



- Determine weld strength using different welding methods.
- Grow plants in a milk jug "greenhouse."

Community Study

- Interview a veterinarian about animal health careers.
- Visit with a local grocery store manager about retail food careers.
- Volunteer for community-based activities.

Communication Study

- Students gather and evaluate data, and produce a finished product or plan.
- Develop a marketing plan for an agricultural commodity.
- Write a series of newspaper articles.
- Design a landscape plan for a community center.
- Develop a plan to dispose of used pesticide containers.
- Produce an advertising campaign for an agribusiness.

Orientation Study

Students explore agricultural careers by observing or working with professionals for a few hours or a day.

- Prepare a scrapbook on the work of a veterinarian.
- Attend an agricultural career day at the university.
- Prepare a research report on food science careers.

Supplementary

Students improve the performance of a specific skill taught in an instructional unit.

- Prune a fruit tree.
- Ball and burlap a tree.
- Help a neighbor dehorn cattle.
- Cut firewood with a chain saw.
- Stake tomatoes.

Improvement

Students improve the value or appearance of the place of employment, home, school or community, the efficiency of a business or family living conditions.

- Landscape a home yard.
 - Monitor water pollution and clean-up process.
 - Remodel and paint a room.
 - Overhaul a piece of equipment.
 - Renovate and restock a pond.
 - Computerize records for an agribusiness.
- (Adapted from North Carolina State University SAE Record Book)*

*These activities can
help students select
and create the type
of SAE they would
like to pursue or help
them gain valuable
career skills.*

SAEs provide an
easy way to
prepare students
for the workplace
and let them apply
what they learn in
the classroom.



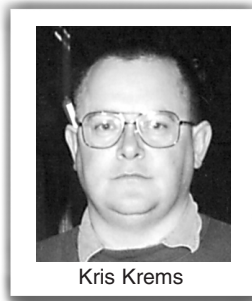
Link SAEs to the curriculum and a career.

Here's how to help students apply classroom learning to work-based situations:

- ❑ Create classroom activities and teach skills that help prepare students for the workplace. For example: Have floriculture students prepare and design bouquets and work with customers.
- ❑ Build worksite responsibilities and activities into what's taught in the classroom or laboratory. For example: Have students keep records of SAE activities and require employers, students and the school officials to sign a program agreement, with goals and evaluation criteria, which acts as a contract.
- ❑ Have worksite mentors return an assessment form each quarter, evaluating students' performance and offering suggestions for improvement. Use this assessment as part of the grade.

Base SAEs on Instruction and Skill Development

The summer before **Cuyahoga Valley Career Center, Ohio**, students enroll in Kris Krems' horticulture classes, he determines what type of careers interest them. After a year of exploratory lab-based SAEs where students



Kris Krems

learn the basics of landscaping, greenhouse work and floral design, they are placed at a worksite.

Results: All students complete a formal training plan and program

agreement to ensure that their SAE is a broad-based, multi-purpose educational experiences. The *SAE Handbook* provides a thorough overview of how to establish SAEs.

Kris Krems, (216) 526-5200



Shadowing Allows Exploration of Career Pathways

Central Woodstock High School, Va., natural resources students spend a day with a professionals working in that field, observing all that they do.

Students ask employees they shadow: What do you like and dislike about the job? What are typical starting salaries? What kind of skills do you need to perform your job? What responsibilities do you have?

Back in the classroom, students write a report and give an oral presentation. They are then encouraged to establish an SAE based on their career interests explored through shadowing.

Results: Students learn what type of careers they are interested in before they commit time and money to post-secondary education. Shadowing allows students to immediately see the connections between the classroom and the work world.

Sherry Heishman and George Bowers, (540) 459-3806



Sherry Heishman



George Bowers

Make Shadowing a Part of Orientation to the Workplace

While it's not an SAE, shadowing is an excellent way to help students discover what type of SAE would interest them.

- Have students make a list of everyone, including entrepreneurs, they could shadow as a class assignment, including community entrepreneurs.

Continued on page 2-5 >

Shadowing continued from page 2-4

■ Explain the goals and benefits of shadowing to your school administration and request permission. Propose a specific date for release from school.

■ Have students write a letter to business people they would like to shadow. Design a sheet that explains shadowing goals. Propose a mutually convenient date and include in the letter.

■ Once enough professionals have agreed to let students shadow, ask if they mind having photos taken of them and students at work.

■ Contact your local newspapers ahead of the event, explaining that “shadowing” would be of interest to readers because it provides an example of how the school is preparing quality employees for the community. Have students interested in communications, the chapter reporter or a public relations committee member take photos and write articles.

Let students manage their SAEs.

To function in today’s workplace, students must learn to apply curriculum-based skills in real-world settings.



Empower students to get needed resources, to ask for assistance—such as from a work mentor—and to learn to work independently.

School-based cooperatives can provide opportunities for students to conduct relevant and meaningful student-managed SAEs. They can provide experience for all students and may be especially appropriate for members with barriers to SAE (such as urban students and those with disabilities).

Twelve Steps to Launching A Cooperative SAE

1. Hold an exploratory meeting.
2. Conduct a community needs assessment. Determine what will sell in the community and make sure the program does not compete with other local businesses.
3. Select a steering committee.
4. Analyze markets and costs.
5. Determine financial needs and methods of financing.
6. Set goals and develop a business plan.
7. Draw up legal papers and articles of incorporation.
8. Hold a meeting of charter members to adopt articles of incorporation and bylaws.
9. Elect a board of directors.
10. Elect officers.
11. Hold a membership drive and issue certificates.
12. Implement the business plan.

For a complete guide to cooperative SAEs, call the National FFA Teacher Services Team, (703) 360-3600, ext. 254.

Secure Collateral for Student Projects

Teacher Dale Glazier, **Thomas, Okla.**, secured reduced interest loans through a local bank for students. Members start with a credit limit of \$1,500. “After proving themselves, some students have \$30,000 to \$40,000 loans with the bank,” he says. “We tell students the only limiting factor when they’re starting a project is their imagination.”

Results: Ninety percent of agriculture students have SAEs, ranging from beef to rodent production.

Dale Glazier and Jim Maddox, (405) 661-3200

SAEs help students

function in today's

workplace and make

independent decisions

based on problem-

solving skills learned

through placement,

entrepreneurship and

cooperative

work-based learning.

SAE Cooperative Examples

- Fruit sales (and other fund-raisers)
- Bedding plant retail sales
- Broiler production
- Finishing feeder pigs
- Aquaculture production (tropical fish for pets or fish for food)
- Bait shop
- Lawn care or landscaping service
- Firewood
- Small animal care
- Maple syrup production
- Tree nursery
- Greenhouse operation
- Soil testing
- Crop scouting
- Farm and home supplies



Step 4

Document the SAE by using recordkeeping and analysis.

Recordkeeping is key to well-documented SAEs, which teach students to evaluate practices and identify alternatives based on their records. The information students gather—such as work samples, assignments, grades and SAE evaluations—can be used to update their portfolios and to market their skills for post-high school education and careers. The Agricultural Proficiency Award application is an excellent format for student portfolios. Order the Decisions and Dollars instructional material to provide guidance in documenting SAEs.



SAE Portfolios and Career Fair

Demonstrating career competency is a priority for students at **Riverside High School, Durham, N.C.** Former teacher **James McLamb** required students to maintain portfolios on all



James McLamb

SAE records, including photos of events they attend, awards they win and competitions they enter. Students provide narratives of the SAE or classroom activities that relate to their project area.

Results: Portfolios provide an excellent example of student work. Students use them to showcase learning in agriculture at an SAE fair and possibly later in employment interviews.

James McLamb, (919) 677-9440

Career Passport

Students at **Miami Valley Career Technology Center, Clayton, Ohio**, fill out an SAE agreement letter, outlining their goals. They keep daily SAE work journals and have worksite mentors fill out evaluation forms each quarter. Students assemble these forms, along with the descriptions of skills learned and work experiences gained, into a Career Passport—a portfolio of performance information which can be used as a tool in seeking post-high school education or employment. You can even use proficiency award applications—which require a resume and recommendations—as part of students' portfolios.

Results: Students possess a ready-made tool to market to prospective employers or college recruiters.

Tom Vranesic, (937) 837-7781



Step 5

Take an active role as supervisor of SAEs.

SAE activities are controlled, supervised and evaluated by agriculture instructors, employers, parents and others involved with the experiences. The National FFA Organization does not select, control or supervise student SAE activities. Teacher involvement is key to SAE quality and student success.

☐ Provide year-round, worksite SAE instruction for students.

- Visit each student individually at his or her SAE site.
- If individual visits are not possible for each student, consider these alternatives:



- cooperative group SAE instruction
- small group instruction and supervision for students with related SAEs
- use of paraprofessionals and workplace mentors trained by the agriculture teacher

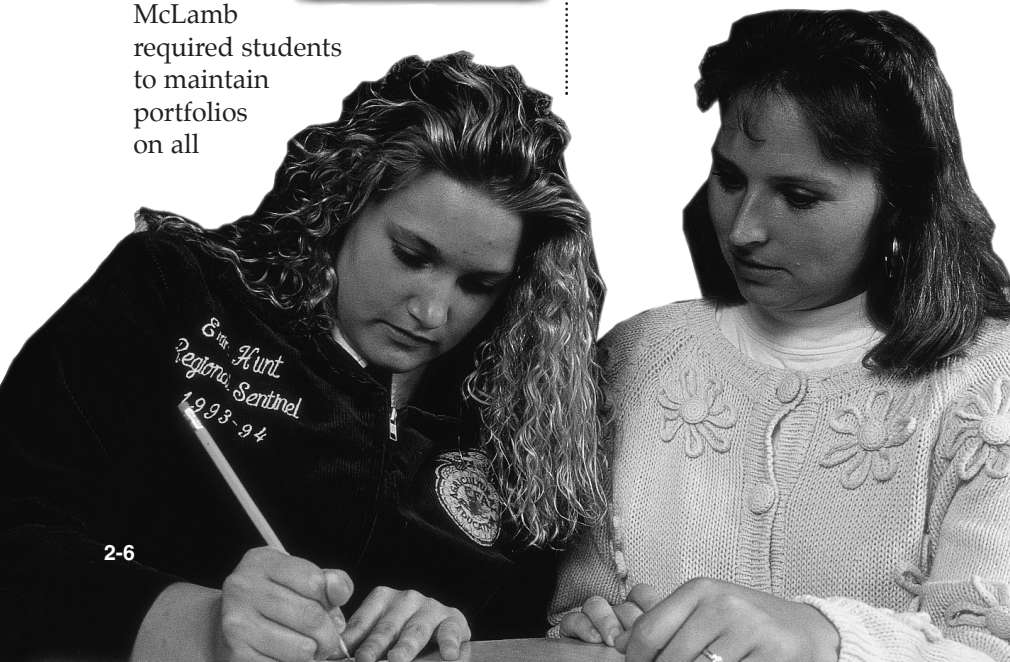
(These alternatives should not be used to eliminate extended contracts for agriculture instructors or support for SAE teacher supervision.)

- Visit students with SAE problems promptly and frequently.
- Discuss students' progress with parents/guardians and/or employers.
- Between personal worksite visits, phone employers and students while they are on the job to check on progress.

☐ Keep SAE visit records.

☐ Have the local advisory committee help plan and supervise SAEs.

☐ Inform state supervisory staff and teacher educators of progress and ask for assistance when needed.





Recognize students for their SAEs.

Find ways to reward quality SAEs. Encouraging students to apply for recognition above the chapter level and publicizing results in the media are great motivators for increased achievement. Without SAEs, many students may be denied valuable learning experiences available through FFA recognition programs.

Let students know early on about the National FFA Agricultural Proficiency Award Programs as well as chapter, state and American FFA Degrees and the Star Farmer and Star in Agribusiness Awards. Use these awards as a way to motivate and reward members for high-quality SAE work. Base student recognition on skills learned, application of classroom and individual instruction and record books.

Promote student SAEs to key partners with these steps:

- Invite partners to come along on tours, or teaching visits, to observe SAEs.
- Feature SAEs at the annual banquet or other public events such as the school board meeting. Invite

employers, parents, school officials, students and other partners to participate.

- Prepare monthly SAE visit reports, complete with photographs, for administrators and board members to review.
- Be sure partners receive copies of SAE articles published in the local newspaper.
- Invite administrators or school counselors to attend classes or labs, especially when students are working on aspects of SAEs such as career research or record books.

Create Innovative Award Programs

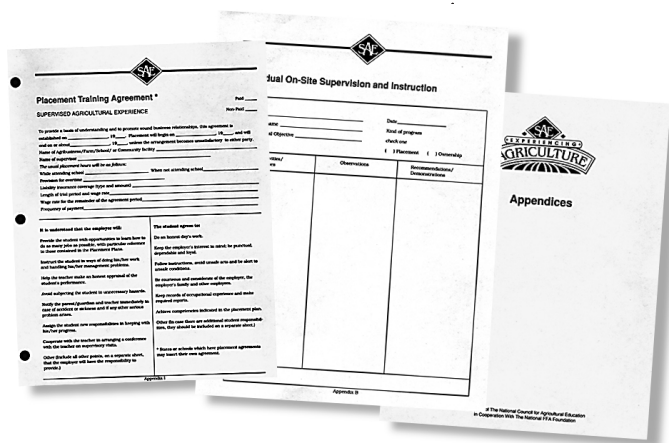
Schuyler Central, Neb., students who average 80 percent or better on their record book for three months qualify for a steak dinner and travel on an SAE tour. Besides having proud parents and other students recognize their efforts, "we also publicize the event in the local paper," says teacher Tom Wheeldon.



Tom Wheeldon

Results: Eighty-five percent of students have SAEs and three-fourths make the grade for the SAE tour.

Tom Wheeldon, (402) 352-5838



The SAE Handbook is your guide for planning and carrying out successful SAEs. It includes templates to help establish and manage student SAEs.



Below are ideas from teachers across the nation that will help you develop a successful SAE program.

Plan comprehensive SAEs:

- Network for new contacts by distributing business cards to area organizations and companies you buy from and let them know your students are available for job placement.
- Schedule summer visits by sending a letter ahead with these details:
 - A schedule listing the days you plan to evaluate each student's program.
 - A request for students to call you as soon as possible if they will not be home on the date you have chosen to visit. Send a response card two weeks prior to the appointment as a reminder.
 - A request that students have their record books filled out and available when you visit.
- Have students write a letter to themselves at the beginning of the year, defining SAE goals they hope to achieve by school's end or graduation. Give the letters back to them at the end of the year so they can evaluate their progress.

Link SAEs to the curriculum and a career:

- Give classroom grades based partially on completion of record books.
- Use FFA activities to assess the performance of work-based skills.
- Conduct shadowing or exploratory SAEs as a part of key courses.

Let students manage their SAEs:

- Offer financial and mentoring resources to encourage research and imagination when students are designing their SAEs.

Continued on page 2-8 ➤



■ Invite business people and former members who credit recordkeeping or SAEs with their career success to speak to students during class or FFA meetings or to serve as mentors.

Document the SAE by using recordkeeping and analysis:

■ Require students to submit a daily journal as a part of the grade, describing what they learned. Place these logs in their portfolios.



Take an active role as supervisor of SAEs:

■ Provide administration a calendar of scheduled supervisory activities. Report regularly on your progress.



■ Schedule classroom time and in-school conferences to teach students skills they need for successful SAEs and to plan and supervise them. Use information gained on worksite visits during classroom instruction.

Recognize students for their SAEs:

■ Join the local chamber of commerce. Have your students attend meetings and present their SAEs.

■ Use FFA achievement award certificates (as featured in the *FFA Official Chapter Catalog*). Have students set a goal, and if they achieve it, present them with a certificate.

■ Highlight an "SAE of the Week" on your classroom bulletin board, in school announcements, to the local paper and radio station. Take pictures and have students write a brief summary on the career field they're interested in, how they got started and skills learned.

■ Hold an SAE/career fair where students highlight the career pathways they are interested in and demonstrate to parents, administration and other students what they learn through SAE activities.

■ Consider record book accuracy and completeness when selecting students for awards and degrees to motivate them to complete their records.



The following are key resources needed to build quality work-based learning opportunities or SAEs.

A large variety of FFA posters, brochures, videos and recruitment materials are available in the "Educational Resources" section of the *FFA Official Chapter Catalog*, which is produced annually.

- Achievement Certificate (FFA)
- Agriculture's New Professionals video (FFA)
- Agriculture: An Industry Too Big To Ignore brochure (FFA)
- Agri-Entrepreneurship recognition materials (National Council for Agricultural Education—The Council)
- Chronicle of Agricultural Occupations Guidebook (FFA)
- Decisions & Dollars instructional materials (The Council)
- Guide to Cooperative SAEs (Call the National FFA Teacher Services Team, (703) 360-3600, ext. 254)
- Leadership: Personal Development and Career Success (By Cliff Ricketts, Delmar, 1997)
- Open Door career booklet (FFA)
- Proficiency Award Handbook (FFA)
- SAE Handbook (FFA)
- SAE, It's More Than You Think video (FFA)
- SAE Record Book (North Carolina State University, call Dr. James Flowers, (919) 515-1758)
- Think About It brochure (FFA)

Use the following worksheets for building quality work-based learning opportunities or SAEs:

- Work-based Learning/SAE Action Plan, 2-10.
- Work-based Learning SAE Rating Sheet, 2-12.
- SAE Program Agreement Form, 2-14.
- SAE Visitation Form, 2-15.

- Student Journal Worksheet, 2-16.
- Worksite Survey Form, 2-17.
- SAE Supervision Report, 2-19.
- Supervised Agricultural Experience Documentation Form, 2-20.
- On Site Instruction and SAE Evaluation Form, 2-21.
- SAE Contact Report, 2-22.



- How will you apply it to your program?
- What are your goals?

My Notes:

[illegible]

Chapter 2—SAE (Work-based Learning): Providing Hands-on Experience and Career Exploration

1. Plan comprehensive SAEs.
 - ❑ Help students design SAEs that involve skills needed by local agribusiness personnel.
 - ❑ Use the SAE rating sheet to assess what constitutes a quality work-based experience.
2. Link SAEs to the curriculum and a career.
 - ❑ Design in-school experiences that involve workplace skills to help students think on their own.
 - ❑ Have employers, students and school officials sign a training/educational agreement.
 - ❑ Have worksite assessments submitted quarterly.
 - ❑ Make shadowing a part of instruction.
3. Let students manage their SAEs.
 - ❑ Encourage students to launch cooperative SAEs.
 - ❑ Develop a program with bank officials to assist students in securing funds for SAEs.
4. Document the SAE by using recordkeeping and analysis.
 - ❑ Require students to keep SAE portfolios.
5. Take an active role as supervisor of SAEs.
6. Recognize students for their SAEs.



Name: _____ Phone: _____ Program/State: _____

Work-based Learning/SAE Action Plan



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

Teachers: Give this form to students to encourage them to explore SAEs and to guide them in career exploration.

1. “What’s Relevant For Me?” (SAEs provide these MAJOR benefits):

- contacts with potential future employers.
- hands-on work experience that can give you an edge in gaining top jobs.
- a better understanding of where you want to go with your career and how to accomplish your goals.
- self-confidence that comes from developing valuable skills.

2. “What’s Possible?” (Three types of SAE areas where you can receive FFA recognition):

Placement Examples

- Work for a:
- fish hatchery
 - greenhouse
 - farm supply store

Ownership/Entrepreneurship Examples

- Start a:
- recreational business
 - livestock production enterprise
 - agricultural processing business

Research/Experimentation and Analysis

- Conduct a:
- comparison of the shelf life of fresh food products
 - comparison of rooting hormone treatments
 - demonstration of the effect of soil acidity on plant growth

SAE ideas you would be interested in:

3. “Explore Your Interests” (Complete your personal mission statement.)

In 20 years:

- I want to be living in what geographic location: _____
(City, State)
- I want to have an annual income of:
 - \$15,000 to 25,000 _____
 - \$26,000 to 35,000 _____
 - \$36,000 to 45,000 _____
 - \$45,000 or more _____

continued...

- I want a family consisting of: _____

- I want people to see me as: (Explain your image, personality, priorities.)

Right now:

- If I could do anything I wanted and get paid for it, I would:

- The five things I enjoy doing most are:

- If someone told me I could only work for one year, I would:

- Given the choice, this is why I would like to work for myself:

- Given the choice, this is why I'd rather work for someone else:

4. "Complete the SAE Connection"

- Review your answers to these questions.
- Survey the *Chronicle of Agricultural Occupations Guidebook*, library resources, professional magazines, university extension service and the Internet for more details on agricultural careers.
- Make a list of the agricultural careers that closely match your interests.
- Visit a local agribusiness that relates to what you're interested in once you have a list of potential careers and SAEs.

Source: *FFA Advisors Making A Difference*, October 1996 issue, p. 16

Work-based Learning SAE Rating Sheet

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

Teachers: Use this form to evaluate the progress of student SAE and skill development.

Defining SAE Quality

The five factors that define a quality supervised agricultural experience (SAE) program are listed below. There are three levels of quality in each of the five factors. Using the narrative descriptions you can assess the quality of a student's SAE. To be considered in one of the three levels (initial, commendable or superior) a student's SAE must achieve that level's entire narrative description.

1. The SAE is planned and comprehensive.

<u>Initial</u>	Student experiences a limited range of activities; focuses on limited skills; sets short-term goals. SAE is teacher-driven and planned.
<u>Commendable</u>	Student experiences skills which meet curricular expectations; accomplishes short-term goals; uses both managed and independent activities.
<u>Superior</u>	Student experiences a wide range of skills which exceeds curricular expectations; accomplishes previous goals and sets new long-term ones; works independently.

2. The SAE is linked to curriculum and a career.

<u>Initial</u>	<u>Information (knowledge):</u> Student uses knowledge gained from instruction in planning SAE; marginal portions of curriculum are included in the SAE.
<u>Commendable</u>	<u>Skill and Application:</u> Student uses curriculum skills in carrying out SAE; student can apply information and skills in varied situations, major portions of the curriculum included in the SAE.
<u>Superior</u>	<u>Integration and Synthesis:</u> Student uses agricultural and academic principles to arrive at end products; assesses new situations and selects appropriate knowledge and skills from curriculum. The entire curriculum is included in the SAE.

3. The SAE is student managed.

<u>Initial</u>	Student applies a limited number of classroom learned skills in real-world settings with direct assistance; student does not control decisions.
<u>Commendable</u>	Student applies an increased number of skills learned in the classroom in real-world settings with little direct assistance; student may control some decisions.
<u>Superior</u>	Student applies classroom learned skills in real-world settings with self-initiated assistance; initiates and controls decisions.

4. The SAE is documented by using recordkeeping and analysis.

<u>Initial</u>	Student begins a record system and keeps appropriate records in a timely fashion with assistance; begins résumé.
<u>Commendable</u>	Student maintains accurate records with some assistance; understands and summarizes records; updates résumé.
<u>Superior</u>	Student analyzes records, evaluates practices and identifies alternatives based on his/her records with little assistance; updates résumé.

continued...

5. Student receives recognition for SAE.

<u>Initial</u>	Student receives peer and teacher, parent and/or employer recognition for SAE accomplishments.
<u>Commendable</u>	Student receives certificates and local membership degrees and receives public and school media recognition.
<u>Superior</u>	Student receives recognition based on SAE above the chapter level and is recognized through public media.

SAE Rating Sheet		Student Name: _____		
Quality Indicator	Initial	Commendable	Superior	
<input type="checkbox"/> SAE is planned and comprehensive.	_____	_____	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> SAE is linked to curriculum and a career.	_____	_____	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> SAE is student managed.	_____	_____	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> SAE is documented by using recordkeeping and analysis.	_____	_____	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Student receives recognition.	_____	_____	_____	

Source: Local Program Success SAE Work Group

SAE Program Agreement Form



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

Teachers: Have all parties involved with each student's SAE program sign the following agreement to help them understand exactly what has been planned.

The SAE program is an integral part of the total agricultural education program. The purpose of the SAE is to provide real-world experiences to help the student select a career, secure employment or prepare for further education. A quality SAE program contains a variety of experiences.

This agreement shall be in effect for the _____ school year.

The student's SAE program will consist of: (List all the activities in which the student will be involved. Be specific. **Examples:** Shadow a local business leader for a day, develop a marketing plan for an agricultural commodity, observe and/or assist a florist, cut firewood with a chain saw, raise a 20' by 20' garden, work 20 hours a week at Johnson's supply store, landscape the home lawn.)

The materials and resources for each of the SAE activities will be provided by: (List who will provide the materials and resources required for each activity.)

For activities in which a profit (or loss) might occur, describe who will receive the gain (or loss) or how it will be divided:

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Student: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Other people who might be involved: _____

Agriculture Teacher: _____

SAE Visitation Form

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

Teachers: Fill out this form when you visit students' SAEs to keep track of their progress.

DATE OF VISIT: _____

TIME OF VISIT: _____

STUDENT'S NAME: _____

WORKSITE: _____

SUPERVISOR: _____

SUMMARY OF SITE VISITATION

COMMENTS BY STUDENT: (if applicable)

TEACHER COMMENTS: (Describe how students' activities relate to instruction.)

RECOMMENDATIONS/NEXT STEPS:

Student's Signature

Date

Teacher's Signature

Date

Student Journal Worksheet

Class Period:_____ **Student:**_____

Instructions:

Summarize your SAE activities and accomplishments each day. Be sure to use correct spelling and punctuation in your summaries and date each entry. This is an important activity, as you will be graded on your journal at the end of the semester.

Monday:

Tuesday:

Wednesday:

Thursday:

Friday:

Saturday:

Sunday:

Worksite Survey Form



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

Company _____ Representative _____

Individual Conducting Interview _____

Date of Interview _____ Telephone _____

Teachers: Give this form to business and industry personnel to determine their needs and support for your program.

Business and industry personnel: We are conducting a survey to evaluate the types of skills employers are seeking and gain commitment for work-based learning sites or shadowing experiences. On a scale from one to five, please rate the following with one being unimportant and five being very important. Please also circle the most important skill in each area.

I. BASIC SKILLS

1. Reading	1	2	3	4	5
2. Writing	1	2	3	4	5
3. Arithmetic	1	2	3	4	5
4. Speaking	1	2	3	4	5
5. Listening	1	2	3	4	5

II. THINKING SKILLS

1. Creative Thinking	1	2	3	4	5
2. Decision Making	1	2	3	4	5
3. Problem Solving	1	2	3	4	5
4. Knowing How to Learn	1	2	3	4	5

III. PERSONAL QUALITIES

1. Responsible	1	2	3	4	5
2. Social Skills	1	2	3	4	5
3. Self Management	1	2	3	4	5
4. Integrity and Honesty	1	2	3	4	5

IV. RESOURCES

1. Manages Time	1	2	3	4	5
2. Manages Money	1	2	3	4	5
3. Manages Materials and Facilities	1	2	3	4	5
4. Manages Human Resources	1	2	3	4	5

V. SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Understands Systems	1	2	3	4	5
2. Uses Technology	1	2	3	4	5

VI. INFORMATION SKILLS

1. Acquires and Evaluates Information	1	2	3	4	5
2. Organizes and Maintains Information	1	2	3	4	5
3. Interprets and Communicates Information	1	2	3	4	5

VII. INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

1. Participates as a Team Member	1	2	3	4	5
2. Teaches Others	1	2	3	4	5
3. Services Clients/Customers	1	2	3	4	5
4. Exercises Leadership	1	2	3	4	5
5. Works with Cultural Diversity	1	2	3	4	5

What do you feel are the two most important qualities to be successful in the world of work?

What classes in school do you feel would help a student make a successful transition into an entry level position in your company?

Do you possess any special skills or knowledge related to the food, fiber and natural resources systems?

Would you be willing to share your special skills or knowledge with students as they work on school projects?

Would you be willing to serve as a mentor for students enrolled in our agriculture program?

Yes, I would be interested in supporting my local agricultural education department.
(Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guest Classroom Speaker | <input type="checkbox"/> Competition Coach/Judge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tour Guide of Business Site | <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Student Mentor | <input type="checkbox"/> FFA Advertisement/Project Sponsor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chaperone of Field Trips | <input type="checkbox"/> Experiments/Small Projects Consultant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Site for SAE/Career Intern | <input type="checkbox"/> Advisory Committee Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Site for Shadowing Experiences | |

Are you currently an FFA Alumni member? Yes ____ No ____

If "No," would you be interested in receiving information on membership? Yes ____ No ____

Source: Dennis Finley, agriculture teacher, Clayton, Ohio

SAE Supervision Report

Teachers: Fill out this report regularly and give to administrators to inform them about your program and supervisory work on SAEs.

Submitted by: _____
(Name)

Report for _____ **to** _____
(Date) (Date)

Introduction: Supervised agricultural experience is the part of the agricultural education program where students gain practical, "hands-on" experience. Each student enrolled in agriculture sets occupational goals. Instruction in school teaches knowledge and skills related to these goals. SAE involves students in planned work situations so that what they learn in the classroom has more meaning. Students keep careful records of what they do.

All students have certain basic experiences. These relate to leadership and personal development. Projects that improve the home and community are also included.

The SAE programs of students are in two broad groups: placement/directed laboratory and entrepreneurship. Placement programs involve students in employment in agribusiness or on farms. The student may be paid a wage. Directed laboratory experiences occur in school facilities after regular class time. Entrepreneurship programs involve students owning livestock, crops or other enterprises.

Basic experiences of students/members

Number of students in high school _____

Number of students enrolled in agriculture _____

Number of FFA members _____

Number of agriculture students on committees _____

Number of agriculture students holding offices:

Local _____
County _____
District _____
State _____

Source: SAE Handbook



Number of agriculture students participating in leadership activities:

Public speaking _____
Parliamentary procedure _____
Other _____

Number of agriculture students participating in FFA activities for awards:

Agricultural proficiency awards _____
Livestock judging events _____
Agricultural mechanics events _____
Parliamentary procedure events _____
Showing livestock _____
Other _____

Number of agriculture students participating in school/community activities other than FFA _____

Number of agriculture students with improvement activities _____

Number of improvement activities completed _____

FFA degree advancements:

Greenhand Degree members _____
Chapter Degree members _____
State Degree members _____
American Degree members _____

Placement experience of students/members

Number of agriculture students placed _____

Placement stations:

Farm machinery dealerships or repair shops _____
Agribusinesses _____
Farms _____
Total number of different students _____

Number of hours worked in placement by agriculture students _____

Income to students from placement _____



SAE Resource

Supervised Agricultural Experience Documentation Form



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

Teachers: Have your students fill out this form showing the skills that they have learned through their SAEs.

Time Invested In Skill			Documentation of Experience		
Item	In Class Hours	Out of Class Hours	List skill or task performed	Instructor's Initial/ Completion Date	Points
1. _____					
2. _____					
3. _____					
4. _____					
5. _____					
6. _____					
7. _____					
8. _____					
9. _____					
10. _____					
11. _____					
12. _____					
13. _____					
14. _____					
15. _____					
16. _____					
17. _____					
18. _____					
19. _____					
20. _____					
21. _____					
22. _____					
23. _____					
24. _____					
25. _____					
26. _____					
27. _____					
28. _____					
Grand Total Hours and Points =					

On Site Instruction and SAE Evaluation Form

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

Teachers: Use this form to evaluate student SAEs during site visits. Provide copies to the student and parent or guardian.

Date: _____

Student's name: _____

Student Site of SAE Visit ☐ Home ☐ School ☐ Lab ☐ Ag. Bus. Worksite ☐ Other

SAE Description: _____ Site Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____ Phone: _____

Evaluation	Area		Poor		Fair		Good	
	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	5 Points			
SAE Record Books	Not Available	Available / Not Started	Available/ Started	Available and Up to Date with Questions	Available/ Up to Date with Documentation		3	
General Record Book	Not Available	Available / Not Started	Available/ Started	Available and Up to Date with Questions	Available/ Up to Date with Documentation		2	
Home and Community Improvement	Not Available	Available / Not Started	Available/ Started	Available and Up to Date with Questions	Available/ Up to Date with Documentation		1	
Student Evaluation of SAE Assessment Form	Not Available	Not Completed Prior to On Site Instruction	Completed with Assistance	Completed and Reasonable	Completed and Justifiable		1	
Agricultural Experience Observation	No Student Work Observed/No Decision Making	Little Student Work Observed/No Decision Making	Student Work is Evident with Some Student Responsibility	Student Work Shows Evidence of Consistent Effort and Responsibility	Student Work Shows Evidence of Consistent Effort, Responsibility, and Decision Making		3	
					TOTAL			

Additional Comments:

Teacher: _____ (Signature) Parent/Guardian/Student: _____ (Signature)

Source: Kit Hamilton and Harold Niehaus, agriculture teachers, Preble Shawnee High School, Camden, Ohio

SAE Contact Report

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

Teachers: Use this form to track SAE visits and report to your administration. Provide copies to your superintendent and principal.

Date: _____

Contact Performed*	Contact Means **	Time in Hours	Related Career Cluster	Mileage Used	Instruction, Task or Event Completed
<i>Calculated Totals</i>					

Report Key

***Contact Performed:**

S = Student P = Parent I = Industry E = Educational

****Contact Means:**

P = Phone H = Home S = School Lab A = Ag. Bus. Worksite O = Other

Source: Kit Hamilton and Harold Niehaus, agriculture teachers, Preble Shawnee High School, Camden, Ohio



Promising Practices

Below are ideas from teachers across the nation that will help you develop a successful SAE program.

Student SAE Exhibitions

All Montague agriscience students develop an SAE exhibition and essay as part of their semester finals instead of taking traditional tests. Students are graded on content, presentation, time, visuals used and their answers to instructor questions. Students generally give a five to 10 minute presentation using PowerPoint® or a video that covers their required community service, résumé, skills learned, SAE experience and future career plans. John Schut says students in his classes tend to be more adept and comfortable in using computers and are able to present information in a more useful manner than other high school students.

John Schut, Montague High School, Montague, Michigan, (616) 894-2661, ext. 228 or jschut@remc4.k12.mi.us

Non-traditional SAE Ideas

One option for urban students without the resources, space and time for traditional SAEs is to volunteer at local humane societies or animal shelters. Typically, juniors or seniors with an interest in small animal/pre-veterinarian science opt for these experiences as a part of their occupational program; however, younger students are not excluded. Kimberly Bellah suggests a contract be created to ensure that students receive the best learning experience. Students may clean kennels, pet animals and work with potential pet adopters among other tasks. As a result, they begin to learn about animal regulations and have an increased awareness of responsible pet ownership.

Kimberly Bellah, California Polytechnic State University—San Luis Obispo, California, (805) 756-6106 or kpauley@calpoly.edu

Work Site Field Trips

When James Woodard taught at Jeff Davis High School in Hazlehurst, Ga., students in his agricultural internship class organized field trips to their respective work sites for their peers. Students completed the necessary paperwork at the beginning of the semester, scheduled a trip every Friday, guided the work site tour and arranged for the business owner or spokesperson to speak to the group. Students were required to complete a proficiency award application that served as a term paper on their experience. Woodard says company officials were impressed because students came to the tours dressed in business attire. This move also helped develop pride within the class, he says.

James Woodard, Georgia Department of Education, (912) 386-3428 or jwoodard@doe.k12.ga.us

Electronic Record Book

As part of studying SAEs, first year or ninth grade agriculture students at Montello develop a computerized SAE record book. They produce a hard copy draft of a budget and records for their interest area that corresponds to the FFA proficiency application. Next, they create a computerized version on the school's network or use the national proficiency computer software in the agriculture classroom. Brian Hendrickson says using computers makes keeping records more appealing to students. The practice does several things: 1) helps students fulfill a school-to-work requirement to keep records, 2) teaches them about computers, and 3) provides them with an incentive because they learn how successful FFA members used records to compete nationally.

Brian Hendrickson, Montello High School, Montello, Wisconsin, (608) 297-2126 or hendrickson_b@hotmail.com

Student Cooperative

Concordia agriscience students manage a cooperative for fruit and gift boxes of 23 items, mostly produced in north central Kansas. Students learn how to conduct business correspondence, and develop sales, financial, marketing and computer skills. They learn about production practices from product suppliers, everything needed for a successful SAE or entrepreneurship. Dan Stehlik's agricultural sales class, comprised of 10-13 juniors and seniors, oversees the wholesale operation (the cooperative), which sells to about 35 other Kansas FFA chapters. It also supervises the rest of Concordia FFA members as they handle a retail operation in the local community. The cooperative is more than just a fund-raiser with a sales territory covering the entire state. Students function as a board of directors and district salespersons, and deliver orders. Freshmen agriscience students use the receipts to learn basic record keeping and as an introduction to the enterprise. The success of the cooperative has allowed the chapter to offer annual scholarships to seniors and dividend incentives to participating FFA chapters.

Dan Stehlik, Concordia High School, Concordia, Kansas, (785) 243-2452 or StehliD@parod.com

SAE Progress Tools

Each semester as a part of their course assignments, agriculture students at Allentown High School submit a report on the 10 items that they learned as a part of their supervised agricultural experience (SAE) programs. They report on how their SAEs changed, including the scope and any progress toward their program goals. Another tool students use to assist them in this process is a weekly report sheet on which they keep a journal of their daily SAE activities. Teachers collect the journal sheets on Mondays and use them to assist students in monitoring and building SAE success.

Cynthia Roszel, Allentown High School, Allentown, New Jersey, (609) 259-2160

Promising Practices continued on page 2-24 ➤

SAE/Co-op Employer Listing

Jeff Olson keeps a listing of prospective employers for students looking for a job as part of their cooperative experience or supervised agricultural experience program. Prospective positions are first available to students in the cooperative course, and then to other students depending on whether their qualifications match the position responsibilities. Olson started collecting employers' names, including the type of positions and pay available, by asking students for recommendations for job opportunities. After 10 years, he has a list of more than 120 names, ranging from concrete businesses to area farm operations. He even receives tips from other teachers and even unsolicited e-mail requests. Each year he revises the list based on employer interest and student availability.

Jeff Olson, Twin Falls High School, Twin Falls, Idaho, (208) 733-6551 or olsonje@tfsd.k12.id.us

Log Book Saves Contract, Aids Instruction

Mike Hanagan suggests that other teachers keep a log as they visit and review students' enterprises or projects. In the past, Hanagan has used his log to save his summer contract when administrators contemplated cutting the program budget. He suggests listing students' names, the mileage traveled per day, including starting and ending times. Special notes about students' programs, such as animal weights for calculating average daily gain, can be documented for later use.

Mike Hanagan, Artesia High School, Artesia, New Mexico, (505) 746-4171

Community Evaluated Résumés

As a part of a "career unit," teacher Kimberly Bellah requires her students to develop résumés, using their supervised agricultural experiences (SAEs) as their work experience. Students with ownership SAEs write about them as if they were self-employed. In turn, students submit their résumés to local business personnel directors and managers who then evaluate and analyze their résumés as if they were looking for potential employees. As a part of the assignment, students must use quality bond paper. Bellah provides paper to those students who do not have the means of reaching this goal. Likewise, students are required to use computers, printers, dictionaries and thesauruses in creating a professional tone and appearance. The emphasis of the activity is to show students that they are learning many transferable employment skills through their SAEs. As a result of the activity, one of Bellah's students graduated and applied for a position at a local florist. The owner hired the student because he remembered receiving her résumés in the mail. Four years later, the same student manages her own floral shop.

Kimberly Bellah, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California, (805) 756-6106 or kbellah@calpoly.edu

Using Photographs to Build SAEs

David Howell believes that students need to see success in action for them to build successful supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs). That's why he snaps a lot of photographs of students and their SAEs, which range from raising registered puppies to farming several hundred acres. Howell distributes these photographs to students in introductory courses and discusses what types of SAEs previous students developed and how they built success. Most of Howell's students still come from farms; those who don't can review the photographs of the large selection of farm-related jobs available. All students are encouraged to participate in livestock and crop shows to measure the success of their SAEs. The approach is certainly working, as evidenced by numerous state winners, five national finalists and one national winner in proficiency areas.

David Howell, Cotton Center High School, Cotton Center, Texas, (806) 879-2160 or dhowell@esc17.net

Poultry Processing Plant Offer Experience

Hesperia High School runs an educational project at a local poultry processing plant where students learn skills needed to become meat inspectors. The plant, inspected by the state Department of Food and Agriculture, is owned by a local family, which supplies the equipment. Students supply a portion of the inspection crew and free labor the first time they work at the plant. After that, they work for shares of the income derived from processing fees. Through the enterprise, students learn anatomy and physiology of domestic birds, disease identification and sanitation. By the time they graduate, students may obtain a California poultry meat inspector certificate.

Jonathan Evans, Hesperia High School, Hesperia, California, (760) 244-9898 or jevans3640@aol.com

Work Experience Bulletin Board

William Stanforth keeps a bulletin board in the vocational center that features students on cooperative work experience. The board displays junior and senior level students, a photograph of their work sites and descriptions of their experiences, which generally operate for a year. Since Live Oaks is a vocational center for 12 area schools, the display provides recognition and awareness of these students' accomplishments by parents, counselors, other teachers and prospective employers. It also serves as a motivational tool for younger students. Many work experience students continue full-time with their employers after graduation.

William D. Stanforth, Live Oaks Career Development Center, Milford, Ohio, (513) 575-1900, ext. 271 or stanbill@aol.com

Career Internships

Students in the Carrollton, Mo., Area Vocational-Technical program participate in supervised agricultural experience (SAE) internships that directly relate to specific career path areas, giving them a distinct advantage in the market place after they graduate. Before entering the program as freshmen, they complete a survey found in the state department of education's Career Path Planner for Secondary Students (available from the University of Missouri—Columbia Instructional Materials Center) that identifies potential areas of interests. To develop those interests further, students participate in a school-wide job-shadowing program as freshmen and sophomores to ascertain an occupation that more closely matches their interests. During their junior or senior years, students with openings on their school schedules enroll in internships related to one or two occupational areas. For one or two hours a day, students learn and develop job skills related to their career interests and chosen occupations by working at community sites. Instructor Callie Dobbins and the local advisory committee brainstorm ideas for potential work sites to give all students access to skill training.

Callie Dobbins, Carrollton Area Vocational-Technical, Carrollton, Missouri, (660) 542-0000 or cwk024@mail.connect.more.net

SAE Reports

Clear Spring juniors and seniors actually teach their peers about subjects that relate to their supervised agricultural experience programs. Whether it's discussing applied biotechnology or demonstrating how to flush embryos from cows, students prepare a presentation that accounts for 10 percent of their grade. They provide an outline and schedule the class time with teacher Terrie Shank. Since class is only 45 minutes long, many students opt for a video presentation. Shank has found that students are attentive and ask more questions when peers teach class. It is a great learning experience for everyone.

Terrie Shank, Clear Spring High School, Clear Spring, Maryland, (301) 766-8086

Online Career Research and Résumés

Freshmen entering the Allentown agriculture program conduct career research online, and write résumés and cover letters. Older students annually conduct similar projects that relate to the courses in which they are enrolled, including review of postsecondary education. After finishing the week-long unit, students present oral reports from the information found online. They also create bumper stickers that promote their specific career choices. The most creative ones are displayed in the school to raise an awareness among other students of the diversity of agricultural careers.

Cynthia Roszel, Allentown High School, Allentown, New Jersey, (609) 259-2160

Student Swine Cooperative

While teaching agriculture at Filley Consolidated Schools, Dennis Kenning used a swine cooperative as a supervised agricultural experience (SAE) program for students who did not have access to production projects (primarily students from urban areas). The cooperative also provided Kenning with a resource for teaching students about showmanship, teamwork, safety and swine husbandry practices. At the beginning of the cooperative year, participating students and their parents signed an SAE/cooperative agreement. Each year in April, the FFA chapter purchased feeder pigs for those students who expressed a desire to show an animal at the local fair. Students bought as many stock options in the cooperative as they wanted through deposits, which amounted to the cost of each feeder pig. The pigs were owned jointly by students and the FFA chapter, which paid for the feed costs and other expenses. Animals were housed at a local FFA Alumni member's farm. To be eligible to share in the profits and to receive their deposits back at the end of the cooperative, students kept track of their hours performing daily duties on a checklist, including the watering or feeding of the feeder or market hogs. At the end of the enterprise in July, students selected their animals for the fair or sold them directly to market. After all expenses were subtracted from the income received on all animals sold, the profits were divided among the students based on the percentage of hours they worked.

Dennis Kenning, Wilber-Clatonia High School, Wilber, Nebraska, (402) 821-3013

Community Service SAEs

Mitch Coleman encourages freshmen and sophomores who enroll in the Dayton, Ore., program to keep track of their community service hours, such as working on a local nature trail, as a beginning supervised agricultural experience (SAE) program. Since many of his students come from an urban background and have no immediate SAE ideas, Coleman's purpose is to raise student interest in agricultural education and to motivate them to become active in the FFA. As they continue in the program, he encourages them to expand their SAEs into other areas. With the advent of a home and community development proficiency, Coleman has found that community service SAEs serve a useful purpose. In fact, several students have earned their State FFA Degrees or won state proficiency awards using unpaid community service hours. Coleman has also found that scholarship programs and employers often look for community service as a qualification for acceptance or hiring. Other examples of unpaid community service that Dayton students record hours on include set-up for the chapter banquet and other FFA or school activities, a petting zoo, agricultural olympics, Food for America and even presentations at Kiwanis or Rotary Club meetings. Coleman recommends contacting the local Chamber of Commerce or municipal government for other suggestions or ideas for community service.

Mitch Coleman, Dayton High School, Dayton, Oregon, (503) 864-2273 or mcoleman@onlinemac.com

Farm Service Loans for SAEs

Garrard County students are encouraged to improve their SAEs by applying for loans through the USDA's Farm Service Agency. The Youth Loan Program provides students nationwide with seven-year loans ranging in size from \$500 to \$5,000 that can be used for anything related to their enterprises such as purchasing equipment. Parents sign off on the loans and agree to monitor their children's progress. Students become active participants in the real world of agricultural economics. The program has helped Kenneth Parsons to extend his summer employment contract, which in Kentucky is based on working with students with approved SAEs.

Kenneth Parsons, Garrard County High School, Lancaster, Kentucky, (606) 792-2146

SAE Course

Ray Gilmore has found that a separate class in supervised agricultural experience (SAE) instruction helps expand, refine and develop quality SAEs. The individualized, "after school" class, with schedules designed to meet students' needs, provides them with an opportunity to develop outstanding SAE programs. The course is recognized as a normal class in Gilmore's teaching assignment and is not an "extra" activity, but rather an integral part of the program. Gilmore has found that this class builds strong ties between students and their SAEs, provides for an ever growing disparity in experience that students bring to the program and offers a great way to tie the units of instruction to the "real world." Students must have an approved SAE, complete a project record book, file appropriate proficiency and degree applications, maintain a record of speeches and presentations and maintain all other appropriate information. This collection of information also serves as an excellent portfolio for later use. Molalla FFA has a number of indicators that would show success of this class and the overall instruction. In 1999, seven members received the American FFA Degree (19 total over the past 5 years.) Eleven of the year 2000 graduates received their State FFA Degrees. Two of these 11 recipients were Star State FFA Degree candidates (two of 5 nominated statewide).

Ray Gilmore, Molalla High School, Molalla, Oregon, (503) 829-2855 or gilmore-ray@yahoo.com

Student Interests Drive Urban SAEs

Kate Pickard annually surveys her urban agriscience students on their interests and career goals. She then matches their responses with the courses she teaches (horticulture, landscape design and floriculture). She and fellow teacher Brandy Marsich work closely with the community to develop creative supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs) for students who have no access to traditional ones. For example, one student uses her horticultural skills at a day care center where she works to teach students how to grow plants. Other SAEs may range from community service projects such as fence mending to horticulture therapy at a

senior citizen center. Students may keep and care for a pet at school or participate in job shadowing experiences. Besides learning record-keeping skills, Pickard reports that students are more interested and engaged in course subjects than before because they see the relevance of their education. Over the last two years, at least 10 students have changed their post-graduation plans and pursued further education in agriscience career areas.

Kate Pickard and Brandy Marsich, William Penn High School, New Castle, Delaware, (302) 323-2804

SAE Portfolios

Instead of a traditional exam, John Schut, formerly of Montague and now of Lowell, Mich., assigns his students a comprehensive agriscience portfolio that is due at the end of each semester. The portfolio highlights each student's progress and covers 10 areas equally weighted, including class work, writing samples, service learning projects, FFA accomplishments, career skills (including those developed in class) and SAE projects/records.

Schut requires that 30 percent of the content of each student's portfolio is directly related to his or her SAE program:

- SAE records comprise 10 percent,
- SAE/service learning project essay comprises 10 percent and
- A section on career skills is 10 percent.

Each semester, students update their current SAE records and assemble them within their portfolios.

- Records cover income, expenses, hours, skills and achievements realized during the previous semester.
- Students write a one-page essay on how their SAEs or service learning projects helped them develop career and interpersonal skills.

Schut has noticed that as students use portfolios and become more involved in the program and their SAEs grow and change, they learn to evaluate their own progress. Portfolios also provide a mechanism for documenting student growth and progress over time. They can be equally important in helping students complete award or degree applications. This year alone, the Montague program received 10 American FFA Degrees, six State FFA Degrees, 21 state outstanding junior awards, 18 regional FFA awards and three state winning proficiency awards—all of which rely heavily on documented progress and records.

Tips for Success

1. Because this practice is not "traditional," communicate your strategy with counselors, principals and parents, so they are informed of your approach.
2. If you use this technique for all of your courses, raise the standard for second-, third- and fourth-year students, to challenge them to fully develop their potential.

John Schut, Lowell High School, Lowell, Michigan, (616) 897-4125 or jhschut@aol.com

Enterprise SAEs

At Ohio's Buckeye Valley High, students use a 298-acre school farm for their supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs). Students either rent land or participate in a school-sponsored cooperative enterprise.

Annually in October, teacher Jennifer Kessler explains to all students how the farm operates. They sign a sheet, expressing their interest to cultivate land under one of the options.

Cash Rent

Students who want to rent land pay a cash deposit and the remainder of the rent after their crop is harvested. The cash rent option operates similar to that of a tenant arrangement; some students receive parental sponsorship. Some students rent or barter hours for equipment. Generally, five students annually rent about 20 acres each.

Cooperative Land Enterprise

The remaining farmland is available under the enterprise option to students who don't have the financial resources to rent land. Each student receives an equal acreage allotment, typically about five acres. The school farm account, which is separate from the FFA account, pays for all expenses such as seed, fuel and equipment rental.

Each student's rent is subtracted from the farm account, which receives all receipts. Students earn points based on an agreement they establish in the fall. The 1999 agreement specifies that each student work a minimum of 20 hours and attend at least five cooperative meetings. Students receive a five percent reduction in their earnings for each hour and meeting missed.

A cooperative secretary keeps records of the meetings and students use their SAE record books to track their hours and crop production. This year, students conducted an experiment, comparing no-till and conventional methods.

SAE Learning Lab

Students learn about these aspects:

- management of costs and risks
- teamwork and commitment
- grain merchandising
- crop production

Non-farm students gain an appreciation and better understanding as consumers by participating in the enterprise, Kessler says.

Tips for SAE Success

Kessler offers these tips to teachers:

1. Establish an advisory committee to handle all personnel, farm and land management issues. These individuals relieve Kessler of the pressure of making major decisions. The farm was given to the school system as an educational resource; its deed mandates that an advisory committee be appointed by the probate court, township trustees and the school board.
2. Tap into your community resources. Because she grew up in the Columbus suburbs with a limited production agriculture background, Kessler supplements instruction with guest speakers and seeks advice from agribusiness owners.
3. Make sure every student has the option to participate. Request that they enroll in the enterprise up front. Invite younger students to participate to keep them involved and interested in the program.

Jennifer Kessler, (740) 363-1349 or FLAS2@aol.com

Promising Practices continued on page 2-28 ➤

Grading SAEs

The Texas Education Agency requires all teachers to use a “point system” that allows students to earn 1,000 points for each semester course. (The state agency mandates and requires the practice for school districts to receive vocational funding. It also requires that all students enrolled in agriscience courses establish a project.) In response to the mandate, Gary Rosenbusch uses a grading system at Glen Rose to verify students’ supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs) to state officials and to make the program more accountable. Besides meeting state requirements, students learn real world experiences such as responsibility and record keeping skills. Essentially, the agency requirement allows Rosenbusch, and other state agriscience teachers, to award students 200 points every six weeks for a total of 600 SAE points per semester. For those students who do not have the ability to establish an animal or plant project, Rosenbusch allows them to earn SAE points outside of class time. They can perform activities that are related to agriculture, such as participating in FFA career development events. Rosenbusch likes the state point system because it allows non-traditional students who don’t have access to animal or plant SAEs to be successful in agriscience courses. These same students can apply for awards, degrees and scholarships because they meet the requirements with points.

Gary Rosenbusch, Glen Rose High School, Glen Rose, Texas (254) 897-4383 or rosega@grisd.net

SAE Informational Tours

Freshmen tour junior- and senior-level supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs) to gather ideas to improve or begin their own projects. Instructor Sheri Pettit selects two or three freshmen (and sometimes sophomores) to visit one of the chosen SAEs on a bimonthly basis, depending on weather and other factors. Pettit chooses 10 of the most exceptional SAEs to showcase each year. Her selection is based on the SAE scope, the students’ knowledge of their programs and freshmen career interests. Students must submit a parental permission form before participating in the SAE tours, which usually occur after school hours.

Shereen (Sheri) Pettit, Mountain View-Birch Tree High School, Mountain View, Missouri, (417) 934-2029 or smp613s@yahoo.com

Exploratory SAE Activities

Robin McLean uses three resources to help first-year students to explore agricultural careers. During the process, students match their interests to prospective careers and, if possible, use the information to develop their supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs). First, McLean requires that all students complete a career assessment available in the school’s computer lab. After completing the assessment, students view a list of career areas that match their interests. By clicking on the career that appeals to them, students surf the Web and the career program, gaining valuable information, such as career trends, education, job descriptions and salaries. Second, students visit the

Workforce NJ website, which links to a site called “America’s Job Bank” (<http://www.ajb.dni.us/>). Once at the site, students can conduct a job hunt and search by state or career area. Finally, students use a printed occupational guide to verify what careers are available in the food, fiber and natural resources industry.

Robin McLean, Penns Grove High School, Penns Grove, New Jersey, (856) 256-9579 or ag4robin@jersey.net

Tips for Selling SAEs

Justin Heupel uses his on-site instruction for supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs) to do more than observe students’ SAEs and offer tips for improvement. He covers the reasons for having SAEs and FFA recognition opportunities by presenting information on how SAEs fit into the agricultural education curriculum and how they develop students’ career skills. He also uses the time to instruct especially beginning students, their parents and employers on how SAEs and SAE record keeping allow members to compete for higher FFA degrees, proficiency awards and scholarships. Montana educational standards require that all agricultural education students conduct an SAE. Heupel tries to meet with agricultural education students and their parents or employers at their respective homes or work sites at least annually.

Justin Heupel, Richey High School, Richey, Montana (406) 773-5523

Record Keeping Key to SAE Success

To help new students build solid supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs), Rusty Suttle requires them to complete a net worth statement and begin recording their SAE-type hours the summer before they start classes. At Neshoba, SAEs are mandatory for all students, comprising 20 percent of their grade. All students must record their SAE work hours weekly and annually in January. After three years of enrollment, students enter their SAE hours and work experiences into the computer, so they can complete chapter and national proficiency award or state FFA degree applications. Due to their accurate record keeping and ability to demonstrate their work experiences, more Neshoba FFA members are considered for the state star farmer and agribusiness competitions than from any other chapter in the state. More importantly, Suttle’s SAE practices have created a demand on the part of employers to hire students after graduation. Employers and college recruiters often attend the annual FFA banquet to hire or to recruit students.

