

A STUDY OF THE OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF STATE FARMER  
DEGREE MEMBERS IN KANSAS

by

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## INTRODUCTION

Kansas high schools began offering federally aided courses in vocational agriculture with the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917. This act was designed to encourage states to promote and further develop programs of vocational education which otherwise might not be adequately provided for in the state systems of education.

Since that date the demand for vocational agriculture has increased until at the present time (1951), 182 Kansas high schools are offering the courses.

The primary aim of vocational education in agriculture is to train present and prospective farmers for proficiency in farming. The major objectives are to develop effective abilities to:<sup>1</sup>

1. Make a beginning and advance in farming.
2. Produce farm commodities efficiently.
3. Market farm products advantageously.
4. Conserve soil and other natural resources.
5. Manage a farm business.
6. Maintain a favorable environment.

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<sup>1</sup>Glen Cook, A Handbook on Teaching Vocational Agriculture, p. 6-12.

From the very beginning the boys who were enrolled in these courses in the various states felt a spirit of comradeship due to their background of country life and their desires with regard to farming as a vocation. Within a few years many of the states had organized "agricultural clubs".<sup>1</sup> It was not until 1928 that the National Organization of the Future Farmers of America was founded. The Future Farmers of America is a national organization of, by and for boys studying vocational agriculture in public secondary schools under the provisions of the National Vocational Education Acts.

The FFA program of work is built around nine major areas; (1) Supervised Farming; (2) Cooperation; (3) Community Service; (4) Leadership; (5) Earnings and Savings; (6) Conduct of Meetings; (7) Scholarship; (8) Recreation; (9) General.<sup>2</sup>

The specific purposes for which this organization was formed are as follows:

1. To develop competent, aggressive, rural, and agricultural leadership.
2. To create and nurture a love of country life.
3. To strengthen the confidence of farm boys and young men in themselves and their work.
4. To create more interest in the intelligent choice of farming occupations.

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<sup>1</sup>F. F. A. Manual, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

5. To encourage members in the development of individual farming programs and establishment in farming.
6. To encourage members to improve the farm home and its surroundings.
7. To participate in worthy undertakings for the improvement of agriculture.
8. To develop character, train for useful citizenship and foster patriotism.
9. To participate in cooperative effort.
10. To encourage and practice thrift.
11. To encourage improvement in scholarship.
12. To provide and encourage the development of organized rural recreational activities.

There are four degrees of membership within the FFA organization, and being an integral part of the vocational agriculture program, the advancement to the various degrees is based upon certain standards of accomplishment within the vocational agriculture program.

The degrees are: (1) Greenhand; (2) Chapter Farmer; (3) State Farmer; and (4) American Farmer. The first two degrees are awarded by the FFA chapters in the local high schools. The third degree is awarded by the states and the fourth degree is awarded by the National Organization.

Standards for the State Farmer Degree are set up by the states in conformity with the minimum qualifications listed by the constitution of the National Organization of Future Farmers of America. Two per cent of a state's active membership may be awarded this degree. However, the practice in Kansas has been

to keep standards high and to select candidates on the merit of their individual achievement. Consequently the total of two per cent has not always been reached.

The following minimum qualifications for the State Farmer degree are included in the constitution of the National Organization:<sup>1</sup>

1. Must have held the degree of Chapter Farmer, and have a record of satisfactory participation in the activities of the local chapter.
2. Must have satisfactorily completed at least two years of instruction in vocational agriculture, have in operation an outstanding program of supervised farming.
3. Demonstrate proficiency in parliamentary procedure.
4. Be able to lead a group discussion for forty minutes and pass some occupational or FFA test provided by the State executive committee.
5. Must have earned by his own efforts from farming or other agricultural work and deposited in a bank or otherwise productively invested at least \$250.
6. Show outstanding ability as evidenced by his leadership and cooperation in student, chapter, and community activities, and have a satisfactory scholarship record as certified to by the local school superintendent or principal.
7. Must have participated in an outstanding way in activities for community improvement and the development of agriculture.

Prior to this study, there were no figures available in Kansas showing the number of State Farmer degree members who had gone into farming occupations.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 15-16.

This study shows the occupational status of former vocational agriculture students who had been awarded the State Farmer degree by the Kansas Association of FFA from 1929 to 1950. As has been previously indicated, this group is not a cross section of the vocational agriculture students in Kansas but concerns only those who were granted the State Farmer degree.

The study was made specifically to determine: (1) the extent to which State Farmer degree members were engaged in farming; (2) in what capacity the State Farmers were farming; (3) the percentage who attended an agricultural college; (4) the percentage who attended non-agricultural colleges; (5) the family status of State Farmers; (6) the extent to which State Farmers were participating in community activities; and (7) the attitude of State Farmer degree members with reference to the value of the all-day school program and the part-time or young farmer program in vocational agriculture. The types of schools and classes in agricultural education provided for under the National Vocational Education Acts are all-day school, day-unit school, part-time classes and evening classes.<sup>1</sup> It is hoped that these findings will be of value in planning future policies and programs of agricultural education in Kansas and in selecting future State Farmer degree members.

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<sup>1</sup>Statement of Policies for Administering Vocational Education, p. 44.

## PROCEDURE

The information for this study was secured by means of questionnaires which were sent to all FFA members, except those in military service, who had been awarded the State Farmer degree by the Kansas Association of FFA during the twenty-two years that the degree has been awarded in Kansas.

Each local FFA chapter in Kansas having one or more State Farmer degree members was mailed a list of the names of members who had received the State Farmer degree and the local FFA adviser was asked to supply the correct current addresses for same. Each local FFA adviser was also asked to write a "type" letter addressed to the State Farmer members of his chapter asking their cooperation in supplying the information requested.

Just prior to the time the lists of State Farmer names were mailed to the chapters, Mr. Pollom, state supervisor of agricultural education, and state adviser, Kansas Association of FFA, wrote a letter (Appendix) to all the vocational agriculture teachers asking for their cooperation in securing correct addresses of State Farmer degree members.

