

COMPARISONS OF PROGRAM-COMPLETERS' AND LEAVERS'
PERCEPTIONS OF THE OKLAHOMA FARM BUSINESS
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

By

JAMES KAYLOR STEWARD, JR.
Bachelor of Science
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma
1966 and 1967

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College
of the Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
MASTER OF SCIENCE
May, 1986

Thesis
1986
S849c
cop. 2



COMPARISONS OF PROGRAM-COMPLETERS' AND LEAVERS'
PERCEPTIONS OF THE OKLAHOMA FARM BUSINESS
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Thesis Approved:

Robert Terry

Thesis Adviser

James W. White

James P. Key

Norma M. Durhan

Dean of the Graduate College

1251230

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In reflecting on this study and the many combined efforts which made this work possible, the author would like to recognize several persons whose guidance and support were helpful in the conducting and completion of this study.

Sincere appreciation is expressed to the author's committee chairman and members for their guidance and direction. Special thanks goes to Dr. Robert Terry, major thesis adviser, for his support and encouragement.

Acknowledgement is given to the members of the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education staff for their assistance and guidance. Special thanks to Shelia Stone, Bob Mitchell, Todd Zdorkowski, and Janet Sloan.

Sincere appreciation is expressed to the Farm Business management instructors who participated in this study.

Special thanks to Dr. Raleigh Jobes for his support and encouragement. Without his cooperation the Farm Business Management Program might not exist as it does today.

Sincere thanks is extended to the cooperators who responded to the questionnaire for this study. Without their cooperation this study would not have been possible.

Sincere appreciation is extended to the author's parents, Mr. and Mrs. James K. Steward for the many things which words cannot express.

Special recognition is expressed to my wife, Diane, who has continually been an inspiration to me and who has been a source of encouragement and assistance for completing my degree program. Special thanks to our children, sons Jimmy and David and daughter Wendy, for their cooperation and support. To them, this work is dedicated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	3
Purpose of the Study	3
Objectives of the Study	3
Assumptions of the Study	4
Limitations of the Study	5
Definitions of Terms	5
Scope of the Study	6
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	7
Adult Education and Evaluation	7
Agricultural Education	10
The Practical Process of Farm Business Management Evaluation	14
Summary	15
III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES	17
The Survey	17
The Survey Instrument	18
Data Collection Sites	19
The Distribution Method	20
Analysis of the Data	24
IV. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA	26
Introduction	26
Background of Respondents	26
Year Enrolled in Program	27
Major Farm and Ranch Enterprises	29
Age	31
Farming Status	33
Attendance at Class Meetings	35
Record Systems Used by Completer Respondents	37
Completers' Opinions About Key Concepts	38
Completers' Perceptions of Program Objectives	40
Respondents' Perceptions of Educational Programs and Services	42
Respondents' Perceptions of Major Topic Areas	46

Chapter	Page
When Leaver Respondents Left Program	50
Leaver Respondents' Reasons for Departing Program	51
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	54
Summary	54
Purpose of the Study	54
Objectives of the Study	55
Rationale for the Study	56
Design of the Study	56
Major Findings of the Research	57
Background of Respondents	57
Attendance at Class Meetings	58
Record Systems Used by Completer Respondents	59
Completers' Opinions About Key Concepts	59
Completers' Perceptions of Program Objectives	59
Respondents' Perceptions of Educational Programs and Services	60
Respondents' Perceptions of Major Topic Areas	60
When Leaver Respondents Left the Program	61
Leaver Respondents' Reasons for Departing the Program	61
Conclusions	62
Recommendations.	64
Recommendations for Additional Research	65
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	66
APPENDIXES	69
APPENDIX A-- COVER LETTERS	70
APPENDIX B - PROGRAM-COMPLETER QUESTIONNAIRE	80
APPENDIX C - PROGRAM-LEAVER QUESTIONNAIRE	86

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Comparison of Selected Demographic Information of Program Completer and Leaver Non-Respondents.....	22
II. Comparison of Completer and Leaver Respondents by Year of Enrollment in the Program.....	28
III. Comparisons of Completer and Leaver Respondents by Major Farm or Ranch Enterprises.....	30
IV. Comparison of Completer and Leaver Respondents by Age.....	32
V. Comparison of Completer and Leaver Respondents by Farming Status.....	34
VI. Comparison of Completer and Leaver Respondents Attendance at Class Meetings.....	36
VII. Distribution of Types of Record Systems Used by Program Completer Respondents.....	37
VIII. Completers' Opinions About Key Concepts Concerning the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program.....	39
IX. Completers' Perceptions of Program Objectives by Degree of Importance in Their Farming or Ranching Operation....	41
X. Comparison of Completer and Leaver Respondents' Perceptions of Educational Programs and Services by Degree of Their Importance in Helping Meet Farm Business Management Educational Needs.....	44
XI. Comparison of Completer and Leaver Respondents' Perceptions of Major Topic Areas by Degree of Importance in Their Farming or Ranching Operation.....	48
XII. When Program Leaver Respondents Left the Program.....	50
XIII. Program Leaver Respondents' Reasons for Departing the Farm Business Management Program.....	52

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program is an adult education program. It involves the cooperative efforts of the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, the Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service, and the area vocational-technical schools. This program is designed to bring farm and ranch families the benefits of farm business management instruction in their local area vocational-technical school settings and in their homes. The program permits farm and ranch families to study their own farm and ranch businesses in detail, and it emphasizes the systematic application of proven decision-making processes to their individual farm and ranch situations. In this way, the program contributes to the overall mission of the area vocational-technical schools, extending benefits to individual farm and ranch families, and through them, to all members of the communities in which they live.

The Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program has several features which make it unique in adult agricultural education:

1. The program is operated year-round. Just as farming has no season, neither does continuing education in farm business education.
2. The program is continuous. Farm and ranch families are expected to enroll for a three-year period. Specific units

of instruction are offered in a definite sequence in the three-year course. There is a continuity between the units of instruction that allows program participants to accomplish their farm business and family goals and objectives.

3. Because farming is often a family business, both the farmer and spouse are included in the instruction. Spouses not only assist in keeping records, but also help to make management decisions. In some families, the spouse also makes a major contribution in the farming labor.
4. A most unique feature of the program is its schedule. The class has regular monthly classroom meetings at the area vocational-technical school and individualized instruction. The instructor makes scheduled visits to each cooperator's farm or ranch to help with record-keeping problems and to offer management suggestions tailored to each family's operation.

However, despite the high quality of the formal program evaluations conducted by the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, and the praiseworthy character of most of the informal feedback that program instructors have received, it was not really known what program completers and leavers have thought about the Farm Business Management Program. It was not really known what completers and leavers considered to be the program's most useful and least useful aspects, and it's not known why leavers failed to complete the program. This study was undertaken to answer these and other related concerns, and to suggest ways that Oklahoma's already successful Farm Business Management Programs may be improved.

Statement of the Problem

Although Oklahoma's Farm Business Management Program was structured by curriculum specialists, and has been accepted for use in other states' curriculums, no one has surveyed its students to gather their perceptions of the program's course of instruction. As a result, it was not known if they believe the program meets their needs; if its present schedule of classes should be continued; if its instructional units were appropriate to the needs of their farming and ranching operations; or what they feel its future direction should be. There was also a lack of information concerning the differences between completers' and leavers' perceptions of the Farm Business Management Program. As a result, it was not known if the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program met users' needs, or if its effectiveness could be measured.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine program completers' and leavers' perceptions of the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program. The study investigated the respondents' perceptions of the program as well as their perceptions of how the program should change to meet future needs. The study also sought to distinguish between program completers' and leavers' perceptions, in the hope that both groups' needs might be identified and better served.

Objectives of the Study

In order to accomplish the purposes outlined, the following objectives were organized:

1. To compare program completers' and leavers' by year of enrollment and when they completed or left the program, by major farm or ranch enterprises, by age, and by farming status.
2. To compare program completers' and leavers' attendance at class meetings.
3. To determine types of record systems used by program completers.
4. To determine program completers' opinions about selected statements about the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program.
5. To determine program completers' perceptions of program objectives.
6. To compare program completers' and leavers' perceptions of educational programs and services in helping meet their farm business management educational needs.
7. To compare program completers' and leavers' perceptions of major topic areas.
8. To determine when program leavers left the program.
9. To determine program leavers' reasons for departing the Farm Business Management Program.

Assumptions of the Study

The following assumptions concerning the validity of the data presented in this study were formulated: (1) The students involved in this study were representative of future enrollees. (2) Farm Business Management programs at all schools were basically the same. (3) The attitudes expressed by the participants in this survey were honest expressions of their opinions.

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations of the study were recognized: (1) Some schools experienced a turn-over of instructors during the years the program was operating in their schools. This study was not designed to measure the qualifications of the instructor, but to measure student responses to the program and its results. However, quality of instruction definitely has an impact on the effectiveness of the program. (2) As in all survey research, a respondent's motivation to complete the survey questionnaire is difficult to assess, and this affects the validity of the response. (3) Again, as in all survey research, the returned survey questionnaires may represent a biased sample. In this case, the sample was of all those interested enough to participate. A sample of those too busy or unwilling to participate in the survey might produce a different description of the program. (4) Some survey questionnaire responses were returned to the instructors. These responses may represent a biased sample.

Definition of Terms

For better understanding of the content presented in this study, the following definitions seemed relevant:

Farm Business Management: Combination of economic analysis and business control, and the management of biological processes within the context of changing technical, legal, and human environments. Farm business management is more than either the direct application of production economic principles or technical production management as would be taught in a production agriculture curriculum.

Cooperator: Participant (student) in the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program, usually the farmer and spouse.

Curriculum: Instructional materials from which information is presented in the classroom or used in individualized on-farm instruction.

Farmer: Person who earns a living by farming or ranching; one who operates or manages a farm or ranch. In this program the terms, farmer, farm, and farming are generalized to include both farming and ranching operations.

Full-time Farmer: Person or firm must have received at least two-thirds of their total gross income, including non-farm income, from farming.

Completer: Cooperator who completed the three-year Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program.

Leaver: Cooperator who enrolled in the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program but departed before completing the third year of the program.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study included: (1) All cooperators who had completed the three-year Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program from 1980 through 1984; and (2) All cooperators who had enrolled but left the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program from 1978 through 1984.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The intent of this study was to analyze Oklahoma's Farm Business Management Programs from the cooperators' (users') point of view. This should provide curriculum and program specialists with the kind of information needed to improve the Farm Business Management Program in interesting and useful ways. However, the intent of this study was to "analyze" Oklahoma's Farm Business Management Programs, and this was such a complex task that it demanded some background information before it could be approached directly.

Webster (1980) states that, to analyze any phenomenon, one must examine it in detail in order to determine its nature and tendencies. This means that there is a need to examine the evaluation of adult education in farm business management from several different angles in order to understand it. Specifically, this review will discuss adult education and the evaluation of adult education in agriculture in general terms, previous work done in agricultural education, and the practical process of evaluation that occurs in Farm Business Management programs on a day-to-day basis.

Adult Education And Evaluation

Malcolm Knowles (1962) suggests that learning is a life-long process, especially for the farmer. He states: "The concept of life-long

learning is the only insurance the farmer has against obsolescence" (p.289).

Knowles (1977) also warns that, "The problem is that education is not yet perceived as a life-long process. People feel that they ought to know rather than how to keep finding out" (p.23). But how are adult educators, in this case, farm business management instructors, to combat this?

