

THE VALUE OF THE FFA'S WORK EXPERIENCE  
ABROAD PROGRAM AS PERCEIVED BY  
SELECTED PARTICIPANTS

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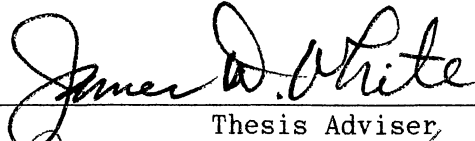
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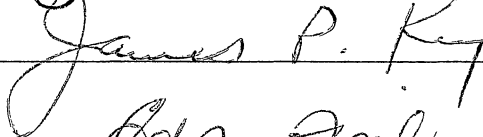
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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The Future Farmers of America organization sponsors an international exchange program, called Work Experience Abroad, for members of Active, Collegiate, and Alumni chapters of the Future Farmers of America (FFA). The goal of the Work Experience Abroad program is to gain international experience in agriculture and agriculture-related areas while working in a foreign country. The National Future Farmers of America Organization International Programs Booklet explains that the Work Experience Abroad program is:

an international exchange placing Future Farmers of America members on farms and in agribusinesses around the world. By living and working with farm families and other involved in agriculture, participants learn by personal experience about the agriculture methods and culture of the country in which they are placed (p. 1).

Learning from Work Experience Abroad is one of the major goals of the program. As a past FFA International Programs staff member for FFA, Gary Johnson (13), summed up the WEA program in a personal interview to the author:

Learn by hands-on doing, on a foreign farm in a foreign country, with a foreign host family and in a foreign language.

The Work Experience Abroad program stresses "hands-on" learning, which is a major method of education and learning in vocational agriculture. The best place to learn about foreign agriculture is to work with agriculture in a "foreign country". The best method to learn a foreign culture is to live it each day with a special "foreign host family".

The best place to learn a "foreign language", like German, is in Germany.

The FFA has been involved in the International program since the start of FFA in 1928. Many of the people that were leaders in the FFA organization accepted employment with the Agency for International Development and other departments in the United States Government that sponsored international programs. These FFA leaders working with international programs saw the need for youth-to-youth international education. From their suggestions, in 1968 the National FFA organization opened a department responsible for International Education Programs. The FFA at 50 by Dr. A. Webster Tenney (21) gives the history of Work Experience Abroad:

In 1968 the FFA employed Lennie H. Gamage, former national FFA officer from Virginia, and a member of the FFA Program Division staff, to serve as Director of International Programs of the FFA.

In 1968 an exchange program was initiated with the International Agricultural Exchange Association to provide practical work experience in agriculture for participants. Two FFA members participated in 1968 but arrangements were made for 25 participants from the FFA and an equal number from Western Europe to take part in the exchange in 1969.

In 1970 the FFA made direct contact with the European Committee of Young Farmers Clubs, which represented 14 countries, and operated directly an FFA program called, 'Work Experience Abroad' (p. 122).

Work Experience Abroad grew very rapidly in the 14 years that Mr. Gamage (8) was the Director of the International Programs.

The author participated in the Work Experience Abroad program in 1978-1979 and personally learned from the program and enjoyed the leadership and friendship of the National FFA staff working with International programs.

Much of the success of the Work Experience Abroad program comes

from the leadership and guidance of the International programs staff of the National FFA organization.

#### Statement of the Problem

There was a lack of information concerning the value and effectiveness of the Work Experience Abroad (WEA) program. This study was undertaken to determine the value and effectiveness of WEA as perceived by past participants. As a past participant in the program, the author had a personal interest in the perception of the program and how others felt about their experiences.

To ascertain the appreciation others had for the WEA program, past participants were asked their impressions of the value and experiences.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the value and effectiveness of FFA's Work Experience Abroad (WEA) program as perceived by selected participants during the five year period, 1978 to 1983.

#### Objectives of the Study

To accomplish the purpose, the following objectives were formulated.

1. To determine selected demographic characteristics of past WEA participants.
2. To determine the status of the 1978 - 1983 participants.

3. To ascertain the value of the Work Experience Abroad Program with regard to developing social, agricultural knowledge and leadership skills as perceived by past WEA participants.
4. To determine the participants perceived effectiveness of the WEA program regarding selection criteria, orientation, and management of the program.

#### Scope and Limitations

The scope of this study consisted of four hundred forty-two WEA participants during the period 1978 through 1983. This study was limited to only those who completed WEA experiences abroad.

#### Definition of Terms

Certain terms have special meanings as applied to this study:

Future Farmers of America -- (FFA) A national organization of young men and women with interests in vocational agriculture. The Future Farmers of America have four levels of membership, which are: 1. Active; 2. Collegiate; 3. Alumni; and, 4. Honorary

International -- A practice relating to one whose activities extend across national boundaries.

Past Participants -- Future Farmers of America members that worked with Work Experience Abroad between the years of 1978 to the summer of 1983.

Work Experience Abroad -- (WEA) The international exchange program of the National Future Farmers of America. Work Experience

Abroad is used to promote international understanding and education of agriculture.

Outbound Participants -- American FFA members traveling to a foreign country to work in a WEA Program.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to present for the reader an overview of the Work Experience Abroad program and the student involvement in international exchange programs. The presentation of this back-ground information was divided into four major areas and a summary for the purposes of organization and clarity. The primary areas of concern were: (1) History of Exchange Programs; (2) Educational Exchange Programs; (3) Developmental Exchange Programs; and, (4) Work Exchange Programs.

#### History of Exchange Programs

This history of exchange programs concerns some of the earliest exchanges in educational programs where students traveled abroad to gain academic experience. Developmental exchanges, on the other hand, include the provision of technical assistance by students to host countries. Work exchange programs, however, involved situations where students gained experience by living and working in another country.

In 339-397 A.D. Saint Ambrose, bishop of Milan, made an international exchange statement according to the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations (20).

Si fureis Romae, Romano vivito more;  
Si fueris alibi, vivito siut ibi (p. 4).

When Saint Ambrose's statement is directly translated, it reads;

If you are at Rome live the Roman Style;  
If you are elsewhere live as they live elsewhere (p. 4).

Saint Ambrose's quote has lost some of the words in its present-day usage, but very little of the meaning is lost. Saint Ambrose's quote has changed from the original statement to the way it is usually quoted today according to the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations (20);

When in Rome, do as the Romans do (p. 4).

Saint Ambrose was an exchange student himself, born in Milan and educated in Rome, where he studied law and literary education.

Saint Ambrose's quote is an excellent one to be used as a guide for exchange programs, because the foreigner conforms to the ways of the host country. The term "Ugly American" comes from Americans in a foreign country not living and acting in the way that is proper in that country. The Ugly American does not observe the ways that are customary to the culture of the host country he is visiting.

Fa Hsien, an early Chinese exchange participant, who crossed the deserts of China in the fifth century, was mentioned in the book entitled, A Short History of China. Another early Chinese exchange student was Hsuo Chuang, a Buddhist monk who journeyed through China in 630 A.D. Hsuo Chuang traveled through China's deserts like Fa Hsien before him and Marco Polo after him. Hsuo Chuang traveled through China's deserts and over the Himalayan Mountains, to visit monasteries in India. According to Williams' (28):

Hsuo Chuang brought with him from India twenty horse-loads of books and images and relics. The large collection of books was placed in a pagoda especially built for that purpose. The books were not all of a religious character; there were numerous mathematical and philosophical treatises (p. 140).



America became involved in international exchanges just after the American Revolution, when America was a new nation. The early exchanges were privately funded by very wealthy families. After the first World War some groups sponsored students and other young men to help clean up the destruction left by the war in Europe. With each war the groups became larger, because the destruction was more severe to the towns and communities which were once the battlefront. As the reconstruction of the towns and communities was completed, the goals of international exchange programs changed from repairing the damage to one of understanding various cultures to avoid more wars.

Dr. Fred D. Hoefler (11) stated in his thesis, Participant Assessments of Exchange Program, that the goals of groups sponsoring exchange programs in the United States in the early 1950's after the reconstruction period were:

1. Increase international understanding and good will among the peoples of the world as a contribution to peace.
2. Establish friends and supporters for the United States by offering persons from other countries a better understanding of the life and culture of the United States.
3. Assist in the economic, social, or political development of other countries.
4. Assist in the educational or professional development of outstanding individuals.
5. Contribute knowledge throughout the world for general welfare of mankind.
6. Train leaders capable of dealing with basic human problems (p. 9).

The goals were usually developed with time and growth of the sponsoring group. The largest private agency in the field of international education is the Institute of International Education. This institute administers exchange programs between the United States and 74 different countries. The stated objectives of the Institute of

International Education have been as reported by Elmo C. Wilson (30) and Frank Bonillia (30) (Evaluating Exchange of Person Programs):

1. To increase understanding between the United States and other nations through the exchange of promising college students and advanced specialists in many fields.
2. Through these educational exchanges to help develop leadership to deal with basic problems of the world's people (p. 19).

This type of goals and objectives had an effect on Senator J.

William Fulbright's thinking. Fulbright, of Arkansas, knew how beautiful Europe had been before the Second World War. As a Rhodes Scholar, the Senator spent a year on tour in Europe after finishing his education. Senator Fulbright (18) stated that:

There is a great need for some new approaches to international relations when heading at such indiscriminate destruction of life and property by new and sophisticated methods of World War II (p. 24).

World War II left Europe devastated and the American Field service and many other exchange groups helped the countries to recover from the great losses caused by the war. After the recovery from the war the American Field Service, along with other exchange groups, developed into an educational exchange service using the people they had helped earlier, to find host families for American students wanting to be educational exchanges.

### Educational Exchanges

Traveling abroad to get an academic education does not belong only to the modern age of jet aircraft that can cross the Atlantic Ocean in five hours or less. Americans have always traveled abroad, even when it took five weeks instead of five hours to cross the Atlantic Ocean,

and the travel was much more dangerous. When America was winning her independence some of the signers of the Declaration of Independence received their education in Europe. Garraty (9) stated in The New

Guide to Study Abroad:

Americans recognized the special values of study abroad, and for the favored few this was an established feature of one's training. In colonial times the sons of wealthy southern planters were frequently sent to England or France to be educated. William Byrd, II, ancestor of the polar explorer and of Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia, studies in London's famed Middle Temple in the Inn of Court. Charles Carroll, of Maryland, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was educated at the College de St. Omer in Flanders and studies law in Paris and London (p. 7-10).

More Americans from the Southern Atlantic coast were educated in Europe than those from the New England states because of the early development of Harvard, founded in 1639. Just after the American Revolution many bonds were broken between the new nation and the old country, and America started building more schools and colleges to educate the students here in this country. America still did not have any law or medical colleges, which required students that wanted to become a doctor of medicine or a lawyer to travel to Europe to receive more training than was available in American colleges.

Garraty (9) listed, in the New Guide of Study Abroad, more reasons that Americans travel abroad to be trained:

Although the number of American colleges expanded rapidly after the Revolution, many intelligent young men continued to study abroad. Germany, because of her high standards of scholarship and the complete academic freedom, was a magnet that attracted the finest scholars (p. 10).

Each student will have a different reason for wanting to study in Europe, but they will have a common goal, "to learn". This quote is found in the International Thesaurus of Quotations by Rhoda T. Tripp (26):

Experience, travel; These are an education in themselves (p. 13). The quote is not new nor is the thought. Andromache Euripedes said it in 426 B.C.

