STANDARDS AND QUALITY INDICATORS IN
COLORADO SECONDARY AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS- Draft
(Revised 2003)

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:
Agricultural education is the educational process which promotes knowledge, skills, and attitudes in agriculture (occupationally- oriented) and about agriculture (non-occupationally oriented) to a diverse clientele of all ages, inclusive of all populations by utilizing structured and non-structured delivery systems. Agricultural education enhances the leadership potential and essential life skills of its students and encourages life-long learning.

Agricultural Education offers options in each program in the following areas: Production Agriculture; Agricultural Supplies and Services; Agricultural Mechanics; Agricultural Products, Processing and Marketing; Horticulture and Landscaping; and Renewable Natural Resources and Forestry.

ESSENTIAL PROGRAM STANDARDS:

1) A credentialed and certified instructor shall be employed in any approved program.
2) The student organization shall be an integral part of each approved program.
3) A Supervised Agricultural Experience Program (SAEP) shall be required for all students with the instructor receiving an extended contract for the purpose of SAE supervision.
4) All approved programs must be operated under the auspices of a program advisory committee.
5) Approved programs must be offered in accordance with policies and requirements of the Colorado Vocational Act and an approved PA-II.

QUALITY INDICATORS

QUALITY INDICATOR #1 - INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Organization and content of instruction are based on a written course of study which provides the competencies and outcomes needed. The program is designed to meet student needs through clear, attainable objectives. Student progress is assessed and recorded throughout the program using competency measures.

A. Organization of Content of Study

1. Instructional plans will be based on validated competencies and outcomes will be developed, maintained, and utilized which clearly state objectives, activities, resources, and the evaluation to be used during instruction.
2. Students enrolling in agricultural education programs will have written occupational interest objectives in agriculture.
3. Students enrolling in approved agricultural education programs must be at least in the ninth grade.
4. Career information, entrepreneurship and job seeking skills shall be integrated into the curriculum.
5. Leadership development activities will be an integral part of the instructional program.

B. Student Records and Evaluation

1. Individual student portfolios/files shall be maintained and may include the following components:

    a. student long-time educational plans
    b. student data sheet
    c. student occupational interest objective
    d. student safety tests
    e. FFA applications and awards
    f. SAE reports

2. A criterion referenced evaluation system (based on predetermined competencies/outcomes and/or objectives) will be used to measure student progress.

C. Supervised Agricultural Experience Programs (SAE)

1. SAEs will be agricultural-based, supervised, experience centered, and individualized. SAE programs will be classified as exploratory, entrepreneurship, or placement. Improvement activities will be encouraged in all SAE programs.

2. Students will be engaged in supervised agricultural experience programs which will relate to their stated occupational interest, objectives, and the teacher/coordinator will maintain written records of the supervision and/or coordination performed with each student.

3. All students will have long-time educational plans (based on each student's occupational interest objective) which will outline the necessary program components required to achieve each student's educational objective.

4. The students engaged in an agricultural experience program will be under the supervision of the teacher/coordinator and will also be supervised by the parent, and/or person in charge of the experience.

5. The student's annual supervised agricultural experience program will extend over a period of at least six months and/or will include a minimum of 360 hours invested.

6. Students engaged in a supervised agricultural experience program will maintain accurate and up-to-date records including financial transactions and competencies acquired during the program.

7. Instructors are to be provided at least one period each school day to make on-site supervision of students' agricultural experience programs.

8. The local educational agency will operate under an established policy regarding the granting of academic credit to students participating in supervised agricultural experience programs.

D. Secondary Instruction

1. The secondary instructional program will be a minimum of three years in length and provide a minimum of 600 clock hours of instruction, (i.e., 180 days x 50 minutes x 4 class periods = 600 clock hours of instruction or equivalent). Specific time requirements for the instructional program(s) are not applicable if a competency based instructional format has been implemented. In such cases, the program advisory committee must verify that the length of instruction is adequate to assure the mastery of skills.

