

AN ASSESSMENT OF SELECTED FACTORS INFLUENCING  
PERKINS-TRYON AGRICULTURAL STUDENTS TO CHOOSE  
SUPERVISED AGRICULTURAL EXPERIENCES IN  
ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE

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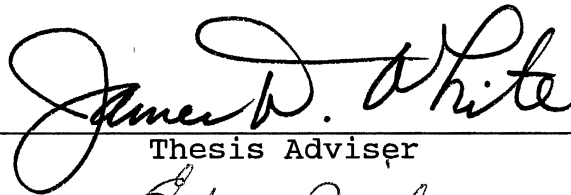
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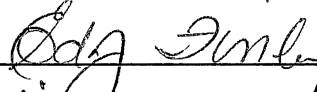
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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Oklahoma has a long history of outstanding vocational agriculture programs. These programs are responsible for the production of outstanding citizens that have built the tradition of agriculture in our state. Vocational programs originated over 70 years ago through the Smith Hughes Act of 1917 (Smith, 1982). These programs were established to provide the type of training for young men that would encourage them to choose agriculture as a career. These young men were taught the latest innovations in agriculture, but with a unique "twist". Students of vocational agriculture were oriented to emphasize the local program and community. It was a combination of localization and innovation that developed Vocational Agriculture and FFA Programs into dynamic and progressive programs in and about agriculture during the latter part of the twentieth century.

Since their inception vocational agriculture programs have existed to provide the student with the most up-to-date information. Because of the time limitations, teaching students to become experts was not possible, however teaching and challenging students to discover new information is possible. Vocational agriculture brought the

"hands-on" technique to life through participation in supervised experience programs outside the classroom. Students learned basic skills and knowledge from this hands-on approach. Many vocational programs have become popular, however none have the success story of vocational agriculture. Vocational agriculture programs have grown and progressed due in large part to Supervised Agriculture Experience Programs (SAE's). The SAE, also known as 'Supervised Occupational Experience Program (SOEP's) or Supervised Farm Practice', has remained the heart of vocational agriculture curricula for 70 years. The objectives of SAE include: 1) the enhancement of classroom instruction, 2) the better understanding of any agricultural occupation chosen by the student, 3) an opportunity for the student to grow into an agricultural occupation through the acquisition of technical agricultural knowledge and/or agricultural land, facilities or livestock, and 4) providing a vehicle for the accumulation of experience in performing a task required by an agricultural occupation (Smith, 1982). The types of SOEP's have taken a drastic change and no doubt will continue to do so. Today's SOEP's are a blend of production and agribusiness (Johns, 1986). The SOEP changed even more as young women were admitted to the program in 1969 (FFA Manual, 1984).

Depressed prices of commodity products and agriculture assets have brought about many changes in rural areas. As a result, SAE's have also appeared to suffer in recent years.

Students have been reluctant to carry on traditional SAE programs, many which have centered around "show programs" in Oklahoma. "Unfortunately some SOEP's have been developed primarily for exhibition purposes and have been managed by parents and instructors rather than students" (Hembree, 1983). Just the same, SAE's have always been an intricate part of vocational agriculture programs. Both students and teachers perceive SOEP's as a major tool which insures that our programs remain vocational in nature (Dunham and Long, 1984).

Perhaps SOEP's in Oklahoma became too narrow in their perception (Johns, 1986). SAE's became more for "show" than for any other purpose. Although SAE's in Oklahoma have brought about some of the keenest competition and created many large livestock shows, student involvement has been decreasing. The loss of student participation in SOEP's must be addressed as these programs provide many worthwhile experiences.

The challenge that lies ahead for instructors is to increase student participation in SAE's in our "vocational agriculture programs". In order to increase the number of SAE's, a broader scope of interest must be developed among students. Other research efforts have indicated some of the same problems and suggested studies be developed to investigate related information that would encourage the further development and encourage student participation in supervised experience programs.

Non-traditional agriculture provides an alternative for potentially increasing student involvement in supervised experience programs (SAE's). Alternative agriculture has proved valuable in diversifying Oklahoma farm income, therefore generating extra income in periods of financial distress (Harriett, 1987).

Alternative agriculture is just a different word for a non-traditional agriculture business (Harriett, 1987). These new programs have become more prominent in recent years as farmers searched for resources that would place extra money in the their pockets.

Alternative agriculture has created a new perception in production areas in the forms of Mohair production, catfish production and wildlife hunting and leasing production to name a few. Specialty crops have come to light as farmers have used Christmas trees, fruit production, vegetables and other crops not commonly found in the state to increase income.

The students of vocational agriculture programs learn from the local agriculture base of the community. This makes our programs unique to each community. Teachers should be educated so that SAE's reflect the agriculture base of the community. SAE programs should be developed with built-in flexibility to be able to adapt to change. This means the teacher could influence students to expand their capabilities and explore possibilities for new areas



of agricultural involvement. To do so brings a wider variety of agriculture and diversification to the community.

#### Statement of Problem

There are several factors that could increase the number of SAE's currently supervised by vocational agriculture teachers, however numbers of students involved in well planned SAE programs is limited primarily because of two factors in the Perkins-Tryon community, 1) the population of high school age students is decreasing, and 2) the current economy is suffering from depressed prices in the farm and energy sectors.

Vocational agriculture is a "hands-on" program designed to provide students with a means to enter the agricultural industry. To increase participation, researchers suggest broadening the scope of SAE's in which a student can become involved. Implementing new Supervised Experience Programs through alternative agriculture may provide an answer to increasing student involvement. Factors that contribute to the selection of Supervised Experience Programs, especially an SAE based in alternative agriculture must be identified.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this study was to assess the selected factors influencing Perkins-Tryon agriculture students to choose supervised agriculture experience programs in alternative agriculture.

## Objectives

In order to fulfill the purpose of this study it was necessary to formulate the following objectives.

1. To determine the general background characteristics of agricultural education students, their parents and members of the Perkins-Tryon business community.

2. To determine the perceived interest of Perkins-Tryon agriculture students in selected agriculture career choices.

3. To determine the perceived acceptability by students, their parents, and members of the business community concerning selected alternative agriculture enterprises.

4. To determine the level of influence selected factors have on students to select supervised experience programs in alternative agriculture as perceived by students, parents, and members of the Perkins-Tryon business community.

5. To determine the level of influence selected alternative agriculture areas have on students with regard to attracting their interest and involvement in alternative agriculture SAE's as perceived by students, parents, and members of the business community.

6. To determine the level of influence selected limiting factors have on student's decisions to consider involvement in alternative agriculture supervised experience

programs as perceived by students, parents, and members of the Perkins-Tryon business community.

#### Assumptions of Study

1. Students, parents, and members of the business community understood and/or comprehended the questions asked in the survey instrument.

2. The students, parents and members of the business community understood the meaning of supervised experience program as applied to this study.

3. Responses by the participants were honest and sincere.

#### Scope

The scope of this study included all agriculture education students, their parents and members of the business community in the Perkins-Tryon School district.

#### Definitions

Agriculture - the science or art of cultivating the soil, producing crops and raising livestock (Webster, 1984).

Base - the bottom of something considered as its support (Webster, 1984).

Agricultural Base - the agricultural resources of area that provides economic support for the community.

Alternative - a choice between things (Webster, 1984) i.e. the selection of various managerial techniques and/or

enterprises for increased economic stability (Harriett, 1987).

Alternative agriculture - the selection of various agricultural enterprises for increased economic stability of the agriculture industry.

Exhibition SOEP - These SOEP's deal primarily with animals, crops, etc. raised singly or in limited numbers primarily for exhibition (i.e. barrow, steer, wethers) (Hembree, 1983).

Business/Professional person - members of the Perkins-Tryon business community and/or professionals involved in law, education, finance, medicine, dentistry, etc.

Lab experience - a program for students of agriculture education classes designed to teach specific skills through "hands-on" training procedures outside the traditional classroom.

Multiple Teacher Department - program where two or more vocational agriculture teachers are teaching vocational agriculture in the same school department (Johns, 1986).

Production SAE - These are SAE's that deal more with production commercially of livestock and crops as opposed to single animal production for exhibition (i.e. show heifer vs. commercial heifers and cows, show gilts or commercial sows and gilts, crop production, feeder cattle or wheat pasture cattle) (Hembree, 1983).

Resources - something that lies ready for use or can be drawn upon for aid (Webster, 1984), i.e. the output of

researchers, scientists, educators, etc. for use in agriculture (Harriett, 1987).

Single Teacher Department - program where only one vocational agriculture teacher is teaching vocational agriculture in a high school department (Johns, 1986).

Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 - the legislative act which provided for a continuing appropriation for vocational education in agriculture, trade and industrial, and homemaking education (Smith, 1982).

SAE - Supervised Agricultural Experience - a multipurpose enterprise or activity supervised by agriculture instructors for the purpose of enhancing students' growth and development as well as learning about and training in American modern agriculture.

Vocational Agriculture - an educational program at the high school level providing training for students in production agriculture and agriculture related occupations (Hembree, 1983).

Agricultural Education - an education program conducted at the secondary school level which provides training about agriculture for students in agribusiness, ag mechanics, leadership, natural resources, production management, and related areas.

Vocational Agriculture Instructor - State certified personnel employed by local school districts to direct programs designed to meet the needs of students desiring occupations in agriculture and to enact in helping adults of

the community in meeting their needs in the area of agriculture (Wilson, 1987).

Agricultural Education Instructor - State certified personnel employed by local school districts to direct programs designed to meet the needs of students desiring both education about agriculture and training in agricultural occupations.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to review literature related to those factors which influence students to select Supervised Experience Programs in Agriculture/Alternative Agriculture. This literature review will include: 1) attitudes of students, teachers and parents, toward SAE's, 2) The SAE benefits for students, 3) Factors which limit student participation, and 4) Alternative agriculture SAE's for students with limited opportunities.

#### Attitudes Toward Supervised Agriculture Experience

From the very start of vocational agriculture programs, the participation in SAE's has been an integral part of the curriculum. The SOEP has been a primary means to provide students with actual life experiences they will find necessary for careers in the field of agriculture (Rawls, 1980). Students of vocational agriculture have learned valuable skills from their SAE's that they can transfer to later life experiences. Since students have entered classes of vocational agriculture, our country has experienced good times and bad - yet SAE's have managed to survive. Given

the current economy of Oklahoma, the loss of revenues from oil and agriculture related industries have reflected lower gross income to households. The decline of numbers of SAE's in recent years may be due to the poor economic condition of the state. This problem is not unique to Oklahoma vocational programs, as other states are facing similar problems. However, recent research has shown the economy may not play as large a role as suspected in the decline in numbers of SAE's. Many students are actually unhappy with their current SOEP and would like to increase or do more (Zurbrick, 1984). However, most educators are aware that the program was built on the premise that learning-by-doing is a basic and proven educational principle (Williams, 1980). A study by Williams (1977) indicated that students in Iowa felt their SOEP's were valuable in helping to obtain occupational skills that would lead to careers in the field of agriculture.

For an SAE to be successful, some degree of support must come from the parents. Most parents of vocational agriculture students recognize the educational and occupational benefits provided by SOEP programs and will most generally support educational programs if they can see the benefits provided to their sons and daughters (Rawls, 1982).

Teachers perceive the SAE as a valuable tool in creating the "hands-on" approach that vocational agriculture is noted for. Teachers realize their contribution to the



SAE requires a large amount of time. Vocational agriculture departments with an active, progressive SOEP are difficult to manage and requires additional funding for the teacher to maintain proper SOEP visits (Case, 1985). Related literature indicated the instructor of vocational agriculture is possibly the strongest influence on the quality of the SOEP (Case, 1985).

Progressive vocational agriculture programs are a result of aggressive supervised agricultural experience programs. It is important that teachers recognize this and provide aggressive leadership in supervision of SOEP's (Harris, 1985). Related literature found that SOEP's in California vocational agriculture programs were a combination of three major areas:

(1) classroom instructions, (2) supervised occupational experience and (3) the Future Farmers of America. The combination of these three segments provided benefits to its students (P. 56, Leising and Zilbert, 1985).

Additional literature related to SAE's revealed that the quality of the SAE depends on three factors to be successful: (1) the student, (2) parent and (3) vocational agriculture instructor. The attitude of these three components will in large determine the success of the SAE. Research has proven a positive attitude toward the SAE must occur in order for the student to receive full benefit from the program.

## SAE Benefits for Students

No program will survive long if benefits are not perceived from those who are directly involved. The literature expressed this as researchers in Iowa identified these three benefit students gains:

(1) work attitude, (2) occupational development and (3) human relationship skills (P. 37, Rawls, 1982). Rawls identified the SOEP as a program that systematically involved students in real life agriculture experiences which are planned and supervised as a part of the vocational agriculture program (P.31, Rawls, 1982).

SAE's are a valuable tool in developing entrepreneurship in students.

If teachers provide an environment that encourages students in the development of entrepreneurial abilities the SOEP's of the vocational agriculture program will become stronger (P.8, Wilson, 1984).

There are few programs offered nation wide that provide the chance for students to learn skills and receive income at the same time. Related literature highlighted this, as it suggested students have the opportunity through supervised occupational experience programs that provide practical hands-on training needed by students to become entrepreneurs, the owners of agriculture/agribusiness enterprises (Siefeldt and Meyer, 1984).

Students are rewarded through foundation awards throughout the nation each year for their involvement in an SAE. These awards take place in 29 different agriculture and agriculture related areas. In recent years new awards have been developed to recognize students involved in

alternative agriculture. For many years these awards primarily emphasized traditional crop, livestock and career placement areas. These students are provided with incentives of recognition awards and money to encourage further development of their SOEP's (FFA Manual, 1984).

Teachers, parents and administrators have long recognized the benefits of job placement which SAE's provide students of vocational agriculture. Vocational agriculture students have indicated to agriculture educators through research that the supervised occupational experience program (SOEP) are important in developing occupational skills (Williams, 1977). Related research found that agribusiness placement SAE's contribute similarly to the development of occupational ability regardless of these factors:

student's home location, years involved in the vocational program, teacher placement assistance, FFA awards received in the SOE agribusiness program, immediate plans and occupational goals (P. 52, Pilgrim and Williams, 1984).

