

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 247 414

CE 039 446

AUTHOR Kotrlik, Joe W.; Camp, Susan  
 TITLE A Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Guide to Planning  
 Summer Programs. Bulletin 1728.  
 INSTITUTION Louisiana State Univ., Baton Rouge. Dept. of  
 Vocational Agricultural Education.  
 SPONS AGENCY Louisiana State Dept. of Education, Baton Rouge. Div.  
 of Vocational Education.  
 PUB DATE 29 Jun 84  
 NOTE 23p.  
 PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.  
 DESCRIPTORS \*Agricultural Education; Educational Research;  
 Planning; Program Development; State Surveys; \*Summer  
 Programs; Summer Schools; \*Supervised Farm Practice;  
 \*Teacher Responsibility; \*Time Management; Vocational  
 Education; \*Vocational Education Teachers  
 IDENTIFIERS \*Louisiana

ABSTRACT

The purpose of a study was to determine what Louisiana vocational agriculture teachers were doing during their summer months of employment and then provide this information to individual teachers as an aid in planning the summer program. In early May 1983 a sample of 110 teachers completed an initial survey instrument on which they indicated what they thought they should be doing in their summer programs. Every two weeks during the summer the teachers completed a form that recorded what they had done. Results indicated that vocational agriculture teachers expect, and are expected, to do more than just to teach and to supervise supervised occupational experience programs (SOEP) during their summer employment. Approximately 20 teachers indicated that all 38 listed activities were important and should be performed by all teachers during the summer. Teachers also indicated that 16.4 percent of time should be spent on SOEP alone. Recommendations were that teachers should allocate a major portion of their summer to student contact, time spent on non-student contact activities should be kept to a minimum, time should be spent with all students, and teachers should develop a daily plan for the summer. (A sample summer program planning guide is provided.) (YLB)

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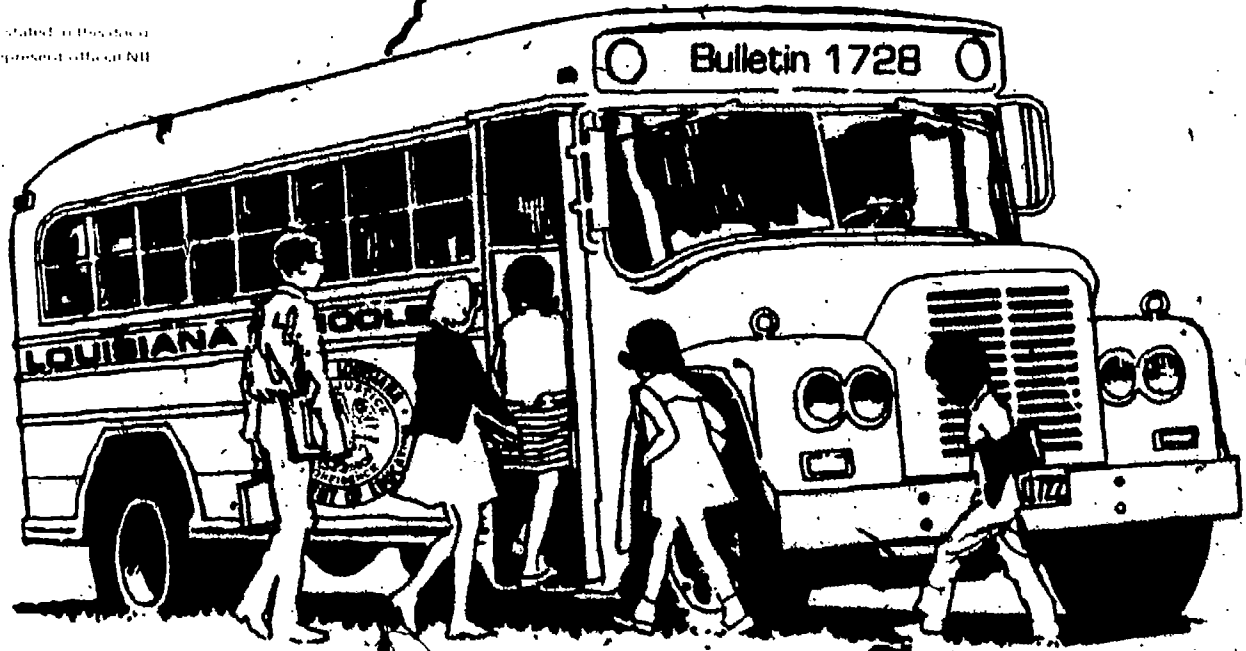
# A VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER'S GUIDE TO PLANNING SUMMER PROGRAMS