Rusty Suttle, Neshoba Central High School, Philadelphia, Mississippi, (601) 656-2504

Credit, Focus Build Quality SAEs

Jose' Bernal hopes to build quality supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs) by promoting them as the program's most important component. He emphasizes SAEs because he believes that a focus on instruction and work experience serves as the foundation for a strong student FFA experience. His philosophy is evident in that SAEs comprise 25 percent of a student's grade. In order for students to receive credit for their SAEs, they must meet the following basic requirements: first-year students need 100 SAE hours annually; second-year students, 200 hours; third-year students, 300 hours; and fourth-year students need 400 required hours. In addition, Bernal convinced Amphitheater administrators to award a half credit per year to every student who successfully completes a planned SAE. SAEs are eligible for credit as long as they carry the proper documentation in the form of record books. To encourage participation in SAEs, Bernal remains flexible and sensitive to the needs, wants, opportunities and schedules of students, especially during their first year. He also spends time explaining to students about the importance of developing a work ethic and the relationship of an SAE to work ethic. Bernal finds that the program's land laboratory provides opportunities for involvement in SAEs. The result is telling: 60-70 percent of Bernal's students have solid SAEs.

*Jose' Bernal, Amphitheater High School, Tucson, Arizona
(520) 696-5432 or jbernal@amphi.com*

Introducing SAEs

April White tries to encourage a variety of ideas when her students are developing their supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs). She asks them to "think outside the box, to find a need and to fill it" when it comes to choosing a specific SAE. White allows students to review copies of state and national proficiency award applications to generate ideas for possible SAEs. They spend one day surfing websites, such as those on gardening, aquaculture and hydroponics, to gain a broad understanding of the scope of SAEs. All students start with a simple record book at first. As their SAEs grow, so do their record books. SAE is also a part of all students' course grades, requiring students to be accountable for their SAEs.

*April White, Paradise Valley High School, Phoenix, Arizona
(602) 867-5480 or awhite@pvusd.k12.az.us*

Photos, Report Foster SAE Success

April White requires students to submit two photos and a one page report of their supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs) at the end of the school year. Her aim is to foster and encourage students to think in terms of career success through SAEs. In addition, they submit their record books, which demonstrate the scope of and their progress in their SAEs. During the school year, as she visits with students and discusses their SAEs, White photographs their programs and posts the images on an SAE bulletin board in the classroom. Students also give brief oral updates on their SAEs in class. White's intent is to focus on

SAE and work-based learning and inspire students searching for possible SAE ideas.

*April White, Paradise Valley High School, Phoenix, Arizona
(602) 867-5480 or awhite@pvusd.k12.az.us*

Grant Boosts Learning, SAE Experiences

For instructor Jeff Papke of Prineville, Ore., the FFA Alumni Chapter Grant Program provided new learning opportunities and improved the quality of supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs). The Crook County FFA Chapter submitted an application for funds to renovate a 50-year-old cattle barn located on the county fairgrounds for student use. It received \$1,000 to purchase supplies to remodel the facility. The renovated facility gave FFA members, who had nowhere else to board their market animals, a place to house them for a few months. As a part of a class project, students upgraded the building's animal pens, enclosed it with plywood sheeting to make it more secure and applied a fresh coat of paint to its new walls. Students also installed a concrete slab for an electronic scale to weigh animals. Participation in FFA fair activities immediately increased by 10 students because of the new facility. Thirteen market animals—sheep, beef or swine—were housed at the facility last year. Instead of driving miles to feed their market animals, FFA members cared for their animals before arriving at school (since the renovated barn is just 100 yards from the high school). Papke and his students have also utilized the facility for animal feed trials. The facility and the new electronic scale's close proximity to the school has allowed Papke to supervise students' animal feeding regimens more closely. Regularly monitoring rate of gain has given students an opportunity to adjust their market animals' rations appropriately to match their intended goals for showing their animals.

*Jeff Papke, Crook County High School, Prineville, Oregon
(541) 416-6900 or jeff.papke@crookcounty.k12.or.us*

Scheduling Summer Visits

As a new teacher, Richard Stephens found it challenging to schedule summer supervised agricultural experience (SAE) visits for his 100 students. They were often unavailable for on-site evaluations when he attempted to visit. Missed and unscheduled appointments made it difficult to visit all students within a certain time frame. To address the situation head-on, Stephens contacted local veteran teachers for ideas. They recommended establishing a tentative schedule with students while they are yet in school. As a part of the new plan, Stephens will contact students three days prior to the scheduled visit to confirm the time and date. This approach will place the responsibility on students to reschedule if they cannot meet the appointment. He has also realized that helping parents and administrators understand the importance of SAE programs is another key to successful summer on-site evaluations. To accomplish this objective, he plans to mail parents a letter prior to summer vacation that explains the need and procedure for SAE visits.

*Richard Stephens, Alexander High School, Albany, Ohio
(740) 689-8951 or stephens_163@hotmail.com*

Promising Practices continued on page 2-30 ➤

Portfolio Project

Teachers at Winnisquam Agricultural Education Center instituted a student portfolio project in an effort to increase their new chapter's participation in both the state level proficiency and degree award programs. Another aim of the project was to encourage student self-awareness and career planning. The practice is a simplified adaptation of the once-per-week practice of updating of supervised agricultural experience program record books. Instructor Janet Rosequist created a form that held more meaning for the students who had no real connection with agriculture other than through classroom instruction. In January, after the calendar year ends, instructors begin by teaching five portfolio activities to each class one page at a time. First, they begin with a statement of personal net worth. Next, students complete a personal assessment of how they have spent their time and what skills they have developed through the activities they have listed. The third activity is a summary of all the hours they have worked (paid or unpaid) and dollars they have earned (close to the one in the state degree application). Students then write a narrative of their work experiences, filling in the details of their skills and background. Finally, they create a résumé, complete with references. A complimentary videotape produced by Master Card® about personal credit and budgeting, entitled "Mastering Your Future," is used in conjunction with each segment. Returning students build on their portfolios from year-to-year. The practice has quadrupled the chapter's FFA application submissions to the state both for degrees and proficiency awards. In addition, state submissions have been of better quality (and more competitive) with many FFA members being chosen as state stars since the inception of the practice.

*Janet Rosequist, Winnisquam Regional High School,
Tilton, New Hampshire
(603) 286-4531, ext. 330 or jrosequist@winnisquam.k12.nh.us*



FFA provides support materials to local teachers who implement effective leadership programs, along with motivational activities and award incentives available through funds raised by the National FFA Foundation, Inc.



The following topics are covered in Chapter 3 FFA (A Connecting Activity): Bringing Learning to Life

Benefits of an Active FFA Chapter

Steps to Success

- 1 Link FFA leadership, award programs and competitive events to high-quality agricultural education curriculum.
- 2 Recruit and retain new members from diverse populations.
 - Help FFA members understand themselves.
 - Surveying helps find membership barriers.
- 3 Inform every student about the diverse opportunities in FFA.
 - Share opportunities with new members.
 - Former members serve as role models.
- 4 Elect capable officers and train them.
- 5 Ensure that all members share responsibilities and have access to leadership and other opportunities.
 - Create special awards.
 - Track and reward participation.
- 6 Formulate a workable constitution and bylaws.
- 7 Develop a challenging program of activities.
- 8 Secure adequate financing.
- 9 Build school and community support.
- 10 Conduct well-planned, regularly-scheduled chapter meetings.
- 11 Maintain proper equipment and records.

Promising Practices of Top Programs

Selected Resources

Action Plan

Worksheets and Other Tools

Promising Practices Update

Chapter 3

FFA (A Connecting Activity): Bringing Learning to Life

Students spend their middle and high school years searching for a place to belong, discovering their own ambitions, and choosing a career path to follow. As teachers and advisors, you are challenged to guide those students to success.

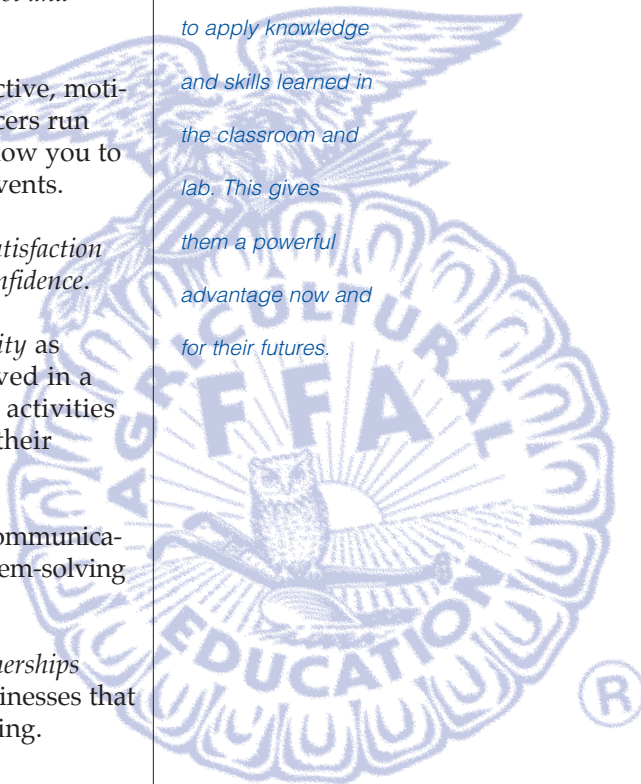
FFA activities and award programs bring learning to life and allow students to apply knowledge and skills learned in the classroom and lab. This gives them a powerful advantage now and for their futures. At the same time, they have fun, meet new friends, earn awards and money for college, travel, become leaders and “belong” to a team. This builds a strong defense against negative influences and pressures of being a teenager today.

Members will take advantage of these life-changing experiences if they know about them and are encouraged to participate. A strong FFA chapter that develops every student’s potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success is an integral part of a successful agricultural education program.

With an active, successful FFA chapter, you will:

- 🍏 See *students thrive* and have valuable leadership opportunities.
- 🍏 Watch student *interest and membership rise*.
- 🍏 Obtain *relief* while active, motivated members and officers run chapter activities and allow you to become a facilitator of events.
- 🍏 Possess *greater job satisfaction* from increased student confidence.
- 🍏 Gain *program visibility* as members become involved in a challenging program of activities and are recognized for their achievements.
- 🍏 Reinforce students’ *communication, science, math, problem-solving and creative skills*.
- 🍏 Build *successful partnerships* with employers and businesses that encourage student learning.

FFA activities and award programs bring learning to life and allow students to apply knowledge and skills learned in the classroom and lab. This gives them a powerful advantage now and for their futures.



The local chapter is the heartbeat of the FFA, which is an intracurricular part of agricultural education. Steps to build a strong, active FFA chapter:

- 1 Link FFA activities to high-quality agricultural education curriculum.
- 2 Recruit and retain a diverse membership.
- 3 Inform every student about the diverse opportunities in FFA.
- 4 Elect capable officers and train them well.
- 5 Ensure that all members share responsibilities and have access to leadership and other opportunities.
- 6 Formulate a workable constitution and bylaws.
- 7 Develop a challenging program of activities.
- 8 Secure adequate financing.
- 9 Build school and community support.
- 10 Conduct fun, well-planned, regularly-scheduled chapter meetings.
- 11 Maintain proper equipment and records.

The knowledge
and skills
students develop
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Link FFA leadership activities, award programs and competitive events to high-quality agricultural education curriculum.

FFA career development events, award programs, community service projects and leadership activities strengthen instruction by providing a real-world context for learning. Prioritize and select only those activities that apply to classroom instruction and career opportunities. For example, don't enter the poultry event if you don't teach poultry production and there is no community interest or job opportunities.

The knowledge and skills students develop through FFA prepare them for life and future careers. You will find a complete listing of life and career skills addressed by FFA in the publication *Culminating and Enabling Expectations for Selected National FFA Activities*.



FFA Service Projects Offer Skill Development

FFA members in **Williamsfield, Ill.**, collected the closing agricultural commodity reports during class and recorded them for a local radio station as part of an FFA community service project.

Results: Students learned about commodity markets and gained valuable public speaking skills.

Dennis Harper, (309) 639-2216

Members will take
advantage of FFA's
life-changing
experiences if
they know about
them and are
encouraged to
participate.



Recruit and retain new members from diverse populations.

When FFA membership is representative of the student population, there are many rewards:

- greater service to students, parents and community
- broader community support
- more creative programs planned through diverse input
- students who understand and embrace differences

So how do you go about creating diverse membership?

- Set a membership goal that reflects the diversity of the school population and that everyone agrees on.
- Teach each student to recruit potential members.
- Think about what type of students you have in your school. Consider the various ethnic, socio-economic and minority groups, personality types, learning styles and cultural backgrounds of students as well as how many are male or female.
- Learn about your students' interests, and show how agriculture courses and FFA activities fit in.
- Once the students are members, teach them about different cultures whenever you can, no matter what the subject matter. Make it very obvious that you're open to different people and ways of approaching things, whether you're talking about ethnic groups or about different learning styles. The curriculum *Many Faces, One People* gives activities to break through stereotypes. It shows students and teachers how to be more open as they look at themselves and others.



Help FFA Members Understand Themselves

Steve Gratz, Ohio FFA executive director, uses *True Colors*, a personality profile assessment tool, to help his state officer team work better together. He says it's a good idea to take all FFA members through the program. "It will allow teachers to understand how their students learn, work together and put them in more functional work groups," he says.

Results: The activity helps students and adults cultivate respect for differences.

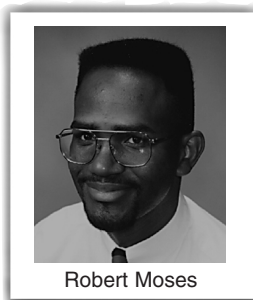
Steve Gratz, (614) 644-5924

Surveying Helps Find Membership Barriers

To recruit a diverse group of students at Indianapolis' STAR Academy, FFA chapter members:

- 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 potential students and parents, showing how agricultural education and FFA met parents' and students' needs.



Robert Moses

- Collected data on what interested non-member friends, and polled parents and potential students over the phone to find out 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 a letter to open-house participants to keep agricultural education top of mind when they registered for classes.

Results: Enrollment increased by 320 percent or 107 students in three years.
Robert Moses,
(317) 226-4167

Teamwork Day Fosters Cooperation

Canoga Park, Calif., draws a diverse group of students from the Los Angeles area. To help the high schoolers understand each other and work together better, Environmental Ag Science Magnet Coordinator Steve Pietrolungo organized a one-day, teambuilding leadership conference for all 225 students. "It was all very positive," Pietrolungo says. "We arranged seating with a computer-generated list of the kids so they would have to interact with new people."

The reason the program was so successful and that students were still talking about it months later is "we planned and planned and then planned some more, he says. The chapter officers and group leaders spent a day rehearsing, thinking about what could go wrong. And, we used different resources, from the University of California system, from 4-H and scouts," he says.

Results: It's difficult to quantify how a new sense of respect for others can pay off, but Pietrolungo says by pairing students with different ages, interests and ethnic backgrounds, the seminar helped develop an overall sense of community and let students know the agriculture program is open and receptive to all kinds of students.

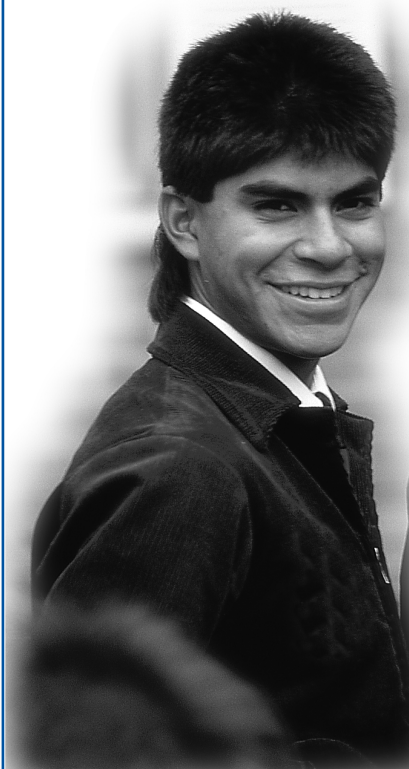
Steve Pietrolungo,
(818) 346-1720

"By pairing students with different ages, interests and ethnic backgrounds, we helped develop an overall sense of community and let students know the agriculture program is open and receptive to all kinds of students."



Steve Pietrolungo

Steve Pietrolungo,
Environmental Ag
Science Magnet
Coordinator, Canoga
Park, Calif.



FFA members reap
many benefits
when their career
and educational
interests are
matched to FFA
activities.

Inform every student about the diverse opportunities in FFA.



Students who fully understand what's available can reap the benefits FFA provides. Help students match their interests as well as career and educational needs to specific FFA activities. Members have many opportunities to choose from: leadership, travel, career preparation, service, competition and scholarships. Communicating these opportunities to students and their parents is essential.

Share Opportunities with New Members

In Yelm, Wash., students join FFA throughout the year, so it's hard to know who has been told what. Advisor Dennis Wallace offers these tips:



Dennis Wallace

- Give each new member an FFA calendar of events.
- Publish a monthly newsletter, announcing activities.
- Post events on a bulletin

board and keep it current.

- Read school-wide announcements each morning.
- Hold meetings once a month at night and during the day.
- Challenge committee chairs to publicize events in the school paper and motivate other students to participate.

Results: New and current members stay informed of chapter activities.

Dennis Wallace, (360) 458-7777

Former Members Serve as Role Models

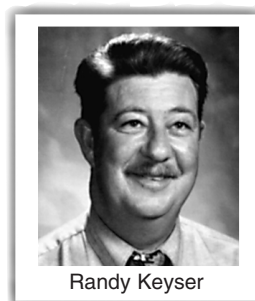
Randy Keyser has former students speak to his **Broadway High School, Va.**, leadership development class on how FFA was a motivating factor in their lives. "Most of the time, when students hear this they say, 'Maybe I can do it too,'" he says.

In class and meetings, Keyser shows FFA videos that describe programs such

as Made For Excellence, Washington Leadership Conference and the national FFA convention. After showing specific segments, he discusses possibilities with students.

Results: The class is so popular that it has a list of students waiting to enroll. It's increased his program's appeal to nontraditional students.

(Randy Keyser passed away the week this guide went to press. Our condolences to his family.)



Randy Keyser

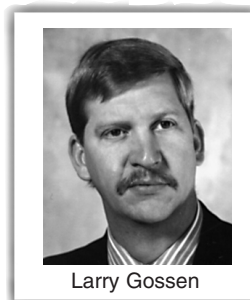
Elect capable officers and train them well.



Local FFA officers are the most visible representatives in your school and community. They serve as role models for members and direct chapter activities. As advisor, your role is to guide members in electing capable and dedicated officers. You have an added responsibility to orient them to their new duties. By remaining in the background and providing assistance when needed, you can help members assume responsibility for their chapter.

Identify Strong Officer Candidates

To eliminate "popularity contests" and identify the best candidates, Larry Gossen, **Neodesha High School, Kan.**, implemented a two-stage election. First, candidates complete an application and write an essay on their interest in and qualifications for office, then give a short speech to members, who vote for the top 10 candidates. In stage two, candidates interview with a panel including Gossen, the retiring senior officers, two teachers and several business people. Gossen combines the interview results, essay, application



Larry Gossen

Continued on page 3-5 ➤

Capable officers continued from page 3-4

and vote total to slate the team. Candidates not elected are given the opportunity to head a committee.

Results: "This year we assembled the best officer team we ever had," Gossen says. "We ask them in interviews who they would want on their team, what office they want, and if they would have problems working with anyone else running. This brings out potential problems before they have a chance to develop."

Larry Gossen, (316) 325-3015

Focus on Team Goals

Chapter officers at **Spencer High School, Spencer, Wis.**, develop a clear mission and set goals at the annual chapter officer retreat. Each officer answers three questions:

- What personal characteristics are important to me? (Examples: honesty, caring)
- What contributions and achievements do I want to make?
- What do I value?

The team then selects the most important characteristics it wants to represent and crafts a mission statement from them. Next, chapter officers fill out an action plan to help them accomplish the goals that support their mission.

Results: "It rallies the group around something, and builds ownership in the chapter," says advisor Mark Zimmerman. "Nothing gets students fired up more."

Mark Zimmerman, (715) 659-4211

Ensure that all members share responsibilities and have access to leadership and other opportunities.

When all members are active, the entire chapter benefits. A well-planned program of activities ensures that each member has



Mark Zimmerman



specific duties in the chapter. Create and plan more opportunities for student success and recognition at every level of membership. Give every student the opportunities to be a leader. Use a committee structure so each student can be "in charge." Even members with disabilities or other challenges can head activities such as a poster contest or canned food drive.

Create Special Awards

Teachers at **Ledyard, Conn.**, make sure chapter proficiency contests exist for most students to enter. "We set up proficiency awards based on what types of SAEs our kids have," says instructor Shelly Roy. "We have an aquaculture proficiency category, and we've had a goat proficiency area."

Applications for local awards are very simple. Students summarize their projects, what improvements they've made and what they've learned. They tell what they think makes their project better than everyone else's. Since teachers visit all student programs, they don't have to include photos.

Results: "A greater number of proficiency awards keeps up the kids' interest," Roy says. The majority of the 190 agriculture students continue their SAEs for all four years of high school.

Shelly Roy, (860) 464-9600



Shelly Roy

Track and Reward Participation

To help students track their progress and work towards a bigger goal, the **Mt. Vernon High School, Ind.**, chapter established a point system for members to record their FFA activities. The chapter counts how many points members have accumulated to decide who's eligible for trips and to win awards.

Results: "It keeps things fair," says advisor Dave Reese, "and it lets students know your expectations."

Dave Reese, (812) 838-4356



David Reese

A well-planned

program of activities

ensures that each

member has specific

duties, so the entire

chapter benefits.

Step 6

Formulate a workable constitution and bylaws.

All chapter decisions should be based upon the constitution and bylaws, which allow flexibility for progress, yet provide enough structure to give the chapter a firm foundation for operation. Your chapter constitution may be more stringent than state and national ones, but should not be more lenient. Use the national FFA constitution, found in the *Official FFA Manual*, or the sample one at the end of this chapter as a model.

Before each school year begins, review the constitution and bylaws with your chapter officers to determine if revisions are needed. Base your decision on the past year's performance and any special needs which may have arisen during the previous year. For more on evaluating your chapter, see *Chapter Planning and Recognition: A Student Handbook* available from FFA.

3-17

Develop a challenging program of activities.

Step 7

FFA chapters use the program of activities (POA) as a road map for planning and accomplishing their goals. A well-planned and well-executed POA helps students develop their leadership, interpersonal and planning skills. By assigning each member specific POA responsibilities, you can achieve greater local, state and national participation.

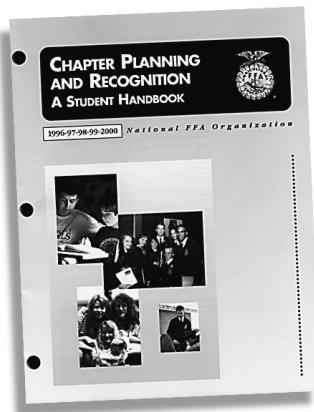
By involving community and school leaders in the planning, you can make your POA an excellent public relations tool.

Organize For Success

- Find out what your community and students want your program to accomplish.

5-2

Chapter Planning and Recognition: A Student Handbook available from FFA provides information on how to plan, write and implement a program of activities that benefits students, the chapter, school and community.



3-6

- Create committees and designate officers to handle business in three major areas:
 - **Student development**—Promote personal and group activities that improve life skills.
 - **Chapter development**—Encourage students to work together.
 - **Community development**—Cooperate with other groups to make the community a better place to live and work.
- Present committee plans to the chapter for approval of action and resources.
- List the goals approved by the chapter, along with steps to accomplish them, target dates, estimated costs, and results or notes on an *Activity Planning Sheet*. Assign a person to complete each activity. Select a “spark plug” officer to remind members of their commitments.
- Complete the National Chapter Award application, which provides local, state and national recognition for chapter success.
- Evaluate all activities to determine where improvements are needed. Make a wall chart to evaluate how well goals are being implemented. Celebrate each time you achieve a goal. Keep these questions in mind when evaluating activities:
 - Should the activity continue in the future?
 - Did all members take part in and benefit from the activity?
 - Were all the goals achieved?
 - Were the estimated costs correct?
 - How did the activity benefit student learning?
 - What changes would improve this activity?

3-12

Delegate Responsibilities

Start small and plan ahead as you begin to delegate responsibilities to students, advises Gary Moore, **North Carolina State University** agricultural education professor. “It works much better for teachers to delegate early, rather than wait until they’re over their heads.”

Moore offers these tips:

- Give students small tasks to build self confidence and desire to accept greater responsibility. Encourage officers and committee chairpersons to delegate tasks.
- If you’re uncomfortable with delegating, examine why. “Are you afraid of losing control, or that somebody else might do a better job? We have to make sure we aren’t subconsciously sabotaging our own efforts,” he says.
- Time spent planning ahead allows students to perform responsibilities successfully.
- Remember it’s okay to delegate unpleasant tasks. You’re still giving students opportunities to develop self-confidence, while managing activities more effectively.



Secure adequate financing.

Yearly fund-raising projects contribute to the support of important chapter activities. Effective fund-raisers provide students with career learning opportunities and involve a majority of members. The *FFA Selling and Fund-raising Guide* and the fund-raising checklists listed in this chapter have information on how to plan, conduct and evaluate fund-raisers.

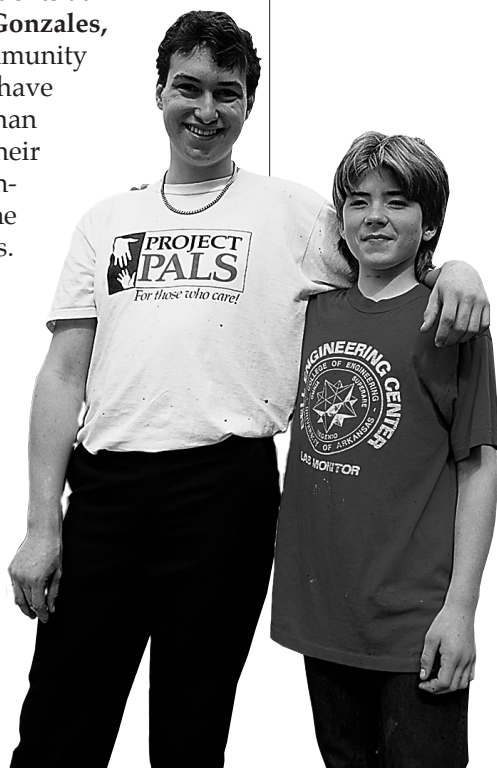


Some creative fund-raisers:

■ Conduct a Rent-a-Plant chapter business. Students at **Northern Potter High, Ulysess, Pa.**, rent out plants to teachers, businesses, restaurants and post offices. At the end of the year they sell the plants. Students learn horticulture and business skills.

■ The **Thomas High School, Thomas, Okla.**, chapter raised \$14,000 by conducting an auction where local employers hired students to shadow them for a day.

■ With the help of alumni members, students at **J.W. Tate in Gonzales, Fla.**, host community rodeos. They have raised more than \$100,000 for their local FFA foundation over the past five years.



Build school and community support.

A chapter must strive to meet the needs of its community and school.

■ Demonstrate how FFA activities and award programs build and recognize skills needed for the workplace and life. This will establish credibility with the local community, parents and administration.



■ Ask key influencers—people within the general community, school administration, students and parents—what they need and want in an FFA chapter. FFA alumni members can help provide key influencer contact names.

■ Involve these key groups in FFA events, recognize them for their efforts and report their achievements within the school and community.



Showing how FFA builds skills needed for the workplace will establish credibility with key influencers in the community and school.

Mentoring elementary students through the FFA Partners in Active Learning Support (PALS) program provides an excellent activity and shows how the community benefits from the organization.

Step 10

Conduct fun, well-planned, regularly-scheduled chapter meetings.

Monthly meetings, scheduled at regular times and guided by sound agendas, promote chapter unity and efficiency, and encourage better attendance and involvement. Participating members will learn communication and parliamentary skills.

The *Official FFA Manual* and *FFA Student Handbook* contain more information on how to conduct a chapter meeting or annual banquet.

Remember variety is essential for successful chapter meetings, so don't forget the entertainment, refreshments, fun icebreakers and teambuilding activities.

Make Chapter Meetings and Activities Fun

To keep students motivated about attending FFA events, Sherry Heishman lets members at **Central Woodstock High School, Woodstock, Va.**, earn extra points on tests if they attend chapter meetings.

Developing fellowship with recreation and refreshments after each meeting is important, she says.



Sherry Heishman

Some of the chapter's biggest hits:

- For Halloween, pin the nose on the pumpkin. Whoever's the closest gets a bag of candy.
- Host a piñata party. Use a dodge ball instead of a baseball bat to hit the piñata.
- Guess how much candy or how many beans are in a jar. The winner gets a prize such as an FFA hat or T-shirt.
- Play an energetic game of volleyball or basketball.

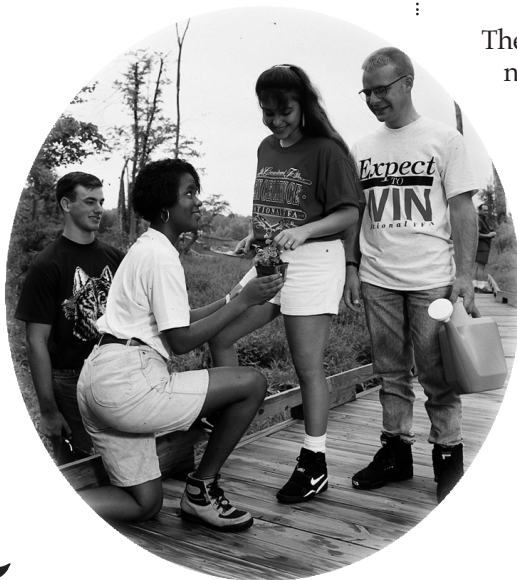
Results: Meeting attendance is up and students love the fun activities.

Sherry Heishman and George Bowers,
(540) 459-3806

Step 11

Maintain proper equipment and records.

The chapter should acquire the necessary equipment, such as secretary's and treasurer's books, for officers to perform their duties as listed in the *Official FFA Manual*. Maintaining proper records allows the chapter to conduct its business in a professional and ethical manner as described by the FFA Code of Ethics.



Promising Practices

Below are ideas teachers across the nation use to develop active, strong FFA chapters:

Link FFA activities to high-quality agricultural education curriculum:

- Host a farm safety program where agricultural mechanics students demonstrate proper operating procedures for farm equipment.
- Encourage students to develop a marketing plan on how to "position" FFA to the community.
- Arrange for horticulture students to landscape the school grounds.
- Organize an envirothon where chapter teams are tested on topics such as soil, forestry, wildlife management, aquatics and current environmental issues.
- After discussing marketing principles in an agribusiness course, encourage students to participate in the FFA Marketing Plan Career Development Event, presenting a product or service of their choice.

Recruit and retain a diverse membership:

- Send non-members a special newsletter that highlights the benefits of joining.
- Start a 7th and 8th grade leadership class to attract students to enroll in agricultural education.
- Hold a middle school or 4-H orientation program, demonstrating the benefits of FFA.
- Invite state officers for a chapter visit and arrange for them to speak to an entire school assembly.
- Take photos of FFA members winning awards and participating in events. Post them in visible spots within your school or on the general bulletin board. Be sure to include diverse populations in photos.

Continued on page 3-9 ➤

- Offer semester courses in non-traditional areas to attract new students.
- Make FFA a part of the grade if school or state policies permit.
- Give the FFA "Why Not?" brochures to potential students and their parents to explain the benefits of joining the organization.
- Include students from different social and ethnic groups on your advisory committee to help create plans to interest their peers.
- Display recruitment posters on bulletin boards in the main school hallways.
- Offer an independent study for students whose schedules won't permit them to take agriculture courses.
- Update instruction to reflect student interests and industry expectations.
- Host a facility tour for parents, explaining the benefits of FFA and how agricultural education answers their concerns.
- Pair new recruits with members who are different from them or who they haven't worked with before. For example, have a freshman eat lunch with a senior, or assign an outgoing person and a shy student to organize a local event.

Inform every student about the diverse opportunities in FFA:

- Host an agriculture olympics and FFA knowledge quiz event at the beginning of the school year and award prizes. Include all students and teachers, not just members.
- Hold an incoming freshmen orientation program where the opportunities for involvement are explained to new students and parents.
- Host an "international day," highlighting opportunities available through FFA travel programs.
- Give each new member the *Discover World Class Opportunities in FFA* brochure, which describes what the organization has to offer.
- Hold a middle school career day and picnic to promote agricultural careers.

- Establish an agricultural careers corner in the school counselors office.

Elect capable officers and train them well:

- Help students analyze their communications and learning styles, so they can better work together. Check with your guidance counselor for personal profile resources or contact one of the educational institutions listed in the back of this guide.
- Watch the "Impact Leadership" video series from the National FFA Organization.
- Organize outdoor team-building activities to teach officers how to trust each other.
- Have officers develop their own notebooks that include information they learned through teambuilding and self-evaluation.
- Assign mailboxes to officers and committee chairpersons.
- Spend a weekend exchanging ideas with a neighboring chapter's officer team.

Ensure that all members share responsibilities and have access to leadership and other opportunities:

- Post exciting position descriptions for each committee assignment. Then encourage members to sign up for the committee of their choice.
- Use a checklist for every FFA activity and recruit members to fill the duty roster.
- Encourage each agriculture class to elect its own officers. This will allow more members opportunities to be involved in leadership positions.

Secure adequate financing:

- Keep detailed receipts of all income and expenses.
- Form a landscaping and lawn care cooperative.
- Start a chapter hauling service.
- Host a barbecue feed for the entire community and sell tickets.

- Conduct a sausage and smoked meat sale.
- Sell concessions at athletic events or sale barns.
- Hold a fruit sale with fruit grown from the chapter orchard.
- Start a scrap metal, aluminum and paper recycling program.
- Conduct a community cookout with fish raised by the aquaculture class.

Build school and community support:

- Hold a fall picnic and invite former FFA members, school administrators and community members.
- Demonstrate safe hunting procedures for a local television station.
- Sponsor an anti-drug program. One chapter organized two concerts to collect money for anti-drug groups.
- Conduct Food For America or Agriculture in the Classroom activities for elementary students.
- Host a "good will" business and industry tour with your chapter officers.
- Invite key community members or school leaders to the chapter banquet. Present a special award or certificate for their support.
- Invite and sponsor partners' and administrators' way to attend the state and national FFA conventions.
- Plan a breakfast, lunch or barbecue in partners' honor.
- Create a newsletter to keep administrators, parents and community members informed and included in FFA.
- Send supporters the brochure *Open a Promising Future for Students*, which explains in detail what the FFA is all about from partners' perspective.
- Host a parent night where chapter successes are highlighted.
- Pair chapter members with FFA alumni or community mentors who have similar career interests.

Continued on page 3-10 ➤



Conduct fun, well-planned, regularly-scheduled chapter meetings:

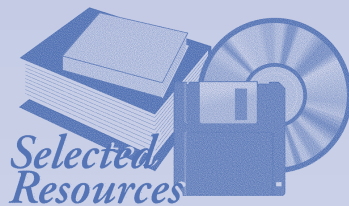
- Have the chapter executive committee plan the agenda and post it in the chapter meeting room or on the bulletin board several days prior to each meeting.
- List items of business along with any potential speakers on agendas to create excitement.
- Have the chapter recreation committee plan fun activities such as these after meetings:



- open gym night
- ice skating
- motivational speakers
- inter-chapter volleyball tournament
- bowling
- movies
- prizes (perfect attendance)
- refreshments (ice cream, pizza)
- family night
- slide show on international travel
- "bring a friend" meeting

Maintain proper equipment and records:

- Each May before the school year ends, encourage outgoing officers to evaluate whether any new equipment, record books and other FFA paraphernalia are needed. Then have the chapter sentinel order supplies through the *FFA Official Chapter Catalog*.



The following are key resources needed to build a successful, active FFA chapter.

A larger variety of FFA posters, brochures, videos and recruitment materials are available in the "Educational Resources" section of the *FFA Official Chapter Catalog*, which is produced annually.

- *Advisor's Guide to the FFA Student Handbook (FFA)*
- *Banquet Planning Guide (FFA)*
- *Bridging Horizons, an FFA Advisor's Guide to FFA Involvement for Members with Disabilities (FFA)*
- *Career Development Event Handbook (FFA)*
- *Chapter Leadership Development video with worksheet masters (FFA)*
- *Chapter Planning and Recognition: A Student Handbook (FFA)*
- *Culminating and Enabling Expectations for Selected National FFA Activities (FFA)*
- *Discover World Class Opportunities in FFA brochure (FFA)*
- *FFA: Preparing for the Future video with worksheet masters (FFA)*
- *FFA Selling and Fund-raising Guide (FFA)*
- *Leadership: Personal Development and Career Success (Cliff Ricketts, Delmar, 1997)*
- *FFA Student Handbook (FFA)*
- *Food for America kit (FFA)*
- *Leadership for a New Millennium recruitment materials (FFA)*
- *Many Faces, One People curriculum (National 4-H Organization)*
- *National FFA Career Development Event Questions and Answers (FFA)*
- *Official FFA Manual (FFA)*
- *True Colors personal assessment program (ESI)*
- *"Why Not?" recruitment brochure (FFA)*

Use the following worksheets:

- *Activity Planning Sheet, 3-12.*
- *Meeting Planning Form, 3-13.*
- *Chapter Officer Action Plan, 3-14.*
- *Fund-raising Idea Criteria Checklist, 3-15.*
- *Fund-raising Committee Checklist, 3-16.*
- *Sample Local Chapter Constitution, 3-17.*



Write: Who you're going to contact, potential meeting dates, next steps and ideas you want to implement immediately.

[illegible]

Use this simplified plan in your program today.
Write notes at left to get you started.

1. Link FFA activities to high-quality agricultural education curriculum.
2. Recruit and retain a diverse membership.
 - ☐ Train each student to recruit potential members.
 - ☐ Learn about your students' interests and show how agriculture courses and FFA activities fit in.
3. Inform every student about the diverse opportunities in FFA.
 - ☐ Give each new member an FFA calendar of events and a monthly newsletter that announces activities.
 - ☐ Have former members serve as role models.
4. Elect capable officers and train them well.
 - ☐ Have officers develop a clear mission and set goals at their annual chapter officer retreat.
5. Ensure that all members share responsibilities and have access to opportunities.
 - ☐ Create special awards and established a point system to record FFA activities.
6. Formulate a workable constitution and bylaws.
7. Develop a challenging program of activities.
8. Secure adequate financing.
9. Build school and community support.
10. Conduct fun, well-planned, regularly-scheduled chapter meetings.
11. Maintain proper equipment and records.



Describe the activities you do, how you implemented them and the results. Send your ideas on this form or a separate sheet of paper to Local Program Success Liaison, Teacher Services Team, National FFA Organization, 6060 FFA Drive, P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960, fax: 317-802-5334 or e-mail: jarmbruster@ffa.org.

Activity Planning Sheet

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

Teachers: Use this sheet to ensure that all members share responsibilities and have access to leadership and other opportunities. This sheet can help you keep track of the details of activity management.

Steps in Project Management:

1. Identify the project.
2. List the individual tasks necessary for completion.
3. Identify necessary resources for each task.
5. Create a timeline.
6. Follow-up and evaluate.

Activity Planning Sheet

Project: _____

Planned Completion Date: _____

<u>THINGS TO DO</u>	<u>COSTS/RESOURCES NEEDED</u>	<u>WHO'S IN CHARGE/DEADLINE</u>	<u>RESULTS</u>
Promotions			
Thank Yous			
News Release			
Evaluation			

COMMENTS:

Source: Mike Shirey and Chris Hall, agriculture teachers, Monroeville, Indiana

Meeting Planning Form

Teachers: Use this form with FFA chapter members to conduct well-planned, successful chapter meetings.

PURPOSE OF MEETING:

DATE:

TIME (Beginning and Ending):

LOCATION:

WHO'S IN CHARGE:

WHO RECORDS WHAT HAPPENS:

ASSIGNMENTS TO BRING TO THE MEETING:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Resources Needed</u>	<u>Person Responsible</u>

MEETING TOPICS (from members, officers, staff):

- ☐ Most important first
- ☐ Avoid back to back emotional issues
- ☐ Give each item a time period for discussion
- ☐ Include only items appropriate for the meeting

DATE OF NEXT MEETING (if one is needed to deal with issues addressed):

ADJOURN ON TIME:

RECREATION/SPECIAL EVENT PLANNED:

Chapter Officer Action Plan



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

Teachers: Use this form to assist chapter officers in developing their mission statement and focus on setting FFA chapter goals.

We, the members of the _____ FFA officer team set forth this mission:

What are the steps to obtain this mission?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What can I personally add or give to achieve this mission?

How does our team mission benefit the chapter and community?

What are possible problems or barriers to the team mission statement?

Fund-raising Idea Criteria Checklist



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

Teachers and students: Before you make that final decision on which fund-raiser you want to do, make sure it meets both your chapter's sales and overall program goals. Use this checklist to evaluate the pros and cons of potential fund-raising activities.

- ☐ Does this fund-raiser promote the image we want to have?
- ☐ Does this project meet the public relations goals of our chapter? If our goal is to promote the environment, are we selling products that are themselves environmentally friendly? Is the packaging environmentally friendly?
- ☐ Do we want to promote an agricultural product in our fund-raising?
- ☐ Is this a product or service chapter members will be excited about selling? Members will want to sell something if it is fun, there's some competition and if they can see rewards for their work.
- ☐ Is there a need for this product in our community? Will people buy it?
- ☐ Is the product or service of high quality? Will it fall apart or not work as we promised, thus, the community will not buy from us again next year?
- ☐ Is this project original? Will other school organizations, grocery markets or area stores be selling this product or service too? Not only will we have more competition selling an unoriginal product or service, but the community may be more willing to buy something that's new and different.
- ☐ Can we do this fund-raiser with the number of members we have in our FFA chapter? Can we meet our sales goals with the number of students we have? Will we have enough people to unload, check for quality and deliver the product or do we need to seek assistance?
- ☐ Can the manufacturer or the supplier be trusted? Will he or she listen to our individual chapter needs? Have other chapters had success with this supplier? Is the supplier trying to make this a win-win situation for everyone?
- ☐ What is the return policy for this product both back to us and to the manufacturer?
- ☐ Can the chapter make money selling this product or service? Is it profitable?

Source: *FFA Selling and Fund-raising Guide*

Fund-raising Committee Checklist

Teachers and students: There are many questions to answer as you begin fund-raising. Use this checklist to determine if you have all details covered for your potential fund-raising activities.

- ☐ What is the school policy on selling?
- ☐ Do other school organizations have first option on selling this product?
- ☐ What is the chance of a joint fund-raiser with other school organizations?
- ☐ Who is the manufacturer/supplier? Address? Phone number? Person we should talk to?
- ☐ What is the product name?
- ☐ What method of payment will need to be made by the chapter? Does the manufacturer/supplier expect payment before or after we sell? If payment is expected before we sell, can our chapter budget cover that amount?
- ☐ What day will our order be delivered?
- ☐ What are the storage requirements of the product while it is being delivered? (cold/cool temperature, dry storage, etc.)
- ☐ What is the manufacturer/supplier return policy for unwanted or damaged goods?
- ☐ What are some product features and benefits?
- ☐ Does the manufacturer have any brochures or promotional items for our salespeople to carry while selling?
- ☐ Will the sales forms be provided by the manufacturer or by the chapter?
- ☐ Does the manufacturer/supplier sponsor prize programs for top salespeople? Get a complete description of the program—how much does each member need to sell to win a prize? Are there chapter and individual prizes?
- ☐ What is the reputation of the manufacturer/supplier among other FFA chapters or school organizations?

Source: *FFA Selling and Fund-raising Guide*

Sample Local Chapter Constitution

Teachers: Use this sample as a model for your local chapter constitution.

FFA Chapter Constitution

ARTICLE I - Name, Mission and Strategies

Section A. The name of this organization shall be the _____ Chapter of the National FFA Organization.

Section B. The mission and strategies for this chapter are as follows:

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for **premier leadership, personal growth** and **career success** through **agricultural education**.

1. Develops competent and assertive agricultural leadership.
2. Increases awareness of the global and technological importance of agriculture and its contribution to our well-being.
3. Strengthens the confidence of agriculture students in themselves and their work.
4. Promotes the intelligent choice and establishment of an agricultural career.
5. Encourages achievement in supervised agricultural experience programs.
6. Encourages wise management of economic, environmental and human resources of the community.
7. Develops interpersonal skills in teamwork, communications, human relations and social interaction.
8. Builds character and promotes citizenship, volunteerism and patriotism.
9. Promotes cooperation and cooperative attitudes among all people.
10. Promotes healthy lifestyles.
11. Encourages excellence in scholarship.

ARTICLE II - Organization

Section A. The _____ Chapter of FFA is a chartered local unit of the _____ Association of FFA, which is chartered by the National FFA Organization.

Section B. This chapter accepts in full the provisions in the constitution and bylaws of the _____ Association of FFA as well as those of the National FFA Organization.

ARTICLE III - Membership

Section A. Membership in this chapter shall be of three kinds: (1) Active; (2) Alumni; and (3) Honorary, as defined by the National FFA Constitution.

Section B. The regular activities of this chapter shall be carried on by the active membership.

Section C. Honorary membership in this chapter shall be limited to the Honorary Chapter FFA Degree.

continued...

Section D. Active members in good standing may vote on all business brought before the chapter. An active member shall be considered in good standing when:

1. While in school, be enrolled in at least one agricultural education course during the school year and/or follow a planned course of study. Either course must include a supervised agricultural experience program, the objective of which is preparation for an agricultural career.
2. Show an interest in the affairs of the organization by attending meetings, striving for degrees of membership and participating in other organized activities of the chapter.
3. Pay all current state and national dues by the date determined by the chapter.
4. Display conduct consistent with the ideals and purposes of the National FFA Organization.

Section E. Names of applicants for membership shall be filed with the membership committee.

ARTICLE IV - Emblems

Section A. The emblem of the FFA shall be the emblem for the chapter.

Section B. Emblems used by the members shall be designated by the National FFA Organization.

ARTICLE V - Degrees and Privileges of Active Membership

Section A. There shall be five degrees of active membership based on individual achievement. These degrees are (1) Discovery FFA Degree, (2) Greenhand FFA Degree, (3) Chapter FFA Degree, (4) State FFA Degree and (5) American FFA Degree. All Discovery FFA members are entitled to wear the regulation bronze and blue emblem pin. All "Greenhands" are entitled to wear the regulation bronze emblem pin. All members holding the Chapter FFA Degree are entitled to wear the regulation silver emblem pin. All members holding the State FFA Degree are entitled to wear the regulation gold emblem charm. All members holding the American FFA Degree are entitled to wear the regulation gold emblem key.

Section B. Discovery FFA Degree. To be eligible to receive the Discovery FFA Degree from a chapter, the member must meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Be enrolled in agricultural education class for at least a portion of the school year while in grades 7-8.
2. Have become a dues paying member of the FFA at local, state and national levels.
3. Participate in at least one local FFA chapter activity outside of scheduled class time.
4. Have knowledge of agriculturally related career, ownership and entrepreneurial opportunities.
5. Be familiar with the local FFA chapter program of activities.
6. Submit written applications for the degree.

Section C. Greenhand FFA Degree. Minimum qualifications for election:
(Refer to National Constitution.)

1. Be enrolled in agricultural education and have satisfactory plans for a supervised agricultural experience program.
2. Learn and explain the meaning of the FFA Creed, Motto and Salute.
3. Describe and explain the meaning of the FFA emblem and colors.
4. Demonstrate a knowledge of the FFA Code of Ethics and the proper use of the FFA jacket.
5. Demonstrate a knowledge of the history of the organization, the chapter constitution and bylaws and the chapter Program of Activities.
6. Personally own or have access to the *Official FFA Manual* and the *FFA Student Handbook*.
7. Submit a written application for the Greenhand FFA Degree.

continued...

Section D. Chapter FFA Degree. Minimum qualifications for election:
(Refer to National Constitution.)

1. Must have received the Greenhand FFA Degree.
2. Must have satisfactorily completed the equivalent of at least 180 hours of systematic school instruction in agricultural education at or above the ninth grade level, have in operation an approved supervised agricultural experience program and be enrolled in an agricultural education course.
3. Must have participated in the planning and conducting of at least three official functions in the chapter Program of Activities.
4. Must have earned and productively invested at least \$150 by the member's own efforts or worked at least 45 hours in excess of scheduled class time, or a combination thereof, and have developed plans for continued growth and improvement in a supervised agricultural experience program.
5. Must have effectively led a group discussion for 15 minutes.
6. Must have demonstrated five procedures of parliamentary law.
7. Must show progress toward individual achievement in the FFA award programs.
8. Must have a satisfactory scholastic record.
9. Must submit a written application for the Chapter FFA Degree.

Section E. State FFA Degree. Minimum qualifications for selection:

1. Qualifications for the State FFA Degree are those set forth in the constitution of the state FFA association and National FFA Organization.

Section F. American FFA Degree. Minimum qualifications for selection:

1. Qualifications for the American FFA Degree are those set forth in the constitution of the National FFA Organization.

ARTICLE VI - State and Chapter Officers

Section A. The offices of an FFA chapter shall be president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, reporter and sentinel. Other officers may be elected as deemed appropriate by the local advisor and/or governing body. The teacher(s) of agricultural education shall be the FFA advisor(s). Chapter officers shall be elected annually or semi-annually by the members present at any regular meeting of the chapter.

ARTICLE VII - Dues

Section A. Local dues in this chapter shall be fixed annually by a majority vote of the active members.

Section B. Full local, state and national dues shall be paid by all active members.

Section C. No member shall be considered as active and in good standing unless he/she pays full local, state and national FFA dues.

ARTICLE VIII - Amendments

Section A. This constitution may be amended or changed at any regular chapter meeting by a two-thirds vote of the active members present, providing it is not in conflict with the state association constitution or that of the National FFA Organization.

Section B. Bylaws may be adopted to fit the needs of the chapter at any regular chapter meeting by a two-thirds vote of the active members present providing such bylaws do not conflict in any way with the constitution and bylaws of either the state association or the national organization.



Below are ideas from teachers across the nation that will help you build a strong, active FFA chapter.

Officer Contracts

The Harlan FFA Chapter guarantees that its elected officers fulfill their duties. At the beginning of their terms, FFA officers sign a contract, listing their respective duties and responsibilities. At year's end, members and advisors rate the officers' performance. Officers whose performance falls below a 95 percent rating must reimburse the chapter for the costs paid on their behalf to attend various events during the year. "Since we implemented the program in 1997, all officers have lived up to the chapter's expectations, and none has reimbursed the chapter," reports Daniel Leinen. *Daniel Leinen, Harlan Community Schools, Harlan, Iowa, (712) 755-3101 or dleinen@harlan.k12.ia.us*

Parliamentary Procedure Outreach

Mark Welch and his FFA officers build the reputation of the FFA as a source for leadership training by teaching other student leaders about parliamentary procedure. Training sessions includes how to move motions or amendments and the general duties of elected officers. Organizations such as DECA, FHA, and student council, including government classes, have solicited the chapter about training. Welch hopes to offer the same training in the future to every student officer during an annual workshop. He says chapters can be proactive in promoting their skills in this area by conducting mock meetings for teacher organizations or on the school's closed cable system Channel One. *Mark Welch, Union City Community High School, Union City, Indiana, (765) 964-4840*

Career Development Events (CDE) Internships

Randi Hunewill prepares her floriculture CDE team through a volunteer internship with a local florist. Students must obtain parental permission to participate during school free time or after hours. They learn to arrange flowers or to make dish gardens for example. Advanced students use the career skills learned on site to teach their peers about floriculture during class time. The local florist benefits from the partnership by having a ready source of fully trained workers for peak seasons and during the summer. To supplement the professional training, Hunewill locates industry resources on the Internet. *Randi Hunewill, Smith Valley High School, Smith, Nevada, (702) 465-2332 or hunewill2@tele-net.net*

Student Leadership Summit

Johnny Story and his FFA officers initiated and sponsored a summit for student leaders two years ago. With help from principals and guidance counselors, they planned a daylong workshop that addressed school issues and provided students with leadership training. This year's summit focused on community involvement and 70 students from eight organizations, including the FFA, participated in a street renovation project. Involvement in co-curricular activities has risen 183 percent, fulfilling school officials' goal of having every student involved in at least one activity outside of class. "The summit gives students a voice in their school and raises awareness of our expertise in leadership," Story says. *Johnny Story, Apollo High School, Owensboro, Kentucky, (502) 278-9057*

Participation Awards

Lowell Ely offers extra credit and various other unique rewards to students at Inman High to entice them to participate in new activities or during class—something outside of their comfort zones. Ely started this routine more than nine years ago in an attempt to build a program which was heavily focused on agricultural mechanics. His advice: Make all incentives consistent, fair and fun. For example, he gives out fishing lures to students for participating in a wildlife contest or lollipops for taking part in a land judging contest. "Success breeds success," he says. "Set your expectations high, reward all students and they will come out on top." *Lowell Ely, Inman High School, Inman, Kansas, (316) 585-6441*

Reading to Elementary Students

Centerville FFA members annually conduct a community activity that involves reading books to elementary students in kindergarten through third grade. The event is held in conjunction with Read Across America Day. They work with public librarians to secure appropriate books, ranging from Dr. Suess to those with agricultural themes. They also read through their selections beforehand to prepare for their visits. On the day of their visits, members wear FFA T-shirts, introduce themselves to students and explain why they are there. After reading for 15-20 minutes, they field questions from listeners. (Originally, students contacted the elementary principal and teachers to obtain permission for the activity. Upon receiving a positive response, they scheduled their visits mostly during agriculture class time.) The activity has raised members' awareness of the needs of elementary students. Elementary students likewise have learned about the FFA. *Dianne Strickler, Centerville High School, Centerville, Iowa, (515) 856-0617 or stricklerd@aea15.k12.ia.us*

Promising Practices continued on page 3-21 ➤

FFA Days

To help freshmen understand the FFA better and feel a part of the membership, Don Lockwood annually holds an FFA Day each Friday during the month of September. These special event days follow a classroom orientation on the history and purpose of the FFA. Chapter officers assist Lockwood on each of these Fridays in conducting activities that highlight one of the purposes of the FFA, such as building teamwork, communications skills, self-esteem and leadership skills. Besides analyzing their own personality traits and learning about the opportunities FFA offers, freshmen develop a plan of activities for their class. Lockwood uses FFA's Chapter Success Series videos to supplement the activities on self-esteem and national officer retiring addresses to promote the leadership opportunities available to members. In conducting these event days for four years, Lockwood has seen a higher retention rate, more motivation and greater overall involvement among freshmen.

Don Lockwood, Sullivan High School, Sullivan, Illinois, (217) 728-8311, ext. 285 or dtlock@hotmail.com

FFA Feed Store

Four years ago, the McClave FFA Chapter started a feed store to supply students with high-quality show feeds at reasonable prices. By the end of the first summer, teachers and members identified the feed store as an educational, fund-raising and community service opportunity. The store grossed more than \$100,000 last year and served more than 250 customers within a 250-mile area, while giving members hands-on career experience. The chapter rented a store on Main Street and now employs a student, who is considered a school employee, for 24 hours per week during the summer months. A neighboring business owner helps with customers during the rest of the time. Students also handle large ranch orders as needed and daily duties—such as preparing a business plan, sales, bookkeeping and advertising—as a part of a small-business course. In the course, they also study small-business management and economics. A feed board governs policies, and is comprised of one representative from each class and a program advisory council member. The chapter purchases feed and show supplies from commercial vendors.

