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Connecting with Your Community

We live in an exciting time. The world's knowledge base is doubling every 18 months. Soon it will double every 12 months. While this means people are solving all sorts of age-old problems, all of this new information creates challenges of its own, particularly in education and even more forcefully in technical education areas such as agriculture.

How will you prepare your students for the careers of this new century? Many educators are changing their philosophies and methods of teaching. Rather than seeing themselves as traditional "storehouses of knowledge" and teaching their students from that knowledge base, they are becoming "managers of information" and helping their students find the information needed.

Educators are giving students a solid basic education so students can interpret a wide range of information. A key part of this transformation is developing and using partnerships in your local community. Your local program may survive or fail based upon your ability to promote it to your local partners.

This issue of *FFA Advisors Making a Difference* focuses on creating community partnerships and how teachers across the country have developed programs that serve their students and communities.

Take, for example, Doug Munsell, who teaches agriculture in Ulysses, Kansas. Several years ago, the Ulysses FFA Chapter worked with the rodeo club to host a bull ride. The annual event has grown into a well-supported community activity that helps students learn while raising scholarship funds.

"The students are responsible for planning and managing the event," Munsell says. "I teach a lesson on agricultural sales, and the students in that class are responsible for selling the program ads. They learn how to properly present themselves and their product, and how to work with customers."

A student group creates the printed program and purchases advertising from the local print and broadcast media. Another group of students prepares the arena. On average, the event nets about \$6,000 from gate receipts and concessions. These funds are used to support senior scholarships.

This type of community event is just one example of how agricultural education programs can meet a community need and, in turn, develop community support. Turn the page to learn what others across the country are doing to create strong community connections.

Creativity Counts

Agriculture educators are a creative lot when it comes to helping their students learn and meeting

Students from the Ponchatoula FFA Chapter in Louisiana reconnect with their community and its heritage by producing strawberries and selling them at the Strawberry Festival.



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The FFA Mission

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

The Agricultural Education Mission

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

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Watch for the LPS Logo



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

Perspectives

Launching a New Program



By Byron Ernest, Dept. Head
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Lebanon, Indiana

The Lebanon Agricultural Education Program is brand new, having hosted a kick off celebration Aug. 24. The event attracted 427 community members. We have 288 students enrolled in agriculture courses in grades 8-12 with a two-teacher department.

How were we able to spur that much interest in a new program? By creating community partnerships. The success started with visionary administrators who saw the need for all of the student benefits provided by a strong agricultural education program. The administrators partnered with the school board to put the program in place and secure the necessary funding needed to adequately equip it.

Lebanon is fortunate to have outstanding guidance counselors who host class meetings for parents. I was fortunate to be on the agenda and have the opportunity to explain agricultural education. This was an important step in making the parents partners in the process.

Next came the advisory committee, which I believe to be one of the most important partnerships of the agriculture program. I asked several individuals in the agriculture community to give me names of "heavy hitters" in the community. A heavy hitter is defined as someone who can get things done and is creative. Notice I did not say anything about being connected, worth a lot of money, politically correct, etc. All I really wanted were people

who could get things accomplished. If you have ever noticed, though, those who get things done usually do have the connections, ability to get money to fund programs, etc.

Another community partnership was made with a local business, Midland-Impact Cooperative. They wanted to partner with our potential FFA members by paying half of their dues. This gave the students an opportunity to take the FFA organization for a test drive without investing too much in dues. This was a huge hit, with 172 members paying dues by the Aug. 24 deadline.

We are blessed to have a committee of heavy hitters. They did most of the legwork for our kickoff celebration. For example, one of our advisory committee members is a member of our county pork producers' board. He arranged for the Boone County Pork Producers to donate and cook pork burgers for our celebration.

The day after the event I received an e-mail from two Dow AgroSciences scientists who live in the Lebanon school district and wanted to offer their assistance in the classroom to help teach biotechnology. Are these "heavy hitters" or what?

Always remember there are a lot of talented "heavy hitters" in all of our communities that have a lot to offer. All we need to do is ask for help and turn them loose!

Rebuilding a Program with Community Support

When Alice DuBois arrived at Ponchatoula High School in Louisiana nine years ago, the agricultural education program was a shadow of its former, successful self and the school's superintendent wanted to convert the program to mechanics. Now, the program boasts two teachers, 245 students and a strong booster club.

The transformation started when the school's principal stood firmly behind DuBois and her efforts. "The chapter had no program of activities, no advisory board – none of the structural elements a program needs to build its strength," DuBois says.



PHS students sell strawberry baskets as a fundraiser.

Building the Basics

DuBois started rebuilding the program by developing a strong officer team and a program of activities. Next, she tackled starting an advisory committee.

"I had received the *Local Program Success Guide* and read the section on advisory committees," DuBois recalls. "It recom-

mended seeking out leaders in the agricultural industry and asking them for their input. I approached a local nurseryman first, and he helped me get things moving. Now, we have a really strong advisory panel. It makes such a difference."

DuBois also salutes her fellow agriculture teachers. "I asked other teachers for their input and gleaned from their ideas. My experience has been nothing but positive when it comes to the goodness of other agriculture teachers. They have supported me and my program and made a big difference."

Getting Involved

In this community 45 miles outside of New Orleans, most of the students are from a low socio-economic group and most aren't from farms. DuBois wanted to help them reconnect with their community's heritage. One of the area's traditional crops was strawberries. Working with the local strawberry festival organizers, DuBois obtained a grant to develop a school-based strawberry production enterprise.

This effort, now in its third year, has students planting one-quarter acre of strawberries and 500 hanging baskets (full of strawberries, of course). The students harvest the berries and sell them, along with the hanging baskets, at the festival as a fundraiser. The proceeds are used to fund planting the strawberry patch the next year as well as to provide FFA members with opportunities.