Knowles partially answers this question when he states that the primary and immediate mission of every adult educator is to help individuals satisfy their needs and achieve their goals. Leske (1978) specifies this even further for agricultural educators. He notes that the primary purpose of the Minnesota Farm Business Management Program is to help farm families increase the effectiveness of their farm business operations, and to help farmers achieve their family goals. Steward (1982) notes that these are much the same as the goals specified for the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program.

Again, how are agricultural educators to know when they have achieved their goals? Childers (1972) suggests that the only possible way is through periodic assessment programs. Richardson (1979) agrees, and goes one step further in his discussion of the assessment process. He notes that effective program evaluation involves communication with its products, its students. He also notes that unfortunate consequences usually follow from an educator's refusal to listen to his or her adult learners.

What are program evaluators to listen for then? Bender (1972) suggests that evaluation is concerned with the way in which individuals place values on processes, procedures, outcomes and activities, calling

it: "... the process of ascertaining or judging the value or amount of something by careful appraisal" (p.187).

Of course, evaluation was not an end in itself (Hunsicker, 1966). It was only a means by which program administrators can determine the effectiveness of their efforts. It was a means by which to chart further program improvements. Faust (1975) notes that the evaluation process had other rewards as well. He observed that instructors with the determination to be of service were rewarded with a sense of accomplishment when they participated in good evaluations, or when they saw individuals and their communities grow through their efforts.

Callahan and Jackson (1978) relate program evaluation to community accountability. They state that educators are responsible for fulfilling the educational needs of their students. This means that adult educators must be able to determine whether or not students' needs were being met. It further means that adult educators must be used to demonstrate accountability publicly.

Sutherland (1966) suggests that program evaluations should be made in terms of program objectives. Failure to do this, of course, produces misleading if not completely false 'evaluations'. But this demand also requires a high degree of self-criticism and self-awareness from agricultural educators. One of the best lists of objectives for adult educators in agriculture was produced by Cook (1947). He lists the following as significant goals and purposes:

1. To develop improved farming abilities and improved family living.
2. To provide information on approved practices and new developments in agriculture.
3. To contribute to more successful establishment in farming.
4. To encourage cooperation among farmers in programs which are beneficial to farming operations, i.e., artificial breeding units, dairy herd improvement associations, soil conservation, etc.

5. To enable the school to serve as a central place where ideas can be presented and ground work laid for projects, tours, classes and meetings.
6. To provide instruction in farm mechanics.
7. To develop an appreciation of the need for training in farm management practices.
8. To develop rural leaders.
9. To develop abilities which result in making the farm a better place to live.
10. To further satisfy the educational needs of the community (pp. 651-652).

However, farm business management program's adult students place special demands upon agricultural program evaluators. As early as 1936 (Bryson, 1936), some educators realized that adults learned differently than children and adolescents. Unlike school-aged children, adults differ markedly in their preparation and experience, and most of their learning occurs in informal interactions rather than in more structured settings. Bender (1972) builds on these observations, and suggests that the evaluation criteria for adult education in agriculture should reflect older learners' voluntary status. In contrast to children, voluntary learners want:

1. Their learning to be useful.
2. To be more actively involved.
3. Competent teachers.
4. Methods which are effective.
5. Desirable social experiences (p. 19).

As well, most adults recognize that (Bundy, 1972), "The dynamic world in which we live requires each adult to frequently update his store of knowledge and skills" (p. 329), which means that adults want learning experiences they can enter and leave easily.

Agricultural Education

The preceding paragraphs have, unavoidably, touched upon the topic of program evaluation in adult agricultural education. However,

the majority of the work in this field has taken a different path. The most common method of evaluating agricultural training for adults, of measuring the results of their educational activities (Morgan, 1964), involves accounting methods. Farm business management programs are often evaluated by the increases in net farm income that they produce.

Sisler (1962) showed that farm business management students achieved 30 percent greater net earnings than the average farm operators in Greenbush, Minnesota. Strohm (1963) determined that farm business management students in his project achieved an average increase of \$2,000 per family per year in gross income. Persons (1968) studied the business records of 3,518 farmers who participated in adult farm business management programs in Minnesota to determine the relationship between educational inputs and economic outcomes. Among the conclusions and implications of the study were the following:

1. In a benefit-cost analysis in which all direct and opportunity costs are calculated, and where all future benefits are discounted to present value, a farmer can expect to realize about four dollars of labor earnings for each dollar of investment in the educational programs described in this inquiry. This benefit-cost ratio of 4:1 does not include benefits or returns which are non-monetary.
2. In a benefit-cost analysis in which the benefits to the community are calculated as the aggregate rise in farm labor earnings and where the costs included the aggregate costs borne by the community, the benefit-cost ratio is approximately 2:1. This is an excessively conservative estimate since it does not include as benefits the increase in business activity which derives from expanded farm sales, nor does it include a community benefit which derives from an expanding tax base. A benefit-cost ratio which includes farm sales as a measure of business activity is 9:1. Inclusion of measures of increased tax base or other less tangible monetary benefits result in an even greater benefit-cost ratio.
3. In the first three years of management instruction, there were rapid gains in farm income. Diminishing marginal returns occurred as farmers reached practical ceilings to their capacity to employ technological improvements on existing enterprise

combinations. During the fourth and fifth years of instruction, farmers reorganized and reallocated their productive resources to revised enterprise combinations.

From the sixth to the eighth year of instruction, farm income increased sharply and dramatically and continued to rise at a steady rate in the remaining two years of this study (pp. vi-vii).

Person's (1968) study raises an interesting point in agricultural evaluation. The farmers who participated in Minnesota's Farm Business Management Program were not the sole beneficiaries of the program. Probasco (1961) notes that the individuals' benefits are relatively small when compared to the benefits accruing to the larger community. In fact, he suggests that the community is the largest beneficiary of a good adult farm business management program.

Several other authors have discussed the non-financial benefits of farm business management programs, although these are somewhat more difficult to work into an evaluation scheme. Hohenhaus (1964), for example, found that farm business management students used their business analysis summary information as indicators of personal success, as income tax aids, as decision-making aids and as justification for more credit. While these are all desirable farm business management outcomes, one might argue that some of them are rather difficult to evaluate with precision. However, Morgan (1963) notes that whatever exists at all exists in some quantity, and can therefore be measured. The problem here is simply one of defining what program goals to measure and which will then serve as the criteria for program evaluation.

Fortunately, several adult educators in agriculture have addressed this problem. Hauser (1957) lists the objectives of instruction for the Minnesota Farm Business Management Program as:

1. To develop an appreciation of the vital need for training in farm management.
2. To train farmers how to decide upon the proper size of farm business they should operate.
3. To teach farmers skills in wisely selecting and combining enterprises of their farm business.
4. To promote a cooperative effort among farmers and increase their ability to use the agencies which serve the rural population.
5. To train farmers how best to incorporate research and proven farm practices into their business.
6. To teach farmers skills in farm planning through the use of farm records, budgets, goals, outlook information, and the farm business analysis.
7. To train farmers in citizenship by encouraging conservation of soil and resources, participation in community activities and improvement in family living (p.3).

Peterson and Cochran (1952) produced a similar, if somewhat earlier version of that list as well. They listed the purposes of the Minnesota Vo-Ag Farm Management Program as:

1. To provide more effective means for the teaching of farm management in vocational agriculture classes.
2. To provide research data for a more complete study of farm management.
3. To assist farmers to:
 - a. Organize farm business more profitably.
 - b. Detect and correct weak points in farming operations.
 - c. Determine accurately the status of the farm business from month to month and year to year.
 - d. Provide farms with records useful in establishing credit and obtaining loans.
 - e. Provide complete data for income tax purposes thereby assuring accurate returns and complete deductions.
 - f. To make it possible for farmers to get the most out of their farm business.

However, a more recent work in this field has taken a somewhat different approach, and Persons (1981) emphasizes the business aspects of his hypothetical farm business management program in a way earlier goal statements do not. He states that a strong farm business management program should have the following components: "(1) Goal orientation, (2) Establishing a data base, (3) Analyzing farm record information, (4) A planned course of study, (5) Personalized instruction,

and (6) Technical support" (pp.6-8).

Interestingly enough, post war educators have returned some of their focus onto the special needs of adult learners. Hohenhaus (1964) found that the majority of farm families enrolled in farm management programs rated on-the-farm instruction as the most valuable part of their instructional program. Francis (1967) also emphasizes the importance of on-the-farm visits in vocational agriculture, as did Bullard (1963). Together, then, these educators suggest that the farm business goals of a farm business management program be tempered with a due concern for the special needs of the adult farm business management student. Bundy (1968) notes that American agriculture is in a constant state of change, which suggests that flexibility or adaptability may be an important evaluation criteria for farm business management programs as well.

The Practical Process of Farm Business Management Evaluation

The question at this point is not whether farm business management instructors should or should not evaluate their teaching. The real question is whether the evaluation will be done poorly or well (Bender, 1972). Richardson (1979) states that informal evaluation is occurring in the classroom continuously, although this informal process is less precise and less reliable than more formalized means of evaluation. Adult students continuously observe an instructor's work, speak with other learners outside of scheduled meeting times and places, and note changes in one another's methods and practices. Bender (1972) makes much the same observation, although he suggests that adult students, their family members, school administrators, other teachers and members of the wider

community are involved in the informal evaluation process as well.

As a result, program evaluations are going to occur whether an instructor wants them or not. Sutherland (1966) notes that: "The lay public is going to evaluate our programs anyway, and generally on the basis of misinformation or lack of information" (p.16). Probasco (1961) concludes that: "In the final analysis, it is the farmers' evaluation of the adult farm program that spells its success or failure" (p. 37). Schoenfeld (1955) echoed this when he said: "Adult education will never be what the educator may say it is; it will always be what the adult thinks it is" (p.70).

Summary

So, what can be concluded? Adult educators know that farm families can and do learn, and want to know the ways in which they may operate their farms more profitably (Richardson, 1979). Adult educators also know what a good farm business management program means to farm families (Francis, 1975):

1. Having a sure knowledge of their financial picture.
2. Improved earnings that provide better living standards.
3. A better understanding of the total workings of the farm business by all members of the family.
4. A much better grasp of how their business is progressing, how it compares with others, and where improvements are needed.
5. That accurate 'cost of production' estimates can be made for each enterprise.
6. Makes possible the forming of a solid farm partnership or corporation.
7. Development of a 'sense of awareness' of one's business that creates improved family attitudes, a better self-image and a desire to further improve abilities.
8. Development of a questioning attitude by the farm family.
9. More intelligent purchasing of equipment, facilities, and farm inputs and better understanding of marketing procedures.
10. Opportunity for more families to remain an economic farm unit and raise their family in a rural setting.

11. Opportunity to discuss some of the major aspects of their farm business with someone who is knowledgeable to their future goals and past performance (p.32).

Beyond these, it is known that adult learners have special needs not found among younger students. As a result of these and similar considerations, it was decided to evaluate Oklahoma's Farm Business Management Programs using a survey instrument which would investigate farmers' and ranchers' perceptions of the program's adequacy.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methods and procedures used in conducting this study. These were dictated by the central purpose of this study which was to determine if the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program was meeting cooperators' educational needs and to determine future educational program and service needs for those cooperators who have completed or left the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Programs. To achieve this purpose, completers and leavers of Oklahoma's Farm Business Management Programs from 1978 through 1984 were surveyed to determine their perceptions of the program and their future educational needs and services.

