

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING  
VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE AS A CAREER

by

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## CHAPTER 1

### CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM

The shortage of qualified high school vocational agriculture teachers across the United States over the past several decades has become, and continues to be, a major concern of the agricultural education profession. There has been ample and continuous documentation of this shortage. Woodin at The Ohio State University began an annual national study of the supply and demand for teachers of vocational agriculture in 1966. This study was taken over by Craig at the University of Tennessee in 1974.

The most recent report of the shortage by Craig in 1980,<sup>1</sup> indicates several reasons why this shortage has occurred. There was a turnover of 12.5 percent, the highest in sixteen years. The total number of teaching positions increased from 10,520 in 1970 to 12,520 in 1980. During this same time span, the number of new graduates qualified to teach dropped from 1700 to 1584. Of these 1584, only 52 percent entered the teaching profession. This resulted in a total of 117 teachers needed nationally but not available at the beginning of the school year.

Studies have been conducted in an attempt to decrease this teacher turnover rate and to increase the number of vocational agriculture teachers. These research efforts have been used to determine: 1) the factors that influence a person to become a teacher; 2) the reasons

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<sup>1</sup>David G. Craig, "A National Study of the Supply and Demand for Teachers of Vocational Agriculture in 1980," College of Education, The University of Tennessee, February 1981, p. 9.

why a teacher leaves the profession; 3) the benefits and rewards of teaching; 4) the use of the teachers' time; 5) salary and working conditions; and 6) the future need for teachers in particular programs.

Even with all the attention that has been devoted to this pervasive problem, little improvement has been seen in increasing the supply of teachers of vocational agriculture. The result of this shortage has been the issuing of temporary or emergency certificates to persons lacking the professional and/or technical background needed to teach vocational agriculture. At the same time, many departments are being forced to close due to the inavailability of a certified teacher.

A means to increase the number of students intending to become vocational agriculture teachers might be to encourage present teachers to portray their jobs more favorably. Hanson<sup>2</sup> surveyed agriculture education students who did not intend to teach. He found that a majority of the respondents' reactions as to why they decided not to teach were based on perceptions of their own vocational agriculture teacher formed during high school. Hanson suggested that,

the only parts about the job of the agriculture teacher that we ever hear about are the negative. I don't feel the average college student has received a true picture of the entire job of teaching agriculture...If teachers don't start talking about the positive points of teaching along with the negative, the agriculture teacher shortage will stay with us or even get worse.

The importance of the teacher in recruiting future teachers can be supported by work by Welton in 1980.<sup>3</sup> In surveying agricultural

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<sup>2</sup>Dale A. Hanson, "The Vo-Ag Teacher Shortage from a College Student's Point of View," The Agricultural Education Magazine, (October 1977), pp. 94.

<sup>3</sup>Richard F. Welton, "The Development of Guidelines for a Recruitment Program in Agricultural Education at Kansas State University," Department of Adult and Occupational Education, Kansas State University, January 1980.

education students at Kansas State University, he found that the most influential person on the students' choice of college curriculum reported by the respondents was their high school vocational agriculture teacher.

If vocational agriculture teachers were aware of their influence on students' career choices and how they portray their own job to their students, they may make an effort to stress some of the good aspects of teaching more often. It is the purpose of this study to determine how students actually perceive the job of teaching vocational agriculture. These perceptions will be based on their observations of their own vocational agriculture teacher and their experiences as a vocational agriculture student.

### Objectives

The primary objective of this study will be to examine how vocational agriculture students view teaching vocational agriculture as a career.

This will be accomplished by determining these specific objectives:

1. To determine how vocational agriculture students perceive the economic rewards of teaching vocational agriculture.
2. To determine how vocational agriculture students perceive the working conditions of teaching vocational agriculture.
3. To determine how vocational agriculture students perceive the personal characteristics of the vocational agriculture teacher.
4. To determine how vocational agriculture students perceive the activities of the vocational agriculture teacher.
5. To determine how vocational agriculture students perceive their own job satisfaction as a potential vocational agriculture teacher.
6. To determine how vocational agriculture students perceive the vocational agriculture and the general teaching job markets.

### Significance of The Study

Many studies have been conducted in an effort to lessen the vocational agriculture teacher shortage. This investigator is not aware of any that attempted to discover how students perceive the job of teaching vocational agriculture as a possible occupation. By determining how students perceive the career of teaching vocational agriculture, it may be possible to discover any misconceptions the students may have about teaching agriculture. If these misconceptions can be corrected and the positive aspects of the job stressed, it is possible that more students may be encouraged to enter the vocational agriculture teaching profession. This could be accomplished if vocational agriculture teachers were made aware of how they portray their jobs. The end result of this study could be making the agriculture teaching profession more attractive, thus drawing more students into it. This would aid in reducing the shortage of vocational agriculture teachers.

### Definitions of Terms

A list of terms was developed to assist the reader and aid in comprehension of the study. The following is a list of those terms:

1. Vocational agriculture -- The training of high school students through an instructional program to develop and/or supplement skills in agriculture/agribusiness occupations in a state approved program.
2. Vo-ag -- Abbreviated form of "vocational agriculture."
3. Economics rewards -- Those variables which are concerned directly or indirectly with income, (i.e. salary, advancement, material goods which indicate wealth).

4. Working conditions -- Those variables which are concerned with job characteristics other than economic rewards.
5. Activities -- The manner in which vocational agriculture teachers spend their time during "working hours."
6. Job aspects -- Those characteristics dealing with the students' future jobs.

#### Limitations to the Study

The limitations of this study included:

1. The population for this study was selected from twelfth grade students enrolled in vocational agriculture during the final spring school period in 1981 in Kansas.
2. The population was limited in their responses to only those on the given questionnaire.
3. The population size was smaller than desired due to a limitation of time.

## CHAPTER II

### PROCEDURE

Increasing the number of students intending to become teachers of vocational agriculture would aid in lessening the shortage of high school agriculture teachers. Emphasizing the positive aspects of teaching vocational agriculture would also tend to increase the number of prospective teachers. This study was undertaken to determine how high school vocational agriculture students actually perceive the job of teaching vocational agriculture. In examining the techniques used in researching this study, this chapter will present the following sub-headings; population, instrumentation, procedure, and analysis of data.

#### Population

In selecting the population for this study, it was necessary to meet the following criteria: 1) the participants should be high school students with enough previous exposure to vocational agriculture to have developed definite perceptions of the job of teaching vocational agriculture as a career; 2) the population should be large enough to enable generalization of the findings to the state of Kansas; and 3) the selection should be consistent with the participant confidentiality guidelines established by Kansas State University. In order to satisfy criteria number one, twelfth grade vocational agriculture students were selected because of the probability of their having more experience in vocational agriculture than the three earlier high school grades. In determining the number of participants needed to generalize the

findings, the sampling method proposed by Warmbrod<sup>4</sup> was used. A phone call to the Kansas State Department of Education offices revealed there were 1310 seniors enrolled in the 160 vocational agriculture programs in Kansas. A risk of one in 20 that the actual error is larger than five percent was determined acceptable by the researcher. Using the table on page 107 in Warmbrod's article, 1310 was found to be 62 percent of the distance between the 1000 and 1500 population sizes given. Sixty-two percent of the distance between the suggested sample sizes for populations of 1000 and 1500 was calculated to be 315. A goal of 315 seniors was set as the desired sample size. The next step was to determine how many vocational agriculture departments must be surveyed to receive 315 responses from the twelfth grade vocational agriculture students. This number of seniors per department was calculated by dividing the number of senior vocational agriculture students in Kansas (1310) by the number of vocational agriculture departments (160). This revealed an average of eight seniors per department. The number of departments needed to be surveyed was found by dividing the desired number of senior respondents (315) by the average number of seniors per department (eight). This resulted in 39 departments needed to be surveyed.

The departments to be surveyed were then selected by using a table of random numbers. Each vocational agriculture program listed in the 1980-81 Kansas Agricultural Education Directory was assigned a number from one to 160. The schools with numbers corresponding with those drawn from the random number table were selected to be asked to participate in the study. These departments were then mailed a letter (Appendix

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<sup>4</sup>J. Robert Warmbrod, "The Sampling Problem in Research Design," The Agricultural Education Magazine, (November 1965), pp. 106, 107, 114, 115.

A) on April 3 explaining the study and requesting their consent to participate. A response postcard was included which also requested the number of twelfth grade vocational agriculture students in that department. This allowed the researcher to send the appropriate number of questionnaires to each school. Because all the schools first selected to participate in this study did not consent to participate, additional schools were randomly chosen as needed and mailed the letter and consent postcard. It was discovered that the average number of seniors per department was closer to six than the originally calculated eight. This required getting the consent to participate from additional schools. A follow-up letter (Appendix B) to the April 3 letter was mailed on April 14. A second follow-up was made by telephone on April 27 and 28. This resulted in 48 departments consenting to participate. These 48 departments reported that they had 317 twelfth grade students who could complete the survey.

### Instrumentation

A survey instrument was developed after a review of research and literature related to this study. From this review, five categories of variables were identified to be studied. These included: 1) economic rewards of teaching vocational agriculture; 2) working conditions of teaching vocational agriculture; 3) personal characteristics of vocational agriculture teachers; 4) activities of vocational agriculture; and 5) students' perceived job satisfaction as a vocational agriculture teacher. Variables relating to each of these categories were identified from questionnaires used in previous related studies. The first three categories were randomly assigned to one scale. This section was titled "Part I, Student Perceptions of the Vocational Agriculture Teacher." Categories



four and five were rated on separate scales and called "Part II, Activities of the Vocational Agriculture Teacher" and "Part III, Your Perceived Job Satisfaction as a Vocational Agriculture Teacher."

A preliminary copy of the survey was sent to the following: Kansas State University Agricultural Education staff, selected College of Education faculty at Kansas State University, and selected vocational agriculture teachers in Kansas. Suggestions and needed changes or corrections were requested and received from the above. These suggestions were used in the refinement of the variables and the questionnaire. Candy Noble, Kansas State University, College of Education computer consultant for graduate studies, was consulted on data analysis to be used.

The pilot study was developed and taken to the Wamego High School vocational agriculture department on April 28. It was administered by the instructor, George Ebert, to 15 junior and senior vocational agriculture students. The survey took the respondents approximately 25 minutes to complete. The data was transferred to computer cards by the researcher and ran at the Kansas State University Computing Center on May 5. After completion of statistical analysis, the pilot study was reviewed and further refined.

### Procedure

A copy of the methodology used in this study was sent to the University Rights of Human Subjects Committee on April 3. This included the complete procedure for obtaining informed consent and all data collection instruments. The proposal was reviewed by the committee whose approval was given on April 23.

On April 29 the appropriate number of questionnaires, consent letters

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CONTAINS  
NUMEROUS PAGES  
WITH DIAGRAMS  
THAT ARE CROOKED  
COMPARED TO THE  
REST OF THE  
INFORMATION ON  
THE PAGE.**

**THIS IS AS  
RECEIVED FROM  
CUSTOMER.**

and teacher instruction sheets (Appendix C) were mailed to each of the 48 consenting schools (Appendix D). Also included was a self-addressed, stamped, return envelope. The first questionnaires were returned on May 4. Only a small number of schools responded by the requested date of May 7. This prompted the sending of a follow-up letter (Appendix E) on May 8 to those schools which had not returned their questionnaires. A second follow-up by telephone was made on May 13 to those which had still not responded.

May 29 was established as the last day to receive questionnaires for inclusion in the study. Table 1 reports the number of schools having responded at that time. Table 2 reports the number of questionnaires received at that time.

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TABLE 1

PERCENTAGE OF DEPARTMENTS RESPONDING

<u>Number of Schools Consenting to Participate</u>	<u>Number of Schools Returning Questionnaires</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
48	33	68

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TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE OF TWELFTH GRADE VOCATIONAL  
AGRICULTURE STUDENTS RESPONDING TO QUESTIONNAIRE

<u>Number of Twelfth Grade Students reported by teacher</u>	<u>Number of Questionnaires Returned</u>	<u>Percent Returned</u>
317	166	52.4

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### Analysis

Each of the questions on the questionnaire dealing with the students' perception of teaching vocational agriculture was, in this study, a dependent variable. In the research instrument, a total of 120 dependent variables were utilized. The questions were rated on four different scales. The first four dependent variables dealt with salaries, hours worked and competition to get a job teaching. The respondents were asked to circle the number for the answer that best represented their choice of the answers. Part I dealt with 52 student perceptions of economic and working conditions of teaching agriculture as well as personal characteristics of the teachers. The respondents were asked to circle the letters that best represented their agreement with the statement. In this part, SA= strongly agree, A= agree, U= undecided or neutral, D= disagree, SDA= strongly disagree. The numerical values assigned to these letters for analysis purpose were SA= 1, A= 2, U= 3, D= 4, SDA= 5. Part II dealt with 26 possible activities of the vocational agriculture teacher. The respondents were asked to circle the number on the right side of the activity which best represented the relative amount of time their vocational agriculture teacher spends performing the activity during a full year. The numeral one represented "no time" and seven represented a "large amount of time." Part III was titled "Your perceived job satisfaction as a vocational agriculture teacher." This section was composed of 19 aspects of an occupation. On the left of each aspect, the respondent was asked to circle a number between one and five which best represented how important that aspect of their future job is to them. In this rating scale, 1= none and 5= extreme. On the right side of each aspect, the respondent was asked to circle the number which represented the extent to which teaching

vocational agriculture would allow those aspects to be satisfied. The same rating scale was used as on the left side.

Independent variables consisted of demographic data. The numerical values of all of the independent and dependent variables were transferred to IBM cards directly from the research instrument. This work was done by Pam Rawley. The statistical analysis was done at the Kansas State University Computing Center.

The analyses that were made include:

1. Descriptive statistics for 120 dependent and four independent (demographic) variables.
2. ANOVA on the average mean for the following groups of dependent variables: economic rewards, working conditions, personal characteristics, activities, and importance and satisfaction of job aspects by each of the four demographic variables.
3. Coefficient alpha to test the internal consistency of each of the six groups of dependent variables.

After the results of the descriptive statistics had been reviewed, the choices to several of the demographic variables were combined. The changes made were:

1. Sex - no change.
2. Years of vocational agriculture - four and five = four.
3. Years of FFA - zero = zero; one and two = one; three = two; four = three; five = four.
4. Number of vocational agriculture teachers - four and five = four; six = deleted (no responses).

In order to analyze the means for those variables in Part I dealing with agreement, the following guidelines were proposed. Since the

respondents could not go .5 points beyond either end of the scale, they actually were limited to a four point scale. This four points when divided by the five levels of agreement allowed for a range of .8 per level of agreement. The resulting scale was 1.0 to 1.8 = strongly agree, 1.8 to 2.6 = agree, 2.6 to 3.4 = undecided or neutral, 3.4 to 4.2 = disagree, and 4.2 to 5.0 = strongly disagree.