"We have 13 members going to the national FFA convention this year, and we're raising funds to support 100% of the cost," DuBois says.

Beyond raising funds to support the Ponchatoula FFA Chapter's needs, the members also raise funds to support other



Ponchatoula FFA members pose with the gifts they gathered for their adopted families.

community efforts. Last year, the members voted to adopt eight families that had been identified as in need by the United Way.

"Our students raised funds and gave money out of their own pockets to buy gifts and food for the adopted families," DuBois explains. "They wrapped the gifts, assembled the baskets and delivered them along with food for Christmas dinner. It was very touching to see our teenagers reaching out to these people who are experiencing tough times. Our students walked away realizing how much they have to be thankful for—their health, their fellow students, teachers who care about them and their success. It really opens their eyes and makes them appreciate what they have. This activity touches them deeply."

These activities, along with many more that the chapter implements each year, have raised the program's visibility in the community. "The more the community sees that is positive, the more they support our program," DuBois says. "The support and good will builds on itself and grows over time."

If you'd like to strengthen your community support, review the information provided on that topic on the 2004-05 *Local Program Resource* CD-ROM. Just click on the "Partnerships" link (on the left side of the screen) and you'll be able to access the *Get Connected Partner Handbook* as well as promising practices for partnerships and the LPS materials that focus on developing strong community links.

“Meating” Student, Community Needs

Iike many others across the country, the agricultural education program in Florence, Texas, prepares its students for further education and careers in agriculture. The way in which this program accomplishes the task, however, is unique.

The program, which serves approximately 180 students, is centered on a meats lab and a market the students operate. “We have developed coherent course sequences from which our students choose an area of career specialization,” Bobby Rosenbusch, the lead teacher, explains. “Our students all start out in a basic agriculture course, then select a focus area.”

The specialization areas offered are:

- food processing/meat industry
- agricultural business and communications
- horticulture
- animal and food industries
- agricultural mechanization

The program’s three teachers each take responsibility for different areas. Rosenbusch takes primary responsibility for the meats lab and market. Melissa Loerwald leads the agricultural business and communications segment and Joshua Weston manages the agricultural mechanics area.

Learning by Doing

The meats lab and market provide hands-on training for students enrolled in several of these areas of specialization. For example, the students in the food processing specialization manage and staff the back of the shop. Students in the agricultural business and communications specialization manage the front of the shop, including product development, packaging, advertising, customer interaction and keeping the financial records.

“We offer eight sections of marketing management,” Rosenbusch explains. “These students basically staff the market throughout the school day. They wrap cut products, serve customers, count the day’s proceeds, make the deposits and keep the records.”

Rosenbusch emphasizes the importance of financial record keeping. “We generate between \$10,000 and \$15,000 in profit annually that goes back into the school’s general fund. This draws the auditor’s attention, so it is imperative that we keep meticulous records.”

Career Tech Focus

While some time is spent in the classroom, students experience on-the-job training for a majority of the year. “We are a career tech program,” Rosenbusch says. “We believe in learning by doing. Our students learn to be accountable on a daily basis. Our second-year students help teach the first-year students and build their skills. The students who graduate from this program are ready to continue their education or go into the work force above entry-level positions and wages.”

Terry Phillips, the agricultural science and technology program director for the Texas Education Agency, says, “By working



Florence FFA members staff the chapter’s meat market.

with the management at HEB and Albertson’s, Mr. Rosenbusch has developed a student certification opportunity for program completers. Many students continue their post-secondary education by working in the industry while attending college. At the same time, many completers continue in their chosen professions on a full-time basis.”

Seeking Community Input

Rosenbusch and his teaching colleagues have an active advisory committee that meets twice a year and provides recommendations. “Our advisory committee’s goal is to make sure we’re training students in the right areas,” Rosenbusch says. “We send the advisory committee minutes to the school board. About 10 years ago, we had a superintendent who shared our philosophy and that led to support for establishing the meats lab. The lab and market have grown over time with strong community support.”

All of that hands-on training has reaped rewards in FFA competitive events. The Florence FFA agricultural communications team won the state competition and will compete in Louisville this year. Many students have also competed in the FFA Agriscience Fair, with research projects on e-coli and other studies related to the food industry.

For more information about this unique program, visit the website at www.florenceffa.org.



A student packages and prices products at the chapter’s meat market.

Salt and Safety:

One Program's Recipe for a Successful Community Partnership

Would you let OSHA visit your agriculture department's shop?

The teachers at Grantsville High School in Utah did, and the community partnership that developed has become a great asset.

Last December, the Rohm & Haas subsidiary Morton Salt approached teacher Grant Peterson about letting OSHA provide safety training to students, and involving students in practical, hands-on applications of safety in their shops. Louis Silva, the OSHA employee credited with this partnership idea, assured them that it would be non-threatening. "I work for the consultation program, not the enforcement program of OSHA," Silva emphasizes.

Peterson admits, "It made me nervous, but safety is a critical issue so we opened our doors and invited them to come and look."

Silva, OSHA's state director of consultation services, suggested the idea because of Morton's impeccable safety record and the Morton's people's sincere commitment to the local community in Tooele County. "I want Morton to pass on their safety and work ethic to the young minds at the high school," Silva says. "I want the students to have a practical knowledge of safety and develop good working habits. If we can reach just one student and prevent him or her from losing an eye, a finger or their life in the workplace, then we will have reached our goal."

