A STUDY OF FORMER STUDENTS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE IN MOUNTAIN VIEW HIGH SCHOOL

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A STUDY OF FORMER STUDENTS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

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PREFACE

The thesis study was selected during the summer of 1952 in a seminar and research class under the guidance of Professor Don M. Orr. Class members discussed and helped to develop the questionnaires which were used as a basis for this study. Final suggestions and additions were made by Mr. Orr and Mr. White.

Having taught in the Mountain View School for eleven years, I had a desire to evaluate my own efforts as well as to determine the effectiveness of the Vocational Agriculture Department in the local school.

I am very grateful to Professors Don M. Orr and Chris White of the Department of Agricultural Education of the Oklahoma A. and M. College for their advice, guidance, and material assistance in the writing of this study. Also thanks are due many residents of Mountain View who rendered invaluable assistance in compiling the list of present addresses of the former students.

Especially do I acknowledge the encouragement and unfailing cooperation on the part of my wife, Clara.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The significance of this study is realized when we are aware of the difficulties that young men encounter in becoming established in farming. How young men become established in farming and why young men do not become farmers are important considerations in this work.

Vocational agriculture has urged the use of the supervised practice program as a means of becoming established in farming. "To train present and prospective farmers for proficiency in farming is the aim of vocational education in agriculture."[1] At the same time, the limitations of the supervised practice program as a means of becoming established in farming should be recognized. "It should be said that follow-up and establishment of young men in farming is the weakest part of the vocational agriculture program."[2]

It is apparent that there may be many influences and factors affecting establishment in farming. Young men may be aware of many of these factors while others may be in effect and never be recognized.

Opportunity to take the step from employee to tenant should be possible for one who has gained the confidence of his community. In established farm families, this often occurs on a family owned farm. In such cases, the intelligent management will permit the younger members of the family to take over at least partial management as soon as they have developed sufficient ability. This is more commonly done in areas of good land than poor, where economic necessity often forces

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[1]Federal Security Agency, U. S. Office of Education, Vocational Division Monograph No. 21 (Washington, 1940), p. 2.

[2]Federal Security Agency, U. S. Office of Education, Vocational Division Bulletin No. 240 (Washington, 1949), p. 70.

older people to remain in active operation. It is a common observation that young men leave such communities.[3]

Thus it may be seen that sociological and economic forces play an important part in establishment in farming. The writer has made an effort to present these and other factors that have influenced the occupational choices of the young men included in this study.

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[3]L. J. Norton, Financing Agriculture (Danville, Illinois, 1940), p. 376.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A number of studies dealing with problems similar to those presented in this study were examined. While these works were not designed to cover idential problems, they were related closely enough to be of considerable value in planning and conducting this study.

A study of the Stockbridge Valley Central Rural School, Munnsville, New York, by J. W. Hatch, revealed that the parents are not always able to help in the establishment of young men in farming, however willing they might be.

Each of fifty operators expressed a willingness to make a share agreement with his own son. In over fifty percent of these cases, it was questionable whether the son could make a profitable agreement because of the limited size of the father's business.

> Each young man's opportunity to share at home needs to be carefully evaluated in terms of the relationships that exist within the family and on the farm before satisfactory conclusions concerning the worth of the opportunity can be drawn. The inability of some parents to aid in establishment in farming thus partially limits opportunities of young men to become farmers.[1]

A number of studies reveal the need for an early choice in selecting an occupation. In farming, this would aid in a more purposeful development of the boy's supervised farm training program in vocational agriculture.

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[1] U. S. Department of the Interior, Discovering Occupational Opportunities for Young Men in Farming (Washington, 1939), p. 8.

The fact that farm boys' attitudes about farming may undergo considerable change was emphasized in a Pennsylvania study by C. S. Anderson.

When asked to indicate their vocational choices during the early high school period, boys do not express a predominant preference for the work of their fathers; but as they approach the time when they will leave school, interest in their fathers' occupations sharply increases. This is most pronounced in the case of sons of farmers.[2]

That such choice is not always to be considered too permanent seems also borne out by W. A. Anderson in a similar study. "Need for occupational guidance and training is emphasized by the number of young men who would like to change their vocations."[3]

Again conclusions drawn by C. S. Anderson are in agreement.

Many farmers have drifted into their present occupation instead of having made a deliberate choice of vocation. This is particularly true of young men who do not complete high school.

Employment as farmers frequently is not a true expression of their vocational or occupational preferences; but, because of their background of farm experience, because of the relatively narrow range of vocations in which young men of their training and ability succeed, and because of numerous other contributing circumstances, they enter farming.[4]

The tendency for the pattern of occupational advancement to change has been increasingly evident during the past fifteen or twenty years.

The older group were inclined to "climb the agricultural ladder" in the regular order of hired hand, share at home tenant, part owner, and finally of owner. The younger group were becoming established to a greater degree by developing single farm enterprises.[5]

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[2] C. S. Anderson, Out-of-School Rural Youth in Pennsylvania (State College, Pennsylvania, Bulletin 374, 1939), p. 33.

[3] W. A. Anderson, Rural Youth: Activities, Interests, and Problems (Ithaca, New York, Bulletin 649, 1936), p. 46.

[4] C. S. Anderson, Out-of-School Rural Youth Enter Farming (State College, Pennsylvania, Bulletin 385, 1940), p. 25.

[5] U. S. Department of the Interior, Young Men in Farming (Washington, D. C., Vocational Education Bulletin 188, 1936), p. 80.

A study of how present farm owners become established, how they obtain capital and credit, how they accumulate livestock and equipment, and what their relationships were with parents, is needed.[6] This recommendation for further study is in part attempted in this present report.

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[6]U. S. Department of the Interior, Discovering Occupational Opportunities for Young Men in Farming (Washington, D. C., Vocational Education Bulletin 52), p. 9.

CHAPTER III

SCHOOL HISTORY AND FARMING AREA

In securing the history of the Mountain View vocational agriculture department, all information led to one of the town's founders, Mr. A. E. Kobs, now deceased. Following is his account of the establishment of the local department which was printed in a brief history of Mountain View and written on the occasion of the Fortieth Anniversary of the First National Bank of which he was president and founder.

The bringing of a vocational agriculture teacher to the town is a singular and amusing incident, singular because it marked the first time an Oklahoma community ever asked for such an instructor, and amusing because of how it happened.

Years ago the State Department of Vocational Agriculture had to beg and plead with state towns to place a vocational agriculture teacher in their schools. It was on such a mission that a district supervisor of vocational agriculture stopped his car in Mountain View one spring morning in 1929.

The stranger, obviously not familiar with his location, stepped upon the curb in front of the First National Bank just as Mr. Kobs walked out of the bank entrance. Noticing the man, Mr. Kobs asked, "What are you looking for, Mister?"

"I'm looking for Carnegie," the fellow replied. "I didn't see any sign outside town and thought this might be it."

"Well, this isn't Carnegie, this is Mountain View," said Mr. Kobs, "but what the heck would anybody want to go to Carnegie for!"

"I've got some business there."

"Maybe you could do some business here. What business are you in, anyway," countered Mr. Kobs, as he insisted on talking without telling the visitor that Carnegie was the next town east.

"Why, I'm setting up vocational agriculture units in schools of this district, and I've got an appointment to talk it over with Carnegie business men this afternoon."

