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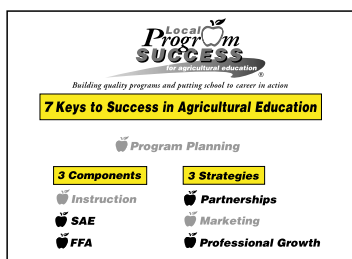
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Watch for the LPS Logo

The logo below shows how this issue of *FFA Advisors Making a Difference* relates to Local Program Success, a national initiative to strengthen agricultural education programs. You'll see this icon on all FFA materials. The shaded apples show which areas the materials address.



Creating Experiences for Today's Students

FFA and agricultural education have a long, rich history of providing work-based learning experiences for students. For many years, these experiences were known as supervised occupational experience programs (SOEP) and consisted primarily of production agriculture programs.

In the early 1980s the agriculture economy experienced a significant recession and many agricultural education programs broadened their curricula from strictly production agriculture to include horticulture, forestry, wildlife management and agriscience. As this change occurred, the work-based learning experience program changed, too. A national conference was held and leaders across the country had an opportunity to discuss what students needed. SOE evolved into SAE—supervised agricultural experience.

Award Programs

The awards programs evolved to meet these changes. Students may now compete for proficiency awards in 48 different areas. The degree programs have been modified to be more inclusive and new star award categories have been added so that students may be recognized for outstanding work in agribusiness, agriscience and placement as well as in production agriculture.

Today, agricultural education programs across the country are experiencing an influx of students who are stretching the boundaries of traditionally accepted SAEs. Informal conversations have been cropping up at teacher meetings that focus on how to best

serve the needs of students. The opinions on this revered and complex topic are diverse. There are likely as many “right” answers as there are students.

Some feel it is time to revise the work-based learning component again, this time focusing less on “agriculture” and more on “experience.” Others feel that students without a true interest in agriculture should be encouraged to consider other career and technical programs that are more in line with the students’ interests, even when that means losing good students from the program.

Making the Decisions

The National FFA Organization has long held that the determination of what is and what isn't an SAE happens at the local level. However, some programs that may be defined as an SAE at the local level, may not necessarily be viewed the same at the state or national level. While these decisions can impact degrees, they become much more visible in the proficiency award program. For example, a student who works as a clerk in a grocery store may certainly be developing employability skills through that experience and may receive recognition at the chapter level, but wouldn't necessarily place very high beyond the local level.

Funding is being sought to revise the existing SAE materials. Through that process, there will be many opportunities for debate and discussion. The bottom line is how the organization can best serve its members. Let the discussion begin!



New Initiative To Support, Reward Ag Teachers

You will soon have more tools and support to do your job, thanks to a major new agricultural education initiative launched last fall. The program, sponsored through a \$200,000 donation from Syngenta and coordinated by the National FFA Organization, supports the recruitment, retention and recognition of teachers in agricultural sciences.

"Our vision at Syngenta is to deliver better food to a better world through innovative crop solutions for growers and the food and feed chain. The continued success of agriculture depends on the education of crop producers and of the people who support them in their jobs," says Bob Woods, chairman of Syngenta Corporation, U.S. "We are pleased to partner with FFA on this effort to strengthen agricultural education in North America," he added.

A key to the education program is recognizing and rewarding teachers who excel in teaching the agricultural sciences. Syngenta is sponsoring the development of new state and national awards programs. The National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE) Outstanding Agricultural Education Award recognizes the efforts of state winners and six regional winners in developing outstanding education programs for high school agriculture programs. The NAAE Outstanding Post-Secondary Agriculture Program likewise rewards state winners and six regional winners for accomplishments in teaching at the post-secondary community college level.

One teacher, Jodi Geiger of Florida, was chosen as the spokesperson for the education program. She participated in a media tour to highlight the importance of agricultural education, and will travel to Switzerland to tour Syngenta's global headquarters.

According to Dr. Larry Case, coordinator of Agricultural and Rural Education for the U.S. Department of Education and national FFA advisor, the sponsorship also will support production and distribution of a number of materials for current and potential agriculture educators – including this *Making a Difference* newsletter!

"The key to success with improving the future for agricultural education is partnerships between the public and private sectors – between the educators, government bodies, organizations and businesses that are focused on agriculture. We hope this program between Syngenta and the FFA will be a model for how such partnerships can work," says Case.

Through the new program, career assessment tools for both high school and collegiate students will be developed to highlight the benefits of a teaching career in agriculture. Also, a number of tools will provide current agriculture teachers with "best practices" and resources to help them achieve success in their classrooms.

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The National FFA Organization is a resource and support organization that does not select, control or supervise state association, local chapter or individual member activities except as expressly provided for in the National FFA Organization Constitution and Bylaws.

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The Council	1-800-772-0939
FFA website	http://www.ffa.org

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 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.

Rocky Mountain Marketing Communications, Inc.
Editorial Consultant

Published by Larry D. Case, Coordinator, Agricultural and Rural Education, U.S. Department of Education

This publication is available online at www.ffa.org/news/html/ffapubsindex.html.

What Are Your Thoughts on SAE, Related Needs and Incentives?

Supervised agricultural experience (SAE) is probably the portion of the agricultural education model that sets it apart from other education disciplines. While nearly all of career and technical education programs conduct some form of work-based learning, the School-To-Work Opportunities Act and related initiatives have spawned work-based learning in academic disciplines such as math, science, social studies and language arts.

Agricultural education remains alone in offering work-based learning for "all" its enrollees at "all" grade levels of participation. We are the only secondary program that continues to provide supervision and individualized instruction from the time students enter our programs and continue it beyond graduation. Yes, agricultural education's historical use of the application of classroom and laboratory experience supported by the incentives and benefits of an active FFA chapter continues to be a model for School-to-Work and educational success.

New Effort

A new effort is underway to reinforce and re-emphasize the importance of the SAE program to all agriculture educators and students across the nation. This effort is in direct response to the recommendations of a national task force on SAE coupled with the Local Program Success initiative and the career clusters effort in agriculture and natural resources. The career cluster effort is a project of the U.S. Department of Education under the leadership of Dr. Larry Case, Va., Richard Ledington, Idaho, and Dale Gruis, Iowa.

The SAE task force brought together an array of agriculture educators and business leaders from across the nation who work on the local level and are familiar with what is required for success in various aspects of an agricultural education program. The task force developed and prioritized several objectives designed to enhance and support SAE into the future. The objectives include development of model SAE standards, updating national SAE handbooks and guides, promotional materials and recognition and incentive programs. These objectives will be addressed by those involved in the SAE-based revision activity. This group will begin meeting this spring and into the summer.

Send FFA Your Input

As an agricultural educator, you are encouraged to provide comments in regard to support materials, model standards, incentive programs, evaluation of experiences and other issues related to SAE. Please send your thoughts on this topic to Kevin Keith, Local Program Success, National FFA Organization, P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960, or via e-mail to kkeith@ffa.org.

The National FFA Organization commends you for your efforts to implement, maintain and strengthen the SAE portion of your local program and encourages you to make use of the tools that are available. Agricultural education, delivered in its entirety, is a true model of educational success that has global application. However, for it to be such a model, agriculture teachers must implement it globally in their individual programs.

*Making a
Difference
in the Lives
of Students*



SAE: It's All About Students

Sidney Bell, Stan Mitchell and Janet Allen have developed a strong team at Oconee County High School in Watkinsville, Ga. In 2002, three of Georgia's four state stars were from their program.

