

A STUDY TO DETERMINE WHY OKLAHOMA VOCATIONAL  
AGRICULTURE INSTRUCTORS CHANGED THEIR  
PROFESSIONS DURING THE 1968-1970  
SCHOOL YEARS AND THEIR NEW  
OCCUPATIONS

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Pages in Study: 33

Candidate for Degree of Master of Science

Major Field: Agricultural Education

Scope and Method of Study: Forms were sent to agriculture teachers who left teaching between the 1968-1970 school years, securing information concerning (1) why teachers left the teaching profession between the 1968-1970 school years, (2) their opinions on various agriculture subjects, and (3) their new occupations. Names and other information were obtained from the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational Agriculture, the Agricultural Education Department at Oklahoma State University, and other agriculture teachers.

Findings and Conclusions: Vocational agriculture teachers left the teaching profession because of (1) limited chance of promotion, (2) excessive and inconsistent hours, (3) insufficient salary, (4) personal conflict with school administration, (5) overloaded with work, (6) too much community and school responsibility. Their new jobs were obtained in (1) agriculture related businesses, (2) teaching and administration in vocational-technical education institutions, (3) farming, (4) high school administration, (5) continuing education.

It is recommended that the State Department of Vocational Agriculture and the Oklahoma State University Agricultural Education Department work toward improving vocational agriculture teachers' working conditions and salary in an attempt to hold vocational agriculture teachers in the profession.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL \_\_\_\_\_

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Purpose and Design of the Study

Vocational agriculture departments across the state of Oklahoma and the nation have helped many young men find their niche in life's work and become useful citizens that contribute to the welfare of this country.

The vocational agriculture programs in high schools have been revised in recent years to place emphasis not only on the production of agriculture products, but also to include the marketing, processing and distribution of these agriculture products.

Many agriculture teachers are having the opportunity to leave the teaching field and take other positions which offer benefits that are not available in the teaching profession.

These reasons for leaving the profession need to be discovered in order to improve teaching conditions. Due to the broad educational background of vocational agriculture teachers, they received job offers from many fields other than teaching vocational agriculture.

#### Statement of the Problem

There seems to be an increase in the number of vocational agriculture teachers leaving the profession each year. The problem with which this study was concerned was that of identifying those factors that



tended to influence vocational agriculture teachers to leave their high school teaching and to discover their new occupations.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the report was to obtain reasons why Oklahoma vocational agriculture teachers changed their profession during the 1968-1970 school years. It is hoped that as a result of this report these reasons can be corrected, and the outstanding agriculture teachers will have the incentive to stay in the teaching profession.

It is hypothesized that vocational agriculture teachers change their profession because of (1) higher salaries and fringe benefits are received in other professions, (2) conflict with school administration or community, (3) better chance of advancements in other professions, (4) teaching vocational agriculture requires an excessive number of hours and an inconsistent working schedule, (5) numerous community, school and home responsibilities.

### Need for the Study

Since many of Oklahoma's vocational agriculture teachers leave the teaching profession each year, results of this report will be of great concern to high schools that have vocational agriculture departments, the State Department of Vocational Agriculture, the Agricultural Education Department at Oklahoma State University, agriculture teachers, and other people who are interested in the field of agriculture.

### Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to vocational agriculture instructors who

left the vocational agriculture teaching profession in Oklahoma during the 1968-1970 school years. The entire state, which consists of five supervisory districts, was included. Teachers who left after June 1, 1970 were not considered unless they had previously notified the State Department.

#### Method of Procedure

The first step was to secure from the State Department of Vocational Agriculture a list of all the vocational agriculture instructors in Oklahoma who left the vocational agriculture teaching profession between the 1968-1970 school years. Instruments used to collect data consisted of closed form questionnaires and opinionnaires gathering information concerning why these teachers left the teaching profession and their new occupations. The Likert Scale was used to determine their attitude toward agriculture. Data gathering instruments were sent to forty-two teachers located throughout the state. Twenty-seven of the forty-two agriculture teachers responded. Information concerning teachers not responding was obtained from the State Department of Vocational Agriculture, the Oklahoma State University Agricultural Education Department and other vocational agriculture teachers.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

While doing research and building the foundation for this report many interesting findings were discovered concerning the reasons for vocational agriculture teachers to leave the teaching profession.