## CHAPTER III

### A REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND RELATED LITERATURE

Since the shortage of qualified vocational agriculture teachers has been such a persistent problem during the past several decades, much research has been conducted to help alleviate this problem. The general categories of teacher shortage studies include: 1) why agricultural education graduates do not choose to teach; 2) what factors influence education graduates to teach; 3) what factors influence vocational agricultural teachers to leave teaching, 4) the salary and working conditions of teaching, and 5) the use of time by teachers. While these studies have been helpful in clarifying the vocational agriculture teachers job, they seem to have little influence on alleviating the teacher shortage. None of these studies have addressed student perceptions of teaching. It may be helpful, however, to briefly review these studies to discover how vocational agriculture teachers define the job and to build a basis for this study.

This search of literature did not reveal any research on how students perceive the vocational agriculture teacher's occupation. A relatively large amount of research was identified on how students and others perceive the general classroom teacher's status and occupation. This research dealt mainly with how teaching compares with other occupations and the teachers' image in general. These studies do not mention vocational agriculture and many of the studies were taken from urban communities which most likely did not have a vocational agriculture program. Most of the concepts and perceptions still seem to be applicable to this study. For this reason, these studies will be included in this review. A third area of research which will be reviewed for this study is

what factors influence a student's career choice and why students decide to become teachers.

In order to aid in the organization of this review, the following categories of research and literature were proposed:

1. The vocational agriculture teacher shortage and related research;
2. Student career choice;
3. Teaching and the teacher image as seen by students;
4. Teaching and the teacher image as seen by the public;
5. Teacher influence on career choice;
6. Teaching and the teacher image as seen by teachers.

#### The Vocational Agriculture Teacher Shortage

Enough agricultural education graduates are produced in the United States that, if all would decide to teach, there would be a surplus of vocational agriculture teachers. The truth is that only about 60 percent actually ever begin teaching. Annual research by Woodin and later by Craig<sup>5</sup> revealed that over a sixteen year period from 1965 to 1980, each year on the average, no more than 60 percent of the graduates who qualified to teach entered the teaching field. Hanson<sup>6</sup> conducted a survey of 350 agricultural education students in six Midwestern universities. His survey showed that only 56.2 percent of the students planned to become high school agriculture teachers. In Kansas, a follow-up study by Welton and Unruh<sup>7</sup> of the 1980 agricultural education graduates at Kansas State University indicated 52 percent

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<sup>5</sup>Craig, "National Study of Supply and Demand for Teachers," p. 9.

<sup>6</sup>Hanson, "Teacher Shortage from College Student's View," p. 90.

<sup>7</sup>Richard F. Welton and Dale Unruh, "A Follow-up of the 1980 Agriculture Education Graduates at Kansas State University," Department of Agriculture Education, Kansas State University, 1980.



of the qualified graduates entered teaching. Although these percentages differ slightly, the fact remains that over one-third of the college graduates qualified to teach vocational agriculture chose not to.

In an attempt to determine why agricultural education graduates from Iowa State University chose to enter fields other than teaching, Froehlich<sup>8</sup> in 1966, surveyed over 800 non-teaching graduates who completed their degree work between 1940 and 1964. He found that freedom and independence of the job, having evenings free, and an opportunity for advancement were the factors which most frequently influenced those graduates to enter an employment area other than teaching.

Allen<sup>9</sup>, in 1976, determined that on the average, Oregon vocational agriculture teachers taught less than five years. He found that teachers leaving the field left for the three composite reasons of salary (27 percent), did not have enough time for their families (38 percent), and to enter school administration (49 percent).

In surveying persons who entered the teaching field in Ohio between 1975 and 1978, Dickens<sup>10</sup> reported factors that influenced the graduates'

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<sup>8</sup>Loren H. Froehlich, Factors Related to the Tendency of Iowa State University Agricultural Education Graduates to Not Enter or to Leave the Vocational Agriculture Teaching Profession, Agricultural Education Research Publication No. 17 (Ames: Iowa State University, 1966), p. 13, cited by Phillip W. Reilly, "Analysis of Factors Which Encourage Vocational Agriculture Teachers in Kansas to Remain in Teaching," (A Master's Thesis, Department of Education, Kansas State University, 1979), p. 51.

<sup>9</sup>S. Allen, "A Study to Determine Why the Average Length of Service for Secondary Vocational Teachers in Oregon is Less than Five Years," (M.S. Thesis, Oregon State University), cited by John Hillison and Gale Hagee, "A Study to Determine Influencing Factors for Selecting Agricultural Education as a Career with Implications for Recruitment," paper presented at the National Agricultural Education Research Meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana, December 5, 1980, p. 2.

<sup>10</sup>John W. Dickens, "Why Vocational Agriculture Teachers in Ohio Enter and Remain in Teaching," paper presented at the National Agriculture Education Research Meeting, Dallas, Texas, December 1, 1978, pp. 1-13.

decision to remain in the teaching field. He found those factors which rated the highest were:

1. Having an adequate retirement plan from teaching;
2. Enjoying the variety of subject matter being taught;
3. Having a feeling of accomplishment and success from teaching;
4. Enjoying teaching high school students;
5. Enjoying working with the technical aspects of the instructional area;
6. Developing own program as a teacher;
7. Finding each day different in the role as a teacher.

In a 1979 study of Kansas vocational agriculture teachers, Reilly<sup>11</sup> discovered the factors that encouraged teachers to remain in teaching were:

1. Enjoy working with rural people;
2. Enjoy being close to work associated with the farm;
3. Enjoy working with young people;
4. Enjoy the chance to work outdoors;
5. Enjoy working with other vocational agriculture teachers;
6. Enjoy the variety of subject matter taught in vocational agriculture;
7. Enjoy helping students to mature and learn;
8. Enjoy living in the community of the size and type in which they teach;
9. Enjoy being able to guide and counsel students;
10. Enjoy working on FFA activities.

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<sup>11</sup>Phillip W. Reilly, "Analysis of Factors Which Encourage Vocational Agriculture Teachers in Kansas to Remain in Teaching," (A Master's Thesis, Department of Agricultural Education, Kansas State University, 1979), p. 51.

The fact that salaries and working conditions are two of the reasons most often cited for quitting or not entering teaching has prompted studies in these areas. Craig,<sup>12</sup> in his national survey of vocational agriculture teachers in 1977, revealed that about 47 percent of the teachers taught both high school and adult level classes. Almost 90 percent of the teachers conducted vocational agriculture programs in general or comprehensive high schools. Almost one-half of the departments (49.7 percent) had two or more teachers. Approximately 34 percent of the teachers were in full-time production agriculture programs and 49 percent taught production and specialized classes in agriculture. The number of teachers teaching full-time in specialized classes had climbed to almost 17 percent.

In a recent study of time utilization by teachers of vocational agriculture in Nebraska, Dillon<sup>13</sup> had 40 teachers keep a record of the time spent for one year in twenty-seven categories. These data were recorded in one-fourth hour blocks. These teachers reported working an average of 2,652 hours per year. This figure when divided down is equivalent of 221 hours per month or 51 hours per week. Thirty-one percent of their time was devoted to planning and teaching day agricultural classes; 11 percent to counseling and advising students; eight percent to curriculum planning; six percent to supervising occupational experience programs and the remaining 44 percent to the other 23 duty

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<sup>12</sup>David G. Craig, "Update on Vo-Ag Teacher Shortage," The Agricultural Education Magazine, (June 1978), pp. 284, 285.

<sup>13</sup>Roy D. Dillon, "An Analysis of Selected Factors Influencing the Use of Time by 40 Vocational Agricultural Teachers in Nebraska," Department of Agricultural Education, University of Nebraska, 1976, cited by J. David McCracken, Summaries of Research and Development Activities in Agricultural Education, 1975-1976, United States of America, Department of Agricultural Education, (Columbus: The Ohio State University, 1976), p. 27.

categories. A similar study by Wolfe and McCracken<sup>14</sup> found that production agriculture teachers worked 57.4 hours per week and non-production agriculture teachers worked 49.7 hours per week.

### Student Career Choice

A student's decision to enter a particular career is thought to be influenced by experiences and people with whom the student has been associated. This has prompted researchers to identify the factors most influential in career decisions. Reynolds<sup>15</sup> compared agricultural education students to non-agricultural education curriculum students in an attempt to reveal what were the influencing factors concerning their career choices. His findings revealed that agricultural education majors graduated from a smaller high school and had more vocational agricultural and farm work experience than did the non-agricultural group. The five factors rated by agricultural education students as having the highest degree of influence on curriculum choice were: 1) job opportunities; 2) FFA experiences; 3) courses taken in college; 4) high school agricultural teacher; and 5) work experience before college. The five factors rated highest by students in the non-agricultural education curriculum group were: 1) work experiences before college;

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<sup>14</sup>Christopher E. Wolfe and J. David McCracken, "Time Utilization by Vocational Agricultural Teachers," The Ohio State University, 1978, cited by Jimmy G. Cheek, Summaries of Research and Development Activities in Agricultural Education, 1978-1979, United States of America, College of Agriculture, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (Gainesville: University of Florida, December 1979), pp. 66-67.

<sup>15</sup>Carl Reynolds, "A Comparison of Agricultural Education Students and Students in Non-Agricultural Education Curricula and Factors Related to Their Curriculum Choice," (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Illinois, 1976).

2) job opportunities; 3) courses taken in college; 4) work experiences during college and 5) father.

In a study to determine those factors influencing people to select a career in agricultural education, Hillison and Hagee<sup>16</sup> surveyed agricultural education graduates and undergraduates. The factors most often given by the college students for electing a career in agricultural education were:

1. Good way to get into other jobs in agriculture;
2. High school vocational agriculture and FFA experiences;
3. Vocational agriculture teachers;
4. Want to work with young people;
5. Want to share an interest in my technical agriculture field with others;
6. Strong demand for agriculture teachers;
7. Impressed with the agriculture faculty at the university;
8. Farm background.

Dickens<sup>17</sup> attempted to find why vocational agriculture teachers enter the teaching profession. Factors rated as having some influence on their career choice of teaching were:

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<sup>16</sup> John Hillison and Gale Hagee, "A Study to Determine Influencing Factors for Selecting Agricultural Education as a Career with Implications for Recruitment," Department of Agricultural Education, Virginia Tech, 1980, as reported at the National Agricultural Education Research Meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana, 5 December 1980, p. 10.

<sup>17</sup> John W. Dickens, "Why Vo-Ag Teachers Enter and Remain in the Teaching Profession," (Doctoral dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1978, cited by Jimmy G. Cheek, Summaries of Research and Development Activities in Agricultural Education, 1978-1979, United States of America, College of Agriculture, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (Gainesville: University of Florida, December 1979), pp. 57, 58.

1. I thought I would enjoy the variety of the subject matter to be taught;
2. I thought I would enjoy teaching high school students;
3. I felt I would have a feeling of accomplishment and success from teaching;
4. I felt I would enjoy working with the technical aspects of my instructional area;
5. I felt I could develop my own program as a teacher;
6. I thought I would find each day different in my role as a teacher;
7. I felt that teaching would provide opportunities for professional development;
8. I felt that I would have the chance to stay current in my field;
9. I thought I would enjoy the flexibility of summer employment;
10. I thought I would enjoy working with other adults in agriculture.

Although student career choice in vocational agriculture is somewhat limited, much work has been done with student career choice in general classroom teaching. Bartel and Coppedge<sup>18</sup> surveyed 447 Kansas State University professional semester education students in an attempt to find their reasons for teaching. Those who enter teaching appear to be motivated by the desire for personal service to others. The influence of others, primarily that of other teachers, seems to be a major factor in their career choice. Similar studies by Wood,<sup>19</sup> Warner<sup>20</sup>, and Cohen<sup>21</sup> also support the idea that those who choose teaching as a career are more

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<sup>18</sup>Roy A. Bartel and Floyd L. Coppedge, "Why Teach? A Survey Supplies Answers," Clearing House, (December 1969), p. 240.

<sup>19</sup>Karlyn E. Wood, "What Motivates Students to Teach?", Journal of Teacher Education, (November/December 1978), pp. 48-50.

<sup>20</sup>Dolores Warner, "Attitudes of Prospective Teachers Toward Teaching," Improving College and University Teaching, (Autumn 1970), pp. 249, 250.

<sup>21</sup>Louis Cohen, "Student Identification with a Profession," Educational Research, (November 1969), pp. 41-45.

people-oriented than comparison groups and enter the teaching field for intrinsic rather than extrinsic factors. These findings do not necessarily mean that the future teacher does not look at extrinsic factors when choosing a career. Heath<sup>22</sup> studied 176 secondary education students at Illinois State University. She found that the students are less idealistically committed to education than the traditional public image of the teachers portray. Not only were the students quite interested in external incentives such as salary and fringe benefits, they also wanted to control the conditions under which they worked.

#### Teaching and the Teacher Image as seen by Students

Although no studies were found revealing high school students attitudes towards vocational agriculture teaching, some work has been conducted on agricultural education students' attitudes. Reynolds<sup>23</sup> comparison of agricultural education students to non-agricultural education curriculum students revealed several interesting discoveries concerning perceptions of vocational agriculture teaching. These were: 1) students in agricultural education rated the degree to which they expected benefits from teaching agriculture higher for personal satisfaction, variety of work and opportunity for advancement than did non-agricultural education curriculum students; 2) whether or not students had taken vocational agriculture in high school influenced their ratings of the degree to which benefits would be received from teaching agriculture. Those who had vocational agriculture experience rated benefits realistically;

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<sup>22</sup>G. Louis Heath, "Future Teachers Look at the Profession," Illinois Education, (December 1970), pp. 75-77.

<sup>23</sup>Reynolds, "Comparison of Agricultural Education Students," p. 8.



those in agricultural education who had none gave optimistic ratings; those in the non-agricultural education group who had no experience rated benefits pessimistically; 3) of those who took vocational agricultural in high school, agricultural education students rated their agricultural teachers higher on knowledge of subject matter than did non-agricultural education students; 4) students in the two curriculum groups perceived the competition for getting a job as a high school teacher for any subject similarly; however, agricultural education students perceived a lower level of competition for getting a job teaching agriculture than did students in the non-agricultural education group.

In research dealing with the student image of the general classroom teacher, many studies have been conducted. O'Dowd and Beardslee's<sup>24</sup> survey of four colleges in northeastern United States revealed that when compared to other occupations, the teacher is seen as financially poor, lacking in opportunity for advancement, and relatively low in social status and power in public affairs. However, the teacher has many positive attributes also. According to these college students, the teacher is an unselfish, wise, sensitive, thoughtful, intelligent, friendly person who devotes time and energy to his family and perhaps a limited circle of conservative friends.