Because students involved in SAE's have extra opportunities they are a step ahead of the other students of similar age and grade. SAE's provide benefits in developing of career goals at an early age. Bearing this in mind, an SAE should be designed to prepare students for job placement in production or off-farm agricultural occupations (Binkley and Tulloch, 1981). The instructor must assist students in planning and developing SAE's to be flexible in meeting the needs of both rural and urban participants. These kinds of

programs work to create unique SAE's which can be utilized by off-farm students.

A broad based, well planned SAE program can provide many benefits to both rural and urban students. However all will benefit primarily because of (1) development of skills and knowledge, (2) awards and income from the SAE program, and (3) future job placement opportunities derived from on-job experiences.

#### Factors Limiting Student

#### Participation in SAE

A Nebraska study indicated that economic conditions were contributing factors by reducing employment opportunities and increasing the cost of production while the value of agriculture products decreased (Foster, 1986). Foster (1986) also reported that school administrators, instructor knowledge, and limited contract days did not limit students' involvement in SOEP's.

In Oklahoma, the use of the school farm system has helped to reduce the limitations of students involved in SAE's. Farrell (1983) provided supporting evidence stating that school farms provide practical experience for students from urban areas in developing an agricultural background. Further supporting evidence in a study by Miller (1984) showed that SOEP's should be responsive to the students' needs.

This leads us to believe that student success with an SAE is to some extent in the hands of the local vocational agriculture teacher. An Oregon study confirms the teacher has significant influence over the student. Herren and Cole (1984) recommended that teachers have the experience of:

(a) owning a SOEP while in high school, (b) be required to do course work at the university concerning SOEP's and (c) all student teachers received some training about SOEP quality during student teaching (P. 51).

#### Alternative Agriculture For Students With Limited SAE Opportunities

SAE's strengthen the total program and provide the component which makes it vocational. Traditional SAE's became well established during the first 60 years of vocational agriculture. These traditional programs served their purpose by meeting the needs of many students as they carried on both ownership and agribusiness SAE's. Today, with agriculture changing, so must the SAE's in which students are involved. Students select SAE's based for a variety of reasons, but basically many are influenced by the teacher.

A related study by Leising and Zilbert (1985) revealed there was a high correlation between SOEP (1) at the level of FFA participation, (2) application of students for FFA awards, and (3) membership in the FFA. He found a lower correlation when the SOEP (1) is required, (2) family source of income and (3) place of residence (P. 62).

Furthermore, Leising and Zilbert (1985) revealed that there was a significant association between membership in the FFA and student participation in SOEP's.

Leising and Zilbert (1985) also found that the place of residence or family income also affected whether or not students had a SOEP. This study further revealed the primary influence came from the vocational agriculture instructor. Agreement was shown in a Missouri study which described efforts to improve SOEP's quality dealt with SOEP activities in which the vocational agriculture teacher had considerable expertise and influence. Case and Stewart (1985) found that teachers were able to influence students' involvement and levels of involvement through (1) the number of on-site visits by the teacher, (2) adequate travel funds for making supervising visits, (3) emphasizing SOEP during the school day, and (4) SOEP supervision hour scheduled during the school day (P. 5).

During the 1980's, even students with a farm background were forced to become more creative in their selection and development of SAE's. As a result, alternative agriculture entered vocational agriculture programs primarily through the development of small animal programs. In an article written by Bender (1986), he addressed the problem in detail. Bender (1986) pointed out that there were primarily three reasons why students were not more interested in small animals:

(1) teachers don't care and don't care to teach what they don't know, (2) many teachers were not prepared to teach these areas because of little preparation, and (3) teachers lack the experience to teach students (P. 21).

The unique aspect of alternative agriculture is that it provides students more opportunity to select and own an SAE. This better fits the resources, needs and goals of students. Newman and Powell (1986) cited examples involving both livestock and crops. Their research showed that students could benefit from producing specialty crops such as strawberries, blueberries and other fruit bearing crops because they required minimum acreage and developed managerial skills in production agriculture. Newman and Powell (1986) also cited the fact that students could grow and merchandize vegetables such as carrots, eggplant, tomatoes, peppers, beets, sweet corn, and okra.

Many counties in Oklahoma have developed farmers markets which provide an excellent outlet for the sale of alternative agricultural products. Students that select SAE's that are alternative in nature can use these outlets to market the product produced. This type of merchandise provides a real opportunity for the student to learn how to market agriculture products.

Specialty livestock and wildlife have also moved into the realm of SAE's. Newman and Powell (1986) further revealed that catfish farming was a profitable SOEP. Some students are also selecting areas such as beekeeping to produce income and develop skills.

Wilson (1986) stated that beekeeping is an art and science that can remain with the student for the rest of his/her life and the vocational agriculture instructor can have a lasting effect on the student (P. 10).

Fur bearing animals are also proving to be an old project that is making a reappearance. Fur bearing animals like rabbits which also can be produced for meat have provided an excellent opportunity for students with limited space and capital to maintain an SAE. While some believe "exotic" SAE's should not be recognized as SAE's in vocational agriculture. Freeman (1984) stated

we must keep our mission and identity clearly in mind. We teach vocational agriculture. The production of tropical fish, birds, dogs, cats, mice and monkeys are not agriculture by my definition. We should not be teaching in these areas nor should we accept them as SOEP projects (P. 17).

However, Lindsay (1985) stated aquaculture was one of the oldest concepts of agriculture and the production of seaweed and seafood such as mussels, clams, oysters and fish could reduce food shortages and increase the source of protein (P. 73).

#### Summary

The review emphasized one very basic concept, SAE is a very important component of every vocational agriculture program. Without the SAE as a base, students would lose the unique opportunity for skill development. The literature revealed that both parent and teacher play an important role in the attitude of the student toward his selection and participation in the SAE. The teachers expertise,



knowledge, commitment to on-site visits and his interest in SAE greatly effect the quality of the program.

The review further showed that students gained much more when SAE was a fundamental component of the total program. Aside from the income received and the skills learned, these young people are actually experiencing the rewards of life. The ability to explore career opportunities as well as being placed in position of entrepreneurship responsibility by managing their SAE's.

Furthermore, students with limited opportunities have the opportunity for a new or non-traditional approach. Specialty crops and livestock for an SOEP alternative agriculture has a built in opportunity for extra income. Rediscovery of areas not commonly utilized before, SAE's have brought a new look to secondary agriculture programs in addition to reducing the barriers of student participation.

In addition, a point which was expressed by several researchers, emphasized without the interest and support of the vocational agriculture teacher, the success of the vocational agriculture SOEP will be limited.

## CHAPTER III

### DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

The objective of this chapter was to describe the methods used and the procedures followed in conducting the study. The intent of this study was to determine the selected factors influencing Perkins-Tryon Agriculture students to choose Supervised Agriculture Experience Programs (SAE's) in alternative agriculture. To accomplish the purpose and objectives of this study, it was important to complete the following tasks: 1) identification of the population, 2) the development of the instrument, 3) collection of the data, 4) analysis of the data, and 5) Institutional Review Board Approval.

#### Population

The population for this study consisted of: 1) the total student population (80) of the agricultural education program of the Perkins-Tryon School system, 2) 76 parents, and 3) 50 members of the business community.

The student population, which included nine double enrollees, consisted of 22 members of the 8th grade Ag Orientation Class, 15 Agriculture I students, 10 Production

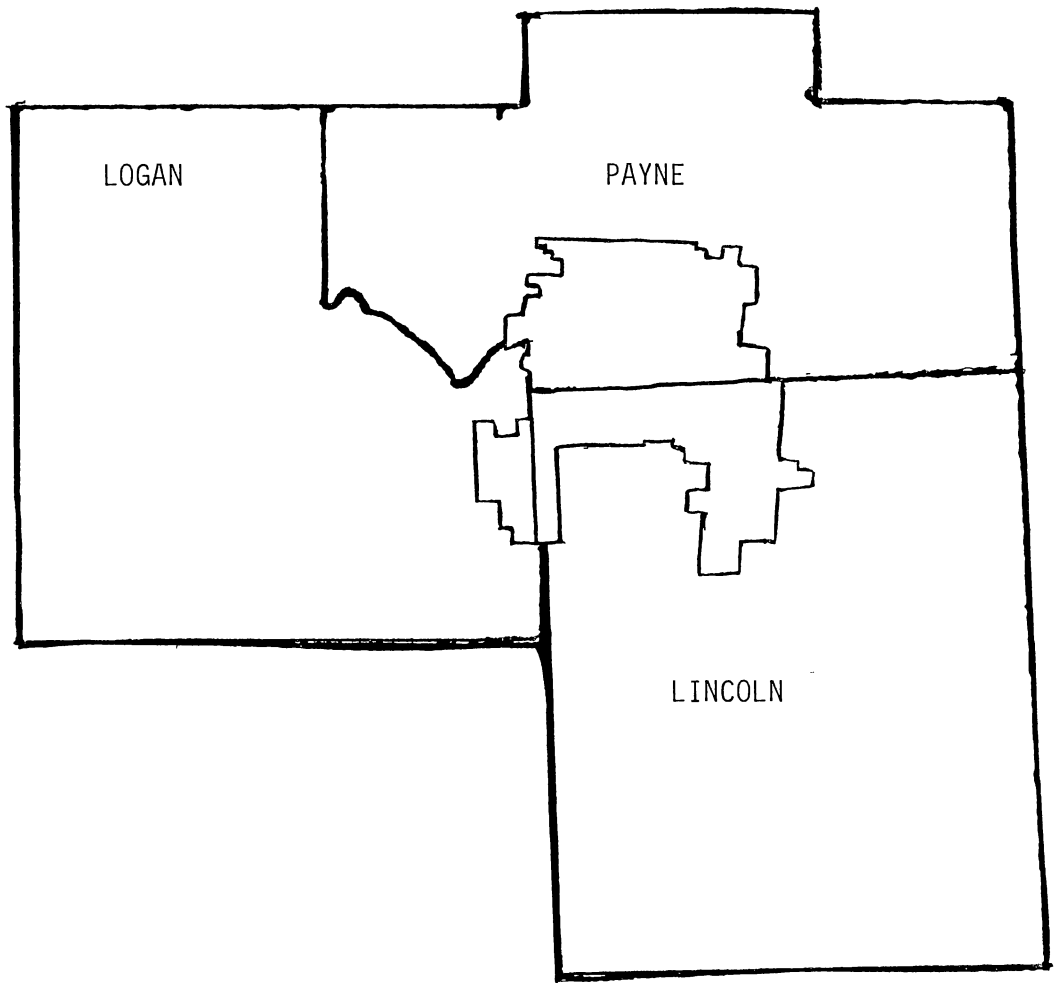


Figure 1. Geographic Location of the Perkins-Tryon School District.

Management I students, 12 members of the Natural Resources Class, 9 students in Agriculture Processing, 11 students in Agricultural Mechanics I and 10 members of the Agricultural Mechanics II class for a total of 80 study participants.

All (100 percent) of the students completed the questionnaire during their respective classes, while 40 (25.81 percent) of the parents responded to the survey brought home by their children for them to complete. Thirty-five (70 percent) of the fifty business and professional people in the Perkins-Tryon School District completed the survey instrument delivered by the researcher.

TABLE I  
A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY CATEGORY

Category	Frequency Distribution	
	N	Percentage (%)
Students	80	51.61
Parents	40	25.81
Members of the Business Community	35	22.58
Total	155	100.00

## Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Federal regulations and Oklahoma State University policy require review and approval of all research studies that involve human subjects before investigators can begin their research. The Oklahoma State University Office of University Research Services and the IRB conduct this review to protect the rights and welfare of human subjects involved in biomedical and behavioral research. In compliance with the aforementioned policy, this study received the proper surveillance and was granted permission to continue. The research project number assigned to this study was AG-91-013.

## Development of the Instrument

A questionnaire was designed to gather data that fulfilled the purpose and objectives of the study (see Appendix A). The survey consisted of 1) student, 2) parental, and 3) business and professional questionnaires. The student questionnaire included both forced and open response items. The twelve (12) questions ascertained data regarding 1) type of SAE, 2) specific student SAE involvement, 3) student demographics, 4) the students' career interest, 5) the students' perceived usefulness of alternative agriculture enterprises, 6) the students' perceived influence of selected factors influencing their decision about alternative agriculture, and 7) five open-ended questions exploring general influences. The parental

questionnaire also consisted of both forced and open response items which included demographics questions concerning parent/guardian, 2) the parents' perceived usefulness of selected alternative agriculture enterprises, 3) parents' general perceptions of their child's/children's involvement in alternative agriculture, and 4) their perceptions about selected factors and enterprises pertaining to alternative agriculture. The questionnaire designed for the business and professional members of the community was the same as the "parental question" with the exception of how the potential respondents identified themselves as members of the Perkins-Tryon business and professional community.

Both nominal and ordinal scales were utilized to gather objective information about the respondents and the respondents' opinions/perceptions about alternative agriculture respectively. However, a five-point "Likert-type" scale was employed to compile data regarding the respondents' perceptions of levels of influence relative to 1) student involvement in alternative agriculture SAE's, 2) level of influence by the enterprise appealing to the students' choice of an SAE in alternative agriculture, and 3) perceptions of parents/guardians and business/community leaders concerning the consideration of selected factors prior to encouraging one's child or a student to pursue an SAE enterprise in alternative agriculture.

Upon completion of the rough draft, the instrument was reviewed by a panel of experts for clarity, organization and content. After further review for "face" validity the instrument was pilot tested. The survey was then submitted to author's graduate committee for final approval.

#### Collection of the Data

The survey process was conducted for the groups involved at three different times during the 1990 fall semester. The Perkins-Tryon Agriculture students were administered the survey during early September, while the students hand-carried the survey instrument home for their parents to complete around the middle of September. Business and professional leaders in the community received the survey and personal instructions for completion during the middle of October. Since the student survey was conducted during class-time, completed instruments were collected at the end of class that day. Parental surveys were to be completed by the parent/guardian and returned to school the next day via their child/children. And since the survey was personally delivered to members of the business community by the author, he was also personally responsible for collecting them. Follow-up requests for the surveys were conveyed personally and by telephone to both parents and members of the business community two-weeks after the initial surveys were delivered.

