

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF MEETING
STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

March 15, 1963
Willows, California

Roll Call

Present

Fred W. Rohnert	Byron J. McMahon
Glen Eidman	J. Everett Walker
Theodore Todd	E. Dave Graf
Herman Sperber	R. H. Pedersen
Cyrille Faure	George P. Couper
Allen Grant	Frank Hutchinson
Milton Kidd	S. Wright Carlson
Verne Hoffman, Jr.	S. S. Sutherland

Absent

George Nicholas

The meeting was opened with a welcome from District Superintendent S. Wright Carlson of the Willows district; by Vice President Glen Eidman of Willows, and Frank Hutchinson, director of agriculture at the high school. The committee was invited to see the facilities of the agriculture department and the rest of the school if time permitted.

Eidman said that agriculture in Glenn County is changing somewhat but is the predominant means of income. He said the county is not particularly interested in an increased population, but more and more people are bound to come. He described the planned trip to the ranch on which he lives - one of three operated by Kenneth Sexton and with his supervision.

Byron J. McMahon introduced the staff members present.

Minutes of Last Meeting

Reading of the minutes of the meeting at Corona on September 21 were dispensed with.

Review of Report From President's Committee Studying Vocational Education

S. S. Sutherland, head teacher educator, University of California, Davis, briefed the report of a special panel appointed by President Kennedy to evaluate and make recommendations on vocational education. He said the panel was composed partly of lay individuals and partly of educators.

Sutherland said that the report considered many facets of vocational education - not merely the current secondary school level. The report recommended additional occupational preparation for high school young people, and would add support for the office occupations not now reimbursed. Much attention is given to the post-high school group - equivalent to the California Junior Colleges. He said California is in the lead with its junior college system. Sutherland said the proposal would include further education for what we know as the Young Farmer group.

It recommended special attention to the low-achievers (the drop-out type) who otherwise become delinquents or on public aid; and on retraining for those displaced by industrial changes or automation. Research and the preparation of teaching material are included.

Glen Eidman asked about the kind of people on the panel, and Sutherland said they represented a wide range of interests.

Proposed National
and State Legislation

Mr. McMahon spoke on proposed national and state legislation. He said the federal measure would implement the recommendations of the report of the President's panel but not by the full potential amount. It would increase all support by about \$20 million. McMahon mentioned a state bill which would set up special area vocational schools for agriculture and forestry for "drop-outs". He felt that this measure tended to downgrade agricultural training as being suitable only for "misfits".

Allen Grant spoke relative to the Tulare County work farm, which includes care of hogs and cattle. He said it wasn't too effective, because most of the boys were not interested in any kind of agriculture, and wouldn't learn what they didn't like. Eidman said that boys assigned to a work farm are generally not those interested in agriculture.

Mr. Rohnert asked how a boy was assigned, or got into, the work farm. Grant said the courts or schools could refer boys, or parents could give their consent to boys going to the farm. Mr. Todd said that laws, concerning minors, making it difficult for employers to hire them, is one of the basic problems.

Mr. Graf mentioned a survey made in the agriculture section of the Preston School of Industry at Ione. He said the cost of such education is high - there is one counselor per fifteen boys compared with about one per 400 in regular schools. They have small classes. He said they recommended a regular classroom situation and technical training rather than just work experience without knowing why they were doing things. He said the boys in the butcher plant were the only ones who seemed interested in their work, and in getting employment in killing plants after leaving Preston.

Mr. Sperber said the Imperial Valley is filled with people in the wintertime - all the jails are full and there are many living in labor camps. He said most of them are "no good". Mr. Grant said that he can't make use of "trainees" on his own ranch as each segment of the work force has its own tasks - milking, washing, etc. Mr. Carlson said there might be a place for an area school in all phases of vocational training - not limited to agriculture and

forestry. Mr. Sperber said that farmers just can't afford to put persons under 25 years of age on expensive machinery and the insurance rate is too high.