2. Multiple period classes in a day shall be offered consecutively with no interruptions.

3. The first-year instructional program will be offered separately from all other agricultural instructional programs.

E. Young Farmer Programs in Agricultural Education

1. Young Farmer programs will be conducted as year-round programs based on the fiscal year of July 1 to June 30. Classes will be organized and conducted to equate to three or four credit hours. Individual instruction of each Young Farmer member will be conducted by the program instructor for a minimum of eight hours per year.
2. An annual course outline will be submitted to the local administration and the CCCS.
3. Class enrollment lists and written visitation reports on each Young Farmer member will be kept on file in the Agricultural Education department.
4. Young Farmer programs will be designed to meet the needs of persons who are at least 16 years of age and are not regularly enrolled in secondary agricultural education programs.
5. An instructional aide shall be employed to assist the program instructor when the Young Farmer enrollment exceeds 25 students.
6. The Young Farmer program will be structured to provide leadership training and offer membership in the local, state, and national Young Farmer Educational Association.

F. Program Instructors

1. The student-teacher ratio in agricultural education classes is twenty to one.
2. In addition to the program instructor, a teacher aide is approved by CCCS and employed in agricultural education programs enrolling 40-60 students.
3. A second program instructor is employed in agricultural education programs when program enrollment exceeds 60 students.
4. Secondary agricultural education instructors are to be employed for a minimum of forty (40) days of summer employment beyond the regular teaching contract for nine-month teachers. Postsecondary vocational agriculture instructors are to be employed for a minimum of forty (40) days of employment beyond the regular teaching contract.[1] Contracts are to be drawn to begin July 1 of each year and terminate June 30. The instructor submits to the administration and to CCCS a planned calendar of activities and weekly reports of extended contract duties. Contract extensions are needed because agricultural education teachers have responsibilities outside the regular school year assignment. Examples of these responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

   Supervision of the Agricultural Experience Programs of students, student leadership activities, annual revision of the agricultural education course of study, program maintenance and repair and involvement in county or state fairs and shows.

5. The instructor will submit to the local school administration and the CCCS a planned calendar of activities and weekly reports of extended contract duties.
6. The instructor will be engaged in a continuing in-service professional development program which is planned with the assistance of the local school administration and the CCCS
7. The program instructor will be actively involved in professional teacher organizations related to their teaching area, i.e. CVATA.

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[1]See Exceptions, Page 7

G. Leadership Development

1. All agricultural education programs shall provide appropriate leadership organizations as an integral part of the total program, i.e., FFA and Young Farmer.
2. Approved curriculum will include instruction in leadership training and development for all secondary agricultural education students.
3. Agricultural education instructors will encourage and assist all students to participate in leadership activities and to obtain recognition beyond the local level.
4. The leadership instructional program must be advised and delivered by the credentialed agricultural education instructor who is employed to operate the approved program.

QUALITY INDICATOR # 2 - PROGRAM FACILITIES

The local education agency shall provide vocational programs with facilities to assure safe, orderly, and quality instruction to meet each program's objectives. The appropriate state supervisors shall be consulted regarding plans for new and remodeled facilities.

The instructional environment for agricultural education programs should duplicate or simulate the actual workplace environment in which the student may be employed. Equipment and supplies are to be comparable to that used in the workplace. Instruction must be characterized by teaching methods which stress "hands-on" learning. Effective housekeeping and safety practices will be an integral part of the training of each student.

A. Facilities

1. The classroom, shop, laboratory, office, and storage room(s) shall be a cohesive unit and be primarily dedicated to the operation of a quality agricultural education program.
2. Facilities will meet the required safety standards and will be maintained in an orderly, clean, safe, and attractive condition.
3. Specialized equipment to enhance technological advances in agriculture shall be made a part of the facilities and/or equipment.
4. The following are the minimum size standards for agricultural education facilities.