For students studying history or languages it is best that they understand the origin of the people to study their history and the origin of the language to fully understand the language. A student can learn proper German from a text book in a classroom setting, but he will learn "street German" when he is living and learning in Germany. The street German will be more commonly understood when the student uses the language to communicate with the German people. So the best place to learn German is in Germany, because in Germany most of the people the student meets will be speaking German, making the German nation his classroom. The business will be done in the German language, from ordering potato salad in a street cafe to asking directions about when the next train leaves for Frankfurt.

Students have always traveled to receive an education. Some students travel to America for that education because to students from less developed countries the education will be better here than what they could receive in their own country. Still some travel to America because they did not have high enough grades to be admitted to schools in their own country. Boyan (6) reported:

The number of foreign students reported in 1979-1980 was 286,343 an 8.5 percent increase over the 263,938 students reported in 1978-1979. While the number of foreign students in the United States continues to grow, their total number still represents a very small fraction of all students in higher education (p. 66).

The percentage of students traveling abroad from the United States to receive an education has changed since the American Revolution as

compared to the number that travel to the United States. Boyan (6)

states:

In 1978-1979 United States college-sponsored study abroad programs reported 24,886 students that participated in international exchange programs (p. 66).

This data was reported by the Institute of International Education in the Open Doors 1979-1980 report on International Educational Exchanges. The data is not fully accurate, because of the limitations caused by schools and colleges that do not report to the institute and families that enroll their children directly into foreign schools and colleges.

Three goals of International Education were explained by Stephen K. Bailey (4), Dean of the Maxwell Graduate School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, who also serves as chairman of the Commission of International Education of the American Council on Education. Behind all of the efforts there seem to be three interrelated goals in international education as stated in the government pamphlet International Education: Past, Present, Problems, and Prospects:

1. To prepare men and women for wise public leadership in the sciences and arts of governance in a critical interdependent and rapidly changing and evolving world.
2. To cultivate the soil of civic understanding so that informed leadership can reap enlightened response and constructively critical support from mass political fellowship.
3. To heighten the sense of option, variety, excitement, and identity in peoples across the face of the globe whose esthetic and social sensibilities can be sharpened only by insights into the world beyond their familial and neighborhood surrounding (p. 1-2).

These three interrelated goals of international education should show up in all international educational exchange programs.

The American Field Service started during World War I in 1914 as a volunteer ambulance corps working with the French Army. The volunteers in the American Field Service drove donated ambulances to the front lines to help the wounded French soldiers. The American Field Service was transformed from a volunteer ambulance service into a youth exchange program in 1947 following the devastation of World War II.

The American Field Service is a major sponsor of educational exchange students. This service functions in some 28 countries, provides means for foreign students between 16 and 18 years of age to attend high school and live with families for a year in the United States. American high school students may also live with foreign families and attend school abroad for one academic year.

The purpose will help to better understand the goals of the American Field Service as stated in the American Field Service International Intercultural Program 1983 Annual Report (2).

American Field Service volunteers and professional staff throughout the world are moving towards the goal of peace by stimulating an awareness of mankind's common humanity, a wider understanding on the diverse cultures of the world, and a concern for the global issues confronting society. They acknowledge that peace is a dynamic concept threatened by social injustice and economic inequity both between and within nations.

In pursuit of this goal, the core of the American Field Service experience has been the promotion of relationships in which families, communities, groups, and maturing young persons from different cultural backgrounds share new learning situations related to the purposes of the American Field Service. In addition, through experience and experimentation, American Field Service has developed and continues to encourage new models and opportunities for exchange, that will be beneficial for the development of society (p. 1).

The American Field Service has many programs for students from America to visit foreign countries to study and learn. The American Field

Service Program Guide for Students, Families, and Volunteers (3) says:

The American Field Service School Program offers American high school students the opportunity to attend high school in one of fifty countries, while living with a host family (p. 5).

Attend school, live with a host family, learn the culture and be more than a tourist is what student exchanges are about.

The benefits reported by the American Field Service are excellent and their goals ideal for any exchange program. Some of the benefits from participating in an American Field Service (1), as listed in

American Field Service Expand Your Horizons include:

1. A deeper understanding of yourself and others.
2. A new respect and awareness of different attitudes and ways of life.
3. An increased knowledge of the history and culture of another area of one's country or of the world.
4. A new perspective on your own beliefs, traditions, history and culture.
5. A more profound understanding of the interdependence of all people and their problems.
6. A greater growth of personal maturity, tact and self-confidence.
7. A new language or fluency in one you have already studied.
8. Advanced college credits are available (p. 5).

The benefits listed above will help improve students' lives and help them become better citizens of this world.

Senator J. William Fulbright was a Rhodes Scholar and knew the importance of international exchanges. In 1945 he saw an opportunity to finance a vast program of educational exchanges by using the foreign currencies that were piling up as counterpart payments for war relief. Senator Fulbright did more to help understanding and exchange programs with his senate address on September 27, 1945 and this bill, which finance educational exchanges, is one of the Senator's most noted acts as a legislator. The opening statement of the bill, as recorded by Robert B. Luce (18) in Fulbright of Arkansas, states:

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to introduce a bill, for reference to the Committee on Military Affairs, authorizing the use of credits established abroad for the promotion of international good will through the exchange of students in the fields of education, culture and science (p. 44-47).

Senator Fulbright's idea of a student exchange was from his experience abroad on a Rhodes Scholarship and a one year tour of Europe. Walter Lippmann (17), a close friend of Senator Fulbright, wrote this in the introduction of Fulbright of Arkansas:

Fulbright's former history tutor at Oxford now Master of Penbroke College, told his former pupil, with pardonable expansiveness: You are responsible for the largest and most significant movement of scholars across the face of the earth since the fall of Constantinople in 1453 (p. 26).

(Constantinople was the very last of the Eastern Roman Empire.)

#### The Development Exchange

The development exchange is where exchange students and adults are on a job assignment that will help underdeveloped nations use the natural resources of that country. The Peace Corps was the largest and most common of the development exchange programs. The Peace Corps is largely students working in the fields of education, health, agriculture, and community development, but it is not limited to students only, as mentioned by Morris I. Stein (22) in Volunteers for Peace:

Although people of all ages could apply for service in the Peace Corps, it was most attractive to an probably best designed for young people (p. 1).

The Peace Corps' director, Sargent Shriver, appointed by President Kennedy, was a leader in the work exchange program "The Experiment in International Living."



The Peace Corps is now 21 years old and has become familiar to many Americans that have done volunteer service helping underdeveloped nations become more self-sufficient. David Hapgood (10) states in

Agents of Change; A Close Look at Peace Corps:

The Peace Corps in (twenty-one) years has become an accepted part of the federal government. By the standards of domestic politics, this new agency for overseas service, created in 1961 by the late President Kennedy, has been a success. The American public views the Peace Corps with approval, if not necessarily with understanding (p. 1).

The three objectives outlined in the Peace Corps Act, Public Law 87-293, of the Eighty Seventh Congress, on September 22, 1961 Section 2, as understood by Robert B. Textor (25) in Cultural Frontiers of the Peace Corps are:

1. To help peoples of the various host countries in "meeting their needs for trained manpower." Presumably, what Congress had in mind was the Peace Corps Volunteers would be cast in their work roles in such a way as to contribute to the self-expanding development of these host countries, so that eventually outside assistance would no longer be necessary. The Peace Corps was thus expected to succeed in such difficult and complex tasks where other agencies of our (overseas Establishment) had often met with indifferent success or even outright failure.
2. To help "promote a better understanding of the American people on the part of the peoples served." This objective was often informally expressed as projecting an improved American image overseas (p. 5-6).

In the 21 years that the Peace Corps has worked overseas they have given many young Americans the opportunity to travel and learn, and also helped the host country in various ways, including the improvement of its well being.

Last year June Kronholz (16) wrote this article in the Wall Street Journal:

Well, the Peace Corps is twenty years old now. It has dwindled to 5,400 volunteers from 13,000 at its mid 1960's peak and to operating in 60 countries from 90. Its budget was cut 9% this fiscal year to 95 million dollars and faces an even bigger bite

next year.

But the Peace Corps is still up to a thing or two. In Ghana, which used to be called the Gold Coast, Peace Corps volunteers are raising rabbits, keeping bees, farming fish. They are glazing pottery, cooking charcoal, patching dams. They are teaching speech to retarded children, family planning to medicine men, plowing with a bullock to farmers who have never used anything more complicated than a hoe (p. 1).

A good sign of tasks being completed is when the job is getting smaller.

### The Work Exchange

Students have many reasons for wanting to travel and work abroad. The most common one mentioned was travel and adventure in visiting a foreign country and to not be just a tourist. In the New Guide to Study Abroad by Garraty (9), the introduction of the work exchange was very meaningful:

One need not to be a student to find adventure in a foreign land, but by settling down for a time and becoming part of the local community, the student does usually experience life abroad at a far deeper and more meaningful level than does the tourist who whisks from sign to sign at a hectic pace guided by a bored and empty-headed tour leader parroting cliches and misinformation. Those who have traveled as tourists, but also have lived for some time in one place abroad agree almost unanimously that the tourists look at more but see far less (p. 13).

Many Americans go abroad not to study in the formal classroom sense but to learn by living. The best method to learn is with hands-on experience; hands-on experience in living in a foreign land is the best way to learn about that country and the people that make up that country's population. The text book is not the only way to learn and in some cases the text is the slowest and most inaccurate form of learning. Garraty's (9) New Guide to Study Abroad agrees with the

author on this:

The student who goes abroad without his books, impelled simply by a desire to learn by living, may well achieve as much intellectually as the scholar who is closeted in a library, and he will be far more likely, too, to make a good impression on the local people and this contributes substantially to the development of international good will (p. 363).

The American tourist has a great opportunity to see a foreign country, but the American that takes the time to learn a culture will gain far more than the tourist who sees the culture but does not understand it or the language.

William Peters knew that studying in a foreign country is not the only way to learn. Many students, college and high school, spend their summers and vacation in a country other than their own. William Peters started "The Experiment in International Living" in 1932, with the idea that is in the forward of William's (29) book, Passport to Friendship. The forward, written by Pearl S. Buck (7) states:

If people knew each other well enough through their various ways of living and thinking, a human relationship would result which, based upon mutual understanding, could mean peace on earth and good-will among men (p. 9).

William Peters' idea was not new, but the part that was new is that he put it into a useful practice. William Peters decided to gather a few American boys and take them to some foreign country and let them get to know other young boys their age in that host country. Peters called this "The Experiment in International Living."

A major leader on the "The Experiment in International Living" team was Sargent Shriver, who later became the director of the United States Peace Corps.

The FFA sponsors a work exchange program to help students in high

school and college become involved in agriculture in a foreign country. The program is called "Work Experience Abroad." The FFA International Programs (13) lists the program as:

The Work Experience Abroad program is an international exchange placing FFA members on farms and in agribusinesses around the world. By living and working with farm families and others involved in agriculture, participants learn by personal experience about the agriculture methods and the culture of the country in which they are placed (p. 1).

The way to discover a different cultural method is by doing it. Lennie Gamage (8), International Programs Coordinator for the National FFA organization, speaking to a group of participants preparing to leave for a foreign country, stated:

Just because there are two methods to do one job does not mean that one of the methods is wrong, but only that they are different.

The Work Experience Abroad program is designed to help high school and college age students learn and experience a new way of life in more than 25 different countries. The value of the Work Experience Abroad program will be different for each participant, depending on the length of stay and country of their experience.

Carlos A. Navar (19), a Work Experience Abroad participant, recalled some of his experiences in The Agricultural Education Magazine about the value and the placement of participants:

I can't say strongly enough, how valuable and exciting are the experiences of international agricultural education while living and working in another country. The host families are picked carefully and are an important part of the total Work Experience Abroad experience. The Work Experience Abroad program under the leadership of Len Gammage works very hard and quickly to set you up with a host family and give you, if possible, the type of work experience for which you asked. Also they try to match your desire for a particular country and experience as best they can, quite often on a first come, first served basis (p. 9, 22).

