An Assessment of the Needs of Young Farmer Teachers in Georgia

by

Lynne M. Cook

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Approved by

Brian Parr, Chair, Associate Professor and Program Coordinator of Agriscience Education Gordon Patterson, Assistant Professor of Agriscience Education Don Mulvaney, Associate Professor of Animal Sciences David Shannon, Professor of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Technology

Abstract

Georgia Young Farmer teachers and their needs have never been researched in a formal fashion. To better understand these individuals and strengthen the program that is decreasing in numbers throughout the United States, the general design of this research was a descriptive survey, allowing the 51 Georgia Young Farmer teachers to enter categorical as well as continuous data on a questionnaire(Georgia Agriculture Education Department, 2010; H. Thompson, personal communication, June 20, 2010). The questionnaire consisted of four sections as follows: general information, professional needs, technical needs, and general needs.

The average Georgia Young Farmer Teachers is male, over 45 years of age, and married with two children. They attained a Bachelor's or Master's Degree through the University of Georgiaand have less than ten years of experience teaching Young Farmers. The majority of Young Farmer Teachers are located within the southern one-third of the state and teach one inschool Agriculture Education course per day. These teachers ranked internet websites, agribusiness representatives, and other specialists as their top resources. They are more active on the local and state levels versus the national level. Three of the top nine most critical needs for the teachers were within the area of agribusiness followed closely by livestock and row-crop production. The general needs of motivating adults, public relations and fundraising were also within the top nine. Teachers also revealed a need in improved support from professional development, local and state boards of education, the Teacher Retirement System and the University of Georgia.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background and Setting

Like the cowboys of yesteryear, Young Farmer teachers offer essential adult agricultural services to farmers and ranchers. Agriculture is following a similar trend within the last century, dropping in farm numbers by 63% while increasing in farm size by 67% (Dimitri, Effland, & Conklin, 2005). The number of farmers and ranchers has dropped to an all-time low of 1.9% of the American population, and yet through mechanical, technological, and biotechnological innovations produce262% more product with less than 2% fewer inputs, keeping American food costs the lowest of any other country in the world(American Farm Bureau, 2011). Young Farmer teachers have helped to keep these important and highly productive individuals up to date and informed.But, they too are also disappearing quickly across the American landscape (Carpentier& Iverson, 1996, H. Thompson, personal communication, June 20, 2010).

However, Georgia offers one of the final strongholds for this American tradition with over 50 programs remaining. Georgia's Young Farmer program is a part of the Georgia Agriculture Education Department, which divides the state into three Regions, North, Central, and South, and each Region into two Areas each as seen in the appendices. Areas I and II are located in the North Region; Areas III and IV are in the Central Region; and Areas V and VI are in the South Region. Young Farmer programs are spread throughout the Regions and Areas as represented in the Figure 1 below.



Figure 1.Georgia Young Farmer Programs. Reprinted from About Us, in Georgia Young Farmers, Copyright 2012 by Georgia Young Farmers Association. Reprinted with permission.

The Young Farmer Program is open to individuals who are out of secondary school and whose career objective is to become established and/or more proficient in agricultural production, agricultural management, or an agribusiness occupation (Georgia Agriculture Education, 2010), and the Georgia Young Farmer Organization is one of the most successful National Young Farmer Education Association (NYFEA) programs in the nation (H. Thompson, personal communication, June 20, 2010). The need for this adult agricultural program is definite and understood by those in Agriculture Education (Birkenholz&Maricle, 1990; Dormody, Seevers, &Clason, 1996; Ricketts, Duncan, Peake, &Uesseler, 2005). Even so, there is a dearth of information and research about the Georgia Young Farmer Organization and, more specifically, the needs of the teachers who make it successful.

Statement of Problem

For many laypersons and even many in agriculture, the Young Farmer Program and, thus, the research needed to profile this group is an enigma (Dormody, Seevers, & Clason, 1996). To those involved in the program, the Young Farmer Program offers instructional classes, on-farm support, leadership opportunities, and a social outlet (Georgia Agriculture Education Department, 2010). The Georgia Young Farmer teachers, themselves, also realize its uniqueness and have expressed their desire to hone their skills to be as proficient as possible in helping their adult students (H. Thompson, personal communication, June 20,2010). However, before these needs can be met, they must be identified (Irani, Place, & Mott, 2003; Silva-Guerrero & Sutphin, 1990). Most researchers have skirted around the central issue of identifying the needs of these teachers, centering instead on the Young Farmer members and the program as a whole (Carpentier & Iverson, 1996; Dormody, Seevers, & Clason, 1996; Steakley & Webb, 1973; Wells & Iverson, 2000). A national assessment was conducted by Bruenig and Radhakirshna (1993) assessing the needs of Young/Adult Farmer teachers but was so diverse in its national coverage that it did not specify on Georgia Young Farmer teacher needs. Instead, much of the information gathered applied to Midwestern farming practices and programs. Therefore, a needs assessment of all Georgia Young Farmer Educators was taken and compiled to identify these specific professionals' needs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative research was to identify and assess the perceived professional, technical, and general needs of Georgia Young Farmer teachers in order to enable state and university officials to choose appropriate college curriculum, in-service courses and support services for this group. The study specifically addressed the following:

- 1. Determine the demographic data of this subgroup of Agriculture Educators.
- 2. Determine the teachers' perceived level of importance of and competence in professional areas within their profession.
- 3. Determine the teachers' perceived level of importance of and competence in technical areas within their profession.
- 4. Determine the teachers' perceived level of importance of and competence in general areas within their profession.
- 5. Identify the pre-service, in-service, and support service needs of Georgia Young Farmer teachers.

Definitions

- Young Farmer an individual who is out of school and whose career objective is to become established and/or more proficient in agricultural production, agricultural management or an agribusiness occupation(Georgia Agriculture Education, 2010).
- Professional needs those associated with teaching, support, and leadership competencies(Finch & McGough, 1982).
- Technical needs those related to the laboratory and cooperative work setting(Finch & McGough, 1982).

4. General needs - intermediary or personal skills necessary to be effective in the professional and technical areas (Finch & McGough, 1982).

Limitations

The sample used in this study was Georgia Young Farmer Teachers. Even though there are other Young Farmer Teachers throughout the nation, each state trains, funds, and defines the standards of their Young Farmer Teachers differently (Bruenig&Radhakirshna, 1993; Carpentier& Iverson, 1996; Thompson, 2010). Due to this limitation, no generalization can be made for populations other than Georgia Young Farmer Teachers.

Basic Assumptions

The 51 Georgia Young Farmer teachers completed a survey form, ranking their professional, technical, and general needs on a Likert scale and establishing a Georgia Young Farmer Educator demographic model. It wasassumed that the educators answered openly and honestly with no hidden agendas or outside influences. It was also assumed that each Young Farmer Educator in Georgia was qualified and actively fulfilling the duties required of the profession.

Significance

The examination of demographic information revealed by this study established an understanding of who these teachers are and the backgrounds that make them successful. The needs identified due to this study will assist teacher educators, state staff, local administration, and the National Young Farmer Education Association in developing curriculum materials, professional development, and skills training needed by teachers.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This literature review was designed to create a foundation for this research, explaining the importance of understanding who the Georgia Young Farmer teachers are and what their professional, technical, and general needs are. To create this understanding, an explanation of adult education in America is first explored. Then, an overview of the Georgia Young Farmer Program follows, including research results conducted on a state and national level. The needs of effective Young Farmer teachers are then reviewed in light of current research and the professional, technical, and general framework. A final foundational section explores the preparation of Georgia Young Farmer teachers for the future followed by a summary of the vital information that served as the basis for this research.

Adult Education in America

The forefathers of America saw fit to develop a system within the government through which every citizen of the United States would be given an equal education. Today, America's tax-paid education system has grown to encompass kindergarten through the twelfth grade and can prepare students to obtain a job or to further their education in either a vocational-technical school or college. Even with this vast educational system, however, many adults are finding it necessary to seek further training after they have completed their high school or post-secondary educational career (Aslanian, 1989).

Adult education in America has risen from 40 percent in 1995 to 46 percent in 2001 (Institute of Education Sciences, 2007). With this large number of adults seeking further knowledge, there must be a significant force motivating these learners onward. The force's name is technology (Gayle, 1990). Adelaine and Foster, 1988 reported that changing agricultural technologies coupled with an aging agricultural population spurred the need for adult education

in the area of agriculture. Currently, large numbers of technological discoveries are being made. So much so that scientists are predicting that within the next decade more inventions will be created than have been in the last century and a half. The pace of new technological discoveries is so swift that every hour that passes in America means the birth of two hundred words of new information. Thus, businesses have a constant need to keep their employees updated on the newest technological skills and information (Gayle, 1990; Peterson, 1961). Finding better ways to accelerate and refine adult learning will directly benefit and propel these businesses (Conner, 2007).

Even with this growing demand, however, university educators and, much less, other educators do not have access to a significant quantity of references about adult education of any type (Adams, 1989). References on elementary and secondary students are plenteous, but adults do not share the same typical characteristics as other, younger students. Maturation changes individuals both physiologically and psychologically, indicating the need for a different approach when teaching adults (Ross, 1988). Adults find pedagogical methods of education to be repressive and stifling (Kabuga, 1977). They have special needs and react differently than the traditional kindergarten through twelfth grade or even post-secondary students (Hensel, 1991). In fact, adult learners are motivated by social interaction, external expectations, social benefit, personal achievement, personal incentive, and the desire for lifelong learning. These same motivators can act just as conversely as barriers when not handled correctly by the teacher. Adults can quickly fall into resentment of the teacher is they perceive that they are treated as a child. It is for this reason that an adult education model was needed to better understand adult learners and their needs and to relinquish the learning process to adults as they gain expertise and skills (Aspell, 2003).

Adult learners differ from their younger counterparts. "Adult learners need to know the why, the what, and the how of what is being taught (Aspell, 2003, p. 1)." Adults are selfmotivated simply because they have more to lose than other students. Therefore, adult educators find that their students are self-assured, intelligent, and competent and, yet, very anxious about being successful. Adult students want to know the most effective ways to do things or the correct answer and cannot tolerate ambiguity (Choy &Delahaye, 2002; Hensel, 1991). Their motivation centers on creating a lasting change in their life through learning the new information and skills required (Ozuah, 2005).

The motivation of adults to learn, however, is short-lived, disappearing quickly if not addressed and reinforced properly. "Adults can be ordered into the classroom and prodded into seats, but they can't be forced to learn" (Zemke & Zemke, 1995, p. 41). Adult learners are natural resisters of the change of education. This resistance is a natural human reaction akin to grieving for a lost loved one or item. Even though adult learners obviously realize the need to learn new skills which requires leaving old skills behind in lieu of the new ones, there is still a natural resistance, not rejection, of change (Aspell, 2003). They also have many life challenges such as spouses, children, careers, etc. that can create not only the desire to pursue further education but also interfere with that same educational process (Cercone, 2008). "Adult learners bring to the classroom a mix of rich resources, great vulnerabilities, and internal barriers…powerful forces with the potential to completely sabotage the learning process (Evans, 1989, p. 28)." These forces cannot be overcome without the strong support system of a well-developed and managed adult program that responds to the adults' interests, needs, and problems (Dollisso & Martin, 1999).

Adult education can be broadly defined as "any organized learning activity involving adult learners and a teacher (Carter, 1990, p. 30)." Such a simple definition belies the vastness of this ever-growing field. "The art and science of helping adults to learn (Knowles, 1970, p. 43)," is termed andragogy. Malcolm S. Knowles is generally accepted as the American father of andragogy. However, the term was originally introduced to America by E. C. Lindeman and M. L. Anderson in 1927 who, in turn, studied Alexander Kapp, a German who originated the term in Europe when describing the Greek Philosopher Plato (Cooper &Henschke, 2001; Davenport & Davenport, 1985; Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2000; Monts, 2005; Ozuah, 2005; Sandlin, 2005). Even so, Knowles was the first in America to study the increase in American adult education, create a statement of how adult education should be conducted, and postulate a theory on andragogy (Smith, 2002).

Knowles' work gained the most popularity and support as he compared andragogy as the opposite end of the educational spectrum from pedagogy, the art and science of teaching children. Knowles found that teachers who were the most effective at teaching young adults shared similar characteristics such as having students participate in the learning process, acting informally as instructors within the classroom, exhibiting interest in their students as individuals, and providing support. By the 1970s, Knowles had established a framework of adult education and successfully introduced the term andragogy (Bullen, 1995; Cooper &Henschke, 2001; Davenport & Davenport, 1985; Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2000; Maughan, 2007; Merriam, 2001; Monts, 2005; Ozuah, 2005; Ross, 1988).

Knowles' framework centered on adult learners' self directedness, need to connect to prior experiences, desire to learn those subjects that address direct problems, need for interactivity, and the collaborative nature with the student often teaching the teacher (Davenport

& Davenport, 1985; Imel, 2000; Knowles, 1970; Maughan, 2007). He felt that pedagogy and andragogy differed on four basic principles. First, the learner is not the dependent as in pedagogy; instead, adults are more self-directed (Cercone, 2008; Knowles, 1970; Monts, 2005). Adults who are motivated to learn will do so with or without a qualified teacher (Zemke & Zemke, 1995). Secondly, pedagogy is directly dependent on the teacher's knowledge and tools such as textbooks and instructional materials versus and ragogy that relies on the previous experience of adults. A third difference centers on when learning should occur. Pedagogy creates standard curriculums, because it is based on the premise that learners want to learn what society requires together at a steady pace. Andragogy, however, rejects this notion, embracing the belief that adults learn when they perceive a need to learn. The final difference is the expectation of learning. With pedagogy, subjects learned begin simple and progress to more complex with the promise that the skills learned will be utilized at some future time within the learner's life. Andragogy and its adult learners learn new skills and concepts to improve themselves immediately and, usually, in a known fashion (Cercone, 2008; Knowles, 1970; Monts, 2005). With these differences, Knowles felt that adults could not be treated as younger learners, sitting in a classroom absorbing all the knowledge that their teachers allow them to have (Knowles, 1970). Instead, Knowles' framework "shatters the myth that knowledge is the private property of teachers" (Kabuga, 1977, p. 256).

