

FACTORS WHICH AFFECTED THE CHOICE OF THE AGRICULTURAL  
EDUCATION MAJOR AT KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY, 1973

by 613-8301

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is one of the largest industries in the United States, as well as in Kansas. One U.S. farmer today produced enough food for himself and 45 other people. Agriculture did not mean farming alone, and farming today was not as simple as it was. It utilized technology, modern equipment, and supplies. To keep up to date with the fast growth of agricultural industry, farmers and people involving in agriculture must be well informed and well trained through channels of communication. Education generally and Agricultural Education, especially were the best ways to keep up with rapid changing technology.

Important objectives of Agricultural Education included:

- To prevent drop-outs from school,
- To prepare for advanced study,
- To prepare for entry employment in agricultural related occupations, and
- To prepare for farming.

To achieve these objectives, Agricultural Education encompassed: (1)

1- Agricultural Production prepared students for the business of farming or ranching. It included a study of animal and crops production, soil management, Agri-Business, and Ag-Mechanics.

2- Agricultural Supplies and Services prepared students for

agricultural occupations in production, processing and marketing of agricultural goods. It involved agricultural chemicals, feeds, seeds, food, and non-food products.

3- Agricultural Mechanization, developed student abilities necessary to assist, perform, maintain, service and use farm power, equipment, and machinery. It included a study of farm machinery and equipment, soils and water management, and agricultural mechanic practices.

4- Horticulture was concerned with the establishing maintaining, and management of plants used for ornamental, or asthetic purposes. It included arboriculture, floriculture, green house operation and management, landscaping, nursery operation and management, and turf management.

Agricultural Education was one of the most flexible educational programs because it provided the opportunities to work with people, to be creative, and to provide many employment possibilities. One of the most recent employment developments included the addition of many job opportunities in international agriculture. To prepare students for the many employment opportunities in vocational agriculture, well prepared teachers were needed. The enrollment in vocational agriculture had increased greatly with the increasing employment opportunities for graduates. More teachers were required to instruct the increasing enrollment of vocational agriculture students. Qualified teachers of vocational agriculture were also in great demand in other fields of agriculture and replacement needs for teachers of Agricultural Education were required annually to replace those who left the field and those who retired each year.

To meet the demand for additional teachers of vocational agriculture a recruitment program was required. In order to successfully launch a recruitment program it was very essential that the characteristics of prospective teacher candidates be identified. Factors which affected the choice of the Agricultural Education curriculum also needed to be identified.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT:

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors which influenced the choice of the Agricultural Education curriculum. This report included a comparison of the 1969 study by Mr. Terry Fanning. (2) The study by Mr. Fanning included the factors which affected the choice of either an Agricultural Education major or other Agricultural majors. The writer of this report tried to identify any changes which may have taken place during the last five years, from 1969 to 1973 in the selection of Agricultural Education as a college major. In this report the author studied the following questions:

- 1- What conditions affected students in changing their college majors to Agricultural Education?
- 2- Which persons and what factors were the most important for students in the selection of the Agricultural Education major?
- 3- In what specialized areas of agriculture were the Agricultural Education majors the most interested?
- 4- What employment opportunities were of the most interest for Agricultural Education majors?
- 5- What were major considerations in international employment?

6- In what regions of the world would Agricultural Education majors like to serve?

DEFINITIONS AND TERMS USED:

Agri-Business included non-farm occupations which were in business and industry and where agricultural competencies were primarily needed. Some occupations were allied to distribution, such as feed and fertilizer sales, elevators, farm produce, livestock brokerage, farm machinery sales, and horticulture sales. Others may be allied to industrial occupations, such as farm machinery repair.

Agricultural Education was the college curriculum which prepared students to be Vocational Agriculture teachers.

Career Education was the educational concept which involved students from the Kindergarten through adult and prepared students for successful occupational choice and adjustment.

International Agriculture included the employment opportunities related to Agricultural Education in countries other than the United States.

Vocational Agriculture was one of the major areas of Vocational Education which was established by Smith-Hughes Act of 1917. This act provided federal funds for a cost sharing training program to be carried on at the local high school level.

Vocational Agriculture in Kansas included classroom teaching, Agri-Business, supervised agri-experience, and the Future Farmers of America organization.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Agricultural Education extended from elementary schools (3) to post college work. After graduating from Vocational Agriculture in high school, students were well prepared for advanced education. If Agricultural Education was the choice for their college major, it provided the students with the opportunities to be involved with people, and to have flexibility of occupational selection. In addition graduates may work close to out-of-doors, have professional status, and enjoy opportunities to be creative. Perhaps the greatest advantage in this field involved the demand for more teachers than were available.(4)

In 1968 there were 10,606 teaching positions in the United States according to Dr. Ralph J. Woodin (5) with 1,314 qualified teachers, but only 61.6 percent of this entered the field of teaching. This left 141 teaching positions unfilled (See Table 1, page 6). In 1971 total positions in Vocational Agriculture teaching decreased 10,438 and the numbers of qualified teachers was 1,743. One-hundred twenty more teachers were needed, because 49.6 percent of total qualified teachers joined the teacher's force. From 1968 to 1971 the total qualified teachers had decreased by 107 teachers per year, and the number of teachers who left the field was about 3 percent per year. Teaching positions slightly decreased (-31 positions per year) and the Vocational Agriculture teachers were in short supply but at a

TABLE 1  
A COMPARISON OF SELECTED INFORMATION ON SUPPLY AND  
DEMAND OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS (1)

Years	Total N <sup>o</sup> of positions	Teachers needed but not available	Total qualified for training	% of qualified enter Vo. Ag. teach
1968	10,606	141	1,314	61.6
1969	10,560	121	1,566	59.9
1970	10,520	171	1,700	51.0
1971	10,438	120	1,743	49.6
1975	11,977	94	2,171	34.6

(1) "Teacher shortage continues in Agricultural Education" by Ralph J. Woodin, Agricultural Education, Page 251, Vol. 44, N<sup>o</sup> 10, April 1972.

decreasing rate. Woodin estimated that there would be 11,977 teaching positions in 1975 and if the trend continued as indicated, 2,171 qualified teachers would be required. Thirty-five percent would be expected to enter the teaching field, leaving a shortage of 95 teachers. Woodin also reported that in 39 out of 50 states a shortage of Vocational Agriculture teachers existed.

