

FFA

JUNE, JULY, AUGUST, 1991

New Horizons

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION



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FFA New Horizons

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION

June-July-August, 1993

Volume 41 Number 5



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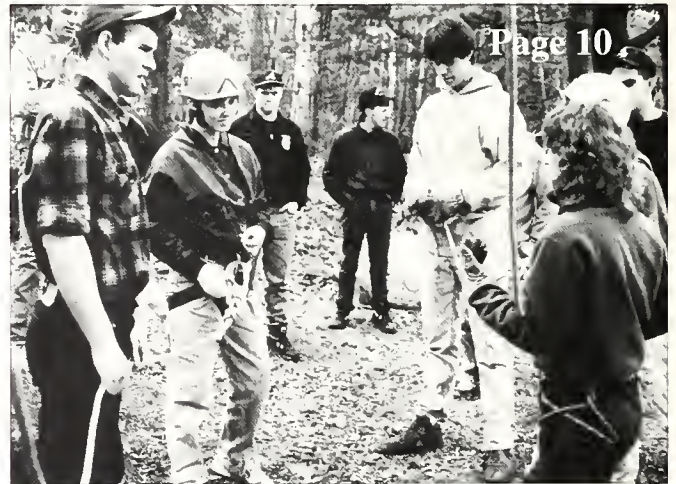
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T H E F R O N T L I N E

To many, contest and awards are at the heart of the FFA. Anyone who has ever participated in a contest or received an award knows how it can boost your confidence, drive you to achieve more and probably get your name in the paper.



But are the current activities on target? Do they capture student interest and provide for what the agricultural industry needs? These questions have been put to the National Contest and Awards Task Force appointed by the FFA Board of Directors. They have been challenged to design FFA activities that meet the needs of students, parents, advisors and the agricultural industry for the year 2000.

"What business and industry want are people working with people to get things done," says Rhett Laubach, 1992-93 Oklahoma FFA president, who, along with Paul Friedrichs, 1992-93 Kansas FFA president, is serving as a student representative on the task force. "The skills they need to have in the workforce are the same skills we should be emphasizing at the chapter level," adds Laubach.

The task force's first step was to ask some key questions to students, parents, advisors, administrators and state FFA staff through a study. Students said they most often enroll in agriculture classes because they want to participate in FFA activities, enjoy working outside the classroom and plan on going into a career in the agricultural industry.

FFA members said they participated in contest and awards because they like the feeling of winning, it increased their self esteem and it gave them a chance to win prizes or scholarships. They valued teamwork and taking responsibility for a project more than learning a specific skill. A whopping 71 percent of those students surveyed said that *cooperation* in FFA activities is more important than *competition*. (For more study results, see "News in Brief" page 6.)

Based on the study's results, the task force created a "Philosophy for FFA Awards and Contests" that includes guidelines for individual, team and chapter activities. In July, the FFA Board of Directors will discuss the report. If they approve it, each FFA activity will be reviewed to see if it meets up to the new standards. If it doesn't, it will either be changed or dropped. New activities may be created.

Laubach says that the student voice was clearly heard on the task force of agriculture teachers, college professors, agribusinessmen, state FFA officials and national staff. He said that many times during the meetings, all heads would turn to the student representatives for their point of view. "We were in the thick of the discussion and we were listened to. You can get lost in the statistics, but we kept the group focused on what those numbers really mean."

During the summer of '95, your advisor will receive a new set of guidelines for FFA contests and awards. Everything from public speaking to livestock judging to the agricultural mechanics proficiency award will have been reviewed and changes will have been made. The work between now and then will have a huge impact on the FFA.

Andy Markwart

How To Have An Awesome AGRICIENCE Project



You don't have to be a rocket scientist to start an agriscience project. Soil tests, tissue cultures and growth regulator experiments are all typical classroom activities, but they can also be agriscience projects you can win awards and money with. Each state winner in the Agriscience Student Recognition Program wins \$1,000. Eight national finalists will be awarded at least \$3,000. The national runner-up wins \$5,500 and the national winner rakes in \$7,000.

To order a fun-to-read application/how-to guide and brochure that shows how to put together an agriscience project contact: Teacher Services Specialist, Greg Egan, 5632 Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria, VA 22309 or phone him at 703-360-3600, ext. 264.

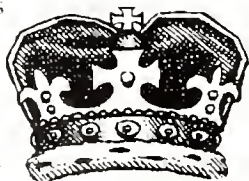
American Royalty

For a little more than two weeks of work you could win a \$5,000 scholarship, as well as all sorts of other prizes.

All you have to do is request an application from your state FFA staff for the American Royal Student Ambassador Program. The deadline to have your entry postmarked is September 1. Judges are looking for contestants who have high academic achievement, public speaking ability and knowledge of agriculture or agriculturally related fields.

They will choose one female and one male FFA member to reign for the American Royal Horse Show and Rodeo performances.

For more information, contact your state advisor; American Royal Liaison, Pam Petty, 816-221-9800; or Student Ambassador Program Chairperson, Kathy Scaglia, 816-333-2120.



A Chance To Thank Your Advisor

The date to have your Advisor Tribute contest entry postmarked has been changed to June 25. If you would like to recognize your advisor in the magazine, type a letter on plain white paper stating what your advisor means to you and why. Include your name, home address, home telephone number, school telephone number, FFA chapter and FFA advisor's name with the letter. Send your entry to FFA New Horizons, Advisor Tribute, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309-0160. We'll publish the top entries in the September-October issue and one winner will be chosen to speak at the National FFA Convention.

Time To Celebrate... FFA Membership Is Growing

Last year FFA membership numbers went up for the first time in ten years. This year the trend continues. As of publication time, FFA had **11,214** more members than last year, for a total of **412,788**.

Contests And Awards Study May Spur Changes

A professional research organization has done a study of all FFA contests and awards. They sent surveys to 500 students and 260 advisors as well as to parents, school administrators and state staff. A special FFA task force, at the July board meeting, will review the study and decide if contests and awards changes should be made.

Here are some of the student's answers. They assigned values on a scale of one (not important) to ten (very important) for each answer.

- When asked why they participate in contests and awards, students reported: they like the feeling of winning and self esteem (8.1), hope to win prizes or scholarships (8.0), like to go on trips (7.7), enjoy the teamwork (7.6), and learn from preparing for them (7.1).

- What is important for students to learn? Taking responsibility (8.7) and teamwork (8.5) were rated highest by all students and adults, while learning a specific skill (7.0) and learning to win (5.3) were rated lowest by both students and adults.

- Students reported that involvement in other activities (6.7), work after school

You Make It Happen

Here's a fun way to recruit more members into your chapter. The You Make It Happen game show lets you present FFA facts to seventh and eighth graders in an exciting way. Every FFA advisor will get these materials by September 1.

(6.5), shyness (6.2), conflicts with part-time jobs (6.0), and a feeling they don't fit (5.8) are barriers that reduce participation.

- Students and adults generally believe female and male students have the same opportunities to participate in FFA contests and awards (92.5%). Seven percent of students responded that females and males do not have equal opportunities. Reasons these students felt there was gender bias are: the nature of the activities (41%), advisors attitudes (24%), and physical strength (24%).

- In answer to the question, in the future, should FFA activities promote competition or cooperation, a majority (71%) of the students rated cooperation as being more important. Adults tended to rate cooperation higher than students.

- Students recommended that all students should be recognized for participating at the first level above the chapter.

- The four most important types of recognition for students were plaque or trophy (8.4%), write-up in local paper (8.2%), local awards banquet (8.1%) and recognition from friends and family.

Oceans of Opportunity

Chicago FFA member makes a splash with basement business

By Jennifer West, FFA Member
Hesperia, California

With just a couple of hundred dollars, space for a few fish tanks and a lot of patience, you could be in the tropical fish business. Jason Ziegler, fish breeder and FFA member from Chicago, Illinois, says patience is a key because, "The fish aren't going to spawn when you want them to." He's been waiting on one pair of fish for two years—with no results.

Ziegler's parents first gave him an aquarium and tropical fish when he was three. By his freshman year he was selling some of the fish he bred in his basement. "The first time, I sold to just one pet shop. Later, I learned to spread out, to sell to different stores and get a higher price for my fish."

