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# Vocational and Residential Adjustment as Viewed by Selected Farmers, Part-Time Farmers and ex-Farmers: An Attitudinal Study with Particular Implications for Public Policy

H. A. Gilbert

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Bulletin 609  
April 1973

*Farmers View . . .*

*Vocational  
and  
Residential  
Adjustment*

**An Attitudinal Study with Particular  
Implications for Public Policy**



**Department of Economics  
Agricultural Experiment Station  
South Dakota State University  
Brookings**

WHAT ARE PEOPLE SEEKING WHEN THEY ENTER FARMING?

WHAT FACTORS ENCOURAGE SOME TO LEAVE FARMING?

WHAT CONDITIONS CONTRIBUTE MOST TO VOCATIONAL SATISFACTION?

WHAT DISTINCTIVE ROLE DOES PART-TIME FARMING PLAY?

WHAT PROBLEMS DIFFERENTIATE THE MAN IN FARMING, UNABLE TO LEAVE, FROM THE MAN ECONOMICALLY INCAPABLE OF CONTINUING TO FARM?

Public and agricultural policies deeply influence the lives of farmers and their families. Thus, questions such as the above must be answered if appropriate policies are to be designed.

Agriculture is characterized by transition. Policies must be addressed to the needs of the farmer in this transitional setting. The research reported in this bulletin is designed to seek answers to these questions and others related to agricultural transition.

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VOCATIONAL AND RESIDENTIAL ADJUSTMENT AS VIEWED BY SELECTED  
FARMERS, PART-TIME FARMERS, AND EX-FARMERS:

An Attitudinal Study With Particular Implications for Public Policy

by

Howard A. Gilbert  
Associate Professor of Economics  
South Dakota State University

CHAPTER 1

Summary and Conclusions

Summary

In an effort to evaluate current public policy related to off-farm migration, 91 South Dakota past or present farmers or ranchers were interviewed concerning their vocational and residential experience. In addition, respondents discussed their comparisons of farm with non-farm employment and rural with urban residence.

As a vocation, farming was considered to be more economically risky than non-farm employment but to offer equal or superior income opportunities. Though farming was considered no less prestigious, prestige was generally considered to be an irrelevant criterion of comparison. Leisure also generally failed to differentiate between the two types of employment.

The rural residence was considered neither more nor less convenient than the urban counterpart, as such. Rather, the relative convenience of the location of a residence was strongly a function of its proximity to the primary employment of the head of the household. The rural home, however, was considered generally a superior place to raise children and a setting for less costly family living.

Certain interrelationships of evaluations of the farm vocation and/or rural home were noted. A majority of respondents identified both child raising advantages of the rural home and the low cost of family living there. Those noting these cost advantages were more likely to emphasize the superior income opportunities offered by farming. Consideration of this income potential was commonly accompanied by an estimate of high economic risks in farming.

Respondents tended to couple their awareness of the risk disadvantages of farming with the living cost advantages of rural living. A majority of all respondents consider both farming more risky and the farm a superior place to raise children. Both these combinations of answers suggest the farming-rural living choice may be a compromise of income security for the sake of other things, e.g., advantages relating to living costs and/or child raising.

Exits from farming were as likely to be due to economic practicality or other voluntary reasons as they were to be due to uncontrollable factors. Most of the mandatory exits were due to non-economic factors. Movements into and out of farming were equally satisfactory in the light of the fulfillment of expected benefits and on the basis of actual income changes relative to expected income changes. These findings and related data would confirm the suggestion made elsewhere (12)<sup>1</sup> that there may be ample gross exit from agriculture to bring about labor adjustment but that there is (re-) entry into the industry that negates much of the solution the exit would produce.

Experiences of respondents who are denied the opportunity to choose whether or not to farm did not confirm the popular stereotype of farm families forced unwillingly from farming. Rather, considerably more prominent frustration was noted on the part of full-time farmers (believing themselves to be) devoid of vocational alternatives. Respondents trapped in farming were more common than farmers forced from farming.

Farmers in general were less likely to plan vocational changes than ex-farmers. Similarly, those farmers who were dissatisfied were not planning vocational changes as commonly as the dissatisfied ex-farmers. The dissatisfied farmers' relative lack of plans to change vocations is contrary to expectations.

Both full- and part-time farmers are held in farming much more commonly by living and working conditions than any other group of factors.

Of these factors, training and experience comprised the only category which proved much more important for the full-time than part-time farmers. If farmers' training and experience is influential in this regard, it may be a rigidly limitational factor for these respondents though it would rarely be for multi-vocational, part-time farmers.

Of the factors which had very different retention influences on these two farmer groups, only security was more binding for the part-time farmers. Farmers seeking security frequently undertake only a partial exit from full-time farming. Respondents seeking higher income more frequently sought it with a complete shift either into or out of farming.

Vocational satisfaction commonly follows a change of jobs which results in an increase in income. However, satisfaction more dependably relates to vocational changes in which income expectations were exceeded, regardless of what was expected, than those in which the income change itself was positive.

Full-time farmers and ex-farmers were generally more satisfied with their vocations than the part-time farmers. The two former groups were very similar in the frequency with which income expectations were fulfilled or exceeded.

Part-time farmers were more likely to express indifference (lack of satisfaction or dissatisfaction) with their current vocations and were generally less satisfied. Compared to full-time farmers and ex-farmers, part-time farmers were less likely to have gained income from vocational changes and less likely to have received more income than expected from these changes.

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<sup>1</sup>Numbers in parentheses indicate references cited at the end of the bulletin.

## Conclusions

Considerable movement of respondents into and out of farming results in comparable vocational satisfaction to full-time farmers and ex-farmers who commonly sought improved incomes by the shift. Many respondents find somewhat less frequent vocational satisfaction by entering part-time farming, particularly seeking security. Improved non-farm income opportunities for the part-time farmers would increase their satisfaction, would deter some further entry into farming, and would encourage additional partial exits from farming.

Vocational immobility as it relates to farming holds farmers in farming because of a lack of viable alternatives, especially as determined by training and experience. No evidence was found that forced exit from farming is a more noteworthy sociological problem than most labor adjustments.

## CHAPTER 2

### Recommendations

In light of the discussed existing conditions and occurring transitions, the following recommendations are appropriate:

1. Increase income opportunities for part-time farmers by inaugurating legislation and policies to:
  - a. encourage employers to locate where this labor is available, and
  - b. provide employment and production policies to allow more variable off-farm work responsibilities and more adaptable opportunities, i.e., to adapt jobs to needs of potential part-time employees.
2. Facilitate commuting from part-time farms by:
  - a. developing and maintaining appropriate commuter roads, considering condition, location, and peak load capacities, and
  - b. providing ample and easily accessible parking for commuters' cars.
3. Increase vocational mobility of farmers through designing extension-type and other programs to:
  - a. make available the types of retraining that would create new employment alternatives for full-time farmers desiring to move,
  - b. promote clearly to the potential participant-benefactors the availability of the retraining, and
  - c. identify clearly to farmers the direct personal value they can obtain from the retraining.

## CHAPTER 3

### Introduction

Currently there are nearly 3 million farmers in the United States. It is estimated that one-sixth of these or 500,000 could produce the same agricultural goods with no significant loss in overall economic efficiency. Increasing displacement of labor with machinery suggests that a dollar's worth of labor in agriculture may be less productive than a dollar's worth of some non-labor inputs.

If the total return to the entire agricultural industry is essentially independent of the number of farmers, the problem may also be stated as one of excess farmers among whom the fixed industry income must be divided.

The low productivity of an added laborer on some farms and the presence of many farmers dividing the industry income are resulting in an exit of farmers. There is considerable disagreement about the desirability of this emigration of labor from the industry and of the community and other adjustments that result therefrom. The average per capita income in agriculture is still considerably below that outside agriculture (1). The rapidly increasing productivity of farm labor over time is obliterating the jobs of these laborers. Thus, free inter-industry adjustment of this resource might enhance the welfare of farmers and ex-farmers.

The productivity of this labor in non-agricultural pursuits is not so well known. It is not generally agreed that the transition of farmers to the urban labor market improves the lot of the farmer or improves efficiency of the total national complement of resources. The ex-farmer, though relatively unneeded in agriculture, is not necessarily more productive when moved to the city. His preparation for non-farm employment must be considered.

From a more humanitarian viewpoint, the vocational transition in response to economic pressures frequently imposes a shock on the farmer, his wife, and their family. It may be necessary to design public policy which differentiates between the labor resource, as composed of sensitive humans, and non-human resources. Human values should be given consideration along with economic criteria if an otherwise economically profitable decision is traumatic to the people involved. Adjustments in resource use can, and should be, evaluated in part by their impact on people as people rather than on people as another input factor.

In bringing together the economists' analysis of resource use and the sociologists' analysis of a segment of society under stress and in transition, this research was designed to identify public policy needed to cope with the pressures now removing people from farming. Specifically, this research has attempted to separate the vocational shift to non-farm employment from the residential shift to urban living. If these two transitions do not necessarily accompany one another, policy decisions can be made which minimize human distress in achieving economic adjustments and goals.

Somewhat similar to previous studies of the rural-urban transition, this research dealt with expectations from vocational changes and the degree to which these expectations were fulfilled. Further information concerning facilitation of vocational transition would be expected to complement conclusions of earlier studies.



## CHAPTER 4

### Previous Work

In one of the more significant recent studies relating to migration of primarily agricultural people, Kiefert (2) studied residents of Walsh County, North Dakota. He compared classes of migrants and non-migrants on the bases of age, residence, education, employment, and social factors assumed to be involved in the decision to migrate. He notes that "only those communities can grow and flourish which provide individuals with opportunities for personal, social, moral, vocational, and intellectual growth after stimulation.

"Social scientists maintain that migration is a reaction to a dissatisfactory situation in which the individual has weighed the psychological, social and economic costs of migration against the costs of staying under existing conditions." (p. 1)

That study indicated that migrants were generally more educated and more likely to be employed in prestigious occupations than the non-migrants. Migrants had lower incomes before migration and gained considerable income by the shift. Non-migrants were apparently economically motivated not to move.

Migrants cited as reasons for migration higher wages, more avenues to success, better climate, and preferable size of community. They believe the move improved their future and are satisfied that the move fulfilled their expectations.

In a later study, Kiefert (3) sought to determine if high school senior males who intended to migrate differed from those who did not. He found that higher migration aspiration correlated with a negative attitude toward the present community, the degree of certainty of occupation, and past migration. Migration aspiration was not correlated with perceived social cost of migration, prestige of planned occupation, or educational aspiration. He also noted that rural youth generally have a lower migration aspiration, rate local availability of jobs important, enter jobs of lower prestige value, and possess less occupational knowledge.

Klietsch (4) has noted in his listing of important factors involved in regional and national population trends that "...migration is basically a social response to the opening and closing of socio-economic resources and opportunities...." He further concludes that the "...urban area...is [increasingly] synonymous with access to opportunity...." (p. 434)

In an Iowa study, Hill (5) has noted that migrants "to non-farm jobs from an Iowa community were not those with the lowest incomes, the least efficient, the poorest farmers, or the physically disabled. The educational level of farmers in the survey, the average farm size (measured by acres or gross sales), and the average age of migrating operators compared closely with county averages and distributions." (p. 415) Nearly all of the migrants he consulted were satisfied with the move they had made. He concluded that "migration is a much smoother transition process from commercial areas where education and cultural values make contrasts between farm and city less severe." (loc. cit.)

Factors which limit earning potential of rural youth as farmers similarly limit that potential of these same workers should they leave agriculture (6). Deficient education and training may make a laborer's situation in agriculture undesirable but they will also severely limit the benefits of vocational change. The need is in the person, not the job.

Riley and Pew (7) quote Bowles (8) as identifying the following reasons for high out-migration of young adults from farming:

- "(1) They are in search of economic opportunities and have usually formed no or only tenuous job attachments on farms;
- (2) many have finished high school and will leave farm homes if they go to college;
- (3) most are relatively unattached as far as family responsibilities are concerned and are thus more free to roam about;
- (4) their sentimental attachments for farm homes and communities may not be as strong as those of older persons;
- (5) many of the young people are eagerly in search of new experiences which they feel will be afforded them in non-farm areas." (p. 3)

The future prospects for Great Plains farm youth can be summarized, according to Rehnberg (9), by saying the "...opportunities for young men to become farm operators will continue to be limited." (p. 31) Most farm youth will have to become employed agricultural workers, employees of agricultural related non-farm businesses, or members of the non-agricultural labor force.

There obviously have been many demographic studies of various phases of migration as it relates to South Dakota's or other agricultural labor. Considerably scarcer, however, are the publications which have gone far enough to identify the most serious problems related to rural-urban migration (value oriented though this may be) and have proposed a solution.

Thompson and Stone (10) are primarily concerned about social costs of out-migration. As a means of strengthening rural communities and promoting rural economic growth, they identify education as a key factor.