According to Navar, he received some of the best experiences of his

life while working in Austria and Holland on the Work Experience Abroad program.

The objectives of the National FFA International Education Programs are as follows, according to FFA Board of Directors Policies (5):

1. To share with agricultural youth world-wide the benefits of vocational agriculture and FFA.
2. To promote an exchange of ideas in order to develop mutual understanding, and the improvement of rural life and agricultural education in all nations.
3. To assist in the development of youth organizations patterned after FFA in countries that desire to receive such guidance (p. 40).

These objectives are an excellent example of the goals of the FFA and Work Experience Abroad program.

#### Summary

Since the earliest recorded time, people have traveled to other countries to learn of other cultures, and to tell of their culture. In the review of literature on exchange programs, it was found that many present-day exchange programs began as a result of the reconstruction efforts after World War II.

Various types of exchange programs exist, from the academic exchange of Rhodes Scholars to the improvement of underdeveloped countries through the Peace Corps.

All exchange programs seem to have several things in common. Teaching and learning are part of nearly every exchange program, along with the goal of promoting a better understanding of various cultures.

The Work Experience Abroad program of the FFA is no exception. Young adults involved with the FFA have the opportunity to get to know

people of other cultures in countries throughout the world. They can obtain a better understanding of those people by living and working with them. In addition, they may share their thoughts and ideas as Americans.

## CHAPTER III

### METHOD AND PROCEDURE

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methods and procedures used in conducting this study. In order to collect data, which would provide information relating to the purpose and objectives of the study, it was necessary to accomplish the following assignments: (1) determine the population from which data was to be collected; (2) develop an instrument for data collection; (3) develop collection procedures; and, (4) determine procedures for data analysis.

#### Population

The population for the study consisted of participants that entered the program in the Summer of 1978 through those that entered during the Summer of 1983. The selected (1978-83) population included four hundred forty-two past participants. The population was determined by records available from the international programs department at the National FFA Center.

The 1978 start was chosen because it was only five years since they returned from the Work Experience Abroad program. The 1983 end was chosen to give all of the participants a chance to return from the Work Experience Abroad program, that were outbound in the summer of 1983.

Past participants were expected to return the survey instrument since they had a personal investment in the program. The main problem

was in getting current addresses of this group of young adults moving away from home, to college, to business, or other employment.

#### Development of Instrument

It was determined early that the mailed questionnaire would be the best method to gather data for the study.

The questionnaire was developed with the assistance of the National Future Farmers of America staff and the author's graduate committee.

The survey instrument was composed of three sections. The purpose of section one was to gather personal and host country information at the time the participants were accepted for the Work Experience Abroad program. Section two attempted to ascertain demographic information that was current to 1984 and section three was utilized to assist the participants with their perceptions of the program's value and benefits.

The three sections were composed of a total of 50 items. The statements utilized interval scales, open and forced response items and a "Likert-type" scale to ascertain the data. The scales were designed to secure nominal, ordinal and quantitative data as well as the respondents' personal comments from open response items. The questionnaire was sent to the International Department of the national FFA for their evaluation prior to surveying the participants. Necessary additions, deletions and changes were made (see Appendix A).



### Collection of Data

The questionnaire was mailed in early May 1984 to the past participants. An introductory letter, and a self-addressed, return stamped envelope were sent with the questionnaire. The explanation letter contained the signatures of the author and the International Programs Coordinator for the FFA. The past participants were asked to return the questionnaire by June 1, 1984. A follow-up of non-respondents was not conducted.

### Analysis of Data

The population of the study consisted of WEA participants during the 1978-1983 timeframe, who traveled to a foreign country to work in an agricultural exchange program sponsored by the National FFA Organization.

Information obtained from the survey provided the means to identify the responding participants perceived values and effectiveness of the WEA program. The survey contained short answer items and statements requiring answers on an interval scale. Major topics included demographics, value of the WEA and effective management of the WEA program.

For each of the statements concerning the value, a frequency count and percentage of responses for the perceived value was determined on a five point "Likert-type" scale. Arithmetical mean responses for each statement listed were calculated by value of WEA as perceived by the participant. For each of the statements concerning the effectiveness,

a frequency count and percentage of responses for the perceived effectiveness was determined. A five-point "Likert-type" scale was used after the "Not Applicable" responses were substantiated. In addition, the data was treated utilizing the descriptive statistics of frequency distribution, percentages and rank orders.

The five-point "Likert-type" scale was used in securing participants responses according to the value they perceived of the WEA program. Numerical values were assigned as follows: "Extremely Valuable" = 4, "Very Valuable" = 3, "Valuable" = 2, "Slightly Valuable" = 1, "Not Valuable" = 0.

Real limits were set at 3.50 to 4.00 for "Extremely Valuable"; 2.50 to 3.49 for "Very Valuable"; 1.50 to 2.49 for "Valuable"; .50 to 1.49 for "Valuable" and .00 to .49 for "Not Valuable".

The five-point "Likert-type" scale was used in securing participants responses according to the effectiveness they perceived of the WEA program. Numerical values were assigned as follows: "Very Good" = 4; "Good" = 3; "No Opinion" = 2; "Poor" =1; "Very Poor" =0.

Real limits for the Summary of Perceived Effectiveness Based on Selected Categories of the Work Experience Abroad Program table were set at 3.50 to 4.00 for "Very Good"; 2.50 to 3.49 for "Good"; 1.50 to 2.44 for "No Opinion"; .50 to 1.49 for "Poor"; and .00 to .49 for "Very Poor".

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the background data of the WEA participants and their perceived value and effectiveness of the FFA's WEA program. In addition, it describes base-line study for future research efforts concerning the WEA program.

To facilitate reading and the understanding of the analysis presentation, the data was grouped and arranged in progression based on the objectives of the study.

Data collected in this study were from 269 returning WEA participants during 1978 - 1983. The characteristics of the participants were reported in frequency distributions. In addition, the frequency distributions of responses to each question pertained to the respondents' perceived value and effectiveness of the WEA program.

#### Background of the Population

The population of this study included 442 young men and women who returned to the United States, having been participants between the summer of 1978 and the summer of 1983. Questionnaires were mailed to 442 past participants, 269 (60.86 percent) responded. The non-respondents were not followed up. All returned and undelivered questionnaires were delivered back to the United States Department of Education.

### General Characteristics of Respondents

The questionnaire contained 16 questions designed to obtain personal information from each WEA participant concerning their WEA tours, starting date, gender, age, residential location, population of residence, educational level, size of local FFA chapter, participants' Chapter Officer status, participants' State Officer status before and after the WEA program, highest FFA degree, supervised occupational experience program, length of their WEA program, countries visited and date participant departed America. In responding to the questionnaire not all questions were answered by all respondents, and some respondents answered questions with more than one answer; therefore, the "n" on some tables may vary.

Table I, revealed frequency and percentage of respondents by gender. Of the 269 respondents, 98 (37 percent) were female. The remaining 167 (63 percent) were male.

TABLE I

#### A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY GENDER

| GENDER          | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269) |        |
|-----------------|--|--------|
|                 | n                                      | %      |
| Female          | 98                                     | 37.00  |
| Male            | 167                                    | 63.00  |
| Total Responses | 269                                    | 100.00 |

Presented in Table II, were the age categories of the WEA participants. The largest group were the 18 year-olds with one hundred eight respondents which was 40.15 percent of the total. Thirty percent of the respondents were 17 or 19 years of age, 189 respondents (70.26 percent). Each category in the age group of 23 and above accounted for less than one (1.00) percent per category. The average age of the WEA participant was 18.75 years old.

It was shown in Table III the frequency and percentages of respondents by geographic location of their places of residence. Of the 269 respondents, 223 (82.90 percent) were from rural residence. The remaining 46 respondents (17.10 percent) were from towns or cities.

Table IV revealed the frequency and percentage of the respondents by educational levels. The largest group of the participants were in college or had graduated from high school. Of the 269 respondents there were 234 respondents (86.98 percent) who were high school graduates and less than 10.00 percent who were high school students. Ranking the participants by education level included: (1) High School graduate; (2) College Student; (3) High School Student; (4) and (5) College Graduate and other, followed by No response.

The number and percentages of respondents by the size of the participant's local FFA chapter was reported in Table V. Seventy-two respondents (26.77 percent) indicated that the local chapter size was 21-40 members. Only 19 respondents (7.06 percent) were from FFA chapters smaller than 20 members. The remaining respondents were closely distributed in FFA chapters ranging in size from 41 members to more than 100 members. A ranking of top five chapter sizes by the

TABLE II

## A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE

| AGE             | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269) |        |
|-----------------|--|--------|
|                 | n                                      | %      |
| 16              | 7                                      | 2.60   |
| 17              | 34                                     | 12.64  |
| 18              | 108                                    | 40.15  |
| 19              | 47                                     | 17.48  |
| 20              | 40                                     | 14.87  |
| 21              | 17                                     | 6.32   |
| 22              | 11                                     | 4.09   |
| 23              | 2                                      | .74    |
| 24              | 2                                      | .74    |
| Greater than 25 | 1                                      | .37    |
| Total           | 269                                    | 100.00 |

$$\bar{x} = 18.75$$

TABLE III

## A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE

| LOCATION OF RESIDENCE        | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269) |        |
|------------------------------|--|--------|
|                              | n                                      | %      |
| Rural Farm or Ranch          | 183                                    | 68.03  |
| Rural Non Farm or Ranch      | 40                                     | 14.87  |
| Town Less than 5,000 Pop.    | 26                                     | 9.67   |
| City Greater than 5,000 Pop. | 20                                     | 7.43   |
| Total                        | 269                                    | 100.00 |

number of WEA participants was: (1) 21-40 members; (2) 41-60 members; (3) 61-80 members; (4) more than 100 members; (5) 81-100 members.

When asked if they were Chapter Officers, 212 of the respondents (78.81 percent) indicated they had been Chapter Officers. The remaining 47 respondents (17.47 percent) said they had not been Chapter Officers, and no response from 10 (3.72 percent) as shown in Table VI.

TABLE IV

A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF FORMAL  
EDUCATION COMPLETED AT THE START OF THE WEA TOUR

| EDUCATIONAL LEVEL COMPLETED | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269) |        |
|-----------------------------|--|--------|
|                             | n                                      | %      |
| High School Student         | 23                                     | 8.65   |
| High School Graduate        | 135                                    | 52.26  |
| College Student             | 86                                     | 32.33  |
| College Graduate            | 9                                      | 3.38   |
| Other                       | 9                                      | 3.38   |
| No Response                 | 7                                      | 2.60   |
| Total                       | 69                                     | 100.00 |

The frequency distribution of Chapter Offices held by respondents was reported in Table VII. Of the 297 responses, Vice-President had the greatest frequency with 95 responses (31.99 percent), closely followed by President with 75 responses (25.25 percent) and Secretary with 41 responses (13.80 percent). Treasurer, Reporter, and Sentinel shared the remaining 86 responses with each office accounting for less than 15 percent.



TABLE V

A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY  
SIZE OF LOCAL CHAPTER

| CHAPTER SIZE          | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269) |        |
|-----------------------|--|--------|
|                       | n                                      | %      |
| Less than 20 members  | 19                                     | 7.06   |
| 21 - 40 members       | 72                                     | 26.77  |
| 41 - 60 members       | 54                                     | 20.07  |
| 61 - 80 members       | 43                                     | 15.99  |
| 81 - 100 members      | 34                                     | 12.64  |
| More than 100 members | 42                                     | 15.61  |
| No Response           | 5                                      | 1.86   |
| Total                 | 269                                    | 100.00 |

Table VIII demonstrates the number and percentage of respondents which held a State FFA Office before going on the WEA program was reported. Two hundred ten (210) respondents (78.07 percent) out of 269 respondents said they had not held a State FFA Office or 14 respondents (5.20) had no response and 45 (16.73 percent) responded that they had been State FFA officers.

