

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Advisory Committee Meeting

September 23, 1960

9:10 a.m.

Yuba City High School, Yuba City

ROLL CALL

Present

Absent

Joseph Anderholt	E. D. Graf, guest
Verne Hoffman, Jr.	G. A. Hutchings, guest
Fred Rohnert	S. L. Barrett, guest
Allen Grant	J. E. Walker, guest
Volney Craig	S. S. Sutherland, guest
Glen Eidman	G. P. Couper, guest
Earl Blaser	Clarence Summy, guest
Cyrille Faure	James Becket, guest
Wesley P. Smith, guest	Melvin Elkins, guest
Byron J. McMahon, guest	

Milton Kidd

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Verne Hoffman, Jr. After a few preliminary announcements, President Joe Anderholt and Secretary Fred Rohnert arrived and the meeting was reconvened.

Absence of  
Milton Kidd

Mr. McMahon explained that the absence of Milton Kidd, Modesto, was occasioned by the death of Mr. Kidd's brother. Members of the advisory committee, bureau staff, Mr. Smith and Yuba City personnel, were introduced by Mr. McMahon.

Welcome

Mr. Summy, District Superintendent of Schools at Yuba City, welcomed the group. He indicated that, as an agricultural producer himself as well as school administrator in an agricultural area, he was in sympathy with the objectives and problems of the group.

April Meeting  
Minutes

Secretary Rohnert read the minutes of the April meeting held at San Benito County High School, Hollister.

Master Plan for  
Higher Education

Mr. Anderholt called for new developments in the field of agricultural education. Mr. McMahon outlined progress in the "Master Plan for Higher Education", stating that a Board of Trustees of 21 had been named by the Governor, including the ten members of the State Board of Education, six new members, and several ex-officio members. This group is selecting a Statewide administrative officer, possibly to be called the chancellor. While the group does not have official charge of the State College system until July 1, 1961, they must submit a budget to the legislature. There is much hope for a coordinated plan. While this will affect the University of California system very little, and State colleges in an administrative way, its probable greatest ultimate effect will be on junior colleges. Predictions are that they will have 50,000 additional students within this decade.

Citizens  
Committee on  
Education

Mr. McMahon discussed the Citizens Committee on Education which is finishing its report to be presented to the legislature. He said that the members are not unanimous in their findings and recommendations, and they are generally very favorable to vocational education. A great deal of their attention has been given to the elementary school program.

Vo-Ag Problem  
at Yuba City

Mr. Summy stated that in a six-period day it was impossible for some of the brightest farm youth in his district to take vocational agriculture and meet University entrance requirements; therefore, he felt that the Yuba City High School agriculture department did not get enough of the best farm boys in the district.

Mr. Sutherland stated that in the College of Agriculture at the University of California about 25 per cent of the enrollment were boys who had had four years of vocational agriculture in high school and had still met University entrance requirements; therefore, it could be done.

Vo-Ag skill  
training

Mr. Anderholt suggested that the vocational agriculture curricula should be revised and stripped of much of its "skill training". He said that employers might have to assume more of the job training after the student has finished school.

Mr. McMahon commented on a study which has been made by agriculture teachers themselves to determine those areas of agricultural science and skills which every vocational agriculture student, regardless of his home area or objective, should be taught. He said this was the result of several meetings and an intensive workshop this summer at California State Polytechnic College, and this "Core Course Content" material was being distributed back to all agriculture teachers this fall by regional supervisors. He asked the advisory committee members to study this document at their leisure and comment on it, perhaps at the spring meeting or through correspondence.

Mr. Smith stated that there is no State "course of study" in agriculture, and that we don't want a straight-laced course; other subjects do not have it. But the tendency of any teacher is to have a hobby, or area of particular interest, which he rides to death. Mr. Smith illustrated from his own high school experience, where his teacher devoted an entire year to bees.

Miscellaneous

Mr. McMahon distributed copies of the "Guide to Local Advisory Committees", and stated that in these troubled times, more and more high school agriculture departments are turning to the help of advisory committees. He indicated this should be encouraged.