An Agricultural Research Service publication (11) suggests rural economic growth can be promoted by providing non-farm employment through established manufacturing and service firms in the farm community.

Perkins and Hathaway (12) noted a gross annual out-migration of farm labor from farming, which averaged 14.2% but a net reduction in farm employment of only 3.5% per annum, partly because there was a large return of ex-farm laborers to farming. The farmer was more likely to move from the farm if he expected a large income increase from doing so. His move was more likely to be permanent if his income was greatly increased by the move. These writers do not identify a need to increase gross out-migration of labor from farming but rather to limit return of ex-farmers and ex-farm laborers. They suggest working at policies which will enable retention of these workers in the non-farm sector of our economy by, for example, educating and training them to increase the probability of a non-farm income that will leave them too satisfied to return to farming.

Of the above references, Kiefert's (2) work most closely parallels this study. He dealt with geographic migration as assumed to generally accompany vocational migration and divided respondents into out-of-state migrants, in-state migrants, and "stables." This study deals with geographic and vocational migration as phenomena occurring separately or concurrently. Farmers may leave farming but stay on the farm or they may move to town but continue

farming; they may undertake no change or may leave the farm and farming at the same time. Also those now farming may have moved into farming from other jobs, whether they did or did not move to the farm.

## CHAPTER 5

### Objectives

The general objective of this research was to study the present processes of vocational and residential transition relating to farming. The dual criteria for evaluation were the expectations of the respondents and of policy makers responsible for administering this transitional society.

Specific goals were to:

1. Provide an understanding of vocational and residential migrants, concerning:
  - a. degree and permanence of change in vocation type,
  - b. extent of accompanying geographic shift,
  - c. changes in living standard and style, and
  - d. expected and actual changes in income.
2. Identify the factors which precipitated farmers' and ex-farmers' vocational or residential transitions.
3. Identify the values respondents consider relevant to migration after transitions take place.
4. Relate results expected by farmers to relevant actual results.
5. Separate the impact of the farm to non-farm vocational change from the impact of the rural to urban residential change and determine which of these, if either alone, is the primary "farm problem" from the point of view of the farmers and ex-farmers.
6. Offer suggestions, if any are warranted by the findings of this research, for more precise and effective direction of agricultural and public policy to meet the needs of agricultural people.

## CHAPTER 6

### Data Collection

Interviewers attempted to contact all current or recent farmers in prescribed geographical areas, within reasonable limitations imposed by availability of data. Interviewees were current or recent farmers and farm couples in two townships or districts in each of three South Dakota counties (Figure 1): Brookings County, a crop-farming area with significant urban employment available within commuting distance; Hutchinson County, a crop-farming area without urban employment available nearby; and Haakon County, a ranching area with only limited non-farm work.

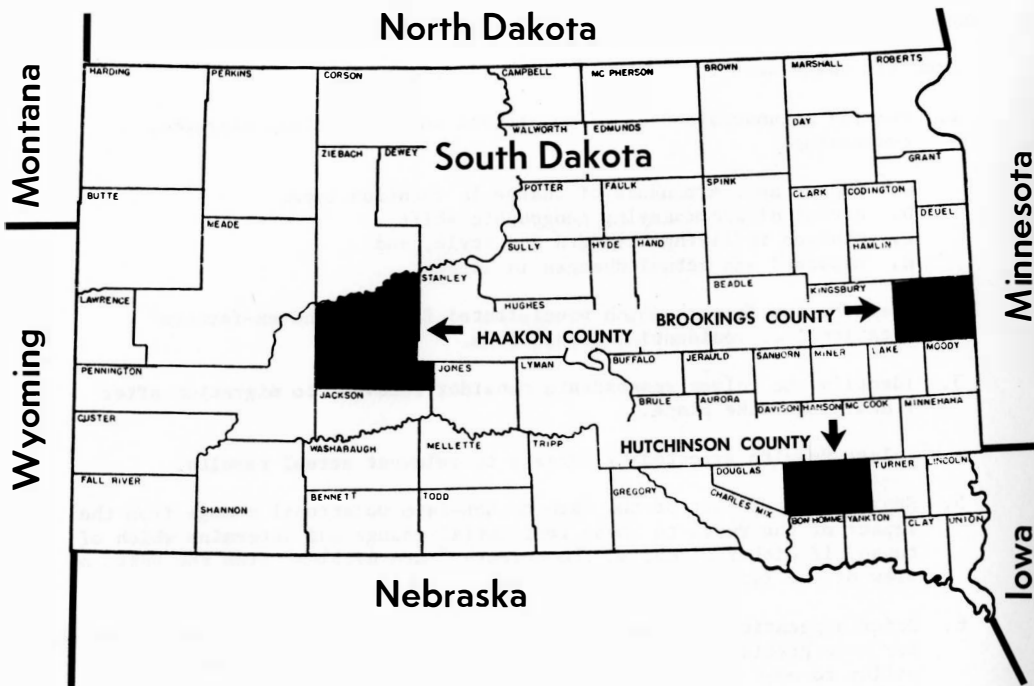


Figure 1. Geographic distribution of sampled areas.

Selection of the townships or districts within these counties was made jointly by the interviewers and the relevant county agents, with particular consideration given to availability of farmers with a variety of migration experiences and an anticipated cooperative attitude toward the interviews. Ultimately, the final sample was judged to be satisfactory since it allowed collection of data stemming from most possible combinations of changes and non-changes of residence and employment in each combination of type-of-farming area and non-farm employment situation studied.

Data were collected through personal interviews during the summer of 1969. Interviewers spent approximately one-half hour with each of the 91 current or past farmers and ranchers who provided usable data relating to their history in agriculture and their recent movements into or out of the industry. Interviewees are described in Appendix A. The questionnaire utilized is included as Appendix B.

## CHAPTER 7

### Respondents' Evaluations of Farming and of Rural Living<sup>2</sup>

#### Respondents' Evaluation of Farming as a Vocation

Income opportunity - 51% of all respondents indicated that they believe income opportunities are superior on the farm (Table 1). Part-time farmers

Table 1. Respondents' Preferences for Farm vs. Non-farm Employment on the Basis of Income Opportunity

	Farm Offers More Income Opportunity	Farm and Non- farm Offer Equal Income Opportunity	Farm Offers Less Income Opportunity	Total
- - - (Percent of all responses in each group) - - -				
Full-time farmers	50	21	29	100
Part-time farmers	58	17	25	100
Ex-farmers	46	21	33	100
All respondents	51	19	30	100

<sup>2</sup>Questions relating to these evaluations and several other questions used in the personal interviews were open ended; i.e., the respondent volunteered the answers rather than picked them from among alternative answers offered by the interviewer. The answers were then categorized and the groups titled subsequent to the data collection. Specific answers and the titles of categories into which they are placed comprise Appendix C.

most strongly favored this position (58%) whereas the ex-farmers were least convinced (46%). In each of the three classes, however, a large majority of those who believed there is a difference (i.e., excluding those who equated opportunities from the two sources) favored farming.

Considering only those who do not believe farming offers the superior income opportunity, only 58% of the full-time farmers believed off-farm employment offered superior income opportunities, while 60% of the part-time farmers, and 64% of the ex-farmers believed so. The remainder believed there was no difference between the two on the basis of opportunity for income. Agricultural income opportunities were not interpreted to be forboding nor were the respondent groups differentiated by these responses.

Risk - Farming is considered more risky than non-farm employment by each of the three respondent classes (Table 2). Part-time farmers were more likely than members of either of the other two groups to consider farm and non-farm employment equally risky or to consider farming less risky. This would be in agreement with the greater immunity of the diversely employed part-time farmers to the risks of farming than the full-time farmers (whose entire livelihood is risked when farming is unpredictable) or the ex-farmers (some of whom may have left farming due to the results of risks it offers). That is, respondents are more likely to consider farming to be risky, the greater their own (past or present) exposure to that risk by farming.

Table 2. Respondents' Preferences for Farm vs. Non-farm Employment on the Basis of Risk

	Farm More Risky	Farm and Non-farm Equally Risky	Farm Less Risky	Total
- - (Percent of all respondents in each group) - -				
Full-time farmers	75	8	17	100
Part-time farmers	58	17	25	100
Ex-farmers	66	15	20	100*
All respondents	65	13	22	100

\*Apparent addition error due to rounding.

Respondents' estimates of farming riskiness were compared with the degree to which benefits expected from vocational changes were actually achieved. This comparison was made to determine if a respondent's bad experience influences his impression that farming is risky.

A larger proportion of those full-time and part-time farmers whose benefits were not realized considered farming risky than of the group whose benefits were realized -- 85% as opposed to 50%. However, those ex-farmers whose move out of farming resulted in the benefits they expected are more likely to consider the risk disadvantages of the vocation they left than are those whose expected benefits were not realized.

Prestige - Farming is neither more nor less prestigious than non-farming vocations according to 57% of the respondents who compared the two in this survey (Table 3). To these respondents prestige is an irrelevant characteristic for differentiating between the two types of vocations. The proportion of full-time, part-time, and ex-farmers who voiced this opinion was very similar -- between 54% and 58% for all three groups.

Table 3. Respondents' Preferences for Farm vs. Non-farm Employment on the Basis of Professional Prestige

	Farm More Prestigious	Farm and Non- farm Equally Prestigious	Farm Less Prestigious	Total
- - - (Percent of all respondents in each group) - - -				
Full-time farmers	38	58	4	100
Part-time farmers	29	54	17	100
Ex-farmers	28	58	14	100
----- All respondents	31	57	12	100

Of the 43% of all respondents who differentiate between these employments in this regard, nearly three-fourths stated that farming is the more prestigious of the two alternatives. The full-time farmers were most strongly in favor of agriculture as the more prestigious though a majority from the other groups who so differentiated also favored farming (29/46 of the part-time farmers and 28/42 of the ex-farmers who considered employments unequal).

Leisure - A majority (53%) of the respondents favored farming as offering more leisure than non-farm employment (Table 4). Full-time and part-time farmers

Table 4. Respondents' Preferences for Farm vs. Non-farm Employment on the Basis of Leisure

	Farm Offers More Leisure	Farm and Non- farm Offer Equal Leisure	Farm Offers Less Leisure	Total
- - - (Percent of all respondents in each group) - - -				
Full-time farmers	52	0	48	100
Part-time farmers	46	8	46	100
Ex-farmers	59	10	31	100
----- All respondents	53	7	40	100

who so differentiated were nearly evenly divided between favoring and disfavoring farming in this regard. Fifty-two and 46%, respectively, favored farming. The ex-farmers favored farming as the more leisurely by a majority of 59%. It is noteworthy that only 7% of all respondents failed to differentiate employments on this basis.

In sum, those who consider farming and non-farming different in this regard are about evenly divided between favoring farming and non-farming, except for the ex-farmers who favor farming. Fifty-nine percent of this group considered farming more leisurely whereas 31% considered it less leisurely and 10% noted no difference.

Comparison of rural with urban residents' responses and full- or part-time farmers' with ex-farmers' responses indicated that the farther a respondent is from farming, the more he tends to consider farming more leisurely.

#### Respondents' Evaluation of Rural Living

Raising children - All of the 83% of the full-time farmers who have a preference between farm and town as a place to raise children preferred the farm (Table 5). Ninety-six percent of the part-time farmers also chose the farm over the city. Nine percent of the ex-farmers saw no difference between the two in this regard, while 84% preferred the farm. Part-time farmers are more likely to differentiate than are urban or rural people without mixed employment. Generally, the less the relative involvement in farming (full- vs. part-time vs. ex-farmers) the greater the tendency to disfavor the farm for the purpose of raising children, though no more than a small proportion of any group of respondents disfavored farming on this basis.

Table 5. Respondents' Preferences for Rural vs. Urban Living for Raising Children

	Farm Better Place to Raise Children	Farm and City Equally Good for Raising Children	Farm Worse Place to Raise Children	Total
- - - (Percent of all respondents in each group) - - -				
Full-time farmers	88	12	0	100
Part-time farmers	96	2	2	100
Ex-farmers	84	9	7	100
Rural residents	89	9	2	100
Urban residents	79	12	9	100
All respondents	88	9	3	100



Rural residents also had a stronger preference for the farm in this regard than did the urban residents. This preference was indicated by 89% of the rural residents as opposed to 79% of the urban residents. Nine percent of the rural residents and 12% of the town residents consider the alternatives equally desirable while 2% of the rural and 9% of the urban residents preferred the city. When this comparison is made on the basis of residence, not jobs, the agreement that the farm is considered superior by a majority is repeated. Again, rural residents are less likely to disfavor the farm.

Family living expense - Sixty-one percent of the full-time farmers, 83% of the part-time farmers, and 71% of the ex-farmers considered the farm to offer less costly family living than does the city (Table 6). Though the part-time farmers have a better exposure to both alternatives for the sake of making this comparison, their diverse employment might limit living cost benefits of either alternative pursued on a full-time basis.