The chapter originally obtained financing through the school district and used Carl Perkins monies to purchase equipment, such as a forklift and pallet truck. The chapter tries to achieve a 10-percent profit annually, most of which is reinvested in inventory and equipment. The chapter has reaped \$1,500 in funds for its treasury and funded two \$250 scholarships this year. Students have realized pride in their store's growth and community members have appreciated the convenience of the store.

Don Thorn and Del Chase, McClave High School, McClave, Colorado, (719) 829-4517 or mcaged@hotmail.com

Theme Meetings Help Recruit and Retain Younger Members

Every junior FFA meeting at Letchworth Central High School has a theme that is related to a career or a competitive event, such as livestock judging or engines. The practice attracts younger students, retains their interest and provides avenues for future involvement. Initially, a committee of senior FFA members organizes the monthly meetings and creates a list of meeting topics of interest to junior students, which is published annually. Once junior officers are elected, they provide input into the process as well. One senior officer oversees the junior program, which retains two-thirds of all students. Younger students are invited to senior high meetings that are held during the evening hours.

Jeff Perry, Letchworth Central High School, Gainesville, New York, (716) 493-2571 or perryja@wycol.com

Agriculture Olympics

At the beginning of each school year, Mercer County, Ky., chapter officers hold an agriculture olympics to persuade enrolled agricultural education students to consider FFA membership. The goal of the after-school event is to show non-members that FFA offers camaraderie, fun and interesting things to do. The event and its accompanying cook-out allow freshmen to meet and to learn to work with chapter officers. Teacher Michael Jones credits the annual event with maintaining, and even increasing, local membership levels. The olympics contains both co-ed team and individual activities, such as the truck push, hay stacking, calf roping, hay throwing, fence post throwing and egg toss contests to name a few. Jones also suggests that advisors participate in some of the activities to show students that they like to have fun too. To ensure a large turnout, officers send letters to students and promote the event with posters in school.

Michael Jones, Mercer County High School, Harrodsburg, Kentucky, (859) 734-4364 or jonesm@merc.k12.ky.us

Web Sites Provide CDE Updates

Nicky Lindsey prefers using the World Wide Web to stay current in every aspect of her job, including career development event (CDE) rules and changes. The Texas FFA and agriculture teachers' web sites provide valuable information affecting CDE participation, including guidelines, results and rule changes. Lindsey uses most of this information in training and teaching students, while in other instances she passes it on directly to her students as background. Last summer, for example, state leaders added a new event, which had rule changes and clarifications. Lindsey was able to download the data for free faster than waiting for the published information to arrive via mail for a nominal fee. By doing so, she was able to know for certain what the rule changes were before training her teams, rather than modifying their routines later. National CDE rules changes, resources and updates can be viewed by visiting ffa.org and locating career development events.

Nicky Lindsey, Decatur High School, Decatur, Texas, (940) 627-2038 or niklindsey@hotmail.com

Chapter Leadership Camp

The Glen Rose FFA has its own leadership camp, which is open to all members, especially incoming freshmen. For 15 years now, chapter officers have planned the sessions, chosen their themes and topics, and prepared and presented workshop sessions. The camp is held at a local electric utilities leadership center. Texas FFA officers are invited to participate to offer chapter members exposure to state leaders. Besides helping chapter officers build presentation skills, the camp provides members leadership training outside of the classroom. Camp results are clear: Glen Rose has had four state FFA officers and two National FFA Presidents.

Gary Rosenbusch, Glen Rose High School, Glen Rose, Texas, (254) 897-4383 or rosega@grisd.net

Bilingual Events and Materials

To encourage participation in public-speaking events, and to retain and recruit a diverse membership, teachers from California's South Coast Region allow members, who are English as a Second Language (ESL) students, to participate in the FFA Creed Event by reciting it in Spanish or their primary language. At the same time, the San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara sections allow members to participate in the FFA Opening/Closing Ceremonies Competitive Event in Spanish or their primary language. Kimberly Bellah says ESL students who would never have participated in any FFA activities have an increased sense of self-worth, re-enroll in agriculture classes and develop a feeling of ownership in the program. Teachers interested in obtaining a Spanish or Hmong version for either of these two events should contact Bellah directly.

Kimberly Bellah, California Polytechnic State University—San Luis Obispo, California, (805) 756-6106 or kbellah@calpoly.edu

Student Handbook

Horacio Garza Jr. uses a handbook he created to provide students and their parents with information about the local program and chapter operations. The handbook contains a yearly calendar of events, phone numbers, agreements and contracts, regulations and other important information that students need to participate in program or chapter activities. The handbook serves as an aid in conversing with parents and students about FFA opportunities or procedures. It also is used as a tool in keeping the lines of communications open between parents, students and other instructors who teach FFA members.

Horacio Garza Jr., Sharyland High School, Mission, Texas, (956) 580-5307 or g4lachogarza@yahoo.com

Industry Judges

William Stanforth uses industry judges to evaluate all students for state career development event teams. These judges—who include a local veterinarian, veterinarian and research lab technicians, dog trainers, groomers and pet shop managers—come to school, evaluate students' skills in each event and select the top four students for each team.

Students explain and demonstrate practical skills for each judge. Judges who are also industry sponsors evaluate students as prospective employees for their businesses and students learn to communicate and market their skills.

William D. Stanforth, Live Oaks Career Development Center, Milford, Ohio, (513) 575-1900, ext. 271

Adopt-A-Highway Program

Marshall, Ill., FFA members conduct the Adopt-A-Highway program to serve their community, care for the environment and receive positive support for the local chapter. Teacher Eric Reutter simply called the local division of the state department of transportation (DOT) and enrolled in the program. Illinois DOT officials created the program to allow volunteer groups to "adopt" and clean up the trash from a section of highway at least four times a year. In return, DOT officials erect a sign along the highway recognizing the group for their efforts. The program has allowed members to understand volunteerism, gain a greater respect for the environment and the community, and build friendships from working on a common task. Members have even been known to encourage other students to stop littering. Reutter has used the program to supplement his lectures and discussions on pollution and environmental dangers of littering.

Eric Reutter, Marshall High School, Marshall, Illinois, (217) 826-2395 or ereutter@marshall.k12.il.us

Issues Exploration

Helping students identify, understand and discuss agricultural issues is a priority for the instructors at Central High School in Woodstock, Va. Specific examples of how students explore issues permeate the curriculum and FFA activities.

Food for America

Prior to enrolling in the program, students are introduced to agricultural issues as elementary students through the chapter's Food for America outreach. For about 10 years, FFA members have taken a proactive stance in discussing animal welfare issues with fourth graders to create a positive impression and to enhance their knowledge of animal agriculture.

- Members display poultry, beef, sheep and swine on the grassy area between the elementary and high school buildings. They describe how farmers strive to ensure animal health and disease-free food through various production practices.
- Members create posters that describe the cuts of meat from each specie that students will encounter in the grocery store.
- Members conduct their activities to coincide with the elementary students' study of Virginia history and its economy.

County Fair

The chapter annually studies animal welfare issues and promotes high-quality livestock areas at the fair and members' homes. At the county fair, all members are encouraged to keep their pens in good condition and animals well-groomed through an award program in cooperation with the 4-H organization.

FFA Week Outreach

During National FFA Week, advisors annually travel with chapter officers to Virginia's capital at Richmond to visit with their state delegates. Besides promoting the FFA, officers interact with state legislators and learn about issues that affect agriculture and rural Virginia.

Exploration Through Instruction

Central High students explore issues that affect agriculture during their second and third years of instruction. In both the agricultural technology management and natural resources courses, students learn about current events and how modern science affects political and economic decisions. For example in the management course, instructor George Bowers collects and distributes newspaper clippings to his class. For more than two weeks, students summarize and discuss their topics, which include cloning, animal welfare and urbanization in the Shenandoah Valley. Bowers evaluates students by asking them to write about each issue, describe each perspective and provide specific examples of solutions to the issues. Many students use the classroom discussions to develop speeches for FFA public speaking contests. In the natural resources course, students follow a similar routine to discuss water quality, zoning, as well as the Endangered Species Act and its implications for animals and society. At the conclusion of the course, students attend a board of supervisors meeting to observe issues, such as zoning, being discussed at a county level. Following the meeting, students discuss how they would have voted on zoning cases, such as set-backs for a poultry facility, if they would have been a supervisor.

Sherry Heishman or George Bowers at Central High School, Woodstock, Virginia, (540) 459-3806

Randy Ward, Peter Muhlenberg Middle School, Woodstock, Virginia, (540) 459-2941

FFA Class Officers

Teachers Willie Gholston and Marvin Carter have found that allowing each class to elect a chapter officer from its own peers ensures that all members share responsibilities and have access to leadership and other chapter opportunities. Each spring or summer, both instructors select two or three students per class for senior chapter offices, such as president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. They add these names to a pool of candidates chosen because of their scores and chapter participation. Gholston and Carter also choose candidates from among the incoming freshmen who meet the criteria for junior officers, such as reporter or parliamentarian. At school's start, FFA members from each

class elect the officers from their respective candidate pools with the chapter president being elected from the junior or senior class pools. Through the process, members have learned parliamentary procedure, how to nominate qualified candidates and elect a slate of officers that truly represent their needs. Those members not elected from the pool are regularly chosen to oversee the chapter's committees. Both instructors have found the process encourages more involvement on the part of students within younger classes because of the influence of the officers from their peer group.

Willie Gholston and Marvin Carter, Wilcox Central High School, Camden, Alabama, (334) 682-9239

Invitational CDEs

The Marysville, Ohio, FFA chapter and Alumni affiliate annually host an invitational event, including competition and instruction in seven state career development events (CDEs). Nearly 1,000 FFA members from across the state participated last year to prepare for state competition, since it closely follows state CDE format, including the use of scantron scoring sheets. The whole event lasts only about three hours on a Saturday morning. Results are posted within a day or two via the Internet. Marysville FFA Alumni handle the event's accounting and billing. FFA members field phone calls, mail informational packets, set up the facilities and concession areas and assist with grading. At least three months before the March event, resource personnel who run the various events and coach students are secured. The state CDE skills coordinator is hired to assist with the scoring and other event tasks. Catalogs provide a convenient method for ordering equipment and supplies for the various events.

John Carl or Bill Keck, Marysville High School, Marysville, Ohio, (937) 642-0010

Officer Training Programs

For 18 years while he taught in Arizona, Jim Armbruster conducted an FFA officer training program. These four- to six-day retreats allowed officers to develop an activity action plan and empowered them to become better student leaders. Armbruster began these officer retreats on campus with three days of training, nightly recreational activities and a mock banquet. He obtained administration approval for the activity early on by submitting a comprehensive plan and student evaluations. Later, teams traveled off campus to mountain cabins or resorts, depending on officer input and availability. The FFA chapter provided \$500 toward costs and school administrators furnished transportation. FFA officers planned the entire program, including session themes, menus, cooking and cleaning detail. They participated in team-building, including program and chapter activity planning activities. Officers drafted and developed a detailed annual calendar that identified who was responsible for each activity and presented their goals to members for approval. This type of long-range planning removed some of the day-to-day operations from Armbruster's desk and placed it in officers' hands.

Contact Armbruster for sample training plans.

Jim Armbruster, National FFA Organization (originally Yuma and Tucson, Arizona), (317) 802-4334 or jarmbruster@ffa.org

Hospital Service Project

What started out as a tragedy for one Woodstock, Va., stroke victim ended in a service project that improved the well-being of FFA members and community residents. The victim, a member of the American Legion and a community activist, convinced agriculture teacher George Bowers that the area hospital needed a footpath for stroke rehabilitation.

Woodstock's Central and Muhlenberg Middle School FFA chapters were quick to respond. Fourteen members and their advisors, Bowers and Randy Ward, built a multi-surface footpath in the hospital's courtyard, reducing maintenance costs because hospital staff did not have to care for the entire area.

Footpath Offers Hope to Victims

The pathway—composed of gravel, sawdust, mulch, wood, sand and grass surfaces—is designed to help stroke victims prepare for life after they leave the hospital.

- Victims learn to use different walking aids, such as canes and walkers, as well as to monitor their balance as they navigate over the different surfaces.
- Patients, especially those who were avid gardeners before their strokes, can develop their muscles by using rakes in the footpath's sandy area.

Project Sparks Community Support

The project enjoyed widespread community support. Most of the funding came from the local American Legion; wood, sand, gravel, sawdust and other supplies were donated by area businesses. The FFA provided herbicide to control unwanted weeds and grass.

Benefits for All

Besides directly improving therapy for stroke victims, the project had a positive effect on the FFA chapter and learning:

- Many members who participated became better leaders and were elected to chapter office.
- Contact with older students sparked middle school members' interest in FFA.
- Students gained satisfaction from seeing the community benefit from their work.
- Students learned construction and landscaping techniques during the building of the footpath.

Bowers hopes an FFA member can develop a supervised agriculture experience (SAE) program around the care and maintenance of the footpath and courtyard.

Advice for Others

Bowers offers these tips for conducting hospital service projects:

1. Contact the hospital administrator to determine the local need.

A variety of needs exist, including donating toys to the pediatric ward.

2. **Allow the best person to make contact with hospital staff.** A person who already has a connection with the hospital can improve your chances of finding the information you need.

3. **Secure community funding.** Contact organizations for funding that already focus on civic activities such as the Rotary, Lions and Ruritan.

George Bowers and Sherry Heishman, (540) 459-3806 or Randy Ward, (540) 459-2941

*Promising Practices
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One of the surfaces students constructed within the hospital courtyard included wooden decking.

Motivating Students

Leigh Loughhead uses several tactics to retain and motivate FFA members. Some tangible results of the practices below include increased enrollment and FFA membership. More students are also becoming involved in the local chapter, completing degree applications and running for state office. Here are a few of Loughhead's ideas:

- Encourage as many members as possible to help with each activity. Loughhead has found that when active members talk to younger or inactive peers that they tend to become involved. A day before each activity, chairpersons use sign-up sheets to contact and remind interested members that they volunteered to participate.
- Encourage other members, in addition to chapter officers, to assist with activities. FFA officers can easily become "burned out" if they feel they are doing everything in the chapter, Loughhead cautions. "It takes a collective effort from all members to make a chapter work."
- Ask members one-on-one to chair or oversee certain activities. Some members need that personal attention for them to become involved, Loughhead says. "They often are the students who have the potential, but seldom raise their hands in class or meetings because they are afraid of what everyone else might think of them."
- Encourage members to participate in areas or activities in which you believe they would excel. By the end of students' first year, Loughhead says she can deduce what their career goals might be. For example, if a student wants to pursue a career as an elementary school teacher, then she will encourage them to oversee the Food for America committee.
- Reinforce the concept to members that they can achieve their goals no matter what the circumstances. Every year, Loughhead finds members who come from financially challenging or difficult home situations. "FFA is equal opportunity," she says. "Sometimes all it takes is finding a sponsor, so a member can attend one event. They often become hooked then and can see that everyone has the same chance to succeed."

*Leigh Loughhead, Yuma High School, Yuma, Arizona
(520) 782-1881, ext. 511 or yh_loughhead@yumaed.org*

CDE* Strategies

The secret to the Bear River, Calif., FFA chapter's success in career development events (CDEs)* stems from encouraging its students to participate in events annually. Regularly being at a "high level of competition develops within members a mental toughness and confidence" that is important, explains Steve Paasch, the FFA advisor. Bear River's strategy definitely works when you review the

accomplishments of their students. In total, the chapter has had nine different state champion teams and individuals in the last four years. Bear River's students have also earned national recognition in parliamentary procedure and live-stock evaluation.

"CDEs are ingeniously designed, with their rules and parameters, to assist FFA members in developing the skills and mental agility so they can move ahead of their future real-world competitors," Paasch says. The goal is about more than winning events, he adds. "We hope that students carry the skills, adaptability, intensity and ability to set goals over to their chosen career areas."

Tips for Success

Paasch prepares at least 25 students concurrently for CDEs. He utilizes these techniques to keep students at a high competitive level.

- To make efficient use of practices, Paasch divides members into small groups to develop specific skills. To describe how the idea works, he likens the process to what football coaches do when they conduct different drills for linemen, receivers and special teams. Paasch says the key is keeping students' minds challenged for a high percentage of their practice time. In smaller groups, students are required to contribute more than in larger ones. They also spend 90 percent of their time mastering their skills while being scored or evaluated by their peers or Paasch.
- Encourage students to set preparation goals. At the start of practice, students in livestock judging, for example, may choose to give three sets of reasons in two hours. Paasch then encourages them to accomplish their goals, which contributes to their mental self-discipline.
- Have former students to conduct workshops for current teams.
- Conduct visualization exercises to help members focus more successfully. Whether it's prior to an event to control nervousness or in practice to develop an "event" frame of mind, students visualize creating a positive image of a successful performance. "Half an event is developing the exact frame of mind to perform," Paasch says. "Every time you view the Olympics, you see successful athletes using visualization."

*Steve Paasch, Bear River High School, Grass Valley, California
(530) 268-3700*

FFA Knowledge Event

The Zumbrota-Mazeppa, Minn., chapter holds an FFA Knowledge Event to educate first-year members about and to motivate Greenhands to become more involved in the organization. The event consists of a 50-100 question multiple choice test that covers all aspects of the FFA organization. The test is based on the Official FFA Manual. The top three teams and individuals receive awards and medals. The event promotes well-informed members and provides first-year members with another opportunity to compete. (In Minnesota, a regional contest is held in January. A state event is held in April and a national invitational is held in Louisville in October.)

Jon Yutsen, Zumbrota-Mazeppa High School, Zumbrota, Minnesota (507) 732-7395 or jpyffa@aol.com

Leadership Adventures Program

Amy Kesler conducts a summer leadership development program to enhance team-building skills and the personal growth of FFA members. Any chapter member open to trying new things and who has a sense of adventure can participate. The program consists of a one-week session at the New York FFA Leadership Training Camp at the Oswegatchie Education Center located in upstate New York. Along the bus route to and from the camp, members and chaperones conduct excursions and tours to various agricultural sites and places of interest. Sites include the National FFA Center, Rock-n-Roll Hall of Fame, Niagara Falls, St. Lawrence Seaway System, dairy farms and fish hatcheries. The FFA alumni affiliate assists the program financially. Because the program enjoys the full support of the school board for this out-of-state trip, parental permission and liability issues are covered in the school board policy. Kesler credits the program with improved student personal character, more chapter members and increased member participation in FFA activities above the local level. Advisors interested in more information can visit the camp's website at www.oswegatchie.org.

Amy M. Kesler, Wright City High School, Wright City, Missouri (636) 745-7513, UGADAWG90@hotmail.com

Wall Calendars

As a past state officer, Darcy Johnson knows that it is important to keep students informed about diverse opportunities in FFA. She keeps a three-month calendar of events on her classroom wall, so all students can review and determine which activities they want to participate in. Tentative yearly calendars are distributed at the parent/member ice cream social at the beginning of the year. Johnson says that when parents are informed about opportunities, members are more likely to participate. Teacher assistants help Johnson keep the calendars up to date and weekly officer meetings keep activities well-planned.

Darcy Johnson, Buckeye Union High School, Buckeye, Arizona (623) 386-4423 or DarcyJ@BUHSD.org

Collegiate FFA Enhances Retention and Recruitment

Dr. Greg Thompson of Oregon State University (OSU) primarily uses the collegiate FFA chapter as a connecting activity to keep undergraduate agricultural education students focused on FFA and their career path. The chapter allows students interested in teaching to work with young people and professionals to further their own development in FFA. Thompson says OSU students, who participate in state conventions, judge leadership events, chaperone, serve as public relations officials and organize and implement leadership activities for FFA members, gain a new perspective of leadership development and working with youth. Even more importantly, the collegiate chapter serves as the catalyst for OSU students to change their majors to agricultural education. Thompson uses collegiate FFA events to emphasize the intangible benefits of teaching to students and dispel myths about teaching. By allowing college students to work with FFA members, the collegiate chapter helps them understand their role as adults in providing opportunities for youth and serves as a transition between high school FFA and alumni membership. Thompson says it is advantageous for high school teachers to encourage their graduating seniors to join a collegiate FFA when they attend college. Students who come from high schools that do not have an FFA chapter learn more about FFA and experience the power of leadership. Thompson has found that as they graduate from college and enter their professions and communities, collegiate FFA members are more apt to become involved in a local FFA alumni and other service organizations.

Dr. Greg Thompson, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon (541) 737-1337 or Greg.Thompson@orst.edu

Tips on Involving FFA Members

Involvement by all members is vital to the Des Lacs-Burlington, N.D., FFA Chapter's success and growth. FFA advisor and instructor Richard Sabol follows a few tips to keep members involved:

1. A mixture of all age groups and classes is assigned to committees for the chapter's program of activities—both officers and seventh and eighth grade members alike.
2. FFA is promoted as a learning opportunity. Even though it may be very gratifying to win CDEs, proficiency awards or other activities, Sabol feels that members need to learn one new idea at an event. By doing so, they gain knowledge that they can use at other events or pass on to younger members, which strengthens the chapter and encourages involvement.
3. Sabol's best resource is word-of-mouth. The Des Lacs-Burlington chapter has entire families that belong to it and are enrolled in the program. Older brothers and sisters serve as mentors for younger siblings both in terms of joining the FFA and becoming involved in the chapter.

Richard Sabol, Des Lacs-Burlington High School, Des Lacs, North Dakota (701) 725-4334 or Richard.Sabol@sendit.nodak.edu

CDEs Outgrowth of Instruction

Besides being a great avenue for FFA members to meet their peers, Crystal Pietrowicz has found that career development events (CDEs) can provide a non-threatening learning environment if they are structured as an outgrowth of instruction. For example, last year Pietrowicz began the school year by using CDE materials and concepts. Everything students learned in class contributed to their readiness in CDEs that reflected careers available in the community or region. She taught plant anatomy and identification from lists already common to her area and the CDE. Students memorized names and plant characteristics. For floral design, students created centerpieces and learned about the principles of design and color. Students also conducted research and wrote their ideas or findings into reports. These assignments provided critical skills for oral presentations. They then applied this knowledge at one of Maine's regional events in nursery identification, floral design and extemporaneous speaking. For Pietrowicz, the competition was a success because it tested students' knowledge of the subject matter taught in the classroom. One FFA member placed second in extemporaneous speaking and all chapter members competed in at least one CDE. *Crystal Pietrowicz, Main Vocational Region 10, Brunswick, Maine (207) 729-6622 or crystal@mvr10.org*

Plant Donations Fund Chapter

In order to raise funds for chapter activities and the department, Kimberly Lugo and Alonso, Fla., FFA members write letters to local nurseries asking them to donate various plants for the chapter's spring plant sale. Students write and mail the letters on behalf of the chapter. They also handle plant collection and set-up for the sale. Besides learning how to write business letters and merchandise products, the activity provides students with tangible results for their labor. The activity has been successful in filling the chapter's treasury.

Kimberly Lugo, Alonso High School, Tampa, Florida (813) 356-1525 or ogul34@hotmail.com

Fund-raising Accounting System

The Silver Sage, Nev., FFA Chapter created a credit system to reward those members who regularly participate in fund-raising activities and to encourage others who are hesitant to do so. The chapter treasurer established an individual computerized account for each member in Quicken Books. Money is credited to members' accounts as they earn funds for the chapter through fund-raising activities. The money in members' accounts can only be used for official FFA activities: purchasing of FFA jackets for Greenhands, paying expenses to the conventions and judging practices or attending fairs and other official activities. The program works in this manner: When the chapter sells an individual item, such as a jar of jerky, the amount of money allotted to a members' accounts is determined by chapter officers. After all expenses are paid and the needed profit margin for the chapter is subtracted from the remain-

ing amount, members' accounts are credited with the remaining funds. A separate system of accounting is in place for members who work concession stands. Since the Silver Sage FFA has incorporated this fund-raising accounting system, instructor Dennis Digenan has found it easier to encourage members to participate in fund-raising activities. The key to the system is giving complete explanations of these fund-raising ideas to members, so they can be accountable for their own earnings.

Dennis Digenan, Spring Creek High School, Spring Creek, Nevada (775) 753-5575

CDE Part of Successful Program

The Woodbury, Conn., FFA has consistently had five or six career development event (CDE) teams compete at state and national level competitions annually over the last 10 years. This year the Woodbury FFA has gained the reputation as the first chapter in the country to send 11 teams to national competition. There are several reasons for the chapter's success. 1) Most importantly, CDE teams are an outgrowth of a diverse, indepth curriculum that is tied solidly to student supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs) and the FFA. CDEs are only one element of this successful program. 2) CDE teams match the program's curriculum and much of the knowledge is taught within classes biennially. 3) Students interested in continuing their education as an outgrowth of their SAEs or instruction are encouraged to join a CDE team. 4) CDE teams practice mostly before or after school hours, so as not to detract from classroom learning. 5) CDE teams are coached by six dedicated teachers who have mastered their respective disciplines or by former or senior-level students who have previously competed in CDEs or have a background in the specific area. The Farm Business Management and Environmental Science CDE teams are coached by the high school business and chemistry / environmental science teachers respectively. 6) The program enjoys strong community support. Advisory committee members and alumni members serve as resource people and open their facilities to community field trips that offer students real-life experiences for their CDE preparation. 7) These real-life experiences are woven back into the classroom and student SAEs. For example, one student continued his undergraduate and graduate education in meats science as a result of participation in the state and National FFA Meats Evaluation CDE. Another Woodbury graduate established her own florist business at age 21 and her ability, interest and success can be traced directly back to her participation on a gold medal National FFA Floriculture CDE team and the Nonnewaug instructional program.

Alex Thomson, Liz Webb, George Lyman, Eric Birkenberger, Cindy Walstedt and Bill Davenport, Nonnewaug High School, Woodbury, Connecticut (203) 266-4038 or william.davenport@snet.net



You may not need
community
members marching
in the street to
support your
program, but there
are things partners
can do to make
teaching easier and
more productive.

The following topics are covered in Chapter 4
Partnerships: Becoming a “Manager of Resources”

Benefits of Building a Network of Partners, Allies and Volunteers

Steps to Success

- 1 Identify potential partners.
- 2 Identify benefits of involvement for partners.
- 3 Present benefits to potential partners.
 - How to turn a “no” into a “yes.”
 - Using school-to-career concepts to attract key partners to your program.
- 4 Establish a plan for involving core partners.
- 5 Reward partners by recognizing their contributions and support.

Tips on How to Recruit and Retain Partners

- Set a vision for volunteer involvement.
- Create job descriptions to provide focus.
- Focus on partners’ reasons for supporting the program to keep them motivated and involved.
- Prevent burnout.

Promising Practices of Top Programs

Selected Resources

Action Plan

Worksheets and Other Tools

Promising Practices Update

Chapter 4

Partnerships: Becoming a "Manager of Resources"

You may not need community members marching in the street to support your program, but there are things partners can do to make teaching easier and more productive.

This chapter demonstrates how you can ease your workload and maximize your efforts by becoming a "manager of resources." When

community members and school

administration see your program's benefits to students and the community, they can help you obtain supplies, plan events, market your program, secure equipment and provide moral support.

Once you convince key partners of your program's benefits, they will sell it for you. By working together and using community resources to ease your work load, you are free to focus on the bottom line—facilitating learning.



Building a network of 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 and business people.

By working together with key partners and becoming a "manager of resources," you can ease your workload and focus on the bottom line—facilitating learning.



Teachers who become "managers of resources" and develop a shared responsibility with local supporters effectively use their time, program dollars, facilities and community resources. Here are five steps to enlist the support of potential partners:

- 1 Identify potential partners.
- 2 Identify benefits of involvement for partners.
- 3 Present benefits to potential partners.
- 4 Establish a plan for involving core partners.
- 5 Reward partners by recognizing their contributions and support.

Identifying and
getting to know
"core partners"
can affect your
funding, student
enrollment and
the success of
your program.

Step 1 **Identify potential partners.**

Partners are those groups or individuals who are essential to the success of your program.

Prioritizing Partners

Prioritizing your partners requires an understanding of who the key influencers are in your community. Eventually the same names will start to surface again and again. Those are likely your community's key influencers.

- Take an active role in local organizations and events will help you see who the prominent people are and get to know them.

- Attend city council meetings to get to know the members and to see who appears regularly to voice opinions.

- Volunteer to chair a committee for your town's founder's day celebration or summer fair.

- Ask your students' parents to help identify key decision makers.

- Find out who sits on the boards of local businesses and organizations.

- Talk to the local bank president and other community leaders.

- ☐ Review the guide's list of partners and prioritize those you want to contact first.



- ☐ Make a list of potential supporters' names, titles, phone numbers and mailing addresses for easy access.



Step 2 **Identify benefits of involvement for partners.**

Use the key benefit messages at right to show partners how agricultural education meets their needs. Answer the question: "What's in it for them?"

Identifying Key Partner Benefits

- ☐ Schedule a meeting and ask potential partners such as principals about

their goals for student learning. Ask open-ended questions beginning with who, what, how, when and where to determine their concerns.

- ☐ After the initial discussion, make a list of benefits that will help your potential partners accomplish their goals.

- ☐ To get a more in-depth view of what motivates school officials to support your program, use the *Partner Needs Assessment Sheet*.



Other school teachers:

- increased graduation rates and test scores

- increased career opportunities

- opportunities to share resources

- ability to "learn by doing"

- individual and school recognition

Principals, superintendents, school board members:

- individual and school recognition

- success for students (increased test scores, lower dropout rates)

- delivery of academic content through contextual learning, demonstrating how academic principles are applied to life

- opportunities for school-to-career experiences

School counselors:

- scholarships for FFA members for post-secondary education

- work-based experiences leading to careers

- leadership development

- increased self-esteem

- more than 200 rewarding careers in the food, fiber and natural resources systems

Parents and community members— business leaders, policy makers, alumni:

- satisfaction from being useful and productive citizens

- community recognition

- leadership and organizational skills

- community service projects

- quality potential employees and adequately prepared workforce

- increased science and math literacy

- access to qualified employees

- trained in agriculture to contribute to success of new and growing businesses

- opportunity to give back to FFA

Using School-to-Career Concepts to Attract Key Partners to Your Program

School-to-career is a new approach to student learning that links schools, workplaces and students. The 1994 School-to-Work Opportunities Act provides funding to local communities and schools to develop programs that combine a high level of academics, and provides students a seamless transition from high school directly into post-secondary education or careers.

Agricultural education has long incorporated school-to-career concepts. SAE programs that create partnerships with employers and businesses to help students apply instruction to the workplace are just one example.

Show core partners such as principals, school counselors and administrators how agricultural education is meeting the school-to-career needs of students, the community and school. School-to-career concepts also provide a framework to evaluate your staff.

School to career has three basic parts:

- School-based learning
- Work-based learning
- Connecting activities between school and careers

Practical Application

These terms, which apply directly to instruction, supervised agricultural experience programs and FFA, represent language school officials will understand and appreciate. Use them to explain how your pro-

gram helps students prepare for careers and life-long learning.

FFA events, for example, can be connecting activities. Various FFA career development events and leadership activities allow students to learn about and be involved in the community.

Glossary of Terms

Here are some terms that will help you better speak the school-to-career language:

Benchmarking—A continuous process of measuring products, best practices, services and practices against strong competitors or recognized leaders to improve performance.

Career Awareness—Activities that occur at the elementary or middle school level to make students aware of the broad range of careers and/or occupations in the world of work. Activities may include field trips to classroom speakers.

Career Major/Pathway—A sequence of courses or field of study that prepares students for a first job or for employment in a broad industry sector or post-secondary education.

Connecting Activities—Programs or human resources that link school- and work-based educational programs.

Contextual Learning—Learning that occurs in close relationship with actual experience, enabling students to test academic theories via real-world applications.

Entrepreneurial Projects—Projects that provide opportunities for school-age students to assess, design and operate business and community service activities.

High Performance Workplace—A workplace that employs technically advanced and efficient production techniques and demands workers who can adapt to changing technology and work in teams to solve problems.

Integrated Curriculum—Curriculum taught to emphasize relationships between instruction normally offered in separate courses. It may include introducing academics into traditional occupational courses or organizing instruction around a career major.

Internships—Student internships are where students work for employers for a specified time period to learn about a particular industry or

occupation, may or may not include compensation and includes special projects. *Teacher internships* last at least two weeks at a worksite to learn specific skills.

Occupational Cluster—A grouping of occupations from one or more industries that share common skill requirements. They form the basis for national skill standards, establishing career academies and creating career pathways.

Portfolio—A collection of work that documents a student's educational performance over time. It typically includes materials selected by the student and increases learning, demonstrates skill development and teaches greater responsibility for self-learning.

SCANS—The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) was convened in February 1990 to define the skills needed for employment, propose skill levels, assess proficiency and disseminate the findings.

School-sponsored Enterprise—An enterprise in which goods and services are produced and managed by students as part of their school program on or off the school site.

Skill Standard—The knowledge and competencies required to perform successfully in the workplace.

Tech Prep—A name given to programs that offer at least four years of sequential course work at the secondary and post-secondary levels to prepare students for technical careers and may end in an associate's degree or certificate.

For more information and a complete glossary, contact the National School-to-Work Learning and Information Center, (800) 251-7236.

Agricultural

education has long

incorporated

school-to-career

concepts. SAEs that

create partnerships

with employers and

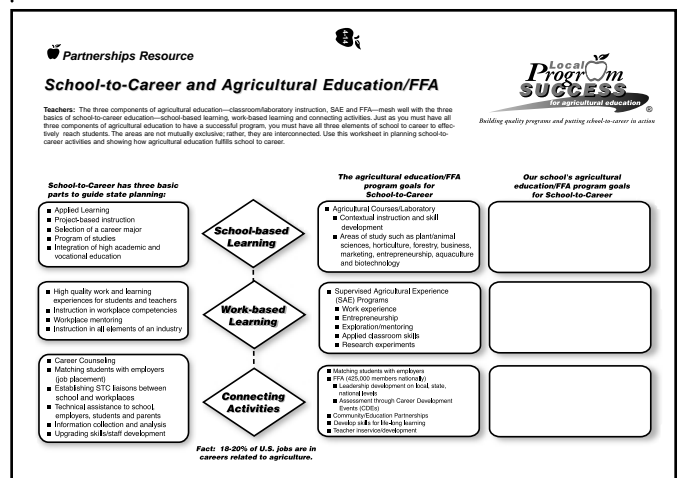
businesses to help

students apply

instruction to the

workplace are just

one example.



Agricultural
education links
"real-world"
experiences with
classroom instruc-
tion. More than 20
percent of
America's work
force is employed
in some phase of
the food, fiber and
natural resources
systems.



Present benefits to potential partners.

- ☐ Schedule a meeting with key influencers to discuss the benefits of agricultural education, FFA and SAEs.
- ☐ Before the meeting: Review the lists of general benefits that may appeal to the key influencers (or those that you have gathered from surveys and interviews).
- ☐ Practice explaining how agricultural education, FFA and SAEs deliver the benefits that interest your key influencers. Know the answers to these questions:

- What do I hope to accomplish with the help of key influencers?
- What are the program priorities?
- What do I want key influencers to do as a result of this visit?
- What do they want me to do for them?

Brochures such as *Agriculture: The Industry Too Big to Ignore, Think About It, Open A Promising Future For Students, School-to-Career Solutions and Circle of Life* (at right) help increase partners' understanding of agricultural careers and benefits of agricultural education.



☐ At the meeting: Set joint, measurable goals. Talk about dates to get items accomplished. Bring an FFA officer or key business leader with you.

☐ Begin the meeting on a positive note by showing you know that key influencers are concerned about students. You might start by saying: "I understand that you want to see more students excited about learning science and math. We believe agricultural education can help. Our program links "real-world" experiences with classroom instruction (share success stories, personal experiences and other important facts)."

☐ During and after the meeting, approach potential supporters and emphasize key benefits in conversations and when reporting activities.

☐ Be prepared for potential supporters to have misconceptions about agricultural education. Commit these statistics to memory to combat stereotypes.

■ More than 20 percent of America's work force is employed in some phase of the food, fiber and natural resources systems.

■ Virtually any career field applies to the food, fiber and natural resources industry:

- science and engineering (includes biotechnology)
- production
- marketing, merchandising and sales
- education and communications
- management and finance
- social services

☐ After your meeting, keep spreading the word about the benefits of agricultural education. Provide open house presentations, school board updates or student/parent orientations. Use the *Partner Core Group Action Plan* to arrange other activities.



Continued on page 4-5 ➤

How to Turn a “No” into a “Yes”

From time to time, potential partners will not be interested in your program. Here are some tips to turn them into supporters:

- Share your message with those who have influence such as key parents, school board members, teachers and community members and ask them to write letters of support.
- Enlist community and alumni members or current and past FFA officers to share their positive stories.
- Provide newspaper and magazine clippings of successful agricultural education activities.
- Explore objections. Determine why they disagree, so you better understand their positions. Figure out what you can give them to help them say “yes” to your agriculture program.
- Develop presentations for school board members given by students as well as business and industry supporters. Use videos such as *Agricultural Education...Investing in Our Future* or the *Discovering an Agricultural Biotechnology Career* publication to explain the program in their terms.
- No matter how frustrating communication with potential supporters gets, always stay positive about and respect their opinions during each encounter.



Establish a plan for involving core partners.

Establish Yourself as a Community Leader

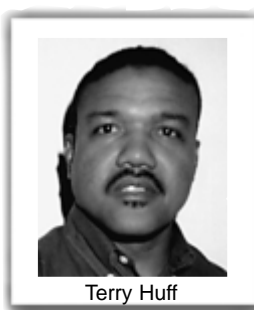
Connecting with influential people in your community will be easier if you are seen as a leader yourself. Be open to opportunities to serve on boards and committees, give presentations and position yourself as an expert in your field. Terry Huff, agriculture teacher at **McIntosh High School, Ala.**, serves on the environmental community advisory panel of a local chemical company.

Getting involved is the only way to develop yourself and your program, he says.

Results:

Huff's service enabled him to get students involved with company issues and established him as an environmental resource in the community.

Terry Huff, (334) 944-2660



Terry Huff

1. Make a “wish list” of all program needs. While it's not a guarantee you'll find partners to do the work, this process will provide a strategy for recruiting people able to handle those tasks. Start by asking these four questions:

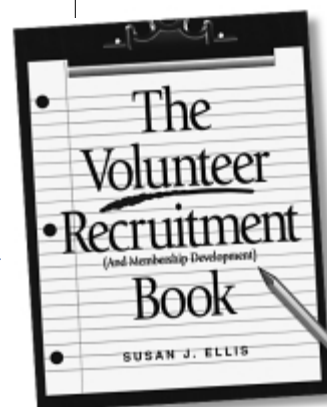
- What are we currently doing that we would like to do more of?
- What unmet needs does the local program have that we presently can do nothing about?
- What would support me in my work?
- What might we do differently if we had more skills and time available to us?

2. Ask members, parents, school administrators, alumni, and community members what types of activities would best support the agriculture program. Plan and implement your program's goals and activities by answering these questions:

- How do we position agricultural education within the school and community?
- How do business and industry fit into the program?
- How can we use alumni?
- How can we demonstrate student achievement to potential partners?

3. Find out who can do the work.

“It is not enough to say we need supporters and volunteers,” says Susan Ellis, internationally known volunteer leader and author of *The Volunteer Recruitment Book*. Recruiting specific volunteers for specific jobs can help gain and retain their support long-term.



Recruiting

volunteers for
specific jobs can
help gain and retain
their support
long-term.

Continued on page 4-6 >

For example, if you're looking to establish a scholarship program, search for someone such as a grant writer whose occupation involves educational funding, counseling or proposal writing. Partners are apt to say "yes" if they have a concrete task that suits their interests.

4. Research and know all the legal or policy requirements and liabilities of working with volunteers. Legal issues vary by state, but could include liability while driving vehicles, steps for notifying administration when entering the school, legal background checks and guidelines for how to interact with students. Contact your local administration for school district policies.

5. Analyze Community Resources.

Find out:

- Where will you get the equipment, supplies and money you need?
- Who do you know who has valuable contacts and resources?
- Where will you get the highest return on your time invested?



Involve Key Partners on Advisory Committees

With help from her advisory committee, Sheila Folan revamped the **Florin High School, Sacramento, Calif.**, agriculture program.

- Key business leaders identified the community's career and industry trends and crafted curriculum.
- They hold one or two meetings a year to review all features of the agriculture program: goals, competencies, curriculum, lesson plans and classroom and lab formats.

Results: Folan's program now includes courses in horticulture—a growing industry in her area—and students gain art credit for part of their horticulture work. Advisory committee members secure agribusiness positions for students to gain workplace experience.

Sheila Folan, (918) 689-8600 ext. 6205

Retired Citizens Are Strong Volunteers

When Marcia Paterson, director of agriculture and environmental education, **Hershey, Pa.**, taught in **Chicago**, she recruited retired citizens to assist as tutors. "Seniors were very effective working one-on-one with whatever projects students needed help with—such as

reading science fair project papers," she says.

Results: Agriculture teachers had experienced volunteers to provide personal attention for students. As a result, they were less stressed and students received extra help that wasn't always available before.

Marcia Paterson, (717) 520-2240



Marcia Paterson

Alumni Can Help Organize Local Support

Establish an FFA alumni affiliate to support the local program. Invite key parents and business leaders to serve as charter members. The *FFA Alumni Affiliate Action Plan* has details on how establish an affiliate.



Recruiting and Retaining Partners

Internationally-known Volunteer Leader and Presenter Susan Ellis

1. Set a vision for volunteer involvement. Know why you want key partners involved or you may find recruiting difficult. Here are four easy tips:

- Take time to write down your program's reasons for involving volunteers and make sure everyone

agrees—advisor, officer teams, alumni, business leaders and recruitment committee members.



Susan Ellis

- Review the program's mission and determine what partners are expected to do.



- Set specific goals and objectives for partners. Ask: How will they make a difference in supporting agricultural education and FFA?

- Annually review and revise your program's goals and objectives for partner participation.

2. Create job descriptions to provide focus. Design job descriptions that will appeal to partners and include tangible and intangible perks. Have a committee of advisors, alumni, FFA officers, principals and business leaders who will work with partners create job descriptions for them.

3. Focus on partners' reasons for supporting the program to keep them motivated and involved.

- Show them how they fit into the program's mission and fulfill local needs. This can serve as a springboard for an initial training session.

- Show new partners the personal benefits of their involvement.

4. Prevent burnout.

- Ask partners for input when making important decisions. They are more interested in things they help plan.
- Make sure partners know what is expected of them. Regularly review responsibilities and benefits.
- Give personal tokens of appreciation.
- Encourage partners to work together for extra support.
- Insist that partners rotate positions and assignments.



Reward partners by recognizing their contributions and support.

Include activities in your plan to recognize and report partners' success. For example, counselors are interested in career development. Solicit media coverage that recognizes business leaders who help students build career skills through work-based learning (supervised agricultural experience programs—SAEs). Send published articles to school counselors.

Keep in constant touch—to offer support, to remind partners of your goals and to thank them.

Create Events to Thank Supporters Such as Alumni

People like to see their names in print, says Ken Seering, who makes sure **Denmark, Wis.**, alumni members' good deeds are publicized in the local newspaper and newsletter. Five times a year, members host celebrations such as a bratwurst festival and a sweet corn boil to show their appreciation to their partners. "This publicity helps give the alumni members ownership of their activities and motivates them," he says.

Results: Publicizing good deeds is one reason FFA alumni membership increased from eight to more than 400 members. Volunteers provide all kinds of assistance, such as writing support letters to school administrators and contributing more than \$8,000 annually to sponsor local awards and projects.

Ken Seering, (414) 863-2176



Ken Seering



Promising Practices

Here are ideas that will help you become an effective "manager of resources."

Identify your potential partners:

- Use the telephone book to identify all agricultural businesses in your area.
- Build a database of all the people who have been in contact with the program in the last year.
- Form a local partner development team to identify and work with prospective supporters.
- Conduct a focus group session with key former and current students, administrators, business leaders and parents to develop a list of potential partners to contact.

Identify benefits for potential partners:

- Read *Promoting Programs By Building Partnerships* from FFA for a view of partner benefits.
- Conduct a survey to assess what partners are looking for in a high school education.

Present benefits to potential partners:

- Hold an FFA alumni rally and invite key community leaders as guests.
- Invite partners to tour student agribusiness, landscape, aquaculture and other SAEs.
- Initiate a joint teaching project to help other teachers see the value of agricultural education.
- Volunteer to speak about your program's activities at a community service organization meeting. Demonstrate how agricultural education and FFA address members' needs. If the group is a civic association like the Kiwanis, have

the parliamentary procedure team exhibit how the FFA develops the skills to run a business meeting.

- Hold a career fair to show how agricultural education integrates math, science and English.
- Hold a technology day and demonstrate the links between science and agriculture.
- Provide core partners with local success stories. Document your own statistics on how agricultural education and FFA help students learn. Be sure to include this information:
 - How many agriculture program graduates have gone on to pursue post-secondary education?
 - How does this compare to non-agriculture students?
 - How many years did it take students who took high school agriculture courses to graduate from post-secondary education compared with non-agriculture students?
 - What key career and life skills did students learn in agricultural education?
 - How many students were encouraged to go to college because they went through your program?

Establish a plan for involving core partners:

- Invite partners to serve on the advisory committee.
- Invite your principal to the state or national FFA convention and sponsor his or her trip.
- Sponsor life alumni membership for the school administrator.
- Invite parents to chaperone distant trips such as to the national FFA convention.
- Use the local alumni board of directors as the advisory committee to review curriculum, as well as direct program activities such as fund-raising, transportation to FFA events and scholarships.
- Establish an agricultural careers corner in the guidance office.



Continued on page 4-8 ➤

- Offer three-ring binders full of agricultural career and college information, along with brochures and videos to educate counselors and encourage them to promote agricultural careers.
- Lobby for an ex-officio student seat on the city council. Have an FFA representative attend chamber of commerce meetings and bring a report of school and chapter activities.
- Invite local FFA alumni members, parents and business leaders to:
 - train the chapter's teams or individuals for career development events or competitions
 - assist with fund-raising
 - volunteer to speak with graduates about potential careers
 - transport FFA members' projects to the county fair
 - serve as a chaperone for overnight events
 - encourage students to enroll in the local program or become FFA members
 - offer students paid or unpaid agricultural career experiences such as on farms or a community businesses

Reward partners by recognizing their contributions and support:

- Send a thank you note after every visit with the principal.
- Plan a breakfast, lunch or barbecue in their honor.
- Invite partners to attend your awards banquet and present them with a certificate of appreciation.
- Present one key partner annually with the honorary chapter FFA degree or FFA achievement award.
- Encourage students to write thank you notes after every sponsored event.



The following are key resources needed to build building strong partnerships. For details about how to order these materials, see the appendix.

A larger variety of FFA posters, brochures, videos and recruitment materials are available in the "Educational Resources" section of the *FFA Official Chapter Catalog*, which is produced annually.

- *Agriculture: An Industry Too Big To Ignore* brochure (FFA)
- *Agricultural Education... Investing in our Future* brochure and video (FFA)
- *Discovering an Agricultural Biotechnology Career* publication (FFA)
- *Discover World Class Opportunities* brochure (FFA)
- *FFA Alumni Manual* (In development) (FFA)
- *Make It Happen* instructional materials (FFA)
- *National FFA Week* promotional materials (FFA)
- *Open A Promising Future For Students* promotional materials (with school counselor insert) (FFA)
- *Open Door* career brochure (FFA)
- *Promoting Programs By Building Partnerships* handbook (FFA)
- *School-to-Career Solutions* brochure (FFA)

- *The Volunteer Recruitment Book* (Energize, Inc.)
- *Think About It* brochure (FFA)

Use these worksheets to help you become a manager of resources by building strong partnerships:

- *Partner Needs Assessment Sheet*, 4-10.
- *Partner Priority List*, 4-11.
- *Partner Needs and Resources Sheet*, 4-12.
- *FFA Alumni Affiliate Action Plan*, 4-13.
- *School-to-career and Ag Ed/FFA*, 4-14.
- *Partner Core Group Action Plan*, 4-15.





- How will you apply it to your program?
- What are your goals?

My Notes:

[illegible]

Chapter 4—Partnerships: Becoming a “Manager of Resources”

1. Identify potential partners.
2. Identify benefits of involvement for partners.
Ask, “what’s in it for them?”
3. Schedule a meeting to present benefits to potential partners.
4. Establish a plan for involving core partners.
 - ☐ Make a “wish list” of all program needs.
 - ☐ Ask members, parents, school administrators and community members what types of activities would best support the agricultural program.
 - ☐ Find out who can do the work.
 - ☐ Research and know all the legal or policy requirements and liabilities of working with volunteers.
 - ☐ Analyze community resources.
5. Reward partners by recognizing their success.
 - ☐ Create events to thank supporters such as FFA alumni.
 - ☐ Thank supporters by publicizing their good deeds in the local paper, the school paper and chapter newsletter.



Describe the activities you do, how you implemented them and the results. Send your ideas on this form or a separate sheet of paper to Local Program Success Liaison, Teacher Services Team, National FFA Organization, 6060 FFA Drive, P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960, fax: 317-802-5334 or e-mail: jarmbruster@ffa.org.

Partner Needs Assessment Sheet

Teachers: Give the following survey to agricultural education partner groups to help determine their needs and wants.

Key partners and supporters: Your assistance will help teachers and students better understand your concerns and the challenges you face. Thank you for your cooperation. Please return survey to the agriculture department.

Instructions:

Review the following list of issues and topics and rate them by using a one to seven scale (seven being the most important).

- _____ Accountability (setting and meeting standards)
- _____ Improving student achievement
- _____ Building morale/motivating staff
- _____ Using technology to improve learning
- _____ Building students' self-esteem
- _____ Improving the leadership of school principals
- _____ Getting parents involved in their children's education
- _____ Helping at-risk students
- _____ Building public confidence in schools
- _____ Serving the "student in the middle"
- _____ Teaching values and ethics
- _____ Recognizing student achievement and performance
- _____ Responding to students' learning styles
- _____ Cooperative learning/peer teaching
- _____ Dropout prevention
- _____ Building effective school/business partnerships
- _____ Education for employability and citizenship
- _____ Other (please list): _____
- _____ Other (please list): _____

Source: *Promoting Programs By Building Partnerships*, National FFA Organization

Partner Priority List

Teachers: Review this list of partners and rate each one A, B or C according to their importance in your community and program. Use "A" for the most immediate priority contacts. Next, rank the "A"s in order of importance by adding a number next to the "A." This will help you determine where to begin your partnering efforts. Note that this list is not all-inclusive; add other partners in your school and community in the blank spaces.

In School:

- _____ central administration (e.g. finance director)
- _____ coaches
- _____ counselors
- _____ elementary school programs
- _____ local funding agencies
- _____ middle school programs
- _____ other high school teachers
- _____ other student organizations (DECA, band, etc.)
- _____ other students
- _____ parents
- _____ principal/assistant principal
- _____ school board
- _____ school secretary
- _____ site council
- _____ superintendent
- _____ support staff
- _____ vocational director
- _____ adult agricultural education instructors/students

In the Community:

- _____ agriculture in the community
- _____ agricultural associations
- _____ agricultural businesses
- _____ agriculture adult education students and teachers
- _____ American Association of Agricultural Educators
- _____ community college agriculture faculty and students
- _____ Farm Bureau
- _____ Grange
- _____ National Council for Agricultural Education
- _____ National Vocational Agricultural Teachers' Assoc.
- _____ local FFA alumni association
- _____ natural resource commission
- _____ natural resources/environmental groups
- _____ state department of agriculture
- _____ state department of education
- _____ state extension staff
- _____ university agriculture faculty and students
- _____ Young Farmers

Others in the Community:

- _____ advisory committee
- _____ American Association of Retired Persons
- _____ area and state school board members



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

- _____ businesses
- _____ chamber of commerce
- _____ city council
- _____ city manager
- _____ county government officials
- _____ county/parish board members
- _____ funding providers
- _____ governor
- _____ immediate and extended families
- _____ key staff of elected officials
- _____ local legislators
- _____ local media (newspaper, radio and TV reporters)
- _____ long-term residents (bedrock of the communities)
- _____ mayor
- _____ parent/teacher association
- _____ professional journals
- _____ professional organizations
- _____ Business and Professional Women of America
- _____ real estate agents
- _____ economic/financial leaders
- _____ insurance agents

Others:

- _____ religious entities
- _____ school newsletter sent to parents and community
- _____ school paper staff
- _____ social/service organizations:
 - _____ American Legion
 - _____ Eagles
 - _____ Elks
 - _____ Garden clubs
 - _____ Isaak Walton
 - _____ Jaycees
 - _____ Junior League
 - _____ Kiwanis
 - _____ Lions
 - _____ Moose
 - _____ Rotary
 - _____ Veterans of Foreign Wars
- _____ state agricultural publication
- _____ state legislators
- _____ state school official
- _____ state supervisors of agricultural education
- _____ state vocational educational council
- _____ urban groups
- _____ Other: _____
- _____ Other: _____

Partner Needs and Resources Sheet

Teachers: Once the core partner groups have completed the *Partner Needs Assessment* survey, use this form to evaluate the survey and partner concerns.

1. Which concerns are most valuable? Where is our time best spent?

2. What goals can be set from partner key concerns and needs?

3. What key activities would satisfy these needs and concerns?

4. What equipment or supplies do we need to accomplish our goals?

5. How much money do we need to accomplish our goals?

6. What contacts do we need to accomplish our goals?

7. Who do we know (within the school system, media and the business community) who has available money, equipment or relationships with needed contacts?

FFA Alumni Affiliate Action Plan

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

Teachers: You don't have to do it yourself. Use this form to establish an alumni affiliate to support your efforts and ensure your program's survival.

Action Plan: How to organize a local FFA alumni affiliate

Task	Target Date	Completed ✓
A. Identify potential members. Begin with three to five interested patrons at a nucleus meeting.	_____	_____
B. Develop a tentative constitution and bylaws prior to the meeting.	_____	_____
C. Call a nucleus meeting to:	_____	_____
1. Review the purpose and benefits of a local affiliate and how it will help local FFA chapter members.		
2. Discuss the procedure for chartering a local affiliate.		
3. Define membership eligibility.		
4. Review the suggested FFA Alumni bylaws, constitution and application for local charter.		
5. Appoint a chairperson to assign duties.		
6. Make a list of potential members and divide the responsibility of contacting each prospect.		
D. Publicize an organizational meeting open to the public, the alumni affiliate and its goals:	_____	_____
1. Deliver a news release to the local media and announce meeting date, location and purpose.		
2. Have FFA members send handwritten invitations to parents, administrators and community leaders.		
3. Contact potential members in person or by telephone. Ask people to spread the word to at least five others.		
E. Conduct the organizational meeting:	_____	_____
1. Present the purpose of the meeting.		
2. Use Alumni promotional materials.		
3. Invite an FFA alumni state or national council member to assist in presenting the purpose and objectives of the alumni association.		
4. Temporary chairperson asks for motion to form affiliate. Then, proceeds to pass constitution and elect officers.		
5. Establish local dues and set date for next meeting.		

School-to-Career and Agricultural Education/FFA

Teachers: The three components of agricultural education—classroom/laboratory instruction, SAE and FFA—mesh well with the three basics of school-to-career education—school-based learning, work-based learning and connecting activities. Just as you must have all three components of agricultural education to have a successful program, you must have all three elements of school-to-career education to effectively reach students. The areas are not mutually exclusive; rather, they are interconnected. Use this worksheet in planning school-to-career activities and showing how agricultural education fulfills school-to-career concepts.