In Kansas the situation was better than 1969. Mr. Fanning indicated in his report that 12 percent of Kansas Vocational Agriculture teachers left the field each year. In 1972 the number of Vo Ag teachers in Kansas was 168 (6) compared to 182 in 1969. This is an 8 percent decrease since 1969 or 2 percent per year up to 1972. According to the State Plan of Kansas State Department of Education, Vocational Education Division there would be 189 Vo Ag teachers needed in 1974 for production agriculture and 40 more for off-farm agriculture to serve the expected enrollment in Vocational Agriculture. (9)

From the limited research and data available, it was estimated that 14 percent of the total work force in the United States was engaged in occupations which required knowledge and skills in one or more of the instructional categories of Vocational Agriculture. It was estimated that only about 40 percent of the sufficient numbers of teachers were being trained to meet the needs for upgrading, replacement and the staffing of present and emerging occupations. (7)

Currently only one out of four high school students is enrolled in the Vocational Agriculture courses of study. (8) The number of teachers who entered the field of teaching had decreased, but the number of qualified teachers had increased. This indicated that more college students were interested in Agricultural Education. The



Agricultural Education curriculum provided many opportunities in addition to teaching such as: Vo Ag. teaching, Agricultural Extension, Government and Service College Teaching, Agricultural Services, Research, Management and Sales Services, Farm and Ranch Operation, and International Agriculture. During the past three years, 1970-1972, 95 Kansas State University students graduated from the Agricultural Education curriculum. Forty-eight of this or 51.5 percent entered the teaching field in Kansas and the others continued their education or went into other professions (Table 2).

There has been a remarkable increase in the number of Agricultural Education students in international agriculture during the last three years, from 1970 to 1972. There were no college students involved in this field in 1970, then one out of 34 or 3 percent in 1971, but 7 out of 31 or 33 percent in 1972. The seven students in the curriculum in 1972 were from South Vietnam and were funded by a special grant from the Federal Government. International agriculture is the new dimension in Agricultural Education. With the improvement of transportation and communication systems the people of the world had attained a closer association. The relationship among people had been developed and improved. Developed countries tried to help some new and undeveloped countries so human life could be more enjoyable and worthwhile. Agriculture had an important role in this. New varieties of crops or vegetables, equipment and supplies have been developed which could be used in the other countries around the world. Several Kansas State University Teaching Teams have been going overseas to assist other institutions, such as at the University of India, Andhra-Pradesh University, and another in Nigeria, Ahmadu-Bello University. The

TABLE 2  
PLACEMENT OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION GRADUATES  
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

	1972	1971	1970	Total 1970,71,72
Vocational Agriculture Instructors	15	18	15	48
Armed Services		6	6	12
Agribusiness	4	4	2	10
International Ag	7	1		8
Farming	4	1	2	7
Ministry		2	2	4
Graduate School	1	2		3
Scinece Teacher			2	2
County Agent			1	1
Total	31	34	30	95

influence of international agriculture had been evident on the increased enrollment in the Agricultural Education curriculum in Kansas.

#### FOOTNOTES

- (1) "Vocational Education A Hand Book For Planning, Developing and Implementing Vocational Education in Kansas," Kansas State Department of Education, Division of Vocational Education, Topeka, Kansas.
- (2) "A Study of Conditions Which Affected the Choice of Either an Agricultural Education Major or Other Agricultural Majors" by Terry D. Fanning, 1969. An Unpublished Master's Report, College of Education, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas.
- (3) "Career Education: Elementary Program," Agricultural Education, Vol. 44, N<sup>o</sup> 7, Jan. 1973.
- (4) Agricultural Education Brochure, Dept. of Adult & Occupations, Kansas State University, 1973, Manhattan, Kansas.
- (5) "Teacher Shortage Continues in Agricultural Education" by Ralph J. Woodin, Agricultural Education, Vol. 44, N<sup>o</sup> 10, April 1972.
- (6) Kansas Education Directory 1972-1973, Kansas State Department of Education, Bulletin 340, Topeka, Kansas.
- (7) "Justification," Need Statements for Five Years Overall Administrative Plan Objectives.
- (8) "Career Education for All American's Youth" by Robert M. Worthington, Agricultural Education, Vol. 44, N<sup>o</sup> 9, March 1972.
- (9) Kansas State Department of Education "Vocational State Plan," Division of Vocational Education, Topeka, Kansas.

### CHAPTER III

#### METHOD OF RESEARCH

This study was to identify the factors which affected the choice of the Agricultural Education major at Kansas State University. A comparison was made with the findings of Mr. Fanning's report in 1969 and to see if any changes had occurred during the last five years from 1969 to 1973 in the selection of a college major. The questions used in this study were based on the following information:

- 1- Present education situation,
- 2- Background of subjects,
- 3- Influence of associates on the selection of a college major,
- 4- Personal ideas that might affect the selection of a college major,
- 5- Suggestions for improving aid in selection of a college major.

In addition to the above the author included questions to determine:

- 6- The degree of student's interest in the specialized areas of agriculture,
- 7- The important factors, and employment areas in the selection of the Agricultural Education major,
- 8- The interest of Agricultural Education students in international agriculture.

All Agricultural Education majors who enrolled at Kansas State University in the 1973 Fall semester were selected as the sample for the study. Sixty-six out of 81 students or 81 percent of Agricultural Education students responded to this survey. The data from this survey can be found in the next chapter.

There were five choices for each response for question 8 and 9 on the questionnaire. Where majors ranked a choice as being the most important it was given a score of 5. Second choice was given a value of 4 points; third, 3 points; fourth, 2 points; and fifth, 1 point. Questions 11, 12, 13, and 14 were given weighed values for importance. Each response was scored as follows: much importance, 5 points; some importance, 3 points; and little importance, 1 point.

The total weighed average was calculated for each item by multiplying the total number of the student's responses for the specific item by the appropriate weight of 5, 4, 3, 2, or 1 point depending upon the student's response to each item.

After the findings were presented, a summary of the results was developed. Implications of the study were made after analyzing the results of the findings and summary materials.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE FINDINGS

The results of this study indicated the reactions of Agricultural Education majors, hereafter referred to as Ag Ed majors, to the factors which influenced the selection of their college majors. Sixty-six out of 81 or 81 percent of the students in the Agricultural Education curriculum indicated the factors which affected the selection of their college major. The number for each class as indicated in Figure 1 included:

- 5 or 7.5% of the total 66 students were freshmen;
- 10 or 15.0% of the total 66 students were sophomores;
- 25 or 37.8% of the total 66 students were juniors;
- 22 or 33.3% of the total 66 students were seniors;
- 4 or 6.4% of the total 66 students were grad.