Table 6. Respondents' Preferences for Rural vs. Urban Living on the Basis of Family Living Expenses

	Farm Less Costly	Farm and City Equally Costly	Farm More Costly	Total
- - - (Percent of all respondents in each group) - - -				
Full-time farmers	61	35	4	100
Part-time farmers	83	8	8	100*
Ex-farmers	71	19	10	100
Rural residents	78	17	4	100*
Urban residents	68	23	9	100
All respondents	72	20	8	100

\*Apparent addition error due to rounding.

Thirty-five percent of the full-time farmers, 8% of the part-time farmers and 19% of the ex-farmers considered the alternatives essentially equal on the basis of related living costs.

Those who oppose the idea of lower living costs on the farm do not necessarily believe the converse is true. Ninety percent of the full-time farmers who do not prefer the farm in this regard are indifferent between the alternatives, as are half of the remaining part-time farmers and 66% of the remaining ex-farmers. Only 4% of the full-time farmers considered the farm a more costly place to live whereas 8% of the part-time farmers and 10% of the ex-farmers did so.

Generally, the farther the respondent is from full-time farming, the more likely he will be to prefer the city over the farm on this expense basis. However, the likelihood is small.

Convenience - A majority of farmer respondents consider the farm and the city quite comparable on the basis of general convenience (Table 7). Sixty-three percent of the full-time farmers and 58% of the part-time farmers saw no convenience difference between the two. Twenty-nine percent of the ex-farmers agreed with this.

Table 7. Respondents' Preferences for Rural vs. Urban Living on the Basis of General Convenience

	Farm More Convenient	Farm and City Equally Convenient	Farm Less Convenient	Total
- - - (Percent of all respondents in each group) - - -				
Full-time farmers	4	63	33	100
Part-time farmers	4	58	38	100
Ex-farmers	17	29	55	100*
Rural residents	6	47	47	100
Urban residents	14	44	42	100
All respondents	10	46	44	100

\*Apparent addition error due to rounding.

One-third of the full-time farmers, 38% of the part-time farmers, and 55% of the ex-farmers preferred the city for convenience. Those who have the best chances to know the advantages of urban living rate urban living higher in this regard. These respondents may be those whose preference was strong enough to move them to the city.

Only 4% of the full-time and part-time farmers considered the farm more convenient while 17% of the ex-farmers did so. Although ex-farmers are more ready to compare farm and city in this regard, the balance between their preferences for farm and city is similar to the balance expressed by other respondents.

A greater uniformity was noted between groups with regard to relative convenience when respondents are separated on the basis of residence rather vocation. Fifty-three percent of the rural residents and 56% of the urban residents differentiated between the two on this basis. The city was considered more convenient by 47% of the rural residents and 42% of the urban residents, while the farm was favored in this regard by 6% of the rural residents and 14% of the urban residents.

Comparison of the convenience estimates on the bases of residence and vocation suggests most respondents consider the convenience of residential location more relevant to vocational considerations than to non-vocational

considerations relating to family living. To change between rural and urban employment apparently is likely to alter an individual's estimate of the convenience of farm vs. city living.

Forty-four percent of all interviewees considered the city generally more convenient than the farm whereas 46% considered the two equally convenient. Only 10% considered the farm more convenient.

While many respondents considered the farm and the city equal with regard to convenience, those who did differentiate very largely favored the city as superior in this regard. The farther a respondent was from full-time farming, the more likely he was to differentiate between the two and the more strongly this group of respondents favored the city. Apparently those who have moved from the farm to city and thus have a chance to compare the two favor their new location more strongly than do those who have had less opportunity for comparison. The city is expected to be more convenient and proves to be so for those who live there.

Interrelationships Between Respondent's Evaluation of Farming and Rural Living

The majority of all respondents both prefer the farm as a place for raising children and estimate the relative living costs on the farm to be low (Table 8). This relationship is confirmed by each of the three vocational groups of respondents. Possibly reduced living costs is one of the factors which make the farm an attractive place to raise children.

Table 8. Relationship of Respondents' Evaluation of Rural Living Costs to Their Evaluations of Farm Income Opportunities and Rural Child Raising

	<u>Child Raising</u>				:	<u>Farm Income Opportunities</u>			
	Farm Better	Same	Farm Worse	Total	:	Farm Better	Same	Farm Worse	Total
- (Total number of respondents giving each pair of answers) -									
Living costs					:				
Farm less	57	5	2	64	:	35	12	18	65
Same	14	3	1	18	:	6	5	4	15
Farm more	7	0	0	7	:	2	0	5	7
Total	78	8	3	89	:	43	17	27	87

Respondents' estimates of relative living costs are generally inversely related with their estimates of the relative income opportunities (also Table 8). The greater they consider the income opportunities to be the less they consider the living costs to be. Estimates of living costs and income

opportunities may be expressions of a general impression of economic well-being on the farm relative to economic well-being available elsewhere. This impression would be consistent with the importance of costs relative to farm success, as found by Gilbert, et. al., (13) and by Krause and Williams (14).

Respondents who considered living costs lower on the farm were likely to consider farming more risky (Table 9). One limiting economic factor of farming may be somewhat counterbalanced by another favorable factor. Considered with the above findings, this may further suggest that high income opportunities are interpreted to be derived from high risks.

Table 9. Relationship of Respondents' Evaluation of Farming Risks to Their Evaluations of Living Costs and Rural Child Raising

	<u>Living Costs</u>				:	<u>Child Raising</u>			
	Farm Lower	Same	Farm Higher	Total		Farm Better	Same	Farm Worse	Total
- (Total number of respondents giving each pair of answers) -									
Farming risks					:				
Farm less	12	3	3	18	:	17	1	0	18
Same	7	4	1	12	:	9	3	0	12
Farm more	46	9	3	58	:	52	4	2	58
Total	65	16	7	88	:	78	8	2	88

Over half the respondents are convinced both that the farm is preferred as a place to raise children and that farming is a relatively risky vocation (also Table 9). To farm is apparently interpreted to involve making a vocational decision which involves a choice between family raising benefits and economic security. This relationship involving aggregate data was also observed in the data from each individual group.

In sum, respondents generally agreed on their impression of farming relatively to its alternatives. The farm is commonly considered to be a better place to raise children with lower living costs, higher income opportunities, and higher economic risks.

### Non-relationships

Respondents' estimates of how leisurely farm life is was unrelated to their preference for a place to raise children and their estimates of farm income. The first of these observations of independence is confirmed by each of the three vocational groups. The second is confirmed in whole or in part by each group. Similarly their estimates of relative income opportunities of leisureliness appeared unrelated to their impression of the prestige offered on the farm.

The impressions respondents held concerning relative convenience on or off the farm appeared independent of their impression of relative living costs. This was confirmed individually by the full-time farmer group and by the ex-farmer group.

Respondents' estimates of the prestige offered by the farm relative to non-farm vocations did not relate to their impression of relative living costs, relative preferability of a place to raise children, income opportunities, or leisure. Similarly, prestige impressions were not determined by respondents' estimates of the relative riskiness of farming. Respondents' evaluation of the relative prestige offered by farming appears to be independent of all three economically oriented evaluations of farming which they were asked to make. To these respondents, prestige is evidently a non-economically determined or oriented concept or is more strongly related to non-economic considerations.

## CHAPTER 8

### Respondents' Evaluations of Their Vocational and Residential Experience

#### Vocational Changes

Seventy percent of all respondents had at some time in their employment career transferred into or out of farming. The remaining respondents have been farmers throughout their vocational lives.

The farmers who had changed vocations generally had less formal education than those who had not (Table 10). Contrary to the popular opinion that vocational mobility increases with formal education, these respondents who had not changed vocations were more highly educated in the formal sense than were those who had shifted. Those who had completed some college education were less likely to have changed vocations than those who had less education.

The vocational migrants (respondents who had changed vocations) may have either moved into or out of agriculture, as per the sample design, but the non-migrants must have been continuously engaged in farming. Thus, the implications of any exogenous factor on respondent mobility for the migrants is a two-way consideration while that for the non-migrants relates only to a refusal to migrate. If the positive correlation between formal education and the decision not to change vocations is to be meaningful in this context, more highly educated people apparently are more likely to decide to stay on the farm (though they may have shifted into farming from a non-farm vocation). If the education of these respondents is complementary to their agricultural productivity, this is as expected. As stated, however, it does not concur with the assumed positive correlation of education with vocational mobility.

#### Benefits Expected from the Vocational Change

Two-thirds of the full-time farmers had transferred into farming and discussed benefits which they expected from doing so (Table 11 and Figure 2). Family and leisure benefits were mentioned by 44% of the farmers in this group who cited benefits. Benefits relating specifically to level of income were identified by 38%. Work benefits were noted by 31%. Expense benefits were mentioned by only 13% of these farmers while 13% had not identified any particular benefits.

Table 10. Respondents' Vocational Mobility Related to Highest Educational Level

	Some Grade School	Some High School	Some College	Total
-- (Percent of all respondents in each mobility group) --				
Vocational migrants	51	38	11	100
Entrants into farming	59	24	17	(100)
Exits from farming	44	47	8	(100*)
Vocational non-migrants	44	33	22	100*
-- (Percent of all respondents from each educational level) --				
Vocational migrants	73	73	54	
Entrants into farming	38	34	50	
Exits from farming	<u>62</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>50</u>	
	(100)	(100)	(100)	
Vocational non-migrants	<u>27</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>46</u>	
Total	100	100	100	

\*Apparent addition error due to rounding.

Family and leisure benefits were the most frequently anticipated group of benefits mentioned by the ex-farmers, also, though only 25% of those ex-farmers responding to this inquiry identified these benefits. Income level, again the second most prominent benefit category, was mentioned by 22% of these ex-farmers. Expense benefits were noted by 19%, work benefits by 13%, and income consistency by 6%. Thirty-one percent of the ex-farmers specifically stated that they anticipated no particular benefits.

Ex-farmers less frequently mentioned family and leisure benefits and work benefits than the full-time farmers and more commonly failed to identify any anticipated benefits. However, rankings of identified benefits expected by the respondents are very similar for the full-time and the ex-farmers. It is particularly noteworthy that the relative importance of family and leisure benefits and of benefits related to income level is similar between these two groups of respondents. This similarity is coincident with the similarity between the motivational attitudes of members of these two groups noted above.

Fifty-four percent of the part-time farmers mentioned specific anticipated benefits related to their vocational change. Income level benefits were anticipated by 62% of these respondents. (Note, however, that this represents only one-third of all part-time farmers included in the survey.) The next most frequently observed category of expected benefits involved family and leisure benefits, as mentioned by 31% of this group. Fifteen percent each mentioned benefits relating to expenses, income consistency, and working conditions.

Table 11. Benefits Expected from Vocational Changes

	Percent of All :- - - - - (Type of benefit expected) - - - - -							Total
	Respondents Who:							
Discussed Their Expectations:	Income Level	Expense Benefits	Income Consistency	Work Benefits	Leisure Benefits	Family and No Benefits Anticipated		
(Percent of all respondents in each group who discussed their expectations)								
Full-time farmers	67	38	13	0	31	44	13	
Part-time farmers	54	62	15	15	15	31	31	
Ex-farmers	76	22	19	6	13	25	31	
-----								
All respondents	68	34	16	7	20	33	21	
(Percent of all reasons given by respondents in each group)								
Full-time farmers	:	27	9	0	22	32	9	100*
Part-time farmers	:	37	9	9	9	18	18	100
Ex-farmers	:	19	16	5	11	22	27	100
-----								
All respondents	:	27	13	6	14	25	16	100

\*Apparent addition error due to rounding.

Whether this reflects motivation or mere expectation is indiscernible from these data, but this evidence generally fails to support reference made above to part-time farmers' apparently greater concern for security than income level, relative to other respondents. Note, however, that a greater proportion of these respondents anticipated income consistency. (The dollar amount of the expected gain in income is not considered here.)