When the current addresses of State Farmer degree members had been received, the following material was mailed to each member: (1) a cover letter, (2) a letter from the local FFA adviser, (3) a questionnaire, and (4) a stamped self-addressed envelope.

The questionnaire (Appendix) included six major headings as follows:



Part I - Name, high school attended, family status and college attended.

Part II - For those who were farming -- present positions, types of farming, and sizes of farms.

Part III - For those who were not farming -- present occupation, position in that occupation, and previous occupation.

Part IV - Community activities - membership offices held in local organizations.

Part V - Two questions concerning opinions held: (1) the value of the all-day program of vocational agriculture in Kansas and (2) the value of the part-time vocational agriculture program.

Part VI - Comments.

The study is based upon the 784 usable questionnaires that were returned by the State Farmer degree members.

#### DATA REGARDING THE OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF STATE FARMER DEGREE MEMBERS IN KANSAS

The 22 years covered by the study were divided into the following five groups: 1929-30; 1931-34; 1935-39; 1940-45; and 1946-50. However, only the last four groups were used in the group comparisons because of the low number and percentage of responses received from 1929-30 group. The purpose of this grouping was to determine possible trends that would be of value. It was thought that this division of the years into groups would show variations that figures for the total period of time would not show.

Certain factors lying outside the classroom and removed from the curriculum affect decisions regarding occupational

choice and to some extent the success within the chosen occupation. The above groupings were taken to represent as nearly as possible equal periods of time and to determine the extent to which the great Kansas drought and the depression (1931-34) and the World War II period (1940-45) affected occupational choice, compared with periods of less disturbing environmental factors. The above groups of years designated as drought and depression of World War II do not coincide exactly with the periods of time included by these great disasters, but they are approximate and for convenience are used in this study.

The study was based upon the 784 usable questionnaires that were returned by the State Farmer degree members of Kansas.

Table 1 shows how this number was obtained:

Table 1. Source of information used in the occupational study of State Farmer degree members of Kansas.

Source of information	Number
Total State Farmer degrees granted by the Kansas Association of FFA in Kansas from 1929-50 . . . . .	1225
Number of State Farmer degree members from chapters not active at the time the survey was conducted . . . . .	62
Number of State Farmer degree members deceased . . . . .	26
Number of State Farmer degree members in service when questionnaires were mailed . . . . .	55
Addresses not supplied by chapters . . . . .	7
Addresses unknown . . . . .	51
Total number of questionnaires mailed . . . . .	1024
Number questionnaires returned marked "insufficient address" . . . . .	22

Table 1. (concl.)

Source of information	: Number
Number questionnaires received by State Farmer degree members or their families . . . . .	1022
Number of questionnaires returned before deadline . . . . .	803
Per cent of questionnaires returned of those received by State Farmer degree members . . . . .	80.1
Number of questionnaires returned with service addresses . . . . .	19
Number of questionnaires used in the study . . . . .	784

State Farmer degree members who were in military service at the time of this study were not included in the findings. Questions listed on the questionnaires were not formulated to fit the situations of men in the armed forces.

Two chapters out of the 118 used in the study failed to respond to the request for addresses. Of those who did respond all addresses were listed except for 51 members.

The opportunity for using experiences gained in vocational agriculture in the business of farming was present in a substantial number of the cases, Fig. 1. Approximately 63 per cent were engaged full time in farming. Slightly more than 7 per cent were engaged in farming part-time, making a total of about 70 per cent of the State Farmer degree members who were engaged in farming in some capacity.

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Farming full time	:	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	62.6 per cent
Not farming	:	XXXXXXXXXXXXXX	30.2 per cent
Farming plus other occupation	:	XX	7.2 per cent

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Fig. 1. Occupations of State Farmer degree members by major groups.

These percentages are approximately the same as corresponding percentages found in similar studies in some of the other states. A study of State Farmer degree recipients from 1940-43 in Nebraska showed that 65 per cent of the State Farmers went into farming immediately upon leaving high school.<sup>1</sup> An Oklahoma study<sup>2</sup> showed that 57 of 100 State Farmers studied were on farms. In two Michigan studies the percentages of State Farmers who were farming were approximately equal. One reported that 56.1 per cent were farming either full-time or part-time,<sup>3</sup> and the other reported that 56 per cent of the State Farmers were engaged in full-time farming.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Raleigh A. Pilster, A Study of 182 Nebraska Vocational Agriculture Students Who Were Awarded the State Farmer Degree in the Future Farmers of America Organization from 1940 to 1943, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Oliver Newcomer, A Study of the Young Men in Oklahoma Who Have Received the State Farmer Degree, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup>Earl C. McKim, A Follow-up Study of Young Men in Michigan Who Received the State Farmer Degree during the Ten-Year Period 1930 to 1939, p. 26.

<sup>4</sup>Texton Robert Miller, A Follow-up Study of Young Men in Michigan Who Received the State Farmer Degree during the Period 1940 to 1947, p. 14.

In Kansas full-time farming was carried on by a higher percentage of State Farmers who received their degrees during the 1941-45 and the 1946-50 periods than during the 1931-35 and the 1936-40 periods, Table 2. With the exception of those who received the State Farmer degree in 1936-40, there was a slight decrease from 1931 to 1950 in the percentage of State Farmers who were going into occupations other than farming. The drought and depression may have caused farm people to engage in additional occupations in order to supplement the farm income. As the figures indicate, some of the farm people may have continued in that capacity. The degree recipients from 1936-45 tended to depart from the dual occupation status.

There were probably a number of factors that influenced the decisions of State Farmer degree members of recent years to remain on farms. The relatively high financial position of the farmers in recent years occasioned by favorable weather and relatively high prices has made farming attractive to many people.

