



Making a Difference

The Resource for Agriculture Educators



February 2010

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Feature Stories

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This Just Tweeted: Social Networking Can Be a Terrific Teaching Tool

What You Ought to Know about Social Media

By Julie Woodard

Chew on this: Research shows it took radio 38 years to reach 50 million listeners. For TV, 13 years. The internet? It only took four years. Today, that number has swelled to more than 6 billion world-wide Internet users. These impressive growth figures are often attributed to one of the most popular activities on the web: social media.

Simply put, social media is media shared through social interaction on the Internet and mobile-based technologies. If you've ever commented on an article on a newspaper's website, replied to a post on a message board, forwarded a YouTube video to a friend or created a Facebook page, you are frolicking in the world of social media.

But be warned: Social media is addictive. And its lure is even more tempting for teenagers with 73 percent of all wired teens using social networks. In order to connect with your ag students, it's imperative that you're at least familiar with their online hangouts. As you'll read in this issue of *Making A Difference* online, many ag teachers are doing just that--connecting with their students via social media. At the National FFA Organization, we use social media to interact with FFA members as well as teachers, parents and supporters. Here's a rundown on what social media the organization offers:

Social Networking

When you think social media, social networks such as Facebook, MySpace, and Linked In are probably the first that come to mind. Social networks, along with blogs, are the fourth most-popular online activity, even beating out e-mail. Social networks are online communities where people meet, socialize and share files. Facebook is the biggest player in the field, with more than 400 million users (the average user has 130 friends). FFA now has nearly 29,000 fans, mostly FFA members, of the [National FFA](#)

[Organization fan page](#). Many FFA chapters and state and alumni associations also use Facebook to communicate, and the [National Officers](#) maintain a fan page as well.

FFA has its very own social network called [FFA Nation](#). More than 5,000 members strong and growing, FFA Nation allows FFA members to connect with other members across the country. Members can create profiles, add friends, upload photos, communicate on message boards and interact with other members with similar interests. Look for a new and improved site in April.

FFA members also frequent the organization's [MySpace](#) page. Teachers and supporters use the organization's [Linked In](#) site to stay connected with other FFA contacts and ag-related job opportunities.

Micro-blogging

Who would have thought 140 characters would be so revealing. [Twitter](#) has taken the Internet by storm and now has more than 15 million active users. Teens have been slow to jump on the Twitter bandwagon but many teachers use the site for everything from assigning homework to communicating with parents.

Blogs

[Blogger](#), [LiveJournal](#), [WordPress.com](#), [Xanga](#), [Tumblr](#)...the number of free blog-hosting services are plentiful! Even though more than 133 million blogs exist on the Web, research shows that many teens aren't big on generating content, but they do read blogs. You can keep up with the [National Officers](#) as well as the [organization](#) on ffa.org.

Photo sharing

[Flickr](#) and [Photobucket](#) dominate the photo sharing category with users downloading millions of images each year. Both provide great ways to share photos with other FFA folks.

Video Sharing

When it comes to sharing video, [You Tube](#) is king but most schools block the site. That's where [SchoolTube.com](#) comes in. This school-friendly site makes it easier to see FFA Today and other FFA-related video during the school day.

Wikis

A wiki is a collaborative website that allows visitors to create and edit the content. The encyclopedia-like [Wikipedia](#) is the biggest wiki to date; right now, the site hosts more than 14 million articles. If you're looking for the latest, most accurate

information on FFA, always visit ffa.org first, but in a pinch, the organization's [Wikipedia](#) page can be helpful. Be careful though: Wikipedia is not always the best source for accurate information.

Other Sites to Check Out

[Moodle.org](#)—designed to help educators create online courses and websites.

[Quia.com](#)—features tools to help create, customize and share learning activities.

[FFA New Horizons online](#)—E-mail or comment on articles featured in the printed *FFA New Horizons* magazine.

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To Post or Not to Post? That is the Question

By Michael Rubino

To the uninitiated, it may appear that using social media in the classroom is fraught with pitfalls. But Michele Payn-Knoper, a social media strategist, professional speaker, author and agriculture expert, says the real risk is for ag teachers and advisors to dismiss community-building technology altogether out of fear or ignorance.

“I know some people may be intimidated,” says Payn-Knoper, “but it’s not rocket science and it’s not difficult, I promise. Facebook, Twitter, any kind of interactive, community-driven technology that falls under the umbrella of Web 2.0—these can be amazing tools. And as a parent, I see no reason why students shouldn’t be using them within a controlled environment. Think of the reality: Students are already using these things and love them. Why not find a way to use these as a resource and education mechanism?”

Payn-Knoper’s company, Cause Matters Corp., “focuses on agricultural advocacy, social media strategy, grassroots marketing and corporate sponsorship development.” She recommends using the aforementioned Facebook and Twitter, along with YouTube and LinkedIn in the classroom to engage and enrich students in a similar fashion.

The key in working with students, she says, is setting parameters. The first step is for teachers and advisors who already take part in some of these online communities to examine their own personal policies and practices.