Now a junior in high school, Ziegler's monthly income averages between \$50 and \$75. He delivers about 200 fish a month to various pet shops. Fish prices range from \$1 an inch to \$50 each, depending on how hard they are to breed.

Building a business relationship with the store owners is a key to a successful enterprise, says Ziegler. "Pet shops are very picky about where they buy their fish from, because there are always worries about parasites and such." Owners must know you provide a good supply for them to keep buying from you, he says.

Ziegler spends about two to three hours a day at work. He hires several freshmen as apprentices. "They've learned a lot," he says of his assistants. "When I find a freshman who doesn't have an SAE [supervised agricultural experience program], I'll train them to help me with my business. Often, they start fish projects of their own."

Not everyone is suited for raising these scaly creatures though. "It's a challenge," Ziegler says. The fish have to have a certain constant temperature (83 degrees Fahrenheit normally and 87 to 89 when

spawning), soft water, a specific pH level and high quality food.

To entice the fish to spawn, Ziegler puts a dozen of one type of fish in the same tank. After the fish choose their mate, and are put in a tank of their own. Ziegler waits for the next generation to be born.

Through his FFA experience, Ziegler says he has learned to keep efficient records. "By using record books, I've found out how much better it is to write everything down, so I can keep track of customers and how much I earn."

By plowing 90 percent of the money he earns back into the business, Ziegler feels he has accomplished many of his goals and plans to expand. "When I began, I wanted to be self-supported, and I think I

accomplished that. Now, I'd like to get bigger tanks and expand to more exotic breeds of fish."

Running his fish enterprise fits well with Ziegler's ambitions to become a veterinarian and to own his own pet shop. "The best part about my business," he says, "is that I'm doing something I enjoy." To other FFA members considering starting a business, he advises, start small and build your way up. Find out what you are interested in and make sure it's demanding. If it's not challenging, Ziegler says it may be hard to stay interested. As a final note, he says, "Don't give up. Sometimes you might think that running your own business is too difficult, but in the long run, it's worth it." ...



Photo by Mike Wilson

"First you have to find something that interests you, then you have to do something that's demanding," says Ziegler, who's raised and bred varieties of African and South American tropical fish for three years.

CAREERS IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

Watch For Big Opportunities in the International Arena

By Michael Wilson

Wanting to see the world, visit exotic lands, explore a new culture? Your future may be tied to agricultural exports. That's because the American farmer no longer provides food and fiber for his fellow citizens alone. Of the 128 people one farmer can feed, 34 of them live in other countries.

"The idea that we're in a global economy has finally caught hold in agriculture," says Dr. Lowell Hill, University of Illinois professor of agricultural marketing. "Almost anything we do in agriculture now needs an international understanding."

That's where you come in. Hundreds of farm commodities, both raw and processed, are sold overseas in virtually hundreds of countries. About one million jobs are tied in one way or another to those exports, according to the U.S. Feed Grains Council (USFGC).

Most are in assembling, processing, and distributing agricultural products. Transportation jobs in trucking, rail, river barge, and shipping, depend heavily on exports. Many agricultural researchers study ways to improve grain quality for when the crop is shipped overseas.

Nearly every agricultural career area has some connection to farm exports.

Destination: Overseas?

On the other hand, some jobs are directly tied to farm exports. Some of these jobs are located in places like Washington, D.C.—and Rome, Paris, Moscow, and Tokyo.

Let's start with the Foreign Agricultural Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture that supports the private sector in expanding exports of U.S. farm products. Three-fourths of FAS staff work in Washington, D.C. The rest work overseas, representing the interests of U.S. agriculture in more than 80 countries.

One of those jobs might be as an agricultural attaché. "Their job is to be the representative of the U.S. government in areas of agriculture in the foreign country," explains Dr. Hill. "They work with trade groups, conduct meetings on policy, try to negotiate better trade terms, and help in promot-

ing products."

Those FAS workers who are stationed in Washington might work on various economic reports, analyze the credit risk of various countries, or collect information on global supply and demand.

FAS hires economists who specialize in agriculture and international affairs. These jobs with FAS almost always require a four-year college degree plus a master's degree, preferably in agricultural economics. FAS commonly recruits for these jobs at land grant colleges.

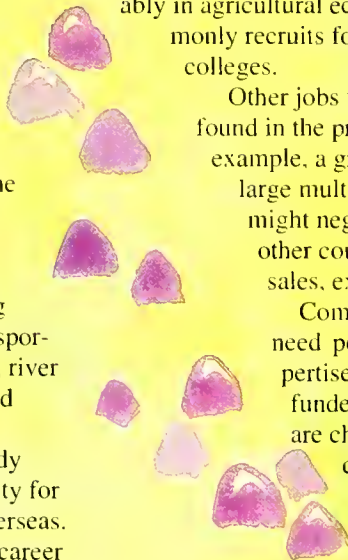
Other jobs tied to farm exports are found in the private sector. For example, a grain merchandiser for a large multinational grain company might negotiate with people in other countries to make grain sales, explains Dr. Hill.

Commodity organizations often need people with international expertise, says Dr. Hill. These organizations, funded by farmer contributions ("checkoffs"), are challenged to create new markets for their commodities.

Many checkoff-funded commodity organizations have offices in other countries staffed with Americans whose job it is to educate foreigners on new ways to use U.S. farm commodities. The American Soybean Association conducts over 200 export expansion activities in 76 countries. They set up trade fairs and conferences and conduct feeding trials or seminars to promote U.S. soybeans.

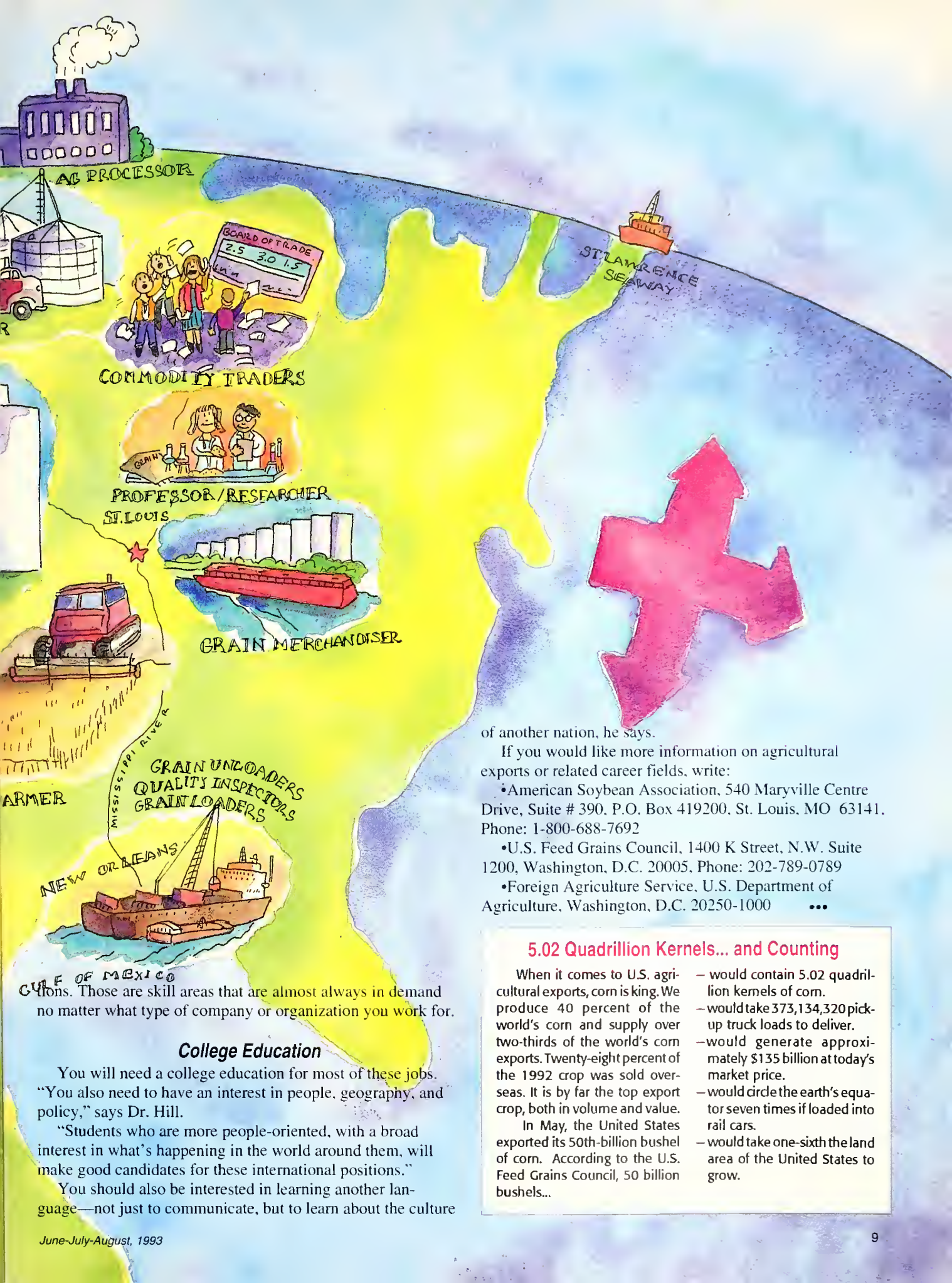
Farm equipment companies—both American—and foreign-owned—need people who can help market their products in other countries. You may wind up working as a technician or engineer for John Deere in France, since many American-owned farm equipment companies sell overseas. Or you may land a similar job here working for Claas, a German-owned farm equipment company that sells machinery here in the United States. Hundreds of smaller companies are constantly striving to find new markets for their farm equipment.

