

Final Report on a 2002-2003 FCAE Research Grant
Entitled:

**“Determining Expenditure Trends Among Illinois Agricultural
Teachers on Allocated Funding”**

Submitted by:
Dr. Andrew J. Baker
Associate Professor
Agricultural Education
Western Illinois University

This research project was funded by the

Illinois State Board of Education

under the direction of

Facilitating Coordination In Agricultural Education

with support provided by the

Department of Agriculture and the College of Business & Technology

Western Illinois University

June 2003

Methods & Procedures:

The research funds were utilized to determine trends associated with the incentive funds incurred by Illinois agricultural teachers. These expenditures were also compared with the funds received by agricultural teachers from their prospective school districts. An eight-page survey was mailed as well as electronically sent to 50 pre-selected teachers across the state.

Teachers were selected based upon the past funding on their incentive grant and number of years teaching. Teachers had to receive at least \$2500 on the 2001-2002 incentive grant application to be considered for this study. Two teachers from each section of the state were selected to participate in this study. One teacher had to have seven to sixteen years of teaching experience and the other teacher had to have seventeen plus years of teaching experience. This variable was utilized to separate the participants into two groups based upon the number of years of teaching. It also ensured that the participants had enough teaching years and experience to complete the survey. Group A had seven to sixteen years of teaching experience and Group B had seventeen plus years of teaching experience.

The overall response rate was 68%. Group A's response rate was 72% and Group B's response rate was 64%. There were three females and thirty-one males who completed the survey for a total of thirty-four participants. The average teaching years for Group A was 12 years and the average for Group B was 24 years.

Objectives:

- 1) To determine the past, current, and future expenditure habits of incentive grant and school district funds allocated to Illinois agricultural teachers.
- 2) To determine if there are trends associated with the spending of incentive grant and school district funds allocated to secondary agricultural teachers.
- 3) To develop a strategic plan for the future royalty funds generated through instructional materials sales.

Findings:

Both groups have experienced an increase for incentive funding over the last five years. Group A have experienced a 15% increase for incentive funding from an average of \$2462 to \$2926 and Group B have experienced a 16% increase for incentive funding from an average of \$2785 to \$3318 over the last five years. However, there is a drastic difference between groups in the amount of funding received from their prospective school districts. Group A only experienced a very slight increase in funding from their school districts over the last five years. The average, for the 1998-1999 school year, was \$4454 compared to the \$4474 for the 2002-2003 school year. Group B had a totally different experience. They felt an 18% decrease in school district funding over the last five years. The average, for the 1998-1999 school year, was \$2415 compared to the \$1984 received in the 2002-2003 school year.

Both groups were asked to list items they purchased with their incentive funds and their school district allocated funds for the school years of 1998-1999, 2002-2003, and 2007-2008. Teachers were asked to be a little futuristic in the way of thinking, by speculating what they might purchase with their incentive and district funds five years from now. Both groups indicated that there would be little change when it comes to purchasing items from the different funds. This includes past, present, and future purchases. This indicates that they are very consistent in what they purchase and what fund they utilize when purchasing items. Consistently, both groups indicated that their top choices for the 1998-1999 school year were computers, printed materials, shop equipment/supplies, and subscription services when utilizing incentive grant funding. Both groups remained consistent for the 2002-2003 school year by indicating their top purchases were computers, ag science resources, printed materials, and shop equipment/supplies when utilizing incentive grant funding. The new variable of change would be the appearance of ag science resources and the disappearance of subscription services. Again, the two groups were consistent with the other years by indicating they would purchase computers, ag science resources, and shop equipment/supplies in 2007-2008.

The purchasing trends continued to be consistent with one another with their school district allocations. Both groups consistently purchased instructional materials (both print and technology versions), Ag Mechanics consumables and/or equipment, and technology consumables for each of the analyzed time periods.

Both groups believed that the agriculture curriculum in the State of Illinois has changed over the last five years with 94% and 75% agreement in Group A and B respectively. Approximately 20% from both groups requested assistance on how to spend funding. A majority of both groups felt comfortable with completing surveys on-line, if the surveys are constructed correctly. Participants were also given several avenues on how to send their completed surveys, which were regular mail, fax, or electronically. Approximately 44% of the participants utilized the fax to send their completed surveys and 35% mailed a hard copy, while 20% sent their completed survey electronically.

Conclusion & Recommendations:

The overall outcomes of the study were very consistent between the two groups of participants. Both groups were very consistent on what items were purchased and the funding utilized to purchase the item over each time period. They felt their spending habits have and will change a little over time, but not drastically. They also felt that the state curriculum has changed over the last five years and their spending habits have reflected this change over time.

However, the most significant finding is the fact that the allocations from school districts have decreased over time for Group B. The tightening of budgets probably has had the biggest impact on this finding. More research is needed to evaluate this phenomenon to determine if this is an upcoming trend or a fad. If this becomes a trend, agricultural teachers will become more reliant on their incentive allocations to fund their programs. In speculation, this variable is probably the reason for the increase in incentive funding for both groups over the last five years. It is vitally important that we constantly evaluate

the margins of difference between incentive and school district allocations for agriculture programs in Illinois. The incentive application may have an observe effect on our agriculture programs, if administrators realize they can reduce their allocations, because of the additional funds contributed through the incentive grant process. It is definitely an item of concern for the future.

