

The National Future Farmer

Published by the Future Farmers of America

June-July, 1983



Inside This Issue: FFA's Star Agribusinessmen: Beating The Odds
An Exclusive Interview with John Block

S U M M E R



"One minute I was chasin' through eye-high brush with a rope on an old range steer; the next minute he's chasin' me tryin' to get a hook in my leg. I hung on and let my horse run us outta there while my Levi's® Western Shirt and Range Pants fought the thorns to a standstill. As it is, I'm headed home minus the steer, but smarter in a lot of ways. A man who intends to help himself into trouble, better have equipment that'll help him out!"

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A Word With The Editor

Although the agriculture industry is faced with some tough questions, no one can deny that these are exciting times as well. Both at home and abroad, developments in agriculture are taking place at an everquickening pace. The issues of ag exports and USDA's payment-in-kind (PIK) program are just two examples that illustrate this fact. But although agriculture is moving fast, it's not always easy to see just exactly who is in the driver's seat.

As Future Farmers, it's important that you're aware of this fast-changing and fast-moving business of agriculture. Our interview with FFA Alumni and Secretary of Agriculture John Block, plus "What You Should Know About Ag Exports" should give some idea of the tremendous challenges American agriculture faces.

With less crops planted this year because of PIK, many agribusinesses are faced with another year of tightening their belts. Our feature story on FFA's Star Agribusinessmen gives a revealing portrait of the strengths and attitudes young people will need to survive in such a fast-changing field; and this issue's profile of Travis Faust's blossoming agribusiness career gives an inside look at what qualities you'll need to be a successful "future" businessman.

You'll also read about two very successful FFA chapters—Bartlett Yancey in North Carolina, and Flowing Wells in Arizona. In both cases, the chapters' successes are largely due to FFA advisors who understand that teaching vocational agriculture is a 24-hour commitment. In the case of Flowing Wells, our cover story, you'll see how an FFA chapter "modified" their vo-ag program into a thriving horticulture program in order to better fill the needs of their community.

Wilson Carnes

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FFA Advisor Mike Henry, left, has the rapt attention of two FFA members from the Flowing Wells, FFA Chapter in Tucson, Arizona. The Flowing Wells Chapter has a "tailor-made" vo-ag program uniquely designed to suit the needs of the Tucson community. Read more on page 10.

Cover Photo by Michael Wilson

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The FFA
News in Brief

A NEW STATISTICS booklet published by the national FFA organization reveals some interesting numbers on FFA growth over the last ten years. The following figures are some highlights:

- State FFA dues grew from \$1.28 per member in 1972 to \$2.05 per member in 1982. Membership during that ten-year span grew slightly, from 447,577 to 475,858.
- Although both FFA membership and numbers of FFA chapters have grown during the last ten years, the percentage of FFA members compared to the total number of students enrolled in vocational agriculture classes—about 75 percent—has remained the same. The same goes for percentage of vo-ag departments with FFA chapters nationally: about 95 percent.
- More FFA members are applying for both State and American Farmer Degrees than they were ten years ago. According to statistics, in 1972 49.6 percent of all FFA chapters had members applying for the state degree; 53.5 percent had members applying in 1982. Ten years ago only 10.9 percent of all FFA chapters had members applying for the American Farmer Degree; last year 14.2 percent did.

THE NATIONAL FFA Convention is still months away, but plans at the National FFA Center started long ago to insure another successful gathering. Recently added to the list of celebrities who will make appearances at the 1983 convention in Kansas City, Missouri, is Willard Scott, weather reporter for NBC's "Today Show." Watch this

column in future months for more details.

THE NATIONAL FFA Foundation welcomes four new sponsors: Kentucky Fried Chicken of Oklahoma, Monsanto Agricultural Products Company, The Lerio Corporation and American Bankers Association. Kentucky Fried Chicken is sponsoring one-fourth of the FFA's Poultry Proficiency Award; Monsanto has sponsored a workshop for newly-appointed state FFA officials recently held at the National FFA Center in Alexandria, Virginia; The Lerio Corporation has agreed to sponsor one-fourth of the FFA Floriculture Proficiency Award; and the American Bankers Association will be sponsoring national FFA convention guest speaker Zig Ziglar, a versatile speaker and author of *See You At The Top*.

ENROLLMENT DROPS at agriculture colleges: according to a Kansas State University study, undergraduate enrollment in 71 land-grant colleges declined from 101,243 students in 1978 to 87,000 in the fall of 1982. The USDA projects the United States will need 59,780 new graduates between now and 1985 to fill agriculture-related jobs, but colleges say they will graduate only about 51,976 students. According to the report, found in the *Ithaca Journal*, the enrollment decline is compounded by an expected 25-percent decrease in high school graduates by 1991 compared with 1978. Decreased enrollment has already been one reason cited for a decrease in national FFA membership.

Mr. Robert Book, 1983 FFA Foundation Sponsoring Committee Chairman makes a point during a recent joint staff meeting between National Foundation Executive Council, Foundation Committee and national FFA staff members at the National FFA Center in April. Other Executive Council members in attendance included Mrs. Lu Achilles Wall, 1982 Sponsoring Committee Chairman, and Dr. Hilmer Jones, Foundation chairman-elect for 1984.



A soldier in camouflage uniform and headset is working on equipment inside an aircraft. The soldier is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background shows the interior of an aircraft with various panels and equipment.

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SUPERCOWS: recent figures on U.S. milk production show milk output is record high—again. U.S. cows produced 32.8 billion pounds of milk between October and December last year, up 3 percent from a year earlier. That brought production for 1982 to 135.2 billion pounds, up 2 percent from a year earlier, and 5 percent above 1980. Two main causes for the increase, according to the report in the *Farm Paper Letter*, are: more cows on farms, and record output per cow. Production per cow averaged a record 12,267 pounds.

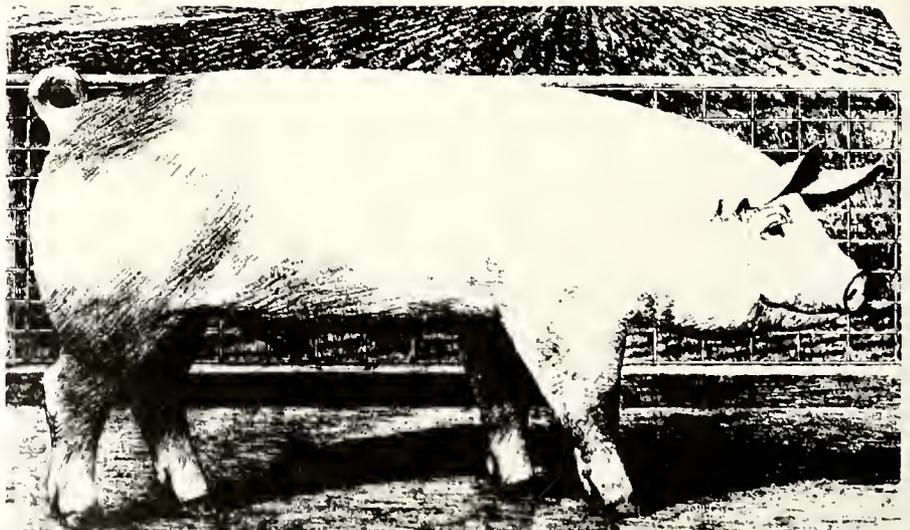
JUST HOW BAD is soil erosion? According to research, the news isn't good. Statistics show about 5.4 million tons of topsoil are lost to erosion each year; much of that soil comes from farms. Enough soil goes down the Mississippi River in a year to build an island one-mile long, a quarter-mile wide and 200 feet high. USDA officials say it's hard to comprehend what this could mean in the long run, since most research projects are scattered bits of the big picture. But a solution may be around the corner: a recent USDA team has developed a computerized analysis system which puts the fragmented pieces of the erosion puzzle together to forecast how soil erosion may affect the land's ability to grow food and fiber in the years and decades ahead.

IOWA IS now ranked as the number one ag exporting state in the country,

according to the Foreign Agricultural Service. Of the 1981 total U.S. farm export dollars, \$43.8 billion, Iowa accounted for \$3.7 billion, nearly 8.5 percent of the total. Traditionally Illinois has been the top farm exporting state, and now trails close behind Iowa with \$3.6 billion in ag exports. For a closer look at ag exports, see our story this issue.

FARMERS HAVE shown more than a passing interest in conservation tillage, according to USDA figures found in *Doane's Agricultural Report*. Conservation tillage was used on 79.2 million acres in 1979, or 23.2 percent of the total harvested cropland. That's nearly twice as much as the 44 million acres in 1973. The report adds that conservation tillage can be economically feasible through fewer trips over the field, less labor and lower machinery costs. But the saving is offset by higher costs for herbicides needed to fill in for the loss of weed control through tillage.

GRAIN DUST EXPLOSIONS have caused 85 deaths, serious injuries and hundreds of millions of dollars in property damage over the last three years, says a report in USDA's *Farm Paper Letter*. But the blasts can be prevented by eliminating one of the four elements needed to set an explosion off: fuel, air, an ignition source and a closed container. The report also recommends precleaning grain before it enters the elevator.



The perfect hog: A recent study done by The National Pork Producers Council has come up with the following "standard of excellence in hog type job description." According to the study, the perfect market barrow is 240 pounds, composed of three or more breeds and is from a litter of ten pigs marketed. He demonstrates a feed conversion efficiency of 2.5 from birth to a market age of 150 days. He demonstrates a lean gain of 3/4 pounds per day of age.

NOT BY BREAD ALONE: farmers receive only 31 cents from every dollar spent on food at the supermarket, according to ag economists at the University of Arkansas. The rest pays for processing, transporting,

packaging, advertising and displaying the food in conveniently located stores. The statistics for one dollar's worth of bread sold in this country are even more revealing.

Wheat	8.9¢	Baker to Wholesale Spread	62.1¢
Other Farm Ingredients	1.5¢		
Non-Farm Ingredients	1.9¢		
Transportation	2.9¢		
Milling Flour	2.1¢		
		Wholesale to Retail Spread	18.9¢
		Miscellaneous	1.7¢



Illustration courtesy Mead Paper

NO MORE OUCH—when picking blackberries, that is. Recent USDA research has paved the way for the “Hull thornless,” a new blackberry plant that produces blackberries—but no thorns. The plant was introduced in 1981 and should be available soon to growers and gardeners who want to avoid pricking their fingers this year. The plant is named for the late John W. Hull, formerly of the University of Maryland, the University of Arkansas and the USDA, who spent most of his career improving blackberries and raspberries.

AGRICULTURAL LEASE receivables held by banks nearly doubled from 1979 to 1980, reaching \$105 million, according to a national survey of equipment lessors done by the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City. Bank lessors have a smaller involvement in ag leasing than captive and independent lessors, but bankers who responded predicted their net ag lease receivables would increase by 58 percent before the end of 1985. The increase in lease receivables may be an indication of the growing movement toward leasing equipment as an alternative to high interest rates.

FARMER COOPERATIVES en-

joyed record-high levels of business volume in 1981, 8 percent higher than 1980 levels, according to a USDA official. Randall E. Torgerson, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Cooperative Service, attributes the rise in volume primarily to larger quantities of farm products marketed by cooperatives. Most commodity prices for farmers were down in 1981. Torgerson also says numbers of cooperatives dropped from 6,293 to 6,211 from 1980 to 1981, most as a result of reorganizing—mergers, consolidation, acquisitions—and going out of business. Membership was also down approximately 100,000 farmers from 1980 to 1981.

FARM FUEL BILLS can be held down without having to reduce tillage, says *Doane's Agricultural Report*, by following a few key steps. Proper weighting, operation and tire selection can save from 5 to 30 percent in fuel. Tests show that shifting up and throttling back on light loads can cut fuel consumption by up to 30 percent, while also saving wear and tear on the tractor. And if you need new tractor tires, shifting to radials will generally show at least a 5 percent improvement in fuel efficiency when working on tilled soil.

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The Mailbag

Columbus, Ohio

I too hesitated a great deal about writing this letter, but after speaking to several other bothered individuals I couldn't prolong my resentment. This is in regard to a letter in the April-May "Mailbag" page from a Vicksburg, Michigan, resident.

I really find it hard to believe that some individuals could be so ignorant to fail to see the point of the article concerning Leroy Billman, the state president of the Ohio FFA. I believe the response letter answered and corrected any miscomprehension of the Michigan reader, but I still want to make a point clear.

How many times do we all remember and practice what is taught and preached to us every day in our lives? Do you always fasten your seat belt when in an automobile? Do you dare leave the kitchen when something is cooking on the stove? Do you always read and follow all directions when operating appliances and machines?

My point is everyone makes mistakes—we're all human. Unfortunately some mistakes cost us more and teach us the hard way, but that is just the way things happen in this fast-moving society. It is also unfortunate that the ignorance of some continues to add to the pain of others.

Holly Downing
Ohio State Reporter

Idaville, Indiana

Today, while I was sitting at home feeling sorry for myself at having to miss our basketball sectional because of the flu, I picked up the February-March issue of *The National FUTURE FARMER*. I saw an article that really touched me and showed me that being sick isn't the end of the world.

Of course, I'm talking about the article on Leroy Billman, Ohio state president. I think it is great that just three weeks after his farming accident he went to the national convention. I feel he really must be someone special and I would be proud to have him representing our state. His is the kind of courage that shows strength and determination and he should be an inspiration to all members, especially Greenhands.

Edie Cosgray

Popayan, Colombia

We send this urgent appeal to our FFA friends for help and assistance, as a result of the earthquake that destroyed the city of Popayan, Colombia, on March 31. The quake damaged ten schools with vo-ag departments and chapters of Future Farmers of Colombia.

Some 1,800 students who are active members are affected by the disaster. Our immediate needs include seeds,

water filters, horticultural equipment, tents, hoes, lamps, flashlights, first aid kits, hand tools for carpentry, lab equipment and books.

Please help us if you can.

The National Committee
Futuros Agricultores de Colombia

Donations of the above items can be sent to: Federacion Nacional de Cafeteros, 140 E. 57th Street, New York, New York 10022, who will take care of shipping. Chapters that would like to make a financial contribution can do so through: International Department, National FFA Center.—Ed.

Yampa, Colorado

How come most of the articles in *The National FUTURE FARMER* are about Future Farmers whose fathers already have a large ranch or farm operation? What about the "low man on the totem pole" whose father doesn't own a working operation and he has to work twice as hard to get a small herd going and to keep them going—the Future Farmers who are just starting out fresh on their own, and are giving everything they have into their operations, even the "blood, sweat and tears?"

Sheila McCloskey

Read about Greg Krush in the April-May, 1983, issue (Page 21) and Star Agribusinessman Elmer Zimmerman in this issue. Both are good examples of FFA members who started with little and built a successful operation anyway. We'll feature more stories like these in the future.—Ed.

Buffalo, New York

There aren't many big city FFA chapters in the nation, but in New York, the McKinley Chapter is proving that you don't have to live in the country to be a Future Farmer. The chapter members are all from Buffalo, but they have discovered that there is so much more to FFA than the name implies. The FFA members take horticulture and aquatic ecology programs at McKinley.

They all love *The National FUTURE FARMER* magazine. It's a really informative and fun way to learn about fellow members and their different ways of life all over the country.