Many private companies and commodity organizations need professionals in marketing or communications, points out Donna Dunn, USFGC director of membership and communica-



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NEW ORLEANS
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ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY

of another nation, he says.

If you would like more information on agricultural exports or related career fields, write:

- American Soybean Association, 540 Maryville Centre Drive, Suite # 390, P.O. Box 419200, St. Louis, MO 63141. Phone: 1-800-688-7692
- U.S. Feed Grains Council, 1400 K Street, N.W. Suite 1200, Washington, D.C. 20005. Phone: 202-789-0789
- Foreign Agriculture Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250-1000 ...

5.02 Quadrillion Kernels... and Counting

When it comes to U.S. agricultural exports, corn is king. We produce 40 percent of the world's corn and supply over two-thirds of the world's corn exports. Twenty-eight percent of the 1992 crop was sold overseas. It is by far the top export crop, both in volume and value. In May, the United States exported its 50th-billion bushel of corn. According to the U.S. Feed Grains Council, 50 billion bushels...

- would contain 5.02 quadrillion kernels of corn.
- would take 373,134,320 pickup truck loads to deliver.
- would generate approximately \$135 billion at today's market price.
- would circle the earth's equator seven times if loaded into rail cars.
- would take one-sixth the land area of the United States to grow.

ions. Those are skill areas that are almost always in demand no matter what type of company or organization you work for.

College Education

You will need a college education for most of these jobs. "You also need to have an interest in people, geography, and policy," says Dr. Hill.

"Students who are more people-oriented, with a broad interest in what's happening in the world around them, will make good candidates for these international positions."

You should also be interested in learning another language—not just to communicate, but to learn about the culture



Marguerite Lisai is crossing the multivine traverse with the help of her support crew. Teammate Jody Aldrich (to the right of the tree) gives encouraging words from below.

By Lawinna McGary

Project Adventure

Outdoor teambuilding teaches confidence and trust

You're on a cable 25 feet up in the air. A wave of dizziness hits. Your body is shaking. Breathe...and focus on your goal. Just look ahead...a few more steps to the tree and you'll be safe. Whatever you do, don't faaalll!

Welcome to the world of team building in Springfield, Vermont.

"It's kind of exciting and it's kind of scary," says 17-year-old Marguerite Lisai, describing her first time on the high ropes. "I found out I could make it across, which a lot of people can't do. It makes me proud. It's given me self confidence."

Lisai is one of about 80 students in the past two years who have tackled outdoor activities like the wild woosey, teepee shuffle, spider's web and the WALL. There are 17 team-building activities performed on elevated ropes and logs. Some are only inches from the ground while others are more than 20 feet from firm footing. There's little chance of an accident. In the highest activities, students are safely harnessed in and attached to ropes that ease them to the ground. Yet, the experience strikes fear in the hearts of most people.

"I'm scared of heights," says junior Harold Rock. "But I keep going out there and keep challenging myself."

Team Time

Chapter members first constructed the outdoor elements for a Building Our American Communities project. Advisor Hank Stopinski wanted a way to bring his classes and the community together. Students from four other high schools, as well as adult students, attend his technical center. With such a mix of people in his classrooms, Stopinski found it hard to get students to work together and to trust each other.

His goal is to have each student go through team-building exercises. These



Slipping Matt Lloyd through the ropes without touching ANYTHING is the goal of the Spider's Web.

outdoor activities show you how to make decisions, set goals and "realize the power of the team can make a significant difference," he says.

Rock's first time on the course was during freshman orientation. "I saw a different side of people." People in different cliques began to work together, he says. "Most of the time in school, you're put in a certain class. If you have cool clothes and money, you're in. If not, you're out. It's hard. You lose your self confidence. That's what is so great about this class. It doesn't matter who you are. You can be great at anything."

"I've always had a hard time working with people," says Lisai. "Since I was a little kid, I've always been secluded and shut off from everybody else. It (the team building) has really made a change in my life. Now I like working with other kids."

It's Cool To Be Kind

Before members can brave the elements and become a team, they go through about an hour of instruction. Then they must agree to follow these rules: always

give 100 percent; everything is challenge by choice...no activities are forced on anyone; only positive reinforcement allowed; and everything heard in the group stays in the group.

"There are no put downs in this class. It gives you confidence to speak out and say what you want to say. To say what you feel," Rock says. Because of a learning disability, Rock says he gets frustrated in other classes. Being in forestry, something he's good at, and then being encouraged on the ropes courses by friends, has helped him decide to stay in school.

Knowing that no one will blast you at lunch after you've spilled your guts in the morning, says Stopinski, is an important part of the program's success.

"A lot of people feel much better about themselves when other people are giving support and helping," says chapter vice president Mike Johnston. Before this course, "A lot of people didn't think I was going to graduate. Now I'm an 'A' student, and I'm in a lot of extracurricular activities. I'm even going to college. This program made me want to do more." ●●●

Adventure Can Be Yours

For more facts on how to set up your own team building activities, contact one of these Project Adventure offices.

Main office:
PO Box 100
Hamilton, MA 01936
(508) 468-7981

116 Maple Street
Brattleboro, VT 05301
(802) 254-5054

PO Box 14171
Portland, OR 97214
(503) 239-0169

PO Box 2447
Covington, GA 30209
(404) 784-9310

This non-profit corporation, dedicated to helping schools, offers these resources:

- staff who can build your site or provide literature that shows how to build your own
- books on topics such as adventure games, ice breakers and problem solving
- staff who will show teachers and others how to set up and run events
- equipment for games, problem solving events and ropes courses (You can order catalogs from the Georgia and Massachusetts offices.)



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**It's up to US to
Convince C
it's Safe at home**

A P O W E R F U L

The boys (and girls) of summer take to the ballfield each year with high hopes of scoring home runs, fielding hits and avoiding as many errors as possible. The same could be said of the American agricultural team as it seeks to avoid the tag that our food is unsafe.

With each passing season, new doubts are raised about the safety of our nation's food supply and the reliability of its food protection system. Sometimes the questions focus on how the food was raised or grown. At other times, concerns center on how it's processed, packaged or shipped.

In nearly every instance, the questions are resolved and the matter becomes a faded memory. Americans go on about their daily lives, eating three square meals a day, rarely concerned about the safety of the food they put on their plates and in their mouths.

Until another headline stirs their fears and jolts their confidence.

Sometimes the headlines are constructive, reminding all in the food industry to do a better job. But, other stories are merely collections of accusations made by one group or another – mostly done with the best of intentions but often lacking in both forethought and fact.

Each report seems to chip away at the public's trust of farmers, farm suppliers, food processors, government regulators and food retailers.

