

A STUDY TO, EXAMINE WHY MONTANA VOCATIONAL
AGRICULTURE TEACHERS
LEAVE TEACHING

by

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APPROVAL

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ABSTRACT

A shortage of vocational agriculture teachers has been a continuing problem in the United States for many years. This situation works a hardship on many school districts and especially the secondary students each year which are denied the opportunity to avail themselves of many vo-ag departments across the nation, including several in the state of Montana.

For these reasons a study was devised to examine the reasons why Montana vocational agriculture teachers have left their profession between the years of 1974 and 1983. A list of past teachers was procured from the State Specialist for Agricultural Education in the Montana Office of Public Instruction. A survey developed from factors used in other studies of vocational agriculture teachers was sent to all the past vocational agriculture teachers for which addresses could be found. This survey consisted of 104 factors to be rated on a Likert scale, eight demographic factors, and two open-ended questions.

The mean Likert value was determined for each factor tested and the resulting means were then subjected to an analysis of variance procedure to determine which were significant. Frequency tables were established for the demographic data.

The majority of factors identified as influencing vocational agriculture teachers to leave the field were primarily clustered in the salary, advancement, and administration areas, with some concern being shown for the areas of student and parental attitudes and the pressures of time. The factors found to be significant for showing the least influence on causing teachers to leave were mainly grouped in the areas of actual instruction and work with the FFA and the fulfillment and goals of the teachers themselves.

The conclusions and recommendations of the study, therefore, are that the public relations of vocational agriculture must be strengthened, especially to school boards and administrators; as well as the general public, in order that those who are in control of the conditions which are causing vocational agriculture teachers to leave

might be influenced to alter those conditions. It is also recommended that present and new vocational agriculture teachers receive additional training in the areas of public and human relations, as well as how to manage time and set priorities and goals.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A shortage of vocational agriculture teachers to fill positions in secondary schools has been a chronic problem for many years. In the past, many vocational agriculture programs across the nation have gone begging each year for want of a qualified instructor. Only about one-half of the graduates in Montana and the nation qualified each year to teach vocational agriculture actually enter the profession and many of those placed change professions in less than ten years.

This situation may be good for the individual vocational agriculture teacher because there is always a high demand for his services. However, what is best for the individual may not always be best for the profession.

Because of the high demand for vocational agriculture teachers most qualified teachers find employment. Another result of the recurring shortage of teachers has been the closure of vocational agriculture programs throughout the United States. Craig (9) indicated that in 1982 fifteen vocational agriculture departments across the nation were destined to close because of a lack of a qualified instructor.

According to previous research, the length of service of a vocational agriculture instructor often has a direct effect upon the quality the instructor is able to build into his teaching (31). Therefore, teaching experience has a bearing on the quality of the program for which he/she is responsible. Consequently, the quality of vocational agriculture programs in a state has been, and will continue to be, influenced by the longevity of individual instructors in the field. Presently the importance of quality programs is being considered as local boards of education and state legislators take a more critical look at educational quality and tightened budgets in response to a national concern over inferior education and reduced federal financial support of vocational education. Those state programs which show the highest quality will operate from the strongest position in making a bid for continued or increased support. Therefore, teacher educators in agriculture, state supervisors of secondary vocational agriculture and local school districts must look for methods to encourage agricultural education graduates to enter and remain in the field of secondary education.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine the degree to which selected personal, professional, and demographic factors caused Montana vocational agriculture teachers

teaching during the ten year period between the years of 1974 and 1983 to leave the profession of teaching prior to retirement.

Need for the Study

We have a continuing need within the education system to provide adequate quality vocational agriculture programs. However, one of the factors which continues to limit the number of programs throughout the nation is the availability of highly qualified vocational agriculture instructors (9). Those departments for which an instructor could not be found had to subsequently close and wait a year in hopes of finding a qualified instructor the following year, or hire an instructor who was not fully qualified for the job.

The actual number of agricultural education majors in colleges and universities has continued to drop since 1970. There were a total of 1,748 graduates in the field of agricultural education in the nation in 1970, and by 1982 that figure had dropped to 1,368 (9). This trend, coupled with the fact that, on the average, only 56% of all agricultural education graduates actually enter the field of teaching, makes it doubly important to examine reasons why vocational agriculture teachers are not continuing in the profession (9). In 1965, the average tenure of Iowa vocational agriculture teachers was seven years (15), while in Montana

the average tenure in 1982 was slightly higher, but still only 8.43 years (18). Thus, many teachers are moving into other fields just when they should be gaining sufficient professional experience and instructional background to become effective teachers. The current dropout rate has a significant impact upon the ability of the vocational agriculture profession to meet the needs of students. Therefore, this researcher felt it is important to study the reasons vocational agriculture teachers in Montana have left the profession in order that measures might be taken to help lengthen the tenure of vocational agriculture teachers.

Although similar studies have been completed in other states, none have been conducted in Montana. Montana is subject to conditions such as size, degree of isolation, and the size of the agricultural industry which may be quite different than those in other areas studied, so it can be hypothesized that different factors may be responsible for the tenure problem.

This study, then, was conducted to help provide information which teacher educators in agriculture could use to evaluate the training program followed in preparing students, and determine whether prospective teachers can, in fact, be prepared to deal with those factors which cause teachers to consider leaving the profession. State supervisors of secondary vocational agriculture will find value

in considering the result of this study when establishing state standards and recommendations for maintaining vocational agriculture programs in local school districts. Local schools would do well to heed the findings of this study while considering program development, support, organization, and hiring procedures if the district wishes to build and maintain a strong vocational agriculture program. Finally, present and prospective vocational agriculture instructors will be able to use the results of this study to become further aware and plan to face the realities of the profession.

Objectives

The specific objectives of this study were to determine:

1. The personal factors that have the greatest influence in causing Montana vocational agriculture teachers to leave teaching at the secondary level.
2. Those professional factors that have the greatest influence causing Montana vocational agriculture teachers to leave teaching at the secondary level.
3. Those demographic factors that have the greatest influence in causing Montana vocational agriculture teachers to leave teaching at the secondary level.

Assumptions

The underlying assumptions of this study were:

1. Those factors that affect the tenure of Montana vocational agriculture teachers will continue to be important in the future.
2. Respondents replied truthfully to the questionnaire.

Limitations

This study was limited to those teachers leaving secondary vocational agriculture as a teaching profession from 1974 through 1983, for reasons other than retirement or death.

Definitions

1. Montana vocational agriculture (vo-ag) teachers - Those Montana instructors of a curriculum in agricultural education designed to offer students at the secondary level the opportunity to explore and prepare for agricultural occupations.
2. Profession - The collective group of positions occupied by vocational agriculture teachers.
3. Factors - Any internal or external forces that affect the attitudes of people.
4. Demographic factors - Those characteristics that

relate to distribution, density, vital statistics, etc. of populations.

5. Personal factors - Those characteristics related to character, personality, intimate affairs, conduct, etc. of an individual.
6. Professional factors - Factors related to salary, school and community conditions, vocational and professional goals, skills and abilities, education, professional activities, etc.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Upon written request of this researcher, copies of several previously completed studies were received. Other studies were discovered through the ERIC system at Montana State University, the library of the Agricultural Education Department of Montana State University and the Online Bibliographic Service provided by Renne Library of Montana State University.

National Need

In the latest poll of the public's attitudes toward public education, Gallup found that 87% of the public would like their children to go to college. However, only 57% said that their child would go on to college (14). Actually, the number of children entering college is about 42% of those entering the public school system, while slightly more than half of those entering college actually graduate (29). This leaves 75% to 80% of the nation's children who need training to enter the national work force or a technical school upon leaving high school. These data point up the need for a continued increase in secondary vocational

programs, a fact which was emphasized as the third most important area for curriculum change in the Gallup poll (14).

There is an increased need for additional vocational training and additional vocational instructors as the level of knowledge, skill and competency which must be imparted to the student through the vocational class by his or her instructor is in a rapid state of flux. A basic theory of vocational education is that an instructor must have had a successful experience in the application of the skills and knowledge of the operations he is teaching (24).

Vocational Agriculture Teachers Leave Early

Some of those vocational agriculture teachers which leave the profession are among those needed most to improve and expand the vocational program. As stated earlier, a procedure for weeding out less qualified teachers may be desirable; however, many good teachers are being lost to the field at the same time. They have gained experience and are often among those with higher grade point averages in high school and college (13).

Berkum (4) indicated that vocational agriculture teachers tend to examine the possibility of leaving the profession at three generally defined intervals. The earliest is during the first year of teaching, when the new teacher is faced with the seemingly overwhelming task of

preparing lessons for all classes, organizing the department into a functional unit, and taking over all of the functions of the supervised experience program, the FFA program, and the adult farmer program, if it exists.

If the teacher survives this testing period, the second period of serious doubt occurs at approximately the fifth year. Berkum (4) found that by this time the teacher has largely organized his program, made some accomplishments, developed a teaching style and perhaps gained some recognition. At this point the teacher begins to wonder if he or she could perhaps be doing something more rewarding while at the same time earning a larger salary. If the vocational agriculture teacher continues to teach, the third, and probably last time he or she will seriously consider the possibility of looking for a different vocation or profession, according to Berkum (4), will be after teaching about ten years. If ever the teacher is to leave, it would seem that it must be now or never. At this point in their career, the teachers are usually past thirty years of age and soon will be too old to be a likely job prospect, and their children are not yet settled into a high school. Berkum indicated that the vocational agriculture teacher that is going to successfully weather these times of doubt must establish workable priorities in the areas of job, family, community involvement, extracurricular school activities, and leisure activities (4).

