

AN EVALUATION OF FOURTEEN AREAS OF THE, VOCATIONAL
AGRICULTURE PROGRAM AT HILL CITY, HIGH SCHOOL, 1959-1972

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B. S., Kansas State University, 1958

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

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1973
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to express appreciation and gratitude to the following persons: Dr. James J. Albracht, Major Professor, Department of Adult and Occupational Education, Kansas State University, and Dr. Gordon W. Price, Instructor of Research Seminar in Education, Department of Education, Fort Hays Kansas State College. Their assistance and advice in the planning and completing of this report was greatly appreciated.

Appreciation is also expressed for Professor Howard R. Bradley, Department of Adult and Occupational Education and Professor Paul N. Stevenson, Department of Agricultural Engineering.

Appreciation is also expressed to the former vocational agriculture graduates of Hill City High School for their cooperation in completing the questionnaire for this report.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Vocational agriculture was started in 1917 by the Smith-Hughes Act. The purpose was to prepare present and prospective students for proficiency in farming. Succeeding vocational education acts increased funds available for vocational agriculture as the number and scope of programs expanded. The first change in emphasis in vocational agriculture occurred with the passage of the Vocational Education Act of 1963. The Vocational Education Act of 1963 expanded vocational agriculture to include the training for off-farm, ag related jobs. The Vocational Education Act of 1968 further broadened the program to meet the man-power needs in agriculture.

Many changes have taken place in the vocational agriculture programs across the state of Kansas as schools have adapted programs under provisions of the Vocational Acts of 1963 and 1968. It was the opinion of the author that some parts of the vocational agriculture curriculum might be lost in adapting to the new requirements.

Process and product evaluations have received increased emphasis in agricultural education. The key to improved programs of vocational agriculture included an evaluation of the process and a follow-up study of the graduates of the program. According to Albracht (1) process evaluation alone was not sufficient for

assessing the value of educational programs. It was imperative that the product be included in the evaluation process. The author chose this area to make a study of the vocational agriculture program at Hill City, Kansas.

Statement of the Problem

The primary concern of this study was to conduct a follow-up of the graduates of Hill City High School who had completed three or more years of vocational agriculture between the years of 1959 - 1972 to determine the value of the instructional program of vocational agriculture in their chosen occupations.

Objectives of the Study

There were three basic objectives listed for the study:

1. To determine the value of various areas of instruction of the vocational agriculture program;
2. To compare the value of these areas of instruction in the students' chosen field of work;
- and 3. To compare the value of these areas of instruction on the basis of how long the graduates had been removed from the program.

Justification of the Study

This study was designed to evaluate the existing local vocational agriculture program to see how well it was meeting the needs of the graduates and to provide guidance in making future changes in the program. The findings of the study were useful in providing information to the Agricultural Education

Division, State Department of Education. Another important consideration for the study was to provide the administration, board of education, and the advisory council with valuable information that could be used in providing direction for the vocational agriculture program.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to ninety-three boys who had graduated after having taken three or more years of vocational agriculture at Hill City High School during the period 1959 - 1972. The author failed to find the addresses of six of the ninety-three boys because they had moved away and had no further contact with the community. The study was further limited to the sixty-six graduates who returned the questionnaire. The writer received seventy-six per cent return on the eighty-seven questionnaires mailed. The study was also limited by the graduates' ability to interpret the questionnaire as the writer had intended and the author's ability to interpret the responses as the graduates had intended.

Definitions of Terms Used

For the purpose of this study, certain words were set aside and given special definitions. The definitions were not necessarily those in common usage and were defined solely for the purpose of this study:

Ag related occupations. This was the term given to occupations that were dependent upon production agriculture for their being.

Chapter farm. A 160-acre farm rented and operated by the Hill City FFA Chapter members was known as the chapter farm.

Farming program or work experience. That part of the vocational agriculture program where the students were involved in the production phase of one or more agricultural enterprises or where they received on-the-job training in some phase of agriculture.

FFA awards. Awards were earned by FFA members in competition with other members. Some examples of FFA awards included: FFA letters, foundation awards, and the state farmer degree.

Field trips. That part of the instruction where the students were able to observe or participate in an activity related to the area of study away from the classroom.

Judging contest work. This involved the voluntary preparation for and participation in various FFA judging contests on a local, district, state and national level by the vocational agriculture students.

Leadership training. This was the term used to describe the training students received through the FFA organization.

Mechanical skills. This was a term used to describe the agricultural mechanics skills learned in the vocational agriculture program. Welding, electricity, carpentry, engine

repair and metal lathe work were examples of mechanic skills.

Non-ag related occupations. These were considered to be occupations having no direct association with agriculture.

Occupational information. This was a part of the vocational agriculture program which explored the major occupations in agriculture with emphasis on making a wise occupational choice.

Record book. The record book was a special account book used by vocational agriculture students to keep records of their farming program or work experience program.

Shop projects. This involved the application of the mechanical skills learned in the vocational agriculture shop to the construction or repair of a piece of labor-saving equipment.

Social experiences in FFA. Those activities sponsored by the FFA organization where close fellowship resulted were referred to as social experiences in FFA.

Student notebook. A three-ring notebook used by the students in vocational agriculture as a reference book. It contained the hand-outs and notes kept by the students during the school term.

Technical agriculture information. The information dealing with the scientific information of agricultural subjects was known as technical agriculture information.

Two-hour Vo-Ag II class. This was a course offering in the vocational agriculture program that was offered as a two-hour block during the school term.

Vocational agriculture. An instructional program in high school in which the major emphasis is devoted to the preparation for employment in agriculture and agricultural mechanics. The term is used synonymously with Vo-Ag in this report.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

Related readings have indicated that there were no studies which were identical in nature to this study. There were several studies of a related nature which involved follow-up studies which have been used to evaluate the effectiveness of programs of vocational agriculture.

According to Stewart (19), evaluation was an integral part of program planning. Vocational agriculture programs were designed to increase the competencies of students and to prepare them for agricultural occupations. Emphasis was placed on the development of specific knowledge and skills necessary for successful community life.

In a report by Dittenhafer (4), traditional approaches and policies must be evaluated in light of today's needs with an eye to the future. Those traditions not meeting the designated criteria must be revised or discarded. Dittenhafer continued by stating that good evaluation enhances public accountability for educational endeavors. Change in education is difficult at best, but evaluation can provide the facts to substantiate change. He concluded that evaluation efforts should provide students with the most efficient and relevant education possible.

