

A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF AGRICULTURAL
EDUCATION GRADUATES AT
OKLAHOMA STATE
UNIVERSITY:
1980-1987

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Due to the current economic plight, many students are directed away from agricultural degrees. Instead these students are urged to obtain degrees in fields unrelated to agriculture. This trend concerns agricultural educators in universities across the nation. These universities, including Oklahoma State University, are invariably concerned about the quality and quantity of graduates with degrees in agriculture. Also many students who graduate with degrees in Agricultural Education decide not to teach after completing their degree and some never intended to use their teaching degree. This factor forces educators to inspect the professions these graduates seek and possibly prescribe a more comprehensive college experience.

Educational goals and professional plans force young people to ponder many questions. For which jobs will they be qualified? Where can they expect to obtain employment? What type of salary can be expected from each job? Studies such as this, completed periodically, aid agricultural educators in their endeavors to aid prospective students in career choices and follow the course and progress of departmental graduates.

Statement of the Problem

Due to the current economic plight, many students are directed towards degrees in areas of business, instead of towards Oklahoma's largest industry -agriculture. Students at Oklahoma State University in the College of Agriculture and the Department of Agricultural Education need to be better informed of the employment areas, salaries and job satisfaction of previous graduates in order to perceive a realistic concept of their needs and opportunities upon graduation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gather specific information regarding the status of former students in the Agricultural Education Department at Oklahoma State University.

Objectives of the Study

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

1. To identify the areas of employment selected by graduates from Agricultural Education.
2. To identify the salary ranges upon graduation and also current salary ranges.
3. To assess the degree of job satisfaction obtained from the graduates' current occupations.

4. To determine the degree of influence that selected people had on the respondents' decisions to pursue a degree in Agricultural Education.

Scope of the Study

This study included 203 baccalaureate graduates from the Department of Agricultural Education at Oklahoma State University for the years 1980-1987.

Limitations of the Study

The respondents are all Bachelor of Science degree graduates of the College of Agriculture specifically from the Department of Agricultural Education. Conclusions drawn are limited to this population.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Need for Program Evaluation

Agricultural Education Departments across the United States have been the subject of many studies which deal with the quality of instruction students receive. However, documented research done to inform students of expectations and opportunities available upon graduation are limited in number.

The Iowa State University Agricultural Education Department has developed a brochure to inform prospective students as to what opportunities may be available. The brochure states: "Graduates of this program have ample opportunities for employment whether they decide to teach or to pursue a related agricultural career."

"As of 1986 only 55.2 percent of Agriculture Education graduates entered the teaching profession," according to the National Study of Supply and Demand For Teachers of Vocational Agriculture. The remaining graduates chose various related fields or fields unrelated to agricultural education.

Due to this fact not only do students need to be better informed about the types of careers for which they

may apply, but they also must be made aware of the probable income they can expect to receive. Just as importantly, the student must be able to examine statistics which describe the extent of job satisfaction agricultural graduates get from various careers.

Follow-Up

A follow-up study is a means of accumulating information from individuals after they have had similar educational experiences. The follow-up study is also one of the most informative methods used to conduct product evaluation.

Wentling (1980) has provided the following list of objectives for follow-up studies:

1. To determine career patterns of former participants of various programs.
2. To determine the immediate demand for positions within the community.
3. To determine the mobility of program graduates.
4. To determine the adequacy of the educational training program in preparing individuals for job entry.
5. To determine the adequacy of preparation for entry into advanced training.
6. To determine the adequacy of ancillary services such as guidance, counseling, and placing.
7. To determine realistic job descriptions for positions obtained by former students.

8. To emphasize the primary objective of career education to staff and students.

The ultimate objective of a follow-up study is to better educate and train the successors of the group studied (Gilli, 1975). Drueckhammer stated: A follow-up study can provide useful information, but it has several major hazards. The questionnaire must be carefully constructed in order to secure the quality of information desired.

The use of follow-up can be a method of developing strong channels of communication with alumni (Nelson, 1964). Drueckhammer commented:

The alumni became more closely connected with and directly interested in their alma mater as they provide input through follow-up. The university gains in public relations and has an excellent means of alumni fund raising.

Follow-ups provide a variety of beneficial information. New/or prospective students should be the recipients of the important information gained through the follow-up system. As Webb (1978) stated:

Benefits from follow-up studies can be realized in ways other than as a means of evaluating the curriculum. High school students and junior college graduates many times ask such questions as 'What is Agricultural Education?' and 'Can I get a job when I graduate?' 'What kind of job can I get?' 'What is the pay scale?'

Data obtained and interpreted from follow-up studies can help answer these and other questions. University counselors, administrators, and placement officers can use

information from follow-up studies in counseling and recruiting students for careers in Agricultural Education.

Related Studies

A number of studies (related to this study) investigating Agricultural Education have been conducted. Some of these studies have been limited to graduates from the Agricultural Education Department at specific, individual universities. Other studies consisted of a broader spectrum of respondents from other colleges.

Heorner (1965), in a study to determine the factors related to employment of Iowa state University graduates in Agricultural Education stated that over the twenty-five year study period, 55.8 percent of the 1,022 graduates in Agricultural Education entered vocational agriculture teaching as their first employment. Some area of teaching was the first employment of 69.1 percent of the graduates during the twenty-five year period. Other areas of first employment of the 1,022 respondents included: extension service 2.1 percent; farming 5.5 percent; feed and seed, fertilizer, machinery or livestock industry, 4.9 percent; government service, 2.4 percent; military service, 2.1 percent; and other types of employment, 10.5 percent.

The mean incomes received by the Agricultural Education graduates during the first year in all areas of employment was \$2,463 for graduates during the period 1940-44. Those who graduated between 1960-64 had a mean salary

of \$5,672. During the first two five year periods, including 1940-45, 1946-50, it was discovered that the mean beginning income of vocational agriculture instructors was slightly below the mean beginning income of all other graduates. However, during the most recent period, 1960-64, the mean beginning income of the seventy graduates who taught vocational agriculture was \$5,908, which was \$236 higher than the mean of \$5,672 for all 128 respondents.

Chizek (1984) in a follow-up study of Iowa State University Agricultural Education Graduates from 1964-81 reported that the people making the greatest contribution to the graduates' decision to enroll in agricultural education were the vocational agriculture instructors themselves. Due to the fact that vocational agriculture instructors work very closely with students in vocational agriculture and FFA, Chizek felt that the instructor's influence on the graduates' decision to enroll in agriculture education may be expected.

Chizek reported that over 61 percent of the graduates had begun teaching vocational agriculture directly after graduation, with a total of 69.8 percent having taught at some point. Yet in 1982, only 18.6 percent remained in the teaching profession. Instead in 1982 farming was the primary source of employment at 25.6 percent. Vocational agriculture teaching, agricultural sales, banking, and agribusiness management followed in descending order.

Chizek also reported that almost one third of the graduates worked within ten miles of their parental home and over sixteen percent lived within ten miles of their spouse's parents.

Another area of Chizek's study revealed the net income for seventy-nine percent of the graduates employed as vocational agriculture instructors fell within the \$16,000 to \$25,000 range per year. Yet reported salary ranges for employment areas other than graduate students, insurance agents, non-agricultural management, and other education occupations, ranged higher than that of vocational agriculture instructors.

In a follow-up study of Agricultural Education graduates from Texas A&M University from 1965-1971, which determined who influenced the graduates' career choice, Webb (1978), discovered that vocational agriculture teachers were clearly the most influential in helping graduates choose Agricultural Education as a major.

Webb also stated that at the time of the study the median annual gross salary of former graduates who had changed professions was about \$18,000, while the annual gross salary of teachers presently teaching was approximately \$14,500. For the non-teaching graduates (those that never taught), who entered a wide variety of occupations after graduation, the median salary of their present occupation was approximately \$19,000.

Otte (1970), in a study of the factors affecting the educational and career choices of Agricultural Education graduates at Texas A&M from 1960-64 reported that teachers of vocational agriculture were named by 52.4 percent as the person exerting the most influence in helping respondents select Agricultural Education as a college major. Friends were given credit by 11.2 percent. In descending order of influence college faculty members, parents, college counselors, relatives, county agricultural agents and high school counselors also contributed to graduates career choices.

