

## NCATA History

The North Carolina Vocational Agricultural Teachers' Association was formed at the annual conference of teachers of vocational agriculture in the summer of 1939. J.C. Brown, Waynesville agriculture teacher, was largely responsible for the organization being formed when in 1938 he proposed to a group of teacher that such an organization was needed. The proposal met with approval and Brown was delegated to draw up a Constitution and Bylaws which was presented at the 1939 conference. Much of the material was drawn from his experience with the Florida Association of Teachers of Vocational Agriculture while he was teaching in Florida. R.S. Dunham of Cary, R.B. Winchester of Mt. Gilead, O.J. Gaylord of Bath, A.L. Vann of Rich Square, Fred L. Hunt of Fuquay and others assisted in getting the organization started. Membership in the association was set as active and honorary. The active membership was confined to agriculture teachers and members of the state supervisory and teacher training staff.

R.S. Dunham of Cary was elected as the first President and served two years. Dues were fifty cents for the first year and raised to one dollar the second year where they remained until 1949. Other first year officers were: R.B. Winchester (Secretary-Treasurer) and A.W. Parker of Littleton, G.K. Savage of Roseboro, H.E. Singletary of Orrum, P.H. Satterwhite of Cleveland, and R.M. Morris of Rutherfordton (Vice Presidents).

In addition to adopting a Constitution and Bylaws, a Code of Conduct was approved. The code reads: I will maintain a high standard of conduct. I will accept my responsibility as a good citizen. I will study to improve myself professionally. I will do unto my fellow teachers as I would like for them to do unto me. I will work in harmony with school authorities, academic teachers, and all agencies whose primary aim is the improvement of rural life. I will defend a fellow teacher and his program as far as honesty will permit. I will stand ready to cooperate with and assist fellow teachers where feasible. I will consider a contract binding until dissolved by mutual consent.

At a meeting in Raleigh on July 25, 1941, the Association drew up a number of suggestions as to how the Association and the State Department of Agricultural Education might strengthen the working relationship between them. Some of these included: (1) That in arranging salary schedules, the staff give due consideration to the rising cost of living. (2) That travel to and from conference be paid at the rate of five cents per mile provided that no teacher received more than \$15.00. (3) That at least two meetings on the conference program be allotted to NCVATA. (4) That the conference extend over a period of four or five days and be equally divided between recreation and professional development. (5) That recognition, by way of salary increases, be made for teachers who hold higher academic degrees. (6) That the state staff be increased so that each department might secure adequate supervision and help.

In 1949 the NCVATA joined the National Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association (NVATA now known as the National Association for Agricultural Educators), which had been organized in 1948. In 1951, S.F. Peterson of Ayden was elected NVATA Vice President for Region V at the national convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In 1954 he was elected as National President of NVATA.

Peterson has a great impact on the state association. In 1952, a new NCVATA was approved by the state association, which included several significant changes. One of the major changes was that the NCVATA President's term would be for two years after serving as President Elect for one year. Also, from that point forward the officers of the association were assisted for their travel to the NVATA National Conventions. The initial limit on this financial assistance was not to exceed \$50.00 per person.

In 1950, the Association created the Widow's Fund. The efforts of H.G. Johnston and R.S. Dunham led to the development of this fund. Dunham named the fund and it was based on the idea of providing a financial gift to the surviving widow of an agriculture teacher. The first assessment was \$3.00 and in 1959 it was raised to \$5.00. Fred L. Hunt served as secretary-treasurer of the fund until 1961 when those duties were assumed by Wayne Proffitt. He continued in this role until his retirement in the 1990's.

In 1958-60, Vayden Hairr served as President of the NCVATA. In 1961, C.V. Tart was elected as NVATA Alternate Vice President for Region V.

In addition to being affiliated with the NVATA, the association was also became affiliated with the American Vocational Association (later known as Association for Career and Technical Education and the North Carolina Vocational Association (later known as the North Carolina Association for Career and Technical Education). Major accomplishments of the association in the first twenty-five years of the Association included:

1. Prepared, adopted, and encouraged the adherence to a code of ethics.
2. Unified and correlated the professional activities of the membership.
3. Promoted the improvement and extension of vocational agriculture in North Carolina.
4. Cooperated with and prompted a closer working relationship with state leaders and university faculty.
5. Helped secure teacher pay increases, travel allowances, and such services as use of school buses for vocational agriculture bus trips.
6. Secured purchasing contract agreements with care, appliance, and other dealers.
7. Worked for legislation favorable to vocational agriculture as well as other areas of vocational education.
8. Worked for and encouraged the appointment of qualified supervisory personnel favorable to vocational agriculture.
9. Adopted a "Widows' Fund" plan that provides a financial benefit to the survivors of a deceased member.

The importance of the NCVATA has continued to grow and expand over the years. In 1999, the NCVATA voted to change its name to the North Carolina Agriculture Teachers' Association (NCATA). This change grew out of a name change of the national association and the fact that vocational agriculture was now known as agricultural education. Major accomplishments that have occurred in recent years include:

1. The creation of legislation in 1983 to maintain 12-month positions for agricultural education programs.
2. The creation of legislation to build a conference center at the North Carolina FFA Center located at White Lake in Bladen County.
3. The establishment of a new state agricultural education leadership model at NC State University in the Department of Agricultural and Extension Education.
4. The protection of the 12-month legislation in the 1997 Excellence in Education Act.
5. The establishment of a scholarship program for future agriculture teachers in 2000.
6. The leadership to assist in the establishment of a new FFA Foundation position at NC State University in 2003.
7. The legislative influence to assist in protecting career-technical education from state budget cuts.