Other factors have been causing people to leave the farms. In 1930 in Kansas there were 707,196 persons on 166,042 farms and in 1945 there were 480,469 persons on 141,192 farms.<sup>1</sup> Factors that have brought on this movement may include the following: (1) Many of the less efficient farmers were forced to enter other occupations; and (2) Others of the farm population have found work more attractive in areas off the farm.

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<sup>1</sup>U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census.

Table 2. Numbers and percentages of State Farmer degree members engaged in major occupation areas by five-year groups.

Occupation	Years									
	31-35		36-40		41-45		46-50		Total	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Farming full time	31	53.4	80	52.3	180	68.7	198	64.3	491	62.6
Not farming	19	32.8	64	41.8	73	27.9	80	26.0	237	30.2
Farming plus other occupations	8	13.8	9	5.9	9	3.4	30	9.7	56	7.2
Total	58	100.0	153	100.0	262	100.0	308	100.0	784	100.0

Table 3. Major occupation groups of State Farmer degree members who are not farming.

Occupation	Years									
	31-35		36-40		41-45		46-50		Total	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Occupation related to agriculture	11	39.3	32	42.7	26	31.0	6	5.6	76	25.7
Occupation not related to agriculture	17	60.7	39	52.0	39	46.4	20	18.5	115	38.9
Students in school	--	--	4	5.3	19	22.6	82	75.9	105	35.4
Total	28	100.0	75	100.0	84	100.0	108	100.0	296	100.0

The movement of the country people into the towns and cities tends to leave the use of the land in the hands of fewer people. Also in many cases a farmer is now farming two or more times the amount of soil he farmed a few years ago. It is important that those who raise our food should know the best methods of handling and preserving our soil resources.

Studies in certain regions and in certain communities are not in perfect agreement relative to the percentages of former students of vocational agriculture who engage in farming and the factors associated therewith.<sup>1</sup> Because of the increasing number of occupations and the specialized areas within occupations, there are many instances in which a definite break does not exist between the "occupations related to agriculture" and "occupations not related to agriculture." For example, we could classify an auto mechanic as being in an occupation "not related to agriculture" while another worker possessing similar skills working with tractors could be placed into the "agricultural related" group.

There has been a great lack of uniformity existing as to the meaning, terminology, and classification of occupations related to agriculture.<sup>2</sup> In this study the occupations related

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<sup>1</sup>George P. Deyoe, Supervised Farming in Vocational Agriculture, p. 369.

<sup>2</sup>Carlton E. Wright, Occupational Distribution, Entrance into Farming and Opportunities for Farming, for Former Students of Vocational Agriculture, p. 15.

to agriculture include the following: tractor mechanic, veterinarian, veterans on-farm training instructor, extension service, soil conservationist, fieldman for farm management service, plant breeder, agricultural teacher, farm loan appraiser, PMA field supervisor, agricultural experiment station research, and farm foreman.

While the results of studies between states are less comparable in the cases of related occupations than in many of the other study areas,<sup>1</sup> the comparisons within Table 3 indicate that in Kansas there may be a trend toward a higher percentage becoming established in agricultural related occupations than in occupations not related to agriculture.

Occupations not related to agriculture as listed by State Farmer degree members surveyed included: engineer, minister, mechanic, partsman, patternmaker, teacher, printer, welder, plumber, elevator operator, buttermaker, photographer, auto painter, student, carpenter, rural mail carrier, truck driver, groceryman, funeral director, insurance salesman, journalist and medical doctor. Some of these occupations could be classified as related to agriculture in certain respects but in this study they were treated as being not related to agriculture.

State Farmer degree members who were on farms were farming in many different capacities ranging all the way from hired men to owners. These groups were compared by five year intervals, Table 4. It was found that State Farmers were becoming established in the farm business as owners as time allowed them to

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<sup>1</sup>Loc. cit.



Table 4. Numbers and percentages of State Farmer degree members who were farming in various capacities by five year groups.

Position on farm	Years									
	31-35		36-40		41-45		46-50		Total	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Renter	6	15.8	29	32.9	57	30.3	60	27.3	152	28.4
Partner	2	5.3	8	9.1	50	26.6	88	40.0	148	27.6
Own part, rent part	15	39.5	29	32.9	49	26.1	25	11.4	120	22.4
Owner	12	31.6	15	17.0	11	5.9	3	1.4	41	7.6
Renter, partner	2	5.3	2	2.3	11	5.9	25	11.4	40	7.5
Own part, rent part, partner	0		2	2.3	8	4.3	4	1.8	14	2.6
Hired man	0		0		1	.5	12	5.5	13	2.4
Manager	0		2	2.3	0		2	.9	4	.7
Owner, partner	1	2.6	1	1.1	1	.5	1	.5	4	.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100.1</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>99.9</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>100.1</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100.2</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>99.9</b>

accumulate financial resources.

Of those who received State Farmer degrees in 1946-50, 5.5 per cent were on farms as hired men, those who received degrees during the first ten years of the period studied reported no one working as hired man. In the "owner" and "own part, rent part" categories there were definite and continuous rises in percentages from 1946-50 to 1931-35.

Of the State Farmers who were farming, 81.1 per cent reported that they were doing a general type farming, Table 5.

Table 5. Types of farming in which State Farmer degree members of Kansas were engaged.

Type of farming :	No. cases :	Per cent of cases :
General	433	81.1
Livestock	57	10.1
Cash crop	19	3.6
Dairy	23	4.3
Poultry	2	.4
Total	534	100.0

The term "general farming" was applied to the farm businesses which were engaged in producing both crops and livestock. Most of the area of Kansas has climatic, soil and market conditions suitable to the general type of farming.

Table 6 shows the size of farms operated by State Farmer degree members classified by acres and the numbers and percentages

Table 6. Acre size of farms operated by State Farmer degree members.