Successful teachers of adults who use the andragogical model utilize more discussions, variances in teaching styles, connections to life experiences, and adjustments to their teaching due to student feedback than when they taught younger students (Monts, 2005). Teachers of adults, therefore, must first help his learners become aware of their need to know the information being presented within the context of the motivation that brought them to learn new information

and/or skills. Then, teachers must nurture the self-directedness and autonomy of their students while employing teaching techniques such as laboratories, simulations, or open class discussions to access experiential learning, while continually relating each activity to the real-life skills that are desired (Ozuah, 2005). Learning becomes difficult when teachers blur the line of andragogy and pedagogy, using a mixture of the two and undermining their students' motivation (Pew, 2007).

Teachers new to andragogy can often develop a cognitive discord in their teaching viewpoints and practices, requiring a shift in their core attitude of education (Pew, 2007). Knowles (1970) stated "one who has a deep loyalty and commitment to the pedagogical model – may be tempted to underrate the extent to which an andragogical assumption may be realistic and may, for example, want to keep a learner dependent long after the learner has become able to be self-directing" (p.43). Care must be taken to fully train the teacher in andragogical concepts. Cooper &Henschke, 2001, stated "that, in preparing educators of adults, andragogy becomes a way of being or an attitude of mind, and needs to be modeled/exemplified by the professor" (p. 5). Even with the growing need for teachers versed in andragogy, not one university in America uses the term to describe their professors' expertise (Reischmann, 2004). Instead, most teach andragogy as a unit or framing within foundation and adult learning courses (Sandin, 2005).

The Georgia Young Farmer Program

Agricultural educators of the past recognized the growing need for some sort of adult program and pioneered the development of these programs (Boone, Gartin, Wright, Lawrence, & Odell, 2002). Thus, during the mid-twentieth century, the Young Farmer Program was born. After World War II had ended, many men were returning to America with no up-to-date training with which to obtain jobs. To meet this need, the Veterans Farm Training Program was

createdin Georgia. This program was designed to identify and meet the individual needs of those veterans returning to the farm. The veterans program was a resounding success and enabled many young men to enter or reenter the farming occupation with the most updated knowledge of the time. Due to the strength seen in this type of public service, eight pilot programs for training young farmers began in 1952 with just as much if not more prosperity than the original veteran program. Thus, the Georgia Young Farmer Program was set into motion (Georgia Agriculture Education Department, 2010).

The Young Farmer Program continues today. The technological changes within the agricultural industry have been and will continue to be phenomenal. Technology has already expanded the scope of agriculture so much that even though 40% of all Americans are employed in the industry of agriculture, only 2.2% of them are involved directly in production agriculture. It takes only one farmer today to feed 155 people whereas in the 1960s that same farmer could feed only 26 (Center For Food Integrity, 2009; Whaley & Lucero, 1991). This increase in efficiency is needed, since it is predicted that the world's population will bloom to over nine billion by the year 2040, requiring new and yet unheard of technological and biotechnological developments (Farm Foundation, 2008). This increase of technological breakthroughs not only in engineering and management practices but also biotechnological innovations such as gene splicing and cloning will generate major growth in the future (Aslanian, 1989). The competitiveness of the business of production agriculture and agribusiness will also require the honing of problem solving skills. To meet this need, 51 Young Farmer Programs have been developed throughout the state with 41 full-time positions and 10 part-time positions under the advisement of in-school agricultural teachers. These programs serve approximately 3,500 members annually (Georgia Agriculture Education Department, 2010).

Across the nation, however, there are only 148 full-time Young Farmer Programs left (Camp, Broyles, & Skelton, 2002). Few know exactly what this organization does even though the NYFEA is chartered in 22 states (Dormody, Seevers, & Clason, 1996). For those that are members and for Agriculture Education teachers, the Young Farmer Program is a vital and necessary portion of the Agriculture Education program as a whole. In-school Agriculture Education teachers realize the importance of having a local Young Farmer affiliate as a part of their program (Ricketts, Duncan, Peake, & Uesseler, 2005). The Young Farmer Program is unique just like its members.

The farmers who seek out this program are different from even the average American farmer and have different needs than any other adult education group. These special needs range from technical and economical to sociological and psychological. Therefore, the Young Farmer Program must be sure to recognize the overall characteristics of its students and the needs its students have for pursuing further education (Steakley & Webb, 1973). In a study conducted by Carpentier and Iverson (1996) of the University of Georgia, members of the National Young Farmers Education Association (NYFEA) from twenty states were sent questionnaires concerning themselves. The resulting responses led Carpentier to the following conclusions about the average Young Farmer:

- NYFEA members were approximately twelve years younger than the national average for farmers.
- They operated farms more than twice the size of the national average and had a larger investment in land and buildings.
- The average value of agricultural products sold by NYFEA members was more than twice the national average.

- NYFEA members had a higher level of educational attainment when compared to the average American farmer.
- The main reason Young Farmers joined and continued their membership on the local level was for the education and training. The most requested areas of training were marketing agricultural crops, farm management, and the latest farm technology.
- Respondents also perceived the programs and services offered by the NYFEA as having low to medium impact on state and local programs. However, members believed that future emphasis should remain the same or be expended in all program areas/services.

The Young Farmer educators have taken note of the differences in and identified the needs of their Young Farmers. These factors indicate that the Young Farmers are seeking out the Young Farmer Program to survive and cope in the industry they face daily. Since their students are concerned about survival, they demand a practical, pragmatic program (Feldman & Sweeney, 1989). In fact, most Young Farmer members appreciate their Young Farmer teachers to be engaged in part-time farming, so that they stay grounded within farming activities (Wells & Iverson, 2000). Young Farmer teachers have realized that they must place the main focus of their lessons on providing opportunities for the Young Farmers to develop problem solving skills. These skills will equip the Young Farmer and Young Farmer teachers have defined the purposes of the Young Farmer Association, an organizational extension of the Young Farmer Program, as follows:

provide continuing education to meet new and changing need for progress in agriculture

- help Young Farmers build better farms, homes, and families
- assist Young Farmers in becoming successfully established as farmers and leaders in the community
- provide group experiences and exchange of ideas through local, district, and state activities
- add dignity and prestige to the business of farming
- cooperate with agricultural organizations, businesses, and industry for continued improvement in agricultural technology and social conditions
- provide wholesome social and recreational activities (Georgia Agriculture Education Department, 2010)

Those Young Farmers have not only the opportunity to attend classes to improve themselves technologically and economically but, also, an organization, the Georgia Young Farmer Association, which allows for leadership, sociological, and psychological development. Much research and time has gone into developing lessons, activities, and resources in the education process (Georgia Agriculture Education Department, 2010). Yet, very little has been done to identify the characteristics and needs of the single most important factor that affects every aspect of the program – the Young Farmer educator (Birkenholz & Harbstreit, Adult Education in Agriculture: A Little Bit of Heaven, 1991).

Needs of the Effective Young Farmer Teacher

The needs of Young Farmer educators can be broken down into three basic categories – professional, technical, and general (Finch & McGough, 1982). The professional category entails those needs associated with the broad range of teaching, support, and leadership competencies that are invaluable to the adult educator. The second category of technical needs

encompasses the area associated with the laboratory and cooperative work setting. Lastly, the general category covers those needs which are needed to meet the professional and technical areas. These needs include written and oral communication, computation, interpersonal relations, personal development, and many others (Finch & McGough, 1982). If the technical, professional, and general needs of the Young Farmer educator are met, the Young Farmer Program in Georgia will grow stronger and flourish. Many adult agriculture educators feel a substantial need improving their skills on all of these levels (Irani, Place, & Mott, 2003). However, before these needs can be met, they must be identified. Therefore, a needs assessment of all Georgia Young Farmer Educators must be taken and compiled so that those needs can be met and the program flourishes.

Professional Needs

Anyone who wishes to become a Young Farmer educator in Georgia must first gain a degree in Agriculture Education from an accredited college. The two Georgia colleges who offer a degree in Agriculture Education are Fort Valley State University and the University of Georgia. Peake (2010) stated that the University of Georgia prepares approximately 25 to 35 students per year who could possibly fill a middle school/high school agriculture educator position to gain experience for future Young Farmer openings. The UGA Agriculture Education degree requires the student to take 120 credit hours with approximately 30 hours in the area of technical agriculture, 30 hours in the area of education, and 60 hours in the basic core curriculum (The University of Georgia, 2009, J. Peake, personal communication, November 30, 2010). Another option in becoming a Young Farmer teacher is the alternate certificate program, which allows those individuals who already have an undergraduate degree in an agricultural field to become certified while working on a graduate degree. Upon completion of either degree, the

potential teacher must apply for a Young Farmer position within an individual school system. Currently, the state funds Young Farmer educators on a 70:30 ratio to the local system. This ratio is very enticing to local systems that only have to pay thirty percent of the educator's salary while the state pays seventy. Such a heavy percentage falling on the state's shoulders also indicates the conviction it has in the effectiveness of the program (Georgia Agriculture Education Department, 2010; H. Thompson, personal communication, June 20, 2010).

The state has established minimum requirements for each Young Farmer position filled in Georgia. Young Farmer educators are to be hired on a twelve month basis after they have met the certification requirements. They must teach one in-school class as well as at least twenty out-of-school class sessions to Young Farmers. They are responsible for providing systematic instruction within each course that is taught and for supervision and instruction on the farm. To help facilitate the classes, the Young Farmer educator uses the school facilities – classroom, shop, canning plant, etc. – and attends in-service clinics designed to broaden their knowledge and skills. The Young Farmer educator is required to act as advisor, organizer, and coordinator of the Young Farmer Organization while at the same time establishing and utilizing an advisory committee for improvement of the program. The state also mandates that the Young Farmer educator is under the direct supervision of the principal or the principal's designee, usually the vocational supervisor, and must assist the in-school Agriculture Education teacher when needed (Georgia Agriculture Education Department, 2010; H. Thompson, personal communication, June 20, 2010).

To carry out these requirements set by the state to be a professional Young Farmer teacher, Young Farmer teachers need both the high level technical skills of an agricultural professional and the organizational and delivery skills of a master teacher. Even so, due to the

limited time in which students are in the program and the few openings in Young Farmer education each year, more emphasis is placed on teaching younger students than adults. Each student is given a chance to interact and possibly teach adults. During their training, however, most student teachers spend less than one percent of their time involved in any adult education endeavors, leaving them deficient in experience although eligible for employment as a Young Farmer teacher (Torres, Ulmer, & Aschenbrener, 2008). There is a definite need for teacher education programs to increase the amount of adult and/or Young Farmer skills that are being delivered at the present time (Deeds, Flowers, & Arrington, 1991). Since there is limited individual Young Farmer educator training in the university teacher preparation program, those responsible for helping Young Farmer teachers to develop themselves and their programs – university graduate teachers, Area teachers, local administrators, the Young Farmer Organization, and the Young Farmer educators themselves – must seek out and identify these professional needs of the Young Farmer educators (Iverson, 1992).

A study conducted by Birkenholz and Maricle (1991) questioned state leaders and department heads and identified some professional needs of Young Farmer teachers. The researchers concluded from the data that they collected that even though state leaders support the principle of adult agricultural education, they do not equate this support with that of the secondary programs. The researchers also concluded that courses in adult education should be required in pre-service agriculture teacher education programs and that state leaders should support in-service workshops which encourage teachers to supervise Young Farmer Programs. Graham (2001) also reported the need for professional improvement before university graduates could address the adult community.

Other, more specific needs were identified in a report given on August 9, 1979 by Harald Ragan, Young Farmer educator of Grady County at the time, at the Annual Conference of Teachers of Vocational Agriculture. Ragan reported the following ideas of what Georgia Young Farmer teachers perceived as their professional needs:

- Young Farmer positions should be filled with caution with only highly qualified and preferably experienced teachers.
- A pre-requisite to placement of a teacher of agriculture in a Young Farmer position should be a special in-service, credit-type course, especially developed to prepare to fill the Young Farmer teacher role.
- Young Farmer teachers and Area teachers need to review types and methods of presentations to adult farmers now being used.
- Educational image of Young Farmer classes needs to be improved more professionalism on the teacher's part.
- Young Farmer teachers need some clerical help.
- Need increased pay in order to attract and hold competent teachers.
- Place more responsibility for attendance on chapter officers.
- As one person observed, and I agree, that the greatest one thing needed in the program is dedicated, professional-minded teachers (Ragan, 1979, p. 1).

Technical Needs

The technical area of developmental needs is somewhat more definite in content than the other two areas. More research and formal as well as informal studies have been done to determine what type of technical training and assistance Young Farmer teachers need. In

Ragan's (1979) report, many technical needs were also mentioned by the Young Farmer teachers of Georgia as follows:

- Young Farmer teachers need and intensive, on-going, and well-planned teacher update program.
 - Determine from Young Farmer teachers what they feel they need help in and provide that help.
 - The Young Farmer program needs an instructional approach that is teachercentered rather than guest speaker-centered – strong teacher identity.
 - An intensive series of short course for Young Farmer teachers should be provided. Should be similar to update service used by the Extension Service for their personnel. Young Farmer teachers must be competent and current if he is to be successful in dealing with farmer's problems and earn credibility.
 - From these short courses should come information, competencies, teaching materials, and organization, which will enable a teacher to teach a job with very little further preparation. In other words, a job of jobs would be taught to teachers which they, in turn, could teach to their farmers. Teachers could participate here by preparing and teaching a job in which they feel they are especially competent. This could help build a bank of lesson guides.
- Young Farmer teachers need a complete and up-to-date technical reference file. This may be separate from the ag department set.
- The Area teacher service is vital to the continued success of the Young Farmer
 Program. Teachers need more help in the agronomic sector.

- An expense account that is adequate and realistic is needed in order to carry on an effective program.
- The instructional program needs to be strongly oriented toward farm management (Ragan, 1979, pp. 2-3).

More specific information was found by Bruenig and Radhakirshna (1993). The researchers questioned 196 Young/Adult Farmer teachers about the instructional subjects, types of resources, activities, and practices they used in their programs. The results showed that the topics most needed by the teachers were in traditional topics such as corn, soybean, wheat, beef, and swine instruction. The emerging field of aquaculture was also identified as needing some attention as well as the management topics of marketing, farm business analysis, enterprise analysis, and profitable decision making processes. The researchers also revealed that the Young/Adult Farmer teachers tend to facilitate, find experts in the field they wish to be taught to speak to the group, rather than personally instruct their programs. The primary media found to be used by teachers were video tapes and slides, which were becoming out-dated at the time. To be effective, Young Farmer teachers must deliver and transfer technological information through a variety of educational strategies, which most do not feel proficient in conducting (Martin & Omer, 1990). Much of the information gathered, however, was based on Midwestern farming techniques with little on the Southeastern United States. Therefore, a needs assessment will identify Georgia Young Farmer teacher deficiencies.