Mr. McMahon mentioned material concerning the problems of maintaining and establishing vocational agriculture departments which had been given to farm organization leaders and others. He said all were interested and sympathetic. He mentioned comments made by Waldo Weeth, former member of the committee, from Coalings, who had appeared on a panel.

AVA Convention

Mr. McMahon mentioned the meeting of the American Vocational Association in Los Angeles, December 6 - 9, 1960. He is sending copies of the program to each member of the advisory committee and hopes that as many as possible might attend some part of the

meeting. He mentioned the agricultural section of the convention, especially talks to be given by Daniel Aldrich of the University of California, and Mark Nichols, Director of Vocational Education in Utah, who spent several months recently in Russia. He said the advisory committee members would be invited to, and welcome guests at, the several luncheons to be hosted at the convention.

Relations of  
Science to  
Agriculture

Mr. Sutherland discussed the study now going on in the relationship of science to agriculture. He said that the impetus came from the teacher workshop group of 12 representing each region of the State, studying "what is needed to improve instruction in agriculture?". The study is being made by an agriculture teacher and a high school biology teacher employed by the University through national defense funds. He said the study might meet the University challenge, "is science really being taught in vocational agriculture?" and stated that if this could be shown, the University might accept vocational agriculture for some of the science requirements.

Individual Reports

Mr. Anderholt called on members of the advisory committee for new developments. Their reports were as follows:

Verne Hoffman, Jr.: After listening to the minutes of the spring meeting, there have not been material changes in the swine industry in California. In the testing program, larger lots are being tested.

Allen Grant: He had recently attended a meeting with Extension and University people on the need for trained college and university graduates. He cited a total output of about 8,000 from all colleges and universities, and an annual need of 16,000. He said his own Production Credit Association, in Visalia, is looking for an assistant manager, and they are considering "stealing" a man with an agricultural background from a local bank.

He has been sitting in for President Louis Rozzoni, of the Farm Bureau, on the Governor's Committee on agricultural pesticides and residues. He said that the problem is very serious, particularly concerning food shipments to Europe which are actually labeled "poisonous materials". He said there is a big "scare campaign" which has attracted all the faddists and crack-pots to the committee meetings. He cited his appearance on the Paul Coats' TV program where he was introduced as a farmer who was poisoning the consumer. He mentioned an Imperial Valley farmer cited by the "lunatic fringe" because he neither used fertilizers nor chemicals. Investigation showed that he was selling all his produce to health food companies, who took everything, regardless of quality, and also that this man farmed in an isolated area where the pest problem is less critical.

He mentioned the milk situation, the great change from the days of home delivery to the present super market. He said the producer is now separated from the consumer, and needs to follow up more closely on the acceptance of his product. He said the big distributors are now selling many more products than dairy products, the Kraft Company business is now only about 12 percent

milk products. He said that he had sold through Knudsen's for about 30 years; recently Knudsen's are adding fruit juices. He said the Teamsters Union is preparing to try to organize the Grade "B" dairy producers and explained they planned to keep out milk from other states by calling a strike for higher plant processing wages in other states.

Volney Craig: Mr. Craig said the pesticide residue problem is of great importance in the citrus industry, especially in exports to the United Kingdom and Europe. He said the citrus industry uses many fungicides, especially in the preservation of picked fruit. He said West Germans are being made highly suspicious of American imports. He said the industry had brought groups of West Germans to the United States for visits and inspections.

He said that Oriental fruit flies had been trapped in Orange and San Bernardino counties and this posed a very great threat to fruit and vegetable production. He said the fly not only attacks growing fruit and vegetables, but also that on display in markets and stores. It could be an economic disaster with quarantines placed on California produce.

He cited the growing problem of high priced land in agricultural areas. He said that in his own area, some 13,000 acres is in an "association" which is being formed with hopes for a master plan of orderly development. He said the people realize that they cannot prevent urbanization but may be able to control its progress.

Mr. Craig's company has made small plots of land available to Future Farmers for productive projects on a share basis. One boy with an acreage of tomatoes hit a favorable market and took home some \$2,400. Some boys were raising sweet corn and selling it locally, and a seedman had contracted with a boy on an isolated plot for flower seed.