Olson (23) stated that the average tenure for North Dakota vocational agriculture teachers was 5.45 years, while Chizek (6) found that Iowa State University graduates of agricultural education taught an average of 4.1 years. In a study by Crosen (10) of Virginia vocational agriculture teachers leaving the profession, 78.1% quit before they reached the tenth year of teaching. The longest average tenure of vocational agriculture teachers was reported as 11 years in Ohio by Knight (16). However, Knight also found that nearly 50% of those leaving do so before they complete three years of experience.

Regions Studied

This researcher found reports of seventeen studies conducted across the nation on the subject of why vocational agriculture teachers either stay or leave the profession or both. Each of these studies covered one state or a portion of a state. Of these, the states studied in the western United States were: a part of Texas by Collins (4); Oklahoma by Adams and Morton (1), by Reece (25), and by White (31); Arizona by Mattox (19); and Kansas by Reilly (26) in the southern and southwestern regions of the country. The state of Washington was studied by Branson (5) and Oregon by Allen (2) in a west coast environment, while Olson's (23) study of North Dakota was the only one of relative socio-economic and geographic closeness to

Montana. The North Dakota study dealt only with reasons why vocational agriculture teachers stayed in the profession and the conclusions drawn were quite general, such as: observing the growth and development of students, working in agriculture, and being innovative (23). All of those areas in which studies have been conducted differ from Montana in social, economic, school, and job market factors.

Conflicts Between Studies

In his recent public poll, Gallup rank ordered nine reasons for teacher burnout (14). However, this ranking conflicts with the ranking of factors listed by teachers in several studies. For example, in two separate studies, one reported by Adams and Morton (1) and another by Reece (25), salary was the number one factor in Oklahoma, while in a study of Oklahoma vocational agriculture teachers by White (31) salary was rated as number nine. The Branson (5), Froehlich (13), Hoerner (15), Knight and Bender (16), Mattox (19), Crosen (10), Miller (20), and Reece (25) studies ranked lack of advancement possibilities quite high, while the Adams and Morton (1), Allen (2), Reilly (26), Shadle (28) and Olson (23) studies did not even include such a reason among those considered most important. In the studies reviewed, salary was listed most frequently as a factor, but was only identified as most important

by Adams and Morton (1) and by Reece (25), while White (31) found that salary was of relatively low importance as a factor.

Demographic Factors

Olson (23) found in his study in North Dakota that 40% of vocational agriculture teachers in the state lived within thirty miles of the home of their parents. Chizek (6) found that 18% of Iowa State University graduates of the agricultural education curriculum lived within ten miles of their parents. Knight's study showed that 50% of the vocational agriculture teachers leaving the field lived within twenty-five miles of their parents' or their spouse's parents' home. Such findings tend to indicate that vocational agriculture teachers prefer to stay close to their home area, which might influence some of them to quit teaching to remain in, or move back to, their home area.

Chizek (6) found that over 63% of Iowa State University graduates from 1964 to 1981 in agricultural education had taken additional coursework since receiving their Bachelor of Science degree and 4.1% had received a Ph.D. He went on to say that 61.8% taught at some point in their experience. Olson (23) discovered in his study of North Dakota vocational agriculture teachers that only 12.1% of the four to seven year tenure group had over thirty graduate credits, while 85.7% of the over fifteen year tenure group had over

thirty graduate credits. In his study of Iowa State University agricultural education graduates of 1940 to 1964 Hoerner (15) found that 55.8% entered teaching immediately upon graduation and 64.0% did teach at some point. Froehlich (13) found that only 5% of 1940 Iowa State University agricultural education graduates did not teach, while 47% of the 1964 graduates failed to enter the field.

Those vocational agriculture teachers remaining in the field averaged more years of FFA membership than did those who did not teach or quit teaching according to Chizek (6). Cole's (7) data showed a higher percentage of those who were still teaching having had four years of FFA experience and being extremely active in the FFA than those who taught and left or had never taught.

Chizek (6) found that 79% of the vocational agriculture salaries were between \$16,000 and \$25,000, which was ranked fourth from the bottom of the list of salaries of professions of Iowa State University agricultural education graduates in 1984. Crosen (10) found in 1976 that 90.3% of Virginia vocational agriculture teachers who had quit teaching had salaries from \$8,001 to \$14,000 at the time they quit teaching.

Methods of Study

Adams and Morton (1) surveyed all types of vocational teachers in their study, while Allen (2), Branson (15), Crosen (10), Mattox (19), and Reece (25) surveyed only former vocational agriculture teachers. Past vocational agriculture teachers were interviewed by Dillon (12) in his study. White (31) and Olson (23) also surveyed vocational agriculture teachers staying in the profession to determine why they preferred the field. A survey of non-teaching agricultural education graduates was conducted by both Froehlich (13) and Miller (20), while Hoerner (15), Waltz (30), and Shadle (28) all surveyed teaching and non-teaching graduates in agricultural education. Knight (16) surveyed past and present vocational agriculture teachers. Reilly (26) surveyed teachers present at a state vocational agriculture teachers conference in order to determine why teachers were planning to leave the field. He divided the group into those planning to continue in the vocational agriculture field and those planning to quit at the end of that year.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the reasons vocational agriculture teacher tenure is low has been of interest to researchers and professionals within the field for many years. However,

research on this topic has been sporadic and localized and has yet to yield clear causal patterns or identified methods to prevent this phenomenon. The review of literature did not reveal any study which has been done in the state of Montana on the subject of what factors cause vocational agriculture teachers to leave the profession. Therefore, it was deemed appropriate to conduct such a study within the state, as it could not be assumed that the factors identified in any other study could be generalized to Montana vocational agriculture teachers.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The primary purpose of this study was to identify those personal, professional and demographic factors that influenced Montana vocational agriculture teachers to leave secondary teaching between 1974 to 1983. To accomplish this purpose the following method and procedures were employed.

Population and Sample

The population of this study was comprised of those ninety-seven Montana vocational agriculture teachers who had left the profession of teaching vocational agriculture, other than through retirement or death, from 1974 to 1983. The sample included the entire population of vocational agriculture instructors leaving the field. The entire population was not too large to be effectively studied. It was also felt that this would result in a broader base for generalization and recommendations than a smaller random sample. Although twelve addresses were not found, the researcher felt that this would not bias the study as none of those on the list had remained within the secondary school system. The names of one hundred individuals were

obtained through the records of the State Office of Public Instruction. Current addresses were obtained from various sources; present vocational agriculture teachers, school superintendents, Office of Public Instruction personnel, personnel of the Agricultural and Industrial Education Department of Montana State University, the Montana State University Alumni Office, and friends and relatives of former teachers. Addresses for eighty-eight of the total population were found.

Instrumentation

Several methods were used to increase the reliability of this survey. To increase the clarity of the instrument specific and unambiguous terms were used. In order that all factors might be covered, an exhaustive list of items was prepared by listing and combining factors from studies by Chizek (6), Cole (7), Craig (9), Crosen (10), Dillon (12), Froehlich (13), Knight (16), Mattox (19), Miller (20), Moore (21), Olson (23), Reilly (26), Waltz (30), and White (31). These factors were then grouped into nine categories including: (1) monetary considerations, (2) facilities and equipment, (3) administration and supervision, (4) family and personal, (5) community, (6) teaching situation, (7) FFA and adult farmer activities, (8) professionalism, (9) advancement and security. This first collection of factors resulted in a total of 120 separate factors in the nine

categories. It was judged that, along with demographic questions, this would make the survey too long and burdensome and result in a poor return rate. The number was then reduced to a total of 104 factors by eliminating those, which, in this researcher's opinion, would be the most insignificant or yield the least information. The final configuration of factors is as follows: monetary considerations - eight factors; facilities and equipment - eight factors; administration and supervision - fifteen factors; family and personal - ten factors; community - twelve factors; teaching situation - twenty-four factors; FFA and adult farmer activities - nine factors; professionalism - eleven factors; advancement and security - seven factors. Each factor was then worded as a statement or reason for leaving teaching.

A weighted Likert scale for rating each factor was then devised. The respondent was asked to circle the symbol which indicated his/her degree of agreement with the statement as a reason for leaving the teaching field. The responses available to the respondent were: SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree; N/A = not applicable. It was decided that since a "not applicable" response was available, that a neutral response between agreement and disagreement with the factor statement was not necessary. The respondent had already made the decision to quit teaching and any factor which

was not marked "not applicable" must have had some influence upon the respondent to continue in or leave the profession. The omission of a neutral answer would also force respondents to make a stronger response to each factor, more clearly delineating those factors which indeed had influenced them to leave the field of teaching vocational agriculture.

Due to the large number of factors to be rated by the respondent as reasons for leaving the vocation, the number of demographic questions was kept to a minimum. Although it would have been very interesting to ask what occupation the respondent had moved into, where he/she now lives, how his/her present salary compares with his/her salary as a teacher, etc., the primary purpose of the study was only to identify reasons vocational agriculture teachers have left the profession. Thus, such questions were eliminated and would be prime material for further study into the question of what lures vocational agriculture teachers from the field and where they go after leaving.

Validation

To strengthen the validity of the survey, the original 120 factors were compiled from factors used in previous studies found in the review of literature. This list and the suggested demographic questions along with the cover letter (Appendix A) were then submitted to the Agriculture

Education staff of Montana State University and the State Specialist in Agriculture Education with the Montana Office of Public Instruction. After reviewing and incorporating changes suggested by those just mentioned, the survey and cover letter were submitted to one vocational agriculture instructor who had previously quit teaching and had re-entered the field, as well as three vocational agriculture teachers who had quit. As a result of this process minor changes were made in the factors listed in the survey and two open-ended questions were added at the end. See Appendix B for the finalized survey form.