General Needs

The general needs of Young Farmer teachers were rarely mentioned in most research. Some inferences, however, are made to the general needs of teachers by researchers. Birkenholz and Maricle (1991) reported that state leaders needed to be proactive in their support of adult

agricultural education. This support cannot end with only the professional and technical needs of the teacher but must encompass their general needs also.

Overall personal growth is a large general need of Young Farmer teachers. Even though the average Young Farmer teacher is often younger than the majority of the students, the majority of Young Farmers demand maturity within their teachers. Maturity, unfortunately, is more often taken at the face value of age by the Young Farmers rather than by the other indicators such as the amount of on-farm experience, confidence in presenting materials, professionalism, and enthusiasm about the Young Farmer Program. For the average Young Farmer, the technological updates and stress relief provided by the classes are a must due to the fact that he has more capital invested or borrowed for his farm and sells more products. With this sort of stress upon the students, the teacher must be sure to deliver succinct information in each meeting while scheduling class or recreation time for stress management of the students. Thus, both the "hats" of the agricultural technology expert and the mental health counselor must be worn by the teacher along with administrator, coach, club advisor, trouble-shooter, financial advisor, public relations expert, friend, and many more just to meet the needs of the Young Farmers and their organization. Young Farmers believe that a more mature person would better insure that this type of teacher would be heading their program (Iverson, 1992).

Ragan (1979) reported other general needs of the Young Farmer teacher as follows:

- The Young Farmer Program needs to be continually publicized.
- The Young Farmer teacher needs help in perceiving and portraying his unique role.
- There needs to be more opportunity and emphasis on exchange of ideas among Young Farmer teachers.

- Work to keep administration informed and aware of Young Farmer teacher's activities itinerary, advisory committee, newsletter with copy to staff and board members.
- Attempt to secure top-notch guest speakers and program presenters.
- Utilize as many Extension Specialists as fits the local situation.
- Involve members in program more. Example: Members write articles concerning their methods of producing certain enterprises.
- Find a way to have members attend state and national conventions and other state organization-sponsored activities.
- Encourage chapter committee on membership to function in regard to membership.
- Better utilize officer structure to help promote and reach prospective members.
- Find some fundraising projects so that the chapter can plan a meaningful and useful program (Ragan, 1979, p. 3).

Preparing Young Farmer Teachers for the Future

With the education and employment requirements clearly identified, many believe that the Young Farmer educator positions could be filled by anyone who meets the minimum requirements and that that person would produce a Young Farmer Program with instantaneous success (Miller &Daloz, 1989; Steakley& Webb, 1973). Success for the adult educator, however, depends upon multiple factors. For instance, the competence of university adult educators is "measured by degrees, publications, and other awards" (Miller & Daloz, 1989). Even though measurement of the Young Farmer educator is somewhat weighted by these factors, there are still many more which must be taken into account before the educator can be called fully competent and effective. Young Farmer educators vary from other adult educators in that they have a specific clientele of students who have different needs, demands, and interests from any other adult education group. These students, in turn, demand that the teacher have more extensive and varied duties and responsibilities than the average adult educator. Thus, the measurement of how effective, competent, able, and successful a Young Farmer educator will be lies in different measurements than those traditionally used(Georgia Agriculture Education Department, 2010; H. Thompson, personal communication, June 20, 2010)..

The general consensus of those involved with Young Farmer education has been to measure the competence and effectiveness of the Young Farmer educator by the success of their Young Farmer chapters. There is no doubt that the teacher has the single most profound influence on the quality of the adult education program (Birkenholz & Harbstreit, 1991). To be a positive influence, every educator, especially Young Farmer educators, must actively seek ways to serve people according to the individual's interests, needs, and learning styles (Gayle, 1990). Educators' attitudes toward their work and students also play a vital role in the amount and perhaps the kind of influence the teacher has on the program. Young Farmer educators must realize that students, even adult students, react to and emulate their teacher's behaviors, which are then carried directly to the workplace (Karmos & Greathouse, 1989). A study conducted at Texas A & M University by the Department of Agriculture Education found that the attitude of the teacher affected the success of the Young Farmer chapter. Those Young Farmer educators who perceived the Young Farmer program to be important had higher performing Young Farmer chapters (Steakley & Webb, 1973). Thus, the success of the Young Farmer Program rests heavily on the attitude and efforts of the Young Farmer educator, and these attributes are directly improved when the teacher feels that his needs are being met (Karmos & Greathouse, 1989).

Young Farmer positions must be filled with those who know how and are capable of delivering more than the minimum requirements of the state if the program is to stay viable and

vigorous (Peake, 2010; Thompson, 2010). These types of Young Farmer educators cannot be found; they must be created through training and updating programs that meet the needs they have to become this ultimate educator. The majority of the needs that the Young Farmer teachers themselves identified were directed firmly at bettering themselves. The teachers realize that if they are strong and competent then their program will be also (Steakley & Webb, 1973).

Summary

Adult education, including andragogy, will continue to be a part of American adults as they and the businesses that hire them seek to keep their skills current. The Georgia Young Farmer teachers provide this service for the Georgia Young Farmer members. Little is known about the needs and demographic makeup of this specialized group of educators due to a dearth of research about them. Therefore, a demographic model and the needs – professional, technical, and general – of these teachers must be identified before they can be addressed by university personnel, state staff members, and area teachers.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

Design and Procedures

The purpose of this quantitative research was to identify and assess the perceived professional, technical, and general needs of Georgia Young Farmer teachers in order to enable state and university officials to choose appropriate college curriculum, in-service courses and support services for this group. The study specifically addressed the following:

- 1. Determine the demographic data of this subgroup of Agriculture Educators.
- 2. Determine the teachers' perceived level of importance of and competence in professional areas within their profession.
- 3. Determine the teachers' perceived level of importance of and competence in technical areas within their profession.
- 4. Determine the teachers' perceived level of importance of and competence in general areas within their profession.
- Identify the pre-service, in-service, and support service needs of Georgia Young Farmer teachers.

The general design of this survey was descriptive. Young Farmer teachers link postsecondary and adult education on a daily basis, and yet, little is known about them, including needs that might be addressed by agriculture education teacher educators who do little in preparing future Agriculture Educators for adult education (Iverson, 1992). To better understand these individuals and strengthen the program that is decreasing in numbers throughout the United States, a proper research design was sought that would allow the Young Farmer teachers to enter categorical as well as continuous data. Therefore, the general design of this research was a survey, allowing for Georgia Young Farmer teacher demographic data, trends, and opinions to be identified and studied. Surveys are the most economical means of studying a population in a short time while offering a quick turnaround in data and results (Creswell, 2009).

This survey was cross-sectional with all of the data collected at the mandatory annual Georgia State Young Farmer Breakout Session at the GVATA Summer Conference in July, 2012. It consisted of a cover letter explaining the research and anonymity of answers and a self-administered questionnaire. This document was given to each teacher at the meeting. Each teacher was also given a note card on which they were asked to place their name and county. This card was used as the means for drawing a winner for a \$50.00 gift card to Bass Pro Shop and for identifying those teachers who filled out the questionnaire while maintaining their anonymity. The research plan was approved through the Auburn University Institutional Review Board prior to implementation.

Of the 51 Young Farmer Programs, 40 Young Farmer Teachers responded at the conference. One program had been discontinued, two other programs were in the midst of hiring new Young Farmer Teachers, and three teachers present at the meeting were so newly hired that they did not understand the Young Farmer Program well enough to fill out the questionnaire. There were four Young Farmer Teachers not present at the meeting due to extenuating circumstances. Those teachers not present were mailed the research document with a self-addressed, stamped envelope in which to return the form. After three weeks, those who had still not responded were mailed a second copy of the survey and were personally contacted by the researcher via e-mail and/or phone call. One of the four responded, returning a completed survey.

Even though this method of survey was more inconvenient for the researcher than an emailed version, this method of dispersing and collecting the research document was considered

best for the Georgia Young Farmer teachers, due to their activity levels. Their schedules are extremely busy, and mailed questionnaires or e-mailed surveys are quickly discarded or overlooked. In conducting the survey at an annual meeting, the teachers were in a more relaxed atmosphere and more apt to complete the questionnaire and other documentation. Through this method, an overall response rate of 80.39% (41 responses out of 51 programs) or 82.0% if the discontinued program is not counted. Of experienced teachers, the response rate was 91.11%. This response rate was very good as compared to the national average of 52.7% (Baruch & Holtom, 2008).

Instrumentation

Since there was no similar survey available, the researcher modeled the questionnaire on Carpentier and Iverson (1996) instrument that dealt more with Young Farmer members but offered insight into construction of the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of four sections as follows: general information, professional needs, technical needs, and general needs as described previously. Section one, general information, asked the participant to enter demographic data such age, gender, years experience, years experience as a Young Farmer teacher, etc, required participants to respond with categorical answers. Sections two through four required the participant to rate on a continuous, five-category Likert scale their need for and proficiency in professional, technical, and general skills areas as follows:
Variable	Definition	Response Options		
Demographics	Age	Fill in boxes for birthdate		
	Marital Status	Categorical : Single, Married, Divorced, Widowed		
	Children	Fill in boxes for number and ages of children		
	Education Level	Categorical: Bachelors, Masters, EDS, EDD		
	YF Chapter	Categorical: Region & Area		
	YF Program Categorical: Full, Part Time			
	ExperienceFill in boxes for years of experience			
	Classes Taught Fill in boxes for amount and names of cours			
	School Schedule	Categorical: 4X4, Modified, 6 period, 7 period		
	YF Members	Fill in box for number		
	YF Meetings	Fill in box for number		
	YF Activity Level	1=Least Active5=Most Active		
	Associations	Fill in chart		

Table 1. Demographic Data - age, marital status, educational level, program type and location,
experience level, and other activities

 Table 2. Technical - Agricultural Mechanics, Natural Resources, Production Agriculture, and

 Agribusiness

Variable	Definition	Response Options
Technical Skills	Ag Mechanics	Response is in two columns on all:
	Natural Resources	1=No Importance5=Vital Importance
	Production Ag	A=No CompetenceE=Extreme Competence
	Agribusiness	

Table 3. Professional - Resources, State	& National YF Activities, Local YF Act	ivities, Support,
and Curriculum		

Variable	Definition	Response Options			
Professional	Resources	Response is in two columns:			
	State & National YF	1=Ineffective5=Always Effective Column 2: Fill in blank for # times used/year or #			
	Activities	times competed in			
	Local YF Activities	Response in two columns:			
		I=No Importance5=Vitally Important			
	Support	Response in two columns:			
		1=No Need5=Extreme Need			
		A=IneffectiveE=Always Effective			
	Curriculum	State Curriculum = Yes or No			
		Regional Curriculum = Yes or No			
		Fill in the blank – Top 3 YF Concerns			

The survey given to Georgia Young Farmer teachers was designed to extract the specific data required to establish a demographic understanding of this unique group and analyze their professional, technical, and general needs. Portions of the questionnaire required written responses while others required circling responses on a five-category Likert-style scale. After the Auburn University Institutional Review Board's approval, the written questionnaire was distributed during the Georgia Young Farmer teachers' required annual meeting. Those not present were contacted via mail, email, and phone with an ensuing totalresponse rate of over 80%.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative research was to identify and assess the perceived professional, technical, and general needs of Georgia Young Farmer teachers in order to enable state and university officials to choose appropriate college curriculum, in-service courses and support services for this group. The study specifically addressed the following:

- 1. Determine the demographic data of this subgroup of Agriculture Educators.
- 2. Determine the teachers' perceived level of importance of and competence in professional areas within their profession.
- 3. Determine the teachers' perceived level of importance of and competence in technical areas within their profession.
- 4. Determine the teachers' perceived level of importance of and competence in general areas within their profession.
- 5. Identify the pre-service, in-service, and support service needs of Georgia Young Farmer teachers.

Analysis

All respondents' data were pooled and compared statistically. All respondents data were pooled and compared statistically with descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages. Cronbach'sAlpha was calculated for each section, indicating the consistency and reliability of responses. A Cronbach's Alpha score ranges from zero to one with a score of 0.7 or higher indicating an acceptable reliability coefficient. In some cases, a slightly lower alpha score is accepted (Santos, 1999). To further identify the needs of the Georgia Young Farmer teachers, a mean weighted discrepancy score (MWDS) was

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calculated similar to the analysis utilized by Ricketts, Duncan, Peake, and Uesseler (2005), which allowed for a more valid picture of the needs than would the raw scores of the rankings. In their research, which is similar, the MWDS was "calculated by subtracting the competency score from the importance score and by multiplying that number times the mean importance rating for each competency" (Ricketts, Duncan, Peake, & Uesseler, 2005). An Excel-based MWDS calculator was utilized, reducing the possibility of error (McKim & Saucier, 2011). This scoring process helped the researcher to narrow in on problem areas that need to be addressed through professional development activities or state staff interventions.

Demographic Data

As indicated in Table 4, 95.1% of Georgia Young Farmers were male. Actual ages of the teachers were calculated and entered categorized in five-year increments. Twenty-two and one half percent ranged in age from 26-35 years; 17.5% were 36-45 years; 47.5% were 46-55 years; and 12.5% were 56-65 years. Approximately 90% were married with 2.4%, 4.9%, and 2.4% reporting that they were single, separated/divorced, and widowed respectively. Most, 50%, had two children. Another 12.5% each had either no children or one child; 17.5% had three children; and 7.5% had four children.

