

APPENDIX: PART II

Prepared by Debra A. Reid as supplemental material for
Interpreting Agriculture at Museums and Historic Sites
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SELECTED ADVOCATES OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND POTENTIAL FOR PARTNERING (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

The National Council for Agricultural Education (The Council) describes agricultural education as “a systematic program of instruction available to students desiring to learn about the science, business, and technology of plant and animal production and/or about the environmental and natural resources systems.”¹ For a survey of the formation of organizations dedicated to agricultural education up to 1985, see: William G. Camp and John R. Crunkilton, “History of Agricultural Education in America: The Great Individuals and Events,” *Journal of the American Association of Teacher Educators in Agriculture* 26, no. 1 (Spring 1985), 57-63.

For the purposes of this overview of selected organizations, I have expanded the definition of agricultural education to include informal as well as formal agricultural education. The list of includes regional and national organizations, coordinators of agritourism, and rural economic development initiatives that provide good models. Historical content does not often factor into systematic agricultural instruction, but historical content plays a major role in heritage tourism.

Much potential exists for museums and historic sites that interpret agriculture to partner with the numerous advocates for formal and informal agricultural education at the local, state, and national levels. These include public agencies, public and private schools, non-governmental organizations, and other special interest groups. Understanding details about the National Agriculture in the Classroom curriculum can help you speak the language of agricultural literacy that will get the attention of private and public school teachers in your area. Reaching out to Cooperative Extension Service and Farm Bureau office staff in your county can put you into contact with people who schedule informational programs and site tours. Contacting faculty teaching in land-grant colleges, and in colleges of education in your state universities may lead to partnerships that provide opportunities to become part of pre-service training for teachers. Partnering with not-for-profit organizations such as the Rural Schools Partnership can increase regional advocates for small town, rural schools, and economic development. Visiting your state’s department of agriculture will acquaint you with valuable historical records about centennial and sesquicentennial and even bicentennial farms and the families that have operated them in your state.

The following summaries of selected organizations indicate the wealth of support for agricultural education that exists. Museums and historic sites that interpret agriculture can form mutually beneficial alliances. Such partnerships will help the purveyors of history content to become more knowledgeable about the science, technology, engineering, and math content fundamental to agricultural literacy. In turn, the purveyors of agricultural education will become more aware of the ways that historic context can inform the teaching, research, and professional development of agricultural educators and of other professionals working in modern agriculture.

Support for agricultural education has a long history. Advocacy for informal agricultural education began at least by the late 1700s as citizens organized agricultural improvement societies and agricultural institutes in cities, counties, and states. These organizations, some funded through membership dues and others funded through state appropriations provided opportunities for farmers to secure current research and advice about the business of farming. National support for formal agricultural education began in 1862 with passage of the Morrill Land-Grant Act. Over time, states accepted the public land grants and chartered at least one public land-grant university to train the agricultural and industrial classes. States also chartered several public colleges and universities to train teachers. Eventually, competition arose at the state level as the public teacher colleges and the public land-grant college jockeyed for the position as the sole trainer of teachers of agricultural, vocational, and technical subjects. This competition increased as national legislation such as the Smith-Lever Act (1917) and the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (aka G.I. Bill) increased public support for agricultural education, and as state's struggled with funding for several public institutions of higher education which duplicated programs.

The Morrill Land-Grant Act specified the inclusion of liberal as well as practical education, but practical instruction dominated curricula at land-grants universities across the nation. For information about their development and maturation and their influence over one-hundred-and-fifty years, see Alan I. Marcus, editor, *Science as Service: Establishing and Reformulating American Land-Grant Universities, 1865-1930* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2015) and Alan I. Marcus, editor, *Service as Mandate: Land-Grant Universities and the Making of the Modern World, 1920-2015* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2015). The emphasis on practical instruction relegated liberal arts, including history, to the sidelines. Only a few of the land-grants ever included courses in the history of agriculture. For an overview, see R. Douglas Hurt, "Teaching Agricultural History at Land-Grant Institutions," in *Service as Mandate*. For a discussion of the potential for and methods of incorporating rural and agricultural history into courses at colleges and universities, see Minoa Uffelman, "Teaching Rural History in an Urban Age," in Pamela Riney-Kehrberg, ed., *The Routledge History of Rural America* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

SELECTED ADVOCATES OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Alliance of National Heritage Areas: formed in 1997, the ANHA is an alliance of National Heritage Areas and partner organizations that exist to sustain areas noted for their unique cultural and natural resources. <http://www.nationalheritageareas.us/>

