



Agricultural Education teachers in the state of Missouri participated in the study ($n = 320$). The purpose of the study was to assess the perceptions of secondary agriculture teachers concerning the current criteria, definitions, and descriptions of supervised agricultural experience (SAE) programs. All agriculture teachers attending their respective district meetings during the annual teachers' conference in the summer of 2005 were surveyed regarding their perceptions of the current National FFA SAE types and Missouri SAE criteria. The teachers also had the opportunity to rank the current Missouri criteria and identify core or essential criteria they deemed necessary for a supervised agricultural experience program.

A comparison of agriculture teachers' ranking of the importance of the nine current Missouri SAE criteria can be found in Table 1. The rankings are compared by six geographic districts.

Table 1 . *Ranking of current Missouri SAE criteria by district*

Item	Districts					
	NW	NE	C	SW	SC	SE
Experience	1	1	1	2	1	1
Supervised	2	2	2	1	2	2
Agricultural	3	3	3	3	3	3
Instruction	4	5	4	4	4	4
Program	5	4	5	5	5	5
Evaluated	6	7	6	6	7	8
Recognition	7	6	8	7	6	9
Economic Base	8	9	9	9	9	7
Time	9	8	7	8	8	6

Key Findings

- Students were encouraged to develop SAEs that focused on ownership/entrepreneurship and placement compared to those that focused on

exploration, research/experimentation, and analysis.

- The existing SAE criteria were valued as important (3.5 to 4.5, on a 5-point scale); however, teachers placed less value on criteria stating the project should contribute to family living now and in the future.
- Supervised, agricultural, and experience were classified as the most important criteria for an acceptable SAE program.
- Less emphasis should be given to time and economic base and more emphasis should be placed on the evaluation and recognition of students' SAEs.
- Demographic characteristics of gender, years teaching, location of teaching, number of students, and department size, did not influence teachers' perceptions of the SAE criteria.

Recommendations and Implications

- Students who develop exploratory, research/experimentation, or analysis SAEs are unable to receive recognition in Missouri because of the current award recognition criteria.
- Even though teachers agreed that all nine criteria are important, some of the criteria contradicted.
- It was apparent that the current criteria are supportive of the overall foundation of a SAE, but revisions are needed.
- In order to have better alignment and representation to the National SAE types, the current criteria should be modified.
- The results reflect teachers' attitudes and willingness to utilize and support "traditional" SAEs.

Thies, D. L. (2005). *Perceptions of agricultural education instructors regarding program criteria of supervised agricultural experience*. Unpublished master's thesis, Department of Agricultural Education, University of Missouri-Columbia.