He referred to an article in the Journal of Stanford Research, third quarter, on the future of American agriculture. He particularly mentioned the reference to farm assistance programs and questioned whether the researchers were qualified in an agricultural field.

He mentioned the aspects of bare land culture versus sod, using herbicides to kill the weeds. He said bare land culture provided a warmer soil in winter. He said they were using tank trucks with two tanks and two pumps, one with a pesticide and one with grass killer. In one coverage, two jobs could be done at reduced cost. He said he saw cotton growing in Arizona using herbicide thinning and weed control - no hand work. He also saw flame control of weeds.

He also commented on the workership program for vocational agriculture students at Santa Paula High School and said his company had three this last summer. He said the boys thought they should get more than 75 cents per hour while learning.

Glen Eidman: He said the sheep industry is sick. Lamb prices are down and with the second very dry year in a row, there was much hay feeding with less lambs completely milk fed.

Many heavy fed lambs went on the market at the same time as the coastal and mountain state lambs, with a market drop. Then 30,000 Australian lambs came in. Many sheep ranches in Idaho and nearby states were for sale at almost any price.

Mr. Eidman stated the Australian lambs were not of good quality, many with considerable age, but meaty. He said the housewife does not want waste fat; sheepmen must recognize that the light, meaty lamb best meets market demands. He said if the lamb is too fat, the housewife turns to chicken or beef.

He said that importers of lambs could actually make money by selling cheaper in the U.S. than the Australian purchase price because they are using the pound sterling, which they cannot get out of Britain otherwise, to buy lambs, then converting this credit into dollars in the U.S.

Through some economic phenomenon it was being said that if domestic wool prices dropped three cents, U.S. wool could be exported at a profit. He said this didn't make sense when the U.S. is an import country.

He said the trend is back to the smaller farm flock, using a new type of ewe which theoretically would produce a big lamb, a type with heavy wool, lambing early and with quick maturing lambs. Growers must cull out all dry and barren ewes. He said they were using a wool grade tester which operates on a compression basis, and were dividing their bands into several quality groups based on the number of pounds of clean wool each ewe would produce. They mate the best ewes to the best bucks. He said the range was from eight pounds of wool down to two pounds, yet there was not too much difference to the eye.

Mr. Eidman said that in weaning beef calves they were using 1 cc. of tranquilizer per 100 pounds body weight, putting calves in one field and dams in another separated only by an electric fence. He said this cut down on the adjustment, and that in three years with about 1,000 calves, only three had gotten across the fence. He also commented on the high land prices.

Earl Blaser: He commented at length on the labor problems, and said the general wage level was up regardless of union pressure. He said when labor represents 50 to 70 percent of the cost of a crop, a 25 percent raise is important.

He emphasized the rapid advance of mechanization. Peaches are rapidly being harvested with more and more mechanization, and the tomato harvester appeared to have real possibilities, if new varieties can be developed.

Mr. Blaser mentioned paper mulching on tomatoes, and said that on the early pick there was an increased yield of about four tons per acre. Also there was no cultivating cost.

He answered Anderholt's question as to whether laboring people were interested in unionization by saying they were not interested but frightened. He said the union was giving cards to almost anyone without payment of dues to say they were "card carriers".

There was considerable discussion on the relief load, where seasonal workers are induced into a district.

In answer to another question as to whether the grower of 20 to 40 acres of peaches could afford mechanization, he said custom operation was probably the answer. He said they were using high school youngsters and that there may be a need for an organized program of training and using young people. He described briefly the cost accounting and management reports. He said they are most important and an eye opener to foremen and owners. He said often you don't know what is making or losing money until you install an accurate system.

Mr. Blaser employs two former Davis agronomy professors who plan out the use of each field for a period ahead, and go over the cost accounting carefully. This is done on a custom basis at about \$1 per acre per year. He said the results far outweighed the expense.

Cyrille Faure: The last year has been another bad one insofar as feed conditions, but prices had held up surprisingly well. He said there had been some drop in the last 60 days.

He commented on the so-called 100 percent concentrate feeding; it used to be 50 percent concentrates and 50 percent roughages. In some instances it has proved very efficient, using about 90 per cent barley, 5 percent molasses, and 5 percent other concentrates and minerals. He said it won't work on feeders with liver fluke.