Acres	Years									
	31-35		36-40		41-45		46-50		Total	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
0-5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6-50	3	7.9	4	4.8	0	0	8	4.1	15	3.0
51-100	4	10.4	4	4.8	3	1.7	13	6.5	24	4.9
101-200	2	5.3	10	12.0	27	15.5	22	11.2	61	12.4
201-300	4	10.5	12	14.5	35	19.9	26	13.2	77	15.5
301-400	8	21.1	12	14.5	31	17.6	36	18.3	87	17.5
401-600	5	13.2	16	19.3	34	19.3	31	15.7	86	17.3
601-1200	9	23.7	15	18.1	34	19.3	36	18.3	95	19.2
1201-2000	0	0	6	7.2	7	3.9	16	8.1	30	6.0
2001-and above	3	7.9	4	4.8	5	2.8	9	4.6	21	4.2
Total	38	100.0	83	100.0	176	100.0	197	100.0	496	100.0

of degree members by five year groups. Very few State Farmers were farming less than one hundred acres. The larger percentages fall within the 301 to 1200 acres range, with the largest single percentage lying within the 601-1200 acres range.

The State Farmers who had been out of high school 15 to 20 years tended to farm more land than did those who had been out only one to five years. In the 1931-35 year group 23.7 per cent were farming acreages between 600 and 1200. While in the 1946-50 group only 18.3 per cent were farming in this acre range. This showed that the younger farmers were also farming comparatively large acreages, but as has been pointed out previously, the younger men were farming to a larger extent as renters, partners and hired men, while more of the older men were farming in the capacity of full owners or part owners.

Table 7. Previous occupational status of those who were not farming and who listed previous occupations.

Previous occupations	No.	Per cent
Included farming one year or more	59	40.1
Did not include farming one year or more	88	59.9
Total	147	100.0

Table 7 shows the extent the State Farmer degree members who were not farming and who listed previous occupations had been engaged in farming for one year or longer at some previous time. Of those State Farmers who were not engaged in farming

at the time the study was made, and who had listed previous occupations, 40 per cent had previously farmed for one year or longer.

Table 8 shows the family status of the State Farmer degree members in Kansas. Fifty-three and two tenths per cent of them were married. Of the State Farmers in the 1946-50 group 13.3 per cent were married. In the 1931-35 year group 94.8 per cent were married. The largest number of children listed for any one family for any group was five. In the 1931-35 group the largest percentage of families had two children. Next in order in this group were families with three children and third were those with one child.

During the twenty year period 1931-50, approximately one half of the State Farmer degree members attended college, Table 9. Of those who attended college, 74 per cent went to an agricultural college for all of their higher education and 78.1 per cent obtained part of their education in an agricultural college.

The percentage of college attendance by five-year groups fluctuated over the twenty year period. World War II undoubtedly influenced the percentages of State Farmer degree members who attended college. Some of the State Farmers who received their degrees between 1936-40 had their college training interrupted by the national emergency -- others not enrolled in college went to war, then returned and attended college under the GI Bill. The drought and depression apparently had little effect upon college attendance by State Farmer degree members.

Table 8. Family status of State Farmer degree members in Kansas.

Family size	Years									
	31-35		36-40		41-45		46-50		Total	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Married, no children	8	13.8	24	15.7	64	24.4	26	8.4	122	15.6
Married, 1 child	13	22.4	31	20.3	65	24.8	12	3.9	122	15.6
Married, 2 children	17	29.4	54	35.3	41	15.6	3	1.0	116	14.8
Married, 3 children	14	24.1	20	13.0	8	3.1	0	0.	43	5.4
Married, 4 children	2	3.4	9	5.9	1	.4	0	0	12	1.5
Married, 5 children	1	1.7	0	0	1	.4	0	0	2	.3
Single	3	5.2	15	9.8	82	31.3	267	86.7	367	46.8
Total	58	100.0	153	100.0	262	100.0	308	100.0	784	100.0

Table 9. College attendance by State Farmer degree members by five-year groups.

College attended	Years									
	31-35		36-40		41-45		46-50		Total	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
No college	28	48.3	60	39.2	148	56.5	153	49.7	391	49.9
Agricultural college	17	29.3	72	47.1	87	33.2	114	37.0	291	37.2
Non-agricultural college	7	12.1	19	12.4	22	8.4	38	12.3	86	10.9
Both agricultural and non-agricultural college	6	10.3	2	1.3	5	1.9	3	1.0	16	2.0
Total	58	100.0	153	100.0	262	100.0	308	100.0	784	100.0

Table 10 shows that State Farmer degree members who attended institutions of higher learning were enrolled in seven major areas or schools. Curriculums such as animal husbandry, agronomy, or horticulture were placed within the school of agriculture. Agricultural engineering, chemical engineering, civil engineering and other types of engineering were grouped under engineering and architecture.

Table 10. Schools in which State Farmer degree members who attended college enrolled.

	Number	Per cent
Agriculture	247	62.8
Arts and Sciences	76	19.3
Engineering and Architecture	36	9.2
Veterinary Medicine	19	4.8
Medicine	6	1.5
Law	1	.3
Theology	8	2.0
Total	393	99.9

Arts and Sciences included such divisions as English, education, business, chemistry, biology, etc.

Of the 393 State Farmer degree members who had attended college at the time of the survey 38.4 per cent had finished four years of work, Table 11. It is also significant to note that 7.4 per cent had completed five years or more higher education.



Table 11. Number of years higher education completed by State Farmer degree members.

Years completed	Number	Per cent
0 to 1	57	14.5
1 to 2	83	21.1
2 to 3	73	18.6
3 to 4	29	7.4
4 to 5	118	30.0
5 to 6	18	4.6
6 to 7	6	1.5
7 to 8	7	1.8
8 to 9	2	.5
Total	393	100.0

Of the State Farmer degree members who were not farming, 35.4 per cent were still enrolled in school.