Whitt (12) found that thirty-two of one-hundred two teachers who were first employed as agriculture teachers had changed to some other occupation. These thirty-two teachers indicated better opportunities for advancements, increased salaries, better working conditions and work more to their liking as the major reasons for changing their occupations. Ch

Previous studies had indicated that a wide variety of occupations were available for graduates of agricultural education. Bryan (2) reported on 144 graduates at the University of Idaho and found that seventy-two percent of these graduates were initially employed teaching vocational agriculture and twenty-eight percent were employed in some other profession.

In a recent study, Harrison (6) found that a limited chance for promotion was the most important factor in the decision of teachers to leave vocational agriculture teaching. \*

The desire for work with fewer hours and more time with their families was second in importance for terminating high school teaching. Other contributing factors were salary, the teaching situation, policies

and practices in administration and supervision, and the community situation.

Although many agriculture teachers had accepted new professions, previous studies in this area had indicated that agriculture teachers do not change occupations often. Thompson (10) said, "Former agriculture teachers had very stable careers. They moved infrequently while teaching and were likely to have only one or two jobs after leaving the agriculture classroom." (On page 158.)

Weigers (13) did a study at the University of Tennessee to determine what suggestions former graduates had made to make agricultural education more inviting. He found the following suggestions to be most important:

Higher salaries	51%
Revised high school curriculum	27%
Better facilities and equipment	19%
Better public relations	17%
Lower Pupil load	12%
Less politics involved	6%
Revised vocational agriculture objectives	6%
More chance for advancement	6%

If people were made aware of the importance of vocational agriculture and the role that it played in keeping our nation prosperous, some of these suggestions would be met.

## CHAPTER III

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Twenty-seven of the forty-two vocational agriculture teachers that were sent questionnaires replied and gave a 64.3% return.

Much of the general information concerning these agriculture teachers was similar. Twenty-five of the twenty-seven were married and two were single. The average number of children in the household when leaving the teaching profession for the twenty-seven teachers was 1.96, the largest number being five. All of the agriculture teachers but one were reared on a farm.

The total years of vocational agriculture teaching experience for all of the teachers combined were 336 years or an average of 12.44 years being taught by each. The average age for all of the teachers when they terminated their teaching was 36.55 years.

Each teacher averaged teaching in 2.11 schools during his teaching career, although the average number of years taught at their last vocational agriculture department was 8.52 years. This indicates that the vocational agriculture teaching profession would be stable if a teacher was located where desired, was happy with his work, and was doing a good job.

Fourteen of the agriculture teachers had already worked at one or more occupations besides teaching. The average for other jobs besides teaching was .93 for each individual.

The educational background of the teachers consisted of fourteen with Bachelor of Science degrees and thirteen with Master of Science degrees. Twenty-four had their highest degree in Agricultural Education.

All of the teachers indicated their chapters were active in live-stock shows and FFA Contests. Seventeen agriculture teachers expressed their beliefs in vocational agriculture programs by saying they would encourage their sons to teach vocational agriculture. Eight of the teachers indicated they had desired to re-enter the vocational agriculture teaching profession at one time or another.

The following tables, comments and information were compiled from the data gathered from vocational agriculture teachers who left during the 1968-1970 school years from the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational Agriculture and the Agricultural Education Department at Oklahoma State University.

Table I is composed of information concerning the year and the district in which forty-four agriculture teachers left teaching between the 1968-1970 school years and also shows their new occupations.

Table I shows that the total number of agriculture teachers leaving during this period was forty-four. Eighteen (40.9%) of these left during the 1968-1969 school year.

The remaining twenty-six (59.09%) departed during the 1969-1970 school year.

The Northeast District led with thirteen leaving during this two year span. The Northwest District was close behind with twelve leaving. The Central District had seven and the Southeast and Southwest Districts each had six.

