
Program Philosophy and Objectives

The philosophy of a local agriculture department developed within the guidelines of the state and local school philosophy must be clearly defined and understood by the instructor(s), school administration, parents, and students. It will include responsibilities to the community, the groups to be instructed, the areas of instruction, and direct the objectives of the program. The philosophical base should embrace the importance of the relationship of knowledge taught to the effective use and application of such knowledge as this gives the program stability and a sense of direction. The following example of a philosophy for a comprehensive high school agriculture program is offered to provide teachers and students with a clear and understandable view of the program:

Sample Philosophy for a Comprehensive High School

The agriculture teachers of Model High School are dedicated to the development of an educational environment that will help each person grow into creative, sensitive, and thinking adults. Agricultural Education is a part of the career development continuum, which includes education for agricultural occupations ranging from career motivation, career orientation, and career exploration through career development. The goal is to teach students who pursue entry-level jobs and entrepreneurship in agriculture. Students will develop an awareness that work is society's way of creating, preserving, changing, and improving their environment. Provisions will be made to allow for individual differences in all cooperative, on-the-job, and classroom experiences. Adult education is an important part of the total program.

It is essential to help each person develop self-understanding and the ability to evaluate themselves, and, as a result, to initiate change when necessary. The teacher strives to instill in students self-respect and personal values, which will help them become more effective and happy persons. The teacher acknowledges and encourages student participation and interaction in accomplishing needed change while encouraging students to accept responsibility for their actions.

Student participation and interaction is provided through planned leadership activities in FFA. The FFA provides opportunities for cooperation, citizenship, and leadership development at the local, state, and national level. Students gain experience in decision making, learn to accept responsibility for their actions and participate in activities that may lead to more purposeful use of leisure time.

The development of wholesome, community-school relations is essential in the establishment, planning, and evaluation of the Agricultural Education program. SAE visits and parent conferences must be used to interpret the needs of the students as well as visits to employers and prospective employers. By nurturing a close relationship with students and by observation of both their work and classroom achievements, students will achieve a critical awareness and respect for their community, country, and its democratic principles.

Missouri Career and Technical Education

There Five Principals that form the vision of CTE. Collectively, they serve as guideposts for the CTE community to set priorities and make decisions affecting CTE programs, policies and priorities—and to chart a new course for CTE and the nation in the 21st century.

- CTE is critical to ensuring that the United States leads in global competitiveness.
- CTE actively partners with employers to design and provide high-quality, dynamic programs.
- CTE prepares students to succeed in further education and careers.
- CTE is delivered through comprehensive programs of study aligned to The National Career Clusters Framework.
- CTE is a results-driven system that demonstrates a positive return on investment.

Program Objectives

Program objectives should reflect the needs of students, the community, the industry of agriculture, and the goals of the school. Program objectives should provide the instructor, students, parents, administrators, and community members with an indication of the purpose and goals of the agriculture program. After the objectives have been specified, further planning can be completed to guide the program's activities designed to fulfill the stated objectives. Program objectives in effect provide a target for program accomplishments.

Program objectives should meet the following criteria (Handbook on Agricultural Education in Public Schools by Phipps, Osborne, Dyer and Ball p. 100-101)

1. Based on the community's needs-include local, state, national and international dimensions
2. Measurable-stated clearly and specifically to know what was accomplished
3. Trackable-able to track progress in meeting objectives
4. Attainable-comprehensive and challenging but able to be achieved
5. Realistic-written in such a way that others are motivated to pursue them
6. Relevant-germane to the task and outcomes for the local program

Such lists should be revised as necessary to meet local conditions. Understanding of the state and national objectives for Agricultural Education and general education is prerequisite to the development of objectives, which are appropriate for a local agriculture program. Successful agriculture programs recognize that they function as part of the overall program of the local school; therefore, the objectives of the program should reflect the contribution of Agricultural Education to the overall goals of the school system.

According to the National Council for Agricultural Education (<http://www.ffa.org/thecouncil>) strategic plan for school based agriculture programs, "*Agricultural education envisions a world where all people value and understand the vital role of agriculture, food, fiber and natural resource systems in advancing personal and global well-being.*" In addition, the mission for agricultural education is to prepare "*students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture food, fiber, and natural resources systems.*" With the national vision and mission for agricultural education in mind, as well as the goals for local schools, teachers can develop program objectives that contribute to the greater mission and vision for agricultural education.

