Agriculture's image has suffered of late. The media's exploitation of news about farmer's financial problems, movies like "Country" and "Places in the Heart" dramatizing families struggling to earn a living on the farm, and songs by singers such as Charley Pride lamenting that "if we can put a man up on the moon, why can't we keep one down on the farm?" have contributed to a negative image. This image is extending to the whole of agriculture, and it is evident in baccalaureate enrollments, which declined by ~30% in agriculture at land-grant universities between 1977 and 1983 (1).

It is not impossible to change an image. Kyle Jane Coulter reminds us that New York was once regarded by many as dirty, crime-ridden, and financially troubled. The "I Love New York" campaign helped transform its image to one of scenic beauty, interesting people, and cultural excitement (1).

A focus on culture is part of the strategy for enhancing the public image of agriculture at Clemson Univ. With the help of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, a partnership has been established that enables undergraduate students to make significant contributions to the area of agricultural awareness.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation is promoting agricultural awareness through grant support for an Agricultural Literacy Program. The purpose of the program is to enhance the awareness of faculty, students, and the public about food-related, human nutrition, and agricultural issues. The program is designed to support curriculum development and improve interdisciplinary exchanges between Liberal Arts and the Agricultural Sciences through competitive mini-grants awarded to faculty teams. Clemson Univ. is one of 13 colleges and universities across the United States selected for participation in this program. During the period 1984 through 1986, two mini-grants helped form the partnership between landscape design and visual arts faculty and students that contributed to a concept entitled IMAGES, an innovative, fresh visual approach to promoting agricultural awareness. The use of artistic images included two projects, entitled "Agricultural Sculpture in the Landscape" and "Ag. Junction Agricultural Art Exhibit and Interior-scape".

Agricultural sculpture in the landscape

The first of these programs, "Agricultural Sculpture in the Landscape", involved the classes of sculptors John Acorn and James Stockham, both professors in the department of Visual Arts and History in the College of Architecture, and the landscape design classes of landscape architect Mary Haque in the College of Agricultural Sciences. The proposal for this project arose from a desire to establish a link between the colleges of Architecture and Agriculture and to establish visibility for these colleges on a campus that is notably short on sculpture and low in agricultural student numbers.

Agricultural sculpture in the landscape

Students from a beginning sculpture class and a beginning landscape design class united to work on a sculpture project based on the theme food and agriculture. Together, students researched art in public spaces and works of art related to the food and agriculture theme. They worked through the process of site selection together and designed spaces integrating sculpture and landscape. The same theme also was assigned to a summer school sculpture class, where students built scale models, "Wheat", "Growth", "Leaf", "Seed Pod", "Ice Cream Cone", and "Eggs" were titles of student works evidencing the agriculture theme.

The authors anticipated that the interdisciplinary aspects of this project would stimulate students to contemplate what R. Karson
calls "one of the fundamental dilemmas of 20th century sculpture". Karson asks if sculpture is to remain a "precious, pedestaled, museum object (in the tradition of Rodin) or should it develop its role (à la Smithson) as a clarifier and definer of site?" (5). The students unanimously chose the first of Karson's options.

Although the students did not evidence the tremendous social, political, and natural awareness of a Christo, or confront the forces of nature in heroic style as would Nancy Holt, they did take a close look at agriculture. One piece provided a provocative touch of controversy, which sculptor Athena Tacha says "improves the climate of public sculpture" (3). The phallusesque piece, dubbed "Father Earth" by Kellogg officials, provoked laughter, rolling of eyes, red faces, censorship, and discussion about the principal value of public art. If the capacity to command our attention and become the focus of aesthetic contemplation, or at least a good argument, is one of the principal values of public art, as Eric Hammum propounds (3), then even this controversial piece had value.

In addition to providing a stimulating exchange, one of the principal values of the "Agricultural Sculpture in the Landscape" project was in motivating non-agriculture students to take an in-depth and creative look at agriculture.

Agriculture abounds with elements that can heighten a student's perceptual awareness. Landscape design and sculpture students together to design and implement a project incorporating student paintings and interior vegetation for a highly visible sales center called "Ag. Junction" on the Clemson University campus. Beginning visual arts students were assigned the theme "food and agriculture" as a class project, and their works were exhibited on a previously bare wall in the Ag. Sales Lobby, where many people from both the university and the community come to buy agricultural goods. Horticulture students enrolled in a landscape implementation class planned and implemented an interior design, using plant materials in conjunction with the visual arts student's paintings. The two classes met together to discuss the layout and plans for the space, and to implement the exhibit.

The exhibit was judged by professional artist/teacher Susan Wooten from Anderson College. Awards were given to Harry Bolick, a fourth-year architecture student, for his painting of a cow and a computer chip and to Richard Kiely and Chris Farr for paintings of potatoes and string beans. The first place winner received a honorarium of $50, which was established to motivate and reinforce the students.

Invitations to the student presentations and awards ceremony were sent to the Kellogg review committee and to the Deans of Agriculture and Architecture. Each painting student made a brief comment about his work, and Julie Bennett, the junior horticulture student who designed the interiorscape and spearheaded its implementation, presented her design for the interiorscape.

The project was completed in Spring 1985, and articles have appeared in Clemson University News, C.U. Newsletter, and S.C. Horticulture urging people to "drop by the Ag. Sales Center for some ice cream and a look at the plants and the paintings" (3). We think that $700 worth of plants and $300 worth of paint, canvas, and frames have given far more than $1000 worth of visibility to art and agriculture. Both the students and the public have enjoyed the process, and with more than 500 visitors a day viewing the project, the visibility of agriculture and visual arts in the public's eye has certainly been enhanced.

**Conclusion**

Artist in Education Judith Major has aptly observed that "an artist can sometimes spark a community's appreciation of its own treasures... Een resources outside their awareness or so familiar that they go unnoticed" (6). This expanded vision is reflected in the works of college students who participated in the W.K. Kellogg Agricultural Literacy Program. Through interdisciplinary exchange on two art-related projects, "Agricultural Sculpture in the Landscape" and "Ag. Junction Agricultural Art Exhibit and Interiorscape", students in visual arts and horticulture have established a salient and artistic approach to expanding agricultural awareness.

**Mary Haque, John Acorn, James Stockham, and Ireland Regnier**

Dept. of Horticulture

Clemson Univ.

Clemson, S.C. 29634

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2Professor of Visual Arts and History.
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