An examination of the first employment after graduation showed that 27.6 percent entered vocational agriculture teaching. The second largest group, 22.4 percent, became high school teachers of subjects other than vocational agriculture. This was followed closely by governmental employees who made up 22.1 percent of the graduates; 9.6 percent entered the Armed Forces, 5.1 percent entered sales-service, 4.5 percent entered banking-finance; 3.2 percent entered farming or ranching, and 1.9 percent entered graduate college.

Occupations held at the time of the study revealed that 23.7 percent were still teaching vocational agriculture, 18.6 percent were in governmental service, 14.7 percent in sales-service, 12.2 percent were high school teachers of other subjects, 7.2 percent were in banking-finance, 5.8 percent were in graduate college, 5.1

percent were in farming or ranching and 3.8 percent were in the military.

In their occupation after graduation, respondents earned a median salary of \$5,136. Teachers of vocational agriculture earned a median salary of \$5,580, followed by governmental and banking-finance employees at \$5,167 each. Median salaries of other occupational areas are listed in descending order: sales-service \$4,833, farmers-ranchers \$4,500, teachers of subjects other than vo-ag \$4,481, and military service \$4,333.

At the time the study was conducted the median salary earned by the respondents in their immediate avocation was \$8,852. Farmers-ranchers earned the highest median salary of all considered occupational groups at \$13,750. The military service followed with a median salary of \$10,375. The salary of government workers was third with \$10,143 followed by banking-finance and sales service median salaries of \$9,500 each. Teachers of vocational agriculture, who had the highest median salary upon graduation, had fallen behind with a median salary of \$7,800 at the time the study was conducted. Only high school teachers of other subjects earned less; their median salary was \$7,312.

From this study it was found that 51.7 percent of the respondents indicated that they would major in Agricultural Education again if they were to repeat their college work. However, 30.2 percent indicated that they would select a

different major, and the remaining 18.1 percent were undecided.

Birkenholz (1986) in a five-year follow-up of bachelor degree graduates in Agricultural Education from the University of Missouri-Columbia reported that program graduates who had once taught, but had quit teaching produced a personal income group mean of \$14,170. Graduates who were currently teaching reported an average personal income of \$19,820. The average personal income of graduates who had never taught was \$18,725. The grand mean of personal income computed for all respondents was \$18,819.

Frochlich (1966) in a study concerning factors related to the tendency of Iowa State University Agricultural Education graduates to not enter or to leave the vocational agriculture teaching profession reported that 50.8 percent listed vocational agriculture teaching as their first employment area, 9.2 percent entered G.I. on-farm training, 7.4 percent extension service, 61 percent farming, 3.0 percent feed and seed business, 2.8 percent government, 2.1 percent college teaching, and 2.4 percent listed military service as their first employment.

When mean incomes of graduates who had been initially employed in an area constituting at least five percent of the graduates studied were compared, only small differences were observed. Graduates who had entered farming reported the highest average income of \$4,836. Graduates who had

entered G.I. on-farm training reported the lowest average income of \$4,103. Of all groups studied, graduates who had entered college teaching had the highest first employment income average at \$5,733. The mean income for the 406 graduates who entered vocational agriculture teaching, but then left the profession was \$4,471 for the twenty-five year period studied. This mean was three dollars below the \$4,474 reported as the mean first employment income of all graduates over the same period of time.

The mean 1963 income and number of graduates by 1964 employment area revealed that twenty graduates (2.6 percent) had taught vocational agriculture in 1964, but then left the profession. Employment areas accounting for at least five percent of the graduates included: farming, 13.3 percent; feed and seed business, 9.2 percent; extension service, nine percent; high school teacher of classes other than vocational agriculture, 8.2 percent; government, 6.6 percent; banking, 6.3 percent; and college teaching, 5.5 percent.

The twenty graduates who taught vocational agriculture in 1964 before leaving the profession had a mean income of \$7,260. Only graduates employed in farming, high school teaching (other than vo-ag), and the petroleum business reported lower mean incomes for 1963. The mean income of all graduates, excluding the thirty-five graduates in military service and graduate school, was \$8,352.

Summary

A review of literature has shown that universities are aware of the importance of informing prospective students of opportunities and salaries they can expect to find upon graduation. It must be remembered, however, that these elements change with the economy, and they require constant evaluation.

The use of a follow-up study is one of the most beneficial means to evaluate the ever-changing needs of society, and to inform the students of employment opportunities. It gives the students concrete, factual evidence to analyze, and allows them to view other graduate's progress as well as job satisfaction. In this way, prospective students gain an insight into what they can expect to find once they graduate from the university.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND CONDUCT OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the procedures used to accomplish the purpose of this study. The procedures used were determined by the purpose of the study and the objectives listed in Chapter I. The following steps were completed to gather and analyze the data:

1. Determine and describe the population from which to gain data.
2. Develop the instrument for collecting data, (with the help of OSU College of Agriculture Faculty).
3. Develop appropriate procedure to collect needed data.
4. Establish proper methods to effectively analyze data.

Study Population

The population for this study included all Bachelor of Science degree graduates from the Agricultural Education Department at Oklahoma State University. Those graduating in the years 1980-1987 were included in this study. This included only those graduates for which current addresses

could be found. There were three hundred and twenty graduates who fit into this category.

Development of the Instrument

To secure appropriate information from the Bachelor of Science degree graduates from the Agricultural Education Department at OSU, an appropriate instrument had to be developed. A review of related literature and previous instruments used for research was conducted. Also several educational research books were consulted in order to insure that proper procedures were used in the development and formation of the instrument.

Faculty consultants in the Agricultural Education Department at OSU also gave additional direction for development of the instrument.

A mailed questionnaire was the method chosen to collect data. The advantages and disadvantages of using the mailed questionnaire were considered in depth. Isaac and Michael (1984) cautioned the use of mailed questionnaires:

This approach is the most commonly used survey method and often the most sterile or misleading, unless the following disadvantages are heeded and offset:

1. Low response rate can occur, especially with less educated and older addresses, inviting a nonrepresentative return.
2. No assurance the questions were understood.

3. No assurance addressee was the one who answered (p. 130).

Yet most problems and disadvantages can be avoided or minimized if care is taken to develop and administer the questionnaire. Isaac and Michael (1984) suggested the following consideration in using a questionnaire:

Questionnaires should be carefully field tested to eliminate ambiguous or biased items and to improve format, both for ease of understanding and facility in analyzing results. Response rates can be improved with stamped return envelopes, follow-up reminders, advance contacts and publicity campaign, personalized letters of transmittal, and, when a handful of questions with simple answers is sufficient, a reprinted return postcard can serve as the instrument (p. 131).

The questionnaire used for this study was developed with the guidelines suggested by Isaac and Michael (1984) being adhered to :

1. This is the single most widely used technique in education. It requires a careful, clear statement of the problem underlying the questionnaire. Otherwise ambiguity and misinterpretation will invalidate the findings.
2. Constructing the questionnaire:
 - a. Questionnaires tend to be planned poorly and overdone. To overcome consumer resistance, they must be expertly designed and skillfully introduced and justified.
 - b. State the reason for the questionnaire and explain how the information will be analyzed. Avoid wordiness and ambiguity.

- c. Objectivity is important. Lengthy, subjective, open-ended questions are difficult for the respondent to write and for the investigator to evaluate. If the possible categories of responses can be anticipated these should be offered as alternatives to an objective question.
- d. One of the best ways of developing good objective questions is to administer an open-ended form of the question to a small sample of subjects representative of the population in which you are interested. These more lengthy answers provide the data from which objective-type answers are derived.
- e. Questions should be asked in such a way that they minimize the evaluation task, eliminating unnecessary processing steps and interpretation problems.
- f. Avoid questions that are threatening to the respondent, exposing him to criticism or placing him in an awkward position.
- g. Avoid questions which evoke predictable response biases and obscure objective information.
- h. Avoid leading questions.
- i. Pretest the questionnaire.
(p. 133-134)

After developing questions to measure the objectives stated for this study, careful consideration was given to the order in which the questions were to be placed. The questions were ordered in sequence of topic area. The length of the questionnaire was also taken into consideration in order to achieve optimum participation from the population asked to respond.

In its final form the questionnaire consisted of eleven items or questions. Two of the questions required the respondent to reply twice and two other items required four different responses.