On Facebook, Payn-Knoper asks, “who do you friend? Do you want to be friends with your students? Do you want students to see your photos and what others write on your wall? If so, that’s up to you, the individual teacher. It’s just important that you be responsible and are familiar with

Facebook's privacy settings.”

And if you're not already on Facebook for fear you're too old, don't worry: Payn-Knoper says 66 percent of the site's more than 350 million users are “beyond college age.”

With Facebook, Payn-Knoper suggests creating a “group” for a class or chapter so you can control who joins. “For example,” she says, “if I taught a basic horticulture class I could create a group and post links to interesting articles and videos. I could post assignments, questions, encourage discussion and interact with my students. I could post links to research, classroom notes, and connect with other pages and groups that would be of value to them.”

She says Facebook “pages” are a great way to promote a cause and can be a touch-point for your chapter. Similar to Web pages, Payn-Knoper says these can be used to connect with the community outside your immediate circle, like area business people, local media, or alums of a particular FFA chapter. “Plus, one of the neat things about using these tools is that it teaches kids to write things in short, concise sound bites. They are learning writing, editing and marketing.”

Similarly, YouTube, a video sharing site, allows students to become producers and enables them to share a chapter or classroom's message visually. YouTube can be used in conjunction with several other social media technologies.

Payn-Knoper compares Twitter to an online “coffee shop” with rooms filled with interesting discussions in the form of tweets—a lone Twitter message of 140 characters or less. She says the agriculture community has a significant presence on Twitter, which provides students a great opportunity to eavesdrop and participate in important discussions.

“I think creating a classroom or chapter account could be a good research tool,” she says. “These are the discussions that people in the field are having now, both positive and negative.”

She says 27 million tweets are sent daily, and although some estimate 40 percent of those are simply white noise, there's still plenty of value to be found.

Payn-Knoper takes part in a moderated ag chat every Tuesday (a different topic is selected by the members each week) with 120 others for two hours. The conversation is

fast-paced and can get cantankerous, but she says the issues are important. “This can show students what people in the industry are talking about, and, more importantly, how we can work through tough topics through having an intelligent discussion.”

She recommends that teachers and advisors use Twitter for older or more advanced students and using a social media browser called TweetDeck so you can monitor who students follow.

Payn-Knoper also has high praise for LinkedIn, a mixer for would-be professionals and old pros. Students can upload resumes there and make contacts with business professionals, preparing them for life outside the classroom.

“These days employers check your Facebook page,” she said. “They see what you write on Twitter.” Payn-Knoper says having a Web 2.0 footprint is an opportunity to teach students accountability as well as self-promotion.

Though these worlds may be unfamiliar, she says they are simply an extension of the classroom, another opportunity for parents, teachers and mentors to help young people make good decisions.

“I do friend a lot of teenagers,” says Payn-Knoper. “I want to make sure they are okay and know what they are thinking. Teachers and parents, we have a responsibility to help our young people. We need to make sure they are making the right choices. The students are already in these communities; we need to be there, too, and help them understand the rules.”

* For additional help and information, visit www.michelepaynknoper.com

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This Just Tweeted: Social Networking Can Be a Terrific Teaching Tool

By Beth A. DeHoff

Friending. Blogging. Tweeting. These terms may seem a long way from the agricultural classroom, and they certainly weren't part of your dad's FFA chapter. Yet it turns out that social networking and other relatively new technologies may be the best way to lasso your students' interest.

Jessica Geisler, agriculture teacher and FFA chapter advisor at Shenandoah High School in Anderson, Ind., can rattle off a list of technologies her chapter uses that could make most people's heads spin. "We currently use Facebook, Twitter, SchoolTube and YouTube, as well as having a chapter website and photobucket page that leads to a blog, newsreel, and podcast that are on our website. The podcast connects to iTunes and can be subscribed to by iTunes users," she says.

Geisler is the first to caution others to avoid starting with all that. "If you're interested in using technology, start small with a website or Facebook page," she says, also pointing out that her chapter's Public Relations Committee is in charge of all the social media networking and uses it as an integral chapter activity.

"Our PR Committee chair uses this exclusively as her SAE, because she comes from a non-farm background," Geisler says. "She actually won the District Ag Comm Proficiency as a sophomore this year, and she presented our National Models of Innovation presentation on this topic. All of the hours spent on social networking are documented by the committee."

Pilar Reyes-Swider, an agricultural teacher and FFA advisor in Puerto Rico, uses some of this technology in her agriscience classroom, as well. "I was making plans for the

new school year and thinking about how to make the agriscience class different and interesting for the students,” she says. “I did think of doing something with them using the computer as a tool, since they are from the ‘net generation.’ Then the idea about having them write about agriculture’s themes arrived, and it became a blog for each student.”