A study of 1500 high school students by Friesen and Chalmers<sup>25</sup> compared the jobs of a teacher, social worker, doctor, nurse and lawyer for 24 variables. On all variables, the general trend indicated by

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<sup>24</sup>Donald D. O'Dowd and David C. Beardslee, "The Student Image of the School Teacher," Phi Delta Kappan, (March 1961), p. 251.

<sup>25</sup>David Friesen and Hal Chalmers, "Student Perceptions of the Teacher Image," Educational Leadership/Research Supplement, (April 1973), pp. 635-636.



the analysis was that the image of the teacher was generally above average on "service" variables such as contributions to the total good, and service given per dollar of income. However, on "status" variables such as prestige, income, and training requirements, the image of the teacher was generally below average. The teacher rated last among the five groups for sociability. Students also chose teachers as the occupational group with which they would least like to associate on a social basis. Those students who planned to become teachers perceived the image of the teacher more favorably than those students who planned to enter other occupations.

Langston<sup>26</sup> questioned sixth, ninth and twelfth graders as to their attitudes toward teaching as a vocation. At the twelfth grade level, teaching was seen as 1) financially unrewarding; 2) uninteresting; 3) underpaid for the amount of training required; 4) without much chance for advancement; and 5) monotonous. Female attitudes were far more favorable than males. However, in a study by Richey and Fox<sup>27</sup>, this sex difference is reversed with 48 percent of the girls and only 30 percent of the boys feeling that teaching was less desirable than other professions and work requiring equivalent training.

Even though reasons given for not teaching are usually financial, students and parents are cautious not to rank teachers below average financially. In a study of rural teachers, Murse and Parson<sup>28</sup> found

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<sup>26</sup>Roderick G. Langston, "A Study of Attitudes Toward Teaching as a Vocation," Journal of Teacher Education, (June 1951), p. 86.

<sup>27</sup>R.W. Richey and W.H. Fox, "A Study of Some Opinions of High School Students with Regard to Teachers and Teaching," Bulletin of the School of Education, Indiana University, Volume XXVII, No. 4.

<sup>28</sup>Ivan D. Murse and Robert J. Parson, "A Study of Rural Teachers and the Rural Schools as Perceived by School Administrators, Teachers, Parents and Students," U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, National Institute of Education, October 1975 (University Microfilm-ED119921), p. 8, 27.

that students and parents felt that teachers were typically as well off as other families, if not more so. Students also perceived the teacher as putting in significantly less time than he actually did, reporting a perceived work week of from 30-50 hours.

Student attitudes toward teaching were studied by Dutton and Keislar<sup>29</sup> in 1961. In their study, boys felt that teaching would necessitate buying a smaller house and a less desirable car about three times as often as did girls. Boys felt they would earn less money, would be disappointed in not being able to afford things they wanted, and would worry about having enough money if they entered the teaching profession. All students felt that teaching would provide the same security as other professions.

#### Teaching and the Teacher Image as seen by the Public

Parents and the general public are cited as having considerable influence on students' career choice. Many researchers have attempted to identify how the public views teaching. This research might lend itself to understanding why students perceive teaching as they do.

A survey of 120 Spokane, Washington residents by Waldrip<sup>30</sup> compared teaching with other professions. Teachers were seen as extremely active in community activities, contributing more to the community, and giving more service per dollar than any other professional group. However, teachers were considered underpaid and lacking in prestige. The teaching profession was considered to be a good one for women, but not so good for men.

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<sup>29</sup>Wilbur H. Dutton and Evan R. Keislar, "Attitudes Toward Teaching," The Journal of Teacher Education, (June 1961), pp. 165-171.

<sup>30</sup>Donald R. Waldrip, "Image of the Spokane Teacher," Phi Delta Kappan, (June 1966), p. 571.

Pounds and Hawkins<sup>31</sup> surveyed adults at four PTA meetings. Only in rural areas would the majority of adults encourage their son to enter the teaching profession. However, more than 80 percent of the adults in all the communities consider teaching a desirable occupation for their daughters. Almost two-thirds of the adults in all population strata considered teaching a desirable occupation for both their male and female children.

Tronsgard<sup>32</sup> studied adult attitudes towards teachers and teaching as functions of perceived income discrepancies. The group feeling economically equal to teachers was the most favorable towards teaching. As perceived distances in income increased in either direction, attitudes became less favorable. Besides perceived income discrepancies, other variables were shown to influence attitudes. The people less likely to be favorable toward teachers were shown to be 1) the people of high education; 2) those who do not participate in PTA; 3) men; 4) those with high economic expectations for the future; and 5) those who are dissatisfied with their present incomes.

The twelfth annual Gallup Poll<sup>33</sup> of the public's attitudes toward public schools disclosed these facts. Seventy-four percent of the public expressed a great deal or fair amount of confidence in the public

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<sup>31</sup>Haskin R. Pounds and Michael L. Hawkins, "Adult Attitudes on Teaching as a Career," The Journal of Teacher Education, (Fall 1969), p. 341.

<sup>32</sup>David T. Tronsgard, "Adult Attitudes Toward Teachers and Teaching as Functions as Perceived Income Discrepancies," (Doctoral dissertation, Stanford University, 1962), cited from Dissertation Abstracts International, 1963, 23, 4175A, (University Microfilms No. 63-2700).

<sup>33</sup>George H. Gallup, "Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools," Phi Delta Kappan, (September 1980), p. 381

schools. Persons living in rural communities or small towns and cities gave the highest ratings to their schools. Only 48 percent of the public would like to have their child take up teaching as a career. This figure has declined from 67 percent in 1972 and 75 percent in 1969.

According to an NEA public opinion poll reported by Ryor<sup>34</sup> in 1978, three-fourths of the American public expressed a great deal or a fair amount of confidence in the country's education system and in teachers specifically. The majority of Americans felt that the job of the public school teacher is tougher today than in the past. Teachers were faulted by nearly one-third of the public for not paying enough attention to individual students and for being insufficiently dedicated. Twenty percent faulted them for lack of firmness. One-third said that teachers expect too little from their students. Virtually all segments of the public felt that teachers are competent, well-trained and interested in their community.

#### Teacher Influence on Career Choice

Teacher influence on student career choice has been well documented over the past several decades. The influential people on agricultural education student's choice of college curriculum was revealed in Welton's<sup>35</sup> study at Kansas State University. The two persons tied as having the most influence were the high school vocational agriculture teacher and the college professor. Parents ranked third and friends fourth in this study.

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<sup>34</sup>John Ryor, "The Public Respects Teachers," Today's Education, (November-December 1978), pp. 11, 12.

<sup>35</sup>Welton, "Guidelines for Recruitment in Agricultural Education," p. 2.

Reynolds<sup>36</sup> and Heathcott<sup>37</sup> established the importance of the vocational agriculture teacher in agricultural education students choice of college curriculum.

Hillison and Hagee<sup>38</sup> studied agricultural education majors' career decisions at Virginia Tech. They disclosed that males rank their high school instructor much higher than do females as being influential in their career choice. Kluckman<sup>39</sup> surveyed vocational agriculture teachers in California, Florida, Ohio, New York, and Virginia and found similar results.

Fielstra<sup>40</sup> asked students in an introductory education course at the University of California at Los Angeles to rate 11 motivational factors in order to discern which were influential in their career choices. Having the most influence in persuading these students were former teachers. Ranking second were friends and relatives, followed by newspaper accounts of the need for teachers, leaflets, magazine articles, books and parents' influence.

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<sup>36</sup>Reynolds, "Comparison of Agricultural Education Students," p. 8.

<sup>37</sup>Eldon E. Heathcott, "Occupational Choice, Tenure and Selected Aspects of the Employment Patterns of Murray State University Graduates Qualifying to Teach Vocational Agriculture," (Doctoral dissertation, Oklahoma State University, 1974), cited by J. David McCracken, Summaries of Research and Development Activities in Agricultural Education, 1975-1976, United States of America, Department of Agricultural Education (Columbus: The Ohio State University).

<sup>38</sup>Hillison and Hagee, "Influencing Factors for Agricultural Education as a Career," p. 9.

<sup>39</sup>Delores M. Kluckman, "Traditional and Nontraditional Career Role Vocational Agriculture Teacher Perception of Career Choice, Work Satisfaction and Career Plans," (Doctoral dissertation, Oregon State University, 1979), cited by J.G. Cheek, Summaries of Research and Development Activities in Agricultural Education, 1978-1979, United States of America, College of Agriculture, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (Gainesville: University of Florida).

<sup>40</sup>C. Fielstra, "An Analysis of Factors Influencing the Decision to Become a Teacher," Journal of Educational Research, (May 1955), p. 10.

Bartel and Coppedge's<sup>41</sup> study revealed that of 13 reasons cited for choosing teaching as a career, the respondents overwhelmingly (87 percent) reported a desire to teach as the major factor in their choice. The next four reasons cited were teacher influence (31 percent), humanistic concern (21 percent), influence of a friend (18 percent), and the influence of parents (13 percent).

A study of 200 prospective teachers at the University of California at Los Angeles by Warner<sup>42</sup> revealed that over one-half of them had teaching relatives. Although these relatives did not represent the decisive influence in the students' career choices, the fact that their relatives liked their profession reinforced the students' decision to teach.

Tipton<sup>43</sup> found that in comparison with a control group of 89 students choosing occupations other than teaching, his sample of 128 intending teachers reported a greater degree of close relationship with their own teachers. They further said that their teachers had been important sources of influence in their vocational choice.

#### Teaching and the Teacher Image as seen by Teachers

Teachers often rate their jobs' importance and conditions much lower than does the general public. Rettig and Pasamanick<sup>44</sup> found this

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<sup>41</sup>Bartel and Coppedge, "Why Teach?", p. 10.

<sup>42</sup>Warner, "Attitudes of Prospective Teachers," p. 10.

<sup>43</sup>R.M. Tipton, "Vocational Identification and Academic Achievement," Journal of Counseling Psychology, 13, 4, pp. 425-30.

<sup>44</sup>Salomon Rettig and Benjamin Pasamanick, "Status and Job Satisfaction of Public School Teachers," School and Society, (March 1959), p. 116.

to be true in their study. They found that the teachers' expected status rating from the general public was 57 out of 100. They actually received an average status rating of 68 from the lay samples. The lay person samples, in fact, assigned the public school teacher higher status than they did four different medical specialities.

In Murse and Parson's<sup>45</sup> study, teachers and administrators had a lower opinion of the importance of the teaching profession than did parents or students. When asked about the importance of the teaching profession, only 24.7 percent of teachers and 25 percent of administrators gave it a classification of "very important." This compared to 41.4 percent by the students and 67.5 percent by the parents.

The community and school size may influence the teacher's view of teaching as evidenced in the 1971 NEA Teacher Opinion Poll.<sup>46</sup> Significantly more urban teachers than suburban and rural teachers responded that teaching was getting worse. Also significantly more teachers in large systems than in small systems thought teaching was getting worse. The major problems given were large class size, insufficient time for rest or preparation, lack of public support for schools, inadequate salaries, and insufficiency of clerical help.

### Summary

The preceding review of research and related literature contains many findings which have a bearing on this study. These findings are:

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<sup>45</sup>Murse and Parson, "Study of Rural Teachers," p. 23.

<sup>46</sup>"Teacher's View of Teaching," NEA Research Bulletin, (December 1971), pp. 102-108.



1. There is a shortage of qualified vocational agriculture teachers.  
One of the reasons for this shortage is not enough agricultural education graduates entering the teaching profession. It was suggested that students hear mainly the negative aspects of teaching and very little about the positive attributes of teaching.
2. Reasons stated by education graduates for not teaching were mainly extrinsic factors. Reasons stated for teaching were primarily intrinsic factors, although the graduates were also interested in extrinsic factors.
3. Teaching, compared with other occupations, was seen as financially unrewarding, lacking in opportunity for advancement and relatively lower in social status and power in public affairs. On most "status" variables, teaching was generally below average. However, on "service" variables, teaching was generally above average, often listed as the top occupation in these categories.
4. College students generally perceived teaching more favorably than high school students. They saw the teacher as an unselfish, wise, sensitive, thoughtful, intelligent person but whose material and social success is very limited. Even though students saw teaching as financially unrewarding, they still felt that teachers were typically as well off as other families. Students who plan to become teachers perceived the image of the teacher more favorably than those who did not.
5. Over one-third of the adult population saw teaching as an undesirable occupation for their children. However, most felt that teachers were competent and well-trained. They expressed confidence in teachers as a whole.



6. In almost all studies of students training to teach, past teachers were rated as the first or second most influential factor in their career choice. A close relationship with a past teacher was a positive influencing factor.
7. Teachers had a lower opinion of the importance of their job and gave themselves a lower status rating than did the general public. Teachers in larger communities and school systems were more negative towards teaching than are those from smaller ones.

Research and related literature examined in this study would seem to support the importance of revealing how high school students perceive the vocational agriculture teachers job. By doing so, any misconceptions held by the students can be corrected and the strong points of teaching vocational agriculture can be emphasized. This might tend to make teaching vocational agriculture more desirable so that an impact may be made upon the vocational agriculture teacher shortage.

## CHAPTER IV

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The data in this chapter reveals the findings of a statewide survey of twelfth grade vocational agriculture students concerning their perceptions of teaching vocational agriculture as a career.

The findings from this study are reported in the following subdivisions:

1. Analysis of demographic data;
2. Analysis of dependent variables;
3. Statistical analysis of vocational agriculture teaching attributes;
4. Reliability of the research instrument.

Analysis of Demographic Data

The sex of the respondents in the study is reported in Table 3. Inspection of this table shows only six percent of the respondents were females.

TABLE 3  
SEX OF RESPONDENTS

Sex	Number of Responses	Per Cent
Male	155	93.4
Female	10	6.0
TOTALS	165	99.4 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Data missing from one respondent accounted for .6 per cent.

The number of years of vocational agriculture completed by the twelfth grade students is presented in Table 4. This table reveals that most of the students did have a good basis for their perceptions. Eightypercent of the population completed at least four years of vocational agriculture. This included 1.8 percent which had five years of agriculture classes. These students most likely had failed to pass a year of high school. Only six percent of the respondents had only one or two years of vocational agriculture. The remaining 13.9 percent had taken three years of agriculture. The mean number of years of vocational agriculture taken by the students was 3.75 years.

TABLE 4  
YEARS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE COMPLETED

Years completed	Number of Responses	Per Cent
1	2	1.2
2	8	4.8
3	23	13.9
4	130	78.3
5	3	1.8
TOTALS	166	100

The data which were compiled in Table 5 indicated that 80.7 percent of the respondents were FFA members three or four years. Only 4.8 percent of the students had never been an FFA member. The percent of respondents who had been FFA members for only one or two years was 14.4 percent. The mean number of years as an FFA member was 3.28 years.