American Association for Agricultural Education (AAAE): organized around 1960 as the American Association of Teacher Educators in Agriculture; renamed in 1991. The AAAE is “dedicated to studying, applying, and promoting the teaching and learning processes in agriculture.” It publishes the *Journal of Agricultural Education* (first issued in 1961) and cooperates with organizations likewise committed to improving agricultural instruction, including pre-service instruction of agricultural educators and professional training for agricultural industry and rural community development. The AAAE publishes five-year plans that identify issues that educators must consider when reviewing and refining higher agricultural education.² <http://aaaonline.org/>

American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF): founded in 1919. The AFBF describes itself as “the voice of agricultural producers at all levels.” Members join at the county level, and have access to benefits including automobile, house, and crop insurance, as well as access to news and information and technical expertise. Each state has a Farm Bureau office. The National Agriculture in the Classroom partners with Farm Bureau offices at the state and county level to implement that curriculum. The Farm Bureau is also one of the most effective and active farm lobby groups. <http://www.fb.org>

American Farmland Trust: founded in 1980 in the midst of the farm crisis. It exists to “Protect farmland, promote sound farming practices, and keep farmers on the land.” <https://www.farmland.org>

Barn Again!: launched in 1986 through a partnership between *Successful Farming* magazine and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The program has encouraged the rehabilitation of hundreds of barns across the United States. Resources created to support the program include Mary Humstone, *Barn Again! A Guide to Rehabilitation of Older Farm Buildings* (Des Moines, Iowa: Meredith Corporation and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1988), Michael J. Auer, *The Preservation of Historic Barns*, Preservation Brief #20 (October 1989), available at: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/20-barns.htm>, four Barn Aid how-to publications about barn foundations, increasing storage space in old barns to accommodate new machinery, painting barn exteriors, and repairing barn roofs.

The Council (The National Council for Agricultural Education): The Council began in 1983 to facilitate communication between leaders of the eleven national organizations that advocate for agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resource systems education in schools. It serves as the “umbrella organization for the agricultural education community.”
<https://www.ffa.org/thecouncil/>

4-H: An informal educational program delivered to rural and urban youth through a partnership that involves volunteers at the local level and employees of the county-level Cooperative Extension Service (administered through each state’s land-grant university. 4-H participants learn about subjects ranging from health and nutrition to civic responsibility. For information on the 4-H National Headquarters see <https://nifa.usda.gov/program/4-h-national-headquarters>

Land Stewardship Project (LSP): founded in 1982 in the midst of the farm crisis. The LSP exists to “foster an ethic of stewardship for farmland, to promote sustainable agriculture and to develop healthy communities.” It involves working with “culturally and racially diverse rural and urban people [to] take practical steps that result in greater stewardship of the land, more family farmers, healthy food for all and resilient, racially just communities.” <http://landstewardshipproject.org>

National Agriculture in the Classroom (NAITC): launched in 1981 through a partnership between the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state departments of agriculture and state Farm Bureau offices. The USDA distributed materials designed to teach elementary school children about food and fiber systems initially. In 1988, the National Research Council (NRC) defined an agriculturally literate person as a person who “understand[s] the food and fiber system and this would include its history and its current economic, social and environmental significance to all Americans.” The 1988 NRC report called for the expansion of the Ag in the Classroom program.³ In 2013, the *National Agricultural Literacy Outcomes* identified five themes central to the national curriculum: 1) Agriculture and the Environment; 2) Plants and Animals for Food, Fiber, and Energy; 3) Food, Health, and Lifestyle; 4) Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math; and 5) Culture, Society, Economy, and Geography.⁴ Each state has a coordinator who facilitates distribution of curriculum materials through partnerships with other advocates for agricultural education. <http://www.agclassroom.org/>

National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE): Organized in 1948 as the National Vocational Agricultural Teachers' Association and renamed in 1997. The NAAE serves the interests of the fifty state-level agricultural educator associations. Its mission is to “advance agricultural education and promote the professional interests and growth of agriculture teachers as well as recruit and prepare students who have a desire to teach agriculture. The organization is dedicated to developing professional pride and competency, to nourishing a spirit of unity among

classroom teachers, and to recognizing members for conducting outstanding programs. It monitors governmental affairs affecting agricultural education and assists in the development of priorities and strategies to effect federal legislation and appropriations. <http://www.naae.org/>

National Barn Alliance (NBA): The alliance exists to “provide national leadership for the preservation of America’s historic barns and rural heritage through education, documentation, conservation, and networking.” The NBA has had a website since 1996 and publishes a semi-annual newsletter and The Barn Journal blog. <http://barnalliance.org>

National Farmers Union (NFU): founded in 1902 as the Farmers Educational Cooperative Union, the NFU serves more than 200,000 members in thirty-three states. The NFU “believes that good opportunities in production agriculture are the foundation of strong farm and ranch families, and strong farm and ranch families are the basis for thriving rural communities. Vibrant rural communities, in turn, are vital to the health, security and economic well-being of our entire national economy.” <http://nfu.org>