Reyes-Swider’s students reflect on agricultural themes and how they affect agriculture on the island they are studying and around the world. “Instead of a traditional notebook, they have a web journal that can be read by classmates, parents, friends and anybody on the web looking for some information about what agriscience is,” she says. “The blogs are journals we don’t have to carry, and students can have pictures, music, jokes and other things they use to personalize their blogs and make it interesting to them.”

John Jones, agriculture teacher and FFA advisor at Glen Rose High School in Glen Rose, Texas, uses the computer technology of iTunes to work with students in his class with special needs. “I read my tests using a hand-held microphone, and save the mp3 file on iTunes,” he says. “When the students took the test, they could listen to me read the test, pause, back up and listen again as many times as they needed before answering the question. It keeps kids normally in special education in my room – they don’t need to go to the special ed room to be read to. If they do have a question, they can ask me instead of the special ed teacher, who may or may not have an answer about my subject matter.” Jones also has used the technology with the parliamentary procedure CDE, allowing students to download the motions onto their mp3 player and listen to them over and over.

All this effort is not technology just for the sake of technology. “Students absolutely love being able to tag themselves in photo on Facebook, they’re anxious to subscribe to our Twitter feeds, and they download our podcasts to their mp3 players,” Geisler says. “They write blogs in class and make videos and class assignments, and that all goes up on our website.”

As much as students love the technologies, Geisler has two cautions. “As an advisor, you have to have a lot of trust in your students. Luckily, my committee members are responsible and respectful, and they monitor everything that goes online to be sure it’s appropriate,” she says. “Another pitfall is that it can be very time-consuming, and you need to spend a lot of time with students training them, coaching them and double-checking everything they do because it’s always in the public eye.”

That public eye, however, is one of the chief benefits of such technology, too. “Our community, including parents, alumni, school board members and others, has really taken hold of this!” Geisler says. “They follow us on Facebook and Twitter, utilize our website, and spread the news of our successes through re-tweets and congratulations messages. We get a lot of compliments, and the students really enjoy it.”

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Perspectives

Yes, Social Media is Your Friend

By Dr. David L. Doerfert and Alyx Shultz

The world has changed. You may have heard people talking about it in terms that seem like a Scrabble game gone bad. LiveJournal, Wikipedia, Facebook, Twitter, Skype, Second Life, YouTube, and Flickr are just a few new terms that have not only become part of everyday vocabulary but are how people are connecting and business is being conducted. Maybe you have even dabbled in it yourself or maybe you have only heard your students talk about it. If you're like most people, you have some reservations about the educational value of this "social media" craze and what these new forms of communicating mean to agriculture and the industry's future.

At its core, social media is an umbrella term that defines the various activities that integrate technology, social interaction and the construction of words and pictures. Unlike the traditional media of newspaper, broadcast and film, social media are relatively inexpensive and very accessible tools that enable anyone to publish or access information. Through its many forms, social media applications facilitate communication, collaboration, media sharing and entertainment in ways that place participants on an equal yet dynamic playing field. The pace of change in this new information world is astonishing to say the least.

So where to begin? First, realize that being a "newbie" (beginner) is ok. You may break some unwritten social media rules and even get flamed (a negative response to something you said or did). Like everything else, this will pass as you learn how to use these new tools.

Second, seek to understand what is possible. With the current availability of high-speed Internet and smart phones that can access the web on the go, more people than ever are accessing and posting to social media sites. This includes crop farmers who "tweet" from the tractor cab; dairy farmers who post videos to help explain their business to others; agriculture professionals who discuss current agriculture-related issues via Twitter every Tuesday

evening; and agriculture literacy groups that update their followers through Facebook on the latest agriculture legislation and upcoming events. You may be surprised just how many individuals and groups are already using social media to promote agriculture as well as conduct business.

Finally, focus on being needs-driven and identify those things you want to achieve in your individual classes and local program. Educators are using blogs to develop writing and critical thinking skills as well as foster creativity. They are accessing images, videos, and PowerPoint presentations to enrich their daily classroom and laboratory content. They also use Twitter and Facebook to keep students, parents and alumni up to date on upcoming events and activities as well as connect with other teachers across the United States and throughout the world. Opportunities exist and possibilities are endless.

Social media has changed our world and arguably for the better. It provides opportunities for agriculture and education that can connect us to others in ways never before imagined. So what are you waiting for? Connect, share and become part of this community of learners.

Dr. David L. Doerfert is a professor of Agricultural Communications at Texas Tech University. Alyx Shultz is a doctoral candidate in Agricultural Education at Texas Tech University.

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LifeKnowledge Spotlight

Social Media and the FFA Mission

By Katy Mumaw, FFA Education Specialist

Actuating the FFA mission can be reflected in many aspects of social networking. Our students today may not remember a time when instant messenger was not an option or when blogging was a new idea. How can we help them bring to fruition the FFA mission of premier leadership, personal growth and career success though this technology that is second nature to them?

Social networking is making its way into the workplace. A growing number of social networking sites are now geared toward working professionals. While sites like MySpace and Facebook were once exclusively social, businesses have begun to establish a presence there, too.