The questionnaire utilized questions in the following topic areas:

1. occupational position
2. salary history
3. location of employment
4. job satisfaction
5. career influences
6. degree options

Collection of the Data

The instrument used in this study was completed in June of 1987 with the initial mailing of 320 questionnaires being completed on July 13, 1987. There were 149 respondents that replied to the first mailing. A second mailing was made to all nonrespondents on October 9, 1987. Of the questionnaires sent in the second mailing, fifty-four participants responded. At the end of the response deadline 203 of the 320 (63.44 percent) questionnaires mailed out had been returned and all of the results were included in this study.

Analysis of the Data

The population of this study was all Bachelor of Science degree graduates from the Agricultural Education Department at OSU for the years 1980 through 1987. The data obtained from this population through the use of the mailed questionnaire provided information in the following areas: 1) occupational position 2) salary history 3) location of employment 4) job satisfaction 5) career influences, and 6) degree options.

Item one gave information about the questionnaire. Item two determined the year in which the participant graduated from OSU. Item three required the respondent to indicate jobs held after receiving a Bachelor of Science degree. It was specifically designed to have the respondent indicate the first job held after graduation and the present job held.

The topic area covered in item four was salary history. On a listed table the respondent was asked to check the salary range for the first job accepted after graduation and the salary range for the present job held.

Item five dealt with the location of the graduates' employment. Once again the questionnaire specifically asked the respondent to indicate answers corresponding to first employment and present employment.

Items six referred to the satisfaction level of the respondents' first and present position using a scale of one to five to determine responses. (1 = Definitely not

satisfied, 2 = Not satisfied, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Satisfied, 5 = Highly satisfied).

Item seven referred to the length of time respondent planned to remain in present position when given the following choices; Unknown, 1 yr., 2 yrs., 3 yrs., 4 yrs., 5 yrs., or Indefinitely.

Item eight was directed to those respondents not currently teaching. The first part asked how interested they would be in teaching Vocational Agriculture if the opportunity presented itself. They were given the choices of; Not interested, Undecided, Interested, or Highly interested. The second part of item eight was directed to those respondents' who were interested in teaching to discover when they would like to begin teaching whether it would be within 1 year, in 2 - 3 years, in 4 - 5 years or after 5 years.

Item nine specifically asked if the respondent was interested in receiving information regarding Vocational Agriculture teaching openings.

Item ten asked the respondent to indicate his rating of undergraduate instruction, career choice, choice of profession and choice of Agricultural Education as his major on a scale of 1 to 5. (1 = Definitely no, 2 = No, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Yes, 5 = Definitely yes)

Item eleven asked the respondent to indicate personal influences on the individual's career choices.

Item twelve was a two-part question dealing with degree options. The second part of the question asked the respondent to voice specific opinions.

All questionnaires were carefully analyzed and tallied. The statistics derived from the returned questionnaires were expressed in total numbers and percentages.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the information gathered from former graduates of the Agricultural Education Department at OSU about their past and present employment, salary histories, job satisfaction, career influence and degree options.

Data collected in this study were based upon the 203 respondents from the 320 questionnaires mailed to Agricultural Education graduates from the years 1980-1987. In the first section of this chapter the background of the population will be observed. The second section of the chapter will present the general characteristics of the individual respondents using frequency distribution. In section three the employment data concerning the respondents will be reviewed. The fourth section of this chapter will delve into the past and present salary history of the respondents. Section five uses percentages and number totals to report data on respondents' job satisfaction. Section six uses points to rank the influence certain individuals had on the respondents' career choice. Section seven uses

numbers and percentages to report data on degree options in Agricultural Education.

Background of the Population

The population of this study included all Bachelor of Science degree graduates from the Agricultural Education Department at OSU for the years 1980-1987, for which current addresses could be found. There were 320 questionnaires mailed, and 203 individuals returned the questionnaire for a 63.44 percent return rate.

General Characteristics of the Respondents

The survey instrument contained eleven items aimed at obtaining information from each individual concerning the following topics: employment immediately following graduation and present employment, past and present salary level, demographics, job satisfaction and alternatives, career influences and degree options.

The number (n) and the percentage (%) of responses are shown in tables. On the questionnaire not all questions were answered by all respondents; therefore, the "n" of different tables varies somewhat.

Presented in Table I are the number and percentage of respondents who received a Bachelor of Science degree during each year included in the study. The year 1984 had the greatest number of respondents with a total of

TABLE I
FREQUENCY OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE
RESPONDENTS FROM AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION
BY YEAR GRADUATED

Year Graduated	Frequency	Distribution
	"n"	%
1980	8	3.94
1981	17	8.37
1982	13	6.4
1983	23	11.33
1984	43	21.18
1985	35	17.24
1986	37	18.23
1987	27	13.3
	----	----
Total	203	100.00

43 for a 21.8 percent return rate. Graduates of 1986 were accountable for 18.23 percent of the responses represented in the study. Graduates of 1985 made up 17.24 percent of the respondents, 13.3 percent of the respondents graduated in 1987, and 11.33 percent graduated in 1983. Those who graduated in 1981 constituted 8.37 percent of the survey group and 6.4 percent received their degrees in 1982. The year 1980 yielded the lowest percentage of respondents at 3.94 percent.

Employment Data

In order to determine the various types of employment held by graduates of Agricultural Education the questionnaire asked the respondents to list their first employment after graduation and their current employment.

Table II reports type of employment acquired upon graduation for all respondents. Of the 203 respondents, 74 began teaching vocational agriculture in Oklahoma immediately upon graduation while six the respondents began teaching vocational agriculture in a state other than Oklahoma. There were four of the respondents who taught subjects other than vocational agriculture as their first employment. The extension service employed eight of the graduates after graduation and another 11 were employed in other government positions related to agriculture and 17 went into agribusiness in the private sector. Of the

TABLE II
 FIRST POSITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT UPON
 GRADUATION FROM AGRICULTURAL
 EDUCATION

Employment	Frequency "n"	Distribution %
Taught Vo-Ag in OK	74	36.45
Taught Vo-Ag in other state	6	2.96
Taught subject other than Vo-Ag	4	1.97
Extension Service	8	3.94
Govt. Position in Agriculture	11	5.42
Agribusiness (private sector)	17	8.37
Agriculture related business	14	6.90
Farming/Ranching	19	4.93
Non-agriculture related	31	4.43
Graduate School	14	15.27
Unemployed	5	6.90
Total	203	100.00

respondents 19 went into ranching and/or farming, while 31 went into non-agricultural fields. Of those remaining, 14 went directly into graduate school and five were unable to find employment.

Table III represents the frequency distribution of those respondents who are currently teaching vocational agriculture in Oklahoma according to the year graduated. Of the 78 respondents currently teaching, 25.64 percent graduated in 1984. Eighteen respondents (23.08 percent) graduated in 1985 and 14.1 percent graduated in 1986. Graduates from the year 1983 accounted for 12.82 percent of the respondents currently teaching. The years 1986 and 1987 were responsible for 10.26 percent of the respondents. 1980 accounted for 2.56 percent of those currently teaching, while 1982 had the lowest percentage with only 1.28 percent of the respondents teaching.

Table IV reports all types of employment held since the respondents graduated. As indicated the "n" will exceed the total number of respondents, since many graduates have held more than one job. Of the 203 respondents, 95 have taught or are presently teaching vocational agriculture in the state of Oklahoma. Seven of the respondents have taught vocational agriculture in a state other than Oklahoma. Agricultural Educational graduates who have taught subjects other than vocational agriculture made up seven of the 203 respondents. The extension service has employed 11 of the respondents at

TABLE III
 FREQUENCY OF RESPONDENTS WHO ARE
 PRESENTLY TEACHING VOCATIONAL
 AGRICULTURE IN OKLAHOMA

Year Graduated	Frequency "n"	Distribution %
1980	2	2.56
1981	8	10.26
1982	1	1.28
1983	10	12.82
1984	21	25.64
1985	18	23.08
1986	11	14.1
1987	8	10.26
Total	78	100.00

TABLE IV
 PAST POSITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT
 HELD BY GRADUATES FROM
 AGRICULTURE EDUCATION

Employment	Frequency ----- "n"
Taught Vo-Ag in OK	95
Taught Vo-Ag in other state	7
Taught subject other than Vo-Ag	7
Extension Service	11
Govt. Position in Agriculture	16
Agribusiness (private sector)	33
Agriculture related business	21
Farming/Ranching	34
Non-agriculture related	47
Graduate School	21
Unemployed	11

Total	303

some time, 16 have held government positions in agriculture, and 33 have, at some time, been involved in agribusiness in the private sector. Of the respondents, 21 have been involved in an agriculture-related position at some time and 34 of the respondents have been involved in farming and/or ranching. Of the 203 respondents, 47 have also worked in non-agricultural fields, while 21 have attended graduate school, 11 of the respondents have been unemployed at some point.