"Well, maybe, Mountain View wants one, too. Anything that's good enough for Carnegie is good enough for us."

The stranger mentioned that perhaps he ought to be going on to Carnegie, he'd come back to Mountain View another day. "Now what's your hurry? Let's go in the bank and talk this over--I'm A. E. Kobs."

"Glad to know you; I'm J. B. Perky from Woodward."

Mr. Kobs insisted that Perky stop long enough to explain this program whereby a trained instructor was placed in the high school, half his salary paid by the Federal government, and the other half to be matched by the local board. He insisted that Perky stay for lunch, and then meet the local school board members and business men. Mr. Kobs' insistence won out. The pair visited up and down Main Street, and obtained approval of the project before Perky went on for his original appointment at Carnegie.

The Mountain View chamber of commerce obtained the town's share of the expense. A unit was established there on July 1, 1929, and the school has had a vocational agriculture teacher ever since. Mountain View boys have pioneered in soil conservation work in Oklahoma, and their school won the first Texas terracing machine ever awarded in the state for a successful conservation program.[1]

Mr. Earl K. Lowe was the first instructor in the Mountain View department. He served from 1929 to 1935. Mr. R. F. Kendall taught during 1935-36 and part of the 1936-37 term. Mr. Neal Stidham finished the school term 1936-37 and taught until Mr. Jesse Barbre came in 1938. The writer succeeded Mr. Barbre when he went into the Army in 1941 and has continued in the position until the present date.

The present school plant consists of separate buildings for grade school, junior high school, and high school. A vocational agriculture department and gymnasium were constructed in 1951. Vocational agriculture was formerly housed in the high school building.

Soon after the introduction of vocational agriculture into the school curriculum, a department of vocational home economics was

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[1]A. E. Kobs, One Man's Family Bank (Oklahoma City, 1939), pp. 18-21.

established. The department of commerce was started in 1937. In the spring of 1942 a physical education program was introduced as a step to integrate the school efforts with the needs of the county. This eventually put team sports on a class basis.

The grade school teachers have enjoyed a long tenure in this system, but there has been a rapid turnover of high school teachers and administrative personnel.

The Mountain View school system employed twenty-two teachers for the school year 1952-53 as compared to sixteen teachers in the school year 1942-43. This increase may be due to consolidation of the rural schools. Only one of seven rural one- and two-teacher schools remain in operation in the Mountain View transportation area.

THE FARMING AREA

Soil types in the Mountain View school area are characterized by extreme variation. The Washita River flows through the center of the district. South of the river is a wheat and beef cattle area. The soil here is shallow, heavy, fine textured, gently rolling, with a large part classed as immature soil. Much of this soil is slightly acid. Indians own twenty percent of the land in this area, and this twenty percent comprises thirty-five percent of the cultivated land in the area.

North of the Washita River the soils are deep and coarse textured. The area has steep slopes and the soils are low in organic matter and generally deficient in phosphorous. These soils have a tendency to blow. Primarily these soils are devoted to cotton and grain sorghum production.

The use of vetch, sweet clover, and Austrian winter peas, and the revegetation of lands is the current trend in soil conservation work here.

The average rainfall in the area is twenty-seven inches annually. The highest recorded rainfall is 42.57 inches in 1908, and the lowest is 14.41 inches in 1910.

The size of the average farm is increasing. In 1930, the average farm here was 171.2 acres; in 1940, 238.9 acres; in 1950, 321.2 acres.

The average value of land and buildings has increased from $13,284 in 1945 to $23,753 in 1950. In 1940 the average value of land and buildings was $7,480. Land values have more than tripled in the last ten years. This indicates a scarcity of land and constitutes a problem for young men beginning to farm.

In 1945 there were 1953 tractors on 1554 farms in Kiowa County. In 1950 there were 2,249 tractors on 1489 farms. These figures illustrate the increase in the use of power farming equipment.

The chief changes in crop production in the Mountain View area are the use of storm resistant varieties of cotton and cotton strippers. Grain sorghum production has changed from standard to combine types and varieties.

There has been a tendency to go out of dairy production and into beef production. An insufficient supply of milk in this area was the major cause in closing the cheese plant which for a number of years had operated in Mountain View.

CHAPTER IV

PURPOSES AND PROCEDURE

THE PROBLEM

The primary purposes of this study are: (1) to recognize factors that may have influenced young men in starting to farm; and (2) to determine factors that may have caused young men not to farm.

The secondary purposes of the study are: (1) to determine the characteristics of the supervised farm training programs of boys who become established in farming; (2) to determine the characteristics of the supervised farm training programs of boys who did not enter farming; (3) to compare the farm training programs of young men who became established in farming with the supervised farm training programs of young men who did not become farmers; (4) to determine the sources of financial and material aid to young men who became farmers; (5) to ascertain the human factors that influenced young men in becoming or not becoming farmers; (6) to determine the influence of military service in becoming established in farming; (7) to discover the effect of the Veterans' Agricultural Training Program on becoming established in farming; (8) to determine the present employment status of former students not farming now; (9) to determine the plans for the future in regard to farming on the part of former students not now engaged in farming; (10) to consider reasons for taking agriculture and reasons for not farming advanced by young men not now farming; and (11) to check the disposition of supervised farm training projects of former students not now engaged in farming.

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

A total of 348 high school students earned one or more units of credit in vocational agriculture from the time the department was established at Mountain View in 1929 to the end of the school year in 1952. Six pupils had only one-half credit in vocational agriculture and are not considered in this study. The permanent registers of the high school were the source from which these names were listed.

Mailing addresses of this group were secured in various ways. Telephone calls and personal contacts supplied the greatest number. The writer spent three days in the local drug store, bank, cafes, and the post office contacting people and securing addresses of former students. Some letters were written to individuals requesting addresses. These letters received a good response. Finally, a front page article in the local paper gave a general outline of the study being undertaken and requested the addresses of students whose names were listed. By these means, addresses were obtained of all but sixty former students.

TABLE I

STUDENTS INCLUDED IN THIS STUDY

Present Status	Number of Students	Number of Surveys Mailed	Number of Surveys Returned	Percent of Surveys Returned
Deceased	13			
Farming	55	55	50	90.90
Not farming	280	220	90	40.90
Totals	348	275	140	50.90

The high percent of return of the farm surveys is due to the personal contacts made by the writer. Thirty-four percent of these surveys were returned by mail and the rest were secured through personal interviews. Only four former students were farming out of the immediate territory. The fifty farm surveys used were obtained in the Mountain View, Fort Cobb, Carnegie, and Gotebo areas. A twenty-mile radius with Mountain View as the center would cover the area. This indicates that students of vocational agriculture tend to farm in the same area in which they were reared.

Former students were mailed farming surveys provided they were actually farming for themselves. Several of these men were working at other jobs as well as farming. If the former student had a farming interest but was not supervising or doing the farming personally, he was not considered a farmer in this study. An eighty-acre farm was the smallest operation of any individual included in this study.

None of the returned survey forms were rejected due to inadequate information or carelessness in being filled out. However, on thirty-one forms the signature or minor parts of information were omitted.