## Analysis of Data

The data collected were treated through the use of descriptive statistics. The statistics included frequency distributions of numerical values, percentages and arithmetic means to describe the information collected. According to Hoshmand (1988):

Data can be presented in a frequency distribution which involves grouped data that can be easily visualized. Frequency distributions give both the values for the observations and their frequency of occurrence (p. 18).

Further describing the measures of central tendency and specifically the mean, Hoshmand (1988) stated that:

Agricultural scientists and managers alike often talk about averages in the context of average weight gain, average retail food price, average income of farm workers, average milk production per day, etc. These averages simply summarize, in a single value, a set of data. In other words, averages are no more than the middle, or central location of a set of values or measurements. Averages can be presented as one of the three measures of central tendency, namely the mean, the median, and the mode.

**Mean.** The most familiar average is the mean or the arithmetic mean symbolized as  $\bar{X}$ . It is found by adding all values of a group of items and dividing the sum by the total number of items. The formula for the mean for sample and population respectively is as follows:

If a sample:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{n}$$



If a population:

$$\mu = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

where: X = measured value of an item  
 $\bar{X}$  = sample mean, read as X-bar  
 n = size of a sample  
 $\mu$  = population mean, read as mu  
 N = size of a finite population

The Greek capital letter  $\Sigma$  (sigma) is used to indicate the addition of all observed values of X. It is read as summation of. To distinguish between a sample and a population, we designate the population by the Greek letters, and the sample with Roman letters. The following example is used to show how we calculate the mean (p. 24).

In addition, Popham (1967), in his advocacy of utilizing descriptive statistics emphasized "by employing statistical descriptions of a distribution's central tendency and variability, an accurate representation of the data can usually be conveyed" (p. 11). Rank-orders and mean rankings on selected items were also derived from questions concerning ranking ones "top ten" career choices and rating the perceived "usefulness" of alternative agriculture enterprises on a scale of 1 to 10.

With regard to the quantitative evaluation of the data and calculation of the mean scores, selected responses derived from the use of the "Likert-type" scale were assigned the following numerical values concerning the perceived degree/level of influence of selected factors relative to SAE's in alternative agriculture. The numerical values designated were: "Very Great Influence" = 4; "Great Influence" = 3; "Moderate Influence" = 2; "Some Influence" =

1; and "No Influence" = 0. Furthermore, real limits were established to more accurately describe the responses secured by the study. The real limits set for the levels or degree of influence of the selected factors concerning choices about SAE's in alternative agriculture were: 3.5 and above for "Very Great Influence"; 2.5 to 3.49 - "Great Influence"; 1.5 to 2.49 - "Moderate Influence"; .5 to 1.49 - "Some Influence"; and 0 to .49 - "No Influence".

In addition, numerical values were assigned the rating scale illustrated in Table II. The values depicted on the rating scale with regard to their usefulness/acceptability as perceived by the respondents ranged from 1 to 10. One being the least/not acceptable alternative agriculture enterprise, while 10 was the most acceptable alternative agriculture enterprise rating. Real limits for the numerical values assigned to the rating scale were established as follows: 8.5 and above for "Most Acceptable"; 6.50 to 8.49 - "Very Acceptable"; 4.50 to 6.49 - "Acceptable"; 2.50 to 4.49 - "Somewhat Acceptable"; and 1 to 2.49 - "Least/Not Acceptable".

TABLE II  
A NUMERICAL RATING SCALE

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Least Acceptable Alternative Agriculture Enterprises										Most Acceptable Alternative Agriculture Enterprises
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

---

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSES OF DATA

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify selected factors influencing Perkins-Tryon Agricultural Education students to choose Supervised Agriculture Experience Programs (SAE's) in alternative agriculture.

Data collected in this study effort involved the responses of 80 Perkins-Tryon Agricultural Education students, 40 parents/guardians, and 35 business and professional leaders in the community.

The intent of this chapter was to report the findings in a logical and concise manner. For the purposes of clarity and organization the findings were arranged in these proceedings by 1) background of population; 2) student's career interest; 3) usefulness/acceptability of selected alternative agriculture enterprises; 4) factors influencing student involvement; 5) influences of the SAE enterprise; and 6) factors limiting student involvement.

#### Background of Population

The population of this study consisted of the students enrolled in the Perkins-Tryon Agricultural Education

program, their parents, and the members/leaders of the Perkins-Tryon business community. One hundred fifty-five individuals completed questionnaires regarding selected factors which influence students to choose SAE programs in alternative agriculture. Specifically 80 students (100 percent), 40 parents out of 76 possible (52.63 percent) returned usable surveys, while 35 of 50 (70.0 percent) business and community leaders chose to participate in the study.

As illustrated in Table III student respondents in the study were asked to indicate the type of SAE in which they were involved. The Perkins-Tryon agriculture students being raised in a rather typical production agriculture environment responded accordingly with almost one-third (29.8 percent) involved in production agriculture, 22.1 percent in agribusiness, 26 percent in on-farm placement, and 16.8 percent off-farm placement, while 5.3 percent of the students were involved in directed laboratory experiences as their supervised agriculture experience program (SAE).

Specific SAE student involvement with regard to enterprises was pointed out in Table IV. The distribution of student involvement revealed that 27 percent of the Perkins-Tryon agriculture students were involved in traditional livestock enterprises, 26.5 percent considered themselves to be involved in some phase of agribusiness, 15 percent were involved in specialty animal areas, and 12

percent in agricultural mechanics, while the remaining 19.5 percent were presently involved in such enterprises as traditional crops, commercial horticulture, ornamental horticulture, specialty crops and aquaculture.

TABLE III

A DISTRIBUTION OF THE PERKINS-TRYON AGRICULTURE EDUCATION STUDENT'S SAE INVOLVEMENT BY TYPE OF SAE PROGRAM

Type of SAE	Frequency Distribution	
	N = 131	Percentage (%)
Placement		
On-farm	34	26.0
Off-farm	22	16.8
Directed Laboratory Experience	7	5.3
Ownership		
Production	39	29.8
Agribusiness	29	22.1
Total	131	100.0

Reviewing the student's perceived involvement, depicted in Table V, revealed that only 19 percent saw themselves as "very involved", while over 62 percent perceived that they were only "somewhat involved". Six percent indicated that they were "not interested" in being involved in an SAE program.

TABLE IV

A DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN SAE  
PROGRAMS BY PERKINS-TRYON AGRICULTURAL  
EDUCATION STUDENTS BY TYPE OF SAE

Sae Enterprise Currently Involved	<u>Frequency Distribution</u>	
	N	Percentage (%)
Traditional Livestock	43	27.0
Traditional Crops	12	7.5
Commerical Horticulture	6	4.0
Agriculture Mechanics	19	12.0
Ornamental Horticulture	3	2.0
Specialty Animal	23	15.0
Specialty Crop	1	.5
Aquaculture	8	5.0
Agribusiness	42	26.5
Other	1	.5
Total	158	100.0

TABLE V

A SUMMARY OF THE STUDENT'S PERCEIVED INVOLVEMENT BY DEGREE  
OF INVOLVMENT IN ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE SAE'S

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Degree of Involvement	N = 80	Percentage (%)
Very Involved	15	19.0
Involved	10	12.5
Somewhat Involved	50	62.5
Not Interested	5	6.0
Total	80	100.0

---



A distribution of students by gender illustrated in Table VI showed that 81.25 percent were male and 18.75 percent of the 80 students were female. In a distribution of students by age, the data in Table VII indicated that 30 percent of the Perkins-Tryon Agricultural Education students were 15 years of age and only 2.5 percent were 18 years of age. Seventy percent of the students ranged in age from 13 to 15 years of age. The average age of the students was 14.93 years.

A distribution of students by grade in Table VIII revealed that over 27 percent of the students were in the eighth grade class, 22.5 percent of the students were enrolled as sophomores, while the smallest enrollment by class were the juniors with 14 percent.

In Table IX the data showed that the greatest concentration of student's parents among the selected occupations listed were housewives (12.5 percent), mechanics (12.5 percent), educators (10 percent), and farmers (10 percent).

A distribution of the student's parents by age category in Table X revealed that more than 82 percent of the parents ranged in age from 31 to 45 years. The two largest groups were in the 36 to 40 and 41 to 45 age intervals with 30 percent in each category. Two and one-half percent were in the 56 to 60 year age range. The data in Table XI indicated a parental gender distribution which responded to the "SAE" survey of 56.1 percent male and 43.9 percent female. This

TABLE VI  
A DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS BY GENDER

Gender	N = 80	Percentage (%)
Male	65	81.25
Female	15	18.75
Total	80	100.0

TABLE VII  
A DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS BY AGE

Age in Years	N = 80	Percentage (%)
13	14	17.5
14	18	22.5
15	24	30.0
16	10	12.5
17	12	15.0
18	2	2.5
Total	80	100.0

$$\bar{X} = 14.93$$

TABLE VIII  
A DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS BY GRADE IN SCHOOL

Grade*	N = 80	Percentage (%)
Eighth	22	27.5
Freshman	17	20.0
Sophomore	18	22.5
Junior	10	14.0
Senior	13	16.0
Total	80	100.0

\* $\bar{X}$  = 16, Average class size by grade level

TABLE IX  
A DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT'S PARENTS BY  
SELECTED OCCUPATION

Occupation	N = 80	Percentage (%)
Farmer	4	10.0
Welder	-	-
Banker	-	-
Educator	4	10.0
Agribusiness	3	7.5
Housewife	5	12.5
Mechanic	5	12.5
Government Service	1	2.5
Military	1	2.5
Restaurant Operator	1	2.5
School Administrator	2	5.0
Attorney	-	0
Carpenter	1	2.5
Auto Dealer	1	2.5
Retail Business	1	2.5
Sales	1	2.5
Retail Clerk	-	-
Insurance Agent	-	-
Florist	-	-
Secretary	2	5.0
Medical Doctor	-	-
Veterinarian	-	-
Other	8	20.0
Total	40	100.0

TABLE X  
A DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS BY AGE CATEGORY

Age Category	N = 40	Percentage (%)
20 and less	-	-
21 to 25	-	-
31 to 35	9	22.5
36 to 40	12	30.0
41 to 45	12	30.0
46 to 50	3	7.5
51 to 55	3	7.5
56 to 60	1	2.5
Total	40	100.0

TABLE XI  
A DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS BY GENDER

Gender	N = 40	Percentage (%)
Male	22	56.10
Female	18	43.90
Total	40	100.0

is a surprising finding that more men than women responded to something that affects their children as much as their involvement in a supervised agriculture experience program. Another revealing statistic was the number of college graduates among the parents. The data in Table XII indicated that over 22 percent of the respondents had completed a baccalaureate degree program and five percent held a masters degree. However, more than 42 percent stated that their highest level of formal education was the completion of a high school program of study.

The data in Table XIII showed a distribution of respondents from the business community by gender to be 27 (77.15 percent) males and 8 (22.85 percent) females.

In a distribution of respondents from the business community, the data in Table XIV indicated that over 74 percent of the respondents ranged in age from 31 to 55 years, while the largest concentration of participants were in the 41-45 year age group.

The data shown in Table XV revealed that over 62 percent of the respondents from the business community had more than a high school education and that one-fifth (20 percent) had completed a baccalaureate degree program. It was interesting to visually compare this finding to the level of formal education among the student's parents. Both groups were similar in the percentage which had completed the B.S. Degree program. Twenty-two percent of the parents



TABLE XII  
A DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS BY HIGHEST LEVEL  
OF FORMAL EDUCATION

---

Level of Formal Education	N = 40	Percentage (%)
High School	17	42.5
Two Years of College	8	20.0
Completed B.S.	9	22.5
Completed Masters	2	5.0
Other	4	10.0
Total	40	100.0

---

TABLE XIII  
A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS FROM THE BUSINESS  
COMMUNITY BY GENDER

Gender	N = 35	Percentage (%)
Male	27	77.15
Female	8	22.85
Total	35	100.0

TABLE XIV  
A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS OF THE BUSINESS  
COMMUNITY BY AGE CATEGORY

Age Category	N = 35	Percentage (%)
20 or less	-	-
21 - 25	-	-
26 - 30	2	5.71
31 - 35	4	11.43
36 - 40	5	14.29
41 - 45	10	28.57
46 - 50	7	20.00
51 - 55	4	11.43
56 - 60	2	5.71
61 - 65	1	2.86
66 - 70	-	-
71 - 75	-	-
76 or over	-	-
Total	35	100.00

TABLE XV  
 A DISTRIBUTION OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY RESPONDENTS  
 BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF FORMAL EDUCATION

Level of Formal Education	N = 35	Percentage (%)
High School	13	37.1
Two Years of College	8	22.9
Completed B.S. Degree	7	20.0
Masters Degree	-	-
DVM	2	5.7
Other	5	14.3
Total	35	100.0

had finished a baccalaureate program compared to 20 percent of the respondents from the business community.

With regard to type of career or occupation in which the members of business community were involved, the data in Table XVI indicated a rather wide range of careers among the respondents with the exception of one area. Twenty percent of the respondents from the Perkins-Tryon business community were involved in retail businesses, while the next largest group, 8.5 percent, were involved in banking as a career path.