Office of Vocational Education

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A VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE  
TEACHER'S GUIDE  
TO PLANNING SUMMER PROGRAMS

JUNE 29, 1984

Curriculum development performed in cooperation with the Coordinating Unit, Office of Vocational Education, Louisiana Department of Education, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

PROJECT DIRECTOR: JOE W. KOTRLIK  
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE: SUSAN CAMP

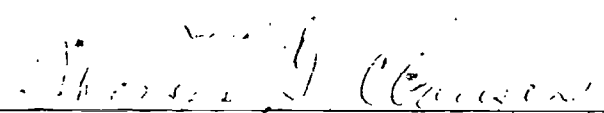
DEPARTMENT OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION  
SCHOOL OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY  
LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

Bulletin 1728

## FOREWORD

The vocational agriculture summer program is a vital part of the total vocational agriculture program in Louisiana. In order to be effective and purposeful, the program for students must be well-planned, and it must be based upon realistic and proven activities for the agricultural and socioeconomic characteristics of the school district.

This study identified the kinds of activities in which vocational agriculture teachers in Louisiana actually participate and the indicated amount of time spent on the activities during the summer of 1983. Vocational agriculture teachers should use the findings as a guide to planning their summer program. University teacher-educators can also use the information herein to plan pre-service and in-service teacher education programs.

  
Thomas G. Clausen, Ph.D.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The population examined in this study includes a representative sample of all vocational agriculture programs in Louisiana. The original sample consisted of 169 teachers who were asked to provide the information needed. Of the 169 teachers, 112 agreed to devote the time necessary to record the information.

The authors would like to thank the vocational agriculture teachers who participated in the project for taking the time out of their busy schedules to work on this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
FOREWORD.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES.....	1
HOW THE DATA WAS GATHERED.....	2
RESULTS.....	2
Background Information.....	3
Summer Employment Activities.....	4
CONCLUSIONS.....	11
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	12
PROGRAM PLANNING GUIDE FOR LOUISIANA VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS.....	13
REFERENCES.....	16

## INTRODUCTION

The summer months of the vocational agriculture teacher have legislatively and traditionally been months of supervision, teaching and learning. Since the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917, vocational agriculture teachers have been employed for a longer period of time (originally 12 months) than other teachers in the high school.

Summer programs are a necessary characteristic of the vocational agriculture program in the United States. A high quality vocational agriculture program can not end in May. Instruction must continue in areas that can not be adequately covered during the school year due to the seasonality of agriculture.

Supervision of supervised occupational experience programs (S.O.E.P.) must be a year-round activity if we intend to gain the optimal advantages in learning for our students. The crop and animal diseases and problems must be diagnosed and cooperative work students must be supervised on the job, their questions answered, and their problems dealt with as they arise.

This year-round instruction for vocational agriculture students has led to a program in vocational education that is admired and looked to for innovations by other vocational educators.

The teachers of today are asked to do more than supervise on farm S.O.E.P.'s. Larger numbers of students, advisory councils, more contests, new reporting forms and other new requirements make it difficult to perform all the functions asked of the vocational agriculture teacher in 1983. This project is an effort to determine what the teachers are asked to do, what they believe they should do, and what they actually are doing. These findings will provide a basis with which teachers and supervisors can examine their summer programs of Vocational Agriculture and determine what is reasonable to include in summer programs in the future.

## PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this study was to determine what Louisiana vocational agriculture teachers were doing during their summer months of employment and then provide this information to individual teachers as an aid in planning the summer program. In order to accomplish this overall purpose, the following objectives were used as a basis for the study:

1. Gather demographic information concerning vocational agriculture teachers and programs in Louisiana.
2. Identify the activities that vocational agriculture teachers believe should be a part of all summer programs in vocational



agriculture and the percentage of time that should be spent on these activities.