School-to-Career has three basic parts to guide state planning:

- Applied Learning
 - Project-based instruction
 - Selection of a career major
 - Program of studies
 - Integration of high academic and vocational education
- High quality work and learning experiences for students and teachers
 - Instruction in workplace competencies
 - Workplace mentoring
 - Instruction in all elements of an industry
- Career Counseling
 - Matching students with employers (job placement)
 - Establishing STC liaisons between school and workplaces
 - Technical assistance to school, employers, students and parents
 - Information collection and analysis
 - Upgrading skills/staff development

School-based Learning

- Agricultural Courses/Laboratory
- Contextual instruction and skill development
- Areas of study such as plant/animal sciences, horticulture, forestry, business, marketing, entrepreneurship, aquaculture and biotechnology

Work-based Learning

- Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Programs
 - Work experience
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Exploration/mentoring
 - Applied classroom skills
 - Research experiments

Connecting Activities

- Matching students with employers
- FFA (425,000 members nationally)
 - Leadership development on local, state, national levels
 - Assessment through Career Development Events (CDEs)
 - Community/Education Partnerships
 - Develop skills for life-long learning
 - Teacher inservice/development

Fact: 18-20% of U.S. jobs are in careers related to agriculture.

Our school's agricultural education/FFA program goals for School-to-Career

Partner Core Group Action Plan



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

1. Fill in the blanks with names and phone numbers of key partners in your area.
2. Identify the major challenges to recruiting partner support, and develop key messages to address them.
3. Develop a plan to ask, involve, recognize and report to these key partners.
4. Continue developing partnerships throughout the year.

Name/Phone Number	Major Challenges	Key Messages	Activities for Involvement/Date
Superintendent			1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
Principal			1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
Assistant Principal			1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
School Counselors			1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
School Board Member			1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
Vocational Director			1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
Key Parents			1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
Other:			1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
Other:			1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____

1. Fill in the blanks with names and phone numbers of key partners in your area.
2. Identify the major challenges to recruiting partner support, and develop key messages to address them.
3. Develop a plan to ask, involve, recognize and report to these key partners.
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	Name/Phone Number	Major Challenges	Key Messages	Activities for Involvement/Date
Other:				1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
Other:				1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
Other:				1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
Other:				1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
Other:				1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
Other:				1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
Other:				1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
Other:				1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____
Other:				1. _____ / _____ 2. _____ / _____

ALUMNI RELATIONSHIPS KEY TO *Program Success*



A working relationship with alumni members is vital to the success of your local program. Alumni can do a lot to make teaching easier, increase your chapter's funding and recruit more students for the program. Want to ease your workload and maximize your efforts? Then tap into the support of your local FFA alumni affiliate. And if you don't have one, now's a good time to start one.

The key to this relationship is for you to become a "manager of resources" and let alumni members do the rest. By working together and using alumni resources to ease your workload, you are free to focus on the bottom line—teaching students. Sound too good to be true? Read on.

"Alumni have really taken a burden off of our shoulders," says Brenda Oldfield, agriculture teacher at Scott County High School in Georgetown, Ky. "Without them, there's no way we'd get all our activities done."

TEACHERS LEARN TO DELEGATE

Just ask Oldfield and fellow agriculture teachers John Lacy and Regina Fritsch how important it is to have a supportive FFA alumni affiliate. When Oldfield began teaching agriculture at Scott County in 1985, the local affiliate was inactive and had about 30 members. At first the teachers tried to jump-start the volunteer group. They tried to enlist community leaders to no avail. "It was an alumni in name only," Oldfield recalls.

In 1991, after five years of trying to do "everything" in the program themselves, the three teachers realized they needed alumni members to carry some of the workload. "We finally had to admit we needed people to serve," Oldfield explains. "We just got worn out and were afraid of imposing on people."



*"Become a Manager of
Resources..."*

*Instead of going in all
directions, a relationship
with alumni can ease your
workload and free you to
focus on the bottom line—
teaching students.*

BENEFITS OF ALUMNI SUPPORT

In less than seven years later, the Scott County FFA Alumni is one of the most active affiliates in the nation. Now more than 140 alumni members participate in 75 activities that support the local program's needs. Alumni members:

- Raise more than \$10,000 annually at a fall Pumpkin Fest to fund FFA activities,
- Cover students' expenses to the state leadership camp, national FFA convention, Washington Leadership Conference and Made for Excellence personal development program,
- Sponsor more than \$3,000-worth of scholarships annually (for a total of \$20,000 in nine years),
- Train students for speaking and judging competitions,
- Recruit students to the program (more than 20 percent of freshmen were recruited by alumni members),
- Serve as substitute teachers and chaperones on field trips when teachers have other duties,
- Chaperone monthly FFA-sponsored recreational activities such as a ski or canoe trip, and
- Serve as mentors to students and offer needed encouragement and advice.

During the 1996-1997 school year alone, the affiliate logged more than 8,800 hours in serving the local program and working directly with students. As a result, it received the outstanding affiliate award in 1997 for its support of the local FFA chapter and agricultural education program.

QUICK LOOK

- Secrets to Support.....4-18
- Parents Crucial to Support4-19
- How to Recruit and Retain Alumni Members4-20
- Activities to Support Your Program.....4-22
- Action Plan: How to Start an Alumni Support Group.....4-25
- Form: FFA Alumni Grant Program4-26

SECRETS TO ALUMNI SUPPORT

Here are Scott County's secrets to creating a dynamic, alumni support network:

SECRET 1 **Focus on parents as your main supporters.** "Parents know that \$1 of their dues goes directly into the scholarship fund," Oldfield says. "They see that as a small investment when they understand that the organization is giving \$15,000 to their students."

SECRET 2 **Let everyone participate at their own level.** "Trust members to volunteer when you need them," Oldfield explains. "We can still be successful without having all 140 members at each meeting."

SECRET 3 **Share with alumni what they can do to serve the program.** At first, teachers invited alumni to support projects directly related to the chapter's program of activities. Later, they found it more advantageous to review with members their roles and general areas on how they could support the program and let them go from there. "After alumni realized they could fund scholarships for students," Oldfield recalls, "they just took off and continued to find new ways to raise money."

SECRET 4 **Recruit strong leaders.** One of the things that has helped the affiliate to thrive has been the strong support and leadership of parents who have active students in the program. In 1988, 1991 and 1994, alumni elected parents and a former agricultural education major to serve as presidents. Knowing what the program was all about helped these leaders to focus the affiliate on the true needs of the program, students and teachers. At this point, all three agriculture teachers realized they could relinquish more control because the group was in capable hands.

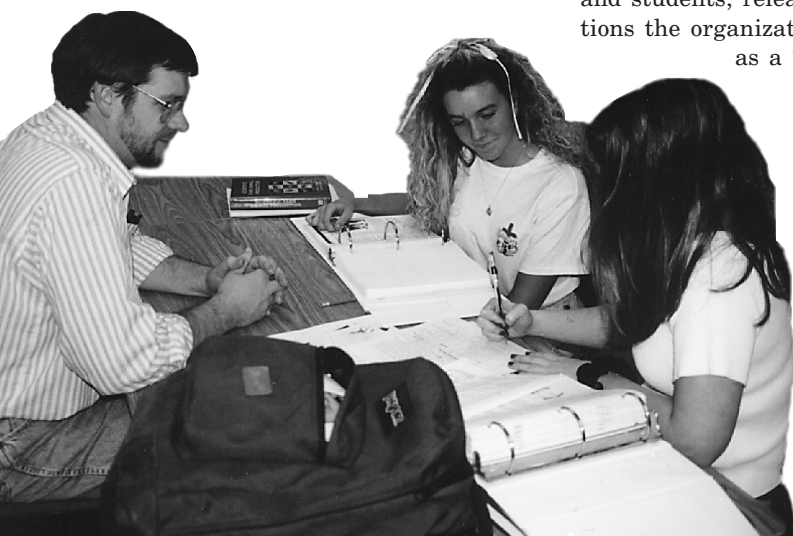
SECRET 5 **Recruit members all year long.** Scott County alumni hold a kick-off dinner in September where more than 100 parents, supporters and students listen to the benefits of the alumni membership and FFA. To add prestige to membership, the affiliate offers alumni sweatshirts, t-shirts and a directory to active members.

SECRET 6 **Provide time for fun.** Each month, Scott County alumni chaperone local FFA chapter recreational activities such as trail riding, skiing or a cookout. This builds camaraderie between alumni and students, releases stress and positions the organization to non-members as a "fun" place to be.

SECRET 7 **Develop activities that place alumni in direct contact with students.** "Sometimes alumni have more credibility than teachers do," Oldfield adds. "Students learn a lot about being punctual and dependable by working side-by-side with alumni such as at the Pumpkin Fest each October."



Read on for more tips to building successful alumni/parent relationships.



IDEA: Scott County, Ky., alumni members take an active interest in helping students prepare for FFA competitions. At left: Alumni Past-president Charlie Hamilton assists two chapter members in preparing for impromptu speaking events prior to the regional competition.

PHOTO COURTESY SCOTT COUNTY FFA/ALUMNI

Recruiting Parents to the FFA Dream Team

FFA alumni can build a strong link between parents and local agriculture programs. Involved parents provide leadership, career mentoring and role models, says Denmark, Wis., agriculture teacher Ken Seering. "With more parents on the team, a program has more manpower and students have more opportunities," he adds.

Securing parental involvement has its challenges. Despite the hurdles, the Denmark FFA Alumni has one of the nation's largest memberships and strongest parental/alumni support networks.

SUPPORT STARTS AT HOME

Most parents want their children to become caring adults and good citizens, says Denmark membership chairperson Marilyn Madsen. "FFA youth are doing positive things for society," she adds. "That's a natural selling point."

For other parents, she stresses the need to be involved in their children's education, which is one reason she joined the alumni in 1976.



EXAMPLES BUILD FUTURE LEGACY

"Seeing us involved gets them involved," explains alumni board member Kathy Rentmeester of her children. Though not an active member, Rentmeester's daughter volunteers her time because she sees her mother and father support the local chapter and what FFA does for her friends.

TIPS TO INCREASE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

1. Encourage FFA members to talk to parents. Explain how agricultural education and FFA build skills for life and work.

2. Keep them informed. Send parents a regular newsletter, highlighting specific examples of support and ideas for involvement.

3. Invite parents to participate in FFA activities.

Many tasks require very little time commitment. Many volunteers mean a low burnout ratio.

In Denmark, parents are invited to participate as soon as their children enroll in agricultural education.

4. Hold social gatherings to show appreciation. Host a corn roast, steak

and shrimp dinner and appreciation night where parents are recognized for their support. "Having fun draws people out," Madsen says.

5. Recruit graduating seniors.

Involve graduates early before they become parents and there is less time in their schedules.

6. Contact parents in person.

"Parents are more apt to respond after personal contact," Madsen adds. "We have a core group of members who keep in touch with volunteers."

7. Refer to acquaintances.

Rentmeester and her husband, Glenn, speak of mutual friends who are current members as a bridge to membership.

8. Build ownership through publicity. Denmark FFA and alumni members submit weekly articles on activities to the local newspaper. They regularly give status reports to the school board. Each year a 40-page supplement appears in the newspaper featuring award winners, degree recipients and other positive examples of what the program is doing. "We have a lot of support because we tell our story and the community knows it's their program," Seering says.

GET THE FAQs ON ALUMNI SUPPORT

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions



Q: What is the alumni association?

A: An organized group of individuals concerned with the success and growth of their community.

Their primary purpose is to support their local agriculture program and FFA chapter.

Q: Who should be part of a local alumni volunteer network?

A: Anyone interested in supporting and promoting youth, agriculture and local education success. Parents form the core working group, but bankers, lawyers, co-op owners, school officials

and agribusiness leaders are important potential members too.

Q: Won't an alumni affiliate take too much of my time. Won't I have to be at every meeting?

A: You'll notice it takes very little of your time as you learn to delegate and trust others to help out. Make your expectations about your time commitment clear at the beginning. Have your local FFA president or alumni chairperson serve as the liaison between the chapter and affiliate as Oldfield does in Scott County, Ky.

Q: How do I get people to join an alumni affiliate?

A: You don't have to do it yourself. Provide a list of goals and accomplishments for your program and how it will benefit your students and community (For more ideas on how to

recruit and retain members see pages 4-19 and 4-20).

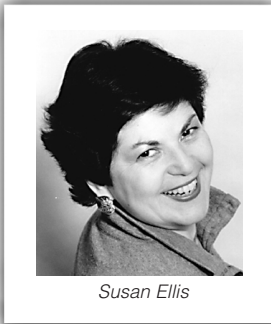
Q: How can I locate potential members?

A: Again, delegate the task of recruitment. Encourage members to attend community organization meetings and talk about the local program and FFA chapter's achievements (For an exhaustive list of organizations and individuals to contact, see page 4-21).

Q: What are the major benefits of having an alumni affiliate to the program, students and teachers?

A: There are many benefits listed throughout this insert. They can generally be divided into four categories: 1) Continuity after you leave teaching; 2) unified community support; 3) financial support; and 4) an information and career network.

RECRUITING AND RETAINING ALUMNI MEMBERS



Advice from Susan Ellis, internationally-known volunteer leader and presenter, and author of The Volunteer Recruitment Book

1. Set a vision for volunteer involvement. Know why you want alumni involved or you may find recruiting difficult. Here are four easy tips:

- Take time to write down your program's reasons for involving volunteers and make sure everyone—advisor, officer teams, alumni, business leaders and recruitment committee—agrees.
- Review the program's mission and determine what alumni volunteers are expected to do.
- Set specific goals and objectives for alumni. Ask: How will they make a difference in supporting agricultural education and FFA?
- Annually review and revise your program's goals and objectives for alumni participation.

2. Create job descriptions to provide focus and fit your goals for participation. Design job descriptions that will appeal to alumni and include tangible benefits to students, the program and community. Have a committee of advisors, alumni, FFA officers, principals and business leaders who will work with alumni create job descriptions for them (see page 4-22 for more information on how to design job descriptions).

3. Focus on alumni members' reasons for supporting the program. This will help to keep them motivated and involved.

- Show them how they fit into the program's mission and fulfill local student and community needs. This can serve as a springboard for an initial training session.
- Show new members the personal benefits of their involvement such as participation in monthly social activities like skiing or cookouts.

4. Prevent burnout.

- Ask alumni volunteers for input when making important decisions. They will be more interested in things they help plan.
- Make sure alumni know what is expected of them. Regularly review responsibilities and benefits to keep them focused on the reasons for their involvement.
- Give personal tokens of appreciation such as certificates, pins, sweatshirts and small gifts.
- Encourage alumni to work together for extra support.
- Insist that alumni rotate positions and assignments.

.....

Once you have decided how alumni can help the local program, the list to the right can help you locate potential members.

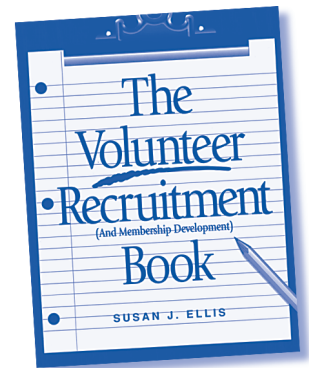


PHOTO COURTESY SCOTT COUNTY FFA/ALUMNI

IDEA: SCHOLARSHIPS ATTRACT PARENTS, AWARD STUDENTS

THE MAIN PROJECT OF SCOTT COUNTY, KY., ALUMNI IS A SCHOLARSHIP FOR GRADUATING SENIORS. ALUMNUS CHARLIE HAMILTON, RIGHT CENTER, PRESENTS CERTIFICATES TO SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS. SINCE THE PROGRAM'S START, ALUMNI HAVE AWARDED MORE THAN \$15,000 IN SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS. PARENTS SEE THEIR DUES AS A SMALL INVESTMENT WHEN THEY SEE THAT THE ORGANIZATION IS GIVING THEIR FUNDS TO STUDENTS.



POTENTIAL ALUMNI RECRUITMENT LIST

IN SCHOOL:

- central administration (e.g. finance director)
- coaches
- career counselors
- elementary school teachers
- middle school teachers
- other high school teachers
- parents
- principal/assistant principal
- school board members
- school secretary
- site council
- superintendent
- support staff
- vocational director
- adult agricultural education instructors and students

IN THE COMMUNITY:

- agricultural associations
- agricultural businesses such as the local co-op, feed mill
- community college agriculture faculty and students
- Farm Bureau
- Grange
- natural resource commission
- natural resources/environmental groups
- university agriculture faculty and students
- Young Farmers

OTHERS IN THE COMMUNITY:

- American Association of Retired Persons
- county extension agent
- general businesses
- chamber of commerce
- city council
- city manager
- county government officials
- county/parish board members
- funding providers
- immediate and extended families
- key staff of elected officials
- local legislators
- local media (newspaper, radio and TV reporters)
- long-term residents (bedrock of the community)
- mayor
- parent/teacher association
- Business and Professional Women of America
- real estate agents
- economic/financial leaders
- insurance agents

OTHERS:

- religious leaders
- social or service organizations:
 - American Legion
 - Eagles
 - Elks
 - Garden clubs
 - Izaak Walton
 - Jaycees
 - Junior League
 - Kiwanis
 - Lions
 - Moose
 - Rotary
 - Veterans of Foreign Wars

IDEA: Alumni members can bring special knowledge of various enterprises to share with students in the classroom. Below: Scott County, Ky., alumni member Mike Wiley demonstrates proper rabbit care and handling techniques with his own animals to agricultural education students.

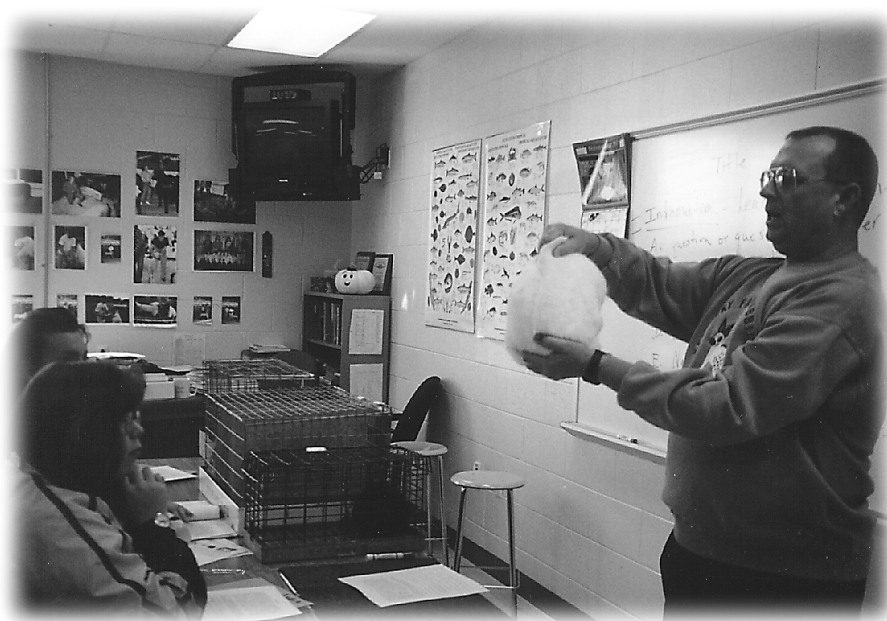


PHOTO COURTESY SCOTT COUNTY FFA/ALUMNI

Now that you have recruited members, it's time to plan activities that support the program and ease your workload.

Local Activities

CREATE AND IMPLEMENT Successful Activities



1. Make a “wish list” of all program needs. While it's not a guarantee you'll find alumni to do the work, this process will provide a strategy for recruiting people able to handle those tasks. Start by asking these four questions:

- What are we currently doing that we would like to do more of?
- What unmet needs does the local program have that we presently can do nothing about?
- What would support me in my work?
- What might we do differently if we had more skills and time available to us?

2. Ask members, parents, school administrators, alumni and community members what types of activities would best support the agriculture program. Plan and implement your program's goals and activities by answering these questions:

- How do we position agricultural education within the school and community?
- How do business and industry fit into the program?
- How can we best use alumni?
- How can we demonstrate student achievement to potential partners?

3. Find out who can do the work. “It is not enough to say we need supporters and volunteers,” says Susan Ellis, internationally known volunteer leader and author of *The Volunteer Recruitment Book*. Recruiting specific volunteers for specific jobs can help gain and retain their support long-term.

For example, if you're looking to establish a scholarship program, search for someone such as a grant writer whose occupation involves educational funding, counseling or proposal writing. People are more apt to say “yes” if they have a concrete task that suits their interests.

4. Research and know all the legal or policy requirements and liabilities of working with volunteers. Legal issues vary by state, but could include liability while driving vehicles, steps for notifying administration when entering the school, legal background checks and guidelines for how to interact with students. Contact your local administration for school district policies.

5. Analyze Community Resources. Find out:

- Where will you get the equipment, supplies and money you need?
- Who do you know who has valuable contacts and resources?
- Where will you get the highest return on your time invested?

OUTSTANDING AFFILIATES OFFER IDEAS FOR ACTIVITIES

The Scott County, Ky., and LeRoy, Ill., FFA alumni affiliates were the 1997 outstanding affiliate award winner and runner-up. The award is given to affiliates for an outstanding program of activities in support of local FFA chapters and agricultural education programs. Listed here are activities that each affiliate conducts and may spark ideas for you.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Hold a livestock judging clinic
- Provide equipment and materials for an FFA corn plot
- Assist with training career development teams
- Donate computer programs and videos
- Host an FFA/alumni marketing class and Internet workshop
- Offer sites for agricultural placement
- Hold a student skills contest and present awards

COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES WITH LOCAL CHAPTER

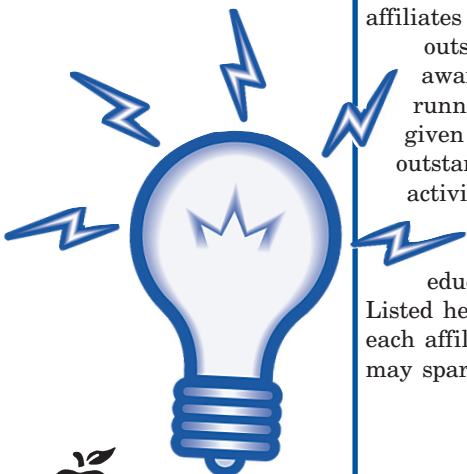
- Serve as judges for chapter speaking events

- Assist with livestock show and sale
- Provide scholarships to FFA members
- Establish nature trails in the country
- Conduct a food drive for local charities
- Distribute trees for Arbor Day
- Remodel community center and athletic facilities
- Conduct a community safety program

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

- Provide food concessions at school sporting events, livestock shows and sales
- Cater an agricultural appreciation dinner

(Continued on page 4-23)



VETERAN TEACHERS SHARE HOW ALUMNI HELP *Build Success*

Two agriculture teachers shared their insights and strategies for building this most important partnership with alumni members.

Q: *What can local agriculture teachers do to build a relationship with alumni members?*

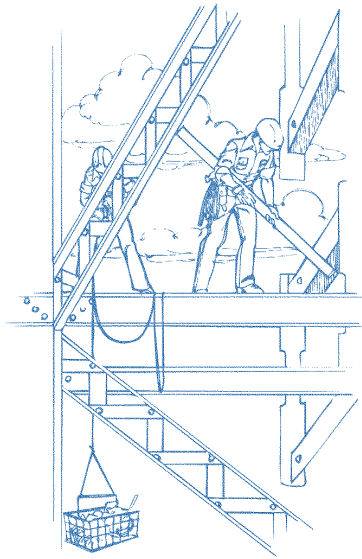
A: Ray Gilmore, a 27-year teaching veteran from Molalla, Ore., suggests local teachers start by meeting with key alumni members. "This will give them an accurate view of your expectations and clarify how they play a positive role locally."

Gilmore, whose 70-plus member alumni affiliate is five years old, says member involvement needs to be structured around the fact that teachers are responsible for the program.

"This means that both sides need to have open and direct communications," adds MeeCee Baker, Ph.D., agriculture teacher at Greenwood High School in Millerstown, Pa.

Q: *What is the key to successfully working with local alumni members?*

A: "The key word is 'supporter,'" explains Gilmore. "Teachers need to stress



that that is the role for alumni members and not fear that alumni want to 'take over.'"

Baker adds that advisory committees serve as natural places for alumni members to offer support and volunteer their time.

Q: *What role can alumni play in building a local program or helping instructors?*

A: Baker, who is starting a local alumni affiliate for the program, says teachers usually welcome volunteer assistance, especially in areas that add value to

agricultural education programs. Local volunteers "with experiences or related careers in horticulture have been a tremendous asset in building our greenhouse," she explains.

"It can be as simple as calling them on the phone and asking for help," says Baker. "However, keep in mind the tremendous time demands on local alumni members."

Share an example of how you would like them to get involved, offers Gilmore. "Every community is different, so assess the situation and let them determine how they can contribute."

Both offered the following ideas as ways for alumni to get involved. Suggest that they:

- train the chapter's teams or individuals for career development events or competitions,

"My alumni has been the best thing that happened in my 27 years of teaching!"

—Ray Gilmore, agriculture teacher

- assist the local chapter with fundraising,
- volunteer to speak with graduates about potential careers,
- transport FFA members' projects to the county fair,

- serve as a chaperone for overnight events,
- encourage students to enroll in the local program or become FFA members, and
- offer students paid or unpaid agriculture career experiences.

Q: *What other ways can alumni help out?*

A: Besides direct instructional assistance, alumni volunteers can be key in reopening a closed agricultural education program as was the case in Millerstown, says Baker. Since that time, the program has grown to more than 75 students, one third of the school's enrollment. "Local residents who are organized are in a better position to assist local teachers."

Gilmore adds that local alumni have been responsible for preserving his advisor's stipend and increasing his extended contract to more than 50 extra days despite severe school district budget cuts.

Molalla alumni have also single-handedly helped the local program secure funding and permission for a new 60' x 125' facility with a shop and computer lab and a 50 acre land lab. They also obtained a \$35,000 sponsorship for equipment for the new shop.

(Continued from page 4-22)

- Sell magazines, cookbooks and calendars
- Provide travel scholarships for FFA members
- Assist with FFA fruit sales
- Donate plants and materials for FFA greenhouse and agriculture course

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

- Hold a free chili supper
- Host a chapter greenhand meal and program
- Chaperone the chapter's winter ski trip and canoe trip/cookout

- Provide a meal for chapter agricultural olympics
- Conduct a summer cookout and game night for alumni and FFA members
- Hold an FFA Week breakfast for supporters

RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES

- Conduct a presentation for parents of chapter greenhand candidates
- Publish articles highlighting the alumni in local newspaper
- Send a letter to the parents of new agriculture students

- Conduct a presentation at the parent-member banquet promoting alumni membership
- Speak to other civic organizations and explain alumni goals and aims
- Conduct a "chartering" program for other schools
- Send a postcard to all existing members reminding them of dues collection

How to Recruit Counselors and Administrators

Counselors and administrators need to be reminded about the solid career opportunities available in agriculture today. Before classes start in the fall, visit with your career counselors, superintendent and principal. If they hold any misconceptions about agriculture, you can share information that can help build the credibility agricultural education and FFA deserve. Comments from alumni such as parents and community members can lend strong support to your agricultural education program. Work with the alumni to help develop the best strategies for success.

Counselors and administrators need to hear these key talking points:

1. Scholarships. FFA awards more than \$1.5 million in scholarships annually to its members. They can remind students about these opportunities for higher education funding.

2. Workbased Experience. Related work experience—supervised agricultural experience (SAE)—is an integral part of agricultural education. Students apply the concepts they learn in a related work experience and document their progress toward individual careers.

3. Leadership Development. The national, state and local FFA officers are outstanding leaders due to their FFA preparation. Students attend workshops such as Made for Excellence, Washington Leadership Conference and the State Presidents’

Conference. More than 30,000 students participate in the national FFA convention held annually in Louisville, Ky.

4. Increased self-esteem. All FFA members have a chance to grow and experience success through competitive events.

5. Increased Career Opportunities. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, there will be a ten percent shortage of college graduates in the food and agricultural sciences needed to fill positions between now and 2000.

EIGHT WAYS TO OPEN DOORS

Here are other activities to give counselors and administrators a better



grasp of the opportunities in agricultural education and FFA:

- Present updates and student successes at staff or public meetings in cooperation with local alumni.
- Invite them to join the alumni association and sponsor their membership.
- Involve counselors or administrators in community activities that allow them to have contact with district residents who support the local program.
- Give each of them a complimentary subscription to the *FFA New Horizons* magazine.
- Invite them to a breakfast or FFA chapter banquet where key business supporters and volunteers present why they support FFA.
- Invite them on a tour that highlights student agribusiness, technology or environmental projects.
- Invite them to a chapter meeting to observe leadership in action.
- Leave copies of the following publications: *The Industry Too Big To Ignore*, *Open a Promising Future for Students* and *Discovering an Agricultural Biotechnology Career*. These excellent four-color publications are available at minimal cost and can help graphically explain your points.

Resource materials in this article are available through FFA Distribution Services, (800) 332-2668.

Photo illustration by Gary Staszak/PhotoDisc © 1996; Canon PhotoEssentials © 1996

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

1. For more information, contact the National FFA Alumni Association at (317) 802-4292. Write: P.O. Box 68960, 6060 FFA Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960. Visit the alumni homepage at <http://www.ffa.org>.

2. To purchase a copy of *The Volunteer Recruitment Book*, contact Energize, Inc. at (800) 395-9800 or search its Web site at <http://www.energizeinc.com>.

3. Review *A Guide To Local Program Success* for strategies on how to work with partners such as alumni.



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The Agricultural Education Mission

Agricultural education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

The FFA Mission

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for **premier leadership, personal growth and career success** through agricultural education.

The National FFA Organization affirms its belief in the value of all human beings and seeks diversity in its membership, leadership and staff as an equal opportunity employer. This piece was prepared and published by the National FFA Organization in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education as a service to state and local agricultural education agencies.

Published and prepared in coordination with the National FFA Organization Teacher Services Team and the National FFA Alumni Association.

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Action Plan

HOW TO ORGANIZE A LOCAL FFA ALUMNI AFFILIATE

Teachers: You don't have to do it all yourself. The estimated times below are approximate and show that it doesn't take a lot of time to start an alumni affiliate. Use this form to establish an alumni affiliate to support your efforts and ensure your program's survival.

ESTIMATED TIME

TASK

TARGET DATE

COMPLETED ✓

5 minutes	A. Identify potential members. Begin with three to five interested patrons at a nucleus meeting.	_____	_____
10-15 minutes	B. Develop a tentative constitution and bylaws prior to the meeting. (Contact the national office for an example.)	_____	_____
28-29 minutes	C. Call a nucleus meeting to:	_____	_____
5 minutes	1. Review the purpose and benefits of a local affiliate and how it will help local FFA members and the program.		
3 minutes	2. Discuss the procedure for chartering a local affiliate.		
3 minutes	3. Define membership eligibility.		
5 minutes	4. Review the suggested FFA Alumni bylaws, constitution and application for local charter.		
2-3 minutes	5. Appoint a chairperson to assign duties.		
10 minutes	6. Make a list of potential members and divide the responsibility of contacting each prospect between nucleus committee members.		
20 minutes	D. Publicize an organizational meeting that is open to the public, the alumni affiliate and other community members:	_____	_____
10 minutes	1. Write and deliver a news release to the local media and announce meeting date, location and purpose.		
5 minutes	2. Have FFA members send handwritten invitations to parents, administrators and community leaders.		
5 minutes	3. Nucleus members contact potential members in person or by telephone. Ask people to spread the word to at least five other individuals.		
60 minutes	E. Conduct the organizational meeting:	_____	_____
5 minutes	1. Present the purpose of the meeting.		
5 minutes	2. Review alumni promotional materials.		
10 minutes	3. Invite an FFA alumni state or national council member to assist in presenting the purpose and objectives of the alumni association.		
30 minutes	4. Temporary chairperson asks for motion to form affiliate. Then, proceeds to pass constitution and elect officers.		
10 minutes	5. Establish local dues and set date for next meeting.		

CONTACT THE NATIONAL FFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, (317) 802-4292, FOR MORE DETAILS.



NATIONAL FFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION LOCAL PROGRAM SUPPORT GRANT APPLICATION

The National FFA Alumni Association is offering grants to local FFA chapters as a means of providing local chapter support. Interested chapters should submit their applications by **September 15** to the

National FFA Alumni Association
P.O. Box 68960, 6060 FFA Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960

FFA chapters should consider items needed to strengthen their chapter's program and/or member support. The grant may be used for computers, equipment, members supplies, official dress, etc.—any items the chapter feels are needed to enhance the local program.

The maximum grant amount is \$1,000. Award winners will be recognized during the annual alumni convention. Thank you for your participation.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- FFA chapter must be from a chartered, active state FFA alumni association and the application signed by the state alumni president.
- FFA chapter must have a nationally chartered, active local FFA alumni affiliate and the application must be signed by the affiliate president.
- All time lines, applications and signature requirements must be adhered to or the application will not be considered.

Chapter: _____ Chapter Number: _____

High School: _____ School Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Chapter Advisor: _____ Signature: _____

Chapter President: _____ Signature: _____

Local Alumni Affiliate: _____

Local Alumni President: _____ Signature: _____

State Alumni President: _____ Signature: _____

Project Name: _____



NATIONAL FFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION GRANT PROPOSAL APPLICATION

Page 2

Project Name: _____

A. **Goals/objectives:** (What do you want to accomplish?) 20%

B. **Plan of action:** (Who, what, when, where, why, how?) 10%

C. **Impact:** (How will this project make an impact on your members and/or program?) 40%



NATIONAL FFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION GRANT PROPOSAL APPLICATION

Page 3

D. **Budget:** (Indicate expenses, resources, materials and cash needed to complete the project.
Indicate the total amount needed.)

20%

Item #	Description of Item	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Cost
1		\$		\$
2		\$		\$
3		\$		\$
4		\$		\$
5		\$		\$
6		\$		\$
7		\$		\$
8		\$		\$
9		\$		\$
10		\$		\$
Total Cost of Project				\$

Below list any other information you feel is vital to your request or which the committee should consider.

10%

Project Name: _____

GRANT COMMITTEE EVALUATION

Objectives: _____ / 20%

Plan of Action: _____ / 10%

Impact: _____ / 40%

Budget: _____ / 20%

Other: _____ / 10%

Application Total: _____

Total Awarded: \$ _____





Below are ideas from teachers across the nation that will help you involve partners in your agricultural education program.

Career Interviews

For more than five years now, community business leaders have interviewed all Ravenna High seniors through a vocational education/English department partnership that allows seniors to learn about writing résumés, letters of application and thank you notes. Students also practice business etiquette and network with potential employers. In turn, the partnership allows employers to see what future employees are learning and to tap into the future job market early. Kent Zeller says the process has helped many agriculture students obtain part-time jobs.

*Kent Zeller, Ravenna High School, Ravenna, Nebraska,
(308) 452-3249 or kzeller@genie.esu10.k12.ne.us*

Goodwill Projects

Butch Whelchel has enjoyed strong community support because of many projects consisting of repairing or building items at cost for city and community members. Students have repaired broken street sign poles, created trash bins for local businesses and installed playground equipment. Whelchel tries to make service projects an extension of the classroom. When local administrators asked for students to construct a parking pad for disabled persons, he taught a unit on concrete. To keep the program's profile high and requests coming in, he publicizes Kensington's service with ready-made film rolls available through a partnership with local newspapers. "When you do things for others," he says, "people are more apt to return the favor or offer support."

*Butch Whelchel, Kensington High School, Kensington, Kansas,
(785) 476-2217 or butchbowhunts@hotmail.com*

Advisory Board Tours

Jim Miller plans to enlist local advisory board members in interviewing all students for proficiency, scholarship and award programs this year. Besides giving board members a better understanding of how students learn, Miller hopes the new practice will turn them into true advocates of the program. Members will travel to students' work sites or farms to inspect their SAEs one Saturday in the spring before the annual banquet. Members will also ask questions of prospective competition entrants to determine their standings.

*Jim Miller, Crater High School, Central Point, Oregon,
(541) 664-7632 or jcmiller@mind.net*

Shadow-Career Day

A shadow-career day involves business owners with Lloyd Vannarsdall's program and introduces them to potential employees. The experience occurs as part of a unit on careers in the senior sales and marketing course. Vannarsdall first determines owners' interest in or accepts student suggestions for shadowing locations. Next, owners receive a letter confirming the intent and expectations of the

experience. Students must obtain approval from other teachers and their parents. Finally, Vannarsdall suggests verifying insurance coverage for students who will travel off campus. Prior to their experiences, students are required to submit a list of potential questions for interviewing their mentors.

*Lloyd Vannarsdall, Owen County High School, Owenton, Kentucky,
(502) 484-5509*

Scholarship Partners

About 10 years ago, Fred Bennett enlisted his advisory committee to solicit funds for a scholarship program. Due to the efforts of one influential farmer on the committee, the program raised \$40,000 in seed money from which the interest provides \$3,000 worth of scholarships annually. The effort brought bankers, a state senator, area farmers and other business leaders together in support of the program. The scholarship program, which is listed as a non-profit entity in Arizona, draws attention to students' SAE, FFA and academic achievements, which serve as application evaluation criteria. Bennett uses a contributors' plaque to reinforce to freshmen how much the community supports the program and looks to them for their leadership.

*Fred Bennett, Tolleson Union High School, Tolleson, Arizona,
(602) 936-1276*

Scholarship Foundation

In 1990, the Carthage FFA Chapter worked with local FFA Alumni to establish scholarships supported by individuals and businesses. Members patterned the foundation directly after the National FFA Foundation located in Indianapolis, Indiana. A general solicitation letter is sent annually to potential and existing FFA supporters, who have the option of supporting the scholarship foundation at several different funding levels. The foundation board, agriculture teachers, alumni and chapter officers conduct visits to donors' work sites. The foundation's success is evident. Last year alone, supporters gave more than \$15,000 in donations for five post-secondary and ten \$250 Washington Leadership Conference scholarships. A scholarship committee, comprised of a cross-section of supporters, selects topics for agricultural essays submitted by applicants. Essays must be 500 words and cover a career-oriented topic.

*Eddie Stephens, Greg Wolf, John Dillard and Chris Cloud,
Carthage Technical, Carthage, Missouri, (417) 359-7025*

Student Advisory Council Members

In addition to its adult members, the 16-member Harlan Agricultural Advisory Council consists of eight students (two from each grade level). Harlan agriculture teachers select two freshmen annually to serve on the council for a total of four years. During that time, they attend two council meetings annually and express their views on the needs of the agriculture program and its curriculum. The practice allows students to gain ownership in the curriculum. Teachers have created five new courses as a result of input from student members on the council.

*Daniel J. Leinen, Harlan Community Schools, Harlan, Iowa,
(712) 755-3101 or dleinen@harlan.k12.is.us*

Convention Outreach Ideas

For the past seven years, the Scott County FFA Chapter and Alumni affiliate have used the national FFA convention as a recruitment tool for potential partners. Members offer these tips and ideas on how to heighten awareness and build support for your local program among key partners: principals, administrators, school board members, middle and high school counselors, non-agriculture teachers, superintendents and community leaders.

1. Plan fund-raising events early to raise money to send partners to the national convention. (Scott County alumni hold an annual fund-raiser near convention time to provide additional motivation, so students and alumni members see the immediate results of their efforts.)
2. Invite key partners early (by the end of the school year prior to convention), because their schedules are usually arranged weeks or months in advance. By doing so, you will have an accurate idea of how much money to budget and raise to send partners to the convention.
3. Offer to arrange and cover the costs of transportation to and from the convention.
4. Cover the lodging costs for partners attending the convention and offer to cover any out-of-pocket expenses like food.
5. Invite partners to interact with FFA and alumni members by having them lodge near you in Louisville and including them in on all your activities.
6. Use the trip to educate partners on the impact the FFA and alumni have on young people. Be sure to emphasize that the FFA convention is the largest youth convention in the nation. Here are some activities and events for partners to gain first-hand experience of the FFA:
 - School Officials Luncheon
 - FFA National Agricultural Career Show (Local alumni invited their administrator to work in the state booth.)
 - FFA Alumni Convention and Auction (where partners can learn what other communities are doing to support agricultural education programs locally)
 - Convention sessions that highlight famous speakers and during which your chapter receives awards.
7. Give partners a true perspective of convention by showing them last year's program or the *Advisor's Planning Guide*. Emphasize the benefits of attending. For legislators, for example, point out how many students from their district will be attending the convention.
8. Determine which partners were past FFA members who never attended a national convention and be sure to invite them.

9. Invite school administrators, principals, board members and counselors to go with you to the convention for a day, especially if your school is located closer to Louisville.

10. Construct a window display at a local bank or store to highlight your chapter's involvement at the state and national conventions. (Scott County members received positive community comments and built awareness of their program in this way.)

Brenda Oldfield, Scott County High School, Georgetown, Kentucky, (502) 863-2056; and Charlie Hamilton, Scott County FFA Alumni affiliate, (502) 857-4757

Alumni Scholarships

Since its formation several years ago, the Van FFA Alumni affiliate and the local teacher, Len Moore, have used an annual pickup truck raffle to raise thousands of dollars for scholarships and FFA activities. Three hundred tickets are distributed to community residents who donate \$100 each. The last ticket drawn at the annual livestock show wins the truck; local businesses also donate several other prizes. Moore shares program goals and information on potential needs with alumni members, who annually present three \$1,000 scholarships to graduating seniors and also support FFA activities. Over the last four years, this program has helped 17 FFA members attend eight different colleges.

Len Moore, Van High School, Van, Texas, (903) 963-8623 or lenmoo@msn.com

Using Field Experts

Jan Hildebrandt involves key business and community partners in the Eau Claire Memorial agriculture program. Speakers discuss the type of education, job requirements, hiring practices and benefits that relate to their career fields. More frequently, they assist with instruction in the more technical small animal science, veterinarian science and aquaculture courses. They discuss specialized topics such as bovine reproduction or companion animal respiration, validating to students that what they learn in class has a real-world connection. These field experts also comprise an informal support network on which Hildebrandt can rely for technical instruction. That is why she tries to invite one speaker to every course at least once a semester. The list of guest speakers includes the manager of a major pet store, a veterinarian and a local tech-school bovine instructor.

Jan Hildebrandt, Eau Claire Memorial High School, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, (715) 839-1500 or jhildebrandt@ecasd.k12.wi.us

Promising Practices continued on page 4-31 ➤

Recruit Alumni Support Year Round

Scott County FFA Alumni and teachers are regularly conducting activities designed to increase their base of support. They hold a kick-off dinner in September where more than 100 parents, supporters and students hear about the benefits of alumni membership and the FFA. To add prestige to membership, the alumni affiliate offers tangible benefits such as sweatshirts, T-shirts and a directory to active members. Each month, Scott County alumni chaperone local FFA chapter recreational activities such as trail rides, skiing or a cookout. These activities build camaraderie between alumni and students, release stress and position the alumni and FFA organizations to non-members as a “fun” place to be.

Brenda Oldfield, Scott County High School, Georgetown, Kentucky, (502) 863-4131

Homeless Shelter Donations

The Lake Forest FFA generates goodwill through collecting canned food for a homeless shelter. About 150 items of canned food are collected twice a year from boxes located throughout the high school and in classrooms. In addition, teacher Mark Breeding donates excess boxes of citrus from the chapter fruit sale to the shelter as well. Through this simple project, parents, students and FFA members assist those in need and build community awareness of the local FFA chapter and agriscience program. Community partners are more apt to contribute to the FFA chapter because they know that members and Breeding are concerned neighbors.

Mark Breeding, Lake Forest High School, Felton, Delaware, (302) 284-3434

Environmental Partnerships Provide Project Model

Piney Woods officials have developed partnerships with environmental organizations, including state and federal agencies, in the operation of a methane gas collection system from the school’s swine operation—the first of its kind in Mississippi. Director Billy Sumrall attended various agricultural and environmental meetings where he made contacts leading to grant proposals for this well-planned student research project. The private school, founded in 1909, has hosted state legislators, private industry and international visitors hoping to benefit from the system’s technology. For students, it may mean international travel and scholarships. Sumrall continues to search journals and publications for key issues to foster other partnerships to fund student projects.

Billy W. Sumrall, Piney Woods School, Piney Woods, Mississippi, (601) 845-2214, ext. 271 or pwsag1@aol.com

Agricultural Awareness Day

The Grassland FFA conducts an Agricultural Awareness Day and enlists the help of FFA members, alumni, community supporters and local agency personnel. This year’s event helped 300 elementary students, their parents and district teachers to understand agriculture’s diversity, recruit potential students and build relationships to enhance the program. Elementary students experienced agriculture while interacting at 13 different stations, ranging from a safety demonstration to a petting zoo to a mini environment. Stations were manned by FFA members and partners from area agriculturally related services.

Robert Lauffer, Garden Spot High School, New Holland, Pennsylvania, (717) 354-1577 or bob_lauffer@elanco.k12.pa.us

Enlisting Recent Graduates for Support

Joel Lemer has found that former students make some of the most active FFA Alumni members and often are looking for opportunities to remain active after graduation. He says they make great coaches or supervisors for other activities that require a direct knowledge of FFA. Nearly 50 percent of the Carrington FFA Alumni membership consists of recent graduates. How does Carrington do it? First, recruiters personally invite graduates who have been active in the FFA to join. Next, they follow up with a letter, which emphasizes the social aspects of joining the alumni and how graduates can still make contributions via the organization.

Joel Lemer, Carrington High School, Carrington, North Dakota, (701) 652-3136

Chamber of Commerce Outreach

About seven years ago, Hillsboro, Ore., FFA officers began a partnership with the local Chamber of Commerce agriculture/forestry committee that has provided many opportunities for FFA members. In the process of starting a new alumni affiliate at that time, the advisor and officers attended committee meetings to present information on FFA activities. The presentations convinced Chamber members to support the chapter. In building the partnership, advisor John Stables and Hillsboro FFA members continued to attend meetings, then volunteered for Chamber activities. In time, the committee changed its focus and mission to support the local program. It began to provide financial assistance with over \$7,000 to date going to computer donations for the chapter, the building of a new campus greenhouse, FFA jackets for first-year members and student supervised agricultural experience loans. Cooperative ventures with the Chamber opened many doors in the community, including work with the Hillsboro Downtown Business Association. The chapter initially provided 135 large flower baskets for city streets. This annual fundraiser enhanced the visibility of the horticulture program. This partnership has created a valuable resource network for Stables, who has utilized chamber members as judges for local career development events.

John Stables, Hillsboro High School, Hillsboro, Oregon, (503) 648-8561 or stablesj@hsd.k12.or.us

Master Gardeners

Vilma Gomez has forged a solid partnership for the local horticulture program with members of the Master Gardeners Association, a national and international organization begun under the auspices of the Extension Service. Members, who are usually retired and life-long avid gardeners, have shared gardening tips and ideas on how to improve the local program with Gomez and her students. They have also worked one-on-one with special needs or physically-challenged students. In return for their assistance, Master Gardener members are allowed to use the school greenhouse as a home base for their outreach, including a two-hour weekly community education class that they teach on various horticultural topics. They have also helped Gomez and her students install a greenhouse mist and irrigation system. Members have also contributed to the curriculum through their establishment of a special environs in the greenhouse for propagation and experiments with ornamental and native plants. Master Gardener members have also helped Gomez by serving as in-class instructors on various horticultural topics.

Vilma Gomez, Edinburg Career Center, Edinburg, Texas, (956) 316-7798

Community Proficiency Judges

For more than 20 years while teaching at Eagle Point, Ore., Mel Morris utilized advisory committee members as judges for the local chapter proficiency awards program. Besides including about eight to 15 agricultural advisory committee members who were community leaders, the team of judges included school administration and two senior students. For one day in April (prior to the chapter banquet in May), members boarded the chapter bus and traveled about 150 miles to review and interview applicants about their supervised agricultural experience (SAE) programs on site. Prior to their tour, judges received descriptions of each proficiency area from the *FFA Handbook* and copies of each member's award application. At each location, judges reviewed members' applications and record books prior to their interviews with students. If students were unavailable for the on-site visit by the committee, they submitted a video for consideration. In addition to creating a fair process for applicants, the practice of interviewing students on site helped them to feel more at ease while judges questioned them about their SAEs and allowed Morris and his fellow teachers to showcase the program and its students. Judges ended their day back at the school, where they selected winners from the finalists. Each judge also received a plant from the greenhouse for their time and efforts.

*Mel Morris (retired), Eagle Point, Oregon, (541) 826-5142
Tim Ray, Eagle Point High School, Eagle Point, Oregon, (541) 830-1318*

Grant Writing

In 11 years, Galen Zumbach and the Creston, Iowa, agriculture program have secured more than \$200,000 in grant monies for chapter projects and activities. Much of that amount has been in the form of matching grants, in-kind work or other resources. Zumbach has made a commitment to grant writing because it has benefited the local agriculture program. Take, for example, a grant received from the regional power utility IES to plant \$55,000-worth of trees and shrubs. As a long-term part of the grant program and as an outreach of the instructional program, students will learn to stake, mulch, prune and care for new seedlings. The key is locating programs with access to public education that allow students to make a positive influence, he says. Once you find those programs, request some paperwork on grant or funding possibilities. He offers these suggestions as starting points:

- Power utilities are often mandated by state for federal governments to set aside funds for conserving resources, such as for tree planting programs or heating/cooling improvements.
- Banks may be willing to buy trees or other resources wholesale and donate them to your FFA chapter as part of an in-kind beautification program.
- Local business owners are quick to donate where the benefits are immediate. Lock them into certain sponsorships. For example, Creston businesses annually purchase 5,500 seedlings to be given to elementary students for wildlife habitats and windbreaks.
- Police and fire departments are often willing to underwrite community service projects. After seeing the value of a bike safety rodeo, Creston police now fund 50 percent of the cost of safety helmets for elementary students.

Tips for Success

1. Enroll in a grant writing course as part of your continuing education to learn more about grants.
2. Check to see if your school district has a grant writer on staff. Work with him or her to complete the appropriate applications that match the goals and needs of your program.
3. Search for potential grant opportunities by "surfing" the Internet or by contacting officials in your local Soil Conservation District, Extension or United States Department of Agriculture offices.
4. Find community resource people to assist you. A retired Ford Motor Company executive, Ralph Edwards, assists Zumbach in preparing the paperwork and maintaining the documentation for a Department of Transportation grant to improve roadways. Already active in community work, Edwards also oversees the Creston project, making Zumbach's workload in this area easier.

Galen Zumbach, Creston High School, Creston, Iowa, (515) 782-2116, ext. 36

Natural Resources Partners

Richfield students participate in a trail ride and conservation improvement projects in the Henry's Mountains as a part of a natural resources course. These hands-on activities began following a suggestion by a Bureau of Land Management official and course lecturer. Bureau of Land Management, Soil Conservation, water quality, wildlife and U.S. Forest Service officials, including other conservation and environmental groups, present course topics and labs, such as how to calculate deer ages by wear patterns on the teeth using a jawbone collection. Teacher McKay Jenson hopes to raise community environmental awareness and student interest. Most students use their own horses for the trail rides and plant identification projects, including for deer, elk and bison counts. Parents and former students serve as chaperones. Jenson works closely with administrators in obtaining parental release and supervision of these voluntary, enrichment activities.

McKay Jenson, Richfield High School, Richfield, Utah,
(435) 896-8909 or mckay.jenson@m.cues.k12.ut.us

Low-income Elderly Housing, Landscaping

The Yelm FFA Chapter worked with a real estate developer, the Yelm Community Services (a senior citizens' betterment organization that funded the construction) and the local chamber of commerce to clean and prepare a 24-unit apartment complex for low-income elderly residents. Chapter members submitted a bid for the project and secured the contract. Students who worked on the project gained a respect for construction practices and learned about space/living requirements for senior citizens. As a community service project, members designed and installed landscaping around the apartment complex based on architectural specifications, including gravel around the building to allow for proper drainage. In total, 50 members devoted more than 1,000 hours to the project.

Dennis Wallace, Yelm High School, Yelm, Washington,
(360) 458-7777 or dennis_wallace@ycs.wednet.edu

CDE* Coaches

A challenge for many agriculture teachers with busy schedules is finding time to train students for career development events* (CDEs). Ray Gilmore, a 27-year teaching veteran at Molalla, Ore., uses volunteers such as FFA alumni and other community partners to coach CDE teams and participants. The twist to this traditional partnering strategy: Local alumni members recruit the coaches and he prepares them to train students.

"Many teachers aren't aware of the resources available locally," Gilmore says. "Most volunteers will not step forward until someone like alumni asks them."

Alumni Secure Coaches

The process that Molalla alumni follow is easy to duplicate anywhere, Gilmore says.

- First, alumni visit with other members, past students, event participants and community leaders who have skills, experiences or resources that match a specific CDE, encouraging these potential coaches to learn more on how they can participate.
- Alumni then submit the names of interested individuals to Gilmore for follow-up and preparation with resources such as the state events manual, which explains every competition in detail.

"Alumni recruit the largest number of coaches," Gilmore explains. "We always underestimate how many people really want to help."

Benefits Outweigh Effort

Enhanced Learning. One benefit to this successful coaching strategy is an increase in learning due to the natural rapport that exists between students and local adults. "Anytime you have more than one person instructing students," Gilmore explains, "you're bound to match students' learning styles and help them understand a subject better."

Reaching Out. Volunteer coaches are also there to answer last minute questions and offer encouragement to students before they go into the show ring or on stage.

Extra Time. "For every coach I train, I receive 25 hours of time in return," Gilmore says. A retired speech teacher and former FFA member, for example, invested more than 50 hours over a two-month period in coaching the chapter's parliamentary procedure team and speaking events entrants. The benefits? Students learned a lot about parliamentary procedure, the team advanced to state finals and Gilmore had extra time to devote to other students and projects.



Program Support. Volunteer coaches also lend credibility to the program. Gilmore invites CDE coaches to school board meetings to make presentations on event results. "Board members realize there is support when they see community members involved," he says. Gilmore says this support is partially responsible for moving the school board to extend his summer contract this year and increase the program's supply budget by \$15,000.

Quick Resources

Gilmore recommends these resources in training alumni and other partners to work with students and CDE teams. Call (800) 332-2668 for any National FFA resources listed below.

- *Career Development Event Handbook* has rules, regulations and event descriptions of CDE activities organized by the National FFA Organization (Item CDEH, free).
- Internet search engines such as Yahoo and the Ag Ed Network (800-334-9779) provide students access to a world of information and data for writing speeches and keeping up-to-date on issues and news topics related to specific CDEs.

Contact National FFA Staff Jim Armbruster or Dale Crabtree at 317-802-6060 for questions on CDEs. Ray Gilmore can be reached at (503) 829-2855 (school), (503) 651-3544 (home) or gilmoreray@yahoo.com.

The Good Neighbor Policy

Ask Butch Whelchel about community service and you will hear about the “good neighbor policy.” To him, the phrase simply means “you don’t do a favor for your neighbor expecting one in return.” However, his approach to community service has generated phenomenal support and goodwill for the Kensington, Kan., program.

Community Roots

Since 1988, Whelchel has taught at Kensington, a town of about 500 residents where everyone knows everyone else. This atmosphere has made it easy for Whelchel and his students to “pitch in where help was needed.”

Take as an example how students built shelves for owners of a local meat locker. In response to their help, the owners have often volunteered their facility, allowing FFA members on the meats team to practice evaluating cuts and carcasses. This is one reason why members have had success at district, state and national competitions. “The owners expect us to use their facility because of a little goodwill,” Whelchel says.