Two different questionnaires were prepared; one for the former students now engaged in farming, and the other for those who are not engaged in farming. The questionnaires used are presented on the following pages. The tables presented in this study were designed to show the information secured from these questionnaires.

SURVEY FORM

1. Name _____ Address _____
2. Year graduated from high school _____
   If not a graduate, give last year in Vocational Agriculture _____
3. Number of years in Vocational Agriculture _____
4. Number of years in military service _____
5. Were you farming when you went into military service? _____
6. Did you return to farming at the close of your military service? ___
7. Did you have a program of supervised farm training (projects) when you entered military service? _____ Disposition _____
8. Did you save any of your service income? _____ Did you use it in some phase of your farming business? _____
9. Months enrolled in the Veterans' Agricultural Training Program ____
   Months in college _____
10. Indicate the ways the VATP helped in your farming program:
    a. Purchase cattle _____
    b. Purchase poultry _____
    c. Purchase swine _____
    d. Purchase machinery or equipment _____
    e. Furnish a part of living _____
    f. Make farm or home improvements _____
11. Do you consider the financial help of the VATP an important factor in your farming operation? _____
12. Check the disposition of your supervised farm training (projects) at the close of your FFA career.
    a. Used as a base to continue and grow into a personal farming interest _____
    b. Left on the home farm and absorbed into the farm program with your loss of identity with it _____
    c. Sold to provide other education _____
    d. Kept on the home farm and proceeds used for further education _____
    e. Sold to pay personal debts _____ Debts against the farm _____
    f. Do not recall what was done with the supervised farm training program _____
    g. Sold to provide a part of family living _____
    h. Turned over to a younger brother for his FFA project _____
13. How did you get your first land to farm on your own?
    a. From parents or your wife's parents _____
    b. Cash rent or lease _____
    c. Crop rent _____
    d. Purchased the land _____
    e. Partnership with your relatives _____ Wife's parents _____
14. How did you establish your livestock program as a farmer?
    a. Livestock obtained as a FFA boy served as a basis for establishing your present livestock program _____
    b. Your relatives or wife's parents gave you the following numbers of livestock:
       Dairy cattle _____ Beef cattle _____
       Swine _____ Poultry _____
       Sheep _____

c. Borrowed money to go into or increase livestock program _____
Where borrowed: Parents _____ Local bank _____ Other _____
d. Did you have a co-signer on your note? _____
e. Cash transaction _____

15. Means of arranging for farm machinery and equipment.
a. Used parents' tools _____
b. Used wife's parents' tools _____
c. Whose tractor did you use? _____
d. Tools were included in the rental agreement _____
e. Had enough tools and equipment of your own to start farming ___
f. Took over parents' equipment _____
g. Borrowed money to purchase equipment or bought on time payments _____
h. Cash transaction _____

16. In what year did you start farming on your own? _____

17. Use of time from leaving school till starting to farm:
a. Remained at home and helped farm. Indicate status.
Partner in all farm operations _____
Livestock and crops share or acreage _____
Worked for wages at home _____
b. Student _____
c. Worked out on farms _____
d. Worked out in town _____
e. Military service _____

18. Family relationships:
a. Number of brothers _____ Number of sisters _____ Total ____
b. Wife's family: Number of brothers _____ Number of sisters _____ Total _____
c. Are you the oldest brother _____
d. Are you the youngest brother _____
e. What is the order of your birth _____
f. When did you get married? _____
g. Age when married? _____
h. Did you marry a local girl? _____
i. Number of children in your family _____
j. List their ages _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

SURVEY OF FORMER VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE STUDENTS OF MT. VIEW

1. Years of vocational agriculture _____
2. Year graduated or left school _____
3. Why did you take vocational agriculture?
   a. Required _____
   b. Liked agriculture _____
   c. Thought it was an easy course _____
   d. Parents insisted on it _____
   e. School authorities persuaded you _____
   f. No choice in curriculum _____
   g. Because other boys of your age and grade were taking it _____
   h. Influenced by an older brother or neighboring FFA boy _____
4. Do you plan to farm in the future? _____
5. Are you making definite plans to farm now? _____
6. Reason for not going into farming.
   a. Disliked farm life _____
   b. Physical reasons _____
   c. Found suitable permanent employment in other fields _____
   d. Went into other business _____
   e. Went to college_____ From college to other fields _____
   f. Wife did not like farm _____
   g. Folks left the farm _____
   h. Land not available due to competition and prices _____
   i. Lack of tools and farming equipment _____
   j. Went into temporary work (such as defense) _____
   k. Too many persons in the family for parents to help _____
   l. Would you have farmed if the financial angles could have been worked out? _____
7. Disposition of your supervised farm training program (projects)
   a. Sold to pay debts _____
   b. Sold to further education _____
   c. Sold to help with the family living _____
   d. Kept on the home farm and proceeds used to further education __
   e. Left on the home farm and absorbed into the home farm program with loss of your identity with it _____
   f. Sold when parents sold their farming interests or moved to town _____
   g. Sold to help set up housekeeping when you were married _____
8. When did you get married? 19____ Age when married _____
9. Number of children in your family _____ Give their ages _____
10. What is your present employment status? _____
11. Do you plan to follow your present line of work? _____
12. If you are in school at the present time, state your preferred employment _____ Return to the farm _____

CHAPTER V

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSES OF DATA

TABLE II

NUMBER OF YEARS FORMER STUDENTS HAVE BEEN OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL

Years Out of School	Now Farming		Not Farming	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
5 or less	5	10	19	21.09
6 to 10	9	18	21	23.31
11 to 15	15	30	31	34.51
16 to 20	14	28	13	14.43
Over 21	7	14	6	6.66
Totals	50	100	90	100.00

Average number of years out of school, farm group, 13.45
Average number of years out of school, group not farming, 10.84

The above figures show that the farm group was out of high school an average of 2.61 years longer than the non-farm group. The latter group has a higher percentage of boys five years or less out of high school and a lower percentage of those out of high school more than fifteen years. The higher figure in the average number of years the group now farming has been out of school may be due to the fact that it takes longer to become established in farming than it does to become established in some other fields.

TABLE III

NUMBER OF YEARS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TAKEN BY STUDENTS REPRESENTED IN THIS STUDY

Number of Years of Vocational Agriculture	Now Farming		Not Farming	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1	7	14	5	5.55
2 to 2½	11	22	20	22.20
3 to 3½	11	22	16	17.76
4	21	42	49	54.49
Totals	50	100	90	100.00

Average number of years of vocational agriculture taken by farm group, 2.92
Average number of years of vocational agriculture taken by non-farm group, 3.24

Twenty percent of the farm group finished their vocational agriculture in 1930, 1931, and 1932. These were the first years of the department and consequently these men did not have a chance to take four years of study. Only 5.55 percent of the non-farm group took the course in these years. Twelve percent of the farm group did not finish high school. These facts may account for the non-farming group remaining in vocational agriculture longer than the group now farming.

The tendency seems to be for students to take all the years of agriculture offered, whether they become farmers or not. The teachings of leadership, scholarship, cooperation, and thrift may have influenced them to remain in vocational agriculture. These qualities have a definite carry-over value in any occupation a young man enters.

A thorough check of the fifty young men now farming reveals that only two of them came from town homes. The father of one boy was in the transfer and hauling business and the other was a blacksmith.

