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Why South Dakota and Minnesota Vocational Agriculture Instructors have Remained in the Profession

Roger A. Heller

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WHY SOUTH DAKOTA AND MINNESOTA VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE INSTRUCTORS HAVE RETAINED IN THE PROFESSION

By

R. A. Heller

A problem submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science (Plan B) at South Dakota State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts

August 1957
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

It is sincerely appreciated and deeply felt by the writer that the cooperation shown by Assistant Professor H. W. Gadda and Professor Stanley Sundet, Department of Education, South Dakota State College, Brookings, South Dakota was genuinely needed to make this problem a success. It is with this acknowledgment that sincere thanks are also expressed to H. E. Urton, Supervisor of Vocational Agriculture in South Dakota, Pierre, South Dakota and G. R. Cochran, Supervisor of Vocational Agriculture in Minnesota, St. Paul, Minnesota. Appreciation is also extended to those assisting in developing the list of addresses and to all teachers of vocational agriculture in South Dakota and Minnesota who have helped in the completion of this problem.
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Section I
INTRODUCTION

It is quite obvious that any person who remains in a certain occupation or profession for some length of time does so for one or more specific reasons. Teachers seemingly then, must have some reason for their tenure in their profession.

There have been many studies in the past few years, giving reasons why teachers leave the field. The Research Bulletin for Education in South Dakota indicates that of the 7345 teachers in our public and parochial schools in 1952-53, a total of 1912 did not return to South Dakota classrooms for the 1953-54 school year.

This is a matter which demands the consideration of everyone concerned with our school systems. These reports are made known and read by many people, including prospective teachers. It is only proper then, to determine and make known the reasons why some teachers remain in their professions as they do.

Many teachers in our public schools, including teachers of special departments have developed desirable tenure. In this paper, a single group, vocational agriculture teachers, will be considered. It is true, according to present available information, that this group loses a larger percentage of teachers than do many other fields of education. In a study by Clarke, completed in 1954, of how many vocational agriculture teachers

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1 Department of Public Instruction, "Reasons Why Teachers Left Teaching Position at the End of the 1952-53 School Year," Research Bulletin No. 25, April 1, 1954

2 Lester A Clarke, "Why Former South Dakota Teachers of Vocational Agriculture Left the Profession in South Dakota, 1946-53," Research Problem, M. S., South Dakota State College, 1954
left the field in South Dakota from 1946-53, it was found that a total of 41 left during that period. While many do leave for various reasons, the majority of the vocational agriculture teachers throughout the nation have remained in their positions through the years. The success of a vocational agriculture department is dependent upon the services of a competent teacher. This study determines why many of those teachers remain in their positions.
Section II
PURPOSE

Many successful teachers of vocational agriculture have compiled outstanding records and have stayed in the profession many years. Why do they stay? How long have they taught? What do they think of their program?

A study of the factors associated with keeping vocational agriculture teachers in the field was prompted by the increasing rates of departure from the field. The studies of reasons for departure give us a reason to retaliate with reasons for remaining.

This study can be desirable for the purpose of assisting teacher trainers in the selection of candidates likely to remain in the profession. This study could also assist administrators, teacher trainers, and students to review factors which are associated with teachers' decisions to remain in the field of vocational agriculture. The discovery of some of these factors could enable candidates, upon entering the profession, to objectively weigh its possibilities; it could assist teacher trainers to adjust training programs to meet the needs of the student; it could assist state supervisors and administrators to adjust situations in local schools so that they will attract desirable teachers. It is important to retain good teachers in the profession so that the needs of personnel for agricultural education can be more adequately met.
Section III

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Much has been written in the past few years concerning school problems. There definitely are many difficulties in education, but one of the major problems is the matter of teacher shortages.

There are many reasons why we have shortages of teachers and recent studies strongly indicate many such reasons. In a study completed in 1953 by the Department of Public Instruction in South Dakota,\(^3\) it was found that the total number of teachers trained for the 1953-54 school year was about fifteen hundred less than the number leaving the field.