Personal Characteristic (Range)	n	Percentage
Gender	41	
Male	39	95.1
Female	2	4.9
Age (26-63 Years)	40	
26-35 Years	9	22.5
36-45 Years	7	17.5
46-55 Years	19	47.5
56-65 Years	5	12.5
Marital Status	41	
Single	1	2.4
Married	37	90.2
Separated/Divorced	2	4.9
Widowed	1	2.4
Children (0-4 Children)	40	
0	5	12.5
1	5	12.5
2	20	50.0
3	7	17.5
4	3	7.5

Table 4. Personal Characteristics of Georgia Young Farmer Teachers

Table 5 exhibits 39% had attained a Bachelor's Degree; 34.1% completed a Master's Degree; 14.6% were Education Specialists; and 12.2% had obtained their Doctorate. Approximately 66% had attended the University of Georgia with 2.4% from Fort Valley State University, 4.9% from Alternative Certification paths, and 26.8% from out of state institutions. The teachers entered their experience level, which were sorted into ten-year categories. Experience levels varied with approximately 2% just starting as a Young Farmer Teacher. The majority, 53.7%, had 1-10 years of experience. More experienced teachers included 26.8% in the 11-20 year range and 17.1% in the 21-30 year range. Approximately 15% were beginning within a new Young Farmer Teacher position while 54% had been in their current position from 1-10 years. Another 19.5% and 12.2% had been in their current position for the past 11-20 and 21-30 years respectively. Agriculture Education ranged from 22% with no prior experience; 53.6% with 1-10 years; 14.6% with 11-20 years; and 9.8% with 21-30 years. Approximately 54% reported having no other work experience while 32% had worked 1-10 years outside of Agriculture Education. Another 9.6% reported 11-20 years, and 4.8% had worked 31-40 years

of other experience.

Table 5. Educational and Experience Levels of Georgia Young Farmer Teachers

Education & Experience Characteristic (Range)	n	Percentage
Education Level	41	
Bachelor's Degree	16	39.0
Master's Degree	14	34.1
Education Specialist	6	14.6
Doctorate	5	12.2
Educational Institute	41	
University of Georgia	27	65.9
Fort Valley State University	1	2.4
Out of State University	11	26.8
Alternative Certification	2	4.9
Experience – Young Farmer Teacher (0-28 Years)	41	
0 Years	1	2.4
1-10 Years	23	53.7
11-20 Years	11	26.8
21-30 Years	7	17.1
Experience – YF Teacher at Current Position (0-25 Years)	41	
0 Years	6	14.6
1-10 Years	22	53.7
11-20 Years	8	19.5
21-30 Years	5	12.2
Experience – Agriculture Education (0-25 Years)	41	
0 Years	9	22.0
1-10 Years	22	53.6
11-20 Years	6	14.6
21-30 Years	4	9.8
Experience – Other (0-40 Years)	41	
0 Years	22	53.7
1-10 Years	13	31.9
11-20 Years	4	9.6
21-30 Years	0	0.0
31-40 Years	2	4.8

Young Farmer Programs in Georgia are approximately 88% full time as shown in Table 6. Within Georgia, nearly 50% are located within the South Region with roughly 25% in each of the other two regions. Area I consists of 15% of the Young Farmers; Area II consists of 12.5%; Area III consists of 10%; 12.5% are in Area IV; 32.5% are in Area V; and 17.5% are within Area VI. The schools in which they are housed are 51.2% on 4 by 4 Block, 31.7% on 7-Period, 12.2%

on Modified Block, and 2.4% each on 6-Period or some other schedule. Most Young Farmer Teachers either teach one in-school course (48.8%) or two in-school courses (36.6%) with a remaining 12.2% teaching multiple classes and 2.4% teaching no classes. These figures seem out of line with the Georgia Agriculture Education Department, which stated that only one class be taught by Young Farmer Teachers(Georgia Agriculture Education Department, 2010). However, the 51% of Young Farmer Teachers who are on block schedule may be required to teach one class per semester versus a traditional seven-period day in which one class would last all year.Part-time Young Farmer Teachers would also confound this data. The classes taught included 23.1% Agricultural Mechanics, 12.8% Animal Science, 5.1% Plant Science, and 2.6% each in Natural Resources, Agribusiness, and Cooperative Education/Young Farmer Internship. Other Young Farmer teachers, 2.6%, teach middle school Exploratory courses while 41% and 7.7% teach multiple courses or other agricultural courses respectively.

Program Characteristics	n	Percentage
Agriculture Education Region	41	
South	20	48.8
Central	10	24.4
North	11	26.8
Agriculture Education Area	40	
I	6	15.0
II	5	12.5
III	4	10.0
IV	5	12.5
V	13	32.5
IV	7	17.5
Program Type	41	
Full Time	36	87.8
Part Time	5	12.2
In-School Schedule	41	
4X4 Block	21	51.2
Modified Block	5	12.2
6 Periods	1	2.4
7 Periods	13	31.7
Other	1	2.4
In-School Class(es)	41	
0	1	2.4
1	20	48.8
2	15	36.6
Multiple	5	12.2
In-School Class Subject	39	
Animal Science	5	12.8
Plant Science	2	5.1
Agricultural Mechanics	9	23.1
Natural Resources	1	2.6
Agribusiness	1	2.6
Co-Op Education/YF Internship	1	2.6
Other High School Subjects	3	7.7
Middle School Exploratory	1	2.6
Multiple Unrelated	16	41.0

Table 6. Program Characteristics of Georgia Young Farmer Teachers

According to Table 7, Young Farmer Chapter membership ranges from 5 to 265 members and were sorted into categories increasing by 50 members. They reported that 4.9% had 0-50, 75.6% had 51-100, 12.2% had 101-150, 4.9% had 201-250, and 2.4% had 251-300 members. Young Farmer Teachers provided the number of classes annually taught to their Young Farmer members, and the responses were categorized in sections of ten. The teachers reported teaching0-10 classes annually in 35% of the programs, 11-20 classes in 50% of the programs,

and 21-30 classes in 15% of the programs.

Table 7. Chapter Characteristics of Georgia Young Farmer Teachers

Young Farmer Chapter Characteristic (Range)	n	Percentage
Young Farmer Chapter Membership (5-265)	41	
0-50 Members	2	4.9
51-100 Members	31	75.6
101-150 Members	5	12.2
151-200 Members	0	0.0
201-250 Members	2	4.9
251-300 Members	1	2.4
Young Farmer Chapter Classes (5-26)	40	
0-10 Classes	14	35.0
11-20 Classes	20	50.0
21-30 Classes	6	15.0

Young Farmer Teachers were asked to rate their Young Farmer Chapter's activity level in six different areas using a scale of one to ten with ten being high. Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for this section and equaled 0.84 ($\alpha = 0.84$), indicated a high level of internal consistency. According to Table 8, the teachers perceived that they were most active in Chapter meetings and classes (M=7.83) and local activities (M=7.6). With state Young Farmer Activities (M=5.3) and Contests (M=4.75), Young Farmer Teachers perceived their Chapters to be moderately active. The least perceived activity level was the National Young Farmer Contests (M=1.93) and Activities (M=1.93).

Young Farmer Chapter Activity Level (a = 0.84)	n	Μ	SD
Local (Community) Activities	40	7.60	2.27
Chapter Meetings & Classes	40	7.83	2.01
State Young Farmer Contest	40	4.75	2.48
State Young Farmer Activities	40	5.30	2.57
National Young Farmer Contests	40	1.93	1.75
National Young Farmer Activities	40	1.93	1.70

Table 8. Chapter Activity Level of Georgia Young Farmer Teachers

Needs of Georgia Young Farmer Teachers

Young Farmer Teachers were asked to rank the importance of sets of technical skills using the following scale: None (M=1.0-1.49), Slight (M=1.5-2.49), Average (M=2.5-3.49), Above Average (M=3.5-4.49), and Vital (M=4.5-5.0). They were also asked to rank their perceived competence within each of the areas utilizing the following scale: None (M=1.0-1.49), Slight (M=1.5-2.49), Moderate (M=2.5-3.49), Very (M=3.5-4.49), and Extreme (M=4.5-5.0). Those scores were then used to compute the Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score (MWDS) to determine the highest and lowest ranking needs of Georgia Young Farmer Teachers.

The perceived importance of ten major skills within the technical area of Agricultural Mechanics is displayed in Table 9 and exhibited high internal consistency with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.89 ($\alpha = 0.89$). The two highest ranked skills that were considered of above average importance were tractor maintenance and repair and machinery maintenance and repair. The two least ranked skills in this area, tool fitting and masonry, were listed of average importance.

Table 9. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Perceived Importance of Agricultural Mechanics

Skills

Importance ($\alpha = 0.89$)	n	Μ	SD
Tractor (Maintenance & Repair)	41	4.20	0.782
Machinery (Maintenance & Repair)	41	4.05	0.835
Welding	41	3.83	0.803
Electricity	41	3.76	0.799
Carpentry	41	3.51	0.810
Small Engines (Maintenance & Repair)	41	3.44	0.923
Woodworking	41	3.22	0.909
Plumbing	41	3.20	1.005
Tool Fitting	41	2.98	0.935
Masonry	41	2.59	0.741

Table 10 reports the perceived competence level Georgia Young Farmer Teachers have within the same ten Agricultural Mechanics skills. The Cronbach's Alpha for this section also exhibited a high level of internal consistency with a score of 0.87 ($\alpha = 0.87$). The two highest and lowest ranking skills matched those deemed most and least important with machinery and tractor maintenance repair and maintenance ranked highest and tool fitting and masonry ranked lowest.

 Table 10. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Perceived Competence in Agricultural Mechanics

Skills

Competence ($\alpha = 0.87$)	n	Μ	SD
Machinery (Maintenance & Repair)	41	3.61	0.771
Tractor (Maintenance & Repair)	41	3.61	0.862
Welding	41	3.59	0.670
Carpentry	41	3.49	0.675
Woodworking	41	3.41	0,741
Plumbing	41	3.24	0.699
Electricity	41	3.22	0.935
Small Engines (Maintenance & Repair)	41	3.00	0.975
Tool Fitting	41	2.85	1.062
Masonry	41	2.51	0.870

According to Table 11, the Agricultural Mechanics MWDS scores revealed the highest ranked needs as tractor maintenance and repair, electricity, machinery maintenance and repair, and small engines maintenance and repair. Conversely, welding, plumbing, and woodworking were ranked lowest.

Table 11. Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score (MWDS) of Level of Importance and Level of

Competence in Agricultural Mechanics Skills

Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score	n	MWDS
Tractor (Maintenance & Repair)	41	2.46
Electricity	41	2.02
Machinery (Maintenance & Repair)	41	1.78
Small Engines (Maintenance & Repair)	41	1.51
Tool Fitting	41	0.36
Masonry	41	0.19
Carpentry	41	0.09
Welding	41	0.00
Plumbing	41	-0.16
Woodworking	41	-0.63

The perceived importance of nine major natural resources skills are listed in Table 12. The resulting Cronbach's Alpha of 0.78 ($\alpha = 0.78$) signifies a strong internal reliability. These skills were rated by the participants with one item, soil conservation, rated of above average importance. The rest of the skills were considered of average importance.

Table 12. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Perceived Importance of Natural Resources Skills

Importance ($\alpha = 0.78$)	n	Μ	SD
Soil Conservation	41	3.85	0.760
Wildlife Management	41	3.46	0.809
Land Measure / Surveying	41	3.44	0.808
Forest Management	41	3.34	0.794
Reforestation	41	3.22	0.759
Tree Harvesting & Sales	41	3.15	0.792
Hunting & Fishing	41	3.05	0.947
Forest Insects & Diseases	41	3.02	0.758
Aquaculture	41	2.63	0.859

Table 13 lists the perceived competence level of these same nine natural resources skills, which were all rated within the moderate range of the ratings scale. This section's Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.88 ($\alpha = 0.88$) exhibited a strong internal consistency.

Table 13. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Perceived Competence in Natural Resources Skills

Competence ($\alpha = 0.88$)	n	Μ	SD
Soil Conservation	41	3.46	0.636
Wildlife Management	41	3.34	0.911
Hunting & Fishing	41	3.27	1.001
Land Measure / Surveying	41	3.17	0.919
Reforestation	41	3.12	0.954
Forest Management	41	3.10	0.917
Tree Harvesting & Sales	41	2.85	0.853
Forest Insects & Diseases	41	2.78	0.852
Aquaculture	41	2.76	0.943

The MWDS within the natural resources skills area is reported in Table 14. Soil

conservation was ranked highest in teacher need. The lowest-ranked skills were forest

management, aquaculture, and hunting and fishing.

Table 14. Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score (MWDS) of Level of Importance and Level of

Competence in Natural Resources Skills

Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score	n	MWDS
Soil Conservation	41	1.50
Land Measure / Surveying	41	0.92
Tree Harvesting & Sales	41	0.92
Forest Insects & Diseases	41	0.74
Wildlife Management	41	0.42
Reforestation	41	0.31
Forest Management	41	0.00
Aquaculture	41	-0.32
Hunting & Fishing	41	-0.67

According to Table 15, Georgia Young Farmer Teachers ranked eight production agriculture skills. The Cronbach'sAlpha for this section was 0.65 ($\alpha = 0.65$), which is slightly lower than the 0.70 target. However, in cases of low numbers of items being compared, alpha

coefficients lower than 0.70 are acceptable (Cortina, 1993; Schmitt, 1996). The following three skills were rated highest as above average importance: livestock, row crop, and vegetable production. All other skills were ranked as average in importance.

Table 15. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Perceived Importance of Production AgricultureSkills

Importance ($\alpha = 0.65$)	n	Μ	SD
Livestock Production	41	4.44	0.743
Row Crop Production	41	4.29	0.981
Vegetable Production	41	3.78	0.881
Poultry Production	41	3.49	1.186
Specialty Crop Production	41	3.46	0.840
Specialty Animal Production	41	3.20	0.928
Greenhouse Management	41	2.71	0.981
Ornamental Horticulture	41	2.56	0.923

Table 16 reveals the perceived competence levels of teachers on these eight production agriculture skills. Similar to its counterpart above, the Cronbach's Alpha was $\alpha = 0.56$. Young Farmer Teachers considered themselves very competent in livestock and row crop production. They rated all other skills as moderate competence

 Table 16. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Perceived Competence in Production Agriculture

Skills

Competence ($\alpha = 0.56$)	n	Μ	SD
Livestock Production	41	3.80	0.813
Row Crop Production	41	3.63	0.767
Vegetable Production	41	3.22	0.725
Poultry Production	41	3.05	0.893
Specialty Crop Production	41	3.02	0.651
Specialty Animal Production	41	2.93	0.818
Greenhouse Management	41	2.76	0.888
Ornamental Horticulture	41	2.66	0.965

The mean weighted discrepancy scores reported in Table 17, list row crop and livestock production as the highest needs among the teachers. Specialty animal production, greenhouse management, and ornamental horticulture were the lowest-ranked in need for skills development. Table 17. *Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score (MWDS) of Level of Importance and Level of*

Competence in Production Agriculture Skills

Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score	n	MWDS
Row Crop Production	41	2.83
Livestock Production	41	2.81
Vegetable Production	41	2.12
Poultry Production	41	1.53
Specialty Crop Production	41	1.52
Specialty Animal Production	41	0.00
Greenhouse Management	41	-0.13
Ornamental Horticulture	41	-0.25

The importance of five agribusiness skills is reported in Table 18. All of them were rated as above average importance. Even though low in item number, the Cronbach's Alpha of this section exhibited a high internal consistency with a score of 0.88 ($\alpha = 0.88$).