Rosetta, an interactive marketing agency, reports that more than half of 100 leading retailers surveyed have fan pages on Facebook. In addition to setting up fan pages, businesses have begun to use social networking sites in another way.

What is this other practice that you should be aware of, you may ask? Some employers have begun to troll social networking sites as a means to investigate individuals prior to the interview and hiring process as well as sometimes monitor current employees. So, here are a few items to keep in mind when utilizing these social networking tools. Encourage your students to think of their online presence as part of the interview process.

A lesson within the [Career Success Module](#) on LifeKnowledge Online addresses business communications. While maneuvering through this self-paced module, students are asked to reflect on social networking related to professional communication when getting and keeping a job.

The precepts and values that we live by everyday are reflected in what we write, post and spend time searching online. Since there are no standard rules that parents give their children about social media, making sure our students know the power and capabilities of social media may be very important. This subject can be expounded upon in a full lesson or we can include making wise choices about social

media during discussions about leadership attributes such as responsibility, character, relationships and decision making,

What do students need to know about communicating appropriately when using new technologies—that is, text messaging, Facebook and other social media? One way to start the conversation in your class is to use LifeKnowledge lesson [AHS.14- Embracing Emerging Technology in the Workplace](#). During this lesson students will analyze the advantages and disadvantages of emerging technologies in agricultural industries and develop the skills to intelligently research and select the appropriate technology to complete a task. Allow your students to explore the LifeKnowledge Online Career Success student module and discover some dos and don'ts of social networking and how they are being utilized in agriculture. Social networking is already a key to success in many career paths; let's make sure our students are equipped with the tools they need to succeed. What are you doing to keep up?

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Question for the Profession



How Are You Using Technology to Become Part of Your Student's World?

By Nina Crutchfield, Local Program Success Specialist

I always knew that I needed to link my content and strategies to my students' current frame of reference, but I never realized just how significant that link can be for young, developing minds until last summer at the Delta conference. During the weeklong event, I saw how we must take the high order cognitive skills we're teaching and connect them to where the students are at in that very moment.

So, where are our students at? This month's and last month's issues of *Making a Difference* are dedicated to technology. We chose that theme because it is where our students are. If we want to continue to connect and increase our students' skills, we must enter their world. We've got teachers across the country doing just that, and it's not just the young teachers. Veteran teachers, with decades of experience, figured out long ago that they had to stay in tune with their students. We've got a good start on sharing strategies, software, websites, etc. in the NAAE's Communities of Practice Technology Community, but we need more.

I know the technology novice's, like myself, in the profession could use some help on more than knowing that Twitter and Facebook exist. We need instructions on how you use it, where to find tutorials and how it helps us impact student learning to make it worth our while to try.

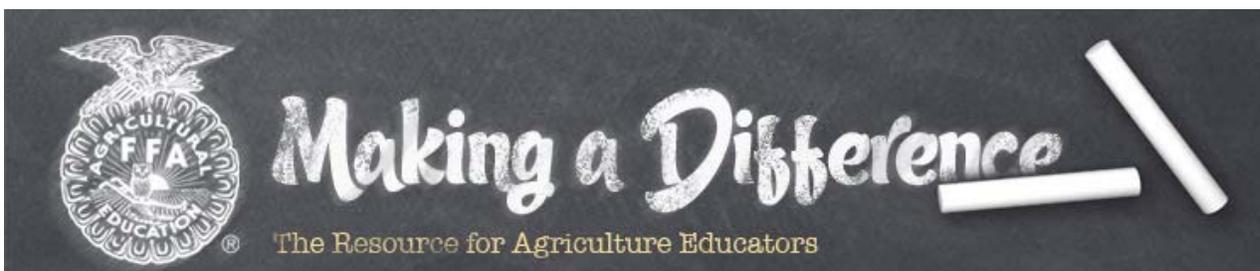
This month's question for the profession is [How are you using technology to become part of your students' world?](#) Take a little time to share the details of what you're doing so that we can attempt to replicate your success. When you share by posting to NAAE's CoP, all of our students benefit from your expertise.

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Teacher Resources

Speaking of Blogs—How about Glogs? "A glog is like a poster, only better. A glog is an online poster that allows students to add images, video files, sound files, text and hyperlinks. Glogs address multiple learning styles and easily incorporate student research and educational content into a web publication. They are free, use no ink and are fun!" Jan McGee. Why Glog? How about [Glogster EDU](http://edu.glogster.com/) for a starter?! Glogster developers, much like VoiceThread, have made a commitment to provide teachers and their students with a tool for 21st century teaching and learning."

Learn more and give it a try!
<http://edu.glogster.com/> and
<http://toolkit4blogwalker.wikispaces.com/Glogster>

Project Food, Land & People, hosted by the National Association of Conservation Districts, promotes approaches to learning to help people better understand the interrelationships among agriculture, the environment and people of the world. Find free lessons for pre-K through 12th grade. This is a great resource for Food for America activities, Partners in Active Learning Support (PALS) lessons, and classroom instruction.
<http://www.foodlandpeople.org/index.html>

Parliamentary procedure teaching packages, free for downloading and printing. Some include a worksheet and test. [The site includes numerous resources for teaching parliamentary law and training Career Development Event \(CDE\) teams.](#) Written by Shane Dunbar, a professional parliamentarian.