In dealing directly with why vocational agriculture instructors left the field, Wolf,\(^4\) conducted a study in Ohio in 1955 to determine what was wrong with teaching. Wolf sent questionnaires to five hundred one Ohio State graduates in Agricultural Education from 1929-43. Of the total number of respondents, one hundred thirteen were currently teaching vocational agriculture, with 90 never having taught and two hundred ninety-eight having left the profession. The reason which was most frequently enumerated for leaving the field by those who had left was a sub-standard salary with the lack of future for advancement being second. However in this study, as in many others, the questioned individuals related many reasons why they enjoyed the profession of teaching vocational agriculture. From these reports it can be deducted that certain definite factors influence the desirable tenure some vocational agriculture instructors have recorded.

\(^3\) Department of Public Instruction, "Supply of, and Demand for Teachers in South Dakota." Research Bulletin No. 18.3, December 18, 1953

\(^4\) W. H. Wolf, "What's Wrong With Teaching" Agricultural Education Magazine, Volume 27, May and June 1955, Pages 257 and 279
The United States Office of Education Statistical Release Number 9,5 indicated that for the years 1938-1939 the average length of service of vocational agriculture teachers in the United States was about six years. Many of the more recent studies indicate that teacher tenure in vocational agriculture has actually increased. For instance, in a study conducted in 1953 by Sasman6 of Wisconsin, it was found that one hundred thirty-three of the five hundred seventeen vocational agriculture instructors had 10 or more years experience. Moreover, 40 of the instructors in Wisconsin had 20 years or more experience and one-half of the men in the field 20 years ago were still in the field at the time the study was made. It can be seen from this and other studies that vocational agriculture teaching must have some desirable qualities.

Brown7 of Missouri, has written an article on some of the reasons why he teaches vocational agriculture. Following are some of the reasons that he enumerates:

1. The vocational agriculture teacher can feel honor and responsibility when a 14 year old boy signs up for vocational agriculture and gives him the opportunity to mold that boy for from four to six years or more.

2. The vocational agriculture teacher has a full time job that is never dull or routine. It may vary from teaching Sunday School to square dance calling on Saturday night. Even the classes vary in discussion, demonstration, field trips, visual materials and farm supervision.

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7 B. Oscar Brown, "Vocational Agriculture Teaching as a Career," Agricultural Education Magazine, Volume 25, April 1953, Page 232
3. Trips during the year give chance for the teacher to broaden and stimulate himself. Some of these trips may be educational tours, F.F.A. Conventions and teacher conferences.

4. With supervised farming as the backbone of vocational agriculture the vocational agriculture instructor can render a tremendous service to his community by actually supervising.

5. There is an emotional side of teaching vocational agriculture when people come to you with praise. A boy explains pride in the local chapter of the Future Farmers of America and the teacher is able to see advancement in the individual.

Some of the opportunities inherent in vocational agriculture teaching can be seen in the foregoing article listed by a teacher who has considerable tenure in the field.

What do the "new" vocational agriculture teachers think of its advantages? In an article written by Kantner of Ohio, some ideas of a recently trained teacher are expressed. Kantner, upon completion of his first year of teaching; wrote an article entitled, "I Am Glad I Taught Vocational Agriculture."

At the end of the very first year, Kantner states that he is now sure he chose the correct profession. This is not a rare feeling by any means. What is responsible for the sudden convincing attitude toward the teaching of vocational agriculture? Kantner's article gives some clues for this certain conviction as follows:

1. Personal satisfaction, because most students will say that vocational agriculture is their best subject and some students are firm in their belief of having the best FFA Chapter in the area.