Table 18. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Perceived Importance of Agribusiness Skills

Importance ($\alpha = 0.88$)	n	Μ	SD
Recordkeeping	41	4.32	0.756
Government Programs	41	4.20	0.782
Commodities Market	41	4.10	0.735
Computer Literacy	41	4.00	0.742
Tax Law Knowledge	41	3.83	0.771

The competence these teachers felt within these skills is listed in Table 19. Teachers considered themselves very competent in the recordkeeping and computer literacy skills. All other skills were rated as moderate. Again, this section showed a high reliability coefficient with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.86 ($\alpha = 0.86$).

Competence ($\alpha = 0.86$)	n	Μ	SD
Recordkeeping	41	3.61	0.802
Computer Literacy	41	3.61	0.891
Government Programs	41	3.32	0.756
Commodities Market	41	3.29	0.782
Tax Law Knowledge	41	2.85	0.760

Table 19. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Perceived Competence in Agribusiness Skills

According to Table 20, three of the agribusiness skills were ranked highest in teacher need. These skills were tax law knowledge, government programs, and recordkeeping. The lowest ranked skill within this area was the commodities market of agribusiness.

Table 20. Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score (MWDS) of Level of Importance and Level of

Competence in Agribusiness Skills

Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score	n	MWDS
Tax Law Knowledge	41	3.74
Government Programs	41	3.68
Recordkeeping	41	3.05
Computer Literacy	41	1.56
Commodities Market	41	0.00

Georgia Young Farmer Teachers were also asked to rank the importance of and their competence in 16 general professional skills necessary to their local organizations and complete their school duties. A Cronbach's Alpha of 0.86 ($\alpha = 0.86$) is well above the desired level for internal consistency. As listed in Table 21, two duties, meeting organization and public relations, were ranked as vitally important. Parliamentary procedure was deemed as only slightly important, and the rest of the duties were perceived as of above average importance.

Importance ($\alpha = 0.86$)	n	Μ	SD
Meeting Organization	39	4.51	0.644
Public Relations	40	4.50	0.599
Motivating Students	40	4.40	0.672
Motivating Adults	40	4.38	0.705
Fundraising	40	4.25	0.742
Roster	40	4.08	1.023
Program of Work	40	3.98	0.832
Banquet Organization	39	3.95	0.793
Program of Activities	39	3.95	0.887
Monthly Reports	40	3.93	1.118
Budgeting	39	3.90	0.882
Activities for Young Farmer Wives	40	3.85	0.864
MIS Reports	39	3.82	1.189
Annual Reports	39	3.69	1.195
Lesson Plans	40	3.63	1.055
Parliamentary Procedure	39	3.05	0.887

Table 21. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Perceived Importance of General Activities

According to Table 22, the Young Farmer Teachers ranked their competence as moderate in activities for Young Farmer wives and parliamentary procedure. All other duties were rated as very competent with meeting organization, roster, and monthly reports sorting themselves as the highest competence duties. A Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.93 ($\alpha = 0.93$) reveals a high level of internal consistency.

Competence ($\alpha = 0.93$)	n	Μ	SD
Meeting Organization	39	4.13	0.695
Roster	40	4.10	0.709
Monthly Reports	40	3.98	0.768
Program of Activities	39	3.92	0.664
Program of Work	40	3.90	0.672
Public Relations	40	3.90	0.709
Motivating Students	40	3.88	0.757
Banquet Organization	39	3.87	0.767
Budgeting	39	3.85	0.670
MIS Reports	39	3.85	0.844
Annual Reports	39	3.79	0.864
Motivating Adults	40	3.70	0.687
Fundraising	40	3.65	0.770
Lesson Plans	40	3.53	0.784
Activities for Young Farmer Wives	40	3.33	0.730
Parliamentary Procedure	39	3.21	0.732

Table 22. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Perceived Competence in General Activities

The mean weighted discrepancy scores garnered from the importance and competence scores reveal the highest need for more training in the areas of motivating adults, public relations, fundraising, and motivating students as exhibited in Table 23. The least ranked were parliamentary procedure, annual reports, and monthly reports. Table 23. Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score (MWDS) of Level of Importance and Level of

Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score	n	MWDS
Motivating Adults	40	2.81
Public Relations	40	2.57
Fundraising	40	2.43
Motivating Students	40	2.20
Activities for Young Farmer Wives	40	1.92
Meeting Organization	39	1.57
Lesson Plans	40	0.35
Program of Work	40	0.28
Budgeting	39	0.18
Program of Activities	39	0.09
Banquet Organization	39	0.00
MIS Reports	39	-0.09
Roster	40	-0.10
Monthly Reports	40	-0.19
Annual Reports	39	-0.34
Parliamentary Procedure	39	-0.42

Competence in General Activities

All of the technical and professional skills analyzed for their ensuing mean weighted discrepancy scores were combined to reveal the overall in-service needs of the Young Farmer Teacher group. The three agribusiness skills of tax law knowledge, government programs, and recordkeeping sorted to the top as the most needed. The least three needed skills were parliamentary procedure, annual reports, and aquaculture. The complete rankings and scores are listed in Table 24.

Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score	n	MWDS
Tax Law Knowledge	41	3.74
Government Programs	41	3.68
Recordkeeping	41	3.05
Row Crop Production	41	2.83
Livestock Production	41	2.81
Motivating Adults	40	2.81
Public Relations	40	2.57
Tractor (Maintenance & Repair)	41	2.46
Fundraising	40	2.43
Motivating Students	40	2.20
Vegetable Production	41	2.12
Electricity	41	2.02
Activities for Young Farmer Wives	40	1.92
Machinery (Maintenance & Repair)	41	1.78
Meeting Organization	39	1.57
Computer Literacy	41	1.56
Poultry Production	41	1.53
Specialty Crop Production	41	1.52
Small Engines (Maintenance & Repair)	41	1.51
Soil Conservation	41	1.50
Land Measure / Surveying	41	0.92
Tree Harvesting & Sales	41	0.92
Forest Insects & Diseases	41	0.74
Wildlife Management	41	0.42
Tool Fitting	41	0.36
Lesson Plans	40	0.35
Reforestation	41	0.31
Program of Work	40	0.28
Masonry	41	0.19
Budgeting	39	0.18
Carpentry	41	0.09
Program of Activities	39	0.09
Welding	41	0.00
Forest Management	41	0.00
Specialty Animal Production	41	0.00
Banquet Organization	39	0.00
NIIS Reports	39 40	-0.09
Creanhouse Management	40	-0.10
Diumbing	41	-0.15
I fullioning Monthly Donorte	41	-0.10
A quoquituro	40	-0.19
Annual Deports	41	-0.32
Parliamentary Procedure	39	-0.34
	57	-0.+2

Table 24. OverallMean Weighted Discrepancy Score (MWDS) Technical and Professional Skills

Georgia Young Farmer Teachers rated the effectiveness of professional resources and Young Farmer activities as to their effectiveness according to the following scale: Ineffective (M=1.0-1.49), Occasionally Effective (M=1.5-2.49), Sometimes Effective (M=2.5-3.49), Often Effective (M=3.5-4.49), and Always Effective (M=4.5-5.0). They were also asked to list the amount of times the 11 resources were used and 12 activities were entered per year. As shown in Table 25, five resources were ranked as often effective, including internet websites, agribusiness representatives, other specialists, computer projectors/smartboards, and videos/dvds. One item, overhead transparencies, was rated as occasionally effective while all other items were rated as sometimes effective. The responses in this section rendered a 0.67 ($\alpha = 0.67$), slightly lower than the 0.70 target score.

Resources By Effectiveness ($\alpha = 0.67$)	n	Μ	SD
Internet Websites	39	4.00	0.761
Agribusiness Representatives	39	4.00	0.858
Other Specialists	39	3.85	0.875
Computer Projector / Smartboard	37	3.70	0.939
Videos / DVDs	39	3.51	0.823
Area Ag-Ed Personnel	39	3.49	0.997
Extension Specialists	39	3.33	0.838
Slide Shows	39	3.31	1.127
Pamphlets	39	3.15	0.844
Books	39	2.67	0.927
Overhead Transparencies	39	1.97	0.959

 Table 25. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Perceived Effectiveness of Resources

While evaluating the amount of use of resources, resources were categorized into physical versus human resources. Of the seven physical resources ranked in Table 26, computer projectors/smartboards and internet websites were utilized most by teachers while overhead transparencies were the least used.

 Table 26. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Physical Resource Usage

Physical Resources By Use n M	SD	Use/Year(n)
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Computer Projector / Smartboard	31	3.70	0.939	14.10
Internet Websites	30	4.00	0.761	12.60
Slide Shows	31	3.31	1.127	8.39
Pamphlets	31	3.15	0.844	8.23
Books	30	2.67	0.927	6.07
Videos / DVDs	31	3.51	0.823	5.29
Overhead Transparencies	31	1.97	0.959	0.52

The four remaining resources were categorized as human resources and are displayed in Table 27. Agribusiness representatives were ranked as the most used throughout the year. Area Agriculture Education personnel were ranked as the least utilized annually.

 Table 27. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Human Resource Usage

Human Resources By Use	n	Μ	SD	Use/Year(n)
Agribusiness Representatives	31	4.00	0.858	8.29
Other Specialists	31	3.85	0.875	6.58
Extension Specialists	31	3.33	0.838	3.65
Area Ag-Ed Personnel	31	3.49	0.997	2.55

Of the 12 major Young Farmer activities, the State Young Farmer Convention, Farm Family Contest, Photo Contest, State Officer, Spokesman Award, and Chapter Award activities were rated as often effective. All others were deemed sometimes effective. The complete list is given in Table 28 and achieved a strong internal consistencyCronbach's Alpha score of 0.80 ($\alpha =$ 0.80)

YF Activities By Effectiveness ($\alpha = 0.80$)	n	Μ	SD
State Young Farmer Convention	40	4.15	0.893
Farm Family Contest	39	3.67	1.009
Photo Contest	40	3.63	0.897
State Officer	39	3.59	0.785
Spokesman Award	39	3.56	0.821
Chapter Award	40	3.53	0.816
President Award	40	3.48	0.784
Farm Management Award	39	3.38	0.935
State Young Farmer Summer Tour	40	3.28	1.198
Advisor's Award	39	3.21	1.128
National Institute	38	3.00	0.986
National Officer	38	3.00	1.185

Table 28. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Perceived Effectiveness of Young Farmer Activities

According to Table 29, Georgia Young Farmer Teachers had the most entries and activity

levels within the State Young Farmer Convention and State Young Farmer Summer Tour. The

least amount of entries and activity level were identified as the National Institute and National

Officer.

Table 29. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Entries and Participation within Young Farmer

Activities

YF Activities By Annual Entries	n	Μ	SD	Entries/Year(n)
State Young Farmer Convention	35	4.15	0.893	11.14
State Young Farmer Summer Tour	35	3.28	1.198	10.34
Farm Management Award	34	3.38	0.935	7.59
Photo Contest	35	3.63	0.897	7.31
Chapter Award	34	3.53	0.816	5.85
President Award	35	3.48	0.784	5.71
Farm Family Contest	34	3.67	1.009	4.29
Spokesman Award	34	3.56	0.821	1.74
State Officer	35	3.59	0.785	1.57
Advisor's Award	31	3.21	1.128	1.55
National Institute	34	3.00	0.986	1.26
National Officer	33	3.00	1.185	0.06

Georgia Young Farmer Teachers were asked to rank the effectiveness of and need for 11 key support entities that work on their behalf. They were asked to rate the need for each of these

support entities on the following scale: None (M=1.0-1.49), Some (M=1.5-2.49), Moderate (M=2.5-3.49), High (M=3.5-4.49), and Extreme (M=4.5-5.0). Similarly, teachers rated the effectiveness of each on the following scale: Ineffective (M=1.0-1.49), Occasionally Effective (M=1.5-2.49), Sometimes Effective (M=2.5-3.49), Often Effective (M=3.5-4.49), and Always Effective (M=4.5-5.0).

Teachers ranked the Georgia Young Farmer Executive Director, Regional Agriculture Education Office, local board of education, Area Teachers, and professional development as highly needed. All others were rated as moderately needed with the exception of RESA personnel who were rated with some need. The Cronbach's Alpha for this section was 0.76 ($\alpha =$ 0.76), exhibiting internal consistency among responses. The complete listing is located on Table 30.

Need ($\alpha = 0.76$)	n	Μ	SD
Georgia Young Farmer Executive Director	41	4.66	0.575
Local Board of Education	40	4.50	0.784
Regional Agriculture Education Office	41	4.46	0.809
Area Teachers	41	4.29	0.814
Professional Development	40	4.25	0.670
Teachers Retirement	38	3.79	1.166
State Board of Education	40	3.78	1.000
University of Georgia	40	3.70	0.992
State Merit System	38	3.50	1.202
National Young Farmer Organization	40	2.98	1.165
RESA Personnel	39	2.41	1.208

Table 30. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Perceived Need of Support Entities

When asked to rank the effectiveness of these same support entities, those considered often effective were the Georgia Young Farmer Executive Director, Regional Agriculture Education Office, local board of education, Area Teachers, and professional development. RESA personnel were ranked as slightly effective. All others were rated sometimes effective. TheCronbach's Alpha score of 0.87 ($\alpha = 0.87$) showed strong internal consistency of answers.

Table 31 shows the complete list with ratings.