Finally, validity was encouraged by assuring respondents that all individual information and responses would be kept confidential and would be used only for statistical purposes in order to elicit honest responses.

Data Collection

In order to determine which persons had not responded to the initial mailing, the names on the mailing list were numbered and each survey form and return envelope was numbered correspondingly. On April 8, 1985, the survey and cover letter, along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope, were mailed to the eighty-eight persons for which addresses had been procured. By April 23, 1985, when a reminder letter (see Appendix C) and another survey form and return envelope were mailed, forty-two (47.7%) surveys

had been responded to or returned as undeliverable. The final day set to receive responses was May 10th, and no further responses were returned after that date. Table 1 below summarizes the final response to the mailed survey.

Table 1. Percentage of Vo-Ag Teachers Responding to Questionnaire (n = 88)

Questionnaires	Number	Percent
Returned and usable	55	62.5
Returned undeliverable	7	8.0
Teaching out-of-state	1	1.1
Left by retirement	1	1.1
Taught only Industrial Arts	1	1.1
Not returned	23	26.1
Total	88	*99.9

*Rounded to one decimal place.

Therefore, of the 100 names listed as leaving the vocational agriculture teaching field from 1974 to 1983, one had retired, one was teaching out-of-state, and one had not actually been a vocational agriculture teacher. This left ninety-seven names, fifty-five of which returned surveys, for a return of 56.7%.

Comparison of Non-Respondents

After the last of the surveys was received, four non-respondents were called by phone to elicit a response, in order to check for any difference in responses between respondents and non-respondents. One of those contacted

returned the survey and one agreed to answer the survey over the phone. This informal assessment indicated the non-respondents were not different from the respondents.

Analysis of Data

The data gathering techniques used in this study were descriptive in nature. The possible responses were given numerical values as follows: SA = 1; A = 2; D = 3; SD = 4; N/A or no response = 0. Raw data from the returned questionnaires were compiled into non-document data files using the Word Star word processing program on a Radio Shack Model 4 micro-computer. These files were reconfigured at Montana State University to be read by a Kaypro 2X micro-computer. The SUMSTAT program within the MSUSTAT Interactive Statistical Analysis Package (1983) by Dr. Richard Lund was then used to analyze each factor for its weighted mean and standard deviation.

Each factor mean was then analyzed for least significant difference from the overall mean of the total responses by all respondents. The factor mean was the mean of all Likert values recorded for that factor. The overall mean ($\bar{X}$) was determined by the formula:

$$\text{Mean}(X) = \sum P_i X_i$$

where:

$$P_i = \frac{n_i}{n} \quad \text{and} \quad P_i = \text{probability of } X=1,2,3,4$$

$$i = 1,2,3, \text{ or } 4$$

$$n_i = \text{frequency of occurrence of } 1,2,3, \text{ or } 4$$

$$n = \text{total frequency of all } 1,2,3, \text{ and } 4$$

The resulting values are presented in Figure 1.

n_i	$n_i / n = P_i$	X	$P_i X_i$
443	$443/4979 = 0.0890$	1	0.0890
1158	$1158/4979 = 0.2326$	2	0.4652
2471	$2471/4979 = 0.4963$	3	1.4889
907	$907/4979 = 0.1822$	4	0.7288

Figure 1. Values used to determine overall mean.

Consequently, the overall mean($\bar{X}$) of all responses to all questions on the questionnaire was determined to be $\sum P_i X_i = .0890 + .4652 + 1.4889 + .7288 = 2.7719$.

Figure 2 was then prepared to show the expected variance of $\bar{X}$, where $\text{Var}(\bar{X}) = \sum P_i (X_i - \bar{X})^2$. Therefore, $\text{Var}(\bar{X}) = .2788 + .1379 + .0002 + .2757 = .6926$.

X	$(X_i - \bar{X})^2$	P_i	$P_i (X_i - \bar{X})^2$
1	$(1 - 2.77)^2 = 3.1329$	0.0890	0.2788
2	$(2 - 2.77)^2 = 0.5929$	0.2326	0.1379
3	$(3 - 2.77)^2 = 0.0005$	0.4963	0.0002
4	$(4 - 2.77)^2 = 1.5129$	0.1822	0.2757

Figure 2. Values used to determine variance.

The least significant difference to the .05 level of confidence was then calculated for each section of questions

in the survey using the following equation:

$$LSD = 1.96 \sqrt{0.693 \left(\frac{1}{n_q} + \frac{1}{n_t} \right)}$$

where:

1.96 is the standard z score for a 95% confidence level.

n_q = the mean number of responses per question in that section.

n_t = n_q (number of questions in that section).

If a single factor mean was less than the overall mean and the difference between that single factor mean and the overall mean exceeded the least significant difference for that section, it was identified as being a significant factor influencing vocational agriculture teachers to leave the field. If a single factor mean was greater than the overall mean and the difference between that single factor mean and the overall mean exceeded the least significant difference for that section, it was identified as being a significant factor which least influenced vocational agriculture teachers to leave the field.

The same method was also used to determine those sections or categories of questions for which the mean of the factor means was significantly different from the overall mean.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to determine those factors which significantly influenced vocational agriculture teachers in Montana to leave the secondary vocational agriculture field from 1974 to 1983.

Tables 2 through 9 summarize the responses to the survey questions describing demographic factors.

Table 2. Years of Teaching Vocational Agriculture

Years	Number	Percent
Less than 5	36	65.5
5 to 10	13	23.6
10 to 15	2	3.6
15 to 20	2	3.6
20 to 25	1	1.8
Over 25	0	0
No response	1	1.8

Of those vocational agriculture teachers who left the field from 1974 to 1983, 65.5% left before teaching five years and 89.1% (65.5% + 23.6%) left within ten years. This finding tends to confirm the statements of Berkum (4), suggesting that most vocational agriculture teachers leave within the first ten years of teaching. Therefore, any program designed to impact on the length of tenure must

influence the newer teachers.

Table 3. Age at Which Persons Quit Teaching Vocational Agriculture

Age	Number	Percent
21 to 25	17	30.9
26 to 30	20	36.4
31 to 35	7	12.7
36 to 40	5	9.1
41 to 45	1	1.8
46 to 50	1	1.8
No response	4	7.3

As would be expected from the data shown in Table 2 on years of teaching experience before leaving the field, the numbers and percentages in Table 3 indicate that the majority of vocational agriculture teachers leave the field at an early age. By age twenty-five, 30.9% of the respondents had left the field, while 67.3% (30.9% + 36.4%) had quit by age thirty and 80.0% (30.9% + 36.4% + 12.7%) had stopped teaching vocational agriculture by age thirty-five.

Table 4. Marital Status When Teaching

Status	Number	Percent
Single	21	38.2
Married	32	58.2
Divorced	0	0
Widowed	0	0
No response	2	3.6

The majority (58.2%) of the teachers were married by the time they left the field of secondary vocational agriculture. Marriage is considered an indicator of one's

willingness to "settle down," however, those factors that caused Montana vocational agriculture teachers to quit teaching were strong enough to influence them to leave even though they were married. Several comments from the questionnaires (see Appendix D) indicated that some teachers quit in order to have more time with their family.

Table 5. Years as a Vocational Agriculture Student

Years	Number	Percent
0	15	27.3
1	2	3.6
2	2	3.6
3	3	5.5
4	30	54.5
5	2	3.6
No response	1	1.8

As can be seen in Table 5, the majority of vocational agriculture teachers leaving the field had been vocational agriculture students for four years while in high school. This fact might indicate that enrolling in vocational agriculture in high school does not predispose a vocational agriculture teacher to remain in the profession, but the trend might be explained by the fact that the majority of those entering the vocational agriculture teaching field had previously been students in the vocational agriculture curriculum.

Table 6. Years in FFA (Future Farmers of America)

Years	Number	Percent
0	15	27.3
1	1	1.8
2	1	1.8
3	3	5.5
4	17	30.9
5	2	3.6
6	2	3.6
7	0	0
8	9	16.4
9	1	1.8
No response	1	1.8

Only response categories of up to eight years of FFA membership were included on the questionnaire; however, one respondent had been involved with FFA for nine years. Therefore, the data arrayed in Table 6 reflect this deviation from the survey format. The largest number of respondents (30.9%) had been FFA members for four years, indicating they were involved in FFA throughout high school. Nearly the same number (27.3%) had never been an FFA member. The third largest group of respondents (16.4%) were FFA members for eight years, indicating that they were involved as collegiate FFA members. These responses could indicate that FFA membership in high school created less incentive for teaching vocational agriculture than collegiate FFA membership. However, a more logical explanation would be that those persons with the desire to participate in FFA in college as well as high school correspondingly had a greater desire to remain in the secondary agriculture education field.

Table 7. Degree of FFA Involvement

Involvement	Number	Percent
Very Active	27	49.1
Moderately Active	5	9.1
Slightly Active	3	5.5
None	1	1.8
No Response (not in FFA)	19	34.5

Although a "none" response was not provided to this question in the original form of the survey, it was written in by one respondent. By far the largest percentage (75.0%) of those respondents which had been in FFA indicated that they had been very active as FFA members. One explanation of this phenomenon would be that FFA involvement does not build a realistic view of the conditions and pressures within the field of agricultural education. One could hypothesize that the most active FFA members enjoyed the excitement and recognition of accomplishments within the FFA organization without adequately visualizing many of the day-to-day duties, conditions, and stresses that a vocational agriculture teacher must face. This hypothesis certainly is worthy of further research.

