



The summer program of work of vocational agriculture instructors
by Dick V Fagan

A THESIS Submitted to the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Science in Agricultural Education
Montana State University
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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to determine procedures and time consumed in the different activities of the summer program of work by instructors of vocational agriculture. The study was designed to assist supervisors, administrators, teacher trainers, and experienced and beginning instructors in building a complete summer program of work for vocational agriculture.

A questionnaire was sent out to 322 departments of vocational agriculture in eleven western states where the instructors had "been in their department for two years or longer. The departments were rated by the state supervisors into high, medium, and low groups as to the excellence of the supervised farming programs of students in these departments.

Data was obtained on the amount of time that instructors spent on different areas in their summer program, A separate questionnaire was sent to all state supervisors to determine what types of reports they required from instructors of vocational agriculture.

The study revealed that about 70 percent of the instructors in the high and low group prepared a written plan of activities they planned to carry on during the summer. Instructors in both the high and low groups spent about 20 percent of their time attending summer school. Teachers rated in the high group averaged \$534.61 more annual salary than those in the low group, in the high group 20 percent more of the instructors visited their students during the summer than did those in the low group. Fifteen percent more of the instructors in the high group than in the low group had adult farmer classes during the summer,. In the low group 45 percent more of the departments had advisory committees than did those in the high group.

Activities for improving the summer program of work are recommended. These include planning an effective summer program of work; visiting all students, and prospective students of agriculture during the summer! keeping the public informed of activities carried on by the department! and reporting monthly the activities carried on to the school administrators, school boards, and state supervisors of vocational agriculture, A form was devised for reporting the summer program of work which would be of help to instructors to keep the public informed of activities carried on during the summer.

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OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE INSTRUCTORS

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DICK V. FAGAN

A THESIS

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

in

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for the degree of

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at

Montana State College

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THE SUMMER PROGRAM OF WORK OF VOCATIONAL
AGRICULTURE INSTRUCTORS

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine procedures and time consumed in the different activities of the summer program of work by instructors of vocational agriculture. The study was designed to assist supervisors, administrators, teacher trainers, and experienced and beginning instructors in building a complete summer program of work for vocational agriculture.

A questionnaire was sent out to 322 departments of vocational agriculture in eleven western states where the instructors had been in their department for two years or longer. The departments were rated by the state supervisors into high, medium, and low groups as to the excellence of the supervised farming programs of students in these departments. Data was obtained on the amount of time that instructors spent on different areas in their summer program. A separate questionnaire was sent to all state supervisors to determine what types of reports they required from instructors of vocational agriculture.

The study revealed that about 70 percent of the instructors in the high and low group prepared a written plan of activities they planned to carry on during the summer. Instructors in both the high and low groups spent about 20 percent of their time attending summer school. Teachers rated in the high group averaged \$534.61 more annual salary than those in the low group. In the high group 20 percent more of the instructors visited their students during the summer than did those in the low group. Fifteen percent more of the instructors in the high group than in the low group had adult farmer classes during the summer. In the low group 45 percent more of the departments had advisory committees than did those in the high group.

Activities for improving the summer program of work are recommended. These include planning an effective summer program of work; visiting all students, and prospective students of agriculture during the summer; keeping the public informed of activities carried on by the department; and reporting monthly the activities carried on to the school administrators, school boards, and state supervisors of vocational agriculture. A form was devised for reporting the summer program of work which would be of help to instructors to keep the public informed of activities carried on during the summer.

PART I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this thesis study was to determine time consumed in the different activities of the summer program of work by high school vocational agriculture instructors. The study was designed to assist supervisors, administrators, experienced instructors, teacher trainers, and beginning instructors in building a complete summer program of work for vocational agriculture by revealing desirable characteristics and practices.

The problem was designed to include (1) a library study of literature related to the summer program of work of vocational agriculture instructors, (2) a status study to determine the amount of time that teachers of vocational agriculture spend in the different areas of work, and (3) a study to determine numbers and kinds of reports that were required by the state departments of vocational agriculture.

This problem involves the following questions:

1. What are the areas of work in which teachers of vocational agriculture spend their time during the summer?
2. How much time during the summer do teachers of agriculture spend in the above areas of work?
3. What are the areas of work that should have the most time devoted to them during the summer?

Need for Study

The following statements further indicate the need for this study:

1. School administrators and the public may lack information with regard to the summer duties of agricultural instructors.

2. State supervisors of vocational agriculture and the agriculture instructors may not be in full agreement as to what constitutes a good summer program of work.

Design of Status Study

In an attempt to discover the status of the summer program of work 322 1/ vocational agriculture departments were surveyed in Oregon, California, Washington, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, Arizona, and New Mexico. A separate questionnaire was sent to the state supervisors of vocational agriculture in forty-eight states, Puerto Rico, and Hawaii. The instructors and schools selected were those in which the instructors had been in residence for two or more years because they were established and had a summer program of work in operation.

Department Ratings -- Ratings were obtained from the state supervisors on each of the 322 departments. The instructors were rated on the general excellence of the supervised farming programs of the students in their departments. 2/ The schools evaluated were divided into three groups - high, medium and low. The groups were designated as Group I, Group II, and Group III, respectively. There were 104 schools in Group I, 143 in Group II and 75 in Group III.

The schools were designated by number so that the writer would not be biased in rating results and so that the schools would not be subject to unpleasant recognition.

