

A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF RILEY COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL
VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE GRADUATES,
1960 - 1971

by

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A MASTER'S REPORT

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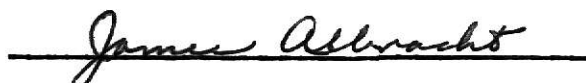
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES.....	v
 Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Importance of the Study.....	2
Limitations of study.....	2
Definitions of Terms.....	3
2. REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE.....	5
State and National Studies.....	5
Local Studies.....	7
3. METHODS AND PROCEDURE.....	13
4. FINDINGS AND RESULTS.....	15
Present Occupations of Vocational Agriculture Graduates of Riley County High School.....	15
Present Status of Graduates Not Engaged in Full-Time Farming.....	17
Value of Vocational Agriculture Subjects On the Job.....	17
Value of Vocational Agriculture Subjects in the Home.....	20
Number of Vocational Agriculture Graduates Who Continued Education After High School.....	20
Marital Status of Graduates.....	25

Chapter	Page
Annual Salary of Vocational Agriculture Graduates.....	26
Responses of Vocational Agriculture Graduates as to Who Influenced Them Most in Their Present Occupation.....	27
Responses of Vocational Agriculture Graduates as to What Part of Vocational Agriculture Was Most Helpful.....	28
Responses of Vocational Agriculture Graduates as to What Extra-Curricular Activities Were Most Important.....	29
Responses of Vocational Agriculture Graduates as to Helpfulness of Vocational Agriculture Courses in Present Occupation.....	30
Comments of Graduates.....	31
Summary of Findings.....	32
5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	33
Summary.....	33
Conclusions.....	35
Recommendations.....	36
REFERENCES.....	37
APPENDIXES.....	40
A. LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL.....	41
B. QUESTIONNAIRE.....	43
C. FOLLOW-UP LETTER.....	49

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Present Occupation of Vocational Agriculture Graduates of Riley County High School.....	16
2. Present Status of Graduates Not Engaged In Full-Time Farming.....	18
3. Value of Vocational Agriculture Subjects On the Job.....	21
4. Value of Vocational Agriculture Subjects In the Home.....	23
5. Number of Vocational Agriculture Graduates Who Continued Education After School.....	25
6. Marital Status of Graduates.....	26
7. Annual Salary of Vocational Agriculture Graduates.....	27
8. Responses of Vocational Agriculture Graduates As To Who Influenced Them Most In Their Present Occupation.....	28
9. Responses of Vocational Agriculture Graduates As To What Part of Vocational Agriculture Was Most Helpful.....	29
10. Responses of Vocational Agriculture Graduates As To What Extra-Curricular Activities Were Most Important.....	30
11. Helpfulness of Vocational Agriculture Courses In Present Occupation.....	31

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

It was the belief of the researcher at the time of this writing that there was a need for more study to determine if the Vocational Agriculture curriculum at Riley County High School was meeting the needs of its graduates. With the added emphasis in educational systems of preparing students for college and future occupations, this objective was foremost in mind when the study was begun. It was assumed that with the declining number of farmers and the increase of capital needed to enter farming, the Vocational Agriculture curriculum should be updated to include all facets of agriculture. If this is true, those graduates enrolled in Vocational Agriculture in prior years should be of some help in the preparation and development of a curriculum suitable for meeting the needs of the students now in high school.

Sufficient studies could not be found which would verify or refute any such claims to the satisfaction of the researcher. Accordingly, the conclusion was reached that studies would have to include complete analysis and follow-up of large numbers of pupils graduating from Vocational Agriculture classes to provide data on which validity of such claims could be evaluated.

Statement of the Problem

This study was based on the belief that a survey of those students who took three or more years of Vocational Agriculture at Riley County High School from 1960-1971 would provide data which would be of assistance in determining the value of and the graduate's reaction to the Vocational Agriculture curriculum which had been offered at Riley County High School. It was expected the information obtained from the study would provide a basis for evaluating the Vocational Agriculture curriculum and determine if the curriculum was meeting the needs of students after graduation.

Importance of the Study

This study was designed to be helpful to the community studied by assessing the need for a Vocational Agriculture program or the changes needed in the one presently taught. The study was also designed to assist in the evaluation of the Vocational Agriculture program in compliance with requirements of the State Board of Vocational Agriculture for state and federal reimbursement. An important consideration for the study was to provide information for school administrators and board of education members.

Limitations of study. This study was limited to the graduates who had taken three or more years of Vocational Agriculture at Riley County High School during the period from 1960-1971.

Definitions of Terms

Agriculture mechanics: "Agriculture Mechanics" is that part of the Vocational Agriculture curriculum where skills and abilities in welding, carpentry, concrete, electricity, shop tool conditioning and project construction were taught.

Agriculture-related occupations: "Agriculture related occupations" are businesses and occupations which provide services for farming.

Course: A "course" was defined as organized subject matter in which class or shop instruction was offered within a given period of time, and for which credit toward graduation was given.

Crop production: "Crop production" is that part of the Vocational Agriculture curriculum in which the skills and abilities in production and management of crops were taught.

Extra-curricular activities: "Extra-curricular activities" are that part of the total curriculum which involved experiences not usually provided in typical classes, such as clubs, assembly programs, inter-scholastics, and other activities under the guidance of the school.

FFA (Future Farmers of America): The "FFA" is a youth organization for boys studying Vocational Agriculture.

Farm management: "Farm management" is that part of the Vocational Agriculture curriculum where skills and abilities in making decisions and planning the farm operation were taught.

Livestock production: "Livestock production" is that part of the curriculum in which skills and abilities in production and management of livestock were taught.

Non-agriculture occupations: Those businesses or occupations which do not require the worker to possess agricultural competencies.

Record keeping: "Record keeping" is that part of the Vocational Agriculture curriculum in which skills and abilities in the recording and analysis of occupational and personal financial transactions were taught.