Connection to the Classroom

Whelchel has often incorporated service projects into instruction and pointed out practical lessons. When he and his students constructed a driveway to a shed that housed the school vehicle, Whelchel taught them about running concrete. Students learned to calculate how many yards of concrete were needed to complete the job. They also discovered a practical lesson in comparing their production costs to having the project completed commercially.

In addition, students have created trash bins for businesses and shelves and oven stands for a local cafe. For school employees or administrators, students have constructed shelves for lunch and storage rooms and a mobile computer printer stand. Just recently, the Boy Scouts and a senior citizens group have requested students’ help with two new projects.

“I love assisting the community through these projects,” Whelchel says, “It also makes for no idle hands in shop classes.” When students have asked him about their involvement in service projects, he has stressed to them that “you never know when you will be in a similar situation where you will need help.”

Tips for Success

1. Publicize service activities. To keep the program’s profile high, Whelchel publicizes service activities with the local newspaper by using a digital camera. “I can take pictures and send them immediately via e-mail to the paper,” Whelchel adds. “Once residents know that we’re doing great things, they are more apt to lend a helping hand in return.”

2. Let people know the FFA is behind the project. In larger communities where people may not know about the FFA,

Whelchel encourages FFA advisors to wear jackets that

identifies them as such. “This will help people associate the FFA with the service taking place,” he explains.

3. Develop relationships with local businesses owners. Whelchel encourages teachers, especially in larger communities, to learn about and address the needs of local businesses. At the same time, he and his students are careful not to infringe on the business of local companies.

Butch Whelchel, Kensington High School, Kensington, Kansas (785) 476-2217 or butchbowhunts@hotmail.com

Farm Bureau® Safety Programs

Justin Heupel has formed a successful partnership with the Montana Farm Bureau to teach second and fifth grade elementary students about farm safety. Students from his eighth grade agricultural education program use the Bureau’s “Always Be Careful” Farm Safety Program outline and materials to conduct their outreach during National Farm Safety and Health Week in September. Heupel annually teaches a unit on farm safety in early September. Instead of a unit test, he evaluates students on their presentations to elementary students and their grasp of course material. During the farm safety unit, Heupel invites the Farm Bureau representative to speak about the program. Students then have two class periods to practice their roles before conducting their presentations. Over the years, Heupel and his students have added props and new presentations to the standard curriculum. Some of the new elements have included tests that measure student reaction time in comparison to the speed of a power take off. The one-hour program also includes demonstrations on lawn mowing, ATV and farm and home chemical safety. This year students gave presentations to four area schools.

Justin Heupel, Richey High School, Richey, Montana (406) 773-5523

Input Improves Banquet

Randy Miller invites community partners, especially FFA officers’ parents and former guests, to offer input in planning the chapter’s annual banquet. Chapter officers and their parents work together to plan the spring banquet. Though the same format is generally followed annually, ideas are welcomed and implemented on a trial basis. Successful ideas become a regular part of the banquet format. Some have included table positioning for maximum seating capacity, meal handling for faster service and procedures that reduce clean-up time.

Randy Miller, Iota High School, Iota, Louisiana (337) 779-2646 or ramiller@acadia.k12.la.us

Partnership Building Tips

Tim Edwards, Derek Hall and Larry Shuyler are very successful at building community partnerships. The three teachers have developed successful working relationships with the Sumter County Sheriff's Department and County Commission office. Both groups have donated surplus equipment and allowed the program to use 55 acres of county-owned land to expand the chapter livestock program. This year, a private foundation donated funds for renovating and expanding Sumter's swine facility.

All three teachers offer the following tips for building successful partnerships:

- Use the FFA to demonstrate how the local program is relevant. Edwards says an active FFA chapter makes it easier to build relationships with community and business leaders because they already have an understanding of what the program is about when you approach them. To create positive impressions, all three teachers strive to gain as much press coverage of the chapter's successes as possible. In addition, they oversee an extensive job placement program, allowing all three teachers to visit and to present positive messages about the program directly to current and prospective employers. Individuals or business owners who have supported or shown an interest in the program and FFA during the previous year are invited to attend the annual banquet. The event is designed to highlight the chapter's successes and encourage community guests to support the program.
- Become involved with community agricultural organizations. All three Sumter teachers have served on the board of directors of the local Farm Bureau, the Cattleman's Association, Soil Conservation Service and 4-H Advisory Committee. By remaining active in these and other organizations, they have maintained direct contact with agribusiness leaders in the school district.
- Remember to ask for assistance. Edwards says he knows of many cases where community members and business leaders are eager to help and support a program, but they are waiting for someone to ask or tell them about the opportunities available. He suggests that teachers have an answer prepared if community members inquire about support. Edwards says teachers can reap dividends by attending the meetings of community organizations to explain how support will benefit students and offering assistance with their projects.

*Tim Edwards, Derek Hall and Larry Shuyler,
South Sumter High School, Bushnell, Florida
(352) 793-6432 or tedwards@sum.net*

Input Improves Banquet

Randy Miller invites community partners, especially FFA officers' parents and former guests, to offer input in planning the chapter's annual banquet. Chapter officers and their parents work together to plan the spring banquet. Though the same format is generally followed annually, ideas are welcomed and implemented on a trial basis. Successful ideas become a regular part of the banquet format. Some have included table positioning for maximum seating capacity, meal handling for faster service and procedures that reduce clean-up time.

*Randy Miller, Iota High School, Iota, Louisiana
(337) 779-2646 or ramiller@acadia.k12.la.us*

Student Grant Writing

Liberty Union agriscience students have developed proposals for key business people and decision makers to secure funds to buy feed for a hog cooperative and digital equipment for the program. Instructor Christi Bachman's sister-in-law, who is the director of the Ohio FFA Foundation, instructed students on how to write grant proposals and give presentations to a selection committee. Students in Bachman's agriscience leadership course divided into pairs to write part of each proposal and develop PowerPoint slides to accompany their written materials. Once the written materials and slides were completed, the entire class critiqued the completed proposals, made suggestions for improvements and planned their speaking arrangements. In the first year, students secured a donation for half of the hog feed needed, which amounted to nearly \$500. The feed company donated the feed, without question, the second year of the project. Also, the school principal awarded the students the \$1,200 for needed video equipment to produce weekly video announcements for the students body. Bachman says each assignment taught students as future employees how to submit written proposals and then share their ideas with others. Students learned technical writing skills and polished their speaking techniques. They also practiced their computer skills through the use of PowerPoint. As a project of the agriscience leadership curriculum, the assignment allowed students to work with area business people and decision makers. The exercise also prepared students for public relations skills and was a springboard for students interested in the FFA agricultural communications career development event.

*Christi Bachman or Tim Turner,
Liberty Union High School, Baltimore, Ohio
(740) 862-4107 or luagscience@hotmail.com*

Community Newsletter

Monica Redburn has found that publishing a bimonthly newsletter keeps the lines of communications clear with key partners like administrators and parents. The newsletter, written and designed by students, highlights activities and reports on accomplishments in the agriculture program. FFA officers and active members write the articles and the chapter reporter compiles and edits the them into a newsletter format. Redburn edits the formatted newsletter and offers suggestions. The newsletter consists of two to four pages with easy-to-read articles that incorporate pictures of students whenever possible. The completed newsletter is copied by school staff. Labels are run from the chapter's computerized database and FFA officers prep the newsletter for mailing. Parents, administrators, community members, and even other teachers, appreciate being kept up-to-date. Parents enjoy knowing what their children are doing in and out of the classroom. Administrators use the newsletter to inform the school board of the various activities and accomplishments of the FFA chapter. They also uses the newsletter's calendar of activities to schedule time to join chapter members at events. The newsletter recognizes community and business members who help the chapter. The move has helped in keeping them involved and in increasing support. The greatest success of the newsletter has occurred when other teachers have acknowledged the accomplishments of FFA members in their classes. Not only does this action on the part of teachers encourage FFA members, but it introduces other students to the FFA and agricultural education.

*Monica Redburn, Mesquite High School, Gilbert, Arizona
(480) 632-4750 or monica_redburn@gilbert.k12.az.us*

Annual FFA Breakfast

The Union FFA Chapter holds a breakfast during National FFA Week to promote partnerships. Chapter members arrive at 5 a.m. to cook a country breakfast and serve more than 300 people. The chapter funds the entire event and meals are provided free. Parents, alumni members, school faculty members, business persons and advisory members are invited. A special emphasis is placed on involving school board members, the superintendent and his staff, assistant superintendents, maintenance personnel, the bus coordinator and other school personnel. The chapter has purchased equipment to prepare the breakfast, allowing the activity to run efficiently. The popular event demonstrates to partners that chapter members really appreciate their support. It has made it easier for instructor Gerald Barlowe to ask partners for their help. An example includes traveling to the national FFA convention. When he reserves and picks up the bus from the school bus coordinator, Barlowe often finds it ready, serviced and fueled, usually at no charge to the chapter. Barlowe says the key to the event is planning. Having enough good tasting food for everyone, sending out personal invitations and following up the mailing with a phone call from members are key elements.

*Gerald Barlowe, Union High School, Clinton, North Carolina
(910) 592-4114 or gbarlowe@ocs.sampson.k12.nc.us*

Blueprint for Magnet School Initiative

The Louisiana School for Agricultural Sciences is the first of its kind in the state. Avoyelles Parish school officials, including supervisor Linda B. Bordelon, believe that the regional agriculturally based charter school will enable at-risk students to secure employment upon graduation or pursue higher education, and will increase the state's economic productivity. Discussions about an alternative school began in December 1997 following a study of education in central Louisiana that indicated a need restructuring curriculum and grants programs. Nearly three years later, 60 eighth-grade students were enrolled in the program, which emphasized academic preparation and hands-on vocational experiences.

The key to the Avoyelles officials' success was their purposefully involving key partners in the planning of the proposed magnet school. A complete blueprint of how they planned and established the school is available from Bordelon upon request. Below are some key activities that advanced progress toward the school's opening. Some of these activities might provide ideas or a pattern for similar school initiatives.

- * Engaged local administrators and parish school board members early on in the discussion of an alternative high school. (This included obtaining support and approval of Avoyelles administrators and board members and other regional school superintendents throughout the process. Avoyelles principals were included in the planning of school enrollment and the total program.)
- * Appointed a grant coordinator early on to research, complete and submit applications for funding.
- * Discussed with and sought assistance on the charter school concept from Louisiana Department of Education officials, Louisiana State University College of Agriculture leaders and the governor's education advisor.
- * Involved key state political leaders in reviewing, and revising if necessary, the state's charter school law and funding options.
- * Informed congressional representatives and senators about the agriculture school concept.
- * Visited and assessed the success and curricula of nationally-acclaimed agricultural schools, including the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences, Piney Woods Academy in Mississippi, W.M. Biddle Saul Agricultural Science High School in Philadelphia and Turner Tech in Florida.
- * Sought local and state support by meeting with key officials from national professional organizations, colleges, universities, businesses, parents, including the state Farm Bureau president, the NAAE executive director and USDA Agriculture in the Classroom leaders.
- * Established a network of resources and funding by attending the ASSIST conference, a meeting of agriculture school principals.

Promising Practices continued from page 4-36

- * Contacted judicial officials about equal access and pertinent rulings for the charter school.
- * Cooperated with key curriculum and architectural specialists on building a program of instruction and facility to accommodate the school's goal.

*Linda Bordelon, Louisiana School for
Agricultural Sciences, Marksville, Louisiana
(318) 240-0216 or lbordelon@avoyellespsb.com*

Alumni Help Build Rapport, Support

Ray Gilmore utilizes Molalla FFA alumni members as the conduit for establishing successful partnerships on behalf of the agricultural education program. He finds that alumni can quickly build a rapport with potential community partners because of their already-established networks. Gilmore meets with the local group on a monthly basis to identify strategies, priorities and potential partners. Because alumni are involved with the program on a day-to-day basis, they can quickly identify and match community and business leaders who might be able to support the program either financially or in-kind. Alumni serve as the initial contact and conduct follow-up visits with potential partners. Molalla alumni members find their involvement very rewarding. For example, they were very instrumental in securing additional support and funds for a local equine facility. Involving alumni on the front lines of building partnerships saves Gilmore time and helps him focus on teaching students.

*Ray Gilmore, Molalla High School, Molalla, Oregon
(503) 829-2855 or gilmore.ray@yahoo.com*

Grant Supports Aquaculture Instruction

Instructor Doug Mayfield is grateful that his local affiliate submitted an FFA Alumni Chapter Grant Program application. A \$1,000 grant was instrumental in alleviating the financial burden of purchasing new aquaculture equipment. Since fish farming is a growing industry in the region, alumni members and Mayfield decided it would be beneficial to invest in a school aquaculture system. The system includes a 300-gallon tank, a biofilter and circulation pump for raising 25 fish at one time. The system will be used to teach students about water quality, feed efficiency, fish growth rates and general fish farming management techniques. Besides serving as a basis for agriculture in the classroom outreach to local teachers and students, the new aquaculture program will equip students with the skills for securing local employment.

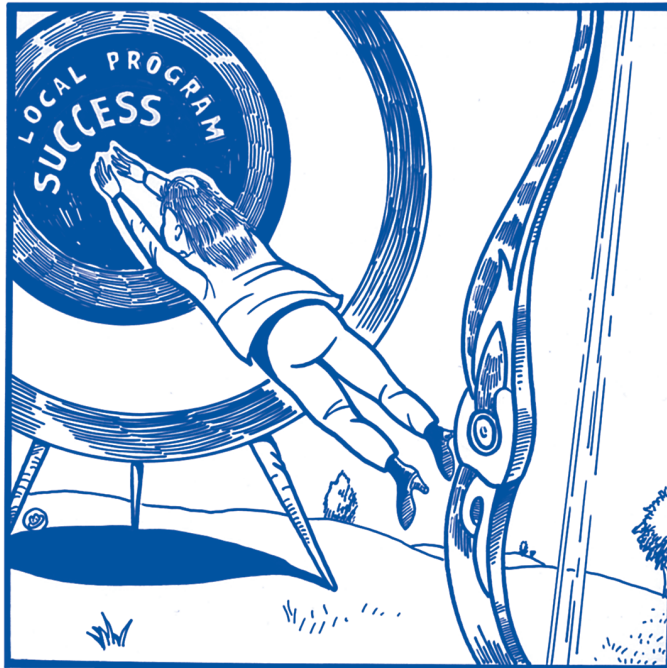
*Doug Mayfield, Grayville High School, Grayville, Illinois
(618) 375-7114*

Advisory Committee

As a beginning teacher, Debra Harstine wanted to increase her community's involvement in the local program to garner more support. Based upon the suggestion of a community member, Harstine initiated an advisory committee. She first asked for community volunteers. In turn, the volun-

teers assisted in the task of selecting additional committee members (the committee consists of parents, two chapter FFA officers, the school principal, a school board member and three or four community business leaders). Initially, the group met every month and then bimonthly, depending on the time of the year. The results were phenomenal. With the committee's assistance, Harstine updated the program's computer lab from two to five stations. She purchased a printer, scanner and a digital camera. Besides serving as chaperones, judges, classroom speakers and volunteers for numerous tasks, committee members aided in obtaining materials for and the construction of a new greenhouse. Because of their assistance, Harstine was able to focus on paperwork, lesson plans, award applications and teaching students.

*Debra Harstine, Johnstown High School, Johnstown, Ohio
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The key to managing your workload and creating a successful agricultural education program is doing the right things, not everything. Follow this advice and your program will be right on target!

The following topics are covered in Chapter 5
Marketing: Charting Your Course to Success

Benefits of Effective Program Planning and Marketing

Steps to Success

- 1 Identify key customers in each of these groups: general community, administration/school, students, parents.
- 2 Establish a plan to ask, involve, and recognize key customers and to report successes to them and the media.
 - Program planning and marketing saves agriculture programs.
 - Identify and meet business needs.
 - Assign students responsibilities.
 - Publicize responsibilities.
 - Get to know influential customers.
 - Invite parents to school.
 - Thank sponsors promptly.
 - Use the media.
 - Track and share former students' successes.

Promising Practices of Top Programs

Selected Resources

Action Plan

Worksheets and Other Tools

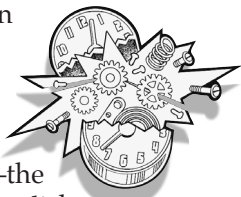
Promising Practices Update

Chapter 5

Marketing: Charting Your Course for Success

More than 60 percent of agriculture teachers surveyed at a recent national FFA convention said the number one challenge they face is time management—the ability to accomplish all of the programs and projects, and still have time to teach. Many feel suffocated under an ever-increasing workload of diverse student needs, administration expectations and national education initiatives.

How do you balance these needs with all the other demands on your time? How do you help each student build a successful portfolio, career and life? How do you obtain relief from stress? The key to managing your workload and creating a successful agricultural education program is *focusing* on those activities that are important to your customers—community members, administration, students and parents. Do the *right things*, not *everything* and your program will be right on target!



Through effective program planning and marketing, you will:

- 🍏 *Save time* when you define local success and focus on what's important.
- 🍏 *Identify and recruit volunteers* such as alumni to assist you with tasks.
- 🍏 *Maximize resources* available to your program.
- 🍏 *Increase funding and ensure program survival* through strong community support when school finances are tight.
- 🍏 *Gain recognition* for your program.
- 🍏 *Plan and implement curriculum and programs that meet the needs of key customers.*

The key to managing your workload and creating a successful agricultural education program is focusing on those activities that are important to your customers. Do the right things, not everything.



Successful teachers use program planning and marketing to help focus on what's important for students, administrators, community members, parents and themselves. You can find and fill key customers' needs by following two steps in a simple process called "GASP for AIRR!"

- 1 Identify key customers:
General Community
Administration/School
Students
Parents
- 2 And establish a plan to:
Ask
Involve
Recognize
Report

Program planning
and marketing
can save
agriculture
programs.



Identify key customers in each of these groups:

General Community
Administration/School
Students
Parents

Who are the customers of your program? In agricultural education, marketing is the creation and retention of satisfied students, parents, administrators and general community members.

How to Identify Key Customers:

☐ Form a program planning and marketing committee of a variety of people—agriculture teacher, FFA and alumni association presidents, principal, advisory committee members, parent, key business leaders, agriculture and non-agriculture students.

☐ Write down the names of key individuals or partners within the four categories on the *Program Marketing Action Plan*. Be sure all committee members agree on the list.

☐ Gather all the information you need to invite these key people to participate in the process: names, titles, phone numbers and mailing addresses. Review the list of potential partner contacts and key messages as you gather information.



Establish a plan to:

Ask
Involve
Recognize
Report

✓ How to Ask

Once you've identified potential customers and partners, *ask* them what they *want, need and expect* from your agriculture program. This will help you identify and design the curriculum and program activities around the needs and interests of key customers. Use the *Program Marketing Action Plan* to guide you in this process and collect key information.



☐ Use formal surveys in this guide or informal discussions with customers to determine:



- what customers and partners want and expect
- what needs to be taught locally
- what FFA, SAE and other activities are needed to support instruction
- what must be done to ensure program success and a quality product for customers

Continued on page 5-3 ➤

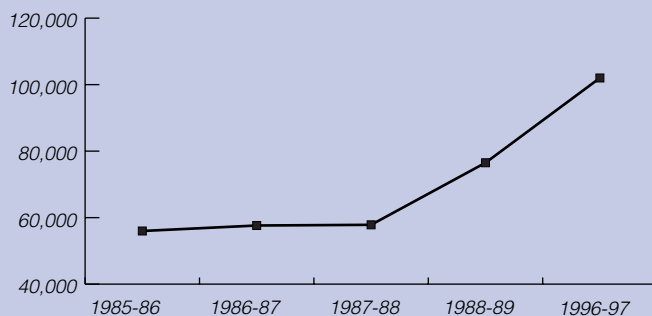
Program Planning and Marketing Saves Ag Programs

Faced with significant political pressure, Texas agricultural educators realized that marketing was a key to program survival. They began questioning how and what they were teaching.

They created a new curriculum based on student and community needs and wants. The new semester-based curriculum became mandatory in 1987-88.

Results: Student enrollment responded favorably to the new curriculum. The chart above documents the growth in enrollment from effective marketing.

Jack Winterrowd Jr., (512) 463-9687



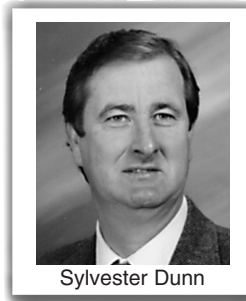
❑ Solicit help from your advisory committee to conduct surveys, then tabulate and evaluate results. Ask:

- What did each group surveyed identify as its main wants, needs or expectations?
- What similar wants and needs do the surveyed groups hold?
- What new revelations about the program did we find?

Identify and Meet Business Needs

Pineville, Ky., agriculture teacher Sylvester Dunn interviewed business and industry leaders and found they wanted graduates to start work with group interaction, problem-solving, math and science skills. Based on their recommendations, he now teaches high-

tech subjects such as robotics and biochemistry; has students and parents sign a contract requiring high performance expectations; and includes teamwork, work attitude and attendance in students' grades.



Sylvester Dunn

Results: Students scored better in other classes, enrolled in more advanced courses, are much more prepared for the workplace, and more are pursuing higher education. "They know how to work in groups, accept responsibility and keep good records," Dunn says.

Sylvester Dunn, (606) 337-7061

Students perform better in the classroom when you base your curriculum on what the community needs and wants.

✓ How to Involve

❑ Identify the top items GASP customers said they wanted, needed or expected from your program or a high school education. For example, employers and parents may say teamwork is a high priority for students to learn.

❑ Brainstorm activities to involve GASP customers and address the benefits they need, want or expect to hear. Besides activities that focus on key partners, include those that will position your program as being active in the community. Use the *Program Marketing Action Plan* to help in your planning in each of the six key areas to program success. If parents and employers rated teamwork skills as something they wanted, conduct an SAE fair or tour that demonstrates how agricultural education is preparing students for their careers and life through work-based learning. You may want to teach a unit on cooperating in the work-



place and invite business representatives to present.

❑ With this information, develop a program mission and plan that describes what you want to accomplish and focuses everyone's attention on what's important and needs to be done. The *Annual and Long-Range Program Plan* can provide a framework for success locally. Have committee members sign planning documents when finished, signifying their agreement and support.



❑ Complete an *Activity Planning Sheet* for each major activity to provide the next step. It will list the resources needed, costs, deadlines and persons responsible for the activity. The *Partner Core Group Action Plan* will help you focus on the key messages and activities needed for partner groups. Keep all planning sheets in one general location.



Assign Students Responsibilities

"We have a one-member, one-job approach in our program," says **Millerstown, Pa.**, teacher MeeCee Baker. A task list on the classroom wall outlines jobs for each student.

Tasks range from making copies to locking the greenhouse daily to calling a local radio station with news.

Results: The students obviously appreciate being involved. Three years ago, the program was closed. Now, 85 high schoolers, one-third of the school's population, are enrolled.

MeeCee Baker, (717) 589-3116



MeeCee Baker

More examples continued on page 5-4 ➤

Recognizing
the successes of
your program,
students and
supporters is
important to
maintaining
long-term
motivation.

How to Involve continued from page 5-3

Invite Parents to School

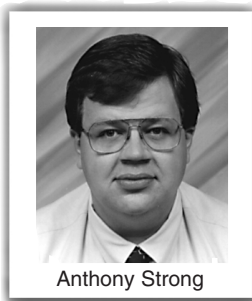
The key to parental involvement is getting them interested when they first make contact with the program.

Pendleton County, Ky., teacher

Anthony Strong hosts a parents' night immediately following registration. The chapter reporter sends a newsletter to all incoming freshmen and their parents explaining the program, as well as a follow-up letter encouraging students to enroll and educating parents about the program. Stress FFA travel opportunities and how the organization includes students from many backgrounds.

Results: Strong says parents who had misconceptions about agricultural education were convinced to let their children enroll. Currently, 115 students are enrolled.

Anthony Strong, (606) 654-3355



Anthony Strong

Get to Know Influential Customers

Always invite the principal, superintendent and school board members to agricultural education and FFA events, says **Denmark, Wis.,** teacher Ken

Seering. "If you can get them to see your students in action, they'll get hooked on this stuff, and when you need them they'll be there." Encourage parents or alumni



Ken Seering

to write letters of appreciation about your program, include this core group on your newsletter's mailing lists and appoint them to serve on your advisory committee. **The system works for Seering:** 430 FFA alumni members consistently promote the benefits of the program to school administrators.

Ken Seering, (414) 863-2176

✓ How to Recognize

Recognizing the successes of your program, students and supporters is important to maintaining long-term motivation. Highlight the achievements of students, parents, administrators and the community and thank volunteers and contributors at chapter banquets and during FFA meetings so each group will see that its efforts are appreciated. Good gifts are items that promote your program such as FFA T-shirts, caps and bumper stickers.

Recognize Members' Contributions

The chapter reporter at **Arkansas City, Kan.,** is in charge of producing a member-written newsletter. The

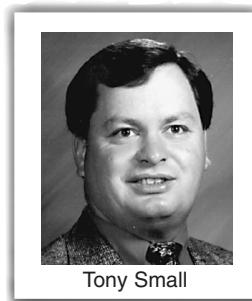
reporter, along with each member who contributes to the newsletter, gets their name published next to their article.

This recognition "instills pride in success," says advisor Tony Small.

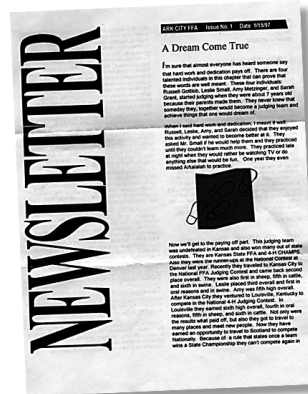
"Any time students do something well, we recognize them to encourage them to go on to the next step."

Results: "If you give students responsibility, they usually handle it pretty well," Small says. Their confidence grows along with their skills. Membership in his chapter has been increasing right along with his students' self-esteem. "We went from about 50 members four years ago to 184 this year," he says.

Tony Small, (316) 441-2010



Tony Small



Arkansas City, Kan., students write a newsletter that recognizes achievements of the local program and key partners.

✓ **How to Report**

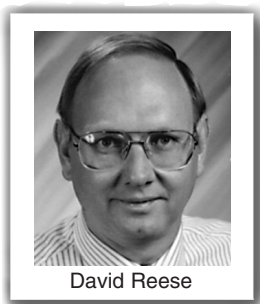
Regularly informing all key customers of program events and accomplishments helps them stay in touch with progress made and builds ownership. Develop publicity activities, such as newsletters or school board presentations, to communicate value to customers and how the program is meeting their needs.

Use the Media

For teacher David Reese, **Mt. Vernon, Ind.**, media coverage is as easy as calling the local reporter on the phone. Offer to do a weekly program on safety for the local radio station. During FFA week, students broadcast live from the classroom for an hour, promoting activities.

Results: Community members are well aware of the chapter. Publicity boosts members' self-esteem, especially when they're on the radio or in the paper.

David Reese, (812) 838-4356

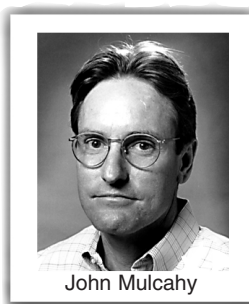


Track and Share Former Students' Successes

Peoria, Ariz., teacher John Mulcahy surveys agriculture program graduates and informs school administrators of their progress. The numbers are impressive. Surveys show that 90 percent of students who study high school agriculture go on to post-secondary education. Five to 10 years after graduation, 50 percent of students are employed in the fields they studied. Ten years after graduation, students who participated in agricultural education are 100 percent employed.

Results: Since the word is out about the success of his program, administrators are very supportive.

John Mulcahy, (602) 486-6300



For more details on "GASP for AIRR!" and examples of tools and activities to use with each group, attend the FFA workshop *Keeping Your Head Above Water: Strategies for Marketing Your Program*.



Send regular media alerts before scheduled events, highlighting activities and possible news leads. Be prepared to answer media questions by knowing what are customers' key needs and wants and how your program addresses them.

Sharing your program's success stories can help key customers appreciate and understand the value of your program.



Here are ideas from successful teachers that will help you chart your program's course for success.

Ask:

- Join community civic organizations to ask members what they expect from the agriculture program.
- Invite all key members of each GASP group to an annual focus group meeting to discuss the direction of your program.
- Conduct a telephone survey of potential students and their parents, asking what they would like to see in a high school education. Use this information to design brochures that meet their needs.
- Visit students and parents at home at least once annually.
- Send a letter to all students' parents, inviting them to join the local and national FFA alumni associations.
- Develop an image survey to assess how administrators, school counselors and principals perceive your program.

Involve:

- Send a letter inviting key business and community leaders to allow students to shadow them on their jobs for a day.
- Focus recruitment efforts on active students who are more apt to participate.
- Conduct an open house, career fair or exhibit in the local mall to invite community members to join the local alumni affiliate and learn about agricultural education.
- Invite administration to the state and national FFA conventions.
- Prune shrubs for area businesses.
- Conduct a tour of student agribusiness, production, environmental or other SAEs.
- Sell concessions at sporting events.

- Find one community project for members to do monthly such as a highway litter clean-up program.
- Renew natural resources: fortify stream banks, stock ponds and rivers with fish.
- Send a promotional letter to parents, detailing how their children will benefit from your program.
- Invite local business or community members to speak about their careers at regular meetings.
- Invite key community members to judge local competitive events.
- Start a local school greenhouse or livestock cooperative, allowing all members to participate.
- Use FFA members as recruiters. Based on the results of non-enrolled student surveys, produce a customized series of brochures with the classroom computer, highlighting key benefits.
- Show community members through orientations or local newsletters how their roles as volunteers fit into the program's vision and fulfill local needs. If they are working on local fundraisers, for example, explain how those funds will be used.
- Build awareness and reassurance through events such as an open house or chapter banquet.
- Invite them to serve as chaperones, which can provide them a direct experience of what agricultural education is all about.
- Post the latest notices, upcoming activities and students' assignments on the bulletin board. Update bulletin boards during chapter or officer meetings as a reminder to students that they need to get items accomplished.
- Have chapter members help with community events such as a bank appreciation day or spring festival.
- Have chapter officers attend county farm bureau meetings and other functions in official dress. Arrange for them to give the pledge of alliance or bring greetings.

Recognize:

- Thank students and announce awards over the school speaker system daily or weekly.
- Create a student-of-the-month award and write a profile of the recipient for your chapter newsletter.
- Place an advertisement in the local paper, recognizing each of the program's sponsors.
- Provide positive reinforcement to encourage students to follow through on commitments. Recognize students who were responsible for successful activities at FFA and officer meetings.
- Hold an appreciation dinner, a bratwurst feed or sweet corn night to thank members of each group—students, parents, community and administration—for helping out.
- Send a letter to parents congratulating them on their children's achievement.
- Recognize at least one key partner or sponsor each year at the annual FFA banquet with the honorary chapter FFA degree or outstanding achievement award.

Report:

- Take advantage of National FFA Week, National Ag Day, and other events to publicize your chapter.
- Invite the local media to tour the program, highlighting key instructional areas and how they prepare students for careers and life. Give reporters news leads on successful student SAE projects.
- Distribute literature about the benefits of your program. Explain what agricultural education and FFA are all about.
- Share a local example of how FFA changed a student's life at regularly scheduled meetings such as with the school board.
- Distribute flyers to visitors describing the classes you teach as a part of the agriscience curriculum.
- Write a letter to your local legislator, describing the virtues of agricultural education and the merits of your local program.

Continued on page 5-7 ➤

- Have an article ready and prepared when you speak to reporters. You might even write an article introducing your program to the community.
- Start a scrapbook filled with newspaper clippings, highlighting competitive events successes.
- Continually examine your chapter or program's schedule for news opportunities and identify two or three topics a month to share with reporters.
- Build a reputation as a news source for community items. Provide a monthly tips sheet, listing any meetings, FFA activities, awards and guest speakers with their topics.
- Send media alerts before regularly scheduled events, highlighting activities and possible news leads such as competitive event results, national FFA convention and FFA Week.
- Produce special public service announcements at the local radio station.
- Produce an FFA Week newspaper supplement with support from local businesses, highlighting the program and student achievement. Circulate to community residents.
- Send a monthly newsletter to all key business people, administrators and parents profiling program and student successes for that month.

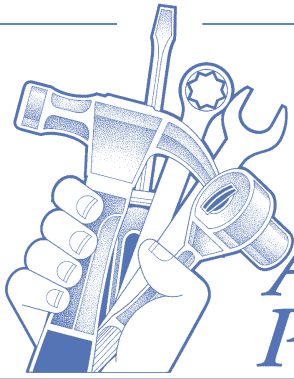


FFA posters, brochures, videos and recruitment materials are available in the "Educational Resources" section of the *FFA Official Chapter Catalog*. Survey the key resources below to use in marketing and program planning. More information on specific publishers is available in the back of this guide.

- *Chapter Planning and Recognition: A Student Handbook* (FFA)
- *Discover World Class Opportunities in FFA* brochure (FFA)
- *FFA Advisor's Public Relations Guide* (FFA)
- *FFA Reporter's Handbook* (FFA)
- Food For America Program instructional materials (FFA)
- *FFA New Horizons* magazine (FFA)
- FFA Week Ideas Booklet and promotional folder (FFA)
- *Keeping Your Head Above Water: Strategies for Marketing Your Program* workshop (FFA)
- Leadership for a New Millennium recruitment materials (FFA)
- Make It Happen instructional materials (FFA)
- *Think About It* brochure (FFA)

Use the following worksheets to assist in program planning and marketing:

- *Agricultural Education Program and FFA Student Survey*, 5-9.
- *News Release Guidelines*, 5-11.
- *Recognition Checklist*, 5-12.
- *Parent/Guardian Survey*, 5-14.
- *Non-Agriculture Student Survey*, 5-16.
- *Program Marketing Action Plan*, 5-18.
- *Annual and Long-Range Program Plan*, 5-20.
- *Agricultural Education Program Goals and Evaluation Sheet*, 5-22.
- *Agricultural Employment Survey*, 5-24.



Action Plan

Think about what you learned in this chapter.

- How will you apply it to your program?
- What are your goals?

Use this simplified plan in your program today.
Write notes at left to get you started.

My Notes:

Write: Who you're going to contact, potential meeting dates, next steps and ideas you want to implement immediately.

Chapter 5—Marketing: Charting Your Course for Success

1. Identify key customers in each of these groups: general community, administration/school, students and parents.
2. Establish a plan to ask, involve, and recognize key customers and to report successes to them and the media.
 - ☐ Identify customer needs through formal surveys in this guide or through informal interviews.
 - ☐ Solicit help from your advisory committee to conduct, tabulate and evaluate results.
 - ☐ Brainstorm activities to involve customers and to address their needs.
 - ☐ Assign students responsibilities.
 - ☐ Invite parents to school.
 - ☐ Thank volunteers and contributors at chapter banquets and during FFA meetings.
 - ☐ Use the media to publicize customers' contributions.
 - ☐ Track and share former students' successes.



We want to hear your ideas for marketing. They may be used on the Local Program Success Internet site (<http://www.ffa.org>), in workshops or in the next edition of this guide.

Describe the activities you do, how you implemented them and the results. Send your ideas on this form or a separate sheet of paper to Local Program Success Liaison, Teacher Services Team, National FFA Organization, 6060 FFA Drive, P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960, fax: 317-802-5334 or e-mail: jarmbruster@ffa.org.

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Program/State: _____

Agricultural Education Program and FFA Student Survey



Teachers: Give this form to all students enrolled in your program to improve the program and serve student needs better.

Students: Our agriculture department would like your input in evaluating our program. If you would like to provide additional comments, please write them on the back of this form or include them on a separate page. Your suggestions are important.

Thank you for taking the time to help us improve our program.

1. How many family members are currently enrolled in the agricultural education program?

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5+

2. How did you learn about the program? (Check all that apply.)

☐ Guidance Counselor ☐ Fellow Student or Sibling ☐ FFA Advisor
☐ 8th-Grade Presentation ☐ Promotional Materials ☐ Parent/Guardian
☐ Other: (list) _____

3. Please rate (1= poor, 5=excellent) the following areas of the agricultural education program:

Teacher(s)	1	2	3	4	5
Safety	1	2	3	4	5
Cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5
FFA activities	1	2	3	4	5
Learning environment	1	2	3	4	5
Classroom and agriculture facilities (i.e., shop)	1	2	3	4	5
Agriculture course offerings	1	2	3	4	5
Security	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to learn career skills	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities for college bound students	1	2	3	4	5

4. In which courses are you enrolled? Please list your courses.

5. If you could add a course to the program, what would it be? Why?

6. If you could change one thing about the FFA chapter, what would you change? Why?

7. Do you feel you are being adequately prepared for a career through involvement in this program and/or the FFA? ☐ Yes ☐ No

8. What level of education do you plan to complete?

☐ High School ☐ Trade/Technical School ☐ College ☐ Military Service

9. If applicable, what post-secondary school do you plan to attend? _____
 What will be your degree or field of study? _____
 What is your career goal? _____

10. How are you going to pay for your education? (Check all that apply.)

☐ Scholarships ☐ Part-time Employment ☐ Military
☐ Grants/Loans ☐ Parents/Guardian Support ☐ Not Applicable

continued...

11. Have you received any monetary awards for academic or extracurricular activities, i.e., scholarships, grants or prize money? If so, what type and in what amounts?

12. How much time do you spend on agriculture courses outside of class (including SAE) each week?

☐ Less than 2 hours ☐ 3 to 5 hours ☐ 6 to 10 hours ☐ More than 10 hours

13. What intracurricular, extracurricular, teams, clubs or organizations are you involved in?
(Check all that apply.)

_____ FFA	_____ Band/Chorus	_____ DECA/VICA/FHA-HERO
_____ Varsity or Intramural Sports	_____ Language Clubs	_____ Booster Club
_____ Cheerleading/Pompoms	_____ National Honor Society	_____ 4-H
_____ Student Council/Gov't.	_____ Debate/Forensics	_____ Other: _____

14. What are your three favorite FFA activities?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

15. What are the main reasons students
don't enroll in agriculture classes?

_____ Scheduling conflict
_____ Agriculture has a poor image in school
_____ Guidance counselor discourages enrollment
_____ Member in too many other clubs
_____ Not interested in an agricultural career
_____ Don't like instructor(s)' teaching methods
_____ Classes are not interesting or appealing
_____ Other: _____

- What are the main reasons
agriculture students don't join FFA?

_____ Can't afford the membership fee
_____ FFA has a poor image in school
_____ Not enough activities for involvement
_____ Member in too many other clubs
_____ Don't like wearing the official dress
_____ Don't know what FFA has to offer
_____ Activities are not fun or interesting
_____ Other: _____

Optional Information:

Full Name: _____

Street Name: _____

Telephone: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Source: Linda Proctor, supervisor of the Arizona Agribusiness and Equine Center, Phoenix, Arizona

News Release Guidelines

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

Teachers: Use these guidelines to help you format news releases that reporters will use.

Header

- FFA logo, chapter name, school name, address, bold type
- Release Date—*For Immediate Release*, current date, 10-point type
- Contact Person—name, telephone number
- Headline—12-point type, centered, bold, upper and lower case
- Sub Head—12-point type, centered, bold, upper and lower case
- Successive Page Headings—12-point type, left justified, small caps with page number underneath

Body Text

- Body Text—12-point type
- Line Spacing—1 and 1/2 spaces
- Paragraph Spacing—1 and 1/2 spaces
- Indentation—1/2 inch

Margins

- Left and Right—1 inch
- Bottom—1 inch
- Top—1.75 inch (first page)
- Top—1 inch (succeeding pages)

Bottom of Page

- —MORE— centered, if news release continues on successive pages
- ### centered, at the end of the news release

Writing A Good News Release

- The first sentence starts with location in bold in this style—**ANYTOWN, Va.**
- Start with one sentence that sums up the whole event or subject...the one most important idea.
- Send a news release to reporters after and before each major event. Ask yourself: What would interest key customers?
- End with a boiler plate (tag line) about the FFA or your chapter.
“FFA is a national organization...” as seen in the last paragraph in the sample news release.

Sample News Release



ABC FFA Chapter

ABC High School
123 Blue Street
Anytown, VA 54321

For Immediate Release
January 1, 19XX

Contact: FFA Advisor Name
123-456-7890, ext. 123

FFA Officers Elected at ABC High School

ANYTOWN, Va.—Seven ABC High School students were elected by their peers to serve as officers of the ABC FFA Chapter. The newly-elected officers will serve as the leadership core to guide the XX-member chapter through the coming year.

Those elected to office are President (Name), Vice President (Name), Secretary (Name), Treasurer (Name), Reporter (Name), Sentinel (Name), and (Name) as executive committee member.

“Being an officer in the FFA enables students to build self-esteem, leadership and goal-setting skills through a variety of activities. The officer team will oversee monthly meetings, competitions, leadership seminars, community service projects, the annual banquet and 12 planning committees,” says FFA Advisor (Name).

FFA is a national organization of more than 450,000 members preparing for leadership and careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture. The FFA’s mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for **premier leadership, personal growth and career success** through agricultural education.

###

Source: Marcia Paterson, director of agriculture and environmental education, Hershey, Pennsylvania

Recognition Checklist

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

Teachers: Review this checklist for recognition of key people involved in your agricultural education program and the FFA. Check each activity under the Yes or No columns. If there is a promotional or recognition activity your program is not involved in, consider adding the recognition to your Program of Activities.

Principal and Superintendent ✓

Yes	No	Our Agricultural Education Program and FFA...
___	___	Send a thank you note for every event our administrators attend.
___	___	Invite them to our chapter banquet for an award and/or speech.
___	___	Sponsor them for Honorary FFA Degrees.
___	___	Has at least one photo in a newspaper of administrators with students.
___	___	Send an annual report with a thank you letter for their support.
___	___	Sponsor an appreciation meal or gift.
___	___	Thank our administrators at a school board meeting.
___	___	Sponsor a local, state and national membership in FFA alumni.
___	___	Sponsor their trip to the state or national FFA convention.

School Counselors ✓

Yes	No	Our Agricultural Education Program and FFA...
___	___	Send a thank you note for every event our counselors attend.
___	___	Invite counselors to our annual banquet.
___	___	Send an annual report with a thank you letter for their support.
___	___	Sponsor an appreciation meal or gift or present the honorary degree.
___	___	Sponsor a local, state and national membership in FFA alumni.
___	___	Sponsor their trip to the state or national FFA convention.

School Board ✓

Yes	No	Our Agricultural Education Program and FFA...
___	___	Send a thank you note for every event a board member attends.
___	___	Invite them to our chapter banquet.
___	___	Send an annual report with a thank you letter for their support.
___	___	Sponsor an appreciation meal or gift or present the honorary degree.
___	___	Sponsor a member's trip to the state or national FFA convention.

Parents/Guardians ✓

Yes	No	Our Agricultural Education Program and FFA...
___	___	Verbally thank parents for attending member events.
___	___	Hold a parent appreciation program at the chapter banquet.
___	___	Mail a thank you letter and give an appreciation certificate for their support.
___	___	List members' parents' names in news releases.
___	___	Sponsor a parent appreciation event and present the honorary degree.
___	___	Encourage a local, state and national membership in FFA alumni.

continued...

FFA Alumni and Community Sponsors ✓

Yes	No	Our Agricultural Education Program and FFA...
___	___	Hold an alumni/sponsor appreciation program at the chapter banquet.
___	___	Mail a thank you letter and give an appreciation certificate for their support.
___	___	Sponsor an alumni/sponsor appreciation event.
___	___	Encourage FFA alumni membership for community sponsors.
___	___	Sponsor their trip to the state or national FFA convention.
___	___	Send an annual report with a thank you letter for their support.
___	___	List alumni/sponsors in all news releases, banquet programs and PSAs.
___	___	Give awards at the banquet for outstanding service and support.
___	___	Sponsor them for honorary FFA degrees.

FFA Members ✓

Yes	No	Our Agricultural Education Program and FFA...
___	___	Send a news release with photo for every honor or election.
___	___	Send a news release with photo for each leadership conference attended.
___	___	Send a news release with photo for every competition and fair attended.
___	___	Sponsor FFA alumni membership for all graduating students.
___	___	Sponsor a member's trip to the state or national FFA convention.
___	___	List all members on the banquet program.
___	___	Give as many awards and honors as possible at the chapter banquet.
___	___	Have displays with photos and names of members.

How To Write A Thank You Letter

- | | |
|---|---|
| ✓ Check spelling, including names. | ✓ Hand write the note neatly. |
| ✓ Use official FFA stationary or letterhead. | ✓ Use their correct job title in address. |
| ✓ Name their specific contribution to your event. | ✓ Enclose any photos of persons at the event. |
| ✓ Use the words, "thank you." | ✓ Send within one week of event. |
| ✓ Include comments you heard on their kindness. | |

Parent/Guardian Survey



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

Teachers: Give this form to parents and community members to determine their needs and wants. Use this information to improve educational opportunities and involve parents in the local program.

Parents: Our agriculture department would like your input in evaluating our program. If you would like to provide additional comments, please write them on the back of this form or include them on a separate page. We welcome all comments and will consider each suggestion carefully. We want to meet your needs for improved educational opportunities.

Please mail the completed form and comments to the agricultural education department. Thank you for taking the time to help us improve our program.

1. How did your child learn about the program? (Check all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/> Guidance Counselor	<input type="checkbox"/> Fellow Student or Sibling	<input type="checkbox"/> FFA Advisor
<input type="checkbox"/> 8th-Grade Presentation	<input type="checkbox"/> Promotional Materials	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Guardian
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: (list) _____		

2. Does your child enjoy his/her agriculture class? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If "No," why does your child not enjoy the class?

3. Do you feel your child is being adequately prepared for a career through involvement in this program and/or the FFA? ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Has this program prepared your child for the career she/he wants to pursue? ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Are you satisfied with your child's academic performance? ☐ Yes ☐ No

6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
☐ K-6 ☐ Junior High ☐ High School ☐ Trade/Technical School ☐ College

7. What level of education does your child plan to complete?
☐ High School ☐ Trade/Technical School ☐ College

8. If your child did not attend this program, would he or she be able to work in agriculture? ☐ Yes ☐ No

9. Is your child involved with any intracurricular, extracurricular, teams, clubs or organizations?
(Check all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/> FFA	<input type="checkbox"/> Band/Chorus	<input type="checkbox"/> DECA/VICA/FHA-HERO
<input type="checkbox"/> Varsity or Intramural Sports	<input type="checkbox"/> Language Clubs	<input type="checkbox"/> Booster Club
<input type="checkbox"/> Cheerleading/Pompoms	<input type="checkbox"/> National Honor Society	<input type="checkbox"/> 4-H
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Council/Gov't.	<input type="checkbox"/> Debate/Forensics	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

10. Will your child seek financial assistance for college? ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. Has your child received any monetary awards through his/her academic, intracurricular or extracurricular activities (scholarships, grants or prize money)? If so, what type and in what amounts?

continued...

12. Which courses offered through the agricultural education program do you feel are most worthy of your child's time and effort? Please list course offerings.

13. If you could add a course offering to the agriculture program, what would it be?

14. Do you have other children at home? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If "Yes," do you plan to enroll them in the agriculture program? ☐ Yes ☐ No

15. Please rate (1= poor, 5=excellent) the following areas of the agriculture program:

Facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Faculty	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities offered within the classroom	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities offered within the FFA	1	2	3	4	5
Cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5
Your child's attendance	1	2	3	4	5
Educational tools offered through the program	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities for you to visit the campus	1	2	3	4	5

16. Yes, I would be interested in supporting the agricultural education department and FFA (Check all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/> Guest Classroom Speaker	<input type="checkbox"/> Competition Coach
<input type="checkbox"/> Tour Guide of Farm/Business Site	<input type="checkbox"/> Competition Judge
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Student Mentor	<input type="checkbox"/> FFA Advertisement Sponsor
<input type="checkbox"/> Chaperone of Field Trips	<input type="checkbox"/> FFA Project Sponsor and
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Tutor	<input type="checkbox"/> Advisory Committee Member
<input type="checkbox"/> No, I am not interested	

17. Are you currently an FFA Alumni member? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If "No," would you be interested in receiving information on membership? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Optional Information: (please include if you answered Questions #16-17)

Full Name: _____

Street Name: _____

Telephone: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Source: Linda Proctor, supervisor of the Arizona Agribusiness and Equine Center, Phoenix, Arizona

Non-Agriculture Student Survey



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

Teachers: Use this form to gather information that can be used to ask and involve non-agriculture students (and potential FFA members) in the program.

Students: Our agriculture department would like your input in evaluating our program. Your suggestions are important. Thank you for taking the time to help us improve our program.

1. What level of education do you plan to complete?

- ☐ High School ☐ Trade/Technical School ☐ College ☐ Military Service

2. If applicable, what post-secondary school do you plan to attend? _____

What will be your degree or field of study? _____

What is your career goal? _____

3. How are you going to pay for your education? (Check all that apply.)

- _____ Scholarships _____ Part-time Employment _____ Military
_____ Grants/Loans _____ Parents/Guardian Support _____ Not Applicable

4. How much time do you spend on your homework each week?

- ☐ Less than 2 hours ☐ 3 to 5 hours ☐ 6 to 10 hours ☐ More than 10 hours

5. What intracurricular, extracurricular, teams, clubs or organizations are you involved in?

(Check all that apply.)

- _____ DECA/VICA/FHA-HERO _____ Band/Chorus _____ Booster Club
_____ Varsity or Intramural Sports _____ Language Clubs _____ 4-H
_____ Cheerleading/Pompoms _____ National Honor Society _____ Other: _____
_____ Student Council/Gov't. _____ Debate/Forensics

6. What are your three favorite school activities?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

7. What are your three favorite after school activities?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

8. What is your reason for joining an organization or a school club? (Rank, in order of importance, the following items one to eight with a rank of one being most important and eight being least important.)

- _____ Scholarships _____ Friendship
_____ Travel _____ Career and Leadership Skills
_____ Fun Activities _____ Belong to a Group
_____ Recognition and Awards _____ Being an Officer

continued...

9. What is the main reason you don't enroll in agriculture classes?

- _____ Scheduling conflict with other courses
- _____ Agriculture has a poor image in school
- _____ Guidance counselor discourages enrollment
- _____ I am a member in too many other courses
- _____ Not interested in an agricultural career
- _____ Don't like instructor(s)' teaching methods
- _____ Classes are not interesting or appealing
- _____ I am seeking further education
- _____ Other: _____

10. What is your favorite type of music?

- _____ Rock & Roll
- _____ Pop
- _____ Country
- _____ Rap
- _____ Heavy Metal
- _____ Soul/Rhythm & Blues
- _____ Classical
- _____ New Age
- _____ Jazz

12. What kind of person do you most admire?

- _____ Sports Figure
- _____ Actor/Actress
- _____ Entertainer
- _____ Family Member
- _____ Teacher
- _____ Political or Cause Activists
- _____ Politician
- _____ Family member (parent, uncle, aunt, etc.)

13. What is your favorite in the following categories?

Favorite Movie: _____

Favorite Television Show: _____

Optional Information:

Full Name: _____

Street Name: _____

Telephone: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

What is the main reason you don't join the FFA?

- _____ Can't afford the membership fee
- _____ FFA has a poor image in school
- _____ Not enough activities for involvement
- _____ Member in too many other clubs
- _____ Don't like wearing the official dress
- _____ Don't know what FFA has to offer
- _____ Activities are not fun or interesting
- _____ Not enrolled in an agriculture course
- _____ Other: _____

11. What is your favorite type of movie?

- _____ Action/Drama
- _____ Comedy
- _____ Classics
- _____ Science Fiction
- _____ Family-oriented
- _____ Horror
- _____ Foreign

Program Marketing Action Plan



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

Teachers: Use this form to guide you in collecting key information on key customers' wants, needs and expectations. Then use it to help you plan activities for each of the GASP customer groups.

Ask

Who are you going to ask?

What are you going to ask them?

General Community

Administrators/Counselors

Students

Parents

Involve

Who are you going to involve?

How are you going to involve them?

General Community

Administrators/Counselors

Students

Parents

Recognize

Who are you going to recognize?

How are you going to recognize them?

General Community

Administrators/Counselors

Students

Parents

continued...

Report

To whom are you going to report?	How are you going to report to them?
General Community	<hr/> <hr/>
Administrators/Counselors	<hr/> <hr/>
Students	<hr/> <hr/>
Parents	<hr/> <hr/>

Next Steps:

Fill out an *Activity Planning Sheet* for each of the ideas listed under each heading: Ask, Involve, Recognize and Report. This will allow you to keep better track of your progress on each activity. Then, transfer all this information to the *Annual and Long-Range Program Plan* to allow you to keep track of program goals and activities long-term.



A. Transfer your idea or activity from this sheet to the *Activity Planning Sheet*. Write it under the heading, "Things to Do."



B. List the cost, resources needed, person responsible, deadline and, after completion, any results you saw from your actions.

C. Use the *Activity Planning Sheet* for evaluation of any activity or project undertaken. Use it to obtain information for reporting your results to key customers. You can easily transfer information from it for use in news releases, the *Annual Report Outline*. Keep it in your Local Program Success notebook for future reference.



Annual and Long-Range Program Plan

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

Teachers: This plan is the master from which all worksheets in this guide flow. Once you have determined the needs, wants and expectations of key customers and you have decided on how to involve, recognize and report to them, then use this sheet to gather that information together. It will allow you to plan and focus your efforts. Include instructional planning and professional growth opportunities in this document. Add sheets to it as needed. Share it with administrators, advisory committee members, school boards and other key partners and invite them to give input to your program's long-term plan. This document may be crucial in budget and long-term needs discussions.

_____ High School

19__ to 19__

A. Program Mission:

The mission of Agricultural Education is to prepare and support students for careers, build awareness and develop leadership for the food, fiber and natural resources systems.

B. Program and Teaching Philosophy:

Secondary Agriscience and Technology Education at _____ High School is a community-based, multi-year program. It offers semester-based programs which prepare students with competencies for specialized areas of the food, fiber and natural resources systems.

[You may want to include:

- How Instruction (Contextual Learning), SAE (Work-based Learning) and FFA (A Connecting Activity) fit into the local program and their benefits to students and key customers.
- How the program prepares students for post-secondary education, specialized training or careers.
- How your program is a year-round endeavor and extended service for teachers is a necessary requirement to meet program objectives.
- How the local advisory committee is involved in local program operation, future planning and direction.]

C. Program Goals:

[Possible goals to include:

- List how the program will affect student careers, knowledge and lives.
- List how the program will build awareness of agriculture.
- List what the program will do for students as to building leadership skills.]

D. Major Objectives/Priorities:

[List all those items that need attention or have been identified with the help of the Program Marketing Action Plan that need attention. Some examples:

- Organize and implement an advisory committee.
- Major and minor facility improvements.
- Curricular revisions.
- FFA Program of Activities.]

1. Annual:

- A.
- B.

2. Five-Year (Long-Range):

- A.
- B.

continued...

E. The scope and sequence of curriculum for the _____ Agriscience and Technology Education program is attached and has been reviewed by the local advisory committee and vocational education director.

F. **Planned Curricular Changes:**

[Describe the priorities you plan to implement on both an annual and long-range (five-year) basis.]

G. **Student Recruitment Activities:**

[Include all suggested activities and a brief explanation. Some examples:

- Give group presentations with former members to 8th grade students.
- Use student information sheets to identify potential student interest and obtain demographic data.
- Audiovisual presentations.
- Involve school guidance personnel in student counseling and scheduling.]

