

SUPERINTENDENT PERCEPTIONS OF TIME ALLOCATIONS
FOR VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS
in Missouri

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Introduction

Program planning for the local vocational agriculture department requires inputs from several sources within the local school community. Advisory councils, school and community surveys, past experiences provide data which the local agriculture instructor can use in planning local programs. The organization and implementation of this data is the direct responsibility of the local vocational agriculture instructor. However, the administrator is finally responsible for the end product of the total school program. Administrators can be expected to utilize the planning information presented in light of their perceptions of the program. Therefore, it would be helpful to have available information concerning administrator perceptions of the vocational agriculture program.

The problem identified for study was to determine the association of superintendent perceptions of time to be allocated to the various segments of the program to determine if the various segments of the agriculture program are perceived to be needed. This problem may be expressed in question form as: What are superintendent's perceptions concerning the various segments of the agricultural program when these perceptions are based on: (a) the amount of time available, (b) the need to include the activity in the total agricultural program.

A research project was conducted in Missouri which sought to provide evidence for answering the above question. A survey instrument was developed to determine the time available and time needed for vocational agriculture program activities as perceived by superintendents in Missouri schools. A sample of forty schools was selected at random from the list of schools with single teacher departments in Missouri in 1971-72. Thirty-two usable instruments were obtained from the superintendents. The chi square statistic and percentages were used to analyze and print the data. The major agricultural program activities studied were instruction and summer programs.

Instructional Programs in Vocational Agriculture

Vocational agriculture instructional activities were divided into four areas: (1) production agriculture (2) agricultural mechanics (3) agricultural sales and service and (4) horticulture. The first section of the instrument asked the superintendents to respond as to whether each of these four areas were needed or not needed. Also, they were asked if there was adequate time available to conduct these segments of the instructional program.

A second subdivision was made within each section of the above instructional areas. A series of questions was asked concerning each instructional area. The questions were related to class preparations, class presentations, field trips, and maintaining files and equipment. The same dichotomies of adequate or inadequate time available and need or not needed were asked.

A significant value was reported for the instructional area for both the adequate-not adequate, and the needed-not needed dichotomies. The explanation for the lack of association can be explained by examining the responses in each of the four previously mentioned areas as reported in Table I. Ninety-four percent of the superintendents perceived adequate time to be available for production agriculture while 64 percent perceived adequate time to be available for horticulture. Likewise, a significant chi square value was reported for instruction in the needed-not needed dichotomy. While all responded that production and agricultural mechanics were needed, 37 percent of the superintendents reported that horticulture programs were not needed in their schools.

Agricultural sales and service contributed to the significant chi square values in the instructional analysis. Fifty-six percent of the superintendents perceived adequate time available for agricultural sales and service, 34 percent perceived inadequate time available and 9 percent perceived agricultural sales and services to be not needed. Eighty-four percent of the superintendents perceived that adequate time was available for mechanics while none felt that agricultural mechanics was not needed.

Agricultural Production. Six questions were asked concerning specific responsibilities related to agricultural production. An examination of these factors as reported in Table II revealed that the superintendents felt that adequate time was available for class preparation and presentations, to arrange field trips and to maintain files of materials. However, 28 percent felt adequate time was not available for work on bulletin boards and displays and 40 percent felt that time was not available for laboratory work.

Agricultural Mechanics. Four questions were asked which related to agricultural mechanics. Ninety-four percent of the superintendents felt that teachers had adequate time for class preparation, 75 percent felt there was adequate time for development of skills, 78 percent felt time was adequate for maintaining agricultural mechanics files, and 72 percent felt time was adequate for the maintenance of equipment and facilities. None of the respondents indicated that any of the four items was not needed.

Agricultural Sales and Service. Examination of the three questions concerning agri-sales and service revealed that 59 percent of the superintendents felt that teachers would have adequate time available for class preparation and 53 percent felt there would be adequate time available for class presentations. However, only 40 percent felt adequate time would be available for laboratory experiences and field trips.

TABLE I
 THE ASSOCIATION AMONG SUPERINTENDENT RESPONSES¹ TO
 TIME ALLOCATED TO THE AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM

Instruction	Percent Adequate	Percent Not Adequate	Percent Not Needed	D.F.	Chi Adequate	Chi Needed
A. Production Agriculture	94	6	0	3	15.99**	25.57**
B. Agriculture Mechanics	84	16	0	5	15.73**	0.15
C. Agri-Sales and Service	56	34	9	3	5.99	0.00
D. Horticulture	34	28	37	2	2.74	0.00
				2	1.20	0.00

¹There were 32 superintendent responses.