The Survey

An advisory committee composed of the State Coordinator of Farm Business Management Programs for the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, a representative of the faculty of Oklahoma State University's Department of Agricultural Economics, and the Farm Business Management Curriculum Specialist for the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education assisted with this study. Together, the committee supervised the development of an appropriate survey instrument, the selection of appropriate data collection sites and the survey distribution method. The initial statistical

treatment of the collected data, and the analyses that followed were accomplished with the assistance of staff members of the research, evaluation, and curriculum divisions of the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education.

The Survey Instrument

Under the guidance of the advisory committee, a survey instrument was tailored to the specific needs of this study. The instrument was designed to target the following areas of cooperator perception and experience.

1. Cooperator identification of the services and programs most likely to meet their current needs.
2. Cooperator identification of the services, programs and study units most likely to meet their future needs.
3. Cooperator identification and evaluation of the program objectives they felt they accomplished during the three-year program.
4. Program-leavers identification of their reasons for leaving the Farm Business Management Programs.

The researcher developed an initial list of potential items in each of these areas. Afterwards, the list was reviewed and revised by: (1) farm business management instructors, (2) Oklahoma State University Department of Agricultural Economics staff and Cooperative Extension area farm management specialists, and (3) an Oklahoma State University/Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education Farm Business Management Program supervisory committee. At their suggestion, separate questionnaires were developed for program-completers and program-leavers, and the questionnaire was oriented toward "the feelings, beliefs, experiences or attitudes..." (Key, 1981) of farm business

management program cooperators. Several technical considerations prompted the final form of the questionnaire as well. Key indicated the questionnaire involved less expense and less time than alternate methods of data-gathering, however it did not seem to cause much loss of statistically useful or personal information. Of course, the questionnaire also assured that each respondent would receive the same set of questions, worded in exactly the same way, thus eliminating one of the most common sources of interviewer bias. The survey's items were written in a multiple-choice format where the alternative answers were assigned values on a Likert-type ordinal scale. All of the alternatives were scaled in a similar fashion so that the sum of the scores obtained on each item could be used to represent the total score for that scale, and so that neighboring scales' scores could be compared.

Data Collection Sites

Cooperators from all of the area vocational and technical schools that offered the Farm Business Management Program between 1978 and 1985 were included in the sample. This included twelve schools: Western Oklahoma AVTS, Burns Flat; O. T. Autry AVTS, Enid; Caddo-Kiowa AVTS, Fort Cobb; Pioneer AVTS, Ponca City; Oklahoma Northwest AVTS, Alva/Fairview; Mid-America AVTS, Wayne; Red River AVTS, Duncan; Canadian Valley AVTS, Chickasha; High Plains AVTS, Woodward; Great Plains AVTS, Lawton; Northeast Oklahoma AVTS, Afton; and Byng Public Schools, Byng.

The Distribution Method

The advisory committee felt that the survey should be distributed by the individuals who were most involved with the cooperators. As a result, the administrators and the farm business management instructors in each of the 12 area vocational and technical schools were contacted and asked to participate in the survey. The administrators gave their permission to the researcher and the farm business management instructors agreed to supervise and coordinate the survey in their school districts. This involved collecting the names of former farm business management cooperators, accepting the survey forms, and distributing the survey (Appendix A). The survey was sent to the cooperators with a postage-paid return envelope to the researcher.

In hindsight, it seems that the local instructor is the key to effective survey distribution and collection. With the instructors' aid the survey was sent to 356 former cooperators, 111 program-completers and 245 program-leavers (Appendix B and C). A follow-up survey was sent to non-respondents approximately two months after the initial survey. The survey generated 175 respondents (49% of surveys sent). This represented 80 program-completer respondents (72% of program-completers) and 95 program-leaver respondents (39% of program-leavers).

A third follow-up of non-respondents was conducted by telephone. Thirty-five or 19% of the non-respondents were interviewed. Five of 31 or 19.3% of program-completer non-respondents and 30 of 150 or 20% of program-leaver non-respondents were interviewed. Results of this effort were summarized in Table I. A comparison between the respondents and non-respondents revealed little difference according to age, major farm

or ranch enterprises, and status as a full-time or part-time farmer. Because of the similarity of non-respondents and respondents in terms of background information it was assumed that the absence of non-respondents responses was not likely to bias the results of this study from the standpoint of the comparisons that were made. However, it could not be assumed that the same generalization could be made about answers to the more specific questions of the survey, since non-respondents were not asked to respond to their perceptions of those survey statements.

TABLE I
COMPARISON OF SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF
PROGRAM COMPLETER AND LEAVER NON-RESPONDENTS

Comparison Factor	<u>Distribution by Response Group</u>			
	<u>Completer</u>		<u>Leaver</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
	(N=5)		(N=30)	
<u>Year Enrolled In Program</u>	<u>When They Completed or Left the Program</u>			
1978	0	0.0	1	3.3
1979	0	0.0	3	10.0
1980	0	0.0	5	16.7
1981	2	40.0	3	10.0
1982	3	60.0	3	10.0
1983	NA	NA	7	23.3
1984	NA	NA	8	26.7
Total	5	100.0	30	100.0
<u>Age Range</u>				
20 - 29	0	0.0	5	16.7
30 - 39	1	20.0	12	40.0
40 - 49	2	40.0	8	26.6
50 - 59	2	40.0	5	16.7
Over 60	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	5	100.0	30	100.0

TABLE I (Continued)

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>Farming Status</u>				
Full-Time Farmer	3	60.0	17	56.7
Part-Time Farmer	2	40.0	13	43.3
Total	5	100.0	30	100.0
<u>Major Farm or Ranch Enterprise</u>				
Wheat	5	35.8	30	33.8
Cattle	4	28.6	23	25.8
Alfalfa	0	0.0	8	9.0
Other Livestock	2	7.1	2	2.2
Cash Crop	2	7.1	5	5.6
Other Grains	0	0.0	2	2.2
Custom Work	1	7.1	3	3.4
Hay and Pasture	2	14.3	9	10.1
Dairy	0	0.0	7	7.9
Total	14	100.0	89	100.0

(NOTE: Respondent could list up to three major farm or ranch enterprises.)

Analysis of the Data

Information obtained from the questionnaire provided a means to identify selected demographic data, determine perceptions of program completers and leavers, and determine why program leavers departed the program. The questionnaire contained statements requiring answers on an interval scale and short answer items. Major topics included selected demographic information about respondents, program-completer respondents' opinions of selected statements about the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program, program-completer respondents' perceptions of program objectives, respondents' perceptions of major topic areas and educational programs and services, and program-leaver respondents' reasons for departing the program. All information collected was entered on an I.B.M. (International Business Machine) 3081D computer utilizing a S.A.S. (Statistical Analysis System) program in initiating statistical computations. Frequency distributions and means were used to describe the data collected.

As discussed in the preceding paragraph, a group of selected statements were developed to assess the perceptions of the respondents. To facilitate comparisons of the findings through mean responses, numerical values were assigned to a five-point Likert scale. Also, due to a need to determine the average response of each respondent group's answers to the statements and because computation of these mean responses resulted in decimal fractions, a range of real limits was established for each degree of agreement in the response categories as follows:

Response Category	Numerical Value	Real Limit	Response Category
Strongly Agree	5	3.5 & Above	Very Important
Agree	4	2.5 - 3.49	Important
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	3	1.5 - 2.49	Neither Important Nor Unimportant
Disagree	2	.5 - 1.49	Unimportant
Strongly Disagree	1	0 - .49	Very Unimportant

Thus, if the mean response of a group was determined to be 4.6, then according to the foregoing formula the group was considered to be either strongly in agreement with the statement in question or felt the statement was very important, whichever response category was appropriate.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine program completers' and leavers' perceptions of the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program. Additionally it was the purpose of this study to investigate the respondents' perceptions' of how the program should be changed to meet future needs. The study also sought to distinguish between program completers' and leavers' perceptions, in the hope that both groups' needs might be identified and better served.

Data collected in this study involved opinions given by 175 respondents. The purpose of this chapter is to report to the reader those facts revealed from the analysis of data assembled in this research effort.

Background of Respondents

Each respondent was asked to complete selected demographic information about the year enrolled in the Farm Business Management Program, year completed or left the program, major farm or ranch enterprises, age, and farming status.

Year Enrolled in Program

Table II shows a comparison of completer and leaver respondents by year of enrollment in the program. Of the 14 respondents who enrolled in 1978, eight completed the program and six left the program. Of the respondents who enrolled in 1979, seven completed the program and five left the program. For 1980, equal numbers, 13, completed and left the program. From the 1981 respondents, 24 completed the program and 20 left the program. Of the 44 respondents who enrolled in 1982, 28 completed the program and 16 left the program. There had not been sufficient time for cooperators enrolling in 1983 and 1984 to complete the three-year program. However, of the enrollment in 1983 and 1984 there were 19 and 16 leaver respondents respectively.

TABLE II
 COMPARISON OF COMPLETER AND LEAVER RESPONDENTS
 BY YEAR OF ENROLLMENT IN THE PROGRAM

Year Enrolled In Program	<u>Distribution of Respondents When They Left or Completed Program</u>			
	<u>Completers (N=70)</u>		<u>Leavers (N=91)</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
1978	8	10.0	6	6.3
1979	7	8.8	5	5.3
1980	13	16.2	13	13.7
1981	24	30.0	20	21.1
1982	28	35.0	16	16.8
1983	NA	NA	19	20.0
1984	NA	NA	16	16.8
Totals	80	100.0	95	100.0

Major Farm and Ranch Enterprises

It was found that program-completer and leaver respondents managed similar farm and ranch enterprises. Each respondent could list up to three major enterprises for their individual farm or ranch.

Table III shows that 68.5 percent of the completers' responses and 72.4 percent of the leavers' responses had wheat and cattle as major enterprises.

The 80 completer respondents were involved in several other major enterprises. In descending order by percentage of total responses they were: cash crops (10.8%), alfalfa (6.2%), hay and pasture (5.7%), other livestock (4.6%), other grains (2.6%), and custom work (1.6%).

The 95 leaver respondents listed seven other major enterprises. In descending order by percentage of total responses they were: alfalfa (7.1%), cash crop (6.7%), hay and pasture (6.2%), other livestock (3.8%), dairy (2.9%), other grains (0.5%), and custom work (0.5%).

The major farm or ranch enterprises were grouped into like categories. Cow/calf, stockers and summer stockers were considered cattle. Other livestock consisted of swine, horses, sheep and goats. Cash crops were primarily row crops such as peanuts, cotton, soybeans, and horticulture. Other grains included oats, corn, and milo. Hay and pasture included all hay crops except alfalfa. Custom work consisted of all off-farm agricultural enterprises such as custom combining, custom baling and various agribusiness enterprises.

TABLE III
 COMPARISONS OF COMPLETER AND LEAVER RESPONDENTS
 BY MAJOR FARM OR RANCH ENTERPRISES

Major Farm or Ranch Enterprise	<u>Distribution of Responses by Group</u>			
	<u>Completers</u>		<u>Leavers</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Wheat	66	34.0	76	36.2
Cattle	67	34.5	76	36.2
Alfalfa	12	6.2	15	7.1
Other Livestock	9	4.6	8	3.8
Cash Crop	21	10.8	14	6.7
Other Grains	5	2.6	1	0.5
Custom Work	3	1.6	1	0.5
Hay and Pasture	11	5.7	13	6.2
Dairy	0	0.0	6	2.9
Totals	194	100.0	210	100.0

(NOTE: Respondent could list up to three major farm or ranch enterprises.)