#### Student's Career Interests

In reviewing the student's perceived career interests it seemed that agricultural mechanics, livestock production, computers, farm management, forestry, ag finance, commercial horticulture, and meat processing were the areas most attractive to the students. The data in Table XVII illustrated that the two highest ranked areas of career interest have typically been viewed as traditional agriculture areas. While the top two areas have been generally seen as traditional agriculture, it was interesting to find that the students selected five of their remaining top eight areas from enterprises usually perceived as non-traditional or alternative agriculture areas. Specifically, there was little notable difference in mean score rankings between livestock production and computer specialist, while both farm/ranch management and forestry were tied with mean scores of 4.01. It was also interesting

TABLE XVI  
A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS FROM THE BUSINESS  
COMMUNITY BY OCCUPATION

Type of Career	N = 35	Percentage (%)
Farmer	2	5.7
Welder	-	-
Banker	3	8.5
Educator	1	2.9
Agribusiness	1	2.9
Housewife	-	-
Mechanic	2	5.7
Government Service	2	5.7
Military	-	-
Restaurant Operator	2	5.7
School Administrator	1	2.9
Attorney	-	-
Carpenter	2	5.7
Auto Dealer	-	-
Retail Business	7	20.0
Sales	2	5.7
Retail Clerk	2	5.7
Insurance Agent	2	5.7
Florist	1	2.9
Secretary	2	5.7
Medical Doctor	1	2.9
Veterinarian	2	5.7
Other	-	-
Total	35	100.0

TABLE XVII

A SUMMARY OF STUDENT'S PERCEPTIONS TO A SELECTED  
LIST OF POSSIBLE CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE AS  
INDICATED BY MEAN SCORE AND RANK

Selected Agricultural Careers	Mean Score	Rank
Agricultural Mechanics	3.64	1
Livestock Producer	3.80	2
Computer Specialist	3.81	3
Farm or Ranch Management	4.01	4.5
Forestry	4.01	4.5
Agricultural Finance	4.38	6
Commercial Horticulture	4.75	7
Meat Processing	4.93	8
Veterinary Medicine	5.21	9.5
Wildlife Management	5.21	9.5
Public Relations	5.62	11
Nursery and Landscape	5.67	12
Environment Protection	5.68	13
Government Service	5.73	14
Plant Pathology	5.78	15
Agriculture Sales	5.97	16
Agriculture Marketing	6.00	17
Crop Production	6.11	18
Agriculture Engineering	6.22	19
Aquaculture	6.27	20
Teaching Agriculture in High School	6.33	21
Cooperative Extension	6.57	22
Soil Conservation	6.69	23
Greenhouse Management	6.71	24
International Trade	6.72	25
Agricultural Research	7.00	26
Floriculture	7.29	27
Agricultural Transportation	7.55	28

to note that floriculture, even though it is an important segment of the horticulture industry, was ranked next to last with a 7.29 mean score.

#### Perceived Acceptability of Alternative Agriculture

With regard to the perceived acceptability/usefulness of alternative agriculture enterprises as student supervised experience programs (SAE's), the data in Table XVIII showed that in the Specialty Animal area, guard dogs, hunting dogs, and stock dogs were definitely the most popular among students. However, when comparing the student's perceptions in the specialty animal area to that of their parents and members of the business community, the data in Tables XIX and XX revealed that stock dogs, guard dogs, and seeing-eye dogs were the perceived choices. Even though the parents and members of the business community had these three groups of dogs in different rank orders both groups had hunting dogs and rabbits ranked fourth and fifth. In addition, both parents and members of the business community perceived that Emu's as being only "somewhat acceptable" for student SAE programs.

With regard to aquaculture, the students ranked catfish, trout, minnows, frogs and tilapia in that order as being acceptable for SAE programs. The data in Table XXI indicated that catfish were by far the most acceptable as an SAE program for Perkins-Tryon Agriculture students. It was



TABLE XVIII

A SUMMARY OF STUDENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF SPECIALTY ANIMAL  
SAE'S AS INDICATED BY MEAN RESPONSE, DEGREE  
OF ACCEPTABILITY, AND RANK OF SELECTED  
SPECIALTY ANIMAL ENTERPRISES

Specialty Animal Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Guard Dog	7.02	Very Acceptable	1
Hunting Dog	6.75	Very Acceptable	2
Stock Dog	6.00	Acceptable	3
Sight Dogs	5.00	Acceptable	4
Ostrich	4.64	Acceptable	5
Seeing Eye Dog	4.58	Acceptable	6
Llamas	4.49	Somewhat Acceptable	7
Rabbits	4.36	Somewhat Acceptable	8
Mink	4.10	Somewhat Acceptable	9
Chinchilla	3.81	Somewhat Acceptable	10
Emu	3.78	Somewhat Acceptable	11
Mice	2.91	Somewhat Acceptable	12
Other	2.01	Not Acceptable	13

TABLE XIX

A SUMMARY OF PARENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF SPECIALTY ANIMAL  
SAE'S FOR THEIR CHILDREN REGARDING MEAN RESPONSES,  
DEGREE OF ACCEPTABILITY, AND RANK BY SELECTED  
SPECIALTY ANIMAL ENTERPRISES

Specialty Animal Enterprise	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Stock Dog	6.55	Very Acceptable	1
Guard Dog	5.75	Acceptable	2
Seeing Eye Dog	5.60	Acceptable	3
Hunting Dog	5.45	Acceptable	4
Rabbits	4.95	Acceptable	5
Ostrich	4.38	Somewhat Acceptable	6
Sight Dog	4.30	Somewhat Acceptable	7
Mice	4.18	Somewhat Acceptable	8
Llamas	3.83	Somewhat Acceptable	9
Chinchilla	3.00	Somewhat Acceptable	10
Mink	2.83	Somewhat Acceptable	11.5
Emu	2.83	Somewhat Acceptable	11.5
Other	2.28	Not Acceptable	13

TABLE XX

A SUMMARY OF BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL LEADER'S PERCEPTIONS  
OF SPECIALTY ANIMAL SAE'S FOR STUDENTS IN AGRICULTURAL  
EDUCATION AS INDICATED BY MEAN SCORE, DEGREE OF  
ACCEPTABILITY, AND RANK OF SELECTED  
ANIMAL ENTERPRISES

Selected Specialty Animal Enterprise	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Guard Dog	6.45	Acceptable	1
Seeing Eye Dog	6.34	Acceptable	2
Stock Dog	6.25	Acceptable	3
Hunting Dog	5.73	Acceptable	4
Rabbits	5.73	Acceptable	5
Mink	5.52	Acceptable	6
Chinchilla	5.43	Acceptable	7
Mice	5.02	Acceptable	8
Sight Dog	4.20	Somewhat Acceptable	9
Ostrich	4.02	Somewhat Acceptable	10
Llamas	3.56	Somewhat Acceptable	11.5
Emu	2.56	Somewhat Acceptable	11.5
Other	2.24	Not Acceptable	13

TABLE XXI

A SUMMARY OF STUDENT'S PERCEPTION OF AQUACULTURE AS AN  
SAE PROGRAM AS INDICATED BY MEAN RESPONSE, DEGREE OF  
ACCEPTABILITY, AND RANK BY SELECTED ENTERPRISE

Selected Aquaculture Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Catfish	7.56	Very Acceptable	1
Trout	6.46	Acceptable	2
Minnows	4.72	Acceptable	3
Frogs	4.35	Somewhat Acceptable	4
Tilapia	3.88	Somewhat Acceptable	5

interesting to note in making a visual comparison of Tables XXI, XXII, and XXIII that all three groups; students, parents, and the business community; ranked the selected aquaculture enterprises in the same order. However, the students and members of the business community seemed to be much more enthusiastic about catfish than the student's parents as indicated by differences in mean scores. As a whole the data revealed in Table XXII indicated that among parents mean scores were lower than those of students and members of the business community except for minnows and frogs, where parental perceptions were somewhat higher.

A vast array of responses concerning selected horticulture enterprises were illustrated in the data depicted in Tables XXIV, XXV, and XXVI. The student's perceptions included in Table XXIV revealed that watermelons, sweet corn, cantaloupe, field corn, Indian corn, and tomatoes seemed to be the most popular enterprises. SAE's which consisted of watermelons seemed to be the most acceptable to the students and had a calculated mean score of 6.0, which was a notable finding when compared to sweet corn which had a mean score of 5.41 and ranked second. However, when comparing the student's perceptions to the parent's perceptions, the data in Table XXV showed that the parents had five of the six items the students rank in the top six but in a completely different order. In addition, the parents included okra in their top six and ranked it third, while ranking sweet corn first with a

TABLE XXII

A SUMMARY OF PARENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF AQUACULTURE AS AN  
 SAE PROGRAM FOR THEIR CHILDREN AS INDICATED BY MEAN  
 RESPONSE, DEGREE OF ACCEPTABILITY, AND RANK BY  
 SELECTED ENTERPRISE

Selected Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Catfish	6.88	Very Acceptable	1
Trout	5.28	Acceptable	2
Minnows	5.00	Acceptable	3
Frogs	4.83	Acceptable	4
Tilapia	3.05	Somewhat Acceptable	5

TABLE XXIII

A SUMMARY OF BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADER'S PERCEPTIONS  
 OF AQUACULTURE AS AN SAE PROGRAM FOR PERKINS-TRYON  
 AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION STUDENTS AS INDICATED BY  
 MEAN RESPONSE, DEGREE OF ACCEPTABILITY, AND  
 RANK BY SELECTED ENTERPRISE

Selected Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Catfish	7.43	Very Acceptable	1
Trout	5.54	Acceptable	2
Minnows	4.56	Acceptable	3
Frogs	3.86	Somewhat Acceptable	4
Tilapia	3.45	Somewhat Acceptable	5

TABLE XXIV

A SUMMARY OF STUDENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF COMMERCIAL  
HORTICULTURE AS AN SAE PROGRAM AS INDICATED BY  
MEAN RESPONSE, DEGREE OF ACCEPTABILITY, AND  
RANK BY SELECTED ENTERPRISE

Selected Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Watermelon	6.00	Acceptable	1
Sweet Corn	5.41	Acceptable	2
Cantaloupe	5.40	Acceptable	3
Field Corn	5.35	Acceptable	4
Indian Corn	5.05	Acceptable	5
Tomatoes	4.97	Acceptable	6
Pumpkins	4.26	Somewhat Acceptable	7
Okra	4.24	Somewhat Acceptable	8
Hot Pepper	4.20	Somewhat Acceptable	9
Cucumber	4.10	Somewhat Acceptable	10
Flowers	4.11	Somewhat Acceptable	11
Carrots	3.87	Somewhat Acceptable	12.5
Sweet Pepper	3.84	Somewhat Acceptable	12.5
Lettuce	3.84	Somewhat Acceptable	14
Herbs	3.59	Somewhat Acceptable	15
Onions	3.36	Somewhat Acceptable	16
Butter Beans	3.34	Somewhat Acceptable	17
Radishes	3.27	Somewhat Acceptable	18
Spinach	3.22	Somewhat Acceptable	19
Egg Plant	3.26	Somewhat Acceptable	20
Sweet Potatoes	3.16	Somewhat Acceptable	21
Lima Beans	3.10	Somewhat Acceptable	22
Summer Squash	3.08	Somewhat Acceptable	23.5
Winter Squash	3.08	Somewhat Acceptable	23.5
Irish Potato	3.00	Somewhat Acceptable	25
Pinto Bean	2.94	Somewhat Acceptable	26.5
Cowpea	2.94	Somewhat Acceptable	26.5
Turnip Greens	2.91	Somewhat Acceptable	28
Broccoli	2.87	Somewhat Acceptable	29
Bush Bean	2.83	Somewhat Acceptable	30
Cauliflower	2.69	Somewhat Acceptable	31
Cabbage	2.64	Somewhat Acceptable	32
Asparagus	2.56	Somewhat Acceptable	33
Beets	2.55	Somewhat Acceptable	34
Other	2.12	Not Acceptable	35



TABLE XXV

A SUMMARY OF PARENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF COMMERCIAL HORTICULTURE  
AS AN SAE PROGRAM FOR THEIR CHILDREN AS INDICATED BY  
MEAN RESPONSE, DEGREE OF ACCEPTABILITY, AND RANK  
BY SELECTED ENTERPRISE

Selected Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Sweet Corn	6.48	Acceptable	1
Tomatoes	6.25	Acceptable	2
Okra	6.08	Acceptable	3
Cantaloupe	5.88	Acceptable	4
Watermelon	5.60	Acceptable	5
Field Corn	5.48	Acceptable	6
Onions	5.20	Acceptable	7
Irish Potato	5.15	Acceptable	8
Flowers	4.85	Acceptable	9
Pumpkins	4.75	Acceptable	10
Asparagus	4.63	Acceptable	11
Indian Corn	4.55	Acceptable	12
Broccoli	4.30	Somewhat Acceptable	13
Cabbage	4.28	Somewhat Acceptable	14.5
Sweet Potatoes	4.28	Somewhat Acceptable	14.5
Lettuce	4.25	Somewhat Acceptable	16
Cucumber	4.25	Somewhat Acceptable	17
Sweet Pepper	4.13	Somewhat Acceptable	18
Pinto Bean	4.10	Somewhat Acceptable	19
Cauliflower	4.05	Somewhat Acceptable	20.5
Carrots	4.05	Somewhat Acceptable	20.5
Hot Pepper	3.90	Somewhat Acceptable	22
Summer Squash	3.80	Somewhat Acceptable	23
Cowpeas	3.58	Somewhat Acceptable	24.5
Beets	3.58	Somewhat Acceptable	24.5
Lima Beans	3.53	Somewhat Acceptable	26
Bush Beans	3.40	Somewhat Acceptable	27.5
Herbs	3.40	Somewhat Acceptable	27.5
Radishes	3.33	Somewhat Acceptable	29
Butter Beans	3.28	Somewhat Acceptable	30
Egg Plant	3.25	Somewhat Acceptable	31
Spinach	3.03	Somewhat Acceptable	32.5
Turnip Greens	3.03	Somewhat Acceptable	32.5
Winter Squash	3.00	Somewhat Acceptable	34
Other	2.68	Somewhat Acceptable	35

TABLE XXVI

A SUMMARY OF BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADER'S PERCEPTIONS  
OF COMMERCIAL HORTICULTURE AS AN SAE PROGRAM FOR  
PERKINS-TRYON AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION STUDENTS  
AS INDICATED BY MEAN RESPONSE, DEGREE OF  
ACCEPTABILITY, AND RANK BY SELECTED  
ENTERPRISE