The community they serve mirrors many across the country in that it is rapidly being transformed from a rural area into a bedroom community for two nearby cities—Athens and Atlanta. The school boasts approximately 1,700 students; 245 are enrolled in agriculture courses. First-year students generally enter the program with no specific interests and the team works hard to help each one discover his or her niche.



Bell, Allen and Mitchell visit FFA member Heather Savelle's SAE program.

"We require each student to develop an SAE plan," Bell says. "We provide instruction for the first two weeks and give a lot of examples of other students' programs. We try to focus on SAEs that are tied to the curriculum as well as fitting in with student interests. That basically requires a lot of talking, encouraging and listening."

The POO Factor

Bell continues, "All SAEs are not created equal. You'll have some students who do the minimum they can

to get by. Then you'll have some that are highly motivated. I call that the 'POO' factor—Pride of Ownership. These are the students that take pride in their work, whether or not their project is entrepreneurial."

As an example, Bell details a student who created a detailed GIS map for a 6,500-acre wildlife conservation area. "He took what he learned in the classroom and applied it to a field in which he was interested," Bell says. "He spent countless hours compiling data and it was all volunteer, he wasn't being paid. It was an outstanding experience for the student and for his teacher. I learned a great deal from that process. However, there is no way I could have ever pushed him to complete that project. He wanted it and was internally motivated. He has a very high POO factor."

Leap of Faith

When asked for his advice regarding SAE, Bell encourages his fellow teachers to take a leap of faith and make SAE important in your program. "Require it of all students. At first, they'll hate it. I explain it sort of like public speaking. When you first attempt to speak in public, it's a painful, embarrassing experience. However, as your skill develops you become more comfortable until all of a sudden, you realize that you enjoy it and that it helps you succeed. You look back at the experience and realize how much it has done for you. It's the same way with SAE."

Bell continues, "Teens don't always know what is best for themselves. You increase their likelihood for success when you require things that are at first uncomfortable, like SAE. Support your students in their decisions. When

you require SAE and encourage students, they will begin to experience success and their level of engagement and enthusiasm will increase. Notice I said they will experience success—SAE isn't my success, it's student success."

Addressing Challenges

Like others, the Oconee County team occasionally faces unsupportive parents and administrators. Bell admonishes, "Some parents feel SAE is a hassle. Those are the students that will do the bare minimum to get by. Sometimes they'll get turned on and that will engage the parents."

In the case of administration, Bell stands firm. "It's easy to blame the administration or the school system for your problems. But it all boils down to the fact that you build the program from the classroom out. Your program is built on what you do, not on what others do. If you're doing a good job, students will experience success. When that happens, parents and administrators will support you and the program."

According to Bell, the bottom line to success starts with how you approach any challenge. He says, "We make teaching students a priority. Not teaching agriculture, but teaching students. If you do that, all the other elements will fall into place."

What the Devil Does Integral Mean?

Is FFA or SAE Optional?

As all good agriculture instructors know, agricultural education is a total educational program that involves three integral parts—classroom, SAE and FFA. None of the three parts are optional! You, as a teacher, do not provide students the option to attend class. Why do some of us give students the option to be in FFA? When did we decide agricultural education was not an integral program?

I realize saying FFA and SAE and classroom are integral parts of agricultural education is easy. Making it happen in a local school is far more difficult. Eleven years of teaching experience allows me to empathize with you on this challenge.

One stumbling block is the lack of a clear concept of what “integral” means; another is the question of how to share the concept with school administrators. Many of us have used the three overlapping circles to graphically depict the integral nature of agricultural education, but even that is often confusing.

Defining Integral

An alternative, developed by Tom Kapostasy, director of business and information services at National FFA, can be seen in Figure 1. It lays out clearly both what we teach and how we teach in agricultural education in one graphic. It is simple to explain and simple to understand. The color shading within the grid indicates that differing levels of what we teach may be better suited to one type of teaching (i.e. classroom, SAE, FFA) than another, but note that some of all three are taught by all three (i.e., a truly integrated model).

The graphic clearly shows that if you remove FFA or classroom/laboratory or supervised experiential learning, then your local program will not deliver the same level or quality. Good teachers know that the more integrated the local program, the more students will learn and retain. The result is a more successful program.

It’s easy, when looking at this model, to see how students who do not have an SAE or are not in FFA are not gaining the full benefit from the local program. This is not about student choice! It is about making sure we as teachers use every tool at our disposal to effectively teach! Since when do students know more than you do about what they need? We as teachers must make “integral” happen locally if it is to happen at all.

Making it Happen

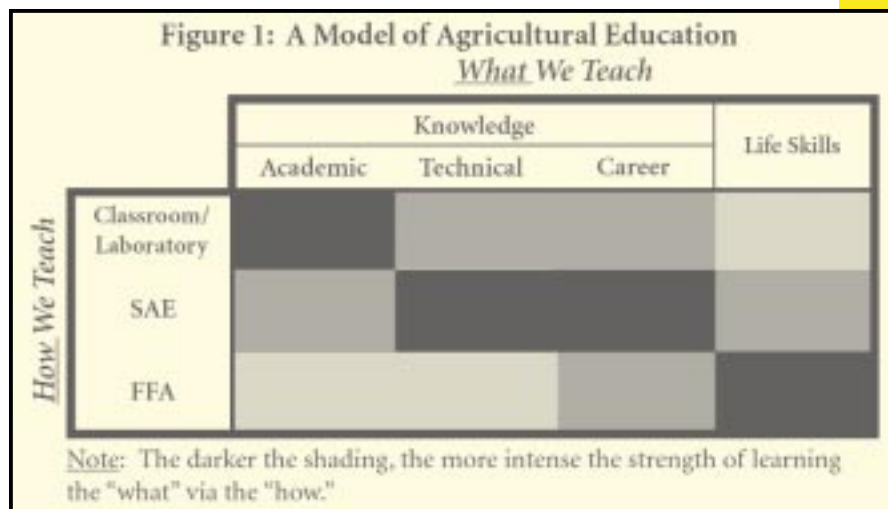
No one else can shoulder this responsibility for us. We are it! If we are just teaching another class, how long can our local program survive? We cost more than most other classes.

Our facilities tend to be more expensive. Our summer or extended contracts make agriculture teachers more costly than nine-month teachers. Our classes, in many cases, are not required for graduation. Competing on just the “class” level is the death knell of local agricultural education programs.

Our real hope is to showcase why a totally integrated program of classroom/laboratory, experiential learning and FFA provides a superior educational model that is effective in teaching and “growing” young people. We must demonstrate why such a program is important to keeping kids in school, to improving graduation rates, and as a way to augment real-world math and science instruction. In addition, such an integrated program can be critical to showing that students really truly learn and retain knowledge and skills with this model. A totally integrated model is a good investment for a local community. In fact, it is a model the entire school system should adopt if the goal is improved student learning and success.



By Bernie Staller
Chief Operating Officer
National FFA Organization
Indianapolis, Indiana



Creating SAEs in Connecticut

Bill Davenport and his five fellow agriculture teachers have no small task in serving the 255 students enrolled in agriculture at Nonnewaug High School in Woodbury, Connecticut. The students, who must apply to become part of the program, come from 26 different towns, some up to an hour away. They are attracted to the program for many reasons, one of them being its proven success in preparing winners, not just in FFA, but in life.

“Our students come from a wide variety of backgrounds,” says Cindy Walstedt, who started teaching just last fall at Woodbury. “The program reflects their diverse interests, offering courses in seven different interest areas: floriculture, horse management, veterinary science, conservation and natural resources, agricultural mechanics, agriculture production and landscaping.”