Pitch



The challenge for all of us in agriculture is to find a way to help consumers sort through the headlines – distinguishing accuracy from accusation – while still searching for ways of improving our score card on food safety. Our best chance for winning with the American people is to deliver a powerful pitch on food. And, as an FFA member, you are one of agriculture's Designated Pitchers on food safety.

Concerns about food safety have covered the waterfront... from ripening agents used in apple production to fungicides on peanuts, herbicides on corn, growth hormones used in beef production and food additives used by processors. Why do we use these products? Are they safe? Do we really need them? What are the long-term health effects? How can we be sure our food is safe?

These questions are fair. And each of us should know how to respond by covering all the bases.

First Base: The Farm



Have you ever met a farmer who just couldn't wait to spend money on herbicides or livestock antibiotics? As wise-cracking Macaulay Culkin said in *Home Alone*, "I don't think so."

With less than 2 percent of Americans producing food for the rest of the nation and a major portion of the world,

farmers have their work cut out for them. The farmer's success at producing vast quantities of fruits, vegetables, cereals, grains and fiber crops, as well as cattle, hogs and poultry, has made American agriculture our Number One industry – and something of a miracle worldwide. Yet most consumers never give it a second thought; we expect to find fresh and processed foods – readily available, convenient and affordable – whenever we stroll into a grocery store.

This food abundance could only be possible through farmer efficiency, use of the latest advances in machinery, agronomic practices and science, and thoughtful attention to carefully managing these technologies. Without these tools, a farmer could feed only a handful of people (as was the case only 50 years ago) rather than the nearly 130 consumers fed by each U.S. farmer today.

Sure, some of those innovations have names that the public often misunderstands – names like pesticides, antibiotics, growth hormones, hybrid seed varieties, genetically engineered crops, and a host of other food production tools and techniques. But there's no doubt about it: Farmers don't use these tools because they want to spend their hard-earned money. They are quick to recognize which innovations "work" and which ones don't. Thanks to farmers making the right choices, our food production system has become the model for the world.

Second Base: The Laboratory



The tools used in food production don't just happen. They are the result of *lifetimes* of careful research, study, and field, greenhouse and laboratory experimentation. Put simply, today's productivity enhancements are the product of research, research, research (more research) and...success!

Take ag chemicals, for example. On average, only one (that's right, just one) in 20,000 pesticides survives the journey from the chemist's lab, through testing, beyond regulatory review, to the marketplace. (More about the regulatory process later.) Many discoveries are rejected because they don't meet manufacturer standards for pest control, guidelines for safety to humans and the environment and countless other tests. This long and winding process takes from seven to 10 years and costs pesticide manufacturers anywhere from \$35 million to \$50 million. Again, all to end up with only *one* product out of 20,000 candidates!

The same exhaustive research goes into other production inputs and food processing additives. In fact, anything that has a remote chance of becoming part of the food supply is subjected to a wide variety of company and government-directed testing.

Third Base: The Government



Three federal agencies are the primary guardians of our food supply. They are:

- **Environmental Protection Agency** (expected to become the Department of Environmental Protection). EPA is responsible for carrying out a law commonly known as "FIFRA" – the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act. FIFRA requires that pesticides used in food production meet tough standards for safety by being subjected to more than 120 health, safety and environmental

"While consumers should remain alert about the foods they eat, they also should realize that the U.S. food supply is vigorously regulated and remains among the safest in the world."

Dr. Louis Grivetti
Food Historian and Professor of Nutrition
University of California at Davis

tests. The law sets specific guidelines for product labeling, registration, transportation and worker safety during use. In brief, FIFRA ensures rigorous testing and safety to the public and environment, and verifies that any pesticide's benefits far outweigh its potential risks.

- **Food and Drug Administration.** FDA administers the federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, one of the world's most comprehensive laws designed to protect food safety. Because no food is "pure," this law sets a "tolerance" level for all chemical traces and food additives present that might constitute a "residue." This covers artificial sweeteners, preservatives, traces of animal drugs, pesticides – even food packaging materials. Together with federal environmental officials, the Food and Drug Administration sets the legal limits for residues in raw agricultural commodities and processed foods.

- **Food Safety and Inspection Service.** FSIS is responsible for ensuring that meat and poultry products are safe, wholesome and accurately labeled. This USDA agency

inspects products for domestic and export consumption and checks imported products as well. FSIS assures that those who raise animals and process food have lived up to their food safety responsibilities. Consider these facts:

- ❖ More than 7,000 inspectors are stationed in meat and poultry plants nationwide.
- ❖ Slaughter inspectors and veterinarians inspect nearly 120 million live-stock and 6 billion poultry for signs of disease or abnormalities, before *and* after slaughter.
- ❖ Food technologists and processing inspectors annually *re-inspect* about 150 *billion* pounds of hot dogs, chicken nuggets, frozen entrees and processed products.
- ❖ About 325,000 samples are checked each year for residues of animal drugs, pesticides or other chemicals, and roughly 40,000 are checked for bacteria or parasites.



So, what does all this regulation, testing and inspection mean to us? It means our food is safe. In fact, regulations require such wide margins of safety that a 40-pound child could eat 340 oranges EVERY DAY FOR LIFE and still not consume the equivalent amount of pesticide residues that *might* cause health problems in laboratory mice. Three hundred forty oranges a day? *"I don't think so."*

Home Plate: The Consumer



How many times have you tasted cookie batter containing eggs? According to the American Dietetic Association, that's a no-no, because raw eggs could contain harmful bacteria.

Believe it or not, foods are at their greatest risk once they've reached the consumer's home, mostly because of how the food is frozen, thawed, refrigerated, cooked (not cooked) or handled. Improperly cooked meats, for example, can carry dangerous bacteria.

People often become ill because they fail to wash their hands after handling raw poultry and other meat. Similar

handling and preparation concerns apply to fruits and vegetables, too.

But, assuming our foods are properly handled and prepared, are consumers still at risk because of food additives?

As mentioned earlier, food additives are closely regulated and can only be used for a specific food purpose. They cannot be used to hide inferior products, trick consumers or

destroy nutrients. Without food additives, according to the American Dietetic Association, ice cream would form icy crystals, peanut butter would separate and marshmallows would be hard.

The most commonly used food additives are sugar, salt and corn syrup. These and all other additives are listed on the product package to assist consumers in making informed choices.

With all the health concerns surrounding food safety, it's important to remind people that the best health insurance is a sound, balanced diet of nutritious foods – including fruits, vegetables, breads, cereals, dairy and poultry products, fish and meats. Do you eat five servings of fruits

and vegetables every day? (Did you say, "I don't think so"?) Well, the National Cancer Institute says that diets rich in fruits and vegetables are the best defense against at least nine forms of cancer.

Clearly, you've got the facts needed to deliver a winning pitch on food safety. And agriculture has a great team with lots of talent. With all the bases loaded in favor of consumers, the healthful benefits of food will continue to outscore the risks, season after season.

This special message on food is brought to you by:

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Say What?

FFA award winners were left to fend for themselves in a world that didn't speak English

By Andy Markwart

Everything was fine for Darren Funk until he stepped inside the airport in Hamburg, Germany. No one was speaking English. This was more of an adventure than he had bargained for.

Funk, western region star farmer, was on the Stars International Marketing Tour, a 10-day whirlwind trip through Germany, Belgium and France. With him were Randy Bogden, western region star in agribusiness; Brian Lake, eastern region star farmer; Jeff Martin, eastern region star in agribusiness; Rosco Vaughn, FFA board member and his wife, Susan; Funk's advisor, Gaylen Smyer and myself.

For the time being, Funk and his fellow travelers could relax, sort of, while their trusty tour

families in rural Germany.

Do you remember the first time you heard someone speaking another language you didn't understand? Sounds like gibberish. Ultra-high-speed gibberish...like everyone in the country went to auctioneering school. "It was like being illiterate," recalls Funk. "I couldn't even communicate with the taxi driver. The louder I got, the faster he went, no matter what I said."

After meetings with U.S. Department of Agriculture export officials and a tour of a meat processing plant, the travelers piled into a van and headed south to their host families. The two-hour trip from Hamburg was spent cramming basic German survival words. "Yes. No. Please. Thank you. Where is the bathroom?"

