

PRACTICES FOR CREATING EFFECTIVE INDUCTION PROGRAMS

Procedures for Creating and/or Re-energizing an Effective Induction Program

Administrators, curricula directors, teacher union officials, teacher educators, and professional organization leaders, and policy-makers have a heightened awareness of the benefits of induction programs. As a result of the apparent benefits of induction programs upon early-career teachers and their students, many school districts have established district-wide programs. Unfortunately, few programs address the unique needs and challenges of teachers within their discipline; such is the experience for most entry-level agricultural education teachers.

Establishment or re-energizing a quality induction program for agricultural education involves several steps. Interested partners initially needs to spend considerable time learning about the features, rationale, operation, and evaluation of programs. Personal visits to existing programs to visit with program leaders, funders, and participants is worthwhile to alleviate unnecessary setbacks. Likewise, attending induction seminars and workshops are extremely useful for gathering ideas for your program. The descriptions, materials, and reported outcomes of many school district wide, state, and featured induction programs can also be viewed on the internet. There are also a variety of textbooks and handbooks that provide describe the materials and practices for initiating effective programs.

In summary, procedures for creating an induction program for agricultural education can be placed into action after program designers and stakeholders have addressed or completed the following:

- develop a clear understanding of the joys and challenges of entry-level teachers.
- establish an understanding of the career experiences of lifelong teachers;
- know the value of quality pre-service teacher education programs;
- value the importance and impact of professional development for teachers and students;
- create an awareness that induction programs are a recognized solution for addressing the challenges of early-career teachers;
- develop familiarity with the features and benefits of quality induction programs; and
- understand the benefits, costs, and challenges of managing and sustaining programs.

After attending to the foregoing, the procedure for creating an induction program for agricultural education includes concurrent attention to several practice and program components. They include: confirm induction program partners; reach consensus upon the features desired for your induction program; establish programming capacity of the induction team; create statements of the program vision, mission, goals, and values; securing funding for program support; design programming for a sustainable induction program; involve effective coaches, guides, and mentors in the induction program; strategies for evaluating the goals and outcomes of the program; effective communication strategies; and, marketing the induction program.