In addition, the following national goal statements were developed to provide more direction for teachers and administrators in guiding Agricultural Education programs in the future. Therefore, the national goals for Agricultural Education are:

Goal 1: An abundance of highly motivated, well-educated teachers in all disciplines, pre-kindergarten through adult, providing agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems education.

Goal 2: All students have access to seamless, lifelong instruction in agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems through a wide variety of delivery methods and educational settings.

Goal 3: All students are conversationally literate in agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

Goal 4: Partnerships and strategic alliances ensure a continuous presence of education in and about agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

Recognizing the major goals of Agricultural Education will help provide direction in program planning. Each teacher, as the manager and supervisor of a local Agricultural Education program, will also be asked to develop a list of objectives for the local program. Examples of the types of program objectives, which should be developed for a local Agricultural Education program, are as follows:

Sample Program Objectives

1. Recognize the influence of research on the agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources sector and other aspects of our society, such as medicine and consumer products.
2. Assess the interrelationships of agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources with other segments of society.
3. Become familiar with the influence of public policy on the agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources sector.
4. Develop an appreciation of agriculture for vocational and leisure interests.
5. Promote creative interests of students.
6. Promote meaningful and practical applications of the content of other subject matter areas, such as mathematics and science.
7. Provide guidance regarding the opportunities in occupations requiring knowledge and skills in agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources.
8. Assist in improving the economic efficiency of the agriculture, food, fiber and natural resource industry and individuals with careers in the industry.
9. Promote balance and meaning in the total educational program of the school and individuals.
10. Assess the contributions of agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources to society.
11. Assist present and prospective employees in agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources sector to improve their efficiency.

Sample Program Objectives for Agricultural Education

Objective 1: Develop agriculture competencies needed by individuals engaged in or preparing to engage in a career in the agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resource sector.

- A. Begin and advance in a career in the agriculture, food, fiber, and, natural resource sector.
- B. Effectively manage an agriculture enterprise or business.
- C. Recognize and apply the principles of soil science, plant science, animal science, management, and mechanization as they relate to careers in the agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources sector.
- D. Perform the managerial and operational activities necessary to enter and progress in a career in the agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources sector.

Objective 2: Develop an appreciation for career opportunities in the agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources sector and the preparation needed to enter and progress in these careers.

- A. Recognize and appreciate the importance of agriculture to the nation's economy and its impact on the daily lives of all citizens.
- B. Determine the types and numbers of occupational opportunities in agriculture.
- C. Evaluate information concerning careers in the agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources sector.
- D. Review information in relation to personal characteristics, aptitudes, and interest for careers in the agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources industry.
- E. Obtain exploratory work experience in selected occupations.
- F. Appreciate the need for pursuing a program of continuing education to keep abreast of and advance in occupations.

Objective 3: Develop the abilities in human relation skills essential in careers in the agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources sector.

- A. Appreciate the dignity of work and the need for every individual to make contributions toward his/her occupation, and to the advancement of his/her family, community, and nation.
- B. Establish and maintain effective relationship with associates.
- C. Use effective verbal and written communication skills.
- D. Appreciate and develop desirable personal behaviors and work habits.

Objective 4: Develop the abilities needed to exercise and follow effective leadership in fulfilling occupational, social, and civic responsibilities.

- A. Associate with and become a functioning member of a community organization.
- B. Identify and participate in desirable activities for developing and improving leadership.
- C. Initiate activities that improve agriculture and the community.
- D. Develop and maintain desirable relationships between groups.

Objective 5: Provide educational opportunities for persons outside the scope of the traditional secondary agriculture program who are starting a new or supplemental career in agriculture or to provide additional education for those persons who are wishing to supplement prior training in agriculture.

- A. Provide informal classes or learning experiences on topics of interest to adults in the community.
- B. Supply the latest information regarding the agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources sector to the community.
- C. Provide assistance in financial management to adult farmers/agribusinesses.
- D. Identify and participate in useful leadership activities through an active Young Farmers/Young Farm Wives program.