Table 31. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Perceived Effectiveness of Support Entities

Effectiveness ($\alpha = 0.87$)	n	Μ	SD
Georgia Young Farmer Executive Director	40	4.38	0.774
Regional Agriculture Education Office	41	4.22	0.791
Local Board of Education	40	4.10	0.871
Area Teachers	41	3.98	1.037
Professional Development	40	3.68	0.944
Teachers Retirement	39	3.31	1.127
State Board of Education	39	3.28	1.191
University of Georgia	40	3.25	1.006
State Merit System	38	3.13	1.143
National Young Farmer Organization	40	2.85	1.027
RESA Personnel	39	2.41	1.117

To determine the largest need for improvement of support to Georgia Young Farmer Teachers, a mean weighted discrepancy score (MWDS) was utilized and listed in Table 32. The three highest-ranked support entities were professional development, local board of education, and state board of education. The three least-ranked support entities were the National Young Farmer Organization, Area Teachers, and RESA personnel. Table 32. Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score (MWDS) of Level of Need and Level of

Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score	n	MWDS
Professional Development	40	2.33
Local Board of Education	40	1.71
State Board of Education	40	1.71
Teachers Retirement	38	1.67
University of Georgia	40	1.58
Georgia Young Farmer Executive Director	41	1.25
State Merit System	38	1.11
Regional Agriculture Education Office	41	1.09
National Young Farmer Organization	40	0.35
Area Teachers	41	0.00
RESA Personnel	39	0.00

Effectiveness in Support Entities

The survey concluded with Georgia Young Farmer Teachers giving feedback on the need for a state or regional Young Farmer curriculum. When surveyed on the need for a statewide curriculum, 42.1% agreed that there was a need while 57.9% disagreed. When asked if a regional curriculum would be more effective, 79.5% of Young Farmer Teachers marked yes.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this quantitative research was to identify and assess the perceived professional, technical, and general needs of Georgia Young Farmer teachers in order to enable state and university officials to choose appropriate college curriculum, in-service courses and support services for this group. The study specifically addressed the following:

- 6. Determine the demographic data of this subgroup of Agriculture Educators.
- 7. Determine the teachers' perceived level of importance of and competence in professional areas within their profession.
- 8. Determine the teachers' perceived level of importance of and competence in technical areas within their profession.
- 9. Determine the teachers' perceived level of importance of and competence in general areas within their profession.
- 10. Identify the pre-service, in-service, and support service needs of Georgia Young Farmer teachers.

One of the purposes of this study was to gain demographic insight into Georgia Young Farmer Teachers. The majority of these teachers are married males with two children that are over 45 years of age as shown in Figures 2 and 3. Figure 4 reveals that the majority of these





teachers have a Bachelor's or Master's Degree from the University of Georgia as was indicated necessary by the state Agriculture Education website and University personnel (Georgia Agriculture Education Department, 2010; The University of Georgia, 2009). Most have no experience beyond Agriculture Education and are in their first ten years of teaching Young Farmers. As presented by Iverson, 1992, Young Farmer Teachers are often the same age or younger than the Young Farmer members they teach.



Younger or not, Young Farmer members require maturity not only in their teachers years of age but in agricultural experience, so that they feel their teachers have the knowledge necessary to provide training to them. This maturity includes experience in how to reach and teach adults(Iverson, 1992). Torres, Ulmer &Aschenbrener, 2008 found similar results with only one percent of future educators spending any significant time learning to teach adults. These and other researchers came to a similar conclusion, calling for teacher education programs to increase the amount of experience and emphasis placed on adult education (Birkenholz&Maricle, Adult Education in Agriculture: A National Survey; Deeds, Flowers, & Arrington, 1991; Graham, 2001; Ragan, 1979).

Nearly half of Georgia Young Farmer teachers are located within the South Region with two-thirds located specifically within Area V. Their programs are predominantly full time with 50 to 100 members that meet 11 to 20 times annually. Most of their chapters are most active on the local level, somewhat active on the state level, and rarely level on the national level. As seen in Figure 5, the majority of these schools are on a 4 by 4 block schedule that requires the Young Farmer Teacher to teach one Agriculture Education class per day.



This study was also designed to identify the professional, technical, and general needs of Georgia Young Farmer Teachers. Professionally, the teachers felt that the most effective resources at their disposal were internet websites, agribusiness representatives, and other specialists with overhead transparencies, books, and pamphlets being the least effective. This perception was evident in the amount each of these resources was used by the teacher. The use videos and slide shows have diminished from Bruenig&Radhakirshna's 1993 study in lieu of internet websites and applications. In this 1993 national study, Young Farmer teachers were reported as acting more as facilitators, calling on experts for instruction of their classes(Bruenig & Radhakirshna, 1993). However, Ragan, 1979 warned against the use of too many guest speakers, suggesting that educating Young Farmer teachers in a wider variety of technical and andragogical methods would give them a stronger identity. Martin & Omer, 1990 also echoed this sentiment, stating that most Young Farmer teachers did not feel proficient in delivering the technological information and skills required of them through a variety of educational tactics. The Young Farmer teacher's perception of himself and his program directly affects the success level of the Young Farmer program itself(Steakley & Webb, 1973).

Within the Young Farmer Organization, Georgia Young Farmer teachers felt that the national activities were the least effective and were reflected not only in their participation numbers but also their perceived activity level and need for the National Young Farmer Organization. Ragan, 1979 saw the need for Young Farmer teachers to be active on all levels stating that these teachers should seek out ways for their members to attend both state and national events. He felt that making the Young Farmer members more active and accountable through local activities and offices and the utilization of creative fundraising ideas would enable Young Farmer teachers and their members to get involved on every level(Ragan, 1979).

The technical and general skills needs were also studied. Three of the top nine needs were in the area of agribusiness, followed by two production agriculture areas, livestock and row crop production. A comparable result was found by Bruenig&Radhakirshna, 1993 who found the needs of 196 teachers nationwide to center on production agriculture and farm business management. Ragan, 1979 found similarly that Young Farmer teachers needed help in the agronomic and agribusiness sectors, stressing the need for a formal program in farm

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management. He also suggested that "Young Farmer teachers need a complete and up-to-date technical reference file. This may be separate from the ag department set" (Ragan, 1979, p. 3).

The top three general skills ranked sixth, seventh, and ninth, including motivating adults, public relations, and fundraising. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers also identified through this study that the greatest perceived need for improved support to be from professional development, local and state boards of education, the Teacher Retirement System, and the University of Georgia. In 1979, Ragan also reported the need for continually publicizing Young Farmer programs and allowing Young Farmer teachers more chances to collaborate professionally and exchange ideas.

The results of this research will enable state and university officials to choose appropriate college curriculum, in-service courses, and support services for the Georgia Young Farmer Teachers are Teachers. According to the results of this study, Georgia Young Farmer Teachers are professionally young with predominantly Agricultural Education experience. Therefore, it is recommended through this study that more general and technical professional development courses be designed specifically for Young Farmer Teachers.

The Young Farmer Teachers rated themselves highly competent in computer literacy with the use of internet websites the most effective resource in their arsenal; however, they inversely ranked this skill fourth in importance. Therefore, this research recommends that state officials help Young Farmer Teachers stay up to date in this technology, identifying useful hardware and software; creating or identifying useful computer applications, websites, and programs; and continuing to update and further develop the Georgia Young Farmer website.

It is also recommended that there be more connection and collaboration with the National Young Farmer Organization. The National Young Farmer Organization was rated as ineffective

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by these teachers as well as their lowest activity levels. Further study would have to be conducted to identify if this is due to financial limitations, exposure, and/or amount of activities available. Similarly, it is recommended that a stronger relationship be developed between the Area Teachers and the Young Farmer Teachers. Area Teachers are perceived as effective but are the least utilized of the human resources. Ragan, 1979 echoed this sentiment, stating "the Area teacher service is vital to the continued success of the Young Farmer Program" (p.3).

It is also recommended that Georgia Agriculture Education State Staff study the results of this research for disparities between perceived effectiveness and activity levels. An example of such a disparity occurs with the Summer Tour. Young Farmer Teachers ranked it low in effectiveness and yet high in participation. Identifying these may reveal activities or areas where energies, finances, or man hours are spent meeting requirements such as state standards that might be diverted into more useful and effective activities.

Further research is suggested in identifying those agribusiness representatives and other specialists that are utilized to potentially create a state-wide support network for the Young Farmer Teachers. It is also suggested that other states with Young Farmer Programs conduct similar studies to help strengthen their own Young Farmer Teachers.

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APPENDIX



For Information or help Phane: 334-844-5966	canteet THE OFFICE (=mail: hsubjec@oub	DF RESEARCH CO um.cduWeb A	MPLIANCE, 115 R. ddressi https://www.	omsoy Holl, Aubum University w.aubum.edu/research/vpr/phs/
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7. PROJECT ASSURANCES

NEOJECT TITLE: A Needs Assessment of Georgia Young Farmer Teachers.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR'S ASSSURANCES

- Lettilly that all information provided in this application is complete and conserv.
- 2. Lunderstand that, as Principal Investigates, I have ultimate responsibility for the conduct of this study, the ethical performance this project, the protection of the rights and wailfore of human subjects, and swidt subjectere to any significations imposed by the Aubam University WR.
- 3. I carrily that all individuals involved with the conduct of this project are qualified to carry out their specified roles and
- responsibilities and one in compliance with Aabum University pelicies regarding the collection and analysis of the research data. 4. I coree to causely with all Autum policies and procedures, as well as with all applicable federal, state, and local laws regardles. the protection of human subjects, including, but not limited to the following-
 - Conducting the project by qualified personnel according to the approved protocol Юh.,
 - b., implementing no changes in the approved protocol or consent form without prior approval from the Office of Human Subjects Research
 - Obtaining the legally effective informed consent from each participant or their legally responsible representative prior to 18. de their participation in this project using only the currently approved, stamped consent form
 - Promptly reporting significant adverse events and/or effects to the Office of Human Subjects Research in writing within 5 di. working days of the occurrence.
- 5. If I will be unavailable to cliract this research personally, I will arrange for a co-investigator to course direct responsibility in any observe. This person has been normed as co-investigator in this application, or I will advise OHSR, by letter, in educers of such concentration and the
- Engree to conduct this study only during the period opproved by the Aubum University IRS.
- 7. I will prepare and submit a renewal request and supply all supporting documents to the Office of Human Subjects Research before the approval period has expined if it is necessary to continue the research project beyond the time period approved by the Auburn University IRIs.
- 8. I will prepare and submit a final report upon completion of this research project.

My signature indicates that I have read, understand and agree to conduct this research project in accordance with the assurances listed daave.

James M. Cook.

Printed name of Principal Investigator

of Investigator's Signatu

B. FACULTY ADVISOR/SPONSOR'S ASSURANCES

- 1. By my signature as feaulty advisor/approar on this research application, I certify that the student or quest Investigator is knowledgeable about the regulations and policies governing research with homon subjects and has sufficient training and experience to conduct this perticular study is accord with the opproved protocol.
- 2. I certify that the project will be performed by qualified personal accurding to the approved protocol using conventional or experimental methodology.
- 3. I agree to meet with the investigator on a negular basis to manitor study progress.
- 4. Should problems onlise during the cause of the study, I agree to be pvoliable, personally, to supervise the investigator in solving them.
- 5. I occurs that the investigator will promptly report significant extreme events and/or effects to the OHSR is writing within 5 working dows of the occurrence.
- 4. If I will be unavailable, I will arrange for an ofternate faculty spansar to assume responsibility during my absence, and) will advise the OHSR by letter of such amongements. If the investigator is unable to fulfill requirements for submission of renework, modifications or the final report, I will assume that responsibility-
- 7. These read the protocol submitted for this project for conteget, clionity, angl-perhodology Dr. Grian Part

Printed name of Foculty Advisor / Sponsor

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C. DEPARTMENT HEAD'S ASSSURANCE

By my signature as department head, I certify that I will cooperate with the administration in the application and enforcement of all Aubum University policies and procedures, as well as all applicable tedespi, state, and local lews reporting the protection and ethical rectiment of Jamon participants by researchers is my deportment.

11 lmPrinted name of Department Head

Signature (SIGN IN BLUE INK ONLY

8. PROJECT OVERVIEW: Prepare an obstract that includes:

(400 word maximum, in language understandable to someone who is not familiar with your area of study):

L) A summary of relevant research findings leading to this research proposal:

(Cite sources, include a "Reference List" os Appendix A.)

- I.) A brief description of the methodology.
- III.) Expected and/or possible outcomes, and,
- IV.) A statement regarding the potential significance of this research project.

U Like the cowboys of yesteryeer, Young Farmer teachers offer essential adult agricultural services to fermers and renchers. But, they too are also disapproxing quickly across the American landscape (H. Thompson, personal communication, June 20, 2010). However, Georgia offers one of the final strangholds for this American tradition with ever 52 programs remaining. The Young Farmer Program is open to individuals who are out of secondary school and whose career objective is to become established and/or more proficient in agricultural production, agricultural management, or an agribusiness occupation (Georgia Agriculture Education, 2010), and the Georgia Young Fermer Organization is one of the most successful National Young Farmer Education Association (MYFEA) programs in the nation (H. Thompson, personal communication, June 30, 2010). The need for this adult opricultural program is definite and understood by those in Agriculture Education (Birkenholz & Maricin, 1990; Dormody, Servers, & Clason, 1996; Ricketts, Duncan, Peake, & Vesseler, 2005). Even so, there is a death of Information and research about the Georgia Young Farmer Organization and, more specifically, the needs of the teachers who make it successful. For many laypersons and even many in agriculture, the Young Farmer Program and, thus, the research needed to profile this group is an origina (Dormody, Servers, & Clason, 1996). To those involved in the program, the Young Parmer Program offers instructional classes, on-form support, lendership opportunities, and a social outlet (Georgia Agriculture Education Department, 2010). The Georgia Young Farmer teachers, themselves, also realize its uniqueness. and have expressed their desire to hone their skills to be as proficient as possible in heiping their adult students (H. Thompson, personal communication, June 20,2010). However, before these needs can be met, they must be identified (koni, Place, & Math, 2003) Silva-Guerrera & Sutphin, 1990). Most researchers have skitted around the central issue of identifying the needs of these teachers, centering instead on the Young Farmer members and the program as a whole (Carpontier & herrion, 1996; Dormody, Seavers, & Cleson, 1996; Steakley & Webb, 1973; Wells & Iverson, 2000). A national assessment was conducted by illnamig and Radhakinhna (1993) assessing the needs of Young/Adult Farmer teachers but was so diverse in its national coverage that it did not specify on Georgia Young Farmer teacher needs. Instead, much of the information gathered applied to Widwestern farming practices and programs. Therefore, a needs assessment of all Georgia Young Parmer Educators react be taken and consolied to identify these specific professionals' needs.

III) This survey will be cross-sectional with all of the data collected at the mandatory. Annual Georgia State Young Farmer Conference in January, 2011. It will consist of a cover letter explaining the research and anonymity of answers, a self-administered questionnaire, and a contact form for those wanting to receive copies of the research findings.

III.) The examination of demographic information revealed by this study will establish an understanding of who these touchers are and the backgrounds that make them successful.