Vocational Agriculture: One of the courses of study in the high school curriculum in which the major emphasis was devoted to agriculture and agriculture-related occupations. Vocational Agriculture courses taught at Riley County High School were: (1) Vocational Agriculture I, (2) Vocational Agriculture II, (3) Vocational Agriculture III, (4) Vocational Agriculture IV.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

In reviewing the literature it is apparent to the writer that in the field of Vocational Agriculture, there was a growing concern at the time of this study in regard to the number of graduates who had engaged in farming or agricultural related occupations after graduation. Follow-up studies had been made in different states to discover if the Vocational Agriculture curriculum was meeting the needs of graduating students. The literature here cited was selected for review as background for the study and does not attempt to include all the follow-up studies that have been reported.

State and National Studies

Kitts (1957), in his resume of sixty-six studies on the occupational status of former students of Vocational Agriculture, found that the average of all studies indicated that approximately 47 percent of the former students were engaged in farming. Approximately 55 percent of the former students who lived on farms while enrolled in Vocational Agriculture were farming.

Agan (1964), in a study to locate and identify non-farm agricultural occupations in Kansas used selected

businesses. He found the need would continue to be large for employees in agricultural businesses studied. The 495 employers interviewed indicated a demand for 2,823 new employees plus 1,475 employees that would be needed due to growth and turnover in a twelve month period. The study showed that the employers welcomed the concept of training men for these occupations and recognized the needs.

In a follow-up study by Juergenson (1966) of 145 former Vocational Agriculture students in northern California high schools, it was found that 129 said they would take Vocational Agriculture if starting to high school again, while 14 students said they would not. He also found that salaries of the students out of school not more than five years were: 38 percent ranging from 0 to \$3,000; 25 percent from \$3,000 to \$5,000; 31 percent from \$5,000 to \$10,000; and 6 percent above \$10,000.

Green (1963) reported that about 50 percent of the 2,241 former Vocational Agriculture students in Alabama included in his study were engaged in agriculture. More students who had been out of school one year were engaged in farming than those who had been out of school five years. A large number of those in non-agriculture occupations indicated they had made good use of abilities acquired in Vocational Agriculture and FFA.

In a follow-up study by Bass (1966) of boys having three or more years of Vocational Agriculture in the state of Virginia, it was found that more than one-fourth (25.36 percent) of the 1,238 former students were farming; one-

seventh (14.37 percent) were employed in occupations related to the training that they had received in Vocational Agriculture; and less than one-fourth (22.77 percent) were employed in occupations not related to training they had received in Vocational Agriculture.

Bradley (1965) in a study involving 837 former Vocational Agriculture students found that 38.5 percent were either farming or in agriculture related occupations five years after their graduation from high school. Of this same group, 16.3 percent were students and 15.5 percent were in military service.

In a follow-up study by Hemp (1961) of former Vocational Agriculture students in the state of Illinois during the year of 1957-1958, it was found that of the 246 who returned their questionnaires, 170 of them stated that Vocational Agriculture had been helpful to them in their present jobs, even though 42 percent of them were engaged in occupations not related to farming. Animal husbandry, soils, crops, and farm mechanics were the phases of instruction listed most frequently as being helpful by persons in non-related agriculture.

Local Studies

In a twenty year follow-up study of 95 Vocational Agriculture graduates of Hanover High School (Kansas) 1951-1970, Lampe (1971) found that 36.6 percent were farming full time; 11.6 percent were part-time farming; agriculture-related accounted for 26.3 percent, and 26.3 percent were in non-agricultural occupations. Farming, part-time farming,

and agricultural-related combined to indicate 74.5 percent were engaged in farming or agricultural-related occupations.

In a follow-up study of 63 Vocational Agriculture graduates of Ford High School (Kansas) from 1953-1968, Thompson (1969) found that 24.4 percent entered a four year university or college. Full-time farming accounted for 17.5 percent; part-time farming accounted for 20.6 percent; 27.0 percent were in agri-businesses, and 35.3 percent were in non-agricultural occupations.

Ottman (1967), in a follow-up study of 136 boys who took four years of Vocational Agriculture in Onaga Rural High School (Kansas), found that the part of the Vocational Agriculture program listed by the boys as most beneficial was ranked in the same order by both city and farm boys. The parts were ranked as follows: (1) shop, (2) livestock, (3) record books, (4) FFA, and (5) crops.

The farm boys (66.6 percent) and the city boys (73.5 percent) recommended that Vocational Agriculture programs should be left as they were in school. The most frequently recommended changes were as follows: (1) keep the program up to date, (2) to teach more agriculture-related subjects, (3) to have more shop work, (4) to have more work in farm chemicals, and (5) to do more blueprint work.

Ringgen (1967), in a ten-year follow-up study at Waterville and Blue Rapids High School (Kansas) from 1951-1960, found that 66.0 percent of the graduates were in farming or agriculture-related occupations. Of this group, 41.0 percent attended college or universities and 20.0

percent of these graduated. He also found of those now in farming, 77.3 percent had planned to do so while in high school, and of those not in some agricultural occupation, only 11.1 percent were in the occupation they had planned to enter while in high school.

Allbracht (1954), in a study of 123 graduates of Hebron High School (Hebron, Nebraska) during years 1946-1953, reported that 47.0 percent of the Vocational Agriculture students followed the occupations as planned while in high school. Among the non-Vocational Agriculture graduates, only 34.0 percent took jobs as planned.

In a study by Gibson (1961) covering a fifteen year period at Tipton, Missouri, of 130 boys who graduated from high school with three or more years of Vocational Agriculture it was found that 33.85 percent entered college, 18.46 percent entered farming, 16.92 percent entered in positions not related to farming, and 10 percent entered the United States Armed Forces. Of the 33.85 percent entering college, 36.3 percent of this group finished. Of those entering college, 72.8 percent attended an agricultural college. In this study, 72.8 percent became employed in agriculture or agricultural-related occupations. He was under the assumption that all students taking Vocational Agriculture should not become farmers, but they do receive a good background for many occupations related to agriculture.

