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Reference

Swinton, Scott M. (Ed). (1995). *Teaching and learning with cases. Promoting active learning in Agriculture, Food and Natural Resource Education*. College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University.

PERCEPTIONS OF AGRIBUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING OF TEXAS AGRICULTURE TEACHERS

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Introduction

The agricultural economy has changed, is changing and will continue to change. With the past turbulence of the agricultural economy farmers and ranchers must become knowledgeable and proficient in business strategies to maintain existence. The job market in agriculture is also shifting from production skills to management and agribusiness skills. To prepare students for this change in the job market students should learn basic agribusiness concepts at the high school level. This knowledge will be helpful for both college and workforce bound students.

Agricultural Education classes in Texas have over 89,000 students currently enrolled during the Fall 1999 semester in approximately 970 programs. With the large number of students, programs, and the increasing need for a workforce with agribusiness skills, one could expect large numbers of programs to offer specific classes in agribusiness, marketing, management, or entrepreneur.

Methodology

During the Professional Improvement Conference for Agricultural Education Teachers in Texas, 700 surveys were distributed to teachers participating in educational workshops. A \$100 incentive was randomly given to a participant who completed the survey. Approximately 286 surveys were returned and were completed properly. The survey included a lickert scale of the participant's assessment regarding their knowledge of agribusiness topics. These topics are the chapter titles for the Texas Agricultural Business Vocational Courses (i.e. AgSc. 311, 311H, Entrepreneurship). The survey also included some brief demographically oriented information including courses teachers took in college and courses they currently teach in agribusiness.

Results

The results are summarized in the following table. The average amount experience of teachers completing the survey was 12.19 years. The majority also had taken Agricultural Economics in college as part of their teacher preparation program, while a select few had taken Farm Business Management, Agricultural Marketing, Law, Finance, Policy or Sales. The percentages relate the percent that had experience with the corresponding courses. The percentage of the respondents that have taught AgSc 311 or Entrepreneurship is 72% and 66% respectively. These are very high percentages versus the lower percentages of college training in agribusiness courses.

The assessment of knowledge by the participants varies among topic areas.

Summary of Results

The teachers indicated that they have a below average (3.16) level of knowledge in "Legal Structure of Business," "Accounting Procedure", "Farm & Ranch Financial Analysis", "Enterprise Budgeting", "Partial Budgeting", "Cash Flow Budgeting", "Production and Financial Leases," "Insurance Management," "Business Plans," "Marketing Plans," and "Presenting Business Proposals." See Table 1

These areas are the topic areas in which workshops or short-courses may be useful. These are also the "perceived" topic areas. A planned follow up survey will test participant's knowledge in each area, which will possibly provide more detail into the topic areas where training may be needed.

Future Changes or Recommendations

It is recommended that teacher preparation programs develop new courses or reevaluate existing courses to meeting the demands of teaching Agribusiness Management, Marketing, and Entrepreneurship to high school students. Emphasis needs to be placed on skills and knowledge pertaining to the various units of instruction expected for

mastery by high school students. Workshops need to be offered during the Professional Improvement Conference to help teachers develop skills to teach these subjects. Furthermore, easy to understand and useable curriculum materials need to be revised and developed for dissemination to teachers.

Table 1.
Ratings of Knowledge Areas

Areas of knowledge*	Mean (1-5)	Std. Dev.	Years experience*	Mean (yrs.)	Std. Dev.
Employability characteristics	3.86	0.81	Years teaching	12.19	10.09
Legal structure of business	2.80	0.88			
Role of government in agriculture	3.27	0.75			
Supply and demand principles	3.71	0.75	College courses	Percent	Std. Dev.
Accounting procedures	3.12	0.90	Ag. econ.	37	0.48
Income statements and balance sheets	3.31	0.84	Farm bus. mgmt.	14	0.35
Farm and ranch financial analysis	3.13	0.91	Ag. marketing	9	0.28
Enterprise budgeting	3.11	0.91	Ag. law	2	0.14
Partial budgeting	3.03	0.89	Ag. finance	3	0.17
Cash flow budgeting	3.08	0.87	Ag. policy	1	0.11
Production and financial leases	2.88	0.91	Ag. sales	3	0.17
Borrowing funds	3.35	0.93	Average	10	
Insurance management	2.84	0.90			
Marketing	3.24	0.88			
Marketing strategies for production ag.	3.20	0.90			
I.D. business opportunities and customers	3.21	0.85	Courses taught	Percent	Std. Dev.
Business plans	2.92	0.87	Ag. science 311	72	0.45
Marketing plans	2.91	0.89	Ag. science 311-H	9	0.28
Presenting business proposals	2.99	0.97	Entrepreneurship	66	0.48
Average mean	3.16	0.87	Average	49	

*Note: N=286

TEXAS PARTNERS FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY

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Introduction

The *Partners for a Safer Community* program was initiated in response to the unacceptably high agriculture and home-improvement related deaths and injuries among children in the United States. About 22,000 children are seriously injured each year in agriculture, home-improvement and work-related accidents. Recent studies show that a majority of these deaths and injuries may be preventable. *Partners* has developed a highly promising “seven principle” model to encourage communities to work together to adopt positive approaches to youth safety and health through education.