TABLE V

A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY  
SIZE OF LOCAL CHAPTER

| CHAPTER SIZE          | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269) |        |
|-----------------------|--|--------|
|                       | n                                      | %      |
| Less than 20 members  | 19                                     | 7.20   |
| 21 - 40 members       | 72                                     | 27.27  |
| 41 - 60 members       | 54                                     | 20.45  |
| 61 - 80 members       | 43                                     | 16.29  |
| 81 - 100 members      | 34                                     | 12.88  |
| More than 100 members | 42                                     | 15.91  |
| No Response           | 5                                      | 1.86   |
| Total                 | 264                                    | 100.00 |

Table VIII demonstrates the number and percentage of respondents which held a State FFA Office before going on the WEA program was reported. Two hundred ten (210) respondents (78.07 percent) out of 269 respondents said they had not held a State FFA Office or 14 respondents (5.20) had no response and 45 (16.73 percent) responded that they had been State FFA officers.

TABLE VI

A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WEATHER  
OR NOT THEY HELD A CHAPTER OFFICE

| CHAPTER OFFICER | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269) |        |
|-----------------|--|--------|
|                 | n                                      | %      |
| Yes             | 212                                    | 81.85  |
| No              | 47                                     | 18.15  |
| No Response     | 10                                     | 3.72   |
| Total           | 269                                    | 100.00 |

TABLE VII

A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY CHAPTER OFFICES HELD

| CHAPTER OFFICE HELD | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269)* |        |
|---------------------|---|--------|
|                     | n                                       | %      |
| President           | 75                                      | 25.25  |
| Vice-President      | 95                                      | 31.99  |
| Secretary           | 41                                      | 13.80  |
| Treasurer           | 32                                      | 10.78  |
| Reporter            | 34                                      | 11.45  |
| Sentinel            | 20                                      | 6.73   |
| Total               | 297                                     | 100.00 |

\*More than one response.

TABLE VIII

A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WEATHER  
OR NOT THEY HELD A STATE FFA OFFICE

| STATE FFA OFFICER | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269) |        |
|-------------------|--|--------|
|                   | n                                      | %      |
| Yes               | 45                                     | 16.73  |
| No                | 210                                    | 78.07  |
| No Response       | 14                                     | 5.20   |
| Total             | 269                                    | 100.00 |

As shown in Table IX, the frequency and percentage of respondents who held State FFA office was reported, with the breakdown as to which office was held with the greatest frequency. The office of Vice-President was held by the most respondents: 16 respondents (5.95 percent) reported to have been a Vice-President, with 12 respondents (4.46 percent) holding the office of President and 7 respondents (2.60 percent) holding the office of Secretary. Eleven respondents were closely distributed with less than 10 percent between Treasurer, Reporter, and Sentinel, and 223 respondents (82.90 percent) had not held a State FFA office.

TABLE IX  
A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY STATE FFA OFFICES HELD

| STATE FFA OFFICE HELD | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269) |        |
|-----------------------|--|--------|
|                       | n                                      | %      |
| President             | 12                                     | 4.46   |
| Vice-President        | 16                                     | 5.95   |
| Secretary             | 7                                      | 2.60   |
| Treasurer             | 3                                      | 1.11   |
| Reporter              | 4                                      | 1.49   |
| Sentinel              | 4                                      | 1.49   |
| No Response           | 223                                    | 82.90  |
| Total                 | 269                                    | 100.00 |

Presented in Table X were the number and percentage of respondents showing how the participants first learned about the WEA programs. The largest percentage, 29.77 percent (89 respondents), reported they learned about the WEA program from a Former WEA participant. 23.08 percent (69 respondents) reported they learned about the WEA program from their FFA Advisor. The WEA pamphlet and other were ranked third and fourth as to the source of information about the WEA program. The remaining areas are each less than 10 percent.

TABLE X

A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS CONCERNING SOURCE  
OF INFORMATION ON THE WEA PROGRAM

| SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT WEA | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269)* |        |
|---------------------------------|---|--------|
|                                 | n                                       | %      |
| FFA advisor                     | 69                                      | 23.08  |
| Future Farmer Magazine          | 18                                      | 6.02   |
| State FFA Officers              | 22                                      | 7.36   |
| State Executive Secretary       | 4                                       | 1.33   |
| State FFA Advisor               | 9                                       | 3.01   |
| Former WEA Participant          | 89                                      | 29.77  |
| WEA Pamphlet                    | 36                                      | 12.04  |
| Other                           | 52                                      | 17.39  |
| Total                           | 299                                     | 100.00 |

\*More than one response.

The number and percentage of respondents according to the length of their WEA tour was reported in Table XI. Over three-fourths of the participants responding had a program length of six months or less, with the majority being three months, by 108 respondents (40.15 percent) and 102 respondents (37.92 percent) staying six months abroad. The third largest group abroad stayed for 12 months with 28 respondents (10.41 percent) in this group. The other lengths of programs amounted to less than 12 percent of the total respondents.

TABLE XI

A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY  
WEA LENGTH OF SERVICE

| LENGTH OF PROGRAM | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269) |        |
|-------------------|--|--------|
|                   | n                                      | %      |
| 3 months          | 108                                    | 40.15  |
| 6 months          | 102                                    | 37.92  |
| 9 months          | 9                                      | 3.35   |
| 12 months         | 28                                     | 10.41  |
| Other lengths     | 16                                     | 5.94   |
| No Response       | 6                                      | 2.23   |
| Total             | 269                                    | 100.00 |

In Table XII, the number and percentage of respondents was reported by the highest FFA degree attained. More than half of the respondents had reached the State Farmer Degree with 133 respondents (49.44 percent) out of the 269. The next major degree reached by a large number of respondents, 70 of them, (26.02 percent) was Chapter Farmer Degree. Thirty-eight (14.13 percent) had received the highest degree (American Farmer) awarded by the FFA. The remaining respondents, less than 2 percent, had a Greenhand Degree as the highest degree attained.

TABLE XII

## A DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY HIGHEST FFA DEGREE ATTAINED

| DEGREE          | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269) |        |
|-----------------|--|--------|
|                 | n                                      | %      |
| Greenhand       | 3                                      | 1.12   |
| Chapter Farmer  | 70                                     | 26.02  |
| State Farmer    | 133                                    | 49.44  |
| American Farmer | 38                                     | 14.13  |
| No Response     | 25                                     | 9.29   |
| Total           | 269                                    | 100.00 |

The month that participants left for their exchange trip was documented in Table XIII. The majority 60 (59.48 percent) left in June, with 59 (21.93 percent) leaving in August. The next closest number was 28 (10.41 percent) who left in September. There were eight (2.97 percent) who left in July and six (2.23 percent) who began their exchange trip in January. The other two months represented by one each were May and November (both equalling .37 percent). The ranking of the top 5 months that participants depart the United States of America are as follows: (1) June; (2) August; (3) September; (4) July; and, (5) January.



### Perceived Value of WEA

Presented in Table XIV are the responses of the participants who were asked about their perceived value of the WEA program in the areas of meeting people and gaining understanding of self and foreign social cultures.

The WEA program rated a mean of 3.39, which was "Very Valuable" in helping WEA participants meet other people.

The WEA program was "Extremely Valuable" according to the mean (3.75) in helping WEA members see how other people live and work in foreign countries and helped WEA participants experience foreign social cultures (3.50).

WEA participants rated the WEA program as "Very Valuable" in helping WEA participants learn about other people's view of America (3.48) and to learn about other people's views toward their own country (3.06).

The following included a ranking of the Social Cultural Values as demonstrated by the mean (first being of the highest value): 1) the WEA program helped in being able to see how other people live and work in other countries; 2) the WEA program helped in learning about social cultures different from mine; 3) the WEA program helped in learning about other people's views of America; 4) the WEA program helped in being able to meet other people; and 5) the WEA program helped in learning about other people's views towards their own country.

The perception of the WEA program as being "Very Valuable" in learning and experiencing social cultural exchanges in a foreign country according to the mean of 3.44 which was "Very Valuable". Two social cultural categories rated "Extremely Valuable" and three rated "Very Valuable" with none rated below "Very Valuable".

TABLE XIII

A DISTRIBUTION OF WEA PARTICIPANTS DEPARTING  
FOR HOST COUNTRIES BY MONTH

| MONTH       | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269) |        |
|-------------|--|--------|
|             | n                                      | %      |
| January     | 6                                      | 2.23   |
| February    | 0                                      | 0.00   |
| March       | 0                                      | 0.00   |
| April       | 0                                      | 0.00   |
| May         | 1                                      | .37    |
| June        | 160                                    | 59.48  |
| July        | 8                                      | 2.97   |
| August      | 59                                     | 21.93  |
| September   | 28                                     | 10.41  |
| October     | 2                                      | .75    |
| November    | 1                                      | .37    |
| December    | 0                                      | 0.00   |
| No Response | 4                                      | 1.49   |
| Total       | 269                                    | 100.00 |

TABLE XIV

A SUMMARY OF THE RESPONDENT'S PERCEIVED VALUE OF WEA PROGRAMS  
BASED ON SELECTED SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

| Selected Areas   | Distribution By Response Category |     |                      |      |          |       |                  |       |                       |       | Total<br>Responses<br>N | %      | Mean | Category              |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----|----------------------|------|----------|-------|------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|-------------------------|--------|------|-----------------------|
|  | Not<br>Valuable                   |     | Slightly<br>Valuable |      | Valuable |       | Very<br>Valuable |       | Extremely<br>Valuable |       |                         |        |      |                       |
|  | n                                 | %   | n                    | %    | n        | %     | n                | %     | n                     | %     |                         |        |      |                       |
| The WEA program helped in<br>being able to meet other<br>people  | 1                                 | .38 | 4                    | 1.54 | 36       | 13.67 | 72               | 27.38 | 150                   | 57.03 | 263                     | 100.00 | 3.39 | Very<br>Valuable      |
| The WEA program helped in<br>being able to see how other<br>people live and work in<br>other countries | 1                                 | .38 | 0                    | 0    | 8        | 3.05  | 45               | 17.18 | 208                   | 79.39 | 262                     | 100.00 | 3.75 | Extremely<br>Valuable |
| The WEA program helped in<br>learning about social<br>cultures different from<br>mine                  | 2                                 | .77 | 2                    | .77  | 19       | 7.31  | 79               | 30.38 | 158                   | 60.77 | 260                     | 100.00 | 3.50 | Extremely<br>Valuable |
| The WEA program helped in<br>learning about other people's<br>views of America                         | 1                                 | .38 | 7                    | 2.68 | 23       | 8.81  | 66               | 25.29 | 164                   | 62.84 | 261                     | 100.00 | 3.48 | Very<br>Valuable      |
| The WEA program helped in<br>learning about other people's<br>views toward their country               | 1                                 | .39 | 11                   | 4.26 | 51       | 19.77 | 104              | 40.31 | 91                    | 35.27 | 258                     | 100.00 | 3.06 | Very<br>Valuable      |
| Total  | 6                                 | .46 | 24                   | 1.83 | 137      | 10.51 | 366              | 28.07 | 771                   | 59.13 | 1304                    | 100.00 | 3.44 | Very<br>Valuable      |

Table XV, presented the frequency distribution, percentages, mean, and categories of the responses indicated by participants of their perceived values of the WEA program in helping them to gain a better knowledge of agriculture here in America and in foreign countries.