Vocational Satisfaction

Generally respondents were quite satisfied with their current vocation (Table 12), whether they felt they had chosen that job of their own free will or that it was the only alternative available to them. The ex-farmers had the highest proportion (65%) of respondents who are "very satisfied." The full-time farmers had the highest proportion (86%) who were either "satisfied" or "very

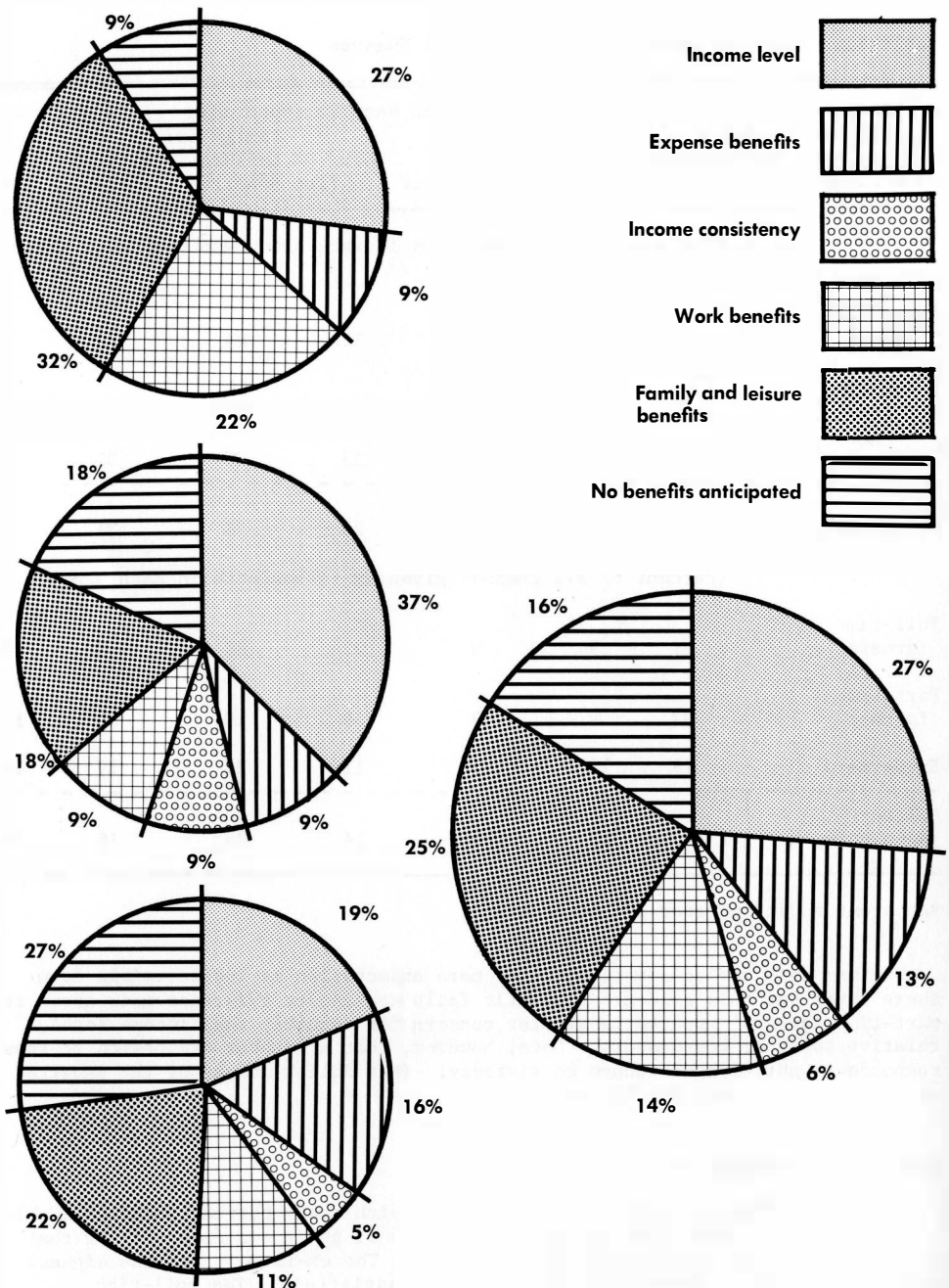


Figure 2. Benefits expected from vocational changes (percent of reasons given).



Table 12. Respondents' Satisfaction with Their Current Vocations

	Very Satis- fied	Satis- fied	Indif- ferent	Dissatis- fied	Very Dissatis- fied	Total
- - - - - (Percent of all respondents in each group) - - - - -						
Full-time farmers	59	27	5	5	5	100*
Part-time farmers	55	15	20	0	10	100
Ex-farmers	65	16	8	3	8	100
All re- spondents	61	19	10	3	8	100*

\*Apparent addition error due to rounding.

satisfied" and the highest average satisfaction coefficient<sup>3</sup> (4.32, as opposed to 4.05 for the part-time farmers and 4.27 for the ex-farmers). The part-time farmers showed considerably more indifference toward their current vocations (20% as opposed to 5% and 8% for the full-time and former farmers, respectively). There was little evidence of dissatisfaction from the members of any group.

#### Fulfillment of Expectations -- General

Sixty-four percent of the full-time farmers who discussed the fulfillment of their expectations said the anticipated benefits were realized whereas 33% of the part-time and ex-farmers said that their anticipations were fulfilled.

A majority of those anticipating each of the various types of benefits stated that these anticipations were fulfilled. All of those anticipating benefits relating to expenses or income consistency obtained what they expected. Approximately three-fourths of those anticipating higher incomes, work benefits, or family and leisure benefits realized their expectations. Farmers and non-farmer were not differentiated in this regard; i.e., the move into farming was not predictably more or less satisfactory on the basis of any given expectation than was the move out of farming.

<sup>3</sup> Satisfaction coefficients are derived by using 5 to represent "very satisfied," 4 for "satisfied," 3 for "indifferent," etc.

## Income Changes

The ordinal impacts of vocational changes on income (i.e., the increases and decreases in income) were distributed very similarly among the full-time farmers and among the ex-farmers (Table 13). Approximately the same percentage of the men in each group received an increase in income with their shift into or out of farming. Also the percentages were comparable for the two groups for those who noted no consequent income change and for those whose income had decreased.

Table 13. Income Changes Resulting from Vocational Changes

	Increased	No Change	Decreased	Unknown	Total
- - - (Percent of all respondents in each group) - - -					
Full-time farmers	60	7	33	0	100
Part-time farmers	45	45	0	9	100*
Ex-farmers	57	11	31	0	100*
All respondents	56	16	26	2	100

\*Apparent addition error due to rounding.

The part-time farmers are noticeably different from the other groups in that a smaller proportion obtained an increase in their incomes due to the vocational change and a much larger percentage had not identified any specific ordinal change in income. No part-time farmers noted an income decrease.

The observation that the part-time farmers are differentiated from both of the other groups with regard to the impact of a vocational change on their incomes may be explained by their distinctive situation. Though these respondents may have moved into farming or out of full-time farming to their current vocation, they are now employed in a multiplicity of part-time jobs. Because, in most cases, they did not entirely abandon their previous vocation, they may have retained the flexibility to continue with the new vocational mix only if they found it economically wise to do so.

It may concurrently be true that those who have moved into part-time farming were less likely to be availing themselves of significant opportunities for gains but, as implied, hedging against the risk of a loss from staying where they were. Thus, if the move to part-time farming is more likely security related than opportunity related, it would be reasonable to expect that a smaller proportion of these respondents would receive an increase in income, as shown by the data. Similarly a higher proportion might receive no noticeable changes in income, and none of these might receive a decrease in income from moving into part-time farming.

The possibility should not be overlooked that moves into part-time farming might be primarily to achieve non-economic goals, subject to an economic constraint. The observed results would be obtained if these moves were made

without the above aim for security but instead for mere employment diversification, variety or working conditions (e.g., closer to nature for those moving into agriculture and more regular hours or less exposure to severe weather for respondents moving into non-farm employment). If these goals, subject to a constraint of maintenance or improvement of income, guided the observed employment shifts, the income results would be expected to be as observed. That is, distributed between increases and no change in income, with a smaller proportion of respondents receiving income increases than would be the case for more economically motivated men moving entirely into or out of agriculture.

Generally, the greater the income from the new vocation relative to the old the more satisfied the respondent is with his present vocation. Those who had received an increase in income noted a weighted average satisfaction of 4.42. Those receiving decreases in income had a satisfaction coefficient of 4.0. These figures would generally indicate that those who received income increases are more satisfied than those whose income decreased. However, the 3.22 coefficient shown by those whose income was unchanged by the vocational transition indicates this group was the least satisfied.

Income Changes Relative to Expectations

Eighty percent of the mobile full-time farmers had formulated rather specific income expectations related to their vocational changes (Table 14). Of this group, 42% received more income from the change than was expected. However, half received less than expected.

Table 14. Income Changes Relative to Expectations from Vocational Changes

	Percent of All : "Mobile" Re-	spondents Who :	Received More	Received Ap-	Received Less	
	Formulated	: Income Ex-	Income Than	proximately	Income Than	
	Income Ex-	: Expected from	Expected from	the Expected	Expected from	
	pectations	: Change	Change	Income	Change	Total
(Percent of respondents formulating expectations)						
Full-time farmers	80	:	42	8	50	100
Part-time farmers	91	:	20	40	40	100
Ex-farmers	75	:	42	33	25	100
All respondents	81	:	37	29	35	100*

\*Apparent addition error due to rounding.

Seventy-five percent of the mobile ex-farmers had identified their expectations from the job change. Forty-two percent of these received more income than expected. The proportion of respondents whose expectations were superceded by their vocational change does not differentiate between those respondents who moved into farming and those who moved out. Only 8% of the full-time farmers received the same income they expected. One-third of the ex-farmers received the income they expected and one-fourth obtained less than they expected. A move into full-time farming is as likely to exceed income expectations as a move entirely out of farming. However, the move into full-time farming is twice as likely to be disappointing in this regard than is a move out of farming, whether because of less satisfactory income results or less realistic expectations.

Twenty percent of the part-time farmers received more income than expected. Forty percent received what was expected and 40% received less. If part-time farming offers primarily security in lieu of high income, results are as expected, assuming no difference in income expectations between groups.

Fifty-nine percent of the full- and part-time farmers whose income was unequal to that expected from their vocational change found that their expectations exceeded their actual income, as compared to 38% of the counterpart ex-farmers. Generally, the income expectations of vocational migrants were more likely to exceed the results if the transition was into rather than out of farming.

Whether the farmers' income expectations were exceeded, fulfilled, or not attained did not predictably relate to the ordinal income change resulting from vocational change. Of those respondents receiving an income increase from the change, approximately an equal number received more than expected as received less than expected. However, all the ex-farmers who have received more income than expected had received an increase whereas 67% of those who had received less than expected had received a decrease in income. Apparently those who shifted into farming had more precise estimates of resultant income changes than those moving out of farming or had more control over the income received to make it match their expectations.

Fifty-five percent of those who are very satisfied received more income than expected from their vocational change. Eighty-four percent of those who were very dissatisfied had received less income than expected. Thirty-three percent of those who received less than expected were very dissatisfied. Satisfaction with the present job is much more closely related to how amply income expectations were fulfilled than to ordinal income changes, per se.

Those whose income exceeded expectations showed a satisfaction factor of 4.59. Those whose income was as expected had a coefficient of 4.25, but those whose income expectations were not fulfilled had a satisfaction coefficient of 3.00.

Forty-three percent of the full-time and part-time farmers noted that income received by one or more members of their families other than the family head himself changed when the head of the household changed his vocation. Fifty-four percent of the ex-farmers noted this influence on other family members' income. Possibly other members of families of men moving into farming were less likely to be employed than those of farmers moving out of farming. Alternatively these family members may have been less likely to relinquish prior employment than were family members of those leaving farming to take on new employment.

Attitudes Toward Further Vocational Changes

The greater the respondent's satisfaction with his present job, the less likely he was to consider another job change. However, none of the full- or part-time farmers who are very dissatisfied with their present job would consider such a change. This may reflect the conviction by some of these farmers that there aren't realistic alternate vocations available to them.

A smaller proportion of the ex-farmers than of the part-time farmers plan to make no further vocational change (Table 15). Similarly, a smaller proportion of the part-time farmers than of the full-time farmers plan to remain in their current job. Generally, then, the greater the proportion of a man's employment which is in farming the greater the probability that he plans to stay where he is vocationally. Those who have changed are within groups where further change is probable. However, none of the ex-farmer respondents is without a vocational change in his background whereas many of the part-time and full-time farmers are.

Table 15. Respondents' Plans for Future Vocational Changes

	Do Plan Future Vocational Changes	Do Not Plan Future Vo- cational Changes	Vocational Change Plans Conditional Upon Situation	Total
-- (Percent of all respondents in each group) --				
Full-time farmers	19	76	5	100
Part-time farmers	28	72	0	100
Ex-farmers	11	63	22	100*
----- All respondents	17	71	12	100

\*Apparent addition error due to rounding.

The ex-farmers are more likely to attach conditions to their vocational plans. Twenty-two percent of them say they might move again "but it depends...." Those who are involved in farming seem more ready to state their future vocational plans than the ex-farmers. Only one respondent who now farms, either part- or full-time, made his plans conditional.

A greater proportion of the part-time farmers than of respondents from other groups would consider changing vocations (again). This can only partly be ascribed to greater readiness on the part of these respondents to state their plans unconditionally. It may be that part-time farming is a step in the transition entirely out of farming.

Twenty-three percent of the full- or part-time farmers who have changed jobs plan another job change whereas 77% do not. Exactly half of each of these groups is retained in farming by working and residential conditions. Income level and enjoyment tied for second for those who would change again whereas

income level and training and experience also retained those who would not change again. It is noteworthy that those who are held in farming by training and experience do not plan another change. This is in keeping with the distinctive relevance training and experience has to retention of farmers in the industry, as discussed later in Chapter 10.