Sandy Swiecicki
President

Columbus, Ohio

In reviewing the April-May, 1983, issue of *The National FUTURE FARMER* magazine, I was shocked to read on page 11, in the "Trends in Agriculture Looking Ahead," column about the significant drop in enrollment at The Ohio State University, College of Agriculture. In your column you reported that Ohio State had a major drop of 33

percent in its undergraduate enrollment in four-year programs in agriculture. This is a totally erroneous listing. I request that you publish a retraction in your next issue of *The National FUTURE FARMER* magazine.

I anticipate you are using data from a draft report of the NASULGC enrollment information which were reported at the November Land-Grant meetings. Those data erroneously included the enrollment in Home Economics for 1981 while our 1982 figures reported only the enrollment in four-year degree programs in agriculture. The data that we furnished to the NASULGC for 1981 included 2,791 students in agriculture and in 1982, 2,612 students for a reduction in enrollment of 6.4 percent.

A footnote was to have been added to the final report by the NASULGC indicating that the figures for 1981 from Ohio State included 1,015 students in Home Economics programs. Apparently the data base you used was not a final copy and we would sincerely appreciate your retracting the statement made on page 11 of your April-May issue of *The National FUTURE FARMER*.

I look forward to your prompt attention to this matter and your proper retraction of the data in your article.

Ray A. Miller
Assistant Dean
Ohio State University
College of Agriculture

We checked with our sources for the story and evidently Ohio State University incorrectly included home economics enrollment with college of agriculture enrollment for 1981, thus inflating the actual size of drop in enrollment. We did not receive any "footnote," therefore we believed the original figures to be correct.—Ed.

Lebanon, Pennsylvania

I receive a complimentary subscription to *The National FUTURE FARMER* from the Tulpehocken FFA Chapter, Berks County, Pennsylvania. Each issue is read with enthusiasm and then displayed for others to read in my office at the Lebanon County Vo-Tech School.

As a former vo-ag instructor I appreciate the enthusiasm this magazine develops for FFA. Please continue to stimulate our young men and women with your excellent reporting.

Gerald H. Seiler
Supervisor

Send letters or notes (be sure it's legible) with name, address and chapter to: MAILBAG, The National FUTURE FARMER, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309. All letters are subject to editing.

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The Skills Are Flowing At

Here's how one FFA Chapter customized its vo-ag program to fit local needs. The result: a vo-ag program that helps keep its community "on the grow"



THE plants are flourishing at Flowing Wells FFA Chapter in Tucson, Arizona. In fact, the trees are blossoming and the greens are greening and the ornamental shrubs are looking—pardon the expression—very ornamental.

The impressive foliage factory found in the greenhouses and classrooms of the Flowing Wells vo-ag program is a result of hard work and enthusiasm, yes. But the lush growth symbolizes a success story much deeper; a story of how both FFA members and FFA advisor are working to keep their community "on the grow" as well.

"This is a horticulture community," says Flowing Wells FFA Advisor Mike Henry. "Because of that, everything we teach in vo-ag relates to horticulture." As a result, the vo-ag program serves its own needs—training students and providing them with experience—while serving the community's needs as well by providing skilled and talented employees for the future.

Flowing Wells is a perfect example of a vocational agriculture program modified to suit the needs of a community. Up until seven years ago the program had been funded to teach students production agriculture skills. But Flowing Wells High School is an urban school located in Tucson, just north of the Mexican border, and there are few employment opportunities in fields like



Above, Flowing Wells instructor Mike Henry checks a tomato plant grown hydroponically in the Chapter's greenhouse as Greenhand Toby Henry looks on.

Flowing Wells

By Michael Wilson



forestry, crop production or livestock. When he arrived there seven years ago, Mr. Henry says the community knew it was time for a change in direction at the vo-ag program.

"Since there's virtually no production ag in this area we went ahead and developed a hort program," says Mr. Henry. Although change is sometimes difficult, this one was welcomed by both local business leaders and school administrators. "Once I explained the specific purpose of the program, it was clear sailing," says the ag teacher, "because we feel we should be training students for our community."

As a result, Flowing Wells now has the distinction of being the only program like it in the state of Arizona. And that fact makes this chapter's vo-ag and FFA activities unique compared to most schools.

For example, Mr. Henry trains FFA members for only four judging contests each year. "We don't have poultry judging or livestock judging because we feel contests should relate directly to the classroom and SOE programs," explains Mr. Henry.

Even more impressive is the specialized set of proficiency awards "custom-fitted" specifically for the program.

"We don't have an award for just ag mechanics," says Mr. Henry. "We give students awards for mechanics relating

to horticulture; such as irrigation or small engine repair." Awards are given in areas like landscape design, greenhouse maintenance, horticulture mechanics, greenhouse construction—all relating to areas of demand in the community.

"Last year we had 17 proficiencies, but it changes each year," he says. "This year, for example, we have an award for hydroponic production because we now have the facility, the know-how, the student interest and the demand in the community. We had several chapter members build and sell hydroponic units through their SOE programs this year."

Students here can still have SOE programs in livestock or crops; many do. But they must also meet the horticulture requirements in order to pass through the vocational agriculture program.

Although the 72 FFA members at Flowing Wells go through a specialized

"If we expect our students to move right from the classroom to the real world there's nothing like work experience through SOE, where they can learn about realities like work hours."

set of experiences in class and laboratory. Mr. Henry says a heavy emphasis is placed on FFA. "We still train leadership skills like speaking and communication," says Mr. Henry. "FFA is terribly important to our future employees in this area, to develop those personal competencies."

So far, the program has seen resounding support from area employers and has built a positive reputation. At one area nursery, for example, all labor is handled by a dozen FFA members; the employer there is so confident in the FFA workers he lets Mr. Henry choose

Left, FFA'ers in this horticulture program identify plants in the Flowing Wells vo-ag classroom. Above, right: one popular way FFA'ers learn skills and support the community is by building miniature greenhouses like this one.

the students. "We have students work at local nurseries, golf courses and small gas engine repair shops to get work experience in high school," says the ag teacher, "and when they graduate the employers will probably hire them over an inexperienced person."

It's that hands-on experience that attracts Tucson horticulture businesses to hire vo-ag students after high school. Mr. Henry places a strong emphasis on training through Supervised Occupational Experience (SOE) programs whenever possible. That means students get experience *before* they graduate.

"If we expect our students to move right from the classroom to the real world there's nothing like work experience through SOE, where they can learn about realities like work hours," says Mr. Henry. "We can try to simulate the real world in the classroom, but it's just not the same."

The Flowing Wells senior ag class came close to simulating the real world last year when they formed a corporation for a greenhouse project. Calling themselves the "Senior Greenhouse Corporation," they invited students to buy shares to generate capital, built the greenhouse, sold it, then payed off their "stockholders" and dissolved the corporation.

"There's tremendous value in projects like these," says Mr. Henry. "First, they're investing their own money; second, they learn how to make decisions in a group; and third, they're planning for profits and marketing their product."

Henry says one of the most important areas of support comes from the school's administration. "They don't just give it lip service that they want a good ag and hort program," he says. "They demand it—and they give us the bucks to back it up."

Mr. Henry says he sees specialized vo-ag programs as a trend for the future, not only in Arizona but other states as well. If the "custom-design" approach catches on—only where it's needed, of course—the ongoing success at Flowing Wells FFA will sure to be upheld as a perfect example of how one vo-ag program helps to keep a community "on the grow." ●●●



HAVING trouble coming up with fresh ideas for a BOAC (Building Our American Communities) or Safety activity? Grasping for an idea that's suited to your chapter and community can be a chore. In fact, of all the necessary steps—planning, coordinating, carrying out the activity—coming up with the perfect idea can be the most difficult of all.

To spark your thinking we've compiled

sible to find an idea never used before by other chapters. The key is finding an idea that suits the needs of both your FFA chapter and your community. In 1982, FFA chapters carried out 1,600 BOAC projects, an increase of over 350 percent since BOAC's inception 12 years ago. Nearly 12,000 projects have been carried out, an average of 1,000 per year, according to R.J. Reynolds, Inc.,

for preserving the local landscape. The chapter joined other local groups in a beautification project, planting 400 new trees and shrubs.

Historic Preservation. A number of gold-winning chapters across the United States have received high marks for projects that preserve local rural heritage. From museum renovation to simple displays, chapters have enriched com-

Ten Ideas To Color Your Chapter Gold

Is your FFA chapter looking for a good BOAC or Safety project? These ideas from gold-rated chapters may help.

By L. R. Bluestein

a list of top projects by savvy FFA chapters nationwide. But it's safe to say these are only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the things you can do as a chapter. The possibilities for BOAC or safety projects are only as limited as your imagination; as you read, think how these ideas may be applied to your own community. Be creative, but set a clear goal. If you see something you like, spread the idea to other members in the chapter. It could be the start of something big.

BOAC

BOAC projects are becoming increasingly popular, so it may be impos-



sible to find an idea never used before by other chapters. Some of those projects include:

Farmland preservation. Does the economy of your town depend on certain crops or industries? Are area farmers and businessmen using sound conservation methods to preserve soil and other resources for future use?

The Elma, Washington, FFA Chapter put those questions to experts in their logging town and came up with an answer: to preserve the town's economy, a massive reforestation project was needed. After 13,000 hours of back-breaking labor planting over a half-million trees on 60,000 acres of timberland the chapter earned the highest BOAC honor—the 1982 National BOAC award.

"But the size and scope of a BOAC project isn't all that important," explains National FFA Advisor Byron Rawls. The true purpose of BOAC is to train FFA members in rural areas to deal with issues of concern over natural resources, agricultural land use and quality of life, adds Mr. Rawls.

Smaller-scale efforts are equally important and appreciated by communities. For example, Cabot, Arkansas, FFA'ers earned the southern region BOAC award

The Elma, Washington Chapter, below and left, took top honors last year through a massive reforestation project.

munities through awareness of local history.

It's no small task to relocate and restore an 1874 vintage farmstead and move a 12-foot by 16-foot granary eight miles to a county fair. But the Monroeville, Ohio, Chapter successfully constructed an agricultural heritage display at local county fairgrounds. Best of all, over 30,000 visitors toured the chapter's display at the 1982 Huron County Fair.

Park development. Parks and recreational facilities improve the quality of life in your community. Hiking trails, picnic sites and playgrounds have been developed by many chapters to meet community needs.

LaSalle-Peru, Illinois, FFA members not only enhanced their community by building an exercise trail and nature park, but eliminated an unsightly, dangerous trash dump as well. Members built eight exercise stations and concrete

Wall Shooting Range

What can one do in the beautiful badlands of South Dakota other than appreciate the landscape, take pictures and watch out for rattlesnakes? The Wall, South Dakota, FFA Chapter came up with an answer last year: head for the new shooting range.

The idea for the BOAC project developed almost three years ago, when newly-hired Wall FFA Advisor Dave Van Laarhoven first met with FFA members. After months of 1) targeting a community need, 2) planning the activity and 3) implementing the project, the new shooting range became reality. As a result, Wall earned a South Dakota Governor's Citation and a gold rating from the



walk bridges over a once trash-filled ravine. County Farmer's Home Administration pitched in by providing free bulldozing and tilling.

Solving Community Problems. Does your community have a high crime rate or other social or economic problems?

Theft prevention was a pet project for the Fort Wayne, Indiana, FFA Chapter. Members marked \$2.5 million worth of property in invisible ink with social security numbers. In addition, the chapter held seven community discussions on theft prevention in cooperation with the state police.

Another chapter came to the aid of local ranchers during a summer labor crunch. Ruby Mountain FFA in Elko, Nevada, launched a drive to place members at ranches to perform various tasks. Members worked in turn for room, board and salary.

Education. Vo-ag students have knowledge and skills developed in school, FFA and other organizations. Passing on your knowledge and experience to younger children is not only inspirational to them, but satisfying for you as well.

Demonstrations, nature hikes and other programs are being implemented by many FFA chapters. Klein FFA Chapter of Spring, Texas, hosts an annual program for kindergartners and elementary school students, including tours of the barnyard at the Houston Livestock Show.

Safety

No less important are ideas for chapter safety programs. The FFA Safety Award Program, co-sponsored by FIEI (Farm and Industrial Equipment Institute) and The Dow Chemical Company, U.S.A., is designed to make FFA members

aware of good safety practices at farms, homes, businesses and communities.

Blood Clinics. Blood can make the difference between life and death in an emergency. And to ensure safe supplies in their communities, several chapters helped Red Cross run blood donor clinics in school gymnasiums. Last year the Green Bay East, Wisconsin, FFA Chapter collected 111 pints of blood in cooperation with Red Cross.

Road Safety. Live in a climate where roads ice over in the winter? Several upper midwest chapters have promoted safer driving by mixing sand and salt as a service to motorists. FFA'ers give local gas stations the mixture to distribute free to motorists.

Be Prepared: stage a disaster. Accidents do happen, but further injury and even death can be avoided if people are informed on procedures to follow in case of an accident. The Assumption FFA Chapter, Napoleonville, Louisiana, mocked an oxyacetylene explosion in the

welding section of their vo-ag lab. The group "suffered" 20 supposed injuries and one death. The hospital ambulance service and police department volunteered to react as if a real accident had occurred.

Vehicle Safety. From bicycle rodeos to tractor operation, FFA chapters have sponsored clinics, displays, lectures and other programs to promote vehicle safety. Chapters have carried out numerous vehicle inspection services for members of the community. An Ohio chapter inspected 200 autos for bald tires, cracked windshields and poor exhaust systems and affixed tokens to cars asking they be fixed. Other groups have sponsored bicycle safety programs for younger children, rewarding sound biking skills with trophies.

Farm and homestead safety. A number of chapters are not only being instructed by experts on how to make homes safer, but are distributing information and safety checklists to local residents. ●●●

Two safety ideas used by top chapters: below left, mixing sand and salt and distributing the mixture to drivers in icy weather; and right, vehicle safety checks.



Below right, Advisor Dave Can Laarhoven watches as Wall FFA'er cuts metallic silhouettes from 3/8-inch plate steel.

Right, Wall FFA'ers "try out" the new shooting range.



national FFA organization last year.

It all began when Wall FFA'ers surveyed the community and came up with a positive response to the shooting range idea. The chapter cogs then began turning: forming necessary committees to do the leg work, making contacts, planning—all before work could begin. Groups like the National Rifle Association, Soil Conservation District, the Wall conservation club, the local police and Rushmore Shooting Club volunteered to help in the undertaking.

One of the most important considerations was obvious: the convenience and safety features of the shooting range site. Wall FFA'ers used aerial photos to decide on an area most beneficial to the community. The land they settled on is

privately owned, so a 15-year lease between the Wall FFA Chapter, the landowners and the Wall Sportsmen's Club was arranged for.

Like all good things, the three years of planning and work was worth the wait. The new Wall shooting range includes: two 50-yard police range targets with distance markers; four 100-yard small bore competition benches with target standards; and two large bore sight-in benches with target standards at 100, 200, 250 and 300 yards.

All benches are set in 1,000 pounds of concrete, and the right side of the range is reserved for black powder and handgun silhouette shooting. Forty silhouettes were made in vo-ag class, but only 20 are used. ●●●

SOMETIMES it's hard to get a handle on what the word "agribusiness" really means. But after speaking to Travis Faust, the cobwebbed, fuzzy images clear up fast. For example:

"Agribusiness is a part of agriculture where we sell to the farmer—we're the starting point," says the blond, lanky young man through a mixed voice of confidence and Texan drawl. "It's a part of agriculture, but it's a part of running a business, too—you're in business to make money, but you're also in business to help farmers make money."