The Woodbury team believes in introducing students to SAE early in the process and in setting expectations high. SAE is heavily emphasized during recruitment presentations. “We start by making all students apply to be part of the agriculture program here,” Davenport says. “They have to come in with a demonstrated interest in agriculture and letters of recommendation to prove it.”

The chapter also hosts an underclassmen awards night that includes a presentation on SAE projects upperclassmen have developed and what is expected of all students. Students know from the beginning that they will be expected to complete degree and proficiency award applications as juniors and seniors. The teaching team shares current applications with them to give the younger students local examples of SAEs and how they were developed.

Getting Off to a Good Start

From there, Davenport and his team of teachers work with each student to develop an SAE based on his or her interests. They require each student to create an SAE application, essentially writing a couple of paragraphs about what they’d like to do as an SAE and including five goals related to the SAE. The team of six agriculture teachers reviews each SAE application and then votes to approve or reject. All six teachers must vote to approve or the application goes back to the student for revision. This step requires students to really think through a program before they launch into one.

The next requirement is logging a minimum of 200 SAE hours a year to stay in the program. If a student hasn’t completed the SAE requirements by the end of each year, they aren’t allowed to return to the program the following year.

“Traditionally, about 95 percent of our students have no problem meeting that benchmark,” Davenport says. “The other five percent are clearly demonstrating a lack of interest and really don’t belong in the program. This requirement separates those who are interested from those who aren’t.”

“There are those who say we’re tough on SAE, and I suppose we are,” Davenport says. “If you set the bar high, students will strive to reach it. If you allow mediocre SAEs to be acceptable, word gets out and soon almost everyone will be slacking off. We hold

ourselves to a higher standard because it results in students who are better prepared for their futures.”

Student Success

Davenport’s results speak for themselves. Nonnewaug graduates have found successful careers in a broad spectrum of careers. Amanda Peterson is one of them. When she was a sophomore, she started working for a floral shop. Peterson worked hard to learn the business and participated in related career development events. After she graduated from high school in 1998, she took a few business and floral design courses at a local community college. Now, at age 21, she owns the Woodbury Floral Design business and employs FFA members.



FFA member Lindsey Monckton rings up a customer’s order at Woodbury Floral Design as owner Amanda Peterson takes care of business on the phone.

“When I first joined FFA as a freshman, I was really shy,” Peterson says. “Mr. D. encouraged me to compete in creed speaking and public speaking. That really helped me get my confidence up. From there, I started working at a floral shop and became really good friends with the owner. When he decided it was time for a change in his life, I bought the business.”

SAE: It's What Makes Us Different

As agriculture educators, we have all heard it time and time again. Our educational programming in agricultural education is different than other programs and disciplines of education.

The methods used in the classroom and laboratory are integrated with the application of those principles through an SAE program while incentives and personal development are learned through the connecting activities of the National FFA Organization, National PAS Organization or National Young Farmer Educational Association.

Practice What We Preach

I have seldom heard any agriculture teacher deny that their programs were special in these ways, but I have noticed, on occasion, that the 'preach' and the 'practice' can be different. Somewhere along the line, even our own people practice the ideals of quality classroom/laboratory instruction, but leave the SAE and sometimes even all or part of the aspects of the respective student leadership organization for "when they have time" or "to be implemented later."

As a state staff member for a number of years, I occasionally received a call from a local agriculture instructor wanting my help in retaining their program which came under fire in times of difficult budgetary situations. While I always did what I could to help, we often identified that the program of agricultural education to which we subscribe was not being implemented in that school. The best support a local program can have is local taxpayer support. This support is seldom lacking in any school district where all parts of this very

special program we have are implemented and thriving. On the other hand, it can be hard to garner support for parts of a program with which these grass-roots folks are not familiar, or have not observed or experienced themselves.

Integral, Not Optional

As I travel the country in my new role as a Local Program Success specialist, I encounter many agriculture educators who say that they work with limited numbers of students through SAE and the student leadership organization, because they do not have time to work with all. It is my belief that we must communicate to these teachers that the program is not one made up of optional parts to be used when convenient. We should strive to work on methods of implementation, which are efficient, integral and supported by proven implementation.

It is unfair to allow our professionals in agricultural education to think that without the full program—and the local support base created through it—that they aren't in danger of coming under attacks in times of fiscal constraint. They should be aware that they are risking their own futures, as well as that of the community, families and students they serve, if they are selective in implementation of the program.

Creating a New Model

Agriculture education professionals at all levels should play a role in the creation of a model for implementation of local programs. This should include step-by-step processes for

integration of the agricultural education program. This model, which would not be specific to curriculum taught, could then be provided through pre-service and in-service training opportunities across the country. The model can best be created by successful and experienced agricultural educators through a national task force development effort.

I believe that the task force should have leadership representation from our professional agricultural education organizations and the National Council for Agricultural Education, and should be endorsed by these groups to gain the best possible



By Kevin Keith
LPS Specialist
National FFA
Organization



FFA member Seth Braker reviews his SAE records with his teacher, Keith Gundlach, of Randolph-Cambria Freisland, Wis.

acceptance across the country. If we can provide our instructors, especially new instructors, with a model for integration of our three methodologies, we will be more successful in providing the benefits of our very special educational program to our students. Should you have comments on this article or input and suggestions for implementation, please send to, Local Program Success Work Group, Team Ag Ed, c/o The National FFA Organization, P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960 or via e-mail to lps@ffa.org.

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Success Breeds Success in SAE

Do you ever wonder how some FFA chapters seem to rise to the top time after time in the proficiency award and degree programs? Is it something in the water or do they have some secret they aren't sharing with the rest of the world?



Tim Heeg and Mark Zee join 2002 American Star Farmer Karlene Lindow and her parents on stage as she receives her award.

Take, for example, the Marshfield FFA Chapter in Marshfield, Wisconsin. They've produced two national star winners in as many years (Karlene Lindow, 2002 American Star Farmer, Steven Offer, 2001 American Star in Agriscience) as well as a score of state and national proficiency award winners. What's their secret? According to Mark Zee and Tim Heeg, agriculture instructors at Marshfield, there is no secret, just lots of hard work and a strong focus on students.

"The main thing is that you—the teacher—must believe in the philosophy of SAE," says Zee. "You must stress the importance of SAE to the students early on and get them started on something. Once you get them started, the program itself will generate their enthusiasm and that rubs off on others."

Introducing SAE

Students begin their agriculture experience at Marshfield with a year-

long course entitled, "Plants, Animals and You." This exploratory course touches on a wide variety of topics and introduces students to topics covered in-depth in other courses, including plant science, animal science, horticulture, soil science, natural resources, wildlife management, forestry, small animals/veterinary science, dairy science, biotechnology and agribusiness. After the first year, students can choose from semester courses in all of the areas mentioned.

Students are introduced to SAE in the Plants, Animals and You course. "We explain the program and show our students videos we've taken at state and national conventions of our students being recognized," Tim Heeg says. "We let them know that those young people being recognized on stage started in the same place they are sitting and that they have the opportunity to build programs and be recognized in the same way."

Identifying Interests

Heeg continues, "We work with each student to identify their interests and then develop SAE ideas from there. It can be something that they've already been working on through a 4-H project, or a hobby such as hunting and fishing, or something they're familiar with through their family environment, like cheese making. Sometimes we uncover ideas based on a particular subject matter that the student found interesting, like soil science. Regardless, once we identify the interest, we build something on top of it."