It was dark when the van dropped off Funk and advisor Smyer at a brick farmhouse near a small town called Bücken. It was thousands of miles away from

Burley, Idaho, and they were feeling every mile of the distance. "I felt abandoned," recalls Funk.

But upon greeting their hosts at the door, they realized everything was going to be all right. Though the mother and father of the house spoke little English, their daughters had traveled to the U.S. and Canada. Better still, the German farmer grew sugar beets and potatoes, just like the western region star farmer and his advisor. They quickly learned that the desire to talk about the latest trends in farming doesn't know international boundaries. The young women interpreted for the crop farmers from different sides of the Atlantic. "We talked beets and

spuds until our interpreters couldn't stay awake anymore," said Smyer. "It took the edge off," added Funk.

Others in the group weren't as fortunate to get in-house interpreters, but man-

aged just fine. They realized communication gets stripped down to bare essentials when you have to look up every other word in a pocket dictionary. Forget the proper way to ask "when will we be eating dinner?" Intelligent people are reduced to exaggerated hand gestures that resemble scooping Cheerios out of a bowl while asking repeatedly, "Dinner? Eating? Time? Munch-Munch?"

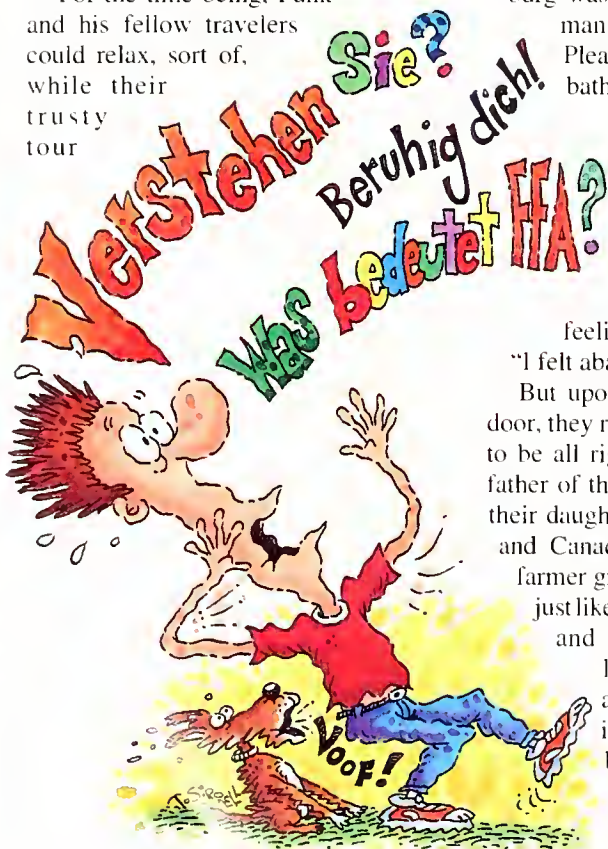
By the next day, the group had been transformed from chatterbox tourists into carefully paced bi-lingual communicators. They were actually speaking to other American group members in the same manner as German hosts, such as, "I...am...very...happy...to...see...you...this...morning...Brian."

The Stars quickly learned their early fears were unfounded. Their hosts were kind, helpful and hospitable. They went out of their way to make sure you were comfortable. These were good people. Friendships were made quickly. After only two days, there were heart-tugging good-byes, promises to write and invitations to visit.

On the final night of the tour, the Stars reflected on their journey while having dinner in the Eiffel Tower in Paris. The group had visited the historic cities of Antwerp and Brussels, Belgium; Paris, France and Hamburg, Germany. They were with high level officials at the U.S. embassies in each country. They toured museums, and attended international farm shows. Yet each one agreed without reservation that the stay with families meant the most to them.

The one event that had been the most scary and the most frustrating wound up being the most rewarding. "I wouldn't trade that for anything," says Funk. "I would have stayed there for the whole ten days if could have." ...

The Stars International Marketing Tour is sponsored by American Cyanamid Company, Agricultural Division; Case IH; Farm Credit System; NA-CHURS Plant Food Company and Pioneer Hi-Bred International as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.



guide navigated them through the city to their business appointments and sight-seeing tours. But in the back of their minds, they knew they would be on their own the next evening, staying with farm

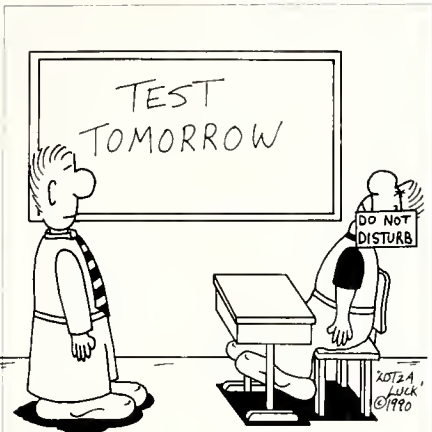
J O K E P A G E

Zena: Great news! The teacher said we'd have a test, rain or shine.

Bena: What's so good about that?

Zena: It's snowing!

Jamie Dilline
Hydro, OK



Mr. Williams realized that being lost in thought was new territory for Robert and began to organize a search party to bring him back to reality.

Judy: My father always whistles when he works.

Rudy: He must be a happy guy.

Judy: Not really. He's a traffic cop.

Michael L. Wilcox
Fountaintown, IN

Jim: I saw a man-eating shark in the aquarium.

John: That's nothing. I saw a man eating shrimp in the cafeteria.

Joseph Sestae
Tabor, SD

Q: What did the farmer say to the seed?

A: I'll cheer you up, if you'll root for me.

Amy Cheek, Will Cheek
Rayville, LA

Q: Why did the cow cross the road?

A: It was the chicken's day off.

Jason Harbin
Adamsville, TN

A zookeeper was talking to three boys who were in trouble. He said, "Tell me your names and what you were doing."

The first boy said, "Tommy. I was trying to feed peanuts to the lions."

The second boy said, "Billy. I was trying to feed peanuts to the lions."

The third boy said, "My name is Peanuts."

J. B. Youngblood
Watson, OK

Doc: Take one of those blue pills every morning with a glass of water, one of the red ones at noon with a glass of water, and one of the green pills every night before bed with a glass of water.

Patient: OK. Doc, but give it to me straight. What's wrong with me?

Doc: You're not drinking enough water.

Bobbie Mae Cooley
Bowen, IL

Q: Why do seagulls fly over the sea?

A: Because if they flew over the bay they would be called bagels.

Joanna Steck
Port Orange, FL

Q: How do you get down from an elephant?

A: You don't. You get down from a duck.

Gerald Lewandowski
Millis, MA

Q: What do you call a minor bird accident?

A: A feather bender.

Ernest Jess
Arthur, IL

Q: What do you know if you find bones on the moon?

A: The cow didn't make it!

Brandon Dobler
Beulah, ND

Charlie and Friends



"No birthday party. They're celebrating my volunteering to do extra chores."

NOTICE:

FFA NEW HORIZONS will pay \$5.00 for each joke selected for this page. Jokes must be addressed to FFA NEW HORIZONS P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309, or via Stargram on the Ag Ed Network to FF100A. In case of duplication, payment will be for the first one received. Contributions cannot be acknowledged or returned.

National Officers Present New FFA Fashions for 1993-94!

Here's a sneak preview of just a few of the exciting new fashions that will be featured in the 1993-94 FFA catalog. This is your chance to order these new items even before the catalog comes out next Fall!

(top row l-r):

Dennis Degner is shown in a turtleneck sweatshirt with "FFA" embroidered in gold on navy collar. M-L-XL-XXL

Item **SWS-TN**
ea \$41.95, size XXL \$45.95

Travis Park is wearing a heavyweight ash sweatshirt with navy lined hood and drawstrings. M-L-XL-XXL

Item **SWS-NH**
ea \$65.50, size XXL \$71.50

Todd Hingson and Rick Perkins are pictured in the colorblock sweats, available in maroon/navy and green/navy-both with contrasting embroidery as shown. M-L-XL-XXL

Item **SWS-CB-M** (maroon)
Item **SWS-CB-G** (green)
ea \$52.95, size XXL \$55.95

(bottom row):

John Kleitner (left) is wearing the new shield sweatshirt in red, white, blue and gold! M-L-XL-XXL

Item **SWS-SH**
ea \$24.95, size XXL \$27.95

Kevin White (right) is shown in the same sweatshirt as Dennis Degner.