"Accountability" replaced "relevance" as the "in" word among educators, according to Drake in an article on evaluation. He explained that it was apparent that the demand was for educational programs to be evaluated on a basis of what they produced and not on promises to produce. The graduates of programs were considered the real proof of accountability. It was stated that vocational education in agriculture must meet demands for relevancy in the curricula and accountability on the part of the educators and graduates.

The writer saw a need to determine if the various areas of the vocational agriculture program at Hill City High School had been of value to the graduates in their chosen occupations. He felt that a follow-up survey of former graduates would provide the basic data needed for evaluation and improvement of the program.

Follow-up studies had been made in Kansas and other states to find out if the vocational agriculture programs were meeting the needs of the graduates. The literature here cited was selected for review as background for this study and does not attempt to include all follow-up studies that have been made.

A study by Green (8) of 2,241 boys from sixty-four vocational agriculture departments selected at random from over the state of Alabama showed that more than fifty per cent of the former vocational agriculture students who had been out of school five years were engaged in farming and farm related occupations.

Those students not engaged in agriculture were employed in many kinds of work requiring abilities in mechanics, sales work, teaching and other fields of work where they will make good use of the abilities in leadership training acquired in the FFA.

In a follow-up study by Hemp (9) of 246 former vocational agriculture students in the State of Illinois during 1957 to 1958 showed that vocational agriculture had been helpful to 170 of the students in their present job, even though forty-two per cent were engaged in occupations not relating to farming. Farmers and those in ag related occupations listed most frequently animal husbandry, soils and crops, and farm mechanics as the phases of instruction most beneficial in their present job. The study of farm mechanics, general education aspects, and record keeping were listed most frequently as being helpful by persons in non-ag related occupations.

In a study of 137 graduates of the vocational agriculture program in Washington County, Kansas, Kastl (12) found that 35.7 per cent of the graduates were engaged in farming and 10.9 per cent were in agricultural related occupations. His study further revealed that 81.6 per cent of the graduates felt a knowledge of agriculture was beneficial or essential to them regardless of their occupations. He also found 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. Agricultural related occupations was ranked the lowest by the former graduates.

In a follow-up of 120 graduates having had three or more years of vocational agriculture at Hanover High School from 1951 to 1970, Lampe (13) found that 36.6 per cent of the graduates were farming full-time, 11.6 per cent were farming part-time, 26.3 per cent were engaged in ag related occupations, and 26.3 per cent were in non-ag related occupations. He also found that graduates in farming and ag related occupations placed a higher value on the vocational agriculture program areas of instruction for use on the job than graduates in non-ag related occupations, with the exception of leadership and electricity. His study also revealed that ag related graduates ranked use of hand and power tools, keeping records, and leadership as being most valuable on the job. Leadership and keeping records were considered as being most valuable to non-ag related graduates on the job.

Ottman (17), in a follow-up study of 136 boys who took four years of vocational agriculture in Onaga Rural High School, found that the most beneficial areas of the vocational agriculture program had been in the following areas: (1) shop or farm mechanics, (2) livestock, (3) record book, (4) FFA, and (5) crops. His study also indicated that 66.6 per cent of the farm boys and 73.5 per cent of the city boys felt the vocational agriculture program should be left as it had been when they were in school. The most frequently recommended changes were as follows: (1) to keep the program up to date, (2) to teach more ag-related subjects, (3) to have more shop work, (4) to

have more work in farm chemicals, and (5) to do more blue-print work.

Thompson (23) found in a follow-up study of sixty-three vocational agriculture graduates of Ford High School from 1953 to 1968 that 17.5 per cent of the graduates were farming full time, 20.6 per cent were part-time farming, 27.0 per cent were engaged in agri-business, and 35.3 per cent were in non-agriculture related occupations. He found that 61.9 per cent of the graduates benefited most from the shop section of the curriculum, 17.4 per cent indicated the FFA area, 12.7 per cent indicated the record book area, 6.3 per cent selected the live-stock section, and 1.6 per cent indicated the crops section. He also found that 49.2 per cent of the graduates rated the FFA as the number one extra-class activity.

Quoting approximate percentages from yet another report, the writer found that Jones (11), in a survey of 121 graduates at Peabody High School, noted that 45.0 per cent of the students taking one or more years of vocational agriculture indicated this course had proven valuable since graduation, while 10.0 per cent stated the course had not proven valuable to them. It was found that 85.0 per cent of the respondents indicated a benefit from all extra-class participation. Nine per cent state no benefit. The returns disclosed that 38.0 per cent of the respondents indicated the FFA as receiving the most top ratings in extra-class activities, with football receiving the next highest rating and collecting 14.0 per cent top ratings.

The literature appeared to indicate that a high percentage of the vocational agriculture graduates were employed in farming and ag related occupations. Most of the graduates ranked agricultural mechanics, leadership development, and the record book as the most valuable areas of the vocational agriculture program.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURE

Introduction

This study was designed to determine the present status of the male graduates of Hill City High School who had taken three or more years of vocational agriculture during the years 1959 - 1972. It was the intention of the writer to learn which parts of the vocational agriculture program the graduates considered the most beneficial to them in their present occupations.

Population

The students who graduated from Hill City High School between 1959 and 1972, and who had taken three or more years of vocational agriculture, were the subjects for this study. All of the graduates surveyed had been enrolled in vocational agriculture with the writer of this report, as the vocational agriculture teacher at Hill City High School during the time period included by the study.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire (see Appendix) was developed by the author with the assistance of Dr. James Albracht, Agricultural Education, Kansas State University. The writer also utilized former follow-up studies in agricultural education and related

readings in publications in the preparation of the survey instrument used in this study.

The questionnaire consisted of four parts:

The first part contained questions concerning year of graduation, number of years of schooling beyond high school, proposed or present occupation, major duties in present occupation, and a yearly income checklist.

The second part of the questionnaire contained a checklist determining the value of the various phases of the local vocational agriculture program. This part was developed through a multiple choice selection basis.

The student selected a value for each of the fourteen areas included in this section of the questionnaire that most nearly met his perception of the importance of each area in his present employment.

The third part of the questionnaire required the student to indicate the three most important of the fourteen areas of the program in his present employment situation.

The fourth and final part of the questionnaire provided the student with an opportunity to make comments and suggestions for the improvement of the local program.