The findings in this chapter are presented in the following four sections: Student's background; Factors affecting the selection of the college major; Students suggestions; and Student rating interest in International Agriculture.

#### A- STUDENT'S BACKGROUND:

Twenty-eight of 66 or 42 percent of Ag Ed students changed their

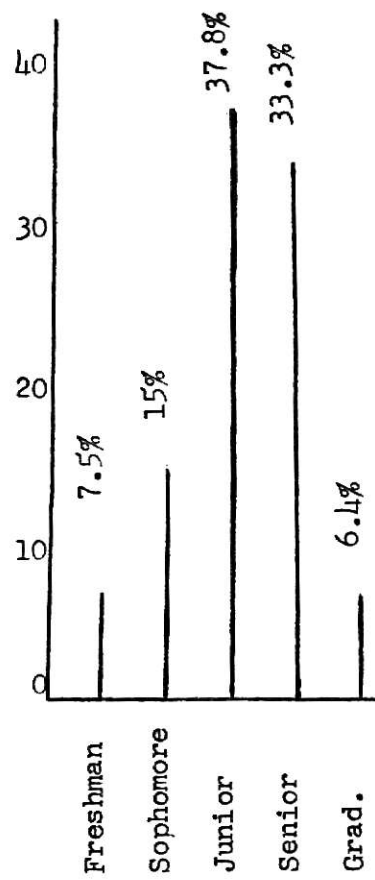


FIGURE 1

THE DISTRIBUTION BY YEAR OF AGRICULTURAL  
EDUCATION MAJORS

major(s) since they enrolled in college (Table 4). Twelve of 28 or 42 percent of students who changed their major(s) had none or less than two years in Vocational Agriculture in high school compared to 7 of 37 or 17 percent of students who did not change their majors.

The reasons for changing majors were:

- Lost interest in old majors . . . . . 36%
- More opportunities and interest in teaching . . . . 42%
- Teacher shortage . . . . . 9%
- No reference to reason . . . . . 13%

Nineteen of 23 or 82 percent of students who changed their majors selected their college majors in the senior year of high school or later compared to 28 of 33 or 85 percent of students who did not change their major.

Six of 23 or 26 percent of students who changed their majors had the occupational course in high school compared to 7 of 33 or 21 percent of students who did not change their major. (Fig. 2)

The more farming background the students had the less the chances for them to change their majors. Eleven of 28 or 40 percent of students who changed their majors did not live on farms compared to 7 of 37 or 19 percent of students who did not change their major.

The educational level of Ag Ed student's parents can be a factor in the influence of selecting a college major. In 1973, 6 of 63 or 9.5 percent of student's mothers had college degrees compared to 5 of 61 or 8.2 percent of fathers. The number of years of schooling of mothers of Ag Ed majors had decreased from 12.8 years in 1969 to 12.5 years in 1973, while the father's schooling had slightly increased from 11.4 years in 1969 to 11.7 years in 1973 (Table 3).



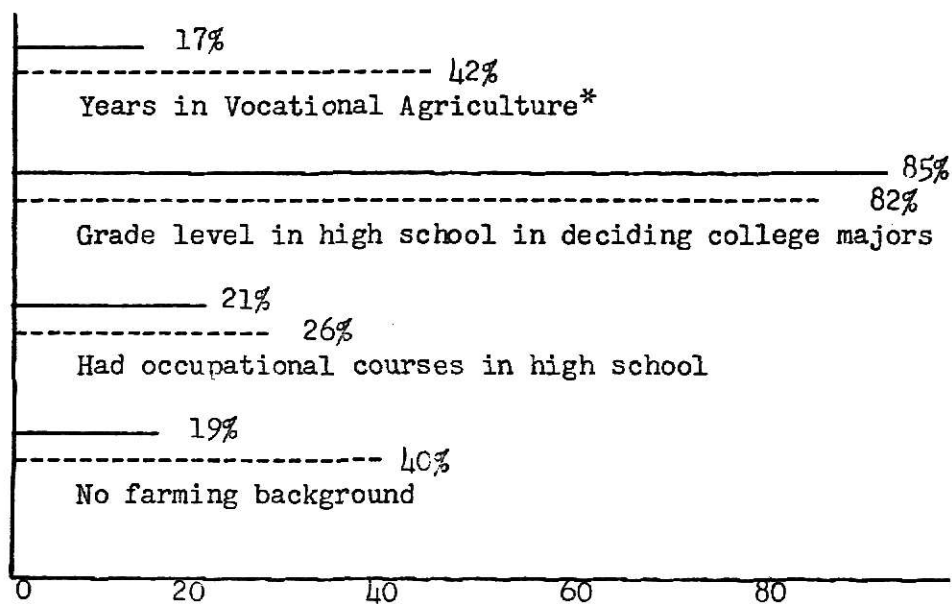


FIGURE 2

A COMPARISON WHO CHANGED AND THOSE WHO DID NOT  
CHANGE THEIR COLLEGE MAJORS

\_\_\_\_\_ students did not change their college major.

----- students changed their college majors.

\*None or less than 2 years of Vocational Agriculture.

TABLE 3

YEARS OF SCHOOLING OF THE PARENTS OF THE  
 AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAJORS  
 IN 1973 COMPARED TO 1969

Years	Years of schooling of mother	Years of schooling of father
1969	12.8	11.4
1973	12.5	11.7

In 1973, 5 percent of Ag Ed students decided on their college major when they were in the Freshman year in high school compared to 3.3 percent in 1969. Other periods of selection of the college major included: Sophomores 6.7 percent in 1973, 6.6 percent in 1969; Juniors 16.9 percent in 1973, 26.7 percent in 1969; Seniors 30.5 percent in 1973, 36.6 percent in 1969; and for those who selected their major after high school 20.9 percent in 1973, and 26.7 percent in 1969 (Table 4). More than 70 percent of Ag Ed students selected their college major when they were in the senior year or later compared to 67 percent in 1969. This indicated that in 1973 students make their choice of a college major later than in 1969.