TABLE 5  
YEARS AS AN FFA MEMBER

Years FFA	Number of Responses	Per Cent
0	8	4.8
1	8	4.8
2	16	9.6
3	32	19.3
4	102	61.4
TOTALS	166	100

The number of vocational agriculture teachers that the students had as instructors is shown in Table 6. Examining this table discloses that only 38.6 percent of the respondents have had only one vocational agriculture teacher. Another 31.9 percent reported having had two teachers and 14.5 percent have had three teachers. The remaining 15 percent indicated they have had four or five vocational agriculture teachers. The resulting mean number of teachers reported was 2.13 teachers. This mean would seem to indicate a fairly high teacher turnover rate, a large number of multiple teacher departments, or a combination of the two. The 29.5 percent of students having had three, four or five vocational agriculture teachers is most likely due to the turnover rate.

TABLE 6  
NUMBER OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS

Number of Teachers	Number of Responses	Per Cent
1	64	38.6
2	53	31.9
3	24	14.5
4	13	7.8
5	16	7.2
TOTALS	166	100

Table 7 shows a profile of selected characteristics of the study respondents. These data reveal that 93.4 percent were male. Those who had completed four years or more of vocational agriculture represented 80 percent. Sixty-one percent of the students had completed four years of FFA membership. The percent of students who had two or more vocational agriculture teachers was 61.4 percent.

TABLE 7  
PROFILE OF SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF TWELFTH  
GRADE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE STUDENTS  
n=166

Characteristic	Per Cent
Male	93.4
Completed four years or more of vocational agriculture	80.0
Completed four years of FFA membership	61.4
Had two or more vocational agriculture teachers	61.4

### Analysis of Dependent Variables

The income of vocational agriculture teachers as perceived by twelfth grade vocational agriculture students is presented in Table 8. Only 10.2 percent of the students perceived an income of \$10,000 or less. Over one-half (51.8 percent) of the students believed vocational agriculture teachers earn either \$12,000 or \$14,000 a year. Another 26 percent saw the teachers earning either \$16,000 or \$18,000 a year. Only 10.2 percent of the respondents perceived the vocational agriculture teacher earning over \$20,000 a year. The mean perceived income was \$14,500 per year.

These data may indicate that twelfth grade vocational agriculture students perceive the average income of vocational agriculture teachers as being lower than actual. The average beginning first year vocational agriculture teacher in Kansas during the 1980-81 school year earned \$14,000 for an eleven month contract.<sup>46</sup> The average Kansas vocational agriculture teacher is most likely earning several thousand dollars a year more than the \$14,500 estimated by the twelfth grade vocational agriculture students.

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<sup>46</sup>Welton and Unruh, "A Follow-up of the 1980 Agricultural Education Graduate at Kansas State University."

TABLE 8

THE INCOME OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS AS  
PERCEIVED BY TWELFTH GRADE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE STUDENTS

Income	Number of Responses	Per Cent
\$8,000	8	4.8
\$10,000	9	5.4
\$12,000	43	25.9
\$14,000	43	25.9
\$16,000	24	14.5
\$18,000	19	11.5
\$20,000	8	4.8
\$22,000	4	2.4
\$24,000 or more	5	3.0
TOTALS	163	98.2 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Data missing from three respondents accounted for 1.8 per cent.

Figures shown in Table 9 show the hours worked per week by vocational agriculture teachers as perceived by twelfth grade vocational agriculture students. Almost one-half (48.8 percent) of the respondents estimated that their vocational agriculture teacher worked between 40 and 50 hours per week. The mean hours per week was also in this range. Only 17.5 percent of the students perceived their vocational agriculture teacher working less than 40 hours per week. One-third of the students (33 percent) thought their teacher worked over 50 hours per week. Six percent of these perceived their teachers working over 60 hours.

These figures when compared to previous studies show that the twelfth grade students have an accurate perception of the hours worked by

vocational agriculture teachers. In Dillon's<sup>47</sup> study, vocational agriculture teachers reported working 51 hours per week compared to the 40 to 50 hours estimated by students in this study. Wolfe and McCracken<sup>48</sup> had found that production agriculture teachers worked 57.4 hours per week and non-production agriculture teachers worked 49.7 hours per week.

TABLE 9

THE HOURS WORKED PER WEEK BY VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE  
TEACHERS AS PERCEIVED BY TWELFTH GRADE VOCATIONAL  
AGRICULTURE STUDENTS

Hours/week	Number of Responses	Per Cent
Under 30	4	2.4
31-40	25	15.1
40-50	81	48.8
50-60	45	27.1
60 or more	10	6.0
TOTALS	165	99.4 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Data missing from one respondent accounted for .6 per cent.

An analysis of the competition for getting a job teaching agriculture in high school as perceived by twelfth grade vocational agriculture students is presented in Table 10. The largest number of students (39.8 percent) felt that there was "some" competition for getting an agriculture position. One-third of the population believed the competition to be "considerable." Only 3.6 percent of the respondents felt that the

<sup>47</sup>Dillon, "Analysis of Factors Influencing Time Use by Vo-Ag Teachers."

<sup>48</sup>Wolfe and McCracken, "Time Utilization by Vocational Agriculture Teachers."



competition was "stiff." Perceiving "very little" competition for getting a job teaching agriculture in high school were 22 percent of the respondents.

TABLE 10  
COMPETITION FOR GETTING A JOB TEACHING AGRICULTURE IN  
HIGH SCHOOL AS PERCEIVED BY TWELFTH GRADE  
VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE STUDENTS

Degree of Competition	Number of Responses	Per Cent
Stiff	6	3.6
Considerable	55	33.1
Some	66	39.8
Very Little	37	22.3
TOTALS	164	98.8 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Data missing from two respondents accounted for 1.2 per cent.

Table 11 presents data concerning the twelfth grade vocational agriculture students perceptions of the competition for getting a job teaching any subject in high school. Seven percent thought the competition was "stiff." Believing the competition for getting any high school subject teaching job was "considerable" was 41.6 percent of the population. Another 42.2 percent felt the competition was "some." Only 8.4 percent of the twelfth grade students felt the competition was "very little."

Comparing Table 10 and 11 shows that the twelfth grade vocational agriculture students perceive less competition for getting a job teaching vocational agriculture in high school than for getting a job teaching

TABLE 11

COMPETITION FOR GETTING A JOB TEACHING ANY SUBJECT  
IN HIGH SCHOOL AS PERCEIVED BY TWELFTH GRADE  
VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE STUDENTS

Degree of Competition	Number of Responses	Per Cent
Stiff	12	7.2
Considerable	69	41.6
Some	70	42.2
Very little	14	8.4
TOTALS	165	99.4 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Data missing from one respondent accounted for .6 per cent.

any high school subject. This can be deduced by comparing the data on each table for "very little" competition. Twenty-two percent of the respondents felt there was "very little" competition to get a job teaching vocational agriculture. Only eight percent, however, thought there would be "very little" competition getting a job teaching any high school subject. From these data, it may be concluded that twelfth grade vocational agriculture students are aware of the vocational agriculture teacher shortage and the resulting less competition for getting a job teaching agriculture in high school.

In order to assist in analyzing the next three tables, it is necessary to review the scale calculated at the end of Chapter II. In this scale, 1.0 to 1.8 = strongly agree, 1.8 to 2.6 = agree, 2.6 to 3.4 = undecided or neutral, 3.4 to 4.2 = disagree, and 4.2 to 5.0 = strongly disagree.

### Analysis of Economic Rewards Variables

Figures in Table 12 indicate the perceptions of the economic rewards of teaching vocational agriculture. Three of the first four variables (one, two, and three) with which the respondents agreed deal with income. All three variables (13, 14, and 15) with which the respondents disagreed were related to income. According to the students, the vocational agriculture teacher does not earn as much as other people with equal training and experience. The vocational agriculture teacher is not adequately paid for hours spent outside the regular 40 hour workweek. The income when compared to the amount of work performed is too low. The population felt that many laborers in the community earn as much or more than a vocational agriculture teacher. The vocational agriculture teacher's vehicle is not perceived as being nicer than the average vehicle in the community. The vocational agriculture teacher is not thought to receive more paid vacation than that of other jobs in the community. These data suggest that the twelfth grade vocational agriculture students perceived the vocational agriculture teacher as being underpaid for the training required and work performed. The position does not offer economic rewards above the average job in the community. However, the teaching position is believed by the respondents to offer good job security (variable four).

These data are consistent with earlier findings about student perceptions of general classroom teachers. Langston<sup>49</sup> also found the twelfth grade students saw teaching as underpaid for the amount of training required. Dutton and Keislar<sup>50</sup> also found that students felt teachers

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<sup>49</sup>Langston, "Study of Attitudes Toward Teaching," p. 86.

<sup>50</sup>Dutton and Keislar, "Attitudes Toward Teaching," p. 170.

TABLE 12

THE FOLLOWING ECONOMIC REWARDS OF TEACHING VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURAL AS  
PERCEIVED BY TWELFTH GRADE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE STUDENTS

Variable	Mean <sup>a</sup>	SD
1. Many laborers in the community earn as much or more than a vo-ag teacher.	2.02	.89
2. A vo-ag teacher's income when compared to the amount of work performed is too low.	2.30	1.00
3. A vo-ag teacher's salary is lower than that of other people with equal training and experience (such as ag. economists, agronomists, social workers).	2.34	.87
4. Teaching vo-ag offers good job security.	2.55	.83
5. A vo-ag teacher should earn more than teachers with the same qualifications who teach non-agriculture courses.	2.68	1.15
6. A vo-ag teacher must work part time in addition to teaching to maintain a standard of living equal to the average professional person in the community.	2.70	.93
7. Vo-ag teachers often use their positions as a stepping stone to a more desirable job.	2.70	.95
8. A vo-ag teacher would change jobs if the new job offered an increase in salary.	2.73	.94
9. The opportunity for advancement to higher paying positions for a vo-ag teacher is excellent.	2.91	.99
10. A vo-ag teacher's retirement program is much better than that of other working adults in the community.	3.19	.76
11. A vo-ag teacher's salary is sufficient to comfortably raise a family of four.	3.33	1.04
12. A vo-ag teacher's home is nicer than the average home in the community.	3.39	.82
13. A vo-ag teacher is properly paid for hours spent outside the regular 40 hour workweek.	3.40	.93
14. The amount of paid vacation for a vo-ag teacher is more than that of other jobs in the community.	3.47	.97
15. A vo-ag teacher's vehicle is nicer than the average vehicle in the community.	3.49	1.01

<sup>a</sup>The scale used was one through five where: 1= strongly agree, 2= agree, 3= undecided or neutral, 4= disagree, 5= strongly disagree.

drove average or below average vehicles. In the Langston study, the students perceived that teaching offered little chance for advancement. In the present study, the students were neutral on their responses concerning advancement.

The population in this study marked neutral or undecided on eight of the 15 variables concerning economic rewards. These data may infer that twelfth grade vocational agriculture students have not developed definite perceptions on the economic rewards of teaching vocational agriculture.

#### Analysis of Working Conditions Variables

Inspection of Table 13 shows the respondents' agreement to variables concerning the working conditions of the vocational agriculture teaching position. The students felt that the vocational agriculture teacher has a favorable attitude toward the workload of teaching vocational agriculture. The workload is seen as allowing time for a good family life. When compared to the average teacher, the vocational agriculture teacher is seen as working more hours per week. The students' response to the statement that a vocational agriculture teacher spends more time working per week than does the average working adult in the community was neutral.

The working conditions of teaching vocational agriculture are seen as favorable. This is indicated by agreement with these statements:

- 1) a vocational agriculture teacher has the support of the community;
- 2) a vocational agriculture teacher has the respect of the students enrolled in the vocational agriculture program;
- 3) vocational agriculture students have a very positive attitude toward vocational agriculture classes and the FFA; and
- 4) teaching vocational agriculture provides

TABLE 13

THE WORKING CONDITIONS OF TEACHING VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE  
AS PERCEIVED BY TWELFTH GRADE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE STUDENTS

Variable	Mean <sup>a</sup>	SD
1. A vo-ag teacher has a favorable attitude toward the workload of teaching vo-ag.	2.05	.77
2. A vo-ag teacher has the respect of the students enrolled in the vo-ag program.	2.1	.75
3. Vo-ag students have a very positive attitude toward vo-ag classes and the FFA.	2.22	.89
4. A vo-ag teacher spends more time working per week than does the average teacher.	2.22	.94
5. A vo-ag teacher has the support of the community.	2.27	.81
6. Teaching vo-ag provides intellectually stimulating activities.	2.36	.77
7. A vo-ag teacher's workload is such that it allows time for a good family life.	2.52	.94
8. A vo-ag teacher travels more on the job than the average working adult in the community.	2.64	.92
9. Teaching vo-ag is a very stressful occupation.	2.66	.90
10. A vo-ag teacher spends more time working per week than does the average working adult in the community.	2.71	.96
11. A vo-ag teacher receives recognition for a job well done.	2.67	.91
12. A vo-ag teacher's position has high prestige in the community.	2.81	.88
13. Space, facilities & equipment in the vo-ag department are much nicer than are other departments in the high school.	2.98	1.30
14. The school administration is very supportive of the vo-ag program.	3.01	1.22
15. Teachers in the school regard vo-ag as a very important part of the total curriculum.	3.22	1.08
16. Parents of vo-ag students in the community often expect too much from a vo-ag teacher.	3.23	1.01
17. There are more discipline problems in vo-ag classes than in other high school courses.	3.30	1.18
18. A vo-ag teacher works all the time & never has fun.	3.99	.82

<sup>a</sup>The scale used was one through five where: 1= strongly agree, 2= agree, 3= undecided or neutral, 4= disagree, 5= strongly disagree.

intellectually stimulating activities. All these factors would seem to make working as a vocational agriculture teacher more enjoyable. The vocational agriculture teaching job is seen as being fun. This can be deduced by the "strong disagreement" on item 18 (a vocational agriculture teacher works all the time and never has fun).

The students marked neutral or undecided on ten of the 18 variable items dealing with working conditions. This may indicate that twelfth grade vocational agriculture students have not developed definite perceptions on the working conditions of teaching vocational agriculture. One of these variables (12) conflicts with earlier findings. In this study, the students were undecided about the prestige of the vocational agriculture teacher. In O'Dowd and Beardslee's<sup>51</sup> study, the students rated the teachers low on social status. Another conflicting finding in this study is variable six. Langston's<sup>52</sup> students thought that teaching was monotonous and uninteresting. Students in this study felt that teaching vocational agriculture provides intellectually stimulating activities.