Method of Securing Data

The addresses of the graduates were secured through the author's knowledge of where the graduates resided at the time of the survey and by addresses provided by the guidance office at Hill City High School. Relatives and friends were contacted

in cases where the addresses were unknown. In some instances the addresses were unavailable. Six graduates had moved from the community without leaving forwarding addresses.

After the questionnaire was developed, the survey instrument was mailed with a cover letter and a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the graduates to return. Those who had not returned their questionnaire within a reasonable period of time were reminded to do so by telephone or through personal contact.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of Chapter IV was to present the findings of this study. The findings were presented in tabular form, and an analysis was made for the purpose of summarization. Conclusions and inferences were derived from the data.

The data in Table I indicated that of the sixty-six respondents, twelve or 18.2 per cent were farming full time; eighteen or 27.3 per cent were in ag related occupations; and thirty-six or 54.5 per cent were in non-ag related occupations. The non-ag related group included six graduates who were in the armed services which would lower the percentage of this group to 50 per cent if they were excluded from this study.

There was an increase in the percentage of graduates entering the farming and ag related occupations in the 0 - 5 year group since graduation. Of the respondents surveyed, seventeen or 25.7 per cent of the graduates in non-ag related occupations were out of school 6 - 10 years. Fifteen or 22.7 per cent of the non-ag related graduates were out of school 0 - 5 years.

The findings in Table I indicated a higher percentage of graduates in the vocational agriculture program in the 0 - 5 year and 6 - 10 year grouping since graduation. It was noted by the writer that a higher percentage of the questionnaires were returned by the more recent graduates.

TABLE I
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF GRADUATES IN EACH OF THE
THREE OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES AND IN THE
THREE GROUPINGS SINCE GRADUATION

Occupational Categories	Number of Years Out of School							
	0 - 5		6 - 10		11 or more		Total	
	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.
Farming	7	10.6	3	4.6	2	3.0	12	18.2
Ag Related	9	13.6	4	6.1	5	7.6	18	27.3
Non-Ag Related*	15	22.7	17	25.7	4	6.1	36	54.5
Total wt. ave.	31	46.9	24	36.4	11	16.7	66	100.0

*The Non-Ag Related group included six respondents who were in the Armed Services.

Information contained in Table II through Table XVI was compiled by using a Likert-type scale and assessing a weighted average value to the responses for each questionnaire item (see Appendix). "Very valuable" responses received four points; "some value" received two points; and "no value" received no points. The weighted average response for each item was obtained by adding the assigned values for each response and then dividing by the number of responses. The sum average for the three groups was determined by dividing the sum of the weighted averages by three. There were three groups of respondents by employment category: farming, ag related and non-ag related. The respondents were also grouped according to the length of time since graduation. The groups were as follows: 0 - 5 years since graduation, 6 - 10 years, and 11 years or more. Areas of instruction with weighted averages of 3.4 - 4.0 were considered "very valuable"; weighted averages of 2.7 - 3.3, "valuable"; weighted averages of 2.0 - 2.6, "some value"; weighted averages of 1.3 - 1.9, "little value"; and weighted averages of 0 - 1.2, "no value."

According to the data in Table II, those graduates engaged in farming placed a higher value on leadership training (3.9) than those in ag related occupations (3.5) and non-ag related occupations (3.3). Those graduates who were out of school 11 years or more placed a higher value (3.6) on leadership training than those who were out 6 - 10 years (3.5) and 0 - 5 years (3.2). Although not shown in Table II, only one graduate placed a "no

TABLE II
VALUE OF LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Occupational Categories	Number of Years Out of School			Sum Average**
	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 or more	
	wt. ave.*	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	
Farming	3.7	4.0	4.0	3.9
Ag Related	2.9	4.0	3.6	3.5
Non-Ag Related	3.2	3.3	3.5	3.3
Total wt. ave.	3.2	3.5	3.6	3.4

*The weighted average was determined by the following scale: "Very valuable" received four points; "some value" received two points; and "no value" received no points. The total values obtained were divided by the number responding to the importance of each item.

**The sum average was determined by dividing the weighted averages of the 0 - 5 year, 6 - 10 year, and 11 year or more groups by three.

value" on leadership training. The graduates in the three occupational categories and the three groups according to time of graduation considered the leadership training to be "very valuable" (3.4).

According to information in Table III, the graduates engaged in farming placed a higher value (3.9) on the record book than those in ag related (3.2) and non-ag related (3.0). The more recent graduates (0 - 5 years) rated the record book the highest (3.4), followed by the 6 - 10 year graduates (3.2) and graduates of 11 years or more (3.1).

Although not given in Table III, no graduates in farming placed a "no value" on the record book; three graduates in the non-ag related group considered the record book of "no value". The graduates who were farming in the 0 - 5 year grouping considered the record book to be "very valuable" with a weighted average of 3.7, and those who graduated in the 6 - 10 year grouping and 11 year or more grouping also consider the value of the record book to be "very valuable" (4.0). Graduates in the other occupational categories considered the record book to be "valuable" with sum averages of 3.2 for the ag related and 3.0 for the non-ag related categories.

The findings in Table IV indicated the student notebook was of the greatest value to the ag related graduates (3.3) followed by farming graduates (2.7) and non-ag related graduates (2.0). The graduates in the 0 - 5 year classification considered the student notebook to be "valuable" (3.0); the 6 - 10 year

TABLE III
VALUE OF RECORD BOOK

Occupational Categories	Number of Years Out of School			Sum Average
	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 or more	
	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	
Farming	3.7	4.0	4.0	3.9
Ag Related	3.3	3.5	2.8	3.2
Non-Ag Related	3.2	2.9	3.0	3.0
Total wt. ave.	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.3

TABLE IV
VALUE OF THE STUDENT NOTEBOOK

Occupational Categories	Number of Years Out of School			Sum Average
	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 or more	
	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	
Farming	2.9	3.3	2.0	2.7
Ag Related	3.6	3.0	3.3	3.3
Non-Ag Related	2.7	2.6	.7	2.0
Total wt. ave.	3.0	2.8	2.4	2.8

group also rated it "valuable" (2.8); the 11 years and over group of graduates rated the student notebook as having "some value" (2.4).

The non-ag related graduates in the 11 year and over group were the only ones that considered the student notebook of "no value" (.7). The overall importance rating of the record book for the three occupational categories and for the three groups according to the length of time since graduation had a "valuable" (2.7) sum average ranking.

