

Developing Agribusiness Management Education for the Emerging Global Agriculture Economy

Presented By
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1

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Developing Agribusiness Management Education for the Emerging Global Agriculture Economy

- Agriculture in the 21st century has more potential for change and greater promise for profitability than at any other time in the history of industry.
- This potential for change is mainly fueled by Biotechnology, Information technology and Globalization.
- Agribusiness executives worldwide agree that a combination of skills are needed to deal with evolving challenges and risks that arise from changes.
- Most agribusiness executives however, see a significant talent gap with their companies and feel that there is an alarming division between what skills the students are acquiring (at Academic institutions) relative to the need of business.
- This presents challenges as well as opportunities for institutions to develop and reorient programs in Agribusiness management to train graduates with needed skills.
- Agribusiness Curricula should be designed to address emerging skill requirements.

2

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OBJECTIVES

- To discuss rationale and need for developing agribusiness degree program and need for change in existing program based on market labor trends.
- To discuss various issues, importance, approaches to be considered in developing an innovative degree program in agribusiness.
- To present a framework to guide development of curriculum.

Trends Fuel the Need for Change and Rationale for Curricula Reorientation:

- In a one-to-one interview more than 40 agribusiness executives from every part of the globe, leaders identified five major trends that will most influence the agricultural industry in the near future.

These are

- **Globalization.**
 - **Information Technology.**
 - **Biotechnology.**
 - **Mergers/Consolidation.**
 - **Expanding consumer power.**
- They also stressed that **Partnering** is a way of the future.
 - The impact of trends on agribusiness industry has been far reaching.

Unique Features of Agriculture Industry:

- 1 Culture, Society and policy.
1. Broad spectrum of production creates more uncertainty and dependence on nature. Risks and uncertainties.
2. Specialized resources-Requires the use of precious often scarce natural resources.
3. The competing goals and varying forms of political intervention across sub sectors and between nations make agribusiness an increasingly global industry.
4. Institutional arrangements have historically placed significant portions of the technology development process in the public sector. Although the private sector has played an important and increasing role.
5. Differing competitive structures and complex economic relationship exist within and among the food and agribusiness sub-sectors of the economy.
6. Distinctive Market structures and Marketing problems.
7. Higher capital-labor Ratio.

The traditional view of the agribusiness system is changing (Figure 1). Two levels of focus: Production related activities and Marketing related activities

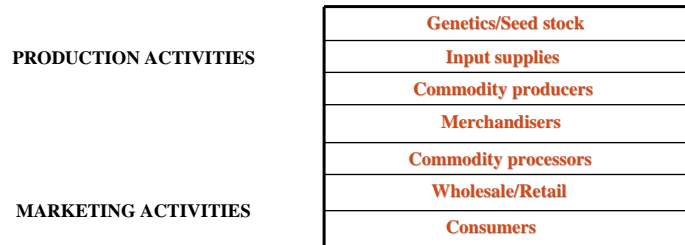
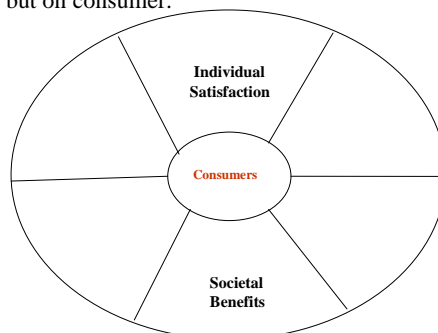


Figure 1: Traditional Agribusiness System

- This view of the system has historically led agribusiness to view competitive position from the perspective of the **producer and services he or she needed**.
- However, the move away from a **production-driven system to a consumer-driven system alters this perspective**.
- In this case competitive advantage is achieved by surrounding the consumer and attempting to satisfy both the individual and the society. In figure 2, focus is not on the producer but on consumer.



The consumer becomes the focal point

Figure 2: Emerging View for Agribusiness

- To establish competitiveness in this, **new vertical relationships must emerge.**
- **Blurring the traditional lines between competitors, buyers and suppliers.**
- **Value added-processing level emerges.** (Figure 3).
- **Almost all the driving forces of change (trends) derive from consumers.**
- **Today the way in which business is done within the food system. Marketing is now the most important.**

