

NOTES FROM THE AAAE POSTER SESSION CHAIR

Originally titled "exchange of ideas," the poster session is a forum for agricultural education professionals to share proven education methods from their individual programs. To be considered for consideration a poster must be a new idea or the creative modification of an existing idea, it must be of potential regional or national significance, and it must have been used before the time the idea was submitted for consideration.

In October of 1999, a call for poster proposals emailed to all subscribers to the Southern Region AAAE List-serve. A call was also mailed to the head of each Agricultural Education Program in the Southern Region.

Ten proposals were submitted for consideration. Each proposal was reviewed and rated by three peer educators in a blind review process. Proposals were judged on significance of the idea, creativity, technical content, practicality, educational value, and adoption potential. All ten proposals were selected for presentation for an overall acceptance rate of 100%. Posters will be judged on site with the top four posters qualifying for presentation at the 2000 National Agricultural Education Research Meeting in San Diego.

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BIOTECHNOLOGY AND AGRISCIENCE RESEARCH COURSE AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction

Today's biotechnology is being used to develop agricultural products and to improve existing plant and animal species. Agricultural scientists, technicians and consumers need to understand agricultural biotechnology in order to conduct research and to make informed decisions. High school agricultural education programs can provide young people the information and training they need to pursue related careers or to become informed decision-makers.

Program Phases

In 1994, North Carolina agriculture education teachers indicated in a North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) survey that agricultural biotechnology should be taught in North Carolina high school agricultural education programs. In 1996, a committee of industry, business and education personnel was formed, under the leadership of North Carolina State University, to determine the competencies and curriculum that should be taught in a course titled Biotechnology and Agriscience Research. This committee referred to the "National Voluntary Occupational Skill Standards for Agricultural Biotechnology Technicians" to determine the skills needed for an entry-level employee in agricultural biotechnology.

During the 1998-1999 and the 1999-2000 school year, the Biotechnology and Agriscience Research course was piloted in eleven schools across North Carolina. A grant was received from the North Carolina Biotechnology Center to buy supplies for the pilot labs and teachers were also invited to participate in their equipment loan program. The pilots and project director accomplished the following objectives:

1. Taught basic biotechnology and current agricultural applications of biotechnology in North Carolina high schools.
2. Introduced approximately 50 teachers to the labs/curriculum in the summer of 1999.
3. Piloted the curriculum materials and lessons.
4. Collected data to assess student performance.
5. Steps taken to achieve the objectives:
6. Trained pilot teachers in workshops at NCSU.
7. Trained pilot teachers in workshops at Carolina Biological Supply Co., Inc.
8. Provided teachers with access to equipment and lab supplies to implement biotechnology lessons.
9. Worked with the DPI and pilot sites to complete the course blueprint.