TABLE 4  
WHEN THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION STUDENTS SELECTED  
THEIR COLLEGE MAJOR

Level in high school	Percentage	
	1969	1973
Freshman	3.3	5.0
Sophomore	6.6	6.7
Junior	26.7	16.9
Senior	36.6	30.5
Later	26.6	40.7

Farming background was one of the most important reasons why Ag Ed students selected their college major. Forty-three of 61 or 70.5 percent of the Ag Ed majors lived on farms in 1973 compared to 93.3 percent in 1969 (Table 5). The number of farm boys having good opportunities to go back to farming decreased from 63.3 percent in 1969 to 60.7 percent in 1973 (Table 5). The increased number of non-farm students in Agricultural Education in 1973 indicated that more of these students were interested in agriculture and in Agricultural Education than in 1969. Perhaps more students were aware of the opportunities offered by the Agricultural Education curriculum.

TABLE 5

THE PERCENTAGE OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION STUDENTS  
WHO LIVED ON FARMS, HAD GOOD OPPORTUNITIES  
TO GO BACK TO FARMING, OR HAD RELATIVES  
EMPLOYED IN AGRI-BUSINESS

Agricultural Education students	Percentage	
	1969	1973
Lived on farms	93.3	70.5
Had good opportunities to go back to farming	63.3	60.7
Had relatives employed in Agri-Business	23.3	27.5

The decreased percentage of farm boys in Agricultural Education, and the decreased percentage of those having good opportunities to go back to farming may explain the increased percentage of non-farm boys in the Agricultural Education curriculum. In 1969, 23.3 percent of Ag Ed students had relatives involved in Agri-Business compared to more than 27.5 percent in 1973 (Table 5).

B- FACTORS AFFECTING THE SELECTION OF THE COLLEGE MAJOR:

In this section Ag Ed students were asked to rank the most

influential persons or factors in their choice of a college major. Each major was to choose each person or choice in rank order for the particularly item. There were 5 choices for each person and for each factor. The first choice was given the value of 5 points, the second choice a value of 4 points, third, 3 points, fourth, 2 points, and fifth, 1 point.

In question 8 students were asked to indicate which of the following people exerted the most influence in their selection of a college major. The influential persons were: mother, father, high school counselor, Vocational Agriculture instructor, county agriculture agent, and others. Ag Ed majors responded that Vocational Agriculture instructors received a weighed score of 217, and had the most influence in the selection of their college major, then came father (209), others (136), mother (108), high school counselor (34), and county agriculture agent (30). (Fig. 3)

The other reasons which were given by students included;

- Students make their own decisions . . . . . 46%
- Friends, brothers, relative, and advisor . . . . . 46%
- Job opportunities . . . . . 8%

The responses to this question was then compared to the results of the 1969 study (Fig. 4) which had the Vocational Agriculture and the father as being the most influential in the selection of a college major. Mother was ranked third in 1969, and fourth in 1973. High school counselor and County agriculture agent received the same rank order in 1973 as in 1969 (Fig. 3).

Question 9 was the same type of question as number 8, except students were asked to rank 5 important factors instead of persons

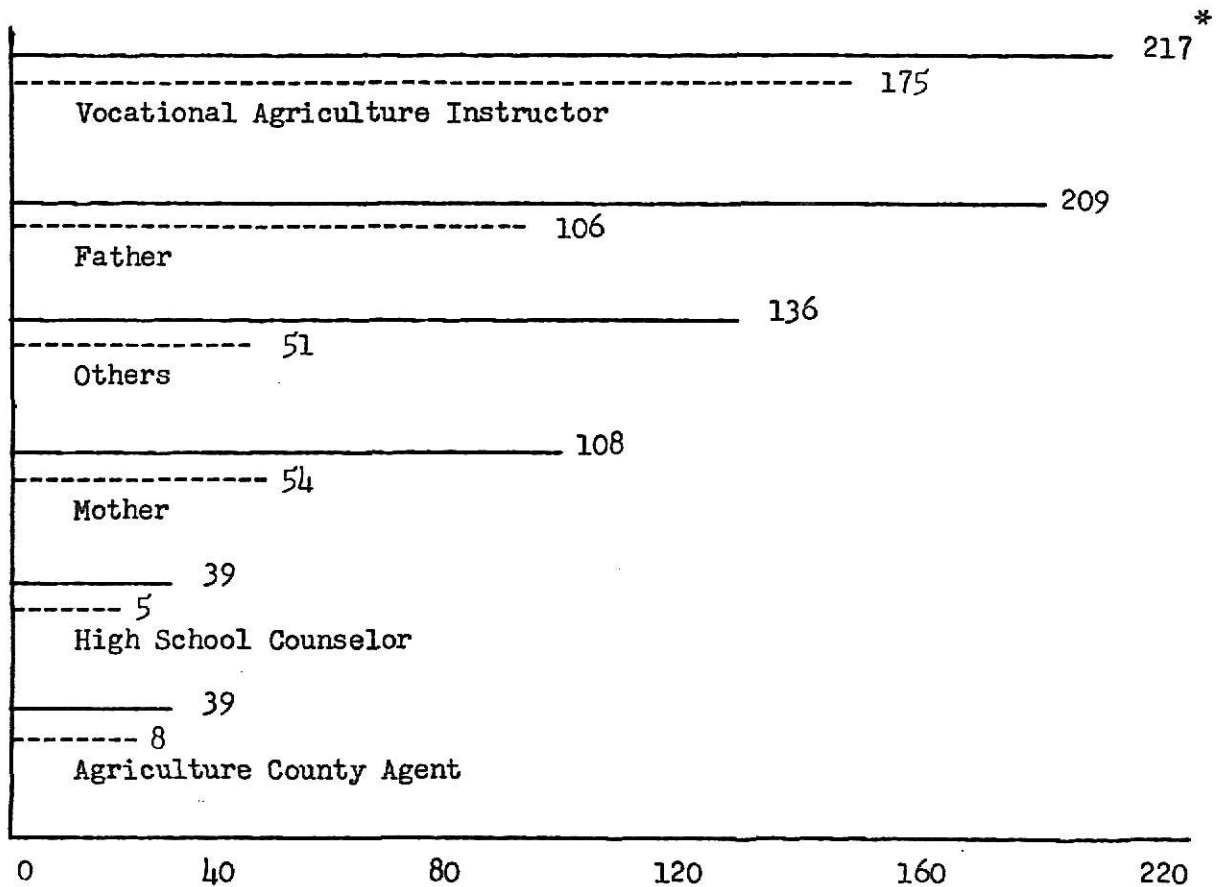


FIGURE 3

PERSONS WHO HAD INFLUENCED THE SELECTION OF

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AS THE COLLEGE

MAJOR IN 1973 COMPARED TO 1969

\_\_\_\_\_ 1973 figures

----- 1969 figures

\*A weighed score with first choice, 5 points; second, 4 points; third, 3 points, fourth, 2 points, and fifth, 1 point.