In an eighteen-year follow-up study by Rawson (1968) of the graduates of Concordia High School (Kansas) during the period from 1943-1961, it was found that of the 191

graduates that had taken three or more years of Vocational Agriculture, 75 (40 percent) were farming full-time, part-time, or were working as farm hands. Thirty-eight (20 percent) were working in jobs directly connected with farming. Thirty-four (18 percent) were employed in jobs not directly related to farming. Twenty-one (11 percent) were in military service either permanently or for their two-year term. Seven (3 percent) were unaccounted for. Between 60 and 70 percent of the boys who took three or more years of Vocational Agriculture were employed on jobs on the farm or in agriculture-related occupations.

A study was made in 1960 on the occupational status of graduates who completed all Vocational Agriculture courses offered by Washington County High Schools (Kansas). Kastl (1966) found that 35.7 percent were engaged in farming and another 10.9 percent were in agriculture-related occupations. He also stated that of the 137 graduates, 111 or 81.6 percent considered a knowledge of agriculture was beneficial or essential to them regardless of occupations. He further stated that the former graduates perceived that livestock production should be ranked first in importance followed by judging, with farm mechanics and crop production tied for third place. The former graduates ranked agriculture-related occupations as least important. The study indicated that graduates engaged in farming reported higher income than any other group. Five of the farming group reported income of over \$12,000, while only one in all of the other remaining groups reported as high an income.

In a study comparing graduates of Vocational Agriculture from Winfield, Iowa and non-Vocational Agriculture graduates of Morning Sun, Iowa, Herman (1957) stated that more of the Vocational Agriculture graduates were farming and in agriculture-related occupations. He also stated that more of the Vocational Agriculture graduates farmed as their first vocation and Vocational Agriculture graduates tended to become established in farming at a higher status.

A follow-up study by Hoppas (1961) found that of the twenty-two individuals engaged in farming, 14 (63.6 percent) believed the instruction received in farm mechanics to have been the most use to them since leaving school. Of those individuals engaged in related occupations, 50 percent thought farm mechanics to have been the most benefit to them. The instructional areas which were thought to be the least helpful were as follows: livestock production, 13 (17.3 percent); supervised farming, 8 (10.6 percent); cropping system, 16 (21.3 percent); participation in FFA, 13 (17.3 percent); and livestock judging instruction, 21 (28 percent).

In a post-student evaluation of the curriculum offered at Severy High School (Kansas) from 1961 to 1965, Hall (1966) stated that the five subjects found to be the most beneficial to the highest number of students taking the subjects were Vocational Agriculture, Home Economics, English, Bookkeeping, and Typing. The five least beneficial subjects to the students were Band, American History, Shorthand, Athletics, and Chorus. The study found all the subjects offered to the students were of some benefit after graduation.

From the study of selected literature, it appeared that students valued Vocational Agriculture courses more highly than other courses. In Vocational Agriculture, the graduates rated livestock production, farm mechanics, and record book work as the most important areas of instruction. A large percentage of the Vocational Agriculture students were employed in farming and agriculture-related occupations. No studies were found which in the opinion of the writer duplicated the purpose of this study.

Chapter 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURE

It was the intention of the investigator to obtain the opinions of former students of the Riley County High School who had three or more years of Vocational Agriculture and who graduated during the years of 1960-1971. The graduates were surveyed to determine their present job and occupations and to assess the values which were placed on the Vocational Agriculture program as an aid in their occupations. The writer also wished to determine which parts of the Vocational Agriculture course of study the graduates perceived to be of most benefit to them in their job and in their home. The writer also attempted to identify additional areas of training which would be beneficial to the graduates.

A complete list of those graduates of Riley County High School having taken three or more years of Vocational Agriculture was obtained from the official records in the Riley County High School office. The addresses of the graduates were obtained from a list prepared for a class reunion held in 1969, from records in the high school office, and from parents and friends of the respective graduates. A questionnaire was developed to include the following areas: (1) number of years enrolled in Vocational Agriculture,

(2) year graduated, (3) education after high school, (4) marital status, (5) present salary, (6) type of employment held since graduation, (7) part-time job, (8) present occupation, (9) influences on job selection, (10) offices held in FFA, (11) personal value of Vocational Agriculture, (12) extra-curricular activities believed of value by the graduate, and (13) a five-point evaluation of the curriculum taught.

The questionnaire which was developed and an introductory letter were mailed to each of the graduates. A follow-up letter was sent to those graduates who had not replied after four weeks.

The data obtained from the questions selected for use in the study were tabulated and summarized. The information was then organized and presented in Chapter 4 of this report. Chapter 2 was set aside for the reviews of the selected related literature for the study, and Chapter 5 was devoted to a summary of the findings and recommendations.

Chapter 4

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

The data gathered in this study was analyzed by the author and the responses which seemed most pertinent to the Riley County community were tabulated and summarized.

Present Occupation of Vocational Agriculture Graduates of Riley County High School

The data in Table 1 indicated there were 48 respondents with 14 or 27.7 percent farming full time. Part-time farming accounted for 11 or 25.9 percent of the respondents; agriculture-related, 10 or 21.6 percent; and non-agriculture had 13 or 24.2 percent. Farming, part-time farming, and agriculture-related combined to indicate that 35 graduates, or 75.2 percent, were engaged in farming or agriculture-related occupations.

Of the six who graduated in 1971, two or 33 percent were farming; two or 33 percent were in part-time farming; and two or 33 percent were in agriculture-related positions. For the five graduates in 1970, one was farming, two were in part-time farming, and two were in non-agriculture-related jobs. Of those four who graduated three years ago, two were farming and two were in part-time farming. The three who had graduated in 1961, or eleven years ago, were all engaged in farming.