Table V indicates the occupational position held by Agricultural Education graduates who responded to the questionnaire as of October, 1987.

As indicated in Table V the majority of the respondents (38.42 percent) were teaching vocational agriculture in the state of Oklahoma, while 1.97 percent taught vocational agriculture in a state other than Oklahoma. Also 1.97 percent of the respondents were teaching, yet in a field other than vocational agriculture. In October, 1987, 2.96 percent of the respondents held jobs with the extension service, and 4.93 percent held a government position in agriculture. The private sector of agribusiness was responsible for the employment of 9.85 percent of the respondents as of October, 1987, and 5.42 percent held agriculture related positions. There were 8.87 percent of the respondents in farming and/or ranching.

TABLE V
EMPLOYMENT OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION
GRADUATES AS OF OCTOBER, 1987

Employment	Frequency	Distribution
	"n"	%
Vo-Ag teacher in OK	78	38.42
Vo-Ag teacher out of state	4	1.97
Teach subject other than Vo-Ag	4	1.97
Extension Service	6	2.96
Govt. Position in agriculture	10	4.93
Agribusiness (private sector)	20	9.85
Agriculture related position	11	5.42
Farming/Ranching	18	8.87
Non-agriculture related	36	17.73
Graduate school	9	4.43
Unemployed	7	3.45
Total	203	100.00

However 17.73 percent of the respondents in this survey occupied jobs in non-agriculture related fields as of October, 1987. Also 4.43 percent had returned to graduate school and 3.45 percent were unemployed.

Salary History

Item four on the survey asked the respondent to list the salary range of the first position held after receiving a Bachelor Of Science degree from the Agricultural Education Department and their present salary range.

Table VI indicates the beginning salary ranges for the respondents of the survey. There were 195 responses dealing with beginning salaries. Of the 195 respondents, 65 (33.33 percent) reported receiving salaries under \$16,800, while 116 (59.49 percent) stated that they received from \$16,801 - to - \$24,000 as their beginning salary. The remaining 14 (7.18 percent) made a beginning salary of \$24,000 or more.

In Table VII is a listing of the present salaries received by graduates of Agricultural Education who responded to the questionnaire.

There were 196 respondents who listed their current salaries as of October, 1987. Of the 196 responses, 46 (23.47 percent) listed receiving salaries \$16,800 and below. There were 103 (52.55 percent) as of October, 1987 who were receiving from \$16,801 - to - \$24,000 as their

TABLE VI
BEGINNING SALARY OF ALL
RESPONDENTS

Salary Level	Frequency	Distribution
	"n"	%
Below \$12,000	25	12.82
\$12,000-\$14,400	22	11.28
\$14,401-\$16,800	18	9.23
\$16,801-\$19,200	40	20.51
\$19,201-\$21,600	44	22.57
\$21,601-\$24,000	32	16.41
\$24,001-\$26,400	8	4.10
\$26,401-\$28,800	1	.51
\$28,801 or more	5	2.56
Total	195	100.00

TABLE VII
PRESENT SALARY OF ALL
RESPONDENTS

Salary Level	Frequency	Distribution
	"n"	%
Below \$12,000	22	11.22
\$12,000-\$14,400	10	5.10
\$14,401-\$16,800	14	7.14
\$16,801-\$19,200	15	7.65
\$19,201-\$21,600	28	14.29
\$21,601-\$24,000	60	30.61
\$24,001-\$26,400	21	10.71
\$26,401-\$28,800	14	7.14
\$28,801 or more	12	6.12
Total	196	100.00

salary, with the remaining 47 (23.98 percent) receiving \$24,001 or more. A further breakdown of salary ranges for all respondents can be found in Table VII.

Of those who entered the profession of teaching Vocational Agriculture immediately after graduation (Table VIII) reported that only five percent began at less than \$16,800, while 90 percent fell within the range \$16,801-to-\$24,000. The remaining five percent received salaries of greater than \$24,001.

There were 82 respondents who were teaching Vocational Agriculture as of October, 1987 who listed their salaries received. There were 62 of the 82 respondents (75.61 percent) who listed their salaries as being between \$16,801 and \$24,000 while the remaining 24.39 percent stated they were receiving \$28,801 or more. A further breakdown of salaries can be found in Table IX.

Career Satisfaction

This section of the chapter presents the views of the respondents on items six through ten on the questionnaire. These items deal with the area of career satisfaction.

In item six the respondents were asked to rate a series of questions on a scale of one to five, with one being definitely not satisfied, two being not satisfied, three being undecided, four being satisfied and five being definitely satisfied.

TABLE VIII
 BEGINNING SALARY OF RESPONDENTS
 TEACHING VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE
 UPON GRADUATION

Salary Level	Frequency "n"	Distribution %
Below \$12,000	0	0.0
\$12,000-\$14,400	1	1.25
\$14,401-\$16,800	3	3.75
\$16,801-\$19,200	21	26.25
\$19,201-\$21,600	33	41.25
\$21,601-\$24,000	18	22.50
\$24,001-\$26,400	3	3.75
\$26,401-\$28,800	0	0.0
\$28,801 or more	1	1.25
Total	80	100.00

TABLE IX
PRESENT SALARY OF RESPONDENTS
TEACHING VOCATIONAL
AGRICULTURE IN
OCTOBER, 1987

Salary Level	Frequency "n"	Distribution %
Below \$12,000	0	0.0
\$12,000-\$14,400	0	0.0
\$14,401-\$16,800	0	0.0
\$16,801-\$19,200	1	1.22
\$19,201-\$21,600	20	24.39
\$21,601-\$24,000	41	50.00
\$24,001-\$26,400	12	14.63
\$26,401-\$28,800	5	6.10
\$28,801 or more	3	3.66
Total	82	100.00

The first question asked the respondent, "How satisfied were you with your first position?" Results are indicated in Table X. Of the 194 respondents replying to this topic, 4.12 percent reported that they were definitely not satisfied, and 15.98 percent were not satisfied. A total of 12.37 percent indicated that they were undecided as the degree of satisfaction they received from their first employment after having received their degree. However, the majority, 39.69 percent of the graduates reported that they were satisfied with their beginning employment and 27.84 percent were definitely satisfied resulting in 67.53 being satisfied with their first employment.

Table XI indicates the employment satisfaction felt by the 79 respondents who were employed as vocational agriculture teachers immediately upon graduating. Of the 79 reporting on their beginning employment, 3.80 percent were definitely not satisfied, and 12.66 percent were not satisfied. Only 8.86 percent of the respondents were undecided. On the other hand 39.24 percent of the respondents who began their careers as vocational agriculture teachers were satisfied and 35.44 percent reported being definitely satisfied. There were 74.68 percent who were satisfied with their first initial employment.

The participant were asked to respond to the question, "How satisfied are you with your present position?" The

TABLE X
 AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION RESPONDENTS'
 RATING OF DEGREE OF SATISFACTION
 WITH FIRST POSITION

Degree of Satisfaction	Frequency "n"	Distribution %
Definitely not satisfied	8	4.12
Not satisfied	31	15.98
Undecided	24	12.37
Satisfied	77	39.69
Definitely satisfied	54	27.84
Total	194	100.00

TABLE XI
 JOB SATISFACTION OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION
 GRADUATES WHO TAUGHT VOCATIONAL
 AGRICULTURE AS THEIR
 INITIAL EMPLOYMENT

Degree of Satisfaction	Frequency "n"	Distribution %
Definitely not satisfied	3	3.80
Not satisfied	10	12.66
Undecided	7	8.26
Satisfied	31	39.24
Definitely Satisfied	28	35.44
Total	79	100.00

same scale of one through five was used. There were 197 responses reported on their present occupation.