Table 8. When Respondents Decided to Teach Vocational Agriculture

Decision Point	Number	Percent
In High School	10	18.2
Between College and High School	5	9.1
In College	36	65.5
Other	4	7.3

As the data in Table 8 reveal, the number of respondents deciding to teach while in college was more than three times the number deciding to teach while enrolled in high school. This response may indicate that most vocational agriculture teachers made the final decision to enter the field in college.

Table 9. Respondents Graduating with a Minor or Second Degree

Graduated with Minor	Number	Percent
Yes	22	40.0
No	32	58.2
No Response	1	1.8
Minor or Other Degree Listed	Number	Percent
Industrial Arts	8	34.8
Biology	3	13.0
Animal Science	3	13.0
Business	2	8.7
Home Economics	1	4.3
Agri. Business	1	4.3
Agri. Economics	1	4.3
Science	1	4.3
Horticulture	1	4.3
Economics	1	4.3
Range Science	1	4.3

The data in Table 9 indicate the minor or other degree of persons graduating with degrees in agricultural education. The majority of the respondents graduated from college without a minor or second degree. Therefore, these persons did not have another teaching area to enhance their vocational agriculture experience.

The greatest number of minors or second degrees listed were in the area of industrial arts. This is not surprising, as vocational agriculture and industrial arts have traditionally had strong ties and are taught within the same department at Montana State University. The combination of industrial arts, biology, and animal science account for 60.8% (34.8% + 13.0% + 13.0%) of the minors or second degrees listed.

Analysis of Statistical Data

After the statistical analysis was completed (see Chapter 3, Analysis of Data), the weighted mean and standard deviation of each factor was determined to be as shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Mean of Responses for Each Survey Factor

Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation
Monetary Considerations		
1. Salary was inadequate.	2.220	*.8401
2. Inadequate travel expense.	2.750	.7510
3. Salary increases were unacceptable.	2.467	*.7862
4. Retirement benefits were inadequate.	2.844	.7057
5. Evening class compensation too low.	2.500	*.7071
6. Extra duty compensation too low.	2.000	*.8892
7. Fringe benefits (i.e., insurance, leave) inadequate.	2.787	.7204
8. Extended contract inadequate.	2.659	.8611

Table 10 - Continued

Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation
Facilities and Equipment		
1. School transportation for program activities was inadequate.	2.880	.7730
2. Shop facilities were inadequate.	2.800	.8081
3. Classroom facilities were inadequate.	2.736	.8582
4. Support facilities needed (i.e., farm, greenhouse).	2.571	.8165
5. Shop equipment of insufficient quality or quantity.	2.731	.7950
6. Office, secretary, copying, A-V equipment were unavailable.	3.115	.6153
7. Classroom materials were outdated or inadequate.	2.745	.8208
8. Facilities were outdated.	2.849	.8412
Administration and Supervision		
1. I had little control over the departmental budget.	2.451	*.9014
2. I had little freedom in my program.	2.870	.7782
3. I had little freedom to purchase needed supplies.	2.755	.7313
4. I had little support from administration.	2.148	*.9597
5. Administration was not accessible (easy to see).	2.788	.8004
6. Lack of goals and policies on administrative or board level relating to vocational education.	2.167	*.9664
7. Administrator did not recognize my leadership ability.	2.569	.8545
8. Vo-Ag was given increasingly less emphasis.	2.130	*.8912
9. Reports and paperwork were burdensome.	2.404	*.8691
10. Help from Office of Public Instruction (OPI) was inadequate.	2.652	.8490

Table 10 - Continued

	Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation
11.	School politics were a problem.	2.019	*.8515
12.	Too much "red tape," government requirements, etc.	2.182	*.8700
13.	Poor relationship with immediate supervisor.	2.640	.9638
14.	Contract was not renewed.	2.667	1.1900
15.	No positions were available.	3.038	.9584

Family and Personal

1.	I was not satisfied with advancement and recognition.	2.553	.7748
2.	Teaching created health problems.	3.000	.7153
3.	I did not enjoy rural living.	3.426	.6166
4.	Teaching restricted my personal freedom.	2.540	.7343
5.	Home problems adversely affected my attitudes toward teaching.	3.109	.6742
6.	Occupational goals were not fulfilled in teaching.	2.283	*.8175
7.	I quit to go into farming or business.	1.977	*.9762
8.	Teaching did not fulfill my desire to be on the land.	2.574	.8274
9.	Ethics and/or religious factors influenced me to quit.	3.190	.8036
10.	I did not enjoy teaching.	3.118	.7654

Community

1.	Local housing was inadequate.	3.000	.7438
2.	Employment for spouse not available.	2.562	.8776
3.	My family did not feel part of the community.	3.081	.8293
4.	Was inactive in local church.	2.978	.8561

Table 10 - Continued

	Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation
5.	Little opportunity to get to know community members.	3.196	.6934
6.	Living too close to relations.	3.368	.5413
7.	Little support for Vo-Ag/FFA.	2.846	.8719
8.	Little recognition for Vo-Ag teacher's community service.	2.596	.8227
9.	Little positive, progressive community spirit.	2.679	.7278
10.	Community was too remote.	2.937	.7553
11.	Too many community responsibilities.	3.020	.5529
12.	Unreasonable community expectations.	2.840	.6809

Teaching Situation

1.	Classes were too large.	2.827	.7598
2.	Parents were uncooperative.	2.904	.6343
3.	Students were uncooperative.	2.685	.7968
4.	Students were not enthusiastic.	2.660	.8073
5.	Little opportunity to exert leadership among local teachers.	2.804	.6870
6.	Summer programs are a burden.	2.979	.6753
7.	Required to teach too many different subjects.	2.520	*.9089
8.	Poor school-community working relationship.	2.750	.7106
9.	Received little satisfaction from helping others.	3.216	.6727
10.	Received little self-fulfillment.	3.000	.7921
11.	Contact with rural youth was of little importance.	3.314	.5828
12.	Students learned few valuable skills.	3.264	.6248
13.	I did not enjoy teaching mechanics.	3.308	.9767

Table 10 - Continued

	Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation
14.	Classroom teaching was monotonous.	3.019	.5770
15.	Lesson planning was burdensome.	2.673	.7335
16.	Lack of student discipline was a problem.	2.736	.8355
17.	Supervision of Supervised Occupational Experience Programs (SOEP) was a burden.	2.978	.5769
18.	Hours required were excessive.	2.094	*.6868
19.	My lifestyle did not fit a school schedule.	2.868	.6516
20.	Classroom and shop aides (teaching assistants) were inadequate.	2.576	.8671
21.	Expected to teach out of my area.	2.824	.8175
22.	Few students recognized my teaching abilities.	3.000	.5292
23.	Had to help with too many extracurricular activities.	2.440	*.8369
24.	I did not enjoy teaching classroom subjects.	3.135	.5950

FFA and Adult Farmer Activities

1.	Received little satisfaction from FFA students' accomplishments.	3.288	.7232
2.	Little enjoyment in FFA activities.	3.269	.7950
3.	Students entering leadership activities was not satisfying.	3.157	.6123
4.	Too much emphasis on winning contests and awards.	2.538	.9174
5.	I received little recognition from FFA student accomplishments.	2.843	.7582

Table 10 - Continued

	Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation
6.	FFA required too much time.	2.808	.7931
7.	Too much competition with extracurricular activities.	1.904	*.8227
8.	Received little satisfaction from helping adults help themselves.	3.108	.5669
9.	I did not enjoy teaching adults.	3.424	.6139

Professionalism

1.	I had a limited commitment to agriculture.	3.453	.7738
2.	My peers did not recognize me as a leader.	3.125	.6058
3.	Little respect in teaching agriculture.	2.878	.8071
4.	Felt little bond among vo-ag teachers.	3.096	.8913
5.	Had poor college preparation.	2.830	.7528
6.	My vo-ag/FFA background was not an asset.	3.209	.7733
7.	Not enough technical work experience.	2.574	.8601
8.	Help from MSU Teacher Training Department was inadequate.	2.633	.8340
9.	No opportunity to specialize in a specific field.	2.642	.8108
10.	Little opportunity for professional improvement.	2.940	.6518
11.	Little relationship with other local teachers.	2.833	.7950

Advancement and Security

1.	Tenure is little reward for teaching.	2.163	*.7732
2.	Little local advancement potential.	2.132	*.8095
3.	Poor advancement potential in vo-ag field.	2.226	*.6973

Table 10 - Continued

	Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation
4.	Little advancement potential into related professions.	2.855	.7581
5.	Lack of other desirable positions was a problem.	2.694	.7131
6.	Security of teaching eroded by deteriorating image of agriculture.	2.700	.8144
7.	Retirement options limited.	2.667	.7532

*Those factors identified as significant to the .05 level in causing vocational agriculture teachers to leave the profession.

From this list of factor means those factors were identified which showed a significance at the .05 level for influencing secondary vocational agriculture teachers to leave the field.

Factors Identified

Table 11 displays those factors which show a negative significant difference above the .05 level of significance between the factor mean and survey mean; consequently, they are considered to be those factors which have the greatest influence in causing a vocational agriculture teacher to quit.