Table 1

Present Occupation of Vocational Agriculture
Graduates of Riley County High School

Years out of school	Full-time farming		Part-time farming		Agriculture related		Non- Agriculture related	
	No.	Percent*	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
1	2	33.0	2	33.0	2	33.0	0	0.0
2	1	20.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	2	40.0
3	2	50.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
4	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	60.0	2	40.0
5	1	20.0	1	20.0	2	40.0	1	20.0
6	0	0.0	1	17.0	1	17.0	4	66.0
7	1	33.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	66.0
8	2	66.0	0	0.0	1	33.0	0	0.0
9	1	33.0	1	33.0	0	0.0	1	33.0
10	1	33.0	1	33.0	1	33.0	0	0.0
11	3	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
12	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	50.0
Total	14		11		10		13	
Average Percent		27.7		25.9		21.6		24.2

*Percentages may not total to 100 percent due to rounding off individual percentages to nearest tenth.

Present Status of Graduates Not Engaged in Full-Time Farming

Information in Table 2 indicated that the largest number of graduates were enrolled in college, and six of the eight graduates in college were enrolled in an agriculture-related field. Three were in Agriculture Education, one each in Animal Science, Agriculture Economics, and Dairy Production. Three graduates were employed as heavy equipment operators. Electricians accounted for three of the graduates. Of the eleven part-time farmers only two, other than those in college, were engaged in agriculture-related occupations. Although it was not shown in Table 2, six of the thirteen graduates in non-agriculture-related occupations had post-high school education, two had four year college degrees, and two had two year college degrees.

Value of Vocational Agriculture Subjects On the Job

Tables 3 and 4 were compiled by assessing a weighted value to the response of each item on the questionnaire (see Appendix). "Very highly useful" received five points; "definitely useful," four points; "useful," three points; "somewhat useful," two points; "of no use," one point. The weighted average response for each item was obtained by adding the values assigned for each response and then dividing by the number of responses.

It was indicated in Table 3 that those graduates engaged in full-time farming placed a higher value on all Vocational Agriculture areas of instruction. The sum average value of 4.0 or more by all graduates indicated that use of

Table 2
Present Status of Graduates Not Engaged
In Full-Time Farming

Occupation	Part-time farming	Agriculture related	Non- Agriculture related
In college	5	1	2
Heavy equipment operator		3	
Teacher	2		
Welder		2	
Elevator		2	
Auto mechanics	1		
Carpenter	1		
Trucking	1		
Water care technician	1		
Ag. salesman		1	
Data processing			2
Electrician			3
Letter carrier			1
In military			1
Government printer			1
Engineer Highway Dept.			1
Construction		1	2
Totals	11	10	13

hand tools, arc welding, and use of power tools were the most valuable skills which were taught. Meats, plant science, parliamentary procedure, on-farm visitations, young farmer work, and social security, with sum average values of 3.9 or less, were considered to be the least valuable by all graduates.

Part-time farmers with weighted averages of 3.9 or more rated arc welding, use of hand tools, use of power tools, and leadership as most beneficial on the job. Meats, livestock breeds, marketing, plant science, social security, and young farmer work, with weighted average values of 2.8 or less, were rated as least beneficial to those engaged in part-time farming.

Agriculture-related graduates, with weighted average values of 3.7 or more, ranked the use of hand tools, arc welding, use of power tools, oxy-acetylene welding, and tool conditioning as the most useful. Soil conservation, parliamentary procedure, crop operation records, young farmer work, and plant science, with weighted average values of 2.2 or less, were the least important for those in agriculture-related areas.

Carpentry, social security, tool conditioning, use of hand tools, and use of power tools, with weighted average values of 4.0 or more, were considered of most value in non-agriculture occupations. This group indicated weighted average values of 1.9 or less for production courses, judging contests, and instructor's supervision and these areas as

the least useful on the job. It should be pointed out that graduates in non-agricultural related occupations made more use of social security instruction than those in agricultural occupations.

Value of Vocational Agriculture Subjects in the Home

The same Vocational Agriculture areas in Table 4 were valued according to their use in the home with the same weighted average value for the responses as in Table 3. The non-agricultural graduates rated the use of power tools, with a weighted average of 4.7, as more useful than that rated by the other groups. The part-time farming group rated leadership and public speaking, with weighted averages of 3.9 and 3.8 respectively, more useful than the full-time farmers. The full-time farmers rated all the areas well above the other three groups. It should be noted that the averages given were limited to those graduates who completed that part of the questionnaire which involved the value of the Vocational Agriculture instruction in the home.

Number of Vocational Agriculture Graduates Who Continued Education After High School

The replies in Table 5 indicated that twenty-five former graduates, or 52 percent of the forty-eight respondents continued their education beyond high school, with 96 percent having completed their course of study or were presently enrolled in their chosen field. Two college graduates had returned to farming.

Table 3

Value of Vocational Agriculture Subjects On the Job

Subject	Farming wt. ave.	Part- time Farming wt. ave.	Agri. related wt. ave.	Non- Agri. wt. ave.	Sum Average**
<u>Livestock Production</u>					
Basic Livestock Prod.	4.3	3.2	3.0	1.8	3.1
Feeds and Feeding	4.4	3.1	3.2	1.5	3.1
Livestock Breeds	3.7	2.8	3.0	1.8	2.8
Marketing	3.8	2.8	2.7	1.9	2.8
Meats	3.4	2.3	2.2	1.5	2.4
<u>Crop Production</u>					
Fertilizers	4.8	3.4	2.7	1.9	3.2
Weed & Crop ID	4.3	3.3	2.5	1.8	3.0
Soil Conservation	4.6	3.4	1.8	1.8	2.9
Plant Science	3.3	2.8	2.2	1.7	2.5
<u>FFA</u>					
Leadership	4.0	3.9	3.6	3.3	3.7
Public Speaking	3.7	3.7	3.2	2.8	3.4
Parliamentary Proced.	3.5	3.5	2.0	2.5	2.9
Judging Contests	4.0	3.3	2.4	1.7	2.9
<u>Agriculture Mechanics</u>					
Use of Hand Tools	4.4	3.9	4.1	4.1	4.1
Arc Welding	4.9	4.0	3.9	3.3	4.0
Use of Power Tools	4.3	3.9	3.9	3.5	3.9
Oxy-Acetylene Welding	4.5	3.5	3.9	3.5	3.9
Tool Conditioning	4.2	3.6	3.7	4.1	3.9
Carpentry	4.3	3.6	2.9	4.2	3.8
Project Construction	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.0	3.5
Electricity	4.0	3.3	3.4	3.0	3.4
Concrete & Masonry	4.4	3.2	2.8	3.2	3.4
Small Gas Engines	4.0	2.8	3.4	2.7	3.2
<u>Farm Record Keeping</u>					
Receipts & Expenses	4.6	3.4	3.0	2.6	3.4
Occupational Experience Plans	4.2	3.2	2.8	2.8	3.3