Selected Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Sweet Corn	7.53	Very Acceptable	1
Tomatoes	7.45	Very Acceptable	2
Watermelon	7.43	Very Acceptable	3
Cantaloupe	6.89	Very Acceptable	4
Field Corn	5.76	Acceptable	5
Asparagus	5.75	Acceptable	6
Pumpkins	5.74	Acceptable	7
Okra	5.64	Acceptable	8
Indian Corn	5.49	Acceptable	9
Hot Peppers	5.03	Acceptable	10
Irish Potatoes	4.56	Acceptable	11
Sweet Pepper	4.45	Somewhat Acceptable	12.5
Butter Bean	4.45	Somewhat Acceptable	12.5
Carrots	4.25	Somewhat Acceptable	14.5
Onions	4.25	Somewhat Acceptable	14.5
Broccoli	4.21	Somewhat Acceptable	16
Cucumber	4.10	Somewhat Acceptable	17.5
Lettuce	4.10	Somewhat Acceptable	17.5
Pinto Beans	3.87	Somewhat Acceptable	19
Winter Squash	3.75	Somewhat Acceptable	20
Summer Squash	3.56	Somewhat Acceptable	21
Bush Beans	3.45	Somewhat Acceptable	22.5
Cauliflower	3.45	Somewhat Acceptable	22.5
Radishes	3.43	Somewhat Acceptable	24
Spinach	3.42	Somewhat Acceptable	25
Egg Plant	3.10	Somewhat Acceptable	26
Sweet Potatoes	3.06	Somewhat Acceptable	27
Beets	3.03	Somewhat Acceptable	28
Flowers	2.95	Somewhat Acceptable	29
Cabbage	2.94	Somewhat Acceptable	30
Cowpeas	2.89	Somewhat Acceptable	31.5
Herbs	2.89	Somewhat Acceptable	31.5
Lima Beans	2.75	Somewhat Acceptable	33
Other	2.68	Somewhat Acceptable	34
Turnip Greens	2.45	Not Acceptable	35

calculated mean score of 6.48. The mean scores reflecting the parent's perceptions were noticeably larger in numerical value. It was also interesting to find in Table XXVI that the data reflecting the perceptions of the business community were similar in the extent that they included five of the six crops that the students and parents included in their "top" six horticulture crops. However, the similarities end here. The members of the business community seemed to be much more intense in their perception with calculated mean scores considerably higher in numerical value. The members of the business community ranked sweet corn first with a calculated mean score of 7.53 compared to the parents which also ranked sweet corn the highest with a mean score of 6.48. The students ranked sweet corn second (Table XXIV) with a mean score of 5.41. Following sweet corn, the business community ranked tomatoes, watermelons, cantaloupes, field corn, and asparagus in that order. In visually comparing the findings, it appeared that the students and parents were a little more tentative in their approach to commercial horticulture than members of the business community. In experience in marketing as well as production and harvesting factors may be part of the difference in the influences which were reflected in the respondents' perceptions.

With regard to specialty crops, it was found in Tables XXVII, XXVIII, and XXIX that the students, parents, and members of the business community ranked honey production,

TABLE XXVII

A SUMMARY OF STUDENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF SPECIALITY  
 AREAS OF ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE FOR SAE  
 PROGRAMS AS INDICATED BY MEAN RESPONSE,  
 DEGREE OF ACCEPTABILITY, AND RANK BY  
 SELECTED ENTERPRISE

Selected Specialty Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Honey Production	5.45	Acceptable	1
Sunflower	4.64	Acceptable	2
Kenaf	3.69	Somewhat Acceptable	3
Specialty Pepper	3.67	Somewhat Acceptable	4
Rape	3.65	Somewhat Acceptable	5
Guar	2.96	Somewhat Acceptable	6
Weeds for Pollen	2.74	Somewhat Acceptable	7
Other	2.18	Not Acceptable	8

TABLE XXVIII

A SUMMARY OF PARENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF SPECIALITY AREAS  
 IN ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE AS SAE PROGRAMS FOR THEIR  
 CHILDREN AS INDICATED BY MEAN RESPONSE, DEGREE OF  
 ACCEPTABILITY AND RANK BY SELECTED SPECIALTY  
 ENTERPRISE

Selected Specialty Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Honey Production	5.80	Acceptable	1
Sunflowers	4.85	Acceptable	2
Weeds for Pollen	3.40	Somewhat Acceptable	3
Specialty Pepper	3.15	Somewhat Acceptable	4
Rape	2.88	Somewhat Acceptable	5
Kenaf	2.53	Somewhat Acceptable	6
Guar	2.50	Somewhat Acceptable	7
Other	2.43	Not Acceptable	8

TABLE XXIX

A SUMMARY OF BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADER'S PERCEPTIONS  
 OF SELECTED SPECIALTY ENTERPRISES AS SAE PROGRAMS FOR  
 PERKINS-TRYON AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION STUDENTS AS  
 INDICATED BY MEAN RESPONSE, DEGREE OF  
 ACCEPTABILITY AND RANK

Selected Specialty Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Honey Production	6.24	Acceptable	1
Sunflowers	3.85	Somewhat Acceptable	2
Specialty Pepper	3.25	Somewhat Acceptable	3
Weeds for Pollen	2.94	Somewhat Acceptable	4
Kenaf	2.85	Somewhat Acceptable	5
Rape	2.43	Not Acceptable	6
Guar	2.25	Not Acceptable	7
Other	2.02	Not Acceptable	8

and sunflowers first and second respectively. However, the students ranked kenaf third and specialty peppers fourth, while their parents ranked weeds for pollen and specialty peppers third and fourth. The members of the business reversed the parents' third and fourth place rankings by ranking specialty peppers third followed by weeds for pollen. The data in Table XXIX indicated that members of the business community ranked kenaf fifth, while the parents ranked it sixth (Table XXVIII).

The data concerning tree crops depicted in Tables XXX, XXXI, and XXXII revealed that all three groups of respondents ranked firewood first as "acceptable" student SAE programs. Following firewood, the students and members of the business community ranked Christmas trees second with mean scores of 5.03 and 6.03 respectively. The parents ranked lumber second. With regard to third and fourth place rankings, the students ranked lumber and pole production, while the parents ranked Christmas trees and nursery stock and the business community viewed nursery stock and post production as viable third and fourth choices for SAE programs among tree crops in alternative agriculture.

Small fruits seemed to attract the attention of all three groups as indicated by the calculated mean scores illustrated in Tables XXXIII, XXXIV, and XXXV. All three groups of respondents ranked strawberries first among small fruits with the parents showing somewhat more acceptance than the students and members of the business community with

TABLE XXX

A SUMMARY OF STUDENT'S PERCEPTION OF SPECIALITY AREAS IN ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE FOR SAE PROGRAMS AS INDICATED BY MEAN RESPONSE, DEGREE OF ACCEPTABILITY, AND RANK BY SELECTED TREE CROP ENTERPRISES

Selected Tree Crop Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Firewood	5.49	Acceptable	1
Christmas Trees	5.03	Acceptable	2
Lumber	5.01	Acceptable	3
Pole	4.64	Acceptable	4
Cottonwood	4.56	Acceptable	5
Post	4.08	Somewhat Acceptable	6
Pulpwood	4.02	Somewhat Acceptable	7
Nursery Stock	4.00	Somewhat Acceptable	8
Other	1.93	Not Acceptable	9



TABLE XXXI

A SUMMARY OF PARENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF SPECIALITY AREAS IN ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE AS SAE PROGRAMS FOR THEIR CHILDREN AS INDICATED BY MEAN RESPONSE, DEGREE OF ACCEPTABILITY, AND RANK BY SELECTED TREE CROP ENTERPRISE

Selected Tree Crop Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Firewood	5.68	Acceptable	1
Lumber	5.15	Acceptable	2
Christmas Trees	5.03	Acceptable	3
Nursery Stock	4.98	Acceptable	4
Poles	4.68	Acceptable	5
Post	4.00	Somewhat Acceptable	6
Cottonwood	3.68	Somewhat Acceptable	7
Pulpwood	3.60	Somewhat Acceptable	8
Other	2.15	Not Acceptable	9

TABLE XXXII

A SUMMARY OF BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADER'S PERCEPTIONS OF SPECIALITY AREAS WITHIN ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE AS SAE PROGRAMS FOR PERKINS-TRYON AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION STUDENTS AS INDICATED BY MEAN RESPONSE, DEGREE OF ACCEPTABILITY, AND RANK BY SELECTED TREE CROP ENTERPRISES

Selected Tree Crop Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Firewood	6.45	Acceptable	1
Christmas Trees	6.03	Acceptable	2
Nursery Stock	4.53	Acceptable	3
Post	4.26	Somewhat Acceptable	4
Lumber	4.24	Somewhat Acceptable	5
Cottonwood	4.24	Somewhat Acceptable	6
Poles	4.03	Somewhat Acceptable	7
Pulpwood	3.80	Somewhat Acceptable	8
Other	2.07	Not Acceptable	9

TABLE XXXIII

A SUMMARY OF STUDENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF SMALL FRUITS AS AN SAE PROGRAM AS INDICATED BY MEAN RESPONSE, DEGREE OF ACCEPTABILITY, AND RANK BY ENTERPRISE

Small Fruit Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Strawberry	6.70	Very Acceptable	1
Grapes	6.08	Acceptable	2
Blackberry	5.64	Acceptable	3
Blueberry	5.46	Acceptable	4
Plums	5.32	Acceptable	5
Raspberry	5.17	Acceptable	6
Dewberry	4.68	Acceptable	7
Currents	4.40	Somewhat Acceptable	8

TABLE XXXIV

A SUMMARY OF PARENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF SMALL FRUITS AS AN  
SAE PROGRAM FOR THEIR CHILDREN AS INDICATED BY MEAN  
RESPONSE, DEGREE OF ACCEPTABILITY, AND RANK  
BY ENTERPRISE

Small Fruit Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Strawberry	7.30	Very Acceptable	1
Blackberry	6.65	Very Acceptable	2
Grapes	5.90	Acceptable	3
Blueberry	5.78	Acceptable	4
Raspberry	5.13	Acceptable	5
Plums	5.08	Acceptable	6
Dewberry	4.86	Acceptable	7
Currents	3.93	Somewhat Acceptable	8

TABLE XXXV

A SUMMARY OF BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADER'S PERCEPTIONS  
 OF SMALL FRUITS AS A SAE PROGRAM FOR PERKINS-TRYON  
 AGRICULTURE EDUCATION STUDENTS AS INDICATED BY  
 MEAN RESPONSE, DEGREE OF ACCEPTABILITY, AND  
 RANK BY ENTERPRISE

Small Fruit Enterprise(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Strawberry	6.84	Very Acceptable	1
Grapes	6.03	Acceptable	2
Blackberry	5.92	Acceptable	3
Raspberry	5.03	Acceptable	4
Plums	4.93	Acceptable	5
Blueberry	4.89	Acceptable	6
Dewberry	4.44	Somewhat Acceptable	7
Currents	2.89	Somewhat Acceptable	8

a calculated mean score of 7.03 (Table XXIV). Both the students and members of the business community were more accepting of grapes, while the parents ranked blackberries second and grapes third. Blueberries were ranked fourth in selection as potential student SAE programs by students and parents, while raspberries were the fourth selection members of the business community. The mean scores with regard to the parents' responses were noticeably higher for the first two possible selections among small fruits (Table XXXIV).

#### Factors Influencing Student Involvement

The data shown in Tables XXXVI, XXXVII, and XXXVIII revealed that the students were largely influenced concerning alternative agriculture SAE's by "encouragement of fellow students, parents and the ag teachers." Students considered this factor to be the most influential among the selected factors listed. The mean score for this factor was 2.82 among the students. However, the parents and members of the business community ranked "a genuine interest in working with the product or commodity" as being the most influential factor (3.35) in the students involvement in alternative agriculture SAE's. Both the students and parents ranked "high profit potential for alternative agriculture enterprises" as the second most influential factor with mean scores of 2.7 and 2.9 respectively. The members of the business community ranked this factor third, while ranking "encouragement from fellow students, parents,

TABLE XXXVI

A SUMMARY OF STUDENT'S RESPONSES CONCERNING THEIR SELECTION OF SAE'S IN ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE AS INDICATED BY MEAN SCORE, DEGREE OF INFLUENCE, AND RANK BY FACTOR OF INFLUENCE

Factor(s) of Influence	Mean Score	Degree of Influence	Rank
Encouragement from fellow students, parents and agriculture education instructors	2.82	Great influence	1
High profit potential for alternative agriculture enterprises	2.70	Great influence	2
A genuine interest in working with the product or commodity	2.55	Great influence	3
Low risk entry requirements (labor intensive, capital intensive)	2.39	Moderate influence	4
New and exciting "get-in-on-the-ground-floor of the industry	2.22	Moderate influence	5
Low profitability from traditional SAE's	2.12	Moderate influence	6

TABLE XXXVII

A SUMMARY OF PARENTAL RESPONSES CONCERNING THEIR CHILDREN  
 SELECTING SAE'S IN ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE AS INDICATED  
 BY MEAN SCORE, DEGREE OF INFLUENCE, AND RANK BY  
 FACTOR OF INFLUENCE

Factor(s) of Influence	Mean Score	Degree of Influence	Rank
A Genuine interest in working with the product or commodity	3.35	Great influence	1
High profit potential for alternative agriculture enterprises	2.90	Great influence	2
Encouragement from fellow students, parents and agricultural education instructors	2.80	Great influence	3
New exciting "get-in-on-the-ground-floor" of the industry	2.73	Great influence	4
Low risk entry requirements (labor intensive, capital intensive)	2.58	Great influence	5
Low profitability from traditional SAE's	2.33	Moderate influence	6



TABLE XXXVIII

A SUMMARY OF BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADER'S RESPONSES  
 CONCERNING PERKINS-TRYON AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION  
 STUDENTS SELECTING SAE'S IN ALTERNATIVE  
 AGRICULTURE AS INDICATED BY MEAN SCORE,  
 DEGREE OF INFLUENCE, AND RANK BY  
 FACTOR OF INFLUENCE

Factor(s) of Influence	Mean Score	Degree of Influence	Rank
A Genuine interest in working with the product or commodity	3.35	Great influence	1
Encouragement from fellow students, parents and agricultural education instructors	2.95	Great influence	2
High profit potential for alternative agriculture enterprises	2.90	Great influence	3
New exciting, "get-in-on-the-ground-floor" of the industry	2.73	Great influence	4
Low risk entry requirements (labor intensive, capital intensive)	2.58	Great influence	5
Low profitability from traditional SAE's	2.33	Moderate influence	6

and ag teacher" second with a mean score of 2.95. All three groups of respondents perceived that "low profitability from traditional SAE's "was the least influential on students' decisions to participate in alternative agriculture SAW programs. "New exciting, get-in-on-the-ground-floor of the industry was ranked third in influence regarding student involvement in alternative SAE's by members of the business community with a mean score of 2.73.