Table 11. Factors Showing Significance for Influencing Teachers to Leave Vocational Agriculture

Factor	Difference Between Factor Mean and Overall Survey Mean
Monetary Considerations	
1. Extra duty compensation too low.	.770
2. Salary was inadequate.	.550
3. Salary increases were unacceptable.	.303
4. Evening class compensation too low.	.270
Administration and Supervision	
1. School politics were a problem.	.751
2. Vo-Ag was given increasingly less emphasis.	.640
3. I had little support from administration.	.622
4. Lack of goals and policies on administrative or board level relating to vocational education.	.603
5. Too much "red tape," government requirements, etc.	.588
6. Reports and paperwork were burdensome.	.366
7. I had little control over the departmental budget.	.319
Family and Personal	
1. I quit to go into farming or business.	.793
2. Occupational goals were not fulfilled in teaching.	.487
Teaching Situation	
1. Hours required were excessive.	.679
2. Had to help with too many extracurricular activities.	.330
3. Required to teach too many different subjects.	.250
FFA and Adult Farmer Activities	
1. Too much competition with extracurricular activities.	.866

Table 11 - Continued

Factor	Difference Between Factor Mean and Overall Survey Mean
Advancement and Security	
1. Little local advancement potential.	.638
2. Tenure is little reward for teaching.	.607
3. Poor advancement potential in vo-ag field.	.544

As can be noted from Table 11, seven factors were identified from the category of administration and supervision. Four factors were identified in the area of monetary considerations, and three in advancement and security, which together accounted for a total of seven factors. Three factors were identified from the category of teaching situation, two from family and personal, and one from FFA and adult farmer activities. None of the factors from the areas of community or professionalism were significant in causing a teacher to seek other employment. The factor identified as having the strongest influence on the respondents to quit teaching vocational agriculture was the frustration of competing with extracurricular activities for students, time and resources and the inhibition this situation created upon the perceived satisfaction of the vocational agriculture teacher.

The factor identified as having the second greatest influence on a teacher to leave teaching was the opportunity to go into farming or business. This may be explained by the fact that many vocational agriculture teachers entered the field initially because of their desire to work in a field closely related to their actual career goal of farming and ranching or business until an opportunity was available to enter their desired profession. This factor showed the highest standard deviation of those identified in Table 11, which was not unexpected because of its general "yes" or "no" nature.

The mean of each of the means in each category were calculated and analyzed for variance from the survey mean in the same manner the factor means were calculated. Three categories were identified as having significance to the .05 level. Advancement and security had a variance of .275 and a standard deviation of .310, administration and supervision had a variance of .271 and a standard deviation of .312, and monetary considerations had a variance of .242 and a standard deviation of .296.

These statistics show that the main concerns of those leaving the field did not relate to their capability to adequately teach the required skills and knowledge or a struggle with their own personal attitudes and satisfaction and fulfillment in teaching. Rather, their concerns centered around the areas of economic compensation for

their efforts and the frustrations they perceived in program administration, as well as personalities and attitudes of administrators, staff, students and parents toward their programs and vocational agriculture in general.

Listed in Table 12 are those factors which show a significant difference from the survey mean for having the least influence upon vocational agriculture teachers to leave the field of secondary vocational agriculture.

Table 12. Factors Showing Significance for Having the Least Influence on Teachers to Leave Vocational Agriculture

Factor	Difference Between Factor Mean and Overall Mean
Facilities and Equipment	
1. Office, secretary, copying, A-V equipment were unavailable.	.345
Administration and Supervision	
1. No positions were available.	.268
Family and Personal	
1. I did not enjoy rural living.	.656
2. Ethics and/or religious factors influenced me to quit.	.420
3. I did not enjoy teaching.	.348
4. Home problems adversely affected my attitudes toward teaching.	.339
Community	
1. Living too close to relatives.	.598
2. Little opportunity to get to know community members.	.426
3. My family did not feel part of the community.	.311

Table 12 - Continued

Factor	Difference Between Factor Mean and Overall Mean
<u>Teaching Situation</u>	
1. Contact with rural youth was of little importance.	.544
2. Students learned few valuable skills.	.494
3. Received little satisfaction from helping others.	.446
4. I did not enjoy teaching classroom subjects.	.365
5. I did not enjoy teaching mechanics.	.268
6. Classroom teaching was monotonous.	.249
<u>FFA and Adult Farmer Activities</u>	
1. I did not enjoy teaching adults.	.654
2. Little enjoyment in FFA activities.	.499
3. Students entering leadership activities was not satisfying.	.387
4. Received little satisfaction from helping adults help themselves.	.338
<u>Professionalism</u>	
1. I had a limited commitment to agriculture.	.683
2. My vo-ag/FFA background was not an asset.	.439
3. My peers did not recognize me as a leader.	.355
4. Felt little bond among vo-ag teachers.	.326

The largest number of factors identified as significant in an area in having the least influence on vocational agriculture teachers quitting was in the teaching situation (six factors). This was followed by the categories of family and personal, FFA and adult farmer activities, and professionalism, each with four factors showing significance.

Three factors were significant in the community area and one each in the areas of facilities and equipment, and administration and supervision. No factors were identified as having the least influence on quitting from the areas of monetary considerations or advancement and security.

In the analysis of group means, no category or group of questions was shown as being significant as a group in creating the least influence on secondary vocational agriculture teachers to leave the field.

The result of the analysis of factors for least influence (Table 12) supplements and confirms the findings shown in Table 11. The respondents were essentially satisfied with their ability to perform in classroom and shop situations, their involvement in the FFA and adult farmer activities, the community and professional conditions, and their own personal attitudes, goals and situations.

Additional Comments

Additional comments (Appendix D) given by the respondents are summarized and recorded in Table 13. The comments closely paralleled the findings from the objective portion of the questionnaire. No percentage figures were included in Table 13 since several comments applied to more than one group; therefore, the total number of comments listed do not reflect the total number of comments returned

on the surveys. Also, not all comments are listed in Table 13.

Table 13. Additional Comments Made By the Respondents

Comment	Number
1. Salary, benefits, advancement inadequate or cut.	40
2. Administration problems.	34
3. Poor student/parent attitudes or support.	20
4. Left to enter another career.	20
5. Time and duty pressure too great.	15
6. Poor college preparation.	7
7. Struggled with doing a good job or working with difficult students.	7
8. Facilities and services inadequate.	6
9. Wrong local area.	6
10. Excessive competition with other activities.	5
11. Facilities adequate.	4
12. Didn't like FFA; FFA too competitive.	4
13. Salary adequate.	3
14. Forced to teach out of area.	3
15. Emotional or family problems.	3
16. Good program support.	3
17. Tenure system is wrong.	3
18. Program emphasis was in wrong areas.	2
19. Employment for spouse inadequate.	2
20. Lack of satisfaction and recognition.	2

a. Other comments were not similar enough to be grouped.

The comments in Table 13 show that salary, administration, poor attitudes and support, and excessive time pressure seemed to be the factors of greatest concern. It should be noted that all comments were not negative. The areas of poor student and parent attitudes and support, and

time and duty pressure being too great were not identified in the statistical analysis of individual factors, but seemed to be of some significant concern to respondents making comments.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS,
AND RECOMMENDATIONSSummary

A shortage of highly qualified vocational agriculture teachers has been a chronic problem in the United States for many years. The problem continues to deprive some students of the opportunity to enroll in a vocational agriculture program and participate in the Future Farmers of America.

Consequently, this study was conducted to determine the reasons vocational agriculture teachers in the state of Montana left the profession from the years of 1974 to 1983. A list of those teachers who had taught during this period was procured from the State Specialist in Agricultural Education in the Montana Office of Public Instruction. A survey instrument was developed using factors found in other studies of vocational agriculture teachers who had quit teaching and was sent to a similar population of Montana vocational agriculture teachers whose addresses could be obtained. This survey consisted of 104 factors to be rated on a Likert type scale. Eight demographic questions and two open-ended questions were included in

the instrument. Of the ninety-seven vocational agriculture teachers identified as having quit from 1974 to 1983, fifty-five responded to the survey for a 56.7% response rate.

The mean ($\bar{X}$) rating was determined for each factor tested and the resulting values were then subjected to an analysis of variance test to determine which were significant. Frequency tables were established for the demographic data.

The majority of factors influencing vocational agriculture teachers to leave the teaching field were primarily clustered around the salary, advancement, and administration areas, with some items also being identified in the areas of student and parental attitudes and the pressures of time. The factors found to be significant for having the least influence on teachers leaving were clustered around the areas of instruction and work with the FFA and the fulfillment of the teachers' personal goals.

Conclusions

The purpose of this descriptive study was to gather data to identify factors which had influenced secondary vocational agriculture teachers in Montana to leave the profession from 1974 to 1983. Those factors which caused vocational agriculture teachers to quit were clustered

primarily around those areas relating to program administration and economic conditions. Some factors were also identified in the areas of student and parent attitudes and work pressures. The respondents did not indicate that preparation for teaching of knowledge and skills to their students or their enjoyment of working with the FFA organization were factors which caused them to move into another career area. Those teachers who had left did not indicate that they were personally unfulfilled or unmotivated to be involved in the field of vocational agriculture.

The findings of this study are quite similar to those found in the review of literature (see Chapter 2), although there was considerable difference among the conclusions of the various studies. Eight studies included in the review of literature ranked the lack of advancement possibilities quite high, while two studies listed salary as being most important. However, none of the studies reviewed showed the impact administration and supervision has had on those Montana teachers who have sought other careers. This finding would tend to indicate that administrative procedures and the relationship between administrators and vocational agriculture teachers in Montana may have a more negative influence on vocational agriculture teachers and their attitudes toward their jobs than was the case in other states. This question would bear further research

before a definite statement could be made.