Another strategy employed in Marshfield is that of sharing completed award applications. "After the upperclassmen finish their degree and award applications, we take some time

to let the freshman review those applications for ideas and inspiration," Heeg explains. "Through the applications, the younger students get a clear idea of what it will take for them to go from where they are to where they need to be to win awards and earn degrees."

SAE Visits Important

Heeg and Zee both stress the importance of making SAE visits. "There is no replacement for sitting down with a student and his or her parents to discuss a program and explore options for improvement," Heeg says. "Seeing the students and visiting with them outside the classroom is invaluable to their development."

It is this holistic approach to education that Heeg and Zee feel leads to their success. "Too many times people get caught up in awards and forget what is behind them," Zee says. "People must understand that the program drives the awards, not the other way around."

Heeg implores, "Don't underestimate the value of what SAE can do for a student. This is the program component where each student gets to explore their interests and expand their individual potential. This is where they develop specific career knowledge and gain skills that will serve them in their chosen life's work. When teachers choose to de-emphasize SAE in favor of other program components, they truly shortchange their students."

Saying Thanks to Those Who Provide FFA Award and Recognition Programs

One of the most important parts of keeping people involved in your local program is thanking them for their contributions of time, effort and funding. This rule also holds true on the state and national levels.

The National FFA Organization is fortunate to have sponsors who are willing to contribute millions of dollars annually to support FFA programs. One of the reasons FFA has consistently been able to raise the level of contributions it receives annually is because each year sponsors receive notes of gratitude written by accomplished young people from across the country.

As the chapter banquet season hits full stride, students are being recognized for their accomplishments in a wide range of areas. Don't forget to ask each of your chapter winners to write a brief note of thanks to the individuals responsible for funding their awards. To assist with this process, all of the national proficiency award, career development event and agriscience fair sponsor names and addresses follow.

Ag Mechanics Career Development Event

Joyce Bonish, Marketing Analyst
Firestone Agricultural Tire Company
4600 NW 2nd Avenue, Suite 100
Des Moines, IA 50313

Agricultural Communications Career Development Event

Tom Davis, Publisher
Successful Farming/Agriculture Online
1716 Locust Street
Des Moines, IA 50309-3023

Agricultural Communications Career Development Event

Chuck P. Roth, President
Farm Progress Companies, Inc.
191 S. Gary Avenue
Carol Stream, IL 60188-2089

Craig Matthews
Senior Sales Representative
R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company
3075 Highland Parkway
Downers Grove, IL 60515-1260

Mike Fox, Executive Vice President,
Director Account Management
Trone Advertising
4035 Piedmont Parkway
High Point, NC 27265

Agricultural Issues Forum Career Development Event

Roy Riggs, Director
Swine Business Unit
Elanco Animal Health, A Division of Eli Lilly and Company
500 E. 96th Street
Four Parkwood, Suite 125
Indianapolis, IN 46240-3733

Agricultural Mechanics Design and Fabrication Proficiency

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Auburn Hills, MI 48326-2766

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Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance Proficiency

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Decatur, IL 62526

William J. Nelson
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CHS Cooperatives
PO Box 64047
5500 Cenex Drive
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55164-0047

Bill Gass, Landec Ag
Fielder's Choice
306 N. Main
Monticello, IN 47960

Lili Horneffer, VP, Human Resources
Ralcorp Holdings
Box 98
1 Quality Place
Buckner, KY 40010

Agricultural Sales - Entrepreneurship Proficiency

Jo Lynne C. Pierce
Brand Promotion Manager - Trucks
Chevy Trucks
100 Renaissance Center, PO Box 100
MC 482-A30-C76
Detroit, MI 48265-1000

Tom Mays, Marketing Manager
Chevrolet/Hummer/SPO/VSS M Divisions, GMAC
MC: 482-A29-C46
100 Renaissance Center
PO Box 100, 29th Floor
Detroit, MI 48265-1000



Agricultural Sales - Placement Proficiency

J.G. Bamer
Sales Manager, Farm & Specialty Tires
The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company
1144 E. Market Street
Akron, OH 44316-0001

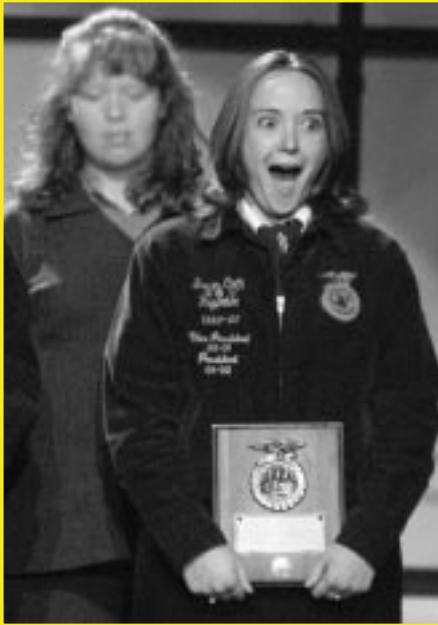
Gerald W. Brase
Senior Vice President, Merchandising
Tractor Supply Company
320 Plus Park Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37217

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Mark Poeschl
Senior Vice President, Operations
Vigortone Ag Products-
a division of North American
Nutrition Company (NANC)
C.S. 5002
6531 St. Rd. 503
Lewisburg, OH 45338

Agricultural Sales Career Development Event

Julie Doane, Special Project Manager
Monsanto
800 North Lindbergh Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63167



Agricultural Services Proficiency

Jo Lynne C. Pierce
Brand Promotion Manager - Trucks
Chevy Trucks
100 Renaissance Center, PO Box 100
MC 482-A30-C76
Detroit, MI 48265-1000

Tom Mays, Marketing Manager
Chevrolet/Hummer/SPO/VSS
M Divisions, GMAC
MC: 482-A29-C46
100 Renaissance Center,
PO Box 100, 29th Floor
Detroit, MI 48265-1000

Mark Good
Vice President, Global Marketing
New Holland
PO Box 1895
500 Diller Avenue
New Holland, PA 17557-0903

Agronomy Career Development Event

Margaret A. Cherny
Vice President, NAFTA, Government
Affairs & Communications
Bayer CropScience
PO Box 12014
2 T.W. Alexander Drive
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

Aquaculture Proficiency Award

Chris Ragland
Vice President, Commercial Operations
Intervet Inc
Box 318
405 State Street
Millsboro, DE 19966-0318

Land O' Lakes Farmland Feeds LLC

Matt Musselman, Director, Feed Sales
PO Box 64281, MS 5370
St. Paul, MN 55614

Beef Production Entrepreneurship Proficiency

W. Phil Niemeyer
Executive Vice President & COO
Nasco Division/Nasco
International, Inc.
901 Janesville Avenue
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

George Krueger
Vice President, Livestock Business Unit
Schering-Plough Animal Health
PO Box 3182
1095 Morris Avenue, 4th Floor
Union, NJ 07083-1982

Beef Production Placement Proficiency

John Rakestraw, President & CEO
ContiBeef LLC
5408 Idylwild Trail
Boulder, CO 80301

Susan Bartlett
Marketing/Sales Support Analyst
Fort Dodge Animal Health
PO Box 25945
9401 Indian Creek Parkway
Overland Park, KS 66225-5945

Forrest L. Roberts
U.S. Beef Marketing Manager
Pharmacia Animal Health
7000 Portage Road
9522-190-9
Kalamazoo, MI 49001-0199