If you guessed those thoughtful words come from a veteran farm salesman, guess again. Nineteen-year-old Travis, Texas Star State Agribusinessman from Spring, Texas, is far from what one could call a "seasoned pro." But Travis' thoughts are just a sample of fresh thinking from a young man who, in all respects, sums up the full character of today's "future" agribusinessman: enthusiastic but not overconfident, aggressive but also realistic. A young man who is likeable and honest to farm customers, Travis epitomizes the new breed of future agribusinessmen in America—those who have learned early the value of "work smarter, not harder."

"Experience is the big thing," he says, grabbing his ever-present clipboard from the stack of feed sacks in the back warehouse of Strack Farms. Travis has worked as assistant manager of Strack Farms for four years now, most of that work in conjunction with his Supervised Occupational Experience (SOE) Program at nearby Klein FFA Chapter. Strack's started as a farm produce store with feed and fertilizer, but has expanded to include hardware, tires and a 400-seat restaurant. One reason for expansion has been the tremendous growth in this area, just north of Houston, Texas.

As assistant manager at Strack Farms, Travis' responsibility has grown. Now he makes sure the store and warehouse is stocked by placing orders for products. "I took on a lot of responsibility when I



Above, Travis prepares an insecticide order for a garden salesman in the front store of "Strack Farms."

Travis Faust: Today's Future Agribusinessman

A new breed of "future" agribusinessmen is emerging from today's vo-ag programs; FFA members who are more driven and determined to succeed than ever before. Now meet one who's thoughts and attitude exemplify that new style.



As Strack Farms Assistant Manager, Travis' many responsibilities call for him to wear many hats—all the way from ordering supplies to loading trucks by forklift. Says Travis: "By about the end of February, this place really starts hopping."

started doing the ordering. Now I order whatever I think is needed for all the inventory, and I don't have to go back to somebody and say, 'Is this OK?' That's the good thing about it.

"I like working here—it's fun," Travis says with a grin. "I've always liked this kind of work. You've got customers coming in, and you've got salesmen coming in at the same time; it gets a little wicked sometimes, but I like it. It's a challenge, really."

Travis' love for his work is just the beginning, though. His attitude and thoughts on agribusiness in general go much further than most 19-year-olds.

"You've got to learn the business itself—how it runs, what kind of things sell, and what helps people," says Travis. "If you can help a person with his problems, he can make you money. If you can make money, then you're doing all right; if you're losing money you must not be able to help people."

"Selling and marketing are a part of business," he adds. "You've got to learn how to be just a little bit ahead of everybody else; you can step ahead of everybody else and keep your business rolling by thinking ahead."

Although agribusiness—specifically ag sales—is what Travis excels at, his roots are in production agriculture. His SOE program in FFA included mostly raising animals. "What I liked about FFA and vo-ag was that it was inspiring—it helped me set my goals for going into agribusiness for a job. FFA was what really turned me on to this business."

As most members of the organization know, along with FFA comes filling out records for home and work projects. Travis says he began seeing the value of keeping records in 10th grade when he first began raising turkeys, pigs, roasters, capons and broilers at his small home farm in Cameron, 130 miles north of Spring.

"I kept records on all my animals and my work here with my co-op books,"

Travis says. "Klein High school had a class where you get out at 10:30 a.m. to go to work. I'd work as much as 40 hours a week here, even during school. I filled out a daily report on what I did for two years, submitted that my last year to the state and went on to win State Star Agribusinessman.

"Every day, I was in those record books, filling them out," he says. "It got

FAUST: "Every day I was in those record books, filling them out. It got so that I could hardly close them. But it's fun when you can do all that work and win—get something in return for your work."

so that I could hardly close them. But it's fun when you can do all that work and win—get something in return for your work.

"And I don't feel you can jump right into a business like this without having some kind of background in keeping records," he adds.

Springtime is when Strack Farms really starts moving, says Travis. "We are about the main place in the area where farmers come to for supplies, mostly fertilizer. There are a lot of truck farmers in this area with between 35-50 acres that are farmed by one family; they produce mostly small vegetables," says Travis. "By about the end of February, this place really starts hopping."

Travis says one way Strack Farms stays so busy is by keeping an open mind to new products which may help farmers better than previous ones. He demonstrates that by working with Texas A&M officials who use nearby acres to experiment with new products. "If we find something that works, we're going to push it hard. It's a big factor when

you can get a new product that works better than an old product."

Travis plans to spend two years at a nearby community college and study business part-time while still holding his position at Strack Farms. "Once I've learned as many aspects of the business here, I'm probably going to move to Cameron, where our home farm is. My goal is to run a business, just like this, because you *can* make money. I know from experience.

"You can learn how to run a business by starting out small," he says. "I started out just sweeping the floors and waiting on customers; and as I learned more and understood more about the business I was given more responsibilities.

"I can use those responsibilities to understand just how I'd want to run my own business someday."

Travis knows that goal won't be easy to reach, but his confident and enthusiastic attitude makes his chances look good. For one thing, he's realistic. "It's a big business to just crawl into. I've saved some money, but not nearly enough. That's why it'll probably be six to ten years before I'll be ready," he admits.

Like all businessmen, Travis must battle problems like inflation in order to keep business strong. "I can get two and a half gallons of that insecticide over there," he says gesturing toward a chemical canister, "that used to cost \$20—and now it costs \$65. Things have gone up tremendously. It costs so much to get a farm rolling, and that kind of thing can be frustrating for both farmers *and* agribusinessmen.

"But you've got to like it to stay in it, no matter what you do."

Travis' immediate goal is to earn the American Farmer Degree. "I'm going for it. If I work hard enough, grow up a little bit more and get a little bit more inspired by this business..." again, the voice mixed with enthusiasm and Texas drawl trails off in thought.

"I'll be trying my best." ●●●



Above, fertilizer is a heavy-seller at Strack Farms when planting season rolls around. And if a forklift isn't available, hand-labor is the only way the job gets done.



No matter what his customers need, Travis makes sure the store has the supplies. "If you can help a person with his problems, he can make you money," says Travis.

The Circle Of Success At Bartlett Yancey

Through one vo-ag teacher's leadership, FFA members at this chapter reach goals on a never-ending ring of achievement.

By Mike Groce

"MY goal is to have a regional winner every year," exclaims vocational agriculture instructor Cyrus "Cy" Vernon. Not many ag teachers can hope to achieve such a lofty goal. But that has pretty much been the case for the Bartlett Yancey, North Carolina FFA advisor since 1977. In the past six years Mr. Vernon has seen no less than five FFA members or teams advance beyond the state level of competition to regional contests.

During Mr. Vernon's seven years of leadership, the chapter has produced 18 American Farmers, over 100 State Farmers, 4 state officers and 1 national officer. That's not including the numerous proficiency awards, chapter and face-to-face contests.

These accomplishments add up to a banner-filled classroom, and give 221 current chapter members an opportunity to see — in real life — what winning regional and national honors are really like.

Credit for this success depends on whom you ask in Yanceyville, North Carolina, home base for the FFA Chapter. Ask Mr. Vernon and he'll tell you the chapter's success could not be possible without school and community support; ask the folks in Yanceyville and they'll say the success is due to the dedication and leadership of Cy Vernon.

But perhaps the biggest reason of all is not what Mr. Vernon accomplishes on a day-to-day basis — but rather the circle of success which now generates its own winners at Bartlett Yancey.

One example FFA'ers follow is former chapter member Jeff Rudd, 1978 eastern region national vice president. Mr. Vernon says, "All I did was help Jeff realize that being a national officer was an achievable goal."



Bartlett Yancey FFA Advisor Cyrus Vernon helps BY vo-ag student get ready for an upcoming poultry judging contest.

The goal Jeff achieved triggered a winning momentum which has now become tradition. Even before his election to national office, Jeff began the "domino effect" of regional winners as

But perhaps the biggest reason of all is not what Mr. Vernon accomplishes on a day-to-day basis — but rather the circle of success which now generates its own winners.

eastern region public speaking winner. It was only the beginning in a long line of success stories — and the stories have yet to end.

After Jeff's win in 1977, Bartlett Yancey went on to be named the 1978 regional winner in the BOAC (Building



Above, Beth Fowlkes gets a floriculture tip. Says Beth: "Mr. Vernon is half teacher and half friend."

Our American Communities) contest. At the same time the chapter accepted their BOAC award, Jeff began a year of service as national FFA officer.

In 1980, Reed Chandler was named eastern region winner in Fish and Wildlife Management. The next year, Bartlett Yancey FFA member Larry Pruitt was recognized as the Fish and Wildlife Management regional winner. The chapter was on a hot streak.

In 1982 Bartlett Yancey member Nancy Fowlkes was named the eastern region winner of the Floriculture Proficiency award, and whether or not the chapter will produce a regional winner in 1983 remains to be seen. But one thing is for sure, chapter members will give it their all this year because they've seen how hard work can pay off.

Beth Fowlkes is a good example. Beth, Nancy's sister and one of this year's Star Chapter Greenhands, has set her sights on developing an SOE program comparable to Nancy's — one that will allow her to compete for similar recognition.

"I expect Beth will do very well in any FFA activity...students being able to see predecessors achieve makes it easier for them to achieve," says Mr. Vernon.

The Bartlett Yancey FFA Chapter is a "success breeds success" story. And Mr. Vernon, at the center of this activity and success, recognizes his importance as advisor.

"Students have got to believe that you believe in them," he says, "and as an advisor you must have the intensity required to be a success."

Mr. Vernon is the type of vo-ag teacher that many Greenhands aspire to be like. Beth probably says it best: "Mr. Vernon is an excellent teacher...because he's half teacher and half friend." ●●●



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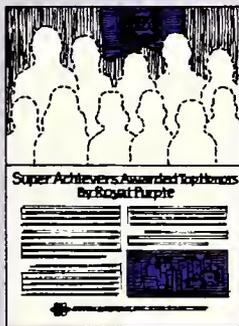
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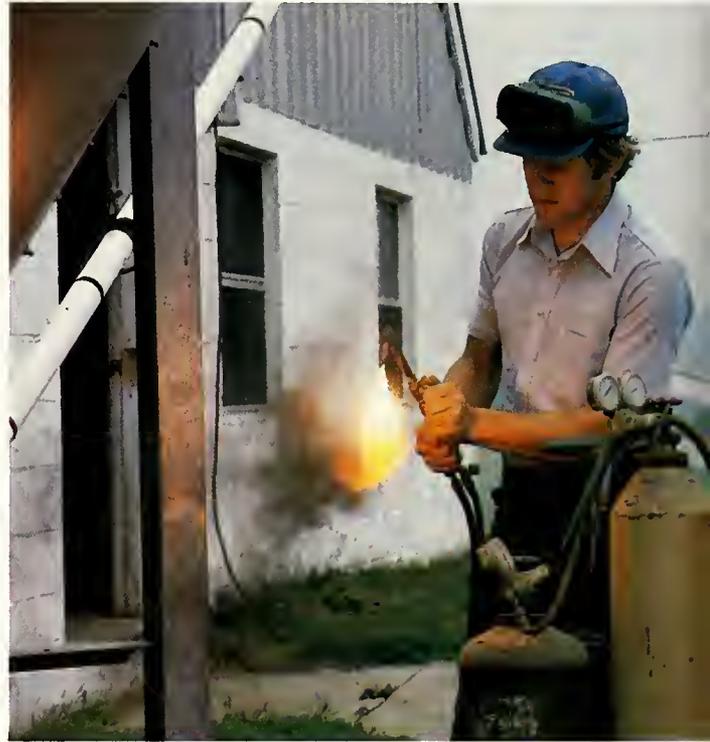
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FFA's Star Agribusinessmen:

Beating The



It's a gamble, but these four Star Agribusinessmen beat the odds with successful business methods, attitude and determination. Clockwise from top right are Elmer Zimmerman, Star Agribusinessman of America, from Lowellville, Ohio; Central Region Star Tom Lichy from Monroe Center, Illinois; Southern Region Star Tracy Vicary from Martin, Tennessee; and Western Region Star Clay Christensen of Thomas, Oklahoma.



Photos By Bill Stagg

Odds In Agribusiness

The fast-changing competitive pace of today's agribusiness world makes it more risky than ever to survive, but these four FFA'ers have made all the right moves.

By Michael Wilson

IT'S no secret that today's farmer must be a gambler to succeed. One bad roll of the weather dice, or a poorly placed bet on a grain market can mean the difference between black or red ink on the ledgers at the end of the year.

But farming isn't the only area of agriculture that's "high risk." Agribusinesses face big gambles just as much—or more—than production agriculture.

The enthusiastic response by farmers to the PIK (Payment-in-Kind) program, where producers are paid in grain to produce less, is a perfect example. With farmers having fewer needs for supplies like chemicals, equipment, fertilizer or seed, many agribusiness firms are forced to scramble to stay in business. But the top-notch ones—because of successful personnel and business methods—will survive and grow in the long run.

In such a fast-paced and risky field, knowing what those "successful business methods" are becomes all-important. And knowing what kind of *people* it takes to make those business skills turn to profits is even more crucial.

We went to a proven source for answers to these questions: this year's four regional Star Agribusinessmen. No other FFA members could be—or should be—more qualified than these four. Their award-winning SOE programs, savvy skills and knowledge of agribusiness have propelled them to the top of the FFA ladder. Now, in the "real world," each is using what he's learned to keep pace and beat the odds in agribusiness.

"The people who will succeed in agribusiness must be able to keep up with the many changes agriculture is going through," says FFA'er Elmer Zimmerman. Elmer, 22, was named Star Agribusinessman of America at last year's National FFA Convention in Kansas City.

Elmer, from Lowellville, Ohio, comes from a 400-acre dairy farm in the north-eastern part of the state. He joined FFA as a junior at a county vocational school because vocational agriculture wasn't offered at his home school. "When it came time for job placement in our program, I assumed I would work on the home farm. But my advisor, Robert Hermiller, had other ideas," says Elmer. Elmer's advisor suggested he work at an

agribusiness related to dairy farming; Elmer took the advice. He began work at a dairy equipment installation business two days later.

Elmer continued working, finished high school and earned an associate degree at Ohio State University. "Now, five years later I own the business, have two full-time employees and my ex-boss is my salesman," says the Star Agribusinessman. "This just goes to show how fast things can change."

What kind of obstacles did Elmer face? "Gaining farmers' confidence because of my age," he says. "Most of the first sales I made were to farmers that I had worked for on other occasions and had proven my abilities.

"Just like in many other situations, you must first sell yourself," he says. "It isn't easy being successful in agribusiness today, but things that are worthwhile never come easy.

"The opportunities in the agribusiness world are many," says Elmer, "But the

ZIMMERMAN: "In five years I've gone from a Greenhand to the Star Agribusinessman of America, and from a farm boy looking for a job to the owner of a farm automation dealership. I did it with hard work and by taking advantage of the same opportunities that every FFA member has everyday."

people who will have successful careers are the people who prepare themselves to meet the challenges and take advantage of every opportunity that comes along."

Elmer says he set his goal to become Star Agribusinessman of America one day shortly after he had joined FFA as a junior. "It was a lot of work and a lot of catching up to the people who had already been in FFA for two years," he says, "but that just goes to show you can accomplish anything if you are willing to work and make sacrifices.