which influenced the choice of a college major. This question was scored the same as the responses to question 8. In this question students were asked what were the most 5 important factors in their selection of Agricultural Education as a college major? Students responded as follows:

<u>Rank order</u>	<u>Factors</u>	<u>Score</u>
1	Have had background experience in this area	146
2	Greater chance for self-satisfaction from work	143
3	This area best prepares me for future opportunities	140
4	Like to work with people	139
5	The field appears to be expanding	104
6	More desirable working condition	81
7	More opportunities to make my own decision	61
8	Greater financial security	57
9	Can have more time to call my own	30
10	More chance for advancement	26

Information in Fig. 4 gave the comparison of the results of the 1969 and 1973 studies. The first 5 important factors were the same in each study, but the rank order was different. In 1969, the factor "This area best prepares me for future opportunities" was ranked number one, but it was in third place in 1973 (Fig. 4).

In 1973 the item "Have had background experience in this area" was number one in rank order, but number 4 in rank order in 1969. The factor "Greater financial security" was moved down from 6th to 8th in importance, and "More opportunities to make my own decision" was moved up from 9th to 7th. The rest of the factors were in the same rank order.

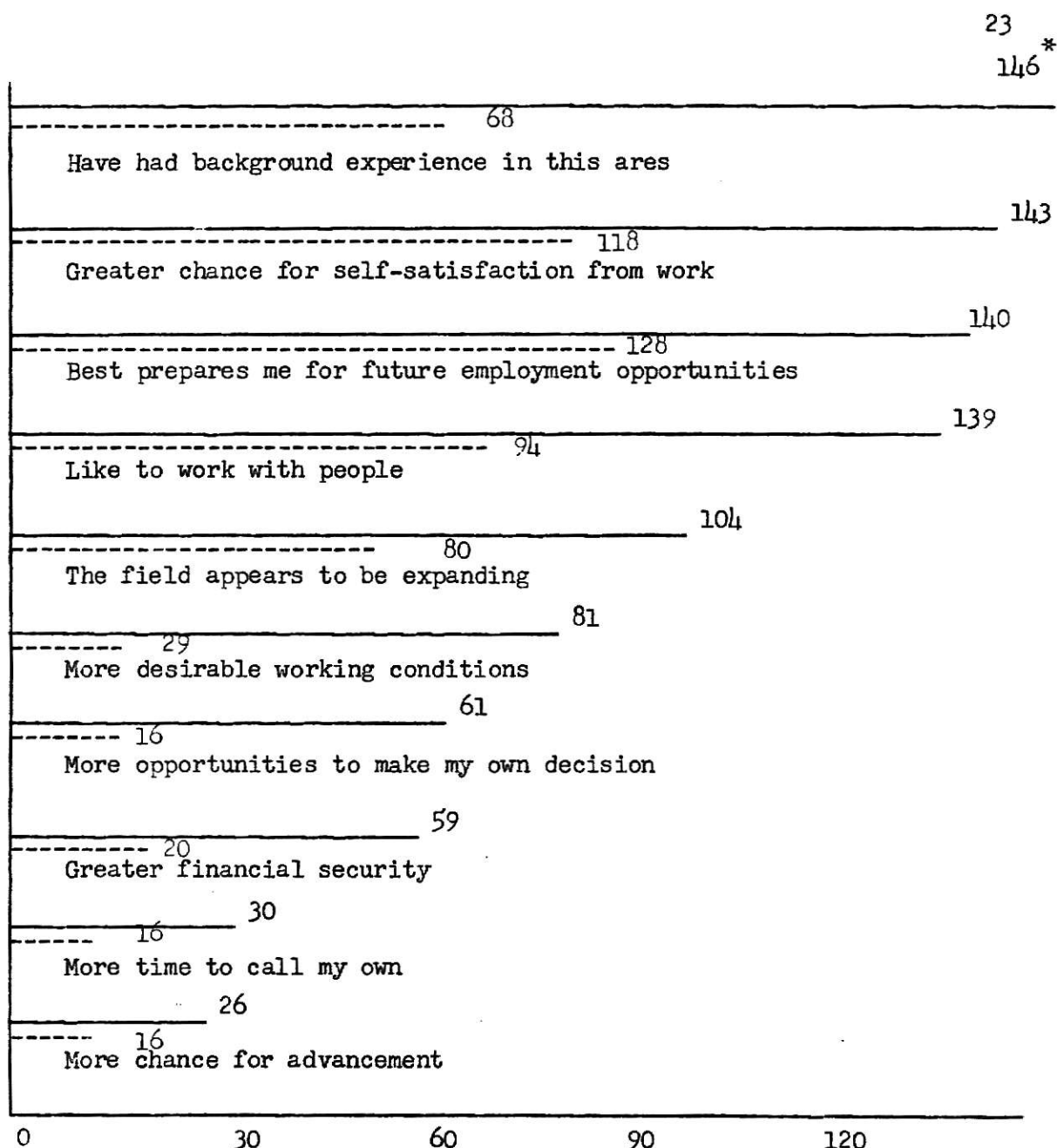


FIGURE 4

FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCED THE SELECTION OF THE  
AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AS THE COLLEGE MAJOR  
IN 1973 COMPARED TO 1969

\_\_\_\_\_ 1973 figures

----- 1969 figures

\*A weighed score with first choice, 5 points; second, 4 points; third, 3 points, fourth, 2 points, and fifth, 1 point.



Self satisfaction from work was a very important factor in the selection of a college major. In order to get the maximum effect from work, teacher as well as anybody else, should enjoy their job and be satisfied in what they are doing. "Like to work with people" was also very important. The Vocational Agricultural teacher was the most influential person in the selection of a college major by the students (Fig. 3).