3. Identify the activities that vocational agriculture teachers actually participated in during the summer of 1983 and the amount of time expended on each activity.
4. Compare the time that vocational agriculture teachers felt should be spent with the time that was actually spent on the identified activities during the summer of 1983.

#### HOW THE DATA WAS GATHERED

The Office of Vocational Education, of the Louisiana State Department of Education, was contacted in order to determine what statewide activities were required and/or available for teacher and/or student participation in the summer months. This information was used in the development of the survey instrument.

A random sample of 169 of the 297 vocational agriculture teachers in Louisiana was selected as the source of information. Each teacher was asked in a letter mailed in March, 1983, to indicate whether they would help with the study by agreeing first to fill out a form indicating what they thought they should be doing in their summer program and then by actually keeping a record of what they did during the summer of 1983. One hundred and sixteen teachers (69%) indicated by return postcard that they would help with the project. The other teachers in the original sample could not help for a variety of reasons, including changing schools during the summer.

The form on which the teachers were to indicate what they thought they should be doing in their summer programs was mailed in mid-April to those teachers who had agreed to help with the project. The teachers were asked to return the form by early May. One hundred and ten teachers out of the 116 returned the initial survey instrument.

The forms on which the teachers were to keep a record of their summer activities were mailed to the teachers in late May. Each teacher received seven of the bi-weekly reporting forms. The forms were to be completed and mailed to LSU every two weeks during the summer.

When all the information forms and bi-weekly summary sheets were returned, the responses were summarized and comparisons made between what the teachers thought should be done and what they actually did during the summer.

## RESULTS

### Background Information

The teachers in the sample were asked to identify the highest degree that they held. The largest group were those with a bachelor of science degree (35.5%). Their responses are reported in Table 1.

TABLE 1  
HIGHEST DEGREE HELD BY TEACHER

Degree	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor of Arts	3	2.7
Bachelor of Science	39	35.5
Master of Education	32	29.1
Master of Science	30	27.3
Doctor of Education	1	.9
Doctor of Philosophy	2	1.8
Other	3	2.7
Total	110	100.0

The mean number of years teaching experience reported by teachers in the sample was 10.1. The mean number of years teaching in Louisiana was similar at 10.0. It appeared that most teachers were no longer teaching at their original school, as indicated by the mean years teaching at their present school (7.6 years).

Of 103 programs the mean number of day (junior or senior high school) students was 93. The mean number of adult students reported by those teachers who taught adults was 33. Half (54 or 49.5%) of the 109 teachers who responded to this question indicated that they farmed or engaged in other business activities to supplement their income.

The teachers were asked to indicate the facilities they had available for use and used by them in their programs. The facility other than a classroom that was reported to have been used most often was an agricultural mechanics laboratory or shop (86%). Table 2 summarizes the kinds of facilities available.

TABLE 2

## PROGRAM FACILITIES

Facility	Frequency	Percent*	n=116
school crop farm (corn, soybeans, wheat, etc.)	16	14.7	
school livestock facilities (hogs, sheep, cattle, horses, etc.)	24	22.0	
greenhouse	78	71.6	
nursery	15	13.8	
garden (vegetable/flowers)	68	62.4	
food processing (meat/produce)	32	29.4	
small animal care laboratory	7	6.4	
forest	14	12.8	
agricultural mechanics lab.	94	86.2	
other	9	8.3	

\*The sum of these percentages exceeds 100%, because each teacher could identify more than one type of facility that was employed.

#### Summer Employment Activities

The main purpose of the study was to determine what teachers believed that they should be doing during the summer months in relation to what they actually did during the summer of 1983. This information is presented in Tables 3 and 4.

The mean percentages listed are means only for those teachers who indicated that that particular activity should be included in the summer program as indicated by the number under the frequency column. A zero was not used in computing the mean if the teacher did not indicate that activity.

Table 3 summarizes the activities as to how often they were indicated by the teachers as an activity that should be performed (frequency) and the percentage of the summer perceived as necessary to be spent by the teachers who indicated that that activity should be performed.

Table 4 summarizes the second questionnaire giving the number of teachers who actually performed each activity and the percentage of the summer spent by those teachers in each activity.

Teachers spent 35 percent of their time during the summer of 1983 working with students. Fourteen percent of this time was spent with student visits and visits to their places of employment.

