Ethics-education and values-education are not new concepts, although we could probably argue their newness to the primary, secondary, and even college/university setting. We could likely even debate the question of whether ethics-education and values-education belong in our public schools! These researchers looked beyond those questions as they sought to assess the ethical condition of competitive FFA program events as perceived by our pre-service agricultural science teachers across the U.S.

The researchers did a commendable job of setting the stage and helping the reader understand the background for this research. The theoretical framework was well organized and easily led the reader to an understanding of this study’s purpose and objectives. The researchers clearly explained and documented the study design. Further, they provided a concisely detailed explanation of the instrument, making it much easier for the reader to follow and understand the findings.

Findings were well organized, based on the objectives. The summary tables and the qualitative comments were both valuable in helping the reader to gain a better understanding of the data. It was important to note the data were open-ended responses in order to get a better handle on the pre-service teachers beliefs. With that in mind, it was both heartening and disheartening to see the responses. Heartening from the standpoint that these pre-service teachers are hearing what we as teacher-educators have been telling them: FFA is a leadership tool, it is an extension of the classroom, and it can foster critical thinking skills through application of classroom learning. Disheartening from the standpoint that many of those concepts were low frequency responses.

Perhaps the most revealing data were reported under objective three where respondents listed concerns with the overall ethical condition of competitive FFA programs. Of 263 respondents, only 60 reported no concern over the ethical condition of FFA! The researchers correctly, and wisely, formulated no conclusion from that data, but it does lead the reader to wonder what this may say about the pre-service teachers coming through our programs.

The recommendations prepared by the researchers were legitimate and the recommended extended research should shed more light on the issue of ethics-education and values-education. The researchers suggest greater emphasis be placed on academics within the FFA program, thereby lessening the emphasis placed on livestock shows and CDEs. I am unsure how this shift would change the competition factor, as academic competition can be as fierce and as fraught with unethical situations as livestock shows or judging contests.

It would be interesting to know if there were major differences in findings among the regions. Some states appear to be more competitively driven through livestock shows and CDEs. It would also be interesting to compare differences in demographics among the respondents to determine if high-school FFA experience impacted the responses.

Once again, the authors are to be commended for continued programmatic research relating to ethics and values-education.