#### C- STUDENTS SUGGESTIONS:

Question 10 was devoted to "What do you think could be done in high school to help others in the selection of a college major?" Fifty-three of 66 or 80 percent of Ag Ed students answered this question, and Fig. 5 gave the suggestions which were made:

- More career education . . . . . 35.8%
- Let the students experience from several majors . . . . 20.7%
- Explain why advanced study is needed and job  
opportunities in advanced study . . . . . 20.8%
- More and better high school counseling . . . . . 13.3%
- Have college representative to visit high school . . . . 9.4%

Student perceptions were changed from 1969. In 1969 students did not refer to career education. They thought to know about job opportunities and college curricular would be a big help in the selection of a college major. This is still true, but students in 1973 thought these factors were not as important as career education. Other important changes included the encouragement of students to start thinking earlier in high school about college or occupations. In 1969 16.4 percent of the students thought this would help them in the

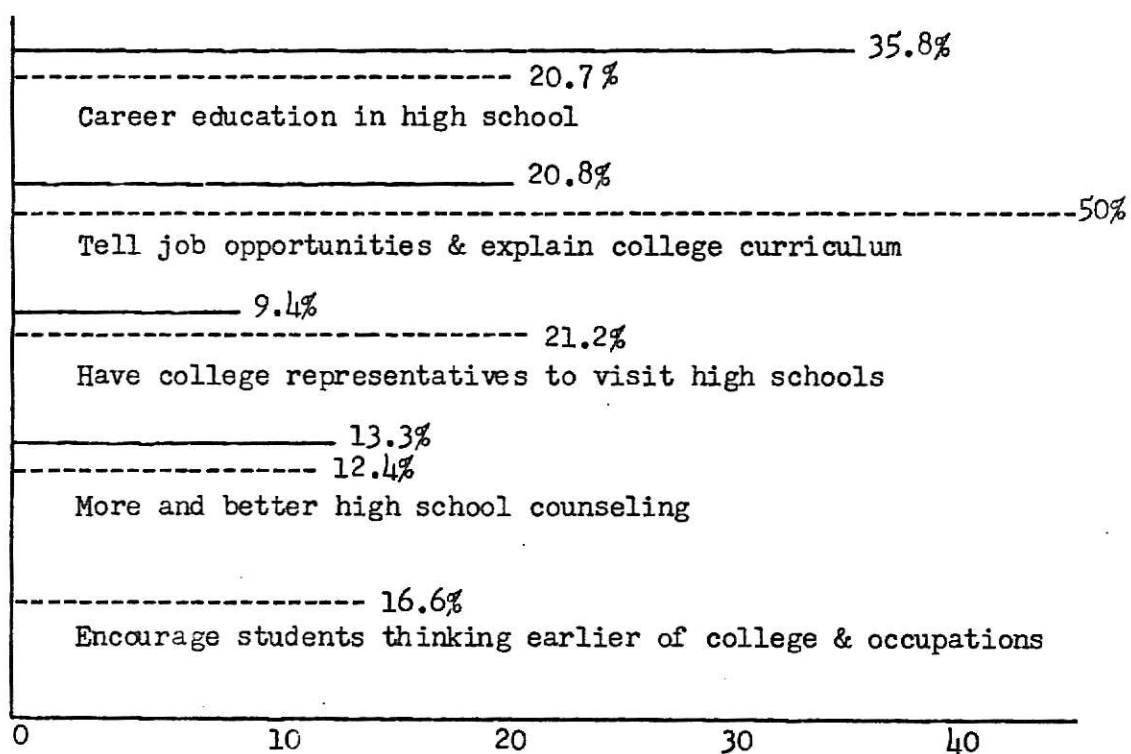


FIGURE 5

SUGGESTIONS ON THE SELECTION OF THE COLLEGE MAJOR

IN 1973 COMPARED TO 1969

\_\_\_\_\_ 1973 figures

----- 1969 figures

selection of their college major (Fig. 5) but in 1973 this idea was not included in the suggestions. In fact Table 4 showed more than 36 percent of 1969 selected their college major when they were below the Junior year compared to 28 percent in 1973.

#### D- STUDENTS RATINGS AND INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURE:

The responses to these questions were given weighed values. Students made 3 choices: much, some, and little interest with weighed scores of 5 for much, 3 points for some interest, and 1 for little interest. Question 11 asked students the degree of interest they had in the specialized areas in agriculture and students responded as following table:

<u>Rank order</u>	<u>Specialized areas</u>	<u>Total scores</u>
1	Animal Sciences	268
2	Crops and Soils	253
3	Agri-Business	221
4	Horticulture	199
5	Agriculture mechanics	192

Observations indicated that there was less student interest in Agricultural mechanics than Animal Sciences and Crops and soils. The weighed values produced the following order of interest, first Animal Sciences, followed by Crops and Soils, Agri-Business, Horticulture and fifth Agricultural mechanics.

Question 12 asked "How important the following factors were in the selection of your college major?" Students responded as follows:

<u>Rank order</u>	<u>Factors</u>	<u>Total scores</u>
1	Flexibility of occupational selection	268
2	Involvement with people	248
3	Close to out of door	241
4	Employment demand exceeds supply	232
5	Opportunities to be creative	220
6	Professional status	177

Ag Ed majors preferred the flexibility of occupational selection best because Agricultural Education offered more than just teaching (Chapter one). The next ranked factor was involvement with people. This was one of the important characteristics in the performance of the Vocational Agriculture teaching functions. (Fig. 4)

Question 13 attempted to find out which employment areas majors like best. Students were asked "How important were the following employment considerations in the choice of your college major?" The following table gave the student's reactions:

<u>Rank order</u>	<u>Employment opportunity</u>	<u>Total scores</u>
1	Vocational Agriculture teaching	285
2	Farm and ranch operation	269
3	Agricultural extension	217
4	Management	207
5	Agricultural services	191
6	College teaching	167
7	Government services	158
8	Sales and services	155
9	International Agriculture	152
10	Research	147

Two things were confusing in this table. First, it appeared normal when Ag Ed students liked to teach, but Woodin indicated that the number of teachers who entered the teaching field had decreased about 3 percent per year, in 1971 only 49.6 percent of total qualified teachers were teaching, an estimated 34.6 percent would teach in 1975 (Table 1).

Second, farm and ranch operation was the second most frequent choice. Table 5 indicated that about 60.7 percent or 70.5 percent of Ag Ed majors who lived on farms had good opportunities to go back to farming.

Question 14 was to determine interest in international agriculture. Thirty of 66 or 45.4 percent of Agricultural Education majors were interested in this area. The distribution of the interested in international agriculture was as follows:

Graduate students . . . . .	4 out of 4 or 100%
Senior . . . . .	.15 out of 25 or 60%
Junior . . . . .	.10 out of 24 or 42%
Sophomore . . . . .	2 out of 8 or 25%
Freshman (not applicable because only 1 out of 3 students answered).	