2. Close supervisor-teacher relationship.

3. The experience acquired through teaching vocational agriculture could have use in a wide area of vocations.

4. Vocational agriculture teaching is a challenge.

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8 Earl Kantner, "I Am Glad I Taught Vocational Agriculture," Agricultural Education Magazine, Volume 24, October 1951, Page 76
Present vocational agriculture instructors, both beginning and experienced, can cite many reasons why their profession is a desirable one, but they are not alone. Former instructors of vocational agriculture also can list reasons for an individual to enter the profession. Roderick of Missouri has conducted a study. The partial results of that study indicated that:

1. Two-thirds of the men surveyed would advise young men to enter the field of teaching vocational agriculture.

2. All but one of the men indicated that their experiences in teaching vocational agriculture had been of considerable value in securing other employment.

3. The outstanding personal value received by teaching vocational agriculture was the acquisition of a broader knowledge of agriculture and the ability to get along with people.

Clarke completed an interesting study entitled, "Why Former South Dakota Teachers of Vocational Agriculture Left the Profession in South Dakota from 1946 through 1953," in which the following summary was indicated: Of the men that had left teaching during the period, most of them indicated a like for 1) classroom teaching, 2) farm visits, 3) being with farm boys.

Not only do the teachers in the field of vocational agriculture list its desirable attributes as a career, but the educators in our colleges also recognize its advantages. Many of our college professors are former high school teachers, many of them in vocational agriculture.

9 C. V. Roderick, "Why Former Teachers of Vocational Agriculture Left the Profession," Research Paper, May 1953

10 Ibid., Page 1
In the textbook, "Teaching Agriculture," Hammonds of Kentucky, expresses some excellent ideas. This textbook, while devoted primarily to the techniques of agricultural education, indicates that a gain in satisfaction can be obtained by the teacher in being able to stimulate learning. It is difficult to measure the contributions of a good teacher. Sometimes it is also rather difficult for society to pay a teacher's worth for services that are intangible. Moreover, these services tend to accumulate long after the vocational agriculture instructor has ceased trying to create the life abundant in a particular community. The book also indicates that a teacher's life need not be dull to be professionally ethical. The vocational agriculture teacher should rather be dynamic, active and charming. He has an excellent opportunity to grow professionally. Even more important, the following growth can be at his own speed: 1) learning the technical facts of agriculture, 2) developing the abilities to teach, 3) developing personal and social qualities.

The good teacher of vocational agriculture, endowed with an optimum environment, becomes deeply engrossed in situations of striving to improve. Hammonds says, "With each achievement in teaching—each cycle completed—something is realized that gives satisfaction, but with each there is a lurking discontent. Such is the penalty of the creative life. Only the mediocre can rest upon their laurels, expecting their cup of triumph to remain full".

11 Carsie Hammonds, Teaching Agriculture, Page 343
12 Ibid., Page 8
Jurgenson of California, recently wrote an article entitled, "Opportunities in Teaching Vocational Agriculture." In his article, Jurgenson brings forth the important fact that the vocational agriculture teacher is considered highly in the public service professions and should realize that his services are building character and establishing farmers. He also points out that very few of the vocational agriculture instructors leave the field of agriculture completely. In California, 40 per cent of the three hundred fifty vocational agriculture graduates, at the time of his writing, were still teaching vocational agriculture in high school. Mention is also made of the opportunities for vocational agriculture instructors in related fields. Teaching experience in vocational agriculture provides real leadership in such fields as Soil Conservation Service, Colleges, Vocational Directorships and farming itself. Teaching is not a blind alley, nor is it simply a stepping stone, but there is no better way to have opportunity offered than to do a good job of teaching vocational agriculture in a community, according to Jurgenson. A good job of teaching vocational agriculture may be here defined as: acceptable tenure by a teacher in a department which he has successfully helped to organize and maintain. Jurgenson is quick to add that teaching brings its own rewards of security, respect, appreciation and a knowledge of contribution.