A Safety Program Like No Other

The initial inspection pointed out some areas for improvement in the shop, but more importantly, the chapter developed a safety committee and curriculum from this effort. Richard Dorman, the maintenance manager at Morton Salt, serves on

the committee as well as Silva. Silva explains, "The information presented to the students is the same curriculum used with companies."

Students earn OSHA-issued certificates for each completed topic. "Besides enhancing their portfolios, four certificates earn the students one-quarter credit towards graduation," explains Peterson. "Morton came up with give-aways for the students like candy bars and decks of cards that say, 'Think Safety.' Each card had a different safety tip. Dorman and OSHA spent several days helping the students with all of their plans. The partnership really made the students pay attention to safety. When a working professional says, 'This is why you need to be safe,' the students listen."

Brett Anderson, Matt Manzanares and George Wooton, all maintenance mechanics from Morton, conducted the hands-on portion of the training. Anderson and Manzanares admit they were nervous and did not know what to expect from the students. "I was excited to see where it would lead," says Manzanares.

Anderson continues, "I felt like an old-timer, but my son is a past FFA officer from Grantsville and I have a vested interest in the program."

Dorman adds, "I know these men have made an impression on the students because the kids talk to them when they see them in town." Anderson and Manzanares recently received awards at the Utah Safety Council luncheon because of their community partnership with the Grantsville FFA.

A Continued Commitment

"Morton's commitment continues to be evident," Peterson says. "They have spent thousands on our agriculture program. This has been a tremendously good

cooperative effort and other businesses want in."

When the local Morton factory achieved 2,500,000 man-hours without a lost-time accident, they treated their employees to a steak-and-lobster dinner. The teachers and student safety committee members were also invited. "Gene Decker, the vice president of operations for Morton and Michael Resetar, the manager of health and safety, spent part of their evening talking to our students about safety and careers," says Peterson.



Grantsville students listen closely during a safety workshop.

Grantsville High School would like to find grants or other businesses to keep this effort going. "We need to expand the program and I want to take some of the load off of Morton," Peterson says. Dorman responds, "I am just offering them access and use of resources we already have."

A Passion for Safety

The Grantsville FFA Chapter is sponsoring a statewide safety program that will provide \$1,000 in scholarships to chapters and individuals throughout the state who have implemented extensive safety programs in homes, in their places of employment, on their farms or within their chapters. The program will kick off at the Utah FFA convention in March 2005.

Creating Community Partnerships

Since 1976, the agriculture teachers in Elma, Washington, have reached out to members of their community and created unique opportunities for their students. Forest products are a big part of the Elma area's economy, and the forest industry is one of the agricultural education program's focal points.

"We have a strong program based in environmental science, natural resources and horticulture," Tim Schneider explains. Schneider, along with his teaching partner Christie Kershaw, lead the Elma program.

Each year, 15 students are accepted into a hands-on forestry program that includes classroom work along with time working in the field. The course work includes managing timber, silviculture and dendrology.

"We contract with area timber companies to provide service work," Schneider explains. "The class is offered as a two-hour block, and when students are working in the field, they get paid along with receiving school credit in math and environmental science. Beyond class time, the students work up to a maximum of 20 hours a week from October through March."

Math Credits

Why math credit? Schneider says, "The work we do requires a lot of applied math. The students convert paces to feet, for example, and estimate timber. It is what they need to know to work in the industry. Frequently the students who enroll in this course don't understand how much math is involved."

The students in Schneider's class do everything from mapping and trapping beavers for the timber companies, to stream revitalization for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and covering slash piles for the county. "The beavers are like large rodents," Schneider explains. "They eat small trees and can devastate new plantings."

Over the years, the Elma program has built relationships with timber companies and governmental agencies ranging from the local county government to the NRCS. "There is some bidding involved in the work we do and the contracts we receive, but these relationships have developed over time. They are very good at holding us accountable. We are audited, for example. That provides very good real-world experiences for the students. They learn to do it right the first time and to work efficiently. I'm not trying to train loggers, but I do focus on helping students develop good work practices."

Rather than working through the school system, all the contracts for this work are issued by the local booster group. "When we complete a contract and receive payment, the money is split among the students based on how many hours they worked," Schneider explains.



Hands-on learning attracts students into the program.

Applied Learning

All of this work has paid off in the Forestry Career Development Event. The Elma team has won the state competition for the past four years, and will compete in Louisville this year.

One of the areas Schneider stresses in his course work is agricultural issues. "We hit issues hard up and down the board," he says. "We live in an issues-based society in the natural resources arena, but many people don't know how to dissect information and determine what is factual from all the misinformation and propaganda. I teach the students how to research both sides of an issue, to consider the sources of all the information they are gathering and come up with their own conclusions based on fact. When the students research issues that affect them and their families, they become highly motivated learners."

“We live in an issues-based society in the natural resources arena, but many people don't know how to dissect information and determine what is factual.”



Elma students take a break during a field work session.

Larison Named a Disney Teacher of the Year

drive down the main drag in Holton, Kansas, and you'll see a typical small, Midwestern town, population approximately 3,500. Step into Jason Larison's agriculture classroom, however, and you might think you've stepped into the future. You might even think to yourself, "Toto, we're not in Kansas anymore!"

Each student has a laptop computer equipped with wireless technology. Instead of using an out-of-date textbook, the students use their laptops to navigate the Internet searching for resources that supplement classroom lessons. The Agricultural Education Department website (www.holton.k12.ks.us/staff/jlarison) serves as a gateway to everything in the program. Students even submit assignments online.

A wealth of learning resources is available at the click of a mouse. All testing is completed online via (www.quia.com), and students receive their test scores and the correct answers just seconds after they press submit. No longer do students wait a day or two to get their tests graded; rather, they receive instant feedback on incorrect answers while the subject is still fresh in their minds. It is this type of visionary thinking that helped Larison earn a 2004 DisneyHand American Teacher Award, which includes several trips, a \$10,000 award for himself, a \$5,000 award for his school and a yearlong series of seminars and professional development experiences.