Table 5 compares the percentage of time that teachers believed should be spent and what they reported was actually spent during the summer of 1983. Significant t-tests are indicated for 16 out of the 38 activities listed, which means that there were statistically significant differences between what teachers did and what they believed they should have been doing for the 16 activities.

TABLE 3

SUMMER EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES  
THAT TEACHERS FELT SHOULD BE PERFORMED

Activity	n=86	Frequency	Mean Percent of Time*
FFA/leadership camp		86	5.8
vacation (personal)		82	10.9
FFA state convention		82	5.8
visit students with S.O.E.P.'s		79	16.4
maintain Vo-Ag equipment/facilities		77	5.1
paperwork (reports/records)		76	4.0
up-date curriculum/lesson plans		75	5.3
inventory Vo-Ag facilities		75	3.2
FFA chapter meetings		74	2.4
field days and/or trips with students		66	3.6
operate school farm/greenhouse/or other instructional laboratory		63	6.7
public relations		63	3.5
state summer teacher's conference		60	4.8
community service		60	4.4
visit incoming freshmen		60	3.4
open Vo-Ag facilities to community		59	5.0
order supplies and equipment		58	2.6
meet with advisory committee/council		54	1.7
arrange for student employment sites		53	2.8
field days and/or trips without students		53	2.5
visit cooperative work program at the job site		50	4.2
collect samples for classroom study		49	2.4
visit adult students		45	4.4
follow-up former students		45	2.2
organized/scheduled meetings with administrators		45	1.8

TABLE 3 (Continued)

SUMMER EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES  
THAT TEACHERS FELT SHOULD BE PERFORMED

Activity	n=116	Frequency	Mean Percent of Time*
recruit new students		43	2.8
attend regional NVATA meeting		41	4.3
shows, fairs and/or sales		39	3.6
FFA chapter recreation/socials		37	1.7
contests		32	3.9
attend non-credit workshops		30	2.7
conduct adult classes/meetings		24	3.4
FFA alumni meetings		22	1.4
perform school maintenance (non-Vo-Ag)		19	3.6
university summer school		18	3.7
advise 4-H club		10	3.0
Washington Leadership Conference		7	4.4
other		2	1.0

\*The sum of these percentages does not equal 100%, because each teacher may or may not have indicated that he should participate in each of the activities listed.

TABLE 4

SUMMER EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES  
THAT TEACHERS DID PERFORM

Activity	n=116	Frequency	Mean Percent of Time*
paperwork (reports/records)		101	5.2
FFA state convention		93	8.9
maintain Vo-Ag equipment/facilities		91	9.4
visit students with S.O.E.P.'s		88	10.0
FFA/leadership camp		87	8.2
vacation (personal)		85	17.5
up-date curriculum/lesson plans		81	4.9
community service		73	4.5
public relations		72	3.0
operate school farm/greenhouse/or other instructional laboratory		68	11.7
inventory Vo-Ag facilities		66	3.0
order supplies and equipment		65	2.4
open Vo-Ag facilities to community		58	7.2
follow-up former students		57	2.6
perform school maintenance (non-Vo-Ag)		56	4.0
organized/scheduled meetings with administrators		56	1.7
visit adult students		54	3.5
state summer teacher's conference		50	7.2
other		46	6.0
arrange for student employment sites		44	2.4
field days and/or trips with students		40	5.9
attend non-credit workshops		40	4.5
FFA chapter meetings		37	1.3
shows, fairs and/or sales		34	5.7
visit incoming freshmen students		34	3.5

TABLE 4 (Continued)

SUMMER EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES  
THAT TEACHERS DID PERFORM

Activity	n=116	Frequency	Mean Percent of Time*
collect samples for classroom study		34	2.6
field days and/or trips without students		33	3.1
visit cooperative work program at the job site		33	2.8
recruit new students		32	2.3
university summer school		23	8.4
meet with advisory committee/council		19	2.8
conduct adult classes/meetings		17	3.9
FFA chapter recreation/socials		12	3.5
contests		11	2.6
attend regional NVATA meeting		6	8.2
advise 4-H club		6	2.7
FFA alumni meetings		5	4.0
Washington Leadership Conference		1	14.0

\*The sum of these percentages does not equal 100%, because each teacher may or may not have participated in this activity during the summer of 1983.