IV.) The reacts identified due to this study will assist teacher educators, state staff, local administration, and the National Young Parmer. Education Association in developing curticulars materials, professional development, and skills training needed by teachers.

PURPOSE.

a. Clearly state all of the objectives, goals, or aires of this project.

The purpose of this quantitative research is to identify and assess the perceived professional, technical, and general needs of Georgia Young. Farmer teachers in-order to enable state and university officials to choose appropriate college curriculum, in-service courses and support services for this group. The study will specifically address the following:

1. Determine the demographic data of this subgroup of Agriculture Educators.

2. Determine the teachers' perceived level of importance of and competence in professional areas within their profession.

- 3. Determine the teachest' perceived level of importance of and competence in technical areas within their profession.
- 4. Determine the teachers' perceived level of importance of and competence in general areas within their profession.

5. Identify the pre-service, in-service, and support service needs of Georgia Young Farmer teachers.

b. How will the results of this project be used? (e.g., Presentation? Publication? Thesis? Distantation?)

The results of this project will be used as a dissertation. However, the Georgia State Agriculture Education Staff and the Georgia Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Association will be provided with results. If so desired, the researcher will present or publish results.

In KEY PERSONNEL Cestribe responsibilities. Incl Be as specific as possible. (Match onlya page if	lude information on research () needed.) All non All affiliates	training or certifications related to this project. CITI is require d key personnel must attach CITI certificates of completion
Lynne M. Cook	Doctoral St.	udent incc016gauburn.edu
Deat / Affiliation; Department of Curriculum and	TER: Teaching - Agriscience Educ	2001 E-Mail address
Roles / Responsibilities; The principle investigator will create the survey in required CITI training.	sitrument and conduct all ad	tivities pertaining to this research. Cook has received all
Individual: Dept / Attilation: Department of Curriculum and	Title Teaching - April clonce Educ	E-mail address baparwauburn edu
<u>Roles / Responsibilities</u> Dr. Pan will advise the principle-investigator.		
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11. LOCATION OF RESEARCH. List all locations where data collection will take place. (School systems, organizations, businesses, buildings, and room numbers, servers for web surveys, etc.) Be as specific as possible. Attach permission letters in Appendix E. (See sample letters at <u>App-bases a durn orthosocromyonitosocropic total</u>) The data will be collected at the mandatory Annual Georgia State Young Farmer Conference in January, 2011. The survey will be given to

each teacher at the meeting. Those teachers not present at the meeting will be mailed a survey with a self-addressed, stamped envelope in which to return the form. After three weeks, those who have still not responded will be mailed a second copy of the survey and be personally contacted by the researcher ela e-mail and/or phone. This method of observing and collecting the research document is considered lasst for the Georgia Young Farmer teachers, due to their activity levels.

12. PARTICIPANTS.

Describe the participant population you have chosen for this project.

Check here if there is existing data, describe the population from whom data was collected 8 include the / of data files. The participants in this survey will be every Young Farmer teacher in state of Georgia. These teachers number 51, and all will be surveyed. The list of teachers is available on the Georgia Agriculture Education and Georgia Young Farmer websites. All Georgia Young Farmer teachers will be surveyed.

- b. Describe why is this participant population is appropriate for inclusion in this research project. (Include criteria for selection.) With such a small population, the response of each member of the group will be sought.
- c. Describe, step-by-step, all procedures you will use to recruit participants. Include in Accounts B a copy of all o mails, fyors. achestisements, recruition scripts, invitatoris, etc., that will be used to invite people to participate. [Site sample documents of http://www.aubarn.edu/essenciri-prishs/sample.htm] This salvey will be cross-sectional with all of the data collected at the mendatory Annual Georgia State Young Farmer Conference. It will comint of a cover letter explaining the research and anonymity of answers, a self-administered questionnaire, and a contact form for those wanting to receive copies of the research findings. This document will be given to each teacher at the meeting. Each questionnaire will be coded for identification purposes to fadilitate any follow up mailings. Those teachers not present at the meeting will be mailed the research document with a self-addressed, stamped envelope in which to return the form. After three weeks, those who have still not responded will be mailed a second copy of the survey and be personally contacted by the researcher via e-mail and/ or phone call. Even though this method of survey is more inconvenient for the researcher than an on-line or e-mailed version, this method of dispersing and collecting the research document is considered best for the Georgie Young Fermer teachers, due to their activity levels. Their schedules are extremely busy and mailed questionnaires or e-mailed surveys are quickly discarded or overlooked. In conducting the survey at an annual meeting, the teachers are in a more relaxed atmosphere and more spt to complete the questionnaire and other documentation.

What is the minimum number of participants you need to validate the stady? 31						
Is there a limit on the number of participants you will recruit?	🗆 No	Yes - the number is ^{\$1}				
Is there a limit on the number of participants you will include in the study?	1 No.	Yes - the number is ³¹				

Describe the type, amount and method of compensation and/or incentives for participants. (If no compensation will be given, check here 🖌 .)

Select the type of compensation: Monetary	 Incentives Raffe or Drawing incentive (include the chances of winning.) Extra Credit (State the value) Other
Description	

Those Young Farmer Teachers completing the survey form during the annual meeting or via mail will receive a chance for a \$50-Bass Pro Shapping Card. The drawing will be conducted during the state-wide Young Farner fall meeting.

13. PROJECT DESIGN & METHODS.

a. Describe, step by step, all procedures and methods that will be used to consent participants.

- (___ Check here if this is "not applicable"; you are using existing data]
- Consent forms will be attached to each oursey. It will be collected and separated from the guestionnaise as it is seturned.

b. Describe the procedures you will use in order to address your purpose. Provide a sing-by-step description of how you will carry out this research project. Include specific information about the participantal time and offert commitment. (NOTE: Use language that would be anderstandable to someone who is not familiar with your area of study. Without a complete description of all procedures. Re Actions University IRB will not be able to novine the protocol. If additional space is mediat for this section, save the information as a .PDF life and insert after page 6 of this form.)

The Young Farmer Association is a nationwide adult educational program open to individuals who are out of secondary school and whose career objective is to become established and/or more proficient in agricultural production, agricultural management, or an agribusiness, occupation (Georgia Agriculture Education, 2010). The Georgia Young Farmer Organization is one of the reast successful National Young Farmer Education Association (NYFEA) programs in the nation and is carried out by local full-time and part-time Young Farmer Teachers (H. Thompson, personal communication, Ame 20, 2010).

Georgia Young Farmer teachers and their needs have never been researched in a formal fashion. These teachers link postsecondary and askit education on a daily basis, and jet. Note is known about them, including needs that might be addressed by agriculture education teacher education who do little in preparing future Agriculture Educators for adult education. To better understand these individuals and strengthen the program that is decreasing in numbers throughout the United States, the general design of this research is a description survey, allowing the Young Farmer teachers to enter categorical as well as continuous data. The participants in this survey will be every Young Farmer teacher in state of Georgia. These teachers number 51, and all will be surveyed during their annual state Tourg Parmer Teacher Meeting.

Since there was no similar survey available, the researcher modeled the questionnaire on Carpentier and Nerson (1996) instrument that dealt more with Young Parner members but offered insight into construction of the questionnaire. The questionnaire constrated of four sections as follow: general information, professional needs, sectional needs, and general needs as described previously. Section one, general information, axis the participant to enter demographic data such age, gender, yours experience, yours experience as a Young Parner teacher, etc. requiring participants to respond with categorical answers. Sections two through feur requires the participant to rele on a continuous, Scategory Liker teach their need for and proficiency in professional, technical, and general skills areas.

The survey will be given to the Tourng Farrier Teachers during their required breakout session during Georgia's Agriculture blocation annual summer meeting. The researcher will lamiliature the teachers with the purpose and confidentiality of the data collected and ask that they fill out the form and return it before the meeting is over. The researcher will set up at a table immediately outside the Young Farrier Teacher session and at the entitions of the final session for their information, and the Young Farrier teacher's neme will be checked off, and they remewed and given to the Young Farrier Teachers for their information, and the Young Farrier teacher's neme will be checked off, and they will be ontend in the prize drawing. These teachers not present at the resetting and these who did not take time during the meeting to finish the survey will be mailed a research document with a self-addressed, stamped envelope in which to return the form. After three useds, thuse who have still not responded will be readed a second copy of the tarvey and be presentably on teachers have be on a \$30 Bao. Pro Shop gift ontri file to responded will be readed a second copy of the tarvey and be presentably on teaching will be for a \$30 Bao. Pro Shop gift ontri files. Mr. Lynn Barber, Georgia Young Farrier Bao be entered in the drawing and announcement of the winner during the state-wide fail meeting of the Georgia Young Farrier.

T3c. List all data collection instruments used in this project, in the order they appear in Appendix C.

(e.g., surveys and questionnaires in the format that will be presented to participants, educational tests, data collection shearts, interview questions, audiol/ideo toping methods etc.)

Needs of Georgia Young Farmer Teachers Survey:

Since there was no similar survey available, the researcher modeled the questionnaire on Carpentier and Iverson (1996) instrument that dealt more with Young Farmer members but offered insight into construction of the questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of four sections as follows: general information, prefessional needs, technical needs, and general needs as described previously. Section one, general information, sets the participant to interfered emographic data such age, gender, years experience, years experience as a Young Farmer teacher, etc, requiring participants to respond with categorical answers. Sections two through four requires the participant to rate, on a continuous, 3category Liket scale, their need for and profilements in perfectional, technical, and general skills areas.

d. Data analysis: Explain how the data will be analyzed.

All respondents' data will be pooled and compared statistically with descriptive statistics, including medians, means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages. A paired Hest will be used to determine differences between the teacher's need for and proficiency in such area. To further identify the needs of the Georgia Young Farmer teachers, a mean weighted discrepancy score (MWDS) will be calculated similar to the analysis utilized by Ricketts, Duncan, Peaks, and Vesseler (2005), which allowed for a more valid picture of the needs than would the teav scores of the tankings.

 RESKS & DESCOMFORTS: List and describe all of the risks that participants might encounter in this research. <u>Execute using</u> deception in this study, please justify the use of deception and be sure to attach a copy of the debriefing form you plan to use in <u>Appendix D</u>, (Examples of pessible risks are in section 460 on page 1.)

Participants in this study may feel they are taking a basech of confidentiality risk when taking the survey. Some may feel they are taking a basech of confidentiality risk when taking the survey. Some may feel they are taking a basech of demographics collected. Some may wonder if there will be repercussions if state or university officials identify a less than positive response on the survey.

15. PRECAUTIONS. Identity and describe all precautions you have taken to eliminate or reduce risks as fished in #14. If the participants can be classified as a "vulnerable" population, please describe additional safeguards that you will use to assum the official instrument of these individuals. *Phonds a capty of any energency planstrandoms and mentical refersal lists in Appendix D*.

Within the cover letter and vertial introduction, the researcher will inform participants that the only identifying mark will be a dreshist of names that will be marked as participants turn in their surveys and have their names extend in the travery. The authors of the surveys are not identifiable. This list will only be used to identify non-participants, so that they researcher can encourage them via a mailed questionnaive to participants. The checklist will be stored in a lacked and secure location. I will also only report data in groups of ten or greater to reduce this risk of delactive identification.

If using the internet to collect data, what confidentiality or security precautions are in place to protect (or not collect) identifiable data? Include protections used during both the collection and transfer of data.

(These are likely issed on the server's website.) The internet will not be used to collect data.

The internet will but be used to called table.

16. BENERITS.

List all realistic direct benefits participants can expect by participating in this specific study.

(Do not exclude "comparisation" listed in #100) Check here if there are no direct benefits to participants. Georgia Young Farmer Teachers should receive professional learning units, resources, and assistance that has been better aligned to their needs as identified by the survey. Annual meetings conducted by state staff and university officials will be altered to address those needs identified. Preparation of individuals within colleges and universities will be honed to provide better training for future Young Farmer Teachers who will join their ranks.

 List all malistic benefits for the general population that may be generated from this study. Serve is above.

17. PROTECTION OF DATA.

а.	Will data be collected as anonymous?	🖂 Mo	IF "YES", skip to part "g".
	("Anonymous" means that you will <u>not</u> collect any identifiable data.)		
b.	Will data be collected as confidential? I Yes	□ Mp	
	("Confidential" means that you will collect and protect identifiable data.)		

- If data are collected as confidential, will the participants' data be coded or linked to identifying information?
 Wes (if so, describe how linked.) No
- 4. Justify your need to code participants' data or link the data with identifying information.
- Where will code lists be stared? (Building, room number?)
- g. Describe how and where the data will be stored [a.g., hard copy, audio-cassatis, electronic data, etc.], and how the location where data is stored will be secured in your absence. For electronic data, describe security. If applicable, state specifically where any IRB-approved and participant-signed content documents will be kept on compass for 3 years after the study ends. All data, hard copies, and electronic data, will be stored in the researcher's personal theme chies. This data will have no identifiable marks to link them to individual participants. All of this information will remain with the researcher for at least three years ofter the study ends.

h. Who will have access to participants' data? (The facely advisor should have fail access and be able to produce the data in the case of a faderal or institutional audit). The researches, Lymme Cook, and faculty advisor, Dr. Brian Pare.

j. How will the <u>confidential</u> data be destroyed? (NOTE: Data recorded and analyzed as "anaryzecus" may be retained individe/c). All confidential data will be shoulded and burned by the researcher.





5040 HALEY CENTER APPEARS, AL 36849-5212

TRUEPHONE:

134-844-4434

FAR:

134-644-6789

www.aubern.ede

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

CURRICULUM & TEACHING

(NOTE: DO NOT SIGN THIS DOCUMENT UNLESS AN IRB APPROVAL STAMP WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)

INFORMATION LEFTER for a Research Study entitled "Assessing the Needs of Young Farmer Teachers in Georgia"

You are invited to participate in a research study to identify and assess the perceived professional, technical, and general needs of Georgia Young Farmer teachers in order to enable state and university officials to choose appropriate college curriculum, in-service courses and support services. The study is being conducted by Lyrine Cook, Doctoral Candidate, under the direction of Dr. Brian Part, professor in the Auburn University Department of Agriscience. You are invited to be a possible participant because you are a full or parttime Georgia Young Farmer Teacher and are age 19 or older.

If you decide to participate in this research study, you will complete a questionnaire. Your total time commitment will be approximately 30 minutes.