Perhaps no one is more sold on vocational agriculture or sees a better cross section of it than a state supervisor. Sasman of Wisconsin

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14 Ibid., Page 5
lists some of the desirable characteristics of vocational agriculture teaching as follows:

1. Pupil enrollment is increased.

2. It is one of the strongest influences there is to keep farm boys in high school.

3. It helps keep support of high school by rural people.

4. Carrying out of approved practices does so much for the community.

5. Through the Future Farmers of America we are able to train youth to accept responsibility for their own leadership.

The foregoing, of course, is only a partial list. However, it gives an idea of what the vocational agriculture instructor can be a part of. With this in mind, he can rightfully say with the Future Farmers of America,\(^{15}\) "I believe in the future of farming with a faith born not of words but of deeds—achievements won by the present and past generations of farmers; in the promise of better days through better ways, even as the better things we now enjoy have come up to us through the struggles of former years."

Not only have vocational agriculture instructors, teacher trainers, and supervisors mentioned the opportunities and advantages of teaching vocational agriculture, but many of them also list and explain some possible ways in which to improve the tenure of teachers in this field. It is the general consensus of most people involved in vocational agriculture that it is up to the public to provide for the encouragement of future teachers and for the proper welfare of those now teaching. For instance, Wolf,\(^{16}\) lists the following suggestions for alleviating the teacher shortage:

\(^{15}\) Future Farmers of America, "Creed", F.F.A. Manual, Page 11

\(^{16}\) Ibid., Page 4
1. Keep salaries in line.
2. Reward better teachers by promoting better salary schedules.
3. Reduce and/or equalize the workload.
5. Give more in-service training.
6. Keep a record of all graduates for their suggestions.
7. Recruit and select proper candidates.

Clark,17 of Michigan has presented some good reasons for the provision of adequate facilities and supervision. In his article entitled "Leaving or Staying," he summarized a portion of a study that he has conducted as follows: Full time departments of vocational agriculture kept their teachers for a longer period of time, as did those schools with large numbers enrolled in vocational agriculture, and those with adult and young farmer classes.

In addition to the suggestions listed, Kantner13 explains that the beginning teacher may become discouraged, in which case he should be able to go to his state department and other teachers for help. He also thought that attendance at more district and state meetings could help decrease the number of first year "drop-outs." Almost all of the men involved agree that teacher tenure in vocational agriculture can be improved through strong state teacher's associations.

17 Raymond M. Clark, "Leaving or Staying," Agriculture Education Magazine, Volume 23, June 1951, Page 274
18 Ibid., Page 6
Section IV

PROCEDURE

In order to obtain recent personal opinions of teachers in the field of vocational agriculture as to why they remain in the field, the writer contacted teachers of vocational agriculture in the states of Minnesota and South Dakota with eight years of experience or more. It was believed by the writer that eight years of experience in the profession would constitute enough time for a teacher to be able to form some opinion, and for him to be able to give some definite reasons for staying in that profession. This group, showing evidence of stability in their profession, were then contacted. The names and addresses of these people were from lists compiled by the state supervisors' offices in each state, with the total in the category being 92. A letter (Appendix I) explaining the problem and a questionnaire type survey sheet (Appendix II) were sent to the ninety-two teachers in the group. Within a few months 76 of the teachers had returned the questionnaires. Another letter (Appendix III) was sent later as a reminder to those people that had not returned the questionnaire. Within another two months another 7 questionnaires were returned for a total of 83 respondents. With this satisfactory number of questionnaires having been returned, they were analyzed and the data compiled.
Section V

RESULTS OF STUDY

Of the 92 teachers contacted in the study, 74 were teaching in Minnesota and 18 were teaching in South Dakota. All of the teachers contacted had 8 years or more experience in the vocational agriculture field. Ninety per cent of the men that were sent the questionnaire returned them.

Table I indicates that 40 of the 33 men returning questionnaires had between 8 and 14 years of experience. Twenty-one men, or 25 per cent giving information had between 15 and 21 years of experience teaching vocational agriculture. Eighteen of the vocational agriculture teachers returning questionnaires had between 22 and 28 years of experience and 4 teachers had taught longer than 28 years with one having taught 34 years. Teachers with this type of tenure should be expected to give some very good reasons why they remain in the field.