Of the 197 respondents reporting, 8.12 percent were either definitely not satisfied, or not satisfied with their current status. A total of 9.64 percent of the respondents reported being undecided concerning satisfaction with their present job. There were 87 of the 197 (44.16 percent) reported that they were satisfied with their current position and 38.07 percent were highly satisfied. A total of 82.23 percent of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their present employment. Table XII clearly indicates the results.

As an aside, responses of the 81 graduates who were presently teaching vocational agriculture were analyzed, it was discovered that only 1.23 percent (one) reported that he was definitely not satisfied and 2.47 percent (two) who stated they were not satisfied. Table XIII shows that only 3.70 percent of the present vocational agriculture teachers responding were undecided. Meanwhile 46.91 percent of the respondents reported being satisfied and another 45.68 percent reported being highly satisfied, making a total of 92.59 percent of respondents' being satisfied with present employment.

Item seven of the survey asked the respondent to estimate the length of time he/she would remain at the present position. Table XIV reports the results of the responses from the 203 surveyed. Of those 203 who

TABLE XII
 ALL RESPONDENTS' RATING OF DEGREE OF
 SATISFACTION WITH PRESENT
 EMPLOYMENT

Degree of Satisfaction	Frequency "n"	Distribution %
Definitely not satisfied	9	4.57
Not satisfied	7	3.55
Undecided	19	9.64
Satisfied	87	44.16
Definitely satisfied	75	38.07
Total	197	100.00

TABLE XIII
 VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS'
 RATINGS OF SATISFACTION WITH
 PRESENT EMPLOYMENT

Level of Satisfaction	Frequency "n"	Distribution %
Definitely not satisfied	1	1.23
Not satisfied	2	2.47
Undecided	3	3.70
Satisfied	38	46.91
Definitely satisfied	37	45.68
Total	81	100.00

TABLE XIV
 ALL RESPONDENTS' ESTIMATION ON LENGTH
 OF TIME THEY PLAN ON REMAINING
 IN PRESENT POSITION

Anticipated Length of Employment	Frequency	Distribution
	"n"	%
1 year	15	7.39
2 years	7	3.45
3 years	6	2.96
4 years	3	1.48
5 years	6	2.96
Indefinitely	65	32.01
Did not know	101	49.75
Total	203	100.00

reported, 7.39 percent reported that they would stay only one year, 3.45 percent reported that they would remain in their present position for two years. Respondents who estimated that they would stay for a period of three years constituted 2.96 percent of the population, while 1.48 percent reported they would remain for four years, and 2.96 estimated a five year stay at their present position. There were 32.02 percent of the respondents stating that they would remain at their present position for an indefinite period of time. The remaining 49.75 percent did not know exactly how long they would remain in their present position.

Again as an aside, the vocational agriculture teacher respondents are represented exclusively in Table XV. Of the 82 current vocational agriculture teachers reporting on the length of time they intended to stay in their present position, 3.66 percent reported that they would remain for one year, 2.44 percent stated that they would remain for two years, and 2.44 stated that they would stay for a period of three years. There were 2.44 percent of the respondents estimating their stay at four years and 4.87 percent felt they were likely to stay in their present position for five years. There was a total of 36.59 percent of the Vo-Ag teachers responding reported that their stay was for an undetermined length of time. The remaining 47.56 percent were undecided as to the length of time they would stay in their present position.

TABLE XV
 VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS'
 ESTIMATED LENGTH OF STAY IN
 CURRENT POSITION

Anticipated Length of Employment	Frequency	Distribution
	"n"	%
1 year	3	3.66
2 years	2	2.44
3 years	2	2.44
4 years	2	2.44
5 years	4	4.87
Indefinitely	30	36.59
Did not know	39	47.56
Total	82	100.00

Another item on the questionnaire was directed at the Agricultural Education graduates who are presently not teaching. The question asked was, "...how interested would you be in teaching vocational agriculture in the future?" The respondents were asked to circle one of the following replies: not interested, undecided, interested, or highly interested.

In Table XVI it is revealed that 16.04 percent of the respondents were not interested in teaching vocational agriculture. Those undecided constituted 27.48 percent of the respondents. Of the 131 who reported, 28.24 percent reported that they were interested in teaching vocational agriculture, while another 28.24 percent were highly interested in the teaching profession.

Those respondents who indicated that they were interested in teaching vocational agriculture were asked to respond to a second portion of the instrument, namely when they would prefer to begin teaching. They were to chose from four periods: within one year, in two to three years, in four to five years, or after five years. As summarized in Table XVII, of the 77 responding 57.14 percent reported that they would like to begin within one year. Those preferring to begin within a two to three year period made up 20.78 percent of the respondents. To begin teaching within a four to five year period would satisfy 11.69 percent of the respondents and 10.39 percent would

TABLE XVI
NON-TEACHING RESPONDENTS' LEVEL OF
INTEREST IN A VOCATIONAL
AGRICULTURE TEACHING
POSITION

Interest Level	Frequency	Distribution
	"n"	%
Not interested	21	16.04
Undecided	36	27.48
Interested	37	28.24
Highly interested	37	28.24
Total	131	100.00

TABLE XVII
 RESPONDENTS AVAILABILITY TO BEGIN
 TEACHING VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

Desired Time of Employment	Frequency	Distribution
	"n"	%
Within 1 year	44	57.14
2-3 years	16	20.78
4-5 years	9	11.69
After 5 years	8	10.39
Total	77	100.00

prefer to begin teaching after a five year time lapse period.

Respondents were asked, "Are you interested in receiving information regarding vocational agriculture teaching openings?" The respondent simply had to answer yes or no. Of the 180 responding to the survey answered this question. Table XVIII reports the findings. While 63.89 percent of those responding stated that they would like to receive the information, 36.11 percent were not interested in receiving any information about available vocational agriculture teaching positions.

The respondents were asked to reply to four separate questions relating to the choice of a major in Agricultural Education. The reported by circling a number on a scale which corresponded to their opinions as follows:

1 = definitely no, 2 = no, 3 = undecided, 4 = yes,
5 = definitely yes.

The first question which the respondents were asked was, "Would you rate your undergraduate instruction as being appropriate for your present position?" As summarized in Table XIX, there were 202 responses to the question. A minority of 3.96 percent of the respondents felt that their undergraduate instruction was definitely not appropriate," while another 7.43 percent rated theirs as "not appropriate." The "undecided" category constituted 8.42 percent of those responding. Meanwhile, 63.86 percent of the respondents were of the opinion that their

TABLE XVIII

FREQUENCY OF RESPONDENTS WHO WOULD BE
 INTERESTED IN OBTAINING INFORMATION
 REGARDING VO-AG TEACHING OPENINGS

Response to Interest	Frequency "n"	Distribution %
Yes (would like to receive information)	115	63.89
No (not interested in receiving information)	65	36.11
Total	180	100.00

TABLE XIX
 RATING OF UNDERGRADUATES INSTRUCTION'S
 APPROPRIATENESS TO PRESENT POSITION

Level of Appropriateness	Frequency "n"	Distribution %
Definitely not appropriate	8	3.96
Not appropriate	15	7.43
Undecided	17	8.42
Appropriate	129	63.86
Definitely appropriate	33	16.33
Total	202	100.00

undergraduate instruction was "appropriate" for their position, and 16.34 percent felt that their undergraduate study program was "definitely appropriate". There were 80.19 percent who felt undergraduate instruction was appropriate.

The second question asked in this area, "Are you satisfied with your career choice?" To this, 203 responses to the question. The results are reported in Table XX. There was only 1.48 percent (3) who were "definitely not satisfied" and 4.93 percent were "not satisfied". Of the three definitely not satisfied, two were presently teaching vocational agriculture. There were 11.33 percent of the respondents who were undecided as to whether or not they were satisfied with their careers. The undecided category among those presently teaching Vo-Ag was 4.88 percent. There were 42.85 percent who answered yes, they were satisfied with their careers and 39.41 percent were definitely satisfied with their choice of careers. This is where the major difference occurred. When analyzing only those who are presently teaching vocational agriculture it was discovered that 90.24 percent reported being at least satisfied.