Table 12 shows the numbers and percentages of community activities engaged in by State Farmer degree members by five-year groups. The term community activity included church, civic clubs, farm bureau and other organizations which include in their objectives the improvement of society. The largest total percentage (32.4) reported taking part in two community activities. Within the 1946-50 year group, 11.4 per cent reported taking part in three community activities. In 1941-45 the percentage reporting three activities had increased to 16. In the 1936-40 group the percentage was 24.2 and in the 1931-35 group

Table 12. Numbers and percentages of community activities engaged in by State Farmer degree members by five-year groups.

No. of community activities	Years									
	31-35		36-40		41-45		46-50		Total	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
0	3	5.2	11	7.2	22	8.4	33	10.7	70	8.9
1	4	6.9	35	22.9	63	24.0	131	42.5	233	29.7
2	15	25.9	46	30.1	108	41.2	84	27.3	254	32.4
3	21	36.2	37	24.2	42	16.0	35	11.4	135	17.2
4	4	6.9	14	9.2	21	8.0	15	4.9	55	7.0
5	6	10.3	6	3.8	3	1.2	9	2.9	24	3.2
6	1	1.7	4	2.6	2	.8	1	.3	8	1.0
7	3	5.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	.4
8	1	1.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	.1
Not answered	0	0	0	0	1	.4	0	0	1	.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>100.0</b>

the percentage participating in three community activities had increased to 36.2.

Six hundred forty or 81.6 per cent of the 784 State Farmer degree members reported that they were members of churches.

Approximately 31 per cent of the State Farmer degree members reported holding one office in local community organizations, Table 13. Being a committee member, chairmen of drives to raise funds and positions of similar nature were not counted as offices held.

Table 13. Numbers and percentages of offices held in local organizations by State Farmer degree members.

Number offices held	Number	Per cent
0	419	53.4
1	242	30.9
2	85	10.8
3	26	3.3
4	9	1.1
5	1	.1
Not answered	2	.3
Total	784	100.0

State Farmer degree members were asked to express their opinions as to whether the program of vocational agriculture as carried on in Kansas high schools was justified, Table 14. Ninety-six and seven tenths per cent said that the program was justified. Within the year groups the percentages that answered "yes"

Table 14. Expressions of opinions of State Farmer degree members regarding the program of vocational agriculture in Kansas.

Response	Years									
	31-35		36-40		41-45		46-50		Total	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Yes	58	100.0	150	98.0	253	96.6	294	95.5	758	96.7
No	0	0	1	.7	1	.4	4	1.3	6	.7
Undecided	0	0	2	1.3	7	2.6	9	2.9	18	2.3
Did not answer	0	0	0	0	1	.4	1	.3	2	.3
Total	58	100.0	153	100.0	262	100.0	308	100.0	784	100.0

Table 15. Expression of opinion of State Farmer degree members regarding the vocational agriculture out-of-school young farmer program.

Response	Years									
	31-35		36-40		41-45		46-50		Total	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Yes	38	65.5	107	69.9	166	63.4	214	69.5	527	67.2
No	6	10.3	12	7.8	25	9.5	25	8.1	68	8.7
Undecided	12	20.8	30	19.7	67	25.7	68	22.1	178	22.7
Did not answer	2	3.4	4	2.6	4	1.5	1	.3	11	1.4
Total	58	100.0	153	100.0	262	100.0	308	100.0	784	100.0

increased from 95.5 in the 1946-50 group to 100.0 per cent in the 1931-35 group.

State Farmer degree members were also asked to give their opinions as to whether the vocational agriculture departments in Kansas should offer out-of-school young farmer educational programs, Table 15. Sixty-seven and two tenths per cent favored such a program.

#### RELATIONSHIPS OF DATA PRESENTED

Table 16 compares the number of children per family for State Farmer degree members who had attended college with State Farmer degree members who had not attended colleges.

Table 16. Mean numbers of children per family of State Farmer degree members.

Years	: Attended college :		: Did not attend college :	
	: Mean :	: S. D. :	: Mean :	: S. D. :
1946-50	.25	.4	.56	.7
1941-45	.86	.8	1.11	1.0
1936-40	1.69	1.1	1.72	1.2
1931-35	1.86	1.1	1.85	1.3

Families of State Farmers who attended colleges were composed of fewer children during the 1946-50 and the 1941-45 periods than the families of State Farmers who did not attend college. However, there was practically no difference between the two State Farmer groups in the number of children in the 1936-40 and

the 1931-35 periods of years. This seems to indicate that the State Farmers who attend college generally postpone the rearing of children, but later rear approximately the same number of children as those who do not attend college.

State Farmer degree members who were farming tended to have more children than State Farmers who were not farming, Table 17.

Table 17. Mean number of children for State Farmer farm families and non-farm families sizes compared.

Years	Farming full-time		Not farming in any capacity	
	Mean	S. D.	Mean	S. D.
1946-50	.44	.63	.50	.67
1941-45	.99	.99	.96	.83
1936-40	1.78	1.1	1.70	1.0
1931-35	2.07	1.2	1.21	1.0

The mean number of children for the 1931-35 year group for those who were farming was 2.07 and for those who were not farming the mean was 1.21.

The number of community activities engaged in by State Farmer degree members were compared with the number of children with in the different sized families. Table 18. For the total period, 1931-50, families with the largest number of children tended to participate in the largest number of community activities. It must be borne in mind however, that the larger families were made up of the older, more permanently established group of people. With in the 1941-45 and 1946-50 year groups, the number of community

activities varied slightly with the number of children per family. Within the 1931-35 and 1936-40 year groups the number of activities increased with the number of children per family. It is possible that as the children reached an age where they were interested in social group activities, the parent may have become more interested.

Table 18. Mean number of community activities engaged in by State Farmer degree member families

Family size	Years	Mean community activities
Families with no children	<u>1931-35</u>	1.75
Families with 1 child		2.38
Families with 2 children		3.94
Families with 3 children		3.14
Families with 4 children		3.00
Families with 5 children		3.00
	<u>1936-50</u>	
Families with no children		1.88
Families with 1 child		1.87
Families with 2 children		2.41
Families with 3 children		2.50
Families with 4 children		3.00
	<u>1941-45</u>	
Families with no children		2.03
Families with 1 child		2.02
Families with 2 children		2.02
Families with 3 children		2.0
Families with 4 children		2.0
Families with 5 children		3.0

Table 18. (concl.)