Utilization	Minimum Space Requirements
Office	120 sq. feet
Classroom	900 sq. feet (*)
Classroom/Lab	1,300 sq. feet
Classroom Storage	80 sq. feet
Lab/Shop – Production Agriculture and Mechanics	3,000 sq. feet (**)
Lab/Shop – Horticulture	1,500 sq. feet
Lab/Shop – Storage	300 sq. feet
Lab/Greenhouse / Head House (Horticulture only)	1,800 sq. feet

(*) Based upon 45 sq. ft. per student
(**) Based upon 150 sq. ft. per student

B. Equipment and Supplies

Tools, equipment, and supplies will be modern and comparable to those currently used in the agricultural industry. See current list available from CCCS

C. Safety and Housekeeping Practices

1. Instruction in safety and assessment of safe practices will be provided in advance of involvement in any shop or laboratory work or other hazardous activities.
2. All safety equipment will be accessible to students and operational. Students will be trained in the proper operation of all safety equipment.

QUALITY INDICATOR # 3 -BUS INESS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Agricultural education instructors will utilize program advisory committees to effectively establish, operate, and evaluate their agricultural programs. The business-industry-school linkages developed through program advisory committees are of paramount importance for effective programs. The program advisory committee will formulate recommendations to local school administrators, instructor(s), and the local vocational education advisory council.

A. The program advisory committee membership will be representative of a cross-section of the agricultural industry in the local community.

B. The program advisory committee will function under written guidelines and/or operating procedures approved by the local board of education which will specify the length of a member's term, responsibilities, and rules for conducting the business of the committee.

C. The program advisory committee will meet a minimum of three times per year. Advisory committee minutes will be recorded and kept on file and are to be distributed to the local school administration, board of education, and advisory committee members.

D. The program advisory committee will assist in establishing effective business/industry linkages for effective student placement.

QUALITY INDICATOR #4 – CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

The administration and staff have in place a guidance and counseling process which provides students with information to make career choices and information regarding available career and technical education programs at secondary and postsecondary levels.

A. All students and potential students have the assistance of qualified guidance and counseling staff as well as agricultural education instructors in making career choices.

B. Students enrolling in Agricultural Education must have a written occupational objective in agriculture.

C. Students enrolling in Agricultural Education must be at least in the ninth grade.

D. All persons involved with the career and technical education programs work with feeder schools and their students to facilitate articulation and insure that prospective career and technical education students are aware of the benefits of enrolling in the programs.

QUALITY INDICATOR #5 - STUDENT PLACEMENT AND FOLLOW-UP

Effective placement of students in agricultural occupations for which they were trained is the result of combined efforts of the administration, faculty, and students. The program advisory committee will assist in establishing effective business/industry linkages for effective student placement. Effective student follow-up and accurate reporting of the results is important to program credibility and statewide reporting for which the program advisory committees play a vital role.

A. The instructor, in cooperation with counselors and administrators, provides assistance in the placement and follow-up of students who exit or complete the program including the development of job-seeking skills.

B. A file on student placement and employment records together with completed one-and five-year follow-ups is maintained in the department.
C. An accurate and documented one-and five-year record of student placement and follow-up information is submitted annually to the local administration and to the CCCS.

QUALITY INDICATOR # 6 - ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

The administration will support the program and promote efforts to enhance the instructional process. The instructor will be provided with adequate time for supervision of students, agricultural experience programs, student leadership training, and other related program activities.

A. The annual and three-year plans for the program, including goals/objectives and activities will be developed and approved by the local administration and the CCCS.
B. The approved budget will contain, but will not be limited to, the following areas:
    1. Annual staff salary
    2. Staff compensation for duties performed beyond the standard teaching day and the standard teaching year
    3. Facility operation and maintenance
    4. Equipment and material purchase and replacement
    5. Consumable supplies
    6. Staff travel and per diem
    7. Transportation for field trips
    8. Student leadership development activities
    9. Staff in-service education

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPECIFIC PROGRAM CRITERIA

These secondary model standards in agricultural education are identified to assist in developing and maintaining high quality vocational agriculture programs. If one or more of these standards are not met and it is determined by the CCCS that such non-compliance is jeopardizing the quality of the program, a plan for remedying the deficiency is required. The plan shall be developed by the instructor in cooperation with local administration and members of the local program advisory committee. This plan shall be submitted to the CCCS for review and approval. Failure to submit a plan and/or failure to implement the plan shall be grounds for the withdrawal of state approval and/or funding for the program.