Table I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranges of Years Taught</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8-14 years</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-21 years</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-28 years</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-34 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>83</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II indicates that 43 men or 58 per cent had consecutive teaching experience in vocational agriculture, while the other 35 men had had their careers interrupted for one reason or another.
Table II

The Number and Percentage of Teachers With Consecutive Experience and Career Interruptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers With Consecutive Experience</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers With Their Careers Interrupted</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>83</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These people with interruptions had taught vocational agriculture, then left the field for a time and have returned to vocational agriculture teaching in their present capacity.

Table III shows the reasons the 35 men with interrupted careers gave for those interruptions. Military service most frequently interrupted careers of the vocational agriculture teachers contacted, with 15 men listing it as a reason.

Table III

Reasons Vocational Agriculture Teachers in Minnesota and South Dakota Have Had Their Careers Interrupted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military Service</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Veterans</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching High School Commercial</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching College</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching High School Science</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soil Conservation Work</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Business</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Jobs</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ford Foundation Fellowship</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Work</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In explanation of why there are more reasons for interruptions than interruptions is the fact that several reasons may have been responsible for one interruption.

Other types of teaching represented the reasons for seven of the interruptions. Four of the men had worked as county agents sometime in their lives, and listed that as a reason for not having taught vocational agriculture consecutively.

Soil conservation work, farming and other business each claimed three men for enough time to interrupt their careers in vocational agriculture. Advanced educational work was listed twice and other jobs four times as reasons for interrupting careers in the field of vocational agriculture.

It was found in this study also that most of the teachers with desirable tenure in the teaching of vocational agriculture had planned on making it their careers at the time they entered the profession. Table IV indicates that 50 of the 83 men returning questionnaires had planned on teaching vocational agriculture as a career as they entered the profession, while only 23, or 28 per cent, had planned not to make it a career. The remaining 12 per cent were undecided.

| Intentions of Men When Entering the Profession of Teaching Vocational Agriculture |
|----------------------------------|--------|--------|
| Intentions of Teacher | Number | Per cent |
| Planned on teaching vocational agriculture as a career | 50 | 60 |
| Did not plan on teaching vocational agriculture | 23 | 28 |
| Undecided | 10 | 12 |
| **Total** | **83** | **100** |
In this survey of teachers of vocational agriculture in Minnesota and South Dakota, it was found that 62 per cent had some professional training beyond the Bachelor's Degree. Table V shows that ten of the men, or 12 per cent, had their Master's Degrees, while the same number had done work in advance of a Master's Degree. Twelve of the men had only their Bachelor's Degree and none held the Doctorate.

Table V

Educational Status of Men Teaching Vocational Agriculture in Minnesota and South Dakota

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree Plus</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's Degree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's Degree Plus</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>83</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the characteristics discussed thus far from the survey are factors to some degree related to the tenure of those teachers. However, the main purpose of the survey, again, was to determine actual reasons for teachers of vocational agriculture remaining in the profession. Table VI lists fifteen of the most frequently listed reasons and their rank. Another six reasons were listed on the survey questionnaire but were not ranked often enough to be significant and therefore are not reviewed. Another fourteen reasons for remaining in the profession of vocational agriculture were indicated on the survey by the men contacted, but similarly, none of them were listed frequently enough to be of any conclusive
importance. The reason ranking first in importance most often was that of being able to work with young people, thus being able to guide and counsel. Fourteen of the men ranked it first for a total of 17 per cent. The reason next most frequently ranked number one was the feeling of being secure in the profession. Eight vocational agriculture instructors ranked security as their main reason for their remaining in the profession.

Three particular reasons were checked frequently by the teachers as important for keeping them in the field. They are:

1. Enjoy small town and rural living and associating with farm people.
2. Enjoy the chance to work outdoors. (Especially in the summer)
3. Enjoy working with young people and being able to guide and counsel.