Replies in Table V indicated the graduates in the farming category of occupations gave a "very valuable" rating in judging contest work (3.6). Graduates in ag related occupations ranked judging contest work as having "some value" (2.5). Those graduates in the non-ag related category gave contest work the lowest value (2.3) of the three occupational categories which were compared in the study.

There was a very small difference in the values (2.5 - 2.6) placed on judging contest work by the three groups according to the number of years since graduation. The graduates in the three occupational categories and the three groups according to the number of years since graduation. The graduates in the three occupational categories and the three groups according to time of graduation rated judging contest work as having "some value" (2.6).

Responses in Table VI indicated that the graduates in farming placed a "very valuable" rating (3.8) on FFA awards.

TABLE V
VALUE OF JUDGING CONTEST WORK

Occupational Categories	Number of Years Out of School			Sum Average
	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 or more	
	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	
Farming	3.1	3.3	4.0	3.6
Ag Related	3.1	2.5	2.0	2.5
Non-Ag Related	2.1	2.3	2.5	2.3
Total wt. ave.	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.6

TABLE VI
VALUE OF FFA AWARDS

Occupational Categories	Number of Years Out of School			Sum Average
	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 or more	
	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	
Farming	4.0	3.3	4.0	3.8
Ag Related	3.0	3.0	1.5	2.4
Non-Ag Related	2.9	2.3	2.0	2.4
Total wt. ave.	3.2	2.5	2.0	2.8

A "some value" ranking was given by graduates both in the ag related occupations (2.5) and the non-ag related occupations (2.4). The respondents in the 0 - 5 year grouping considered FFA awards as "valuable" (3.2), followed by a "some value" rating by both the 6 - 10 year graduates (2.5) and the 11 year or more graduates (2.0).

The FFA awards prior to 1963 were oriented to farming, and the graduates in the non-farm occupational categories may not have conceptualized the relevance of the FFA awards in their occupations.

With the passage of the Vocational Education Act of 1963, occupations other than farming began to receive consideration for FFA awards. This might account for the higher values placed on FFA awards by the more recent graduates in all occupational categories.

The overall importance rating for the FFA awards by the three occupational categories and the three graduating groups had a "valuable" sum average ranking of 2.8.

In Table VII the highest value for the two-hour Vo-Ag II class was given by the farming group (3.4). Less emphasis was given the longer class period by the non-ag related (3.1) and ag related (2.6) groups. Those respondents in the farming category placed a higher value on the two-hour Vo-Ag II class as the number of years since graduation increased; the 11 year or more group granted a "very valuable" rating (4.0).

TABLE VII
VALUE OF THE TWO-HOUR VO-AG II CLASS

Occupational Categories	Number of Years Out of School			Sum Average
	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 or more	
	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	
Farming	3.0	3.3	4.0	3.4
Ag Related	2.6	3.3	2.0	2.6
Non-Ag Related	2.4	3.4	3.5	3.1
Total wt. ave.	2.7	3.3	2.9	3.0

In the combined occupational categories, the 6 - 10 years since graduation group gave the highest value (3.3) to the lengthened class period; this group was followed by the 11 year or more group (2.9) and 0 - 5 year group (2.7). Seven of the 0 - 5 year group did not have an opportunity to take the two-hour Vo-Ag II block because it was no longer offered.

Although not shown in Table VII, no graduates in the farming category rated the two-hour class as having "no value" while three graduates in each of the ag related and non-ag related categories have a "no value" for the two-hour class. A "valuable" sum average rating (3.0) was given to the two-hour Vo-Ag II class by the graduates in the three occupational categories and the three groups according to time of graduation.

The information in Table VIII indicated that all graduating groups in the farming category considered the farming program or work experience to be "very valuable" (4.0). A "valuable" rating was given by graduates in both the non-ag related (3.2) and ag related (3.0) categories.

The graduates in the 6 - 10 year group placed a "very valuable" rating (3.5) on the farming program or work experience. Graduates in the 0 - 5 year group and the 11 year or more group considered the farming program or work experience to be "valuable" by importance ratings of 3.3 and 2.7, respectively. Although not given in Table VIII, only one graduate, who was in the ag related group, placed a "no value" on the farming program or work experience area.

TABLE VIII
VALUE OF THE FARMING PROGRAM OR WORK EXPERIENCE

Occupational Categories	Number of Years Out of School			Sum Average
	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 or more	
	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	
Farming	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Ag Related	2.9	4.0	2.0	3.0
Non-Ag Related	3.2	3.3	3.0	3.2
Total wt. ave.	3.3	3.5	2.7	3.3

This study indicated in Table IX that mechanical skills were "very valuable" (3.8) to the graduates in the three occupational categories and the three groups according to time of graduation. Although it was not shown in Table IX, only six graduates (four in ag related and two in non-ag related) rated mechanical skills lower than "very valuable." No graduate placed a "no value" on mechanical skills.

All the respondents in the farming category rated mechanical skills as "very valuable" (4.0); they were followed by graduates in non-ag related (3.9) and ag related (3.6) fields. It was apparent that graduates in all occupational categories could make use of the mechanical skills they learned in vocational agriculture.

The replies in Table X indicated that the non-ag related group placed the highest value on shop projects. The "very valuable" rating (3.7) by the non-ag related group may have resulted from the visible reminder of the shop project. "Valuable" ratings were given by graduates in both the farming (3.2) and ag related (3.1) categories.

"Very valuable" ratings were given by graduates in both the 6 - 10 year (3.6) and 0 - 5 year (3.4) groups. The respondents in the three occupational categories and the three graduating groups considered shop projects as "very valuable" (3.4). Although not shown in Table X, only two graduates rated shop projects as "no value." Both graduates were in the ag related category.

TABLE IX
VALUE OF MECHANICAL SKILLS

Occupational Categories	Number of Years Out of School			Sum Average
	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 or more	
	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	
Farming	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Ag Related	3.6	4.0	3.2	3.6
Non-Ag Related	4.0	3.8	4.0	3.9
Total wt. ave.	3.9	3.8	3.6	3.8

TABLE X
VALUE OF SHOP PROJECTS

Occupational Categories	Number of Years Out of School			Sum Average
	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 or more	
	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	
Farming	4.0	2.7	3.0	3.2
Ag Related	2.9	4.0	2.4	3.1
Non-Ag Related	3.3	3.7	4.0	3.7
Total wt. ave.	3.4	3.6	3.1	3.4

All graduates registered their opinions of the value of the FFA chapter farm in Table XI. As might be expected, those graduates in the farming category placed the highest value (3.3) on the value of the chapter farm. The ag related and non-ag related respondents rated the chapter farm as "valuable" (2.7).