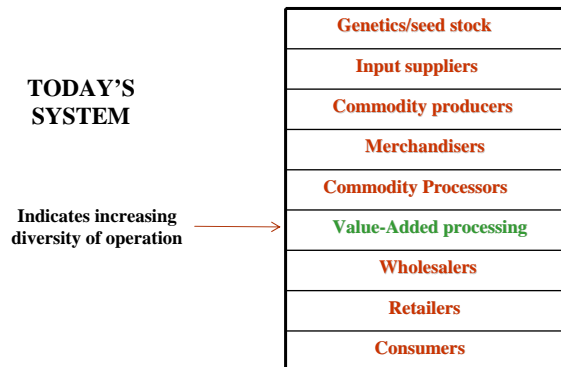


Figure 3: Current View of Agribusiness System

Implications for Shaping Agribusiness Curriculum

- The array of unique characteristics of agribusiness require special managerial and leadership skills and knowledge for arriving at efficient and effective decisions.
- The changes within agribusiness has significant implication for food and agribusiness firms.
- Further, Globalization of the agricultural economy requires that agriculture and agriculture product marketing be researched and taught with respect to their relationships with the environment and access to emerging markets in other countries.
- **Keeping account of factors, the challenge is to develop a curriculum that is relevant, provides for the development of the commercial environment and has international focus.**
- **However, several myths prevailing on campuses:**
 - *Many administrators and some faculty members still believe that by adding a few courses to general agriculture curriculum will make it an “Agribusiness Curriculum.”
 - *Agricultural Economics curriculum can easily be changed to agribusiness by “replacing agricultural economics courses from business school.”
 - *Employers are interested only in the business courses included in the curriculum.
 - *Agribusiness program can easily be a part of business school.

Approach to Curriculum Development

- Agribusiness curriculum will have to be designed to address emerging skill requirements.
- Reflecting these changing requirements, curriculum adjustments are evolutionary.

Partners in Curriculum Development

- A more broadly based team of partners (they are also the stakeholders) be put together to provide for an active intellectual exchange. In figure 4 possible key drivers/stakeholders for curriculum reviewing and guiding development are identified .
- These partners were to be active participants from the early stages of conceptualization and developments to initial implementation-not merely reactors after a curriculum has been developed.

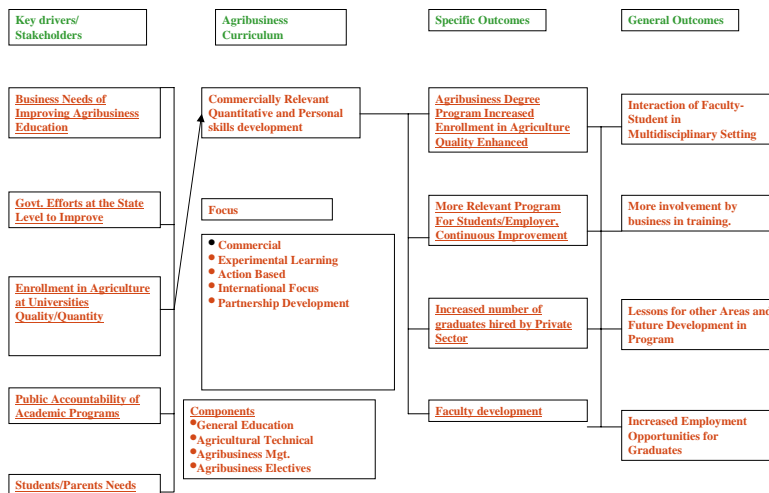


Figure 4: Drivers for Agribusiness Curriculum Development and Outcomes

Curriculum Planning

- There are two common approaches to planning process for curriculum. These are: 1) **Mission Based** , and 2)**Competency Based**
- **Mission based** process is conceptual in nature and closely resembles with an institution's mission.
- Whereas, in **Competency Based** Approach competencies are seen as the capability of people to perform in a function or a profession according to the qualifications they have. These qualifications are expressed in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- Competency is defined as the ability of a student/worker enabling him to accomplish tasks adequately, to find solutions and to realize them in work situations.
- **A Competent Graduate: has the ability to carryout, adequately, tasks that form a substantial part of the function.**
- Competencies could be decided and listed with the help of industry and business (partners) regarding the qualifications expected from graduates of the program (Figure 5).
- One of the central issues to the development of agribusiness programs is curriculum structure and the concept of the Educated Person. The American Association of Colleges suggests nine learning skills and experiences that are important to the **concept of the educated person**.

These are 1)inquiry, abstract logical/thinking, critical/analysis,2)literacy, writing, reading, speaking and listening, 3) understanding numerical data, 4)historical consciousness 5)science 6) values 7) art 8)international and multicultural experiences, 9)Study in depth

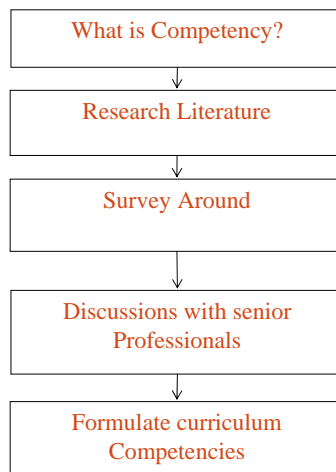


Figure 5 –Formulate Competencies of Graduates

- The competency-based approach as originally presented by Sledge et al. is presented here to illustrate a planning process for an agribusiness curriculum (Figure 6).