The ordinal impact of the job change on income is not indicated to consistently relate to whether the respondent would make another job change.

Seventy-eight percent of those who did have a job available when they changed jobs would not move again while 22% would. Sixty-two percent of those who did not have a job available would not change vocations while 38% would. Having moved when facing employment uncertainty is not a major deterrent to consideration of further vocational moves. To the contrary, these data suggest that those who had no job with the last change would more readily change again.

Those college graduates who would consider making another job change had all majored in agricultural subjects whereas 88% of those who would refuse further changes had majored in other subjects -- 33% in pre-professional programs and 50% in liberal arts. This may indicate the agricultural preparation is broader and provides more flexibility.

Of those who had changed vocations, 69% and 83% of the full-time and of the part-time farmers, respectively, said they would not return to their former job (Table 16). Eighty percent of the ex-farmers would refuse to return. Apparently, ex-urban employed full-time farmers are more willing to return to off-farm work than are ex-farmers to return to the farm. This observation agrees with findings above that respondents who are employed where they are despite a desire to change vocations are more likely to be farmers without known employment alternative than they are to be ex-farmers who were forced from farming. However, those with multiple jobs are less anxious to return to full-time employment entirely within farming or entirely outside farming, possibly for the security reasons discussed.

Table 16. Vocational Migrants' Willingness to Return to Their Former Vocation

	Would Consider Returning	Would Not Consider Returning	Total
- - - (Percent of all respondents in each group) - - -			
Full-time farmers	31	69	100
Part-time farmers	17	83	100
Ex-farmers	20	80	100
-----			
All respondents	25	75	100

Of those who stated that they had realized the benefits of their vocational change, 31% of the full- or part-time farmers and 6% of the ex-farmers said they would return to their former vocation whereas 69% of the full- or part-time farmers and 94% of the ex-farmers said they would not (Table 17). Of those whose benefits were not realized by their vocational change, 75% of the full- or part-time farmers and all the ex-farmers would return to their former vocation whereas 25% of the full- or part-time farmers said they would not. Thus, 84% of those whose expected benefits were realized would refuse to return whereas 80% of those whose anticipated benefits were not realized would return. Apparently the success of the move relative to expectations strongly influences attitudes toward reversal of the move.

Table 17. Relationship of Success of Vocational Change to Respondents' Willingness to Return to Former Vocation

	Willing to Return to Former Vocation	Unwilling to Return to Former Vocation	Total
- - (Percent of all respondents in each group) - -			
Respondents who had realized expected benefits			
Full- and part-time farmers	31	69	100
Ex-farmers	6	94	100
All respondents	16	84	100
Respondents who had not realized expected benefits			
Full- and part-time farmers	75	25	100
Ex-farmers	100	0	100
All respondents	80	20	100

Sixty-seven percent of those full- or part-time farmers whose income was greater than expected from their vocational change would be unwilling to return to their previous job whereas 80% of such ex-farmers would refuse to return (Table 18). Three-fourths of the entire group whose income expectations were exceeded would refuse to return.

Of those whose income expectations were approximately fulfilled two-thirds of the full- or part-time farmers and 63% of the ex-farmers would refuse to return. Sixty-four percent of all whose income expectations were approximately met would refuse to return.

Table 18. Relationship of Fulfillment of Income Expectations to Respondents' Willingness to Return to Former Vocation

	Willing to Return to Former Vocation	Unwilling to Return to Former Vocation	Total
-- (Percent of all respondents in each group) --			
Respondents whose income expectations were exceeded			
Full- and part-time farmers	33	67	100
Ex-farmers	20	80	100
-----	-----	-----	-----
All respondents	25	75	100
Respondents whose income expectations were just fulfilled			
Full- and part-time farmers	33	67	100
Ex-farmers	37	63	100
-----	-----	-----	-----
All respondents	36	64	100
Respondents whose income expectations were not fulfilled			
Full- and part-time farmers	50	50	100
Ex-farmers	0	100	100
-----	-----	-----	-----
All respondents	33	67	100
Respondents who expressed no particular income expectations			
	24	76	100

Half of the full- or part-time farmers whose income expectations were not fulfilled would not return whereas all ex-farmers would refuse. Two-thirds of all respondents would not return.

Of those who had no particular expectations concerning income, 76% of all respondents would refuse to return.

It would appear that the success or failure of a vocational change to meet certain income goals or expectations is not primarily influential on further vocational change aspirations. It would also appear that those who had left farming were more determined not to reverse their recent vocational change than were those who had recently entered farming.



Of those full- or part-time farmers whose income actually increased due to the vocational change, 53% would refuse to return to their previous vocation whereas 75% of those whose income did not change and 80% of those whose income decreased would refuse to return (Table 19). Of those ex-farmers whose income increased due to the vocational change, 30% would refuse to return to farming. Of those whose income did not change, 60% would refuse and of those whose income decreased, 80% would refuse to return. Thus of all respondents combined 69% of those whose income increased, 67% of those whose income did not change, and 80% of those whose income decreased would refuse to return to their earlier vocation. A similar conclusion may be reached concerning the relevance of ordinal change in dollar income on future vocational plans as was reached with dollar income vis-a-vis expected dollar income resulted from the vocational change, i.e., that income changes, whether absolute or relative to expectations, are not strongly related to the individual's future vocational plans.

Table 19. Relationship of Ordinal Income Changes to Respondents' Willingness to Return to Former Vocation

	Willing to Return to Former Vocation	Unwilling to Return to Former Vocation	Total
- - (Percent of all respondents in each group) - -			
Respondents whose income increased			
Full- or part-time farmers	47	53	100
Ex-farmers	20	80	100
All respondents	31	69	100
Respondents whose income remained unchanged			
Full- or part-time farmers	25	75	100
Ex-farmers	40	60	100
All respondents	33	67	100
Respondents whose income decreased			
Full- or part-time farmers	20	80	100
Ex-farmers	20	80	100
All respondents	20	80	100

## Residential Changes

Eighty-six percent of the non-farmers experienced a rural-urban change of residence. Since these are primarily ex-farmers, 14% of this group either has never lived on the farm or has retained their rural residence after shifting from the farm employment. The move entirely out of agricultural production is generally accompanied by a movement from the country.

Two-thirds of all the part-time farmers have either moved from city to farm or vice versa. Thirty-eight percent of the full-time farmers have moved. Residence changes are more probable when the head of the household moves into or out of farming but a noticeable number of vocational non-migrants have been residentially mobile and some vocational migrants have not changed residence.

Eighty-four percent of the full-time farmers live on the farm whereas 52% of the part-time farmers and only 32% of the ex-farmers do. Of the farmers now living on the farm, 71% of the full-time farmers and 46% of the part-time farmers have formerly been engaged in vocations different from their present pursuit. They have thus been engaged in jobs which would tend to encourage non-farm residence. The advantages of non-farm living, if any, were foregone in anticipation of the benefits of farm living since farming is now a significant source of the family's income.

Eighty percent of the rural residents who are full-time farmers and who have changed from non-farm employment also moved from the city to the farm. The remaining 20% of this group were already living on the farm before they began full-time farming. By comparison, 50% of the part-time farmers who have moved into farming from employment outside the industry have moved to the farm. The remaining half were either already living on the farm (as were the currently full-time farmers mentioned above) or are still living in town and carrying on their diversified vocational pursuit from there. Of those part-time farmers who have not changed vocations, 86% have neither moved onto or away from the farm; they live on the farm and have done so since they began their current diverse vocation.

Of the part-time farmers who currently live in town, only 22% have changed vocations. Thus, the decision by these respondents to commute to their farming operation was not a result of a vocational change imposed on a prior residential decision. For a majority of them, commuting does not merely reflect a lag of residence adjustment to a vocational change since they have not undergone a vocational change. To commute to the farm is a decision in and of itself made apparently for the sake of the advantages offered by farm employment and urban residence, even in spite of possible sacrifices related to the commuting process.

Half of the commuting part-time farmers have moved from the farm to town while the remainder have not lived on the farm. The place of the general practice of commuting in the evaluation of the rural residence and changes in residence in policy considerations is discussed below.

Two-thirds of the rural residents who are part-time farmers state that they definitely will not move to town in the near future. Seventy-nine percent of the rurally residing ex-farmers also state they would refuse to do so. Most, but not all, of the respondents in these groups then are satisfied with their rural residence, whether they are or are not farming part time. On the assumption that (possibly more costly) urban housing is available to all these respondents, the data indicate that the respondents refusing to move are

voluntarily rural residents. They may be more voluntarily so than some urban residents where lack of buildings on the farm or demands of the off-farm employment (for part-time farmers) would preclude rural residence.

Of those living in town, all the full-time farmers stated that they would not move (back) to the farm, although 50% of them have changed from non-farm to farm employment. That is, half of the full-time farmers who commute from an urban residence have changed from non-farm employment to farming. Whether they do or do not have an urban employment background (and thus an employment basis for having chosen urban over rural living in the past), they unanimously are refusing to move to the farm where they are fully employed.

A majority of the part-time farmers were similarly persuaded. A third of those who live in town would consider moving to the farm while the remaining two-thirds would not. Of those who would consider such a move, 67% had changed vocations. However, 83% of those part-time farmers who would not consider moving (back) to the farm had also changed vocations.

Apparently, an urban resident is more likely to consider moving to the farm if he is employed part-time off the farm and, further, if he is employed part-time off the farm a past vocational change encourages willingness to move geographically. It should be noted that those who were most willing to consider moving (back) to the farm are excluded from this sample. They have carried out that consideration and are no longer urban residents.

Convenience, particularly between residence and employment, is a highly influential factor in precipitating actual moves or consideration of prospective moves of full-time farmers to the farm. All of these who have moved from town to the farm cited convenience as a reason for doing so. Seventy-five percent of these respondents had moved into farming from non-farm employment.

Part-time farmers were not so concerned with convenience nor were they so homogeneous with regard to their reasons for moving or considering such a move. Convenience would logically be less important to respondents with multiple vocations and thus likely multiple work locations. When a full-time farmer lives on the farm, he lives close to his work. A part-time farmer normally must commute from farm to city or vice versa regardless of where he lives and thus no move would offer the convenience benefits obtained by a full-time farmer's moving from the city to the farm.

### Commuting

Eighty-four percent of the full-time farmers gave reasons why they do not commute (Table 20). Convenience factors were cited by 71% of these respondents. Nearly three out of every four respondents who noted these factors had changed from urban employment to farming at some time in the past. Monetary reasons were cited by 39% of those who gave reasons, enjoyment factors by 19%, and residential factors by 14%.

Convenience factors were mentioned by 63% of the part-time farmers who do not commute. Other reasons cited, including residential, enjoyment, and monetary reasons, were mentioned with lower frequencies.

Convenience was the primary reason given by full- and part-time farmers for not commuting. The importance of monetary factors was particularly dissimilar for the two groups. Eighty-nine percent of the respondents who mentioned these

Table 20. Reasons Farmer Respondents Do Not Commute

	Convenience	Family Reasons	Monetary Reasons	Enjoyment	Residential Factors	Unknown Reasons
- - - - - (Percent of all respondents in each group) - - - - -						
Full-time farmers	71	0	39	19	14	5
Part-time farmers	63	0	13	13	25	0

factors are full-time farmers. Commuting would add travel costs for these full-time farmers, of course. However, part-time farmers are quite probably driving to their other employment and to move so as to avoid the need for commuting to the farm would accomplish little along the line of reducing travel costs.

Of those full- and part-time farmers who now live on the farm, 20% have commuted to the farm in the past but have since moved to the farm. One out of every five farmers in each of these two groups has tried commuting and has apparently found that the disadvantages outweighed the advantages. To live where the family head works is apparently valuable, particularly when that work is in a rural setting as indicated above.

Although some farmers have experienced the advantages and disadvantages of commuting, many of them did not voluntarily choose it over living on the farm. For 67% of them, buildings were not available on the farm at the time they were commuting and thus there was no choice if they were to farm. The remaining third of the ex-commuters had done so for various reasons, including urban employment of family members and convenience to urban provisions. Apparently, commuting is not an acceptable approach to relating vocation and residence for the majority of those to whom the choice is available.

Two of the four full-time farmers who currently are commuting cited convenience as their reason for doing so (Table 21). Residential factors (as discussed above)

Table 21. Reasons Farmer Respondents Commute

	Convenience	Family Reasons	Monetary Reasons	Enjoyment	Residential Factors	Unknown Reasons
- - - - - (Percent of all respondents in each group) - - - - -						
Full-time farmers	50	0	25	0	25	0
Part-time farmers	18	0	64	0	18	0

and monetary reasons were also mentioned. Eighty-three percent of the commuters are part-time farmers, however. Sixty-four percent of the part-time farmer commuters cited monetary factors as their reason for commuting. The remaining reasons mentioned with considerable less frequency involved residential factors and convenience.