TABLE 5

RESULTS OF T-TEST FOR  
SUMMER EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES  
ATTITUDE VERSUS ACTUAL

Activity	n=116	t-value	probability*
FFA chapter meetings		8.20	hs
other		-5.06	hs
visit cooperative work program at the job site		4.79	hs
FFA state convention		-4.74	hs
attend regional NVATA meeting		4.69	hs
visit incoming freshmen		4.52	hs
visit students with S.O.E.P.'s vacation (personal)		3.75	hs
contests		-3.70	hs
perform school maintenance (non-Vo-Ag)		3.45	hs
perform school maintenance (non-Vo-Ag)		-3.07	hs
maintain Vo-Ag equipment/facilities		-2.99	hs
university summer school		-2.60	s
paperwork (reports/records)		-2.31	s
FFA/leadership camp		-2.24	s
meet with advisory committee/council		2.20	s
attend non-credit workshops		-2.20	s
arrange for student employment sites		1.91	ns
collect samples for classroom study		1.86	ns
inventory Vo-Ag facilities		1.71	ns
field days and/or trips without students		1.66	ns
visit adult students		1.58	ns
field days and/or trips with students		1.58	ns
FFA chapter recreation/socials		1.53	ns

TABLE 5 (Continued)

RESULTS OF T-TEST FOR  
SUMMER EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES  
ATTITUDE VERSUS ACTUAL

Activity	n=116	t-value	probability
organized/scheduled meetings with administrators		1.46	ns
Washington Leadership Conference		1.35	ns
conduct adult classes/meetings		1.34	ns
recruit new students		1.31	ns
operate school farm/greenhouse/or other instructional laboratory		-1.31	ns
public relations		1.24	ns
up-date curriculum/lesson plans		1.16	ns
shows, fairs and/or sales		-.94	ns
open Vo-Ag facilities to community		-.94	ns
advise 4-H club		.84	ns
FFA alumni meetings		.77	ns
order supplies and equipment		.76	ns
community service		.57	ns
follow-up former students		-.38	ns
state summer teacher's conference		-.38	ns

## \* NOTE:

- ns - no statistically significant difference existed between what teachers actually did and what they believed they should do  
s - significant difference existed between what teachers actually did and what they believed they should have done  
hs - highly significant difference existed between what teachers actually did and what they believed they should have done

CONCLUSIONS

Results indicate that the vocational agriculture teachers expect and are expected, to do much more than just to teach and to supervise S.O.E.P.'s during their summer employment. Approximately 20 teachers indicated that all 37 activities were important, and should be performed by all vocational agriculture teachers during the summer. They also indicated that a percentage of time could not be assigned to these activities.

Teachers recognized the importance of S.O.E.P. supervision by indicating that 16.4% of the teacher's summer employment time should be spent on that activity alone. Low-ranking activities (in regard to time to be spent) included FFA alumni meetings, attending non-credit workshops, FFA chapter meetings and recreation, meeting with the advisory council, following-up former students, recruiting new students, arranging for student employment sites, and advising 4-H clubs.

Some of the activities were included in the questionnaire not because the project staff believed that they should be performed, but in order to determine what teachers perceived their responsibilities to be during the summer.

Significant differences between time that teachers believed should be spent and what teachers reported as actually being spent were found for 16 of the 38 activities. The teachers spent significantly more time on ten of the activities and significantly less time on six of the summer activities than they believed should be spent.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Teachers should allocate a major portion of their summer to student contact. This time should include SOE supervision, group and individual instruction, continuity of FFA chapter activities (both leadership and social), and visits with new and prospective students.
2. Time spent during the summer by the vocational agriculture teacher on paper work, departmental maintenance and non-student contact activities should be kept to a minimum. It was realized that it is easier to say that this should be done than to actually do it. The following are just three suggestions as to how to minimize non-student time during the summer:
  - a. Students can take inventory and perform equipment and shop maintenance prior to the end of the year. This is both time efficient and sound educational procedure.
  - b. Efficient management of paper work (handle it only once) will save time for more student oriented activities.
  - c. The teacher should determine which activities are making or are not making valuable contributions to the total educational program and then eliminate those that are not contributing.
3. The instructor should endeavor to spend time with all students during the summer - not only officers or those having large SOE programs. The other students may need his/her help even more.
4. Teachers should develop a daily plan for the summer and share it with their principal before the end of the school year. Each week an up-dated 7-day plan should be posted on the vocational

agriculture classroom/shop door. This plan should include a schedule of the teachers in-school and out of school time allocations. By preparing a realistic plan, the teacher can easily evaluate if the activities planned for each summer were carried out and also determine what changes need to be made for the coming year. This activity will ultimately result in better relations with administrators and a better summer program.