#### Analysis of Personal Characteristics Variables

The vocational agriculture teacher gets along well with people in the community according to the students. This can be seen by observing variable number one on Table 14. This was the only variable in the entire study which received a "strongly agree" rating. This fact, coupled with agreement to variable six, a vocational agriculture teacher

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<sup>51</sup>O'Dowd and Beardslee, "Student Image of Teacher," p. 251.

<sup>52</sup>Langston, "Study of Attitudes Toward Teaching," p. 86.

has a large number of friends, would imply that the vocational agriculture teacher is seen as a highly sociable person.

It can be seen by observing Table 14, that the vocational agriculture teacher is favorably perceived in nearly all of the personal characteristic variables. According to the twelfth grade vocational agriculture students, the vocational agriculture teacher is a hard working, dependable individual who is enthusiastic about teaching (variables two, three and five). The average vocational agriculture teacher does a good job as a teacher as shown in variables seven, nine, ten and 17. Not only is the vocational agriculture teacher knowledgeable of the subject matter offered in the program (variable ten), but also has the ability to motivate students to want to learn that subject matter (variable 12). The vocational agriculture teacher is viewed as being fair in dealing with the students (variable seven) and is interested in their personal lives (variable 17). Overall, the vocational agriculture teacher is seen as being competent in the job of teaching.

The vocational agriculture teacher is considered successful by the vocational agriculture students' friends and parents according to the respondents (variable 15 and 16). The teacher is also seen as contributing greatly to the total good of the community (variable 11).

Other personal characteristics favorably viewed by the population were variables four, eight, 13 and 14. The vocational agriculture teacher is a complimentary, attractively dressed individual with a good sense of humor and good moral character. Although the students agree the vocational agriculture teacher is of good moral character, they were undecided as to whether the teacher is active in church work (variable 19). The respondents were also undecided on whether the vocational agriculture teacher is a leader in the community (variable 18).



TABLE 14

THE PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS  
AS PERCEIVED BY TWELFTH GRADE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE STUDENTS

Variable	Mean <sup>a</sup>	SD
1. A vo-ag teacher gets along well with people in the community.	1.71	.59
2. A vo-ag teacher is willing to work hard.	1.86	.69
3. A vo-ag teacher is dependable.	1.90	.74
4. A vo-ag teacher has a good sense of humor.	2.00	.79
5. A vo-ag teacher is enthusiastic about his/her work.	2.04	.77
6. A vo-ag teacher has a large number of friends.	2.06	.73
7. A vo-ag teacher is fair in dealing with vo-ag students.	2.08	.77
8. A vo-ag teacher is of good moral character.	2.1	.81
9. A vo-ag teacher is competent as a teacher of vocational agriculture.	2.13	.69
10. A vo-ag teacher is knowledgeable of the subject matter offered in the program.	2.16	.72
11. A vo-ag teacher contributes greatly to the total good of the community.	2.16	.84
12. A vo-ag teacher has the ability to motivate students to want to learn.	2.20	.86
13. A vo-ag teacher is complimentary.	2.30	.68
14. A vo-ag teacher dresses attractively in public.	2.35	.85
15. A vo-ag teacher is considered successful by parents of vo-ag students.	2.40	.81
16. A vo-ag teacher is considered successful by my friends.	2.44	.76
17. A vo-ag teacher is interested in the personal lives of the vo-ag students enrolled in the program.	2.44	.90
18. A vo-ag teacher is a leader in the community.	2.69	.80
19. A vo-ag teacher is active in church work.	2.77	.80

<sup>a</sup>The scale used was one through five where: 1= strongly agree, 2= agree, 3= undecided or neutral, 4= disagree, 5= strongly disagree.

In previous studies, Friesen<sup>53</sup> had found that teachers rated high on contribution to the total good. Findings in this study were consistent with his findings. Waldrip<sup>54</sup> found that teachers were viewed as being extremely active in community activities by adults. However, in this study, students were undecided if vocational agriculture teachers were leaders in their communities. Teachers were faulted for not paying enough attention to individual students in the 1978 NEA public opinion polls.<sup>55</sup> Vocational agriculture teachers were seen as interested in the personal lives of their students in this study. As in the public opinion poll, the vocational agriculture teachers were perceived as being competent and well-trained in this study also. Friesen had found teachers rated very low sociably. This is in strong conflict with the findings in this study about vocational agricultural teachers.

#### Analysis of Activities Variables

Table 15 presents data pertaining to the perceived activities of vocational agriculture teachers. The twelfth grade students seem to have a fairly accurate perception of what the vocational agriculture teaching job entails. Since the vocational agriculture teacher is hired first and foremost as a teacher of agriculture, it is pleasing to see that their students report teaching takes up more of their teachers time than any other activity. The respondents estimate that their teachers spend almost equal time teaching in the classroom and the shop or laboratory, activities one and two. According to their students, teachers also use agricultural events such as field days and stock shows considerably

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<sup>53</sup>Friesen, "Student Perceptions of Teacher Image," p. 635.

<sup>54</sup>Waldrip, "Image of Spokane Teacher," p. 571.

<sup>55</sup>Ryor, "Public Respects Teachers," pp. 11, 12.

TABLE 15

ACTIVITIES OF A VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER AS PERCEIVED  
BY TWELFTH GRADE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE STUDENTS

Activity	Mean <sup>a</sup>	SD
1. Teaching in the classroom	5.29	1.37
2. Teaching in the shop or laboratory	5.26	1.52
3. Attending agricultural events (such as field days, stock shows)	5.06	1.60
4. Advising FFA chapter activities	5.30	1.54
5. Coaching FFA judging teams	4.99	1.45
6. Facility & equipment upkeep & maintenance	4.83	1.46
7. Attendance at school functions & activities (such as social, athletics, programs, PTA)	4.64	1.63
8. Responsibility for general school duties (such as homeroom, hall, lunchroom, class advisor)	4.44	1.8
9. Money making projects for the FFA	4.4	1.42
10. Clerical work (paper work)	4.25	1.47
11. Teaching adult classes and/or advising the young farmers	4.02	1.82
12. Counseling activities	3.91	1.43
13. Assisting with construction & beautification projects for the school	3.84	1.56
14. Farming	3.84	2.14
15. Attending meetings of professional organizations	3.69	1.51
16. Meeting with the vocational agricultural advisory council	3.58	1.52
17. Jobs after school hours which are not part of the teaching job	3.55	1.82
18. Seeking advanced college degrees or self-improvement	3.5	1.63
19. Assisting local farmers with problems	3.46	1.58
20. Assisting the county 4-H & agricultural extension agents	3.42	1.67
21. Performing maintenance services for the rest of the school	3.39	1.66
22. Home visits	3.25	1.4
23. Providing agricultural services such as pruning for community members	3.15	1.57

TABLE 15 (Cont.)

Activity	Mean <sup>a</sup>	SD
24. Participating in community organizations (such as Lions, Rotary)	3.13	1.53
25. Speaking to agricultural organizations	3.08	1.47
26. Coaching a varsity sports team	1.74	1.58

<sup>a</sup>The scale used was zero through seven where: zero= no time and 7= a large amount of time.

as an education tool (activity three).

FFA is a big part of vocational agriculture in Kansas. This can be pointed out by the fact that three of the top ten teacher activities listed (activities four, five, and nine) pertained to FFA. The FFA activity reported taking up the most time was advising chapter activities. This was followed very closely by coaching judging teams and more distantly by FFA money making projects.

The vocational agriculture teacher is seen as spending a considerable amount of time on facility and equipment upkeep and maintenance for the agriculture program (activity six). Construction and beautification projects for the school also take up some of the agriculture teachers time (activity 13). However, the students report that agriculture teachers spend somewhat less time performing maintenance services for the entire school (activity 21).

Attendance at school functions and activities such as athletic events and school programs (activity seven) take up much of the vocational agriculture teachers' time. The students also report that general school

duties such as homeroom, hall and lunchroom supervisor and class advisor (activity eight) consume a considerable amount of the vocational agriculture teachers' time.

Two other non-teaching activities rated relatively high on the list. These were clerical work (activity ten) and counseling (activity 12). Vocational agriculture teachers often complain about the large number of forms, applications and other paper work they have to do so activity ten was expected to be rated as it was.

Teaching adult classes and/or advising the young farmers organization (activity 11) also received a considerable amount of time rating.

An activity which received a higher rating than expected was farming (activity 14). Two reasons might account for this. Due to a tightening economy, more vocational agriculture teachers may be farming in addition to teaching. The other explanation may be the respondents took into account that many vocational agriculture teachers spend their free weekends and summers helping relatives or others to farm.

The remaining activities all received some time spent on each with the exception of coaching a varsity sports team (activity 26) which received almost no time. This was expected, as most vocational agriculture teachers do not have enough time for coaching activities. However, due to the 1.74 rating, there are apparently vocational agriculture teachers who do some coaching.

One activity which was rated unexpectedly low was making home visits (activity 22). This researcher expected this activity to be rated much higher, at least in the top one-half of the list. If the students' rating is accurate, the Supervised Occupational Experience Programs are not being supervised by the vocational agriculture teachers as closely as they were originally designed to be.

### Analysis of Job Aspects Variables

Figures contained in Table 16 show a comparison of the importance of selected job aspects of a twelfth grade vocational agriculture student's future job and the extent to which teaching vocational agriculture would allow those aspects to be satisfied. The respondents rated five of the aspects as being "substantially" important and the remaining 14 as being of "moderate to substantial" importance. Those aspects which students felt were substantially important to their future job were:

1) opportunity to use own ideas and make own decisions, 2) able to work with your hands, 3) personal satisfaction from the job, 4) opportunity to develop close friendships, and 5) security in the job.

It can be seen by reviewing Table 17 that teaching vocational agriculture was not seen as able to satisfy any of these aspects. Only two of the aspects, "able to work with your hands" and "opportunity to use own ideas and make own decisions," were close to being satisfied by teaching vocational agriculture.

Closer inspection of Table 17 shows that teaching vocational agriculture was seen as able to satisfy only three job aspects. These were: 1) working with young people; 2) opportunity to help others; and 3) associated with agriculture. Teaching vocational agriculture was very close to being able to satisfy several other job aspects. While none of the aspects able or almost able to be satisfied by teaching were among the top five important aspects, many were rated as being of almost "substantial" importance.

Teaching vocational agriculture was not seen as being able to satisfy most of the job aspects. The three which were least satisfied included: good salaries (19), opportunity for advancement (18), and security in the job (17). The fact that the students do not think teaching

TABLE 16

A COMPARISON OF THE IMPORTANCE OF SELECTED JOB ASPECTS OF A  
TWELFTH GRADE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE STUDENT'S FUTURE JOB AND  
THE EXTENT TO WHICH TEACHING VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE WOULD  
ALLOW THOSE ASPECTS TO BE SATISFIED

Importance to Student's Future Job		Satisfaction Allowed by Teaching Vocational Agriculture
Mean <sup>a</sup>	Aspect of Job	Mean <sup>a</sup>
4.17	1. Opportunity to use own ideas and make own decisions	3.99
4.16	2. Able to work with your hands	4.05
4.15	3. Personal satisfaction from the job	3.75
4.09	4. Opportunity to develop close friendships	3.80
4.08	5. Security on the job	3.58
3.97	6. Associated with agriculture	3.97
3.92	7. Work in rural communities	3.80
3.91	8. Good salary	3.16
3.90	9. Variety of work	3.73
3.82	10. Choice of job location	3.36
3.81	11. Good working hours	3.49
3.81	12. Opportunity for advancement	3.30
3.80	13. Opportunity to help others	4.01
3.76	14. Socially respected image	3.51
3.71	15. Working with young people	4.1
3.66	16. Freedom from supervision	3.54
3.53	17. Time for leisure	3.28
3.23	18. Much vacation time	3.16
3.22	19. Opportunity to travel	3.12

<sup>a</sup>The scale used was one through five where: 1= none, 2= minimal, 3= moderate, 4= substantial, and 5= extreme.

TABLE 17

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE IMPORTANCE OF SELECTED JOB ASPECTS TO  
TWELFTH GRADE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE STUDENT'S FUTURE JOB AND THE  
EXTENT TO WHICH VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE WOULD ALLOW THOSE ASPECTS TO  
BE SATISFIED

Job Aspect	Difference (Importance minus satisfaction)
1. Working with young people	+.39
2. Opportunity to help others	+.21
3. Associated with agriculture	0
4. Much vacation time	-.07
5. Work in rural communities	-.08
6. Opportunity to travel	-.10
*7. Able to work with your hands	-.11
8. Freedom from supervision	-.12
9. Variety of work	-.17
*10. Opportunity to use own ideas and make decisions	-.18
11. Socially respected image	-.25
12. Time for leisure	-.25
*13. Opportunity to develop close friendships	-.29
14. Good working hours	-.32
*15. Personal satisfaction from the job	-.40
16. Choice of job location	-.46
*17. Security in the job	-.50
18. Opportunity for advancement	-.51
19. Good salary	-.75

\*aspects which respondents felt were substantially important to  
their future job.



vocational agriculture would satisfy their need for job security conflicts with earlier findings in this study. Data on Table 12 indicated that twelfth grade vocational agriculture students agreed with the statement that teaching vocational agriculture offers good job security.

#### Statistical Analysis of Vocational Agriculture Teaching Attributes

A number of attributes relating to teaching vocational agriculture were investigated in this study. These attributes were:

1. Teaching activities;
2. Economic rewards;
3. Working conditions;
4. Personal characteristics;
5. Job aspect importance;
6. Job aspect satisfaction.

An analysis of variance test was made for each of the six attributes listed. In each case, the dependent variable was the mean score of the vocational agriculture teaching attribute. Four selected demographic characteristics (sex, years of vocational agriculture, years as an FFA member, and number of vocational agriculture teachers) served as independent variables in these tests. An analysis of variance test revealed no statistically significant (.05 level of significance) difference in the average means for teaching activities and economic rewards among the four demographic characteristics. These analysis are indicated in Tables 18 and 19 in Appendix F.

### Working Conditions and Personal Characteristics

Data obtained from an analysis of variance of average mean scores for working conditions and personal characteristics and each of the four selected demographic characteristics is presented in Table 20. The differences in working conditions average mean scores and the number of years as an FFA member were significant at the .05 level. Students who were FFA members for three years rated their responses to variables concerning working conditions lower than those who were members for only one or two years.

Significance was found at the .05 level among average mean scores for personal characteristics and the number of vocational agriculture teachers a student had in high school. Students that had only one vocational agriculture teacher rated variables concerning personal characteristics of vocational agriculture teachers lower than those who had two vocational agriculture teachers. One possible explanation for this result could be that the one vocational agriculture teacher they had was not a good teacher. Those who had two teachers had a better chance to get at least one good teacher.