H. **Facility Improvement:**

[Based on the safety and health of students and staff, learning environment and curriculum needs, list the prioritized annual and long-range facility improvement projects.]

I. **Tool and Equipment Needs:**

[Based on the safety and health of students and staff, learning environment and curriculum needs, list the prioritized annual and long-range equipment needs.]

J. **Curriculum references, texts and other teaching resources needed based on curriculum:**

[Based on the learning environment and curriculum needs, list the prioritized annual and long-range resource needs.]

K. **Local FFA Program of Activities (attached):**

L. **Planned instructional SAE, FFA and related activities planned during the summer for the program.**

[Include a calendar and other documentation.]

M. **Program Budget: (Sample below condensed for presentation. Include expenditure under each category.)**

19____ to 19____

<i>Item(s)/Activity</i>		Annual <i>Anticipated Expenditures</i>	Long-Range (3-5 years) <i>Anticipated Expenditures</i>
1. Consumable Supplies:	<i>Total:</i>	\$	\$
2. Tools and Equipment:	<i>Total:</i>	\$	\$
3. Capital Outlay for Facilities:	<i>Total:</i>	\$	\$
4. Curriculum Materials, References and Texts:	<i>Total:</i>	\$	\$
5. Travel:	<i>Total:</i>	\$	\$
<i>Grand Total:</i>		\$	\$

Source: Dr. John Mundt, associate professor, University of Idaho Boise Center, Boise, Idaho

Agricultural Education Program Goals and Evaluation Sheet



Teachers: Complete this form, then review it with the advisory committee, administrators and key partners. This sheet should match your local program goals as stated in your *Annual and Long-Range Program Plan*.

Overall Program:

	Current	Goal	Achieved
1. Number of students enrolled	_____	_____	_____
2. New units taught in the curriculum	_____	_____	_____
3. Number of open houses or community days held	_____	_____	_____
4. Number of elementary school programs held	_____	_____	_____
5. Number of students in middle-school programs	_____	_____	_____
6. Number of activities for other high school programs	_____	_____	_____
7. Number of community members used in classes	_____	_____	_____
8. Number of field trips	_____	_____	_____
9. Number of students with SAEs	_____	_____	_____
10. Number of students on the honor roll	_____	_____	_____
11. Number of male students	_____	_____	_____
12. Number of female students	_____	_____	_____

Supervised Agricultural Experience Program:

	Current	Goal	Achieved
1. Number of students who have the following:			
a. Own and operate an animal program	_____	_____	_____
b. Own and operate a plant program	_____	_____	_____
c. Own and operate an agriculture business	_____	_____	_____
d. Have an agriscience program	_____	_____	_____
e. Work in an animal program	_____	_____	_____
f. Work in a plant program	_____	_____	_____
g. Work in an agribusiness	_____	_____	_____
h. Work in the school labs	_____	_____	_____
i. Have no SAE	_____	_____	_____
j. Work in research-based projects	_____	_____	_____
k. Other: _____	_____	_____	_____

FFA Chapter:

	Current	Goal	Achieved
1. Number of members who will receive Greenhand FFA Degree	_____	_____	_____
2. Number of members who will receive Chapter FFA Degree	_____	_____	_____
3. Number of members who will receive State FFA Degree	_____	_____	_____
4. Number of members who will receive American FFA Degree	_____	_____	_____
5. Number of students paying membership dues	_____	_____	_____
6. Number of members participating in career development events	_____	_____	_____
7. Number of district/area meetings we plan to attend	_____	_____	_____
8. Number of students attending state FFA convention	_____	_____	_____
9. Number of students attending national FFA convention	_____	_____	_____
10. Number of students attending Made for Excellence conference	_____	_____	_____
11. Number of students attending Washington Leadership Conf.	_____	_____	_____
12. National Chapter Award rating	_____	_____	_____
13. Number of members applying for local proficiency awards	_____	_____	_____
14. Number of members applying for state proficiency awards	_____	_____	_____
15. Other: _____	_____	_____	_____

continued...

Public Relations:	Current	Goal	Achieved
1. Number of TV news stories	_____	_____	_____
2. Number of radio news programs	_____	_____	_____
3. Number of state and national newspaper stories	_____	_____	_____
4. Number of news releases sent	_____	_____	_____
5. Number of local newspaper stories	_____	_____	_____
6. Number of student speaking engagements	_____	_____	_____
7. Number of displays	_____	_____	_____
8. Number attending annual FFA chapter banquet	_____	_____	_____
9. Other: _____	_____	_____	_____

Instruction/Curriculum:	Current	Goal	Achieved
1. Number of student team activities	_____	_____	_____
2. Number of courses containing science lab exercises	_____	_____	_____
3. Number of lessons integrated with other disciplines	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____	_____

Partners:	Current	Goal	Achieved
1. Number of presentations to civic groups	_____	_____	_____
2. How many of the following:			
a. Thank you notes sent to sponsors	_____	_____	_____
b. Career fairs held	_____	_____	_____
c. Alumni members	_____	_____	_____
d. Community events	_____	_____	_____
e. Advisory Council Meetings	_____	_____	_____
3. Other: _____	_____	_____	_____

Professional Growth:	Current	Goal	Achieved
1. Number of continuing education courses taken	_____	_____	_____
2. Number of professional meetings attended	_____	_____	_____
3. Number of students interested in teaching agriculture	_____	_____	_____
4. Other: _____	_____	_____	_____

Source: Doug Daley, agriculture teacher, Gilbert, Arizona

Agricultural Employment Survey

Teachers: Use this form to determine local and regional career trends, needs and skills for program planning.

Business leaders: Please fill out this form and return to the agriculture department to help us survey area career trends and needs.

I. Identification:

Date: _____

A. Name of Business: _____

D. Person Providing Information: _____

B. Mailing Address: _____

Position: _____

_____ E. Major agricultural products or function of business:

C. Telephone No.: (____) _____

II. Employment Data: (Job titles requiring competencies in agriculture.)

Job Title	No. of Employees				Est. No. of		Minimum Age for Employment	Educational Level*	Monthly Wage/Salary	
	Part-time		Full-time		Employees in 5 yrs.				Beg.	Max.
	M	F	M	F	Part-time	Full-time				
1. _____										
2. _____										
3. _____										
4. _____										
5. _____										
6. _____										
7. _____										
8. _____										
9. _____										
10. _____										

*Choices include: None, less than H.S., High School Graduate, 2-year college degree, some college, 4-year college degree, master's degree, doctorate degree.

Source: John Mulcahy, agriculture teacher, Peoria, Arizona



Below are ideas from teachers across the nation that will help you chart your program's course for success.

Sponsor Appreciation Cards

Daryl Schafer hopes to enlist local FFA chapters and members in distributing appreciation cards to state foundation sponsors. The program is easy to implement, even at a local level: 1) All chapters will receive a stack of appreciation cards and a cover letter, listing the sponsors in the area; 2) every time FFA members or advisors patronize a sponsor's business, they will leave an appreciation card behind. Cards will include the FFA emblem, FFA mission statement and a note thanking sponsors for their contributions. Finally, a sentence on the card will instruct employees to pass the note onto their managers, with the intent that owners will see it thanking them for their support.

Daryl Schafer, Pennsylvania FFA Association, (814) 865-1386 or PAFFA@psu.edu

Student Newspaper Insert

For more than nine years, Tony Anson and his students have published an eight-page newspaper insert during National FFA Week. FFA members start to sell ads early in February to cover printing costs and use FFA logo slicks to design them. Members also brainstorm article topics, which usually include CDE results, state and national convention coverage, an FFA history segment and reports from various classes. Each officer writes one piece for the insert, and the rest of the articles are assigned to seniors. Members then use these articles for writing across the curriculum assignments.

Tony Anson, Riverside High School, Basin, Wyoming, (302) 568-2416 or tanson@trib.com

Middle School Mentors

In Oregon, recruitment is often viewed by administrators as negative. So, Ken Ball has developed a career mentoring program with the middle school science teacher that focuses on building enrollment through student interest. The program starts with an hour presentation, which includes the FFA video, "Agriculture's New Professionals," a discussion on agricultural careers and a fun career aptitude test. This is followed by a career day, where a worksheet based on the video is used and middle school students are categorized by career interest based on test results and paired with high school students. Daylong field trips to places, including an emu farm and a biotech firm, that correspond to student interests are usually planned to introduce students to the agricultural industry. Ball says the program requires middle school science teachers who are open to experiential learning and good communication between his and the science department.

Ken Ball, Creswell High School, Creswell, Oregon, (541) 895-6089 (after 1 p.m. PST)

Computerized Promotional Brochure

About three years ago, Jeff Olson and fellow teacher, Jeff Gerard, designed a computerized brochure to promote the program's agriscience and technology courses, to change its "farming only" image and to inform students about it. Olson's wife, who works at a nearby university, helped them design the brochure in a word processing program, so they could alter the text as the need arises. Besides using data from National FFA brochures to sell the program, they tailored some of the content based on results of a student interest survey. The brochure is left in junior and high school libraries, counselors' offices and dispensers in each agriculture classroom for students who may have questions about the courses being offered.

Jeff Olson, Twin Falls High School, Twin Falls, Idaho, (208) 733-6551 or olsonje@tfsd.k12.id.us

Portable Exhibit

Joel Rudderow and the FFA chapter build a portable exhibit annually to enter the state competition held in May. An added benefit is that the almost 3.5' x 6' exhibit is used the rest of the year to build the community's awareness of the program at fairs, school concerts and local events. Because Penns Grove is a non-traditional program, the exhibit design usually consists of pictures of its floral and aquaculture segments, student SAEs and its diverse enrollment. Rudderow has these tips for creating an exhibit: 1) involve artistic students in the design, 2) use velcro for easy attachment of all articles and 3) start early because designs are usually modified.

Joel Rudderow, Penns Grove High School, Carneys Point, New Jersey, (609) 299-6300 or grudder@willie.salem.cc.nj.us

Promotional T-shirts

Lincoln County FFA members annually produce and sell inexpensive shirts as a promotional tool for the local chapter. A committee of four to six members work each year with T-shirt vendors to create a design. In 2000 for example, the chapter produced a shirt with the words, "Lincoln County FFA," on the front side and a large smiling face wearing a cap with a piece of straw hanging out of its mouth on the back side. The chapter also produced caps that were designed by members and sold at cost. The activity has become a great form of advertising for the chapter with about 40 percent of members purchasing shirts. Rujena Dotson recommends avoid printing a year on the shirt (e.g., 2000, 2001, etc.), because it discourages students from wearing their shirts year after year.

Rujena Dotson or Dawn Malone, Lincoln County High School, Fayetteville, Tennessee, (931) 433-6505 or rujena_dotson@hotmail.com or dawn_malone@yahoo.com

Promising Practices continued on page 5-26 ➤

Portable Display Promotes Program

Teacher and students of the Alternative Growing Biologic Environment (AGBE) at Canby High School have constructed a portable student-run display to promote the project to the general public. The display, consisting of a 16-foot greenhouse with plants inside that live on fish waste or natural additives, rests on top of a 24-foot trailer. In 15-20 minutes, students assemble the display and then provide information and answer questions on tissue culturing and true hydroponics. The display has traveled more than 3,000 miles in five years. Students have conducted presentations and workshops at state teachers' conferences, state and county fairs, Oregon Museum of Science and the state capital. The display has been one of the elements that has helped teachers to secure more than \$150,000 in grants and private industry funding for the AGBE project.
*Max Sherman, Canby High School, Canby, Oregon,
(503) 266-5811, ext. 1021 or shermanm@canby.k12.or.us*

Chapter and Program Web Site

For five years now, Waupaca FFA members have maintained a chapter and program web site as part of their regular marketing and public relations activities. The free site averages about 200 hits a month, as well as attracts high school students to the program and informs the general community about chapter activities. Members originally approached teacher Jennifer Erb about creating a web site. Her first response was to obtain information about building a quality web site and school policies pertaining to Internet use from the school information technology specialist. While Erb and fellow teacher René Lehman supervise the web site and its content, students manage the day-to-day operation and development of the site. They locate the visuals, develop the sections and maintain the site. In the future, members plan to include MIDI-formatted digital video segments to promote farm safety. Erb uses *ffa.org* and the Internet as a part of her introduction to FFA course. Students surf the Web to find answers to quiz questions she provides.

Jennifer Erb and René Lehman, Waupaca High School, Waupaca, Wisconsin, (715) 258-4131 or jerb@wsd.waupaca.k12.wi.us

Fun-Learning Classes Spur Growth

About seven years ago, Robert Lawson changed the Sussex Central curriculum to more closely match student needs and wants, and one that addresses the school's new block scheduling. Class topics include small animals, small engines, aquaculture and wildlife management. These courses are promoted at orientation and in a parent letter as "fun-learning" with hands-on activities. Teachers use a tri-fold brochure to market the program to students during enrollment, where upbeat younger FFA members wait to answer questions about course content. Lawson surveys students on the first day of classes to tailor the curriculum even more to their interests. In the last three years, the program has grown to 480 students and has added three new teachers.

Robert Lawson, Sussex Central High School, Georgetown, Delaware, (302) 856-1911

Hanging Baskets Build Support

When Derrell Sharp started teaching at Sequim, Wash., four years ago, he wanted to create a connection between the community and students. He revived a dormant community service project—flower baskets. He first asked the area chamber of commerce and the city of Sequim to allow the students to resume planting the baskets as a greenhouse project. He reassured officials that the project would not compete with area nurseries and florists. They agreed. Students grow the plants from seeds and cuttings in the greenhouse, then design and plant each basket. Over four years, students have planted more than 100 baskets. Now that the baskets are up and blooming in Sequim, merchants are enthusiastic about the project because it beautifies the community. Students receive recognition for their labors when tourists and area residents ask about the baskets. Other communities have contacted the school and Sharp, eager to duplicate the basket program. (Excerpts from November 24, 1999, *The Sequim Gazette*.)
*Derrell Sharp, Sequim High School, Sequim, Washington,
(360) 582-3600*

Television Series Highlights Program, Educates

Vilma Gomez and her students use the television channel owned by the Edinburg, Texas, Career Center to broadcast programs on horticultural topics. The monthly 30-minute shows highlight the program and educate the community about practical topics such as composting, gardening and raising quality plants, including a demonstration on the differences between commercial and home-made composting materials such as wooden pallets. The television programs also give all students, particularly those with special needs, an opportunity to participate in community outreach and demonstrate what they have learned in the classroom.

*Vilma Gomez, Edinburg Career Center, Edinburg, Texas,
(956) 316-7748 or kirbykay2000@yahoo.com*

Rewards Build FFA Participation

Angela Collins has built a larger and stronger FFA chapter by increasing member participation, which has helped in promoting the program to school officials and the community. She has done this by rewarding students with free activity periods and FFA catalog gift certificates. In addition, students receive simple recognition for their actions, such as mentions over the school's public announcements or in news articles. Collins also instituted a points system for career development events, which requires attendance at three FFA meetings and two activities before participation. Finally, she has started grading enrolled students on FFA involvement and their supervised agricultural experience programs to encourage non-members to learn about the organization.
*Angela Collins, Wynne High School, Wynne, Arkansas,
(870) 238-5001*

Surveys Sharpen Program and Outreach

In 1997 during her first year of teaching, Callie Dobbins of Carrollton, Mo., used surveying to gather valuable information to build a quality agriculture program and market it better to all customers.

"I wanted to get a sense of what the entire community felt we should be doing and what we should be teaching students," Dobbins said. "The information helped me as a first-year teacher to understand how the community viewed the agriculture department."

Dobbins modified a survey found on the Agricultural Education Program Disc, which she received as an undergraduate student at the University of Missouri—Columbia, to poll community members, advisory committee members and the entire Carrollton student body (former, current and non-enrolled students). Though Dobbins has not conducted a formal community-wide survey since 1997, she has continued to poll the local advisory committee annually to monitor the program's course.

Priorities, Strategies Surface

"Sometimes what you feel is a priority is not deemed as one by others," Dobbins said. "You won't know until you ask."

To determine what were the priorities among key customer groups, Dobbins conducted surveys that addressed some of these areas:

- What courses would be of interest?
- What courses should have been taught?
- How do you perceive the agricultural education program and FFA chapter?
- What is a suitable curriculum?

With the Carrollton High School surveys in particular, Dobbins asked students to rank their preferences among a list of current and proposed courses. She inquired whether they were enrolled or not and asked them to give their reasons. She also surveyed students and the community on their preferences for horticulture courses and a greenhouse.

Data Brings Results

After she tabulated the surveys, Dobbins showed the results to her vocational-technical director, who in turn presented the information to both the superintendent and school board. Based on the input of the community, advisory committee and students, Dobbins secured consensus and improved the program in several ways:

1. She modified the content of courses offered to make them more useful to the community and students. She was able to do this by buying new curriculum and textbooks. She also began teaching skills, such as welding, that prepared students for the current employment opportunities in the area.
2. She offered a horticulture course and persuaded school officials to write an enhancement grant for the construction of a new greenhouse.

3. She initiated a semester eighth-grade exploratory agriculture course.
4. She learned that more publicity was needed to increase the awareness of FFA activities. The chapter reporter began to increase publicity by submitting announcements to the school's daily and weekly bulletin, local newspaper, radio station and the vocational-technical department's quarterly newsletter, which promotes every segment of the department and various organizations such as the FFA.

Callie Dobbins, Carrollton Area Vocational-Technical, Carrollton, Missouri, (660) 542-0000 or cwk024@mail.connect.more.net

E-mail Marketing

The Ontario FFA uses e-mail to market plants and other chapter sales items. A digital letter, with specific instructions and sales points, accompanies an attached order form, which are both sent to a database of school, college and community supporters. Teacher Les Linegar estimates that the chapter sees a 15-20 percent return rate on their e-mails, which are designed to allow customers to respond immediately. Chapter members also send an electronic newsletter to the same community and school database to keep supporters updated on FFA recent activities.

Les Linegar, Ontario High School, Ontario, Oregon, (541) 889-5309 or llinegar@ontariosd.k12.or.us

Student Mentors

Jeff Bjugstad assigns each freshmen who enrolls in the Northwood agricultural education program to an FFA officer or member to ensure that they remain enrolled and active in the local chapter. Mentors explain chapter activities and answer questions that younger students may be shy about asking Bjugstad. A holiday party to honor freshmen was also planned. The mentor/mentee program has increased active chapter membership and helped to bridge the barriers between senior and younger level classes.

Jeff Bjugstad, Northwood High School, Northwood, North Dakota, (701) 587-5221 or bjugstad@sendit.sendit.nodak.edu

Using Visual Appeal to Attract Students

Forty-four percent of Stephen Bouchard's students have special needs or a minority background, so he relies heavily on visual appeal and media to attract these students to the program. Program activities are aired regularly on the school's television station announcement segment. The FFA chapter has two web sites <http://loki.stockton.edu/~stk9954> and <http://home.earthlink.net/~teachagri>, where Bouchard posts assignments and information. High school students conduct hands-on projects with eighth graders, such as hydroponics experiments, to increase interest. Students are drawn by the experiential learning that takes place, either through the highly visible daily flower sales at the cafeteria flower cart, or landscaping in the school's courtyard and greenhouse where Bouchard's juniors and seniors learn about agriscience with hands-on activities.

Stephen Bouchard, Oakcrest High School, Mays Landing, New Jersey, (609) 909-2632 or sbouchard@mail.geh.atlnet.org

Community Christmas Outreach Activity

Carroll FFA members conduct a community outreach activity that collects canned food, toys and money for those less fortunate. The activity, called "Christmas with the Animals," is annually held for one night in December. Members furnish the animals such as donkeys, llamas, sheep, puppies, goats and pigs for a petting zoo that serves to attract residents with children. The school choir and band serenade attendees with Christmas carols. A local church constructs a nativity scene. The event hosts a Christmas tree-decorating contest, after which the trees and the decorations are donated to needy families. The chapter conducts a raffle and cake walk to raise funds. The activity has generated community goodwill from civic and 4-H leaders, business owners and residents who donate funds, food, supplies, refreshments and time. It has established the FFA chapter as a good neighbor. *Steve Keown, Carroll High School, Flora, Indiana, (219) 967-4157*

School Board Reports

For about three years now, Hermiston FFA members have regularly reported to school board members, informing them and the community about the program and FFA chapter activities. The goal is to create a positive impression of the chapter and to educate board members about what students are learning in the program and by participating in FFA events. Reports have included a parliamentary procedure demonstration on how chapter teams or contestants fared at state or national conventions. Though the practice sounds easy to conduct, Tom Spoo and Chuck Miller say it takes planning and effort to gain access to the board agenda, which fills up quickly. Students develop a short write-up in advance of their presentations. Miller and Spoo critique each narrative and prepare students for their debut by listening to their presentations. The practice has resulted in positive feedback from board members who have met students, Spoo and Miller. *Tom Spoo and Chuck Miller, Hermiston High School, Hermiston, Oregon, (541) 667-6100 or spoot@hermiston.k12.or.us*

Quarterly Presentations

To increase the FFA's overall visibility and to attract students to enroll in the Montello's middle school agriculture program, Brian Hendrickson encourages the chapter officers to conduct quarterly educational/promotional presentations. Officers develop presentations and attempt to integrate them into the elementary curriculum and address current study topics. Elementary teachers approve the topics in advance, which include safety and convention involvement in the fall, FFA Week and Food for America in the winter, the chapter banquet in the spring, along with the fair and field trips in the summer. For more than 10 years now, Montello officers have conducted the presentations. Hendrickson credits the activity with a stable influx of students into the high school program. With agricultural education an elective at the junior high level at Montello, Hendrickson finds it extremely important to be involved

and visible in the elementary upper grades. The elementary students also relate well to the high school students, who conduct the presentations, leaving a favorable impression of the FFA and agricultural education. Hendrickson also says that a higher percentage of students remain involved with the program over six years, partially because they had an early start in seventh grade.

Brian Hendrickson, Montello High School, Montello, Wisconsin, (608) 297-2126, ext. 266

Teaching Bilingual Students

For almost three years, Lori Steward from Tracy, Calif., taught science to an entire class of bilingual students. Steward used agriculture as a foundation for her teaching and introduced students to the FFA. Early on, Steward purposed to create an atmosphere to help bilingual students learn the subject and motivate them to participate in FFA activities. One way to do this was to start a Spanish-speaking opening and closing ceremony event team. Though she encountered a bit of resistance from some teachers within the section at first, Steward located two other teachers who were bilingual and were willing to establish Spanish-speaking teams as well. The teams practiced together and Steward contacted a bilingual judge to assist with the sectional event. She even developed a scoring rubric and obtained the ceremony in Spanish from another advisor.

In the end, Steward entered the Tracy team in the sectional event, which included 16 English-speaking and three Spanish-speaking teams. Her members won the event. Local businesses also sponsored trophies for the team.

Tips for Success

1. Encourage your students through silent messages. Steward frequently displays Spanish language posters in the classroom since the predominant number of students who are bilingual in her class speak that language. A poster with the words "Knowledge Is Power" in both English and Spanish is a standard. In honor of the Mexico's Independence Day, September 16, Steward displayed posters with Fólklórico dancers.
2. Build a positive rapport with students by trying to speak their language. Although she currently teaches only three bilingual students in class, Steward frequently makes connections in both languages by regularly speaking both Spanish and English.
3. Recognize that we live in an international community. Steward tries to make economic connections and relationships for students who speak Spanish, along with those who are learning French and German.
4. Expand your understanding of international cultures. Steward has continued to expand her knowledge of the Hispanic culture by participating in the 14-day FFA Costa Rican travel experience.

5. Explain the program to parents of bilingual students. Steward used scrapbooks of chapter activities to explain to parents what the FFA was all about, showing them how the FFA had traditions just like their own culture. "Parents of bilingual students want to see where your heart is," she says.

6. Persist in locating resources. While bilingual resources are sometimes difficult to obtain, Steward found excellent science textbooks and lab manuals for teaching her course. In addition, she purchased a translator program and utilized a paraprofessional in the classroom to assist her on a daily basis.

Lori Steward, Tracy High School, Tracy, California, (209) 831-5100, ext. 2704, or lsteward@tusd.net.

FFA Chapter Becomes Media Center

Tom Maynard and the Plainview FFA members believe that, the more they promote all chapters, the more their own will be highlighted. Plainview members conduct an extensive communications program, which includes promoting activities on television, radio and in news print, including writing news releases for other chapters. Some of their outreach entails daily weather and FFA activity reports on KKYN radio, a weekly agricultural issues television segment on Amarillo's NBC and Lubbock's CBS affiliates, and a monthly youth radio report on Texas Farm Bureau Round-Up, which reaches 73 Texas stations. On the print side, members publish the *Area I FFA News*, a 12-page newspaper circulated to 92 Texas Panhandle and South Plains chapters, U.S. Congressional members, Texas legislators and the state's agricultural commissioner. The chapter also produces three issues of a state FFA convention newspaper, including selling advertisements for this 8,000 circulation publication.

Tom Maynard, Plainview High School, Plainview, Texas, (806) 296-4060 or plvffa@yahoo.com

All-Star Recruiting

Perfecting a game plan for recruiting students to agricultural education and FFA takes time. Daniel Leinen of Harlan, Iowa, has used a recruiting strategy since 1992 that has increased enrollment more than 625 percent and has satisfied administrators as well.

Feeling to Belong Strong Lure

"We were looking for ways to change the reputation of FFA and agricultural education from being that of just 'farm boys'," Leinen recalls. "To update our image and to attract more students, we decided to capitalize on the success of other school activities."

The root of that success lay with what students told Leinen was the most important reason they joined FFA. Overwhelmingly they answered, "We wanted to fit in!" Hence, a winning recruitment strategy was born.

Strategy Easy to Use

The goals of the Harlan recruitment strategy are simple: Help middle school students see how diverse FFA membership really is and that they don't have to forsake other school activities to join FFA or enroll in agricultural education.

To keep the program and FFA a priority, they conduct their recruitment activity prior to registration for next year's classes. During a 45-minute time slot this simple routine is followed:

1. Background music that is popular with middle school students, such as "Jock Jams," is played.
2. Students names are read one at a time as in a varsity line-up. For example, "And now, introducing your starting line-up at 5'9" and senior defensive end, John Doe."
3. When their names are called, students step forward attired in school uniforms such as varsity football gear or FFA official dress and share information about themselves and their involvement in FFA.
4. Harlan's Program of Activities team then presents a slide show, depicting the exciting projects in which students can participate.
5. Finally, Leinen gives a course overview and why students need to enroll in the program.
6. Light refreshments are offered.

Activity Attracts Students, Offers Opportunities

When Leinen started teaching at Harlan in 1982, there were only 45 students. Prior to 1992 when he and FFA officers started using their present recruiting strategy, enrollment hovered around 60 students. In seven years, the program has grown to more than 250 students. Female enrollment has risen from one to 25 students. All enrolled students are FFA members. School

officials added another full-time teacher to accommodate the growth.

Leinen credits their recruiting tactic with attracting students to the program. Adding an exploratory agriculture course and enhancing the curriculum with more agriscience content keeps students there, he says.

The community, parents and the administration are happy with the results. A larger diversity of students allows Leinen and fellow teacher Chuck Obrecht to encourage more students to participate in new FFA activities and career development events. "More opportunities for students means success for administrators," Leinen says. "More successes lead to happy parents and that satisfaction cycles back again."

Simple Steps to Begin

Leinen says any teacher can duplicate Harlan's efforts. There are three easy steps:

1. Discuss the idea with local middle or junior high administrators to gain their support.
2. Schedule a meeting time, arrange the room and obtain sound equipment for the presentation.
3. Find a diverse line-up of willing FFA members who want to share how agricultural education and FFA have changed their lives.

Daniel Leinen, (712) 755-3101 or dleinen@harlan.k12.ia.us

Video Announcements

Students enrolled in the Liberty Union High School agricultural leadership course produce video announcements for the high school. The announcements boost students' spirits and build agricultural education's respect as an academic course, applicable to all students. Students create, produce and anchor the weekly Friday announcements on video via computer editing equipment secured through a tech prep grant. Besides traditional announcements, the video includes a special feature, such as a special athletic event or student council activity, comments from students and digital images of students or events that occurred earlier in the week. In addition, students narrate the daily announcements through the traditional public address system, using equipment owned by the school. The activity allows students to learn about the latest technology and gain appropriate employable skills.

*Christi Bachman or Tim Turner,
Liberty Union High School, Baltimore, Ohio
(740) 862-4107 or luagscience@hotmail.com*

Recruitment Ideas

Leigh Loughhead uses several techniques and practices to increase program enrollment and FFA membership. To attract students to enroll in agricultural education, Loughhead uses the following ideas and practices:

- FFA members erect a display in the main student meeting area during National FFA Week. The display shows the activities and benefits of belonging to the FFA and of being enrolled in agricultural education. Pamphlets that outline benefits are given to interested students to read and take home to their parents so they can see the advantages of enrollment and membership.
- Loughhead identifies schools that feed into the high school to ensure she makes contact with eighth graders before they register for courses. Because many administrators do not want to sacrifice class time for recruitment purposes, Loughhead takes time to introduce principals to the program. The practice improves her chances of conducting one-on-one recruitment activities with elementary or middle school students before registration. During these activities, Loughhead and her students stress a variety of features and benefits such as travel, awards and scholarship opportunities.
- All district administrators receive a copy of the monthly chapter newsletter to inform them about FFA activities and the positive things members do in the community. Loughhead reinforces how involvement in agricultural education has influenced many former students to pursue postsecondary education. She also stresses the thousands of dollars in scholarships students have received due to their FFA membership.

To attract more enrolled students to join FFA, she uses the following:

- She encourages current members to share information about FFA-related trips and activities in which they have participated with non-FFA members in class in order to build interest.
- FFA members are encouraged to give reports on past or future FFA activities at chapter meetings or during class time to encourage participation and interest.
- Loughhead maintains a list of upcoming FFA activities on the chalk board. She leaves each event listed on the board until the activity has occurred as a means of encouraging participation and membership.
- Chapter officers visit all agriscience classes at the beginning of each semester to explain about the FFA and to remind students about what opportunities are available through the organization. Officers also inform students that they are available if they wish to discuss FFA membership or involvement.

*Leigh Loughhead, Yuma High School, Yuma, Arizona
(520) 782-1881, ext. 511 or yh_loughhead@yumaed.org*

Flower Sales Help Program Blossom

The Oakcrest, N.J., FFA Chapter's most successful public relations tools are its cafeteria flower cart and school store cooler. The two pieces of equipment allow for in-house flower and plant sales to students and teachers. Floral sales have funded the FFA and classroom activities since 1975. The FFA and floral classes supply small floral projects like corsages to various non-profit community groups during holidays and special events as a community service. Instructor Steve Bouchard's advice to teachers contemplating a similar outreach:

- Find a good wholesaler or local florist who will assist the venture in planning and will supply additional training.
- Keep accurate records for holidays.
- Allow students to handle most of the operational and marketing decisions because they know their fellow students.

As a side benefit, these sales and community service activities have contributed to a steady enrollment in floral classes.

*Steve Bouchard, Oakcrest High School, Mays Landing, New Jersey
(609) 909-2632 or sbouchard@geh.atlnet.org*

Promising Practices continued on page 5-31 ➤

Infomercials

Oakcrest, N.J., FFA members produce infomercials for the high school's in-house station, which is run by students enrolled in the media program. In the process, they learn valuable research skills and promote the agriculture program to a potential audience of nearly 1,500 students and 10,000 community residents. The station has four in-house channels and is tied to the local cable access channel. Students generally select and research a topic for a segment, such as the program's aquaculture program or why roses cost more at holiday time. For National FFA Week or Ag Day, students might present news on the local program. In addition to writing scripts and creating story boards, FFA members work with media students to tape and edit the final productions, which often include 60-second spots for the morning news or announcement channels. While students do not air regularly planned programs, they often use the station as a way to gain extra credit or develop their research further. Responses to the infomercials have ranges from non-ag students asking for more information on interesting aired topics to residents requesting students to give presentations to their garden groups or even lend a helping hand with an activity.

Steve Bouchard, Oakcrest High School, Mays Landing, New Jersey (609) 909-2632, sbouchard@geh.atlnet.org

FFA Recruitment Day

Every spring New Bremen, Ohio, chapter members conduct an FFA Day with different activities for all students grades 9-12. Over a period of two hours, students compete in both classroom-type and competitive activities outside on the school's athletic fields. Activities include softball, wiffle ball, volleyball, bean bag toss, milk chugging, bale toss relay, sack race, ear corn throw/relay and straw stacking to name a few. Other teachers sometimes serve as referees, officials and scorekeepers. Students who don't want to participate have the option of attending study hall. FFA members sometimes speak to the entire student body about why they joined the organization. The annual event helps non-enrolled students learn that FFA offers fun activities too and helps break the stereotype that the FFA is just for farm kids. In one year, membership increased 16 percent following the event. Instructor Tom Roetgerman originally founded FFA Day. Following Roetgerman's retirement, New Bremen's instructor Ryan Sell continues the event and advises other teachers wanting to start an FFA Day to include a variety of activities so everyone can become involved.

Ryan Sell, New Bremen High School, New Bremen, Ohio (419) 629-8606 or sell@bremen.k12.oh.us

FFA newsletter, B-day Cards

Rusty Suttle and the Neshoba Central High School FFA members publish a newsletter twice a year, which they send to nearly 600 supporters. The newsletter serves as one of the chapter's main vehicles for reporting the program's activities and awards. Another way the chapter keeps the community updated is through a weekly "FFA News" sec-

tion in the local newspaper. The section features award updates, photos and an article. The chapter also mails birthday cards to nearly 600 supporters throughout the year to keep the program top of mind. The combination of these outreach efforts, including a recruitment session with incoming students during National FFA Week, has encouraged word-of-mouth recruitment on the part of parents, who comprise a majority of the program's supporters. Suttle and the members' efforts have resulted in many parents encouraging their children to enroll in the program to build their leadership skills through participation in FFA. Suttle says that most students stay enrolled once they have joined FFA.

Rusty Suttle, Neshoba Central High School, Philadelphia, Mississippi, (601) 656-2504

One-on-One Recruitment

Through personal one-on-one contact, Jason Larison has increased enrollment by 60-70 students and saved the Holton, Kan., program from closure. One third of enrollment is female. Larison targets students with agricultural backgrounds and those looking to attend college or seeking an academic challenge. His personal recruitment activities are simple, but reinforce to students that he is committed to them. His approach catches their attention, especially when he uses phrases such as, "Do you want a challenge?" or "Try it for a year and I promise you won't regret it." One way he gains access to students is by volunteering to assist with the high school summer enrollment and fee payment. Since he is one of only a few teachers present during the time, Larison is available to answer parent and student questions about the program's diverse offerings and activities. He also is able to target students not yet enrolled.

Jason Larison, Holton High School, Holton, Kansas (785) 364-2181 or jlarison@holtonks.net

Course Promotes Program, Safety

In Louisiana, all residents born on or after Sept. 1, 1969, are required to take a hunter education class before purchasing their first hunting license at age 16. To assist FFA members in seeking their hunting licenses, Raceland Middle School FFA advisor Tim Smith teaches a hunter safety course. The course is taught in cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) and held on land owned by the Raceland Raw Sugar Corporation. The LDWF supplies course workbooks, guns, ammunition and clay targets for practice shooting. During the summer, the course is open to non-FFA youth. Smith team teaches it with the Lockport Middle School and Central Lafourche High School advisors. Besides teaching students how to be safe, ethical and courteous hunters, the course serves as a recruitment tool for community youth, especially since Raceland and Lockport are feeder schools for Central Lafourche.

Tim Smith, Raceland Middle School, Raceland, Louisiana (985) 537-6778 or tsmith.rms@lafourche.k12.la.us

Food for America, Farm Day Recruitment Activities

As part of the first phase of a multi-faceted recruitment process, instructors and students at Eastern Randolph in Ramseur, N.C., conduct a Food for America program and a Fun on the Farm Day. A PALS program and a curriculum fair/tour serve as the second and third phases. The Food for America program is conducted three times annually. Using the kit available from the National FFA Organization, students present the material to all third-graders in the district. FFA officers and selected students, wearing official dress, explain the importance of agriculture and where their food comes from, using a skit and other hands-on activities. Officers also discuss the FFA, focusing on award and travel opportunities. In the spring of each year, kindergarten students and third graders, who participated in Food for America, attend a Fun on the Farm Day as the second activity to introduce younger students to agricultural education. The agriculture program's outdoor classroom on the high school campus serves as the site for the event, hosting a petting zoo and sometimes farm equipment displays. Elementary students receive a plant from the greenhouse, which they transplant and take home as a souvenir of their visit. The aquaculture facility will be added to the tour this year. Instructor Marguerite Fields says the activity is well received and long remembered by elementary students even into their fifth grade year. She notes that the combination of these activities, backed by a solid instructional program, has brought recruitment to a point where enrollment has outgrown the existing facility and teaching load. About 25 percent of the school's population are FFA members. *Marguerite Fields, Amy Greenberg and Raymond Caviness, Eastern Randolph High School, Ramseur, North Carolina (336) 824-4710*

Curriculum Fair

Eastern Randolph, N.C., FFA officers and instructors participate in the high school's curriculum fair to promote their program and chapter. Students in grades eight through 11 attend the event, which is conducted each spring before registration for fall classes. The fair is open to all core subject areas, such as math, English and science, besides electives. The fair begins by having students and parents meet in the gym to discuss graduation requirements. The cafeteria is the site for electives like agricultural education. Eastern Randolph officers and instructors erect a photo display board that demonstrates what classes are like. They also provide answers to a variety of questions, ranging from which courses are offered to why should a student in today's society enroll in agricultural education. A few rabbits and plants are on site to promote the animal science and horticulture pathways respectively. A brochure, with information about the program and its five career pathways, is offered. The chapter invites students and parents to attend the fair by promoting it on its billboard, during announcements and to middle school students in class. *Marguerite Fields, Amy Greenberg and Raymond Caviness, Eastern Randolph High School, Ramseur, North Carolina (336) 824-4710*

Communicating to a Large Chapter

The Sandra Day O'Connor agriculture program has 500 students and over 400 FFA members, making it one of the largest chapters in Texas. Advisors have adopted numerous practices to communicate with the large membership and keep it updated of chapter activities. At the beginning of the year, advisors distribute a policy handbook, which includes the dates, times and listing of each chapter activity held annually. Chapter activities are announced at monthly booster club, FFA and project meetings. A monthly newsletter and mailings also communicate the most important events. The chapter is currently developing a website and creating an e-mail database to complement existing communication vehicles. The ag booster club, teaching staff, courtesy corps and FFA officers form the core groups through whom these ideas are implemented. For example, over 300 members attend FFA meetings, making it one of the main communication vehicles to students. Over 300 hundred supporters regularly attend booster club meetings and about 750 people attend the hamburger supper and auction in early October, making these two events the main communication vehicles to community supporters and parents. *Corbee Wunderlich and Steve Chumberly, Sandra Day O'Connor High School, Helotes, Texas (210) 695-4821 or e043061@nisd.net*



Balancing personal and professional lives is a struggle for many agriculture teachers.

**The following topics are covered in Chapter 6
Professional Growth: Revitalizing Yourself and Your Program**

Benefits of Remaining Committed to Professional Growth

Steps to Success

- 1 Create a vision for your program and teaching philosophy and develop a professional growth plan to accomplish it.
 - Every day, review your mission/values and goals to determine which tasks are priorities.
 - Regularly assess your teaching performance.
 - Create a portfolio to track future success.
- 2 Commit to lifetime learning.
 - Join professional organizations.
 - Read professional publications.
 - Enroll in courses, seminars, workshops or continuing education classes.
- 3 Revitalize the profession and your program. Recruit students you think would benefit from agricultural education and be good teachers.

Promising Practices of Top Programs

Selected Resources

Action Plan

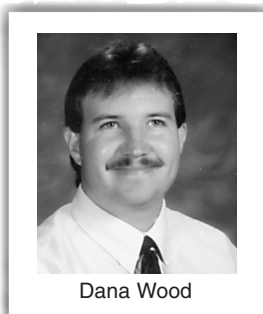
Worksheet and Other Tools

Promising Practices Update

Chapter 6

Professional Growth: Revitalizing Yourself and Your Program

Balancing personal and professional lives is a struggle for many agriculture teachers. Eventually, if you want to keep teaching agriculture—successfully—you will learn, “it does no good to care for hundreds of students and make a difference in their lives, but lose being part of your children’s lives, and what you want from life personally,” says Dana Wood, agriculture teacher, **Hastings, Mich.**



Dana Wood

If you want to have a successful local program, and be fulfilled, you must keep learning and growing.

You play a key role in recruiting tomorrow’s agriculture teachers, ensuring that new programs can begin and yours continues to thrive after you leave the profession.

“The priority is students,” says Marcia Paterson, agriculture and environmental education director, **Hershey, Pa.** “We must plan so that students leave the classroom with results and success.”

By remaining committed to professional growth, you will:

🍏 Prepare successful teachers to guide tomorrow’s agriculture students.

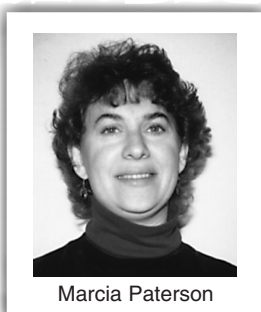
🍏 Receive a *boost* as you stay professionally motivated and prepared to teach your students.

🍏 Renew your professional and teaching credentials.

🍏 Ease your stress as you say “no” to those items that aren’t part of your personal or professional goals, *freeing time* to concentrate on your personal life and other interests.

🍏 Become a “manager of resources,” *letting students become responsible* for their own learning and allowing the community to have ownership in the program.

🍏 Gain *new ideas and motivation* for teaching.

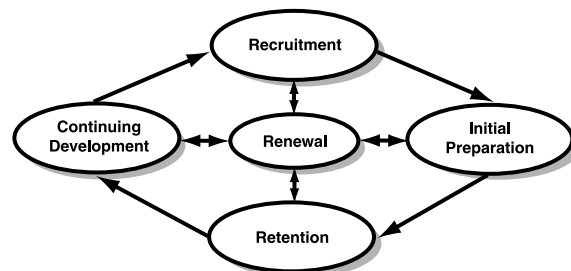


Marcia Paterson

Only innovative and technically qualified agriculture teachers, who stay focused on revitalizing the local program and on gaining skills and knowledge students need, can truly guide them to success. And when you are motivated, your program is well planned and you learn to manage your workload, your personal life will come into balance.



Professional Development Cycle



Use this model to find “renewal” activities that provide professional development.

Source: Local Program Success Task Force, Dr. Bill Camp, professor of agricultural education, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University



Here are three steps successful teachers follow to stay professionally motivated, remain fulfilled on the job and ensure a future for agricultural education:

- 1 Create a vision for your program and teaching philosophy and develop a professional growth plan to accomplish it.
- 2 Commit to lifetime learning.
- 3 Revitalize the profession and your program. Recruit students you think would be good teachers.

Agriculture
teachers must stay
abreast of changing
times, new technology
and the needs of
their students,
communities and schools.

Create a vision for your program and teaching philosophy and develop a professional growth plan to accomplish it.



Agriculture teachers must stay abreast of changing times, new technology and the needs of their students, communities and schools. Dealing with these challenges in the same old ways can lead to burnout and ineffective teaching, while pursuing new solutions can lead to satisfaction and fulfillment.

☐ Review your job description or the sample one in the guide. Are you meeting the expectations? Are you performing other tasks your principal may not be aware of?



☐ Take a measurement of where you are now so you can see where you want to go. Use the *Voluntary Quality Indicators Guide* and *Self-Assessment Form*.



☐ Develop a teaching mission and/or value and goal statements that articulate your classroom priorities.

☐ Every morning as you plan the day, review your mission/values and goals to focus on tasks that are important.

☐ To maintain a successful edge, regularly assess your teaching and personal performance.

☐ Use the *Annual and Long-Range Program Plan* document as a guide for developing a professional growth plan.



☐ Create a portfolio to track your success.

Create a Mission; Beat Burnout

Frustrated and on the brink of burnout in 1994, agriscience teacher Tamara Belavek from **Lapeer County Vocational Technical Center, Attica, Mich.**, developed a mission for teaching, which is posted in her classroom.

She reviews her mission and goals daily to prioritize her tasks. She shares her mission with students and parents each September at an open house.



Tamara Belavek

Students write their classroom goals and reasons for enrolling in the class, which she uses to determine curriculum focus.

Results: Having a clear vision helps Belavek remain excited about the profession, and gives her a mechanism to prioritize her schedule. Relationships with parents are strong because they know her goals and plan for teaching their children.

Tamara Belavek, (810) 724-0541

Creating a Teaching Vision and Mission Statement

1. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Why did I start teaching?
- What do I want students to learn as a result of my teaching?
- What's important in my life?
- What will I be doing in six months, one year and five years from now?

2. List and evaluate your answers. Set personal, professional and career goals around your answers.

3. Write a mission statement that relates to where you want to be and what you want to be doing long-term.

Here is teacher Tamara Belavek's example:

My mission is to help each student BELIEVE in themselves through building their SELF-ESTEEM and ATTITUDE.

I will ENTHUSIASTICALLY MOTIVATE each student to LEARN

and show each one of them that I truly CARE. Through their belief in themselves, they will reach their

HIGHEST POTENTIAL and ACHIEVE SUCCESS IN THEIR LIVES.

Developing a Professional Growth Plan

■ Set personal, professional and career goals that address your program's needs and priorities and fulfill expectations of your position. The *Annual and Long-Range Program Plan* contains all your program needs and priorities based on community, parental, student and administration input.

■ Use the *Goal Setting Outline* to outline your goals.



■ Use the *Teacher Growth and Goals Outline* to determine what resources are needed to accomplish them. Be sure to transfer this information to the long-range planning document.



■ Ask your advisory committee and principal for feedback on this plan.

Items to include in your growth plan:

■ **Specific growth and continuing education needs.** If you're building a new greenhouse for example, you may need to enroll in a facility management course.

■ **Ways to keep current with existing and emerging technologies.** Establish an internship with local agribusinesses on how they use technology in your area.

■ **Professional and summer conferences.** Review what opportunities exist at annual meetings and list those here, so you can tap into staff development funds or arrange for time off.



Commit to lifetime learning.

Take part in yearly professional growth opportunities where you sharpen skills, meet with peers and develop plans directly related to program challenges.

☐ Join your state and national teacher associations such as NAAE, which offer leadership and professional activities. Serve on state and national task forces.

☐ Stay informed by reading professional, education and agriculture publications.

☐ Enroll in courses, seminars, workshops or continuing education classes to update your credentials for recertification and gain new resources and ideas for teaching. List these in your professional growth plan.

Continued on page 6-4 ➤

*Make a commitment
to life-long
learning to help
you and your
students succeed.*

Use Portfolios to Track Growth and Achievement

Use portfolios to track and document your professional achievements and how you address program challenges. NAAE Executive Director Jay Jackman says the goal is for a teacher's portfolio to "become a growing, living, breathing document that expands each year." Use it in salary reviews, award applications and course registrations. Include these items:



Wm. Jay Jackman

■ Statement of program needs.

■ Program and professional growth plan and goals for improvement.

■ Evaluation plan on how you will know when the situation improves or you've reached success.

■ Data that documents successful implementation of your plan. Be sure to include:

- Journal entries.
- Samples of student work.
- Notes from continuing education courses.
- Teaching modules. (Put an extra copy in a three-ring binder or an expandable folder.)
- Newspaper articles that highlight program or professional successes.
- Positive comments from people who have used your teaching materials and support letters from parents or advisory members.
- Certificates or information on continuing education completed.

■ Summary of results or achievements.

Wm. Jay Jackman, Ph.D., (800) 772-0939

Parts excerpted from Checkley, K. (1996). "Teacher Portfolios, Tools for Improving Teaching and Learning," ASCD Education Update, December 1996. Copyright 1996 by ASCD. All rights reserved.

Teaching is a
rewarding career.

You've felt the
satisfaction of
helping students
believe in
themselves, instilling
a passion for
learning and helping
each develop their
talents.

Lifetime learning continued from page 6-3

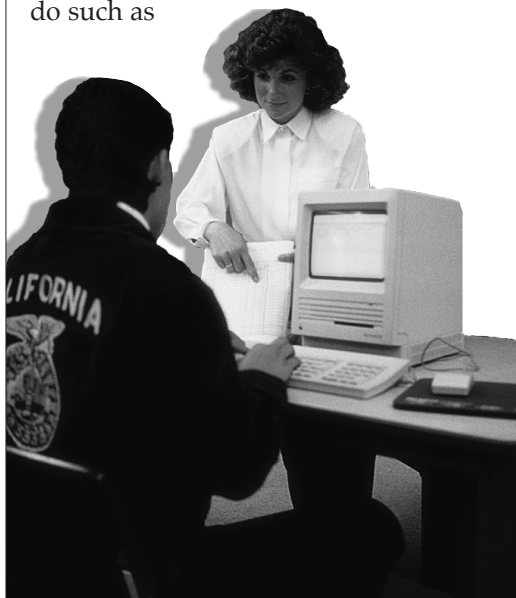
- ☐ Develop an annual professional growth plan.
- ☐ Attend national professional meetings or conferences as well as those in your state and region.
- ☐ Keep school officials and community leaders informed of your professional improvement and growth activities.
- ☐ Watch announcements from universities, continuing education and technical institutions for course offerings that address your needs.
- ☐ Ask peers to review your teaching and classroom management.
- ☐ Develop a global vision and understanding of our increasingly international industry and society. Explore international opportunities such as travel, exchange programs and guest speakers.

Join Professional Organizations

For Gary Shaffer, **Graves County High School, Mayfield, Ky.**, involvement as an officer in the state vocational agricultural teachers' association has allowed him to do things he normally wouldn't get to do such as



Gary Shaffer



The single most
powerful thing
existing teachers
can do to
revitalize the
profession is identify
students who are
interested in
agricultural educa-
tion and are active
FFA members.

travel, attend workshops and tour other programs across the nation.

Results: "Sometimes you get in a rut about the job you're doing," he says. "Involvement provides a little excitement." Shaffer also gathers ideas for projects when he tours other agricultural facilities.

Gary Shaffer, (502) 247-6242



Revitalize the profession.

To ensure that future students will continue to benefit from agricultural education, you need to recruit students you think would be good teachers. Strive to recruit diverse students into agricultural education. You can help diversify the industry for the future.

Slightly more than 10,000 agriculture teachers are employed in the United States annually. Of that number, nearly five percent leave their teaching positions each year, requiring about 500 replacements. Currently, there are not enough qualified teachers graduating from undergraduate institutions to fill those positions.

Identify and Encourage Potential Teachers

The single most powerful thing existing teachers can do to revitalize the profession is identify students in the 10th grade who are interested in agricultural education and are active FFA members.

"Describe to them in positive ways what teaching is all about and bring them to a campus to visit faculty," says **Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University** professor Dr. William Camp.

Results: In 1995-96, Virginia Tech saw the largest number ever of freshmen pursuing teaching careers through this simple technique alone.

Dr. William Camp, (540) 231-8188



Dr. William Camp



Here are ideas from teachers across the nation to help revitalize yourself and your program.

Create a vision for your program and teaching philosophy and develop a professional growth plan to accomplish it:

- Schedule a few minutes at the end or beginning of the day to plan. Include a list of what you can delegate to students, alumni volunteers and other community partners.
- Learn to say “no” to activities that are not in sync with your mission.
- If you’re having problems prioritizing your values, write your ideal eulogy. This will help you understand how you want to be remembered by colleagues, students, your community and family.
- Track your progress and keep supporters informed by using an annual report. Besides serving as a public relations tool for school administration, community groups, and the media, it’s also a great personal pick-me-up device.
- Shy away from time wasters such as general chit-chat on the telephone. Write down important points to convey or questions to ask before you pick up the phone.
- Stick with tasks that are important to you. The next time you think about setting a job aside, consider all the hours you have already invested.

- Once or twice a year, keep a log of how you spend your time. You may unknowingly be wasting time on low priorities.

(Time waster items adapted from ABC’s of Time Management booklet, Dr. Gary Moore, North Carolina State University)

Commit to lifetime learning:

- Keep pace with new technology by offering to pilot test new courses or curriculum software, and present a workshop for other teachers

on the results and how you implemented them into the local program.

- Develop mentor relationships with teachers and agricultural professionals who can provide new ideas and teach you about new topics.
- Secure, from publishers and other commercial outlets, the latest instructional materials for review.
- Invite a CD-ROM vendor to display the latest interactive options available and provide a discount on your next purchase.
- Read the latest issues of professional and industry literature that pertain to subjects you teach.
- Use student surveys and questionnaires to evaluate your performance.
- Secure internships or shadowing experiences with local businesses to learn about new technology and subjects you teach. Spend a week working in a local agribusiness, doing all types of jobs. Develop a list of competencies and skills students need to know to secure jobs in those fields and incorporate them into the curriculum.
- Start a peer support network of three to five agriculture teachers in your area. Hold regular meetings outside school hours to share new techniques and resources to improve instruction and relieve stress.
- Videotape your presentations and then evaluate your performance by using the self-examination questionnaire to guide you in your assessment.
- Review the Honorary American FFA Degree application to provide motivation and set goals.

Revitalizing the profession by recruiting new teachers:

- Offer to let the students shadow you for a day.
- Participate in programs such as Food for America and Partners in Active Learning Support (PALS) that pair high school students with elementary or middle school children for mentoring activities.
- Give students teaching roles within your program. Help arrange teaching SAEs.

■ Arrange for students to sit in on an agricultural education course at a nearby university.

■ Ask your local teaching institution if it conducts an orientation for students interested in teaching agriculture. If not, suggest that one be started and recommend that the campus agricultural education society send its newsletter to students you think are interested in teaching.

■ Mentor students in your program who are interested in teaching. Involve them in the day-to-day operations of the program to give them a realistic understanding of professional expectations.



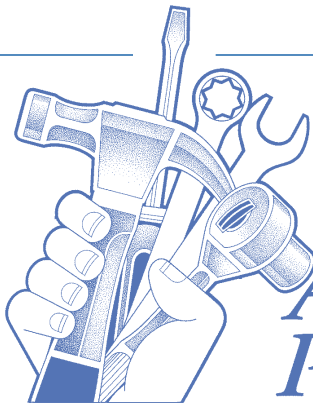
These resources are available for use in professional growth or recruiting students to teach. Specific publishers are listed in the back of this guide.

- *ABC’s of Time Management* (Dr. Gary Moore, North Carolina State University)
- *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* (ASCD)
- Future Teachers Scholarship Program (NAAE)
- *Get the Facts About Teaching Agriculture* (NAAE)
- *Agriculture Teacher’s Manual* (FFA)
- Professional Growth Series workshops (National Council for Agricultural Education)
- *Program Planning Guide for Agriscience and Technology Education* (Interstate)

Use these worksheets to revitalize yourself and your program:

- *Position Description*, 6-7.
- *Voluntary Quality Indicators Guide*, 6-8.
- *Self-Assessment Form*, 6-9.
- *Goal Setting Outline*, 6-10.
- *Teacher Growth and Goals Outline*, 6-11.
- *Annual Report Outline*, 6-12.





Action Plan

Think about what you learned in this chapter.

- How will you apply it to your program?
- What are your goals?

Use this simplified plan in your program today.
Write notes at left to get you started.

My Notes:

Write: Who you're going to contact, potential meeting dates, next steps and ideas you want to implement immediately.