Each of the above reasons was listed 53 times by the 83 teachers, thus 64 per cent of the men considered these to be important. Checked a total of 50 times by the teachers as reasons for keeping them in the field of vocational agriculture was that of not being required to be away from their families for great lengths of time. This reason was ranked first by five of the instructors surveyed. Placed within the top three by 22 of the men returning questionnaires was the reason that they were born and raised on a farm and wished to stay close to work associated with the farm.

Undoubtedly, there are many other important reasons why certain vocational agriculture instructors remain in the profession. However, Table VI points out some of the more frequently ranked reasons of importance to the group of teachers contacted in this study. The group surveyed should represent a fair cross section of teachers that continue serving in the field of vocational agriculture. Therefore the reasons here listed summarized should have some importance in their hold on the instructors in the field.
Table VI
Reasons for Teachers Staying in the Profession of Vocational Agriculture
In South Dakota and Minnesota

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for Staying</th>
<th>Number and Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felt the salary is adequate for the work expected</td>
<td>5 1 3 4 2 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owned his own home in the town</td>
<td>2 3 1 5 6 1 6 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt that he had security in the profession</td>
<td>3 1 3 2 4 4 3 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not have to be away from his family great lengths of time</td>
<td>5 6 8 3 5 6 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was born and raised on a farm and wished to stay close to work associated with the farm</td>
<td>6 10 6 3 2 1 5 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed small town and rural living and associating with farm people</td>
<td>6 7 12 6 6 2 3 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considered it an advantage to have twelve month job</td>
<td>3 1 5 5 3 7 6 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed the chance to work outdoors</td>
<td>2 4 7 6 4 7 1 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed being able to associate with other agriculture teachers and professional agriculture men and women</td>
<td>1 1 1 2 7 3 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liked the dynamic subject matter and diversification of work</td>
<td>5 6 6 5 2 3 3 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed working with young people and being able to guide and counsel</td>
<td>14 7 3 6 3 3 6 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had a feeling of accomplishment and success</td>
<td>1 3 2 3 3 1 1 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued getting cooperation of the students, parents and the administration</td>
<td>1 8 4 2 3 3 2 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considered the future in vocational agriculture teaching good</td>
<td>2 3 4 3 4 1 2 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt that he was serving the rural community and agriculture as a whole</td>
<td>3 6 2 4 3 3 3 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The writer obtained the names of ninety-two men in Minnesota and South Dakota that had been in the field of teaching vocational agriculture eight years or more. Of this list questionnaires were sent to all of the men. Eighty-three men or ninety per cent answered and returned these questionnaires.

It was found that forty-nine per cent of the men had between eight and fourteen years experience with only five per cent of the men having taught more than twenty-nine years. It is of interest to note that forty-eight of the eighty-three men had consecutive experience. The other thirty-five men had had their careers interrupted for some reason or other. Military service was the most prevalent reason for such interruptions.

Sixty per cent of these men entering the profession of teaching vocational agriculture had planned it would be their career, twenty-eight per cent were undecided, and twelve per cent did not plan to teach as their lives' work. Fifty-one of the men or sixty-two per cent had some advanced education in addition to their Bachelor's Degree. Twelve per cent of the men had their Master's Degree and another twelve per cent had completed some work in addition to their Master's Degree.

Reasons for remaining in the field of teaching vocational agriculture totaled twenty-two with the enjoyment of being able to guide and counsel young people being most important with seventeen per cent of the men. Other important reasons for remaining in the profession of teaching vocational agriculture were:

1. The enjoyment of small town and rural living.

2. The enjoyment of a chance to work outdoors. (Especially in the summer) Each of the mentioned reasons was listed fifty-three times by the eighty-three teachers, thus sixty-four per cent of the men considered them to be important.
Section VII
RECOMMENDATIONS

As, previously stated in this paper, the main purpose of this study was to obtain and present the real reasons why vocational agriculture teachers remain in the field, to people vitally interested in the profession. It is hoped, first of all that this study may be used to help the vocational agriculture instructors themselves. It is always wise for the teacher to evaluate his program and profession. This trade of ideas and viewpoints may aid in the objective of professional improvement.