TABLE 20

AVERAGE MEAN FOR WORKING CONDITIONS AND  
PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS BY EACH OF FOUR SELECTED  
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Demographic Characteristics	Average Mean <sup>a</sup>	
	Working Conditions	Personal Characteristics
<u>Sex</u>		
-Male	2.69	2.18
-Female	2.81	2.10
-Total	2.70	2.17
<u>Years of Vo-Ag</u>		
-One year	2.89	1.68
-Two years	2.76	2.04
-Three years	2.60	2.22
-Four and five years	2.71	2.18
-Total	2.70	2.17
<u>Years of FFA</u>		
-No years	2.82	2.20
-One and two years	2.86 <sup>b</sup>	2.18
-Three years	2.55 <sup>b</sup>	2.22
-Four years	2.69	2.16
-Total	2.70	2.17
<u>Number of Vo-Ag Teachers</u>		
-One	2.68	2.07 <sup>b</sup>
-Two	2.77	2.33 <sup>b</sup>
-Three	2.56	2.12
-Four and five	2.70	2.15
-Total	2.70	2.17

<sup>a</sup>The scale used was one through five where: 1= strongly agree, 2= agree, 3= undecided or neutral, 4= disagree, 5= strongly disagree.

<sup>b</sup>Significant at the .05 level of significance.

### Job Aspects

Data contained in Table 21 reveal the average mean for job aspect importance and satisfaction by each of the four selected demographic characteristics. The differences in average mean for job aspect importance and job aspect satisfaction and the number of vocational agriculture teachers during high school were statistically significant at the .05 level.

Students who have had four or five vocational agricultural teachers rated the importance of the various job aspects to their future job lower than did those who had only one or two vocational agriculture teachers. Those who have had four or five vocational agriculture teachers also rated the satisfaction of those job aspects by teaching vocational agriculture lower than those students who had two vocational agricultural teachers. The reason those students with many vocational agriculture rated the job satisfaction derived from teaching agriculture lower is possibly due to the probability that their vocational agriculture teachers were not satisfied by the job which resulted in their moving to a different one.

TABLE 21

AVERAGE MEAN FOR JOB ASPECTS BY EACH OF  
FOUR SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Demographic Characteristics	Average Mean <sup>a</sup>	
	Job Aspect Importance	Job Aspect Satisfaction
<u>Sex</u>		
-Male	3.46	3.30
-Female	3.94	3.61
-Total	3.49	3.32
<u>Years of Vo-Ag</u>		
-One year	1.06	1.37
-Two years	3.47	3.20
-Three years	3.51	3.46
-Four and five years	3.53	3.34
-Total	3.49	3.33
<u>Years of FFA</u>		
-No years	3.91	3.53
-One and two years	3.10	2.97
-Three years	3.55	3.46
-Four years	3.53	3.35
-Total	3.49	3.33
<u>Number of Vo-Ag Teachers</u>		
-One	3.69	3.44
-Two	3.65	3.49
-Three	3.50	3.36
-Four and five	2.64	2.65
-Total	3.49	3.33

<sup>a</sup>The scale used was one through five where: 1= none, 2= minimal, 3= moderate, 4= substantial, 5= extreme.

<sup>b</sup>Significant at the .05 level of significance.

### Reliability of the Research Instrument

In order to test the reliability of the research instrument used in this study, a coefficient alpha test was made on each of the six groups of dependent variables. The results of this test can be found in Table 22. Four of the groups were found to have good internal consistency. Two groups (economic rewards and working conditions) had reliability alphas which are not acceptable if a 0.60 minimum is adopted.

TABLE 22  
COEFFICIENT ALPHA ON SIX GROUPS OF DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Dependent Variable Group	Number of Items	alpha
Economic rewards	15	0.31710
Working conditions	18	0.58827
Personal characteristics	19	0.87031
Activities	26	0.90617
Job aspect importance	19	0.82867
Job aspect satisfaction	19	0.85240

### Summary

This chapter has consisted of data obtained from 166 Kansas twelfth grade vocational agriculture students. A summary of the data follows.

Six percent of the respondents in this study were female. The remaining 94 percent were male.

Eighty percent of the population had four or five years of vocational agriculture. Only six percent had only one or two years of vocational agriculture.

A large majority of the vocational agriculture students (81 percent) were three or four year FFA members. Only 4.8 percent of the students had never been members of FFA.

Less than 40 percent of the respondents had only one vocational agriculture teacher during high school. Fifteen percent had four or five vocational agricultural teachers.

The yearly salary for a vocational agriculture teacher was perceived to be \$12,000 or \$14,000 by 52 percent of the twelfth grade students. Another 26 percent felt vocational agriculture teachers earn \$16,000 or \$18,000 per year.

Fifty percent of the students thought vocational agriculture teachers work between 40 and 50 hours per week. One third of the students (33 percent) perceived their agriculture teacher works over 50 hours per week.

The twelfth grade vocational agriculture students perceived less competition getting a job teaching vocational agriculture than teaching any high school subject. Twenty-two percent of the respondents saw "very little" competition getting a job teaching vocational agriculture. This compared with 8.4 percent seeing "very little" competition getting a job teaching any high school subject.



According to the students, the vocational agriculture teacher is underpaid for the amount of training required and the work performed. The respondents marked undecided or neutral on eight of the 15 variables concerning economic rewards. This may indicate that twelfth grade vocational agriculture students have not developed definite perceptions on the economic rewards of teaching vocational agriculture.

The respondent's attitudes toward the working conditions of the vocational agriculture teacher were mostly favorable. Teaching vocational agriculture was seen as allowing time for a good family life, as providing intellectually stimulating activities, and as being a fun job. The vocational agriculture teacher had the support of the community and the respect of students. The students had a very positive attitude toward vocational agriculture classes and the FFA. As with the economic rewards variables, the students were undecided on over one-half (ten out of 18) of the variables concerning working conditions.

The vocational agriculture teacher was seen as a very sociable person who gets along very well with the people in the community and has a large number of friends. The agriculture teacher is viewed as hard working, dependable individual who is enthusiastic about teaching. Other characteristics attributed to the vocational agriculture teacher were: 1) knowledge of the subject matter, 2) able to motivate students to want to learn, 3) contributing greatly to the total good of the community, 4) complimentary, 5) attractively dressed in the public, and 6) having a good sense of humor.

The twelfth grade vocational agriculture students seemed to have an accurate perception of the vocational agriculture teacher's activities. The students reported that the number one activity taking up the agriculture teacher's time was teaching. The vocational agriculture

teacher was seen as spending equal time in the classroom and shop or laboratory. Attending agricultural events such as field days and stock shows rated high on the list of activities. The teacher was viewed as spending considerable time with FFA activities, judging teams and money making activities. Upkeep of the department's facilities and equipment, attendance at school events, miscellaneous school duties, and clerical work rated relatively high on the list of activities. Teaching adult classes and/or advising the young farmers organization also received a considerable amount of time rating. An activity which received a higher than expected rating was farming. Home visits received an unexpected low rating.

The five job aspects rated as being of "substantial" importance to the twelfth grade vocational agriculture students' future job were: 1) opportunity to use own ideas and make own decisions, 2) able to work with your hands, 3) personal satisfaction from the job, 4) opportunity to develop close friendships, and 5) security in the job. Teaching vocational agriculture was not viewed as able to satisfy any of these needs. Only three of the 19 job aspects were thought to be able to be satisfied by teaching vocational agriculture. These were: 1) working with young people; 2) opportunity to help others; and 3) associated with agriculture. The three job aspects that teaching vocational agriculture was seen as least able to satisfy were: 1) good salary; 2) opportunity for advancement, and 3) security in the job. The fact that students felt teaching vocational agriculture would not satisfy their need for job security conflicted with the fact that earlier in the study they agreed that teaching vocational agriculture offered good job security.

The number of years of FFA membership and the number of vocational agriculture teachers that a student had during high school were found to significantly influence the students' perceptions of the vocational agriculture teacher and the vocational agriculture teaching profession. Students who were three year FFA members viewed the working conditions of teaching vocational agriculture lower than those who were one or two year members. Students that had only one vocational agriculture teacher rated variables concerning personal characteristics of vocational agriculture teachers lower than those who had two vocational agriculture teachers. Students who had four or five vocational agriculture teachers rated the importance of various job aspects to their future job lower than did those who had only one or two vocational agriculture teachers. Those who had four or five vocational agriculture teachers also rated the satisfaction of those job aspects by teaching vocational agriculture lower than those students who had two vocational agriculture teachers.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is a summary of the study. A review of the purpose, objectives of the study, methods, and procedures is included. Recommendations for further action, based on the findings and conclusions of this study, are also presented.

#### Summary of the Study

##### Purpose

The major purpose of this study was to examine how vocational agriculture students viewed teaching vocational agriculture as a career.

##### Objectives

Six specific objectives were identified to guide in the development and evaluation of this study:

1. To determine how vocational agriculture students perceive the economic rewards of teaching vocational agriculture;
2. To determine how vocational agriculture students perceive the working conditions of teaching vocational agriculture;
3. To determine how vocational agriculture students perceive the personal characteristics of the vocational agriculture teacher;
4. To determine how vocational agriculture students perceive the activities of the vocational agriculture teacher;
5. To determine how vocational agriculture students perceive their own job satisfaction as a potential vocational

agriculture teachers;

6. To determine how vocational agriculture students perceive the vocational agriculture and the general teaching job market.

### Methodology

In order to accomplish the purpose and objectives of this study, a statewide survey of Kansas twelfth grade vocational agriculture students was determined the best method to gather the needed information. Forty-eight vocational agriculture departments, representing 317 twelfth grade students, were randomly selected and gave their consent to participate in this study.

A survey instrument was developed to gather information from these students. The questionnaire consisted of 120 dependent variables and four demographic variables. A total of 166 questionnaires were returned by mail to the researcher. The data on the questionnaires were coded onto computer cards and analyzed at the Kansas State University Computing Center.

### Major Findings

#### Analysis of demographic data

Sex -- Six percent of the respondents were females. The male respondents represented 94 percent of the population.

Years of vocational agriculture completed -- Over 80 percent of the students had four or five years of vocational agriculture instruction. Fourteen percent had three years of agriculture classes. The remaining six percent had one or two years of vocational agriculture classes. The mean number of years of vocational agriculture

classes was 3.75.

Years as an FFA member -- Nearly 81 percent of the respondents were three or four year FFA members. Only 4.8 percent of the students had never been an FFA member. The percent of respondents who had been FFA members for only one or two years was 14.4 percent. The mean number of years of FFA membership was 3.28 years.

Number of vocational agriculture teachers -- Only 38.6 percent of the students had only one vocational agriculture teacher during high school. Another 32 percent had two teachers. Those who had three vocational agriculture teachers represented 14.5 percent. The remaining 15 percent had four or five vocational agriculture teachers. The mean number of vocational agriculture teachers for each student was 2.13.

#### Analysis of dependent variables

Perceived income of a vocational agriculture teacher -- Nearly 51 percent of the respondents felt vocational agriculture teachers earn either \$12,000 or \$14,000 per year. Another 26 percent believed the teachers earn either \$16,000 or \$18,000. Only 10.2 percent believed the agriculture teachers earn \$10,000 or less. The other 10.2 percent perceived an income of \$20,000 or more. The mean perceived income was \$14,500 per year.

Perceived hours worked per week by vocational agriculture teachers-- Nearly 49 percent of the students felt vocational agriculture teachers work between 40 and 50 hours per week. Thirty-three percent believed vocational agriculture teachers work more than 50 hours per week. Those thinking vocational agriculture teachers work less than 40 hours per week represented only 17.5 percent of the population.

Perceived competition for getting a job teaching vocational agriculture -- Only 3.6 percent of the respondents felt the competition was "stiff." Thirty-three percent perceived the competition as being "considerable." Those students who believed the competition to be "some" represented 40 percent of the population. The remaining 22 percent thought there is "very little" competition getting a job teaching vocational agriculture.

Perceived competition for getting a job teaching any high school subject -- Seven percent of the students believed the competition to be "stiff." Equal numbers of students (42 percent) felt the competition is "considerable" or "some." Only eight percent of the students felt there is "very little" competition getting a job teaching any high school subject.

Perceived economic rewards of teaching vocational agriculture -- The students believed that: 1) the vocational agriculture teacher's income is too low for the amount of work performed; 2) the agriculture teacher is improperly paid for hours worked outside the regular 40 hour workweek; 3) the vocational agriculture teacher's salary is lower than that of other people with equal training and experience; 4) teaching vocational agriculture offers good job security; and 5) the amount of paid vacation for a vocational agriculture teacher is not more than that of other jobs in the community. The respondents were undecided on eight of the 15 variables.

Perceived working conditions of teaching vocational agriculture -- The respondents agreed that: 1) a vocational agriculture teacher has a favorable attitude toward the teaching workload; 2) the workload allows time for a good family life; 3) a vocational agriculture teacher works more per week than does the average teacher; 4) a

vocational agriculture teacher has the respect of the agriculture students; 5) the vocational agriculture students have a very positive attitude toward vocational agriculture classes and the FFA; 6) teaching vocational agriculture provides intellectually stimulating activities; and 7) teaching vocational agriculture is a fun job. The students were undecided on ten of the 18 variables.

Perceptions of the personal characteristics of vocational agriculture teachers -- The students assigned these characteristics to the vocational agriculture teacher: 1) gets along well with people in the community; 2) has a large number of friends; 3) is willing to work hard; 4) is fair in dealing with vocational agriculture students; 5) has a good sense of humor; 6) is enthusiastic about teaching; 7) is dependable; 8) is of good moral character; 9) is a competent teacher of agriculture; 10) is knowledgeable about vocational agriculture subject matter; 11) contributes greatly to the total good of the community; 12) has the ability to motivate students to want to learn; 13) is complementary; 14) dresses attractively in public; 15) is considered successful by parents of vocational agriculture students; 16) is considered successful by my friends; and 17) is interested in the personal lives of the vocational agriculture students enrolled in the program. The students were undecided on two of the 19 variables.

Perceived activities of a vocational agriculture teacher -- The top ten activities that a vocational agriculture teacher does according to the respondents were: 1) teaching in the classroom; 2) teaching in the shop; 3) attending agricultural events; 4) advising FFA activities; 5) coaching FFA judging teams; 6) maintaining facility and equipment; 7) attending school activities; 8) performing general school duties; 9) working on FFA money makers; and 10)



doing clerical work. Farming rated higher than expected. Home visits rated lower than expected.

Perceived importance of job aspects to a future job -- The five aspects the respondents rated as being of "substantial" importance to their future job were: 1) opportunity to use own ideas and make own decisions; 2) able to work with your hands; 3) personal satisfaction from the job; 4) opportunity to develop close friendships; and 5) security in the job. The remaining 14 aspects were rated as being of "moderate" to "substantial" importance.