Applications Encouraged

Larison was anonymously nominated for the award and was one of 150,000 teachers across the country that received a nomination packet from Disney. "I was very surprised to get the packet in the mail announcing I had been nominated," Larison says.

After filling out the packet and sending it in, Larison was launched on what he terms a once-in-a-lifetime experience. "I really encourage teachers to nominate their peers, and to complete award applications. Sure, it takes time, but these opportunities will directly influence your teaching career and your students. I am a better teacher because I completed that packet. The same goes for NAAE award applications."

Larison continues, "You never know where it's going to take you. Completing these types of applications requires reflecting on what you do and analyzing your teaching philosophy. It provides the motivation to think deeply about what you do every day and you end up with new thoughts and ideas for your program."

“To me, being named a **Disney Teacher of the Year** was a great opportunity to **educate others about agriculture and agricultural education.**”

Ag Ed Ambassador

Beyond the personal satisfaction and monetary awards he and his school received, Larison says the opportunity to educate others about the agricultural education program was most gratifying. "To me, being named a Disney teacher was a great opportunity to educate others about agriculture and agricultural education. It



Larison poses with Mickey following the Disney awards ceremony.

was great to meet and get to know so many other great teachers from across the K-12 spectrum," he says. "Most of the teachers were surprised to learn what we do in agricultural education. They were shocked at the diversity of the subject matter we cover, and how we reinforce academic subjects such as math and science."

Larison continues, "It was a real highlight to share how we set up the wireless classroom. Many of the teachers had these preconceived ideas that agriculture classes were backwards or out of date, yet we're doing things with technology that most of them haven't even thought about. It definitely opened people's eyes about agricultural education and about educational delivery methods."

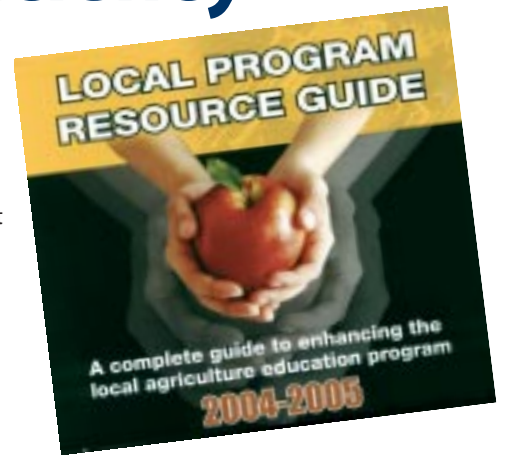
For more information on the DisneyHand American Teacher Awards, visit (<http://disney.go.com/disneyhand/learning/teacherawards/nominate.html>).

2005 Agricultural Proficiency Award Areas

the National FFA Organization and the National FFA Foundation is pleased to announce the proficiency areas, which have been approved and sponsored for the 2005 award year (bolded area names are either name change or new area). The total number of proficiency award categories to be sponsored nationally for 2005 is 50. Keep in mind this list is notification for the 2005 award year! We hope that this early announcement will assist you in future program planning.

- Agricultural Communications - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Agricultural Mechanics Design and Fabrication – Entrepreneurship/Placement
- **Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance – Entrepreneurship**
- **Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance – Placement**
- Agricultural Mechanics Energy Systems – Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Agricultural Processing - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Agricultural Sales – Entrepreneurship
- Agricultural Sales – Placement
- Agricultural Services - Entrepreneurship/ Placement
- Aquaculture – Entrepreneurship/ Placement
- Beef Production – Entrepreneurship
- Beef Production – Placement
- Dairy Production – Entrepreneurship
- Dairy Production – Placement
- Diversified Agricultural Production – Entrepreneurship/Placement

- Diversified Crop Production – Entrepreneurship
- Diversified Crop Production – Placement
- Diversified Horticulture – Entrepreneurship
- Diversified Horticulture – Placement
- Diversified Livestock Production – Entrepreneurship
- Diversified Livestock Production – Placement
- Emerging Agricultural Technology - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Environmental Science and Natural Resources Management - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Equine Science – Entrepreneurship
- Equine Science – Placement
- Fiber and/or Oil Crop Production – Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Floriculture - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Food Science and Technology - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Forage Production – Entrepreneurship/ Placement
- Forest Management and Products – Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Fruit Production – Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Grain Production – Entrepreneurship
- Grain Production – Placement
- Home and/or Community Development - Entrepreneurship/Placement



- Landscape Management - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Nursery Operations - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Outdoor Recreation - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Poultry Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Sheep Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Small Animal Production and Care – Entrepreneurship
- Small Animal Production and Care – Placement
- Specialty Animal Production – Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Specialty Crop Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Swine Production – Entrepreneurship
- Swine Production – Placement
- Turf Grass Management – Entrepreneurship
- Turf Grass Management – Placement
- Vegetable Production – Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Wildlife Management – Entrepreneurship
- Wildlife Management - Placement

All the application and information materials for these awards are contained on the 2004-2005 Local Program Resource CD-ROM. Should you have any questions on this information, please contact Rosalie Hunsinger via e-mail at rhunsinger@ffa.org or by calling 317-802-4255 .

Local Program Success

Creating a Recipe for Community Support



By Tony Small
Local Program Success Manager
National FFA Organization

After returning from the new chapter kick off celebration in Lebanon Ind., I was reminded of the power a community has to provide support to the local program.