The factors which cause Montana secondary vocational agriculture teachers to leave the profession are not primarily those things which involved themselves and their actual teaching experience, but rather, those conditions which tend to be outside their sphere of control. Those items which come from outside the teacher's own program to cause frustration and which disrupt his or her program seem to be the primary reasons causing the teacher to look elsewhere for employment. These influences, coupled with a perceived lack of economic compensation for their time and effort, have caused, and will continue to cause, many Montana vocational agriculture teachers to leave the profession until a change is forthcoming.

The majority of vocational agriculture teachers leave the profession at a relatively young age and with limited tenure. In part this may be due to a natural "weeding out" process whereby some teachers do not feel suited to the profession or the occurrence of alternative job opportunities for those whose career goals were not directing them toward a teaching profession. However, as stated earlier, many promising young teachers are being tempted to leave the field because of the frustration of being forced to deal with those factors over which they have limited control.

The majority of vocational agriculture teachers who leave the profession in Montana made the decision to teach while in college. This may indicate that many vocational agriculture teachers were not aware of the opportunities in teaching until they entered college. However, another interpretation might be that the earlier prospective teachers decide to enter the profession, the more likely they will be to accept teaching as a life long career.

The high school vocational agriculture and FFA program is one of the richest recruiting areas for prospective vocational agriculture trainees. However, those persons with four years of vocational agriculture who were active FFA members seem to be among those who are leaving the field. It is possible that some prospective teachers are developing misconceptions about teaching during their years as students or they are not being prepared sufficiently to meet the day-to-day struggles involved in teaching.

Recommendations for Program Development

It is unfortunate that many of those who are most concerned with increasing vocational agriculture teacher tenure, such as teacher educators, the State Supervisor of Agricultural Education with the Office of Public Instruction, and vocational agriculture teachers themselves, have little control over those factors causing teachers to leave the field. Such factors are primarily under the

control of local boards of education and administrators within the school system. Until that time when this condition can be alleviated, the recommendations of this researcher must center around the concept of influencing those responsible to change the conditions in need of change.

It is the recommendation of this researcher that public relation activities currently in use be modified to better educate the public and educational community about the importance of agriculture in general and vocational agriculture specifically and the importance of fostering favorable career conditions for vocational agriculture teachers. State supervisors of agricultural education, agricultural teacher trainers, and state and national vocational agriculture teacher groups should examine ways to develop new and stronger public relation campaigns. These activities should support increased economic compensation for the teacher. Present and prospective administrators and boards of education should be primary targets for such campaigns in order to reduce the conflicts with vocational agriculture teachers in the area of administration, and to foster the idea that quality vocational agriculture teachers deserve higher salaries.

Agricultural education trainees should be given additional instruction in the skills of human and public relations in order that they might positively impact their

own local situation when they move to the field. They should also receive additional training in administrative procedures associated with teaching and what will be expected of them when they reach the field. Teacher educators should examine ways to prepare prospective teachers and train established vocational agriculture instructors to handle the administrative and financial frustrations which they will face and provide them with useful tools to improve conditions.

Additional training should be provided to help vocational agriculture teachers more effectively manage their time on the job, as well as set priorities and goals in order that their professional career might not interfere with a balanced home life.

Further Research

This researcher would make the following recommendations for further research activities:

1. Clearly identify the types of public relation campaigns needed and the specific target populations.
2. Conduct an in-depth study into the factors of administrative, financial, student and parental attitudes, and time pressure and how these factors interact to impact the career of a vocational agriculture instructor.

3. Study ways in which those with the power to change educational policies and conditions can be affected to bring about needed improvement.
4. Study the relationship of demographic characteristics and patterns to vocational agriculture teachers who leave the field.
5. Determine why a large number of vocational agriculture teachers leaving the field have been very active FFA members and vocational agriculture students and what changes would be needed to encourage more to remain in the teaching field.
6. Conduct a study to determine what percentage of those leaving the field would have been a strong asset to the profession and should have been encouraged to remain.
7. Study the changes needed at the university and state department level to better prepare new and established vocational agriculture teachers to cope with the conditions they must face.
8. Conduct a study to determine how successful those were who left the secondary vocational agriculture teaching field.
9. Compare administrative policies across the nation to determine how they affect vocational agriculture teacher tenure, educational effectiveness, and morale.

10. Conduct an in-depth study to determine when vocational agriculture teachers actually decide to teach and whether there is any correlation between how early they decide and how likely they are to accept teaching as a life long career.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
COVER LETTER

Vo-Ag Department
Box 188
Fromberg, MT 59029

Dear Former Vo-Ag Teacher:

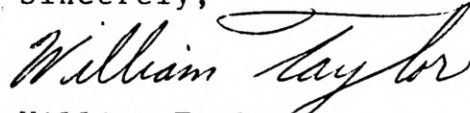
In cooperation with the Agricultural Education Department of Montana State University, I am conducting a study of Montana vocational agriculture teachers who have left the profession within the past ten years. The purpose of the study is to identify the reasons why vocational agriculture teachers leave the field to pursue other career opportunities.

Until we hear from you, we can only guess at the reasons why you and other teachers left teaching. Therefore, it is very important that we receive your response. In this survey you will be asked to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with a compiled list of possible reasons why you may have left teaching.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. All responses will be pooled and no individual survey will be quoted.

Thank you in advance for your time and effort in helping me complete this important survey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William Taylor". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

William Taylor
Vo-Ag Instructor

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

PAST VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER SURVEY

Please circle the response which most accurately describes whether you agree or disagree with the statement presented as it applies to the reason you left the teaching profession. If you taught at more than one school please try to generalize your answers for your entire teaching experience. The following abbreviations for responses apply: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree, N/A-Not Applicable.

I. MONETARY CONSIDERATIONS:

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Salary was inadequate. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 2. Inadequate travel expense. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 3. Salary increases were unacceptable. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 4. Retirement benefits were inadequate. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 5. Evening class compensation too low. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 6. Extra duty compensation too low. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 7. Fringe benefits (i.e., insurance, leave) inadequate. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 8. Extended contract inadequate. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 9. Comments: _____ | |

II. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT:

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1. School transportation for program activities was inadequate. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 2. Shop facilities were inadequate. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 3. Classroom facilities were inadequate. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 4. Support facilities needed (i.e., farm, greenhouse). | SA A D SD N/A |
| 5. Shop equipment of insufficient quality or quantity. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 6. Office, secretary, copying, A-V equipment were unavailable. | SA A D SD N/A |

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 7. Classroom materials were outdated or inadequate. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 8. Facilities were outdated. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 9. Comments: _____ | |

III. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION:

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. I had little control over the departmental budget. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 2. I had little freedom in my program. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 3. I had little freedom to purchase needed supplies. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 4. I had little support from administration. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 5. Administration was not accessible (easy to see). | SA A D SD N/A |
| 6. Lack of goals and policies on administrative or board level relating to vocational education. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 7. Administrator did not recognize my leadership ability. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 8. Vo-Ag was given increasingly less emphasis. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 9. Reports and paperwork were burdensome. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 10. Help from Office of Public Instruction (OPI) was inadequate. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 11. School politics were a problem | SA A D SD N/A |
| 12. Too much "red tape," government requirements, etc. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 13. Poor relationship with immediate supervisor. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 14. Contract was not renewed. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 15. No positions were available. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 16. Comments: _____ | |

IV. FAMILY AND PERSONAL:

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1. I was not satisfied with advancement and recognition. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 2. Teaching created health problems. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 3. I did not enjoy rural living. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 4. Teaching restricted my personal freedom. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 5. Home problems adversely affected my attitudes toward teaching. | SA A D SD N/A |

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 6. Occupational goals were not fulfilled in teaching. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 7. I quit to go into farming or business. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 8. Teaching did not fulfill my desire to be on the land. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 9. Ethics and/or religious factors influenced me to quit. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 10. I did not enjoy teaching. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 11. Comments: _____ | |

V. COMMUNITY:

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Local housing was inadequate. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 2. Employment for spouse not available. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 3. My family did not feel part of the community. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 4. Was inactive in the local church. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 5. Little opportunity to get to know community members. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 6. Living too close to relatives. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 7. Little support for Vo-Ag/FFA. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 8. Little recognition for Vo-Ag teacher's community service. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 9. Little positive, progressive community spirit. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 10. Community was too remote. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 11. Too many community responsibilities. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 12. Unreasonable community expectations for teachers. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 13. Comments: _____ | |

VI. TEACHING SITUATION:

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Classes were too large. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 2. Parents were uncooperative. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 3. Students were uncooperative. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 4. Students were not enthusiastic. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 5. Little opportunity to exert leadership among local teachers. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 6. Summer programs are a burden. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 7. Required to teach too many different subjects. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 8. Poor school-community working relationship. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 9. Received little satisfaction from helping others. | SA A D SD N/A |

10.	Received little self-fulfillment.	SA A D SD N/A
11.	Contact with rural youth was of little importance.	SA A D SD N/A
12.	Students learned few valuable skills.	SA A D SD N/A
13.	I did not enjoy teaching mechanics.	SA A D SD N/A
14.	Classroom teaching was monotonous.	SA A D SD N/A
15.	Lesson planning was burdensome.	SA A D SD N/A
16.	Lack of student discipline was problem.	SA A D SD N/A
17.	Supervision of Supervised Occupational Experience Programs (SOEP) was a burden.	SA A D SD N/A
18.	Hours required were excessive.	SA A D SD N/A
19.	My lifestyle did not fit a school schedule.	SA A D SD N/A
20.	Classroom and shop aides (teaching assistants) were inadequate.	SA A D SD N/A
21.	Expected to teach out of my area.	SA A D SD N/A
22.	Few students recognized my teaching abilities.	SA A D SD N/A
23.	Had to help with too many extracurricular activities.	SA A D SD N/A
24.	I did not enjoy teaching classroom subjects.	SA A D SD N/A
25.	Comments:	