#### Influences of the SAE Enterprise

The data in Tables XXIX, XL and XLI addressed the influences of specific SAE enterprise areas on the students' decisions to participate based on the perceptions of the students, parents, and members of the business community. In table XXXIX, the data indicated that the potential for student involvement in an alternative agriculture SAE program seemed to be the greatest among specialty animal and wildlife enterprises as perceived by the students. Compared to the other alternative agriculture areas listed in Table XXXIX and their mean scores, specialty animals and wildlife seemed to be much more attractive to Perkins-Tryon students as potential SAE programs. However, the data in Table XL reflecting the parents' perceptions indicated wildlife and specialty animals were perceived to be more attractive to student involvement. This was in reverse of the students' perceptions regarding the two alternative agriculture areas. The mean scores reflected by the parents' perceptions were

TABLE XXXIX

A SUMMARY OF STUDENT'S PERCEPTIONS INFLUENCING THEIR  
 DECISIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN AN ALTERNATIVE  
 AGRICULTURE SAE PROGRAM AS INDICATED BY  
 MEAN SCORE, DEGREE OF INFLUENCE, AND  
 RANK BY SELECTED CATEGORY

Selected Categories	Mean Score	Degree of Influence	Rank
Specialty Animal	2.84	Great Influence	1
Wildlife	2.79	Great Influence	2
Specialty Crop	2.15	Moderate Influence	3.5
Fruits	2.15	Moderate Influence	3.5
Vegetables	1.96	Moderate Influence	5
Other	.57	Some Influence	6

TABLE XL

A SUMMARY OF PARENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF INFLUENCES ON THEIR CHILDREN'S DECISIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN AN ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE SAE PROGRAM AS INDICATED BY MEAN SCORE, DEGREE OF INFLUENCE, AND RANK BY SELECTED CATEGORY

Selected Categories	Mean Score	Degree of Influence	Rank
Wildlife	2.80	Great Influence	1
Specialty Animal	2.53	Great Influence	2
Fruits	2.43	Moderate Influence	3
Specialty Crop	2.38	Moderate Influence	4
Vegetables	2.35	Moderate Influence	5
Other	.93	Some Influence	6

TABLE XLI

A SUMMARY OF BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADER'S PERCEPTIONS OF INFLUENCE ON PERKINS-TRYON AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE SAE PROGRAMS AS INDICATED BY MEAN SCORE, DEGREE OF INFLUENCE, AND RANK BY SELECTED CATEGORIES

Selected Categories	Mean Score	Degree of Influence	Rank
Fruits	2.98	Great Influence	1
Vegetables	2.94	Great Influence	2
Wildlife	2.90	Great Influence	3
Specialty Animal	2.75	Great Influence	4
Specialty Crop	2.40	Moderate Influence	5
Other	.67	Some Influence	6

also lower than the students. In contrast, the members of the business community perceived (Table XLI) that fruits, vegetables, wildlife and specialty animals would exert the most influence on the students' SAE involvement. It was interesting to note that the mean scores reflected by the perceptions of business community were much higher as a whole when compared to the mean scores of the students and parents. Mean scores for members of the business community shown in Table XLI were considerably higher than the mean scores, as reflected by the students' and parents' perceptions, regarding the top three alternative agriculture areas. Even though members of the business community ranked wildlife third, the 2.9 mean score was higher than the top two selections, specialty animals and wildlife, by either students or parents. The students and parents both indicated that vegetables were the least attractive to them as potential SAE enterprises and exerted the least influence among the selected alternative agriculture areas listed.

#### Factors Limiting Student Involvement

The data in Table XLII indicating the student' perceptions of the factors limiting their involvement in alternative agriculture SAE programs revealed that "their interest and that of their parents" were major influences in their decisions of whether or not to be involved. The students also indicated that credit availability, start-up costs, market availability, and lack of information were

TABLE XLII

A SUMMARY OF STUDENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF SELECTED LIMITING FACTORS INFLUENCING THEIR PARTICIPATION IN ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE SAE PROGRAMS AS INDICATED BY MEAN SCORE, DEGREE OF INFLUENCE, AND RANK

Selected Factors of Influence	Mean Score	Degree of Influence	Rank
Student Interest	2.69	Great Influence	1
Parental Interest	2.51	Great Influence	2
Credit Availability	2.50	Great Influence	3
Start-up Cost	2.44	Moderate Influence	4
Market Availability	2.35	Moderate Influence	5.5
Lack of Information	2.35	Moderate Influence	5.5
High Risk Enterprises	2.35	Moderate Influence	7
Labor Intensive	2.27	Moderate Influence	8
Lack of Recognition	2.01	Moderate Influence	9
Other	.60	Some Influence	10

limiting factors in their decisions to become involved. However, the data in Table XLIII illustrated student interest and start-up cost were the parents' major concerns regarding their children's involvement in alternative agriculture. Market availability, parental interest, credit availability, and lack of information were also concerns among parents. The major limiting factors perceived by the members of the business community, as indicated by the data in Table XLIV, were the intensive labor requirements of alternative agriculture and credit availability. Lack of information and market availability were also major concerns. Parental interest, start-up cost, and student interest were also seen as limiting factors, but it was interesting that the members of the business community ranked them fifth, sixth, and seventh respectively. Furthermore it was interesting to note that the mean scores which were reflections of the perceptions of the business community were higher for the limiting factor ranked third than the two most limiting factors ranked by either the students or parents. Lack of recognition was of the least concern among all three groups of respondents.



TABLE XLIII

A SUMMARY OF PARENT'S PERCEPTIONS CONCERNING SELECTED FACTORS LIMITING THEIR CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE SAE PROGRAMS AS INDICATED BY MEAN SCORE, DEGREE OF INFLUENCE, AND RANK

Selected Factors of Influence	Mean Score	Degree of Influence	Rank
Student Interest	2.96	Great Influence	1
Start-up Cost	2.91	Great Influence	2
Market Availability	2.86	Great Influence	3
Parental Interest	2.66	Great Influence	4.5
Credit Availability	2.66	Great Influence	4.5
Lack of Information	2.61	Great Influence	6
Labor Intensive	2.49	Moderate Influence	7.5
High Risk Enterprises	2.49	Moderate Influence	7.5
Lack of Recognition	2.45	Moderate Influence	9
Other	.30	No Influence	10

TABLE XLIV

A SUMMARY OF BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADER'S PERCEPTIONS CONCERNING SELECTED FACTORS THAT POTENTIALLY DISCOURAGE STUDENT SELECTION AS SAE'S IN THE PERKINS-TRYON SCHOOL DISTRICT AS INDICATED BY MEAN SCORE, DEGREE OF INFLUENCE, AND RANK

Selected Factors of Influence	Mean Score	Degree of Influence	Rank
Labor Intensive	3.01	Great Influence	1
Credit Availability	2.98	Great Influence	2
Lack of Information	2.97	Great Influence	3
Market Availability	2.90	Great Influence	4
Parental Interest	2.72	Great Influence	5
Start-up Cost	2.67	Great Influence	6
Student Interest	2.56	Great Influence	7.5
High Risk Enterprise	2.56	Great Influence	7.5
Lack of Recognition	2.45	Moderate Influence	9
Other	.90	No Influence	10

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter was to present a summary of the study conducted to determine the perceptions of agriculture students, parents, and members of the business community in the Perkins-Tryon School District concerning the influence of selected factors on the student's decisions to participate in alternative agriculture supervised experience programs. Conclusions and recommendations presented were based upon a detailed inspection and interpretation of the data and major findings.

#### Summary of the Study

##### Purpose

The purpose of the study was to determine selected factors influencing Perkins-Tryon Agricultural Education students to choose supervised experience programs in alternative agriculture.

##### Objectives of the Study

In order to fulfill the purpose of this study the following objectives were established in regard to the

involvement of Perkins-Tryon Agricultural Education students in alternative agriculture supervised experience programs.

1. To determine the general background characteristics of agricultural education students, their parents, and business and community leaders in the Perkins-Tryon School District.

2. To determine the perceived interest of Perkins-Tryon Agriculture students in selected agriculture career choices.

3. To determine the perceived acceptability by students, their parents, and members of the business community concerning selected alternative agriculture enterprises.

4. To determine the level of influence selected factors have on students to select supervised experience programs in alternative agriculture as perceived by students, parents, and members of the Perkins-Tryon business community.

5. To determine the level of influence selected alternative agriculture areas have on students with regard to attracting their interest and involvement in alternative agriculture SAE's as perceived by students, parents, and members of the business community.

6. To determine the level of influence selected limiting factors have on student's decisions to consider involvement in alternative agriculture supervised experience

programs as perceived by students, parents, and members of the Perkins-Tryon business community.

### Rationale for the Study

For some time now, studies concerning supervised experience programs as well as the comments of teachers, parents, students, and supervisors have indicated that the interest and requirements for student SAE programs are on the decline throughout many areas of the country. In the last five to six years several studies have specifically looked at student SAE experiences, perceptions of student-teachers in directing and supervising SAE programs during their student-teaching experience, and limiting factors that influence students to choose areas of involvement other than supervised experience programs (SAE's). However, major findings in many of the studies have indicated that the enthusiasm and commitment of the teacher to the concept of supervised experience is essential if students are to have a positive experience. In addition, agriculture in our state is still in the process of recovering from the recession that has been a part of the industry since 1979. Even though agriculture is in the recovery process and many positive changes have occurred, a stigma remains with many parents, business, and education levels in the state concerning the demise of agriculture in Oklahoma. While on-the-other hand, some agricultural and political leaders have had the foresight to advocate alternatives to the state's

"beef and wheat" mentally. At this point, the emphasis and concepts of alternative agriculture have primarily focused on research, market development, and development of educational programs. While the major thrust of this alternative agriculture concept has been to re-establish profitability in agriculture. As a result, students in some agricultural education programs are evaluating the options and reconsidering their involvement in production agriculture, even if it means approaching it in a non-traditional manner. The premise surrounding this was, if these kinds of things are taking place in the industry, what factors influence students and at what levels of influence are students being persuaded to choose to be involved or not to be involved in alternative agriculture supervised experience programs (SAE's). Therefore, the main objective of this study was to determine the perceptions of the students participating in the program as well as those of their parents and members of Perkins-Tryon business community, many of whom are alumni and avid supporters of the programs, with regard to factors which influence students to select supervised experience programs in alternative agriculture.

#### Design of the Study

Following a review of literature relevant to the study, procedures were established to satisfy the purpose and objectives.

After consulting with the author's thesis committee it was decided to conduct a "modified case study" concerning the perception of students, parents, and members of the Perkins-Tryon business community toward agriculture student involvement in alternative agriculture supervised experience programs (SAE's).

A thirty-five item questionnaire was administered to 80 Perkins-Tryon agriculture students during the 1990 fall semester, while 80 parents and 50 business and community leaders were also provided a 33 item instrument to indicate their perceptions of students being involved in alternative agriculture. The major components of the questionnaires included the student's type of SAE program and current enterprise involvement, their perceived level of involvement, gender, age, grade level, career interest, perceptions of major alternative agriculture areas, factors influencing student involvement, factors limiting participation and the influence of SAE enterprises areas. However, the parents and business leaders' questionnaire differed with regard to highest level of formal education and occupations in which they were involved.

Frequency distributions, percentages, rankings, and arithmetic means were the descriptive statistics utilized to describe the data.

## Major Findings of the Study

In addressing the major findings of this research effort, the author made reference to six majors with regard to the students and five concerning the parents and members of the Perkins-Tryon business community.

1. Background and general characteristics of the respondents.
2. Student's career interests.
3. Perceptions or acceptability of specific alternative agriculture areas as SAE programs.
4. Factors influencing student involvement.
5. The influence of SAE enterprise areas.
6. Factors/barriers limiting student participation.

## Background and Characteristics

An overview of the respondent's background and characteristics revealed that the students were almost proportionally involved in on - farms, production ownership and agribusiness SAE programs. Specifically, Perkins-Tryon students were involved in traditional livestock, agribusiness, specialty animal and agricultural mechanics SAE programs. Almost 31 percent of the students perceived that their level of involvement ranged from "involved" to "very involved." However, over 62 percent of the students indicated that they were only "somewhat involved." With regard to gender almost 82 percent of the students were male, while approximately 19 percent were female, however,



the parents responding were 56 percent male and almost 44 percent female. On-the-other hand, members of the business community responding were slightly more than 77 percent male and almost 23 percent female.

TABLE XLV  
A DISTRIBUTION OF THE THREE GROUPS  
OF RESPONDENTS BY GENDER

Group(s)	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	N	%
Student	65	81.25	15	18.75	80	51.61
Parents	22	56.1	18	43.9	40	25.81
Members of Business Community	27	<u>77.15</u>	8	<u>22.85</u>	35	<u>22.58</u>
Total	114		41		155	100.0

With regard to age, the students had an average age of 14.93 years, while the 14 and 15 year olds were the two largest groups with 22.5 and 30 percent respectively. The average class size was 16 students, while the two largest groups were the eighth graders and sophomores.