Family size	Years	Mean community activities
	<u>1946-50</u>	
Families with no children		1.77
Families with 1 child		1.58
Families with 2 children		1.0
	<u>1931-50</u>	
Families with no children		1.93
Families with 1 child		1.98
Families with 2 children		2.46
Families with 3 children		2.62
Families with 4 children		2.92
Families with 5 children		3.00

Figures 2 to 5 show the occupational choice of State Farmer degree members within the following four groups: (1) those who did not attend college; (2) those who attended an agricultural college; (3) those who attended both an agricultural and other colleges; and (4) those who attended non-agricultural colleges.

Farming full-time	XX	(338)
Not farming	XXXXXX	(41)
Farming plus other occup.	X	(10)

Fig. 2. Occupations of State Farmers who did not attend college.



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Farming full-time	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	(103)
Not farming	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	(208)
Farming plus other occup.	XXXXXX	(33)

---

Fig. 3. Occupations of State Farmers who attended agricultural colleges only.

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Farming full-time	XXXXXXX	(6)
Not farming	XXXXXXXXXXXXX	(9)
Farming plus other occup.	X	(1)

---

Fig. 4. Occupations of State Farmers who attended both agricultural and other colleges.

---

Farming full time	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	(41)
Not farming	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	(32)
Farming plus other occup.	XXXXXX	(12)

---

Fig. 5. Occupations of State Farmers who attended non-agricultural colleges.

Of the State Farmer degree members who attended an agricultural college for any period of time, the following per cents were farming in some capacity at the time this study was made:

Date degree was awarded	Per cent farming
1931-35	70
1936-40	41
1941-45	45
1946-50	48

Of those who were in occupations other than farming and had attended an agricultural college for any period of time, the following per cents were in occupations related to agriculture:

Date degree was awarded	Per cent in agricultural related occupations
1931-35 . . . .	82
1936-40 . . . .	55
1941-45 . . . .	35
1946-50 . . . .	3
1931-50 . . . .	30

Many of the 1946-50 group were college students at the time the survey was made.

For the 20 year period 1931-50, of those who were in occupations other than farming and had not attended college, 23 per cent were in agricultural related occupations and 70 per cent were in non-agricultural occupations. The remaining 7 per cent were in high schools.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. Sixty-two and six tenths per cent of the vocational agriculture students who had received the State Farmer degree in Kansas were farming full-time. An additional 7 per cent were farming part-time.

2. Approximately 26 per cent of the State Farmers who were not farming were engaged in occupations related to agriculture.

3. Approximately 56 per cent of the State Farmer degree members who were farming were renters and partners, however many of those who had been out of high school from 10 to 20 years were becoming established as owners.

4. Most of the State Farmers who were farming were on farms larger than 300 acres.

5. Approximately 50 per cent of the State Farmers attended colleges. Of those who attended colleges, 74 per cent attended agricultural colleges for all of their higher education.

6. Of the State Farmers who attended college, 62.8 per cent enrolled in the school of agriculture.

7. A high percentage of all State Farmer degree members were taking part in community activities. Thirty-six per cent of those who had received their degrees 15 to 20 years previous to the study were engaged in 3 community activities each.

8. Forty-six and six tenths per cent of the State Farmers were holding or had held office in at least one local community organization.

9. The State Farmer degree members of Kansas expressed almost unanimous approval of the program of vocational agriculture in Kansas.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Acknowledgment is due Professor A. P. Davidson of the department of Education and Psychology for his valuable assistance as major instructor, and Dr. M C. Moggie for his help in tabulating data.

The writer also wishes to express his appreciation to Supervisor L. B. Pollom and to the instructors of vocational agriculture in Kansas who cooperated in furnishing addresses and in contacting State Farmers.

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**APPENDIX**



February 13, 1951

Mr. L. B. Pollom, Supervisor  
 State Board for Vocational Education  
 908 Topeka Blvd.  
 Topeka, Kansas

Dear Mr. Pollom:

Enclosed is a copy of the questionnaire that is to be sent to our State Farmers. It is not in its final form, but in the process of being developed. Feel free to suggest deletions and/or additions. We want to keep it somewhat limited in scope and yet include a number of the more significant questions.

Also enclosed is a list or sequence of events, as I recall them, regarding our plan of contacting teachers, send out the questionnaire, etc.

The following is a list of schools that now are offering programs of Vocational Agriculture that have had State Farmers at some time during the period 1929-50 inclusive:

Abilene	Emporia	Lawrence	Paxico
Alma	Fairview	Lebanon	Phillipsburg
Altamont	Fort Scott	Linn	Powhattan
Alton	Fowler	Little River	Pratt
Arkansas City	Frankfort	Lyndon	Randolph
Atwood	Fredonia	Manhattan	Sabetha
Barnes	Garden City	Marysville	Sedan
Bazine	Glasco	McDonald	Silver Lake
Belleville	Goodland	McPherson	Simpson
Beloit	Great Bend	Medicine	Smith Center
Beverly	Hanover	Merriam	Soldier
Bird City	Harper	Miltonvale	Solomon
Bonner Springs	Harveyville	Minneapolis	Stafford
Buhler	Haven	Morrowville	St. Francis
Burlington	Hays	Moundridge	Stockton
Chanute	Hiawatha	Mulvane	Syracuse
Chapman	Hill City	Neodesha	Tonganoxie
Clay Center	Hillsboro	Newton	Topeka (Highland Pk.)
Clifton	Holcomb	North Topeka	Topeka (Wasburn)
Coffeyville	Holton	Norton	Valley Falls
Colby	Hope	Oberlin	Wakeeney
Coldwater	Howard	Olathe	Wakefield
Columbus	Hoxie	Onaga	Wamego
Concordia	Independence	Osage City	Washington
Cottonwood Falls	Inman	Osborn	Waterville
Council Grove	Iola	Ottawa	Wellsville
Downs	Junction City	Overbrook	Westmoreland
Effingham	Kincaid	Paola	Williamsburg
Eldorado	Kingman	Parsons	Winfield
Ellis	Kiowa		

Very truly yours,

Frank R. Carpenter

## STATE BOARD FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

TOPEKA, KANSAS

Dear Fellow Worker:

Occasionally this office encounters need for information concerning the whereabouts and progress of former vocational agriculture students and graduates. When the need arises, it is usually urgent but cannot be supplied without the expenditure of considerable time and effort. Often those seeking the information fail to secure it because of this.