This information indicated that the more years in college the more the students became interested in international agriculture. The majors who were interested in international agriculture were then asked, "What countries would you be interested in for agricultural employment?" The following information summarizes their interest.

<u>Rank order</u>	<u>Countries</u>	<u>Total scores</u>
1	European countries	120
2	Australian countries	119
3	North American countries	100
4	South American countries	93
5	African countries	83
6	Asian countries	78

The last part of this question was to determine "How important are the following considerations for international employment?" Students were given 5 choices, and the following information gives their considerations:

<u>Rank order</u>	<u>Considerations</u>	<u>Total scores</u>
1	Involvement with people	148
2	Service to underdeveloped countries	140
3	Working conditions	120
4	Travel	116
5	Economic return	93

Students preferred to serve in undeveloped countries, but their choices of where they liked to serve the best were the European and Australian countries. However, these were the countries in Europe and Australia which were much more developed than countries in Africa and Asia.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

#### I- SUMMARY:

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors which influenced the Ag Ed students in the selection of their college major. A comparison was made with the findings of a study by Mr. Terry Fanning in 1969. Changes in the selection of Agricultural Education major which had occurred during the last 5 years from 1969 to 1973 were identified. After presenting the data and information in Chapter IV a summary was made as follows:

Eighty-one percent of the Ag Ed majors who were enrolled at Kansas State University during the 1973 Spring semester completed the questionnaire used in this study. Findings related to those who changed their college major to Agricultural Education included:

Forty-two percent changed their major since they were in college.

Forty-two had less than two years of Vocational Agriculture in high school.

Eighty-two selected their college majors in the Senior year of high school or later.

Twenty-six percent had occupational courses in high school.

Forty percent had no background of farming while in college.

The reasons for change in Agricultural Education were:

Lost interest in old majors,  
More opportunities in teaching.

In 1973 there was not much difference in the parent's education compared to 1969. The average years of schooling for the mothers of Ag Ed majors was 12.5 years in 1973 compared to 12.8 years in 1969, and the father's years of schooling was

- Greater chance for self-satisfaction from work
- Like to work with people
- Have had background in this area
- The field appears to be expanding.

Student suggestions on how to help others in the selection of college major included:

#### 1973

- Career Education
- Let students experience from several majors
- Explain why advanced study is needed and job opportunities
- More and better high school counseling
- Have college representatives to visit high school students.

#### 1969

- Tell of job opportunities and fuller explanation of college curriculum
- Have college representatives to visit high school students
- Encourage students to start thinking earlier in high school about college or occupations
- Closer work with students by high school counselor.

Ag Ed majors preferred Animal Sciences and Crops & Soils over Horticulture and Ag Mechanics.



Important factors in the selection of Agricultural Education major included:

- Flexibility of occupational selection
- Involvement with people
- Close to out of doors
- Employment demand exceeds supply
- Opportunity to be creative
- Professional status.

Employment considerations which were rated as important in the selection of the Agricultural Education major included:

- Vocational Agriculture teaching
- Farm and ranch operation
- Agricultural Extension
- Management
- Agricultural Services.

More than 45 percent of Ag Ed students were interested in international agriculture. They preferred to work in European and Australian countries. They liked to work in these areas because of:

- Involvement with people
- Service to undeveloped countries, and
- Working conditions.

## II- IMPLICATIONS:

The following implications can be drawn from this study:

- The more years in Vocational Agriculture, the more farm background experience, the less chance for students to change their majors.

- More career education should be offered in high schools
- More student experienced in several types of occupations
- More information on the reason for advanced study was needed
- More and better high school counseling was needed
- The more years in college the more interested majors became in international agriculture

This report reflected what Ag Ed majors at Kansas State University considered in the choice of a college major. The information in this study could be useful for those who wanted to do more for Vocational Agriculture, and for those who wanted to select Agricultural Education as the college major.

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## APPENDIX

SPRING 1973 QUESTIONNAIRE  
ON SELECTING A MAJOR AREA OF STUDY IN AGRICULTURE AT  
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

1. Indicate your present status in college.  
Freshman\_\_\_\_ Sophomore\_\_\_\_ Junior\_\_\_\_ Senior\_\_\_\_ Grad.\_\_\_\_
2. Have you changed your major since you have been in college?  
Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_  
If you have; how many times have you changed?\_\_\_\_  
What was (were) your previous major area(s)\_\_\_\_  
Why did you change to Agricultural Education?\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. At what grade level in high school did you decide what your college major (Agricultural Education) would be?  
Freshman\_\_\_\_ Sophomore\_\_\_\_ Junior\_\_\_\_ Senior\_\_\_\_ Later\_\_\_\_
4. What level of education did your parents attain? (Indicate the number of years of schooling).  
Mother\_\_\_\_ Father\_\_\_\_
5. Did you live on a farm after the time of entering college? Yes\_\_ No\_\_  
If you did, please state the size (number of acres) and type of operation.\_\_\_\_\_  
Is there a good opportunity for you to return to your home farm or to become established in farming? Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_
6. Is any member of your immediate family employed in Agri-business?  
Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_  
If the answer is yes, please give his (her) relationship to you and explain the nature of employment?\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. How many years were you in vocational agriculture in high school?  
None\_\_\_\_ One\_\_\_\_ Two\_\_\_\_ Three\_\_\_\_ Four\_\_\_\_  
If you were in vocational agriculture, did you have a course on agricultural occupations? Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

8. Rank three of the following as to the influence they had on your selection of agricultural education as a major. Let the number one indicate the most important, then two and three accordingly.

\_\_\_\_\_ Mother  
\_\_\_\_\_ Father  
\_\_\_\_\_ High School Counselor  
\_\_\_\_\_ Vocational Agriculture Instructor  
\_\_\_\_\_ County Agricultural Agent  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (Please Indicate) \_\_\_\_\_

9. Rank five of the following as to the influence they had on your selection of Agricultural Education as a major. Let the number one indicate the most important, then the next four accordingly.