"In five years I've gone from a Greenhand to the Star Agribusinessman of America; and from a farm boy looking for a job to the owner of a farm automation dealership," he reflects. "I did it with hard work and by taking advantage of the same opportunities that every FFA member has everyday."

Tom Lichty, Star Agribusinessman of the central region agrees with Elmer on the point about hard work. "Besides the physical work, it takes a lot of mental work," Tom says.

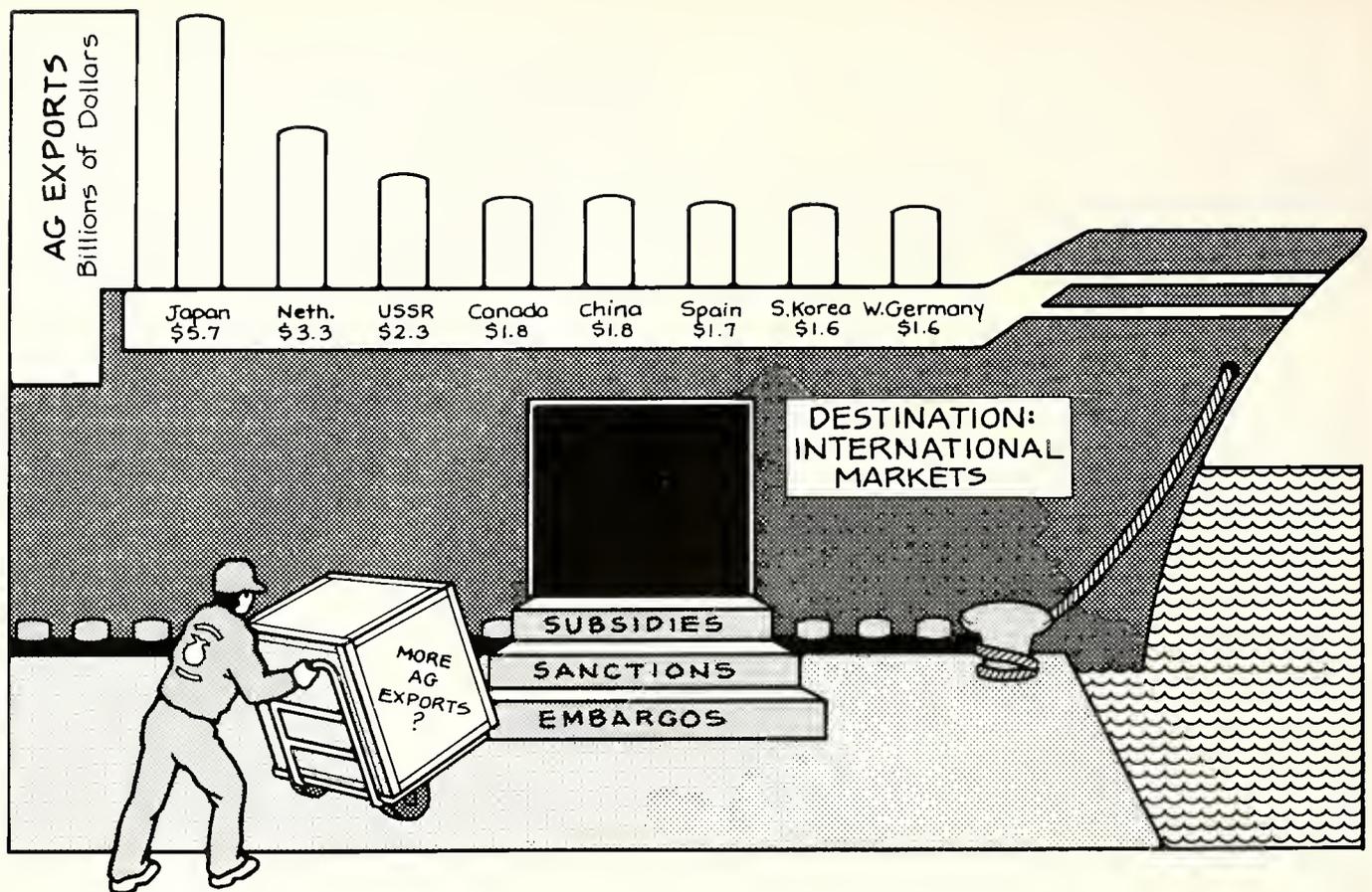
Tom, from Monroe Center, Illinois, has worn several hats throughout his FFA career, but almost all relate to his main love for horticulture. He and his brother started a lawn-mowing business in 1973 when his family moved off the farm, and after two years Tom started business on his own. Before long he was taking care of 40 lawns and was manager of the Monroe Center Park District. "At that time I was up to two tractors and one employee," he says.

Tom took a job as a welder to earn money needed for training at a nearby community college. He worked at the college grounds, continued to take care of the park, and added another hat as groundskeeper of the Monroe Center Cemetery. He graduated from Kishwaukee College in 1982 with a 3.995 (out of 4.0) grade point average, and was named outstanding horticulture student. Since graduating he's set up his own landscaping firm, bought ground to start a nursery, and does residential and commercial landscaping, designing, maintenance and installation. He also works for a landscaping company in a nearby city.

Tom says the biggest odds he faced as he developed his horticulture program were finances. "I have done it all on my own without help from the family," he explains. "I got my first loan when I was 12 years old to buy my first tractor.

"A person has to be careful when borrowing money so he doesn't become over-extended," Tom adds. "But as the saying goes, you have to spend money to make money, and at times, borrowing money to start a business is not only helpful, but essential."

One of Tom's successful business methods is simply following a game
(Continued on Page 35)



Data source: USDA

U.S. exports to top eight foreign markets for fiscal year 1982. Embargos, subsidies or sanctions are just examples of the question marks that can cause markets to expand or dry up.

What You Should Know About Ag Exports

Agricultural exports are becoming more and more critical to the U.S. farm economy, but their importance may also affect you and your future

By Michael Wilson

SOMEWHERE in the Midwest, a grain farmer watches corn prices rise on his local grain elevator price board. He smiles; now he'll get the price for his corn needed to cover costs and make a profit. He quickly locks in his order to sell.

Meanwhile, in a country thousands and thousands of miles away, a huge U.S. freighter carrying American grain is slowly docking. And although that Midwestern farmer may not fully realize or appreciate it, that ship carrying U.S. grain may be one reason his corn price went up.

The subject of agricultural exports makes big news these days, both at home and abroad. Not all the news is good, either. Some consumers here in the United States feel that the more farm

products exported, the higher food prices will be at the grocery store. But they often don't realize that expanded markets—which is what ag exports are all about—makes for lower per unit costs to the farmer, who passes on savings to the consumer when he produces more.

The problems are no less difficult abroad: as the world grows smaller, countries competing for the same ag markets routinely collide, sometimes causing international tensions—even between friendly nations.

Currently the United States and the European Economic Community (ten free European nations) are locked nose to nose in an on-going controversy over European subsidized farm exports. U.S. farmers have a big stake in the outcome of the dispute, because the EEC as a

whole makes up the largest overseas market for U.S. farm products (around 20 percent in 1980).

A *subsidy*, in this case, is government funds which aid or support farm prices. High price supports and no production controls have resulted in a sharp increase in farm output for EEC countries. The general policy of the EEC is to dispose of surpluses in world markets using whatever subsidy is necessary to give them a price advantage.

The subsidies have worked. Although the United States is the world's leading ag exporter, with \$43.8 billion of sales in 1981, experts are calling for a decrease in 1982 figures—the first decrease in U.S. ag exports in 13 consecutive years.

Secretary of Agriculture John Block, denouncing EEC subsidies as "trade

The National FUTURE FARMER

protectionism," retaliated early this year with a U.S. subsidized sale of wheat flour to Egypt, amid cries of foul play from the Europeans. But the troubles aren't confined to our friends in Europe: on the other side of the world, our country is also having trade disagreements with Japan. Although Japan is the United States' largest single customer, the Japanese continue to restrict a long list of U.S. farm products.

Like any argument, there are two sides to the story. Both EEC and Japan say they're merely trying to protect their own farmers; and, like other countries, are still cautious about their dealings with the United States since the U.S. grain embargoes of the '70s. Many countries feel that the United States, because of political tension with Russia, is not a reliable source for trade.

The threats being tossed back and forth across both oceans serve as a reminder of how important exports are to agriculturally-oriented countries. But why are ag exports so important to FFA members? There are a number of reasons, but these three may be most significant:

- **American farmers, particularly in recent decades, have depended on exports to offset an explosion of American farm productivity.** Since 1965 U.S. exports of wheat, corn and soybeans have risen an incredible 626 percent, according to Thomas Warden, USDA ag economist.

Currently American farmers sell almost 40 percent of their products overseas. If that figure were to topple it could pull domestic farm prices down with it, perhaps mortally wounding a farm community already crippled from recession blues. In other words, ag exports have a direct affect on farmers' prices; the more exports there are, the stronger most commodity prices will be in the United States. That's important to know if you plan to participate in this farm community in the years ahead.

- **Ag exports have an indirect affect on agribusinesses and the non-farm economy in general.** For example: a machinery company makes more equipment because farmers are working more land to grow crops for export. As a result, the people who make tractor tires, gears, pulleys, tractor seats, spark plugs and a host of other items—have more work; the country employs more people. The same principle applies to people who work in the fuel industry, transportation industry, fertilizer, sales—the list is endless. Money generated from farm exports can cause a ripple effect throughout the entire U.S. economy, an economy which you'll be involved in someday.

- **Ag exports contribute to a favorable balance of trade.** According to U.S. Department of Agriculture, ag trade contributes a surplus of more than \$10 billion to the total U.S. trade account each year. Looking at it another way, the \$23 billion surplus of ag exports over ag imports in 1980 was enough to cover

nearly one-third of the United State's oil bill that year. Or still another view, that ag trade surplus was enough to offset all U.S. imports of Datsuns, Toyotas, VWs and other foreign cars, plus all the cameras, clocks, watches, TV sets and radios we bought from other countries—plus \$3 billion left over.

As a Future Farmer, that fact adds considerable importance to the role you will play as you pursue a career in agriculture.

What's Ahead

Most experts agree that the trend will continue toward more exports if the American farm economy is to grow. But it's important that you, as an FFA member, be able to explain why exports are important—not only to *your* livelihood, but for the good of the entire country.

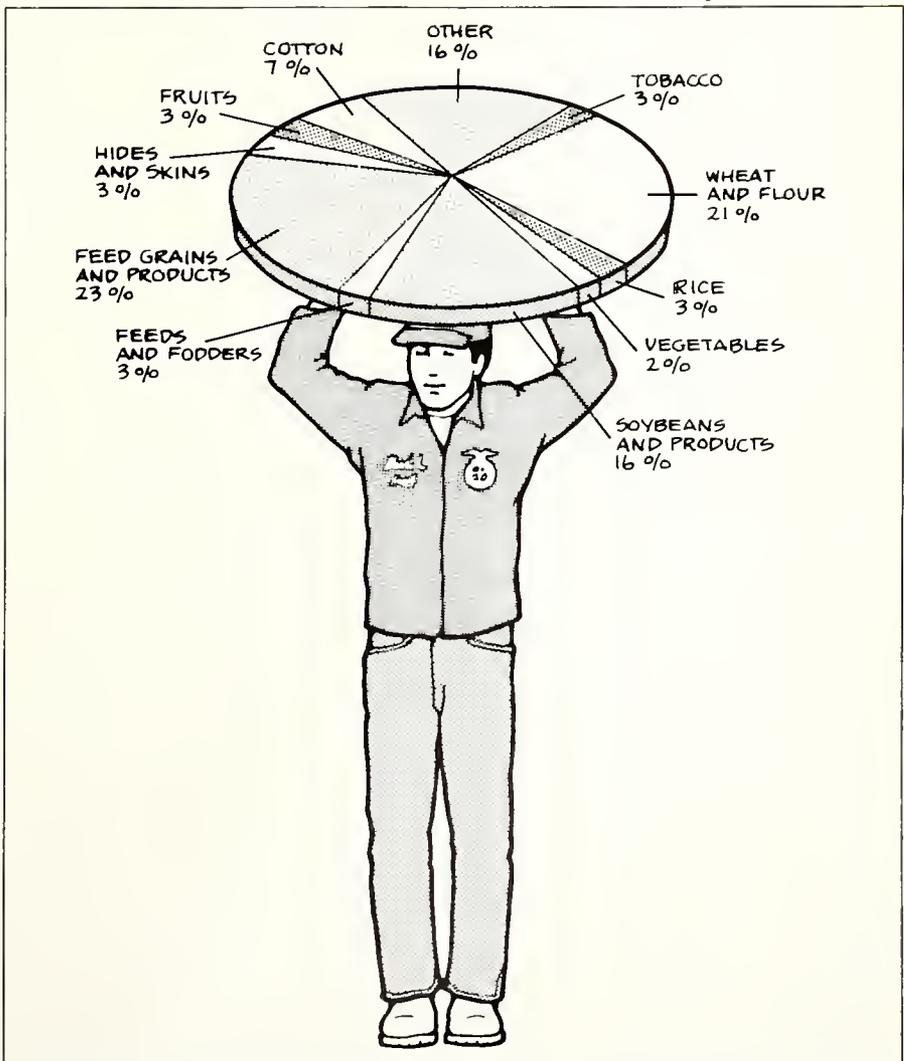
One good example lies in the field of politics. Chances are good that the adult representatives elected in your area or state are from an urban community—with little or no knowledge of the role ag exports play in the nation's economic health. In that case, you or your FFA chapter as a whole might consider mak-

ing a personal visit or writing a letter to those political representatives whom you feel would benefit from the information. Don't feel timid—most office-holders welcome input from their constituents. It's their job to listen to the people who elected them, and it's your job to make sure they know what your interests are.

One way to become familiar with the issue of ag exports is to listen to radio and television farm reports, and read magazines or other resources found in your school library or FFA chapter. But remember, ag exports are a constantly changing scene—so make sure your information is current.

One way to make exports mean more to you is by watching for news of international trade agreements, embargoes or disputes—and trying to detect any connection between that news and price changes at your local grain elevator, livestock market or futures market.

It's no secret the subject of ag exports is a complicated one. But you will surely benefit, both now *and* in the future, if you grasp just how important the subject is. You'll be a better farmer or agribusinessman in the future—and a more informed citizen today. ●●●



In 1982 grains and soybeans accounted for two-thirds of the total \$39.1 billion in farm exports. Each \$1 billion in farm exports is said to create 35,000 U.S. jobs.

FFA Visits With The Secretary of Agriculture

As leader of the world's most powerful agricultural nation, former FFA member John Block faces a simple—but mighty—challenge: “to safeguard the interests of agriculture in the halls of government.”

Editor's Note: When Secretary of Agriculture John Block took office two years ago as head of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, his work was cut out for him: bringing a farm economy out of a seemingly endless economic slump. But based on the “PIK” program and his strong stand on aggressive U.S. farm exports, (see related stories) Secretary Block's leadership is already being felt just two short years later. The message is clear: he's taking his job of protecting American farmers and agribusinesses seriously.

Secretary Block, 47, has always been active as a champion for agriculture, partially due to his own experience on the farm. An owner and operator of a family farm near Galesburg, Illinois, he farmed a 3,000 acre farrow-to-finish hog operation, now managed by his father and son. He headed the Illinois Department of Agriculture before his appointment as a cabinet member two years ago. His interests in FFA run just as deep.