Status of M.D.T.A. Program for Agriculture in California

Mr. Graf reported on programs under the Manpower Development Training program. He said the Fresno vine-pruning and tree-pruning courses had been very satisfactory and so far as he knew, all those completing the courses had been hired. He said a tree-pruning course for Sebastopol did not get under way soon enough, but had been approved for 1964. The tractor operation and maintenance program is about to begin at Indio. An agricultural mechanics and farm equipment program is being considered for the Imperial Valley.

Mr. Grant said that Dean Lloyd Dowler of Fresno State has said that next year the time for the vine-pruning program would be reduced, but that tree-pruning training would take the full six weeks. Mr. Todd asked about any program in the Riverside area training citrus harvesters and Graf said none had been requested. Mr. Faure said that it is expensive to train a young man in a rehabilitation situation.

Agricultural Technician Training Program

Mr. Graf reported on the technician training program at Modesto. He said the college located types of training for which there is employment, such as the successful program in artificial insemination. He said that the college is now surveying graduates of the training program who have jobs, to find out whether they feel they had the right training, and what might be changed. He said the college is considering training foreman-type individuals in farm equipment, and biological laboratory technicians. It was announced that a program at Mt. San Antonio College training for agricultural inspection work is about to start.

Increased Attention to Vocational Education

Mr. McMahon said that the atmosphere is favorable to vocational education. He said that the surge toward scientific and academic training for all students has turned - schools have found out that only about 30 per cent of their students can absorb such courses and that they must be very aware of the remaining 70 per cent. He said that both President Kennedy and Governor Brown had spoken strongly in favor of increased attention to vocational education - the first time in history that a president and a California governor had both done so at the same time.

CBA Brochures in Supervised Farm Programs

Mr. Couper presented a brochure on FFA project competition published by the four major banking groups sponsoring this activity. Attention was directed to the fact that all the pictures involve livestock, while a big share of California's farm income is from crops.

Ag Mechanics Problems in High School Vo-Ag Programs

Mr. Graf and Mr. Sutherland presented the study on farm mechanics in high schools. A survey indicated that in at least 10 per cent of the schools, the program is "inadequate". The question was asked, "What should the agriculture mechanics program be?"

Recent Develop-
ment and Trends
in Agriculture

Considerable discussion followed - how much time can the student afford - what should be taught - how should it be taught - how much space can the school afford - does this time compete for that needed in academic requirements, and so on. It was pointed out that with increased automation, more attention rather than less should be given to farm mechanics, especially machinery. Mr. Hoffman said that all agriculture teachers are not trained in farm mechanics. Mr. Hutchinson described his program at Willows High School. Mr. Sutherland said that the survey showed that there are the better mechanics programs in multiple-teacher schools.

Mr. Grant said that the big question in the dairy industry is that of supply management. In California, the major question at present is "pooling", which is about the only salvation for smaller operators. The big operators with contracts are not interested. Integration is being widely discussed - either that of processors buying dairies, or of dairymen buying processing and distributing systems.

Mr. Eidman said that beef cattle numbers are at an all-time high, while sheep numbers are at an all-time low. Prices reflect these conditions. Imports of frozen carcasses continue to come in from Australia, with prospects of refrigerated planes flying them in to the U.S. in a matter of a couple of days. He said that last year the fat lamb market was from $16\frac{1}{2}$ to $17\frac{1}{2}$ cents, and that it took $16\frac{1}{4}$ cents to "break even". As a result many ewe lambs were slaughtered. He said Glenn County - once leading in sheep - is down to second or third place. Sheepmen are going into safflower or some other crop. He said that patents will run out in the next year or so on many synthetic fibers. This will open manufacturing to a highly competitive business and fabric prices will come down, making the position of wool even worse.

Mr. Faure said that the fed cattle market is down sharply. He said there are imports of beef, and that the long newspaper strikes in eastern cities had cut advertising. He said California has 30 per cent more cattle in 1963 than in 1962. He said operators are generally feeder to lighter weights, but when the market sags, they feed longer. He said that competition for land is increasing - Los Angeles people are in the area constantly trying to buy land. Generally they just want to invest - not particularly to make money out of farming. He said that they were getting cheaper feed out of dry-land clovers. He said financing is getting "tougher". Many operators and farmers are moving from one bank group to another.