The leading vocations entered by these forty-four agriculture teach-

ers were as follows: agriculture related businesses, thirteen; vocational-technical education, nine; farming, five; high school administration and continuing education had four each; non-related agriculture businesses, three; retirement and unknown had two each; teaching in college, one; and undecided, one.

TABLE I

INFORMATION CONCERNING THE YEAR AND TEACHING LOCATION OF 44  
AGRICULTURE TEACHERS WHO LEFT TEACHING BETWEEN 1968-1970  
SCHOOL YEARS AND THEIR NEW OCCUPATIONS

New Occupation	Number Leaving	Percent Leaving	School Year			District				
			1968 1969	1969 1970	NE	SE	C	NW	SW	
Vocational- Technical Education	9	20.45	2	7	2	3	1	3		
High School Administrator	4	9.09	3	1	1		2	1		
College Teacher	1	2.27	1				1			
Continuing Education	4	9.09	2	2	3			1		
Farming	5	11.36		5	1		1	2	1	
Agriculture Related Business	13	29.54	7	6	4	2	2	3	2	
Non-Agriculture Related Business	3	6.82	1	2	1			1	1	
Retirement	2	4.54	1	1	1	1				
Undecided	1	2.27		1					1	
Unknown	2	4.54	1	1				1	1	
Total Leaving	44		18	26	13	6	7	12	6	
Total Percent		99.97	40.9	59.09	29.54	13.63	15.91	27.27	13.63	





Seven of those entering the vocational-technical education occupations were in the administrative field while two actually were teaching at Vocational-Technical Education Institutions. All four of the high school administrators became high school principals. One of the four former agriculture teachers commented that the reason he became a principal was that he felt the need for vocational agriculture in administration.

Three Doctorates and one Master's degree were being pursued by those leaving to continue their education. All four degrees were being obtained either in the field of agriculture or vocational-technical education.

Some of the fields in agriculture related businesses that the teachers had entered were co-op managers, agriculture representatives for banks, management trainees for Farmland Industries, and the nursery businesses. Others included tractor, fertilizer, and feed businesses, Extension Service, Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service, and the Farm Home Administration. The three that went into non-related agriculture businesses were employed as salesmen for a non-agricultural company.

Table II shows the opinions of vocational agriculture teachers who terminated their teaching between the 1968-1970 school years on various agriculture statements.

Positive and negative statements were alternated throughout the opinionnaire to prevent them from being checked without careful reading.

The total accumulative value is determined by the sum of the number of responses multiplied by their value.

The average accumulative value is determined by dividing the total

number of responses of each statement into the total accumulative value. This indicates the groups average opinion on each statement.

One should pay particular attention to the average accumulative value when reading Table II. If the statement is positive and the average accumulative value is positive, this means that the group of vocational agriculture teachers are confirming the positive question. If the average accumulative value is negative, the group is opposing the positive statement.

If the statement is negative and the average accumulative value is negative, this means that the group is opposed to the negative statement. If the average accumulative value is positive, the group will be agreeing with the negative statement.

Values to responses of the statements in Table II were given as follows:

Agree	2
Inclined to Agree	1
Cannot Say	0
Inclined to Disagree	-1
Disagree	-2

In Table II, nineteen agreed with the statement that the State Department of Vocational Agriculture is competent at administrating the agriculture program and six were inclined to agree. Only one was inclined to disagree. Zero could not say or disagree.

The average accumulative value of this statement was 1.65 which means the group's opinion fell about midway between agree and inclined to agree with the statement that the State Department of Vocational Agriculture is competent at administrating the agriculture program.

The statement, the Agricultural Education Department at Oklahoma State University shows partiality toward certain vocational agriculture

teachers, had an average accumulative value of  $-.04$ . Five agreed with this statement, five were inclined to agree, six could not say, four were inclined to disagree, and six disagreed. This indicates that the group would fall between cannot say and inclined to disagree.