Chapter 6—Professional Growth: Revitalizing Yourself and Your Program

1. Create a vision for your program and teaching philosophy and develop a professional growth plan to accomplish it.
 - ☐ Develop a teaching mission and/or value and goal statements.
 - ☐ Every day, review your mission/values and goals to determine which tasks are priorities.
 - ☐ Regularly assess your teaching performance.
 - ☐ Use the *Annual and Long-Range Program Plan* document as a professional growth plan guide.
 - ☐ Create a growth plan and use a portfolio to track future success.
2. Commit to lifetime learning.
 - ☐ Join your state and national teacher associations such as NAAE.
 - ☐ Read professional publications.
 - ☐ Enroll in courses, seminars, workshops or continuing education classes.
3. Revitalize the profession and your program. Recruit students you think would benefit from agricultural education and be good teachers.



We want to hear your ideas for professional growth. They may be used on the Local Program Success Internet site (<http://www.ffa.org>), in workshops or in the next edition of this guide.

Describe the activities you do, how you implemented them and the results. Send your ideas on this form or a separate sheet of paper to Local Program Success Liaison, Teacher Services Team, National FFA Organization, 6060 FFA Drive, P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960, fax: 317-802-5334 or e-mail: jarmbruster@ffa.org.

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Program/State: _____

Position Description Agriculture Teacher

Position Description: To provide leadership and coordination for all students enrolled in secondary school agricultural education courses. To focus on excellence in classroom/laboratory instruction, supervised agricultural education experience and FFA student organization activities.

Position Purpose: To provide students with the opportunity to explore hundreds of career options available in agriculture and to assist them in planning for future careers, to train students with the technical skills needed to be successful in an agricultural career; to connect school with the real world of work through work-based learning experiences through supervised agricultural experience programs; to offer students the leadership and personal development training needed to succeed in a career including, but not limited to, teamwork, problem-solving, analysis and communications; to enable students to compete in the global economy by increasing international understanding; to empower communities through developmental projects that involve students, parents, business leaders, civic organizations, school leaders and others.

**Position
Responsibilities:**

1. Maintain an active advisory committee.
2. Coordinate and supervise the development and growth of an SAE by every agriculture student.
3. Provide an instructional program that meets the needs of students and agricultural industry.
4. Coordinate a strong FFA chapter that correlates with the instructional program and in which all agriculture students are members and participate.
5. Develop strong, positive relationships with key agricultural education partners including, but not limited to, the guidance counselor(s), principal, superintendent, vocational director, county extension service leaders, agribusiness leaders, parents and other teachers.
6. Develop a year-round calendar of activities that is approved by local school administrators. The calendar should include: SAE visits, FFA activities, professional development opportunities, agribusiness visits, etc.
7. Join and be actively involved in various professional and civic organizations to ensure personal and professional growth.
8. Develop and maintain a library of educational resources, textbooks, curriculum guides and other related resources to enhance their performance as a teacher.
9. Provide career guidance for students interested in career opportunities in agriculture.
10. Develop strong marketing, recruitment, retention and public relations efforts for encouraging all students to consider enrolling in agricultural education and joining FFA.
11. Highlight student and program achievements for the local media, parents, school administrators, etc.
12. Maintain an accurate inventory of equipment and supplies for the department.
13. Ensure that all federal and state safety standards are met in the agricultural education facility.

Qualifications: Must be fully or provisionally certified to teach agriculture.

Salary/Benefits: Based upon education and teaching experience in accordance with state guidelines.

Voluntary Quality Indicators Guide

Teachers: Continuous improvement of agricultural education programs is critical in maintaining a competitive advantage in today's educational environment. Use this *Voluntary Quality Indicators Guide* as a tool for self-checking your program and identifying areas that need improvement.

Quality Indicators

Instruction

Rating

High Low

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Curriculum taught meets student needs. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 2. Curriculum taught reflects career opportunities in agriculture. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 3. Student enrollment is above the 12 student minimum in all courses. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 4. Student enrollment is reflective of student population diversity. | A | B | C | D | E |

Supervised Agricultural Experience

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. All agriculture students have an SAE. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 2. All agriculture students with SAE's are visited at least once per year. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 3. SAE's are diverse (placement, ownership, on-campus, exploratory, etc.) | A | B | C | D | E |

FFA

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. All agriculture students are FFA members. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 2. FFA membership reflects the diversity of the school population. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 3. Chapter conducts 10 or more local activities per year. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 4. Chapter annually participates in state/national activities. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 5. Chapter completes the National Chapter Award short-form each year. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 6. Chapter is regularly covered by the local media. | A | B | C | D | E |

Agriculture Teacher

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Teacher is certified to teach agricultural education courses. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 2. Teacher participates in 3 or more professional development activities/year. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 3. Teacher is a member of the agricultural education professional organizations. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 4. Teacher presents a positive and professional public image. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 5. Teacher has developed a strong positive relationship with local school administrators, parents, agribusiness leaders, civic clubs, etc. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 6. Teacher provides administrators with a year-round plan of work/activities including: FFA/SAE activities, teaching plan, inservice workshops, etc. | A | B | C | D | E |

Facility/Equipment/Supplies

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Program facility and equipment meets all federal and state safety standards. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 2. The ratio of students to teachers per class is within safety code. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 3. Teacher maintains an accurate inventory of equipment/supplies. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 4. Teacher submits regular requests for equipment and improvements to the administration. | A | B | C | D | E |

Community Relations/Involvement

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. An active, well-balanced advisory committee is in place and conducts regular meetings. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 2. A strong alumni group for the agricultural education program is in place. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 3. The agricultural education program conducts at least one community service and/or development project per year. | A | B | C | D | E |

Source: Marshall Stewart, state coordinator of agricultural education, North Carolina

Self-Assessment Form

Teachers: By analyzing the planning and delivery of your teaching methods, you can improve. Be honest. Copy this form and use it periodically to ask yourself how you're doing after class or laboratory activities.

1. What part of the lesson did you feel good about?

2. How can you duplicate this success in the future?

3. Did you have any problems today? If so, what were they?

4. How did you solve the problems you experienced?

5. How might your strategy be improved?

6. What, if anything, can be done to avoid these problems in the future?

7. Where can you go to for help in solving these problems?

8. Did you accomplish what you had planned to accomplish? If not, what kept you from doing so?

Source: Dana Wood, agriscience teacher, Hastings, Michigan, *New Teacher Owner's Manual*.

Goal Setting Outline

Teachers: Identify your professional weaknesses, needs and wants. Based on these, write up to ten professional goals.

**Questions to determine your major professional goals
(must be answered yes):**

1. Is it really my goal?
2. Is it morally right and fair?
3. Are short-range goals consistent with long-range goals?
4. Can I commit myself to completing the project?
5. Can I envision reaching this goal?

List of professional goals:

1. (Example) Obtain my master's degree and administrative certification. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

When you accomplish a goal, establish a new goal to take its place on the list.

Source: *New Teacher Owner's Manual*

Teacher Growth and Goals Outline



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

Teachers: Use this sheet to set professional growth goals and develop next steps. Use a separate sheet for each of your goals.

Goal: _____

Target date: _____

Obstacles to overcome:



People or groups who can help:



Skills, knowledge or continuing education needed:



Action plan (what needs to be accomplished each week, month, annually):

<u>Things to Do</u>	<u>Resources Needed</u>	<u>Timeline</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Benefits for program, organization or self: _____

Benefits to others: _____

Annual Report Outline

Teachers: Develop an annual report for your program with the information highlighted below. Report program achievements by sending a copy to key partners: principals, superintendent, school board members and counselors.

- I. Overall Agricultural Education Program**
 - Include goals or objectives of your department with a general description of the program.
- II. Achievements of the Local FFA Chapter and Agriculture Department**
- III. Course Descriptions and Outlines**
 - Provide a detailed description and outline for each course taught to show program direction.
- IV. Enrollment by Classes**
 - Include breakdown of courses taught and number of students enrolled in each.
- V. Advisory Council**
 - List of members, meeting dates, and year's accomplishments.
- VI. FFA Chapter Membership**
 - List chapter officers and breakdown of membership: number of freshmen, sophomores, juniors, seniors and graduates.
 - List percentage of graduates who pursue post-secondary agriculture degrees and careers.
- VII. FFA Alumni Membership**
 - List alumni officers, total number of members, purpose and year's objectives.
- VIII. Supervised Agricultural Experience Programs**
 - List the total number of programs, breakdown of production vs. non production, number of SAE program visits and types of cooperative, entrepreneurial, exploratory, placement and other programs.
 - Give total annual income of all students' SAE programs.
- IX. Activities**
 - List the calendar of yearly activities including FFA activities and teacher activities.
- X. Professional Improvement of Agriculture Instructor**
 - List of workshops, conferences and inservice activities attended.
- XI. Planned Summer Activities**
 - A monthly calendar with a listing of activities planned.
- XII. Supplemental Funding**
 - Overview of number of dollars per year, amount received, items purchased and future plans.
- XIII. Conclusion**
 - Focus on year's accomplishments and goals for future, new curriculum changes, facility or structure improvements and other program elements.

Source: Dana Wood, agriscience teacher, Hastings, Michigan, *New Teacher Owner's Manual*.



Below are ideas from teachers across the nation that will help revitalize yourself and your program.

Mentoring/Local Visits

Don Lockwood advises beginning teachers with less than five years of experience and serves as a mentor in the new mentoring program initiated in Illinois this year. As section chair for Illinois' agriculture teacher association and with 12 years of teaching experience, Lockwood is in an ideal position to advise colleagues on how to develop lesson plans and to coordinate FFA activities. He also encourages new teachers to visit nearby programs to observe and learn from others' experiences and techniques. Speaking from experience, he says, "It is a must for new teachers to have someone they can look to as a resource."

Don Lockwood, Sullivan High School, Sullivan, Illinois, (217) 728-8765 or dtlock@hotmail.com

Job Shadowing

Each summer, Harley Wilson partners with local company mentors, learning specific skills in areas in which he wants to improve. These paid, week-long shadowing experiences, which include working in a cabinet shop or a hydraulic pump business, have allowed Wilson to understand each industry better and develop skills he can share with students. His experiences are possible through funds from his state's educational service districts. If you are interested in shadowing, Wilson suggests approaching local business managers about opportunities in their companies or school administrators who usually have monies for growth experiences like shadowing.

Harley Wilson, Adrian High School, Adrian, Oregon, (541) 372-2335

Enhancing Instruction Through Competition

The Michigan Association of Agriscience Educators annually holds career development events (CDEs) practice sessions that are designed to help teachers instruct their students in related subject matter. These hands-on workshops cover CDE rules, protocols and evaluation criteria, among other particulars. Carl Kieser uses the knowledge learned as a source for preparing his CDE teams or teaching career exploration units. In states where practice sessions are not available, Kieser suggests contacting local business owners whose companies relate to areas tested by specific CDEs such as meat processing or floriculture. Many owners are able to duplicate competition experiences if they review event rules and topics covered.

Carl Kieser, Unionville-Sebewaing Area Schools, Sebewaing, Michigan, (517) 883-2535 or kieserc@usa01.usa.k12.mi.us

Improving Writing Skills

Paula Johnson has improved her writing and presentation skills by serving on the school's portfolio scoring team. She now presents classroom topics in a more concise and detailed manner because of the training received to judge portfolios, which are mandated as part of Kentucky's education reform. Additionally, she has learned strategies such as webbing to help all, especially special education, students improve their writing skills. Johnson says other teachers can gain the same knowledge by developing writing across the curriculum exercises with local English teachers. An example of this idea is how she and an English teacher shared their expertise with each other's students in preparing them to enter the soil conservation essay contest. *Paula Johnson, Grant County High School, Dry Ridge, Kentucky, (606) 824-9150*

Summer Internships

While teaching in Yuma, Ariz., Jim Armbruster developed strong partnerships with local wheat producers and grain elevators by interning with the Arizona Department of Agriculture in the Karnal Bunt Wheat Program. For four to six weeks for two consecutive summers, he learned about the wheat industry from his regulatory post and found his experience rejuvenating. His advice: Conduct a self assessment to determine your technical inservice needs or skills needed to enhance your current program. Contact key leaders in your community to arrange internships to develop those skills to keep your program current with the agricultural industry. Armbruster says government agencies, soil conservation service offices and FFA international programs all provide excellent opportunities for skill improvement.

Jim Armbruster, National FFA Organization, (317) 802-4334 or jarmbruster@ffa.org

Travel Seminar Provides New Perspective

The 12-day FFA travel seminar to Costa Rica gave Gary Fontenot a true perspective as to how agriculture was conducted in that country. This was his first travel experience outside of the United States. Besides learning about the labor intensive nature of Costa Rican agriculture, Fontenot toured universities, coffee plantations, pineapple processing plants, rain forests, sugar cane mills and open air markets. He also experienced, firsthand the Costa Rican society—how the citizens lived and worked, their values and lifestyles, housing, food and technology. Fontenot secured funding for the seminar through his school's education department. He plans to infuse information from the seminar throughout the curriculum by discussing and showing photographs of the Costa Rican people, culture and agriculture whenever appropriate. Fontenot says his travels will bring new insight to his students and add credibility to his emphasis on global, environmental and personal awareness. *Gary Fontenot, Vinton High School, Vinton, Louisiana, (337) 589-7223*

Promising Practices continued on page 6-14 ➤

Program Visits

John Schut annually visits five to 10 agriculture programs to gather ideas to improve his teaching style, FFA chapter activities, local facilities and curriculum. Schut regularly uses hours designated for class prep, administration or supervised agricultural experience (SAE) visits to conduct program tours. While on tour, he looks for ideas on equipment for an aquaculture recirculating system, student projects, alternative testing methods that involve writing and reading, including marketing and recruitment activities. With permission, he frequently reviews National FFA Chapter Award applications for ideas and tips. Schut offers these suggestions:

1. **Consult with your administrator for helpful tips and possible funds to accommodate visits.** Make visits a part of your professional development plan, tying them directly to your goals for teaching and growth. Document and demonstrate how each visit adds value to your program and your professional growth plan.
2. **Develop a mentor/mentee relationship if you're a teacher with three years of experience or less.** Use this partnership to obtain new ideas, test concepts and gain advice from a veteran teacher.
3. **Compile a photo album of your visits.** Show your advisory council what other successful programs with similar curricula possess in the way of facilities or equipment. (With the use of his photo album, Schut convinced advisory council members and administrators to expand the Montague aquaculture facility to enhance student learning.)

John Schut, Montague High School, Montague, Michigan, (231) 894-2661 or jschut@remc4.k12.mi.us

Grant and Community Update Program

Four years ago, Elgin teachers involved the community in evaluating and writing a curriculum to closely match local and national industry trends. In the process, they added a biotechnology and an animal biomedicine course, which required new equipment and further education through university short courses. Teachers obtained a local tech prep grant to fund the travel, equipment and training costs. Local biomedical companies have offered the use of their facilities for labs, and have provided training in the latest technologies and techniques. In addition, a local cancer research hospital regularly allows staff to lecture and present to students enrolled in these courses.

Don Hudson, Elgin High School, Elgin, Texas, (512) 281-9709 or hjalmar@tenet.edu

Industry Input to Instruction

David Ollila spends a lot of time discussing career information with industry representatives, such as seed or implement dealers, at trade, stock and farms shows, including the FFA National Agricultural Career Show in

Louisville, Ky. He gathers the information to integrate into his instruction and to keep himself abreast of industry trends. Ollila asks trade representatives (who work with global positioning systems, for example) about education or training requirements, specific skills needed and career opportunities. Then he weaves this information into his introductory core courses by urging students to search the Web for more details on each career area, such as salary, education and location requirements. The approach has allowed his students, who increasingly come from urban backgrounds, to see the relevance of the course content.

David Ollila, Newell High School, Newell, South Dakota, (605) 456-2393

Planner Balances Family, Career

Kent Bollinger uses a daily planner to manage his time and to balance his priorities at school and home. While Bollinger admits that not every teacher needs to carry a daily planner, he does feel that some type of time management method can help all teachers inventory their tasks. Bollinger uses his planner to monitor the appointments he makes to be sure that he attends no more than three meetings per week. This decision allows him to spend more time with his spouse and children. Bollinger says that teachers' entire lives can suffer if they only participate in and focus on professional activities.

He also offers these additional time management tips to balance family and the career:

1. Leave at least one day a week for family and/or faith. (Except in the case of emergencies or to monitor the progress of activities, Bollinger rests and spends time only with his family on Sundays.)
2. Invite your family on professional trips or to conventions. (As a state officer for the Michigan agriculture teachers association, Bollinger brought his family to the national convention, allowing him more time to be with his spouse and children.)
3. Plan time-consuming professional activities, such as pursuing a graduate degree, for early in your career when you don't have a spouse or children.
4. Model time management skills to your students. (Bollinger keeps his planner with him at all times and shares his priorities with students when asked to commit to additional activities that may infringe on his family time.)
5. Encourage FFA chapter officers to manage their time. (Bollinger purchases a planner from the FFA catalog for each officer who wants one, so they can learn to manage their school work, FFA responsibilities and other activities.)

Kent Bollinger, Coopersville High School, Coopersville, Michigan, (616) 997-3534

Mentoring Other Teachers Within a Department

New teachers often look to established instructors as mentors. Such was the case for Jill Shrum, a non-traditional new teacher at Hendersonville, Tenn. She looked to Jerry Cooper, the agriculture department head and a 25-year teacher, for support. As a new teacher, Shrum needed counsel from Cooper in these general areas:

- 1) Arranging mechanical tasks, such as how to keep a grade book, by using short cuts and procedures to make tasks easier and satisfy school district standards;
- 2) Coping with classroom management issues which couldn't be explained by mere student behavior; and
- 3) Analyzing new ideas before implementing them, so as to avoid "reinventing-the-wheel" and enabling her to fully use her natural talents.

From a mentor's perspective, Cooper facilitated informal department meetings to coordinate lab work and facilities. He ate lunch with Shrum to discuss the day's activities and challenges. He has this advice for current instructors on mentoring new or student teachers: 1) Be as nurturing as possible; 2) provide them with the best experience possible, so as to build their confidence and teaching skills; 3) encourage them to seek the reason for classroom challenges and not assume that students' behavior or lack of performance is their fault (Students have many issues and pressures they bring to school. Though not a teacher's fault, he or she must deal with them professionally and with a "clinical" mentality or risk becoming overwhelmed.); 4) communicate with them as much as possible about how their instruction is progressing; 5) assist them in creating a filing system that works for them, which incorporates computers and their personal work habits; 6) caution them to maintain clear responsibilities and expectations for students and themselves; 7) introduce them to as many community and school partners as possible to create advantageous relationships for themselves and the program; and 8) encourage them to maintain a life outside the classroom by balancing their work load and personal life.

Jerry Cooper and Jill Shrum, Hendersonville High School, Hendersonville, Tennessee, (615) 824-6162

Industry Involvement Offers Perspective, Credibility

Mike McConnell believes it's important to be involved with every aspect of the agricultural industry he is responsible for teaching. That means he assists as often as possible on his in-laws' commercial cow-calf operation. He extends that belief to membership in professional agricultural organizations such as the Wyoming Stock Growers, which sponsors meetings and issues-related discussions for area ranchers. He encourages student involvement by planning field trips to these meetings, such as one sponsored by the Society of Range Management on the Endangered Species

Act and how it affects ranchers, their responsibilities and legal rights. McConnell's involvement allows him to bring an honest perspective to his classroom, build credibility with students and open his program to a larger group of partners with more resources. To complement his local involvement and remain current of technology, he attends industry-sponsored workshops conducted by the state teachers association and as part of the National Council for Agricultural Education's Professional Growth Series.

Mike McConnell, Lander Valley High School, Lander, Wyoming, (307) 332-3640 or mmccconnell@fre1.k12.wy.us

Research Workshops

Teacher John Stables participated in a workshop that allowed him to work side-by-side with Forest Service researchers. He learned about accepted industry research techniques that he has adapted for both the local natural resources and environmental science courses. The summer-long "Teacher in the Woods" workshop, offered through the Portland State University in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service, provided teachers with pay and eight graduate credits for free. During the course of the program, Stables used recreational surveys to assess campgrounds for damage, determined snag and rotten log ages and form classes in the forest, created pit fall traps to collect forest floor insects, developed transects in the woods to create field sample areas, observed Olive-sided Flyer Catcher behavior and much more. Many of the mentors with whom Stables has worked have served as speakers and resource personnel for his courses. Stables has suggested that teachers volunteer for summer internships with their local forest service office if similar workshops are not available through their land state teacher education programs.

John Stables, Hillsboro High School, Hillsboro, Oregon, (503) 648-8561 or stablesj@hsd.k12.or.us

Industry Grants

Tom Spoo won a two-year, private industry grant to research the transgenic resistance to the mosaic virus in cantaloupes. Besides providing insight into a regional production issue, the grant will allow Spoo to earn credit toward a graduate degree. The \$14,000 grant was available to science teachers through the Partners in Science Program, which is sponsored by M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust. It is administered through the local land grant institution—Oregon State University. Spoo will develop an abstract, conduct his research and present his results. Spoo says contacting the research center at the nearest land grant institution may provide similar grant opportunities.

Tom Spoo, Hermiston High School, Hermiston, Oregon, (541) 667-6100 or spoot@hermiston.k12.or.us

Earthwatch Experience Enhances Teaching

Last summer, Jonathan Evans worked with wild Agrimi goats during his two-week Earthwatch experience on the Greek island of Crete. He worked with scientists in gathering information on studying the impact of domestic interbreeding on this goat species. Scientists in turn traded ideas with others like Evans who were grounded in application. For only \$400 out of his own pocket, Evans was able to bring new examples of science and application back to his classroom, and increase his credibility with his students. The experience also allowed him to make contacts with colleges and universities with which his students might be interested.

Jonathan Evans, Hesperia High School, Hesperia, California, (760) 244-9898 or jevans3640@aol.com

Creating a Positive Environment

Donald Westerman follows the credo not to discuss anything negative about students, prejudice or belittle them. If negative comments do arise in the teachers' lounge, he politely exits the room. Rather, Westerman treats students with a fresh perspective and respect daily and allows them to "prove" themselves in class. Westerman has seen fewer discipline cases than his peers and less stress. He has found that "marginal" students blossom under the approach. He credits his strong faith with giving him the positive attitude, focus and patience to address students with care and respect.

Donald Westerman, Glen Rose High School, Malvern, Arkansas, (501) 332-3694

Advice for Female Teachers

Few women taught high school agriculture in 1975 when Cynthia Roszel first entered the teaching profession. While many things have changed in 25 years, women still face some challenges. Roszel has sound advice to share with women entering the profession, some of which is applicable to all beginning teachers.

- 1) Above all else, view yourself as a teacher first. Improve your teaching skills by attending workshops whenever you can.
- 2) Determine to prove that you are competent and prepared by building your curriculum knowledge and library. This can increase your confidence in teaching subjects with which you are not as familiar. Borrow curriculum ideas and resources from successful teachers. Fellow teachers helped Roszel in developing a horticulture curriculum by providing plants, plans and ideas.
- 3) Locate mentors in your area or region on whom you can rely for tips and ideas. Involvement in professional associations opens doors to new resources.
- 4) Rely on the advice and support of advisory council members in improving the program, curriculum and your skills. These networks can be invaluable in building a program in small communities.

- 5) Learn to relax. Be open to suggestions from students, parents and other community residents. Roszel's teaching style has changed since she first entered the profession. Courses are now more student-driven and focus on career interests because of today's technology and learning styles.
- 6) Set realistic parameters for discipline that allow you to manage students for maximum learning.
- 7) Use technology such as the Internet and World Wide Web in course activities to engage and interest students.
- 8) Build some early teaching successes by coaching teams in events which match your strengths.

Cynthia Roszel, Allentown High School, Allentown, New Jersey, (609) 259-2160

Internet, Reading Offer Training Leads

Like most agriculture teachers, Mike McMahon places a high priority on attending workshops and continuing education courses to remain up-to-date on new techniques and technology for real-world applications in areas such as pesticide/herbicide use, livestock production and computer usage in agriculture. However, he primarily finds leads to match his training needs by reading trade publications and "surfing" the Internet. McMahon reads university, Extension and breed publications. While on the Internet, he reviews key sites such as the *Successful Farmer*, *Pro Farmer*, Texas A&M and state agricultural education websites. He has also found excellent leads by reviewing links and postings on several land grant institutions sites, including the one provided by Oklahoma State University.

Mike McMahon, Comfort High School, Comfort, Texas, (830) 995-5166 or mcmahon@comfort.k12.tx.us

Chamber of Commerce Courses

Joel Rudderow and fellow teacher Robin McLean have participated in a four-week course offered by the Southern New Jersey Chamber of Commerce. Covering a five-county region in southern New Jersey, the consortium has offered the course for 10 years to introduce teachers from all disciplines to the economic and social conditions of the area. Rudderow and McLean toured major entertainment and manufacturing companies, learned about the skills future employees will need and listened to economic experts describe current and future working conditions. Besides sharing ideas with teachers from other disciplines, both instructors participated in group projects as part of the course where they worked with other participants in presenting a specific economic challenge for the area or concept learned while on tour. Both teachers have used the information in developing their instructional program and in creating supervised agricultural experience (SAE) programs or finding sources for placement of work-based experiences. If such a course is not available in your area, Rudderow suggests asking local Chamber leaders, whether from one or several communities, to develop such a seminar for your region.

Joel Rudderow, Penns Grove High School, Carneys Point, New Jersey, (856) 299-6300 or jrudderow@pennsgrove.k12.nj.us

Travel Seminar Builds Connections

The FFA Costa Rica Travel Seminar allowed Sheila Folan to bring resources back to her classroom and to build personal and professional connections. Networks created with other trip participants continue through e-mail and web site sharing. Folan can examine instructional practices of other teachers and apply ideas learned from successful students from other states to her own chapter. Folan has developed a heightened awareness of international cultural and agricultural issues. This is especially important since she teaches in a multicultural urban high school. She developed a PowerPoint® presentation with the digital photos taken during seminar, which she uses during agribusiness units to highlight the international facets of American agriculture. The whole experience serves as an introduction to FFA international study and proficiency programs and gives Folan greater credibility with her students in speaking about international travel.

*Sheila Folan, Florin High School, Sacramento, California,
(916) 689-8600 or SFolan@edcenter.egusd.k12.ca.us*

Serving on Executive Boards

Kent Bollinger finds that serving on various youth, school, professional and community boards helps him to focus his energy, prioritize his time as a husband, father and teacher, and build community awareness of the local agricultural education program. Over his 13 years in teaching at Coopersville, Bollinger has served on area 4-H and youth fair boards, the school district's facility study committee, the Michigan agriculture teachers executive board and as a trustee for his local church. He has used these experiences to grow personally, to develop time management skills and to connect with people throughout the community, state and nation. Bollinger believes that when "people see you, they see your program. If they see that you support your community and school, they tend to care more about your program because they see your program as a part of the community." In addition, the board positions have given Bollinger a chance to share his concerns as a parent and teacher. Through these experiences, Bollinger has gained experiences that build his credibility as a teacher.

*Kent Bollinger, Coopersville High School, Coopersville, Michigan,
(616) 997-3500*

Promising Practices continued on page 6-18 ➤

Goal Setting

Agriculture teachers often find it challenging to set goals with so many demands on their time. Establishing goals has helped Brian Hendrickson of Montello, Wis., to build a better program and to teach students more effectively.

Goals Benefit Program, Students

Hendrickson started setting goals back in 1982 when he began teaching. His current goal setting system took shape in 1985 when he and Paul Bignell, a teacher from neighboring Westfield, Wis., wrote a joint curriculum with the help of alumni, business leaders and parents. Here are some joint program goals:

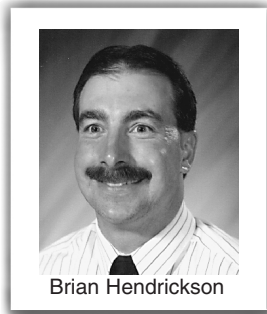
- secure math and science credit for agriculture
- modernize curricula to serve the students' and community's needs better
- establish a biotechnology and leadership course

The process established priorities and direction for Hendrickson and allowed him to focus on teaching and other FFA activities. "It forced us to look at ourselves, the curriculum and our programs," he recalls.

Results are obvious:

- Montello and Westfield were the first Wisconsin programs to receive approval for math and science credit.
- Hendrickson team teaches a biotechnology course for juniors and seniors.
- The program boasts of a diverse, science-based curriculum that is open to grades 7-12.
- The Montello FFA has consistently received a gold rating in the national chapter program.
- This fall Hendrickson will teach a semester course called "Premier Leadership."

During his 17 years of teaching, Hendrickson has encouraged students to set goals to help them succeed in FFA and life. Because of his efforts, motivated students have won three national proficiency awards. In 1994, the chapter also saw an American star finalist. In 1998, two more students have been selected as proficiency finalists.



"When students set goals," Hendrickson adds, "they often push themselves beyond what they normally are capable of doing."

System Easy to Implement

The secret, Hendrickson says, is allowing alumni and parents to assist teachers in accomplishing their goals and focusing on activities essential for program success and growth. Here's an overview his system:

Personal Goals. Throughout the year, Hendrickson compiles a list of areas in his life he wants to improve. Using this list, he sets professional goals early in July before the new school year begins.

Chapter Goals. During the summer, he and chapter officers go on a "retreat" to establish goals for the upcoming year. Officers choose the location and raise the necessary funds for travel and lodging.

Program Goals. Early in September, both Hendrickson and Bignell meet with their joint alumni group to brainstorm possible solutions to curriculum, enrollment and facility concerns.

Hendrickson uses these goals in compiling the chapter's annual program of activities and in completing its national chapter award.

Goal Setting Extends to Classroom

Hendrickson plans to incorporate these same principles into his leadership course this fall. Students who take the class will be given the option of selecting three separate projects as a part of their evaluations that match their interests, personal goals and the topics covered.

Resource Sources

This classroom activity reflects Hendrickson's eclectic approach to leadership. He gathers information about goal setting and other topics from a variety of sources:

- State and national professional meetings offer time for idea sharing.
- The PALS *Getting Started Handbook* supplies good tips on goal setting and training (Item PALSTK, \$69.95).
- State and national FFA conventions provide speakers and workshops from which to gain helpful ideas.
- Conferences such as WLC and MFE offer easily refined leadership curricula and strategies on how to set goals.
- Local alumni, business leaders and other veteran teachers can offer tested strategies on goal setting.

Brian Hendrickson, (608) 297-2126, ext. 266 (school) or via fax at (608) 297-7726

Building Rapport with Students

Dan Kemp works to build his rapport with students. He offers these tips from his 25 years of teaching experience to new teachers and those seeking to improve their rapport with their students:

1. Treat all students as individuals; as a group, treat them all the same. Pay attention to their individual needs. When students come to you with problems, do whatever it takes to inspire, motivate and assist them in facing their individual challenges. Treat all students the same by being fair and consistent in discipline, regardless of their ability or skill level.
2. Assist students when they are feeling down or depressed with their lives outside of the FFA or the classroom. Help them to work through life's challenges by sorting through the details and showing them solutions.
3. Relate to students in their own environment outside of class time. Visit their home to see where they live and what they are dealing with on a daily basis. Reviewing students' work sites for their supervised agricultural experience program gives you an idea of what they are doing or learning on a day-to-day basis. Kemp makes it an annual project to "adopt a class" during the homecoming float-building frenzy. The float build with the help of the agricultural mechanics students is often the most impressive and students take great pride in their production.

*Dan Kemp, Bear River High School, Grass Valley, California
(530) 268-3700*

Computer Usage Seminars

By enrolling in computer usage seminars offered by his school district and the state department of education, Mike Kamrath expanded his skills and knowledge on incorporating computers into the local instruction. The seminars allowed him to modify the curriculum to attract students who are proficient with computers and other technology, especially since nearly 90 percent of the area students are not from farms. Kamrath has used computers in running a virtual stock exchange program in the agrimarketing course, in teaching record keeping and demonstrating lathes, mills, robotics and colorcamm techniques. In turn, he has used the Internet to conduct research for lesson plans and to collect ideas for other aspects of the program. The computer courses are offered at a convenient time during summer breaks or occasionally during the school year.

*Mike Kamrath, Washburn High School, Washburn, North Dakota
(701) 462-3221 or mkamrath@sendit.nodak.edu*

Calendar System

As a first-year teacher, Amy Megan Cox found that using a computer calendar in tandem with a printed copy of her digital itinerary helped her to balance her schedule more effectively. Instead of procrastinating and scrambling to prepare minutes before an event, she used her system to plan for activities at least two weeks in advance, especially when completing school forms was necessary. Cox also employed her system as a journal for future use. She tracked every lesson she taught and recorded any needed materials or special resources.

*Amy Megan Cox, Peoria High School, Peoria, Arizona
(623) 486-6300 or MCox@peoriaud.k12.az.us*

Humanitarian Trip

Butch Haugland believes that professional growth opportunities should result in positive change and opportunities for students and schools. To accomplish this, he's involved in activities outside the classroom with students, parents and industry leaders. One recent example includes a humanitarian trip to New York City (NYC), where Haugland and chapter officers delivered a semi load of pasta products, made from Durham wheat, to food shelters and missions. The agency they worked with feeds 150,000 hungry and homeless daily in NYC. The trip helped Haugland to realize the importance of the teaching profession and encouraged him to continue to improve daily. Divide County officers acquired a greater appreciation for home, community and education. They also learned firsthand about helping those less fortunate. While in NYC, FFA officers met with John Bowne chapter members from Queens, learning about diversity of cultures and education. Plans are now in progress to hold another exchange with John Bowne members and their advisor in North Dakota.

*Gerald "Butch" Haugland,
Divide County High School, Crosby, North Dakota
(701) 965-6392 or Butch.Haugland@sendit.nodak.edu*

Self-Assessment and Goal Setting

Robin McLean began her teaching career by conducting a self-assessment of her performance every two weeks. She used the form found in professional growth chapter in The Guide to Local Program Success. By doing so, she easily recognized her successes and the areas that needed improvement because she had a benchmark from which to evaluate. In addition, she reproduced the "Teacher Growth and Goals Outline" and the "Goal Setting Outline," to fit in to her organizer. She reviewed them twice a week. McLean says the forms helped her to remember what she wanted to accomplish during her initial year of teaching and whom she needed to contact to accomplish her goals.

*Robin McLean, Penns Grove High School,
Penns Grove, New Jersey
(856) 256-9579, ag4robin@jersey.net*

Promoting the Profession

While some students enroll in agricultural education with the stereotypical concept that the course is still farming, Karrie Cox uses a “room quiz” as one way to educate them about agriculture’s diverse careers, including teaching. During the exercise, freshmen search for the quiz’s answers by reviewing the various classroom wall posters that depict the diversity of agriculture and the FFA. The exercise helps students to appreciate the opportunities available in agriculture, gives them an overview of the semester course and provides a framework of how to explore the FFA and the various courses available at Palestine. Karrie Cox has been teaching at Palestine, Texas, for 7 years. While some of her students are still completing their undergraduate work in agricultural education, Cox uses the quiz plus other methods to raise students’ interest level in pursuing a teaching career.

*Karrie Cox, Palestine High School, Palestine, Texas
(903) 731-8005 or agteacherk@yahoo.com*

Lifelong Learning Tactics

Sue Wade has committed herself to lifelong learning to enhance her teaching style.

- For Wade that means building a network of business, post-secondary, vocational training and arm services contacts. It also entails building relationships with other teachers with whom she can share ideas and brainstorm solutions.
- She maintains that staying updated on job trends and relating skills taught in her courses to the real world has helped her to focus on lifelong learning. She began advocating the mindset when she realized that students needed to “buy in” to their own education. To foster participation in the educational process, Wade involves students in the planning process, shares her ideas with them and lists the results she expects. She discusses the grading criteria and then serves as a classroom facilitator instead of a lecturer.
- For Wade, the philosophy includes making every situation in life “a scouting opportunity” to discover new venues to teach her students, including field trips, job fairs, conventions and other opportunities to relate subject matter to the real world.
- Being willing to revise a plan until it produces the desired educational outcome is Wade’s operational goal.
- She regularly evaluates her educational experiences using the following questions. Her goal is to move herself out of her comfort zone and promote the concept of lifelong learning.

1. What did my teachers do that educationally “turned me on” or “turned me off”?

2. How can I use technology to enhance learning?

3. How can I relate this lesson I am teaching to every subject: math, science, English and agriculture?

4. What do I want my students to learn from this lesson and how can they learn it in such a way that they will have a “real world” experience?

*Sue Wade, Young Public School, Young, Arizona
(928) 462-3244*

Student Evaluations

In an effort to improve his teaching abilities, Mark Wilburn conducts student surveys to assess his teaching style and effectiveness. Wilburn seeks his students’ feedback because they interact with him daily; whereas, other evaluators only review his teaching methods annually. He asks students to evaluate his instructional effectiveness in 15 areas, including preparation/organization and classroom management. He conducts these surveys at the end of the second of six grading periods and at the completion of the school year. The timing allows him time to modify his instruction methods to be more effective. A teaching aide distributes, explains, collects and compiles the surveys to ensure accuracy and fairness. The survey instrument is both qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative portion of the survey includes these questions:

What is the most important thing you have learned from Mr. Wilburn?

What has been your favorite part of Mr. Wilburn’s teaching?
What has been your least favorite part of Mr. Wilburn’s teaching?

What are three of Mr. Wilburn’s strengths as a teacher?

What is an area of improvement for Mr. Wilburn?

What advice would you give a future student of Mr.

Wilburn’s if he or she was going to take this class?

Wilburn has modified his teaching style based on his students’ insightful and helpful critiques. For example, he has structured his routine to spend more time one-on-one students when survey results indicated he was not providing enough individual assistance to students who needed it.

*Mark Wilburn, Blanchester High School, Blanchester, Ohio
(937) 783-2461 or wilburnm@blanchester.k12.oh.us*

Promising Practices continued on page 6-21 ➤

Teacher Network Provides Support

Since the agricultural education department at Alonso High School consists of only one teacher, new instructor Kimberly Lugo turns to a number of area teachers for answers to common questions, such as how to prepare an animal for show, construct various animal structures and build a successful chapter. She also seeks help with creating lesson plans that provide students with learning experiences. Lugo has developed an informal network of 10 skilled agriscience teachers to assist her, many of whom she met as an agriscience student. While time constraints make calling other teachers difficult at times, Lugo carries a cell phone for important calls. She also makes a list of peers to contact during her free time. With a simple phone call, Lugo sets up appointments to travel to a peer's school or for another teacher to travel to Alonso to assist her. Instead of taking two hours to search for an answer to a specific question, Lugo saves time and often obtains a more indepth explanation by contacting a teacher in her peer network.

*Kimberly Lugo, Alonso High School, Tampa, Florida
(813) 356-1525 or ogul34@hotmail.com*

Building Equine Expertise

Determined to attend the state's only horse career development event, Joy Goforth and Parkwood High team members spent hours preparing for the competition after school and on weekends. To build her knowledge of horse judging, she contacted the county 4-H agent, who became a wonderful source for information. She enrolled in a short course on horse judging offered by North Carolina State University. She also located community residents eager to assist with training by offering their services. After school Goforth contacted or visited area equine facilities to ascertain if farm owners were willing to allow team members to use their farms for practice. While on the various farms, members reviewed horses and discussed conformation. Farm managers also taught them about breed characteristics.

*Joy Goforth, Parkwood High School, Monroe, North Carolina
(704) 764-2900 or statefan@bellsouth.net*

Reflections

Amy Kesler has implemented several practices to stay organized and prepared for each new day in the classroom. She daily sets aside 15-30 minutes to reflect on the day's events and to focus on the next day's agenda. Kesler begins each of these sessions with journal writing, jotting down ideas or blowing off steam. The activity has allowed her to channel her negative energy on to the paper, rather than to family, friends and co-workers. Part of her routine includes reading a few paragraphs from motivational books. While the amount of reading time is limited, the practice has left Kesler rejuvenated and ready to face new challenges, to return to the classroom and to try new ideas. Kesler also carries a notebook with her annual calendar to keep track of duties, deadlines and errands.

*Amy Kesler, Wright City High School, Wright City, Missouri
(636) 745-7513 or UGADAWG90@hotmail.com*



Selected Resources

The following topics are covered in the Appendix

- 1 National Council for Agricultural Education*
- 2 Agricultural Education Related Organizations*
- 3 National FFA Organization*
 - *Resources*
- 4 Key Professional Publications*
- 5 NAAE*
- 6 Internet Web Site Addresses*
- 7 Resources for Agriculture Teachers*
- 8 Index of Subjects*

Please Note: While this guide is intended to give you basic tools for local program success, it is not all inclusive. Check with your state office for additional resources, ideas and state-specific information.

National Council for Agricultural Education

1410 King St., Suite 400
Alexandria, VA 22314
Tel: (703) 838-5881; (800) 772-0939
Fax: (703) 838-5888
Website: <http://www.teamaged.org>

Contact

C. Coleman Harris for general information

Instructional Materials Contact

Will Waidelich, Ohio State Curriculum Materials Service
waidelich.1@osu.edu • <http://www.ohcms.org>
Telephone Orders: (614) 292-4848
Fax Orders: (800) 292-4919

Existing Instructional Materials

- Animal Welfare (AW)
- Applied Environmental Science (ENVIRON)
- Beef Marketing Primer (BEEF)
- Decisions and Dollars (DD)
- Equine Science (EQUINE)
- Food Science, Safety and Nutrition (FOODSCI)
- Global Vision (GLOVIS)
- Maximizing Economic Yield/ (No-Till Management MEY/NOTILL)
- Rice Production and Marketing (RICE)
- SAE - Experiencing Agriculture Handbook (SAEHDBK)
- Biotechnology for Plants, Animals and the Environment (BPAECD)

Recent Production Releases

- Innovative and Emerging Technologies (ETECCD)
- Agribusiness in a Global Environment (AGECD)
- Aquaculture Education (AQUA-LIBCD)
- Food For Everyone - A teaching resource on world hunger and agriculture (FFE or FFECD)
- Thoroughbred Instructional Materials for Curriculum Integration (TBRED)
- Landscape, Lawn Care and Golf Course Management (TURFCD)

New Products

- Animal Production Food Safety (APFSCD)
- Focusing on Agricultural Issues Revision - Spring 2003
- Introduction to Veterinary Science Materials - Spring 2003



*The mission of The Council is to
provide leadership, coordination
and support for the continuous
improvement and diversity of
agricultural education.*

For ordering the following
products, contact
National FFA Merchandise
and Distribution
(888) 332-2668
(800) 366-6556 fax

- Agriculture Teachers
Survival Kit (SURVKITCD)
- Focusing on Agricultural
Issues (AGISSUES)
- Community Based
Program Planning

Related Agricultural Education Organizations

State Agriculture in the Classroom

Contact your state office for information.

American Association for Agricultural Education

Dr. Bob Martin, President
Department of Agricultural Education
and Studies
210 Curtiss Hall
Ames, Iowa 50011
Tel: (515) 294-0895
E-mail: dmartin@iastate.edu

National Association of Supervisors of Agricultural Education

Karen Hutchison, State FFA Advisor
Delaware State Department of Education
Curriculum and Instruction
John G. Townsend Building, Room 1402
Dover, DE 19903-1402
Tel: (302) 739-4681
Fax: (302) 739-3744
E-mail: khutchison@state.de.us

National FFA Alumni Association

J. Frank Saldaña, Executive Director
P.O. Box 68960
Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960
Tel: (317) 802-4244
Fax: (317) 802-5244
E-mail: bhaig@ffa.org
Website: <http://www.ffa.org>

National Young Farmer Educational Association

Gordon Stone, Executive Vice President
Meriwether Road
Pike Road, AL 36064
Tel: (334) 288-0097
Fax: (334) 288-0097

Postsecondary Agricultural Education

Jim Piechowski, Executive Director
P.O. Box 68960
Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960
Tel: (317) 802-4214
Fax: (317) 395-5214
E-mail: pas@pas.org

*Agricultural Education prepares
students for successful careers
and a lifetime of informed
choices in the global
agriculture, food, fiber and
natural resources systems.*

National FFA Organization

P.O. Box 68960
Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960
Tel: (317) 802-6060
Fax: (317) 802-6061
Call Center: (800) 366-6556

Website: <http://www.ffa.org>

To contact National FFA staff, visit
ffa.org and click on "Contact FFA."

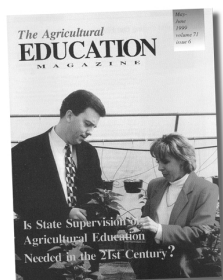


FFA makes a
positive difference in
the lives of
students by
developing their
potential for **premier**
leadership,
personal growth and
career success
through agricultural
education.

Professional Publications

Monday Morning Monitor
1410 King St., Suite 400
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 838-5889

The Agricultural Education Magazine
Dr. Bob Martin
Department of Agricultural Education
and Studies
210 Curtiss Hall
Ames, Iowa 50011
(515) 294-0895
dmartin@iastate.edu



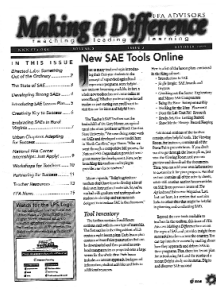
FFA Advisors Making a Difference
P.O. Box 68960
6060 FFA Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960
(317) 802-6060

FFA Alumni New Visions
P.O. Box 68960
6060 FFA Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960
(317) 802-6060

Journal of Agricultural Education
Business Manager: Dr. W. Wade Miller
Department of Agricultural Education
and Studies
210 Curtiss Hall
Ames, Iowa 50011
(515) 294-0895
wwmiller@iastate.edu

NAAE News & Views
1410 King St., Suite 400
Alexandria, VA 22314
(800) 772-0939

Update
P.O. Box 68960
6060 FFA Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960
(317) 802-6060
Only available electronically.



For a complete listing of agricultural education resources, visit ffa.org

Selected FFA Resources

Telephone Orders: (888) 332-2668

Fax Orders: (800) 366-6556

- Achievement Certificate (ACHCERT)
- Advisor's Guide to the FFA Student Handbook (AGSH)
- Agricultural Education...Investing in our Future brochure and video (V-AE)
- Agricultural Issues: Food Safety video (AIFS)
- Agricultural Issues: Global Vision instructional kit and video (GLOVIS)
- Agricultural Issues: Water Quality video (AIGWS)
- Agriculture's New Professionals video (V-ANP)
- Agriculture: An Industry Too Big To Ignore brochure (AATB)
- Agriscience Fair Rules
- American Degree Handbook (AFDH)
- Bridging Horizons, an FFA Advisor's Guide to FFA Involvement for Members with Disabilities (BHAG)
- Building Tomorrow video (BUILDING)
- Career Development Event Handbook (CDEH)
- CDEs Career Success for the Future video (CDESUCCESS)
- Chapter Leadership Development video (NLW-COD)
- Chapter Planning and Recognition: A Student Handbook (NCAH)
- Chronicle Agricultural Occupations Guidebook (CAOG)
- Circle of Life: Using Biotechnology to Improve Agriculture Worldwide booklet (COL)
- Create a Reaction agriscience video (ASRP)
- Culminating and Enabling Expectations for Selected National FFA Activities (available through the FFA Student Services Team)
- Discovering An Agricultural Biotechnology Career That May Be For You brochure (DABC)
- Discover World Class Opportunities in FFA brochure (DWCOFFA)
- Educator's Guide and the Agricultural Biotechnology: A World of Opportunity video (EDUGDE)
- Exploring FFA Opportunities video (NLW-EO)
- FFA Week Envelope Stuffer/Fact brochure (WK-6-97)
- FFA Advisor's Public Relations Guide (AGPR)
- FFA Alumni Manual (In development)
- FFA New Horizons magazine (In Stock)
- FFA: Preparing for the Future video (NLW-PFF)
- FFA Selling and Fund-raising Guide
- FFA Student Handbook (NSTH)
- Food For America Program instructional materials (FKIT-N)
- Get in the Game Poster (GG)
- Hormel Computing Slide for Scoring Career Development Events (HCSS)
- Videos:
 - Goal Setting (GSV)
 - Self-Motivation (SMV)
 - Teamwork (TMV)
 - Self-Esteem (SEV)
 - Leadership (LDV)
 - Communication Leadership (CMV)
- Instruction to Parliamentary Procedure video (PARPRO-VHS)
- Keeping Your Head Above Water: Strategies for Marketing Your Program
- Leadership for a New Millennium recruitment materials
- Livestock Judging: Market Hog Evaluation video (HOGS-VHS)
- Make It Happen recruitment materials and video (MIH-FFA)
- Marketing: It's More Than You Think Video (AP)
- Middle Grade Agricultural Leaders's Guide (MSG)
- National FFA Career Development Event Questions and Answers (NCQ)
- National FFA Horse Selection Career Event Training video (HSCTV)
- New Teacher Owner's Manual (In development)
- Official FFA Manual (OM)
- Open A Promising Future For Students promotional materials (with school counselor insert) (OPFS-SCN)
- Open Door career brochure (ODB)
- PALS Activities Handbook (PALSAH)
- PALS Brochure (PALBROCHURE)
- PALS Handbook (PALSTK)
- PALS Promotional Posters (PALONE—horizontal and PALST-VO—vertical)
- PALS Video: An Introduction (V-PP)
- Proficiency Award Handbook (PAH)
- Project Growth recruitment posters (RP)
- Promoting Programs By Building Partnerships handbook (PDH)
- Retail Cut Identification Video
- SAE Handbook (SAEHDBK)
- SAE, It's More Than You Think video (SAE-V-92)
- School-to-Career Solution brochure (SCS)
- Think About It career brochure
- Why Not? brochure (CB)



Most of the FFA resources are available through the FFA Official Chapter Catalog and the Agricultural Education Resources supplement. Visit ffa.org and click on "Shop FFA" for convenient online shopping.

National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE)

1410 King St., Suite 400
Alexandria, VA 22314
Tel: (703) 838-5881; (800) 772-0939
Fax: (703) 838-5888
E-mail: naae@teamaged.org
Website: <http://www.teamaged.org>

Executive Director
Wm. Jay Jackman, Ph.D.

Resources/Professional Development

- Get the Facts About Teaching Agriculture flyer
- Future Teachers Scholarship Program (sponsored by The Florida Department of Citrus)
- Legislative Guide
- Internet Guide (for accessing Internet and World Wide Web)

Annual summer professional development workshops:

- Floral Design and Greenhouse Management (Stuppy Greenhouse Manufacturing, Inc.)
- Livestock Feeding and Management (Kent Feeds, Inc.)
- Commercial Greenhouse Construction and Operation (Hummert International)
- Biotechnology (American Cyanamid Company Agricultural Products Division)
- Forward Pricing Livestock (Chicago Mercantile Exchange)
- Agriculture Science and Technology (Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.)
- MarketSmart Seminars (Chicago Board of Trade)
- Agricultural Equipment Service Training (Case Corporation)
- Welding Technology (The Lincoln Welding Company)
- Air Cooled Gasoline Engine Training (Briggs & Stratton)
- Ranch Management (Red Canyon Ranch and The Nature Conservancy)

Instructional Materials:

- George Washington: Agricultural Pioneer
- Risk Management (forthcoming)

Professional development workshops at various regional and national conferences

Regional leadership conferences and national convention for teachers

National awards for teaching excellence sponsored by industry:

- Outstanding Agricultural Education Teacher Awards (New Holland)
- Outstanding Agricultural Education Program Awards (Case Corporation)
- Postsecondary All-Star Team Recognition
- Outstanding Young Member Awards (John Deere)
- Ideas Unlimited Awards (Pfizer Animal Health)



The mission of NAAE

*is... "Professionals
providing agricultural
education for the global
community through
visionary leadership,
advocacy and service."*



NAAE recognizes its members annually for excellence in teaching through four award programs. It also offers a variety of professional development workshops. For more information call (800) 772-0939.

Internet Web Site Addresses

Be sure to type <http://> before all web site addresses.

@griculture Online

www.agriculture.com

Agriculture Information Services

www.aginfo.com

Agrigator

gnv.ifas.ufl.edu/www/agator_home.htm

American Crop Protection Association "Ag on the Internet"

(links to agriculture-related web sites)

www.acpa.org/public/interest/interest.html

Career Magazine

www.careermag.com

Center of Education and Work

www.cew.wisc.edu

Dairy Industry

www.moomilk.com/

Environmental Careers Guide

www.princeton.edu/~rcurtis/careeroe.html

Farm Bureau

www.fb.com/

Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service

www.reeusda.gov/

Livestock Virtual Library

www.ansi.okstate.edu/library/

Matt Raven's Homepage—series of agriculturally related web sites links

www2.msstate.edu/~raven/ag/aglinks.html

National Council for Agricultural Education

www.teamaged.org

ffa.org

www.ffa.org

National 4-H Council

www.fourhcouncil.edu/

University Council for Vocational Education

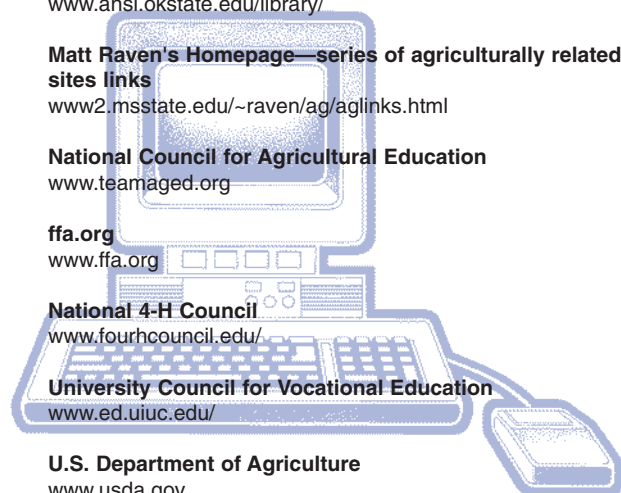
www.ed.uiuc.edu/

U.S. Department of Agriculture

www.usda.gov

Virtual Library for Integrated Pest Management

ipmwww.ncsu.edu/cipm/Virtual_Center.html



Resources for Agriculture Teachers

A.C. Burke & Co.

2554 Lincoln Boulevard, Suite 1058
Marina Del Rey, CA 90291
(310) 574-2770

* Horticulture books, software, videos

AAVIM

220 Smithonia Road
Winterville, GA 30683
(800) 228-4689

* Software, video, books, materials on work-based learning

Academic Press, Inc.

525B Street, Suite 1900
San Diego, CA 92101-4495
(800) 228-4689

* Textbooks

Ag Ed Network

137 South Main Street
West Bend, WI 53095
(800) 334-9779; (612) 633-3170

* Internet agricultural instructional units

Agri-Education, Inc.

P. O. Box 497
Stratford, IA 50249
(515) 838-3000

* Software—farm and food series

American Association of Nurserymen

1250 I Street, NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 789-2900

* Horticulture and landscaping materials

American Media Corporation

490 University Avenue
West Des Moines, IA 50266-6769
(800) 262-2557

* Business management books, videos, CD-ROMs

ANR Publications, University of California

6701 San Pablo Avenue
Oakland, CA 94608-1239
(510) 642-2431

* Integrated Pest Management materials

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

1250 North Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(800) 933-ASCD

Web Site: <http://www.ascd.org>

* Curriculum such as *Multiple Intelligences*, manual on program planning *Enhancing Professional Practice*

Biomat

5200 W. 94th Terr.
Prairie Village, KS 66207
(800) 377-3527

* Fund-raising through seeded mats

Brainstorms

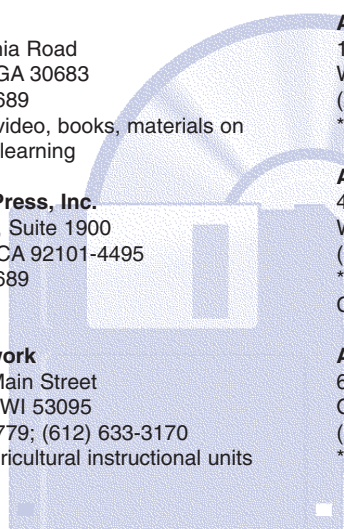
8221 Kimball
Skokie, IL 60076-2956
(800) 231-6000

* Science kits, games, T-shirts, unique gadgets

Brodhead-Garrett

P. O. Box 8102
Mansfield, OH 44901-8102
(800) 321-6730

* Supplies, applied academics, wood and metal working



Career Portfolio

Contact the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee at (202) 653-5665 for state office information.