Southern States Cooperative Stores to Launch FFA Emblem Campaign--From March 1-15 Southern States stores will be doing an FFA promotional campaign and collecting donations for local, state and national FFA. Participating Southern States locations will sell FFA paper emblems to customers. Retail price for each emblem is \$1, but customers can donate as much as they like. One hundred percent of the proceeds will be returned to FFA with 50 percent going to the local FFA chapter(s) identified

by each retail location. All Southern States and AgWay stores are eligible to participate. FFA chapters can get involved and help ensure the success of the program by encouraging Southern States stores to participate. If you have questions about this program or want to get involved, contact Will Fett, wfett@ffa.org or 317-802-4415.

Help Them Find a Field They'll Love--Associations from across the country have united to create a national green industry website targeted toward high school students and designed to spark interest in the variety of careers that the green industry has to offer. The website features careers and career pathways in everything from landscape design to horticulture production. The site also contains information for parents, teachers and guidance counselors. Check it out, www.thelandlovers.org.

Education World Tech Team Favorite Educational Gadget--Great article from Education World's online magazine about the latest and greatest technology tools to help increase student learning. The article explains the gadget, its use in the classroom and provides links. http://www.educationworld.com/a_tech/tech/tech249.shtml

Food Safety Channel on YouTube--You'll probably have to get your IT person to grant you rights to the page, but it is well worth the effort. Great videos demonstrating safe handling practices in a variety of settings including tailgate parties and thanksgiving preparations. Also informative video on food safety during power outages. <http://www.youtube.com/user/USDAFoodSafety>

Personal Finance Lessons, great for an ag-business class or any time you need to address personal finance. Check out the Jump\$tart Coalition's page for free materials. <http://www.jumpstart.org/bp.cfm>

In Virtual Lab, students walk through a lab exercise to explore sex-linked genetic traits. Engage students at http://www.mhhe.com/biosci/genbio/virtual_labs/BL_15/BL_15.html

World Food Prize Global Youth Institute--Each year, more than 100 exceptional high school students from across the United States and other countries are selected to participate in the three-day Global Youth Institute hosted by the World Food Prize Foundation. Selected students and their teacher mentors travel to Des Moines, Iowa, in mid-October to attend this exciting three-day event at which they interact with Nobel and World Food Prize Laureates and discuss pressing food security and agricultural issues with international experts. At the Global Youth Institute, student delegates present and discuss their findings with

international experts and their peers, connect with other students from around the world, tour cutting-edge industrial and research facilities, and take part in symposium discussions with global leaders in science, industry and policy. Jump-start your students' career with global connections by getting them to the Youth Institute. It's an amazing opportunity that we're missing for our agricultural education students!!!! <http://www.worldfoodprize.org/youth/>.

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FFA Buzz

2010 National FFA Collegiate Scholarship Program Attention!

The 2010 Scholarship Application closed at **5 p.m. EST on Feb. 15, 2010**. A completed Signature Page **postmarked no later than Feb. 22, 2010**, is required to complete the eligibility process. Visit www.ffa.org/scholarships and select "Apply Today" for access to the Signature Page link. Direct scholarship questions to the Scholarship Hotline, 317-802-6099, or via e-mail, scholarships@ffa.org."

Help Us Build the New FFA.org

We are rebuilding FFA.org and we need your help. Give us your thoughts on the current site and what you would like to see in the new site. Take this quick [seven question survey](#).

February's FFA New Horizons Teaching Guide Now Online

We're making it super easy to use *FFA New Horizons* as a classroom resource. Check out the [National FFA Publications](#) page for links to the *FFA New Horizons Teaching Guides*. The February teaching guide is now available. You can also access a digital copy of the entire magazine on www.ffa.org/newhorizons. And don't forget to encourage your students to create a profile on our very own social network, [FFA Nation](#). With more than 5,000 members across the country and discuss interesting topics, from SAEs to state conventions.

Changing the World Through Mentoring

Don't miss the new winter issue of *PAL to PAL*, the online newsletter for the Partners in Active Learning Support (PALS) program. Get news on all of the latest happenings, including information about how PALS, Campbell's Soup Company and the LifeKnowledge® Center for Agricultural Education have combined visions to produce a new PALS resource, the Grow Your PALS Program Guide. You'll also find out how FFA chapters around the country are matching their high school members with elementary school students. Check out *PAL to PAL* now at www.ffa.org/pals.

Help Us Reach Our Goal of 1 MILLION Service Hours by Convention 2010!