Basically, the parents were involved on four occupational groups, formers - 10 percent; educators - 10 percent; housewives - 12.5 percent; and mechanics - 12.5 percent. However, "other" occupations among parents made up 20 percent of the total. Almost 83 percent of the parents were in age range from 31 to 45 years of age. Sixty percent of the parents were equally distributed in the two age category intervals of 36 to 40 and 41 to 45 years of age. Over 56 percent of the parents responding to the survey were male. The highest level of formal education reported by the parents was that 42.5 percent were high school graduates. Over 27 percent had completed a baccalaureate degree.

More than 77 percent of the members of the business community which completed a survey instrument was male, while over 62 percent were between the ages of 36 to 50. Over 28 percent were from 41 to 45 years of age. With regard to formal education, over 48 percent had some college training, while the largest single group were high school graduates with 37.1 percent of the group. The largest single group of Perkins-Tryon business and community leaders were in retail business, while the second largest group were bankers.

#### Students' Career Interests

With regard to career interests, it seemed that agricultural mechanics was the most popular among Perkins-Tryon agriculture students, while livestock producer,

computer specialist, farm or ranch management, and forestry were also among the "top five" most popular potential career paths.

#### Acceptability of Alternative Agriculture

Small fruit and aquaculture were the most acceptable alternative agriculture areas to the students as well as the parents and members of the business community. Specifically, guard dogs, catfish, sweet corn, honey production, firewood, and strawberries were perceived as the most attractive for potential student supervised experience programs.

#### Factors Influencing Student Involvement

"Encouragement from fellow students, parents, and agriculture teachers" was the highest ranking factor perceived by students, while both parents and members of the Perkins-Tryon business community cited this factor as being ranked second and third in influence and ranked "a genuine interest in working with the product or commodity" as being the most influential factor influencing student involvement in alternative agriculture SAE programs. All three groups ranked "low profitability from traditional SAE's" as being the least influential. "High Profit potential for alternative agriculture enterprises" was ranked second in level of influence by both students and parents.

TABLE XLVI

A SUMMARY OF STUDENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF SELECTED  
ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE AREAS AS SAE PROGRAMS  
AS INDICATED BY MEAN RESPONSE, DEGREE  
OF ACCEPTABILITY, AND RANK

Alternative Agriculture SAE Area(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Small Fruit	5.44	Acceptable	1
Aquaculture	5.40	Acceptable	2
Tree Crops	4.34	Somewhat Acceptable	3
Specialty Animal	4.04	Somewhat Acceptable	4
Specialty Crops	3.63	Somewhat Acceptable	5
Commercial Horticulture	3.47	Somewhat Acceptable	6

TABLE XLVII

A SUMMARY OF PARENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF SELECTED  
ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE AREAS AS SAE PROGRAMS  
FOR THEIR CHILDREN AS INDICATED BY MEAN  
RESPONSE, DEGREE OF ACCEPTABILITY,  
AND RANK

Alternative Agriculture SAE Area(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Small Fruit	5.58	Acceptable	1
Aquaculture	5.01	Acceptable	2
Tree Crops	4.33	Acceptable	3
Specialty Animal	4.31	Somewhat Acceptable	4
Commercial Horticulture	4.14	Somewhat Acceptable	5
Specialty Crops	3.63	Somewhat Acceptable	6

TABLE XLVIII

A SUMMARY OF BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS' PERCEPTIONS  
 OF SELECTED ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE AREAS AS SAE  
 PROGRAMS FOR PERKINS-TRYON AGRICULTURAL  
 EDUCATION STUDENTS AS INDICATED BY MEAN  
 RESPONSE, DEGREE OF ACCEPTABILITY,  
 AND RANK

Selected Alternative Agriculture SAE Area(s)	Mean Score	Degree of Acceptability	Rank
Small Fruit	5.15	Acceptable	1
Aquaculture	4.97	Acceptable	2
Specialty Animal	4.58	Acceptable	3
Tree Crop	4.43	Somewhat Acceptable	4
Commercial Horticulture	4.07	Somewhat Acceptable	5
Specialty Crops	3.23	Somewhat Acceptable	6

### Influence of the SAE Enterprise

Students and parents saw specialty animal and wildlife enterprises exerting the most influence as alternative agriculture SAE's on the students' potential involvement. However, members of the business community seemed to perceived that the most influence resulting from potential SAE areas would come from fruits, vegetables, wildlife, and specialty animals, and in that order.

### Factors Limiting Student Participation

Students and parents both perceived the "student's interest" as the first limiting factor to the student's involvement in alternative agriculture supervised experience programs (SAE's), while members of the Perkins-Tryon business community saw "labor intensive" as being the most limiting factor to student involvement in alternative agriculture. The students also viewed parental interest, credit availability, start-up cost, and market availability among their "top five" concerns with getting involved in alternative agriculture SAE programs. However, parents perceived that start-up cost, market availability, their own interest, and credit availability as also being among their biggest concerns, but not in the same order as the students. Members of the business community revealed their perceptions of the most limiting factors in their "top five," inclusive of "labor intensive," to be credit availability, and parental interest. "Lack of recognition" was of the least

concern among all three groups of respondents as a limiting to student involvement.

### Conclusions

The analysis and interpretation of the major findings in the study led the researcher to draw the following conclusions.

1. It was apparent that the Perkins-Tryon agriculture students were involved in the traditional on-farm placement, production, and agribusiness supervised experience programs. In addition, it was further concluded that traditional livestock production programs were rather typical as SAE's for Perkins-Tryon agriculture students.

2. With regard to perceived student involvement, it was evident that Perkins-Tryon agriculture students saw themselves as not being totally committed to the concept of supervised experience programs.

3. The typical Perkins-Tryon agriculture student is male, 15 years of age and whose agriculture class contains 16 other students in addition to himself.

4. The agriculture students at Perkins-Tryon High School came from backgrounds where their parents were involved in typical "blue collar" occupations.

5. Parents of the students were relatively young parents.



6. In addition, it was concluded that the parents of the Perkins-Tryon agriculture students were also relatively well-educated.

7. The business community of Perkins consists of young, progressive, educated, retail business people.

8. It was apparent that Perkins-Tryon agriculture students were as traditional in their career interests as their involvement in supervised experience programs.

9. It seemed that there was more potential for getting Perkins-Tryon agriculture students involved in small fruits and aquaculture than the other areas of alternative agriculture.

10. It was evident that catfish, sweet corn, and strawberries were popular alternative agriculture enterprises for potential SAE programs among Perkins-Tryon students.

11. Parents, agriculture teachers, and fellow students are important source of encouragement to students working their way through the adoption process with regard to becoming involved in alternative agriculture supervised experience programs.

12. However, it was apparent among the parents and members of the business community that one of their concerns was students' genuine interest in working with the product or commodity.

13. Supervised Experience Program areas of themselves do not exert a high level of influence on students to become involved.

14. It was apparent that student interest, parental interest, credit availability and market availability were concerns most often mentioned as barriers or limitations to student involvement in alternative agriculture SAE programs.

### Recommendations

As a result of the major findings, analysis of the data, and the conclusions drawn the following recommendations were established.

1. It was recommended that new and non-traditional kinds supervised experience programs be promoted as well as emphasized in the agriculture curriculum of the Perkins-Tryon School District and community.

2. It was further recommended that alternative agriculture supervised experience programs be encouraged for those students whose SAE programs consist of a "Directed Laboratory Experience."

3. A diversified agriculture experience should be emphasized in the agriculture curriculum to broaden the students' scope of potential agriculture careers.

4. There seems to be enough interest and justification in aquaculture and small fruits as well some areas of vegetable production to warrant the development of

extensive educational programs for both agriculture students and adults in the Perkins-Tryon community.

5. Positive encouragement is an important source of student support, therefore, parents, agriculture teachers, and interested citizens should make it a point to reassure students concerning the challenges and opportunities of life, as well as current opportunities available through supervised experience programs.

6. It should be stressed among students that a genuine interest in a particular area of interest is probably the most essential ingredient for its success.

7. The attractiveness of specific SAE areas should not be over emphasized just to get numbers of students involved.

8. Teachers, parents, and business and community leaders should work to reduce barriers which limit student participation in alternative agriculture supervised experience programs, especially, if the student has a genuine desire to be involved.

#### Recommendations for Additional Research

The following recommendations were made by the author regarding additional research as a result of having completed this study. These recommendations were judgements based on the findings and conclusions resulting from this research effort.

1. Research on both SAE and alternative agriculture SAE's specifically be conducted to determine factors other than those highlighted in this study.

2. A study be conducted to emphasize the current status of supervised experience programs in Oklahoma and nation-wide; and results be utilized to develop a renewed effort and thrust toward developing a higher level of involvement and understanding in and about agriculture.

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## APPENDICES



APPENDIX A

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Code \_\_\_\_\_

1. Type of SAE program which you are involved?

- |                                   |                        |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| (A) Placement                     | (B) Ownership          |
| (1) on-farm _____                 | (1) production _____   |
| (2) off-farm _____                | (2) agribusiness _____ |
| (3) directed lab experience _____ |                        |

2. Specific SAE program(s) in which you are involved? Check all which apply)

- |                                   |                               |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (A) traditional livestock _____   | (F) specialty animal _____    |
| (B) traditional field crop _____  | (G) specialty crop _____      |
| (C) commercial horticulture _____ | (H) aquaculture _____         |
| (D) agricultural mechanics _____  | (I) agribusiness _____        |
| (E) ornamental horticulture _____ | (J) other (be specific) _____ |

3. Your current level of involvement in alternative agriculture SAE's.

- |                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| _____ very involved | _____ somewhat involved |
| _____ involved      | _____ not interested    |

4. Gender:

- \_\_\_\_\_ female                  \_\_\_\_\_ male

5. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Grade level:

- |                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 8th grade _____ | Junior _____  |
| Freshman _____  | Senior _____  |
| Sophomore _____ | College _____ |

7. Career interest (please rank your top ten career choices - 1,2,3, etc.):

- |                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| _____ livestock production     | _____ nursery & landscape      |
| _____ forestry                 | _____ crop production          |
| _____ agricultural finance     | _____ plant pathology          |
|                                | _____ (diseases)               |
| _____ agricultural sales       | _____ soil conservation        |
| _____ commercial horticulture  | _____ agricultural             |
|                                | _____ marketing                |
| _____ agricultural mechanics   | _____ floriculture             |
| _____ computer specialists     | _____ aquaculture              |
| _____ meat processing          | _____ wildlife management      |
| _____ farm or ranch management | _____ international trade      |
| _____ public relations         | _____ greenhouse management    |
| _____ cooperative extension    | _____ agricultural             |
|                                | _____ transportation           |
| _____ agricultural research    | _____ government service       |
| _____ environmental protection | _____ agricultural engineering |
| _____ teaching agriculture in  | _____ veterinary medicine      |
| _____ high school              |                                |

8. Listed below are a selected list of alternative agriculture SAE enterprises. Rate each item by using a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being the least usable and 10 being the most usable.

(A) SPECIALTY ANIMAL:

stock dog _____	emu _____
hunting dog _____	rabbit _____
guard dog _____	mice/rat _____
sight dog _____	llamas _____
seeing eye dog _____	ostrich _____
mink _____	other animal _____
chinchilla _____	

## (B) AQUACULTURE:

catfish \_\_\_\_\_  
trout \_\_\_\_\_  
minnow \_\_\_\_\_  
frogs \_\_\_\_\_  
tilapia \_\_\_\_\_

## (C) COMMERCIAL HORTICULTURE:

onion _____	pinto bean _____	cabbage _____
beet _____	bush bean _____	asparagus _____
sweet potato _____	cowpea _____	cauliflower _____
Irish potato _____	lima bean _____	broccoli _____
carrot _____	butter bean _____	egg plant _____
cucumber _____	okra _____	lettuce _____
sweet squash _____	field corn _____	radish _____
winter squash _____	sweet corn _____	spinach _____
pumpkins _____	Indian corn _____	turnip greens _____
tomatoes _____	watermelon _____	
hot peppers _____	cantaloupe _____	
sweet peppers _____	flowers _____	
herbs _____	other vegetables _____	

## (D) SPECIALTY CROPS:

sunflower _____	kenaf _____
weeds (pollen) _____	honey production _____
guar _____	rape _____
specialty pepper _____	other specialty crop _____

## (E) TREE CROPS:

nursery stock _____	pulpwood _____
lumber _____	post _____
poles _____	Christmas tree _____
firewood _____	other _____
cottonwood _____	

## (F) SMALL FRUITS:

strawberry _____	blueberry _____
blackberry _____	grapes _____
dewberry _____	currents _____
raspberry _____	plums _____

9. Rate the following factors that would influence your decision to select an alternative agriculture SAE.

Scale

4 VERY GREAT INFLUENCE  
3 GREAT INFLUENCE  
2 MODERATE INFLUENCE  
1 SOME INFLUENCE  
0 NO INFLUENCE

(A) low profitability from traditional SAE's	4 3 2 1 0
(B) high profit potential for alternative agriculture enterprises	4 3 2 1 0

- (C) low risk entry requirements (labor intensive, capital intensive) 4 3 2 1 0
- (D) encouragement from fellow students, parents, and ag ed instructor 4 3 2 1 0
- (E) a genuine interest in working with the product or commodity 4 3 2 1 0
- (F) new exciting "get in on the ground floor" of the industry 4 3 2 1 0
10. Rate the following selected factors that would discourage you from starting or continuing an alternative agriculture SAE.
- (A) start up cost 4 3 2 1 0
- (B) credit availability 4 3 2 1 0
- (C) market availability 4 3 2 1 0
- (D) labor intensive 4 3 2 1 0
- (E) lack of information 4 3 2 1 0
- (F) student interest 4 3 2 1 0
- (G) parental interest 4 3 2 1 0
- (H) lack of recognition 4 3 2 1 0
- (I) high risk enterprises 4 3 2 1 0
- (J) other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_ 4 3 2 1 0
11. From the list of selected alternative agricultural enterprises, rate the influence you would place if given the opportunity to pursue.
- (A) fruits 4 3 2 1 0
- (B) vegetables 4 3 2 1 0
- (C) specialty crop 4 3 2 1 0
- (D) specialty animal 4 3 2 1 0
- (E) wildlife 4 3 2 1 0
- (F) other \_\_\_\_\_ 4 3 2 1 0
12. Complete the following statements.
- (A) I have explored enterprises that are alternative agriculture in nature, however I didn't select one because \_\_\_\_\_
- (B) A friend of mine selected a SAE program that is considered alternative agriculture in nature. I would like to start one because \_\_\_\_\_
- (C) The SAE in my agricultural education program is important. I think my involvement in an alternative agriculture SAE will \_\_\_\_\_
- (D) A friend of mine selected an alternative agriculture program. I was disappointed because \_\_\_\_\_
- (E) Given the list you rated in question number eight, select five alternative agriculture SAE's (rank them in order of preference).
1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX B

PARENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Code \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Relationship to AGED/SAE program:

\_\_\_\_\_ parent  
 \_\_\_\_\_ member of business community

## 2. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ female \_\_\_\_\_ male

## 3. Age:

_____ 20 or less	_____ 51-55
_____ 21-25	_____ 56-60
_____ 26-30	_____ 61-65
_____ 31-35	_____ 66-70
_____ 36-40	_____ 71-75
_____ 41-45	_____ 76 and over
_____ 46-50	

## 4. Highest level of formal education (check only one response):

_____ high school graduate	_____ Ed.D. or Ph.D.
_____ 2 years of college	_____ DVM
_____ B.S. degree	_____ Other (be specific)
_____ M.S. degree	

## 5. Occupation (check the most accurate response):

_____ farmer	_____ attorney
_____ welder	_____ carpenter
_____ banker	_____ auto dealer
_____ educator	_____ retail business
_____ agribusiness	_____ sales
_____ housewife	_____ retail clerk
_____ mechanic	_____ insurance agent
_____ government service	_____ florist
_____ military	_____ secretary
_____ restaurant operator	_____ medical doctor
_____ school administrator	_____ veterinarian
_____ other (be specific)	

## 6. Listed below are a selected list of SAE alternative agriculture enterprises. Rate each item by using a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being the least usable and 10 being the most usable.