Table 3 (Continued)

Subject	Farming wt.ave.	Part- time Farming wt.ave.	Agri. related wt.ave.	Non- Agri. wt.ave.	Sum Average**
Livestock Feed and Labor Records	4.3	2.9	2.9	1.8	3.0
Crop Operations	4.3	2.9	2.1	1.5	2.7
<u>Instructor's Super- vision</u>					
On-Farm Visitations	3.7	3.2	2.4	1.2	2.6
Young Farmer Work	3.5	2.7	2.1	1.3	2.4
<u>Farm Management</u>					
Social Security	3.7	2.8	2.6	4.2	3.3
Taxes	3.9	3.2	2.6	3.1	3.2
Farmstead Planning	4.3	3.0	2.4	2.0	2.9

*The weighted average was determined by the following scale:

"very highly useful" received five points;

"definitely useful," four points;

"useful," three points;

"somewhat useful," two points;

"of no use," one point.

Those not responding received no points. The total value obtained was divided by the number responding to the importance of each area.

**The sum average was determined by dividing the weighted averages of the farming, part-time farming, agriculture-related, and non-agriculture groups and divided by four.

Table 4

Value of Vocational Agriculture Subjects In the Home

	Farming wt.ave.	Part- time Farming wt.ave.	Agri. related wt.ave.	Non- Agri. wt.ave.	Sum Average**
<u>Livestock Production</u>					
Marketing	4.1	2.6	2.6	3.1	3.1
Basic Livestock Prod.	4.3	2.5	2.6	2.9	3.1
Feeds & Feeding	4.5	2.1	2.3	2.9	3.0
Meats	4.1	2.4	2.9	2.2	2.9
Livestock Breeds	3.8	2.5	2.6	2.3	2.8
<u>Crop Production</u>					
Fertilizers	4.3	3.4	2.7	2.9	3.3
Soil Conservation	4.3	3.4	2.4	2.9	3.3
Weeds & Crop ID	4.0	3.5	2.6	2.5	3.2
Plant Science	3.3	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.6
<u>FFA</u>					
Leadership	3.8	3.9	3.4	2.7	3.5
Public Speaking	3.4	3.8	3.0	2.2	3.1
Parliamentary Proced.	3.0	3.0	1.8	2.0	2.5
Judging	3.2	3.0	2.0	1.9	2.5
<u>Agriculture Mechanics</u>					
Use of Hand Tools	4.6	3.9	3.9	4.2	4.2
Use of Power Tools	4.5	3.7	3.8	4.7	4.2
Tool Conditioning	4.6	3.6	3.8	4.3	4.1
Arc Welding	4.7	3.7	3.3	3.8	3.9
Carpentry	4.4	3.5	3.4	3.8	3.8
Oxy-Acetylene Welding	4.7	3.3	3.3	3.6	3.7
Electricity	4.2	3.6	3.3	3.6	3.7
Concrete & Masonry	4.6	3.3	3.1	3.6	3.7
Project Construction	4.2	3.7	3.1	3.4	3.6
Small Engines	4.0	3.2	3.1	3.5	3.5
<u>Farm Record Keeping</u>					
Receipts & Expenses	5.0	3.9	3.4	3.5	4.0
Occupational Experience Plans	5.0	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.7

Table 4 (Continued)

Subject	Farming wt.ave.	Part- time Farming wt.ave.	Agri. related wt.ave.	Non- Agri. wt.ave.	Sum Average**
Crop Operations	5.0	3.4	2.2	2.3	3.2
Labor Records	4.6	2.9	2.3	2.4	3.1
<u>Instructor's Super-</u> <u>vision</u>					
On-farm Visits	4.5	2.8	2.1	1.5	2.7
Young Farmer Work	4.5	2.1	1.9	1.3	2.5
<u>Farm Management</u>					
Social Security	4.3	3.6	3.0	3.7	3.7
Taxes	3.8	3.7	3.2	3.7	3.6
Farmstead Planning	4.3	3.1	2.3	2.8	3.1

*The weighted average was determined by the following scale:
 "very highly useful" received five points;
 "definitely useful," four points;
 "useful," three points;
 "somewhat useful," two points;
 "of no use," one point.

Those not responding received no points. The total value was divided by the number responding to the importance of each area.

**The sum average was determined by dividing the weighted averages of the farming, part-time farming, agriculture-related, and non-agriculture groups and divided by four.

Six, or sixty percent, of the graduates who went to vocational technical school returned to farming or part-time farming. Two, or twenty percent, of the graduates were in agriculture-related areas. Five of the twenty graduates who went to college were still in attendance.

Table 5
Number of Vocational Agriculture Graduates
Who Continued Education After School

Type of School	No. Attending	No. Completing	Presently Enrolled	Percent Completing
Four-year college	13	7	5	92
Vocational-Technical school	10	10		100
KSU Farmer short course	2	2		100
Totals	25	19	5	

Marital Status of Graduates

All graduates responded to the question on marital status as recorded in Table 6. It was found that of the former students engaged in non-agriculture related jobs, ten or 76.9 percent, were married, while only 64 percent of those in full-time farming and part-time farming were married. Contrary to the findings of most studies, more of the graduates in non-agricultural jobs were married than those who were farming.