Secretary Block was a Greenhand at the Knoxville, Illinois, FFA Chapter when the chapter was first formed in 1949. His first SOE program was raising Duroc hogs; he later added corn and an Angus cow and calf to his learning experience. He was active in showing hogs at local fairs and participated in public speaking contests.

The Secretary holds the FFA's State Farmer degree, serving as a Section President during his years as a Future Farmer. He addressed over 20,000 FFA members during the 1982 National FFA Convention in Kansas City, Missouri, last November. This spring the Secretary agreed to talk with us for a few minutes about his experiences in FFA and his goals as leader of this country's agricultural industry:

FUTURE FARMER: To begin with Mr. Secretary, tell us what your position is on vocational agriculture and vocational education; how do they relate to American agriculture?

BLOCK: Well, I personally grew up involved in receiving benefits from the vocational agriculture programs in the state of Illinois. I have great respect for vocational agriculture and the programs provided to students and young people across the land.

I not only feel they've been useful historically, but I feel they'll be useful in

the future. There's a large demand for those who are interested in agriculture.

FUTURE FARMER: In your career, for example, do you feel you've benefited from your vo-ag and FFA background?

BLOCK: There's no question about that. Early on I was involved in not only exhibiting livestock, but participating in speech contests, parliamentary procedure contests...all those exercises are educational and useful in developing leadership and self-confidence.

FUTURE FARMER: You were involved in FFA at Illinois as a section president, and you mentioned livestock judging and speech contests; what were your favorite activities?

BLOCK: ...Exhibiting livestock. (pauses) They all were favorites, I don't know which one you would underscore as the most favorite. It's fun to win (laughs). But we realize that we can't always win, too.

FUTURE FARMER: When you were an FFA member did you ever dream that some day you would become Secretary of Agriculture?

BLOCK: I would never dare have dreamed such a wild fantasy as that.

FUTURE FARMER: Can you tell us what some of your goals are, specifically, which perhaps might help young farmers become established?

BLOCK: One of the broadest goals really, is to focus the attention in Washington, in the administrative branch as well as the legislative branch, on the problems of agriculture; so that we can work towards solving some of those problems. We're solving the surplus problem with the payment-in-kind program, which is bold, revolutionary. We're more aggressive in the export field than we've ever been before, and we have moved to re-establish the United States as a reliable supplier in the eyes of the world.

It's important that the agricultural industry and the contribution it makes to the country be addressed effectively; and that we don't just see these issues sit around on the table with no action. I'm convinced we're seeing action. We're also seeing the total agricultural industry pull together strongly in working together cooperatively. I hope that I've had something to do with this.

FUTURE FARMER: Can you tell us what is being done at USDA to preserve the family farm? Is this a high priority item?

BLOCK: Preservation of the family farm is a goal we always strive for. I think all of us in agriculture do. I feel my efforts to preserve it are just an effort to give agriculture adequate safeguards and protection, and turn it (agriculture) around during times which are about as difficult as we've seen since the depression. And if we're successful in turning this industry around to prosperous times again, we're going to save a lot of family farms that otherwise would not succeed.

FUTURE FARMER: Do you feel it's necessary to save the family farm?

BLOCK: Yes. It's the most efficient production unit in the world. We've already demonstrated that. Contrary to what some people might suggest, American agriculture is a family farming industry. It's not, by any stretch of the imagination, a corporate industry. It's a family farming industry and that's one reason why it's as successful as it is. The farms today are bigger and they may involve more than one individual in that family, brothers, fathers, sons—but they're still family farms.

FUTURE FARMER: Can you tell us the latest on subsidized export markets? What are your feelings about that?

BLOCK: We in the United States really don't believe in the idea of subsidizing agricultural exports. We abhor the thought. But we have resorted to it,

(Continued on Page 24)



Photos by Bill Staggs

Above, Secretary of Agriculture John Block, right, talks with Michael Wilson of *The National FUTURE FARMER* magazine during an interview at the Secretary's USDA office in Washington, D.C.



Block

(Continued from Page 23)

especially in the case of our wheat flour sale to Egypt, in order to regain a market that the European community had taken away from us with their own export subsidies. And we may find it necessary to target another market in the future.

But we would hope that we could move the world toward fair trade, open trade, which will benefit all of mankind, more so than protectionist policies or subsidized exports.

FUTURE FARMER: Do you see the ag export issue as one of your biggest goals?

BLOCK: It has to be; we're selling two out of every five acres to other countries. If we don't keep those export channels open and we see some of those markets dry up, what do we do with the grain?

FUTURE FARMER: So the big overall picture, as far as you're concerned, is protecting the American farmer?

BLOCK: The big overall issue has to be markets; demand for our commodities, both internationally and domestically. The payment-in-kind program is designed to reduce supplies, designed to cut production at a time when we just cannot find a way to market production if we continue to produce full-tilt. That's

the only reason it is being implemented. The long range objective is to produce—that's what we're good at.

FUTURE FARMER: If you were an FFA member today, Secretary Block, and you were planning a career in farming—in light of low commodity prices and rising foreclosures—would you be optimistic?

BLOCK: Certainly I would be optimistic. Agriculture is an industry that offers

BLOCK: "If we don't keep those export channels open . . . what do we do with the grain?"

more hope, more opportunity and more growth potential than any other industry in the country. We have fundamentals going for us that many other industries do not have.

First of all, we're already efficient; we know how to produce; we don't have to "retool" to figure out how to produce efficiently, we already are. Secondly, we have a natural, ready made growth market, domestically and internationally. People are going to have greater needs; there'll be more demand for food and fiber in the years to come.

Those are two fundamentals of any healthy industry. ●●

PIK—

Putting the Future Back into Future Farming

It's been touted by experts in ag business and education, praised as welcome relief by government leaders and hailed as the most popular farm program ever by countless farm magazines and talk shows. From all the attention it's getting, you'd think E.T. had actually landed in someone's cornfield.

"All the attention" is for P-I-K, call letters for USDA's bold new Payment-In-Kind program, introduced last January by Agriculture Secretary Block and President Reagan. In a nutshell, the plan behind PIK is simple: in return for not planting corn, wheat, cotton and rice, farmers will receive up to 95 percent of their typical yield in the form of surplus government crops, instead of the usual cash payment.

Farmers' response to the USDA plan was enthusiastic: according to *TIME* magazine, up to 82.3 million acres, or 20 percent of all U.S. cropland lies idle this year—nearly one out of every five crop acres in America. A recent opinion page in *Farm Journal* sums it up: "never...can we recall a price support or acreage diversion program that has won the backing of so many major farm organizations."

The PIK program is important to FFA members as well. "It stands to reason if the program can help boost a sagging farm economy today, it can't help but be a benefit for the future," says National FFA Advisor Byron Rawls. "If it works as proposed, it should enable FFA members to have better opportunities to become engaged in farming and agriculture."

Of course, PIK does have shortcomings. Less crops mean less fertilizer, seed, chemicals and machinery needed by farmers, and sources say farmers will spend about \$5 billion less this year for those items. Farm suppliers have become justifiably nervous; for example, an already depressed farm machinery market has some dealers wondering how long they'll be able to stay in business. Still, most agribusinesses support the program because they feel in the long run it will benefit farmers; and a financially healthy farm customer means a more sound farm economy down the road.

That's good news for any FFA member who plans for an agriculture-related career someday. ●●

Win \$500

Enter Hesston's 1983 Salute to Agriculture Contest for FFA Members!

In 100 words or less, write about the role farmers and ranchers play in improving the economy and standard of living in North America. The message should emphasize the good job they are doing.

\$1500 in Prizes

First Prize:

One Winner - \$500 Cash

Second Prizes:

Two Winners - \$250 Cash

Third Prizes:

Five Winners - \$100 Cash

Winners will be announced at the FFA National Convention in Kansas City in November.

100 finalists receive a FREE Commemorative Belt Buckle of the 1983 National Finals Rodeo!



NEW RULES

Complete rules are available from State and National FFA offices or by writing Hesston Corporation. A formal entry form is not required.

1. Entrants must be bonafide members of the FFA who are in good standing. Each member may submit only one entry.
2. Message must be submitted in approximately 100 words or less stating how farmers and/or ranchers are improving the standard of living and the economy in North America.
3. Entries must conform to the rules of the contest, with the date submitted, name, age, address and phone number of the entrant, and the FFA Chapter legibly

4. Entries will be judged entirely upon their content, which should be original in nature.
5. In case of similar or duplicate messages, the one with the earlier postmark will be declared the winner. All entries become the property of Hesston Corporation.
6. Entries will be judged by a panel of agn-industry executives selected by Hesston Corporation. Judges' decisions are final and not subject to appeal.
7. Entries must be postmarked by Sept. 30, 1983 and mailed to "Salute", Hesston Corporation, Hesston, Kansas 67062.

Hesston Corporation, Hesston, Kansas 67062

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PRIME LINE

Janet Bennion: On The Air

ASK some FFA members about the awards received for hard work and achievements, and they might describe their most recent medal or shiny plaque. Ask the same question of Janet Bennion and she will talk of the long-term value found in experience—work experiences which have evolved into a very promising career as a free-lance ag journalist for the Tooele, Utah, FFA member, from Vernon.

“Writing is my first love, but agriculture is what sparks me to write,” says Janet, who recently ended a year as state FFA vice president. Janet’s first love is raising cattle, and she wants to work in cattle ranching after she gets her college degree from Utah State University. She’s currently working an internship in Nebraska for a large cattle company.

But she also wants to pursue a “side career” as an agricultural writer. Her fondness for communication is evident in a long list of experiences, including both radio and print journalism.

Interestingly enough, her FFA advisor, Leland Beckstrom, of Tooele FFA, provided Janet with her first spark in the communications field. “As a junior in high school, my advisor asked me to do an article writing about FFA activities,” she says. “They turned out pretty good and I liked doing it. So I joined a journalism class and since I specialized in agriculture, decided to go in that direction.”

Last year Janet was News Editor of KTLE radio in Tooele, Utah, where she reported, wrote and broadcast primarily agriculture stories. She was given her own “Community Forum” talk show and often invited local Tooele agriculture officials as guests. Janet also wrote feature stories for the *Deseret News*, one of the largest newspapers in Utah, as well as feature work for the smaller newspaper, the *Herald-Journal*.

Janet’s communication activities have broadened since she became a freshman at Utah State University last year. She wrote about agri-chemical theories and experiments that affect Utah farmers at Albion Laboratories in Clearwater, Utah. As USU ag-communications coordinator, Janet is in charge of writing all the news on the agriculture college campus which is sent to newspapers all over the state. She also worked as a writer/broadcaster for KUSU FM in Logan, Utah, worked for the USU Ag Education Department, and has interviewed such political figures as Utah Governor Scott Matheson and Utah Senator Orrin Hatch.

In her spare time, Janet acts as junior partner in the Bennion family’s 200-

head cattle ranch. Through it all, the simple but sound practice of collecting wisdom through experience has paid off handsomely. Janet sums it up: “I want to develop my skills and expertise in all areas of public expression, radio, newspaper, magazine, television and beyond. To do that effectively, I concentrate on the subject that means the most to me: agriculture.”



Janet wrote and broadcast several agricultural stories as news editor of KTLE radio in Tooele, Utah.



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Above, National Officers Bruce Kettler, left, and Wendell Jeffreys roll out the FFA banner shortly after landing in Japan. Below right: It's not exactly "E.T.," but National Officer Bryan Stamps finds one way to say "hello" anyway.

What Does "FFJ" Stand For?

You guessed it—the Future Farmers of Japan. With your National FFA Officers as tour guides, we pay a friendly visit to our Future Farmer friends across the Pacific.

FEW FFA members get the opportunity to see firsthand what Future Farmers are like in other countries. But that's just what your National FFA Officers did in February when they flew half way around the world to visit with members of the "FFJ"—the Future Farmers of Japan.

Nogei Agricultural High School, in the Tokyo suburbs, serves also as the headquarters for the Future Farmers of Japan organization. Although Nogei was not typical (due to its suburban location) the school was a good chance to see FFJ and vocational agriculture at work. Wendell Jeffreys, western region FFA vice president, recalls the excitement as the FFA officers arrived: "We were met by the local officers, the National FFJ President, and the faculty of Nogei High School," Wendell says. "They were excited, and we were excited. We were anxious to meet the students.

"We learned that the school was founded in 1899 with only a few students," he adds. "Today the enrollment is 474—211 boys and 263 girls.

"We toured the departments, took part in a traditional tea ceremony, visited

classes and saw the gardens and greenhouses where FFJ members have their projects."

Cara Doyle, vice president from the central region, adds: "We were overwhelmed with the many gifts presented to us. We were touched by the love and warm hospitality they showed us."

The national FFA officers found that FFJ members and Japan's agricultural high school teachers honor FFA as the "mother" organization. The Japanese respect the help and assistance of American agricultural educators like Dr. Ralph Canada, who helped organize FFJ in 1950.

Just as there are differences in vocational agriculture between the two countries, so also are there differences between FFJ and FFA. One difference is that there is no FFJ jacket—the distinguishing mark of any FFA member. All high school students in Japan wear a uniform: black trousers and black jacket with military type collar.

Other differences between the two groups became apparent throughout the national officers' tour, which was spon-



sored by Mitsui and Company as an FFA Foundation special project. For example, the average teacher to student ratio in Japan is 1 teacher to 18 students. Nogei High School's 474 ag students calls for a teaching staff of 26 ag teachers.

All students are members of FFJ, and all have Supervised Occupational Experience (SOE) programs. The majority of students live on farms, and the average farm for ag students at Nogei is .5 hectares (just over one acre).

Every agricultural high school in Japan has a land laboratory with livestock, dairy, poultry, fruits and vegetables. Twenty percent of the FFJ members will someday have careers as farmers.

Another significant difference is the number of hours spent in school each year. A typical school year in Japan begins in April, with first exams in mid-July. Second term begins in September, and ends with December exams. Third term begins in January and ends with final exams in March.

One difference, which would probably be difficult for most American students

(Continued on Page 36)



IT DOESN'T TEAR UP THE NATION. IT TEARS UP A STATE.

AND WHO'S THERE TO HELP PUT IT ALL TOGETHER?



The Army National Guard of Kansas. Or Mississippi. Or wherever that emergency may be.

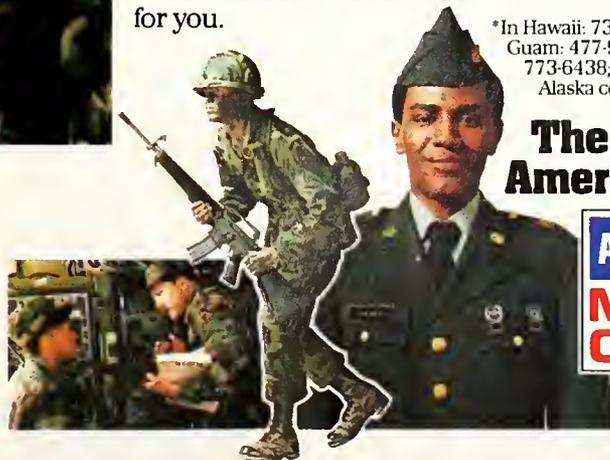
You see, the Guard is the military branch that's first to come to a state's rescue.

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**The Guard is
America at its best.**



Careers in Agriculture

Graduation and the work world may seem a long way off. But that's no reason to postpone thinking about your future and the kind of career to pursue. This is The National FUTURE FARMER's third in a series of stories designed to inform you about career opportunities in agriculture.