He said that as a result of this trend, barley is getting scarce and the feeders may have to use some roughage if they substitute milo. He said he had tried the concentrate feeding but was going back to more use of roughage. He said you can't tell how the feeders are really doing because they may be right on the verge of sickness - they can quickly pick up bugs.

He mentioned the use of systemic poisoning for the control of grubs. He said the cattle so treated looked better, but did not gain as fast as untreated ones by one-third pound per day.

Fred Rohmert: He said the big development in the vegetable business is the forthcoming mechanical harvesting of tomatoes. He said that in cutting and shaking the plant, they were doing in one operation what had been extended over three months. He said growers must use plants or cultural methods, to extend the harvest period longer - canneries just can't take the total crop coming in within a period of ten days or so.

He said one or two varieties look promising for machine harvesting. The yield, however, is about one-third less, and is approaching the mid-west yield, with its lower freight rates to the east coast. In the mid-west, they basically have one picking now, and with mechanical harvesters, this could create real competition for California tomatoes. He said you just can't economically "ship all that water east".

There is a more concentrated program on plant breeding to meet mechanization in the east and mid-west than in California. He said next year the only limit to planting new varieties adapted for mechanical harvest will be the availability of seed, even though they are not yet perfected. He said mechanical harvesters will cost from \$15,000 to \$18,000 - many growers cannot afford them - custom harvesting is the best solution.

It was mentioned that the tomato harvesters are being built in Rio Vista where the original beet harvesters are said to have been invented and perfected by two Rio Vista High School vo-ag students who got their basic instruction in the high school farm mechanics shop.

Joe Anderholt: He commented on the 100 percent concentrate feeding of beef cattle, and said there were both good and bad results.

A new junior college was being developed in Imperial Valley and a bond election would determine its future program.

He said that labor available to the farmer is, in general, getting poorer.

Ranch Tour

The group adjourned to eat a delicious noon meal at the farm staff quarters on the Blaser ranch, with Earl Blaser as host.

A visit was made to another Blaser ranch to see equipment used in the bulk handling of the peach crop. The owner explained its operation, how it was developed, and changes contemplated, including mechanical refrigeration cooling in place of use of ice.

The group then adjourned to the Blaser home to complete the agenda. Questions presented by agriculture teachers were discussed.

Agricultural Machinery

Some program appears necessary to train men to service, adjust and maintain complicated farm machinery. There is no present source; wages do not compare with industry. It was cited that plumbing contractors put up four cents per hour per man working, for a training fund - the apprentice attends night school for about five years, then gets \$4.55 per hour at present rates. Director Smith said the schools were not responsible for training people to operate specialized equipment.

Fairs

Relative to the trend of fairs to require everybody to pay, it was stated that this would probably cut down the number of junior exhibitors, with perhaps more impact on 4-H members than FFA boys who are less dependent on parents. Mr. Faure strongly defended the all-pay gate while Mr. Hoffman strongly opposed it.

Loss of Agriculture Departments

Relative to the situation in some counties where agriculture departments have been dropped, Allen Grant, as a school board member, said his board welcomes suggestions from people such as the Grange or Farm Bureau who might appear before a school board demanding the retention, restoration, or establishment of an agriculture program. Mr. Smith felt that this should generally be channelled through existing school administration. He said a good advisory committee could help, and expressed the

opinion that if a program was dropped, perhaps it was so bad it should be dropped. Grant said that in his school, the board hears reports on different months from the head of the math department, head of the English department, head of the agriculture department, etc. He felt that if this was done, school boards would know when, and whether, an agriculture department was getting into trouble.

Grant also said that he had suggested to the head of the Tulare County Farm Bureau, that he invite in a different vo-ag department head an a couple of his Future Farmers each month, to report on their problems and accomplishments.

Farm-City Week

Members of the committee had no comment on the question as to whether they would participate as speakers on Farm-City Week programs, but none of them said they wouldn't.

The next meeting was tentatively set for March 17, 1961, in the State Education Building in Sacramento. All former members are to be extended an invitation to attend.

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Rohnert, secretary

by

George P. Couper, Assistant