The take-home lesson from that event was to involve everyone and provide a quality relationship with the community to support dedicated youth in a local program. The example I witnessed could have been the finished dish prepared from a recipe book entitled, "Starting a Successful Program." The ingredients used in preparing this dish were:

- a united advisory council consisting of strong supporters from all aspects of the community
- well-informed, supportive school officials
- engaged community officials
- well-informed parents and supporters, and
- dedicated teachers and advisors

The result of putting the ingredients all together and implementing the plan was a true masterpiece. Seeing everyone benefit from the result of creating community partnerships was fabulous. Every chapter has the opportunity and resources to develop a plan and create its own version of Local Program Success.

Community partnerships are the cornerstone of building a solid founda-

tion for a quality program and maintaining it for years to come. In most cases where there is an existing program, it is up to the advisor and gatekeeper to open the door and start or continue to build these partnerships.

There are a number of helpful resources that can assist you in developing a plan for strengthening community support. Many items can be found on your 2004-2005 *Local Program Resource* CD-ROM, which every teacher in the country should have in their possession (if not please call 317-802-4501 to find out how to receive yours).

Additional Resources

In searching for items to assist you with the process, you will want to take a look at the Partnerships section of the CD. This section presents tips on how to build partnerships and mobilize volunteers within the school and community who actively support and share responsibility for the program. The following resources can be found in this section:

- **Local Program Success Guide:** Partnership section—promising practices used by teachers across the country
- **Agriculture Teachers Manual:** Partnership sections—forms, letters and ideas of ways to involve community members and create key partnerships
- **Get Connected Partnership Handbook:** Section Two,

Community-Based Partners, especially helpful in understanding the importance, identifying a partner and developing a plan of action

- **Promising Practices for Partnerships:** this resource will provide new ideas that work from respected teachers (teacher contact information is also available if you would like to contact them for additional information)

In addition to these resources, there are more than 11,000 agriculture teachers across the country and many have interesting ideas to share. If you are searching for ideas, make sure to ask your colleagues in the business; chances are they have some great information to exchange with you.

There is no substitute for building valuable partnerships and working together as a team to support common goals. The effort you provide today will keep your program successful for years to come. Becoming a "manager of resources" and partnering with key community members allows you to focus your time and attention on the bottom line—facilitating learning. The recipe you choose today will reflect the flavor of your program for years to come. Start today, use your resources, work with those in the community and kick it up a notch!

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Local Program Success

is a national initiative designed to enhance the quality and success of local agricultural education programs. LPS uses the total program concept of Instruction, SAE and FFA and four strategies (Program Planning, Marketing, Partnerships and Professional Growth) to assist local teachers in facilitating successful local programs that meet the needs of students and the communities they serve.

Big State, Giant Opportunity for Collegiate FFA



Kyle McGregor is an assistant professor at Tarleton State University, where he also wears the hat of state coordinator for the Texas Collegiate FFA Association. This association has captured the excitement of Collegiate FFA and run with it.

In the words of Japanese Admiral Yamamoto following the attacks on America at Pearl Harbor, "I fear all we have done is awaken a sleeping giant..." A giant of epic proportion, known simply as Collegiate FFA, is on the threshold of awakening in the National FFA Organization. Since the inception of FFA, this level of membership has been somewhat elusive and ambiguous, but

numerous campuses across the nation are beginning to take action.

The Texas Collegiate FFA Association has established a state level membership for two- and four-year institutions. During the last three state FFA conventions in Texas, collegiate members have met, rewritten and ratified a constitution, developed programs, elected state officers and conducted conventions, workshops and CDEs of their own.

Brian Gregg, who was an undergraduate at Sam Houston State University, and is now the agricultural science teacher at Newton ISD, sparked the effort in the state. The Texas Collegiate FFA Association (www.tarleton.edu/~txcffa) is helping collegiate chapters get together, while providing a bridge between active and

alumni memberships by teaching collegiate students how to give back to FFA.

Why a sleeping giant? Go to the National FFA website and visit the Collegiate FFA homepage at (www.ffa.org/collegiate.cfm) to learn more.

Some of the largest agriculturally based corporations in the nation have recognized the power of Collegiate FFA membership and are looking for opportunities to tap into its student resources. This is only the beginning. Stay tuned for more great things from Collegiate FFA in the future. For more information about Collegiate FFA, call 317-802-4214 or e-mail collegiate@ffa.org.

 **Partnerships**

Reaching Out, Creating Teams

Just as the proverb goes that it takes a village to raise a child, we can say that it takes a community to educate a student. The broad scope and technologically laden agriculture of today is making the agriculture instructor's position more difficult. Teachers need a community of partners who have a stake in each student's future.

Helping a student become a valuable part of society and the workforce requires that we assist each student with technical skills, fundamental knowledge in science and math, communication skills, critical thinking skills and work ethics. Agriculture science programs are an excellent means to accomplish this. But barriers include tight budgets that limit

the instructor's time, advanced technical information that has a high learning curve, and equipment that is beyond the budget or time of the instructor.

Building a local agriculture team means working with local industry, government agencies, the local community college and the state university. Local industry can provide internships that teach work ethics or financial support. Government agencies can provide resource materials or projects for developing communication and critical thinking skills. Sharing equipment and expertise with the local community college can provide students with resources not previously available. Creating articulation agreements between secondary programs, community colleges and universities can provide students with a seamless pathway to many careers.

There are many resources available through Team Ag Ed to help agriculture instructors build these relationships. AgrowKnowledge's Planning Institutes help establish "Local Agriculture Technology Education Teams," and the National FFA *Local Program Resource Guide* includes a process for creating these partnerships. Take advantage of these resources and help build your program and your community.