Table 6
Marital Status of Graduates

Occupation	Married	Single	Total
Full-time farming	9	5	14
Part-time farming	7	4	11
Agriculture-related	7	3	10
Non-agriculture	10	3	13
Totals	33	15	48

Annual Salary of Vocational Agriculture Graduates

All graduates responded to the range in which their annual salaries occurred. Seven or 50 percent of those in full-time farming replied that their annual salary was \$8,000 or more, while only 9 percent of the part-time farmers, 40 percent agriculture-related, and 30 percent non-agriculture indicated the same.

Those graduates who indicated an annual salary from \$2,000 - \$2,999 were: 14 percent farming full-time, 10 percent in agriculture-related occupations, 8 percent in non-agriculture related jobs, and none for part-time farmers.

Table 7
Annual Salary of Vocational Agriculture Graduates

Salary	Farming Percent*	Part-time Farming Percent	Agriculture Related Percent	Non- Agriculture Percent
\$2,000 - \$2,999	14		10	8
\$3,000 - \$3,999	7	18	10	
\$4,000 - \$4,999	14	27	10	
\$5,000 - \$5,999	7	18	30	15
\$6,000 - \$6,999	7	9	40	23
\$7,000 - \$7,999		18		23
Over \$8,000	50	9		30
Totals	99	99	100	99

*Percentages may not total to 100 percent due to rounding off individual percentages to nearest tenth.

Responses of Vocational Agriculture Graduates as to Who Influenced Them Most in Their Present Occupation

Responses in Table 8 indicated the persons or persons who influenced the Vocational Agriculture graduates the most in selection of their present occupations. The parents rated an importance value of 1.8 as having the most influence for all graduates who replied. Vocational Agriculture teachers (2.2) and friends (3.4) ranked a close second and third in importance. The wife (3.3), others (3.5), and other teachers (3.9) were next in importance. Other relatives with an importance value of 4.1 ranked least important.

Table 8
Responses of Vocational Agriculture Graduates
As To Who Influenced Them Most
In Their Present Occupation

	Full-time Farming Ave.	Part-time Farming Ave.	Agri. Related Ave.	Non Agri. Ave.	Average
Parent	1.2	1.3	2.2	2.0	1.7
Vo. Ag. Teacher	2.2	1.8	3.0	4.0	2.8
Friends	2.9	3.2	1.6	1.6	2.3
Wife	4.8	3.0	3.3	2.0	3.3
Others	4.5	3.8	2.7	3.0	3.5
Other Teacher	4.5	3.5	4.7	2.7	3.9
Other Relatives	3.8	5.4	4.3	2.8	4.1

*Respondents were asked to rank in order of importance (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7) with 1 being the most important and 7 being the least important. Only those who received responses were tabulated. The responses were totaled and divided by number who responded.

Responses of Vocational Agriculture Graduates As To What
Part of Vocational Agriculture Was Most Helpful

The graduates responded to the values for the areas of the Vocational Agriculture curriculum which were the most helpful to them. There were six areas for the graduates to evaluate. The most important area was given a value of one and the least important area a value of six. The average values in Table 9 for the Vocational Agriculture graduates are listed in rank order as follows: Agriculture Mechanics, 1.9; FFA, 2.5; record book, 2.6; livestock, 2.8; crops and soils, 4.0; and other, 5.0

The non-agriculture graduates ranked agriculture mechanics (1.4), record book (1.8), and FFA (2.0) as more important than the graduates in the other three groups. Livestock instruction ranked the highest by the agriculture-related graduates (2.6). Crops and soils instruction was noted the highest by the full-time farmers.

Table 9
Responses of Vocational Agriculture Graduates
As To What Part of Vocational Agriculture
Was Most Helpful

	Full-time Farming Ave.	Part-time Farming Ave.	Agri. Related Ave.	Non Agri. Ave.	Average
Ag. Mechanics	2.3	2.0	1.8	1.4	1.9
FFA	3.3	2.1	2.7	2.0	2.5
Record Book	2.7	2.9	3.1	1.8	2.6
Livestock	2.6	3.0	2.4	3.0	2.8
Crops & Soils	3.5	4.0	4.1	4.5	4.0
Other	6.0	6.0	4.2	3.8	5.0

Responses of Vocational Agriculture Graduates As To What
Extra-Curricular Activities Were Most Important

The Vocational Agriculture graduates replied in Table 10 to what extra-curricular activities were most important to them. The FFA (1.8) was ranked by all graduates as most important, followed in order by football (2.3), student council (3.5), basketball (3.7), track (3.8), mixed chorus (4.5), debate (4.8), other (4.8), and band (5.5).

Table 10
Responses of Vocational Agriculture Graduates
As To What Extra-Curricular Activities
Were Most Important

	Farming Ave.	Part-time Farming Ave.	Agri. Related Ave.	Non Agri. Ave.	Average
FFA	1.3	1.7	1.9	2.4	1.8
Football	3.3	2.5	1.7	1.6	2.3
Student Council	2.5	3.3	4.5	3.7	3.5
Basketball	5.0	4.0	3.2	2.4	3.7
Track	4.0	3.6	3.2	4.2	3.8
Mixed Chorus	4.0	5.1	4.8	4.0	4.5
Debate	4.5	5.7	4.8	4.0	4.8
Other	4.7	5.3	4.2	4.8	4.8

Responses of Vocational Agriculture Graduates As To Helpfulness of Vocational Agriculture Courses in Present Occupation

Responses in Table 11 indicated thirty-three or 69 percent of the Vocational Agriculture graduates answered that Vocational Agriculture courses have been very helpful in their present occupations. Thirteen or 27 percent answered Vocational Agriculture has been as useful as any other high school course. Two or 4 percent who were in non-agriculture related jobs stated that Vocational Agriculture courses have not been very useful in their present occupations.