The community support for vocational agriculture statement being located between inclined to agree and agree had an average accumulative value of  $1.42$ . Seventeen agreed that community support was sufficient, six were inclined to agree and the other three response factors had one each.

The group of vocational agriculture teachers were slightly negative about the statement that the facilities needed for teaching vocational agriculture were not adequate, giving it an average accumulative value of  $-.50$  and falling one-half way between cannot say and inclined to disagree.

Table II indicates that the teachers leaving believe that vocational agriculture teachers in Oklahoma are doing a good job of educating students in the field of agriculture. Fifteen agreed with the statement, ten were inclined to agree, one could not say and none of the other response factors were checked. This was also supported by the fact that they were negative toward the statement that if you had a son, you would not encourage him to take vocational agriculture. Eighty-four percent of the agriculture teachers agreed that agriculture is more important today than ever before. Even though these teachers left the vocational agriculture teaching profession, results of their opinions showed that they had retained high regards for vocational agriculture. They felt that people who work in the field of agriculture were not thought of as being socially below people in other occupations.

TABLE II

OPINIONS OF TEACHERS WHO LEFT TEACHING BETWEEN 1968-1970 SCHOOL YEARS  
TEACHERS RESPONDING (27 of 42)

Statements	Agree		Inclined to Agree		Cannot Say		Inclined to Disagree		Disagree		Total Accumulative Value	Average Accumulative Value					
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%							
*1. The State Department of Vocational Agriculture is competent at administrating the agriculture program.	19	73.1	38	6	23.1	6	0	0.0	0	1	3.8	-1	0	0.0	0	43	1.65
*2. The Agricultural Education Department at Oklahoma State University shows partiality toward certain vocational agriculture teachers.	5	19.2	10	5	19.2	5	6	23.1	0	4	15.4	-4	6	23.1	-12	-1	-.04
*3. Community support for agriculture in your community is sufficient.	17	65.4	34	6	23.1	6	1	3.8	0	1	3.8	-1	1	3.8	-2	37	1.42
*4. The facilities needed for teaching vocational agriculture are not adequate.	4	15.4	8	5	19.2	5	0	0.0	0	8	30.8	-8	9	34.6	-18	-13	-.50
*5. Agriculture teachers in Oklahoma are doing a good job of educating students in the field of agriculture.	15	57.7	30	10	38.5	10	1	3.8	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0	40	1.54

TABLE II (Continued)

Statements	Agree			Inclined to Agree			Cannot Say			Inclined to Disagree			Disagree			Total Accumulative Value	Average Accumulative Value
	N	%	Value	N	%	Value	N	%	Value	N	%	Value	N	%	Value		
*6. If you had a son, you would not encourage him to take vocational agriculture.	5	19.2	10	0	0.0	0	2	7.7	0	1	3.8	-1	18	69.2	-36	-27	-1.04
**7. Agriculture is more important today than ever before.	21	84.0	42	2	8.0	2	0	0.0	0	2	8.0	-2	0	0.0	0	42	1.68
**8. The people who work in the field of agriculture are thought of as being socially below people in other occupations.	4	16.0	8	4	16.0	4	2	8.0	0	4	16.0	-4	11	44.0	-22	-14	-.56
**9. The excessive number of non-teaching duties influenced my decision to leave teaching.	9	36.0	18	4	16.0	4	0	0.0	0	1	4.0	-1	11	44.0	-22	-1	-.04
**10. My wife desired the change in occupation.	6	24.0	12	3	12.0	3	2	8.0	0	2	8.0	-2	12	48.0	-24	-11	-.44
**11. Health reasons were important in influencing my change of occupation.	4	16.0	8	0	0.0	0	1	4.0	0	4	16.0	-4	16	64.0	-32	-28	-1.12
**12. FFA activities required too much personal expenses.	7	28.0	14	8	32.0	8	0	0.0	0	4	16.0	-4	6	24.0	-12	6	.24

TABLE II (Continued)