Age

Another common characteristic of adults' training performance is age. The distribution of program completer respondents by age, in Table IV, peaked in the 30-39 age range and dropped markedly in the 50-59 and over 60 age ranges. The program leaver respondents' age distribution also peaked in the 30-39 category, but the distribution curve started at a much higher level than that for completer respondents' distribution. Larger percentages of the leaver as opposed to completer respondents were located in the youngest age range (20-29), 29.5 percent, and in the mature age range (50-59), 11.6 percent. However two completer respondents in the over 60 age group did complete the program.

TABLE IV
 COMPARISON OF COMPLETER AND LEAVER RESPONDENTS
 BY AGE

Age Range	<u>Distribution of Responses by Group</u>			
	<u>Completers</u> (N=80)		<u>Leavers</u> (N=98)	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
20 - 29	16	20.0	28	29.5
30 - 39	37	46.3	36	37.9
40 - 49	22	27.5	20	21.0
50 - 59	3	3.8	11	11.6
Over 60	2	2.5	0	0.0
Totals	80	100.0	95	100.0

Farming Status

Table V shows that the ratio of full-time to part-time farmers among program completer respondents was more than 3:1, while among program leaver respondents, it was less than 2:1. The Internal Revenue Service Publication 225, Farmers Tax Guide, defines a full-time farmer as having received at least two-thirds of their total gross income, including non-farm income, from farming.

It was found that 77.5 percent of program completer respondents were full-time farmers while 22.5 percent were part-time farmers. Program leaver respondents reported that 64.2 percent were full-time farmers and 35.8 percent were part-time farmers.

About equal groups of full-time farmers completed and left the program whereas, almost twice as many part-time farmers left the program.

TABLE V
 COMPARISON OF COMPLETER AND LEAVER RESPONDENTS
 BY FARMING STATUS

Farming Status	<u>Distribution of Responses by Group</u>			
	<u>Completers</u> (N=80)		<u>Leavers</u> (N=97)	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Full-Time Farmer	62	77.5	61	64.2
Part-Time Farmer	18	22.5	34	35.8
Totals	80	100.0	95	100.0

Attendance At Class Meetings

It seemed worthwhile to test another common predictor of classroom success, class attendance. As a result, the distribution of program completer and leaver respondents' attendance at class meetings was investigated as shown in Table VI. Sixty-five of the survey's 80 program completer respondents (81.25%) attended class meetings at least 76 percent of the time and only 15 of the completer respondents (18.75%) attended fewer than 75 percent of the class meetings. In contrast, only 57 of 95 program leaver respondents (60%) attended class meetings at least 76 percent of the time while 38 (40%) attended fewer than 75 percent of the class meetings.

In analyzing Table VI it was interesting to note that 12 leaver respondents and three completer respondents reported perfect attendance. In reviewing the individual survey forms of program leaver respondents it was found that many of the respondents who reported attending class 76 percent or more of the time left the program sometime during the first year. In discussions with Farm Business Management Program instructors about attendance, they reported many cooperators attend the first five or six classes (usually on keeping farm records) during the first year of the program and then drop from the program or quit attending classes. Instructors stated this could explain why program leaver respondents reported such high class attendance based on the number of meetings they attended before they left the program, not on the number of class meetings they could have attended.

TABLE VI
 COMPARISON OF COMPLETER AND LEAVER RESPONDENTS
 ATTENDANCE AT CLASS MEETINGS

Percent of Class Meetings Attended	<u>Distribution of Responses by Group</u>			
	<u>Completers</u> (N=80)		<u>Leavers</u> (N=95)	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than 25%	0	0.0	9	9.5
26 to 50%	3	3.75	16	16.8
51 to 75%	12	15.0	13	13.7
76 to 99%	62	77.5	45	47.4
100%	3	3.75	12	12.6
Totals	80	100.0	95	100.0

Record Systems Used By Completer Respondents

Data reported in Table VII revealed that 75 percent of the completer respondents used the Oklahoma Young Farmer Record Book (hand system), ten percent used the Oklahoma State University Costfinder record system (mail-in computerized records), and 15 percent had used both systems sometime during their participation in the Farm Business Management program.

TABLE VII
DISTRIBUTION OF TYPES OF RECORD SYSTEMS USED BY
PROGRAM COMPLETER RESPONDENTS

Type of Record System	Distribution of Responses (N=80)	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Oklahoma Young Farmer Record Book (hand system)	60	75.0
Costfinder (computerized system)	8	10.0
Both	12	15.0
Totals	80	100.0

Completers' Opinions About Key Concepts

Program completers were asked to disclose their opinions about key concepts concerning the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program. These concepts were interpreted from statements published in the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program Guide (Steward, 1982). The completer respondents expressed an average response of "Agree" with all the key concepts as summarized in Table VIII.

Completer respondents' rated scheduled on-farm instruction should be continued (4.46) and both farmer and spouse should participate in the instructional program (4.44) highest among the six stated concepts.

The next highest rated concepts, in order, were: the Farm Business Management Program should be continued as a year-round program (4.33), the Farm Business Management Program met the needs of my farm business (4.25), and the cost of the program should cover all materials provided for the cooperator (4.14).

Completer respondents expressed the lowest level of agreement with the concept that instructional materials had a logical sequence from one unit to the next as indicated by a 3.94 mean response. However, as noted previously, this was an "Agree" response.

TABLE VIII
 COMPLETERS' OPINIONS ABOUT KEY CONCEPTS CONCERNING
 THE OKLAHOMA FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Concept	X Response of Completer Respondents	
The Farm Business Management Program met the needs of my farm business	4.25	Agree
Instructional materials had a logical sequence from one unit to the next	3.94	Agree
The Farm Business Management Program should be continued as a year-round program	4.33	Agree
Scheduled on-farm instruction should be continued	4.46	Agree
Both farmer and spouse should participate in the instructional program	4.44	Agree
The cost of the program should cover all materials provided for the cooperator	4.14	Agree

Completers' Perceptions of Program Objectives

Program completers were asked to provide their perceptions of program objectives by degree of importance in their farming or ranching operation. The program objectives presented in the survey were considered to be the primary objectives of the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program.

Table IX shows that completer respondents rated three objectives "very important" as the average response. These objectives and their mean response were: instruction on record keeping (4.81), instruction related to cash flow planning and credit needs (4.69), and instruction related to financial statements (4.66). All other objectives received a mean response of "important".

The top group of objectives receiving an "important" rating, based on mean responses, were: instruction on income tax management (4.41), whole farm and detailed enterprise analysis (4.34), and instruction related to whole farm planning (4.30).

A second group of objectives receiving "important" mean responses from completer respondents but falling into the middle of the category were: instruction related to risk management (4.23), instruction related to marketing (4.18), and instruction related to farm business and family goals and objectives (4.11).

A third group of objectives fell into the lower level of the "important" response category. These objectives included: instruction related to estate planning (3.95), instruction related to farm business organizations (3.75), and comparative analysis for state and area (3.68).

TABLE IX
 COMPLETERS' PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRAM OBJECTIVES BY
 DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE IN THEIR FARMING
 OR RANCHING OPERATION

Program Objective	X Response of Completer Respondents	
Instruction on Record Keeping	4.81	Very Important
Whole Farm and Detailed Enterprise Analysis	4.34	Important
Comparative Analysis for State and Area	3.68	Important
Instruction on Income Tax Management	4.41	Important
Instruction Related to Farm Business and Family Goals and Objectives	4.11	Important
Instruction Related to Marketing	4.18	Important
Instruction Related to Cash Flow Planning and Credit Needs	4.69	Very Important
Instruction Related to Financial Statements	4.66	Very Important
Instruction Related to Risk Management	4.23	Important
Instruction Related to Whole Farm Planning	4.30	Important
Instruction Related to Farm Business Organizations	3.75	Important
Instruction Related to Estate Planning	3.95	Important

Respondents' Perceptions of Educational Programs and Services

Program completers and leavers were asked to provide, by degree of importance, their perceptions of educational programs and services which would help them meet their farm business management educational needs. Table X shows that completer respondents rated all educational programs and services as "important" on the average. Leaver respondents rated all educational programs and services in the "important" mean response category except one, that being farmer-directed program to provide educational and service needs upon completing or leaving the farm business management program which received a mean response of 3.37 and was classified as "neither important nor unimportant".

Although completer respondents rated all educational programs and services "important" based on mean responses, they could be divided into four groups. The top group included: records service (4.49) and classroom instruction related to farm management techniques (4.43).

A second group of educational programs and services receiving "important" mean responses from completer respondents were: completing financial statements (4.38), completing cash flow projections (4.35), specialized individual assistance (4.33), special topic seminars, meetings, or workshops (4.31), on-farm instruction related to farm management techniques applicable to farming operation (4.28) and resource materials to aid in answering questions about farm management (4.25).

A third group of educational programs and services included: farmer-directed program to provide educational and service needs upon completing or leaving the farm business management program (4.16), assisting with income tax planning (4.11), posting of records

(bookkeeping service) (4.09), and regularly scheduled meetings (4.08).

Completer respondents rated only one educational program and service below a 4.0 mean response. That was filing income tax returns which received a 3.75 mean response. However, this was still in the "important" mean response category.

Of the educational programs and services receiving an "important" mean response from leaver respondents only three received above a 4.0 mean response. These were: classroom instruction related to farm management techniques (4.18), records service (4.05), and completing financial statements (4.02).

In descending order of importance leaver respondents rated the remaining educational programs and services "important", based on mean responses. These were: completing cash flow projections (3.96), on-farm instruction related to farm management techniques applicable to farming operation (3.93), resource materials to aid in answering questions about farm management (3.93), specialized individual assistance (3.91), special topic seminars, meetings or workshops (3.89), assistance with income tax planning (3.81), posting of records (3.80), regularly scheduled meetings (3.61), and filing income tax returns (3.60).

TABLE X
 COMPARISON OF COMPLETER AND LEAVER RESPONDENTS'
 PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND
 SERVICES BY DEGREE OF THEIR IMPORTANCE
 IN HELPING MEET FARM BUSINESS
 MANAGEMENT EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Educational Program or Service	<u>Mean Response by Response Group</u>			
	<u>Completers</u>		<u>Leavers</u>	
Classroom Instruction Related to Farm Management Techniques	4.43	Important	4.18	Important
On-Farm Instruction Related to Farm Management Techniques Applicable to Farming Operation	4.28	Important	3.93	Important
Resource Materials to Aid in Answering Questions About Farm Management	4.25	Important	3.93	Important
Farmer-Directed Program to Provide Educational and Service Needs Upon Completing or Leaving the FBM Program	4.16	Important	3.37	Neither Important Nor Un- important
Special Topic Seminars, Meetings, or Workshops (one or more sessions)	4.31	Important	3.89	Important
Regularly Scheduled Meetings	4.08	Important	3.61	Important
Records Service	4.49	Important	4.05	Important
Filing Income Tax Returns	3.74	Important	3.60	Important

TABLE X (Continued)

Educational Program or Service	<u>Mean Response by Response Group</u>			
	<u>Completers</u>		<u>Leavers</u>	
Assisting with Income Tax Planning	4.11	Important	3.81	Important
Completing Financial Statements	4.38	Important	4.02	Important
Completing Cash Flow Projections	4.35	Important	3.96	Important
Posting of Records (Bookkeeping Service)	4.09	Important	3.80	Important
Specialized Individual Assistance	4.33	Important	3.91	Important

Respondents' Perceptions of Major Topic Areas

A list of the major topic areas of the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program was presented in the survey sent to program completers and leavers. They were asked to rate each major topic area as to its importance in their farming or ranching operation. Table XI shows the mean response of completer and leaver respondents to this list.