Thirteen of the fourteen full-time farmers indicated that Vocational Agriculture was very helpful in farming. Eight of the eleven part-time farmers, seven of the ten agriculture-related, and five of the thirteen non-agriculture related indicated that Vocational Agriculture was very helpful.

Table 11
Helpfulness of Vocational Agriculture Courses
In Present Occupation

	Farming	Part-time Farming number	Agri. Related number	Non Agri. number	Total	Percent
Has been very helpful	13	8	7	5	33	69
As useful as others	1	3	3	6	13	27
Not very useful				2	2	4
Totals	14	11	10	13	48	100

Comments of Graduates

The graduates were asked to comment on the Vocational Agriculture curriculum in an open-ended nature. All comments were submitted by those in full-time farming. The following are the comments:

"The FFA field plot should be used for more experimental purposes, rather than an FFA money-maker. This should be a community service."

"Record keeping is the most important part of the whole program."

"I took Vocational Agriculture four years in high school in which I had three different Agriculture teachers. It seemed that each year was a re-run of basics of the year before. I wish we could have gotten into the subjects deeper and learned more. In livestock, I would like more depth studies in feeding and feed stuffs, understanding different ingredients in commercial supplements. Also, more on gas engines, their ignition systems and carburation systems. Also more on electricity, judging, records, and cash flow."

"If you want to help your students out the most, get them out of the schoolhouse and into the Vocational Agriculture building."

Summary of Findings

The findings of the study of forty-eight Vocational Agriculture graduates of Riley County High School indicated the majority were in production agriculture or agriculture-related occupations. Participation by these Vocational Agriculture graduates in continued education beyond the high school level was considered above average in comparison with other studies.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to provide data which would be of assistance in determining the value of and the graduates' reactions to Vocational Agriculture subjects which had been offered at Riley County High School.

The instrument used to gather information was a questionnaire sent to eighty-five Vocational Agriculture graduates having three or more years of Vocational Agriculture in Riley County High School from 1960 to 1971.

The following areas were covered: (1) occupational status, (2) value of the Vocational Agriculture subjects on the job, (3) value of the Vocational Agriculture subjects in the home, (4) post-high school education, (5) marital status, (6) annual salary, (7) who influenced graduates in selection of present occupation, (8) what part of Vocational Agriculture was most helpful, (9) what extra-curricular activities were most important, and (10) helpfulness of Vocational Agriculture in present occupation.

Summary

Useable responses were obtained from forty-eight of the eighty-five graduates. The findings indicated the following:

1. Twenty-seven percent were farming full-time, 25.9 percent were farming part-time, 21.6 percent were in agriculture-related occupations, and 24.2 percent were in non-agriculture occupations.
2. Graduates not engaged in full-time farming were employed in seventeen different occupations, with college students accounting for eight; heavy equipment operators, three; electricians, three; and construction, three. These were the major occupations which were listed.
3. In evaluating Vocational Agriculture subject matter areas on the job, units of agriculture mechanics generally rated higher than units in production agriculture. The farming graduates indicated they used Vocational Agriculture subjects more on the job than agriculture-related or non-agricultural graduates, with the exception of the subjects in social security.
4. The non-agriculture graduates valued instruction in the use of power tools of greater importance in the home than those engaged in farming.
5. The survey results indicated a high percentage of Vocational Agriculture graduates pursued further education. Twenty-five or 52 percent of the forty-eight graduates continued their education beyond high school while nineteen or 96 percent completed or were continuing their educational objectives. Two college graduates returned to farming.

6. All the graduates answered the question pertaining to marital status. It was found that ten or 76.9 percent of those in non-agriculture areas were married while only 64 percent were married in each of the other three groups.
7. All graduates responded to the range in which their annual salaries occurred. Seven or 50 percent of those in full-time farming replied that their salary was \$8,000 or more. Thirty percent of the non-agriculture graduates had salaries of \$8,000 or more.
8. In evaluating who influenced the graduate most in selection of their present occupation, it was found that the parent, Vocational Agriculture teacher, and friends were most influential.
9. In response to what part of Vocational Agriculture courses were most helpful, it was found that agriculture mechanics (1.80) was rated most helpful with FFA and record books following closely.
10. FFA (1.8) was rated as most important of the extra-curricular activities, with band rated as least important.

Conclusions

As a result of analyzing the findings of this study, the following conclusions were made:

1. Vocational Agriculture had been of great importance to the Riley County Kansas community as evidence by the responses of Riley County High School Vocational

Agriculture graduates engaged in farming, part-time farming, and agriculture-related occupations in the community.

2. The Vocational Agriculture course of study had met the needs of graduates.
3. The percentage of graduates who continued education beyond high school was above average when compared with other studies. Not all those continuing their education reached their educational goals.
4. The information in Table 7 indicated a larger percentage of those farming received higher salaries of \$8,000 or more.
5. It appeared that the graduates of the Riley County High School were successful and that the Vocational Agriculture program was very beneficial to all.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of this study, the writer makes the following recommendations:

1. Continued emphasis should be placed upon the Vocational Agriculture subjects that were taught and met the needs of those going into farming and agriculture-related occupations.
2. Those subject areas of instruction which were found to be of the greatest value on the job and in the home should receive more emphasis.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

TO: FORMER VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE STUDENTS OF RILEY COUNTY
HIGH SCHOOL.

You no doubt have often looked back on your high school days and considered how you could have obtained more out of Vocational Agriculture. We are faced with the problem, how to give our high school Vocational Agriculture students the best possible education. In order to do this, you, through your experiences in high school and since graduation can make a valuable contribution to the improvement of the curriculum in Vocational Agriculture and assist me in completing my Master's Report from Kansas State University.