All of the areas that helped participants learn about agriculture were rated as "Very Valuable".

The WEA was "Very Valuable" in helping participants find out more about their own country with a mean of 2.66.

The WEA program scored a mean of 3.21, which was also "Very Valuable" in helping participants understand different agricultural methods used in foreign agriculture.

The area being of the highest value in agricultural practice, was learning about foreign agriculture. The mean 3.13 was rated as being "Very Valuable".

In helping discover the importance of agriculture world-wide, 113 (43.29 percent) rated WEA as "Extremely Valuable" and 86 (32.95 percent) rated the WEA as "Very Valuable". The mean 3.13 was also in the "Very Valuable" category.

In helping gain experience in other agricultural methods, 98 (37.69 percent) respondents rated the WEA as "Extremely Valuable" and 93 (35.77 percent) rated it "Very Valuable".

The following included a ranking of the perceived value of WEA in helping participants gain knowledge of agricultural practices (first being of highest value): 1) the WEA program helped in learning more about foreign agriculture; 2) the WEA program helped in understanding different agricultural methods used in other countries; 3) the WEA

TABLE XV

A SUMMARY OF RESPONDENT'S PERCEIVED VALUE OF THE WEA PROGRAM  
 BASED ON KNOWLEDGE GAINED OF AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

| Selected Areas  | Distribution By Response Category |      |                      |      |          |       |                  |       |                       |       | Total<br>Responses<br>N | %      | Mean | Category      |
|---|-----------------------------------|------|----------------------|------|----------|-------|------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|-------------------------|--------|------|---------------|
|   | Not<br>Valuable                   |      | Slightly<br>Valuable |      | Valuable |       | Very<br>Valuable |       | Extremely<br>Valuable |       |                         |        |      |               |
|   | n                                 | %    | n                    | %    | n        | %     | n                | %     | n                     | %     |                         |        |      |               |
| The WEA program helped in finding out more about my own country                               | 3                                 | 1.16 | 24                   | 9.27 | 92       | 35.52 | 78               | 30.11 | 62                    | 23.94 | 259                     | 100.00 | 2.66 | Very Valuable |
| The WEA program helped in understanding different agriculture methods used in other countries | 0                                 | 0    | 8                    | 3.04 | 41       | 15.59 | 101              | 38.40 | 113                   | 42.97 | 263                     | 100.00 | 3.21 | Very Valuable |
| The WEA program helped in learning more about foreign agriculture                             | 1                                 | .38  | 5                    | 1.91 | 34       | 13.03 | 101              | 38.70 | 120                   | 45.98 | 261                     | 100.00 | 3.28 | Very Valuable |
| The WEA program helped in discovering the importance of agriculture world wide                | 2                                 | .77  | 14                   | 5.36 | 46       | 17.62 | 86               | 32.96 | 113                   | 43.29 | 261                     | 100.00 | 3.13 | Very Valuable |
| The WEA program helped in gaining experience in other agricultural methods                    | 3                                 | 1.15 | 20                   | 7.69 | 46       | 17.69 | 93               | 35.78 | 98                    | 37.69 | 260                     | 100.00 | 3.01 | Very Valuable |
| Total   | 9                                 | .69  | 71                   | 5.44 | 259      | 19.86 | 459              | 35.20 | 506                   | 38.81 | 1304                    | 100.00 | 3.06 | Very Valuable |

program helped in discovering the importance of agriculture world-wide; 4) the WEA program helped in gaining experience in other agricultural methods; and 5) the WEA program helped in finding out more about my own country.

The frequency, percentages, means, and category of respondents according to the perceived value of the WEA in developing leadership skills, which were measured by (1) appreciation of self responsibility, (2) self-discipline, (3) setting personal goals, (4) developing trust, (5) sharing personal experiences with others; were reported in Table XVI.

The perceived value of the WEA program in developing leadership skills, such as developing an appreciation of my own responsibilities, was rated by 104 respondents (41.16 percent) as "Extremely Valuable" and 98 respondents (37.84 percent) as being "Very Valuable", which converts to mean of 3.13 on the five-point "Likert-type" scale which was in the "Very Valuable" category. Fewer than five percent of respondents rated WEA on developing an appreciation of one's own responsibilities "Slightly Valuable" or less.

WEA participants rated the value of the WEA program in helping them to become self-disciplined with 110 respondent reporting an "Extremely Valuable" (42.47 percent) while 72 respondents (27.80 percent) considered the development of self-discipline as "Very Valuable".

The WEA program was perceived as being "Very Valuable" in helping develop personal educational goals, developing international trust, and sharing agricultural experiences with others. The means were 2.66, 2.84 and 2.96, respectively.

TABLE XVI

A SUMMARY OF RESPONDENT'S PERCEIVED VALUE OF THE WEA PROGRAM  
BASED ON SELECTED LEADERSHIP SKILLS

| Selected Areas   | Distribution By Response Category |      |                   |       |          |       |               |       |                    |       | Total Responses<br>N | %      | Mean | Category      |
|--|-----------------------------------|------|-------------------|-------|----------|-------|---------------|-------|--------------------|-------|----------------------|--------|------|---------------|
|  | Not Valuable                      |      | Slightly Valuable |       | Valuable |       | Very Valuable |       | Extremely Valuable |       |                      |        |      |               |
|  | n                                 | %    | n                 | %     | n        | %     | n             | %     | n                  | %     |                      |        |      |               |
| The WEA program helped in developing appreciation of my own responsibility | 2                                 | .77  | 9                 | 3.47  | 46       | 17.76 | 98            | 37.84 | 104                | 40.16 | 259                  | 100.00 | 3.13 | Very Valuable |
| The WEA program helped in becoming self-disciplined                        | 5                                 | 1.93 | 18                | 6.95  | 54       | 20.85 | 72            | 27.80 | 110                | 42.47 | 259                  | 100.00 | 3.02 | Very Valuable |
| The WEA program helped in developing my personal educational goals         | 10                                | 3.85 | 29                | 11.15 | 71       | 27.31 | 80            | 30.77 | 70                 | 26.92 | 260                  | 100.00 | 2.66 | Very Valuable |
| The WEA program helped in developing international trust                   | 7                                 | 2.68 | 15                | 5.75  | 65       | 24.90 | 101           | 38.70 | 73                 | 27.97 | 261                  | 100.00 | 2.84 | Very Valuable |
| The WEA program helped in sharing my agricultural experiences with others  | 1                                 | .40  | 15                | 6.07  | 45       | 18.22 | 117           | 47.37 | 69                 | 27.94 | 247                  | 100.00 | 2.96 | Very Valuable |
| Total  | 25                                | 1.94 | 86                | 6.69  | 281      | 21.85 | 468           | 36.39 | 426                | 33.13 | 1,286                | 100.00 | 2.92 | Very Valuable |

The following included a ranking of the category "Developing Leadership Skills" as perceived by the participants (first, being of highest value): 1) the WEA program helped in developing an appreciation of my own responsibility; 2) the WEA program helped in becoming self-disciplined; 3) the WEA program helped in sharing my agricultural experiences with others; 4) the WEA program helped in developing international trust; and 5) the WEA program helped in developing my personal educational goals.

All five categories were rated "Very Valuable".

#### Perceived Effectiveness of WEA

Table XVII, titled "A Summary of Respondents Perception Based on Categories of Effectiveness by Selected Program Areas", showed that all selected areas were perceived as being managed effectively by the National Staff.

The following was a ranking on the perceived effectiveness of the WEA (first being the most effective): 1) the effectiveness of the WEA program was in providing different lengths of WEA programs, 3.45 "good"; 2) the effectiveness of the WEA program was in providing a number of host countries on the selection list, 3.37 "good"; 3) the effectiveness of the WEA program was in allowing freedom while on the WEA program, 3.31 "good"; 4) the effectiveness of the WEA program was in introducing European agriculture with a tour, 3.31 "good"; 5) the effectiveness of the WEA program was in having a flexible WEA program, 3.15 "good"; 6) the effectiveness of the WEA program was in providing an orientation program, 3.13 "good"; 7) the effectiveness of the WEA



TABLE XVII

A SUMMARY OF RESPONDENT'S PERCEPTIONS BASED ON CATEGORIES  
OF EFFECTIVENESS BY SELECTED PROGRAM AREAS

| Selected Areas   | Distribution By Response Category |      |      |      |            |       |      |       |           |       |                |       | Mean | Category |                 |      |
|--|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------------|-------|------|-------|-----------|-------|----------------|-------|------|----------|-----------------|------|
|  | Very Poor                         |      | Poor |      | No Opinion |       | Good |       | Very Good |       | Not Applicable |       |      |          | Total Responses |      |
|  | n                                 | %    | n    | %    | n          | %     | n    | %     | n         | %     | n              | %     |      |          | N               | %    |
| The effectiveness of the WEA program in introducing European Agriculture with a tour                   | 0                                 | 0    | 8    | 3.24 | 13         | 5.26  | 68   | 27.53 | 82        | 33.20 | 76             | 30.77 | 247  | 100.00   | 3.31            | Good |
| The effectiveness of the WEA program was in providing aid from international staff                     | 4                                 | 1.53 | 21   | 8.08 | 47         | 18.08 | 88   | 33.85 | 66        | 25.38 | 34             | 13.08 | 260  | 100.00   | 2.85            | Good |
| The effectiveness of the WEA program was in providing an orientation program                           | 2                                 | 2.29 | 9    | 3.44 | 29         | 11.07 | 108  | 41.22 | 96        | 36.64 | 14             | 5.34  | 262  | 100.00   | 3.13            | Good |
| The effectiveness of the WEA program was in providing a number of host countries on the selection list | 3                                 | 1.16 | 8    | 3.10 | 19         | 7.36  | 79   | 30.62 | 133       | 51.56 | 16             | 6.20  | 258  | 100.00   | 3.37            | Good |

TABLE XVII (Continued)

| Selected Areas  | Distribution By Response Category |      |      |       |            |       |      |       |           |       |                |       | N   | %      | Mean | Category |                 |
|---|-----------------------------------|------|------|-------|------------|-------|------|-------|-----------|-------|----------------|-------|-----|--------|------|----------|-----------------|
|   | Very Poor                         |      | Poor |       | No Opinion |       | Good |       | Very Good |       | Not Applicable |       |     |        |      |          | Total Responses |
|   | n                                 | %    | n    | %     | n          | %     | n    | %     | n         | %     | n              | %     |     |        |      |          |                 |
| The effectiveness of the WEA program was in selecting host families                 | 17                                | 6.37 | 16   | 5.99  | 28         | 10.49 | 101  | 37.83 | 100       | 37.45 | 5              | 1.87  | 267 | 100.00 | 2.96 | Good     |                 |
| The effectiveness of the WEA program was in selecting WEA participants              | 5                                 | 1.89 | 13   | 4.91  | 44         | 16.60 | 116  | 43.77 | 82        | 30.94 | 5              | 1.89  | 265 | 100.00 | 2.99 | Good     |                 |
| The effectiveness of the WEA program was in having a flexible WEA program           | 6                                 | 2.26 | 14   | 5.26  | 23         | 8.65  | 107  | 40.23 | 108       | 40.60 | 8              | 3.00  | 266 | 100.00 | 3.15 | Good     |                 |
| The effectiveness of the WEA program was in providing aid from counselors in Europe | 10                                | 3.91 | 25   | 9.77  | 36         | 14.06 | 60   | 23.44 | 69        | 26.95 | 56             | 21.88 | 256 | 100.00 | 2.77 | Good     |                 |
| The effectiveness of the WEA program was in providing scholarships for participants | 14                                | 5.38 | 27   | 10.38 | 47         | 18.08 | 50   | 19.23 | 51        | 19.62 | 71             | 27.31 | 260 | 100.00 | 2.51 | Good     |                 |