Secondly, it is recommended that prospective teachers of vocational agriculture would study this and other sources of similar information to obtain genuine reasons why the vocational agriculture profession is a desirable one. It is recommended that teacher trainers of vocational agriculture review this study and others so as to constantly evaluate their programs that they might do what they can in improving stability in the profession. It is also recommended that state supervisors and local administrators review the varied reasons as outlined in this study so that they might provide the facilities necessary for the capable teacher to create the life abundant.
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Dear Teacher of Vocational Agriculture:

At the present time I am conducting a study of, "Why Some Vocational Agriculture Teachers Stay in the Profession As They Do." This research problem will be partial fulfillment of my Master's Degree in Education at South Dakota State College. The study is to include vocational agriculture instructors of Minnesota and South Dakota with at least eight years of teaching experience.

This problem has been promoted in part of many recent reports on why vocational agriculture instructors leave the field. I believe it is only fair to prospective vocational agriculture teachers, teacher trainers, and ourselves to find out why some teachers do stay in the profession.

The success of this study will depend largely upon your sincere returns. A self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

R. A. Heller
APPENDIX II

Your Name __________________________ Present Address __________________________

I.

1. How many years have you taught vocational agriculture? ___________

2. How many years have you taught vocational agriculture in your present school system? ___________

3. Has your vocational agriculture teaching experience been consecutive?  
   YES ______ NO ______

4. Has your vocational agriculture teaching career been interrupted?  
   YES ______ NO ______

5. If your career has been interrupted, by what?  

6. When you entered the profession, did you plan on making it a career?  
   YES ______ NO ______

7. What is your educational status?  
   Bachelor's Degree ______ Bachelor's plus ______ Doctorate ______
   Master's Degree ______ Master's plus ______

II.

Below are listed reasons for staying in the field of teaching vocational agriculture. Kindly check the reason that fits your case. After you have checked the listed reasons or those you may add, will you please go back and rank them according to their importance, e.g., place a (1) before the most important, a (2) before the second most important etc.

Rank Check

____ 1. I feel the salary is adequate for the work expected.

____ 2. I own my own home in this town.

____ 3. I feel that I have security in this profession.

____ 4. I don't have to be away from my family for great lengths of time.

____ 5. I was born and raised on a farm and wish to stay close to work associated with the farm.

____ 6. I enjoy small town and rural living and associating with farm people.

____ 7. I have physical disability and cannot do farm work or such manual labor.
3. I have an optimum teacher load.

9. I have an adequate enrollment in the various vocational agriculture classes.

10. I consider it an advantage to have a twelve month job.

11. I enjoy the chance to work outdoors. (Especially in the summer)

12. Teaching vocational agriculture commands respect and professional pride.

13. I enjoy being able to associate with other agricultural teachers and professional agricultural men and women.

14. I like the dynamic subject matter and diversification of work.

15. I enjoy working with young people and being able to guide and counsel.

16. I have feeling of accomplishment and success.

17. I continue getting cooperation of the student, parents and the administration.

18. I feel my pre-service training was adequate and kept me in vocational agriculture teaching.

19. I consider the future in vocational agriculture teaching good.

20. The facilities are constantly improving.

21. I feel that I am serving the rural community and agriculture as a whole.
APPENDIX III

Danube, Minnesota
February 4, 1957

Dear Teacher of Vocational Agriculture:

Earlier this year you received from me a questionnaire type survey entitled, "Why Vocational Agriculture Teachers Stay In The Profession As They Do." The results of this questionnaire will be found in a study of the same name as partial fulfillment of my Master's Degree in Education at South Dakota State College.

In case you mislaid the questionnaire, I am enclosing another with a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

I am hoping, that you might see fit to participate in this study which is of interest to everyone in the field of vocational agriculture, I'm sure.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

R. A. Heller
Vocational Agriculture Instructor