#### SUMMER PROGRAM PLANNING GUIDE

Every teacher should voluntarily develop a plan for his/her summer activities. The form on the next page gives a recommended allocation of the time available for the summer program.

These recommendations were initially developed from the data secured in this study and then modified by a committee of vocational agriculture teachers during the State FFA Convention held in Shreveport in June, 1984. The recommendations are based on the assumption that most schools in the state of Louisiana have twelve weeks between the end of one school year and the start of the next. These recommendations would have to be adjusted on an annual basis for the local school calendar.

Teachers should keep one important factor in mind when using this guide: every program in the state is - and should be - different based on various factors (urban/rural area, types of crops or agribusinesses in school district, socioeconomic makeup of population, and so forth). The hours recommended for each activity are based on an average program.

SUMMER PROGRAM PLANNING GUIDE FOR LOUISIANA  
VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS

ACTIVITY	PERCENT OF SUMMER TIME			
	RECOMMENDED		YOUR PLAN	
	%	HOURS	%	HOURS
Field days and/or trips with students	2	9.6	_____	_____
Visit students with S.O.E. programs	12	57.6	_____	_____
Visit adult students	3	14.4	_____	_____
Visit new students	3	14.4	_____	_____
Follow-up former students	3	14.4	_____	_____
Recruit new students	3	14.4	_____	_____
Paperwork (records/reports)	5	24.0	_____	_____
Inventory vocational agriculture facilities, equipment, supplies	3	14.4	_____	_____
Order supplies and equipment	2	9.6	_____	_____
Collect samples and other teaching aids for classroom study and use	2	9.6	_____	_____
Update curriculum and lesson plans	4	19.2	_____	_____
FFA chapter meetings	1	4.8	_____	_____
FFA leadership camp, Bunkie	5	24.0	_____	_____
FFA chapter recreation/socials	2	9.6	_____	_____
FFA state convention	5	24.0	_____	_____
Public relations	2	9.6	_____	_____
Community service	2	9.6	_____	_____
Operate school farm, greenhouse, food preservation center, or other instructional laboratories	6	28.8	_____	_____
Open vocational agriculture facilities to students and/or the community	5	24.0	_____	_____
Maintain vocational agriculture equipment and facilities	5	24.0	_____	_____
Vacation (personal)	16	76.8	_____	_____
Attend non-credit workshops	4	19.2	_____	_____
Attend summer vocational conference	5	24.0	_____	_____

SUMMER PROGRAM PLANNING GUIDE FOR LOUISIANA  
 VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS  
 (Continued)

ACTIVITY	PERCENT OF SUMMER TIME			
	RECOMMENDED		YOUR PLAN	
	%	HOURS	%	HOURS
Advise 4-H club	-	-	_____	_____
Attend regional NVATA meeting	-	-	_____	_____
Washington leadership conference	-	-	_____	_____
University summer school	-	-	_____	_____
Shows, fairs and/or sales	-	-	_____	_____
Contests	-	-	_____	_____
Field days and/or trips without students	-	-	_____	_____
Visit CAE students at the job site	-	-	_____	_____
FFA alumni meetings	-	-	_____	_____
Conduct adult classes/meetings	-	-	_____	_____
Arrange for student employment sites	-	-	_____	_____
Organized/scheduled meetings with Administrators	-	-	_____	_____
Meet with advisory council/committee	-	-	_____	_____
Other: _____	-	-	_____	_____
_____	-	-	_____	_____
_____	-	-	_____	_____
_____	-	-	_____	_____
_____	-	-	_____	_____
_____	-	-	_____	_____
_____	-	-	_____	_____
_____	-	-	_____	_____
_____	-	-	_____	_____
Total	100	480	100	480



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