* Career portfolios

Carolina Biological Supply

2700 York Road
Burlington, NC 27215
(800) 334-5551

* Science books, lab materials, videos, software

Chicago Mercantile Exchange

30 South Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60606-7499
(800) 331-3332

* Commodity futures and options

Cornell Instructional Materials Service

420 Kennedy Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853
(607) 255-9252

* Books, slides, videos, agriscience topics

Curriculum and Instructional Materials Center

1500 West Seventh Avenue
Stillwater, OK 74074-4364
(800) 654-4502

* Instructional packets, videos

Curriculum Materials Service

The Ohio State University
254 Agricultural Administration Building
2120 Fyffe Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1067
(614) 292-4848

* Exploratory lab kits; self-study programs; record books, plant and animal, research/ placement situations; books: *Discovering Learning Preferences* and *Learning Differences in the Classroom*

Delmar Publishers

P. O. Box 15015
Albany, NY 12212-5015
(800) 354-9706
info@delmar.com

* Books, CD-ROMs

Diamond Farm Book

Box 537, Department TD
Alexandria Bay, NY 13607
(800) 481-1353

* Textbooks, videos, small animal materials

Diversity/Teamwork Materials

Gary Heusel
114 Agricultural Hall
University of Nebraska Lincoln
Lincoln, NE 68583-0700
(402) 472-9009

E-mail: fhyd001@unlvm.unl.edu

* *Many Faces, One People* diversity curriculum

Drew Educational Systems

P. O. Box 2941
Costa Mesa, CA 92628-2941
(714) 651-8723

* Videos on careers, construction, cattle, video field trips, forestry

EBSCO Curriculum Materials

Box 281
Chelsea, AL 35043-0281
(800) 633-8623

* Careers software, test reviews, special needs materials

Energize, Inc.

5450 Wissahickon Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19144
(215) 438-8342

* *The Volunteer Recruitment Book*; volunteer and organizational management materials

ESI Resource

2875 Sampson Ave.
Corona, CA 91719-6171
(909) 371-3901; (800) 422-4686 (outside Calif.)
* *True Colors* self-assessment program

Forestry Suppliers, Inc.

P. O. Box 8397
Jackson, MS 39284-8397
(800) 647-5368

* Forestry supplies, environmental equipment

Gempler's

P. O. Box 270
Mt. Horeb, WI 53572-0270
(800) 382-8473

* Supplies, safety clothing

Hobar Publications

3943 Meadowbrook Road
Minneapolis, MN 55426
(800) 846-7027 or (952) 938-9330
www.finnery-hobar.com

* Books, software, videos, mechanics lab materials

Instructional Materials Laboratory

University of Missouri-Columbia
2316 Industrial Drive
Columbia, MO 65202
(800) 669-2465

* Career, school-to-work, teacher resources

Instructional Materials Service

F. E. Box 2588
College Station, TX 77843-2588
(409) 845-6601

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Interstate Publishers, Inc.

P. O. Box 50
Danville, IL 61834-0050
(800) 843-4774

* Books: *Methods of Teaching Agriculture* and *Program Planning Guide for Agriscience and Technology Education*, activities, manuals

Intercultural Press, Inc.

P. O. Box 700
Yarmouth, ME 04096
(800) 370-2665; fax: (207) 846-5181

* Books dealing with the process of adaptation

John Deere Publishing

John Deere Road
Moline, IL 61265-8098
(800) 522-7448

* Books on agribusiness management, machinery operation, maintenance, servicing

Multistate Academic and Vocational Curriculum Consortium (MAVCC)

1500 West Seventh Avenue
Stillwater, OK 74074-4364
(800) 654-3988

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NASCO

901 Janesville Avenue
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538
(414) 563-2446

* Teaching aids for agriscience curriculum, agricultural supplies and games, books, videos, software

National Audiovisual Center

8700 Edgewater Drive
Capitol Heights, MD 20743-3701
(301) 763-1891

* Videos: agriculture, biology, education, safety and general science

National Education Service

1610 W. Third Street
Bloomington, IN 47402
(800) 733-6786; (812) 336-7700
Web Site: <http://www.nes.org/>

* Publications, videos and staff resources such as *Building Cultural Bridges* curriculum.

Research for Better Teaching, Inc.

56 Bellows Hill Road
Carlisle, MA 01741
(508) 369-8191
24-hour phone-mail service: 508-369-2294
* Books such as *The Skillful Teacher*, *Building Your Teaching Skills*

Simulation Training Systems

P.O. Box 910
Del Mar, CA 92014
(800) 942-2900; fax: (619) 792-9743
Web Site: <http://www.stsintl.com/>
* Instructional materials; simulation programs that help students accept diversity

Visual Education Productions

California Polytechnic State University
El Corral Bookstore
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407
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* CD-ROM, laserdisks, software, videos

Venard Films, LTD

P. O. Box 1332
Peoria, IL 61654
(309) 699-3911
* Free loan films and slides

Vocational Agriculture Services

1401 S. Maryland Drive
University of Illinois
Urbana, IL 61801
(217) 333-3871
* Agriscience kits, photo CD-ROMs, digital slide sets, film strips and slide sets

Wadsworth Publishing Company

Belmont, California 94002
* Books such as *Reading to Learn in the Content Areas*

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*Community-Based
Program Planning
will help you make
the final decisions
when planning
your program.*

***The following topics are covered in Chapter P
Community-Based Program Planning***

Steps to Success

- 1*** *Involve key partners in the process.*
 - *The Purpose of Program Planning.*
- 2*** *Develop a shared vision for your program.*
 - *Tips for Building a Vision.*
 - *Benefits of a Vision.*
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- 4*** *Implement your plan.*
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Chapter P

Community-Based Program Planning

Like most teachers, you probably have a daily schedule filled with competing demands:

- classes to teach,
- assignments to grade,
- FFA activities to supervise,
- SAE programs to visit,
- parent conferences to attend, and
- family and community activities to enjoy.

These competing demands also bring competing voices. It seems as if everyone has an opinion on the best way to run the agricultural education program. You probably receive advice from administrators, parents, other teachers, advisory members and many other groups—each with their own priorities and expectations.

However, these groups do not have to make the final decisions as you do. Ultimately, you must decide what to do within the limits of budgets, personnel and time. These decisions may affect program tasks and priorities as well as cause you to drop some of the suggestions received from these contributing groups. This situation often creates friction.

What is the ideal situation? Get everyone to agree on priorities and then work toward that goal.

As impossible as that may seem, there is a way to accomplish it.

Program Planning can help you:

- 🍏 Create a *vision of the future* for your agricultural education program.
- 🍏 Develop a plan to *achieve that vision* through strategic planning.
- 🍏 Implement the strategic plan to create an agricultural education program that *meets future industry, community and educational demands*.

Through the three program planning phases—visioning, strategic planning and implementation—you can work with key partners to develop an agricultural education program that meets future demands.

Planning your program is most likely the last thing on your mind after a busy day. This chapter focuses on this first key in building a quality local program by helping you engage the local community and school officials in determining what needs to be taught and what direction the program needs to take. Many teachers across the nation have benefited from program planning.



This chapter on community-based program planning outlines several strategies to help you

- 1 Involve key partners in the process,
- 2 Develop a shared vision for your program,
- 3 Create action plans to fulfill your program's vision, and
- 4 Implement your plan.

Rather than trying
to predict what
will happen, the
best course of
action is to
establish a vision
of the future you
desire and
develop strategies
to achieve that
future, taking into
account the forces
of change.



Involve key partners in the process.

Involving diverse groups from the community will strengthen your program planning process. There are many ways to involve the community, including using advisory committees. However, bringing together an advisory committee does not ensure success in prioritizing competing demands. Here are some tips:

- Identify people from every facet of your community's geography, demography, ethnicity and business interests to take part in the process.
- Locate people with a proven track record of supporting your program, but also include groups representing many diverse viewpoints in your discussion, especially program critics, to understand their areas of concern.

- Invite a variety of stakeholders (partners) to participate in the process early to enable them to share in the results and allow you to create partnerships to put your vision and plan into action. Be sure to include these partners:

- alumni members
- parents
- students
- business and industry
- school administrators

For ideas on who else to invite, refer to the *Partner Priority List*.



- Be sure that all participants, especially external partners, understand the purpose of community-based program planning (See inset below). Explain your program's purpose to those partners unfamiliar with agricultural education.
- Keep partners aware of developments and include them in any final presentation of the vision and plan.
- Remember that not everyone you have identified to participate has to be, and may not want to be, involved with every phase of the visioning and planning process.

The Purpose of Program Planning

It is difficult to plan for the future because we cannot know what to expect. Relying on past experiences can serve as a guide for planning when operating in a stable environment. In today's world where changes occur daily, this type of planning can leave us unprepared for future opportunities.

Consider the changes we have seen in agriculture, education and agricultural education in the past few years:

- increased crop and livestock yields,
- population growth,
- genetic engineering and biotechnology,
- economic globalization and the international marketplace,
- advanced sustainable agriculture,
- advances in computers and communications,
- diversity of students enrolled,
- block scheduling and many others.

Based on the past, agricultural educators can expect many more changes in coming years, but no one can predict what those changes will be.

It is tempting in this situation either to ignore the likelihood of future changes or to assume it is possible to predict and plan around them. Both of these methods will probably fail—the first because of the increasing speed of change and the latter because there is no single future to predict.

The methods outlined in this chapter on community-based program planning provide a more effective approach for dealing with high levels of change and uncertainty by outlining an organized study of future opportunities and challenges.

The other six keys to success outlined in this guide provide the framework around which to build a total quality program based on the community-based planning process.

Advisory Council Provides Feedback

McDonald County, Mo., instructors John Hobbs and Richard Roller used their local advisory council as the focal group to conduct their program planning meetings.

In addition, they invited administrators, board of education members, a large poultry processor, several



John Hobbs

agribusiness representatives and others such as a local bank lender and lumberyard owner who normally have not been involved with the program.



Richard Roller

To start the first meeting, the 20 or so participants reviewed a video entitled, *Agricultural Education Wakeup Call*, to acquaint themselves with their task and to

begin discussion of the state's enrollment and program development trends. The teachers used a modified version of brainstorming activities they learned about in Missouri area workshops.

Participants were given 40 index cards and asked to respond to the following topics. They also discussed and prioritized their responses.

- List three changes in agriculture in the year 2020.
- What skills will agricultural employees need in the year 2020?
- How can agricultural education better prepare students with those skills needed in the year 2020?
- What type of resources are necessary to conduct an improved program and how can we obtain them?

In the second meeting, participants took the top priorities and established goals related to the agricultural education program and school.

Results: Teachers plan to conduct another meeting to evaluate the options the group proposed to better serve the program's and students' future needs. Because of the process, a local business donated 15 computers to address a department technology need. "Sometimes we fail to see resources available in our community," Roller says. "The donation wouldn't have happened if we hadn't gone through the process."

Richard Roller, (417) 845-3322, ext. 116

Investing time will help answer some fundamental questions about your program's purpose, meaning, direction and reasons for existence.

Process Allows Program to Reap Big Dividends

Diana Collingwood of South Dade Senior High School participated in the initial community-based program planning process conducted in Florida. The state's Agribusiness and Natural Resources Education Program Manager Belinda Chason notes that "Diana assembled a diverse group of enthusiastic stakeholders that developed a shared vision, mission and goals which they were proud to champion."

The vision, mission and goals generated at the workshop challenged the program and community to develop opportunities and seek the

means to achieve them.

Seizing the moment, Collingwood used her program's new vision, mission and goals to complete a \$74,000 grant proposal that was funded recently. The funding allowed her to develop a tissue culture program and to acquire fish tanks for a new aquaculture facility. Like many agriculture programs, South Dade's facilities were not a perfect model. For example, the program had a classroom only equipped with one electrical outlet.

Results: Inspired by the new vision and the \$74,000 grant, high school administrators agreed to update the facilities to accommodate the

new equipment and curricula. Collingwood says it was much easier to gain community support with a well-developed vision, mission and goals.

Diana Collingwood, (305) 247-4244



Diana Collingwood

"The well-developed vision, mission and goals made it much easier to gain community support and secure a \$74,000 grant."

Visioning can also be expressed through the words of visionaries like Alan Kay and Peter Drucker:

"The best way to predict the future is to invent it."



Develop a shared vision for your program.

Rather than trying to predict what will happen, the best course of action is to establish a vision of the future you desire and develop strategies to achieve it, taking into account the forces of change.

A "**vision** is a compelling statement of the preferred future that those who develop and subscribe to it want to create," according to the *Guidebook for Community-Based Program Planning* (published by the National Council for Agricultural Education).



Visioning in its simplest form is studying the many alternative futures you may encounter so that you know how to better shape the one you desire. Visioning allows you to look closely at these two areas:

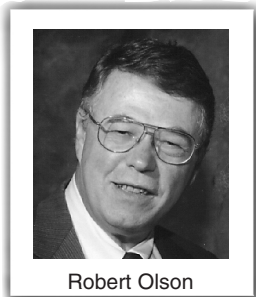
- what might happen (alternative futures).
- what you want to happen (the preferred future).

Tips for building a vision:

- ☐ Make it achievable within a specific time frame.
- ☐ Develop one that expresses the ideal situation—what you are striving to become, why you do what you do and what will come of your efforts.
- ☐ Focus the group on its task to develop a clear vision.
- ☐ Base your vision on a common goal that brings people together to achieve it.
- ☐ Include the highest aspirations for what you believe is possible.
- ☐ Adopt a vision that reflects truly shared aspirations that are a product of this process.

Vision Energizes Race for the Moon

To illustrate the elements of a vision, Robert Olson, research director for the Institute of Alternative Futures, shares this story:

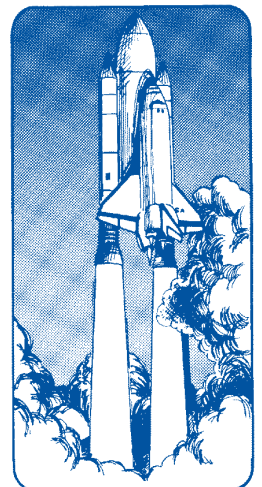


Robert Olson

"In May 1961, President John F. Kennedy declared, 'We will put a man on the moon and bring him back

in this decade.' Initially, many considered it impossible. Gradually, however, discussions moved from 'it can't be done' to 'what has to be done to make this a reality?' Different groups working on the project began to combine the best of their approaches to produce better solutions. Diverse groups with dissimilar—even conflicting—interests found a common ground on which to build alliances that focused on 'the possibility.' Thousands of processes came together, new technologies emerged, former assumptions fell by the

wayside...and in 1969 a man walked on the moon. President Kennedy had no plan for getting to the moon. He had no idea of how to get there, and he did not even propose a process for planning how to get there. What Kennedy did was articulate a vision that [energized] an entire country and aligned the efforts of tens of thousands of people."



Benefits of a Vision

Using a vision to begin your planning efforts will help:

- Focus everyone on the long-term aspirations, not just the issues of the moment.
- Forge agreement between stakeholders on what is truly important to the program.
- Provide new direction and excite action by clarifying priorities.
- Manage conflicts or problems in your program as they arise by allowing you to refocus on priorities.
- Motivate people to work together to achieve a common goal.
- Allow you to explore trends that are already underway to better understand probable future changes.

Sample Visions

Below are some examples of vision statements developed by corporations, entertainment companies and charitable institutions. Each statement contains certain elements of a successful vision as highlighted earlier under step two.

McDonald's

McDonald's vision is to be the world's best quick service restaurant experience.

Cyanamid

To be the premier crop protection products company in the industry.

Disney

Disney's overriding objective is to create shareholder value by continuing to be the world's premier entertainment company from a creative, strategic and financial standpoint.

Habitat for Humanity

To eliminate poverty housing around the world.

Here are a few vision statements developed by local stakeholders (partners) like yourself for agricultural education programs in their communities:

Middlesex County Consortium

Through active working partnerships, establish an Agriscience Center whose function would be to develop, market and provide instruction in a comprehensive Agriscience curriculum encompassing K-Adult with a twelve month secondary program.

New Jersey

Agriculture is a dynamic and vital aspect of New Jersey society with a foundation rooted in educational excellence and the practical application of knowledge and resources. Premier educational programs in food, agriculture and natural resources that provide career opportunities and a positive quality of life shall be recognized, supported and promoted as a foundation for agriculture's future.

Georgia

To be a premier learning system that delivers agricultural environmental and leadership programs and services.

Write below the vision statement that you've developed for your program through this process.

_____ vision statement
(name of your program)

The strategic planning process establishes a plan of action by considering carefully all of the forces acting on your program, both internally and externally.



Create action plans to fulfill your program's vision (commonly called strategic planning).

Unlike many strategic planning efforts, driven by short-term issues that work toward the future in small increments, the method outlined here uses the vision you created to pull you toward the future you've designed.

The following steps are typically part of a planning process that sets strategic priorities and develops an action plan for implementing them.

- ❑ Study the trends that may affect your program in the future to give you an idea of the future environment in which you will operate.

Typically, the information you will look for falls into several broad categories:

- demographics,
- economics,
- social change,
- educational trends,
- government policies,
- agriculture,
- business,
- careers and others.

- ❑ Identify any barriers that may block you from implementing your plan.
- ❑ Assess the strengths and weaknesses of your program, especially in the areas in which you face challenges. Identify any specific opportunities and threats facing your program.
- ❑ Set achievable goals and strategic priorities to reach your vision. Use simple statements of goals and the actions needed to reach them.
- ❑ Set some very short-term goals to put things into action when you implement the plan.

Sample Strategic Planning Goals

Here are some of the goals and objectives stakeholders (partners) in New Jersey developed as a part of their strategic plan to fulfill their vision. The strategic planning goals that follow support the vision listed earlier in the chapter.



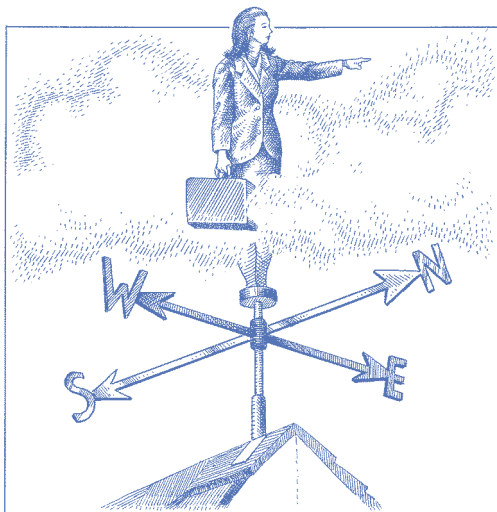
Goal #1:

By 2005, every person in New Jersey will have the opportunity and resources to increase their knowledge and skills concerning food, agriculture, natural resources and the use of production systems for human existence and improve quality of life.

Goal #2:

By 2006, regional centers for excellence in food systems, agricultural production and marketing, natural resource management and agricultural science education will be established.

In the strategic planning phase, you will want to study the trends that may affect your program in the future.



Strategic Planning Tips

- Develop a plan of action you really want to carry out, not one that is a reaction to a problem or a concern. Your plan of action should address the other six keys to a successful agricultural education program.
- Consider carefully all of the forces acting on your program, both internally and externally. (Unforeseen external factors can render useless good plans based solely on internal considerations.)
- Identify potential internal and external partners and their roles in executing the strategic plan.

Step 4

Implement your plan.

In implementing your plan, there are a few essential elements to remember:

❑ Involve a steering committee composed of your local advisory committee, school administrators, teachers and other key partners in implementing your plan.

❑ Follow-up—keep everyone who participated in the planning process informed of your progress.



❑ Make an honest effort to include people's ideas in your work if you ask them for input.

❑ Recognize people for their work.



❑ Put the completed plan into action; do not let it just sit on the shelf.

❑ Celebrate each success to ensure that you accomplish your plan.

❑ All the other six keys to a successful agricultural education program listed below should be based upon your vision, mission and plan of action:

- classroom and laboratory content,
- the direction of students' supervised agricultural experience programs,
- FFA activities,
- partner relationships,
- marketing initiatives and
- professional growth activities/courses.

Follow-Up Activities

❑ Share your finalized vision statement with all partners to provide them with a clear understanding of what your program is all about.

❑ Keep your plan of action current by bringing your steering committee together at the end of each semester, or at least annually, to evaluate, revise and refine it or to reallocate resources as necessary.

❑ Keep your program current and up-to-date by conducting a program planning process, including the visioning and strategic planning exercises, every three to five years.

Local Needs Drive Process, Instructional Review

Director of Instructional Support Paula Fugel and the four agriculture teachers of **Gilchrist County Schools, Fla.**, began the planning process by inviting 80 community stakeholders to participate. Their aim: Gather a spectrum of viewpoints.

■ Meeting #1—Brainstorming, Trends and Discussion of Emerging Developments:

In all, 60 people participated in a four-hour session that included brainstorming exercises and a dinner sponsored by the local Gilchrist County School Board, FFA Chapter and Rotary Club.

By remaining flexible in conducting meeting exercises, leaders were able to examine

local needs more indepth. State agricultural education leaders, who assisted in the process, collated the results and examined the data for common themes. Tabulated results were sent to all participants before the next meeting.

■ Meeting #2—

Development of Vision:

Leaders selected a cross-section of previous participants, especially students and business leaders, to conduct planning exercises. More than 25 people discussed the major themes through the exercise, *Creating a List Vision*, and worked in groups to create vision statements. After analyzing the common elements in all the statements, groups rewrote their statements and finalized a common vision.

Results: Leaders will convene a smaller team of participants to conduct strategic planning exercises and to develop a plan of action. The process has encouraged local teachers to reevaluate their curriculum based on the labor demands and future industry trends discussed.



Paula Fugel

Paula Fugel, Director of Instructional Support, Gilchrist County Schools, (352) 463-3207

National Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives

A diverse group of people from across the nation had the opportunity to shape the future and meet the fundamental needs of society by creating a new national vision, mission, goals and objectives for agricultural education. The vision, mission and goals were developed as a result of the Reinventing Agricultural Education for the Year 2020 initiative, which was sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation as a special project of the National FFA Foundation, Inc.

- Your state may have developed its own vision, mission and plan through the same process.
- The program planning process will allow you and your community to do the same.
- The vision and mission that follow and the one your state leaders have created can serve as a guide. You may wish to include elements of them into the one you develop.

For more information, see *A New Era in Agriculture*, published by the National Council for Agricultural Education.

NATIONAL VISION

Agricultural education envisions a world where all people value and understand the vital role of agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems in advancing personal and global well-being.

NATIONAL MISSION

Agricultural education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

GOAL 1

An abundance of highly motivated, well-educated teachers in all disciplines, pre-kindergarten through adult, provide agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems education.

Summary of Objectives

- Sufficient quantity of qualified teachers represent national demographics.
- Teacher preparation programs integrate instruction and rely on research to develop curriculum and courses.
- Relevant instructional leadership and professional development is provided for leaders and teachers.
- Partnerships provide learning experiences to ensure awareness of agricultural career opportunities.
- Instruction is provided in educational technologies and teaching strategies to address the changing education environment.

GOAL 2

All students have access to seamless, lifelong instruction in agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems through a wide variety of delivery systems and educational settings.

Summary of Objectives

- Collaboration among educational entities ensures students benefit from effectiveness and efficiency.
- All students have access to high quality programs.
- Students are prepared for career success.
- Every agriculture student has opportunity for experiential learning and leadership development.
- Instructional systems and materials provide for diverse learning styles.
- Enrollments represent the diversity of the school-aged population.

GOAL 3

All students are conversationally literate in agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

Summary of Objectives

- Agriculture teachers encourage cross-curricular course development and instructional collaboration with teachers in all disciplines.
- All teachers include elements of agriculture in a relevant, integrated instructional approach.
- Agriculture teachers collaborate with other groups to bring factual information to all students.

GOAL 4

Partnerships and strategic alliances ensure a continuous presence of education in and about agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

Summary of Objectives

- Lines of communication are built with multiple stakeholders to provide for a diverse work force.
- A broad-based coalition develops and disseminates contemporary curricula for all students.
- Partnerships and alliances provide strong support.
- Stakeholders, inside and outside the school, strengthen and refine the shared vision, mission and goals.

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Blueprint for Program Change

As a part of a School-to-Work grant received two years ago, two separate Alabama school districts, **Pike County** and **Charles Henderson**, created a partnership to determine how to deliver agricultural education in the next 20 years. The goal was to broaden agribusiness involvement in education to ensure that the curriculum to be delivered meets industry needs. School officials used AgriVision 2020, their adaptation of Alabama's workshops and the national initiative sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, to accomplish that task. Three meetings were held during a three-month period:

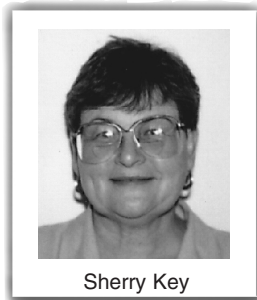
- **Meeting #1:** More than 50 people were invited to participate in a brainstorming and visioning session. The group of teachers, farmers,

administrators, parents, extension and post-secondary educators, among others, focused on the limits of local agribusiness and discussed future trends.

- **Meeting #2:** The same group prioritized its goals, evaluated the area's educational delivery system and reviewed the curriculum and the resources needed to accomplish the goals. The focus was on how to develop a total program that provides students with transferable skills.
- **Meeting #3:** The group implemented its local goals, evaluated new and innovative curricula and established professional partnerships to secure funding.

Results: Through the process, local school leaders have seen more cooperation in curriculum

planning. A local agribusiness council has provided funding for partnerships between agribusiness and the schools. The administrators of both school systems are seeking business/industry and state program certification for all agribusiness programs. Finally, program advisory committees are writing grants to secure funding for greater community and school partnerships.



Sherry Key, Career Technical Director,
Pike County and Charles Henderson
Schools, (334) 566-5395, ext. 11

Credits

On January 1, 1996, the National Council for Agricultural Education inaugurated Reinventing Agricultural Education for the Year 2020, an initiative to reposition and strengthen agricultural and food systems education for the 21st Century.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation provided a \$1.49 million grant to help fund this three-year initiative as a special project of the National FFA Foundation, Inc.

The materials presented here are adapted from the *Guidebook for Reinventing Agricultural Education for the Year 2020*, written by Bryan Daniel (The National Council for Agricultural Education), Jennifer Jarratt (The Kanawha Institute) and Robert Olson (The Institute for Alternative Futures).



The National Council for Agricultural Education offers both of these resources to conduct community-based program planning:

- *Guidebook for Community-Based Program Planning*
- *Community-Based Program Planning Kit*



- How will you apply it to your program?
- What are your goals?

My Notes:

[illegible]

Chapter P—Community-Based Program Planning

1. Involve key partners in the process.
 - ☐ The Purpose of Program Planning.
2. Develop a shared vision for your program.
 - ☐ Tips for Building a Vision.
 - ☐ Benefits of a Vision.
 - ☐ Sample Visions.
3. Create action plans to fulfill your program's vision (commonly called strategic planning).
 - ☐ Strategic Planning Tips.
 - ☐ Sample Strategic Planning Goals.
4. Implement the plan.
 - ☐ Follow-up Activities.



Describe the activities you do, how you implemented them and the results. Send your ideas on this form or a separate sheet of paper to Local Program Success Liaison, Teacher Services Team, National FFA Organization, 6060 FFA Drive, P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960, fax: 317-802-5334 or e-mail: jarmbruster@ffa.org.

Program Planning Exercises Overview



Use this sheet to help you to determine which exercises will best suit your local needs.

Use as many as time will permit. However, if time is limited, complete the visioning exercises, and the three strategic planning activities, to give you all the material you need for writing your final vision statement.

Detailed instructions for each of the exercises are listed in the *Guidebook for Community-Based Program Planning*. Each set of exercises contains basic information, explaining how you are to conduct it, time requirements, setup and material requirements. Each set contains recorder pages to take notes to save the good ideas developed during the meeting.

Introductory Exercises

Community-based program planning exercises are grouped into four categories. The first category of introductory exercises will stimulate thinking about change, trends and developments that shape the future. This category includes these exercises:

- ☐ F Puzzle
- ☐ Trends and Emerging Developments Shaping Food Systems

Visioning Exercises

The second category of exercises forces people to think outside the box and to begin considering futuristic ideas, rather than ideas tied to today's realities. The following exercise accomplishes this:

- ☐ Removing Constraints on Visionary Thinking

Additional exercises combine the visionary ideas and images that you will need to construct a vision. These exercises include:

- ☐ Letter to a Grandchild
- ☐ Personal Vision Development
- ☐ Headlines—USA Tomorrow for the Year 2020.

Strategic Planning Exercises

- ☐ In the first strategic planning exercise, *Creating a List Vision*, you will use the results from your visioning workshop to create a "List Vision"—a list of the major future themes or aspirations that you want to include in your vision.
- ☐ In the second exercise, *Strengthening Vision Themes*, you will strengthen the top-ranking items on your list vision. This is important to do because the most common weakness in visioning efforts consists of people hesitating to think futuristically.
- ☐ The third exercise, *Setting Vision-Based Goals*, helps you formulate vision-based goals that are more specific and action-oriented as well as reflect the loftiness and audacity of the vision language.

Implementation Exercises

The remainder of the exercises will focus on developing strategies and action plans to achieve these goals.

- ☐ The *Stakeholder Identification and Analysis* exercise helps you to identify potential partners in your strategic priorities.
- ☐ The *Building Strategic Priorities* exercises match the vision and vision-based goals with five or six strategic priorities that define future directions and actions. They explore ways to overcome potential barriers or obstacles to executing strategic priorities.

Sample Vision

Agriculture is a dynamic and vital aspect of New Jersey society with a foundation rooted in educational excellence and the practical application of knowledge and resources. Premier educational programs in food, agriculture and natural resources that provide career opportunities and a positive quality of life shall be recognized, supported and promoted as a foundation for agriculture's future.

Sample Vision-Based Goal

By 2008, resources for education in food, agriculture and natural resources will be shared between states, regions and school districts.

Visioning and Strategic Planning Meeting Checklist

Creating a community-based plan for your agricultural education program need not be a difficult process. The *Community-Based Program Planning Kit* provides guided discussion for planning and conducting visioning and planning meetings, including a series of brainstorming exercises designed to help participants enjoy the process.

Here is a list of tips to follow to ensure that your meetings produce success:

- ☐ Identify the specific supplies and materials you will need to complete the program planning process by referring to the instructions for individual exercises in the *Guidebook for Community-Based Program Planning*.
- ☐ Invite a diverse group with a variety of viewpoints and from every facet of the community.
- ☐ Include some of the people who have participated from the beginning of the process in all of the meetings.
- ☐ Conduct visioning and strategic planning at separate meetings for best results. Use the same guidelines established for both meetings.
- ☐ Use only an individual or a small group of two or three people to write a formal vision statement after completing those exercises.
- ☐ Plan for two four-hour workshops (two evenings) for best results.
- ☐ Discuss the planning process and outline expectations at the start of the meeting.
- ☐ Give participants time to introduce themselves and to describe their role or connection with agricultural education.
- ☐ Listen to everyone's ideas, viewpoints and thoughts during the discussion.
- ☐ Be sensitive to individuals when in the course of your work decisions eliminate entries from the group list, leaving some members with the impression that their suggestions were not considered and creating heated discussions.
- ☐ Try to find common ground upon which everyone can agree on what needs to be done and on how to best work toward that goal.
- ☐ Secure a large room in which the whole group and smaller working groups can meet.
- ☐ Select a person to record comments for all exercises.
- ☐ Use the maximum number of exercises time will allow. You do not have to use every exercise in every meeting. In shorter meetings, you should pick the exercises that will yield the results you desire.
- ☐ Send the results of your visioning workshops to participants before the strategic planning meeting.

Tangible Results

Two major items should result from your community-based program planning activities:

- (1) A shared vision.
- (2) A strategic plan of goals and objectives designed to achieve your vision.



Below are ideas from teachers across the nation that will help you plan a successful agricultural education program.

Involve key partners in the process:

Industry Crucial to Career Pathway

In three years, the Hendersonville floriculture program has grown from three to 12 sections with over 275 students. This success is primarily due to teachers identifying an employment niche and engaging industry support. According to teachers Jill Shrum, Jerry Cooper and Jeff Philpott, only a few floriculture design schools exist in Tennessee. So, the local program has become a conduit for potential employees and students looking for a hobby. The state's floriculture industry has recognized Hendersonville's potential and has been crucial in keeping the curriculum updated and furnished with supplies. Wholesale florists provide an estimated \$2,500 in free flowers weekly for students to practice their skills. Students arrange flowers for weddings and regularly provide complimentary bouquets to area nursing patients. Cooper and Shrum have traveled with students to the state lawn and garden show, including regional florist meetings, so students can demonstrate their skills to attract industry interest in the program.

Jerry Cooper, Jill Shrum and Jeff Philpott, Hendersonville High School, Tennessee, (615) 824-6162

Surveying Sustains New Program

Kimball, S.D., school officials established a new agriculture program this year after eight years of community insistence. The newly hired veteran teacher, Lori Tonak, used surveying to construct a curriculum and FFA activity list that matched community and student interest. She adapted the surveys found in *A Guide to Local Program Success* to ask students about the areas of instruction, FFA proficiency and career development events that appealed to them. Likewise, Tonak questioned parents and advisory committee members on local employment needs and their educational preferences. She integrated survey results into the program's curriculum, which emphasizes leadership, employable skills and interpersonal communication. She presented the new curriculum in an open forum to the Kimball School Board and used survey data to dispel publicly held misconceptions about agricultural education and to provide useful information to build program support. In its first year of existence, the program has enjoyed excellent support and FFA members have achieved impressive results in leadership and land competitions.

Lori Tonak, Kimball High School, Kimball, South Dakota, (605) 778-6231 or tonakl@kimball.k12.sd.us

Extension Personnel

One of the most successful partnerships in Wolfeboro, N.H., continues to be the one with the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension Service. This relationship, particularly with the forestry and 4-H youth development educators, dramatically enhances Bruce Farr's planning of his instruction and FFA activities. Extension educators work with Farr in developing and incorporating specific activities into his classroom such as timber cruising techniques and job acquisition skills. These activities provide Farr with immediate technical expertise and keep him updated on current resources available through the Extension Service and elsewhere. In turn, Farr provides extension personnel with a forum to network and educate students about the community resources available to them.

Bruce Farr, Region 9 Vocational Center, Wolfeboro, New Hampshire, (603) 569-4361 or ffa@tiac.com

Develop a shared vision for your program:

POA (Program of Activities) Camp

The West Lyon, Iowa, FFA Chapter uses a POA camp to generate ideas for planning its annual program of activities. All FFA members are invited to participate in the camp, which occurs at a state park. The day-long retreat includes a brainstorming session during the morning followed by a recreational outing and pizza meal. This year 30 members participated in the brainstorming session. To conduct the brainstorming session, each member listed two to three activities to improve the chapter. FFA members were then divided into groups of three to four people to share their activities. Using tag board and markers, members in each group shared and consolidated their activities to improve the chapter. Each group reported its ideas to the full membership, which in turn decided which POA committee should plan and conduct the activities. Annually, each new committee meets in July and reviews all of the recommendations from the camp and plans its itinerary for the upcoming year. After the chapter approves each committee's plans, the chapter vice president develops a finalized plan of each committee's goals and activities for the upcoming year. Prior to the mid-summer POA camp, members from last year's committees meet in June to evaluate their activities and to provide feedback for use at the camp and by future committees. Teacher Gary DeVries also photocopies pages from the National FFA Chapter Awards annual highlights booklet, which list activities and ideas relating to each committee and places these sheets in folders for members to use in planning. The camp has given students the motivation and courage to provide meaningful input into the planning process.

Gary DeVries, West Lyon High School, Inwood, Iowa, (712) 753-4917

Promising Practices continued on page P-14 ➤

Workable Visions Guide Program Health

Jack Roszel strongly recommends that teachers go through a visioning process for their program's long-term health. He speaks from experience. Back in 1976, he and his fellow teacher and wife, Cynthia Roszel, added equine science and began to teach specialized fields instead of a traditional curriculum to address a more suburban student population. Today, Allentown has 120 enrolled students and a comprehensive program with nine offerings, ranging from veterinarian technology to botany. That's one reason they readily volunteered to be part of a three-school consortium to develop a vision and action plan for their county. All participants attended five meetings and completed exercises to guide them through the process. The first vision statement participants created was lengthy, very wordy and unmanageable. Roszel learned these important tips in creating a vision:

- Write a short and concise vision statement.
- Make sure it's attainable.
- Remove any monetary, equipment or personnel constraints that prevent you from thinking of the type of program you want to develop.
- Reassure participants that there will be tangible results.
- Maintain concise and punctual meetings so as not to "overtax" partners; limit meetings to two hours in length.
- Hold meetings at convenient times to accommodate participants from every facet of the community.
- Involve students; let them interact with adults.
- Allow others to have ownership to give them a stake in what's happening.
- Involve state staff in taking minutes and clarifying how the process works to allow participants to focus on their task of creating a vision.

Jack Roszel, Allentown High School, Allentown, New Jersey, (609) 259-2160 or roszelj@web.ufrsd.k12.nj.us

Retreats Help with Chapter Planning

For seven years now, Cindy Shaffer and Steven Kline have held joint retreats for FFA chapter officers and committee chairs. These retreats, patterned after similar conferences held for state officers nationally, have allowed chapter leaders to plan the entire program effectively and to work together to accomplish their common goals. Instead of holding a separate retreat for each group, both teachers found that a joint retreat was easier to manage and allowed members to work effectively as a team throughout the remaining year. Incoming officers make all the plans and arrangements. They select a theme for the two-day retreat. The first session, held immediately after the school year ends and the election of officers, focuses on teamwork and allows members to get to know each other. A ropes course and surveys from the Washington Leadership Conference assist students in identifying their strengths and weaknesses and in appreciating each other's differences. Former state

officers, many of whom come from West Snyder, volunteer their time to help with the training. Another full-day retreat is held in mid-summer, at which members plan the entire program, budget and calendar for the upcoming school year. In addition, they determine which fund-raisers will be necessary to accomplish their goals.

Cindy Shaffer and Steven Kline, West Snyder High School, Beaver Springs, Pennsylvania, (570) 658-8144 or shafarm@sunlink.net

Create action plans to fulfill your program's vision:

Feed Store Transforms Program

Teachers continue to transform every aspect of the Munford, Tenn., agriculture program through an in-school feed store. By working the register, ordering feed to demand, dealing with customers and explaining the nutritional benefits listed on product tags, students practice what they learn in the classroom. In short, they build skills to create résumés and prepare for future jobs in the community. Opportunity to work in the store is available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Competition is fierce to work in the unpaid positions at the store.

The feed store makes the program an important part of the business community. Teachers use the facility to host different organizations and clubs. A recent seminar for horse enthusiasts generated eight new customers and the sale of four tons of feed. All proceeds from Big-Boll Feeds go to scholarships for seniors planning to major in agriculture after graduation. Students receive scholarships based on their academics, FFA involvement and hours worked in the store.

The idea of opening an in-school feed store was a long process for teachers and students. First, Munford teachers surveyed the community on the need for a store and searched for a partner with which to work. Research confirmed a need and the potential benefits to the program. Next, teachers presented a well-planned presentation to persuade the school board of the store's merits for the program, school and community. After winning approval from the board, teachers partnered with Nutrena Feeds in Memphis to supply the store with feed.

Melissa Allen, Glenn Goulder, Lindal Nelson, Leanne McRae, Ann Johnson, Munford High School, Munford, Tennessee, (901) 837-5720 or mjallen365@hotmail.com

Media and Technological Trends Set Course

Jon Yusten has incorporated media trends and technological advances obtained from continuing education courses into his planning of the local curriculum. This practice has helped him keep pace with the needs of the program's enrollment, which primarily is comprised of urban students. His participation in a six-credit college-level immersion course that focused on linking science and agriculture provided him with team teaching ideas. Yusten enrolled in the course for three years, including a final seminar where participants demonstrated how they had incorporated class content into labs or their own curriculum. As an outgrowth of the course, he created a biotechnology course and added elements to other courses, such as

global positioning in a soils unit, that reflect what he learned. At the same time, he integrated current media topics that relate to course content, such as DNA finger typing from the O.J. Simpson trial and cloning, into course discussions, assignments and labs. As a result of the program change, one student plans to attend college this fall majoring in biotechnology. Yusten annually submits an application to administrators for additional hours, beyond his extended or summer contract, to develop or enhance the curriculum with the information he has obtained.

Jon Yusten, Zumbrota-Mazeppa High School, Zumbrota, Minnesota, (507) 732-7395 or jpyffa@aol.com

Planning, Conducting Activities for Success

Teacher Galen Zumbach and Creston FFA members use the National FFA Chapter Award program to plan and conduct activities that are important to their community. The application provides a framework of expectations and allows students to envision what they need to do to build a successful chapter. It also provides a mechanism for them to measure their results at year's end. Chapter activities are developed with criteria from the application in mind. Officers and others involved in ongoing activities meet every other day for about 15 minutes to discuss important matters needing attention. Activity sheets—listing such items as contact person, goals, funds and resources needed—are posted to keep everyone organized and informed. Chapter meetings are conducted to report on activities and to answer questions. Members receive a packet prior to every meeting, which includes a list of completed and upcoming activities, including new business items. FFA officers are totally responsible for developing the agenda since they oversee all the chapter's activities. Zumbach suggests that beginning teachers start by focusing on two to four areas on the application and then add at the community's pace. He says that a community-based program must first possess a quality instructional foundation that attracts students. This strategy has worked successfully at Creston as evidenced by the fact that the school's FFA chapter has consistently been ranked as one of the top in the nation.

Galen Zumbach, Creston High School, Creston, Iowa, (515) 782-2116, ext. 36

Planning to Recruit Female Students

Teacher Rujena Dotson conducted a master's research project on how to recruit female students to an agriculture program. Today, student enrollment in the Lincoln County agriculture program is 50 percent female. Diversity in the program is higher than the school average. Here are a few tips Dotson and fellow teacher Dawn Malone share on recruiting female and minority students:

1. Have at least one female teacher in the program. From her master's project, Dotson found that female students are more apt to take nontraditional instructors, such as female teachers.

2. Survey female and other minority students on what course selections they would find most appealing. Structure your course offerings around their wants and needs.

3. Make an extra effort to reach out to minority students who enroll in your courses. Implement group work and be sure that all groups are a positive and true mixture of the diversity within your program and course.

4. Use eye-openers or other types of activities that allow students to express their true feelings and become more personally familiar with other students who may be different than themselves.

5. Use word-of-mouth to your advantage. Don't be afraid to approach female or other minority students and invite them to join the program. Just conversing with students from diverse populations will allow them to feel more comfortable around you and will let them know that you are open-minded and like to have fun. Dotson says that diverse student populations are more apt to enroll in your program once they know you want and appreciate them.

Rujena Dotson and Dawn Malone, Lincoln County High School, Fayetteville, Tennessee, (931) 433-6505 or rujena_dotson@hotmail.com or dawn_malone@yahoo.com

Implement the process:

Advisory Committee Helps Certify Program

John R. Whaley uses the local advisory committee as a proactive review board. Approximately three years ago, the Alabama Department of Education began a Business/Industry Certification Program for Career and Technical Education. One of the criteria in meeting certification was for local programs and instructors to utilize their advisory committees in a more proactive way in the certification process. In addition, committees were expected to meet at least twice a year to review their respective programs to see if they met industry wants and needs. Whaley asks his local committee, composed of a cross-section of business/industry representatives, students, parents, school officials and community leaders, to review and make recommendations on the program's budget, lesson plans, equipment, marketing plans and curriculum implementation. For two years now, the Jacksonville Agriscience Technology Education Program has obtained certification under the state program. By including a cross-section of business/industry and community leaders on the advisory committee, Whaley has been able to tap into the needs and wants of his community. Another key to local success has been the creation of a website and the circulation of a newsletter, which have helped Whaley report the results of the program to the community.

John R. Whaley, Jacksonville High School, Jacksonville, Alabama, jrwhaley@earthlink.net

Preparing Daily to Teach

Horacio Garza Jr. has found that the key to keeping students motivated and involved in class is being prepared to teach every day. Garza uses four simple and direct ways to prepare himself and his students for each day of instruction:

1. Immediately before the closure of each class period, Garza reviews that day's lesson, unit or activities and what students should have learned. He then gives them a preview of what they will learn in the next class period.
2. Garza tries to read a variety of magazines that pertain to the areas he teaches. The agricultural education department has subscriptions to at least 15 magazines, including topics such as wildlife and animals, livestock shows and equipment, farming and ranching.
3. Each week, Garza monitors his students' progress and decides whether to move forward in the curriculum or review concepts during the following week. He makes this determination on Fridays after students complete their record books. He next assigns them an article that they read and on which they write a report. During this time, Garza tabulates students' scores for the previous week and evaluates the progress made in that course.
4. Garza believes that simple, direct routines are most effective. Having something new daily for all students to accomplish, especially when dealing with a broad spectrum of learning styles, keeps them motivated and creates less confusion among students.

Horacio Garza Jr., Sharyland High School, Mission, Texas, (956) 580-5307 or g4lachogarza@yahoo.com

Work Experiences

By replacing traditional laboratories with work experiences, instructors at Blue Mountain Community College, Ore., decreased student-to-teacher ratios and increased learning opportunities for students. They based their decision on recommendations from the National Science Foundation, which called for infusing more math and science into the curriculum and developing employable skills. Blue Mountain's experiences have clear implications for both secondary and postsecondary instructors alike.

Like most college curricula, Blue Mountain courses consisted of lecture and lab periods. Instructors found that three-hour lab periods did not allow all students enough time to test and validate what they learned during their lectures in forage crops, alternative crops, pest management, plant science and animal science.

Instead, instructors created cooperative work experiences that allowed the entire class to meet in a land lab supervised by a laboratory technician or instructor. They extended course time by one to two hours (for a total of 40 hours per quarter).

In doing so, students had more time to master learning objectives and to develop skills/tasks that the program's advisory committee identified as important for future employees. Mastery of skills was especially important for two-thirds of students who returned to production agriculture or entered a position in agribusiness immediately following graduation. The new structure also allowed students to work effectively as a team in learning to run equipment or test their assumptions from class.

Paul Davis, Jon Farquharson, Tim McCormick, Dale Wendt, Preston Winn, Blue Mountain Community College, Pendleton, Oregon, (541) 278-5848

Internet Is Vital to Instruction

Over the past eight years, Steve Bouchard has used the Internet and World Wide Web as a key resource in keeping the Oakcrest program diverse and up-to-date. The Internet helps him monitor industry changes, allowing him to keep students apprised of trends as they occur. Course work is presented through various media and all course outlines and projects are published online for student use in the classroom or at home. Online access provides materials for student research and producing Power Point® presentations to other classes. These presentations are shared throughout the department and with other New Jersey programs. As student online projects are completed, researched and cataloged, Bouchard and his students send URL mailings of useful websites to other agriculture teachers within and outside of the state. As students become more computer savvy, their enthusiasm for their course work and achievement levels have increased.

Steve Bouchard, Oakcrest High School, Mays Landing, New Jersey (609) 909-2632 or sbouchard@geh.atlnet.org

Excel Curriculum Planner

Ann Newhouse builds a "road map" for the local curriculum by using an Excel® spreadsheet. Her system keeps her on track and more organized. Newhouse annually evaluates the units and the amount of time allotted to teach them. Having her curriculum in a spreadsheet gives her the flexibility to rotate units depending on weather and other factors. In the Excel spreadsheet, each course has its own column. Newhouse charts the various units and the approximate number of days per unit in each of the course columns. To the left of all the courses in a separate column, the dates and number of school days in each of the four quarters are listed. When creating lesson plans, she writes the number of days per unit on the daily plans to help keep her on track.

Ann Newhouse, Bainville High School, Bainville, Montana (406) 769-2321, anewhouse@metnet.state.mt.us

Using Advisory Committee to Chart Directions

Dan Hill uses the local advisory committee as a key group to monitor, propose, plan and implement new directions for the agricultural education program. The group is comprised of individuals who have graduated from the program. Because committee members are also key community leaders, they can communicate the concerns and needs of Sweet Springs, Mo., residents directly to Hill. To empower the group to serve as a guiding force for the program, Hill follows several practices.

- He provides advisory members with a variety of data to assist them in making informed decisions. Members receive enrollment figures categorized by grade and individual courses, including a history of enrollment trends. Hill provides information from occupational interest surveys to give members an ideal of what career areas students are considering.
- Advisory members annually review course offerings and offer suggestions for changes or improvements on what topics need to be taught based on the raw data presented to them. Any and all suggestions are recorded and reviewed by department personnel. Recommendations are shared with the local administrator to determine their feasibility. Most suggestions are implemented within a year. (Recently for example, the group assisted in securing another teaching position after data indicated two full-time secondary teachers were needed to meet the needs of the community. Advisory members played a key role in persuading school board members that a need existed for a second instructor.)
- Members also play a key role in developing long-range plans for facility and equipment improvements or for purchases based on these trends and the information presented to them.
- Hill maintains an “open-door” policy, which encourages advisory members to share community concerns with him. This informal contact throughout the year helps Hill to address concerns and communicate with the community before concerns become problem areas.

Dan Hill, Sweet Springs R-7 High School, Sweet Springs, Missouri
(660) 335-4857 or dns002@mail.connect.more.net

Alumni Key to Program Planning

FFA Alumni played a key role in planning and converting the traditional Buckeye Union curriculum to one based more on agriscience. While the program is still in transition, involving alumni members was the first step in the planning process for instructors Darcy Johnson and Quintin Molina. Alumni became the driving force behind the changes by generating ideas and a vision for the program. They sent a letter to the principal and superintendent, in which they outlined proposed curriculum changes they wanted to see and offered solutions with which they could assist. Once administrators saw that the community took interest in the program, both through alumni

participation and a newly formed advisory board, school administrators accepted offers for help. Involving alumni in the planning process gave Buckeye instructors access to current technologies, key business leaders and community decision makers.

Darcy Johnson and Quintin Molina,
Buckeye Union High School, Buckeye, Arizona
(623) 386-4423 or DarcyJ@BUHSD.org

A Planning Model

Sue Wade follows a series of steps, a model if you will, in incorporating new ideas and projects into the instructional program. Here are some of those steps:

1. Develop an idea.
2. Gather as much information about the project as you can. Share your idea with and obtain feedback from parents, students, other teachers, community members, support staff and key partners. (In sharing her ideas with them, Wade finds that students often expand the scope of the project beyond her expectations.)
3. Ask people if they are interested in helping with part of the project. Brainstorm with people on how they can assist.
4. Write a list of project expectations/objectives.
5. Enthusiastically present a plan to students and obtain their “buy-in.”
6. Brainstorm class goals and objectives for the project.
7. Act as a facilitator for the project, letting students do the work, solve the problems and interact as a team.
8. Review the project’s original goals/objectives mid-stream and adjust the project’s direction if needed.
9. Thank people for assisting with incorporating a new idea or project into the instructional program.
10. Evaluate the plan’s or project’s success based on the original goals and objectives.

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Building a Focused Program

Darcy Johnson and Quintin Molina have found that a focused transition plan makes it easier for community partners to participate in the program. Here are their steps for creating a focused plan:

1. Organize a brainstorming session for agricultural leaders in the community. Encourage alumni to host the event.
2. Include a diverse group in your planning: past members, school officials and parents of current students. Definitely enlist industry representatives who are in a position to provide resources to accomplish your goals.
3. Make the plan as focused as possible by developing a brief description of the specific things you want to incorporate into your program. Draft a letter for the superintendent and principal that includes these items.
4. Meet with administrators and set specific deadlines for each project or item on the list.
5. Meet informally with key players and give them specific responsibilities. Clarify ideas and deadlines, so everyone knows what tasks need to be completed.

The key is to start with the little items and work your way to bigger goals. When community residents see what the program is about, they'll be more apt to contribute next time, Johnson says. Renovating and adding to the school barn was one of the items on Johnson and Molina's list. As a program in transition, the renovated barn allows alumni to better host the Buckeye Ag Day for all area 4-H and FFA members. This annual event brings the community to the program and showcases its progress.

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Evaluating Project Success

When Sue Wade implements a new project or unit of instruction, she uses specific criteria to evaluate whether her plan and teaching were successful. She first compares the actual results with the original written list of objectives for the unit or project. At the end of the project or unit, Wade then conducts a brainstorming exercise with students, gathering their suggestions for improvement. She often conducts a mid-project evaluation, especially if course objectives and results seem to be not aligned. In these situations, Wade might modify the entire project to accomplish the teaching objectives for the project or unit. Finally, she provides feedback to those community supporters who have helped implement the new project and gathers their advice. This process might even include having them serve on an evaluation committee that judges final projects, especially if the those projects require an oral presentation by students.

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Annual May Basket Sale

The annual "May Basket" plant sale serves both as the Jefferson, Iowa, FFA Chapter's main fund-raiser and as a focal point for horticulture instruction. Instructor David Briggs utilizes the event to teach horticulture students greenhouse management, proper plant care and plant identification throughout the semester. Students prepare about 450 different plants, including baskets, pots, poussie pouches and flat trays of 15 different annual flowers. They learn about merchandising and sales through the activity, including professional behavior and pricing. Having the sale on the same date annually (around May 1) and offering a large plant selection builds great community-based support. Profits go to a pizza party for the class and to purchase greenhouse supplies, such as fertilizer injectors and hydroponic items, or a computer program. The chapter advertises the sale in the local newspaper, on cable television and on two radio stations. Briggs works with area greenhouse owners and selects plants other businesses don't sell to avoid conflicts over competition. The one-day event makes for quick movement of product and reduces interruption of class time to handle money.

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Local Need Drives Equine Course

In preparing her first horse career development team for competition, Joy Goforth discovered that area students had a strong equine interest. Their passion for the field encouraged her to work with these students to secure an equine science course as part of the local curriculum. After contacting the state agricultural education coordinator and the local vocational director, Goforth notified community members of course objectives. Local community members immediately offered their support and ideas. Community college faculty actually contacted Goforth to discuss a possible curriculum when they heard about her intentions. Goforth and local leaders are currently working with staff at the local community college to generate interest for an associates degree in equine science. The horse event team also expressed a need to initiate a local equine club at Parkwood High. She worked with students to start a club that included all students, so that it would represent the interests of the student population and encourage them to enroll in agriculture classes and join the FFA. Enrollment for the equine science course this first year is terrific. FFA membership has increased as well.

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Agriscience Learning Lab

The agriscience teachers, students, alumni and community residents of Shepherd, Texas, recently completed construction of a 100' x 120' agriscience learning lab. The concept for the lab came from a need to locate an accessible building where students and community residents could meet for local livestock and hay shows. The facility also provides working and learning space for students to feed their show animals and to develop their knowledge of any agricultural field. In 1998, local FFA Alumni members cleared the present site and began preparing the building pad. The lab consists of a meeting room, restrooms, kitchen, feed room, as well as feeding floor space to house swine, lambs and goats. The lab also contains a show and work arena. The kitchen facility will be used for teaching food technology courses and as a meeting place for chapter and 4-H meetings. The school district, the National FFA Alumni Chapter Grant Program, local alumni members and other community residents provided funds to build and equip the facility.

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