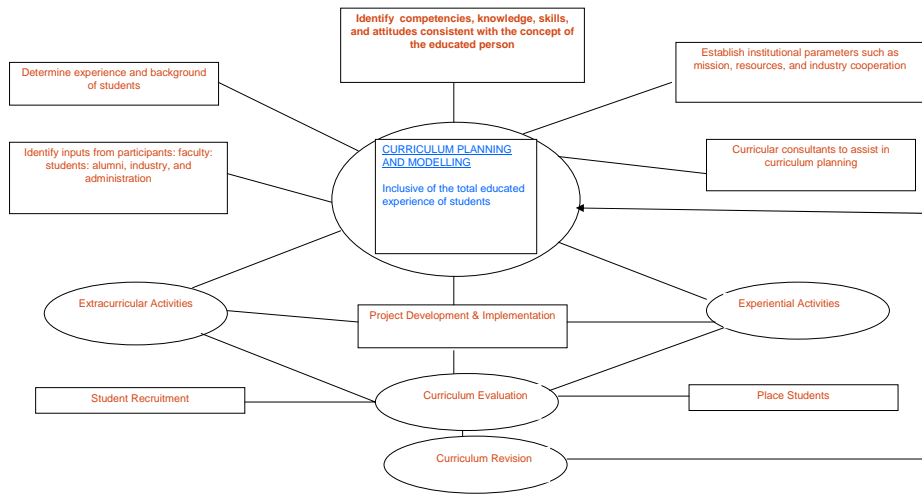


Figure 6: Competency-based Curricular Planning Process. (adapted from Sledge et al.)

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- The core based model for an agribusiness educational program is presented in Figure 7.

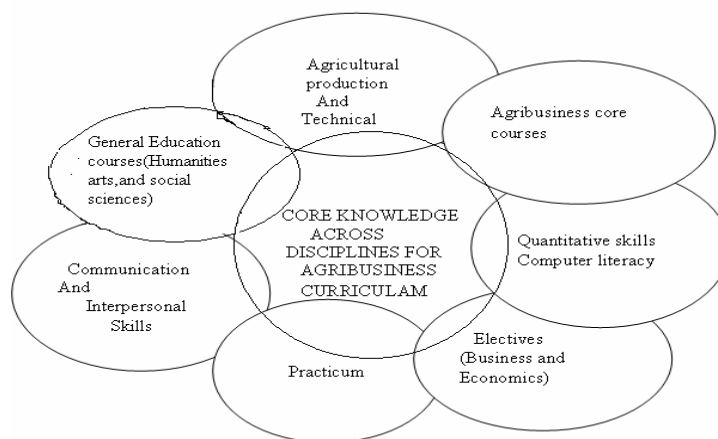


Figure 7: Agribusiness Core-based Curriculum Model (adapted from Sledge et al.)

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- The model also emphasizes the interdisciplinary relationships within agribusiness education. These relationships are overlapping of discipline clusters. Within the core knowledge curricular planners must give attention to interactions within discipline clusters and establishment of prerequisite knowledge and coherence.

➤ Axioms suggested as guides to curriculum developers are:

- Curriculum change is inevitable and desirable.
- The curriculum is a product of its time.
- Curriculum changes of earlier periods often coexist with and overlap curriculum changes of later periods.
- Curriculum development is a cooperative group activity.
- Curriculum development is basically a process of making choices from among alternatives.
- Curriculum development starts from where the curriculum is at present time.
- Curriculum development is more effective if it is a comprehensive, not piecemeal process.

- Curriculum restructuring process begins with defining the problem and needs assessment.

- Diagnostic thinking about- what we expect in terms of outcomes?
- The restructured curriculum should produce expected results, mainly graduates who are ready to solve problems in agriculture.

CHALLENGES:

- Critically examine your program commit to making program work.
- Internationalization of curriculum.
- Student recruitment. **Recruit not only bright ones, but right ones- committed to agribusiness.**
- Develop Partnerships and identify Stakeholders.
- Agribusinesses- help us develop curricula that train people to meet industry needs.
- Experiential learning opportunities.
- Hire Interns, cooperative education.
- Train teachers with right training and experiences.