Statements	Agree			Inclined to Agree			Cannot Say			Inclined to Disagree			Disagree			Total Accumulative Value	Average Accumulative Value
	N	%	Value	N	%	Value	N	%	Value	N	%	Value	N	%	Value		
**13. The community provided inadequate backing for vocational agriculture.	2	8.0	4	1	4.0	1	1	4.0	0	9	36.0	-9	12	48.0	-24	-28	-1.12
***14. I taught in a two teacher department and had difficulty in getting along with my co-worker.	1	14.3	2	1	14.3	1	0	0.0	0	2	28.6	-2	3	42.8	-6	-5	-.72
**15. Vocational agriculture importance is likely to decline in our schools in the future.	6	24.0	12	10	40.0	10	3	12.0	0	1	4.0	-1	5	20.0	-10	11	.44

\* 1 failed to answer the first page of the opinionnaire.

\*\* 2 failed to check the second page of the opinionnaire.

\*\*\* Applied to only seven teachers located in multiple teacher departments.

The group of agriculture teachers were negative to the suggestion that the excessive number of non-teaching duties influenced their decision to leave.

Neither the health of the teachers nor their wives were strong influencing factors in their occupational changes.

It was slightly (24%) confirmed that FFA activities required too many personal expenses, although community backing for vocational agriculture was placed between inclined to disagree and disagree.

Leaving due to conflict with co-worker did not appear to be an important factor. One commented that he had a wonderful working relationship with his co-worker.

Although the agriculture teachers leaving felt that a good job was being done in teaching vocational agriculture, that they would encourage their sons to take vocational agriculture, and that agriculture was more important today than ever before, they were slightly in agreement (44%) that vocational agriculture importance is likely to decline in our schools in the future.

Table III shows the results of data collected from twenty-seven vocational agriculture teachers who left the teaching profession between the 1968-1970 school years. They were asked to rank numerically the five most important factors that influenced them to change their occupations. The most important factor was numbered one and the least important factor was numbered five.

Responses to the factors influencing the changes in occupations were given a value as follows:

Rank

1st	1 Point
2nd	2 Points
3rd	3 Points
4th	4 Points
5th	5 Points

Therefore, the lower the average rank number, the more influence it had on the change in occupation.

One should be careful when considering the average rank because the number of responses vary with each statement. The total number of teachers checking each factor should also be considered.

According to Table III, there were many factors that influenced vocational agriculture teachers to leave the teaching profession. The factor that was checked most often by the teachers as influencing them to change their occupation was the limited chance for promotion. Six teachers ranked limited chance for promotion as the number one factor influencing them to change their occupation. The average rank for the twenty teachers checking this factor was 2.50.

Two more factors that were checked often by the teachers were insufficient salary and excessive and inconsistent hours. Insufficient salary was checked fifteen times, six times as first, and had an average rank of 2.53. Excessive and inconsistent hours had seventeen checks but only two teachers placed it as the first reason for changing occupations.

Personal conflict with school administration was checked by seven teachers and had the highest average rank of any of the factors, 1.71. This factor did not occur too often, but when it did, it appeared to be a serious one. Five of the seven that checked this factor marked it first. Eleven checked restricted personal life as a contributing factor influencing their change in occupation, although none marked it first.



TABLE III

FACTORS THAT WERE MOST IMPORTANT IN INFLUENCING VOCATIONAL  
AGRICULTURE TEACHERS TO CHANGE THEIR PROFESSION  
BETWEEN THE 1968-1970 SCHOOL YEARS  
TEACHERS RESPONDING (27 of 42)

Factors Influencing Change in Occupation	Rank					Total Checked	Average Rank
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th		
Insufficient Salary	6	3	1	2	3	15	2.53
Excessive and Incon- sistent Hours	2	4	7	3	1	17	2.82
Too Much Community and School Responsi- bility	0	3	0	4	0	7	3.14
Restricted Personal Life	0	3	2	3	3	11	3.54
Overloaded with Work	1	1	1	2	3	8	3.63
Limited Chance for Promotion	6	4	6	2	2	20	2.50
Personal Conflict with School Admini- stration	5	1	0	0	1	7	1.71
Retirement Plan is not Adequate	0	1	0	2	3	6	4.17
Insecurity	1	0	1	1	1	4	3.25
Excessive Reports and Paper Work	0	0	2	0	2	4	4.00

Only eight teachers felt that being overloaded with work was a contributing factor in making their decision to leave. Only one ranked it as the main reason for leaving.

