

THE ROLE OF THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURAL
INSTRUCTOR IN COORDINATING YOUNG FARMER PROGRAMS
IN THE UNITED STATES

by *6408*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the past two decades the need for efficient farming increased greatly. There was expanded population growth and increased food and fiber demands upon the farmer. During this period the cost of production increased and more efficient production was required. Slightly more than three million farms were reported in 1968 and this figure was expected to drop to approximately two and three-fourths million by 1980.

The average age of the farmer has been determined in excess of 50, with some figures as high as 56. It was estimated that one million new farmers would be needed by 1980. The colleges and universities provided some advanced education for farmers, however only two percent of the college graduates returned to the farm. With the low number of college graduates returning to the farm there was a great need for agricultural education for young farmers sponsored by the secondary schools in this country. In 1967 there were 350,000 enrolled in young and adult farmer programs in this country. About 68,000 were estimated to be young or beginning farmers.

The young farmer organization had a history dating back to 1927 in Ohio. Local chapters have organized into state