\_\_\_\_\_ Greater financial security.  
\_\_\_\_\_ More desirable working condition.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Can have more time to call my own.  
\_\_\_\_\_ The field appears to be expanding  
\_\_\_\_\_ Greater chance for self-satisfaction from work.  
\_\_\_\_\_ More chance for advancement.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Like to work with people.  
\_\_\_\_\_ More of an opportunity to make my own decisions.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Have had background experience in this area  
\_\_\_\_\_ Feel that this area best prepares me for any occupational opportunity that might later develop.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (Please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

10. What do you think could be done in high school to help others in the selection of a college major? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. Please indicate your degree of interest in the following five specialized areas:

<u>Specialized areas</u>	<u>Interest Rating</u>		
	<u>Much</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Little</u>
1. Animal Sciences	_____	_____	_____
2. Crops and Soils	_____	_____	_____
3. Agricultural Mechanics	_____	_____	_____
4. Horticulture	_____	_____	_____
5. Agri-Business	_____	_____	_____

12. How important were the following factors in the selection of Agricultural Education as your college major:

<u>Factors</u>	<u>Importance Rating</u>		
	<u>Much</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Little</u>
1. Involvement with people	_____	_____	_____
2. Employment demand exceeds supply	_____	_____	_____
3. Flexibility of occupational selection	_____	_____	_____
4. Close to Out-of-Doors	_____	_____	_____
5. Professional status	_____	_____	_____
6. Opportunity to be creative	_____	_____	_____

13. How important were the following employment areas to you in your choice of a college major?

<u>Employment areas</u>	<u>Importance Rating</u>		
	<u>Much</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Little</u>
1. Vocational Agricultural Teaching	_____	_____	_____
2. Agricultural Extension	_____	_____	_____
3. Government and Service	_____	_____	_____
4. College Teaching	_____	_____	_____
5. Agricultural Service	_____	_____	_____
6. Research	_____	_____	_____
7. Management	_____	_____	_____
8. Sales and Services	_____	_____	_____



9. Farm and Ranch Operation \_\_\_\_\_
10. International Agriculture \_\_\_\_\_

14. Are you interested in international agriculture? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please answer the following items.

a. What countries would you be interested in for agricultural employment?

	<u>Interest Rating</u>		
	<u>Much</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Little</u>
1. Asian Countries	_____	_____	_____
2. African Countries	_____	_____	_____
3. Australian Countries	_____	_____	_____
4. European Countries	_____	_____	_____
5. South American Countries	_____	_____	_____
6. North American Countries (outside the U.S.)	_____	_____	_____

b. How important are the following considerations for international employment?

<u>Considerations</u>	<u>Importance Rating</u>		
	<u>Much</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Little</u>
1. Involvement with people	_____	_____	_____
2. Working Conditions	_____	_____	_____
3. Service to undeveloped countries	_____	_____	_____
4. Economic return	_____	_____	_____
5. Travel	_____	_____	_____

FACTORS WHICH AFFECTED THE CHOICE OF THE AGRICULTURAL  
EDUCATION MAJOR AT KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY, 1973

by

NGUYEN THANG HUNG

B. S., Kansas State University, 1972

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Agricultural Education  
College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1973

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors which affected the choice of the Agricultural Education Curriculum. This report included a comparison of the factors in the selection of a college major as identified study by Mr. Terry D. Fanning in 1969. The writer of this report tried to identify any changes which may have taken place from 1969 to 1973 in the selection of Agricultural Education as a college major.

The questionnaire used in this study contained 14 items and was designed to measure the student's background, factors which influenced the selection of the Agricultural Education major, suggestions for the choice of college majors, and the interest of students in international agriculture. All Agricultural Education majors hereafter referred to as Ag Ed majors were selected as the sample for this study. Sixty-six of 81 or 81 percent of Ag Ed majors who were enrolled at Kansas State University in the 1973 Fall semester indicated which factors affected them in the selection of their college major.

The results of this study indicated the changes which had taken place during the last five years from 1969 to 1973 in the selection of the Agricultural Education major. These changes were as follows:

- 1- Forty-two percent of the majors changed to the Agricultural Education curriculum since they enrolled in college compared to 44.3 percent in 1969.

- 2- Seventy percent of Ag Ed majors selected their college major

when they were in the senior year of high school or later compared to 67 percent in 1969.

3- The years of the schooling of the mothers of Ag Ed major had decreased from 12.8 years in 1969 to 12.5 years in 1973 while the fathers' schooling had increased from 11.4 years to 11.7 years.

4- Seventy percent of Ag Ed majors lived on farms in 1973 compared to 93.3 percent in 1969.

5- The percentage of Ag Ed major who had good opportunities to go back to farming from 63.3 percent in 1969 to 60.7 percent in 1973.

6- The percentage of relatives of Ag Ed majors who involved in Agri-Business had increased from 23.3 percent in 1969 to 27.3 percent in 1973.

7- The most influential persons in the selection of the Ag Ed major were: vocational agriculture instructor, father, and mother in 1969 compared to vocational instructor, father, and others in 1973.

8- The most important factors in the selection of Agri-cultural Education as a college major in rank order were:

<u>Rank order</u>		<u>Factors</u>
<u>1969</u>	<u>1973</u>	
4	1	Have had background and experience in this area.
2	2	Greater chance for self-satisfaction from work.
1	3	This area best prepares me for future employment.
3	4	Like to work with people.
5	5	The field appears to be expanding.

9- Student suggestions on how to help others in the selection of a college major included:

1969

- Tell of job opportunities and fuller explanation of college curriculum.
- Have college representatives visit high school students.
- Encourage students to start thinking earlier in high school about college or occupations.
- Closer work with students by high school counselor.

1973

- More career education.
- Let students experience several majors.
- Explain why advanced study is needed, and job opportunities available.
- More and better high school counseling.
- Have college representatives visit high school students.

The last part of the report was devoted to determine the interest of the Ag Ed majors in various areas of Vocational Agriculture, important employment consideration, and their interest in international agriculture. Findings of the study indicated the following:

1- Ag Ed majors preferred Animal Science, Crops, and Soils Horticulture, and Ag. Mechanics in that order.

2- Vocational agriculture teaching, farm and ranch operation, agricultural extension were ranked as the most important employment considerations in the selection of the Ag Ed majors.

3- Forty five percent of Ag Ed majors were interested in international agriculture. They preferred to work in this area because of involvement with people, service to undeveloped countries, and working conditions.

In 1973 there was a lower percentage of Ag Ed majors from farms. The Ag Ed majors indicated that more career education and more experiences should be offered in several occupations in high school. It was recommended that additional study be made to identify ways of providing these additional experiences.