There is no way to secure such information except by going to the vocational agriculture teachers in various communities that have had a course in vocational agriculture in their school for some time.

Professor Frank Carpenter of the Department of Education at Kansas State College has been asked to make a study to determine where those who have been awarded State Farmer Degrees are, what they are doing, and learn something of the progress they are making.

In the near future you will receive a communication including information blanks from Professor Carpenter. We sincerely hope you will give prompt attention to the matter, making every effort to locate former members of your FFA Chapter who have been awarded State Farmer Degrees, and assist him in any way you can in securing the information.

Those of you who have enjoyed a long tenure in your present location probably know of the whereabouts and progress of those holding State Farmer Degrees while those who have recently taken over a long-established department may find that considerable time and effort will be required to locate them.

At any rate this office will deeply appreciate the effort you make in order that this study will provide the necessary information.

Sincerely yours,

Lester B. Pollom, Supervisor,  
Vocational Agriculture

LP:R

KANSAS STATE COLLEGE  
Department of Education and Psychology  
Manhattan, Kansas

February 24, 1951

Dear Mr.

I am making a study of the Kansas FFA boys who have received the State Farmer Degree, to determine their occupational status.

According to our records, the following is a complete list of FFA members from your chapter that have received the State Farmer Degree to date:

<u>Yr. Dgr.</u> <u>Rec'd</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
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Will you please fill in their complete present addresses, so that I may correspond with them for needed information. To find some of these addresses, it may be necessary for you to contact some of the members' relatives, local business men, school officials, teachers, or others.

If any of the addresses cannot be found, please return this list with as many addresses filled in as possible. May I have these returned by March 10.

I hope that this study will bring out certain facts that will be of benefit to Vocational Agriculture in Kansas.

Thanking you in advance for your cooperation, I am,

Sincerely yours,

F. R. Carpenter

P. S. When you mail this list back to me, please enclose a letter to your State Farmers. As Mr. Pollom stated in his letter of February 20 to you, "I hope your letter to them will make it clear that you and we are genuinely and sincerely interested in their work and general progress, that the information being asked is needed whether or not they are on a farm."

We will duplicate your letter and send a copy of it to each of your State Farmers along with the questionnaire. FRC

KANSAS STATE COLLEGE  
Manhattan

Department of Education and Psychology

To State Farmer Degree Members,  
Kansas Association of Future Farmers of America

Dear Sir:

I have been asked by the adult officers of the Kansas Association of Future Farmers of America to make an occupational study of all members granted the State Farmer Degree by the Kansas Association of FFA. Frequently members of the vocational education staff find themselves in need of information concerning the whereabouts and progress of former vocational agriculture students. By means of this study we hope to make available usable data relative to the occupational status of the approximate two per cent of our members who were granted the State Farmer Degree.

Enclosed herewith find a one-page questionnaire which I hope you will find time to fill out and return to me at your earliest convenience.

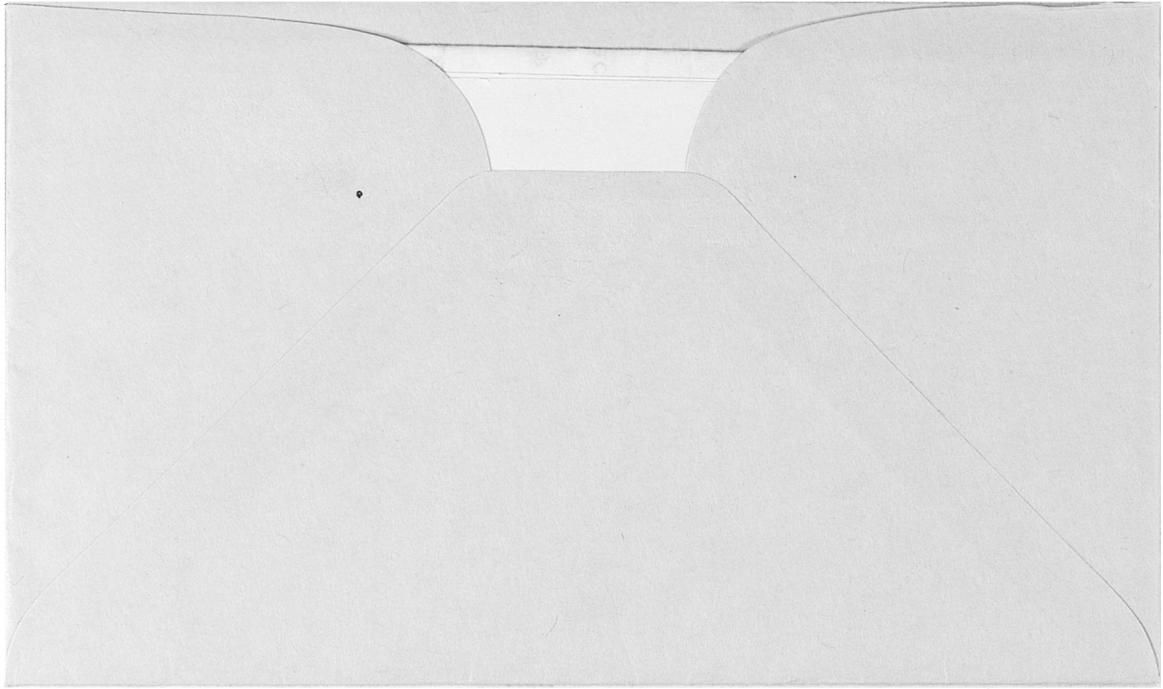
For many of the chapters having State Farmer Degree members, you will find enclosed a copy of a letter written by the present chapter adviser.