"Serving others is something your chapter already does, right?" The **Million Hour Challenge** encourages FFA members to improve their communities through civic engagement. To earn credit, service hours completed between Oct. 2, 2009, and Oct. 1, 2010 should be submitted by chapter advisors through their MyFFA accounts to the online Million Hour Challenge database. Awards of \$2,500 will be given during the 2010 National FFA Convention to those chapters submitting the most community service hours in the following categories—Environment, Government, Social/Human Service, Healthy Lifestyles and Education. **Hours from state and national programs are also eligible for the Million Hour Challenge.** The Million Hour Challenge is sponsored by Monsanto as a special project of the National FFA Foundation. For more information, contact the Million Hour Challenge office, mhc@ffa.org or 317-802-4215.

Convention Housing Is Open

The 2010 National FFA Convention Housing for chapters is now open! To access the chapter hotel list, go to www.ffa.org and login to your MyFFA account.

New Century Farmer Applications Still Available!

Applications for the New Century Farmer program are now available online! Fifty of the agriculture industry's best are selected each year to be a part of this weeklong experience. Selected participants will partake in numerous learning sessions on topics ranging from farm succession, global agriculture, ag marketing and finance to new and emerging farm machinery. Additionally participants will take part in numerous field and operation tours and participate in an extensive team building experience.

The New Century Farmer program will be July 19-23, 2010 in Johnston, Iowa. Applicants must be:

- Enrolled or a recent graduate of an agriculture college or university
- Have a background in production agriculture
- Plan to return to production agriculture as a career after college

Contact Marty Tatman, mtatman@ffa.org, for any questions. Applications are due March 15, 2010, and can be found at www.ffa.org/collegiate.

Are You Paying Attention?

Have you entered the Digital Age and become a Digital Learner, like your students? If not, this [video](#) just may convince you.

Southern States Cooperative Stores to Launch FFA Emblem Campaign

From March 1-15 Southern States stores will be doing an FFA promotional campaign and collecting donations for local, state and national FFA. Participating Southern States locations will sell FFA paper emblems to customers. Retail price for each emblem is \$1, but customers can donate as much as they like. One hundred percent of the proceeds will be returned to FFA with 50 percent going to the local FFA chapter(s) identified by each retail location. All Southern States and AgWay stores are eligible to participate. FFA chapters can get involved and help ensure the success of the program by encouraging Southern States stores to participate. If you have questions about this program or want to get involved, contact Will Fett, wfett@ffa.org or 317-802-4415.

Enlist Farmer Support and Win a \$2,500 Donation for Your Chapter

In this tough economic climate, fundraising can be challenging. But now, through Monsanto's new America's Farmers Grow Communities Project, agricultural youth groups in Iowa and eligible counties in Arkansas and Missouri can enlist support from local farmers for a \$2,500 donation. Farmers, age 21 and older, who produce a minimum of 250 acres of corn, soybeans and/or cotton in the qualifying counties, are eligible. One winner will be drawn for each eligible county from all entries received by Feb. 28, 2010. Winners will be announced in March. The application process is simple. Just visit www.growcommunities.com and fill out a short form by Feb. 28 or call 877-267-3332.

[Contact Us - FFA Mission - Agricultural Education Mission](#)

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Lesson AHS.14

EMBRACING EMERGING TECHNOLOGY IN THE WORKPLACE

Unit. Stage One of Development—Me

Problem Area. What Skills Do I Need for a Lifetime of Leadership, Personal Growth and Career Success?

Precepts. F4: Adapt to emerging technologies

O1: Embraces Emerging Technology in the Workplace.

National Standards. NL-ENG.K-12.8 — Students use a variety of technological and information resources to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.



Student Learning Objectives. As a result of this lesson, the student will ...

- 1 Analyze the advantages and disadvantages of emerging technologies in agricultural industries.
- 2 Develop the skills to intelligently research and select the appropriate technology to complete a task.



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1



Time. Instruction time for this lesson: 50 minutes.



Resources

National FFA Organization's Local Program Resource Guide, 2002–2003.



Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

- ✓ Writing Surface
- ✓ Student Notebook—one per student
- ✓ Overhead Projector
- ✓ AHS.14.TM.A
- ✓ AHS.14.TM.B
- ✓ AHS.14.TM.C
- ✓ AHS.14.Assess—one per student

Key Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in bold italics:

- ▶ ***Life-long learner***
- ▶ ***New technology***



Interest Approach



Never has the workplace world been changing so fast. You are privileged in one way and hindered in another with this change. Our lesson today will help us discover some of the new technologies in the agriculture or agribusiness workplace and how we can embrace instead of fear or resist, the changes that are taking place. Let's look at this transparency.

Place transparency AHS.14.TM.A on the overhead.



The Student's Dilemma: "Schools are attempting to educate students today so they will be able to solve future problems that do not even exist today using personal and workplace technologies that have not yet been invented based on scientific knowledge not yet discovered." Pause.



Think about this: You have to learn how to solve problems that haven't occurred yet; you will have to use technologies that haven't been invented, while using scientific knowledge that hasn't even been discovered yet. That is a dilemma for you as a student and for us as a school. What should we help you learn and why?