The more recent graduating group considered the chapter farm as "valuable" (3.2). The total weighted average for all occupational categories in the 11 year or more group rated the chapter farm the lowest (2.2). It was the observation of the writer that many improvements have been made in the chapter farm in recent years which might account for the higher rating by the 0 - 5 year since graduation group.

The chapter farm received a "valuable" rating (2.8) by the three occupational categories and the three graduating groups. Not shown in Table XI were six non-ag related graduates and two ag related graduates who placed a "no value" on the chapter farm. There were no graduates in the farming category who considered the chapter farm as "no value".

According to data in Table XII, those graduates in farming rated field trips as "very valuable" (3.4). Graduates in the ag related category followed with a "valuable" rating (2.7), while graduates in the non-ag related category considered field trips as having "some value" (2.6).

The 11 year or more group considered field trips as having the least value (2.2). Perhaps the information obtained from the field trips was no longer relevant to the graduates in their present occupations.

TABLE XI
VALUE OF CHAPTER FARM

Occupational Categories	Number of Years Out of School			Sum Average
	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 or more	
	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	
Farming	3.1	2.7	4.0	3.3
Ag Related	3.3	3.5	1.2	2.7
Non-Ag Related	3.2	2.4	2.5	2.7
Total wt. ave.	3.2	2.6	2.2	2.8

TABLE XII
VALUE OF FIELD TRIPS

Occupational Categories	Number of Years Out of School			Sum Average
	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 or more	
	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	
Farming	3.1	4.0	3.0	3.4
Ag Related	3.1	3.5	1.6	2.7
Non-Ag Related	2.5	2.8	2.5	2.6
Total wt. ave.	2.8	3.1	2.2	2.8

The overall importance rating of field trips for the three occupational categories and the three graduating groups had a "valuable" ranking (2.8).

The findings in Table XIII indicated that the technical agriculture information was "very valuable" (3.4) to the respondents in the farming category. As would be expected, graduates in the ag related category considered it as "valuable" (2.7), while graduates in non-ag related occupations rated technical agriculture information as having "some value" (2.4).

There appeared to be little difference in the overall "some value" ratings of (2.5 - 2.6) given by the three graduating groups on the value of the technical agriculture information. The graduates in the three occupational categories and the three groups according to time since graduation considered the technical agriculture information to be of "some value" (2.5).

Responses of the graduates indicated in Table XIV that the social experiences in FFA were rated the highest (3.4) by those engaged in farming as an occupation. Ag related graduates ranked social experiences as "valuable" (3.1). Those graduates in the non-ag related category gave social experiences in the FFA the lowest value (2.8) of the three occupational categories being compared.

Those graduates who were out of school 11 years or more placed a higher value (3.1) on social experience in FFA than those who graduated 0 - 5 years (3.0) and 6 - 10 years (2.8). The overall importance ranking for social experiences in FFA

TABLE XIII
VALUE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE INFORMATION

Occupational Categories	Number of Years Out of School			Sum Average
	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 or more	
	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	
Farming	3.1	4.0	3.0	3.4
Ag Related	2.7	3.0	2.5	2.7
Non-Ag Related	2.0	2.2	3.0	2.4
Total wt. ave.	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.5

TABLE XIV
VALUE OF SOCIAL EXPERIENCES IN FFA

Occupational Categories	Number of Years Out of School			Sum Average
	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 or more	
	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	
Farming	3.4	2.7	4.0	3.4
Ag Related	3.1	3.3	2.8	3.1
Non-Ag Related	2.8	2.7	3.0	2.8
Total wt. ave.	3.0	2.8	3.1	2.9

for all occupational categories and all graduating groups was considered "valuable" (2.9).

The findings in Table XV listed occupational information as "very valuable" (3.5) to those graduates in the farming category. "Valuable" ratings were given by graduates in both ag related (3.0) and non-ag related (2.8) occupational categories. The higher ratings of graduates for occupational information by the farming and ag related categories could probably be contributed to the emphasis given to these areas by the writer, who was the vocational agriculture teacher.

The overall importance rating of the occupational information for the three occupational categories and the three graduating groups had a "valuable" sum average rating of (2.9). Although not shown in Table XV, only two graduates in the non-ag related category placed a "no value" for occupational information.

Information in Table XVI gave the ratings of the graduates for the fourteen program areas by occupational categories. The respondents in the farming category gave the highest rating to mechanical skills (4.0), farming program or work experience (4.0), leadership training (3.9), record book (3.9), FFA awards (3.8), judging contest work (3.6), and occupational information (3.5). Social experiences in FFA, the two-hour Vo-Ag II class, field trips, and technical agriculture information were all given a weighted average of (3.4) by the graduates in the farming group. Respondents in the farming category gave the lowest ranking to the chapter farm (3.3), shop projects (3.2) and the student notebook (2.7).

TABLE XV
VALUE OF OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

Occupational Categories	Number of Years Out of School			Sum Average
	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 or more	
	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	wt. ave.	
Farming	3.1	3.3	4.0	3.5
Ag Related	3.1	3.0	2.8	3.0
Non-Ag Related	2.9	2.6	3.0	2.8
Total wt. ave.	3.0	2.8	3.1	2.9

TABLE XVI
IMPORTANCE RATING FOR FOURTEEN AREAS IN THE VOCATIONAL
AGRICULTURE PROGRAM BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES

Program Areas	Importance Rating		
	Farming wt. ave.	Ag Related wt. ave.	Non-Ag Related wt. ave.
Mechanical Skills	4.0	3.6	3.9
Leadership Training	3.9	3.5	3.3
Record Book	3.9	3.2	3.0
Shop Projects	3.2	3.1	3.7
Farming Program or Work Experience	4.0	3.0	3.2
Occupational Information	3.5	3.0	2.8
Social Experiences in FFA	3.4	3.1	2.8
Chapter Farm	3.3	2.7	2.7
Student Notebook	2.7	3.3	2.0
Two-Hour Vo-Ag II Class	3.4	2.6	3.1
Field Trips	3.4	2.7	2.6
Technical Agriculture Information	3.4	2.7	2.4
FFA Awards	3.8	2.5	2.4
Judging Contest Work	3.6	2.5	2.3

The graduates in the ag related group placed the most importance on mechanical skills (3.6), leadership training (3.5), student notebook (3.3), record book (3.2), shop projects (3.1), social experiences in FFA (3.1), farming program or work experience (3.0), and occupational information (3.0). The remaining six areas received a weighted average score of less than 3.0 with the lowest rating given to the two-hour Vo-Ag II class (2.6), FFA awards (2.5) and judging contest work (2.5).