Will you please fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return it at your earliest convenience? By sharing your experience, you can help build the kind of department that we all desire. The information will be used in a mass data in the writing of the report and will not be identifiable with any one person.

Please answer each question as accurately as you can. If you wish to make further comments about the curriculum, you may use the reverse side of the page of the questionnaire.

The self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your ease in returning the questionnaire. I would appreciate your prompt reply.

Sincerely,

William R. Gross
Vocational Agriculture Instructor
Riley County High School
Riley, Kansas 66531

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

Follow-Up Study of Vocational Agriculture Graduates of Riley County High School

1. Name _____ Year graduated _____
 Offices held in FFA _____
 Vocational Agriculture (number of years) _____ Married _____
 Children: Boys _____ Girls _____
 Education: College (no. years) _____ Vocational (no. years) _____
 Other _____ Major _____
 Institution _____
 Military Service (number of years) _____
2. Present Occupation _____ Number years _____
3. Please list your previous occupations by year since you graduated from high school:

			% Time Spent in Each Area		
Years out of school	Employer	Job Title	Farm	Ag Related	Non-Ag Related
First					
Second					
Third					
Fourth					
Fifth					
Sixth					
Seventh					
Eighth					
Ninth					
Tenth					
Eleventh					

4. Estimated annual income of present primary occupation (check one):

\$2,000 - \$2,999 _____	\$5,000 - \$5,999 _____
\$3,000 - \$3,999 _____	\$6,000 - \$6,999 _____
\$4,000 - \$4,999 _____	\$7,000 - \$7,999 _____
	Over \$8,000 _____

5. Presently, do you have a part-time job? (Yes or No) _____

Job Title _____

Employer _____

Amount of time spent on part-time job _____

Amount of earnings \$ _____/hour

\$ _____/week

\$ _____/month

\$ _____/year

6. If you are farming, which best describes your status?

_____ Farm owner and operator, _____ acres

_____ Partnership

_____ Renter, _____ acres

_____ Hired manager

_____ Hired man (full time)

_____ Day laborer

7. If you are not farming, which best describes your status?

_____ Professional

_____ Technician

_____ Laborer

_____ Manager or Supervisor

_____ Unemployed

8. Who influenced you the most in selection of your present occupation? (Rank importance: i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.)

_____ Parent	_____ Vo. Ag. Teacher
_____ Other Relatives	_____ Other Teacher
_____ Wife	_____ Others
_____ Friends	

9. The Vocational Agriculture courses taken in high school have (check one):

a. been very helpful in my present occupation. _____

b. been as useful as my other high school courses. _____

c. not been very helpful in my present occupation. _____

10. If Vocational Agriculture has helped you, what part was most helpful? (Rank in order of helpfulness: i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.)

a. Ag. Mech. _____	c. Crops/Soils _____	e. FFA _____
b. Livestock _____	d. Record Book _____	f. other _____

11. From the list of extra-curricular activities, please indicate the activities you consider most valuable. (Rank in order of value: i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.)

FFA _____	Football _____	Student Council _____
Mixed Chorus _____	Basketball _____	Debate _____
Band _____	Track _____	Other _____

12. On the following pages answer as to value to you: (please check mark in the appropriate square)

APPENDIX C

FOLLOW-UP LETTER

Dear Vocational Agriculture Graduate of Riley County High School:

If I were able to call on you at your home and ask you to please fill out the questionnaire that was mailed to you recently, you would probably sit down immediately and fill it out for me.

Since this is impossible, why not complete the questionnaire and mail it to me? Your reply is needed to make this study of the Vocational Agriculture Department at Riley County High School complete and worthwhile.

Sincerely,

William R. Gross
Vocational Agriculture Instructor
Riley County High School
Riley, Kansas 66531

A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF RILEY COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL
VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE GRADUATES,
1960 - 1971

by

WILLIAM RALPH GROSS

B. S., Kansas State University, 1970

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Agriculture Education

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1973

The purpose of this report was to determine the occupational status of the Vocational Agriculture graduates of Riley County High School, and to provide data which would be of assistance in determining the value of Vocational Agriculture program to the graduates on the job and in the home. An additional purpose was to determine what other areas of training the graduates perceived as needed.

Information was obtained by sending a questionnaire to each graduate with three or more years of Vocational Agriculture. Questionnaires were returned by forty-eight of the eighty-five graduates. The major findings indicated that thirty-five of the forty-eight graduates (75.2 percent) were engaged in farming, part-time farming, or agriculture-related occupations, and thirteen or 24.2 percent were in non-agricultural occupations.

It was found that graduates in farming, part-time farming, and agriculture-related occupations placed a higher value on the Vocational Agriculture areas of instruction for use on the job than graduates in non-agriculture jobs, with the exception of social security. When the same areas of instruction were evaluated according to use in the home, graduates in non-agriculture jobs valued instruction in the use of power tools of greater importance than those engaged in farming.

It was found that twenty-five of the forty-eight (52 percent) graduates surveyed continued their education

beyond high school. Nineteen of these twenty-five (96 percent) either completed or are presently pursuing their educational objectives.

It was found that of the former students engaged in farming or agriculture-related areas, 64 percent were married while 76.9 percent of those in non-agriculture related areas were married. It was found that 50 percent of those engaged in full-time farming had an annual salary of \$8,000 or more, while only 30 percent of those in non-agriculture areas were over \$8,000.

In response to what part of Vocational Agriculture courses were most helpful, it was found that Agricultural Mechanics was rated most helpful with FFA and record books following closely. FFA was rated as the most important extra-curricular activity with band as least important.

Based upon the outcome of the study, the writer made the following recommendations.

1. Continued emphasis should be placed upon the Vocational Agriculture subjects that were taught and which meet the needs of those going into farming and agriculture-related occupations.
2. Those subject areas of instruction which were found to be of greater value on the job and in the home should be emphasized more.
3. Due to a large percentage of students not continuing education beyond high school, a greater emphasis should be placed upon vocational courses in Riley County High School.