Completer respondents rated one major topic area, based on mean response, cash flow planning (4.54) "very important". They rated all other major topic areas "important", on the average, for their farming or ranching operations. Completer respondents' perceptions of major topic areas appear to be grouped into three groups within the "important" rating.

The first group in descending order of importance based on mean responses: financial statements (4.46), records update (4.44), income tax management strategies (4.40), income tax update (4.35), whole farm analysis (4.35), detailed enterprise analysis (4.35), budgeting (4.35), marketing strategies (4.33), farm planning (4.33), economic effects of new farm management technology (4.31), strategies for supplementing farm income (4.25), and market analysis (4.21).

The second group in descending order of importance, based on mean response from completer respondents was: estate planning update (4.14), risk management strategies (4.05), investment analysis (4.04), and farm input purchase strategies (4.03).

The third group of "important" mean responses by completer respondents included: machinery management (3.98), hedging (using the futures market) (3.77), and charting the markets (3.75).

Leaver respondents perceptions of the major topic areas in their farming or ranching operation were rated "important" based on mean responses, for all areas except two. Hedging (3.31) and charting the markets (3.19) received a mean response of "neither important nor unimportant" from this group of respondents.

The remaining major topic areas received an "important" mean response from leaver respondents. Their responses also appear to fall into three major groups.

The first group of major topic areas receiving mean responses of "important" from leaver respondents in descending order of mean response was: cash flow planning (4.27), financial statements (4.23), income tax management strategies (4.17), and income tax update (4.16).

The second group in descending order of importance was: records update (4.09), farm planning (4.04), whole farm analysis (4.01), detailed enterprise analysis (4.01), marketing strategies (3.96), budgeting (3.93), and economic effects of new farm management technology (3.88).

The third group of major topic areas receiving mean responses of "important" from leaver respondents was: market analysis (3.79), estate planning update (3.75), strategies for supplementing farm income (3.73), risk management strategies (3.70), machinery management (3.66), farm input purchase strategies (3.65), and investment analysis (3.56).

TABLE XI
 COMPARISON OF COMPLETER AND LEAVER RESPONDENTS'
 PERCEPTIONS OF MAJOR TOPIC AREAS BY DEGREE OF
 IMPORTANCE IN THEIR FARMING OR RANCHING
 OPERATION

Major Topic Area	<u>Mean Response by Response Group</u>			
	<u>Completers</u>		<u>Leavers</u>	
Income Tax Update	4.35	Important	4.16	Important
Income Tax Management Strategies	4.40	Important	4.17	Important
Market Analysis	4.21	Important	3.79	Important
Marketing Strategies	4.33	Important	3.96	Important
Hedging (Using The Futures Market)	3.77	Important	3.31	Neither Important Nor Un- important
Charting the Markets	3.75	Important	3.19	Neither Important Nor Un- important
Risk Management Strategies	4.05	Important	3.70	Important
Estate Planning Update	4.14	Important	3.75	Important
Cash Flow Planning	4.54	Very Important	4.27	Important
Farm Planning	4.33	Important	4.04	Important
Financial Statements	4.46	Important	4.23	Important
Records Update	4.44	Important	4.09	Important
Whole Farm Analysis	4.35	Important	4.01	Important

TABLE XI (Continued)

Major Topic Area	<u>Mean Response by Response Group</u>			
	<u>Completers</u>		<u>Leavers</u>	
Detailed Enterprise Analysis	4.35	Important	4.01	Important
Machinery Management	3.98	Important	3.66	Important
Farm Input Purchase Strategies	4.03	Important	3.65	Important
Investment Analysis	4.04	Important	3.56	Important
Budgeting	4.35	Important	3.93	Important
Strategies for Supplementing Farm Income	4.25	Important	3.73	Important
Economic Effects of New Farm Management Technology	4.31	Important	3.88	Important

When Leaver Respondents Left Program

Inspection of Table XII reveals that 65.3 percent of the leaver respondents left the farm business management program during or at the end of the first year. In addition, 27.4 percent of the leaver respondents reported leaving the program during or at the end of the second year and 7.3 percent reported leaving during their third year of the program.

TABLE XII
WHEN PROGRAM LEAVER RESPONDENTS LEFT THE PROGRAM

Left	<u>Distribution</u> (N=95)	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
During First Year	35	36.9
End Of First Year	27	28.4
During Second Year	14	14.7
End Of Second Year	12	12.7
During Third Year	7	7.3
Totals	95	100.0

Leaver Respondents' Reasons For Departing Program

Program leavers were asked to indicate the reason or reasons why they departed from the Farm Business Management Program. Leaver respondents listed over thirty reasons why they departed the program. Some respondents provided more than one reason.

Table XIII provides a summary of the reasons leaver respondents gave for departing the program, the frequency of the response, and the ranking for that reason.

The top ten reasons given by leaver respondents, in descending order by number of responses, were: "received what I wanted from the program" (22), "spouse not interested in program" (21), "program took too much time" (14), "change of instructors" (12), "personal--illness, divorce, new baby" (11), "obtained off-farm job in addition to farming" (11), "wanted instructor to provide more services" (9), "could not participate in a year-round program" (8), "other obligations" (7), "wanted consulting service rather than instruction" (6), and "no longer farming and ranching" (6).

The following reasons received five responses each: "too conventional, too simple," "not pertinent," and "job conflict (wife works during class, expansion)". In addition, "too small," "recordkeeping," and "bankruptcy of farm business" each received three responses each. Receiving two responses each were: "cost" and "lost interest".

A large group of reasons received one response each from leaver respondents. These included: "hired bookkeeper," "too advanced," "use of records," "Costfinder thru (respondent not satisfied with mail-in computerized records)," "out-of-town often," "home computer," "changed

partners," "too far to drive," "CPA vetoed," "inexperienced instructor," and "got behind".

TABLE XIII
PROGRAM LEAVER RESPONDENTS' REASONS FOR DEPARTING
THE FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Reason	<u>Distribution by Response</u>	
	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Received What I Wanted From The Program	22	1
Spouse Not Interested In Program	21	2
Program Took Too Much Time	14	3
Change Of Instructors	12	4
Personal (illness, divorce, new baby)	11	5
Obtained Off-Farm Job In Addition To Farming	11	5
Wanted Instructor To Provide More Services	9	7
Could Not Participate In A Year-Round Program	8	8
Other Obligations	7	9
Wanted Consulting Service Rather Than Instruction	6	10
No Longer Farming Or Ranching	6	10
Too Conventional, Too Simple	5	12
Not Pertinent	5	12
Job Conflict (wife works during class, expansion)	5	12

TABLE XIII (Continued)

Reason	<u>Distribution by Response</u>	
	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Too Small	3	15
Recordkeeping	3	15
Bankruptcy of Farm Business	3	15
Cost	2	18
Lost Interest	2	18
Hired Bookkeeper	1	20
Too Advanced	1	20
Use of Records	1	20
Costfinder Thru	1	20
Out-Of-Town Often	1	20
Home Computer	1	20
Changed Partners	1	20
Too Far To Drive	1	20
CPA Vetoed	1	20
Inexperienced Instructor	1	20
Got Behind	1	20

(NOTE: Some respondents provided more than one reason.)

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this chapter is to present in a concise manner the following topics: purpose of the study, specific objectives, rationale for the study, design of the study and the major findings of the research. Through a detailed inspection of the preceding issues, conclusions and recommendations were presented based on the analysis of data herein.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine program completers' and leavers' perceptions of the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program. The study investigated the respondents' perceptions of the program as well as perceptions of how the program should change so as to meet future needs. The study also sought to distinguish between program completers' and leavers' perceptions, in the hope that both groups' needs might be identified and better served.

Objectives of the Study

In order to accomplish the purposes outlined, the following objectives were organized:

1. To compare program completers' and leavers' by year of enrollment and when they completed or left the program, by major farm or ranch enterprises, by age, and by farming status.
2. To compare program completers' and leavers' attendance at class meetings.
3. To determine types of record systems used by program completers.
4. To determine program completers' opinions about selected statements about the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program.
5. To determine program completers' perceptions of program objectives.
6. To compare program completers' and leavers' perceptions of educational programs and services in helping meet their farm business management educational needs.
7. To compare program completers' and leavers' perceptions of major topic areas.
8. To determine when program leavers left the program.
9. To determine program leavers' reasons for departing the Farm Business Management Program.

Rationale for the Study

Since its inception in 1978 the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program has contributed to the overall mission of the area vocational-technical schools by extending educational benefits to individual farm and ranch families. The program has grown from being offered in two schools in 1978 to 12 schools in 1984. The program permitted farm and ranch families to study their own farm and ranch business in detail, and emphasized the systematic application of the proven decision-making process to their individual farm and ranch situation.

However, despite the high quality of the formal program evaluations by the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, and the informal feedback that program instructors had received, it was not really known what program completers and leavers thought about the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program. It was not really known what program completers and leavers thought were the program's most useful and least useful aspects, and it was not known why leavers departed the program.

This study was undertaken to answer these and other related questions in the search for ways to improve Oklahoma's already successful Farm Business Management Program.

Design of the Study

Following a review of selected literature, a procedure was established to satisfy the purposes and objectives of this study.

An attempt was made to include all program completers and leavers of the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program from 1978 through 1984 in this study.

A questionnaire was sent to 356 former cooperators. Responses were received from 175 cooperators. Also 35 non-respondents were interviewed by telephone for a comparison of respondent and non-respondent characteristics. A mean response for degree of influence was calculated for each statement to describe the data.

Major Findings of the Research

In addressing the summary of major findings of this study, this researcher made reference to the following areas in presentation and analysis of the data:

1. Background of respondents
2. Attendance at meetings
3. Record systems used by completer respondents
4. Completers' opinions about key concepts
5. Completers' perceptions of program objectives
6. Respondents' perceptions of educational programs and services
7. Respondents' perceptions of major topic areas
8. When leaver respondents' left the program
9. Leaver respondents' reasons for departing the program

Background of Respondents.-To analyze the background of completer and leaver respondents four areas were considered. The areas were: year enrolled in program, major farm and ranch enterprises, age, and farming status.

For the respondents enrolling in years 1978 through 1981, the number of completer and leaver respondents by year were similar with 52 and 44 respondents in each category respectively. For 1982, the

numbers per group were 28 and 16 respectively. There were no completers for 1983 or 1984 because they were still enrolled in the program.

Not surprisingly, respondents from both groups were most involved with wheat and cattle enterprises with 68.5 percent of the completer responses and 72.4 percent of the leaver responses listing these two enterprises. Program completer respondents were more involved in the production of cash crops, other grains, other livestock and custom work than leaver respondents. Leaver respondents were more involved with the enterprises of alfalfa, dairy, and hay and pasture.

Survey results suggested that greater numbers of younger respondents (20-29 age range) and of the more mature respondents (50-59 age range) left the program than those in their prime work years (30-49 age range).