The non-ag related graduates placed the highest value on mechanical skills (3.9), shop projects (3.7), leadership training (3.3), farming program or work experience (3.2), the two-hour Vo-Ag II class (3.1) and the record book (3.0). The remaining eight areas received an importance rating of less than 3.0 with the lowest rating given to field trips (2.6), technical agriculture information (2.4), FFA awards (2.4), judging contest work (2.3) and the student notebook (2.0).

It should be noted that all occupational groups considered mechanical skills, leadership, record book, shop projects and the farming program or work experience as being "very valuable."

The respondents were asked to list three of the most important of the fourteen areas listed in Table XVII. The responses indicated that fifty-three of the sixty-six graduates (80.3 per cent) valued mechanical skills as one of the three most important areas of the vocational agriculture program. Thirty-seven respondents (56.1 per cent) replied that leadership training was one of the three most valuable areas. The record

TABLE XVII
 FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES BY SIXTY-SIX GRADUATES OF
 VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE AS TO THEIR FIRST THREE
 CHOICES FOR THE FOURTEEN PROGRAM AREAS

Areas of Evaluation	Frequency of Responses	Percentage of Those Responding
Mechanical Skills	53	80.3
Leadership Training	37	56.1
Record Book	24	36.3
Shop Projects	17	25.8
Farming Program or Work Experience	12	18.2
Social Experiences in FFA	10	15.2
Student Notebook	9	13.6
Technical Agriculture Information	9	13.6
Judging Contest Work	8	12.0
Two-Hour Vo-Ag II Class	5	7.6
Field Trips	5	7.6
FFA Awards	4	6.1
Chapter Farm	3	4.5
Occupational Information	2	3.0

book had twenty-four (36.3 per cent) of the respondents who favored its inclusion as one of the three most important areas. Shop projects had seventeen (25.8 per cent) of the respondents who considered project work as one of the three most valuable areas in vocational agriculture. Twelve (18.2 per cent) of the graduates rated farming programs or work experience as one of the three most important areas. Ten (15.2 per cent) of the respondents considered the social experiences in FFA as one of the three most important areas.

The remaining eight areas had a frequency response of less than ten (15.0 per cent). The eight areas receiving less than ten responses included: the student notebook, technical agriculture information, judging contest work, the two-hour Vo-Ag II class, field trips, FFA awards and the chapter farm. The occupational information area had the least responses, two (3.0 per cent), as one of the three most valuable areas.

The findings in Table XVIII summarized the weighted averages for the three occupational categories and for the three groups according to length of time since graduation as compared to the frequency responses of the graduates for the three most valuable areas of vocational agriculture. Table XVIII indicated that mechanical skills and leadership training had identical ranking when weighted averages and frequency of the three choices were compared. The mechanical skills received a composite score of one (1), which made it the first choice and leadership training received a composite score of two (2), which made it second in importance.

TABLE XVIII
COMPOSITE RANKING OF THE IMPORTANCE OF WEIGHTED AVERAGES
AND FREQUENCY OF FIRST THREE CHOICES

Program Areas	Importance Rating					
	(A) Wt. Aves.		(B) Three Choices		Composite	
	wt. ave.	rank	freq.	rank	Score (A+B+2)	rank
Mechanical Skills	3.8	1	53	1	1.0	1
Leadership Training	3.4	2	37	2	2.0	2
Shop Projects	3.4	2	17	4	3.0	3
Record Book	3.3	4	24	3	3.5	4
Farming Program or Work Experience	3.3	4	12	5	4.5	5
Social Experiences in FFA	2.9	7	10	6	6.5	6
Two-Hour Vo-Ag II Class	3.0	5	5	10	7.5	7
Student Notebook	2.8	9	9	7	8.0	8
Field Trips	2.8	9	5	10	8.5	9
Occupational In- formation	2.9	7	2	14	10.5	10
FFA Awards	2.8	9	4	12	10.5	10
Judging Contest Work	2.6	13	8	9	10.5	10
Technical Agricul- ture Information	2.5	14	9	7	10.5	10
Chapter Farm	2.8	9	3	13	11.0	14

Shop projects were ranked third in order of importance, followed closely by the record book with a composite score of 3.5, which made it fourth in importance. The farming program or work experience had a composite score of 4.5 and was fifth in importance. The respondents rated social experiences in FFA with a 6.5 composite score and seventh in importance. It should be pointed out that the top six categories had very nearly the same ranking on both the weighted average and frequency of the first three choices.

The two-hour Vo-Ag II class, the student notebook and field trips had very close composite rankings. Occupational information, FFA awards, judging contest work, and technical agriculture information had composite scores of 10.5 and were tied for tenth in importance.

The chapter farm had the lowest composite score (11) of the fourteen categories that were evaluated. The author feels this low ranking (14) was probably due to the fact that much of the work done on the farm was done by boys who resided in Hill City and who may have taken one or two years of vocational agriculture and were not included in this follow-up study.

Graduates were asked to make comments or suggestions for the improvement of the vocational agriculture program. Typical open-ended comments by the graduates regarding the FFA organization were as follows:

"More publicity for students' efforts in competition with other FFA members."

"Send out newsletters to all former FFA members."

"Encourage more participation in public speaking."

"I feel that leadership and good record keeping are essential in any occupation and the training in high school should stress the importance of these."

Typical comments by the graduates in the area of mechanical skills were as follows:

"More on electricity and engine repair."

"More learning skills needed in certain areas."

"More advanced classes in mechanics."

"Add a class in hydraulic power."

Comments by the graduates regarding shop projects were indicated as follows:

"Spend more time in the shop working on shop projects."

"Have more special courses where students can have more training in work projects."

The following are some typical comments relating to the vocational agriculture program:

"More farm management should be taught."

"Continue to emphasize the chapter farm."