Adult members of the Kansas Association of Future Farmers of America, Adviser, L. B. Pollom, Executive Adviser, A. P. Davidson, and Executive Secretary, L. F. Hall, join me in the hope that you will find time to give the enclosed questionnaire your careful attention and extend best wishes for your continued success.

Sincerely yours,

Frank R. Carpenter  
Assistant Instructor  
Agricultural Education

FRC  
enc.



A STUDY OF THE OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF KANSAS FFA STATE FARMERS

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDED \_\_\_\_\_.

FAMILY STATUS: Single \_\_\_\_\_ : Married \_\_\_\_\_ : Number of Children \_\_\_\_\_.

COLLEGE ATTENDED: \_\_\_\_\_ Course Taken \_\_\_\_\_ Yrs. Completed \_\_\_\_\_.

FOR THOSE WHO ARE FARMING

a. Indicate your present position by placing (x) in appropriate blank.

Hired man	_____	Owner	_____
Renter	_____	Manager	_____
Own part, rent part	_____	Partner	_____

b. Indicate the type of farm on which you are located by placing an (x) in appropriate blank.

General	_____	Dairy	_____
Livestock	_____	Poultry	_____
Cash Crop	_____	Other (name)	_____.

c. Give total acres farmed, including rented land \_\_\_\_\_.

I. FOR THOSE WHO ARE NOT FARMING

a. First list your present occupation and second your position in that occupation. (Example: Present occupation - auto mechanic: Position in that occupation - hired laborer).

Present Occupation	_____	Position in present occupation	_____
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b. For those who have followed occupations other than the one indicated immediately above, list the occupations in which you were engaged for one year or longer since receiving the State Farmer Degree: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Check (x) if member

Check (x) if you are holding or have held office in the organization

Church	_____	Church	_____
Lions Club	_____	Lions Club	_____
Kiwanis Club	_____	Kiwanis Club	_____
Rotary Club	_____	Rotary Club	_____
Farm Bureau	_____	Farm Bureau	_____
Grange	_____	Grange	_____
Farmers Union	_____	Farmers Union	_____
School Board	_____	School Board	_____

Other local, district or state organizations and offices held in each: \_\_\_\_\_

a. In your opinion is the program of Vocational Agriculture, as carried on in our Kansas high schools justified? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided \_\_\_\_\_

b. Should the Vocational Agriculture departments of Kansas high schools provide organized training programs for out-of school farm youth who are from 18 to 25 years of age. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS: (Use back of page if necessary) \_\_\_\_\_

A STUDY OF THE OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF STATE FARMER  
DEGREE MEMBERS IN KANSAS

by

FRANK ROBERT CARPENTER

B. S., Kansas State College  
of Agriculture and Applied Science, 1948

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AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirement for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Education and Psychology

KANSAS STATE COLLEGE  
OF AGRICULTURE AND APPLIED SCIENCE

1951

Kansas high schools have been offering courses in vocational agriculture since the passage of the Smith-Hughes act in 1917. The primary aim of vocational agriculture is to train present and prospective farmers for proficiency in farming.

Many of the activities within the vocational agriculture program are initiated and carried to completion through the use of the Future Farmers of America Organization. The FFA is a national organization of, by, and for boys studying vocational agriculture in public secondary schools under the provisions of the National Vocational Education Acts.

The Future Farmers of America Organization has four degrees of membership. The first two degrees are awarded by the local chapters. The third degree (State Farmer) is awarded by the State Association of FFA, and the fourth degree (American Farmer) is awarded by the National Organization of Future Farmers of America.

Advancement within FFA is dependent upon definite standards of achievement. Members elected to the degree of State Farmer must have exhibited outstanding accomplishments in their projects or farming programs, must have shown evidence of leadership ability, and have a satisfactory record of scholarship as certified by the local school administrator.

Since there were no Kansas data showing the percentages of State Farmer degree members who had gone into the farming occupation, this study was made to ascertain that information. It is hoped that these findings will be of value in planning future policies and programs of agricultural education in Kansas and in selecting future State Farmer degree members.



Questionnaires were sent to all members who had been awarded the State Farmer degree in Kansas from 1929 to 1950 whose addresses were supplied, except those in the armed forces.

Usable questionnaires were returned by 784 members. The collected data was placed in tabular form and explanatory notes were included.

The summary and conclusions were as follows:

1. Sixty-two and six tenths per cent of the vocational agriculture students who had received the State Farmer degree in Kansas were farming full-time. An additional 7 per cent were farming part-time.

2. Approximately 26 per cent of the State Farmers who were not farming were engaged in occupations related to agriculture.

3. Approximately 56 per cent of the State Farmer degree members who were farming were renters and partners, however, many of those who had been out of high school from 10 to 20 years were becoming established as owners.

4. Most of the State Farmers who were farming were on farms consisting of more than 300 acres.

5. Approximately 50 per cent of the State Farmers attended colleges. Of those who attended colleges, 74 per cent attended agricultural colleges for all of their higher education.

6. Of the State Farmers who attended college, 62.8 per cent enrolled in the school of agriculture.

7. A high percentage of all State Farmer degree members were taking part in community activities. Thirty-six per cent of those who had received their degrees 15 to 20 years previous to the study

were engaged in three community activities each.

8. Forty-six and six tenths per cent of the State Farmers were holding or had held office in at least one local community organization.

9. The State Farmer degree members of Kansas expressed almost unanimous approval of the Kansas program of vocational agriculture in the public secondary schools.