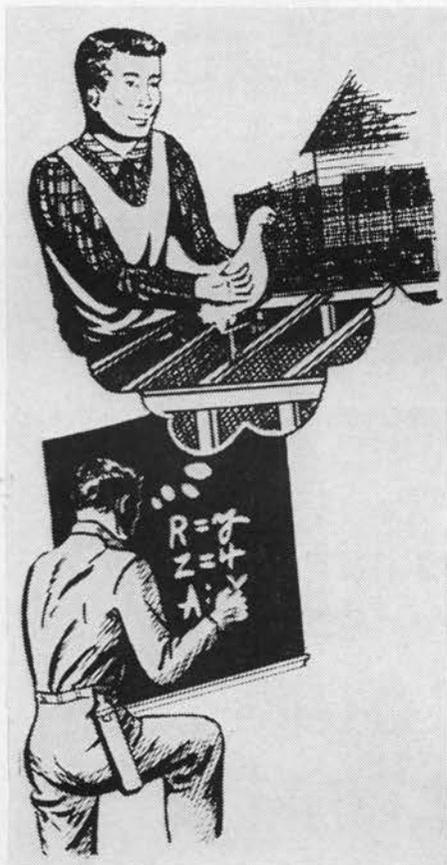


WHAT'S AN

AG?

By Eldean Borg



AN AG! What is he? A fellow in bib overalls and strawhat, pitchfork in hand... Not always. The Ag is a mixture of many ingredients. He is seen in different ways by those who "know" him well.

The engineer sees the Ag as "a man without a slide rule." While the engineer is memorizing the boiling temperature of concrete and the relationship of A to x, the Ag can be found studying such interesting things as the number of Leghorn hens allowed on one roost or the fall of the hog price in China resulting from U.S. corn exports to Spain. The engineer constantly ribs the Ag about the "snap" farm courses, but would trade his slide rule to know what transmissible gastro-enteritis really is.

To his roommate, the Ag is the unsolvable problem who leaves his Agronomy soil samples in the middle of the room or trudges into the room with a trouser-cuff filled with weed seed after spending an afternoon lab at the Agronomy farm. Often the roommate can waken from a deep sleep to hear the Ag mumbling something about the chromosome numbers in Angus bulls.

The Ag as seen by the registrar is the bearer of drop slips during the first two weeks of any quarter. He is also part of the aggregation which causes enrollment to drop during the spring quarter with the explanation, "Dad needs help at home."

The chemistry instructor looks at the Ag and sees someone who demands to know why his major should require chemistry? The instructor also avoids an explanation of chemical fertilizers if there's an Ag in the class in order to save prestige.

The closest contact Mom and Dad have with "their" Ag is a B-I-L-L and the weekly laundry cases which contain some odd looking shirts and trousers called ivy league that "he must have bought at Ames to supplement his Levis and FFA jacket."

The prospective employer looks at an Ag senior and sees a personnel sheet that reads like an issue of the agricultural encyclopedia. There are courses included from every branch of agriculture imaginable and invariably two or three quarters of Genetics 300.

The Ag pictures himself as the most overworked person on the campus. After just four years of school, at Iowa State, he can talk to you about pruning grape vines or the digestive system of a milk cow. He can also tell you the expected progeny from a Holstein-Hereford cross, or the clay content of Clarion-Webster soil.

Often the Ag is the boy who left the farm to go to college to learn all about some business related to agriculture. Upon learning more about the farm, however, he decides to return to the farm and take over the "home forty."

During a five minute visit with an Ag, you'll find he's well-versed on such complicated matters as dating an Iowa State coed, Cardinal Guild, the honor system (and why it won't work), the "Daily", and the art of learning how to sleep through Saturday classes.

The Ag takes jokes from the engineer and the scientist with tongue in cheek and even feels a bit sorry for them because they haven't yet discovered the most interesting, diversified, and rewarding study known to man — that of agriculture.