Six teachers indicated that an inadequate retirement plan was somewhat important in making their decision to select another vocation.

Insecurity and excessive reports and paper work each had four checks and seem to have had little influence in the occupational change.

Some of the teachers wrote in additional reasons in the space provided in the opinionnaire. Some of the items listed by these teachers were as follows:

FIRST CHOICE:

A. Wanted to farm.

B. Opportunity to gain work experience at the national level in the total field of vocational education.

C. Felt that vocational-technical schools offered more for the community.

D. Retirement.

SECOND CHOICE:

A. Felt need for vocational agriculture in administration.

B. Lack of student interest.

C. Opportunity to pursue Doctoral degree.

D. Age.

THIRD CHOICE:

A. Could be of greater service.

B. Hard to get enough quality students that were genuinely interested enough to do a good job.

C. Motivation.

D. Change that seems to be ahead for agriculture.

FOURTH CHOICE:

A. Age.

B. See major problems ahead that are going to be difficult to handle in secondary schools.

C. Was not able to do as good a job as I would like to do.

FIFTH CHOICE:

A. Afraid of becoming stagnant as a teacher.

Following are some interesting comments about teaching vocational agriculture made by the teachers who left the vocational agriculture teaching profession.

"I loved my work and felt the supervisor was more than fair. My son was FFA President this year. Our present teacher is excellent."

"I feel I have a special case. I own a farm and my school is about to close because of enrollment. This principal's job came open so I took it. Also, I have wanted to get into administration."

"There seemed to be some jealousy among the faculty and poor discipline on the part of the administrators."

"My five and one-half years of teaching were wonderful experiences for me yet it was one of the most difficult jobs I ever had. The challenge was great and I met that challenge for five and one-half years, but I soon decided it would make an old man out of me if I fought it.

Also, other areas of agriculture pay better and the cost of living makes it very difficult to live on a teacher's salary."

"I have enjoyed teaching and feel I will miss the contacts with students, farmers, the shows and contests. I have previously turned down numerous offers of better pay. I have not regretted this and really hesitated to accept the present job. It was a good life for me. As you know pretty well what my hours and time schedules have been, I do not have to tell you they were long but happy ones.

"I was not looking for or planning on changing but it was maybe a chance for more regular hours, although it is not as enjoyable."

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Summary

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors contributing to forty-four vocational agriculture teachers changing their professions and their new occupations. The study was limited to vocational agriculture teachers in Oklahoma who left the teaching professions between the 1968-1970 school years.

Questionnaires and opinionnaires were sent to forty-two teachers located in all five supervisory districts in Oklahoma. Names of the teachers were compiled from the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational Agriculture. The names of two teachers quitting during this time period were received after these forms had already been sent out; therefore, as much information as possible concerning them and the ones that did not reply was gathered from the State Department of Vocational Agriculture and other vocational agriculture teachers.

#### Summary of Findings

Some of the more important reasons they listed for leaving the teaching profession were as follows:

1. The factor checked most often by the teachers as influencing them to change their occupation was the limited chance of promotion. Six of the twenty teachers that checked this factor ranked it as the

number one reason for leaving the teaching profession. Limited chance of promotion had an average rank of 2.50.

2. Excessive and inconsistent hours was a contributing factor for seventeen teachers with only two ranking it as the most important factor. It had an average rank of 2.82.

3. Insufficient salary had contributed to fifteen teachers leaving the teaching profession. If had six ranking it as the first reason and had an average rank of 2.53.

4. Although only seven teachers checked personal conflict with school administration, five ranked it as the number one reason for leaving teaching. It had the highest average rank of 1.71.

5. Eleven teachers felt that restricted personal life was a factor in changing occupations. Although none ranked it as the most important, the average rank was 3.54.