Table XXI presents findings gathered in response to the question, "Given another opportunity would you again choose the same profession?" All 203 survey respondents answered this question. There were 3.45 percent who stated that they definitely would not choose the same profession and

TABLE XX
 RESPONDENTS' DEGREE OF SATISFACTION
 WITH CAREER CHOICE

Level of Satisfaction	All Respondents		Vo-Ag teachers	
	"n"	%	"n"	%
Definitely not Satisfied	3	1.48	2	2.44
Not Satisfied	10	4.93	2	2.44
Undecided	23	11.33	4	4.88
Satisfied	87	42.85	34	41.46
Highly Satisfied	80	39.41	40	48.78
Total	203	100.00	82	100.00

TABLE XXI
 FREQUENCY OF RESPONDENTS SELECTING
 THE SAME CAREER

Level of Agreement	All Respondents		Vo-Ag teachers	
	"n"	%	"n"	%
Definitely No	7	3.45	2	2.44
No	14	6.90	2	2.44
Undecided	41	20.2	13	15.85
Yes	72	35.47	31	37.80
Definitely yes	69	33.98	34	41.46
Total	203	100.00	82	100.00

6.9 percent said no, they would not. Of the respondents, 20.2 percent were undecided. Respondents who said yes, they would choose the same profession; made up 35.47 percent of those surveyed, and 33.99 percent stated that they definitely would choose their profession once again. There was a total of 69.45 percent who felt yes they would select the same career.

This question was also analyzed by singling out respondents who currently were teaching vocational agriculture. Of the 82 current vocational agriculture instructors, 2.44 percent stated that they definitely would not choose the same profession and another 2.44 percent said no, they would not choose the vocational agriculture teaching profession if they were to make a career decision again. There were 15.85 percent of those currently teaching who were undecided about making the same career choice. However 37.80 percent of the teaching population stated that yes, they would make the same career choice, and 41.46 percent stated that they would definitely choose the teaching of vocational agriculture as their career once again. There was a grand total of 79.26 percent who stated they would again choose the same career. Table XXI also shows a comparison between those Agricultural Education graduates who are not teaching vocational agriculture to those who are.

The final of this series of questions asked, "Given another opportunity, would you choose Agricultural

Education as your major?" Once again all 203 respondents replied to this question. The numbers and percentages can be found in Table XXII. To summarize, 4.43 percent of the respondents who definitely would not choose Agricultural Education as their major a second time, and 9.36 percent stated that no, they would not choose this particular major if they had to make the choice once again. There were 15.76 percent of the Agricultural Education degree graduates who were undecided as to whether or not they would choose their major a second time. Still 35.96 percent said yes, they would once again become Agricultural Education majors and 34.48 percent stated that they would definitely choose the same major. There was a total of 70.44 percent who once again choose the same major.

Influences on Choices of Career

This section of the chapter analyzes who had the most influence on the Agricultural Education degree graduates when they chose their career. The respondents were asked to number the people who had the most influence on their career choice with one being the most influential and so forth. On Table XXIII the results of this are shown. Note that there is a greater number than the number of respondents. This is due to the fact that some respondents felt that there were two or more people who were equally influential in their career choice. Of the 218 responses, 55.96 percent were influenced most by their high school

TABLE XXII
 FREQUENCY WITH WHICH AGRICULTURAL
 EDUCATION GRADUATES WOULD
 CHOOSE SAME MAJOR AGAIN

Level of Agreement	Frequency Distribution	
	"n"	%
Definitely no	9	4.43
No	19	9.36
Undecided	32	15.76
Yes	73	35.96
Definitely yes	70	34.48
Total	203	100.00

TABLE XXIII
 MOST INFLUENTIAL PERSONS IN RESPONDENTS'
 CAREER CHOICES

Influentials	Frequency "n"	Distribution %
Vo-Ag teacher	122	55.96
College Adviser	8	3.67
Other teacher	6	2.75
Parents	37	16.97
Other relative	11	5.05
Friend	13	5.96
Other person	10	4.59
No one	11	5.05
	---	-----
Total	218	100.00

vocational agriculture teacher, 3.67 percent were influenced by their college adviser, and 2.75 were influenced by some other teacher. Not only did educators influence the career choice of the respondents, but also family members and friends provided some direction. There were 16.97 percent of those surveyed who felt that their parents were the most influential in their career choice, while 5.05 percent were influenced by a different family member, and 5.96 percent were most influenced by a friend. There were 4.59 percent of the respondents who were influenced most in their career choice by some other person than those mentioned above, and 5.05 percent felt there was no person who influenced them into choosing their particular major.

Degree Options

The final item investigated was in the area of degree options in Agricultural Education. This was dealt with in a two part question.

The first part of the question asked, "Do you feel that other degree options in Agricultural Education should be made available?" Of the 192 responses to the question, 149 (77.6 percent) said yes. The other 43 (22.4 percent) of the population who responded felt that no, there should not be any degree options.

The second part of item twelve included only those who answered yes to the previous question. Therefore 149

participants gave 253 suggestions to this question, "... what would you suggest offering as degree options?" Table XXIV shows the results of the suggestions given. However it is noted that, of the 253 suggestions, 50 (19.76 percent) suggested Agricultural Economics and 47 (18.58 percent) felt that Animal Science should be a degree option for Agricultural Education majors. The complete list of suggestions and percentages are described fully in Table XXIV.

TABLE XXIV
SUGGESTED DEGREE OPTIONS AND THE FREQUENCY
WITH WHICH THEY WERE SUGGESTED

Degree Options	Frequency Distribution	
	"n"	%
Agricultural Economics	50	19.76
Animal Sciences	47	18.58
Horticulture	24	9.49
Business	22	8.70
Engineering/Ag. mechanics	20	7.91
Agronomy	19	7.51
Other teaching options (sciences, math, history, OAED)	13	5.12
Agribusiness	10	3.95
Public relations, communication, journalism, advertising	9	3.56
Finance management	8	3.16
Computer Science	7	2.77
Cooperative extension	7	2.77
Accounting/Marketing	7	2.77
Plant & Soil science	3	1.18
Forestry/Wildlife	2	.79
Pre-Veterinary	2	.79
Poultry/Entomology	2	.79
Administration	1	.40
Total	253	100.00

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this chapter is to present a summary of the study and findings related to the purpose and objectives. After a careful analysis of the data presented, and a review of the purpose and objectives of this study, conclusions have been drawn and recommendations have been made.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gather specific information from former students of the Agricultural Education Department at OSU concerning their past and present employment status, their salary history, and their degree of job satisfaction.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To identify the areas of employment selected by graduates from Agricultural Education.
2. To identify the salary ranges upon graduation and current salary range.

3. To assess the degree of job satisfaction obtained from the graduates' current occupations.

4. To determine the degree of influence that selected people had in the respondent's decision to pursue a degree in Agricultural Education.

Design and Conduct of the Study

To collect data for the study a questionnaire was mailed. This questionnaire was developed with the aid of the Agricultural Education Department at OSU. After this it was mailed to a total of 320 Agricultural Education degree graduates for the years 1980-1987. After two mailings of the questionnaire a total of 203 responses were received, for a 63.75 percent return rate.

Major Findings of the Study

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

1. Characteristics of Respondents
2. Employment Status of Respondents
3. Salary History of Respondents
4. Professional Satisfaction of Respondents
5. People That Influenced Respondent's Decision to Pursue a Career in Agricultural Education at OSU
6. Degree Options Respondents Feel Should be Offered to Agricultural Education Majors

Characteristics of Respondents

Each of the 203 respondents in this study graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Education from Oklahoma State University in the years 1980-1987.

The largest percentage of response by degree year was 1984, which represented 21.18 percent of the population. Of those teaching, the largest percentage of response also came from the year 1984, with 25.64 percent response rate. The year 1980 represented the lowest response rate with only 3.94 percent of the respondent population.

Employment Status of Respondents

This questionnaire asked the respondents to list their first job upon completion of their degree and their present occupation. According to the data gathered 46.8 percent of the respondents taught Vo-Ag in Oklahoma immediately after they graduated. Another 3.45 percent accepted a Vo-Ag teaching position in a state other than Oklahoma as their first employment after receiving their degree. This meant that of the 203 who responded, 50.25 percent acquired a Vo-Ag teaching position as their first job after receiving their Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Education.

