

## Program Director

The main job of the Program Director is to take the lead in making the meetings of the Farmers Union division interesting, educational, and entertaining and to encourage the maximum participation of member families. The Program Director should be familiar with how to run an effective meeting and entice people to attend. The duties of the Program Director could easily fit into the scope of the Vice President's job. Many divisions combine the two positions, and it has been very effective.

The Program Director's duties should include:

- Helping plan the division's program schedule for the year. You can find an example in the Appendix.
- Planning interesting and informational meetings.
- Inviting guest speakers to address the division. You can find an example in the Appendix.
- Keeping a list of possible program topics suggested by members as well as a list of available resource people for each topic. One way to gather this information is by surveying members during meetings or through email.
- Arranging for entertainment, if time is available, to provide a well-balanced program.
- Bringing valuable information and educational materials to the attention of members, including books, pamphlets, magazines, film catalogs, video tapes, government reports and bulletins or recent division and national Farmers Union publications.
- Maintaining and trying to enhance relations with other organizations in the community such as parent-teacher organizations, labor unions, extension officials, churches, service clubs and committees on health, education, welfare and farm and highway safety.

### Helpful Hints for the Program Director

- Explore state, regional, and national funding opportunities to financially support programming. For example, consider partnering with National Farmers Union if interested in federal funding opportunities or cross-state collaborative opportunities. Connect with other Program Directors to find out how they leveraged special partnerships, grants, or sponsorship opportunities to expand outreach and financial sustainability programming.
- In planning the program, the division's officers should designate how much time is allotted for each feature of the program, and this should be recorded by the Program Director. Encourage the President to start the meeting on time.
- Have a total program that directly reflects the purpose of the Farmers Union. Perhaps the best idea for effective Farmers Union meetings will involve the scheduling of meetings around a special issue. These meetings may involve a controversial division, local or national issue and should include the presentation of both sides in a panel discussion or debate-style format.
- Special holidays should be noted as interesting ways of presenting the educational themes, such as:
  - panel or forum discussions

- mock radio or TV shows, skits, socio-dramas, or musical skits
  - video, movie or slide presentations
  - quizzes
  - book reports
- Invite speakers or guest members of other groups such as labor unions, the PTA, farm program agencies, health agencies, etc.
- Don't overlook local cooperative employees/managers and Farmers Union insurance agents as potential speakers.
- Cooperate with the division Education Director in planning the program and with the Public Relations Director for promotion of the meeting.
- Include group singing at appropriate points in the program--at the start of the meeting or possibly in advance of the entertainment part of the program--as a means to lighten up the meeting and encourage group participation.
- Work with the other officers in the division to outline a schedule of programs for the entire year--subject to alteration due to current events--so each program can be well developed in advance.