Of those part-time farmers who cited monetary reasons for commuting, over half (56%) have changed from farming to non-farming vocations. They thus apparently obtained financial benefits from moving to town when they added urban employment to part-time farming. This would be particularly true when the farming operations involved crops and not livestock such that farming does not take the constant attention that would be demanded of other employments during the winter months. Thus the urban residence would involve lower commuting costs.

Of those part-time farmers who live on the farm and commute to their non-farm employment, half of them do so primarily for monetary reasons. If the farm job required the family's attention on a larger proportion of total working days than the urban job, rural residence could reduce commuting costs. Also, monetary benefits could be derived from living on the farm if the profitability of the farming operation depended on relatively constant surveillance. Examples might involve general guarding of livestock to preclude the frequent theft which occurs from some unattended farmsteads or watching sheep at lambing time because of the high mortality rate of the newborn animals without close attention.

One-third of the ex-farmers commute from their farm home to their new employment (Table 22). These are evenly divided between having monetary reasons and having family reasons as the primary cause for their not moving to town in lieu of commuting. Forty-two percent of these respondents cited each of these types of reasons. Those citing monetary reasons consider the rural living less costly when compared with the urban alternatives they face as individual families (possibly partly due to the low actual dollar cost to them for the rural residence which they use and which they have retained after leaving the farm vocation). The remaining respondents apparently consider the family raising

Table 22. Reasons Ex-farmers Do or Do Not Commute

	Percent of	: (Percent of all respondents in each group)					
All Ex-farmer Respondents	:	Convenience	Family Reasons	Monetary Reasons	Enjoyment	Residential Factors	Unknown Reasons
Ex-farmers who do commute	33	0	42	42	8	33	0
Ex-farmers who do not commute	67	45	5	15	0	35	5
Total	100						

benefits of a rural setting sufficient to influence their residence decision. Two-thirds of the ex-farmers live in town. Sixty-three percent have expressly moved to town rather than remain on the farm. Forty-five percent of these ex-farmers identified convenience factors as influential in precipitating their rural-urban move. Thirty-five percent noted residential factors, 15% monetary reasons, and only 5% each family reasons and unknown reasons.

Convenience factors and monetary factors dominate the expressed rationale for respondents' decisions concerning commuting (Table 23). The most frequently mentioned reason given by members of each of the three respondent groups for refusing to commute involved convenience factors. Monetary factors were also mentioned by some respondents in each group, but these factors were less commonly mentioned than convenience and were not even second in importance for two of three groups.

Table 23. Summary of All Respondents' Reasons for Decisions to Commute or Not to Commute

Respondent Group:	Percent of Each:						Unknown Reasons:	Per Re-spondent
	Conven-ience	Family Reasons	Monetary Reasons	Enjoy-ment	Residential Factors			
- - - - (Percent of all respondents in each group) - - - -								
Full-time farmers :								:
Commuters* :	17:	50	0	25	0	25	0	: 1.00
Non-commuters+ :	83:	71	0	39	19	14	5	: 1.47
Part-time farmers :								:
Commuters* :	37:	18	0	64	0	18	0	: 1.00
Non-commuters+ :	63:	63	0	13	13	25	0	: 1.14
Ex-farmers :								:
Commuters# :	33:	0	42	42	8	33	0	: 1.25
Non-commuters** :	67:	45	5	15	0	35	5	: 1.05

- \* = to farm
- + = farm residents
- # = to town
- \*\* = town residents

Convenience also dominated the reasons for full-time farmers commuting to the farm, though only four full-time farmers commute. Monetary reasons were also mentioned. Monetary reasons were most commonly cited by part-time farmers and ex-farmers as a reason for commuting.

Generally, then, those who do not commute refuse to do so because living at their employment site is more convenient, either without major regard to monetary considerations which might be relevant or in the absence of significant influential monetary influences. Similarly, those who do commute (especially to urban employment) are most likely to do so for monetary reasons, in the absence of or without regard to influential convenience factors. The commuting part-time

and ex-farmers generally are willing to bear whatever sacrifice is necessary in the form of inconvenience in order to avoid the monetary costs which would be involved, i.e., in order to obtain the monetary benefits of not commuting. In contrast, the non-commuters are more likely to bear necessary monetary costs for the sake of convenience which is important to them.

## CHAPTER 9

### Comparisons Between Geographic Areas

As described above, respondents were from a crop farming area with off-farm employment available within commuting distance (Brookings County), a crop farming area without such employment (Hutchinson County), and a ranching area with very little off-farm employment (Haakon County). Comparisons of answers to all relevant questions were made to reveal the more prominent influences of differences in type-of-farming area and availability of employment alternate to farming.

Vocational satisfaction was highest for respondents from Hutchinson County (4.36 on a scale of 5.00). Haakon County was a close second in this regard (4.31) and Brookings County third (4.06). This same order was observed when counties were ranked for increasing percent of respondents dissatisfied or very dissatisfied or decreasing percent who were very satisfied. However, the highest proportion of Hutchinson County respondents voiced indifference toward their current vocation.

The difference between Brookings County residents' responses and the others should show the influence, if any, of the availability of off-farm work. No question obviously differentiated this group. The differences in availability of this employment as included in the sample are not obviously influential. Such availability may not influence farmers. Alternate sufficient available employment may have also existed in the other counties without being obvious to the researchers — either in the sparsely populated areas of where respondents commuted greater distances to it than considered in planning the sample.

The differences between the Haakon County respondents' reactions and the others should emphasize the importance of the type-of-farming area variation. These respondents were more likely to be held in farming by income level. Income apparently outweighs other influences for these ranchers.

They were also much more ready to consider the farm and city equally convenient and less ready to consider the farm less convenient. Greater distances from farm to town in the ranching area may limit the convenience advantage urban living offers in the crop farming areas.

Hutchinson County respondents were dissimilar to the others in that they were:

1. less likely to identify benefits expected from vocational changes,
2. more likely to have received less income than expected from the change,
3. less likely to differentiate farm and non-farm work on the basis of risk,
4. more likely to have no more than a grade school education and less likely to have any college or university training, and

5. less likely to have had a job available when they left their previous job.

This particular group from a crop farming area without off-farm employment within commuting distance gave a generally more pessimistic view of their job changes and labor potential as it might be measured by conventional wisdom. Economic pressures may be more severe in crop farming than ranching. Consequent problems may be less readily solved without alternate employment at an acceptable location. The fact remains, however, that this group gave evidence of the greatest satisfaction with their current vocations. Solutions have apparently been acceptable -- whether respondents resolved to accept unpleasant situations or worked harder to overcome greater barriers to adjustment.

In particular, the Hutchinson County data may support the suggestion that lack of available off-farm employment may impose a hardship on farmers.

## CHAPTER 10

### Impact of Various Factors on Respondents' Vocational Stability or Mobility

#### Factors Which Retain Farmers in Farming

Generally, the full-time and part-time farmers are similar in their estimate of the relative importance of various factors which hold them personally in agricultural production (Table 24 and Figure 3). In each of these categories the proportion of farmers that considered working and residential conditions relevant to their remaining in farming was nearly twice as great as the proportion which mentioned any other single type of factor. Seventy-five percent of the full-time farmers and 73% of the part-time farmers cited this factor.

The superior income which farming is believed to offer was cited by several men in both the full-time and part-time farmer groups, as were investment related factors, the enjoyment of the vocational responsibilities and setting, and limitations imposed by training and experience.

Only two groups of factors were of widely differing importance to farmers in the two groups. The influence of training and experience on the vocational choice was far greater for the full-time than the part-time farmers. Part-time farmers ranked this group of factors as a tie for the least important category whereas the full-time farmers mentioned these factors with a frequency second only to working and residential conditions. This would suggest that many full-time farmers may not be part-time farmers because the factors relating to training and experience which would prevent their complete exit from agricultural production also keep them from supplementing their possibly insufficient farming income with part-time off-farm employment.

Factors relating to security also differentiated the responses of the full-time farmers from those of the part-time farmers. Apparently security is a more influential factor in holding the part-time farmers in farming than for the full-time farmers. The full-time farmers considered this the least important of all the factor categories (only one farmer mentioned a security factor) whereas these factors tied as the second most important retentive group for the part-time farmers. Evidently full-time farmers are less likely than the part-time farmers



Table 24. Factors Which Retain Farmers in Farming

	Superior Income	Invest- ment	Security	Enjoy- ment	Working and Resi- dential Conditions	Training and Ex- perience	Total
- (Percent of each group of respondents mentioning each factor) -							
Full-time farmers	29	8	4	8	75	43	167*
Part-time farmers	23	14	23	9	73	9	151*
-----							
All farmer respondents	26	11	13	9	74	26	159
- - - - (Percent of responses by farmers in each group) - - - -							
Full-time farmers	18	5	3	5	45	24	100
Part-time farmers	16	9	16	6	47	6	100
-----							
All farmer respondents	16	7	8	5	47	16	100**

\*Farmers in the two groups apparently averaged 1.67 and 1.51 responses per respondent.

\*\*Apparent addition error due to rounding.

to voluntarily (re-) select agriculture as (one of) their vocation(s). They do not view farming as a secure choice but rather as their only known available employment. Rather than selecting it for the security it offers, they are more likely to feel they are trapped by it, without choice. To those who have alternatives, farming is mixed with other employments partly for the security it offers -- possibly for the security such diversity offers. The influence of security in encouraging a man to continue doing what he's doing becomes immaterial when he considers himself devoid of alternatives.

The majority of farmers held in agriculture by each of the various factors mentioned stated that they did obtain the benefits anticipated from farming when they transferred into the industry. The ratio for farmers held by each individual factor is between 4.3:1 and 2:1 (the ratio of farmers who received expected benefits to those who did not). Those retained by working and residential conditions showed the highest ratio of recipients of expected benefits.

Only those farmers retained by the level of their current income showed a predominance of having obtained more income than expected. Farmers held in farming by working and residential factors and by training and experience apparently received the least income relative to what they expected. The fact that non-economic factors hold these farmers in the industry makes understandable

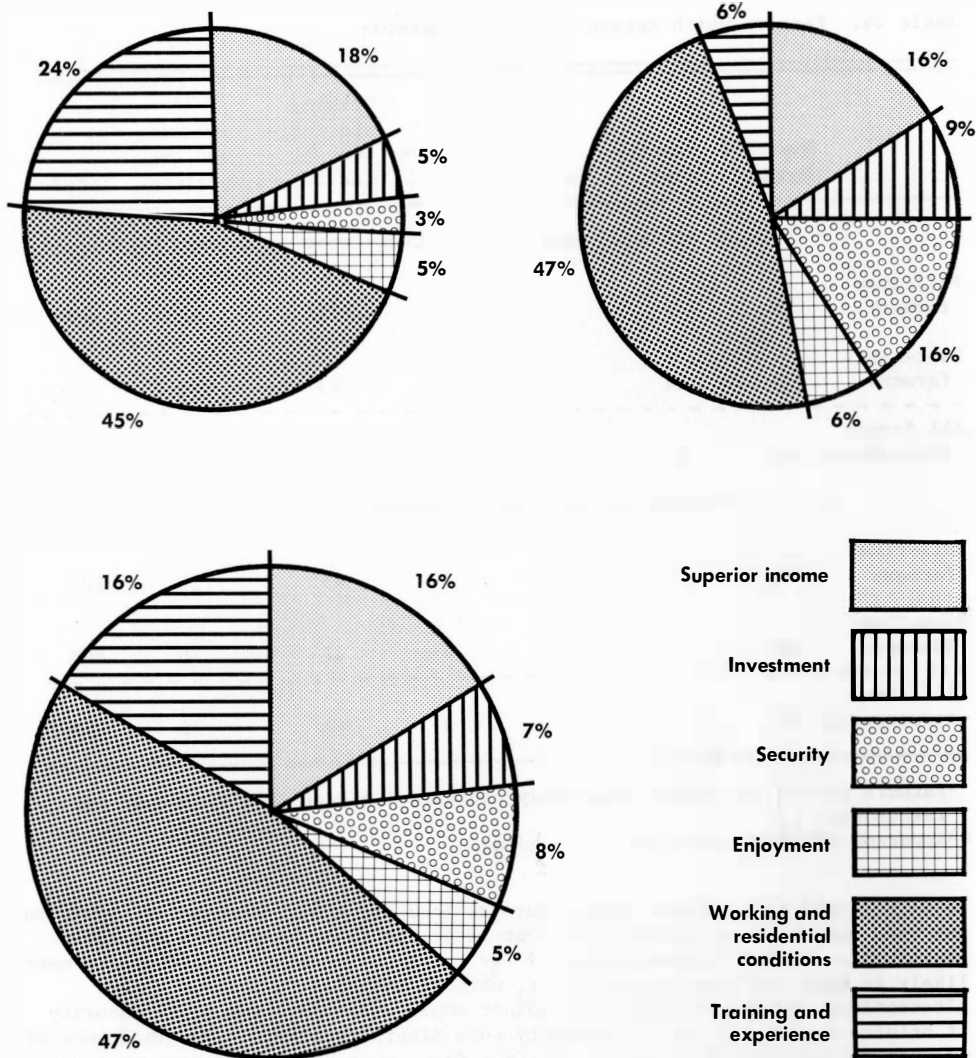


Figure 3. Factors which retain farmers in farming (percent of total responses).

their remaining in the absence of economic factors. Those held by working and residential conditions stay for non-economic benefits available in farming; those retained by training and experience stay in farming in spite of the income disappointment because of the lack of available beneficial alternatives.