TABLE II
SUPERINTENDENT PERCEPTIONS OF TIME AVAILABLE
FOR SELECTED INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Items	N	% Ade- quate	% Not Adequate	% Not Needed
Instruction				
Production Agriculture	32	93.75	6.25	0.0
1. Actual class presentation	32	90.6	9.4	0.0
2. Class and shop presentations	32	87.5	12.5	0.0
3. Maintaining an up-to-date file of instructional materials	32	87.5	12.5	0.0
4. Arranging field trips	32	81.25	18.75	0.0
5. Preparation of bulletin boards and other educational displays	32	71.9	28.1	0.0
6. Lab (Soil testing, etc.)	32	53.1	40.6	6.25
Agricultural Mechanics (for other than production students)				
1. Actual preparation for class	32	93.75	6.25	0.0
2. Time allocation for mechan- ics instruction and develop- ment of skills	32	75.0	25.0	0.0
3. Maintaining an agriculture mechanics file including shop plans	32	78.1	21.9	0.0
4. Maintenance of agricultural mechanics facilities and equipment	32	71.9	28.1	0.0
Agri-Sales and Service				
1. Actual class preparation	32	59.4	28.1	12.5
2. Class presentations	32	53.1	34.4	12.5
3. Lab-including field trips	32	40.6	46.9	12.5
Horticulture				
1. Actual class preparation	32	34.4	28.1	37.5
2. Class presentations	32	34.4	28.1	37.5
3. Lab-including field trips	32	25.0	37.5	37.5

Horticulture. Although 37 percent of the superintendents felt that horticulture programs were not needed, only 34 percent felt that adequate time would be available for class preparation or presentations. In addition, only 25 percent of the superintendents indicated that adequate time would be available for laboratory experiences in horticulture.

Summer Activities

The superintendents were also asked a series of questions relating to the summer program of activities. All superintendents felt that each of the activities suggested for the summer program was needed. Table III reports each of the suggested activities for the summer program.

Occupational Experience. Seventy-two percent of the superintendents felt that teachers have adequate time to conduct occupational experience programs during the summer. Eighteen percent felt there was not adequate time available.

Planning. Seventy-eight percent of the superintendents felt that teachers had adequate time available for planning courses, while 22 percent reported that the time available was not adequate. Eighty-eight percent felt that there was adequate time to organize teaching materials.

FFA Activities. Ninety-one percent of the superintendents felt that there was adequate time for FFA leadership training activities; nine percent felt there was not adequate time available. Ninety-four percent felt there was adequate time for fairs and show while only six percent felt there was not adequate time available for this activity.

Professional. Eighty-eight percent of the superintendents felt that there was adequate time available for teachers to engage in professional activities, 13 percent felt there was inadequate time available.

Summary and Conclusions

Vocational agriculture program planning requires the utilization of data from several sources. One such source is the perceptions of superintendents who administer the different segments of the vocational agriculture program. This study sought to collect data related to superintendent perceptions of the agricultural program.

All the respondents perceived that instruction in production agriculture and agricultural mechanics is needed. Ninety-one percent indicated that an offering in agricultural sales and service is needed, while 63 percent indicated a program in horticulture is needed. However, approximately a third of the superintendents indicated that adequate time was not available for programs in sales and service and horticulture. Inasmuch as all schools included in the study were one-teacher departments, we would conclude that in the perception of super-

TABLE III

THE ASSOCIATION OF SUPERINTENDENT RESPONSES¹
TO TIME ALLOCATED TO THE AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM

	Percent Adequate	Percent Not Adequate	Percent Not Needed	DF	Chi Adequate	Chi Needed
Summer Activities ²						
A. Occupational Experience Program	72	18	0	5	8.49	0.00
B. Planning Course Layouts	78	22	0	4	4.99	2.50
C. Organizing Teaching Materials	88	13	0	1	4.35*	0.59
D. FFA Leadership Training	91	9	0	3	4.00	0.00
E. Professional	88	13	0	2	0.52	0.00
F. Fairs and Shows	94	6	0	2	0.12	1.02
				3	2.58	1.56

¹There were 32 superintendent responses.

²The Chi squares for summer programs were using responses A through F.

*Significant at .05 level.

intendents, the time available is a limiting factor in conducting summer programs. We would further conclude that superintendents perceive the following to be appropriate summer activities for teachers of agriculture: supervising occupational experience programs, planning course layout, organizing teaching materials, conducting FFA activities, and participating in professional improvement activities.

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