Mr. Sperber said that Imperial Valley cattle feeders are losing around \$40 per head. Custom feeders are wondering if they are going to get paid. He said the "freeze" was very serious - coldest since 1928 with temperatures down to

14 degrees at ground level. He indicated some or many vegetable growers might return to standard field crops, especially if the bracero program is dropped.

Mr. Hoffman discussed the swine industry with particular reference to his own operations. He said that California now has very few plants which will kill hogs - most of the supply is shipped in from the Midwest. He said there are now small packing plants all over Iowa that are killing local hogs - they pay \$1 per head less than the Omaha plants, but put the carcasses right on trucks which are in California in 2½ days. He said a group of California swine men were preparing to raise, slaughter, process and retail their product as the only solution. The group owns about 100 sows and would process about 250 hogs per week. He said they have to sell pork loins through different market outlets than for their hams, bacon, sausage and other products. He said they have found that a hog with a little more than minimum back fat will produce better pork - more tender. A hog can be "too lean". He said that James Allen has announced that they will stop slaughtering garbage hogs, and gave his version of the problems of garbage hogs.

Mr. Kidd mentioned the pooling of milk and said it was "coming". He also spoke of the competition for land. He said that federal and state projects in water development are moving ahead rapidly and on time, but that local water projects are mostly "hung up". Some of the delay is caused by sportsmen, boaters and wilderness fans. The government agencies are taking a hand in questioning local projects. He said that the proposed linkage of electrical power with the Northwest could cut California power costs.

Mr. Todd said that the freeze had affected citrus and avocados in the south, but had also affected fruit in Florida, Texas and European producing areas. He said the lemon price looks good for the first time in many years, with world production down about one-third. He said there should be a good market for fresh lemons - the only money-making section of the industry. Orange prices will also be up. He said that the freeze in Tulare County may cause some "re-alignment", but that many persons in citrus don't know agricultural history and will go right back with plantings in danger areas. He said that on February 12 where ice stayed on trees all day from sprinklers there was increased damage. Some frozen fruit could be diverted to processing for several weeks after the freeze. He said Fresno County was less affected by the freeze, which might have some bearing on future plantings. He said the damage to young trees will not be known until after several months.

Mr. Rohnert said that freezing weather prevailed over the entire western area, and that in much of it there was no protective snow cover. There has been considerable damage to field crops and to areas producing alfalfa seed. He said that seed prices are going up, and that producers could sell "poor seed", including exports to Europe. Seed crops are short in Europe and there is an active demand. There is also a very active trend in contracting seed crops in California. He said California can sell seed in the European common market. He said that the Youth Committee of the California Seed Association had developed a brochure on the opportunities in the seed industry. He said they would supply a brochure to Mr. McMahon for each vo-ag department in California.

Revised Farm
Account Book

J. Everett Walker mentioned developments in the farm account book used by vo-ag students, and said he believed it would help boys, especially in teaching them to make out a budget. He said bank appraisers and other in the judging of farm projects had made a point of this weakness. He said that trial copies and operational handbooks would be available by the time of summer vo-ag teacher conference at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, June 24-28. Mr. Faure said that he and his wife had been offering prizes at their local fair for the best project books, and that they had improved materially over the years.

Retiring Committee
Members

It was announced that Fred Rohnert and Cyrille Faure, who had each served two three-year terms, would not want to continue, but that Eidman, who had completed one three-year term, would stay on for another three years. Both Rohnert and Faure said they had greatly enjoyed their participation on the committee. They were presented with Certificates of Appreciation by Mr. McMahon.

Election of
Officers

In the election of officers, Glen Eidman was named chairman for the coming year, Theodore Todd was named vice-chairman, and Herman Sperber was named secretary.

Fall Meeting

The next meeting will be held at Galt, with an opportunity to see the Hoffman swine operations. The date of September 13 was tentatively set for the meeting.

Luncheon and Tour

Following the luncheon, the group visited the sheep and cattle ranch on which Glen Eidman lives - one of the three ranch properties. They had an opportunity to see the ranch facilities and to learn about the very extensive grading and production records kept both on the cattle and sheep.

Respectfully submitted,

George P. Couper, Acting Secretary
for Theodore Todd