6. Eight teachers felt that being overloaded with work influenced them to seek a new vocation. Just one ranked it as the number one reason and had an average rank of 3.63.

7. Too much community and school responsibility was checked seven times by the teachers as a factor. None felt that too much community and school responsibility was the major reason for leaving; the average rank was 3.54.

Some of the new occupations entered by the former teachers are listed as follows:

1. Fields in agriculture related businesses led in the new occupations. Some of the fields were Farm Home Administration, Agriculture Stabilization Conservation Service, Agricultural Extension Service and dealers and salesmen in farm products and equipment.

2. Teaching and administration in vocational-technical education programs ranked second in new occupations with a total of nine entering.

3. Five teachers entered farming and it ranked third among the new occupations.

4. High School administration and continuing education had four teachers entering each.

5. Non-agriculture related businesses were entered by only three teachers.

### Conclusion

It is evident after looking at the analysis of data collected in this study that certain factors have been identified as influencing teachers in vocational agriculture to leave the teaching profession during the 1968-1970 school years.

Table I indicates that most teachers leaving the teaching profession entered agriculture related businesses, with vocational-technical education being second. The number entering vocational-technical education was probably higher than normal due to the fact that most of the vocational-technical institutions in the state were established during the 1968-1970 period.

Table III shows the major reasons for entering these new professions. They are as follows: limited chance for promotion, excessive and inconsistent hours, insufficient salary, and personal conflict with school administration. Others contributing were restricted personal life, overloaded with work, too much community and school responsibility and retirement plan was not adequate.

Personal conflict with school administration had the highest aver-

age rank of all factors. This indicates that this situation does not occur as often as some of the others but when it does, it is a very serious problem.

### Recommendations

Many of our outstanding vocational agriculture teachers are leaving the teaching profession after several years of service because of limited chances for promotion within the teaching profession. In order to advance financially, teachers are taking advantage of the many opportunities available in other professions.

Salary, retirement plan and other benefits need to be improved in the future in order to retain good teachers. Also, work schedules need to be worked out to provide teachers with more time with their families, personal business, and social life.

By improving working conditions and salaries, the better vocational agriculture teachers will stop migrating into other professions. Since many opportunities are becoming available in agriculture related businesses, the agricultural education department should develop their curriculum in a manner to provide more training in agriculture related businesses.

Administrative and vocational agriculture teaching relationships need to be improved by informing the administrative personnel of the extra expense and time required to teach vocational agriculture and advise the Future Farmer of America activities. Administrators also need to be informed of the importance of modern, up-dated facilities and equipment and how they are necessary for efficient and superior quality work.

The advantages and disadvantages of teaching vocational agriculture should be carefully considered before leaving the profession. All jobs have likes and dislikes, but not many jobs offer the personal satisfaction that is obtained from watching students leave the classroom and go out into the world and become a success.



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APPENDIX

2920 Oklahoma Avenue  
Muskogee, Oklahoma 74401

Dear Mr.

I am making a study of why vocational agriculture teachers have changed their profession within the last two years in Oklahoma. This material is necessary for completing my Master's degree report at Oklahoma State University.

It will be greatly appreciated if you will take time from your busy schedule and fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me in the self-addressed, stamped envelope that is enclosed.

I do need your prompt response to this matter and I assure you that the information contained in this questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential. Only the tabulated results will be made available to the public.

Thanking you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter.

Yours truly,

Wendell Fenton  
Vo. Ag. Instructor

Enclosure

## Section I

1. Marital Status:      Single      Married      Divorced
2. Number of children in household at the time you quit teaching vocational agriculture \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Name of school where you were teaching when you quit. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Your age when you quit teaching \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Number of years you taught vocational agriculture \_\_\_\_\_.
6. In how many different schools have you been employed at teaching vocational agriculture \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Besides teaching agriculture, how many other occupations have you held \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Number of years you taught at last vocational agriculture teaching position \_\_\_\_\_.
9. What is your present occupation or what will be your new occupation when you quit teaching vocational agriculture \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Is your new occupation related to agriculture? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
11. Highest college degree earned \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Was your highest degree in agricultural education? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
13. Was your chapter active in FFA contests? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
14. Did your chapter exhibit livestock at shows and fairs? Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_\_
15. Would you encourage your son to teach vocational agriculture?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
16. Have you ever had the desire to re-enter the agriculture teaching profession? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
17. I was reared on a farm. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
18. Other comments:

Section II

Give your opinion of the following statements by marking the column which most closely corresponds with your position.