Completer and leaver respondents were differentiated on the basis of their farming status. The ratio of full-time to part-time farming among completer respondents was more than 3:1, while among leaver respondents this figure was less than 2:1.

Attendance at Class Meetings.-Completer respondents attended a higher percentage of class meetings than leaver respondents. It was found that over 81 percent of the completer respondents attended at least 76 percent of class meetings while only 60 percent of the leaver respondents attended at least 76 percent of class meetings. Also less than four percent of completer respondents attended less than 50 percent of class meetings compared with over 26 percent of leaver respondents.

Record Systems Used by Completer Respondents.-It was found that 75 percent of the completer respondents used the Oklahoma Young Farmer Record Book (hand system) compared to ten percent who used Costfinder (computerized system). Fifteen percent of the completer respondents used both systems sometime during the program. Many completer respondents began on the hand system in the first year of the program and switched to the computerized system in their second or third year of the program.

Completers' Opinions About Key Concepts.-When inspecting the key concepts of the Oklahoma Farm Business Program which made it unique in adult agricultural education six statements were studied. Mean responses from the completer respondents expressed an "Agree" mean response with all the key concepts.

In descending order of agreement, by mean response of completer respondents, the key concepts were: scheduled on-farm instruction should be continued, both farmer and spouse should participate in the instructional program, the Farm Business Management Program should be continued as a year-round program, the Farm Business Management Program met the needs of my farm business, the cost of the program should cover all materials provided for the cooperator, and instructional materials had a logical sequence from one unit to the next.

Completers' Perceptions of Program Objectives.-A portion of the program completers' questionnaire was designed to determine perceptions of the relative importance of program objectives in their farming or ranching operation.

Completer respondents rated, by mean response, three of the objectives "very important". These were: instruction on record keeping, instruction related to cash flow planning and credit, and instruction related to financial statements.

The completer respondents perceptions of the remaining nine program objectives, by mean response, was "important".

Respondents' Perceptions of Educational Programs and Services.-Completer and leaver respondents were asked to reveal their perceptions of selected educational programs and services in helping to meet their farm business management educational needs.

The completer respondents' perceptions' as indicated by mean responses, were that all 13 areas were "important".

Leaver respondents rated all but one area "important" on the average. Leaver respondents' perception of farmer directed program to provide educational and service needs upon completing or leaving the farm business management program, based on mean response, was that it was "neither important nor unimportant".

Both completer and leaver respondents agreed that the top four educational programs and services most important in helping to meet their farm business management educational needs were: classroom instruction related to farm management techniques, records service, completing financial statements and completing cash flow projections.

Respondents' Perceptions of Major Topic Areas.-A portion of the completers' and leavers' questionnaire was designed to determine the relative importance of the major topic areas in their farming or ranching operation.

Completer respondents rated, by mean response, one major topic area as "very important". This was cash flow planning. They rated the remaining 19 areas as "important" to their farming or ranching operation.

Leaver respondents' perceptions of the major topics in their farming or ranching operation rated 18 of the 20 areas, by mean response, as "important". Two areas, hedging and charting the markets, received mean responses of "neither important nor unimportant". These two areas received the lowest mean response from the completer respondents as well.

The top five major topic areas for both completer and leaver respondents were: cash flow planning, financial statements, income tax management strategies, income tax update, and records update.

When Leaver Respondents Left the Program.-Because cooperators leave the Farm Business Management Program in similar numbers to completers an attempt was made to determine when they leave the program.

Over 65 percent of the leaver respondents indicated they left the program during or at the end of the first year. Over 27 percent left during or at the end of the second year. When confronted with this figure it becomes more important to determine why respondents' left the program.

Leaver Respondents' Reasons for Departing the Program.-When leaver respondents were asked to give their reasons for departing the program the primary response given was "received what I wanted from the program". The second most frequent response was "spouse was not interested in the program". The third and fourth ranked responses respectively were "program took too much time" and "change of instructors".

Leaver respondents reported more than thirty different responses for departing the program.

Conclusions

Inspection and interpretation of the study findings prompted the formulation of certain conclusions by the researcher as detailed below.

It was concluded:

1. That farmers and ranchers who enroll in the Farm Business Management program will benefit. The program-completers and leavers surveyed agreed that the program was beneficial and important to their farming or ranching operations. Completers were more in agreement than leavers, but all who participated benefitted.
2. That, in general, the program-completers and leavers surveyed have favorable attitudes toward the educational services, programs and major topic areas offered by the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program.
3. That the structure and design of the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program should continue to be based on the program's key concepts and program objectives.
4. That completers of the farm business management program are more likely to be in their prime work years (30-49 age range), full-time farmers, and involved in not only wheat and cattle enterprises but also in innovative, non-traditional agricultural enterprises.
5. That leavers from the farm business management program are more likely to depart the program if they are in the 20-29

age range and 50-59 age range and a part-time farmer. Leavers appear to concentrate on Oklahoma's more traditional agricultural enterprises of wheat, cattle, alfalfa, and hay and pasture. This suggested that cooperators with the more traditional enterprises might be more likely to leave the farm business management program than cooperators who were trying other innovative agricultural enterprises.

6. That leavers do not attend class meetings as regularly as completers.
7. That the majority of the cooperators who depart the farm business management program leave the program during or at the end of the first year as indicated by leaver respondents. Since the first year is a critical time for retaining cooperators in the program the best instruction must occur. Instructors should try to personalize the curriculum in the first year to best meet the individual needs of each cooperator.
8. That although there were a variety of self-reported reasons leaver respondents gave for departing the program, the largest category of leavers indicated that the farm business management program was a success and that non-completion cannot be considered a simple or straight-forward measure of program failure. Also responses gave support to the emphasis that both the farmer and spouse should be encouraged to participate in all phases of the program.

Recommendations

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

1. Encourage Area Vo-Tech School Farm Business Management instructors to continue to recruit cooperators who are full-time farmers or ranchers and both the farmer and spouse are willing to make a commitment to regularly attend class meetings and schedule on-farm or individualized instruction.
2. New and existing Farm Business Management programs should continue to follow the major topic areas and guidelines as outlined in the Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program Guide, Steward (1982). Instructors should continue to be encouraged to localize, personalize and motivate the Farm Business Management curriculum to suit their local situation.
3. The Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education should continue to provide inservice and technical update training for current and new Farm Business Management instructors. Emphasis should be placed on recruiting, teaching methods, coordination with other agricultural agencies and organizations, and techniques for working with adult learners, as well as the technical training necessary to teach and implement the Farm Business Management curriculum.
4. The Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education should consider a leaver of the program as a cooperator who has completed their goals as set at the beginning of their entry into the program rather than a cooperator who

has completed three years of the program. Steward, (1982), states "the emphasis on the farm business management is to help farm and ranch families establish and achieve their farm business goals and objectives through improved management, organization, and efficiency." (p.5)

5. Farm business management instructors should provide or coordinate continuing education classes in farm management for cooperators who have completed or left the program. The application of many of the economic concepts and topics extend beyond the third year of the Farm Business Management program.

Recommendations for Additional Research

The following recommendations are made by the author in regard to additional research as a result of having conducted this study. The recommendation is a judgment based on the findings and suggestions resulting from the study:

1. Research be conducted to determine factors other than those studied here.
2. More in-depth research of reasons program-leavers depart the program.
3. Research types of educational programs which may be beneficial to cooperators after they complete or depart the Farm Business Management Program.
4. Research ways to keep more cooperators in the program during the first year and into the second and third year of the farm business management program.

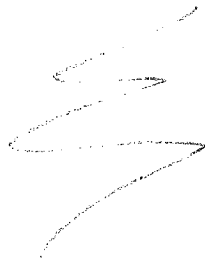
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bender, Ralph E.; Robert W. McCormick; Ralph J. Woodin; Clarence J. Cunningham; and Willard H. Wolf. Adult Education in Agriculture. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1972, pp. 19 and 127 - 187.
- Bundy, Clarence E. "Technical Education for Farmers." Agricultural Education Magazine, Volume 40, Number 8 (February, 1968), p. 181.
- Bundy, Clarence E. "Reaching the Adult with Vocational Education." In The Individual and His Education. Washington, D.C.: The American Vocational Association, 1972, pp. 329 - 341.
- Bryson, Lyman. Adult Education. New York: American Book Company, 1936, pp. 79 - 83.
- Bullard, A. G. "In Our Adult Farmer Program You Start With a Farm Management Core." Agricultural Education Magazine, Volume 36, Number 4 (October, 1963), p. 81.
- Callahan, Paul and Dennis Jackson. "Accountability in Adult Farmer Education." Agricultural Education Magazine, Volume 50, Number 11 (May, 1978), p. 256.
- Childers, B. E. "Vocational Program Evaluation." In the Individual and His Education. Washington, D.C.: The American Vocational Association, 1972, pp. 258 - 269.
- Cook, Glen C. Handbook on Teaching Vocational Agriculture. Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, 1947, pp. 651 - 652.
- Duis, Harold F. "A New Approach to Teaching Farm Management Is Necessary." Agriculture Education Magazine. Volume 36, Number 3 (September, 1963), p. 51.
- Farmer's Tax Guide, Publication 225 (Rev. Oct. 83). Washington, D.C.: Department of the Treasury, Internal Revenue Service, p. 3.
- Faust, P. James. "Adult Program - Zero to 160 in Five Years." Agriculture Education Magazine. Volume 48, Number 2 (August, 1975), p. 41.
- Francis, Eugene V. "A Guide to On-Farm Instruction in Farm Management and Farm Business Analysis." (Masters dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1967.), p. i (foreward).

- Francis, Eugene V. "Farm Business management Program: What Does It Mean?" Agricultural Education Magazine, Volume 48, Number 2 (August, 1975), pp. 32 - 33.
- Hauser, H. J. "Farm Management for Farmers in Minnesota." (Colloquium paper, University of Minnesota, 1957.), p. 3.
- Hensel, James W. Evaluation and Program Planning In Agricultural Education. Columbus, Ohio: The Center for Research and Leadership Development in Vocational and Technical Education/Ohio State University, 1966, pp. 9 - 11.
- Hodgkins, Delbert L. "Techniques and Methods of Instruction in Farm Management." (Masters dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1957.), p. 16.
- Hohenhaus, William E. "An Evaluation of the Vocational Agriculture Farm Management Program of Southern Minnesota." (Masters dissertation, Univeristy of Minnesota, 1964.), pp. 21 - 25.
- Hunsicker, H. N. Evaluation and Program Planning In Agricultural Education. Columbus, Ohio: The Center for Reasearch and Leadership Development in Vocational and Technical Education/Ohio State University, 1966, p. 91.
- Key, James P. AgEd 5980 Research Design. Stillwater, Oklahoma: Oklahoma State University, 1981.
- Knowles, Malcom S. "The Future of Adult Education." School and Society, Volume 90 (Summer, 1962), p. 289.
- Knowles, Malcom S. The Modern Practice of Adult Education. New York: Associated Press, 1977, p. 23.
- Leske, Gary W.; M. Nagi Salem; and Ronald L. Peterson. "An Analysis of Work Load of Adult Farm Management Instructors in Minnesota." (Research and Development Series No. 6, University of Minnesota, 1978.), pp. 1 - 20.
- McMillion, Martin and Sam Saufley. "Adult Farm Business Management - The Virginia Trial." Agricultural Education Magazine, Volume 56, Number 2 (August, 1983), p. 18.
- Morgan, Barton; Glenn E. Holmes; and Clarence E. Bundy. Methods in Adult Education. 2nd Ed. Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, 1963, pp. 14 - 16 and 158 - 160.
- Persons, Edgar A.; Gordon I. Swanson; Howard M. Kittleson; and Gary W. Leske. "Investments in Education for Farmers." (Research Report Project No. 427-65, University of Minnesota, 1968.), pp. vi - vii and p. 31.