However as of October, 1987, 38.42 percent of the respondents were currently teaching Vo-Ag in Oklahoma

and another 1.97 percent were teaching Vo-Ag in a different state. Of the 203 respondents 40.39 percent were teaching Vo-Ag in October of 1987.

As the study shows, although 50.25 percent of the Agricultural Education graduates accepted Vo-Ag teaching positions as their first employment, the percentage of those currently teaching shows a decline as shown in Table XXV.

Table XXV also shows that upon graduation, 23.15 percent of the respondents accepted non agriculture related employment. However this had changed as of October, 1987. At that time only 17.73 percent of the 203 respondents listed their present occupation as being unrelated to agriculture.

Although 16.75 percent of the 203 Agricultural Education degree graduates entered farming and/or ranching after graduation, only 8.88 percent of the respondents listed this as their current occupation.

The remaining areas of employment held by the 203 respondents did not show such a drastic change. Yet all of the changes in occupations can be evaluated in Table XXV.

Salary History of Respondents

After a complete analysis of the data gathered it was discovered that the mean beginning salaries of all Agricultural Education graduates fell in the \$16,801-

TABLE XXV
 FREQUENCY AND TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT HELD
 BY AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION GRADUATES
 AFTER GRADUATION AND AT PRESENT

Area of Employment	Past Employment		Present Employment	
	"n"	%	"n"	%
Vo-Ag teacher in OK	95	46.80	78	38.42
Vo-Ag teacher in other state	7	3.45	4	1.97
Teacher of other subject	7	3.45	4	1.97
Extension service	11	5.42	6	2.96
Govt. position in Agriculture	16	7.88	10	4.93
Agri-business Private sector	33	16.26	20	9.85
Ag.-related position	21	10.34	11	5.42
Farming/Ranching	34	16.75	18	8.87
Not Ag. related	47	23.15	36	17.73
Graduate school	21	10.34	9	4.43
Unemployed	11	5.42	7	3.45

\$19,200 range. The exclusion of those in graduate school or unemployed did not alter the salary level. The graduates who taught Vo-Ag as their first employment had a mean income which fell within \$19,201-\$21,600 range.

The study also showed that the average income for Agricultural Education graduates had risen with their current employment. The mean income of all Agricultural Education graduates was in the \$19,201-\$21,600 range as of October, 1987. Once again, after the exclusion of those respondents in graduate school or unemployed, the average salary level did not change. The present salary of Agricultural Education graduates currently teaching had also risen to an average income which ranged between \$24,001-\$26,400.

Professional Satisfaction of Respondents

Though Agricultural Education graduates held a variety of occupations, the majority of the respondents, 39.69 percent, were satisfied with their first position, and 27.84 percent reported having been highly satisfied in their initial job after graduation. A percentage of 44.16 percent reported being satisfied with their current position and 38.07 percent were highly satisfied.

The study also analyzed Vo-Ag teachers separately. Of the 79 responses received, who held Vo-Ag teaching jobs as their first employment 39.24 percent reported being satisfied and another 35.44 percent had been highly

satisfied. Of the 81 respondents who currently teach Vo-Ag 46.91 percent said they were satisfied with their current job, and another 45.68 percent reported being highly satisfied with their job.

Consequently the questionnaire asked the respondents whether or not they were satisfied with their career choice. Of the 203 respondents 42.86 percent were satisfied and 39.41 percent were definitely satisfied with their career choices. Only 1.48 percent were definitely not satisfied.

Those presently teaching were even more satisfied with their career choice. There were 48.78 percent reported being definitely satisfied and another 41.46 percent said that they were satisfied. A total of 4.88 percent were definitely not satisfied or were simply not satisfied.

The study also showed that 69.45 percent of the respondents would choose the same profession again. Of the respondents who were currently teaching vocational agriculture, 79.26 percent felt that they would once again choose Agricultural Education as their career.

The questionnaire also asked those respondents not teaching if they would be interested in obtaining teaching positions in Vo-Ag if the opportunity presented itself; 131 participants responded. This question uncovered the fact that 28.24 percent were interested and another 28.24

percent were high interested in obtaining employment as a Vo-Ag instructor.

The questionnaire also asked respondents if they wished to receive information regarding Vo-Ag teacher openings. Of the 180 responding, 63.89 percent stated that they would like to receive such information.

This section of the questionnaire also surveyed the opinions Agricultural Education graduates had about their undergraduate instruction. A 63.86 percent of the respondents stated that their instructional program was appropriate for their career choice.

Persons Influencing Respondents'

Career Choice

High school Vo-Ag teachers had a strong influence on the respondents who chose to enter Agricultural Education 55.96 percent of the respondents were influenced most by their high school Vo-Ag instructor. Parents proved to be influential in the respondents' career choice as 16.97 percent reported.

Degree Options Respondents Feel Should

Be Offered to Agricultural Education

Majors

Although a high percentage of the respondents were satisfied with their undergraduate study program, 77.6

percent also felt that other degree options should be made available.

The degree option that was most often suggested was Agriculture Economics (19.76 percent). Animal Science was the next most often suggested option, as it was listed 18.58 percent of the time. Other options which were suggested on at least five percent of the returned questionnaires included horticulture, business, engineering/ag. mechanics, agronomy, and other teaching options which included science, math, history, and OAED.

The typical graduate from the years 1980 - 1987 with a degree in Agricultural Education graduated in 1984 and immediately began teaching vocational agriculture. His beginning salary was between \$16,801 and \$21,600 and was satisfied with his first employment. The typical graduate was most influenced by his vocational agriculture teacher, concerning his career choice. He currently makes between \$21,601 and \$21,000 and is satisfied with his present position and does not know how long he plans on remaining in that position. He would select the same career and major and ranked his undergraduate instruction as being appropriate for his present position.

Conclusions

Through a careful analysis of the data and findings, the following conclusions were made:

1. It was apparent that those Agricultural Education graduates entering the teaching profession did so immediately following graduation.

2. Based on the results, it was concluded that Agricultural Education graduates who were not teaching, needed assistance in locating employment.

3. Since salaries of the beginning and experienced vocational agriculture teachers ranked above the average of other occupations held by Agricultural Education graduates, it was apparent that Vocational Agriculture teachers received higher pay.

4. Based on the findings, it was concluded that beginning teachers who perceived that they were properly trained had a high level of job satisfaction.

5. It was further concluded that teachers were content in their present position and did not perceive themselves as being locked in a dead-end career.

6. It was apparent that Agricultural Education graduates were interested in initiating their teaching careers immediately upon graduation.

7. Based on the findings, Agricultural Education graduates perceived that their undergraduate instruction was appropriate and the quality of the course content was beneficial to their careers.

8. It was concluded that Agricultural Education graduates, both teaching and non teaching, were satisfied with their career choices.

9. Based on the findings, it was concluded that Agricultural Education graduates were satisfied with their career choices and would choose the same options if they were to start over again.

10. It was apparent that Vocational Agriculture teachers have a great deal of influence with regard to students choosing a college major.

11. However, it was further concluded that most of the Agricultural Education graduates perceived that additional options in addition to teaching would be useful for students making career choices.

Recommendations

Findings

As a result of the conclusions which were drawn from the analysis and interpretation of data, the following recommendations are made:

1. Since many graduates of the Agricultural Education Department did hold jobs within the agricultural field, their salary on the average ranked lower than the salary of Agricultural Education graduates who did teach vocational agriculture. It was recommended that the Agricultural Education Department use this information to guide prospective students.

2. Due to the fact that a number of Agricultural Education graduates currently not teaching were dissatisfied with their present position, it was recommended

that these graduates be advised to seek assistance from the Agriculture Placement Office in pursuing more satisfying employment opportunities.

3. Since many graduates acknowledged that they plan to relocate in the future, an effort should be made to inform them of employment and career opportunities through the Agriculture Placement Office as well as available teaching positions through the State Vo-Ag Department.

4. Since Agricultural Education graduates felt that their undergraduate instruction was appropriate, it is recommended that the Agricultural Education Department continue a highly diverse program.

5. Since most Agricultural Education graduates are satisfied with their career choice an effort should be made to continue the department's diverse program as well as its people oriented approach.

6. Since high school vocational agricultural teachers and parents have a strong level of influence on prospective students, an effort should be made to maintain contacts with high school students and their Vo-Ag instructors for the purpose of recruiting students.