"Make all classes in vocational agriculture two-hours in length."

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. SUMMARY

The major purpose of this study was to provide data which would be of assistance in determining the perceptions of the graduates as to the value of fourteen areas in the vocational agriculture program at Hill City High School. Specific objectives for the study were: (1) to determine the value of various areas of instruction of the vocational agriculture program, (2) to compare the value of these areas of instruction in the students' chosen fields of work, and (3) to compare the value of these areas of instruction on the basis of how long the graduates had been removed from the program.

The population for the study were the former students of Hill City High School who had taken three or more years of vocational agriculture and graduated during the years of 1959 - 1972. There were ninety-three who graduated during this period and who completed three or more years of vocational agriculture. Addresses were obtained for eighty-seven, and addresses were unavailable for six former graduates. Sixty-six useable returns of the questionnaire were received from the eighty-seven graduates with known addresses.

The questionnaire which was developed included the following information: (1) occupational status of the graduates,

(2) value of fourteen areas of the vocational agriculture program, (3) selection of the three most important areas of the vocational agriculture program, and (4) comments and suggestions for the improvement of the vocational agriculture program.

The fourteen areas of the vocational agriculture program which were evaluated included the following: leadership training, record book, student notebook, judging contest work, FFA awards, two-hour Vo-Ag II class, farming program or work experience, mechanical skills, shop projects, chapter farm, field trips, technical agriculture information, social experiences in FFA, and occupational information.

The respondents were requested to give their perception of the importance of each of the fourteen areas by selecting one of the following choices: "very valuable," "valuable," and "no value." A weighted average of the importance of each area was determined by using a Likert type scale as follows: "very valuable," 4 points; "valuable," 2 points; and "no value," 0 points. A weighted value for each response was obtained by dividing the sum of the assigned values by the number of respondents. It was the decision of the author that program areas which received a weighted average of 3.4 or above be considered "very valuable" areas, those from 2.7 to 3.3 should be considered as "valuable" areas, and those from 2.2 to 2.6 as being of "some value." Areas in the "some value" would need more study or need to be improved.

A summary of the findings of the study indicated the following:

1. Eighteen per cent were farming full time, 27.3 per cent were in ag related occupations, and 54.5 per cent were in non-ag related occupations. When the six graduates who were in the service were not included in the non-ag related group, the percentages were: farming, 20 per cent; ag related, 30 per cent; and non-ag related, 50 per cent.
2. In evaluating the fourteen areas of the vocational agriculture program using the weighted average for the occupational categories, the areas of mechanical skills, leadership training, shop projects, record book, and the farming program or work experience were found to be the most important.
3. Ag related graduates had the highest rating for the notebook of the three occupational categories being compared. The non-ag related respondents had the highest value for shop projects of the three occupational categories used in the study.
4. Leadership, social experiences in FFA, and occupational information were the most valuable areas for those graduates who were out of school 11 years or more. The two-hour Vo-Ag class was most valuable for the 6 - 10 year graduated group. Graduates in the 0 - 5 year group found the record book, student notebook, FFA awards, farming program or work experience, mechanical skills, and the chapter farm as the most valuable areas of the program.

5. All areas of the vocational agriculture program with the exception of the student notebook were given a very valuable rating by the graduates who were farming. The student notebook received a valuable rating in the farming group.

6. The ag related respondents had a high importance rating for mechanical skills, leadership training, student notebook, record book, shop projects, social experiences in FFA, farming program or work experience, and occupational information. The two-hour Vo-Ag II class, FFA awards and judging contest work should be improved to meet the needs of the ag related group.

7. The non-ag related graduates rated mechanical skills, shop projects, leadership training, farming program or work experience, two-hour Vo-Ag II class and the record book as very valuable areas. The areas of the program which would need to be improved for this group included the student notebook, judging contest work, FFA awards, technical agriculture information and field trips.

8. When the graduates made a choice of the three most important areas of the vocational agriculture program, it was found that fifty-seven of the sixty-six graduates, eighty-three per cent, chose mechanical skills as being the most important areas. Occupational information, two-hour Vo-Ag II class, and the chapter farm received less than ten per cent of the responses.

9. Using the composite ranking of the weighted averages and the frequency of responses, it was found that mechanical

skills were the most important program area of vocational agriculture. It was followed in order by leadership training, shop projects, record book, and farming program or work experience. The chapter farm was fourteenth in ranking.

II. CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following conclusions were made:

1. The vocational agriculture program had been valuable to the community of Hill City, Kansas, as evidenced by the responses of sixty-six graduates of the Hill City High School vocational agriculture program.

2. The vocational agriculture program had been very valuable in meeting the needs of the graduates in the areas of mechanical skills, leadership training, shop projects, record book and farming program or work experience.

3. Very few changes would need to be made in the vocational agriculture program if it were only concerned with meeting the needs of the students with production agriculture or agriculture related occupations as their vocational objective.

4. There was a greater variation in the values placed on the vocational agriculture program areas by the occupational categories than were placed by the grouping of the graduates according to the length of time since graduation.

5. The chapter farm, technical agriculture information, contests, awards, and occupational information were not

perceived to be as valuable to the graduates as the writer had envisioned.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

After the results of this study were reviewed, the writer makes the following recommendations:

1. Continue to emphasize the areas of the vocational agriculture program which met the needs of the graduates going into farming, ag related occupations, and non-ag related occupations.

2. Those areas of the program which were found to be of little value to the graduates should be improved to meet the needs of the students.

3. Because of the high percentage of graduates who have taken three or more years of vocational agriculture entering non-ag related occupations, more emphasis should be placed on the mechanics areas.

4. Continue to place high emphasis on the FFA organization because of the leadership training it provided the graduates.

5. Additional evaluation studies should be made of the areas in the "some value" category before major revisions of the vocational agriculture program are made.

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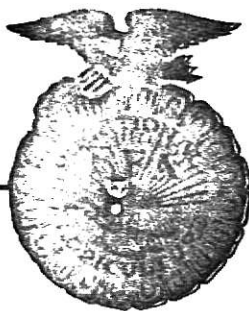
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APPENDIX

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Future Farmers of America

THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR STUDENTS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

HILL CITY FFA CHAPTER
HILL CITY HIGH SCHOOL
HILL CITY, KANSAS 67642

July 28, 1972

Dear Former Student,

The beginning of another school year is drawing near and I feel it is time to evaluate my vocational agriculture program. Many changes are currently being made in the Vo-Ag programs over the nation. To keep in pace with these changes some activities would have to be dropped or less emphasis placed on them. To assist me in making these decisions I have prepared a brief questionnaire. I hope you will find time to complete it and return it to me in the enclosed envelope.