- Persons, Edgar A. "Management Education: Old MacDonald's Farm Is Gone." Agricultural Education Magazine, Volume 53, Number 12 (June, 1981), p. 6 - 8.
- Peterson, M. J. and G. R. Cochran. "Memorandum Regarding Cooperative Vo-Ag Farm Management Project." (Research Project Code IV-B-164, University of Minnesota, 1952.)
- Palan, Ralph L. "A Program of Instruction for Adult Farmers In Agriculture." (Masters dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1968.), pp. 8 - 12.
- Probasco, Peter M. "Criteria Used By Selected Minnesota Vo-Ag Teachers in the Adult Farmer Program." (Masters dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1961.), pp. 5 - 37.
- Richardson, Victor A. "The Organization, Analysis and Evaluation of Adult Farm Management Programs As They Are Conducted in Minnesota." (Colloquium paper, University of Minnesota, 1979.)
- Schoenfeld, Clay. "On Defining Adult Education." School and Society, Volume 81 (March, 1955), p. 70.
- Sisler, C. E. "The Need for a Two-Man Vocational Agriculture Department in Greenbush School." (Masters dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1962.)
- Steward, James K. Program Guide for Oklahoma Farm Business Management Programs. Stillwater, Oklahoma: Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education/Curriculum and Instructional Materials Center, 1982.
- Strohm, John S. "What's A Farm Leader Worth?" High Dollar Farming, September, 1963.
- Sutherland, Sid S. Evaluation and Program Planning in Agricultural Education. Columbus, Ohio: The Center for Research and Leadership Development in Vocational and Technical Education/Ohio State University, 1966, pp. 13 - 16.
- Thome, Gary A. "An Evaluation of the Veteran's Cooperative Farm Management Program 1974-1979." (Colloquium paper, University of Minnesota, 1981.)
- Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary. Springfield, Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1980.

APPENDIXES



APPENDIX A


COVER LETTERS



OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

FRANCIS TUTTLE, DIRECTOR • 1515 WEST SIXTH AVE., • STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74074 • A.C. (405) 377-2000

MEMORANDUM

TO: FBM Instructors
FROM: Jim Steward 
DATE: January 16, 1984
SUBJECT: Survey of FBM Program Completers and Leavers

1. Enclosed is a list of leavers and completers for your program. Please add 1983 program completers and leavers. Also add any names that should have been included or delete duplicate names.
2. Enclosed are instructions for completing the survey.
3. Enclosed is a sample letter. You may wish to use the letter on school stationary.
4. Enclosed are enough copies of the FBM survey instruments for each name on the list. I have enclosed extra copies for 1983 names. Completer forms should be numbered 500 and above. Leaver forms should be numbered between 100 and 499.
5. Return all survey forms to me by March 15, 1984.

If you have any questions, problems or comments, please call.

JS/jks



EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM SURVEY

I. SCHEDULE

January 6 -- Discuss with FBM Instructors

January 16 -- Survey instrument and list of cooperators' names to instructors

(NOTE: Instructors will need to add 1983 completers and leavers to the list. Instructors may need to request more copies of survey instrument.)

February 1 -- Instructors mail appropriate survey form to cooperators'

February 15-- Response due back

February 21 to March 1 -- Follow-up on survey forms that have not been returned

March 15 -- All survey responses and list of cooperators' names to Jim Steward

II. LIST OF PROGRAM COMPLETERS AND LEAVERS

(NOTE: Completion status by cooperator(s) name is provided with the understanding that it will be used only for the in-house curriculum research project which will be administered by Jim Steward in cooperation with the research division. Please note that any individually identifiable student data must be protected as per guidelines of various federal mandates.)

A. Completers

1. Add names of cooperators who are completing your FBM III class as of January 1, 1984.
2. Add names of cooperators who have completed the program but were not included on the list of names provided.
3. Delete names which are duplicated or were not in program.
4. Assign a number to each cooperator.

(NOTE: Numbers will begin with the school's first two initials. Completers will be assigned numbers beginning at 500.)

5. Obtain mailing address and/or phone number for each cooperator.

B. Leavers

1. Add names of cooperators who left your program during 1983.
2. Add names of cooperators who have left your program but were not included on list of names provided.
3. Delete names which are duplicated or were not in program.
4. Assign a number to each cooperator.

(NOTE: Numbers will begin with the school's first two initials. Leavers will be assigned numbers between 100 and 499.)

5. Obtain mailing address and/or phone number for each cooperator.

III. Retype letter to cooperator to fit your situation

- IV. Send appropriate survey instrument and letter to cooperators by February 1, 1984.

(NOTE: Write date on form)

- V. Record when survey response is received
- VI. Follow-up surveys not received
- VII. Send all survey responses, unused survey instruments, and list of cooperator names to Jim Steward by March 15.

FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM SURVEY

SCHOOL _____

COMPLETERS _____

YEAR LEFT	NUMBER (#)	NAME(S) OF COOPERATOR	MAILING ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER	SENT SURVEY	RECEIVED RESPONSE

FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM SURVEY

SCHOOL _____

LEAVERS _____

YEAR LEFT	NUMBER (#)	NAME(S) OF COOPERATOR	MAILING ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER	SENT SURVEY	RECEIVED RESPONSE

January 23, 1984

Dear

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

In an effort to meet the ever-changing educational needs of farm and ranch families in our community and in the State of Oklahoma we are conducting a survey to determine if the Farm Business management program is meeting the agricultural education needs of farm and ranch families and to determine future educational programs and service needs.

The primary objective of the Farm Business Management program is to help farm and ranch families establish and achieve their farm business and family goals and objectives through improved management, organization, and efficiency.

This survey is being provided to farm and ranch families who have participated in the Farm Business Management program since 1978 and who have either completed or left the program.

We need your input from the survey to develop agricultural education programs that will best meet your educational needs. Please complete and return the enclosed survey forms by February 15, 1984. The survey form should be completed by the member of the farm or ranch family who primarily participated in the Farm Business Management program. If both spouses participated in the program, please consult each other and report your consensus opinion.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

FRANCIS TUTTLE, DIRECTOR • 1515 WEST SIXTH AVE., • STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74074 • A.C. (405) 377-2000

May 1, 1984

Dear Farm Business Management Cooperator:

WE NEED YOUR HELP! We do not have a record of your responses to an opinionnaire survey of the Farm Business Management Programs. The survey would have been sent to you the first week in February by your area vo-tech school's farm business management instructor.

WE NEED YOUR INPUT from the survey to develop agricultural education programs that will best meet your educational needs. Please complete the enclosed survey form or the survey sent to you by your instructor and return in the enclosed postage paid envelope by Friday, May 11, 1984. Your opinion is very important in our decision-making process. If you have completed the survey, please ignore this request.

The survey form should be completed by the member of the farm or ranch family who primarily participated in the farm business management program. Please consult each other and report your consensus opinion.

Thank you for your assistance and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Jim Steward

Farm Business Management

Curriculum Specialist

Enclosures: Farm Business Management Program Survey Form
Postage Paid Envelope



EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER



OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

FRANCIS TUTTLE, DIRECTOR • 1515 WEST SIXTH AVE., • STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74074 • A.C. (405) 377-2000

MEMORANDUM

TO: FBM Instructors
 FROM: Jim Steward *[Signature]*
 DATE: January 11, 1985
 SUBJECT: Completer-Leaver Survey

In an effort to obtain additional data for our survey of completers and leavers of Oklahoma Farm Management Programs, please have all completers and leavers of your program for 1984 complete the appropriate survey form.

Schedule:

- January 11 -- Discuss with FBM Instructors and distribute material (introductory letter, completer and leaver survey forms, and reply envelopes).
- January 25 -- Mail appropriate survey instrument to former cooperators (Be sure school initials are in # blank)
- February 15 -- All survey responses to Jim Steward. Return list of completers and leavers (with mailing address and/or phone number) to Jim Steward
- March 1 -- Complete second mailing to non-respondents

jks



EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

January 13, 1985

Dear

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

In an effort to meet the ever-changing educational needs of farm and ranch families in our community and in the State of Oklahoma we are conducting a survey to determine if the Farm Business Management program is meeting the agricultural education needs of farm and ranch families and to determine future educational programs and service needs.

The primary objective of the Farm Business Management program is to help farm and ranch families establish and achieve their farm business and family goals and objectives through improved management, organization, and efficiency.

This survey is being provided to farm and ranch families who have participated in the Farm Business Management program since 1978 and who have either completed or left the program.

We need your input from the survey to develop agricultural education programs that will best meet your educational needs. Please complete and return the enclosed survey forms by February 1, 1985. The survey form should be completed by the member of the farm or ranch family who primarily participated in the Farm Business Management program. If both spouses participated in the program, please consult each other and report your consensus opinion.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX B

PROGRAM-COMPLETER QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY OF OKLAHOMA FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

COOPERATORS' NAMES (OPTIONAL) _____

COOPERATORS' ADDRESS (OPTIONAL) _____

_____ (CITY) (STATE) (ZIP CODE)

YEAR ENROLLED IN FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM: _____

YEAR COMPLETED OR LEFT FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM: _____

MAJOR FARM OR RANCH ENTERPRISES: (1) _____

(2) _____ (3) _____

AGE OF COOPERATORS' (NOTE: Check appropriate age range for both spouses when enrolled in the Farm Business Management program.)

Under 20 _____ 40 -- 49 _____

20 -- 29 _____ 50 -- 59 _____

30 -- 39 _____ Over 60 _____

(Check one)

FULL-TIME FARMER _____ PART-TIME FARMER _____

(NOTE: A full-time farmer must have received at least two-thirds of their total gross income, including non-farm income, from farming. See Internal Revenue Service Publication 225, Farmer's Tax Guide, for further explanation of definition.)

Did you complete the three-year Farm Business Management program?

Yes _____ No _____ If no, do not complete the remainder of this survey,

but return it to us. If yes, please continue.

FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM SURVEY

PAGE 1

The purpose of this survey is to determine if the farm business management program met cooperators educational needs and to determine future educational program and service needs for those cooperators who have completed the three-year program. Thank you for helping us complete the survey.

1. What percent of class meetings did you attend? (Check the appropriate response)

___ Less than 25% ___ 76 to 99%
 ___ 26 to 50% ___ 100%
 ___ 51 to 75%

2. Please circle the response that best expresses your opinion about the following statements:

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
The Farm Business Management Program met the needs of my farm business	5	4	3	2	1
Instructional materials had a logical sequence from one unit to the next	5	4	3	2	1
The Farm Business Management program should be continued as a year-round program	5	4	3	2	1
Scheduled on-farm instruction should be continued	5	4	3	2	1
Both farmer and spouse should participate in the instructional program	5	4	3	2	1
The cost of the program should cover all materials provided for the cooperator	5	4	3	2	1

3. Type of records system you used in the program: (Check the appropriate response)
- ___ Oklahoma Young Farmer Record Book (hand system)
 ___ Costfinder (computerized system)
 ___ Both

The Oklahoma Farm Business Management Program is a three-year adult education program designed to help farm and ranch families establish and achieve their farm business and family goals and objectives through improved management, organization, and efficiency. The following were objectives the cooperators should have been able to accomplish during the three-year program. Please indicate the degree of importance each objective has in your farming or ranching operation by circling the appropriate response.