7. Many Agricultural Education graduates felt that degree options should be made available. Upon this data it is recommended that the Agricultural Education Department pursue opportunities for other degree options considered appropriate for Agricultural Education.

8. It is recommended that as a result of this information gained from this study that the Agricultural Education department develop a brochure for distribution to prospective students concerning available opportunities.

Further Research

1. A follow-up study should be conducted every three to five years so that results of this study will maintain their usefulness as well as provide current information be kept up to date to identify the satisfaction of Agricultural Education graduates.

2. Since the number of Agricultural Education degree graduates currently teaching has decreased somewhat it was recommended that the Agricultural Education department identify factors relative to this apparent trend.

3. Due to the high level of graduates satisfied with undergraduate instruction and career choice, it is recommended that further research efforts be initiated to identify satisfied graduates who support departmental efforts and programs.

4. Due to the fact that many Agricultural Education graduates selected careers other than Vo-Ag teaching it is recommended further research be done to identify factors relative to selecting career options other than teaching.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

COVER LETTERS AND QUESTIONNAIRE



Oklahoma State University

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74078
AGRICULTURAL HALL 448
405-624-5129

October 9, 1987

^[FIRST NAME] ^[LAST NAME]
^[CURRENT ADDRESS]
^[CITY] ^[STATE] ^[ZIP]

Dear ^[FIRST NAME]:

In a continuing effort to provide our students with information about the Agricultural Education program and keep the program as current as possible, we mailed questionnaires to each of you in July. Some of you have responded and we are appreciative of your help. However, the response rate has not been as good as we would have liked. If you have not responded to our questionnaire **please** take a few minutes and fill out the enclosed survey and drop it in the mail. We need your perceptions, opinions and ideas about the AgEd program.

Please complete the enclosed questionnaire as soon as possible, folding it so the return address is on the outside. Notice that it is stamped, so all you have to do is drop it in the mail. Thank you for helping us with this important information which shall be held in the strictest of confidence.

Sincerely,

H. Robert Terry
Professor and Head



Oklahoma State University

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74078
AGRICULTURAL HALL 448
405-624-5129

July 13, 1987

^[FIRST NAME]^[LAST NAME]
^[ADDRESS]
^[CITY]^[STATE]^[ZIP]

Dear ^[FIRST NAME]:

As a recent graduate of Oklahoma State University and the Agricultural Education Department, you are in a unique position to help the students of the future become more aware of what they can expect as a graduate of this program.

The brief moments it will take you to complete this questionnaire will allow Agricultural Education at Oklahoma State University to make informed decisions concerning the program. We, in the Department, continue to be interested in our former students, the perceptions of the program that they hold and how we might do an even better job in preparing future students.

Please complete the enclosed questionnaire as soon as possible, folding it so the return address is on the outside. Notice that it is stamped, so all you have to do is drop it in the mail. Thank you for helping us with this important information which shall be held in the strictest of confidence.

Sincerely,

H. Robert Terry
Professor and Head

OSU Agricultural Education Graduate
Follow-Up Study

1. Please fill in the return address space on the reverse side and return the completed questionnaire. If you have questions please call (405) 624-5129.
2. In what year did you graduate from OSU? _____
3. Please indicate the job(s) you have held in the order you have held them since receiving your B.S. Degree. (first job = 1, second = 2, ... present = P)
 - (1) _____ Teaching Vocational Agriculture in Oklahoma
 - (2) _____ Teaching Vocational Agriculture in a state other than Oklahoma (please specify) _____
 - (3) _____ Teaching in a subject other than Vocational Agriculture (please specify) _____
 - (4) _____ 4-H Extension Agent
 - _____ Agriculture Extension Agent
 - _____ County Extension Director
 - (5) _____ Government position in agriculture (i.e., Soil Conservation Service, Federal Land Bank, etc.) please specify _____
 - (6) _____ Agri-business in the private sector, please specify _____
 - (7) _____ Other agriculture related position, please specify _____
 - (8) _____ Ranching
 - (9) _____ Farming, major crop(s) _____
 - (10) _____ Non-agriculture related, please specify _____
 - (11) _____ Graduate school, major _____
 - (12) _____ Armed services (Army, Navy, etc.)
 - (13) _____ Unemployed
4. New students want to know what salary they can expect to earn after completing a degree in Agricultural Education at OSU. Please help by checking the salary range for your first and present position after receiving your B.S. Degree.

First Position		Present Position
(1) _____	Below \$12,000	(1) _____
(2) _____	\$12,000-\$14,400	(2) _____
(3) _____	\$14,401-\$16,800	(3) _____
(4) _____	\$16,801-\$19,200	(4) _____
(5) _____	\$19,201-\$21,600	(5) _____
(6) _____	\$21,601-\$24,000	(6) _____
(7) _____	\$24,001-\$26,400	(7) _____
(8) _____	\$26,401-\$28,800	(8) _____
(9) _____	\$28,801-\$31,200	(9) _____
(10) _____	\$31,201-\$33,600	(10) _____
(11) _____	\$33,601-\$36,000	(11) _____
(12) _____	\$36,601-\$38,400	(12) _____
(13) _____	\$38,401 or more	(13) _____

5. Please indicate the location of your employment by checking the appropriate blanks below.

First Position		Present Position
(1) _____	Within 50 miles of home town	(1) _____
(2) _____	51-150 miles of home town	(2) _____
(3) _____	151-250 of home town	(3) _____
(4) _____	251 miles or more from home town	(4) _____

6. Please rate the following questions using the scale
(1 = Definitely not satisfied, 2 = Not satisfied,
3 = Undecided, 4 = Satisfied, 5 = Highly satisfied)

1 2 3 4 5 How satisfied were you with your first position?
1 2 3 4 5 How satisfied are you with your present position?

7. How long do you plan on remaining in your present position?
(Please circle one choice)
- Unknown - 1 yr. - 2 yr. - 3 yr. - 4 yr. - 5 yr. - indefinitely
8. If you are not now teaching Vocational Agriculture and the opportunity presented itself, how interested would you be in teaching Vocational Agriculture in the future? (circle one)
- Not interested - undecided - interested - highly interested
- If interested, when would you like to begin teaching Vo-Ag?
- (1) _____ Within 1 year
(2) _____ In 2-3 years
(3) _____ In 4-5 years
(4) _____ After 5 years
9. Are you interested in receiving information regarding Vo-Ag teaching openings? _____ yes _____ no
10. Please answer the following by circling a number from 1 to 5. (1 = Definitely no, 2 = No, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Yes, 5 = Definitely yes)
- 1 2 3 4 5 Would you rate your undergraduate instruction as being appropriate for your position?
1 2 3 4 5 Are you satisfied with your career choice?
1 2 3 4 5 Given another opportunity would you again choose the same profession?
1 2 3 4 5 Given another opportunity would you again choose Agricultural Education as your major?
11. Who influenced your career choice. If more than one, please rank, with 1 being the person who had the most influence, etc.
- (1) _____ Vo-Ag Teacher
(2) _____ College Advisor
(3) _____ Other Teacher (specify) _____
(4) _____ Parents
(5) _____ Other Relative (specify) _____
(6) _____ Friend
(7) _____ Other (specify) _____
(8) _____ No one
12. Do you feel other degree options in Agricultural Education should be made available? _____ yes _____ no
- If yes, what would you suggest? Be specific (i.e., Animal Science/Agricultural Education - Double Major etc.)
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Return Address

Agricultural Education Department
448 Agricultural Hall
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, OK 74078

VITA 2

Monty Jay Layton

Candidate for the Degree of
Master of Science

Thesis: A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION
GRADUATES AT OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY: 1980-1987

Major Field: Agricultural Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, March
1, 1961, the son of Jay and Betty Layton.

Education: Graduated from Adair High School, Adair,
Oklahoma, in May, 1979; received Bachelor of
Science degree in Animal Science from Oklahoma
State University in May, 1983; completed
requirements for the Master of Science degree at
Oklahoma State University in July, 1988.

Professional Experience: Vocational Agriculture
Instructor, Copan High School, Copan, Oklahoma,
July, 1985 to present.

Organizations: National Vocational Agriculture
Teacher's Association, Oklahoma Vocational
Agriculture Teacher's Association.