Perceived satisfaction of job aspects by teaching vocational agriculture -- Teaching vocational agriculture was seen as able to satisfy only three job aspects. These were: 1) working with young people; 2) opportunity to help others; and 3) associated with agriculture. The three job aspects which teaching vocational agriculture was seen as least able to satisfy were: 1) good salary; 2) opportunity for advancement; and 3) security in the job.

Differences between years of FFA membership on the average mean for the groupings of dependent variables -- A significant difference at the .05 level was found between three year members and those who were members one or two years. The three year members have lower perceptions of the vocational agriculture teachers' working conditions than do members of one or two years.

Differences between number of teachers on the average mean for the groupings of dependent variables -- Significant differences at the .05 level were found on the following:

1. Students that had only one vocational agriculture teacher rated the variables concerning the personal characteristics

of vocational agriculture teachers lower than those students who had two vocational agriculture teachers.

2. Students that had four or five vocational agriculture teachers placed less importance on various job aspects than did those who had one or two teachers. Those who had four or five vocational agriculture teachers also felt teaching vocational agriculture would provide less job satisfaction than did those students who had two agriculture teachers.

#### Internal consistency of the research instrument

Coefficient alpha -- Four of the six groupings of dependent variables had good reliability as measured by coefficient alpha. Two groups (economic rewards and working conditions) had unacceptable ranges.

#### Conclusions

From the analysis and interpretations of the data in this study, the following conclusions were made:

1. The average twelfth grade vocational agriculture student is aware of the shortage and need for vocational agriculture teachers.
2. The students feel that the vocational agriculture teacher is not adequately rewarded economically for the work performed and the training required.
3. The students have a misconception of the actual salary of a vocational agriculture teacher. The average twelfth grade vocational agriculture student underestimates the yearly income of vocational agriculture teachers by several thousand dollars.

4. Vocational agriculture students believe the working conditions of teaching vocational agriculture are favorable. They believe the job allows time for a good family life, provides intellectually stimulating activities and is fun. The students feel the vocational agriculture teacher has the support of the community and the respect of the students.
5. The students have an accurate perception of the average vocational agriculture teacher's working hours per week. They feel the vocational agriculture teacher works more per week than does the average high school teacher.
6. The students do not have definite perceptions of a majority of the variables concerning economic rewards or working conditions.
7. Vocational agriculture students do have definite perceptions of the personal characteristics of vocational agriculture teachers and view them most favorably. The characteristics assigned to vocational agriculture teachers include highly sociable, good sense of humor, hard working, knowledgeable, and good teachers.
8. Vocational agriculture students have an accurate perception of what the job of teaching vocational agriculture entails. They see teaching as the activity requiring the most time, followed closely by FFA activities.
9. The students value job characteristics which can not be easily measured materially more than those characteristics which can be easily measured materially. The characteristics most valued include being able to use their own ideas, make their own decisions, work with their hands, and develop

close relationships.

10. Although the students feel the working conditions of the vocational agriculture teacher are favorable, the conditions are not good enough for the students' own future jobs.
11. The job characteristics which teaching vocational agriculture fails to satisfy the students' needs the most pertain to economic rewards. These include salary, opportunity for advancement and job security.
12. Students who are third year FFA members have lower perceptions of the vocational agriculture teachers' working conditions than do those who are members for only one or two years. This perception raises during the fourth year.
13. Students that have only one vocational agriculture teacher views the personal characteristics of vocational agriculture teachers lower than those who have two vocational agriculture teachers.
14. Students who have many (four or five) vocational agriculture teachers during high school do not place as much importance on the various job aspects to their future job than do those students who have only one or two vocational agriculture teachers.
15. Those students who have four or five vocational agriculture teachers believe teaching vocational agriculture will provide less satisfaction for the various job aspects than do students who have two vocational agriculture teachers.

### Recommendations

Based upon the findings and conclusions of this study and the experiences of the researcher, the following recommendations are made.

1. The misconception about the average income of vocational agriculture teachers should be clarified by use of radio, magazine and newspaper articles, printed material given out at booths at career fairs, programs during FFA events (i.e. leadership camp, convention, banquets, and by their own vocational agriculture teachers.
2. Vocational agriculture teachers need to be supplied with a teaching unit on the career opportunities in agricultural education. The teachers should teach this unit early in the students' high school training (freshman year) and then more in-depth during their junior and/or senior years. This would make the students more aware of the vocational agriculture teacher shortage. It would also aid the students in developing definite perceptions of what teaching vocational agriculture entails, working conditions, and economic rewards.
3. The opportunity for advancement from vocational agriculture teacher to administrative positions or agribusiness positions should be emphasized.
4. Ways and means of increasing compensation for the work performed by vocational agriculture teachers should be identified and implemented. The KVATA Teacher Welfare Committee or a special committee composed of KVATA representatives, the Kansas State University Agricultural Education staff, the Kansas State Department of Education vocational education staff, and high school administrators should be formed to

work on this area.

5. An "Agricultural Education Day" at Kansas State University should be initiated. Students interested in agricultural education should be invited in the Spring to come to Kansas State University for a day. This day should consist of programs explaining the career opportunities in agricultural education, question and answer sessions, and tours of the College of Agriculture and the university facilities, followed by a barbeque and recreation. The responsibility for this day should be shared by the Agricultural Education student organizations, the Agricultural Education staff, and KVATA representatives. This day could be held in conjunction with the state FFA contest or state convention.
6. Vocational agriculture teachers should be encouraged to identify vocational agriculture students they feel would make good vocational agriculture teachers and use them as student assistants. By assisting the vocational agriculture teacher in daily activities, the students will be in a position to better understand the job of teaching vocational agriculture.
7. The Agricultural Education Task Force on Recruitment or a committee composed of similar representation should be continued to chart the progress being made on lessening the vocational agriculture teacher shortage and to continue researching ways of educating high school students about career opportunities in agricultural education.
8. The Agricultural Education staff should continue its recruitment efforts to keep the vocational agriculture students aware of

of the need for vocational agriculture teachers.

9. The findings of this study should be made available to the Kansas State Department of Education and other state departments of education. They should promote research in this and related areas. These departments should provide leadership and financial assistance to those studies which aid in the recruitment of agricultural education majors and potential teachers of vocational agriculture.

#### Recommendations for Further Studies

Further studies are seen important by this author in order to improve the recruitment into agricultural education and the lessening of the vocational agriculture teacher shortage. Possibilities for these studies include: 1) how high school students planning to become vocational agriculture teachers vary in their perceptions of the career of teaching vocational agriculture from other high school students; 2) what factors are most influential in agricultural education students' decision to study agricultural education in order to evaluate the efforts of the Agricultural Education Task Force on Recruitment; 3) means by which vocational agricultural teachers can be compensated for their extra work in order to keep vocational agriculture teaching competitive with agribusiness for agricultural education graduates; and 4) duplicate this study, correcting the reliability problems and increasing the population size in order to test for more significant results.

## APPENDICES



## APPENDIX A



**Department of Adult  
and Occupational Education**

College of Education  
Holtz Hall  
Manhattan, Kansas 66506  
913-532-5535

TO: Selected Kansas Vocational Agriculture Instructors

FROM: Larry Garten, Graduate Student in Agricultural Education

RE: Study of how high school vocational agriculture students view teaching vocational agriculture as a career.

Maintaining an adequate supply of quality vocational agriculture teachers continues to be a problem facing agricultural education in Kansas. In surveying agricultural education students at Kansas State University in 1980, it was found that the most influential person on the students' choice of college curriculum was their high school vocational agriculture teacher. If the vocational agriculture teacher is that influential on their students' career selection, the students have their own views of their teacher and the teaching job. If those views can be identified, they can be used in the recruitment efforts of the agricultural education curriculum.

As part of my Masters study, I am conducting a survey of how twelfth grade vocational agriculture students view teaching vocational agriculture as a career. Your vocational agriculture department has been selected to participate in this study. If you would be willing to participate in this study, it would be most helpful and deeply appreciated by me. Your responsibility would be to set aside approximately 25 minutes of a class period to conduct the survey, to read the survey instructions to the students, and to return the surveys to me by mail. Please complete the enclosed postcard indicating whether you will assist me in my studies, and return it to me. Your immediate response is appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Richard F. Welton".

Dr. Richard Welton

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Larry Garten".

Larry Garten

Enclosure

LG/ly

## APPENDIX B



Department of Adult  
and Occupational Education

College of Education  
Holton Hall  
Manhattan, Kansas 66506  
913-532-5535

TO: Selected Kansas Vocational Agriculture Instructors

FROM: Larry Garten, Graduate Student in Agricultural Education

RE: Study of how high school vocational agriculture students view teaching vocational agriculture as a career.

At the time this letter was mailed, I had not received your response to my previous letter. If you have already mailed your response, please disregard this letter. If you have not returned your response postcard, I would appreciate your doing so immediately as I cannot continue my research until all have been returned. It is essential that I complete this study by the end of this school year. I realize that this is a busy time of the school year with contest preparation, and I thank you for any time which you may be able to give this study.

If you did not receive my previous letter due to error in the mailing system, please contact me and I will send you another. If you have misplaced or lost the return postcard, please write the following on a piece of paper and return to me as soon as possible:

NAME OF SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

WILL YOU BE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF TWELFTH GRADE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE STUDENTS:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely yours,

Larry Garten

LG/ly

## APPENDIX C

Vocational Agriculture Teacher's  
Procedure Sheet

Thank you for your agreement to participate in this study. This sheet contains instructions for the administration of the questionnaire to all twelfth grade vocational agriculture students in your vocational agriculture department. All of the directions which you should announce to the students are enclosed in boxes.

The actual time required to administer the questionnaire will cover approximately 25 minutes. You should allow additional time for the distribution and collection of the questionnaires and for the reading of the directions to the students.

All of the materials necessary for the administration of the questionnaire are on the following list with check spaces for your convenience.

- ( ) 1. These instructions --- Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Procedure sheet.
- ( ) 2. Consent letter --- Letter to twelfth grade vocational agriculture students and their parents.
- ( ) 3. Copies of the questionnaire --- Teaching Vocational Agriculture as a Career Questionnaire.
- ( ) 4. Several extra pencils --- students should be told in advance to have pencils with them.

As soon as you receive this packet, distribute the letter addressed to the students and their parents to all your twelfth grade vocational agriculture students. After distributing the letter, say:

"This letter invites you to participate in a study which we will be completing in class in a couple of days. Please read this letter and then take it to your parents or guardian to read. It is important that you show it to your parents and receive their consent for your participation in the study."

Give parents at least two days to contact you about non-consent before you administer the questionnaire. I need the completed questionnaire returned to me by May 7. Do not give the questionnaire to any student whose parents have contacted you about non-consent. On the day the questionnaire is to be administered and the students have been seated and are ready to begin, read the directions which follow. Pause where four dots appear to allow the appropriate amount of time for the procedure described to be carried out.

Is there anyone who does not have a pencil with an eraser? ....

Give a pencil to any student who does not have one.

Each of you will be given a questionnaire. When you receive your questionnaire, read the instructions on the front cover and complete the Student Information Sheet on the second page. Look up at me when you have finished. Do not go onto the next page until I tell you to do so.

Distribute a questionnaire to each student. When every student has had time to read the instructions and complete the requested information on the student information sheet, say:

The instructions for answering the questions are self explanatory. It is important that you read the instructions carefully for each section. Remember, this is not an examination. Answer each question to the best of your knowledge. There are questions on the backs of the pages, and be sure you do not skip a page. Are there any questions? ....

Answer all questions on procedures, then say:

Now turn your questionnaire to page 2 and begin answering the questions. Be sure to only mark one answer for each question.

When everyone has finished, collect the completed questionnaires. Check to make sure you have a questionnaire from each student. Please return the completed forms in the enclosed self addressed, stamped envelopes. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at (913) 532-6423 or:

Larry Garten, Graduate Research Assistant  
Department of Adult and Occupational Education  
GCB #342  
Kansas State University  
Manhattan, Kansas 66506

If you would like a copy of the final report of this study, please indicate so when you return the questionnaire.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION.



**Department of Adult  
and Occupational Education**

College of Education  
Holton Hall  
Manhattan, Kansas 66506  
913-532-5535

**TO:** Twelfth grade vocational agriculture students  
and parents

**FROM:** Larry Garten, Agricultural Education

**SUBJECT:** Study of how high school vocational agriculture  
students view teaching agriculture as a career.

You are invited to be a part of a study to determine how twelfth grade vocational agriculture students view teaching agriculture as a career. I hope to learn how students view the vocational agriculture teacher and characteristics of the vocational agriculture teaching job.

If you decide to take part in the study, you will be asked to respond to a questionnaire distributed during your agriculture class. The information provided by this questionnaire will be used to improve the recruitment efforts of agricultural education at Kansas State University.

If you have any questions, now or in the future, please ask them. You can contact me at G.C.O.B., Room 342, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506; or call (913) 532-5535. All data will be reported as grouped data, and confidentiality of your reply is guaranteed. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation at any time, with the understanding that this study does not provide financial compensation to subjects.

Please show this letter to your parents or guardians for their consent for your participation in this study. If both you and your parents agree that it is alright for you to participate with the understanding that compensation is not available, no further action is necessary except for your completion of the questionnaire. If, however, you or your parents do not consent to your participation, please have your parents contact your agriculture teacher.

LG/ly



## TEACHING VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE AS A CAREER

Dear Survey Participant,

Thank you for your consent to participate in the study "How Vocational Agriculture Students View Teaching Vocational Agriculture as a Career". The information provided by your response to this questionnaire will be used to improve the recruitment efforts at Kansas State University. This necessitates your thoughtful and honest response to the questions.

This survey is being conducted under guidelines established by Kansas State University. By cooperating, you will help the survey administrators find answers to important questions; however, your participation is strictly voluntary. You should omit any questions which you feel unduly invade your privacy or which are otherwise offensive to you. Confidentiality is guaranteed; your name will not be associated with your answers in any public or private report of the results.

Student Information Sheet

Directions: Please complete the following questionnaire as it pertains to your personal information.

1. Sex (check one)    ☐ male    ☐ female
  
2. Number of years of vocational agriculture that you have completed including the current year. (check one)  
    ☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5
  
3. Number of years that you have been an FFA member including the current year. (check one)  
    ☐ 0    ☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5
  
4. Number of vocational agriculture teachers you have had while in high school. (Do not count substitutes or student teachers) (check one)  
    ☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5    ☐ 6  
    ☐ other (please indicate how many)

Instructions: Read the question and then circle the number for the answer that best represents your choice. Circle one number only. If your choice is somewhere between those choices given, circle the number which most closely represents your choice.