VII. FFA AND ADULT FARMER ACTIVITIES:

1.	Received little satisfaction from FFA students' accomplishments.	SA A D SD N/A
2.	Little enjoyment in FFA activities.	SA A D SD N/A
3.	Students entering leadership activities was not satisfying.	SA A D SD N/A
4.	Too much emphasis on winning contests and awards.	SA A D SD N/A
5.	I received little recognition from FFA student accomplishments.	SA A D SD N/A
6.	FFA required too much time.	SA A D SD N/A
7.	Too much competition with extracurricular activities.	SA A D SD N/A

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 8. Received little satisfaction from helping adults help themselves. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 9. I did not enjoy teaching adults. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 10. Comments: _____ | |

VIII. PROFESSIONALISM:

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. I had a limited commitment to agriculture. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 2. My peers did not recognize me as a leader. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 3. Little respect in teaching agriculture. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 4. Felt little bond among vo-ag teachers. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 5. Had poor college preparation. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 6. My vo-ag/FFA background was not an asset. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 7. Not enough technical work experience. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 8. Help from MSU Teacher Training Department was inadequate. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 9. No opportunity to specialize in a specific field. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 10. Little opportunity for professional improvement. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 11. Little relationship with other local teachers. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 12. Comments: _____ | |

IX. ADVANCEMENT AND SECURITY:

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Tenure is little reward for teaching. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 2. Little local advancement potential. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 3. Poor advancement potential in vo-ag field. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 4. Little advancement potential into related professions. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 5. Lack of other desirable positions was a problem. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 6. Security of teaching eroded by general deteriorating image of agriculture. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 7. Retirement options limited. | SA A D SD N/A |
| 8. Comments: _____ | |

In order to group responses and develop conclusions, it is important we receive the following information. All answers are confidential.

1. Number of years teaching (check one):
 _____ less than 5
 _____ 5 to 10
 _____ 10 to 15
 _____ 15 to 20
 _____ 20 to 25
 _____ over 25
2. Age when left teaching?

3. Marital status at time I was teaching (check one):
 _____ Single
 _____ Married
 _____ Divorced
 _____ Widowed
4. Years as a vo-ag student (circle one): 0 1 2 3 4 5
 (If zero, skip to question #7.)
5. Years in FFA (circle one): 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
 (If zero, skip to question #7.)
6. What was your degree of involvement in the FFA while in high school? (check one)
 _____ Very active.
 _____ Moderately active.
 _____ Slightly active.
7. When did you make the decision to major in Agricultural Education? (Check one)
 _____ In high school.
 _____ Between high school and college.
 _____ In college.
 _____ Other (please specify): _____
8. Did you graduate with a minor? Yes No
 If yes, please list: _____
9. What one specific reason would you give for not teaching today? _____
10. What set of conditions might have changed your mind about leaving teaching? _____

APPENDIX C

REMINDER LETTER

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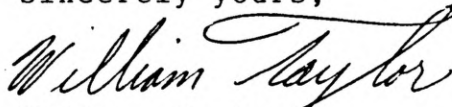
Box 188
Fromberg, MT 59029
April 22, 1985

Dear Former Vo-Ag Teacher:

I recently sent you a survey concerning the reasons that you left the Vo-Ag teaching field. I am sure that in your busy schedule you have misplaced the survey or just not got around to getting it done. I certainly understand this, as my schedule is also very busy. However, I would like to ask you to take the ten minutes necessary and complete the enclosed survey copy and send it to me in the envelope provided. Your answer is very important to me in the furtherance of my Master's Degree program, as well as to the study itself.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William Taylor". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

William Taylor
Vo-Ag Instructor

APPENDIX D
RESPONDENT COMMENTS

RESPONDENT COMMENTS

I. Monetary Considerations

1. Cut contract to nine months on tenure year to force me to leave.
2. The money could' have been better but wasn't that bad.
3. I thought salary more than adequate.
4. Salary adequate for a single person only.
5. Teachers are paid by experience and education - not ability or class, student load.
6. Teacher retirement program is a crock - the state is ripping you off - check the interest rate they are paying. Your credit union could beat the state plan.
7. Starting salary too low - increases barely minimum.
8. Dollars had little to do with leaving.
9. I did not leave for salary reasons.

II. Facilities and Equipment

1. Shop facilities inadequate when I started, but adequate when I left.
2. Usually not enough space or equipment for the number of students.
3. Facilities very adequate - personally taught with very little commercial materials.
4. My school had fine modern equipment.
5. I had ag-business: no shop - transportation by commercial carrier only, planning trips was a nightmare because of the scheduling the bus lines required.

6. In a small school getting enough money to run a good program was a big problem.
7. Shop was old, but functional if utilized properly.
8. Some improvements could have been made.
9. Facilities were old and there was very little support to change them.

III. Administration and Supervision

1. Contract decreased to nine months.
2. The last position was just to fill in for sabbatical leave, then the regular teacher returned.
3. Not enough positive feedback.
4. If not married, I probably would have moved.
5. Emphasis from superintendent to board to faculty was on athletics rather than FFA, VICA, Speech, etc. in non-academic areas.
6. America doesn't need more farmers, they need more ag technicians and service people - the ag shop and FFA aren't in tune with reality - in four years on the farm, I've yet to braze anything.
7. Superintendent felt that vo-ag was a dumping ground for kids who were not doing well in other classes.
8. I had terrific cooperation.
9. No one including cooks, janitors, secretary, other teachers and students had much good to say about the superintendent that year.
10. Increasing amounts of time pressure from addition to program.
11. Administration can be a liability or asset based upon instructor's directives and cooperation.
12. The reason I'm not teaching: the program got cut in half and I couldn't make a living.

13. Too many small schools get administrators, and keep them, who have no business in school administration.
14. Poor superintendent and school board.
15. Kids: no motivation.

IV. Family and Personal

1. Emotional problems led me to leave.
2. I resigned to start my own business and get married. I felt successful teaching, but knew I could not devote the necessary time to the FFA to be successful at it after marriage, and I wanted to work for myself.
3. I enjoyed teaching classes that I was prepared for but I had other classes thrust on me just as the year started.
4. My family was included in most activities, otherwise it would have been impossible.
5. I enjoyed the teaching, too many other things beside teaching to be done.
6. Ethics of education (board, administration, parents) needed . . . (i.e., sports, and the failing student).
7. I left teaching because I felt I wasn't doing a good job.
8. Had the opportunity to farm on my own.
9. Did not enjoy teaching vo-ag at ----- vo-ag - horticulture in ----- was much different.
10. [Teaching caused] marital [problems].

V. Community

1. [In reference to #7 - "Little support for vo-ag/ FFA"] Little support outside of FFA families.
2. Generally very good rural support.
3. Good but isolated.

4. Didn't like the area - lack of recreation used to.
5. Ranch people supportive, irrigated farmers and town not as supportive.
6. Always questioning teachers on their job. No respect for teachers in general.
7. We really enjoyed the community and closeness there - still go back to visit.
8. Community could have got more involved that year and seen that the situation was not good.
9. Employment for non-teacher spouse is non-existent to menial in remote areas.
10. Little support from kids.

VI. Teaching Situation

1. MSU poorly prepared me for supervision of SOEP and preparation of state required forms.
2. Had trouble getting poor students to work, they are the ones that need the help, very frustrating.
3. Superintendent wanted me to be a mechanic, I.A. instructor for junior and senior high school.
4. I had an enjoyable program and great kids and parents.
5. Some students got little from my class. Others, I believe, gained much.
6. Quality work - whether teaching or business requires more than eight hour days.
7. Had to help with too many non-ag related extra-curricular activities - basketball, assemblies, lunch, track, etc.
8. I enjoyed teaching management, animal science and leadership in the classroom.
9. Lesson planning was required - extreme detail was required.
10. Parents expected favoritism.

11. Not interested in ag - just shop.
12. I didn't have one [summer program] and wouldn't if I had the choice.
13. [In reference to #15 - Lesson planning was burdensome.] Had to be approved by superintendent (all teachers).
14. [In reference to #18 - Hours required were excessive.] When married.

VII. FFA and Adult Farmer Activities

1. Got tired of competing with sports and music.
2. FFA is all for contests - win or you and your students are looked on as second class citizens.
3. I helped some ranchers who asked for help.
4. There was a great deal of satisfaction - I still feel for it today.
5. Would have liked more adult education classes but teaching load would not permit.
6. I wasn't too active in adult education - mostly in town young men want to learn welding.
7. I did not enjoy the FFA program at all. If I could teach and not be involved in FFA I would still be teaching.
8. Kids not interested in FFA.
9. Sports #1.

VIII. Professionalism

1. MSU Ag Ed department poorly prepared for FFA activities, contests, paperwork, and supervised projects.
2. I feel that in most cases professionalism as it is doesn't really help the poorer student get started in life.
3. Was not personally interested in professional growth in such as MVATA.