Ag Finance

By Shirley Jones

AGRICULTURAL finance. Sounds terribly complicated, doesn't it?

Such words conjur visions of endless hours hunched over a calculator in a tiny room by a two-inch by two-inch window and 13 year's worth of old *Wall Street Journals* gathering dust on the floor.

Let's zap that image right now: ag finance is a field with numerous possibilities. You could make farm loans for a rural or city bank; work for the Farm Credit System in an association or district office; join a government agency like the Farmers Home Administration; work on the floor of a commodity exchange like those in Kansas City, Chicago or New York. You might even end up in another country as a Peace Corps volunteer or as an employee of an international banking firm. Each group has positions for ag finance majors.

Lest we've made ag finance sound easy, let's back up for a moment. As in most careers, doing a good job in ag finance takes study and ability, plus the desire to do a good job.

First, you'll study. C. B. Baker, professor of agricultural economics at the University of Illinois, says a natural choice is a four-year college degree in agricultural economics, with as many courses as possible in subjects like finance or banking. Many junior colleges offer courses in agricultural finance. Realize, however, that institutions with only a few courses may limit the types of positions you would be eligible for. Most jobs require a wide range of skills.

Baker says positions in ag finance may require any or all of the skills listed below; some will look familiar, because they're the same things you do as a part of record keeping in your SOE (supervised occupational experience) program.

- Capital budgeting—deciding if and when to make an investment, putting together budgets and predicting cash flow.

- Cash flow management—being able to pay the bills.

- Debt Management—deciding whether to borrow, how much, and where.

- Tax Management—what kinds of insurance to buy, managing your liquidity (the balance of cash at your disposal).

- Financial Markets—analysis of



mortgages, securities and other financial instruments.

Besides these basics, Baker says speaking, writing and mathematical skills are crucial. And, as simple as it sounds, he says, "Keeping curious about the world." Students can't afford to ignore current events, since such knowledge marks them as intelligent, thoughtful people.

With college degree in hand, you'll next explore "the work world." To list all the possible career paths in ag finance

The most important ingredient in ag finance, Mr. Murphey believes, is initiative. "That means you're willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done," he says. 'Whatever it takes' includes getting practical experience, no matter what your job.

would be impossible here. However, many positions have similarities. To discover what they are, one has only to look at a person like Tommy Murphey.

When Mr. Murphey was FFA chapter president a few years back in Wingo, Kentucky, he knew he liked public speaking, numbers and people. Those early interests led him through a college program where he majored in agriculture, math and had extensive public speaking courses. Today, he's senior vice president of the Jackson Purchase Production Credit Association (PCA) in Mayfield, Kentucky.

Mr. Murphey's position oversees loan activity for six PCA field offices and works with loan officers. The *loan officer* position, Mr. Murphey says, is one many college graduates pursue. They process loan applications, go to the courthouse and check records, travel to the farms and look at collateral to make

sure it was correctly reported and close the application process.

Mr. Murphey's position is more advanced. As senior vice president, he also works with loans that are in trouble, helps with repayment plans and oversees field office activity.

There's a great deal of people contact in Mr. Murphey's job —about 3,000 persons, he says. "It's never boring, because everyone's problems are different. We have a big influence on their lives."

Along with the influence comes stress. "With the economy like it is, we have felt the problems of our borrowers very strongly," says the former FFA member. Mr. Murphey says PCAs don't want to serve a farmer for just a few years. "We want our members to succeed and to still be farming when he's ready to retire." Such responsibility brings pressure to the job.

What characteristics are important? To Murphey, trust is a key ingredient. "You must be honest with farmers and know what you're talking about," says Mr. Murphey. "If you don't, they will quickly find out."

Knowing what you're talking about is especially crucial for students who don't have a farm background. A certain confidence, stemming from everyday farm experiences, is required for working with farmers, Murphey believes. Without that confidence, "It doesn't take a farmer long to see that such a person doesn't know what he's talking about."

The problem can be solved if a student is willing to get some farm experience after school, during summers and through voag/ FFA. "Driving a tractor, helping with calving — these may all seem insignificant but are very important. We don't have to know everything, such as all the technical information," Murphey says. "But we do have to know the basics."

The most important ingredient in doing a good job in ag finance, Murphey

believes, is initiative. That means "You're willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done," he says. "Whatever it takes" includes getting practical experience, no matter what your job.

Much of Murphey's valuable experience came from FFA involvement.

"You don't realize it at the time, but later you find out how valuable it all was," he says, referring to competition and his work as an FFA officer. Public speaking is a good example: Mr. Murphey's participation won him more than awards—he gained a background in communication which he now uses on the job every day.

"This is not an original thought," he says, "but I believe 'You must earn the right to talk.'" Tommy Murphey has earned that right, and a good job to boot because of his interest and initiative.

If such a position interests you, contact the placement or admissions office of your state university or local college. Your FFA Advisor may also be a good source. ●●●

Shirley Jones is a former FFA State Officer, WCP counselor and National FFA information intern. She currently works as Communications Manager for Agri Business Associates in Indianapolis, Indiana.

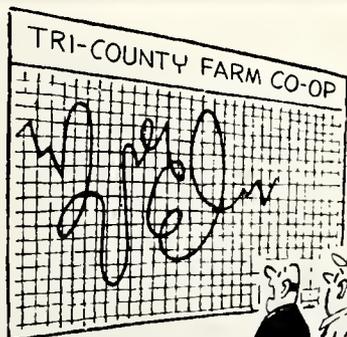
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"We've had a funny sort of year up to now."

New in Agriculture



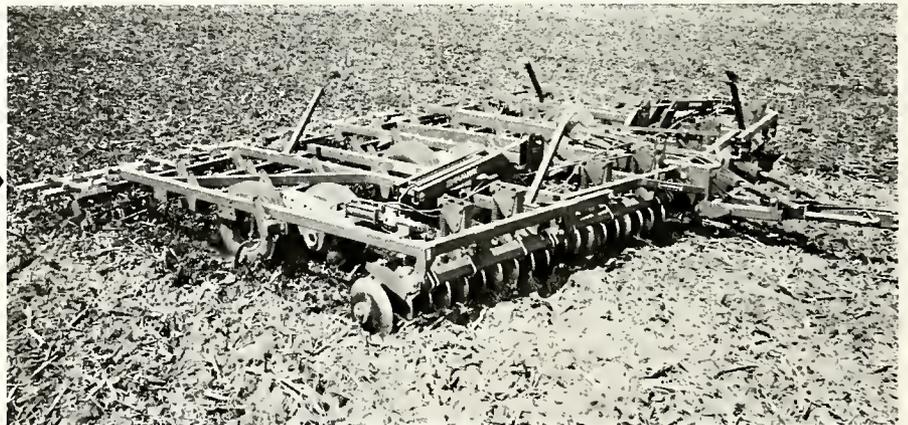
Right, the 3100 Series Landsman is a new tillage implement designed specifically for single-pass seedbed preparation and chemical incorporation introduced by Krause Plow Corporation. The tillage tool will save fuel and conserve soil by making less passes over the field than with conventional tillage.



Above, the latest addition to the Big Wheel Hog Feeder line from Osborne Industries, Inc. is the model RN2, specially designed to feed about 25 head in the 2 to 7 week age range. The RN2 is suited for deck or pen nurseries and its round design eliminates feed "dead spots." Capacity can be expanded from 30 lbs. feed (standard size) to 60 lbs. by special order.



Above, John Deere introduces an exclusive "Bale-Trak" monitoring system as standard equipment on their new 430 and 530 round baler models. A green light on the monitor tells the operator the rear gate is closed, latched and ready for baling. Two dials help direct the driving course, two monitors sense belt slack due to a lack of material, and one monitor tells the operator when the forming bale approaches a pre-set size. Left, oats, corn and other grains can be quickly and conveniently crimped or cracked with the new "crimper/cracker" from the C. S. Bell Company. The device incorporates a cast iron and steel design, greatly reduces feed costs and increases feed volume and digestibility of an animal's diet.



Below, Sperry New Holland introduces Model 316, a new baler combining large capacity with good bale shape and reliability. The tongue, gearbox, plunger and power take-off drive line have all been strengthened. The new baler is available in either twine or wire-tie, features a large feeder opening and can be equipped with either belt type or hydraulic bale thrower. It's well adapted for automatic bale wagons because it offers the density and uniform bale shape characteristics essential for trouble-free automatic handling.



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For Rick Hogan, Enthusiasm Pays Off

"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." —Ralph Waldo Emerson

FROM all the time and energy Rick Hogan puts into his meat processing and sales skills, one might think he'd thought up that statement himself. In Rick's case, a long-standing belief in the value of enthusiasm and "never giving up" has reaped many rewards—both in FFA and a new career.

Rick, from the Carson Valley FFA Chapter in Gardnerville, Nevada, works as general manager of the Carson Valley Meat Company. He's responsible for "everything from keeping track of the books, running the office to taking care of customers," as he puts it. He's worked

every facet of the meat processing operation, starting at age 14 on the kill floor, skinning and dressing carcasses, and the somewhat unpleasant task of "pulling and salting hides."

He put just as much enthusiasm into FFA when he placed first in the state in meat judging—three years in a row. He also earned state proficiency honors in ag processing, ag sales/service, and was named Nevada Star Agribusinessman. Of all these distinctions, Rick's enthusiasm shines brightest in ag sales.

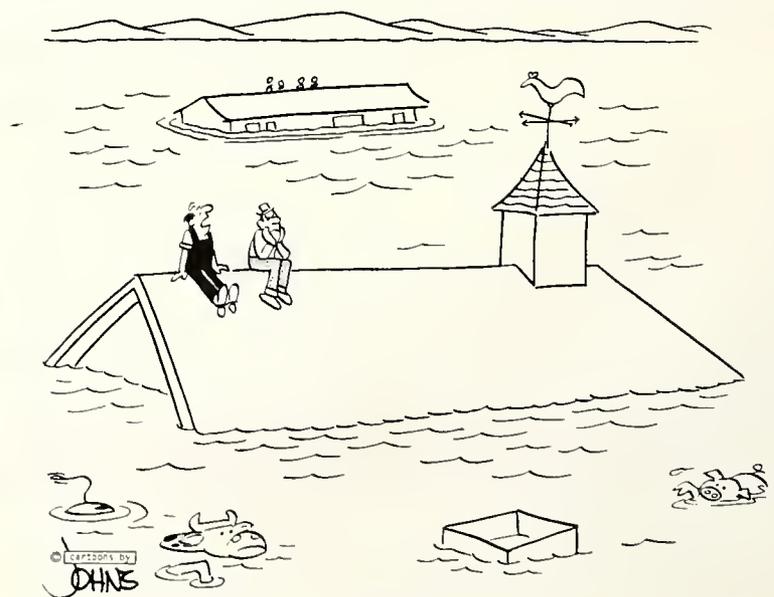
"Everybody I know tells me I have a natural ability in sales," says Rick, taking

a break from behind the company's meat counter. "Being a salesman, I have learned to sell anything, including myself; once you've accomplished that, you can do anything." Rick says an earlier experience in FFA helped him believe in himself and learn not to be discouraged when times get tough.

"The first time I ran for state office I came in seventh, and there are only six officers in Nevada," relates Rick. "That was one of the most devastating things that had ever happened because I wanted to be an officer more than anything at the time. But I learned that you can



Above, succulent cuts of meat line the display shelves at Carson Valley Meat Company, final products of the meat processors' work. Top right, processing carcasses; top left, Rick takes care of a regular customer.



"I still think the basic concept of computerized irrigation is good."

never give up, even if it seems the odds are against you." Rick *didn't* give up; he ended up serving as state treasurer the next year.

Although he values processing and sales skills developed through FFA judging contests and vo-ag classes, Rick says his long-term goal is to become active in sales on a "much broader" scale. "I'm always going to have this skill," he says, "and people are always going to have to eat—so it's always going to be a good trade. I might

continue with this business in the future, but I'd like to explore the possibility of working in sales for a bigger company."

Though he no longer competes, Rick doesn't let his award-winning meat

"Being a salesman, I have learned to sell anything, including myself. Once you've accomplished that, you can do anything."

judging skills go idle. "Now that I'm not judging anymore, the experience I've gained I share with other local chapters by putting on meat judging seminars," says the 20-year-old. He's also teaching

sausage-making courses for the Sierra Education Exchange, and plans to teach a meats economics class in the future. And even though he doesn't plan to be at the Carson Valley Meat Company all his life, Rick says he's not going to forget the skills and enthusiasm that have taken him this far.

"I'll always have butchering and meat processing as a career alternative or as a second job," he says. "Ag processing will always be a part of my life, just as agriculture itself will be a part of my life."

Add to that an all-around enthusiasm for life, and few career outlooks could burn brighter. ●●●

Carson Valley FFA:

Plant Power

Like any other good thing, vo-ag programs do their share of battling and solving problems, whether it be a shortage of funds or a lack of tools for the shop. Few programs have had to worry about bad weather blowing down buildings, though; and it's safe to say that few FFA Chapters have used "plant power" to solve such unusual problems.

Few up until now, that is.

"We built our greenhouse twice—once when it went up originally, and again after it had been blown over by high winds," says Nat Lommori, former FFA advisor at Carson Valley FFA Chapter. Carson Valley FFA is headquartered at Douglas High School in Gardnerville, Nevada. After only 3 ½ years of use, a high wind took its toll on the chapter's greenhouse, leaving nothing but a skeleton.

Fortunately, insurance was able to pay for rebuilding the outside of the structure. "But we needed funds for materials inside the building, like benches, hoses and other horticulture facilities," says Mr. Lommori.

To solve the problem, the 39 Carson Valley FFA members decided on a massive undertaking: selling thousands of bedding plants and strawberry plants to generate income for new greenhouse equipment. In all, Mr. Lommori estimates between 30 and 40 thousand plants were sold, including 4,500 strawberry plants. Most were sold to community residents during an annual "bedding plant" sale, but FFA members also sold plants wholesale to community plant and flower stores.

As a result, the chapter was able to make the necessary equipment purchases, and vo-ag classes in the Douglas High School greenhouse went back to normal. It just goes to show what you can do when you put plant power to good use. ●●●

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Chapter Scoop

by Jack Pitzer

"Agriculture Today" is the title of the *Alpena, MI*, Chapter's new radio program. Aired each week, the show deals with current agricultural issues that effect both consumers and farmers. Members put the entire program together including research, taping and commercials—all in cooperation with the local radio station. Public response has been great and members are having fun too.

N-N-N

During *Elgin, OK*, FFA Chapter's appearance in a local mall, they did a spot for a local ABC affiliate and their morning show.

N-N-N

Dorman, SC, Alumni affiliate sold hot dogs, hamburgers and baked goods to raise funds to use in support of the local chapter.

N-N-N

Reporter for the *Socorro, NM*, Chapter sent word that the FFA had raised \$1,818.90 to contribute to a new van for a local nursing home. The FFA had raised the money by sponsoring a horse-a-thon.

N-N-N

Litchfield, MN, FFA baked ten pies for the faculty during FFA WEEK by invading the home economics kitchen.

N-N-N

An FFA WEEK event sponsored by *Colton, CA*, was a money-pig contest. Each club in the school could have a contestant enter the contest to try to capture a pig in the showing. Each pig was numbered and whoever caught that pig got the corresponding purse with surprise cash amounts. Top was \$20.