Forty-eight of the boys in this group came from farming families, as determined by information from Mountain View residents who have lived here since the vocational agriculture department was established.

TABLE IV

YEARS ELAPSED BETWEEN LEAVING HIGH SCHOOL AND STARTING TO FARM ON THE PART OF FORMER STUDENTS NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING

Number of Years Elapsed	Number of Students	Percent of Students
None	9	18
1 to 5 years	27	54
6 to 10 years	8	16
11 to 15 years	5	10
16 to 20 years	1	2
Totals	50	100

There was a definite tendency to start farming on an independent basis within five years after leaving high school. However, only eighteen percent entered farming immediately upon leaving school. Fifty-four percent did not enter farming until one to five years after leaving school. This table indicates the value of positive planning in high school to become a farmer. Vocational agriculture has a chance to serve a real need here. The supervised farming program should be designed to lead into farming upon high school graduation.

Table IV also points out the need for a Young Farmer Organization. This is emphasized by the fact that seventy-two percent of these men started farming on an independent basis in less than five years. Thus it can be seen that there would be a satisfactory number of young men to form such a class.

TABLE V

USE OF TIME BETWEEN LEAVING SCHOOL AND STARTING TO FARM ON AN INDEPENDENT BASIS BY FORMER STUDENTS NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING

Use of Time Before Becoming Established in Farming on an Independent Basis	Number of Students Reporting	Percent of Students Reporting
Remained at home as partner in all farm operations	6	12
Remained at home on crops or livestock share or acreage	11	22
Worked for wages at home	8	16
Student	6	12
Worked out on farms	13	26
Worked out in town	14	28
Military service	3	6

These figures suggest that more than one use of time was listed by one individual. One-half of the former students indicated that they remained at home part of the time from leaving school until starting to farm as an independent operator. Working out on farms and in town was checked by fifty-four percent of the group. It is presumed that these young men lived at their parents' homes at least part of the time while working for wages. Six percent had military service before becoming established in farming.

A start in farming must be made by an individual at some level, such as being on a farm with a definite or indefinite allowance of money for food, clothing, recreation, and other minor expenses; being employed as a farm laborer, either on the home farm or another farm; having an income from one or more farming enterprises; being a partner in a farming business; renting and operating a farm; owning and operating a farm or managing a farm owned by another individual or an institution.[1] Table V indicates the level from which these young men went into farming.

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[1]Federal Security Agency, Vocational Division Monograph No. 21, p. 4.

Those who remained at home as a partner or on a share basis were farming on a dependent basis at that time. In this study young men are considered farmers only when they are operating on an independent basis.

TABLE VI

YEARS THAT FORMER STUDENTS NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING HAVE BEEN FARMING

Years	Number of Students	Percent of Students
1 to 5	13	26
6 to 10	16	32
11 to 15	10	20
16 to 20	10	20
Over 20	1	2
Totals	50	100

Table VI shows that nearly sixty percent of the former students have been farming less than ten years. Over one-fourth of them have been farming less than five years. This brief span of years leads one to question the degree to which they have become established. It is not the express purpose of this study, however, to determine the degree of establishment in farming.

In recent years farming has been more attractive than formerly. This may account for the high percentage of young men farming ten years or less. Better farm home living conditions and increased financial returns from farming have prevailed in recent years.

TABLE VII

NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF FORMER STUDENTS ENGAGED IN FARMING WHO WERE IN MILITARY SERVICE

Students	Number	Percent
In military service	22	44
No military service	28	56

These figures show that there is a rather even distribution of the farming group who were in military service and those who did not have military service. The table also indicates that nearly one-half of the group delayed or interrupted their farming operations. The figures suggest that entering military service did not keep those young men from farming who wanted to farm and had facilities for farming.

Of these twenty-two young men who had military service, Table IX shows that three had their military service before becoming established in farming. Thus nineteen of these young men who had military service interrupted their farming operations to enter the armed forces.

TABLE VIII

NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF YEARS IN MILITARY SERVICE OF FORMER STUDENTS ENGAGED IN FARMING

Time in Service	Former Students Now Farming	
	Number	Percent
Less than 12 months	5	22.73
13 months to 24 months	3	13.62
25 months to 36 months	7	31.83
37 months to 48 months	6	27.28
Over 48 months	1	4.54

This table indicates the extent of delay or interruption in the former students' farming operations. Approximately one-fourth of these young men were in military service less than one year. Of the men represented in this table, 62.61 percent were in military service for a period longer than two years.

The length of time in military service was the basis for determining the training entitlement in the Veterans' Agricultural Training Program. The time these former students were enrolled in the Veterans' Agricultural Training Program is shown in Table XIV.

TABLE IX

NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF FORMER STUDENTS NOW FARMING WHO WERE FARMING WHEN THEY ENTERED THE MILITARY SERVICE

Students	Number	Percent
Farming at time they entered armed forces	19	86.36
Not farming at time they entered armed forces	3	13.64
Totals	22	100.00

Only a small percent of those veterans now farming were not farming when they entered the armed forces. It is significant that these young men were able to return to farming after spending from a few months to over four years in military service. This suggests that with careful planning, many students of vocational agriculture could expect to enter farming upon their return from military service.

The number of young men who returned immediately to farming after their military service is shown in Table X. Young men represented in the above table as farming at the time they entered military service were doing so on an independent basis.

TABLE X

NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF FORMER STUDENTS NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING WHO DID NOT RETURN TO FARMING IMMEDIATELY AT THE CLOSE OF MILITARY SERVICE

Students	Number	Percent
Returned to farming	15	68.18
Did not return to farming	7	31.82
Totals	22	100.00

Table X brings out the fact that going to the armed forces caused a small percentage not to resume farming immediately and to re-enter farming at a later date. This percentage is not as great as it appears, because 13.64 percent of them were not farming when they entered the armed forces, (Table IX). This leaves a total loss of 18.16 percent due to entrance into the service. No figures are available on how well the young men were established in farming.

Young men are faced with the prospect of spending a period of time in the armed forces as long as a military service law is in effect. The above figures indicate that they should not alter their plans to farm in view of the prospect of military service.

TABLE XI

NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF FORMER STUDENTS WHO HAD SUPERVISED FARM TRAINING PROGRAMS UPON ENTERING THE ARMED FORCES

Students	Number	Percent
Those having supervised farm training program	8	36.37
Those not having supervised farm training program	14	63.63
Totals	22	100.00

Table XI shows that 36.37 percent of these young farmers were still closely tied in with the local vocational agriculture department upon entering the armed forces, since this group indicated that they had supervised farm training programs at that time. The indication is that they could not have been out of high school very long. The majority did not have supervised farm training programs and hence were further removed from the all-day classes of the school.

Table IX shows that 86.36 percent of these young men were already farming at the time they entered military service. Consequently, many of these young men had ceased to identify their farming enterprises as productive enterprise projects in vocational agriculture.

TABLE XII

NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF FORMER STUDENTS NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING WHO SAVED PART OF MILITARY SERVICE INCOME

Veterans	Number	Percent
Saving income	15	68.18
Not saving income	7	31.82
Totals	22	100.00

Over two-thirds of these men saved a part of their service income. In the process of interviewing these men, several stated that they held low service ratings and consequently received low pay. To the writer's personal knowledge, only one individual in this group served above the non-commissioned rank.

