

discipline needs in schools and ethical environmental decision making by agriculturists.

These and other common themes should form the basis for future initiatives, scholarship, and programs by teacher education in agriculture. The goal of teacher education programs in agriculture should be to: 1) provide the national, regional, and state leadership necessary to develop programs which address these challenges; and 2) to prepare teachers of agriculture who are capable of implementing educational programs and instruction that can address these challenges. By collaborating broadly with colleagues from both fields (education and the agriculture), I believe that this can be accomplished.

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# Through Ivy Stained Glasses

By A Caring Critic

After a few years at the university, I'm afraid that some teacher educators start viewing agricultural education through ivy stained glasses. Since this issue is concerned with teacher education in agriculture, I'd like to pose some questions to our fine university friends. Perhaps this will help wipe that ivy juice off those glasses.

1. When was the last time you spent a solid week in the classroom teaching? I know you drop in for "observations" from time to time but you really need to spend an entire week teaching. The students and climate are different today. If you spent a week in the secondary classroom, where you had to actually teach every day, all day long instead of for an hour or two every other day, you might re-evaluate your stance on behavioral objectives, lesson planning, preparing elaborate PowerPoint presentations, etc. There just isn't time in the day to day to do everything teacher educators say should be done. It is nice in theory but difficult to accomplish in the real world.

2. Of what value is your research to the rank and file agriculture teacher? I think the answer to this is pretty obvious.

3. Are you a model of teaching excellence? Do you actually emulate what you say should be done by the teachers?

4. What have you produced lately that could be taken by a teacher and used in the classroom?

5. How proactively are you recruiting prospective teachers? There is absolutely no excuse for some of the teacher education

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research, and provide professional development programs for current teachers.

Is there a need for teacher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Only six percent of our students are served by education in agriculture, yet 100% eat, wear clothes, and are intimate with the environment. Colleges of agriculture rely on high school agriculture programs for students with agricultural experience and premier leadership ability. Industry relies on agriculture graduates for quality employees. ...Pretty impressive display of importance in any century!

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## Who is Going To Do What?

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years to complete a series of workshops, course work, or other identified professional development experiences that teach the necessary knowledge and skills needed to manage the classroom, SAE programs, and the FFA in order to maintain their agricultural teacher certification. Workshops and training could incorporate distance education and possibly be offered for graduate credit through universities.

All states should consider the development of mentoring programs. In the mentoring program, quality teachers would “adopt” one or more new teachers. Ideally, these mentor teachers would receive extra pay. If pay could not be provided, then maybe the state leadership (teacher association, state staff, and/or FFA coordinators) could agree to limit other responsibilities of mentor teachers.

The NAAE could promote regional consortiums that address teacher preparation needs in several states. One way to do this would be to ensure that current regional meetings include quality new teacher preparation programs led by experienced teachers. All meetings (national, regional, and state) must provide solid teacher development programming. These programs could be incorporated as requirements into either the state’s new teacher program or the certification program. The NAAE could also possibly be responsible for initiating articulation agreements that allow teachers to move their certifications from state to state.

While agricultural education seems to stay in a crisis mode, the current status of teacher preparation in many states indicates that this crisis is real and will have profound effects on the future viability of agricultural

education in those states. It will take commitment by all individuals involved in agricultural education to solve the problems related to the supply of qualified teachers for secondary agricultural education. Secondary agricultural education is worth saving. If teachers work with teacher educators and state staff, they can find the solutions. Otherwise, “would the last person out, please turn out the lights.”

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programs in our nations to have only a handful of students when they should have many more. Perhaps the profession would be better served if more time was spent recruiting students instead of writing journal articles and developing educational theory.

6. What are you doing to help lateral entry teachers and to assist the first year teachers you produced? Are they left to sink or swim? With the decline in state supervisory staffs, someone needs to help the neophyte teachers.

Is teacher education in agriculture a part of the solution or a part of the problem?