N-N-N

Carlsbad, NM, organized an alumni affiliate in February.



N-N-N

Greenhand initiates at *Central Union FFA in Fresno, CA*, had to reach into a pot of warm spaghetti, sour buttermilk, green dye and various other goodies from the officers' refrigerator to find a penny. It was designed to promote thrift and savings.

N-N-N

Harrisburg, SD, Chapter sponsored a chili feed at the conference wrestling tournament and served over 200 people.

The *Emerson-Hubbard, NE*, Chapter had a cookie baking party for Christmas and baked 34 dozen cookies which they shared with local nursing home residents—and had a few themselves for their holiday party. The chapter paid for the ingredients; members did the work.

N-N-N

Each year the *Scituate, RI*, Chapter takes a field trip to a local agricultural operation. This year they went to the Knobbs Stables and to Joe Young's sheep farm.

N-N-N

Three members of the *Waterford, OH*, FFA have been elected to the county junior fair board — **Steve Crammer, Randall Irvine and Joe Campbell.**

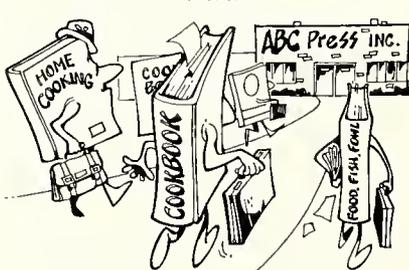
N-N-N

Marsing, ID, FFA said thank you to their local community by sponsoring a float in the city's first annual Christmas parade. Members on board the float tossed candy to the kids along the parade route.

N-N-N

Watertown, TN, Chapter held an evening meeting and sponsored a program on gun safety with a county wildlife officer as speaker.

N-N-N



The *Zillah, WA*, FFA Alumni cookbooks are ready to go to press.

N-N-N

Tom Coleman won \$20 for having an 11-point buck in the *North Crawford, WI*, Chapter big buck contest this fall.

N-N-N

Fort Defiance, VA, FFA purchased an Apple II computer for the ag department to use in figuring feed rations, chapter budget and other useful chapter activities.

N-N-N

When the *Bath County, KY*, new vo-ag facility was dedicated, the local newspapers gave the event lots of coverage and therefore lots of publicity.

N-N-N

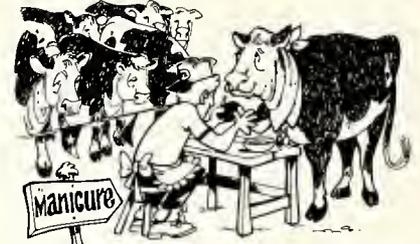
Eric Erler, reporter of *Owasso, OK*, sends word that their local Alumni raised \$6,700 for local members placing in the county premium auction.

Fulton County, KY, Chapter in Hickman, sold carnations to the student body for a \$1 during Valentine's Day. The profits were donated to the American Heart Association.

N-N-N

When *Montevideo, VA*, Chapter visited the FFA Center, they left a copy of a chapter trip form which had questions the members should try to get answers to while on tour such as; Who is Byron Rawls?; Who is the chairman of the National Board?; or Where is the FFA Center located?

N-N-N



An activity of *Pomeroy, WA*, FFA is a steer hoof trimming day.

N-N-N

A special activity of the *Douglas, WY*, FFA during National FFA WEEK was a fire safety demonstration along with one on parliamentary procedure.

N-N-N

Leaders and the advisor from *Talawanda, OH*, Chapter were guests at the *Miami Trace, OH*, Chapter banquet.

N-N-N

The major fund raising event for *Talawanda, OH*, FFA Alumni is a consignment auction. They combine it with a pork chop roast with the help of workers from the FFA and the contributions of alumni.

N-N-N

An old-fashioned square dance with cakewalks and door prizes is another family event sponsored by *Talawanda, OH*, FFA.

N-N-N

For the third year in a row, *Geddes, SD*, FFA has defeated *Platte, SD*, FFA in the annual volleyball tournament.

N-N-N

In order to increase attendance at chapter meetings, the *Lamar, CO*, Chapter puts the names of all members present in an FFA cap. Then whoever's name is drawn gets to keep the cap.

N-N-N

It would make great news for other chapters around the nation if more reporters or officers from some states would send in news for Chapter Scoop-like Texas, and Illinois, and Indiana, and Massachusetts, and Alabama.

Beating Odds

(Continued from Page 19)

plan. "You have to know where you want to be in a month, a year, five years or ten years," he says. "After you decide your goals, you have to work out a strategy to reach your objectives. Remember to be practical in setting goals, but set them high enough that you have to push hard to reach them."

"My FFA program began a few years before I was in FFA, thanks to some smart planning by my parents," says Clay Christensen, Star Agribusinessman of the western region. Clay's parents loaned he and his other brothers and sister money towards purchasing a farm. The Christensen family farms 2,400 acres of wheat and milo. In addition, Clay owns several head of feeder cattle and a cow/calf set-up. "Probably the secret ingredient of our operation is the ability for our family to work in partnership," says Clay. "Together we can do much more than any one of us can do alone."

The Christensen family opened up a Massey Ferguson dealership in 1975 when Clay was a Greenhand in FFA. Clay worked in practically every aspect of the farm machinery dealership, and by 1977 had saved enough money to buy into the business. "The main reason we started the implement business was to

get our own implements at lower price," he explains, "but today the agribusiness enterprise is our main business."

Clay now concentrates his efforts on sales and management of the operation, and tries to utilize his agricultural economics and accounting degrees earned from Oklahoma State University this year. He was recently named one of the top ten Senior men at the University.

"I feel that if a young person wants to achieve the American Farmer Degree and the regional or Star Agribusinessman award, he needs to start *now* with this as a goal," says Clay. "To accomplish your goals you need to get active, believe in yourself modestly, work hard and be dedicated to your goals but know your personal limits.

"If you work hard enough with both your mind and your back, I believe you can accomplish your goals."

Tracy Vicary, 22-year-old Star Agribusinessman of the southern region, lives on a row-crop and hog farm in west Tennessee. "I began my SOE program in 1975 with one beef calf," reflects Tracy, "it has since grown to a 60-sow herd plus 250 feeder pigs, several acres of wheat, corn, milo and soybeans on land which I either purchased or rent."

Unlike the other Stars, Tracy used his interest in agribusiness as a way to gain financial resources and experience before starting farming. He was employed on a dairy and crop farm, and was often

given complete managerial responsibility. He also worked as a herdsman for Gro-Lean Gilts, and as a custom fertilizer and chemical applicator for Southern Milling Company. His goal is to own or manage an agribusiness while continuing a farming program of his own.

"I started off from scratch," Tracy says. "I built all my hog buildings myself with the skills I learned in FFA and vo-ag courses; doing the job right, while using the least amount of borrowed money possible to get the job done."

Tracy says hard work, long hours and wise decision-making all help make a successful start. But most important, he adds, is "a true love for farming and agribusiness jobs—getting that feeling of satisfaction at the end of the day makes it all worth while."

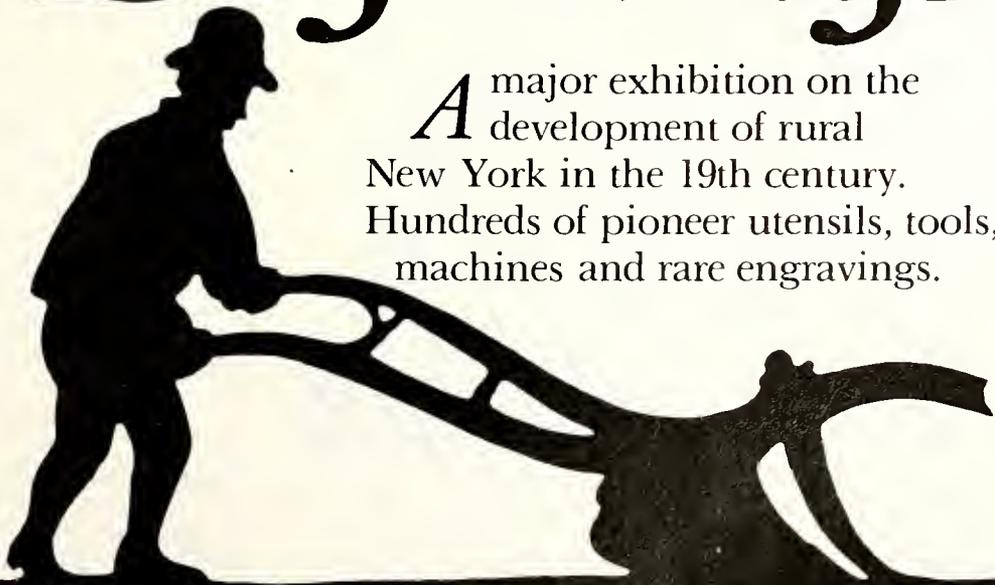
Tracy says one way he beat the odds was by finding an agribusiness area that most closely fit his interests and talents. The next step is showing an employer that you're willing to work hard.

"You should work hard and learn every aspect of the business where you're employed," says Tracy. "Show the employer you're willing to work; give the employer 110 percent.

"When you think you have done all you could possibly do, then do just a little bit more," Tracy adds. "then he will see your desire and maybe will be of great assistance helping you get started in your own business." ●●●

New in Cooperstown

Beginnings



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Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, May 1 - Oct. 31. Free brochures on request

(Continued from Page 26)

to swallow, is that Japanese students go to school Monday through Friday *plus* half a day on Saturdays. There are 12 holidays during a school year—and only six weeks for summer vacation.

But there are similarities between the two country's agriculture youth groups also. FFJ has local chapter officers who conduct meetings and direct the chapter's activities. FFJ has 450 local chapters, 49 "prefectural" (state) associations, 9 regional associations and the national organization, which elects officers and holds an annual national convention. Judging contests similar to FFA are a favorite competitive activity of Japan's 136,000 FFJ members.

"We learned about FFJ, but we also discovered the lifestyle of a typical FFJ family," remarks Bruce Kettler, eastern region vice president. Tajima Agricultural High School, near the sea of Japan, hosted the officers for a weekend.

"The Wada family, and my host 'brother' Kayumi showed me into their home. They showed me my room, and then I was offered the typical Japanese bath. The water must have been 175 degrees Fahrenheit, and it took me 15 minutes just to get into the tub," Bruce exclaims.



Above, the national officer group takes a "Yanmar" tractor for a demonstration during a visit to a Japanese machinery company.

"Then we sat down to a big dinner of sukiyaki beef, vegetables and noodles dipped into a sauce—delicious," he says. "After sharing pictures of my family and FFA projects and trying to communicate, it was soon time for some sleep. In my room there were two big floor pillows lying on mat floors. On top of the pillows was a blanket and a six-inch thick quilt. When I crawled into bed I discovered an electric foot warmer to keep my feet warm.

"It was an exciting weekend," concludes Bruce, "and it wasn't easy to part

with these great friends we had made in just two short days."

Rice, chopsticks, dried fish, raw fish, seaweed, crowded streets, neon lights, rice paddies—just a few differences discovered by National FFA Officers upon concluding their tour of Japan. Western-style clothes, Toyotas, McDonalds, Hondas, Wendys, California citrus, Yanmar tractors—and above all, friendships and smiles—were similarities also discovered by the FFA tour group before finally boarding a jet headed for home in the United States. ●●●

Japan: Observations From the National President

By Jan Eberly,
National FFA President

Japan—half a world away!

In reality, though, only an eleven-hour plane flight separates us from this mystical island country. As our national officer team set forth from Los Angeles for our 12-day International Experience Program, visions of Samurai swordsmen and Buddhist temples raced through our minds—and our anticipation was only beginning.

Our arrival in Japan was marked by the warm hospitality which was to brighten our trip from beginning to end. From the very first day, the Japanese people shared their quiet, yet generous friendship with us; we were showered with gifts, ranging from kimonos and porcelain to green tea.

Our preconceived images of a traditional Japanese society were overcome by the obvious "westernization" of modern Japan. The vast majority of the populace wore American-style clothing and many ate an American "eggs and bacon" breakfast rather



than the traditional hot soup, green salad and vegetable morning meal. The young had many western preferences: Coca-Cola, rock music and hamburgers to name a few.

The Japanese society places a strong emphasis on cleanliness. The streets, cars, and buildings of Tokyo were without exception spotless. Respect for the property and rights of others made theft

and violent crimes seem almost non-existent.

These fine characteristics fostered in each of us a tremendous respect for the consideration and efficiency of the Japanese people, yet we also realized that these traits are the result of necessity. Over 100 million Japanese live on islands approximately the size of California. Seventy-five percent of those islands are mountainous and largely uncultivated and uninhabited. The average Japanese farm is 2 1/2 acres, requiring that the utmost production efficiency be gained from that small amount of land.

Japan is truly to be admired for her tremendous resourcefulness, and yet there is certainly a lesson to be learned from her advancement. If Japan can accomplish so much with so little, what can we in American agriculture—we who have so many resources—accomplish? That answer is up to us—the Future Farmers of America. ●●●



The grand champion ribbon his dad brought him in the hospital sparked Rich to a fast enough recovery from his major operation to get out to the fair.

The Ribbon Was For The Steer But The Championship Was For The Owner

The audience was quickly gaining interest in the flashy black calf that entered the Orange County Fair's livestock showing. The judge also was surprised at the calf's quality as he examined the steer with an approving look. Soon the calf was on top of his class and not a soul left the ringside as the excitement mounted and the class progressed. Everyone was cheering on Rich's calf, except Rich, who wasn't there.

Rich McKee, the owner of Buster, was in the hospital the day his Angus steer was named grand champion at the Orange County fair.

Over two years ago cancer was found in Rich's right arm. After several operations and chemotherapy treatments it was decided the tumor must be removed or the arm amputated. On June 24, 1982, Rich ended his ritual of getting up to take care of his steer and went to the hospital for corrective surgery.

The surgery lasted 15 hours and entailed removing a leg bone and transferring it to his arm. This left Rich in a partial body cast with his right side securely protected. Even though the surgery interfered with his plans for the fair Rich was able to come down a couple of days in his wheelchair. He spent the time with his steer and talking with friends. His father had gone to visit him in the hospital and surprised him with the grand champion ribbon. That

bit of good news obviously helped his recovery.

Buster was led through the auction by John Vertson and Rich also wheeled into the ring. Final price was \$6.00 per pound which wasn't as much as past grand champions sold for, but Rich understands the economic situation of today. The money he received will be used to pay off bills and Buster.

Rich was very involved in basketball and he dreamed of someday playing on a championship team, but sports stopped when the cancer started. Rich graduated from Troy High School with a 3.37 grade point average. It was incredible that Rich could keep his grades up while having to travel to take care of his steer and the many trips to the doctor's office.

Although one steer isn't much for many, Rich faced the challenge of living in an urban area and since his high school did not have an agriculture facility he kept his steer at another high school's ag facility in the Fullerton Union High School district. This made raising a steer even more difficult to maintain due to constantly having to drive over to the other farm.

Rich has learned to cope with his problem and even though he had to give up sports his new goal is to be a veterinarian. Now Rich attends the local junior college and will eventually transfer to a university. *(Nancy Hostert, Southwestern Regional FFA Reporter)*

FFA Leadership Goes To The North Pole

The Alaska FFA held the first annual leadership workshop March 18-20 in Fairbanks. This much needed workshop was funded through a state grant.