Richard McDonald, President & CEO
Texas Cattle Feeders Association
5501 West I-40
Amarillo, TX 79106-4699

Creed Speaking Career Development Event

John H. Schnatter, Founder and CEO
Papa John's International, Inc.
PO Box 99900
Louisville, KY 40269-0900

Bernard L. Staller
Chief Operating Officer
National FFA Foundation, Inc.
PO Box 68960
6060 FFA Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960

Dairy Cattle Evaluation Career Development Event

Sheryl Doering Meshke
Communications Director
Associated Milk Producers, Inc.
PO Box 455
315 N. Broadway
New Ulm, MN 56073

Dirk Hejnal, President and CEO
Westfalia*Surge, Inc.
1880 Country Farm Drive
Naperville, IL 60563

Dairy Foods Career Development Event

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Dairy Production Entrepreneurship Proficiency

Walt F. Maharay
Executive Vice President
DeLaval Inc.
11100 North Congress Avenue
Kansas City, MO 64153-1296

Terry L. Hansen
Director, Dairy Strategic Business Unit
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7000 Portage Road
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

Dairy Production Placement Proficiency

Cheryl P. Morley
President, Animal Agricultural Group
Monsanto
Mail Code B2SA
800 N. Lindbergh Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63167

Diversified Agricultural Production Proficiency

Thomas C. Pasztor
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PotashCorp
PO Box 3320
1101 Skokie Boulevard, Suite 400
Northbrook, IL 60062

Diversified Crop Production Entrepreneurship Proficiency

William J. Nelson
Director of Cooperative Development
CHS Cooperatives
PO Box 64047
5500 Cenex Drive
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55164-0047

Diversified Crop Production Placement Proficiency

Roger Swartz
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American Farm Bureau
Insurance Services, Inc.
PO Box 1056
225 Touhy Avenue
Park Ridge, IL 60068-7056

Gerald Puppe
Vice President, Loss Adjustment &
Insurance Products Division
National Crop Insurance
Services
7201 West 129th Street, Suite 200
Overland Park, KS 66213

Dan DeLano
Assistant Vice President, Marketing
Rain and Hail LLC
9200 Northpark Drive, Suite 300
Johnston, IA 50131-3006

Diversified Horticulture Entrepreneurship Proficiency

Bob Graham
Director, Corporate Communications
Farmland Insurance Nationwide
Agribusiness
1963 Bell Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50315

Stephen A. Rish, President
Nationwide Foundation
One Nationwide Plaza
Columbus, OH 43215-2220

Diversified Horticulture Placement Proficiency

Hylon Kaufmann
Marketing Communications Manager
Arvesta Corporation
7250 Coyote Trail Rd.
Sanger, CA 93657

Pete Farno
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Intervet Inc
Box 318
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Gerald W. Brase
Senior Vice President, Merchandising
Tractor Supply Company
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Nashville, TN 37217

Diversified Livestock Placement Proficiency

Robert Rebholtz, Jr.
President and CEO
Agri Beef Company
PO Box 6640
Boise, ID 83702

John Meyer, CEO
Premium Standard Farms
423 West 8th St., Suite 200
Kansas City, MO 64105

Elaine Beckstrom, Marketing
Manager, Waters Instruments
Zareba Systems
13705 26th Avenue N, Suite 102
Minneapolis, MN 55441

Environmental & Natural Resources Career Development Event

Jack Palazzolo
Ford Brand Marketing Manager
Ford Division
16800 Executive Plaza Drive,
Room 95406
Dearborn, MI 48126-4207

Olivier Gros
Marketing Manager for North America
Michelin Ag Tires
PO Box 19001
One Parkway South
Greenville, SC 29602-9001

Chuck Dunn, President and CEO
Mississippi Chemical Corporation
PO Box 388
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Environmental Science and Natural Resources Proficiency

George Ross
Vice President of Sales & Marketing
**Carolina Biological Supply
Company**
2700 York Road
Burlington, NC 27215-3398

David A. Prichard, Vice President,
Investor and Corporate Relations
IMC Global Inc.
100 S. Saunders Road, Suite 300
Lake Forest, IL 60045-2561

Equine Science Entrepreneurship Proficiency

Doug Stiitt, Director of Marketing
**Red Brand Non-Climb Horse
Fence/Made by Keystone Steel
& Wire Company**
7000 SW Adams Street
Peoria, IL 61641

Brad J. Kerbs, President
Purina Mills, Inc.
PO Box 66812
St. Louis, MO 63166

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Equine Science Placement Proficiency

Gerald W. Brase
Senior Vice President, Merchandising
Tractor Supply Company
320 Plus Park Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37217

Extemporaneous Public Speaking Career Development Event

Dan Durheim
Director, Special Programs
**American Farm Bureau
Federation**
225 Touhy Avenue
Park Ridge, IL 60068

Farm Business Management Career Development Event

James H. Collins, President
John Deere Foundation
John Deere
1515 River Drive, 2nd Fl
John Deere Community Relations
Moline, IL 61265

Fiber and Oil Crop Production Proficiency

Karen Gallivan, VP, Human Resources
Syngenta Seeds, Inc.
7500 Olson Memorial Highway
Golden Valley, MN 55427

John Becherer, CEO
United Soybean Board
16640 Chesterfield Grove Rd.,
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Floriculture Career Development Event

Steve Martinez
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American Floral Endowment
11 Glen-Ed Professional Park
Glen Carbon, IL 62034



Mike Williams
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622 Town Road
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Floriculture Proficiency

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Home Depot, Inc.
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Food Science & Technology Career Development Event

Donald H. Schriver
Executive Vice President
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.
PO Box 909700
10220 North Executive Hills Boulevard
Kansas City, MO 64153

Amy Nelson
Communications Manager
Dean Foods Company/Suiza
Suite 1200 Lock Box 30
2515 McKinney Avenue
Dallas, TX 75201

Jack Davis, President/CEO
Ventura Foods
40 Pointe Drive
Brea, CA 92821-3698

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Joseph P. Burke
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Development, Coca-Cola
Enterprises, Inc.
The Coca-Cola Company
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PO Box 1734
Atlanta, GA 30301

Nancy Peck, Program Manager
ConAgra Foods Foundation
ConAgra Foods, Inc.
One ConAgra Drive
Omaha, NE 68102-5001

Food Science & Technology Proficiency

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Executive Vice President -
Asia/Pacific & Global Mfg./
Supply Chain
H.J. Heinz Company
600 Grant Street, 60th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-2857

Paul Palmby
Vice President Manufacturing
Seneca Foods Corporation
418 East Conde Street
Janesville, WI 53546

Forage Production Proficiency

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Chairman, President and CEO
Gehl Company
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143 Water Street
West Bend, WI 53095-0179

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Forest Management and Products Proficiency

Brian G. Glowiak, J.D.
Vice President & Secretary
Dodge Division and DaimlerChrysler Corporation Fund
CIMS 485-10-94
1000 Chrysler Drive
Auburn Hills, MI 48326-2766

Pat Harrington
Director, Corporate Marketing
Smurfit-Stone Container Corporation
450 E. North Avenue
Carol Stream, IL 60188-2195

Cheryl A. Salley
Manager, Community Relations and
Sponsored Programs
Timberjack, A John Deere Company
1515 River Drive, 2nd Floor
John Deere Community Relations
Moline, IL 61265

Forestry Career Development Event

Stephen Briggs
BASF
PO Box 13528
26 Davis Drive
Research Triangle Park, NC
27709-3528