1. In your estimation, how much money does your vo-ag teacher make in a year?
 

1) \$8,000	4) \$14,000	7) \$20,000
2) \$10,000	5) \$16,000	8) \$22,000
3) \$12,000	6) \$18,000	9) \$24,000 or more
2. In your estimation, how many hours per week does your vo-ag teacher work?
 

1) under 30	3) 40-50	5) 60 or more hours per week
2) 31-40	4) 50-60	
3. In general, what do you think is the competition for agricultural education graduates to get a job teaching agriculture in high school?
  - 1) stiff competition (many applicants for each job opening)
  - 2) considerable competition (several applicants for each job opening)
  - 3) some competition (about one applicant for each job opening)
  - 4) very little competition (less than one applicant for each job opening)
4. In general, what do you think is the competition for graduates in any subject in education to get a job teaching in a high school?
  - 1) stiff competition (many applicants for each job opening)
  - 2) considerable competition (several applicants for each job opening)
  - 3) some competition (about one applicant for each job opening)
  - 4) very little competition (less than one applicant for each job opening)

#### Part I. Student Perceptions of the Vocational Agriculture Teacher

INSTRUCTIONS: Read each statement and decide whether or not you agree with the statement. You are to respond by circling the answer which best indicates your agreement to the statement. Use your own vo-ag teacher, vo-ag department, school and community as a basis for your answer.

SA = Strong Agreement

A = Agreement to some extent

U = Undecided or Neutral

DA = Disagreement to some extent

SDA= Strong Disagreement

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED OR NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The opportunity for advancement to higher paying positions for a vo-ag teacher is excellent.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
2. A vo-ag teacher dresses attractively in public.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
3. A vo-ag teacher should earn more than teachers with the same qualifications who teach non-agriculture courses.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
4. Many laborers in the community earn as much or more than a vo-ag teacher.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
5. A vo-ag teacher has a favorable attitude toward the workload of teaching vo-ag.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
6. A vo-ag teacher is active in church work.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
7. Parents of vo-ag students in the community often expect too much from a vo-ag teacher.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
8. Space, facilities and equipment in the vo-ag department are much nicer than are other departments in the high school.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
9. The amount of paid vacation for a vo-ag teacher is more than that of other jobs in the community.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
10. Teachers in the school regard vo-ag as a very important part of the total curriculum.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
11. A vo-ag teacher is dependable.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
12. A vo-ag teacher gets along well with people in the community.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
13. A vo-ag teacher has a good sense of humor.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
14. A vo-ag teacher contributes greatly to the total good of the community.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
15. A vo-ag teacher's salary is lower than that of other people with equal training and experience (such as ag. economists, agronomists, social workers).	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
16. There are more discipline problems in vo-ag classes than in other high school courses.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
17. Teaching vo-ag offers good job security.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA

		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED OR NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
18.	A vo-ag teacher's retirement program is much better than that of other working adults in the community.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
19.	Teaching vo-ag is a very stressful occupation.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
20.	A vo-ag teacher's work load is such that it allows time for a good family life.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
21.	A vo-ag teacher has a large number of friends.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
22.	A vo-ag teacher has the ability to motivate students to want to learn.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
23.	A vo-ag teacher spends more time working per week than does the average working adult in the community.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
24.	A vo-ag teacher has the respect of the students enrolled in the vo-ag program.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
25.	A vo-ag teacher is enthusiastic about his/her work.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
26.	The school administration is very supportive of the vo-ag program.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
27.	Teaching vo-ag provides intellectually stimulating activities.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
28.	A vo-ag teacher is considered successful by my friends.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
29.	A vo-ag teacher is competent as a teacher of vocational agriculture.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
30.	A vo-ag teacher is willing to work hard.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
31.	Vo-ag teachers often use their positions as a stepping stone to a more desirable job.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
32.	A vo-ag teacher is complimentary.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
33.	A vo-ag teacher's position has high prestige in the community.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
34.	A vo-ag teacher has the support of the community.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
35.	A vo-ag teacher is of good moral character.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA

		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED OR NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
36.	A vo-ag teacher's income when compared to the amount fo work performed is too low,	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
37.	A vo-ag teacher is fair in dealing with vo-ag students,	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
38.	A vo-ag teacher's salary is sufficient to comfortably raise a family of four.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
39.	A vo-ag teacher's vehicle is nicer than the average vehicle in the community.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
40.	A vo-ag teacher's home is nicer than the average home in the community.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
41.	A vo-ag teacher must work part time in addition to teaching to maintain a standard of living equal to the average professional person in the community,	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
42.	A vo-ag teacher spends more time working per week than does the average teacher.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
43.	A vo-ag teacher is properly paid for hours spent outside the regular 40 hour workweek.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
44.	A vo-ag teacher works all the time and never has fun.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
45.	A vo-ag teacher is a leader in the community.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
46.	A vo-ag teacher is considered successful by parents of vo-ag students.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
47.	A vo-ag teacher would change jobs if the new job offered an increase in salary.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
48.	A vo-ag teacher receives recognition for a job well done.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
49.	A vo-ag teacher is knowledgable of the subject matter offered in the program.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
50.	Vo-ag students have a very positive attitude toward vo-ag classes and the FFA.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
51.	A vo-ag teacher travels more on the job than the average working adult in the community,	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
52.	A vo-ag teacher is interested in the personal lives of the vo-ag students enrolled in the program.	SA	A	U	DA	SDA

Part II. Activities of the vocational agriculture teacher.

Instructions: Read each activity and then circle the number that best indicates the relative amount of time that you feel your vocational agriculture teacher spends performing each of the following activities during a full year.

	no time					large amt. of time	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Home visits							
2. Money making projects for the FFA							
3. Attendance at school functions and activities (such as social, athletics, programs, PTA)							
4. Responsibility for general school duties (such as homeroom, hall, lunchroom, class advisor)							
5. Clerical work (paper work)							
6. Counseling activities							
7. Teaching in the classroom							
8. Teaching in the shop or laboratory							
9. Coaching FFA judging teams							
10. Advising FFA chapter activities							
11. Facility and equipment upkeep and maintenance							
12. Teaching adult classes and/or advising the young farmers							
13. Attending meetings of professional organizations							
14. Participating in community organizations (such as Lions, Rotary)							
15. Coaching a varsity sports team							
16. Performing maintenance services for the rest of the school							
17. Seeking advanced college degrees or self improvement							
18. Speaking to agricultural organizations							
19. Farming							
20. Assisting the county 4-H and agricultural extension agents							

		no time					large amt of time	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21.	Jobs after school hours which are not part of the teaching job							
22.	Assisting with construction and beautification projects for the school	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23.	Assisting local farmers with problems	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24.	Providing agricultural services such as pruning for community members	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25.	Meeting with the vocational agriculture advisory council	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26.	Attending agricultural events (such as field days, stock shows)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7



Part III. Your perceived job satisfaction as a vocational agriculture teacher.

Instructions: This section is composed of 19 items. Each item requires two responses. To the left of each item, place a circle around the number that best represents how important that aspect of your future job is to you. To the right of each item, place a circle around the number that best indicates the extent to which teaching vocational agriculture would allow those aspects to be satisfied.

IMPORTANCE

SATISFACTION

none	minimal	moderate	substantial	extreme		none	minimal	moderate	substantial	extreme
1	2	3	4	5	1. Security in the job	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	2. Socially respected image	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	3. Good salary	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	4. Variety of work	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	5. Opportunity for advancement	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	6. Good working hours	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	7. Choice of job location	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	8. Opportunity to help others	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	9. Much vacation time	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	10. Opportunity to travel	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	11. Able to work with your hands	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	12. Work in rural communities	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	13. Associated with agriculture	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	14. Time for leisure	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	15. Freedom from supervision	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	16. Personal satisfaction from the job	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	17. Opportunity to develop close friendships	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	18. Working with young people	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	19. Opportunity to use own ideas and make own decisions	1	2	3	4	5

MAKE SURE YOU MARK ANSWERS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ASPECT. THANK YOU.

## APPENDIX D

## SCHOOLS CONSENTING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

<u>Post Office</u>	<u>Zip</u>	<u>School Name</u>	<u>USD #</u>
Ensign	67841	Ensign HS	102
Garden City	67846	Garden City Sr. HS	457
Ness City	67560	Ness City HS	303
Satanta	67860	Satanta HS	507
Bird City	67731	Cheylin HS	103
Colby	67701	Colby HS	315
Ellis	67637	Ellis HS	388
Goodland	67735	Goodland HS	352
Natoma	67651	Natoma HS	399
Osborne	67473	Osborne HS	392
Phillipsburg	67661	Phillipsburg HS	325
Stockton	67669	Stockton HS	271
Beloit	67420	Beloit HS	273
Belleville	66935	Belleville HS	427
Chapman	67431	Chapman HS	473
Clay Center	67432	Clay Center Comm. HS	379
Jewell	66949	Jewell HS	279
Manhattan	66502	Manhattan Sr. HS	383
Miltonvale	67466	Miltonvale HS	334
Morrowville	66958	North Central HS	221
Riley	66531	Riley County HS	378
Solomon	67410	Solomon HS	393
Scandia	66966	Scandia HS	426
Effingham	66023	Atchinson Comm. HS	377
Frankfort	66427	Frankfort HS	380
Hoyt	66521	Onaga HS	322
Rossville	66533	Rossville HS	321
St. George	66535	St. George HS	323
Silver Lake	66539	Silver Lake HS	372
Burlingame	66413	Burlingame HS	454
Burlington	66839	Burlington HS	244
Council Grove	66846	Council Grove HS	417
Melvern	66510	Marais Des Cygnes Valley HS	456

<u>Post Office</u>	<u>Zip</u>	<u>School Name</u>	<u>USD #</u>
Mound City	66506	Jayhawk-Linn HS	346
Topeka	66619	Washburn Rural HS	437
Buffalo	66717	Altoona-Midway HS	387
Howard	67349	West Elk HS	282
Buhler	67522	Buhler HS	313
Burden	67019	Central HS	462
Claflin	67525	Claflin HS	354
Goessel	67053	Goessel HS	411
Hillsboro	67063	Hillsboro HS	410
Inman	67546	Inman HS	448
Lindsborg	67456	Lindsborg HS	400
Moundridge	67107	Moundridge HS	423
Wellington	67152	Wellington HS	353
Winfield	67146	Winfield HS	465

## APPENDIX E



Department of Adult  
and Occupational Education

College of Education  
Horton Hall  
Manhattan, Kansas 66506  
913-532-5535

TO: Selected Kansas Vocational Agriculture Instructors  
FROM: Larry Garten, Graduate Student in Agricultural Education  
RE: Study of how high school vocational agriculture students view teaching vocational agriculture as a career.

At the time this letter was mailed, I had not received your completed questionnaires which were mailed to you. If you have already mailed your questionnaires, please disregard this letter. If you have not returned your questionnaires, please do so immediately. Some of the questionnaires I have been receiving have sections not completed, especially the back page. Please make sure that the students know there are questions on the back page. It is necessary to complete this research by the end of this school year. Your immediate response is deeply appreciated.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (913) 532-6423. If I am not in, please leave a message and I will get in touch with you.

LG/ly

(Please indicate school on return address)

## APPENDIX F

TABLE 18

AVERAGE MEAN FOR TEACHING ACTIVITIES BY EACH  
OF FOUR SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Demographic Characteristic	Average Mean <sup>a</sup> Teaching Activities
<u>Sex</u>	
-Male	3.79
-Female	3.97
-Total	3.80
<u>Years of Vo-Ag</u>	
-One year	4.12
-Two years	4.43
-Three years	4.02
-Four and five years	3.72
-Total	3.80
<u>Years of FFA</u>	
-No years	3.97
-One and two years	4.12
-Three years	3.97
-Four years	3.66
-Total	3.80
<u>Number of Vo-Ag Teachers</u>	
-One	3.86
-Two	3.81
-Three	3.84
-Four and Five	3.59
-Total	3.80

<sup>a</sup>The scale used was one through seven where: 1= no time and 7= a large amount of time.



TABLE 19

AVERAGE MEAN FOR ECONOMIC REWARDS BY EACH OF  
FOUR SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Demographic Characteristic	Average Mean <sup>a</sup> Economic Rewards
<u>Sex</u>	
-Male	2.84
-Female	3.01
-Total	2.86
<u>Years of Vo-Ag</u>	
-One Year	2.93
-Two Years	2.97
-Three years	2.76
-Four and five years	2.86
-Total	2.86
<u>Years of FFA</u>	
-No years	2.92
-One and two years	2.89
-Three years	2.76
-Four years	2.87
-Total	2.86
<u>Number of Vo-Ag Teachers</u>	
-One	2.85
-Two	2.89
-Three	2.81
-Four and five	2.83
-Total	2.86

<sup>a</sup>The scale used was one through five where: 1= strongly agree, 2= agree, 3= undecided or neutral, 4= disagree, 5= strongly disagree.

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HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF  
TEACHING VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE AS A CAREER

by

LARRY GLENN GARTEN

B.S., Kansas State University, 1980

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1981

Increasing the number of students training to become vocational agriculture teachers is one method which has been identified to decrease the shortage of agriculture teachers. The purpose of this study was to discover how high school students perceive teaching vocational agriculture as a career in order to assist in the recruitment effort.

Twelfth grade vocational agriculture students in Kansas were chosen as the sample population. Forty-eight vocational agriculture departments representing 317 twelfth grade students were randomly selected and gave consent to participate in the study. A survey instrument consisting of 120 dependent variables and four demographic variables was developed and mailed to the departments. A total of 166 questionnaires were returned by mail to the researcher. The data were analyzed at the Kansas State University Computing Center.

Twelfth grade vocational agriculture students perceived less competition getting a job teaching vocational agriculture than teaching any high school subject.

The students felt that vocational agriculture teachers are not adequately rewarded economically for the work performed and the training required. The mean perceived annual income of the average vocational agriculture teacher was \$14,500. The students viewed the working conditions as either favorable or were undecided. The job was perceived as allowing time for a good family life, providing intellectually stimulating activities and as being fun. The respondents were also undecided on many of the economic variables. Vocational agriculture teachers' personal characteristics were viewed most favorably, being seen as sociable, hardworking, knowledgeable and good teachers.

The vocational agriculture students valued job characteristics

which cannot be easily materially measured more than those characteristics which can be easily materially measured concerning their future jobs.

Teaching vocational agriculture was perceived as not able to satisfy the importance given most of the job characteristics associated with the students' future jobs. Those characteristics which teaching vocational agriculture was least able to satisfy were: 1) salary; 2) opportunity for advancement; and 3) job security.

Significant differences were found between years of FAA membership and perceived working conditions of vocational agriculture teachers. The number of vocational agriculture teachers during high school was found to significantly influence the students' perceptions of the personal characteristics of vocational agriculture teachers, the importance of job characteristics to their future job and the satisfaction of those job characteristics by teaching vocational agriculture.