OBJECTIVES	VERY	IMPORTANT	NEITHER	IMPORTANT	VERY
	IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT NOR	UNIMPORTANT	UNIMPORTANT
1. Instruction on record keeping	5	4	3	2	1
2. An annual whole farm and detailed enterprise analysis for my farm	5	4	3	2	1
3. A comparative analysis (average farm) for the state and my area	5	4	3	2	1
4. Instruction on income tax management	5	4	3	2	1
5. Instruction related to farm business and family goals and objectives	5	4	3	2	1
6. Instruction related to marketing	5	4	3	2	1
7. Instruction related to cash flow planning and credit needs	5	4	3	2	1
8. Instruction related to financial statements	5	4	3	2	1
9. Instruction related to risk management	5	4	3	2	1
10. Instruction related to whole farm planning	5	4	3	2	1
11. Instruction related to farm business organizations	5	4	3	2	1
12. Instruction related to estate planning	5	4	3	2	1

FBM PROGRAM SURVEY

PAGE 3

To help determine future direction, please indicate the degree of importance each of the following educational programs and services will have in helping you meet your farm business management educational needs by circling the appropriate response.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OR SERVICE	VERY		NEITHER		VERY
	IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT NOR UNIMPORTANT	UNIMPORTANT	UNIMPORTANT
Classroom instruction related to farm management techniques	5	4	3	2	1
On-farm instruction related to farm management techniques applicable to my farming operation	5	4	3	2	1
Resource materials to aid in answering questions about farm management	5	4	3	2	1
A farmer-directed program to provide educational and service needs upon completion or leaving the FBM program	5	4	3	2	1
Special topic seminars, meetings, or workshops (One or more sessions)	5	4	3	2	1
Regularly scheduled meetings	5	4	3	2	1
Records service (___ Hand; ___ Computerized)	5	4	3	2	1
Filing income tax returns	5	4	3	2	1
Assisting with income tax planning	5	4	3	2	1
Completing financial statements	5	4	3	2	1
Completing cash flow projections	5	4	3	2	1
Posting of records (bookkeeping service)	5	4	3	2	1
Specialized individual assistance	5	4	3	2	1

FBM PROGRAM SURVEY

PAGE 4

To help determine future topic areas for educational programs, please indicate the degree of importance each of the following topic areas may have in your farming or ranching operation by circling the appropriate response.

TOPIC	VERY		NEITHER		VERY
	IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT NOR	UNIMPORTANT	UNIMPORTANT
Income tax update	5	4	3	2	1
Income tax management strategies	5	4	3	2	1
Market analysis	5	4	3	2	1
Marketing strategies	5	4	3	2	1
Hedging (Using the Futures Market)	5	4	3	2	1
Charting the markets	5	4	3	2	1
Risk management strategies	5	4	3	2	1
Estate planning update	5	4	3	2	1
Cash Flow planning	5	4	3	2	1
Farm planning	5	4	3	2	1
Financial statements	5	4	3	2	1
Records update	5	4	3	2	1
Whole farm analysis	5	4	3	2	1
Detailed enterprise analysis	5	4	3	2	1
Machinery management	5	4	3	2	1
Farm input purchase strategies	5	4	3	2	1
Investment analysis	5	4	3	2	1
Budgeting	5	4	3	2	1
Strategies for supplementing farm income	5	4	3	2	1
Economic effects of new farm management technology	5	4	3	2	1
Other:	5	4	3	2	1
Other:	5	4	3	2	1

OTHER COMMENTS: (Please provide any comments which will help improve the Farm Business Management Program and meet farmers and ranchers future needs.)

APPENDIX C

PROGRAM-LEAVER QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY OF OKLAHOMA FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

COOPERATORS' NAMES (OPTIONAL) _____

COOPERATORS' ADDRESS (OPTIONAL) _____

(CITY) (STATE) (ZIP CODE)

YEAR ENROLLED IN FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM: _____

YEAR COMPLETED OR LEFT FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM: _____

MAJOR FARM OR RANCH ENTERPRISES: (1) _____

(2) _____ (3) _____

AGE OF COOPERATORS' (NOTE: Check appropriate age range for both spouses
when enrolled in the Farm Business Management program.)

Under 20 _____ 40 -- 49 _____

20 -- 29 _____ 50 -- 59 _____

30 -- 39 _____ Over 60 _____

(Check one)

FULL-TIME FARMER _____ PART-TIME FARMER _____

(NOTE: A full-time farmer must have received at least two-thirds of their
total gross income, including non-farm income, from farming. See
Internal Revenue Service Publication 225, Farmer's Tax Guide, for
further explanation of definition.)

Did you complete the three-year Farm Business Management Program?

Yes ___ No ___ If yes, do not complete the remainder of this survey,

but return it to us. If no, please continue.

FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM SURVEY

PAGE 1

The purpose of this survey is to determine why and when the cooperator left the farm business management program and to determine future educational programs and service needs for those cooperators who have left the program. Thank you for helping us complete the survey.

1. Indicate reason(s) why you did not complete the program.
(Check (X) all responses that apply)

(X)	Reasons
	Spouse was not interested in program
	Change of instructors
	Personal (Illness, divorce, new baby)
	Bankruptcy of farm business
	Program took too much time
	Received what I wanted from the program
	Obtained an off-farm job in addition to farming
	No longer farming or ranching
	Wanted Consulting service rather than instruction
	Wanted instructor to provide more services
	Could not participate in a year-round program
	Other:
	Other:

2. When did you leave the program? (Check the appropriate response.)
- During first year At completion of second year
 At completion of first year During third year
 During second year
3. What percent of class meetings did you attend before you left the program?
(Check the appropriate response)
- Less than 25% 76 to 99%
 26 to 50% 100%
 51 to 75%

FBM PROGRAM SURVEY

PAGE 2

To help determine future topic areas for educational programs, please indicate the degree of importance each of the following topic areas may have in your farming or ranching operation by circling the appropriate response.

TOPIC	VERY		NEITHER		VERY
	IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT NOR	UNIMPORTANT	UNIMPORTANT
Income tax update	5	4	3	2	1
Income tax management strategies	5	4	3	2	1
Market analysis	5	4	3	2	1
Marketing strategies	5	4	3	2	1
Hedging (Using the Futures Market)	5	4	3	2	1
Charting the markets	5	4	3	2	1
Risk management strategies	5	4	3	2	1
Estate planning update	5	4	3	2	1
Cash Flow planning	5	4	3	2	1
Farm planning	5	4	3	2	1
Financial statements	5	4	3	2	1
Records update	5	4	3	2	1
Whole farm analysis	5	4	3	2	1
Detailed enterprise analysis	5	4	3	2	1
Machinery management	5	4	3	2	1
Farm input purchase strategies	5	4	3	2	1
Investment analysis	5	4	3	2	1
Budgeting	5	4	3	2	1
Strategies for supplementing farm income	5	4	3	2	1
Economic effects of new farm management technology	5	4	3	2	1
Other:	5	4	3	2	1
Other:	5	4	3	2	1

OTHER COMMENTS: (Please provide any comments which will help improve the Farm Business Management Program and meet farmers and ranchers future needs.)

FBM PROGRAM SURVEY

PAGE 3

To help determine future direction, please indicate the degree of importance each of the following educational programs and services will have in helping you meet your farm business management educational needs by circling the appropriate response.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OR SERVICE	VERY		NEITHER		VERY
	IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT NOR UNIMPORTANT	UNIMPORTANT	UNIMPORTANT
Classroom instruction related to farm management techniques	5	4	3	2	1
On-farm instruction related to farm management techniques applicable to my farming operation	5	4	3	2	1
Resource materials to aid in answering questions about farm management	5	4	3	2	1
A farmer-directed program to provide educational and service needs upon completion or leaving the FBM program	5	4	3	2	1
Special topic seminars, meetings, or workshops (One or more sessions)	5	4	3	2	1
Regularly scheduled meetings	5	4	3	2	1
Records service (___ Hand; ___ Computerized)	5	4	3	2	1
Filing income tax returns	5	4	3	2	1
Assisting with income tax planning	5	4	3	2	1
Completing financial statements	5	4	3	2	1
Completing cash flow projections	5	4	3	2	1
Posting of records (bookkeeping service)	5	4	3	2	1
Specialized individual assistance	5	4	3	2	1

VITA

James K. Steward, Jr.

Candidate for the Degree of

Masters of Science

Thesis: COMPARISONS OF PROGRAM-COMPLETERS' AND LEAVERS' PERCEPTIONS
OF THE OKLAHOMA FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Major Field: Agricultural Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, September 28, 1943, the son of James K. and Geraldine F. Steward. Married to Diane J. Stubby on September 4, 1965.

Education: Graduated from Dale High School, Dale, Oklahoma, in May, 1960; received Bachelor of Science Degree in General Agriculture from Oklahoma State University in May, 1966; received Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture Education from Oklahoma State University in May, 1967; completed requirements for the Masters of Science degree at Oklahoma State University in May, 1986.

Professional Experience: Vocational Agriculture Teacher, Paden High School, Paden, Oklahoma, July, 1967, to July, 1970; Vocational Agriculture Teacher, Westville High School, Westville, Oklahoma, July, 1970 to July 1971; Vocational Agriculture Teacher, McLoud High School, McLoud, Oklahoma, July, 1971 to August, 1977; Farm Business Management Instructor, Western Oklahoma Area Vo-Tech, Burns Flat, Oklahoma, August, 1977 to July, 1980; Farm Business Management Curriculum Specialist, Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Stillwater, Oklahoma, July, 1980 to present.

Leadership Activities: Junior Master Farmer Degree, 1960; State Secretary of Oklahoma Future Farmers of America (FFA) Association, 1960-61; member and officer of Collegiate FFA Chapter, 1960-67; President's and Dean's Honor Roll, Oklahoma State University, 1966-67; Honorary Chapter Farmer Degree, Paden FFA, 1970; member Pottawatomie County Fair Board, 1972-1977; charter member McLoud Lions Club, 1974; Honorary Chapter Farmer Degree, McLoud FFA Chapter, 1974; member Oklahoma Education Association and National Education Association, 1967-1981; member of Oklahoma Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association and National

Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association, 1967-present; member Oklahoma Vocational Association, 1967-present; life member American Vocational Association; life member Oklahoma FFA Alumni Association and National FFA Alumni Association; life member of Oklahoma State University Alumni Association; Oklahoma State Department of Vo-Tech Education Extern Program, 1979; Director of McLoud Free Fair, 1971-1977; Honorary State Farmer Degree, Oklahoma FFA Association, 1976; member of United Methodist Church, Stillwater, Oklahoma; selected for Personalities of the South, 1981; serve on nine advisory committees for Area Vo-Tech School Farm Business Management Programs; active member of the National FFA Farm Business Management Contest Committee, 1982-present; member Stillwater Chamber of Commerce, agriculture committee, 1984-1986; member of steering committee and charter member of National Farm and Ranch Business Management Education Association, 1985-present; member of Gamma Sigma Delta, Oklahoma State University chapter of the Honor Society of Agriculture, 1986.