Present were delegates from each of the ten chapters from across the state: Ambler, Delta, Homer, Lathrop, North Pole, Palmer, Selawick, Togiak, Wasilla and West Valley. Also present were several advisors and special guest Dr. Karla Kirks, director of agriculture at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

The workshop, organized and presented by the state FFA officers, was designed to enhance the leadership abilities of the delegates. Upon developing their leadership qualities, they were expected to return to their individual chapters and put them to use.

When the delegates arrived, they were assigned to five individual mock chapters with a state officer acting as advisor. Within these mock chapters, the delegates acted out the duties of various offices and performed a regular chapter's functions. With the help of these mock chapters the workshop centered around leadership, communication, and cooperation, included various activities such as: writing up proficiency awards, developing a scrapbook, public speaking, judging contests, information of state activities, reviewing the state constitution, and preparation for the FFA state convention.

The workshop ended with an awards brunch and the hope for an improved FFA state convention and state association. *(Becky Hendricks, Wasilla FFA President; Carol Muncy, Palmer FFA Reporter)*

Showing Off In The Mall

The students from the Camden Tech-East Chapter from Camden County Vocational and Technical Schools, Sicklerville, New Jersey, sponsored and organized a New Jersey Southern Regional Student Flower Show in February.

Seven area schools participated in this first non-state sponsored show. It was run along the lines of our state FFA floral design contest and flower show except that the contest portion was not included. It was open to FFA and non-FFA high school programs that have floriculture as part of their curriculum.

We had over 100 exhibits on display in categories ranging from flowering plants, cactus, foliage plants, hanging baskets,

(Continued on Page 38)



Mini Maintenance

Members of the Beaver River, New York, Chapter have been busy repairing and tuning minibikes belonging to the New York FFA's Camp Oswegatchie. The camp is located in the Adirondack Mountains of northern New York and provides both learning and recreational experience for members. Six minibikes have been completed and returned to service while several others are waiting for parts and the final checkup. (Peter J. Keys, Advisor)

Cutting Up For The Kids

A hog butchering demonstration, a Food For America demonstration, a welding demonstration and a demonstration of FFA are the four activities the classes from Rossville, Indiana, Elementary School watched. Members of the Rossville FFA butchered a hog and ground the meat into sausage. It was Wednesday of the chapter's FFA WEEK and preceded a demonstration on the origin of food.

The elementary students also watched as our members demonstrated how to weld. Then we used a slide show to tell them what the FFA is.

On Thursday we cooked sausage and served it to all FFA members and to the faculty of the high school. (Mark Hinesley, Reporter)

A Triple Dose of Safety

The Hoxie, Kansas, Chapter sponsored a farm and home chemical safety program the evening of January 25 at the high school.

Those who attended the program were assigned to three groups and were rotated to three different safety presentations.

In the farm program, Mr. Chuck Hoagland, a specialist from Kansas Farm Bureau Safety Division, spoke about the dangers of anhydrous am-

monia and gave suggestions of how to handle and use it safely.

In the next discussion about home safety the audience learned the Heimlich maneuver. It was demonstrated for both adults and infants. Also a movie was shown about the need to learn CPR. Hoxie EMT's presented this program.

The final presentation was about chemical first aid. The EMT's also presented this program. They discussed what to do to help a poison victim and where to call for information. They also demonstrated how to treat chemical impurities that get into the eyes. (Annette Reitcheck, Reporter)

A Combine In The School Parking Lot

The first annual Lexington, Tennessee, FFA farm equipment show was designed to allow some of the students not associated with agriculture to view and inspect farm equipment firsthand. Ag students were present all day to explain how the equipment works and provide an estimate of the cost of the machinery and its upkeep.

Most students were quite impressed with the size of the equipment and the conveniences inside. We had six tractors, a combine, and other equipment from local dealers. The show was a great success and we believe it improved the school's awareness of its ag department. (Donald Scates, Reporter)

(Continued on Page 40)

HORSE JUDGING

Tulsa, Oklahoma August 5

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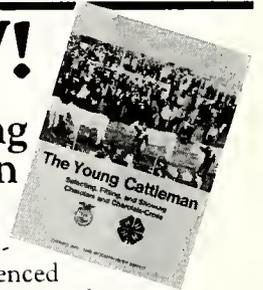
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FFA in Action

(Pick up ACTION from Page 39)

Touch, Feel and Learn

For the second year, Columbus, Texas, FFA supervised a children's barnyard at the local elementary school. The event was held in connection with the annual FFA livestock and poultry show and sale that has been held each spring for the past 40 years.

The purpose of the event was to promote an interest in agriculture in the minds of the children. By talking with the FFA members who were supervising the barnyard, the elementary school youngsters learned where some of their food originates and what foods are eaten by the farm animals that were present.

Children from kindergarten through sixth grades in the elementary school as well as a group from a parochial school all enjoyed the event. Much excitement and enthusiasm arose when the children were allowed to hold some of the animals that were present at the barnyard. The many questions asked by the children showed that FFA'ers had aroused their interest. (Ronda Hancock, Reporter)

A One-Day Ag Class

Each year the Belleville, Wisconsin, FFA holds a farm institute for all the area farmers and businessmen at our high school. We offer a free meal and have featured speakers talk about new ideas in today's agriculture.

This year our program was mainly based around computers on the farm.

Our farm institute also offers a special women's program in the afternoon. We also were proud to have Wisconsin's Alice in Dairyland attending, along with a state FFA officer. (Kevin Long, Secretary)

National Guard To The Rescue

The West Muskingum FFA of Zanesville, Ohio, had to request help from the Ohio National Guard. It seems the chapter's log skidder was taken into the woods, got stuck and then wouldn't start.

So Reporter Todd Hughes contacted his father Sgt. Mike Hughes of the 174th Air Defense Artillery Unit for help. A letter was sent to the adjutant general's office and a reply was given to the local guard unit to go ahead and send a tank retriever to get out the skidder. Sgt. Hughes operated the retriever and helped the chapter not only get out the skidder but helped skid some logs also. Many members were able to ride on the retriever and learn about the National Guard.



National FFA President Jan Eberly delivered a great big thank you message from all FFA members to the top management of Coca Cola in Atlanta. The big thank you card had been autographed by thousands of members and advisors during the National FFA Convention in Kansas City last November. The expressions came from members to say thank you for sponsoring the annual filming of the national convention and making it into a three-year movie to use in spreading the excitement of the convention to members and parents and others who can't be in Kansas City. The sponsorship is made through the National FFA Foundation as a special project. Accepting the big card was Senior Vice President Brian G. Dyson.

National Officer ACTION Update



National FFA Officers get final instructions from the director prior to videotaping a 30-minute program on the FFA for the "Ag USA" program to be telecast on cable TV as well as on 41 other subscribing stations. The show was underwritten by Elanco Products Company of Indianapolis. The officers from the left are Marty Coates, national secretary; Wendell Jeffreys, vice president, western region; Jan Eberly, national president; Bruce Kettler, vice president, eastern region; Bryan Stamps, vice president, southern region; and Cara Doyle, vice president, central region.



Nosy Neighbors

The Charlotte Central Middle FFA Chapter members in Virginia are working with the sheriff's department and other community groups to organize a community watch program. The chapter selected this project as their major Building Our American Communities activity. The students identify their homes as neighborhood watch stations. This tells people in need of assistance that they are willing and able to help them. The sheriff's department has conducted workshops for the members on safety, protection of property and how to inform the authorities of any suspected wrong doing. (Ann Marie Toombs)

A Conservative Idea

Indiana is a state of extreme beauty and splendor with large beautiful woods and lush green fields. But in the last few decades, our state's beautiful natural resources have begun to erode.

Confronted by these problems the county conservation board along with the Indiana State Conservation Service decided to launch a campaign to increase public awareness of the problem. But the board knew they needed manpower.

It was at this time that District Conservation Officer Mike Warner suggested the youth conservation board. He contacted the West Washington, Indiana, FFA members.

In just a few weeks the board was in action helping local farmers restock fish for the farm ponds lost in the bad winter weather.

Later the board began reaching out into the county by beautifying U. S. Highway 60 west of Salem, Indiana. A few weeks later they started a forest improvement project for farmers. (Marvin Skaggs)

A Bike Hike From Wisconsin To Europe

Roger Greidanus is the president of the Delavan-Darien, Wisconsin, FFA Chapter. He lives an active farm life, owns a herd of 67 Suffolks and has an interest in the family cow herd.

Besides his farm interests, he's an ardent bike rider. Earlier this year, Roger decided to take a bike trip to Florida, but his father encouraged him to go abroad to his homeland, the Netherlands.

So Roger took his Japanese bike apart and boxed it up for shipment

overseas. "I have a 18-speed bike and can travel 30 miles an hour," said Roger.

The group put their bikes together and divided up into groups for traveling. Roger had been riding and training strenuously for the trip, so he was in top physical condition.

"It was a very scenic bike trail, but we didn't take much time out to take pictures," said Roger. "I was riding with the fast group and had to keep up the steady pace with them."

"It was a good bike trip and I saw sights I'll never forget." (Wally E. Schulz)

ACTION LINES

- Raise Indian corn to sell.
- Wash the FFA pickup.
- Take your younger brother with you to the contest.
- Offer to help set up for the show.
- Help with lawn care at senior citizens' homes.
- Take your grandparents swimming.
- Stop by to see next year's Greenhands. Welcome them to FFA.
- Get out the homemade ice cream freezer.
- Weed the flower bed in front of city hall or the school.
- Stop by and see how your classmate's SOEP is doing.
- Avoid the rush and order that new FFA jacket before summer ends.
- Challenge the alumni in a tractor driving contest.
- Be sure your chapter says thank you to the dairy farmer who lets you practice judge his cows.
- Gift ideas for your advisor—a new FFA pocket knife.
- Teach someone to show livestock.



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The Joke Page

After boasting of his prowess as a marksman, the hunter took aim at a lone duck overhead.

"Watch this," he commanded his listeners. He fired and the bird flew on.

"My friends," he said with awe, "you are now witnessing a miracle. There flies a dead duck!"

Theresa A. Gartner
Winona, Minnesota

In the course of a sermon, the minister referred to the Old Testament story of Balaam and his talking donkey. He explained that God made the donkey tell Balaam how to accomplish his business better. "You might say," he added, "that the donkey was God's Better Business Burro."

Julie Robertson
Tyler, Texas



"I thought it was a little MUDDY on this side of the field."

A farmer's wife woke her husband early one morning and said, "Today is our 40th anniversary. Let's celebrate tonight and cook one of our best chickens."

The farmer replied, "Why do you want to punish a poor chicken for something that happened forty years ago?"

Jerry Arrington
Waynesville, North Carolina

A tomcat and a tabby were courting on the back fence when the tomcat leaned over to the tabby and said, "I'd die for you, you beautiful thing."

The tabby gazed at him and asked, "How many times?"

Jon Drawdy
Blackshear, Georgia

A farmer was teaching his wife to drive their pickup so she could do some of the driving chores. She seemed to be doing fine, so he sat silently and observed. The dirt road they were on was ending and as they came up to a stretch of blacktop, she shoved the gearshift lever and the car crunched to a sudden stop. Crawling out from beneath the dashboard, the man asked, "What in the world did you do?"

"I just shifted gears," she answered.

"With an automatic transmission?" he asked.

"Sure. I just shifted from 'D' for dirt to 'P' for pavement!"

Wayne Pernicek
Brainard, Nebraska

There was a man and his wife sitting at a table looking at a chunk of bologna with a knife stuck in it. Along came two flies, landed on the knife handle, crawled down and started eating the bologna. Soon they were stuffed and as they flew away they both fell to the floor, dead.

Moral: Never fly off the handle when you're full of bologna.

Peter Kaiser
Stratford, Wisconsin

Q: Do you know why farmers don't wear tennis shoes?

A: Because seed companies don't give them away!

Joan Wittstruck
Denton, Nebraska

A man went into a seafood restaurant and asked for a lobster tail. The waitress smiled sweetly and said, "Once upon a time, there was this handsome lobster..."

Tracy Saylor
Hebron, North Dakota

Timid man to his wife: "We're not going out tonight and that's semi-final."

Champ Isom
Molalla, Oregon

A doctor in the local hospital observed a nurse counting the babies. "What in the world are you doing?" the doctor asked.

"Isn't it obvious," the nurse replied, "I'm taking infancy."

David W. Bartlett
Sacramento, Kentucky

Two men were discussing their wives. One said that every time he and his spouse got in an argument she became historical.

"You mean hysterical, don't you?" said his pal.

"No, historical, she keeps bringing things up from the past."

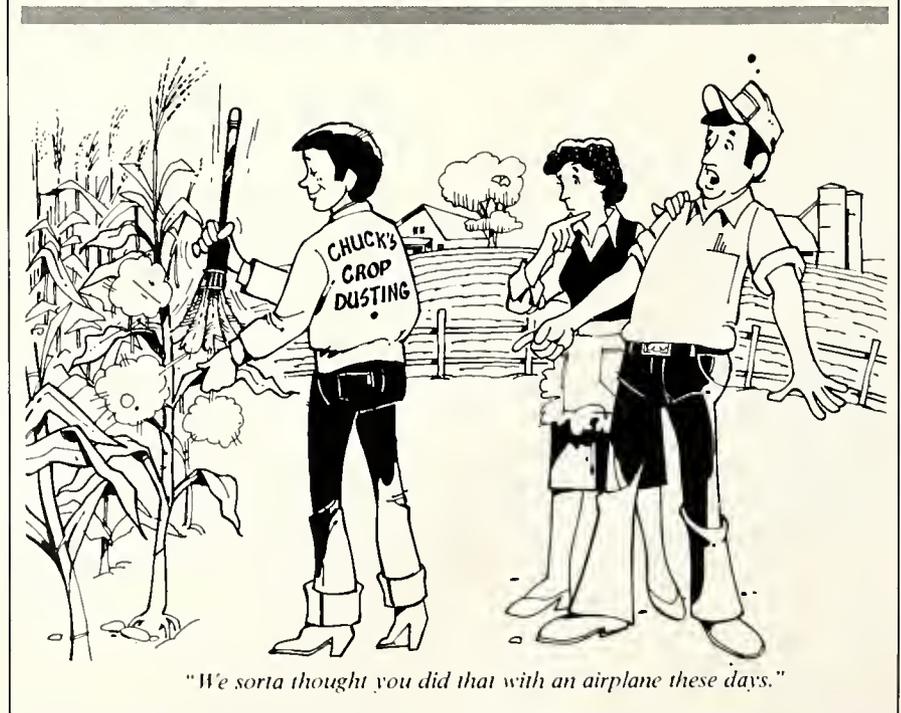
Jon Drawdy
Blackshear, Georgia

Louie: "Say Festus, do you want to buy some of my new seed corn?"

Festus: "Heck no. How can I buy your seed corn when I'm so poor I can't even pay attention?"

Beatrice Bagoshnick
Little Falls, Minnesota

Charlie, the Greenhand



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Today the problems of farmers are different from the ones that faced your parents and grandparents. But one thing hasn't changed: It's still a family business, a way of life as much as it is a way of earning a living. And Double Circle Co-op's role, in maintaining that way of life, is more important than ever.

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As you begin to take over the reins, remember that no one, in this world, can go it alone. You'll need all the help you can get, and the best source of help is your Double Circle Co-op family.



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