NEW FFA FASHIONS ORDER FORM

TO ORDER. Send order form with VISA/MC information below. **check or money order** made payable to the National FFA Organization. Send to FFA Distribution Services, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309. Only credit card orders by phone (703) 780-5600.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ St: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

(Handling: Order \$25.00 or less, add \$2.50; \$25.01-\$50.00, add \$3.75; \$50.01-\$100.00, add \$7.50; over \$100.00, add \$12.50)

MC VISA EXPIRE DATE: _____

CREDIT CARD NO. _____

Signature: _____

| ITEM # | SIZE | QTY. | COST |
|----------|------|------|------|
| SWS-TN | | | |
| SWS-NH | | | |
| SWS-CB-M | | | |
| SWS-CB-G | | | |
| SWS-SH | | | |

TOTAL _____

HANDLING _____

STATE TAX (VA only) _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

Taking the Reigns of a Western Ranch

Today's successful ranch managers use all of their resources

By Joseph W. Byers

Farming and ranching and managing wildlife work together to provide the best of all possible worlds, says Frank Simms, manager and vice president of a 32,000 acre ranch in northern New Mexico.

Livestock, such as cattle, sheep and buffalo occupy 26,000 acres. The rest of the land, more than six thousand acres, is reserved for big game hunting and trout fishing—the two main attractions for people staying at the Chama Ranch lodge. To help assure there are plenty of big game to hunt, Simms grows alfalfa and native hay to feed wildlife during the winter months. He says timber operations also support wildlife by providing new plant growth.

"The more diverse you are the greater the profitability of the operation," says Simms. "Our hunting division is the biggest producer of revenue. Outdoor recreation in terms of hiking and wildlife touring is our fast growing area."

Paying Your Dues

Managing such a large operation takes skill, experience and education. "To manage a 15 million dollar ranch, you can't expect to start at the top," says Simms, who grew up on ranches in northern New Mexico and Colorado. "You need all the education you can get, including a solid business background along with agricultural sciences and lots of experience along the way. Understanding timber management, wildlife principles and livestock nutrition will help qualify you," he says.

The first step to becoming a manager is to get a job in the field. Ranch hands make

\$12,000 to \$15,000 per year, while a ranch foreman may earn \$30,000 to \$40,000. Holding the reigns of the entire ranch will net between \$50,000 and \$100,000 per year, says Simms.

Meeting The Challenge

Each day Simms meets with ranch hands at 6:45 a.m. to discuss the work plan. He promotes and operates the business, with trips into the field as needed, leaving the office at 7 p.m. The long hours get even longer during the hunting season

Making The Most Of What You Have

As you think about your future or the future income potential of the land on which you live, Simms says, analyze your resources. He advises that you figure out what part of your land is occupied by wildlife, and what is the value of that wildlife?

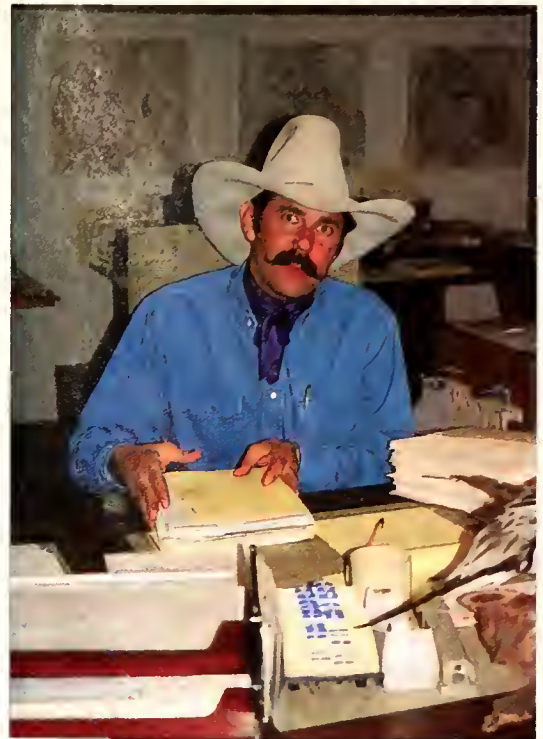
For example, the excellent fishing at Chama provided recreation for major corporations such as Chrysler, Prudential and Quaker Oats. Corporate leaders mix business and pleasure by meeting at the lodge.

On a smaller scale, your farm or ranch may have streams or ponds that could be stocked with fish. A bed-and-breakfast inn may provide extra income.

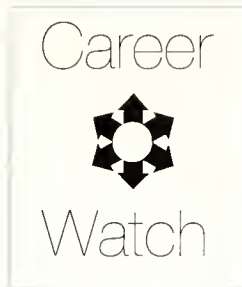
when he meets clients at 4:30 a.m. and wraps things up at nine in the evening—six days a week.

"I have to push myself on a variety of horizons including farming, timber and wildlife management," says Simms. All cogs of the wheel must be meshing in a positive way, from wildlife to lodging, to hunting, to livestock. It is important that one area does not overshadow the others. "To me, the most thrilling part of the job is dealing with the unexpected. There is never a dull moment." ...

"Ten or 20 years ago people would have pooh-poohed the idea of bird watching, or that people would pay you for the opportunity to trespass on your property. But these days attitudes have changed," Simms says. "People come from all over the country and around the world to purchase the opportunity to hunt, fish and see a working ranch. It's obvious people want to get away and see things in nature they don't ordinarily see. That's what is really creating the opportunity for commercialization. I think this is the most exciting time in history to be in the outdoor recreation business."



"I think my people dealing-skills are the biggest reason I got this job," says ranch manager Frank Simms.



The FFA Jacket: Who's Worthy of Wearing It?



It is against FFA rules to give jackets to non-members, including President Bush. Other FFA clothing items are given in place of the jacket.

By Jeri D. Mattics



Photo by Jeri Mattics

"I wore the jacket to support agriculture and the FFA," says Lyle Lovett, former FFA member from Klein, Texas, who wore the jacket to Farm Aid VI.

What do you think?

Let us know who you think should be able to wear the FFA jacket. Just answer these questions and return them to us by July 20. We'll take your response to the Board of Directors and the 1993 convention delegates.

Send your answers to: Jacket Question, FFA New Horizons, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309-0160.

Should FFA allow non-members to have FFA jackets?
 yes no

If yes, who should be eligible to receive an FFA jacket?
 Check all categories you feel would be appropriate.

- national leaders
- celebrities with a track record of integrity
- local leaders who make significant contributions to FFA
- parents
- teachers

If you have extra comments, please write them on a separate page and send in with this survey. Thanks.

Levi's® and Wrangler®. Pepsi® and Coca-Cola®. The American flag and the official FFA jacket. What do they all have in common? Each is a recognized symbol. Corporations spend years and huge amounts of money to establish their symbol in the mind of the public. For many people the FFA jacket represents honesty, integrity, patriotism and hard work.

The jacket's symbolism has become so powerful it is popping up on non-members all over the place. These people wear the jacket to show their support of FFA. While meaning well, they have stepped on FFA toes across the country by violating an FFA policy that states only active members can wear the official FFA jacket.

Lyle Lovett, country music's answer to the big band sound,

appeared on stage at Farm Aid VI wearing his vintage FFA jacket from Klein, Texas. The Kentucky HeadHunters showed up on the 1991 Country Music Association Awards program wearing FFA advisor's jackets. John Cougar Mellencamp was pictured throughout his "Scarecrow" tour with an FFA jacket.

Through these innocent violations of FFA's rules, each artist, in their own way, generated publicity for the organization.

Compare these unauthorized jacket appearances with several recent jacket requests. Presidents Reagan and Bush asked for jackets to use during their appearances at the State FFA Presidents' Conferences. Surgeon General Dr. Antonia Novello requested an FFA jacket to display in her office as a way to promote farm safety. A handful of Nashville musicians including Ronnie Dunn (of Brooks and Dunn) and Vince Gill, have also tried to place jacket orders. Each one of these requests were denied.