Barbara Paez, Vice President of
Marketing and National Accounts
Husqvarna Forest and Garden Company
7349 Statesville Road
Charlotte, NC 28269

Sharon G. Haines, Ph.D., Manager,
Sustainable Forestry & Forest
Policy
International Paper
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Savannah, GA 31402

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Fruit Production Proficiency

James C. Borel
President, DuPont Crop Protection
DuPont Company
PO Box 705
DuPont Crop Protection
Wilmington, DE 19880-0705

Grain Production Entrepreneurship Proficiency

W. Thomas Phillips
Community Investment Director
Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.
400 Locust Street, Suite 800
Des Moines, IA 50309-2340

Grain Production Placement Proficiency

W. Thomas Phillips
Community Investment Director
Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.
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Des Moines, IA 50309-2340

H. O. Sargent Award

Julie Doane, Special Project Manager
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800 North Lindbergh Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63167

Home and/or Community Development Proficiency

Andrius Viskantas
Marketing Communications Manager
Carhartt, Inc.
Three Parklane Blvd
Dearborn, MI 48121

Horse Evaluation Career Development Event

Brian G. Glowiak, J.D.
Vice President & Secretary
Dodge Division and DaimlerChrysler Corporation Fund
CIMS 485-10-94
1000 Chrysler Drive
Auburn Hills, MI 48326-2766

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Evergreen Mills, Inc.
314 S. Broadway Ave. Suite 202
Ada, OK 74820

Art Lurndal, VP, Advertising,
Promotions & Public Relations
KENT Feeds, Inc.
1600 Oregon Street
Muscatine, IA 52761

Gary Mandelbaum, President
Roper, USA
14707 East 2nd Avenue, 3rd Floor
Aurora, CO 80011

Job Interview Career Development Event

Gerald W. Brase
Senior Vice President, Merchandising
Tractor Supply Company
320 Plus Park Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37217

Landscape Management Proficiency

Pete Farno
Market Manager, Turf & Ornamental
Bayer Environmental Science
95 Chestnut Ridge Rd.
Montvale, NJ 07645

Livestock Evaluation Career Development Event

Mark Poeschl
Senior Vice President, Operations
Akey, Inc.
C.S. 5002
6531 St. Rt. 503
Lewisburg, OH 45338

James O'Conner
Senior Marketing Manager
Alpharma Animal Health
One Executive Drive
Fort Lee, NJ 07024

Julian Garcia, Beef Segment Manager
Merial
3239 Satellite Blvd., Building 500
Duluth, GA 30096-4640



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Marketing Plan Career Development Event

Terry Kennedy, Marketing
Data Transmission Network
9110 West Dodge Road
Embassy Plaza Building
Omaha, NE 68114

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President, DuPont Crop Protection
DuPont Company
PO Box 705
DuPont Crop Protection
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Meats Evaluation and Technology Career Development Event

Mike Van Ess, Senior Director,
Sourcing & Meat Procurement
Oscar Mayer Foods
PO Box 7188, 53707
910 Mayer Avenue
Madison, WI 53704

Dirk Jones
Vice President of Pork Business
Excel Corporation
151 North Main
Wichita, KS 67201-1410

Jerry M. Adwell
Director of Pork, Refinery, Feeds
Hormel Foods Corporation
1 Hormel Place
Austin, MN 55912-3680

Mike Townsley, Senior Vice President,
Sales and Marketing
Premium Standard Farms
423 West 8th St., Suite 200
Kansas City, MO 64105

Ed Nicholson, Director of Media &
Community Relations
Tyson Foods, Inc.
Box 2020
2210 West Oaklawn Drive
Springdale, AR 72765-2020

National Chapter Award

Suzanne McCarty
Director of Stakeholder Relations
Community Relations Client Services
Cargill
PO Box 5650
Minneapolis, MN 55440-5650

Bonnie Bassett, Executive Director
Land O'Lakes Foundation
PO Box 64150
4001 Lexington Avenue North
N. Arden Hills, MN 55126

Nursery Operations Proficiency

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Cheryl A. Salley
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John Deere
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Nursery/Landscape Career Development Event

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Washington, DC 20005-4903

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Sanger, CA 93657

Greg Embury
Vice President Sales/Marketing
Kubota Tractor Corporation
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Torrance, CA 90503

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National Sales Promotion Specialist
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536 Viking Drive
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Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960

Outdoor Recreation Proficiency

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Cabela's, Inc.
One Cabela Drive
Sidney, NE 69160

Jo Lynne C. Pierce
Brand Promotion Manager - Trucks
Chevy Trucks
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Detroit, MI 48265-1000

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Parliamentary Procedure Career Development Event

Neil Strong
Director, Agriculture Relations
Syngenta
PO Box 18300
410 Swing Road
Greensboro, NC 27419-8300

Poultry Evaluation Career Development Event

Ed Nicholson, Director of Media &
Community Relations

Tyson Foods, Inc.
Box 2020
2210 West Oaklawn Drive
Springdale, AR 72765-2020

Don Dalton, President
U.S. Poultry and Egg Association
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Tucker, GA 30084

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Poultry Production Proficiency

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United Soybean Board
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Suite 130
Chesterfield, MO 63005

Elton H. Maddox, President & CEO
Wayne Farms LLC
4110 Continental Drive, Building B
Oakwood, GA 30566

Rick Van Puffelen
VP Human Resources
Chore-Time Equipment
Division of CTB Inc.
622 N. Higbee
Milford, IN 46542-20XX

Prepared Public Speaking Career Development Event

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Sheep Production Proficiency

Dan Kleiman, CEO
LA-CO All Weather Paintstik Markers
1201 Pratt Blvd
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-5746

Philip L. McAdams
Wrangler Western Wear
Wrangler
400 N. Elm St.
PO Box 21488
Greensboro, NC 27401

Small Animal Care & Management Entrepreneurship Proficiency

Mark S. Hodgson
Vice President, Business Development
Novartis Animal Health US, Inc.
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Greensboro, NC 27408-7611

Small Animal Care & Management Placement Proficiency

Jeff Ansell, President
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7250 Poe Avenue
Dayton, OH 45414

Specialty Animal Production Proficiency

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Land O' Lakes Farmland Feeds LLC
PO Box 64281, MS 5370
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Specialty Crop Production Proficiency

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BASF
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David Gocken, VP, North America
Phibro Animal Health
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Turfgrass Management Placement Proficiency

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Montvale, NJ 07645

Vegetable Proficiency

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President & Chief Executive Officer
Briggs & Stratton Corporation Foundation, Inc.
PO Box 702
Milwaukee, WI 53201-0702

Wildlife Production and Management Entrepreneurship Proficiency

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St. Paul, MN 55614

Wildlife Production and Management Placement Proficiency

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National Rifle Association of America
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Tom Toman
Conservation Programs Manager
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Thank You!



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Helping New Teachers Succeed

About half of all agriculture teachers who enter the classroom aren't there five years later. More troubling is that one-quarter of all teachers don't continue past their first year! Leaders in the profession have identified the teacher shortage—and teacher retention—as the profession's top priority issue and have been working to address these unsettling statistics for several years.

Working with teacher educators and state staff, the National FFA Organization developed a New Teacher Administrator Conference with support from Philip Morris. The conference is designed for teachers who have been in the classroom fewer than five years. Teachers are encouraged to bring one of their school administrators to the conference.