TABLE XVII (Continued)

| Selected Areas   | Distribution By Response Category |      |      |      |            |       |      |       |           |       |                |       | N    | %      | Mean | Category |                 |
|--|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------------|-------|------|-------|-----------|-------|----------------|-------|------|--------|------|----------|-----------------|
|  | Very Poor                         |      | Poor |      | No Opinion |       | Good |       | Very Good |       | Not Applicable |       |      |        |      |          | Total Responses |
|  | n                                 | %    | n    | %    | n          | %     | n    | %     | n         | %     | n              | %     |      |        |      |          |                 |
| The effectiveness of the WEA program was in providing different lengths of WEA programs    | 1                                 | .38  | 5    | 1.89 | 14         | 5.30  | 91   | 34.47 | 142       | 53.79 | 11             | 4.17  | 264  | 100.00 | 3.45 | Good     |                 |
| The effectiveness of the WEA program was in allowing freedom while on the WEA program      | 10                                | 3.88 | 10   | 3.88 | 15         | 5.81  | 78   | 30.23 | 144       | 58.81 | 1              | .38   | 258  | 100.00 | 3.31 | Good     |                 |
| The effectiveness of the WEA program was in having an age requirement for WEA participants | 5                                 | 2.02 | 19   | 7.66 | 56         | 22.58 | 65   | 26.21 | 80        | 32.26 | 23             | 9.27  | 248  | 100.00 | 2.87 | Good     |                 |
| The effectiveness of the WEA program was in providing aid for language programs            | 7                                 | 2.73 | 18   | 7.03 | 33         | 12.89 | 75   | 29.30 | 56        | 21.88 | 67             | 26.17 | 256  | 100.00 | 2.82 | Good     |                 |
| Totals   | 88                                | 2.61 | 193  | 5.73 | 404        | 12.00 | 1086 | 32.23 | 1209      | 35.91 | 387            | 11.49 | 3367 | 100.00 | 3.05 | Good     |                 |

program was in selecting WEA participants, 2.99 "good"; 8) the effectiveness of the WEA program was in selecting host families, 2.96 "good"; 9) the effectiveness of the WEA program was in having an age requirement for WEA participants, 2.87 "good"; 10) the effectiveness of the WEA program was in providing aid from International Staff, 2.85 "good"; 11) the effectiveness of the WEA program was in providing aid for language programs, 2.82 "good"; 12) the effectiveness of the WEA program was in providing aid from counselors in Europe, 2.77 "good"; and 13) the effectiveness of the WEA program was in providing scholarships for participants, 2.51 "good". All the selected program areas were in the "good" category.

The most effective part of the WEA program in this study was that WEA provided different lengths of programs, followed by the number of host countries on the selection list. The least effective of the areas studied was in providing scholarships for participants.

#### Changes Participants Would Make in the WEA Program

The question "What changes would you make in the WEA program" was asked on the survey. The areas used to classify the responses in general group concerns to the participants were illustrated in Table XVIII as follows: 1) "No Change Needed" included all remarks where the participant stated they would not change any items or events with the WEA program. Thirty-five (13.01 percent) felt that no change was needed in the WEA program; 2) "Staff", which included National FFA Staff, Foreign Country Contacts, and WEA Coordinators contained all

TABLE XVIII

A SUMMARY OF RESPONDENTS STATEMENTS REGARDING SELECTED  
AREAS THEY WOULD CHANGE WITH THE WEA PROGRAM

| Category         | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269) |        | Rank |
|------------------|--|--------|------|
|                  | n                                      | %      |      |
| Miscellaneous    | 24                                     | 8.92   | 6    |
| Length           | 15                                     | 5.58   | 9    |
| Financial        | 18                                     | 6.69   | 7    |
| Public Relations | 29                                     | 10.78  | 5    |
| Participant      | 40                                     | 14.87  | 3    |
| Host Family      | 45                                     | 16.73  | 2    |
| Staffing         | 47                                     | 17.47  | 1    |
| No Change Needed | 35                                     | 13.01  | 4    |
| No Response      | 16                                     | 5.95   | 8    |
| Total            | 269                                    | 100.00 |      |

responses relating to the staffing of the WEA program. Forty-seven (17.47 percent) of the responding participants made statements involving the "staff"; 3) "Host Family" was another broad group used in classifying all statements concerning the host families. Forty-five (16.73 percent) felt that some area dealing with host families could be changed; 4) "Participant" was a very broad term used to classify the statements concerning the participants. Forty (14.87 percent) noted some area that the WEA program could be changed to improve how the participants were involved with WEA; 5) "Public Relations" was the group of statements made by WEA participants responding to the survey in areas that could be improved. Twenty-nine (10.78 percent) felt some area of public relations could be changed to improve the WEA program; 6) "Financial" was the group of statements made by WEA participants responding to the survey in areas that could be improved. "Financial" included scholarships, financial aid, awards, grants, and stipends used to help pay for participant's financial commitments. Eighteen (6.69 percent) felt some area of "Financial" help could be changed to improve the WEA program; 7) "Length" was the term used to classify statements made by WEA participants responding to the survey in areas that they would change which relate to length of program, length of holiday tour, length of orientation. "Length" was used to help group together common ideas that participants would change in the WEA program that dealt with chronological time spans. Fifteen (5.58 percent) felt the length of service should be changed; 8) "Miscellaneous" was the term used to group statements made by WEA participants that would not fit into any of the other groupings, when questioned about areas that the

participants would change with the WEA program. Miscellaneous includes areas such as the language course, obtaining visa's, weekend gatherings, and agricultural tours. Twenty-four (8.92 percent) of the participants had general areas that they felt could be changed to improve the WEA program. 9) "No Response" was the term used to classify the survey's with no remarks or statements answering the question "What changes would you make in the WEA program?" Sixteen (5.95 percent) participants left that question unanswered on the instrument.

A list of the selected respondents personal comments can be viewed in Appendixes C through J. Table XVIII revealed the frequency, percentage, and ranking of the statements made by WEA participants concerning changes they would make in the WEA program was demonstrated by category and ranked by frequency from highest to lowest:

- 1) "Staffing" changes in the WEA program;
- 2) "Host Family" changes in the WEA program;
- 3) "Participant" changes in the WEA program;
- 4) "No Change Needed" statements about the WEA program;
- 5) "Public Relations" changes in the WEA program;
- 6) "Miscellaneous" changes in the WEA program;
- 7) "Financial" changes in the WEA program;
- 8) "No Response" statements in the survey;
- and 9) "Length" changes in the WEA program.

### Feelings About the WEA Program

The participants were asked in the survey "What are you feeling about the WEA program?" All of the responses to this question were classified in Table XIX, as positive feelings about WEA, negative feelings about WEA, or no response to the question. Two hundred fifty-eight (95.91 percent) had positive feelings toward the WEA program. Four (1.49 percent) had negative feelings toward the WEA program. Seven (2.60 percent) of the respondents did not record any feelings for the WEA on the survey.



TABLE XIX

A SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES TO THE PARTICIPANT'S  
FEELINGS ABOUT THE WEA PROGRAM CATEGORIZED AS  
POSITIVE, NEGATIVE, OR NO RESPONSE

|   | Frequency of Distribution<br>(N = 269) |        |
|---|--|--------|
|   | n                                      | %      |
| Positive Feelings about the WEA program | 258                                    | 95.91  |
| Negative Feelings about the WEA program | 4                                      | 1.49   |
| No Response on the Survey               | 7                                      | 2.60   |
| Total                                   | 269                                    | 100.00 |

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

The intent of this chapter is to present in a clear concise manner the purpose and objectives of the study, rationale, design and procedures, and major findings of the research. Through a detailed analysis of the data and inspection of these topics, conclusions and recommendations were presented.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the value and effectiveness of FFA's Work Experience Abroad (WEA) program as perceived by selected participants during the five year period, 1978 to 1983.

#### Rationale of the Study

The WEA Program was perceived as a program of tremendous value and a positive influence by the author from his personal experience. The rationale for this was developed from the perspective that little or nothing had been done in evaluating or publicizing the value of such a program.

The WEA program was designed to provide practical work experience

for Future Farmers of America members in an international setting to help them understand the diversity and complexity of foreign agriculture and to develop themselves personally and professionally.

Therefore, to determine the value and effectiveness of the program, a study should be conducted to provide direction, and positive change as well as ascertain the perceived benefits of students' WEA experiences.

### Objectives of the Study

In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, the following objectives were set forth:

1. To determine selected demographic characteristics of WEA participants.
2. To determine the status of 1978 - 1983 participants.
3. To ascertain if the Work Experience Abroad program was perceived as being of value to WEA participants according to developing social, agricultural knowledge and leadership skills.
4. To determine the participants perceived effectiveness of the WEA program regarding selection criteria, orientation, and management of the program.

### Design of the Study

Following a review of literature and research indirectly related to the study, procedures were established to satisfy the purpose of the

study.

The participants of the WEA Program between 1978 and 1983 made up the population sample for this study. This particular group of 442 individuals was of primary interest to the author since he was a participant in the program during this time period.

The data for this study was collected using a three-part questionnaire. The questionnaire contained a total of 50 individual questions; 16 questions applied to demographics of individual participants prior to entering the WEA program, 19 questions applied to the WEA program being of value to the participant, 13 questions applied to the effectiveness of the WEA program, 1 question was on change needed in the WEA program, and 1 question on personal feelings about the WEA program.

A mail survey was conducted during the Spring of 1984 and two hundred and sixty-nine individuals (60.86 percent) cooperated and provided usable responses. A follow-up of non-respondents was not conducted.

Frequency distributions, percentages, mean values, and their rank were determined by using a Texas Instruments Model TI-30111 hand calculator.

### Major Findings of the Study

The major findings of this study were divided into 3 sections. They were as follows:

1. Characteristics of respondents

2. Perceived values of the WEA program
3. Perceived effectiveness of the WEA program

### Characteristics of Respondents

General characteristics of respondents in this study indicated a majority were male, (63.00 percent), and a high percentage of respondents were 18 years old when they entered the WEA program.

Location of residence revealed that a large majority were from rural farm or ranch backgrounds. In addition, the farm and ranch background group had the highest percentage of high school graduates.

Respondents to the WEA program survey were fairly equal in distribution among the Chapters by size however, Chapter's with less than 20 members had the smallest group of respondents.

Chapter officers represented a large majority of survey participants, while the office of Vice President seemed to be the most common office held by respondents. Most of the respondents had not held a State FFA office.

The major source of information about concerning the WEA were former WEA participants and the Future Farmers of America advisory committee.

The largest percentage of respondents participated in the 3 month WEA program.

A majority of WEA respondents had earned the State Farmer degree.

June was the month when most (59.48 percent) WEA participants departed the U.S. for their host country with August (21.93 percent) following in second as the most common month for departure.

### Perceived Values of WEA Program

Social Culture. The majority (59.13 percent) perceived the WEA program as "extremely valuable" in being able to develop social culture, while only a few (.46 percent) perceived the program as not valuable in this area.

A large majority of the respondents believed the WEA program helped them to see how other people lived and worked in other countries, as well as learning about social customs and cultures different from their own. A majority learned how others perceived America as well as the populace's impression of their own country.