With the recent rash of requests and slumping jacket sales, the National FFA Board of Directors asked delegates to re-examine the policy. The 1992 National FFA Convention delegates suggested creating an honorary jacket similar to the advisor's jacket for people who would uphold the ideals and principals of the organization.

The board decided not to produce an honorary jacket, because it might get confused with the honorary chapter, state and American FFA degrees. But, they agreed to consider presenting a small number of official FFA jackets to highly recognizable individuals who would help build pride and prestige in the jacket.

The basic question is, "Does allowing only FFA members to

wear the jacket help or harm FFA?" If the organization lets non-members own jackets, should ownership be limited to national leaders and celebrities or should chapters be able to give them to individuals who have made local contributions? Here are some jacket facts to help you decide.

- The organization has no real control over how the 3+ million existing jackets are used. But, presenting jackets to people who have never been FFA members could create potential for misrepresentation, disrespect or misuse of the jacket.

- Pride in the jacket among the general membership seems to be declining (many students don't/won't wear the jacket to school, etc.) This translates to lower visibility in schools and communities for the organization if only members can wear the jacket.

- Jacket sales have been going down for 11 years. In 1992, less than 15 percent of active members purchased a jacket. Recent studies indicate only about one-third of active members own jackets. Publicity of national leaders and celebrities with jackets could give members more incentive to own and wear FFA jackets.

- If jacket ownership were opened up to non-members FFA'ers would no longer have exclusive use/rights to the official jacket.

- Presenting the jacket to community leaders who have contributed to the local chapter be a positive public relations tool.

- If non-members were eligible to receive a jacket, it would be difficult to decide who should get a jacket and who shouldn't.

GOING CAMPING?

Two things you'll need on your camping trip: a good flashlight and a reliable knife. And Buck has the answer for both. If you haven't seen our new *BuckLight* compact lights, you'll be amazed how bright they are. This one is powered by 4 AA batteries in unique side-by-side positioning, so it's extra compact, extremely bright. Four models and six colors to choose from. All come with Duracell batteries included.

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The jacket's symbolism has become so powerful it is popping up on non-members all over the place.

SPORTS CHAMPIONS

By Bob Bruce

Kevin Saunders is just your normal, highly successful pentathlete who got blown up in a grain elevator explosion, thrown the length of a football field, folded in half at the chest, and then wound up in a wheelchair for the rest of his life.

Whoa, there. Want to run that one by again?

OK. We'll cover the gruesome stuff first because it's true and it makes a difference. But we're not going to dwell on it. Kevin never does.

It was 1981. Kevin Saunders, farm boy from Downs, Kansas, was working his job as a grain inspector for the USDA. He was on the silo when way down below something went wrong. There was a rumble like a freight train, a whoosh, and a huge fist punched him through the air and smashed him down against the asphalt parking lot, 300 feet away.

Ten of his coworkers died in the blast. Most people thought Kevin would soon join them.

They were wrong.

"You know how most people fold at the waist?" says Kevin. "I was folded at the chest." His back was broken. His lungs were punctured. He was a mess.

But even after spending a year in hospital rehabilitation, he never gave up. In 1983 he rolled in his first event, the Peachtree 10K Road Race in Atlanta. In 1984 he learned that wheelchair athletes were competing in the Olympics in Los Angeles.

"They call them Paralympics," says Kevin. "You compete right there in the Olympic stadium. When I heard that, I decided to compete in the 1988 Seoul Olympics."

Training was gruesome. He lifted weights and wheeled his chair 60 miles on an average day. Four years later he won a bronze medal in the pentathlon. Along the way he won a trunk full of gold medals at the 1990 Pan American Games, the 1990 World Track and Field Champion-

ships, and was named Best All Around Wheelchair Athlete in the world.

All this from a guy who'd been hamburger just seven years before. Kevin says FFA played a part in his success.

"You have to remember that you have a goal and you've got to focus on the positive," he says. "That's one thing the

Kevin, "so I figured I wasn't going to stop at 36. I went ahead and met 72 people."

He won the contest. "That showed me that if you go above and beyond the call of duty, you can reach the top."

"FFA taught me the value of honesty, hard work, and discipline. There were some real tough times during my training for the Paralympics, and the values I learned at FFA were partly what kept me going."

You think running is hard on the body? Try wheelchair sprinting. "When you push a racing wheelchair you have to get your elbows up as high as you can and then you hammer them down through the push rims just as hard as you can, like you're punching somebody."

To help protect his hands, Kevin designed his own gloves made from leather work gloves and cut-up pieces from a rubber overshoe. Even so, he says, "You push so hard it'll rip the skin right off your fingers. Sometimes you've got raw meat on your first two fingers of each hand but you just have to suck it up and work through it."

That doesn't mean, says Kevin, that every struggle for success has to be surrounded by pain. What it does illustrate is that everyone has within themselves the potential to be a champion and if the goal is important enough to you, the discomfort felt along the way will be



Paralympic competitor and former FFA member Kevin Saunders was named Best All Around Wheelchair Athlete in the world.

FFA is about—about the future, about living a positive, balanced life and doing the best you can."

He still remembers one of the most valuable lessons he learned from FFA about the payoff in going that extra mile.

"When I was a freshman in high school I attended a Greenhand conference. They had this contest where you're supposed to meet as many people as you can and write down their name, where they came from, and something about them."

Everybody was given a sheet of paper with 36 spaces to fill in, and a time limit. "But they said it was a contest," explains

worth it.

"It's like the Olympic credo," says Kevin. "The important thing is not to win but to take part. The important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle."

If that sounds inspirational, it's supposed to be. These days Kevin is a one-man motivational empire, with lectures, public appearances, a book of his life story scheduled for October release, host of his own cable TV show "Achievers" on America's Disability Channel coming in the fall, and of course his work as the first disabled person to serve on the President's Council of Physical Fitness. ●●●

FFA IN ACTION

FFA Member In The White House

By Paul Bolstad, FFA member
Gays Mills, Wisconsin

Silverton, Oregon, member Rebecca Fisher met with President Clinton on February 25 to witness the signing of the Congress-approved National FFA Week Proclamation. The document commemorates FFA's role in educating future agriculturalists and denotes February 21-27 as National FFA Organization Awareness Week.

Her White House odyssey really began when she visited our nation's capitol during the Washington Conference Program. There she met Congressman Mike Kopetski. He was impressed with Fisher, then a sophomore. During her junior year, he agreed to speak at her FFA banquet. Then, last November, when he wanted to introduce a student-written proclamation to commemorate FFA Week in Congress, he turned to Fisher.

"It was pretty simple," advisor Andy Bellando says of the proclamation. "I gave Rebecca some basic FFA data, names and dates. She fleshed out the resolution, and Liz Foster [a Kopetski aide] put it into the correct legal language. She added all of the 'herewiths' and such, but Rebecca did most of the actual writing."

"It was really interesting to see my bill put into official terminology," says Fisher. "We sat down [with Liz Foster] for an afternoon in November and wrote the bill. I knew it had to go through both houses of Congress, but I was really busy during January and February, so I sort of forgot about it."

Fisher's bill easily passed in the House of Representatives on Tuesday, February 16, and in the Senate the next day. On Friday, February 19, Kopetski called Fisher with the news. She was proud of her work, but she didn't really get excited until Kopetski called again the following Tuesday.

"He called me at school and asked me if I'd like to come to Washington and see my bill signed into law. He'd contacted RJR Nabisco, and they agreed to pay the way for my family, myself, and Mr. Bellando. I was totally shocked. I couldn't



"It was just so incredible to say 'there's the president, he's coming over to meet us.' It was a major adrenalin rush," says Rebecca Fisher, fourth from right.

believe he was asking me to come back to Washington. I remember telling all my friends, then telling myself with disbelief 'this is what I'm going to be doing tomorrow'," Fisher recalls.

"We later cleared the way for state FFA president Ginger Price to come along," Bellando adds.

Fisher, her parents Nancy and Doug, Price and Bellando were on a plane for Washington at 6:30 the next morning.

The next afternoon, President Clinton signed the bill into law, then gave the pen he used to Fisher.