National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC): founded in 2009 when the National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture (formed in 1994) and the Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (formed in the mid-1980s) merged. The NSAC “gives voice to grassroots efforts across the country working to bring about real policy change for a more sustainable agriculture future.” <http://sustainableagriculture.net>

National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP): founded in 1949, the NTHP supports preservation of historic structures and raises awareness about endangered structures and places, including buildings in rural communities and barns on farms across the nation. It provides information on laws, policies, and programs useful to support rural preservation and adaptive reuse. <https://savingplaces.org/>

Rural Schools Collaborative (RSC): formed in 2014, believes that “a sustainable American future depends on thriving rural regions.” The RSC supports a rural renewal that 1) strengthens rural education; 2) rekindles the agrarian spirit; 3) constructs thoughtful approaches to community development; 4) builds public and charitable capital; and 5) nurtures local cultural heritage. It supports place-based education and manages “Grants In Place,” a small-grants program that funds interdisciplinary projects addressing community issues, involving community members, and engaging students with a community’s history, environment, economy, or culture. It also has launched the Rural Teachers Corps Project to address recruitment and retention of rural school teachers. [http://www. http://ruralschoolscollaborative.org/](http://www.ruralschoolscollaborative.org/)

Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area: self-identifies as the place “where the story of American agriculture comes to life.” It contains 20,000 square miles in thirty-seven counties in northeastern Iowa. Silos and Smokestacks “preserves and tells the story of American agriculture and its global significance through partnerships and activities that celebrate the land, people, and communities of the area.” <http://www.silosandsmokestacks.org/>

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE): began in 1988 when the U.S. Congress passed the Agricultural Productivity Act but issued no appropriation to conduct the work. SARE has identified “3 Pillars of Sustainability”: 1) Profit over the long term; 2) Stewardship of our nation’s land, air and water; 3) Quality of life for farmers, ranchers and their communities. See SARE’s booklet, *What is Sustainable Agriculture?* (2010) and *The New American Farmer*, 2nd edition (2005). SARE’s mission is “to advance—to the whole of American agriculture—innovations that improve profitability, stewardship and quality of life by investing in groundbreaking research and education.” Between 2000 and 2004, SARE partnered with the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History to create a traveling exhibition, “Listening to the Prairie: Farming in Nature’s Image.”⁵ <http://www.sare.org/>

U.S. Farm Stay Association (USFSA, aka Farm Stay US): a non-profit 501c6 trade association launched c2010 exists to “connect guests with farm and ranch stays throughout the United States.” Farm Stay US encourages members to self-regulate within the following guidelines: “offer an authentic look into the agricultural lifestyle of farming and ranching,” be “visitor friendly,” pay attention to “safety and cleanliness,” and be “the face of our agricultural operation” which includes “managing the agricultural operations, and interacting with our guests throughout their stay [and providing meals] made from local sources and/or from the farm itself.” <http://www.farmstayus.com>

NOTES

¹ “About Agricultural Education,” The Council, available at <https://www.ffa.org/thecouncil/ageducation> (accessed 30 January 2016). The webpage also describes opportunities for “leadership development, personal growth, and career success” that agricultural education provides for “more than 1,000,000 students [who] participate in formal agricultural education instructional programs offered in grades seven-adult throughout the 50 states and three U. S. territories.” Instructional delivery occurs in “1) classroom/laboratory instruction (contextual learning), 2) supervised agricultural experience programs (work-based learning), and 3) student leadership organizations (National FFA Organization, National Young Farmer Educational Association, and National Postsecondary Agricultural Student Organization).”

² T. G. Roberts, A. Harder and M. T. Brashears, editors, *American Association for Agricultural Education National Research Agenda: 2016-2020* (Gainesville, Florida: Department of Agricultural Education and Communication, 2016).

³ Committee on Agricultural Education in Secondary Schools, Board on Agriculture, National Research Council, *Understanding Agriculture: New Directions for Education* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1988), for the USDA's launch of Ag in the Classroom, 18; for the quote about agricultural literacy, see 8.

⁴ D. M. Spielmaker, *National Agricultural Literacy Outcomes: Benchmarks Related to Agricultural Literacy and Academic Achievement* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University, 2013), 2, available at <http://www.agclassroom.org/get/doc/NALObooklet.pdf> (accessed 30 January 2016).

⁵ Educational materials for "Listening to the Prairie: Farming in Nature's Image" are available through the Smithsonian Institution (http://forces.si.edu/main/pdf/2-5_Intro.pdf). Lesson Plans for PreK-12, 155 pages of resources, are available through the National Agriculture in the Classroom website (<http://agclassroom.org/ny/resources/pdf/activities/prairie.pdf>).

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