It requires capital to make the step for employee to tenant. The nucleus of such capital should be savings, however small. To supplement this capital, assistance may be given by the family, or by a landlord who seeks a good tenant.[2]

Table XII suggests that military service may be a way for a young man to save more than he could save as a common laborer in civilian life.

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[2]Norton, Financing Agriculture, p. 376.

TABLE XIII

NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF FORMER STUDENTS NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING WHO INVESTED THEIR MILITARY SERVICE SAVINGS IN FARMING

Veterans	Number	Percent
Investing savings in farming	13	86.67
Not investing savings in farming	2	13.33
Totals	15	100.00

The fifteen men represented in this table are those who saved military service income as shown in Table XII. The indication in Table XIII is that these men must have saved their income rather purposefully while in the armed forces. Of the group, only two did not invest their money in farming. The figures lead one to believe that the thirteen men were saving with definite goals in mind.

The amounts saved are not shown in the table, but they were apparently large enough to help make the change from military status to farming.

TABLE XIV

AMOUNT AND DISTRIBUTION OF TIME FORMER STUDENTS NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING WERE ENROLLED IN THE VETERANS' AGRICULTURAL TRAINING PROGRAM

Length of Study	Veterans	
	Number	Percent
None	3	14.64
13 to 24 months	4	18.19
25 to 36 months	3	13.13
37 to 48 months	12	54.54
Totals	22	100.00

Only three of this group of veterans did not enroll in the Veterans' Agricultural Training Program. This table indicates that a high percentage received instruction in farming and substantial financial aid in resuming or starting their farming operations.

A great opportunity to learn was presented to this group. Most of these veterans, however, indicated that they were more interested in the financial side of the program than the teaching.

While not shown in the above table, the returned surveys revealed that only one student took college training as well as Veterans' Agricultural Training. No record of other types of training under the Veterans' Administration was secured in the surveys.

TABLE XV

WAYS IN WHICH MONEY RECEIVED FROM THE VETERANS' AGRICULTURAL TRAINING PROGRAM HELPED NINETEEN FORMER STUDENTS NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING

Use of Money	Former Students	
	Number	Percent
Purchase of cattle	12	63.12
Purchase of poultry	9	47.34
Purchase of swine	8	42.08
Purchase of machinery or equipment	11	57.86
Purchase of family living	19	100.00
Purchase of farm or home improvements	10	52.60

The Veterans' Agricultural Training Program lent its greatest assistance in helping provide the family living. One hundred percent of the men enrolled in the program checked this item on the survey form. Each veteran indicated a variety of uses for the program payments. As the table shows, the men used this money for several of the categories listed.

All of the veterans considered the Veterans' Agricultural Training Program an important financial factor in their farming operations. Over two-thirds of these veterans (68.18 percent) saved some of their military service income, as shown in Table XII. This indicates that they were concerned with serious use of their money after their term of service in the armed forces should be completed.

TABLE XVI

NUMBER OF FORMER STUDENTS NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING WHOSE LIVESTOCK PROJECTS SERVED AS A BASIS FOR ESTABLISHING THEIR PRESENT LIVESTOCK PROGRAM

Students	Number	Percent
Vocational agriculture livestock projects were basis for present livestock program	23	46
Vocational agriculture livestock projects were not a basis for present livestock program	27	54
Totals	50	100

Nearly half of the former students now farming used their vocational agriculture livestock projects as a basis for their present livestock programs, according to this information. This indicates a sound project program with the high school boys. This information also suggests that entering military service did not result in a total loss of animals acquired while in high school.

Table XXXIII shows an average of 1.42 animal units for former students now engaged in farming. This indicates they had only a small basis for the development of their present livestock programs. Though the numbers of livestock were small, they may have been very significant at the time.

TABLE XVII

NUMBER OF FORMER STUDENTS NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING WHO RECEIVED GIFTS OF VARIOUS TYPES OF LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY WHEN STARTING TO FARM

Gifts	Number of Head	Number of Students	Percent of Students
Dairy cattle	13	10	20
Beef cattle	14	6	12
Swine	1	1	2
Poultry	65	2	4
No livestock gifts		21	42

These gifts were made by the former student's parents or his wife's parents, and were not a big factor in establishing a livestock program. The total number of head given was small but it may represent gifts that were very necessary and important at the time they were received. The remark of one young man in this group may partially explain why there were no more gifts of livestock from the parents. He said, "My father helped me accumulate a wide scope of livestock projects while I was in school, and felt that he had helped all he could." Forty-eight percent did receive some help, however small.

Dairy cattle and beef cattle were the main gifts. Thirty-two percent received either dairy or beef cattle. This was an average of 1.6 head for those who received gifts of cattle. This compares with the average of 1.4 animal units that former students now farming showed in their livestock project programs in vocational agriculture, Table XXXIII.

TABLE XVIII

SOURCES OF CREDIT USED BY FORMER STUDENTS NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING TO INCREASE THEIR LIVESTOCK PROGRAMS

Source of Credit	Number	Percent
Parents	5	18.50
Local bank	19	70.37
Other sources	5	18.50

Table XVIII shows a definite practice of local financing, and emphasizes that the local bank is the backbone of the community financial structure in regard to credit. There were twenty-seven men who used credit to increase their livestock programs. One borrower used all three categories of credit listed in the above table.

Only 29.62 percent of the borrowers had co-signers on their notes. This was due in many cases to the age of the borrower rather than the risk of the loan. Twelve percent of the farming group financed their livestock program from cash.

Parents apparently preferred to assist their children in becoming established in farming by other means than lending them money. Tables XVII, XIX, and XX show the means of assistance they gave.

TABLE XIX

MEANS USED BY FORMER STUDENTS NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING TO ARRANGE FOR FARMING TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT

Means of Securing Tools	Former Students Now Farming	
	Number	Percent
Used parents' tools	15	30
Took over parents' equipment	1	2
Tools were included in rental agreement	5	10
Had enough tools and equipment of their own to start farming	7	14
Borrowed money to purchase equipment or bought on time payments	27	54
Cash transaction	7	14

Within this group of students, credit and time payments represent the greatest single factor in the purchase of farming tools and equipment. "When an opportunity arises for a qualified young man to become a tenant, it is probably wise to take considerable risks, i.e., to borrow heavily in relation to capital, if necessary."[3]

Nearly one-third of the group reported in this table used their parents' tools and equipment when they started to farm on their own. Fourteen percent had accumulated enough tools and equipment to farm for themselves. This is indicative of a healthy project program in vocational agriculture for this group. However, this percentage as a whole lacks significance.

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[3]Norton, Financing Agriculture, p. 376.

TABLE XX

MEANS USED BY FORMER STUDENTS IN SECURING FIRST LAND TO FARM

How Land Was Obtained	Former Students Now Farming	
	Number	Percent
Land from parents or wife's parents	20	40
Cash rent or lease	16	32
Crop rent	23	46
Purchased the land	1	2
Partnership with relatives	4	8

In America the agricultural ladder has been the customary way for farmers to acquire ownership of farm land. The rungs of this ladder are usually employment as a hired hand, tenancy on a small farm, tenancy on a larger farm, ownership on part or all of a farm with a mortgage, and finally, ownership free from mortgage.