Factors Which Catalyze the Exit of Farmers from Farming

Part-time farmers who had been full-time farmers and ex-farmers who had farmed either full- or part-time were asked why they left farming. Eighty-one percent of those who responded are non-farmers and 19% are part-time farmers.

Only 38% of the part-time farmers interviewed had been full-time farmers and volunteered reasons for their having shifted partially from farm to non-farm employment. Though voluntary factors were identified slightly more frequently than mandatory factors, these respondents did not identify any single category of factors as noticeably more important than other factors (Table 25 and Figure 4). Small sample size and inter-respondent variability preclude generalization concerning influences causing farmers to change from full- to part-time agricultural production.

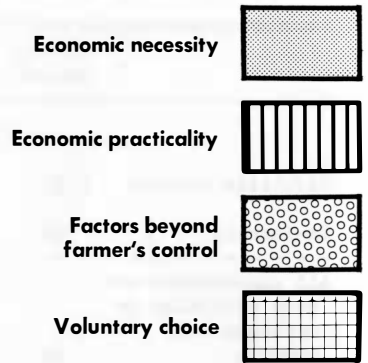
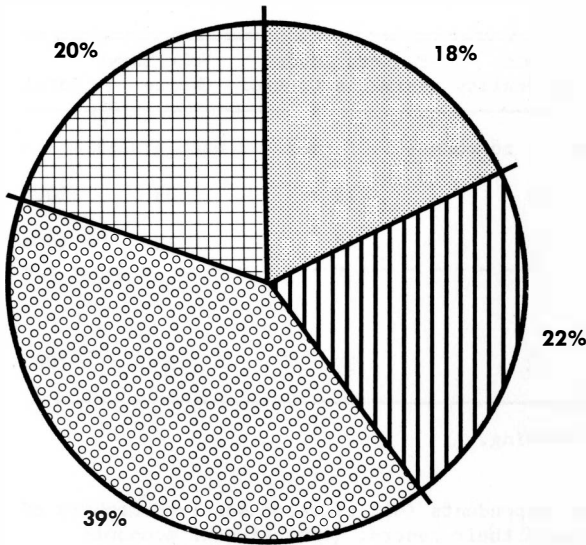
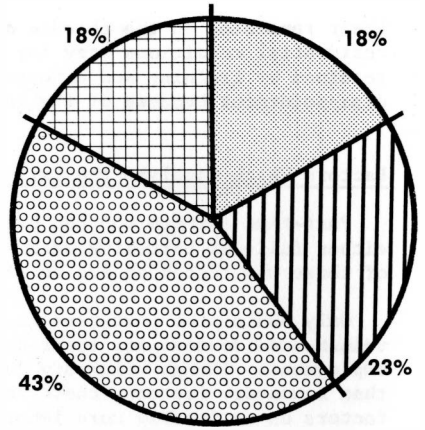
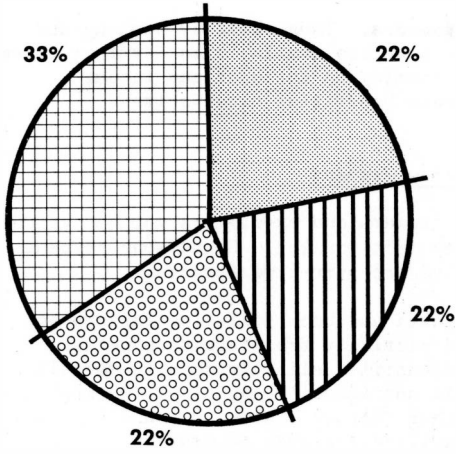
Table 25. Factors Which Catalyze the Exit of Farmers from Farming

	Economic Necessity	Economic Practicality	Factors Beyond Farmer's Control	Voluntary Choice	Total
- - - (Percent of responses by farmers in each group) - - -					
Part-time farmers	22	22	22	33	100*
Ex-farmers	18	23	43	18	100*
-----					
All respondents who have partially or entirely left farming	18	22	39	20	100

\*Apparent addition error due to rounding.

Forty percent of the ex-farmer respondents (43% of responses from members of this group) identified factors beyond their control (exclusive of economic necessity) as partly responsible for their exit. Only two farmers citing these factors identified any additional influential factor in any other category. Factors reflecting economic practicality were second most frequently identified by the ex-farmers. Approximately 21% of the farmers in this group mentioned such factors (23% of all responses from these farmers). Factors involved in the categories entitled "voluntary" and "economic necessity" were included by 17% of these farmers each (18% of this group's responses to this question).

Generally, these data indicate that farmers do not predominantly leave farming solely because they want to but because they are under varying degrees of pressure to do so. Less than 20% of the ex-farmers say they chose to quit, though some of the factors considered economic practicality actually reflect a



**Figure 4. Factors which catalyze the exit of farmers from farming (percent of all responses).**

move by the man to avail himself of superior opportunities rather than a move to escape a necessarily undesirable economic condition on the farm.

Further, most ex-farmers do not feel that a lack of barely sufficient income forced them to quit farming. They do not admit being starved out. Only 17% of these respondents (18% of responses) said it was a financial necessity that they left, and one of these cited a lack of available land as an income source rather than rigidly insufficient income, per se. They apparently were forced from farming by primarily non-financial factors or they were attracted from the industry by preferable alternatives.

If these observations are considered in conjunction with those in the preceding section (Factors Which Retain Farmers in Farming), it appears that the bulk of relevant problems resulting from unavoidable economic necessity relate to the barriers to exit from farming rather than barriers to remaining in farming. Most of those leaving believe they are choosing to do so while many of those who continue to farm do not consider this a matter of choice.

Respondents' reasons for having left farming were correlated with their answers to other questions. Thirty-two percent of those who left due to non-economic factors beyond their control and 38% of those who left due to economic necessity expected no particular benefits from the change. None of the respondents who left for reasons classed in either of the voluntary groups failed to identify specific benefits anticipated from the transition.

Of those who left due to non-economic factors beyond their control, slightly more than half of the respondents who identified expected benefits, specified family and leisure benefits. Only half as many of these respondents identified any anticipated economic benefits (income level, income consistency, or expense benefits, combined) as noted family and leisure benefits. However, 80% of those who left due to economic necessity and who cited specific anticipated benefits and 63% of those who left due to economic practicality cited one of the various economic benefits as their anticipated gain from leaving farming. Although those who left involuntarily were less likely to be able to identify specific anticipated benefits, those who left for economic reasons were more likely to anticipate economic benefits whereas those who left for non-economic reasons were anticipating non-economic benefits. This may differentiate between circumstances precipitating adjustment or it may differentiate between respondents who are economically versus non-economically motivated.

Over half of the respondents who left for economic reasons received an increase in income due to the vocational shift, while only 36% of those who left for non-economic reasons did so. Sixty percent of those who left for non-economic reasons beyond the farmer's control and who identified a specific ordinal change in their income received a decrease in income. Generally those in the most difficult economic situation or most concerned about economic gains received the greatest benefits in this regard.

Income received generally exceeded expectations as frequently as it fell short of expectations for those who left involuntarily whereas 80% of those who left voluntarily received more income than they expected. Seventy percent of those who left for economic reasons received an income increase whereas those who left for non-economic reasons were almost as likely to receive less income than expected as they were to receive more.

Those who left farming for economic reasons were more resistant to the possibility of their returning to farming than were those who left for non-economic reasons. Of the former group, 95% said they would not consider returning whereas 71% of the latter group would not. Eighty-five percent of those who left involuntarily and 76% of the voluntary group said they would not. Apparently those who left voluntarily and/or for non-economic reasons are somewhat more responsive to the suggestion, though a majority of members of no sub-group tested would consider returning.

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Appendix A

Appendix A

The Sample

Vocational Distribution

Interviewees consisted of 25<sup>4</sup> full-time farmers, 24 part-time farmers, and 42 ex-farmers (Appendix Table 1). Respondents identified as part-time farmers are those who have some farming responsibilities but who regularly earn part of their annual income from non-farm sources. The proportion of their employment which the part-time farmers devoted to their farming operation covered most conceivable ranges, though low and high extremes were rather weakly represented. Only three part-time farmers spent less than 25% of their time farming and only one spent more than 75% farming. The remaining 20 are distributed somewhat evenly between 25% and 75%.

Appendix Table 1. Vocational and Residential Distribution of Respondents

	Full-time Farmers	Part-time Farmers	Ex-farmers	Total
All respondents	25	24	42	91
Respondents who had changed vocations	17	10	36	63
Respondents who had not changed vocations	8	14	6*	28
Rural residents	21	14	13	48
Urban residents**	4	10	29	43
Respondents who had changed residence	14	11	34	59
Respondents who had not changed residence	11	13	8	32
Respondents from				
Brookings County	11	7	18	36
Hutchinson County	3	5	18	26
Haakon County	11	12	6	29

\*This small group described by apparently contradictory classifications is composed of voluntarily retired farmers who assumed no new vocation and of rural residents who had never farmed. These latter respondents are non-farmers, though not ex-farmers.

\*\*The term "urban" residents is used here to refer to people living in cities and towns of any size. A small group of residences with minimal commercial facilities would thus constitute a town for this purpose.

<sup>4</sup>One full-time farmer provided useable but only partial data. Thus, the total number of respondents varies from 90 to 91 throughout the study.

## Age

The full-time farmers ranged in age from 26 years to 85 years with an average age of 50.2 while the part-time farmers were between 29 years and 66 years of age, averaging 49.8 (Appendix Table 2). The ex-farmers included in the survey ranged from 31 years to 70 years old with an average age of 49.8. Only one full-time farmer and one part-time farmer were younger than 30 and the only respondents in the entire sample who were over 70 years were the oldest two full-time farmers.

Appendix Table 2. Age Distribution of Respondents

	Age Group						Total	Average Age
	20's	30's	40's	50's	60's	70 & older		
	-- (Total number of respondents in each group) --							(Years)
Full-time farmers	1	6	6	9	1	2	25	: 50.2
Part-time farmers	1	2	9	10	2	-	24	: 49.8
Ex-farmers	-	12	14	3	12	1	42	: 49.8
All respondents	2	20	29	22	15	3	91	: 49.9

The part-time farmers comprise a more homogeneous group with regard to age than the other groups. This group is predominantly composed of middle-aged men in their 40's and 50's. By contrast, the ex-farmers are the most diverse in this regard with a smaller relative representation in this middle age bracket, particularly within the 50-59 year group.

## Education

A smaller proportion of the full-time farmers had gone beyond grade school than of the other groups (Appendix Table 3). Part-time farmers and ex-farmers were essentially the same in this regard.

A smaller proportion of the ex-farmers had some college training than of the other two groups. The full- and part-time farmer groups were essentially equal concerning this characteristic.

Very generally, the sample is characterized by an inverse relationship between an individual's formal education and his relative involvement in agriculture.

## Farm Type and Size

Farm sizes of respondents in Brookings County averaged smaller than in Hutchinson County (307 acres compared to 360), which in turn were much smaller than those in Haakon County (which averaged 3,863 acres). This coincides with a

Appendix Table 3. Highest Education of Respondents

	Education Level			Total
	Some Grade School	Some High School	Some College	
	-- (Percent of all respondents in each group) --			
Full-time farmers	58	21	21	100
Part-time farmers	46	33	21	100
Ex-farmers	45	48	7	100
All respondents	49	37	14	100

decreasing productivity of land in these areas in that order. Productivity of farms in Hutchinson County is generally lower than in Brookings County. Land in Haakon County is more commonly devoted to ranching and thus the average acreage controlled by each respondent there is greater.

The largest acreage reported by any respondent was mentioned by a part-time farmer. The number of acres involved was more than double that of any other reported farm or ranch. Excluding the influence of that single sample unit, average farm size was greater for the full-time farmers (2,354 acres) than for the part-time farmers (2,271 acres). These in turn controlled a greater average acreage than the ex-farmers had when they farmed (1,215 acres). The greater the size of the farm within each area the greater the probability that the respondent expected to continue to farm.

New Employment of Part-time and Ex-farmers

Those former full-time farmers who have taken on some non-farm employment without leaving farming entirely have entered positions of semi-skilled or skilled labor or positions of management. Distribution of these men among these occupations was relatively homogeneous. The ex-farmers who have entirely left farming as a source of income are now distributed rather evenly between unskilled and skilled labor, management, business ownership, and semi-retirement. The appearance of unskilled labor and business ownership in the latter group but not the former may suggest that the person seeking supplemental income is not facing the dire economic necessity (making unskilled labor a preferable alternative) nor the major economic opportunity (represented by business ownership) faced by at least some of those leaving farming altogether.