 **Partnerships**

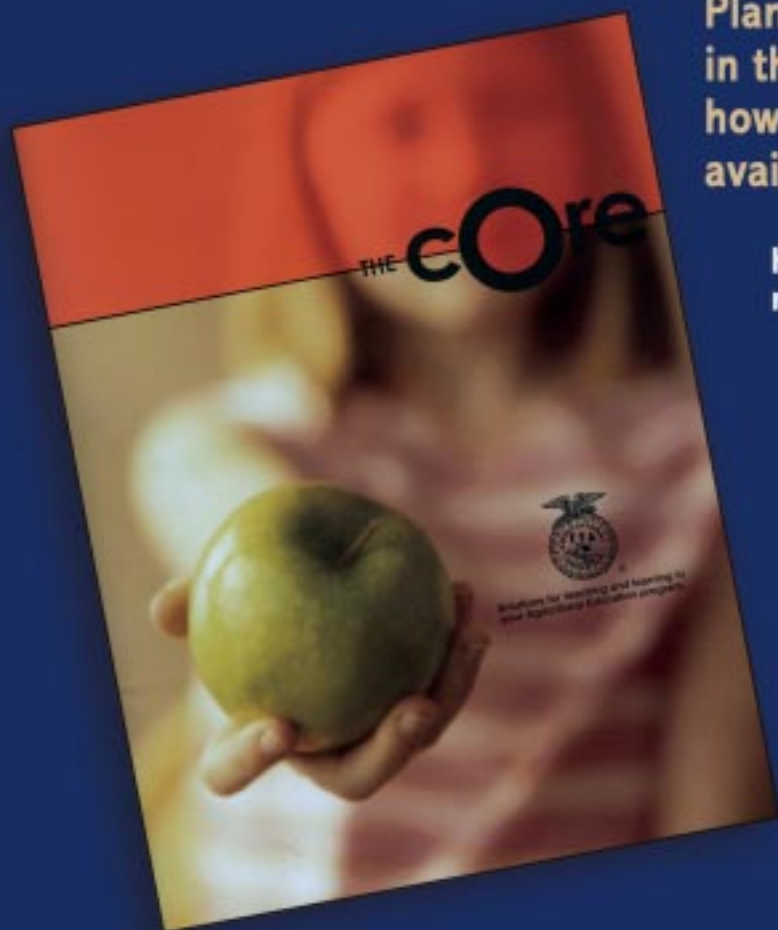


By Terry Brase
Principal Investigator
AgrowKnowledge

*Tired of hearing,
“I can’t think of anything for my SAE?”*

*Wish you
could make learning
about all of agriculture
fun and engaging?*

*Want to utilize
your chapter
officers at a
higher level?*



Plan to stop by The Core catalog booth in the FFA Mega Shopping Mall to learn how you can utilize the resources available from National FFA.

Here are some things to look for with ag ed resources at convention:

• **Debut of New Ag Ed Resources**

Come see the newest items available to you as teachers. Over 13 new products have been added to the ag ed resource product selection this year.

• **Product Demonstrations**

Come and see other teachers demonstrate how to best utilize some of the newest products in a classroom setting. Look for signs around convention to tell you more about specific demonstration times and topics.

• **Product Consultations**

Meet with other ag educators to ask questions about specific products or discuss a selection of products that fit your specific needs.

• **Purchase Products**

After learning more about the products in the demo booth stop in “next-door” to the FFA Mega Mall and purchase products that are sure to benefit both the classroom and FFA chapter!

Booth Hours:

- Wednesday – 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Thursday – 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Friday – 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Saturday – 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Free UPS Shipping will be available for most items purchased!
Cash, personal checks and credit cards are accepted. No purchase orders.



The Core Catalog Booth at national convention is made possible through the support of Tractor Supply Company as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

TeacherResources

Team Ag Ed Tool Box

The role of an agriculture teacher includes gathering new ideas and activities to implement in the local program. The National FFA Organization, as part of the Team Ag Ed Tool Box project, has started gathering and publishing promising practices based on the seven keys of local program success.

Each month seven new promising practices will be published on the Agricultural Educators Workroom page at [\[www.ffa.org/ageducators/\]](http://www.ffa.org/ageducators/). You will be able to access key information and review the promising practices by selecting one of the seven local program success keys. On an annual basis, all promising practices will be published as part of the LPS Guide, which is provided to agriculture teachers as part of the Local Program Resource CD-ROM.

If you would like to share practices that help you make a difference in the lives of young people, please send them via e-mail to [\[lps@ffa.org\]](mailto:lps@ffa.org). Include your name, telephone number, school name and a short description of the practice. If your idea is selected, you will be contacted and interviewed.

For additional information regarding promising practices or how to submit them, please contact Jim Armbruster at [\[jarmbruster@ffa.org\]](mailto:jarmbruster@ffa.org).

Toyota International Teacher Program

Applications are now available to participate in a fully funded two-week study tour of Japan. Sponsored by Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc., this professional development opportunity is open to full-time educators in grades 9-12, from Alabama, California, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, Texas and West Virginia. In addition, this year the program is also open to teachers in New York and Washington, D.C.

While in Japan, participants learn first-hand

about education, culture, environment and technology and how these affect industry and society. An exciting addition to the June 2005 program includes a two-day visit to the 2005 World Expo in Aichi, Japan. The Expo focuses on how the global community is dealing with environmental issues, natural resources and energy.

The program will provide participants with the opportunity to enhance global skills and perspectives and enhance their high school curricula. After the trip, participants are asked to commit themselves to sharing what they have learned and experienced with their students, colleagues and schools.