Table XX demonstrates the ranking and value of perceived value of selected social and cultural experiences based on WEA participants responses to the survey. They are ranked as the value of the WEA program in helping them: (1) see how other people live and work in other countries = "extremely valuable"; (2) learn social differences from their own = "extremely valuable"; (3) learn about foreigner's views of U.S. = "very valuable"; (4) being able to meet other people = "very valuable"; and, (5) learn about other people's view toward their country = "very valuable".

Agricultural Methods. The WEA program was perceived as "valuable" and "very valuable" equally among the respondents in helping them gain knowledge of agricultural practices.

A high percentage of the respondents in this study perceived understanding of different agricultural methods used in foreign countries, learning about foreign agriculture and the importance of

TABLE XX

A SUMMARY OF THE RESPONDENTS' PERCEIVED VALUE OF THE WEA  
PROGRAMS BY SELECTED SOCIAL AND  
CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

| Selected Experiences  | Rank | Perceived Value*   |
|---|------|--------------------|
| The WEA program helped in being able to see how other people live and work in other countries | 1    | Extremely Valuable |
| The WEA program helped in learning about social cultural differences from mine                | 2    | Extremely Valuable |
| The WEA program helped in learning about other people's views of U.S.                         | 3    | Very Valuable      |
| The WEA program helped in being able to meet other people                                     | 4    | Very Valuable      |
| The WEA program helped in learning about other people's view toward their own country         | 5    | Very Valuable      |

\*Derived from mean score.

agriculture world-wide as "extremely valuable" and "very valuable". The statistical value and ranking of WEA rated agricultural knowledge "very valuable" as shown in Table XXI.

Leadership. The WEA program was perceived as being "very valuable" in all areas of leadership that was measured by the survey and data collected from respondents. In Table XXII the value of the selected leadership areas were demonstrated as "very valuable". The ranking of leadership skills was also shown based on perceived value. The WEA program was the most valuable in helping participants develop an appreciation of their own responsibility. Becoming self-disciplined was ranked second by the participants in selected leadership skill areas.

An overall summary of perceived values concerning the WEA program indicated that the largest percentage of the respondents believed their experiences in selected social cultural areas, knowledge gained in agricultural practices and leadership skills were "extremely valuable".

The ranking and value with regard to social cultural experiences were first and rated "very valuable". The knowledge gained about agricultural practices was ranked second and rated "very valuable". Leadership skills were ranked third and also rated "very valuable".

The effectiveness of the WEA program as shown in this study was a measurement of the efficiency of the WEA staff with providing introduction of European agriculture, aid from international staff, orientations, host countries, selecting host families, selecting WEA participants and scholarships. These areas were perceived by most participants as "very good".



TABLE XXI

A SUMMARY OF THE RESPONDENTS' PERCEIVED VALUE OF THE WEA  
PROGRAMS BY SELECTED AREAS OF AGRICULTURAL  
INFORMATION

| Selected Practices   | Rank | Perceived Value* |
|--|------|------------------|
| The WEA program helped in learning more about foreign agriculture                              | 1    | Very Valuable    |
| The WEA program helped in understanding different agricultural methods used in other countries | 2    | Very Valuable    |
| The WEA program helped in discovering the importance of agriculture world wide                 | 3    | Very Valuable    |
| The WEA program helped in gaining experience in other agricultural methods                     | 4    | Very Valuable    |
| The WEA program helped in finding out more about my own country                                | 5    | Very Valuable    |

\*Derived from mean score.

TABLE XXII

A SUMMARY OF THE RESPONDENTS' PERCEIVED VALUE OF THE WEA  
PROGRAM BY SELECTED LEADERSHIP SKILL AREAS

| Selected Skills  | Rank | Perceived Value* |
|--|------|------------------|
| The WEA program helped in developing appreciation of my own responsibility | 1    | Very Valuable    |
| The WEA program helped in becoming self-disciplined                        | 2    | Very Valuable    |
| The WEA helped in sharing my agricultural experience with others           | 3    | Very Valuable    |
| The WEA program helped in developing international trust                   | 4    | Very Valuable    |
| The WEA program helped in developing my personal educational goals         | 5    | Very Valuable    |

\*Derived from mean score.

The strong points were: (1) available lengths of programs; (2) providing a number of host countries; (3) allowing freedom while on the WEA program; and, (4) introducing European agriculture while on tour.

A few of the weaker areas were: (1) providing aid for the language program; (2) providing aid from counselors in Europe; and, (3) providing scholarships for participants.

### Conclusions

The analysis of data and subsequent findings were the basis for the following conclusions:

1. It was apparent during the 1978 - 1983 time period that the typical WEA participant was an 18 year old male high school graduate from a farm or ranch background.
2. The size of the respondents' FFA chapters was not an influencing factor in their selection as WEA participants.
3. The typical respondent in this study had earned the State Farmer Degree and held the Chapter office of Vice President.
4. The WEA program was viewed as being beneficial in providing participants the opportunity to meet other people and experience other cultures in a typical work day environment.
5. It was apparent that the opportunity to learn new social customs was a valuable experience.
6. It was evident that participating in the Work Experience Abroad program "motivated" the respondents to gain a better understanding of U.S. Agriculture.

7. As a result of their experiences, it was apparent that WEA participants developed a better understanding of the importance and impact of agriculture on a global basis.
8. Specifically, the participants seemed to develop an understanding of production techniques in the host country as a result of their experiences with the families which they worked.
9. The typical respondent had a positive perception of the WEA with regard to opportunity for leadership development.
10. The Work Experience Abroad Program was a valuable experience for rural, college age, young people.
11. It was apparent that the performance of the FFA's International Staff concerning the WEA program was effective.
12. It was apparent that the WEA program is a valuable component and creates a positive, progressive image for the National FFA Organization.

#### Recommendations

As a result of the conclusion drawn from the analysis and interpretation of data, the following recommendations were made.

1. Agriculture teachers and FFA advisors should recognize and encourage participation in the FFA's Work Experience Abroad Program.
2. Teachers should identify and encourage potential candidates to plan and prepare for possible selection as a WEA participant.

3. FFA advisors should make it a point to recognize their Chapter's WEA participants in local, county and state news papers as well as other media opportunities.
4. State FFA staff members should take the time and opportunity to recognize WEA participants during state conventions and leadership conferences as well as in their state FFA publications.

#### Recommendations for Additional Research

The following recommendations were made with regard to additional research. These recommendations were judgements based on having conducted the study and examination of the findings. The recommendations include: (1) methodology, and (2) additional research.

#### Methodology

1. As further research is developed, considerations should be given by the National Future Farmers of America Association to maintaining up-to-date files of names, addresses, and telephone numbers of past participants of the WEA program to expedite selection of potential study participants.
2. When using mail surveys, returnable envelopes should be available to determine non-deliverable and unanswered questionnaires so that additional instruments could be mailed to get an appropriate rate of response.

3. Questions pertaining to effectiveness should not have a "No Opinion" area. Everyone should have an opinion. Some are non-verbal or unorganized, while others may be difficult to solicit, however, these could be ascertained with an open-ended question.
4. Rather than treating data with just descriptive data analysis test comparisons and relationships should be established among participants and program components.

#### Additional Research

1. A more comprehensive study involving larger groups of participants and follow-up research to determine if value and effectiveness is still perceived as the same ten years after the WEA tour.
2. Specific research should be conducted to investigate and compare the levels of perceived successfulness of past WEA participants in agriculture and world affairs.
3. Additional research should be continued in the light of recent changes and perspective of many governments world-wide as well as the perceived value and benefits of such experiences for American young people.

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## APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A  
QUESTIONNAIRE

WORK EXPERIENCE ABROAD (WEA) - FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA

Please check or write in the correct answer which applies to your WEA Program and Tour.

1. What year did you begin the WEA Program Tour?  
 1978     1981  
 1979     1982  
 1980     1983
  
2. What is your sex?  
 Female     Male
  
3. What was your age when you began the WEA Program Tour?  
 14 or less     17     20     23  
 15     18     21     24  
 16     19     22     25 or older
  
4. In which state did you reside before beginning the WEA Program Tour?  


---
  
5. What was your place of residence (Urban or Rural)?  
 Rural (Farm or Ranch)     Town-Population less than 5000  
 Rural (Non-Farm or Ranch)     City-Population more than 5000
  
6. At what point in your education did you begin your WEA Program Tour?  
 High School Student     College Student  
 High School Graduate     College Graduate  
 Other (Please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
  
7. How many members were in your local FFA chapter when you began the WEA Program Tour?  
 Less than 20     61-80  
 21-40     81-100  
 41-60     More than 100
  
8. Were you an officer in your local FFA chapter before beginning the WEA Program Tour?  
 Yes     No  
 If yes, which office did you hold?  
 President     Treasurer  
 Vice-President     Reporter  
 Secretary     Sentinel

9. Were you a State FFA Officer before beginning the WEA Program Tour?

Yes  No

If yes, which office did you hold?

President  Treasurer

Vice-President  Reporter

Secretary  Sentinel

10. Were you a State FFA Officer after returning from the WEA Program Tour?

Yes  No

If yes, which office did you hold?

President  Treasurer

Vice-President  Reporter

Secretary  Sentinel

11. How did you first learn about the WEA Program Tour?

FFA Advisor  State Executive Secretary

State FFA Officer  Former WEA Participant

State FFA Officer  WEA Pamphlet

State FFA Advisor  Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

12. What was the highest degree you attained while in the FFA?

Greenhand  State Farmer

Chapter Farmer  American Farmer

13. What was your Supervised Occupational Experience Program while in Vocational Agriculture?

\_\_\_\_\_

14. What was the length of time you spent on the WEA Program Tour?

3 months  12 months

6 months  Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

9 months

15. What country(ies) were you assigned during your WEA Program Tour?

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

16. What month did you depart from America to your Host WEA Country?

Jan  May  Sept

Feb  Jun  Oct

Mar  Jul  Nov

Apr  Aug  Dec

Please answer the next section of questions as to the value of the WEA Program in attaining the specified goals listed below. After each statement circle the number (1-5) which best indicates your feeling about the value of the WEA Program.

- 1 - Not Valuable
- 2 - Slightly Valuable
- 3 - Valuable
- 4 - Very Valuable
- 5 - Extremely Valuable

The WEA Program helped in ...

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17. being able to meet other people.....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. being able to see how other people live and work in<br>other countries..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. finding out more about my own country.....                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. understanding different agriculture methods used in<br>other countries..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. developing appreciation of my own responsibility.....                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. learning more about foreign agriculture.....                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. discovering the importance of agriculture world wide..                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. learning about social cultures different from mine....                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25. learning about other people's views of America.....                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 26. learning about other people's views toward their<br>country.....            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. providing a chance for me to see the world.....                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. becoming self-disciplined.....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 29. developing international friends.....                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 30. learning to speak a foreign language.....                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 31. developing my personal educational goals.....                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 32. developing international trust.....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 33. gaining experience in other agricultural methods.....                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 34. sharing my agricultural experiences with other.....                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 35. developing a better understanding of world affairs....                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Please answer the next section of questions as to the effectiveness of the WEA Program while you were a participant. After each statement, circle the number (1-5) which best indicates your feeling about the effectiveness of the WEA Program. If a statement does not apply to your program, circle NA.

1 - Very Poor

2 - Poor

The effectiveness of the WEA Program was 3 - No Opinion

4 - Good

5 - Very Good

NA - Not Applicable

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 36. in introducing European Agriculture with a tour...                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 37. in providing aid from International Programs Staff.....            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 38. in providing an Orientation Program.....                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 39. in providing a number of host countries on the selection list..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 40. in selecting host families.....                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 41. in selecting WEA participants.....                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 42. in having a flexible WEA Program.....                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 43. in providing aid from counselors in Europe.....                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 44. in providing scholarships for participants.....                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 45. in providing different lengths of WEA Programs....                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 46. in allowing freedom while on the WEA Programs....                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 47. in having an age requirement for WEA participants.                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 48. in providing aid for language programs.....                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |

Please answer the following questions as honestly as possible.