In recent years the father and son partnership method of starting farming has taken the place of the agricultural ladder method on some farms.[4]

The aid that is given by parents to young men starting to farm is shown in this table. Nearly half of this group got their first land to farm from their parents or in a partnership with relatives.

Crop rent is the largest single means of securing first land to farm.

Only one former student was able to purchase his first land to farm. He is a veteran who was captured on Bataan and held a prisoner of war until the close of the war with Japan. He used his accumulated pay

[4]Lynn S. Robertson and Ralph H. Woods, Farm Business Management (Chicago, Philadelphia and New York, 1946), pp. 330-331.

as an officer in the U. S. Army to buy his land.

The fact that seventy-eight percent of this group used crop rent, cash rent, or lease to secure land, emphasizes the need for teaching rental agreements and contracts to boys and young farmers.

TABLE XXI

DISPOSITION OF SUPERVISED FARM TRAINING PROGRAM REPORTED AT THE CONCLUSION OF WORK IN VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE BY FORMER STUDENTS WHO ARE NOW FARMING

Disposition of Supervised Farm Training Program	Former Students Now Farming	
	Number	Percent
Used as a base for a personal farming interest	25	54.25
Sold to provide further education	3	6.51
Sold to pay personal debts	9	19.53
Left on home farm and absorbed into the farm program with student's loss of identity with it	10	21.70
Did not recall disposition	2	4.34

Note: Only 46 of the 50 reporting farmers showed supervised farm training projects at the close of their work in vocational agriculture.

The figures in this table suggest that over half of these students had a program of supervised training of such nature as to aid in becoming established in farming. The writer notes that of two groups--those who did not recall what was done with their projects, and the group who left their projects to be absorbed into the home farm--many were enrolled in agriculture in the early years of the local program, which was during the depression years. The emphasis then was on soil conservation in this department, rather than on supervised farm training programs. Over one-fifth of the group left their supervised farm training projects to be absorbed into the home farm program with the student's loss of identity with them. This is a significant percentage, because it indicates a lack of real ownership of the projects on the part of the student

TABLE XXII

FAMILY SIZES OF FORMER STUDENTS NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING

Number of Brothers And Sisters In The Family	Families of Students		Families of Former Students' Wives	
	Number Reporting	Percent	Number Reporting	Percent
1	2	4	5	11.63
2	5	10	8	18.56
3	12	24	7	16.27
4	9	18	6	13.95
5	7	14	3	6.99
6	7	14	7	16.27
7	2	4	2	4.67
8	1	2	3	6.99
9	0	0	2	4.67
10	3	6	0	0
11	2	4	0	0
Totals	50	100	43	100.00
Average size of family		4.70		4.11
Average number of brothers		2.48		2.00
Average number of sisters		2.22		2.11

The figures above include the students being studied and represent the total number of brothers and sisters in the family. Almost half of these men had four to ten brothers and sisters. Nearly forty percent of the wives had four to eight brothers and sisters.

The number of brothers and sisters of these young men compares closely to the number of brothers and sisters reported in YOUNG MEN IN FARMING. This story of one hundred young men on farms in the northern part of Tompkins County, New York, shows that ninety-one percent of all the young men average 3.5 brothers and sisters.[5] The Mountain View

[5] U. S. Department of the Interior, Young Men in Farming (Washington, 1936), p. 35.

study shows 3.7 brothers and sisters of young men established in farming.

TABLE XXIII

ORDER OF BIRTH OF FORMER STUDENTS NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING

Order of Birth	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th
Number	19	6	7	6	2	5	1	1	1	1	1
Percent	38	12	14	12	4	10	2	2	2	2	2

The order of birth is significant in this study. Sixty-eight percent of the students were either the first born or the last born in their families. Two only children are included in the number of firth-born. Thirty-eight percent were first born. Thirty percent were last-born and varied in order of birth from second to eleventh. Only thirty-two percent were neither the first or last born. The number of those who were last born was determined by comparing the order of birth with the total number of children in the family.

Here is a good example of the influence of sociological or human factors in establishment in farming. These factors are often in effect, and there may be no cognizance of them by the families affected.

TABLE XXIV

AGES OF FORMER STUDENTS WHEN MARRIED

Age When Married	Now Farming		Not Farming	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
18 to 20 years	15	34.88	20	29.00
21 to 23 years	19	44.18	27	39.10
24 to 26 years	5	11.64	14	20.30
27 to 29 years	2	4.65	6	8.70
30 to 31 years	2	4.65	2	2.90
Totals	43	100.00	69	100.00

There is a definite tendency for marriage at an early age in both groups. Sixty-eight percent of the former students not farming were married before their twenty-fourth year. Seventy-nine percent of the young men now farming were married before their twenty-fourth year. Approximately one-third of both groups were married before their twenty-first year. The figures suggest that many of them married soon after leaving high school.

There is a tendency for the farming group to marry at an earlier age than the former students not engaged in farming. A change of environment by the group not engaged in farming may have postponed their marriages.

Eighty-six percent, or forty-three of the fifty young men now engaged in farming are married. This is a much higher figure than shown in the study of the one hundred young men in the northern part of Tompkins County, New York. There forty percent of Class I young men (or the established class) were married.[6]

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[6]Ibid., p. 37.

TABLE XXV

MARITAL STATUS OF FORMER STUDENTS

	Now Farming		Not Farming	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Single	7	14	21	23.31
Married				
5 years or less	11	22	20	22.20
6 to 10 years	12	24	24	26.64
11 to 15 years	9	18	19	21.19
16 to 20 years	11	22	6	6.66
Totals	50	100	90	100.00

The key farm group in this table is the group who have been married five years or less, who represent twenty-two percent of the former students now farming. These young men have started homes, families, and farming at a critical period. The current drought and lowered cattle prices will make it very difficult for them to remain in farming, because they have not had time to become firmly established.

This table represents a high percent of young men still single or married under five years. There is a distinctly higher percentage of former students who have been married over sixteen years in the farm group than those not farming. It is likely that this group married at an earlier age.

TABLE XXVI

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FAMILIES OF FORMER STUDENTS

Number of Children In Family	Group Now Farming		Group Not Farming	
	Number Families	Percent Families	Number Families	Percent Families
0	3	6.70	15	21.75
1	10	23.30	17	24.65
2	17	39.60	27	39.10
3	7	16.30	7	10.15
4	5	11.70	2	2.90
5	1	2.40	1	1.45
Totals	43	100.00	69	100.00

The average number of children in families now farming is 2.09, while the average number of children in families of non-farm group is 1.44. Both groups covered in this study report small families. There is a decided tendency for the non-farming group to have smaller families than those farming at present.

A study of young men of Tompkins County, New York, shows that only forty-three percent of young men farming and forty-four percent of the young men not farming had one or more children and other dependents. The majority of the homes were comprised of husband, wife, and their children, without other dependents.[7] The Mountain View study shows 93.3 percent of the group now farming and 78.25 percent of those not farming have one child or more. This is a much higher figure than that reported in the New York study.

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[7] W. A. Anderson, pp. 11-12.