Secondary teachers in grades 9-12 in the 10 program states are encouraged to submit applications for the 2005 Toyota International Teacher Program. Interested individuals can apply online at [\[www.iie.org/programs/Toyota\]](http://www.iie.org/programs/Toyota). Hard copy applications can also be requested through the website, or by e-mailing [\[toyotateach@iie.org\]](mailto:toyotateach@iie.org) or by calling the Institute of International Education at 1-877-TEACH-JP (877-832-2457). The application deadline is January 10, 2005.

Math Projects Journal

The Math Projects Journal [\[www.mathprojects.com/\]](http://www.mathprojects.com/) is dedicated to improving mathematics education by empowering teachers with lessons and ideas that embrace the principles of "Standards, Concepts, Substance, Accountability and Rapport."

As every teacher and educator understands about students, "You must reach 'em before you teach 'em." The Journal will give you resources to help you do just that. In addition to the free lesson plans, you'll be able to 'Ask the Editors' to share their experience, knowledge and insights into improving mathematics education. The Math Links will give you access to even more resources in the math arena. Rather than burn the midnight oil developing your lesson plans, bookmark this site and keep

a jump ahead of the students!

Science on a Shoestring

The National Science Teacher Association provides teachers with innovative, inexpensive ways to teach science concepts. Check out the following links:

- from the NSTA journal, "The Science Teacher," read "Earth System Science Project," at [\[www.nsta.org/gateway&j=tst&n=49579\]](http://www.nsta.org/gateway&j=tst&n=49579)
- The Teachers' Grab Bag on the NSTA website lists many inexpensive or free items, such as trial versions of educational software and free videos at [\[www.nsta.org/resourcesgrabbag\]](http://www.nsta.org/resourcesgrabbag)
- Stretch limited budget dollars through grants [\[http://www.enc.org/features/calendar/unit/0,1819,205,00.shtm?ls=eu\]](http://www.enc.org/features/calendar/unit/0,1819,205,00.shtm?ls=eu)
- ideas for inexpensive science lessons [\[http://science.nsta.org/enewsletter/2004-09/high_school.htm\]](http://science.nsta.org/enewsletter/2004-09/high_school.htm)

The Core Hits Mailboxes

The latest edition of *The Core*, your first stop for agricultural education resources, should have already arrived in your mailbox. In an effort to make new and exciting resources available, National FFA launched a number of new products for your agricultural education program offered through *The Core* and at [\[www.ffaunlimited.org/\]](http://www.ffaunlimited.org/).

Check out new resources such as Charlie Greenhand's Ag Trivia Challenge, *Mpower: An Officer's Guide to Chapter Leadership* and SAE Idea Cards. These products can help you spice up your classroom, help you teach a concept related to agriculture, FFA or SAE, inspire your chapter leaders or get students excited about being enrolled in agriculture classes! For more information, contact Tiffany Sanderson at 317-802-4239 or [\[tsanderson@ffa.org\]](mailto:tsanderson@ffa.org).

FFA Membership Report

ASSOCIATION NAME	02-03 CHAPTERS	03-04 CHAPTERS	PLUS/MINUS CHAPTERS	02-03 MEMBERS	03-04 MEMBERS	PLUS/MINUS MEMBERS	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
ALABAMA	231	271	40	12982	14392	1410	10.86%
ALASKA	8	6	-2	127	117	-10	-7.87%
ARIZONA	60	69	9	3887	4023	136	3.50%
ARKANSAS	233	225	-8	13053	13030	-23	-0.18%
CALIFORNIA	318	312	-6	57695	59443	1748	3.03%
COLORADO	90	90	0	3785	3823	38	1.00%
CONNECTICUT	20	22	2	2243	2327	84	3.74%
DELAWARE	25	26	1	1836	1845	9	0.49%
FLORIDA	279	278	-1	12843	13329	486	3.78%
GEORGIA	214	218	4	22028	24026	1998	9.07%
HAWAII	22	14	-8	445	349	-96	-21.57%
IDAHO	78	78	0	3445	3442	-3	-0.09%
ILLINOIS	302	297	-5	15863	15952	89	0.56%
INDIANA	175	171	-4	8177	8849	672	8.22%
IOWA	222	230	8	11605	11909	304	2.62%
KANSAS	159	156	-3	7027	6981	-46	-0.65%
KENTUCKY	141	139	-2	13876	14097	221	1.59%
LOUISIANA	193	194	1	9989	10450	461	4.62%
MAINE	13	13	0	629	553	-76	-12.08%
MARYLAND	32	30	-2	1276	1313	37	2.90%
MASSACHUSETTS	15	15	0	1069	1131	62	5.80%
MICHIGAN	98	100	2	5078	4909	-169	-3.33%
MINNESOTA	178	177	-1	8429	8579	150	1.78%
MISSISSIPPI	99	92	-7	3962	3558	-404	-10.20%
MISSOURI	292	292	0	21252	21438	186	0.88%
MONTANA	70	75	5	2459	2643	184	7.48%
NEBRASKA	130	130	0	6574	6383	-191	-2.91%
NEVADA	17	16	-1	1181	1321	140	11.85%
NEW HAMPSHIRE	16	16	0	703	812	109	15.50%
NEW JERSEY	34	32	-2	1922	1761	-161	-8.38%
NEW MEXICO	70	67	-3	3963	4017	54	1.36%
NEW YORK	84	90	6	3687	3904	217	5.89%
NORTH CAROLINA	196	201	5	13669	14833	1164	8.52%
NORTH DAKOTA	77	76	-1	4349	4432	83	1.91%
OHIO	308	304	-4	22182	22669	487	2.20%
OKLAHOMA	357	357	0	22957	23258	301	1.31%
OREGON	96	93	-3	3980	3897	-83	-2.09%
PENNSYLVANIA	136	132	-4	7901	7710	-191	-2.42%
PUERTO RICO	63	68	5	2044	1734	-310	-15.17%
RHODE ISLAND	5	6	1	268	255	-13	-4.85%
SOUTH CAROLINA	89	87	-2	5769	5490	-279	-4.84%
SOUTH DAKOTA	79	80	1	3472	3485	13	0.37%
TENNESSEE	179	178	-1	12687	13050	363	2.86%
TEXAS	965	970	5	58848	60981	2133	3.62%
UTAH	57	60	3	3128	3190	62	1.98%
VERMONT	17	16	-1	458	459	1	0.22%
VIRGINIA	147	151	4	9159	9066	-93	-1.02%
WASHINGTON	141	144	3	7877	8347	470	5.97%
WEST VIRGINIA	63	60	-3	4535	4593	58	1.28%
WISCONSIN	254	252	-2	16055	16831	776	4.83%
WYOMING	45	45	0	1762	1671	-91	-5.16%
VIRGIN ISLANDS	2	2	0	77	75	-2	-2.60%
TOTAL	7,194	7,223	29	464,267	476,732	12,465	2.68%