2

SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1. Analyze the advantages and disadvantages of current emerging technologies in agricultural industries.

Pause and go to the writing surface and solicit answers from the class. Use the Brainstorming Process. Answers may vary from: "Why learn anything then." to what they learned in Lesson 13 about the SCANS skills, "How to find, interpret, store, and report information." Students should also get to "Learning How to Learn" and the ability and desire to be a "Life-Long Learner." After you have a list that contains many of the broad skills and competencies as listed in Lesson 13, you can summarize and discuss them for a short time. Students may recognize that some of their classes may be "suspect" when it comes to what is being taught or learned and what you have on the writing surface. Move on to AHS.14.TM.B.

I. **New technology** is personal and workforce technology that has just been or is in the process of being invented, based on the newest scientific knowledge.



Look at this overhead. "It is common knowledge that the average digital watch on your wrist has more computing power than existed on our entire planet prior to 1960." Only 40+ years is fast for technology change. Ask your parents or grandparents what it was like in the years of early technology development and about the changes that have taken place. The scary, yet exciting, thing is that change is taking place at a faster rate today, and it will be even faster next year. You have to be ready to accept and use the change in technology, and ready and excited about learning how to use the newly developed technological equipment and scientific knowledge.

Pause. Move on to an "Eyewitness News Moment." Ask the students to divide into groups of three and use their notebooks to record the news reports on changes in technology in agriculture or

agribusiness from a few years ago to now, and what they predict ten years from now.

 Separate yourselves into groups of three.

 Take out your notebooks and label the top of the page with “Technology Changes in the Workplace.” Then make three columns in your notebook and label the first column “Ten + Years Ago.” Label the second column “Today’s Technology” and the last column “Ten Years from Now.” Break into your groups of three.

Pause.

 Think to yourself, without talking, about a technology in the agricultural or agribusiness workplace that is of interest to you and has changed over the last ten years. Then think about what it may be like in ten years.

Eyewitness News Moment.



3

 You will play the role of an interviewer for a news broadcast and interview one member of your group about the technology change. Record the information in the three columns of your notebooks. You will have to report back from your notes. You have five minutes for all three of you to be interviewed. You can begin.

Wander around the class and answer questions. After five minutes, you should bring this activity to a close by placing the three columns on the writing surface. Ask the students to report unique and exciting technology changes that the other students reported. If needed, call on some of the students to complete the exercise. Ask the students to record the responses in their notebooks.

 Stop. Who wants to report on your interview information?

Pause and wait for responses and record them on the writing surface. You may want to be prepared to add some information of your own to the chart. After you have recorded the responses from the students, summarize and emphasize the changes that have taken place and the predicted changes for the future.

 That is some change that you have predicted. How are we going to handle that kind of change in

the workplace? Anyone want to speculate that the changes will be much greater than this in the next ten years? Remember, industry is using technology to develop new technology, and it is happening at an ever-increasing rate. However we look at it, change is moving fast and you have to be prepared to handle it. How can we be sure we will be ready?

Use Transparency AHS.14.TM.A again. Read it again aloud and then make the appropriate emphasis on the students' preparation for the unknown future.

A. The Student's Dilemma

1. "Schools are attempting to educate students today so they will be able to solve future problems that do not even exist today using personal and workplace technologies that have not yet been invented based on scientific knowledge not yet discovered."

Objective 2. Develop the skills to intelligently research and select the appropriate technology to complete a task.

Place AHS.14.TM.C, "Successfully Embracing New Technology," on the overhead. Students will be asked to get the information in their notebooks a little later in the lesson.



For now, just look up here and follow along on the transparency. You will have time later to get this information in your notes.

II. Successfully embracing new technology



Let's see how we can do this.

A. Change is inevitable



4



Do any of you believe that the development of new technology is going to stop or even slow down?

Pause.



Therefore, you have to prepare for new and better technology. It is not necessary to embrace all

new technology just because it is new. You will need to research the advantages and disadvantages of the new technology and determine how it will affect your company.

B. Be a *life-long learner*



You should recognize by now that, with as fast as the world is changing, you must be willing to learn new things every day. If you are unwilling to keep learning after high school, by not attending post-secondary studies, workshops, seminars, and on-the-job learning, you will be left behind.

1. Keep abreast and gain knowledge



New knowledge and technology will come at an increasingly rapid rate. You will be responsible to learn for the rest of your life.

2. Share information with colleagues



In the new workplace, you will be working with teams and will need to share the new knowledge and technologies. You and your team will make decisions about technology, enhancements, and workplace efficiencies.

C. Keep a positive attitude toward change



Remember that we have all agreed that change is inevitable. We also know that all change in new technology is not necessarily the best for your workplace at the moment. However, you must be able to analyze and determine the appropriateness of change for your organization.

D. Be a leader in matching new technology to workplace needs



Successful workers will be leaders in determining if new technology is a match for the company's needs.