## (A) SPECIALTY ANIMAL:

stock dog _____	emu _____
hunting dog _____	rabbit _____
guard dog _____	mice/rat _____
sight dog _____	llamas _____
seeing eye dog _____	ostrich _____
mink _____	other animal _____
chinchilla _____	

## (B) AQUACULTURE:

catfish \_\_\_\_\_  
 trout \_\_\_\_\_  
 minnow \_\_\_\_\_  
 frogs \_\_\_\_\_  
 tilapia \_\_\_\_\_

(C) COMMERCIAL HORTICULTURE:

- |                     |                        |                     |
|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| onion _____         | pinto bean _____       | cabbage _____       |
| beet _____          | bush bean _____        | asparagus _____     |
| sweet potato _____  | cowpea _____           | cauliflower _____   |
| Irish potato _____  | lima bean _____        | broccoli _____      |
| carrot _____        | butter bean _____      | egg plant _____     |
| cucumber _____      | okra _____             | lettuce _____       |
| sweet squash _____  | field corn _____       | radish _____        |
| winter squash _____ | sweet corn _____       | spinach _____       |
| pumpkins _____      | Indian corn _____      | turnip greens _____ |
| tomatoes _____      | watermelon _____       |                     |
| hot peppers _____   | cantaloupe _____       |                     |
| sweet peppers _____ | flowers _____          |                     |
| herbs _____         | other vegetables _____ |                     |

(D) SPECIALTY CROPS:

- |                        |                            |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| sunflower _____        | kenaf _____                |
| weeds (pollen) _____   | honey production _____     |
| guar _____             | rape _____                 |
| specialty pepper _____ | other specialty crop _____ |

(E) TREE CROPS:

- |                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| nursery stock _____ | pulpwood _____       |
| lumber _____        | post _____           |
| poles _____         | Christmas tree _____ |
| firewood _____      | other _____          |
| cottonwood _____    |                      |

(F) SMALL FRUITS:

- |                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| strawberry _____ | blueberry _____ |
| blackberry _____ | grapes _____    |
| dewberry _____   | currents _____  |
| raspberry _____  | plums _____     |

7. Complete the following statements:

A. As a parent, I would like to see my son/daughter involved in an SAE that was alternative agriculture in nature, but I'm concerned about \_\_\_\_\_

B. My son/daughter selected an alternative agriculture enterprise and I'm encouraged because \_\_\_\_\_

C. The movement toward alternative agriculture enterprise by agricultural education classes will benefit students as \_\_\_\_\_

D. My son/daughter selected an enterprise that was alternative agriculture oriented, however I was disappointed because \_\_\_\_\_

E. Given the list (alternative agriculture enterprises) you ranked on question six, select five choices for your son/daughter according to their interest and involvement (please rank by how you perceive their interest and involvement).

- |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 5. _____ |          |

8. Rate the following selected factors that would encourage you to advocate to agriculture students or your son/daughter the attributes of alternative agriculture SAE's.

Scale

- 4 VERY GREAT INFLUENCE  
3 GREAT INFLUENCE  
2 MODERATE INFLUENCE  
1 SOME INFLUENCE  
0 NO INFLUENCE

- |  |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| (A) low profitability from traditional SAE's   |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (B) high profit potential for alternative agriculture enterprises  |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (C) low risk entry requirements (labor intensive, capital intensive)   |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (D) encouragement from fellow students, parents, and aged instructor   |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (E) a genuine interest in working with the product or commodity  |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (F) new exciting "get in on the ground floor" of the industry  |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|  |  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 9. Select the degree of influence which should in your opinion be exerted on agriculture students or your son/daughter to choose an alternative agriculture enterprise as their supervised agriculture experience program (SAE). |  |   |   |   |   |   |
| (A) fruits   |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (B) vegetables   |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (C) specialty crop   |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (D) specialty animal   |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (E) wildlife   |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (F) other _____  |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|  |  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 10. Rate the selected factors listed concerning alternative agriculture below which you would consider prior to encouraging your child or other agriculture students to pursue as SAE enterprises.                               |  |   |   |   |   |   |
| (A) start-up or initial cost   |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (B) credit availability  |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (C) market availability  |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (D) labor intensive  |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (E) lack of information  |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (F) student interest   |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (G) parental interest  |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (H) lack of recognition  |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (I) high risk enterprises  |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (J) other (please specify) _____   |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |



APPENDIX C

BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY

LEADER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Code \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Relationship to AGED/SAE program:

\_\_\_\_\_ parent  
 \_\_\_\_\_ member of business community

## 2. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ female \_\_\_\_\_ male

## 3. Age:

_____ 20 or less	_____ 51-55
_____ 21-25	_____ 56-60
_____ 26-30	_____ 61-65
_____ 31-35	_____ 66-70
_____ 36-40	_____ 71-75
_____ 41-45	_____ 76 and over
_____ 46-50	

## 4. Highest level of formal education (check only one response):

_____ high school graduate	_____ Ed.D. or Ph.D.
_____ 2 years of college	_____ DVM
_____ B.S. degree	_____ Other (be specific)
_____ M.S. degree	

## 5. Occupation (check the most accurate response):

_____ farmer	_____ attorney
_____ welder	_____ carpenter
_____ banker	_____ auto dealer
_____ educator	_____ retail business
_____ agribusiness	_____ sales
_____ housewife	_____ retail clerk
_____ mechanic	_____ insurance agent
_____ government service	_____ florist
_____ military	_____ secretary
_____ restaurant operator	_____ medical doctor
_____ school administrator	_____ veterinarian
_____ other (be specific)	

## 6. Listed below are a selected list of SAE alternative agriculture enterprises. Rate each item by using a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being the least usable and 10 being the most usable.

## (A) SPECIALTY ANIMAL:

stock dog _____	emu _____
hunting dog _____	rabbit _____
guard dog _____	mice/rat _____
sight dog _____	llamas _____
seeing eye dog _____	ostrich _____
mink _____	other animal _____
chinchilla _____	

## (B) AQUACULTURE:

catfish \_\_\_\_\_  
 trout \_\_\_\_\_  
 minnow \_\_\_\_\_  
 frogs \_\_\_\_\_  
 tilapia \_\_\_\_\_

## (C) COMMERCIAL HORTICULTURE:

onion _____	pinto bean _____	cabbage _____
beet _____	bush bean _____	asparagus _____
sweet potato _____	cowpea _____	cauliflower _____
Irish potato _____	lima bean _____	broccoli _____
carrot _____	butter bean _____	egg plant _____
cucumber _____	okra _____	lettuce _____
sweet squash _____	field corn _____	radish _____
winter squash _____	sweet corn _____	spinach _____
pumpkins _____	Indian corn _____	turnip greens _____
tomatoes _____	watermelon _____	
hot peppers _____	cantaloupe _____	
sweet peppers _____	flowers _____	
herbs _____	other vegetables _____	

## (D) SPECIALTY CROPS:

sunflower _____	kenaf _____
weeds (pollen) _____	honey production _____
guar _____	rape _____
specialty pepper _____	other specialty crop _____

## (E) TREE CROPS:

nursery stock _____	pulpwood _____
lumber _____	post _____
poles _____	Christmas tree _____
firewood _____	other _____
cottonwood _____	

## (F) SMALL FRUITS:

strawberry _____	blueberry _____
blackberry _____	grapes _____
dewberry _____	currents _____
raspberry _____	plums _____

## 7. Complete the following statements:

A. As a member of the business community, I would like to see Perkins-Tryon students involved in an SAE that was alternative agriculture in nature, but I'm concerned about

---



---

B. I see students selecting alternative agriculture enterprises and I'm encouraged because

---



---

C. The movement toward alternative agriculture enterprise by agricultural education classes will benefit students as

---



---

D. Several students I know selected an enterprise that was alternative agriculture oriented, however I was disappointed because

---



---

E. Given the list (alternative agriculture enterprises) you ranked on question six, select five choices for an agricultural education student you know, according to their interest and involvement (please rank by how you perceive their interest and involvement).

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
 4. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_

8. Rate the following selected factors that would encourage you to advocate to agriculture students the attributes of alternative agriculture SAE's.

Scale

4 VERY GREAT INFLUENCE  
 3 GREAT INFLUENCE  
 2 MODERATE INFLUENCE  
 1 SOME INFLUENCE  
 0 NO INFLUENCE

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| (A) low profitability from traditional SAE's                         | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (B) high profit potential for alternative agriculture enterprises    | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (C) low risk entry requirements (labor intensive, capital intensive) | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (D) encouragement from fellow students, parents, and aged instructor | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (E) a genuine interest in working with the product or commodity      | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (F) new exciting "get in on the ground floor" of the industry        | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
9. Select the degree of influence which should in your opinion be exerted on agriculture students to choose an alternative agriculture enterprise as their supervised agriculture experience program (SAE).
- |                      |   |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| (A) fruits           | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (B) vegetables       | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (C) specialty crop   | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (D) specialty animal | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (E) wildlife         | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (F) other _____      | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
10. Rate the selected factors listed concerning alternative agriculture below which you would consider prior to encouraging agriculture students to pursue as SAE enterprises.
- |                                  |   |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| (A) start-up or initial cost     | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (B) credit availability          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (C) market availability          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (D) labor intensive              | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (E) lack of information          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (F) student interest             | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (G) parental interest            | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (H) lack of recognition          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (I) high risk enterprises        | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| (J) other (please specify) _____ | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

APPENDIX D

COVER LETTER

Dear Perkins-Tryon FFA parent:

Your son/daughter is enrolled in agricultural education for the 1990-91 academic year. Although our program has a rich tradition of involvement in production agriculture, we feel our students need a broader educational base.

The following questionnaire is designed to help us in our search for new SAE (supervised agriculture experience) opportunities to broaden our students' experiences in the "new" field of agriculture. SAE is one of the most valuable tools we have to assist our students to learn. We are currently adding new courses to our program. While doing so, we must expand the available SAE programs which complement them.

Please take time to complete this survey. We value your opinion concerning what is best for your son/daughter. The information you provide will help us to better serve your child and the Perkins-Tryon agriculture community. Thanks for your assistance.

Sincerely,

David Hoy, Instructor  
Perkins-Tryon  
Agricultural Education Department

Dear Members of the Perkins Business Community:

As a member of the Perkins business community, you have been asked to help identify factors that will be used to encourage students to pursue new SAE (supervised agriculture experience) programs.

SAE is a valuable part of the agricultural education program at our high school, as well as our students experiential education. The purpose of this study is to determine the type of supervised experience program best suited for our students.

We are entering one of the most exciting times in the history of our program. Currently, we are in the process of changing our curriculum in order to bring our students up-to-date. At the same time, our hands-on-learning program must change also. Please give us your honest opinion concerning this survey. Thank you for your support, interest and concern. You are appreciated.

Sincerely,

David Hoy, Instructor  
Perkins-Tryon  
Agricultural Education Department

2.

VITA

David J. Hoy

Candidate for the Degree of  
Master of Science

Thesis: AN ASSESSMENT OF SELECTED FACTORS INFLUENCING  
PERKINS-TRYON AGRICULTURAL STUDENTS TO CHOOSE  
SUPERVISED AGRICULTURAL EXPERIENCES IN ALTERNATIVE  
AGRICULTURE

Major Field: Agricultural Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Cherokee, Oklahoma, May 26,  
1950, the son of John and Martha Hoy.

Education: Graduated from Marlow High School, Marlow,  
Oklahoma, 1968; attended Midwest Christian College  
at Oklahoma City fall of 1968; attended Cameron  
University from January 1969 to May 1973; received  
an Associate in Science of Agriculture 1973;  
attended Oklahoma State University, Stillwater,  
from 1973 to 1975, receiving a Bachelor of  
Science, in Animal Science, December 1975;  
completed requirements for Master of Science  
degree in Agricultural Education at Oklahoma State  
University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, July 1991.

Organizations: Member of OVATA, P-TA, OVA, AVA, OEA,  
NEA, OSU Block & Bridle Club, OSU Meats Judging  
Team and OSU Collegiate FFA.