Final Year for Tractor Giveaway

For more than 60 years, John Deere has been a proud supporter of the FFA. In 1993, John Deere Credit started the Classic 4020 Giveaway. Each year since then, they've awarded one lucky FFA member a fully restored John Deere 4020 tractor.

This year will be the final year of the JDC Classic 4020 Giveaway. Be sure all your students register for their chance to win! The August/September 2004 issue of *FFA Advisors Making A Difference* contains a pull-out poster and entry forms your students can use for their chance to win this year's 4020 tractor. Please publicize this exciting program by displaying this poster and providing students with entry forms by photocopying the entry form template found on the back of the poster. Collect the completed forms from your members and mail to: John Deere Credit/4020 Giveaway, P.O. Box 6600, Johnston, IA 50131-6600. Be sure entries are postmarked by Oct. 15, or bring them with you to Louisville and deliver to the John Deere exhibit. Those attending the 77th National FFA Convention in Louisville may register at the John Deere booth from Oct. 27 to Oct. 29. The winner will be drawn and announced at the national convention in the Career Show Food Court at 1 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 29, 2004.

John Deere's commitment to FFA will take on an exciting new direction as John Deere introduces a new "Birdies For Charity" fundraiser program in lieu of the JDC Classic 4020 Giveaway. John Deere is offering a proven fundraiser (more than \$7 million dollars have been raised so far for various non-profit organizations) where 100% of every dollar collected goes back to FFA. For more information about the new "Birdies For Charity" fundraiser program please stop by the John Deere booth at the 77th National FFA Convention in Louisville, or visit their website at [www.birdiesforcharity.com/FFA].

Conference Trainers Needed

FFA is seeking talented and dedicated individuals to serve as conference trainers for the FFA Leadership and Personal Growth Series and state officer training (ALD, BLASTOFF, EDGE, MFE and WLC) for the 2005-2006 conferences. All the information needed to apply for a conference trainer position may be found at [www.ffa.org/about_ffa/html/ffa_jobs.htm - ffa]. If you have any questions, contact Cindy Driver at 317-802-4257 or [cdriver@ffa.org]. The deadline to apply for BLASTOFF is Nov. 1. The deadline to apply for ALD, EDGE, MFE and WLC is Dec. 1. These deadlines allow national officer candidates who are not elected to national office adequate time to complete applications for a trainer position.

Grants Available

Interested in grants for your classroom or professional development? Join partners of the National FFA Organization as they share ideas about funding and resources available for your local classroom and for teacher development. Representatives from Toyota, Wells Fargo, DuPont and the American Welding Society will lead this teacher workshop at the 77th National Convention and provide information on how they are helping local teachers and programs become a success. This workshop is free of charge and will take place on Friday, Oct. 29, at 9 a.m. in CC 109 - 110. For more information visit [www.ffa.org/convention/html/evn_adv_workshops.htm] or contact Andy Armbruster at [aarmbruster@ffa.org] or 317-802-4308.

School Officials Luncheon

Invite your state officials, school official or important education partners to experience motivational speakers, outstanding teachers and top students at the School Officials Luncheon. This educational and entertaining event is free and will take place during the

77th National FFA Convention on Friday, Oct. 29, at 11:30 a.m. Take this opportunity to show your education partners a unique side of the convention. In addition to the luncheon, FFA welcomes them to experience the many suggested activities including convention sessions (fourth and sixth), national FFA leadership workshops and the FFA National Agricultural Career Show. The luncheon is free, however, seating is limited! Only 300 tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis, so please respond early to secure a reservation for this activity. To order your school official's complimentary ticket, contact Michele Gilbert at 317-802-4301 or [mgilbert@ffa.org]. Have attendee's name, organization, mailing address and e-mail address ready.

FFA Education Division Booth

While attending the 77th National FFA Convention, FFA encourages all school officials, teachers (both novices and veterans), pre-service teachers and students interested in teaching to stop by the FFA Education Division Booth in the FFA National Agricultural Career Show. Programs to be displayed include LifeKnowledge, *The Core* (agricultural education resource catalog), Collegiate FFA, PAS, National FFA Collegiate Scholarship Program, H. O. Sargent, Local Program Success, Teach Ag Ed and much more. Additionally, a computer lab will be available for teachers to preview a variety of FFA educational resources and websites. FFA staff will be on site to provide information and answer questions. The Education Division Booth will be located next to the Agriscience Fair and Agriscience Institute. More information is available online at [www.ffa.org/convention/html/conv_careershow.htm] or contact Michele Gilbert at [mgilbert@ffa.org] or 317-802-4301