A possible risk associated with participating in this study is breach of confidentiality. To minimize this risk, all survey responses will be anonymous. Results of the whole group, not individuals, will be reported.

Possible benefits: If you participate in this study, you might experience an increased awareness of your particular Agriculture Education profession within university, regional, and state staff to better most your identified needs.

To thank you for your time, your name will be placed in a drawing for a \$50 Bass Pro-Shops gift card. Mr. Lynn Barber, Georgia Young Farmer Executive Secretary will drawand announce the winner during the final session of the GVATA Summer Conference.

If you change your mind about participating, you can withdraw at any time by returning your incomplete survey. Your participation is completely voluntary. After you turn in your survey you cannot withdraw your survey since we will not be able to identify your anonymous survey. Your decision about participation will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University or the Georgia Agriculture Education staff.

Information obtained may be used to fulfill educational requirements, published in professional journais, and/or presented at professional meetings.

If you have questions about this study, place ask from now or contact Lynne Cook at Inc00168auburn.edu or Dr. Brian Part at bpare@auburn.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Aubum University Office of Research Compliance by phone (334)-844-5966 or e-mail at https://aubum.edu.

YOU MUST NOW DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY. TURNING IN YOUR COMPLETED SURVEY WILL INDICATE YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION. PLEASE KEEP THIS LETTER.

Lynn Cook, Investigator

Date

NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR GEORGIA YOUNG FARMER TEACHERS

Please fill out the following questionnaire as accurately as possible. This form is designed to define the major needs and concerns of Georgia Young Farmer teachers. It is hoped that the information gathered will define any needs for new staff development classes, improve college education and training, and give more support for teachers of Young Farmers. Please feel free to utilize the "comments" sections to add any further concerns within the areas mentioned. Thank you for your time.

Secti	on I	GENERAL INFORMATION
A.	Perso	onal
	1.	Date of Birth:
	2.	Marital Status: (circle one)
		Single Married Separated/Divorced Widowed
	3.	Number of Children:
		(Ages:,,,,,,, _
	4.	Highest Educational Level: (circle one)
		Bachelors Masters Education Specialist Doctorate
		Other: (please specify)
	5.	Educational Institution where Agriculture Education training was attained:
B.	Profe	essional
	1.	Young Farmer Chapter
		a. Region: (circle one) b. Area: (circle one)
		South Central North I II III IV V VI
	2.	Young Farmer Program: (circle one)
		Full Time Part Time
	3.	Years of Experience
		a. as a Young Farmer teacher:
		b. as a Young Farmer teacher in your current position:
		b. as an in-school Agriculture teacher:
		c. in other occupation(s) (please specify below)
		:

		:					
		ccupation			ye	ars	
4.	Scho	ool Information			•		
	a.	Number of in-school classes taught per day:					
	b.	Classes taught:					
	c.	School Schedule: (circle one)					
		4X4 Block Modified Block 6-Period Day		7-	Peri	od I	Day
		Other: (please specify)					
5.	Youn	ng Farmer Program					
	a.	Number of Young Farmer Members:					
	b.	Number of chapter meetings last year:					
	c.	On a scale from 1 - 10 (with ten being the most active	e), rat	te th	ie ac	tivit	ty
		level of your Young Farmer members in the followin	g are	as:	(cire	cle c	one)
		Local (Community) Activities1 2 3 4 5	56	7	8	9	10
		Chapter Meetings & Classes1 2 3 4 5	56	7	8	9	10
		State Young Farmer Contest	56	7	8	9	10
		State Young Farmer Activities1 2 3 4 5	56	7	8	9	10
		National Young Farmer Contests1 2 3 4 5	56	7	8	9	10
		National Young Farmer Activities1 2 3 4 5	56	7	8	9	10

6. Please list below any organizations to which you belong:

Organization	# Years Involved	Level(s) of Involvement	Offices Held

Section II

TECHNICAL

Many technical competencies are needed to be successful in aiding and instructing Young Farmers. Please consider the following skills. Rate them on a scale of 1 - 5 below to indicate the level of **importance** each skill is to becoming a successful Young Farmer teacher. Then, indicate how **competent** you feel in each of these skill areas.

A. <u>Agricultural Mechanics</u>

	Importance 1 = None 2 = Slight 3 = Average 4 = Above Average 5 = Vital				age	$\frac{\text{Competen}}{\text{A} = \text{None}}$ $B = \text{Sligh}$ $C = \text{Mode}$ $D = \text{Very}$ $E = \text{Extreme}$			i <u>ce</u> e it erate me		
					(C11	rcle	e one in eac	ch ar	ea)		
Woodworking	.♦	1	2	3	4	5	♦	. 🔶 🔺	A B	CI	ЭE
Masonry	.♦	1	2	3	4	5	♦	. ♦ A	ΔB	CI	ЭE
Tool Fitting	.♦	1	2	3	4	5	♦	. 🔶 🔺	Ъ	CI	ЭE
Welding	.♦	1	2	3	4	5	♦	. 🔶 🔺	ΑВ	CI	ЭE
Plumbing	.♦	1	2	3	4	5	♦	. 🔶 🔺	B	CI	ЭE
Carpentry	.♦	1	2	3	4	5	♦	. 🔶 🔺	ΑB	CI	ЭE
Electricity	.♦	1	2	3	4	5	♦	. 🔶 🔺	ΑB	CI	ЭE
Small Engines (maintenance & repair)	.♦	1	2	3	4	5	♦	. ♦ A	Ъ	CI	ЭE
Machinery (maintenance & repair)	.♦	1	2	3	4	5	♦	. ♦ A	Ъ	CI	ЭE
Tractor (maintenance & repair)	.♦	1	2	3	4	5	♦	. ♦ A	Ъ	CI	ЭE
Others: (please specify below)											
	.♦	1	2	3	4	5	♦	. 🔶 🗡	АВ	CI	ЭE
		1	2	3	4	5	♦	. 🔶 🔺	ΑВ	CI) Е

B.	Natural Resources										
1.	Soil Conservation	1	2	3	4	5	♦ <i>♦ A</i>	A B	C D	E (Þ
2.	Land Measure/Surveying	1	2	3	4	5	♦ <i>A</i>	A B	C D	E (
3.	Reforestation	1	2	3	4	5	♦	A B	C D	E (
4.	Forest Management	1	2	3	4	5	♦	ΑВ	C D	E (Þ
5.	Tree Harvesting & Sales	1	2	3	4	5	♦	A B	C D	E (Þ
6.	Forest Insects & Diseases	1	2	3	4	5	♦	ΑВ	C D	E (Þ
7.	Wildlife Management	1	2	3	4	5	♦	ΑВ	C D	E (Þ
8.	Hunting & Fishing	1	2	3	4	5	♦ ♦ A	ΔB	C D	E (Þ
9.	Aquaculture	1	2	3	4	5	♦ ♦ A	ΔB	C D	E (Þ
10.	Others: (please specify below)										
		1	2	3	4	5	♦ ♦ A	ΔB	C D	E (Þ
		1	2	3	4	5	♦	ΑВ	C D	E 🖣	Þ

Comments:_____

C.	Production Agriculture						
1.	Row Crop Production	1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆
2.	Livestock Production	1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆
3.	Poultry Production	1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆
4.	Specialty Animal Production	1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆
5.	Vegetable Production	1	2	3	4	5	◆ ♦ A B C D E ◆
6.	Specialty Crop Production	1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆
7.	Greenhouse Management	1	2	3	4	5	◆ ♦ A B C D E ◆
8.	Ornamental Horticulture	1	2	3	4	5	◆ ♦ A B C D E ◆
9.	Others: (please specify below)						
		1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆
		1	2	3	4	5	◆ ♦ A B C D E ◆

D.	Agribusiness						
1.	Recordkeeping	1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆
2.	Tax Law Knowledge♦	1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆
3.	Computer Literacy	1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆
4.	Commodities Market	1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆
5.	Government Programs	1	2	3	4	5	◆ → A B C D E ◆
6.	Others: (please specify below)						
		1	2	3	4	5	◆ → A B C D E ◆
		1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆

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Section III

PROFESSIONAL

Certain professional needs such as having useable resources, worthwhile Young Farmer activities, a strong support team, etc., must be met before a Young Farmer teacher can be successful.

A. <u>Resources</u>

Please rate the following resources used in educating Young Farmers according to your **perceived effectiveness**. Also list the approximate number of times those resources were used last year.

		<u>Effectiveness</u>								
		1:	1 = (ner	tec	tive) 11	<u>used/year)</u>		
		2:	= (_ (JCC	asi asi	ona mo	пу Бf	Effective		
		э. Л.	- c - ()fte	n F	ine Tfe	L1 oti	ve		
			- (- 4	$\Delta 1 \alpha$	ave vave	r Ff	Cu Tea	vc tive		
		5-	- 1	11 //	ayı	, רבו	100			
1.	Books	٠	1	2	3	4	5	♦		
2.	Pamphlets	٠	1	2	3	4	5	♦		
3.	Overhead Transparencies	٠	1	2	3	4	5	♦		
4.	Slide Shows	٠	1	2	3	4	5	♦		
5.	Videos/DVDs	٠	1	2	3	4	5	♦		
6.	Internet Websites	٠	1	2	3	4	5	♦		
7.	Computer Projector/Smartboard	٠	1	2	3	4	5	♦		
8.	Area Ag-Ed Personnel	٠	1	2	3	4	5	♦		
9.	Extension Specialists	٠	1	2	3	4	5	♦		
10.	Other Specialists	٠	1	2	3	4	5	♦		
11.	Agribusiness Representatives	٠	1	2	3	4	5	♦		
12.	Others: (please specify below)									
		٠	1	2	3	4	5	♦		
		٠	1	2	3	4	5	♦		

B. <u>Young Farmer Organization</u>

Please rate the following annual State and National Young Farmer activities according to how effective you believe each one to be as an educational and motivational tool. Also list how many times your current Young Farmer Chapter has participated in each activity since you have been their Young Farmer Teacher.

Effectiveness	<u>(# times</u>
1 = Ineffective	entered/
2 = Occasionally Effective	<u>parti-</u>
3 = Sometime Effective	cipated)
4 = Often Effective	
5 = Always Effective	

1.	Farm Family Contest	1	2	3	4	5	♦
2.	Chapter Award	1	2	3	4	5	♦
3.	Photo Contest	1	2	3	4	5	♦
4.	President Award	1	2	3	4	5	♦
5.	Spokesman Award	1	2	3	4	5	♦
6.	Advisor's Award	1	2	3	4	5	♦
7.	Farm Management Award	1	2	3	4	5	♦
8.	State Young Farmer Convention	1	2	3	4	5	♦
9.	National Institute	1	2	3	4	5	♦
10.	State Young Farmer Summer Tour	1	2	3	4	5	♦
11.	State Officer	1	2	3	4	5	♦
12.	National Officer	1	2	3	4	5	♦
13.	Others: (please specify below)						
		1	2	3	4	5	♦
		1	2	3	4	5	♦

C. Local Young Farmer Organization and School Duties

The following list contains duties and skills that are often required in conducting your Young Farmer Chapter and daily school activities. Please rate how **important** knowledge of each area is in order to be a successful Young Farmer teacher and then indicate how **competent** you fell at each.

		Importance					Competence		
		1 = None 2 - Slight					A = None		
		2 = Siigiii3 = Average					D = Slight C = Moderate		
		3 = 4 =	A	ove	ge A	ver	D = Verv		
		5 =	Vit	al		, en	E = Extreme		
					(ci	rcle	e one in each area)		
1.	Roster	. • 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
2.	Program of Activities	. 🔶 1	2	3	4	5	♦ ♦ A B C D E ♦		
3.	Budgeting	. 🔶 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
4.	Banquet Organization	. • 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
5.	Meeting Organization	. • 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
6.	Parliamentary Procedure	. • 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
7.	Program of Work	. • 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
8.	Monthly Reports	. • 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
9.	Annual Reports	. • 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
10.	MIS Reports	. 🖊 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
11.	Motivating Adults	. 🔶 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
12.	Motivating Students	. 🔶 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
13.	Public Relations	. 🔶 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
14.	Lesson Plans	. • 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
15.	Fundraising	. • 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
16.	Activities for Young Farmer Wives	. • 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
17.	Others: (please specify below)								
		. 🔶 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
		. • 1	2	3	4	5	◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		

D. <u>Support</u>

Young Farmer teachers are supported through several different groups and individuals working on their behalf. Please rate the following supporters according to the need Young Farmer teachers have for the supporter and according to the overall effectiveness of the supporter.

		Ne	eec	<u>l</u>			Effectiveness		
		1 :	= 1	Von	le		A = Ineffective		
		2 = Some			ne		B = Slightly Effective		
		3 :	= N	Лос	dera	ate	C = Sometimes Effective		
		4 :	= H	Hig	h		D = Often Effective		
		5 :	= E	Exti	em	le	E = Always Effective		
						(ci	rcle one in each area)		
1.	Georgia YF Executive Director		1	2	3	4	5 ♦ ♦ A B C D E ♦		
2.	National YF Organization	.•	1	2	3	4	5 ◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
3.	Regional Ag Ed Office	.•	1	2	3	4	5 ◆ ◆ A B C D E ◆		
4.	Area Teachers	.•	1	2	3	4	5 ◆ ♦ A B C D E ◆		
5.	Professional Development	.♦	1	2	3	4	5 ◆ ♦ A B C D E ◆		
6.	University of Georgia	.•	1	2	3	4	5 ◆ ♦ A B C D E ◆		
7.	Teachers Retirement		1	2	3	4	5 ◆ ♦ A B C D E ◆		
8.	State Merit System	.•	1	2	3	4	5 ◆ ♦ A B C D E ◆		
9.	State Board of Education	.♦	1	2	3	4	5 ◆ ♦ A B C D E ◆		
10.	Local Board of Education	.♦	1	2	3	4	5 ◆ ♦ A B C D E ◆		
11.	RESA Personnel	.•	1	2	3	4	5 ◆ ♦ A B C D E ◆		
12.	Others: (please specify below)								
			1	2	3	4	5 ♦ ♦ A B C D E ♦		
		.•	1	2	3	4	5 ♦ ♦ A B C D E ♦		

- E. Curriculum
- 1. Is there a need for a statewide curriculum for Young Farmer Education? Yes / No
- 2. Would a Regional curriculum be more effective? Yes / No
- 3. Please list below your top three concerns about having a Young Farmer Curriculum:
 - a._____
 - b._____
 - c._____