49. What changes would you make in the WEA Program?

50. What are your feelings about the WEA Program?

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER



## Future Farmers of America

National FFA Center  
5632 Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway  
P O Box 15160  
Alexandria Va 22309

A National Student Organization  
Chartered by Congress as an  
Integral Part of Instruction in  
Vocational Agriculture

June 29, 1984

Telephone (703) 360 3600  
Telex 89 9121

### Work Experience Abroad Participant:

Greetings. I am George C. Renison, a student at Oklahoma State University. I am a former participant of the Work Experience Abroad (WEA) program sponsored by the National FFA Association. The National FFA Association and I are interested in your perception of the WEA program based upon your previous participation.

Presently, I am completing the requirements for a Master's Degree in Agricultural Education and need some assistance. I am attempting to survey WEA participants in order to assess the value of the WEA program.

It will be greatly appreciated if you will take a few minutes of your time and fill out the enclosed questionnaire. A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your immediate reply.

I assure you that the information received will be kept strictly confidential. Only the tabulated results (no names included) will be made available to the public. The results will also be available to you personally, upon request.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping me with this important project. I will be waiting to hear from you to complete this study. I know of no better people to talk to concerning the value of the WEA program, than the individuals who have participated in the program.

Sincerely,

*George C. Renison*  
George C. Renison

*Lennie Gamage*  
Lennie Gamage



APPENDIX C

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"NO CHANGE NEEDED" THAT PARTICIPANTS  
INCLUDED ON THE SURVEY

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"NO CHANGE NEEDED" THAT PARTICIPANTS  
INCLUDED ON THE SURVEY

1. I felt that my program was run very satisfactorily.
2. The program was so good, I do not know anything that could be done to make it better.
3. None.
4. I would change nothing, the whole program seems to be under control.
5. I had a terrific experience and would not change a thing.
6. No major changes that I can think of. In orientation I would stress communicating with fellow WEA'ers.
7. None, as I remember.
8. None. It was the most wonderful experience I will probably ever have in my life.

APPENDIX D

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"STAFF" CHANGES THAT PARTICIPANTS  
WOULD MAKE IN THE WEA PROGRAM

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"STAFF" CHANGES THAT PARTICIPANTS  
WOULD MAKE IN THE WEA PROGRAM

1. Possibly provide a counselor of some type - perhaps someone who has already done it - to A.T.W. participants (need to provide counselor for participants traveling around the world (A.T.W.)).
2. I wish I had been placed long before I was.
3. For the WEA counselors to be in Europe at all times when the participants are there. Also in Australia (need counselors in Australia also).
4. The Australian program needs a new Aussie Coordinator.
5. Better correspondence between WEA participants and placement.
6. Communication between WEA staff and host country staff must be improved.
7. Getting information to participants earlier.
8. I was in the South Pacific and we didn't have anyone contact us from the States.
9. Have more country meetings with the participants in the country.
10. More personal assistance, once leaving the U.S.
11. Provide better orientation. Require participants to do research on the host country before qualifying.
12. A larger staff is needed in Europe.
13. I would have liked a language course.
14. The work experience is an excellent program itself, however, I felt that there were a few incompetent persons working on the staff at the time of my program.
15. Older and wiser coordinators.
16. Place a coordinator in Japan if the program increases.

APPENDIX E

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"HOST FAMILY" CHANGES THAT PARTICIPANTS  
WOULD MAKE IN THE WEA PROGRAM

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"HOST FAMILY" CHANGES THAT PARTICIPANTS  
WOULD MAKE IN THE WEA PROGRAM

1. More research should go into the host family.
2. More contacts should be made with youth groups in the host nations as well as participants in exchange programs from other nations.
3. The group I was in had problems with our country contact.
4. Improve the area of host family information.
5. I think one frequent source of dissatisfaction is a non-communicative or slave-driving host family.
6. Make sure that all students are placed with families.
7. Provide more information to host families about the WEA'ers and time when WEA'er is to arrive.

APPENDIX F

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"PARTICIPANT" CHANGES THAT WEA  
PARTICIPANTS WOULD MAKE IN  
THE WEA PROGRAM

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"PARTICIPANT" CHANGES THAT WEA PARTICIPANTS  
WOULD MAKE IN THE WEA PROGRAM

1. I think there should definitely be an age requirement for the participants --- High School Grad.
2. Better screening of participants.
3. Keep the minimum age limit at 16-18.
4. More screening at State level of applicants.
5. Would it be possible to extend the age limit and open the program up for married couples?
6. Please have State FFA advisors interview potential participants. Having an immature or bigoted member represent the U.S. Farming/Agricultural community is destructive.
7. Improve the interviewing procedure for acceptance into the program.
8. I have none, except maybe less girls, as they seem to always develop problems along the way.
9. None, except to really make sure the students are ready, really ready. It is a long way from home. There should be no age minimum.
10. Better follow-up on returned WEA'ers.
11. Make sure all WEA'ers are allowed two weeks travel time - those on the six-month program.



APPENDIX G

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"PUBLIC RELATIONS" CHANGES THE  
PARTICIPANTS WOULD MAKE IN  
THE WEA PROGRAM

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"PUBLIC RELATIONS" CHANGES THE PARTICIPANTS  
WOULD MAKE IN THE WEA PROGRAM

1. It would be nice if it were more publicized - I found out about WEA purely by luck.
2. More publicity.
3. The only change would be to have the US-Ag instructors know more about the program.
4. I would try to make the students more aware of the changes they could take advantage of while in Europe, such as travel and special events.
5. Make it bigger; advertise more and not require the written report which is probably destroyed.
6. Only that students are fully knowledgeable about the learning opportunities and potential available in WEA.
7. I would like to see a greater involvement with local Chapters in promoting WEA. Many people think it is for the award winners or officers, but do not realize many of them qualify.

APPENDIX H

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"FINANCIAL" CHANGES THE PARTICIPANTS  
WOULD MAKE IN THE WEA PROGRAM

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"FINANCIAL" CHANGES THE PARTICIPANTS  
WOULD MAKE IN THE WEA PROGRAM

1. Try to improve scholarships and getting financial aid, especially for ATW (around the world) participants.
2. Try in every way possible to keep costs down.
3. If I could make changes in the WEA program, it would be to explain the cost of the trip.
4. Give more scholarships to needy members.
5. Give some indication about how much money it will cost to get to the host family.
6. Work on obtaining college credit and making it a part of a University Program -- like SOEP is a part of High School.

APPENDIX I

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"LENGTH" CHANGES THE PARTICIPANTS  
WOULD MAKE IN THE WEA PROGRAM

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"LENGTH" CHANGES THE PARTICIPANTS  
WOULD MAKE IN THE WEA PROGRAM

1. My suggestion would be to lengthen the tour time, so that everyone could slow down a little and enjoy it more.
2. I would make the orientation program longer and the introduction tour longer and more countries.
3. A longer holiday tour would be good, then everyone would get a chance to travel and see more of Europe.
4. To be honest, the only thing I can think of is that I had to leave early so I would be home when school started - it would have been more convenient to start earlier and finish earlier.
5. I would have gained more experience by living with different host families (6 week periods).
6. Longer placements.
7. Have the option of a 9 and 12 month program for Europe.
8. Demand everyone to go for 6 months (from a 3 month WEA participant).
9. Make the 3 month program a 4 or 5 month program. I think you need that long to appreciate your time there.

APPENDIX J

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"MISCELLANEOUS" CHANGES THE  
PARTICIPANTS WOULD MAKE IN  
WEA PROGRAM

A SELECTED LIST OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING  
"MISCELLANEOUS" CHANGES THE PARTICIPANTS  
WOULD MAKE IN THE WEA PROGRAM

1. Make the student learn the language before going.
2. Offer help in obtaining VISA's to visit other countries.
3. Provide weekend gatherings for WEA students.
4. More changes to travel and visit other WEA participants.
5. Establish more programs in the Agribusiness sector which would promote more college participants.
6. I would suggest that participants apply for their International Driver's License.
7. The tour could be more agriculture oriented.



APPENDIX K

A SELECTED LIST OF POSITIVE FEELINGS  
TOWARD THE WEA PROGRAM

A SELECTED LIST OF POSITIVE FEELINGS  
TOWARDS THE WEA PROGRAM

1. It was the greatest experience I've ever had.
2. I think it is the greatest thing I ever have done or will do.
3. I think the WEA program is very necessary to help develop a greater understanding between countries.
4. I think it is a super program and I wish more people could or would take advantage of the opportunity.
5. Great!
6. Superior exchange program!!!
7. I would love to do it again.
8. It is one of the best programs offered through the FFA.
9. I support the WEA 100%.
10. I loved it. It was such a tremendous chance for me to see the world outside of South Dakota.
11. It was one of the most superior experiences of a lifetime.
12. It is a fantastic opportunity for anyone lucky enough to attend.
13. An experience I will never forget.
14. I regret not going on the "Around the World" tour.
15. The WEA program was one of the highlights of my life.
16. It was, at times the toughest thing I've ever done. I've never worked longer or harder for such an extended period, but it was so good for me and I saw and learned so much. I wish I could do it again.
17. I feel this is one of the most rewarding programs in the FFA. There is no better way to visit another country than to live with a family for a short period of time (6 months).
18. I have enjoyed it. Good opportunity. I'll leave again to go 3 months to Japan.
19. I wish I could go again.

20. I believe my 3 month in Europe was as valuable as a year in college.
21. I feel very good about the WEA program. I have been on it twice and am going for a third time in a couple of weeks to Japan for 3 months.
22. A good program for promoting world-wide agricultural understanding.
23. The WEA program is an excellent learning experience. The growth of the participant and the host family is something of first hand experience that can not be learned through books.
24. This is perhaps one of the very best youth program's offered not only by the FFA, but by any organization.
25. Opened up a new line of thinking.
26. WEA was a great program that gave me the opportunity to learn about both a host country's culture and agriculture. WEA is for everybody, but for those of us who went into it with the right attitude and maturity, and absorbed as much of the experience as possible, WEA is something that has affected our outlook on the world for a lifetime. Some days were discouraging which I was on the program, but I now reminisce about and relate to my experiences in the Netherlands nearly every day.
27. I got more out of them than they got out of me.
28. I enjoyed it so much I again went to Italy in July of 1984.
29. It was one of the smartest things I have ever done.
30. The best experience of my life.
31. I wish we could start a similar such exchange within the U.S.

APPENDIX L

A SELECTED LIST OF NEGATIVE FEELINGS  
TOWARD THE WEA PROGRAM

A SELECTED LIST OF NEGATIVE FEELINGS  
TOWARD THE WEA PROGRAM

1. I say it would be better if they would throw away the hype and admit that their program might not be # 1.
2. In going to a country like New Zealand a person would learn a lot more and get by cheaper if he went on his own. It would have been very easy for me to find a farming family to live and work for.
3. I was dissappointed in my program. My host family had no idea that I was in an agricultural exchange program.
4. I feel that if people sign up for a certain amount of time and find it to be not what (they expected), the kids who come home early should be granted their money! No questions asked. Instead of the run around.

2  
VITA

George Curtis Renison, DVM

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: THE VALUE OF FFA'S WORK EXPERIENCE ABROAD PROGRAM AS  
PERCEIVED BY SELECTED PARTICIPANTS

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Collegiate Future Farmers of America, Royal Rangers.