- A. I agree with the statement.
- B. I am inclined to agree (with reservations).
- C. I cannot say (have no feeling one way or another, the evidence is insufficient).
- D. I am inclined to disagree (disagree with reservations).
- E. I disagree.

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Inclined to Agree</u>	<u>Cannot Say</u>	<u>Inclined to Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
1. The State Department of Vocational Agriculture is competent at administering the agriculture program.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. The Agricultural Education Department at Oklahoma State University shows partiality toward certain vocational agriculture teachers.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Community support for agriculture in your community is sufficient.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. The facilities needed for teaching vocational agriculture are not adequate.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Agriculture teachers in Oklahoma are doing a good job of educating students in the field of agriculture.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. If you had a son, you would not encourage him to take vocational agriculture.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Agriculture is more important today than ever.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Inclined to Agree</u>	<u>Cannot Say</u>	<u>Inclined to Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
8. The people who work in the field of agriculture are thought of as being socially below people in other occupations.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. The excessive number of non-teaching duties influenced my decision to leave teaching.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. My wife desired the change in occupation.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. Health reasons were important in influencing my change of occupation.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. FFA activities required too much personal expenses.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
13. The community provided inadequate backing for vocational agriculture.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
14. I taught in a two teacher department and had difficulty in getting along with my co-worker.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
15. Vocational agriculture importance is likely to decline in our schools in the future.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Section III

Rank in numerical order five of the following factors that were most important in influencing you to change your profession. (The most important factor should be numbered one and the least important factor should be numbered five.)

- Insufficient salary \_\_\_\_\_
- Excessive and inconsistent hours \_\_\_\_\_
- Too much community and school responsibility \_\_\_\_\_
- Insecurity \_\_\_\_\_
- Lack of personal interest in teaching vocational agriculture \_\_\_\_\_
- Restricted personal life \_\_\_\_\_
- Overloaded with work \_\_\_\_\_
- Location of job \_\_\_\_\_
- Limited chance for promotion \_\_\_\_\_
- Wife desired change of occupation \_\_\_\_\_
- Personal conflict with Agricultural Education Department at Oklahoma State University \_\_\_\_\_
- Personal conflict with State Department of Vocational Agriculture \_\_\_\_\_
- Personal conflict with school administration \_\_\_\_\_
- Retirement plan is not adequate \_\_\_\_\_
- Health reasons \_\_\_\_\_
- Military obligations \_\_\_\_\_
- Excessive reports and paper work \_\_\_\_\_
- Severe discipline problems \_\_\_\_\_
- Others \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



VITA

Wendell L. Fenton

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Report: A STUDY TO DETERMINE WHY OKLAHOMA VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE  
INSTRUCTORS CHANGED THEIR PROFESSIONS DURING THE 1968-  
1970 SCHOOL YEARS AND THEIR NEW OCCUPATIONS

Major Field: Agricultural Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born at Stigler, Oklahoma, April 19, 1940, the son  
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Education: Attended grade school at Havana, a rural school near  
Stigler, Oklahoma; graduated from Stigler High School in 1957;  
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College in May, 1963; received the Bachelor of Science degree  
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Honorary Scholastic Memberships: Alpha Tau Alpha, Phi Kappa Phi,  
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Professional Experience: Vocational Agriculture Instructor at  
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Other: Member of Muskogee Chamber of Commerce, Muskogee Jaycees,  
Muskogee State Fair Board; Oklahoma Education Association;  
National Education Association; National Vocational Agriculture  
Teachers Association; Oklahoma Vocational Agriculture Teachers  
Association.