I am proud of our new vocational agriculture building and wish to take this opportunity to invite you to stop by for a visit and look over our fine facility.

Sincerely,

Joe Farrell
Vo-Ag Instructor

HILL CITY VO-AG DEPARTMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____

Year of High School Graduation: _____

Number of Years of Schooling Beyond High School: _____

If you are currently a student or in service, list your major field or proposed occupation: _____

Present Occupation: _____

Major Duties in Present Occupation: _____

Yearly Salary or Income: (Check One)

_____ under \$5,000	_____ \$7,500 - \$10,000
_____ \$5,000 - \$7,500	_____ over \$10,000

This questionnaire is designed to help evaluate the various phases of the local Vo-Ag Department. Indicate the usefulness of your Vo-Ag background in the following areas upon your completion of high school. Please check the most appropriate blank for each statement.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. Leadership Training in FFA | 4. Judging Contest Work |
| ____ very valuable | ____ very valuable |
| ____ some value | ____ some value |
| ____ no value | ____ no value |
| 2. Record Book | ____ did not participate |
| ____ very valuable | 5. FFA Awards (State Farmer, Foundation Awards, FFA Letters, etc.) |
| ____ some value | ____ very valuable |
| ____ no value | ____ some value |
| 3. Student Notebook | ____ no value |
| ____ very valuable | ____ did not participate |
| ____ some value | |
| ____ no value | |

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>6. Two-Hour Vo-Ag II Class</p> <p>____ very valuable</p> <p>____ some value</p> <p>____ no value</p> <p>____ did not participate</p> | <p>10. FFA Chapter Farm</p> <p>____ very valuable</p> <p>____ some value</p> <p>____ no value</p> |
| <p>7. Supervised Farming Program or Work Experience</p> <p>____ very valuable</p> <p>____ some value</p> <p>____ no value</p> | <p>11. Field Trips</p> <p>____ very valuable</p> <p>____ some value</p> <p>____ no value</p> |
| <p>8. Mechanical Skills (Welding, use of power equipment, electricity, engine repair, etc.)</p> <p>____ very valuable</p> <p>____ some value</p> <p>____ no value</p> | <p>12. Technical Agriculture Information</p> <p>____ very valuable</p> <p>____ some value</p> <p>____ no value</p> |
| <p>9. Shop Projects</p> <p>____ very valuable</p> <p>____ some value</p> <p>____ no value</p> | <p>13. Social Experiences in FFA</p> <p>____ very valuable</p> <p>____ some value</p> <p>____ no value</p> |
| | <p>14. Occupational Information</p> <p>____ very valuable</p> <p>____ some value</p> <p>____ no value</p> |

Of the fourteen items listed above, which three would you rate the most valuable to you? ____, ____, ____.

Comments on the Local Vo-Ag Program:

Suggestions for the Improvement of the Local Vo-Ag Program:

AN EVALUATION OF FOURTEEN AREAS OF THE VOCATIONAL
AGRICULTURE PROGRAM AT HILL CITY HIGH SCHOOL, 1952-1972

by

MAURICE JOSEPH FARRELL

B. S., Kansas State University, 1958

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

The purpose of this study was to determine the occupational status of the vocational agriculture graduates and to provide data which could be used to evaluate the fourteen areas of the vocational agriculture program at Hill City High School.

Data was obtained by sending a questionnaire to the graduates having had three or more years of vocational agriculture in Hill City High School from 1959 - 1972. A questionnaire was developed and mailed to eighty-seven graduates for whom addresses could be obtained. Questionnaires were returned by sixty-six of the ninety-three graduates.

The questionnaire was developed to evaluate fourteen areas of the vocational agriculture program. The areas were as follows: leadership training, record book, student notebook, judging contest work, FFA awards, two-hour Vo-Ag II class, farming program or work experience, mechanical skills, shop projects, chapter farm, field trips, technical agriculture information, social experiences in FFA, and occupational information.

The graduates responded to each of the fourteen areas on a Likert type scale which gave a choice of "very valuable," 4 points; "valuable," 2 points; and "no value," 0 points. The author considered weighted averages from 3.3 - 4.0 as being "very valuable"; those from 2.7 - 3.2 as being "valuable"; and those from 2.2 - 2.7 as being of "some value."

The findings indicated that 18.2 per cent of the graduates were farming, 27.3 per cent were in ag related occupations and 54.5 per cent were in non-ag related occupations. The non-ag related group included six respondents who were in the armed services.

It was found that the areas of mechanical skills, leadership training, shop projects, record book, and the farming program or work experience were rated the most valuable by the graduates on the basis of weighted averages and frequency of responses as being one of the three most important areas.

It was found that all areas of the vocational agriculture program, except the student notebook, were "very valuable" areas for the graduates entering the farming occupation. The ag related graduates rated eight areas in the "very valuable" category. The non-ag related respondents considered seven of the fourteen areas to be "very valuable."

The study indicated that the student notebook, judging contest work, FFA awards, technical agriculture information and field trips were of "some value" and would need to be improved or discontinued for the non-ag related graduates. The graduates in ag related occupations rated the two-hour Vo-Ag II class, FFA awards, and judging contest work as areas needing improvement.

The findings indicated that eighty-three per cent of the graduates chose the area of mechanical skills as one of the three most important areas of the vocational agriculture program.

Occupational information, two-hour Vo-Ag II class and the chapter farm received the fewest responses as being one of the three most important areas.

On the basis of the findings of this study, it was concluded that the vocational agriculture program at Hill City High School had been effective in meeting the needs of the graduates in the areas of mechanical skills, leadership training, shop projects, record book and farming program or work experience.

As a result of the findings, the writer made the following recommendations:

1. Continue to emphasize the areas of the vocational agriculture program which were meeting the needs of the graduates in all occupational categories.
2. Improve those areas of the program that were of "some value" to the graduates.
3. Place more emphasis in the area of ag mechanics due to the number of graduates entering non-ag related occupations.
4. Continue to emphasize the leadership training through a strong FFA organization.
5. Conduct additional evaluation studies, particularly with regard to the chapter farm, before making major revisions in the vocational agriculture program.