

## DISCUSSANT'S REMARKS

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### TEXAS SUPERINTENDENTS AND THE AGRISCIENCE PROGRAM: A COMPARISON OF SELECTED DEMOGRAPHICS, PERCEPTIONS AND PERCEIVED KNOWLEDGE LEVELS

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This interesting study illustrates the importance of always projecting a positive and contemporary image of an agricultural education program. Some superintendents had no ties to the program while others either enrolled in courses in high school or their children enrolled in courses. Very few superintendents have actually been an agricultural education instructor, so portraying a favorable image is essential because one never knows when an impression, either positive or negative, will be made.

The study focused on the demographics of Texas public school superintendents and their perceptions and perceived knowledge level regarding the agricultural science and technology program. The objectives of this study were to determine Texas public school superintendents':

1. Demographic characteristics;
2. Perceptions of the agricultural science program, its purpose, and its role in the total school program and the school's goals;
3. Perceptions of agricultural science teachers;
4. Perceived knowledge levels regarding the agriscience program; and
5. Differences in perceptions among those with and without experience in agriscience.

The presented conceptual/theoretical framework is a beginning of a good literature review summary, but I would like the researchers to illustrate the actual research framework that drove this study. That is, what documents or research findings in the literature caused the aforementioned objectives and associated variables to be selected?

Except for the abstract, the reader did not know the size of the study. The abstract indicated that 100 superintendents were selected and 71 of them responded. Were all of the returned instruments usable? The authors followed appropriate methods and procedures. However, the results of the field test were not included in the report. The recommendations are quite ambitious and I am curious as to how receptive the Texas agriscience teachers will be when they are asked to curtail their showing and judging of livestock.

Perhaps we are approaching the value of an extended contract the wrong way. Like the following statement from the study, many times our focus has been on the value of the extended contract to the teacher: "Agriscience teachers should be employed on 12-month contracts due to Supervised Agricultural Experience Programs (SAEPs) and student participation in leadership activities, in addition to teacher participation in professional development activities." If the statement was edited to focus on the school's goals (student achievement), then superintendents might agree at a higher level than the average scores (4.1 and 4.8) on this study. How about, "Agriscience teachers should be employed on extended 12-month contracts to improve student achievement (as documented by research) through Supervised Agricultural Experience Programs (SAEPs)."