"He was very impressive—he seemed much taller in real-life than we had envisioned him. I come from a Republican area, and a lot of my friends teased me and said, 'Oh, he's just a Democrat, he doesn't really matter.' But I didn't care what party he was. He was still a president, and I got to meet him."

Wyoming This Test Was Fun

The Paintrok FFA is located in Basin, Wyoming, which is a small agricultural community. During FFA Week the chapter conducted an agricultural quiz for the 112 students in their school. Here are some of their questions with the percentages of those who knew the answer and those who did not:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| 1. What is a steer? | Knew: 71% | Didn't know: 29% |
| 2. What is a baby goat called? | Knew: 87% | Didn't know: 13% |
| 3. What is a ewe? | Knew: 81% | Didn't know: 19% |
| 4. Where does veal come from? | Knew: 61% | Didn't know: 39% |
| 5. What is a castrated horse called? | Knew: 66% | Didn't know: 34% |

The chapter also held an agricultural career seminar during the week.

Answers: 1. castrated male bovine 2. kid 3. female bovine 4. female sheep 5. gelding

(Action Continued on Page 24)

FFA IN ACTION

(Continued from Page 23)

Colorado
FFA Gift of Life



Jennifer Timmer, treasurer, and Gena Mack, president, watch the technician prepare chapter member Monica Smith for her blood donation.

The Moffat County, **Colorado**, FFA sponsored a high school blood drive with a community blood center for the second year in a row. The goals of the event were to collect blood and to involve high school students in the effort.

FFA members promoted the program

in homeroom classes. The local newspaper and radio station publicized the FFA Gift of Life project to other adults.

Overall, 40 students and 68 others gave blood and 27 people signed up to participate in a national registry for bone marrow donors.

Oklahoma
Student Association of the Year

The Waurika, **Oklahoma**, FFA was presented the 1992 Red Ribbon Campaign Student Association of the Year Award for contributing to their community's campaign against substance abuse.

Major work by the chapter included sponsoring poster contests and presenting substance abuse prevention programs at area elementary schools, presenting an awards assembly for Red Ribbon Campaign participants and distributing newspaper articles.

Casey Pilrean, a member the chapter, was honored for her video campaign and named Campaign Student of the Year.

The Warren FFA in Vincent, **Ohio**, included cowboy day, barn and boot day, hat day, blue and gold day, and tractor day in their FFA week activities. They also prepared a short video that was shown with school announcements.

.....

Seven members of the St. Johnsville, **New York**, Chapter entered an envirothon contest sponsored by the local soil and water conservation district. The contest tested the members' knowledge of current issues related to the environment, forestry, wildlife, soils and aquatics.



Nevada
Tribal Spokesman

Kyle Prior, Nevada FFA vice president last year, gave a keynote address at the Intertribal Agriculture Council symposium in Las Vegas, Nevada. He is a member of the Elko Bank of Western Shoshone, Owyhee, tribe. He explained his FFA experiences and his commitment to agriculture and rallied the 420 attendees by speaking of the great future that awaits youth in agricultural fields. Native American farmers and ranchers from across the country attended the symposium hosted by the Phoenix Area Tribes. The theme was "Indian Agriculture: Past, Present, Pathways to the Future."

FFA IN ACTION

Michigan

Michigan FFA Challenges Urban Students

Through the financial support of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Michigan Association of FFA provided leadership training to some 200 urban high school students. Michigan's 14 state officers led fine "24-Hour Challenge" programs.

The 24-Hour Challenge gives "nontraditional" students the same leadership opportunities as FFA members. They drew students from the Detroit, Flint, Lansing and Grand Rapids areas—urban areas that do not have access to traditional FFA chapters. About 20 schools sent representatives to 24-Hour Challenges.

The state officer team conducted sessions on goal-setting, teamwork, brainstorming, etiquette and more.

Greenville, Ohio, FFA received a \$1,000 grant for a Building Our American Communities (BOAC) project in cooperation with the city park commission and Fram, Inc., to organize a Senior Citizens Fitness Trail in a local park.

.....

The Lowell, Michigan, Chapter boasts two state officers this year. David Hildenbrand was elected state president and Randy Grieser was elected vice president. They have competed and served together all through their FFA careers.

.....

The Washington, Missouri, Chapter and the local DECA chapter sponsored a fund-raising activity that featured performances by country music entertainers Mark Collie and Exile. Chapter members helped set up stage equipment and served refreshments.

Iowa

Farm Aid Helpers



Several Iowa FFA members volunteered their services to help behind the scenes at Farm Aid VI. Members from the United and Iowa State University collegiate chapters raised more than \$3,000 by selling raffle tickets for chances to win a guitar autographed by many of the Farm Aid VI performers like Willie Nelson and John Cougar Mellancamp. From left to right, in front of the stadium where the concert was held, are Bob Gunzenhauser, Jason Allison and Saul Hammond.

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GET TO KNOW



Rick Perkins

Rick Perkins

In the year 2033 where will you be? What? You haven't planned that far ahead? National FFA vice president

Rick Perkins knows exactly where he should be 40 years from now. Barring any sudden detours, his detailed directions, mapped out in high school, should lead him straight to the White House.

Why would anyone want to be known as Mr. or Ms. president? "At first it was the power," says Rick, who had joked around about being president as a freshman in high school. But now, he says, "I want to help. That's what I think it all comes down to. I

have a pride for my country. And I've always been intrigued with our government and the way things work."

No surprises thank you.

"I've always been one to look into the future plan ahead. I'm very structured and scheduled. I know that's the only way I can get anything accomplished."

As a seventh grader, Rick already knew he wanted to be a lawyer. FFA didn't fit into his plans. "I didn't sign up for it because I thought agriculture was only for farmers. I talked to the guidance counselors and they said FFA wasn't for students with good grades, and that I couldn't take all college prep classes if I was a member." Then an agricultural advisor talked to Rick and his mom. He explained FFA leadership activi-

ties and how it was possible to take college prep and be in FFA.

Sold! Rick switched to agriculture his second week of high school. "It wasn't the easiest class you could take. I learned quickly I had to work hard for an 'A'. There was a test every Friday during my freshman year."

Rick won his chapter and county creed contest and then, "got involved in public speaking by default. Nobody else wanted to do it." Rick was so shy at first he couldn't even ask

questions in class for fear the words wouldn't come out right. Once, while giving a speech to his chapter, Rick froze. "I started to say good afternoon, my name is...and I forgot my name. I ran out of the room almost in tears."

With practice, speaking in front of crowds became easier. Rick competed in public speaking for three years and gained the confidence to run for chapter, district and state office. He was on the livestock and soils judging teams and went to the state level in the job interview contest.

At the same time Rick was in FFA, he also played on the baseball, basketball and golf teams. "I've always been involved in sports. That's where I developed a very competitive edge. I take things I do seriously, and can get very upset with

myself." As a perfectionist, Rick found it easy to be hard on his performance.

"I took things a little too seriously," he says now. Rick recalls a baseball game the summer after his eighth grade year. He was at the plate. "I had a full count and struck out. For two weeks I was saying I lost that game for us. After that when I got up to the plate I would think don't strike out, don't mess up." To cover up for his low self esteem, Rick says, "I would put on my cocky attitude."

"Two things changed my self esteem," says Rick, "FFA and Jami [his girlfriend of five years]."

Now, he says, "I believe in myself. That's where it has to start if you don't believe in what you're saying who else will?" Rick visualizes himself as head of the country. Photos of Presidents Bush and Reagan on his bedroom wall remind him of the D.C. possibilities.

But he says, if the White House isn't part of his future, he won't feel he's failed. "I've accepted the chance that there might be different routes. It may come down to a decision between family and politics." ...

Rick's Road To The White House:

- graduate with bachelor's degree in agricultural economics
- have internships with agricultural companies and network with agricultural lawyers while still in school
- study abroad
- practice law for five or six years for an agricultural company
- possibly enter private law practice
- run for local office such as councilman
- run for state representative, senator or governor
- begin campaign for White House

Family members who help Rick reach his dreams are his father, Dan; mother, Sarah; and brothers Dan, Mike and Bob.



Who knows? Visions of being president may already have been dancing around two-year-old Rick Perkins' head.



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