

DISCUSSANT'S REMARKS

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HEARING ACUITY CHANGES AMONG FIRST YEAR TEACHERS OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION IN ARIZONA FROM 1988-2002

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In an attempt to track the susceptibility of high school agriculture teachers to hearing loss, the researcher at the University of Arizona has conducted research since 1988 on pre-service teachers graduating from the agriculture education program. This topic is important for the beginning as well as veteran teacher. Unfortunately it appears that many new teachers only take this seriously after hearing loss has occurred. While hearing loss has been documented to occur, very few recommendations were made as to how to avoid, eliminate, or reduce the effects of working in the agricultural mechanics laboratory. I raise the following questions for clarification and/or discussion:

1. While some slight hearing loss was reported in first-year teachers, the researcher reported that as we age there is a natural decline in hearing acuity. Would similar hearing loss occur in first-year teachers who do not teach in agricultural mechanics laboratories?
2. One of the recommendations made by the researcher was to instruct undergraduate students about the dangers of noise exposure. What type of methodologies would be the most effective? Is there a time frame within the undergraduate curriculum when this instruction would be best received?
3. Is this subject currently being addressed in in-service instruction to beginning and veteran teachers?
4. Several studies in agricultural and technology education have addressed the subject of noise levels in shop/laboratory settings. Do your studies refute or concur with these?