TABLE XXVII

AGES OF EIGHTY-SEVEN CHILDREN OF FORMER STUDENTS NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING

Age	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	10
Number	13	6	6	12	3	5	7	5	7
Percent	14.53	6.66	6.66	13.32	3.33	5.55	7.77	5.55	7.77

Age	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total
Number	4	5	6	3	1	3	0	1	90
Percent	4.44	5.55	6.66	3.33	1.11	3.33	0	1.11	100

The average age of this group of children is 6.09 years. This figure is misleading, because 41.17 percent of them are under four years of age. In other words, this is an average of an extreme variation of ages. These data represent relatively young families.

One-third of these children are over ten years of age. This is an age when they should be of great help in carrying on the farm work program.

Scholastically forty percent of these children are of pre-school age. Thirty-one percent are of grade school age. Fourteen percent are of junior high school are, and only five percent are of senior high school age. Only eight of these students are fourteen years old or over. Thus, only nine percent of them would be old enough to enroll in vocational agriculture or vocational home economics.

TABLE XXVIII

PRESENT OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF FORMER STUDENTS NOT ENGAGED IN FARMING

Occupational Status	Number of Students	Percent of Students
Military service	15	16.66
Fields related to agriculture	11	12.22
Defense work	8	8.98
Self employed	5	5.56
College student	11	12.22
Laborer	5	5.56
Salaried worker	30	33.30
School teacher	5	5.50
Totals	90	100.00

The returned surveys of the former students shown in this table indicated that 70.23 percent of them plan to follow their present occupation.

The low percentage of self-employed former students is a striking figure. One wonders whether this is due to lack of capital, or the managerial ability necessary to run a business, or good wages in other fields.

T. N. Carver, formerly an economist at Harvard University, said,

> As a vocation, farming demands for its successful pursuit a wider knowledge, more initiative, resourcefulness, and adaptability than is required of the average successful worker in most other fields. The farmer faces not only the uncertain problems of markets and transportation, but the more uncontrollable elements of weather, rainfall, and insect pests. Usually he is not only a laborer, but a capitalist as well. He must possess both managerial ability and technical skill.[8]

In Table XXVIII the fields of employment related to agriculture included the following lines of work: Soil Conservation Service,

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[8]R. W. Roberts, C. L. Angerer, J. L. Moses and R. W. Gregory, Modern Farming (Chicago, Philadelphia, and New York, 1950), pp. 24-25.

poultry and egg buyer, Farm and Home Administration, flower shop and greenhouse manager, and assistant cotton gin manager.

The group listed as salaried workers are in various types of employment, including mechanical engineer, parts man, mechanic, bookkeeper, lumber yard manager, printer, service station operator, pharmacist, and life insurance underwriter.

Six of the fifteen men in military service indicated that they intend to remain in the service.

All of those who are now in college will, of course, go into some field of employment upon leaving school. They gave the following preferred occupational choices: one, veterinarian; one, dentist; four, farmers; two, commercial agriculture; one, high school coach and farmer; and two, medical doctors.

TABLE XXIX

REASONS FOR TAKING VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE GIVEN BY FORMER STUDENTS NOT NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING

	Group Not Farming	
	Number	Percent
Required	1	1.11
Liked agriculture	84	93.24
Thought it was an easy course	3	3.33
No choice in curriculum	1	1.11
Other boys of same age and grade were taking it	5	5.55
Influenced by an older brother or neighboring F.F.A. boy	7	7.77

For a group that is not engaged in farming, the table shows an unusually high percentage of boys who took vocational agriculture because they liked it. This demonstrates the universal appeal of agriculture.

Several of these former students thought that the questionnaire was designed to defend the local department and offered their assistance in case removal of the department was under consideration. This indicates that they regard the vocational agriculture course highly, and feel that it will benefit others as it did them even though they are not now farming.

TABLE XXX

PLANS OF FORMER STUDENTS NOT NOW FARMING IN REGARD TO FARMING IN THE FUTURE

Plans		Group Not Farming Number	Percent
Planning to farm in the future		45	50.00
Not planning to farm in the future		45	50.00
	Totals	90	100.00
Making definite plans now to farm		20	22.20
Not making definite plans now to farm		70	77.80
	Totals	90	100.00

It is interesting that one-half of the former students now engaged in other occupations plan to farm in the future. There is a significant group (22.20 percent) who are making definite plans now to farm. Many former students stated that they would like farming as a sideline. Four former students who are now engaged in farming indicated on the margins of their surveys that they had farmed in the past. These figures tend to justify the existence of a vocational agriculture department in this community.

One-half of this group does not plan to farm in the future. This would suggest that they have satisfactory employment situations or will seek a change in some field other than farming.

TABLE XXXI

REASONS GIVEN BY FORMER STUDENTS FOR NOT ENTERING FARMING

Reasons Given	Group Not Farming	
	Number	Percent
Disliked farm life	3	3.33
Physically unsuited	2	2.22
Found suitable permanent employment in other fields	30	33.30
Went into other business	10	10.10
Went to college	31	34.41
Went from college to other fields	21	23.31
Wife did not like farm	4	4.44
Folks left farm	3	3.33
Land not available due to competition and prices	15	16.65
Lacked tools and equipment	9	9.99
Went into temporary work	10	11.10
Too many persons in family for parents to help	3	3.33

A great number of students checked more than one reason for not going into farming. Apparently availability of land and farming equipment was not a big factor with this group. Of the ninety men reporting in this survey, seven checked both of these factors as reasons for not entering farming. Thus it can be figured that only 17.87 percent of the total number showed that lack of available land or equipment kept them from farming.

The majority of these men found suitable permanent employment in other fields or went to college and from college to permanent employment. Over one-third of the former students reporting here indicated that they went to college, and another one-third found suitable permanent employment in other fields.

TABLE XXXII

DISPOSITION OF SUPERVISED FARM TRAINING PROJECTS
OF FORMER STUDENTS NOT NOW ENGAGED IN FARMING

Disposition of Projects	Group Not Farming	
	Number	Percent
Sold to pay debts	22	24.42
Sold to further education	18	19.98
Kept on the home farm and proceeds used to further education	10	11.10
Sold to help with the family living	6	6.66
Left on the home farm and absorbed into the home farm program	17	18.87
Sold when parents sold farming interest or moved to town	8	8.88
Sold to help set up housekeeping when married	3	3.33
Sold to go in business	1	1.11
Lost lease on land	1	1.11

It is interesting to note how many former students sold their projects or kept them and used the increase to help in financing further education. Nearly one-third of them indicated this use. This figure coincides rather closely with the percent of those who went to college, as reported in Table XXXI.

Almost one-fifth of these former students left their projects to be absorbed into the farm business with loss of their identity with them. This leads one to suspect that they did not have a well-defined ownership of their projects. Slightly over one-fifth of the former students now farming left their projects on the home farm to be absorbed into the home farm program, as shown in Table XXI. The two groups were very similar in this respect.

TABLE XXXIII

AVERAGE NUMBER OF ANIMAL UNITS AND ACRES OF HARVESTED CROPS IN THE PROJECT PROGRAMS OF FORMER STUDENTS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

Former Students	Number Students	Total Animal Units	Total Acres	Average Number	
				Animal Units	Acres
Not farming	59	103	152	1.74	2.57
Now farming	50	71	429	1.42	8.58

The last year these students were in high school was the basis for the above averages. The Final All-Day Reports of the Mountain View Vocational Agriculture Department were used to determine the type and scope of each student's project program. There was no scope given for projects in the school year 1935-1936, the teacher having listed beginning and closing dates of the projects instead.