4. MSU could do a better job preparing teachers - especially in mechanics areas.
5. [In reference to #4 - "Felt little bond among vo-ag teachers."] All production ag and ag mechanics in Montana vo-ag - get with it! [In reference to #8 - "Help from MSU Teacher Training Department was inadequate."] Shorten the theory - theory won't help much with student and parent difficulties.
6. We were close with the other teachers and other ag teachers.
7. I feel some college courses could do a much better job of preparing teachers.
8. [In reference to #5 - Had poor college preparation.] Mechanics.
9. [In reference to #10 - Little opportunity for professional improvement.] More education possible, not synonymous with professional development.

IX. Advancement and Security

1. Really too hard to say after just a couple of years in the profession.
2. Advanced as far as possible in local system, but no way to advance further as far as salary and fringe benefits were concerned.
3. I don't think we need teacher tenure.
4. Tenure - protects poor teachers, does not foster excellence in the profession.

WHAT ONE SPECIFIC REASON WOULD YOU GIVE
FOR NOT TEACHING TODAY?

1. Politics
2. Extracurricular activities on top of FFA kept me busy every evening and weekends so I had no family life.
3. General interaction between administrator and instructors - i.e. : Say one thing one day and change policy next day, no consistency regarding discipline, no backup of teachers.
4. Wages
5. I didn't have the time to be a vocational agriculture teacher and have a family life also.
6. Financial aspect
7. Opportunity to return to family ranch.
8. Am teaching at university. Left secondary because I felt I could have a bigger impact on vo-ag by training teachers.
9. No desire to re-enter low paying job with multitude of administrative/board hassles.
10. Lack of advancement - would be doing the same exact thing thirty years from now. Burnout!
11. Lack of adequate salary.
12. Not knowing whether or not I could withstand the frustration of not reaching those students who refuse to be helped.
13. No position available now near family farm.
14. Lack of self fulfillment and accomplishment.
15. Inadequate salary and lack of public involvement other than agriculture because of busy school involvement.

16. After several years teaching it was not a question of whether I teach an area but only to what degree of efficiency I was doing it.
17. Too discouraging - kids not interested in ag as a way to make a living.
18. Inadequate pay. After teaching school, I took a job as a ranch hand, and made more money, than when I was teaching.
19. Lack of emphasis given to education vs. sports and extracurricular activities.
20. Money
21. Got married - felt I didn't have the time to give it my best - takes lots of time for me.
22. Attitude and action of high school kids.
23. I couldn't deal with the adolescent environment created by the students and teachers.
24. Farming on my own.
25. I wished to work for myself in my own business and ranch and not be dependent upon an employer for a salary.
26. Salary was grossly inadequate. After teaching sixteen years, B.A. plus two quarters, head of department, salary offer in 1981 was \$17,300.
27. Better opportunities in farming.
28. Lack of career advancement and salary potential.
29. Wanted to return to ranching.
30. In nine years teaching had eight superintendents, results - majority school board members ignorant in education.
31. Would want a school with clear administrative policies, towards discipline, running of the school, etc.
32. I had to choose between ranching and teaching.

33. Lack of support from administration (administration needs to be educated about vo-ag and attitude needs to change).
34. Opportunities in my current field.
35. Vo-ag teaching was only a temporary job until an opportunity to ranch came along, which it did a year later.
36. Desire to own and operate a small business.
37. I just had a desire to try something else, always felt I could go back to teaching.
38. Politics - quality evaluations had little to do with contract renewal. Establishment in community for family and continuity of kids' education of more importance than teaching career.
39. Too much to do - it was overwhelming! It wasn't realistic! Vo-ag teachers in Montana have a "closed" attitude. I came in from out of state and never really did feel welcomed into the State Association.
40. Very poor administrator - as a result I had very severe discipline problems.
41. There isn't enough pay incentive for the amount of time invested to do the job well. I don't believe the administrators as a rule are adequate for the job and don't want to work under them.
42. I am teaching and I am a vo-ag teacher (post secondary).
43. Compensation of time involved.
44. Lack of interest in scholastic achievement by the general population.
45. Compensation and advancement.
46. Little opportunity in teaching.
47. I wasn't doing my job. I felt students deserved more than I was giving, so I got out.

48. I now have a job where I get paid as much as I work. School administrators would keep me from ever going back into teaching and I enjoy working in the sheep and cattle business and don't want to ever have anything to do with crops, soils, and mechanics.
49. I am currently working on my M.S. in AgEd and intend to return to the teaching field.
50. My [lack of] knowledge of and experience with the many subject areas I taught was too much!
51. No horticulture instructor positions in this area.
52. Not being able to support me and my family.
53. Administration problems at -----, and decided to return to ranching.
54. Do not like FFA program.
55. Opportunity arose to go into farming.
56. Not enough pay; parents.

WHAT SET OF CONDITIONS MIGHT HAVE CHANGED
YOUR MIND ABOUT LEAVING TEACHING?

1. I didn't leave teaching entirely by choice as my position was closed. I was unable to get another job, due in part to some untrue statements made by my superintendent to whomever asked him for references. I don't know the exact nature of his allegation, but have it from a reliable source that I would have been offered at least one contract except for what he was saying about me.
2. A good administrator who would not insist on forcing teachers to take other activities which they did not want.
3. Had I not got the feeling that I was just another warm body to hand a paycheck to every month, I may have stayed.
4. A change in the attitude of the students and the positive participation of parents.
5. Some help with activities and teaching load.
6. Better wages and a better knowledge of the future of production agriculture.
7. More opportunity for advancement without changing location.
8. A family that was happy with the location.
9. More administrative support.
10. Continuing at the same school - I was not ready to move to new community and start all over again. I enjoyed teaching for the most part, but I wanted to try something different.
11. Increase salary.
12. At the time I left the profession, my emotional stability was such that I could not have stayed in the field. I doubt whether today either, also.

13. If a lot of Montana vo-ag programs weren't so isolated and in such small (two bar towns) towns. Vo-ag teachers expected to put in a lot of extra unpaid hours.
14. None.
15. Having time to become involved in other activities and community involvements as well as salary would have helped. (Agricultural burnout.)
16. Salary.
17. If I could have moved to a different school where the kids had more interest and response. I enjoy being on the ranch now.
18. I did not go to college to be a babysitter. Noon hall duty, decorating floats, chaperoning dances, selling tickets at basketball games and other extra-curricular - non-vo-ag duties should not be required of vo-ag teachers. The pay for these chores is virtually non-existent, and take up a lot of time.
19. A little community and administration cooperation, backing and support.
20. Location in mountains - ranching community rather than farming.
21. Better collegiate preparation on how to do mechanical/technical things - we have too much general teacher/person training. As teachers we need the specifics.
22. More money.
23. More capable peers. Greater community interest, more interest on part of the students.
24. No ranch to get back to.
25. If I had not other options available.
26. Possibly if the community in which I taught had remained more agriculturally oriented rather than subdivision or tourist minded I may have remained. Bill, you are more familiar with my situation than most others you will hear from. I feel more appreciated in private industry and the financial rewards are so much greater I had to ask myself why I didn't get out of teaching sooner.

27. None.
28. A more specific career advancement program.
29. Better relationship with other instructor within the department.
30. If parents, school board, and administration could work efficiently together. Teachers are becoming less respected as professionals.
31. I would have stayed teaching at the time I resigned except a farm came up for sale that I was looking to purchase.
32. None.
33. Support from administration, adequate supply of resource material and tools and to teach vo-ag, not I.A. To me vo-ag is applied science with shop, but most of the students took the class to be in the shop with no interest in agriculture.
34. I was not looking to get out of teaching when I did. Opportunity presented itself and I took it.
35. None.
36. Greater career opportunities.
37. If ag did not have to compete so strongly with athletic activities.
38. Elimination of the tenure system and introduction of an evaluation system using people outside the school system - similar to accreditation teams.
39. More support from State Office (Leonard Lombardi's office) - RE: frustration of too much to do.
40. If I could have stayed in the same school to build a good program with a different administrator.
41. A decrease in the time pressure required of the vo-ag curriculum. They add too much and never remove anything from the program. One person can only do so much work.
42. I still am teaching [post secondary] but dollars received for salary are minimum compared to other professions.

43. A larger budget for the program and at least some support for the program from the administration.
44. There were a number of conditions which revolve around school administration. Some classes needed an aide when there was none available. We were expected to be constantly on duty for several straight hours without break and there was little support in dealing with individuals who constantly disrupted classes. You might be interested in the fact that I eventually went to work for the National Guard full time.
45. Recognition of efforts required to be a quality instructor, anyone can teach.
46. Opportunity for advancement, more money. If my wife could have found a job in same community as I was teaching in. She is also a teacher and at present has over ten years experience in teaching.
47. Having only students that want to be farmers, most of my kids were put there by principal because he had no other place for those kids. Probably 1/2 my students didn't want to be there.
48. Non-availability of a chance to return to farming. More support for vo-ag/FFA in school system.
49. If I didn't have another job to try.
50. A different job.
51. (1) Administration against the program.
(2) Being able to only work part time.
(3) Career opportunities galore outside of teaching.
52. Better conditions for non-tenured teachers.
53. Ability to teach vo-ag subjects, but not be involved in FFA.
54. I'm still teaching, but at the college level in North Dakota.
55. Job close to farm.

OTHER COMMENTS

The program at ----- was run by the students. The lack of discipline was appalling. When I tried to discipline students there was no parental or administrative support.

One of the other instructors I was teaching with was hard to get along with. He was arrogant and inconsiderate of other people's private lives. He was, however, the department head and I had a hard time avoiding conflict with him.

I could go on and on about this program. The waste of money, the poor care of tools, the lack of structure in the classroom and the lack of proper planning are just a few of the items I was shocked by.