It is also recommended the state leadership begin developing relations with the corporate sector in areas that reflect the spending habits of our teachers. If incentives can be provided for teachers to purchase specific items at a discount than we have more power with our state allocated line item dollars. We can get more for less!

I do believe we can generalize these results and outcomes to the entire population of agriculture teachers in Illinois on the basis of the overall response rate and the consistency between analyzed groups. The consistency in the data indicates that the majority of teachers in this state purchase specific items from specific funds. We will experience little change in their spending habits over time. They will continue to purchase computers and technology with their incentive dollars and continue to buy consumables with the school district allocations. We will continue to see a decrease in school district allocations to fund secondary agriculture programs as long as there budget constraints.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew J. Baker

Dr. Andrew J. Baker

Associate Professor

Agricultural Education

Western Illinois University

4 th	50%	Consumables (Horticulture)	4 th	56%	Equipment (Ag
		Mech)			
5 th	44%	Consumables (Tech)	5 th	50%	Consumables (Tech)

2002-2003 District Funding Purchases

<u>Group A (Teaching Years 7-16)</u>			<u>Group B (Teaching Years 17+)</u>		
<u>Rank</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Item</u>
1 st	78%	Consumables (Ag Mech)	1 st	81%	Consumables
2 nd	61%	Instructional Materials (Print)	2 nd	69%	Instructional
3 rd	50%	Equipment (Ag Mech)	3 rd	63%	Equipment
3 rd	50%	Consumables (Horticulture)	4 th	56%	Instructional
3 rd	50%	Misc.	5 th	38%	Consumables (Tech)

1998-1999 District Funding Purchases

<u>Group A (Teaching Years 7-16)</u>			<u>Group B (Teaching Years 17+)</u>		
<u>Rank</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Item</u>
1 st	67%	Consumables (Ag Mech)	1 st	69%	Consumables
2 nd	56%	Instructional Materials (Tech)	2 nd	56%	Equipment (Ag
3 rd	50%	Equipment (Ag Mech)	3 rd	44%	Instructional
3 rd	50%	Consumables (Tech)	3 rd	44%	Instructional
5 th	33%	Instructional Materials (Print)	5 th	38%	Consumables (Tech)
5 th	33%	Consumables (Horticulture)			

Totals Group A

1F:17M of a possible 3F:22 M

Responding Teachers by District:

1: 60%
2: 60%
3: 80%
4: 80%
5: 80%

Avg. teaching years: 12

Avg. Incentive Money : 98-99 \$2,462
02-03 \$2926

Avg. District Money: 98-99 \$4,454
02-03 \$ 4,474

Feelings on spending habits of incentive monies from 98-99 to 02-03:

No Change: 12%
Changed a Little: 65%
Changed Drastically: 24%

Feelings on spending habits of district monies from 98-99 to 02-03:

No Change: 28%
Changed a Little: 44%
Changed Drastically: 28%

Feelings that spending habits on incentive monies will change 02-03 to 07-08:

No Change: 28%
Changed a Little: 55%
Changed Drastically: 17%

Feelings that district monies will change from 02-03 to 07-08:

No Change: 35%
Changed a Little: 53%
Changed Drastically: 12%

% Believe curriculum has changed in the past 5 yrs: 94%

% That would like more assistance on how to spend funds: 19%

% That feels comfortable completing surveys electronically: 94%

% Believe there are barriers from completing surveys electronically: 24%

Survey Completed By:

Fax: 44%

Email: 22%

Mail: 33%

Totals Group B

2F:14M of a possible 2F: 23M

Responding Teachers by District:

1: 40%
2: 60%
3: 100%
4: 60%
5: 40%

Avg. teaching years: 24

Avg. Incentive Money : 98-99 \$ 2,785

02-03 \$ 3,318

Avg. District Money: 98-99 \$ 2,415

02-03 \$ 1,984

Feelings on spending habits of incentive monies from 98-99 to 02-03:

No Change: 25%
Changed a Little: 62.5%
Changed Drastically: 12.5%

Feelings on spending habits of district monies from 98-99 to 02-03:

No Change: 62.5%
Changed a Little: 31.25%
Changed Drastically: 6.25%

Feelings that spending habits on incentive monies will change 02-03 to 07-08:

No Change: 30.8%
Changed a Little: 38.5%
Changed Drastically: 30.8%

Feelings that district monies will change from 02-03 to 07-08:

No Change: 53%
Changed a Little: 33%
Changed Drastically: 13%

% Believe curriculum has changed in the past 5 yrs: 75%

% That would like more assistance on how to spend funds: 25%

% That feels comfortable completing surveys electronically: 69%

% Believe there are barriers from completing surveys electronically: 44%

Survey Completed By:

Fax: 43.75%

Mail: 37.5%

Email: 18.75%