Eight percent of the former students now farming did not report a supervised farm training program. Among the former students not farming, 16.94 percent did not report a project program.

There was a slightly larger average of animal units per student in the group not farming. The significant difference was in the number of acres of crop land farmed per boy. Former students now farming had an average of 8.58 acres as compared to an average of 2.57 acres for the students who are not farming at the present.

We may conclude that the difference in the animal units was not large enough to be a factor in establishment in farming, though the difference in acres of crops was a factor. The group who are now farming had enough land to farm as vocational agriculture students to provide practical experience and serve as a basis for enlarged operations

later.

An animal unit consists of one cow, two to four young cattle, seven sheep, fourteen lambs, two and one-half brood sows, five market pigs, or one hundred poultry.

Some difficulty was encountered in determining animal units. The final all-day reports gave the number of head of the various kinds of livestock and the writer had to convert these figures into animal units.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions from this study fall into three parts which are in accord with the stated purposes of the study. These three phases deal with: (1) the former students who are now farming, (2) the former students who are not farming, and (3) a comparison of the supervised farm training programs of the two groups.

FORMER STUDENTS WHO ARE NOW FARMING

In determining how young men begin to farm, four major influences were found: (1) the supervised farm training program, (2) contributions of the home and parents, (3) farm credit, and (4) military service and the Veterans' Agricultural Training Program. The tables presented in this study summarize the findings on these factors.

The student's supervised training program often serves as a link from high school to establishment in farming. Forty-six percent of this group reported that their productive enterprises in livestock made some contribution to their present livestock program. Fourteen percent of these young men had enough tools and equipment to start farming for themselves at the conclusion of their work in vocational agriculture. Fifty-four and twenty-five hundredths percent stated that their projects were used as a basis for an independent farming operation. An important consideration here is that the extent of the in-school farming activities is, in most cases, limited and guided by the parents. Consequently, the importance of the supervised farm training program is

limited by the financial ability of the parents and the concepts the parents have of supervised farming programs. This points out the necessity of the teacher working closely with the parents.

The influence of the home and parents is manifest in the following ways: (1) fifty percent of these young men remained at home with an active status in all or part of the farm operations, (2) fifty-eight percent reported gifts of livestock and poultry from the parents, (3) livestock programs were increased with loans from parents by eighteen and one-half percent of the group, (4) nearly one-third of the young men used or took over their parents' tools and farming equipment, and (5) forty-eight percent secured their first land to farm from their parents or in partnership with relatives. Thus, we may conclude that the parents and the home farm are very important factors in becoming established in farming. The above figures represent only the measurable assistance and in no way indicates the extent of indirect help.

The use of farm credit is brought out in only two instances in this study. Securing farming tools and equipment are two of the larger problems in starting to farm. Fifty-four percent of the young men now farming used credit or time-payments to purchase tools and equipment. Credit was the largest single factor in going into and increasing the livestock program. The percentage using credit here was 88.87 of the group now farming.

While only forty-four percent of the former students now farming entered military service, they indicated that military savings and the Veterans' Agricultural Training Program made substantial contributions to their establishment in farming. Sixty-eight and eighteen hundredths percent of veterans saved part of their service income, and of this

group 86.67 percent invested their savings in farming.

Cash received from the Veterans' Agricultural Training Program was reported to have assisted in purchasing the following: (1) cattle, by 63.12 of the group; (2) poultry, by 47.34 percent; (3) swine, by 42.08 percent; (4) machinery or equipment, by 57.86 percent; (5) part of family living, by 100 percent; and (6) farm or home improvements, by 52.60 percent. It is readily seen that these were major contributions in helping this group of young men become established in farming.

After careful study, the writer concludes that the contributions of the home and parents are the most important factors in the establishment of young men in farming. The writer does not minimize the other factors and realizes that they are all closely related.

FORMER STUDENTS NOT FARMING NOW

In considering the former students who are not engaged in farming, an effort was made to: (1) determine their present employment status, (2) determine their plans for the future in regard to farming, (3) determine reasons for taking vocational agriculture, (4) check disposition of the supervised farm training projects, and (5) consider reasons for not entering farming.

The significant fact in regard to the present employment status of this group is that 70.23 percent plan to follow their present occupations. A very small percentage is in unsuitable or temporary working situations. Fifty percent of these former students indicated that they would like to farm in the future. Several indicated the desire to farm as a sideline. However, only 22.20 percent indicated that they were making definite plans to farm now.

The fact that they liked agriculture was the reason 93.24 percent of this group gave for taking vocational agriculture. It is to be borne in mind that these were young farm boys coming into high school. Other reasons which they gave for taking agriculture are negligible.

At the close of their work in vocational agriculture there was a varied disposition of their supervised farm training projects. Nearly one-fourth of these young men sold their projects to pay personal debts. One-third of them used their projects in such a manner as to further their education. These represent sound uses of the supervised farm training investments. Nearly twenty percent allowed their projects to be absorbed into the home farm programs and lost their identity with them.

In examining the reasons these young men gave for not entering farming, pertinent facts are revealed which are worthy of a detailed presentation. It is recognized that there may have been multiple reasons for not entering farming. Minor reasons were as follows: (1) disliked farm life, (2) physically unsuited, (3) wife did not like the farm, (4) folks left the farm, and (5) too many persons in the family for parents to help. These reasons were given by a total of 16.66 percent of those reporting.

One-third of the group found suitable permanent employment in other fields and another one-third went to college. Ten percent went into other business. Land not available due to competition and prices was indicated by 16.65 percent. Lack of farming tools and equipment were the reasons given by 9.99 percent.

COMPARISON OF SUPERVISED FARMING PROGRAMS

The supervised farm training programs of former students now

engaged in farming and of those not engaged in farming compared rather closely in regard to the average number of animal units. The group not farming at present had thirty-two hundredths of an animal unit more livestock than the others who are now farming. However, those now farming had decidedly more acres of crops than the other group. They averaged 8.58 acres per boy, which was 6.07 acres more per individual than for the young men who did not farm. In general, the number of animal units in supervised farm training programs was not of sufficient scope to be important in becoming established in farming. The number of acres operated by the group now farming was much more significant.

Since many young men will enter service under the draft laws, there is an opportunity for teachers to stress in the all-day classes the advantages of military service and subsequent benefits. This study reveals that military service and the Veterans' Agricultural Training Program aided materially in becoming established in farming.

The high percentage of those using credit and renting crop land on various bases stresses the need for instruction in these fields in the all-day and young farmer groups.

Some popular claims for the supervised farm training program as an aid to becoming established in farming are not entirely valid in the light of this study. It is suggested that teachers of vocational agriculture should re-examine their supervised practice programs.

The influence and contributions of the home and family suggest that teachers of vocational agriculture should strive to further good relations with the boys, their parents, and other members of the family.

The number of young men now farming in this service area of Mountain View High School suggests that the teacher of vocational

agriculture might have a very successful educational program with this group.

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Report: A STUDY OF FORMER STUDENTS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE IN MOUNTAIN VIEW HIGH SCHOOL

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