The part-time farmers who have left full-time farming have reacted to moderate financial need or opportunity whereas desperate needs or uncommonly attractive opportunities are more likely to result in a complete exit from farming. Part-time farming may represent a security (e.g., income consistency) factor rather than an income level consideration, per se.

Appendix B

Appendix B

Questionnaire

No. \_\_\_\_\_

Vocational Migration

(CONFIDENTIAL)

Farm \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

- (1) If yes,
- (a) Yes, \_\_\_\_\_ full- or \_\_\_\_\_ part-time farmer?  
If part-time describe.
  - (b) Have you previously been engaged in another vocation? \_\_\_\_\_  
If so, what?
  - (c) What are the main factors that keep you farming?
  - (d) Live on a farm \_\_\_\_\_ or commute to the farm \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (e) Why do you or don't you commute?
  - (f) If living on the farm, have you ever commuted to the farm? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, why?  
  
Why did you move (back) to the farm?
  - (g) If commuting, how long have you commuted? \_\_\_\_\_  
  
How far do you commute? \_\_\_\_\_  
Would you consider moving (back) to the farm? \_\_\_\_\_  
If so, why?
- (2) If no,
- (a) When did you stop farming?
  - (b) Why?
  - (c) What is your new job?
  - (d) Live in town \_\_\_\_\_ or commute from the farm to the new job? \_\_\_\_\_ Why do you or don't you commute?
  - (e) If living in town, have you ever commuted from the farm? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, why?
  - (f) If commuting, how long have you commuted? \_\_\_\_\_  
How far do you commute? \_\_\_\_\_  
Would you consider moving to town in the near future? \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, why?

- (3) If you have changed vocations,
- (a) Did you have another job available before you left your previous job? \_\_\_\_\_ Explain.
  - (b) What benefits did you expect from the vocational change?  
Were these benefits realized with the job change?  
How satisfied are you with your present vocation?  
Dissatisfied -- Satisfied  
1 2 3 4 5
  - (c) Do you plan on making another job change? \_\_\_\_\_ Explain.
  - (d) Would you consider returning to your previous vocation?
  - (e) Did your personal income increase, decrease, or remain the same in dollar amount after your vocation change?  
Did you receive more or less money than you expected from the change?
- (4) If you have changed residence and/or vocation,
- (a) Did this shift result in any changes in income obtained by other members of your family?
  - (b) In what activities do you participate outside the home?  
In what activities outside the home did you participate before you changed vocations?
- (5) (All respondents)
- (a) Compare farm vs. non-farm employment on the following bases:
    - (1) Income opportunity
    - (2) Risk
    - (3) Prestige
    - (4) Leisure
  - (b) Compare rural vs. urban living on the following bases:
    - (1) Raising children
    - (2) Family living expense
    - (3) Convenience
  - (c) Education:
 

E	H	C	Grad.
12345678	1234	1234	12345

    - (a) (If-c) What courses of study did you follow?
    - (b) What other education or training have you had?

(d) How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_ Your Spouse? \_\_\_\_\_

(6) How many acres do you farm or operate? \_\_\_\_\_

(7) How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_ What are their ages? \_\_\_\_\_



**Appendix C**

Appendix C

Answers to Selected Items on Questionnaire

Question  
Number

1c What are the main factors that keep you farming?

Superior income level  
make money  
to make living

Investment

Security

hedge against inflation  
other job won't support  
family (works part time)  
uncertainty of other job  
(works part time)

Enjoyment

have something to do  
(health problems)  
hobby

Working and residential conditions

satisfaction of watching things  
grow  
fresh air  
work that enjoys doing  
doesn't like town life  
good place to raise family  
more independent

Training and experience

not trained for anything else  
too old to find another job  
raised on farm  
to keep home place going

1e<sub>1</sub> For what reasons do you commute to the farm?

Monetary

vocation in town

Family

wife works in town

Convenience

farm close to town  
difficult to get to town  
neighbors closer so can get help

Residential

no buildings on farm  
moved off farm so son could  
move on

Enjoyment

Unknown

1e<sub>2</sub> For what reasons don't you commute to the farm?

and

1g<sub>4</sub> Why would you consider moving back to the farm?

Monetary

cost of living less  
not economical to commute  
can raise some of own food

Family

jobs of other family members

Residential

crowded conditions  
has buildings on farm

Enjoyment

enjoys country life

Convenience  
protect property from theft  
convenience  
distance to work

Unknown  
doesn't know

Question

Number

2b Why did you stop farming?

Economic necessity  
unable to make a living  
was in financial ruin  
couldn't get enough land

Economic practicality  
not economical to keep going  
poor timing  
made profit on sale of farm  
had full-time job that could  
make more money  
afraid of losing capital  
machinery too old  
unable to find help on farm  
couldn't do work way should  
be done

Factors beyond farmer's control  
bad weather  
rented and farm sold from  
under  
age  
health

Voluntary  
wanted to try something else  
school was long distance  
so son could move on farm  
retired

2d<sub>2</sub> Why do you commute from farm?

Monetary  
cost of living lower

Family  
children

Convenience  
has livestock so more  
convenient

Residential  
no houses available in town  
bought house and yard in  
country

Enjoyment  
interested in things connected  
with farming  
enjoys country life

Unknown

2d<sub>3</sub> Why don't you commute from farm?

Monetary  
job requires that live in town

Family  
wife doesn't like farm

Convenience  
no good to drive back and forth  
distance is too great  
no sense in commuting  
more convenient  
health

Residential  
sold farm including house  
only rented house when farmed  
buildings occupied

Enjoyment

Unknown

Question  
Number

2e<sub>2</sub> If you have ever commuted from a rural residence to a job in town,  
why did you do so?

Monetary

Enjoyment

Family

Unknown

had a few chickens  
was working on farm along  
with town

Convenience

enjoy country life

Residential

cheaper rent  
economics  
unable to find housing in town

3b<sub>1</sub> What benefits do you expect from vocational change?

Income level

more money  
make a living  
profit from crops  
expected to move up in  
hierarchy  
experience for future work

Work benefits

more challenge  
be own boss  
less responsibility  
more freedom  
be able to do something  
creative

Expense

daily cost of living  
no expenses  
lower taxes  
tax deduction for sons at  
college  
less capital needed  
capital gains  
insurance, retirement,  
vacation

Family and leisure benefits

better family life  
able to work closer to home  
children don't like the city  
to make a home for relatives  
to go to school  
wanted to see country  
health  
more leisure

None

Income consistency

cash income year around  
certain income each year  
more stable job

Question  
Number

4b<sub>1</sub> In what activities do you participate outside the home?

and

4b<sub>2</sub> In what activities outside the home did you participate before you  
changed vocations?

Outdoor recreation

fishing  
hunting  
camping  
baseball  
golf  
travel

Indoor recreation

bowling  
play cards  
citizens' band radio  
dancing

Spectator sports

Public service

volunteer firemen  
PTA  
teacher's aid  
Museum Society

Social clubs

Elks Club  
Extension Club  
Masons  
senior citizens  
Federated Women's Club  
American Legion  
VFW  
Community Club  
4-H  
Royal Neighbor Lodge  
Lions Club

Leadership

township board  
state building  
authority  
hospital board  
Farmers Co-op Board  
school board

Vocational organizations

Welding Association  
Farm Bureau  
Stock Growers  
Association  
Federal Land Bank  
Farmers Union  
Commercial Club  
Chamber of Commerce  
Crop Association  
South Dakota Education  
Association  
Flying Farmers

Church

Church  
Knights of Columbus  
Ladies Aid

None

5a Compare farm to non-farm employment on the basis of:

5a1 Income opportunity

Farm worse

opportunity  
get raises in pay  
change job and step up income  
can work way up hierarchy

risk

no weather, etc., to buck

income level

because of low prices  
less return for hours on farm  
lower wages  
smaller farmer will never get rich  
better wages in town

No difference

no specific answers  
not political  
getting more complex  
conditional on external factors  
depends on availability of  
capital  
depends on area of state  
depends on number of jobs  
available  
if have a lot of luck  
if can get more land

Farm better

opportunity  
more diversification available  
reach a maximum level  
steadier employment  
no non-farm employment in area  
need more education to get  
higher income in town  
increase capital faster  
hard to get money for business  
no future in laboring  
can exercise own judgment

income level

poor wages in town

(No difference, continued)

conditional on internal factors  
age  
depends on individual  
depends on how hard you want  
to work  
depends on education  
depends on ability  
depends on the farmer  
depends on how well you  
know business  
depends on timing  
depends if specialized

5a<sub>2</sub> Risk

Farming more risky

natural factors, accidents  
weather  
machinery breakdown  
disease  
insects, weeds  
can't control final product  
risk of being injured so  
can't work greater

income consistency  
steady income in town  
insurance (workers' compensation)  
income security  
fluctuation of market prices

competitive  
big business pushing little  
guy out  
got to stay current on new ideas

job security

No difference

conditional and improper answers  
depends on farmers  
need more capital  
greater income  
return on investment not as good

Farming less risky

natural factors, accidents

income consistency  
steady income

competitive  
more competition in town  
the businesses are failing  
in town

job security  
can't get laid off  
job security

Question  
Number

5a<sub>3</sub> Prestige

Farm less prestigious

city people look down on  
farmers

Farm more prestigious

own boss  
own operation  
just a number in non-farm  
personally likes farmers  
in control of larger investment  
more stratification in town

No difference

conditional  
just as many groups to  
enhance prestige  
depends on area  
depends on ability  
depends on background  
depends on personality  
depends if farmer is doing a  
good job at farming

5a<sub>4</sub> Leisure

Farm more leisure

can take time off when want to  
more time for breaks  
more demands on you in town  
farmers are always going  
someplace

Farm less leisure

too much to be done on farm  
not as far from activities  
in town  
can't get any help on farm

Question  
Number

(Leisure, continued)

No difference

conditional  
seasonal  
depends on individual

5b Compare rural to urban living on the basis of:

5b<sub>1</sub> Raising children

City better

education  
education advantage  
education disadvantage  
children more advanced

social factors  
better recreation facilities  
more extra-curricular activities  
more contact with other people  
can participate in civic affairs

convenience  
greater time and distance to  
school

income  
wages better

No difference

depends on town  
depends on child

Farm better

discipline easier, effective  
discipline easier  
less supervision necessary  
children learn to entertain  
themselves  
can better control  
environment  
develop better morals  
don't run in gangs

children work  
can put to work  
keep kids busy  
children learn the value of  
work  
learn to work together  
more responsibility

less congestion  
less traffic  
more room  
children healthier on farm  
children have more freedom

enhances family  
atmosphere and surroundings  
conducive to family life  
can have pet animals  
more privacy  
closer family ties  
children seem more satisfied  
on farm

educational experiences  
children can learn more  
learn more about life  
more opportunities for  
self-development

Question

Number

5b<sub>2</sub> Family living expense

Farm less expensive

specific costs lower on farm  
grow and raise own food stuffs  
rent  
taxes  
availability of costly  
activities in town  
recreation cheaper  
don't have to dress as well

Farm more expensive

specific costs higher on farm  
utilities, lights cheaper  
in town  
transportation costs higher  
auto expense  
school expenses  
build own water, sewage system

No difference

other  
if good manager  
not organized in town  
ranchers don't milk

5b<sub>3</sub> Convenience

City better

distance factor  
transportation  
distance and time for parts  
closeness to activities  
closeness to school  
closeness to neighbors  
  
urban provisions  
availability of sports, etc.,  
not as good  
culture plays, museums, etc.  
better sanitation, water, etc.  
more modern  
better police protection

Farm better

independence  
more privacy  
more leisure  
own boss  
  
interpersonal benefits  
helpful neighbors  
more family activities

No difference

depends on type of activity

flexibility

more tied down on farm

weather influence on travel

better roads and streets  
during bad weather

5c<sub>a</sub> If you have gone to college, what course of study did you follow?

Agriculturally oriented

Agri-business  
Animal Science  
Agricultural Engineering  
Veterinary Science

Pre-professional

Engineering  
Civil Engineering  
pre-medic

Liberal Arts

Short courses  
General Registration  
Education  
Bible



Question

Number

5c<sub>b</sub> What other education or training have you had?

Agriculturally oriented

on the farm training  
Vocational Agriculture  
agricultural course  
Farm Management  
training through IH  
auctioneering  
general 4-H work

Mechanical

parts man  
mechanic  
welding  
sheet metal work  
building construction

Professional and business

slide rule application  
photography  
real estate  
commercial credit  
management training  
business  
Dale Carnegie course  
research training  
minister training

Military and other

jet mechanic  
ordinance training  
training in blasting  
flight school  
officer's training school  
training as a cook