Seven Quality Factors

During the conference, master teachers, state staff and teacher educators present the seven quality factors that contribute to the success of the local program. The goal is to improve the first few critical years of teaching by establishing a working relationship between the administrator and the teacher focused on implementing the key components of local program success. The bottom line is helping new teachers to have positive experiences and therefore increase the likelihood they will remain in the classroom. According to Jim Armbruster, a Local Program Success specialist with the National FFA Organization, national FFA staff members have delivered the program 65 times in 36 states since 1998.

Is it working? Dr. Greg Thompson, an associate professor of agricultural education at Oregon State University, believes it is. "The program has been very helpful to teachers in our state,"

Thompson says. "Our teachers really appreciate national staff coming to Oregon to help them become better teachers. It's also an opportunity for us to bring some of our excellent veteran teachers to campus and let them share their expertise in local program success."

Thompson shares, "A few years ago, one of our veteran teacher's who came as a presenter brought his wife with him. She is also a teacher and was amazed that our beginning teachers were being provided with such support. Apparently, programs such as this are uncommon in other disciplines."

Building a Network

Marlene Mensch is in her second year of teaching agriculture at Crater High School in Central Point, Ore. She says, "The beginning teacher workshop was a great opportunity to network and build relationships with other teachers, both new and seasoned."

Mensch continues, "We had a really good round-table discussion with the master teachers. It was very helpful to share challenges and gather possible solutions from the group."

Connecting with Resources

Mensch's comments are echoed by Tammy Morrison, who is in her first year of teaching agriculture at Ingram Tom Moore High School in Ingram, Texas. Morrison attended a new teacher workshop in conjunction with her state's annual summer inservice directed by Dr. James Smith, an assistant professor of agricultural education at Texas Tech University.

"The conference provided me with a lot of sources for information,"

Morrison says. "As a first-year teacher, the information and the resources provided at that conference are invaluable."

One of the resources Morrison uses heavily is a website developed by Smith. Located online at [www.depts.ttu.edu/agriculturalteachers/], the site provides a wealth of information for new and seasoned teachers alike.

Dr. Smith is quick to share credit. "Basically, we post information from many sources that we think might be helpful to our teachers," he says. "Georgia had developed some wonderful materials, and they are now accessible to all teachers on our site."

Team Ag Ed

At the national level, a team that included all the different groups within Team Ag Ed—teachers, teacher educators, state staff and national staff—developed the program. The program is also being delivered in a team fashion.

"Working as a team to deliver this program at the state level has been very helpful to us in implementing the Team Ag Ed concept," Thompson says. "I also think it has been helpful for our teachers to see the leaders of their profession working together in a united way. It sets a great example for them to model."

The New Teacher Administrator Conferences will continue on a limited basis in the 2003-04 school year. States that have not taken advantage of funding opportunities have been contacted and asked to apply for the limited funds available.

The New Teacher Administrator Conferences are sponsored by Philip Morris as a special project of the National FFA Foundation, Inc.

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Teacher Spotlight

One Teacher's Influence



Every day when you walk into your classroom, you're greeted by a myriad of faces. Some smiling, some bored, others withdrawn. Often, these behaviors are clues to the bigger picture of what's happening in a student's life. Some receive plenty of support at home and have solid family lives. Others unfortunately do not. Such was and is the case in Bill Davenport's Woodbury, Connecticut, agriculture classroom.

This is the story of Carter Smyth, a young man with boatloads of potential and an equal quantity of domestic challenges. Smyth came into Davenport's classroom as a freshman. He won the state creed-speaking CDE, enjoyed the leadership activities and participated in the extemporaneous speaking event at the national level. He also had a strong SAE and won a proficiency award with his horse program.

Family Strife

Underneath the FFA success however, Smyth struggled through a difficult home life and watched his parents endure a bitter divorce. While Smyth served as chapter president his senior year, his grades were anything but stellar. In fact, he graduated by the narrowest of margins. Through it all, Bill Davenport believed in him, patting him on the back and kicking him in the pants as each was needed.

After graduating from high school in 1994, Smyth decided to join the Connecticut National Guard (CNG). He saw it as an opportunity to earn money for college and get away from the distractions at home. Quite frankly, he saw it as one of his only options to go to college, since his high school grades weren't going to earn him many scholarships.

Carter responded well to the discipline of military life. He enrolled in Southern Connecticut State University and worked hard to get his grades up. Through the CNG, he also attended Mountain Warfare School, where he befriended some cadets who inspired him to apply to the United States Military Academy at West Point.

"During my service in the military, I was inspired by the officers serving over me to make a significant contribution to society," Smyth says. "I wanted to one day inspire greatness in others the way I had been inspired. I knew of no greater place to achieve that than at West Point, so I made it my goal to get in."

After proving himself in the National Guard and in his college courses, Smyth was accepted into the academy. During his sophomore year at West Point, Smyth was elected by his peers to serve as class vice president, an office he retained throughout the rest of his tenure at the academy.

During Smyth's senior year at the academy, he was chosen by the academy's senior officials to lead one of four regiments. He says his FFA experience helped him prepare for that role. "Leadership, whether it's in FFA or in the military, is about inspiring people to do difficult things," Smyth says. "It's organizing things and working with your peers. Serving as my FFA chapter's president taught me the interpersonal skills I needed to get

people to work together. You don't see that in too many organizations."

Smyth graduated from West Point June 1, 2002. He received a special commendation and was one of a handful of graduates to receive his officer's commission from Secretary of the Army Thomas White during a special pinning ceremony following graduation. He could invite only three people to this ceremony. Smyth chose to invite his mom, his brother, and his agriculture teacher.

A Teacher's Role

Why Mr. Davenport? Smyth says, "Bill Davenport has believed in me since the day I first walked into his classroom. The support and inspiration he provided are a big part of the success I've achieved. When others chuckled at my dreams, he believed in me and helped me to achieve them. He's passionate about his students and always thinking of others. He is a remarkable man, a true role model."

Following graduation from West Point, 2nd Lt. Smyth enrolled in the U.S. Army Ranger program at Fort Benning, Georgia, one of the premier leadership schools in the world. Again, he was elected to serve his class in a leadership position. Smyth recently graduated from the Ranger program and was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division based at Fort Bragg, N.C. He and his unit are ready to serve and are deployable with 18 hours' notice to anywhere in the world. The National FFA Organization salutes Smyth's achievements and his selfless service to our country while reminding teachers of the critical role they play in their students' lives.

Teacher Resources

Opening Doors Materials

Have you ever wanted to tailor a presentation about FFA and agricultural education to fit your specific marketing needs? Opening Doors is a powerful set of educational resources created just for you. Opening Doors has several components—a printed brochure, matching letterhead, template letters and PowerPoint presentations. Each of the tools has been designed to complement the others with a consistent tone, look and feel. As individual materials, they powerfully communicate the story of FFA and agricultural education. Used together, they convey a message that is magnified and strengthened. Take advantage of these beneficial materials to build new relationships and strengthen existing partnerships.

Each chapter should have received a sample of the Opening Doors printed materials. If your sample has not yet arrived, please contact Nicole Bishop, nbishop@ffa.org. Online materials can be downloaded at [www.ffa.org/chapters/html/open doors.html]. Brochures can be ordered at [www.ffaunlimited.org/opdoorbroc1.html].

Fun, Science-Based Activities

Free subscriptions of Exploratorium's e-newsletter for educators, EduNews, are available online on the EDUCATE page of the organization's website, [www.exploratorium.edu].

