

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.

The following is a brief description of the “seven principle” model:

Youth-Teaching Youth: The core of the *Partners* model entails youth teaching youth about safety and health. This is accomplished through training of a core team of high school students to serve as teachers and mentors of others.

Youth Leadership Development: Building on the strengths of youth organizations the *Partners* program encourages development of community leadership and self-esteem among youth.

Multidisciplinary Approach: The multidisciplinary approach reflected in all stages of this program draws upon the complementary, specialized knowledge and skills of diverse individuals within communities.

Community Needs Assessment: The model is designed to help communities identify local youth safety and health concerns and tailor programs to meet those needs.

Community Development: Using this program as a model, participants are in unique positions to develop community strength and involvement, as well as promote safety.

Evaluation: This model emphasizes program evaluation at every level and teaches easy-to-learn evaluation skills for measuring program success in local communities.

Sustainability: The *Partners* philosophy stresses the importance of sustainability. By incorporating the first six *Partners* principles, communities are strengthened in their capacities to create and maintain successful youth safety and health programs over time.

The training model and associated educational materials packet developed by *Partners* is currently being disseminated throughout Texas to agricultural education teachers. This program includes principles and educational materials that make it an effective and sustainable model with the potential to strengthen communities beyond the life of the project

Program Phases

In the spring of 1998, *Partners for a Safer Community* held a “train the trainers” workshop in Atlanta, Georgia. Representatives from Texas were among those who participated and began development of information dissemination methodologies to reach youth organizations in Texas. Plans were made to conduct training sessions for agriculture teachers and students teachers during the Professional Improvement Conference for Agricultural Education Teachers and the State FFA Convention.

Training session announcements for the summer 1998 workshops were sent to approximately 1400 Agricultural Education teachers. Approximately twenty-five teachers and thirty high school students were in attendance during the training sessions.

Following a proposal review by the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Grants and Awards Committee, a \$10,000 grant to purchase educational materials and support the training effort was awarded to Sam Houston State University Agricultural Sciences Department. With these funds and support from University of Texas Health Center Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education, a federally-funded regional agricultural health center, 250 *Partners* educational packets were purchased for dissemination during the 1999 Professional Improvement Conference.

A multi-year program with awards and recognition for the teachers, students, and programs was been created to increase interest. Awards applications are now available on the Texas FFA Homepage. The awards system is designed to recognize ten out-standing programs, students and teachers in regards to implementation of a community safety program. Funds are currently available to support these awards for three years.

Results to Date

To date approximately 300 teachers and 40 pre-service teachers have received training and reviewed the *Partners* educational materials. An informal review of those teachers receiving the materials has shown that they are using selected topics that meet needs within their program and community.

The attention safety issues have received from the *Partners* project has helped begin the development of communication linkages between the Texas Education Agency Agricultural Education Division, the Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, Sam Houston State University, Texas FFA Association and the Texas Council on Agricultural Safety and Health.

Interdisciplinary projects using the expertise of these groups are currently under discussion.

The Future

An additional, 250 *Partners* educational packets will be purchased and disseminated during the 2000 Professional Improvement Conference. Furthermore, a CD-ROM is under development and will contain lesson plans, PowerPoint®/multimedia presentations, transparency masters, and other safety resources for dissemination at this conference.

Safety education material needs to be assessed for suitability for use in the agricultural education classroom. Much of the material currently available is outdated, industry oriented, and printed in black and white. These materials need to be updated and improved to include the use of multimedia.

TEXAS JUNIOR FFA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

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Introduction

Texas currently has 5,596 Junior FFA members in 462 chapters. To be a Junior FFA member, the student must be involved in the local FFA Chapter and pay dues of \$2.50 to the Texas FFA Association. These members are expected to participate in the local program of activities and manage an SAE. The Junior FFA program is more than a way for pre-high school-aged students to show livestock. Each Junior FFA chapter must receive approval through the Texas FFA Association, elect Junior officers and hold meetings for the Junior chapter. Additionally, to be in good standing, the Junior members must actively participate in the creation, adoption and implementation of the local program of activities. However, beyond the chapter level, little had been done to promote involvement in the Junior FFA organization.

To accentuate the leadership capital for the future of the organization, the Texas FFA Association State Officers, with support from the state Agricultural Education Staff, instituted the First Annual Junior FFA Leadership Conference. This conference was implemented as a day camp, complete with leadership development, educational programs and physical activities.

How It Works

The expenses of the program were covered by State Junior FFA dues and a \$10 per member registration fee. These expenses included the rental of a dining hall and campsite, one mid-day meal, snacks, T-shirts for each participant, decorations, and State Officer expenses.

The State Officers and State Agricultural Education Staff met during the FFA Convention in July to develop guidelines and a program for the conference. Dr. Steve Forsythe, State FFA Executive Secretary, developed a rough draft for the program and created a method for publicizing the event. The officers then finalized the program and activities for the day.

A summer camp near Kerrville, Texas was selected and reserved as the site for the Conference. Officers organized into teams to develop T-shirts, finalize the activities, manage the publicity and registration and develop the final format of each session.

The officers met the afternoon prior to the conference to review the program and practice each of the sessions. Several advisors and parents were recruited to help monitor registration and each session during the day. Over 70 Junior members, advisors and parents attended the first-ever Junior FFA Leadership Conference.

Results

The State FFA Officers and State Agricultural Education Staff believe the program was successful. The goal of bringing everyone together for a full day of education about Agricultural Education and FFA in Texas was accomplished. The Junior FFA members attending the conference developed an understanding of FFA history, tradition, and opportunities. These students were able to see positive role models in the State FFA Officers. An excitement for becoming an FFA member in high school and participating in the full range of FFA activities was created. The conference attendees set long and short-term goals and created an action plan for accomplishing those goals.

The theme for the one-day camp was “Step by Step – Past, Present and Future.” The campers had a great time talking with state officers, meeting Lt. Governor Rick Perry, making new friends from across the state, and learning about Agricultural Education and the FFA experience.

Future Plans

Planning has begun for the Second Annual Texas Junior FFA Leadership Conference. Several changes will be made for next years' conference, centered on better meeting the maturity and conceptual needs of elementary and middle school students.

The lack of a rigid, well timed schedule created some conflict with the younger students who lacked the maturity and time management skills to return at scheduled times. Next year, the conference will incorporate a tighter