Review/Summary

Review the transparency AHS.14.TM.C. Spend time with students getting this information in their notebooks. More information can be found in Lessons 15 and 16 on the subject of change and handling change. These lessons will help students understand and cope with change.

At this time pass out AHS.14.Assess.





Application

► Extended Classroom Activity:

Review magazines for information relating to new technology in the field of agriculture or agribusiness, including the fields of biotechnology and genomic science. If it fits into your schedule and you have the materials available, the students could do a report on new technologies in bioscience and hand it in for credit.

► FFA Activity:

Students and FFA officers can look at the technology that the chapter owns and the technology that is available in the agricultural education department and make recommendations at an FFA meeting for the implementation of new appropriate technologies.

► SAE Activity:

Have students study the changes in technology in the workplace and ask to become involved in the process of technology research and changes in their SAE workplace.

✓ Evaluation

AHS.14.Assess

Students could be assigned to pick one area of technology change in the workplace and develop a paper on past and predicted changes.

Answers to Assessment:

All answers are subjective and individualized. Content for the answers can be found in the transparencies and below.

What does this statement mean, “Change is inevitable?”

Potential Answers: Change is going on all the time in all aspects of our lives. We grow, hair grows, cars change, technology changes, weather changes, seasons change, and teachers and parents change. Without change there would be no life and no improvements. Without change everything would remain exactly the same. We would be in a state of suspended animation.

How will you become a “life-long learner?”

Potential answers: I will learn how to learn. I will have to learn all the rest of my life. I will go to school, and take employer-offered service and training. I will go to school on my own when I am older I will read as much as I can, and I will do research on the Internet.



6

What procedure would you use to match emerging technology with workplace needs?

Potential answers: be life-long learner. Keep abreast and gain knowledge. Share information with colleagues. Keep a positive attitude toward change. Be a leader in matching new technology to workplace needs.

Does your agricultural education department make a positive difference in your and others' lives by developing your potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success? How? Anticipated answers will vary: There is no right answer, but the "how" answer is important.



7

AHS.14.Assess Name: _____

EMBRACING EMERGING TECHNOLOGY IN THE WORKPLACE

► Essay Questions

What does this statement mean, "Change is inevitable?"

How will you become a "life-long learner?"

What procedure would you use to match emerging technology with workplace needs?

Does your agricultural education department make a positive difference in your and others' lives by developing your potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success? How?



8

AHS.14.TM.A

THE STUDENT'S DILEMMA

“Schools are attempting to educate students today so they will be able to solve future problems that do not even exist today using personal and workplace technologies that have not yet been invented based on scientific knowledge not yet discovered.”



9

AHS.14.TM.B

“It is common knowledge that the average digital watch on your wrist has more computing power than existed on our entire planet prior to 1960.”



10

AHS.14.TM.C

SUCCESSFULLY EMBRACING NEW TECHNOLOGY

- ◆ **Change is inevitable.**
- ◆ **Be a life-long learner.**
- ◆ **Keep abreast and gain knowledge.**

- ◆ **Share information with colleagues.**
- ◆ **Keep a positive attitude toward change.**
- ◆ **Be a leader in matching new technology to workplace needs.**



How are you using technology to become...



[Nina Crutchfield](#) 147 posts since

Dec 15, 2007

I always knew that I needed to link my content and strategies to my students' current frame of reference but I never realized just how significant that link can be for young, developing minds until last summer at the Delta conference. During the week-long event, I saw how we must take the high order cognitive skills we're teaching and connect them to where the students are at in that very moment.

So, where are our students at? This month's and last month's issues of Making a Difference are dedicated to technology. We chose that theme because it is where our students are at. If we want to continue to connect and increase our students' skills, we must enter their world. We've got teachers across the country doing just that, and it's not just the young teachers. Veteran teachers, with decades of experience, figured out long ago that they had to stay in tune with their students. Check out their techniques for using technology in this month's issue of [Making a Difference](#) magazine. We've got a good start on sharing strategies, software, websites, etc. in the NAAE's Communities of Practice Technology Community, but we need more.

I know the technology novice's, like myself, in the profession could use some help on more than knowing that twitter and facebook exist. We need instructions on how you use it, where to find tutorials, and how it helps you impact student learning to make it worth our while to try.

This month's question for the profession is **How are you using technology to become part of your students' world?** Take a little time to share the details of what you're doing so that we can attempt to replicate your success. When you share, all of our students benefit from your expertise.

Tags: [7_keys_program_success](#), [instruction](#), [making_a_difference_magazine](#), [resources](#), [technology](#)



[Clyde Johnson](#) 1 posts since

How are you using technology to become...

Nov 20, 2007 1. **Re: How are you using technology to become part of your student's world?** Mar 10, 2010
10:24 AM

Help!!! Our school is considering 1 to 1 laptops for students to use for education. How have other schools used this concept in teaching Agricultural Education? Besides initial capital investment, I am concerned that funding may be an issue in being able to use other technology like smartboards, quia, computer add-ons like pH testers, etc. Does anyone have a plan that their school has used in implementing technology?