Biotechnology Resources

DuPont is interested in being a resource for educators and their students on topics related to biotechnology. DuPont's website offers information in English and Spanish on the science behind biotechnology as well as the regulatory structure and other important aspects. The site also includes links to other resources. Anyone is welcome to visit the site at [www.dupont.com/biotech/], or DuPont can be contacted toll free at 1-877-333-1027.

Summer Chapter Planning

Do you help plan or coordinate chapter activities? Summer is the best time for your preparation. If you have a Local Program Success CD-ROM, all of the forms and supporting material you need are there. Easy-to-use templates also are on the CD-ROM, eliminating the need to tear those out of a handbook and then labor on the typewriter. Your computer is all you'll need! If you do not have the Local Program Success CD-ROM, contact your state staff representative or visit the FFA website at [www.ffa.org].

PALS or Food For America Resource

Farm Around the World is an innovative program that allows elementary students to gain an international agricultural experience without exorbitant travel expenses. Based on the book Flat Stanley, this program enables students to experience cultural diversity and broadens their geography knowledge. Three components of the program are farms

and farm life, the land and what helps things grow, and environmentalism. For more details about how to conduct a similar program for your students visit [www.benicia.k12.ca.us/henderson/overview.html].

Agriculture Counts Lesson Plans

The United States Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service has developed for K-12 teachers an integrated curriculum called Agriculture Counts. Through these lesson plans, agriculture is infused into English, math, science and social studies. See what is available by visiting [www.usda.gov/nass/nasskids/resources/resources.htm].

Free Teacher Website

Need an e-bulletin board to communicate with your students, their parents and your peers? Visit [www.TeachWeb.com] to learn how you can post assignments, special announcements, schedules, syllabi and other course information free.

How Stuff Works

Looking for supervised agricultural experience or career development event ideas? "How Stuff Works" is an idea website that can provide a place to start. This diverse site is an excellent tool for both rural and urban agriculture students. It explores the intricacies of how engines, evolution, nature conservancy, organic food and fusion propulsion works, and a host of other subject areas. Visit [www.howstuffworks.com/] and see "How Stuff Works" can work for you and your students.

*Making a
Difference
in the Lives
of Students*

Supervised Agricultural Experience Internship

The National FFA Organization is seeking applications from qualified individuals interested in a four- to eight-week summer internship at the National FFA Center in Indianapolis. One position will start on or shortly after June 1, and end in mid-August, while the second is for the month of July. For more information see job opportunities posted on the FFA website [www.ffa.org/careers/jobs/html/saeintern.html].

Washington Leadership Conference

Start planning your trip to Washington, D.C.! There will be six weeks of the Washington Leadership Conference instead of seven this year. The dates are June 3-8, June 10-15, June 17-22, June 24-29, July 8-13 and July 15-20. This year's conference will consist of a new curriculum with high levels of service learning, mentoring and volunteerism strategies, problem-solving skills, relationship building skills and character development. The premier FFA leadership conference is shaping up to be the best yet! Information was mailed to all chapters in late February. For information, e-mail [wlc@ffa.org] or call 317-802-4312.

Convention Proceedings Available

Relive the excitement, pride and energy of the 75th National FFA Convention through the *Convention Proceedings*. Congratulations to all of the members, advisors and FFA supporters featured on its pages. Printed versions of the full publication have

been mailed to chapters and state staff. In addition, it can be viewed online at [www.ffa.org/proceedings/index.html]. Teachers are encouraged to download and print sections for award finalists and for classroom use.

International Opportunities Available

FFA Global offers students and teachers the opportunity to explore global agriculture through programs that teach about the values, traditions, lifestyle and agriculture of other countries as compared to the United States. Students and teachers can participate in a variety of experiences ranging from educational travel seminars and host family stays to interactive website demonstrations. More information on international opportunities for students and teachers can be found online at [www.ffa.org/programs/global/index.html].

WLC Program Online

In February, state leaders, FFA members, local teachers and an alumni representative met to discuss plans and articulate the vision for the year-long, online program available to Washington Leadership Conference participants starting in 2003. The online program will continue to help student leaders solve problems, develop character, make healthy choices, build relationships and lead others through service. Thanks go to task force members Kent Boggs, Donelle Johnson, Donna Moore, Jamie Cano, Norman Gay, Steve Brown, Mark Zimmerman, Carrie Harp, Jon Sellenrick and Jason Lacey. The development of the WLC online program is being made possible by a grant from the Youth Smoking Prevention

group of Philip Morris as a special project of the National FFA Foundation. For more information, contact Seth Derner, [sderner@ffa.org], 317-802-4413.

LifeKnowledge Lessons

Instructional lessons, part of the "LifeKnowledge, Real lessons for real life" initiative, are now being test piloted. Lesson authors as well as more than 150 agriculture teachers in middle or secondary school settings are teaching more than 200 lessons about leadership, personal growth and career success. Each lesson is being taught by three different teachers (varied by location, type of program and experience in teaching), and is being evaluated by teachers and students. Evaluations will be collected and shared with authors as they make final revisions on lesson plans.

The three sets of materials—middle school, high school and advanced high school—will be completed by June 1, and production of the lessons on CD will be completed by fall of 2003. Thanks go to all who nominated teachers to pilot test the materials. Every effort has been made to contact each teacher nominated. Additional requests to locate correct e-mail addresses may be made in the next week as a small number of teachers will be needed to review supplementary materials. For information on the development process of the LifeKnowledge instructional materials, contact Seth Derner, [sderner@ffa.org], 317-802-4413 or Kelly Horton, [khorton@ffa.org], 317-802-4248.

Finding Helping Hands



By Frank Saldaña
Executive Director
National FFA
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More than half of all agriculture teachers don't continue in the classroom past their fifth year. They are among the thousands of general education instructors who leave the profession. This exodus is attributed to many things, but key among them is stress and burnout.

In response, the National FFA Organization and National FFA Alumni are committing resources to mobilize legions of volunteers to support all levels of agricultural education/FFA with emphasis at the local program level. Creating effective local partnerships, of which volunteers is one part, is one of the seven keys to Local Program Success.

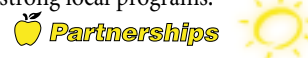
"Predictors of FFA Program Quality in North Carolina," a study conducted by Zane Vaughn, North

Carolina State University, indicates that multiple-teacher departments are the major force in successful local programs. Nationally, nearly 3,500 local programs have only one teacher. One strategy to enhance single-teacher departments is to mobilize volunteers to serve as additional "arms and legs" for the teacher. These volunteers are critical in local program planning, resource development, mentoring the teacher (especially the new teacher), serving as the "institutional memory" when teachers leave, mentoring members, creating SAE opportunities, building community support and the list goes on.

We believe an effective local volunteer support group will help new teachers more effectively "take the reins" in their first year, which could reduce the 25 percent non-renewal rate among new teachers. It also seems logical that

the extra "arms and legs" of an effective local volunteer support group will reduce the work load, time commitment and sense of being overwhelmed that even seasoned teachers are subjected to and that results in burnout, and ultimately teacher resignation.

In short, there is a deep need and commitment to keep good teachers in the fold. An effective local volunteer group may be of great assistance in reducing turnover. The student-to-teacher ratio has expanded rather rapidly and today is approximately 90 to one. How can effective individual student development and SAE development occur when a teacher must manage educational/leadership experiences for 90 students? Again, an effective local support group of volunteers can be a terrific asset in helping to build strong local programs.



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Looking Ahead



Look for your next issue of FFA Advisors *Making a Difference* in May. It will feature stories about biotechnology and agriscience, as well as provide teaching resources and FFA news.

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