1/ See Appendix page 72 for list of agriculture departments.

2/ See Appendix page 76 for letter requesting ratings on agriculture departments.

Means of Obtaining Data -- A questionnaire was devised for the collection of primary data from the instructors in the 322 departments included in this study. 3/ The questionnaire was arranged to give information on the following phases of work of the instructors and departments in each program:

1. General information about the instructor and the department.
2. Supervised farming programs of the students.
3. Equipment and facilities.
4. Future Farmers of America activities.
5. Professional improvement of the teacher.
6. All-day high school teaching program.
7. Out-of-school program for veterans, young farmers, and adults.
8. School and community relations.

A questionnaire 4/ was also sent to fifty state supervisors of vocational agriculture to determine the following information:

1. Were teachers required to submit to the state office a plan of summer activities?
2. Were teachers required to submit to the state office a report of activities carried on during the summer?

Limitations of Study -- From the interpretation of the data, there appear to be no discrepancies or willful intent by the instructors to pad their reports in order to present a better picture of themselves. The questionnaire in many cases had to be filled in from memory by the instructors. In many cases teachers had but few records of their activities

3/ See Appendix page 80 for copy of questionnaire sent to instructors.

4/ See Appendix page 78 for copy of questionnaire sent to state supervisors.

to aid them in filling out the questionnaire.

Summary of Parts

Part I of this study includes a statement of purpose, procedures, and a description of the design of the status study.

Part II includes a review of (1) statements of objectives in vocational agriculture, (2) legislation, (3) literature and studies pertaining to summer programs in vocational agriculture.

Part III includes an analysis and interpretation of the questionnaire studies.

Part IV includes recommendations for improving the summer program of work of vocational agriculture instructors in eleven western states, and the need for further research.

Summary

The activities of the teacher of vocational agriculture and those of the students enrolled in vocational agriculture undergo a change during the summer months from the systematic group instruction conducted during the regular school year. The effective utilization of the summer period may, and frequently does, determine the success of the entire program of vocational agriculture. The summer program is a subject that deserves careful attention on the part of all persons concerned with instruction in vocational agriculture.

Teachers of vocational agriculture may take one or two extreme positions with relation to summer activities. There are those who may regard summer activities as unrelated and separate to the rest of the course. They may think of the work during the academic year as one

program and that during the summer as another; one for "instruction" the other for "supervision of the farming program and organization activities of students."

Summer activities should not be planned or thought of as a separate program. Much instruction can and does take place out of the classroom during the school year and summer. The summer program needs to be planned if opportunities for learning are to be realized during this period of the year.

PART II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND STUDIES

This section reviews objectives of vocational education in agriculture; legislative provisions; policies of federal and state agencies; literature and studies pertaining to the summer program of vocational agriculture. Studies and reports have dealt more extensively with supervised farming and the all-day school program than with the summer activities of teachers.

Objectives of Vocational Education in Agriculture

The purpose of vocational education in agriculture is to increase proficiency in farming on the part of those now engaged in farming and the prospective farmers.

The major objectives of vocational education in agriculture are to develop effective ability to: 5/

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

These objectives were set up by a committee of the American Vocational Association and the Federal Board for Vocational Education in September 1929.

5/ "Administration of Vocational Education", Bulletin No. 1, Revised 1948, Federal Security Agency, Washington, D. C., p. 38.

Legislative Provisions

The National Vocational Education (Smith-Hughes) Act was approved February 23, 1917. 6/ This is the basic act. The act provides annual appropriations for distribution to the States for the promotion of vocational education in agriculture, trades and industry, home economics, and for the training of teachers for those fields. This act is still in effect.

The Vocational Education Act of 1946, 7/ known as the George-Barden Act, is the latest of many subsequent acts which provided additional funds for vocational education. All of the acts were passed for the same general purpose - to promote and develop vocational education of less than college grade.

Federal and State Agency Policies

The Federal vocational education acts contain two mandatory provisions which are peculiar to instruction in vocational education in agriculture. They are: 8/

1. The instruction must be designed to meet the needs of persons over 14 years of age who are preparing for farming or who are engaged in farming.
2. Provision must be made for at least 6 months of supervised practice in agriculture each year.

6/ Public No. 347 Sixty-fourth Congress S.703

7/ Public No. 586 Seventy-ninth Congress S.703

8/ "Administration of Vocational Education", Bulletin No. 1, Revised 1948, Federal Security Agency, Washington, D. C., p. 40.

For a complete program in vocational education in agriculture the element of time should be considered in terms of years as well as in terms of minutes and days per week or month. The in-school youth needs instruction in agriculture to lay a better foundation for his farming career. The out-of-school young farmer needs systematic instruction dealing with the problem of becoming established in farming. Finally as an adult farmer he should have an educational service which will keep him informed on the latest developments and the most recent approved practices that affect the enterprises in his farming operations. Therefore, a school should provide an uninterrupted program of instruction in agriculture.

It is recommended that in developing effective supervised farming programs instruction and assistance be provided for students on all of their important farming activities. This requires that provisions be made for the teachers of vocational agriculture to visit farms of students throughout the year.

In view of the fact that the Smith-Hughes Act requires that schools offering instruction in agriculture "----shall provide for directed or supervised practice in agriculture, ----for at least six months per year, ----" and that farming is a year-round activity, a school shall provide such direction or supervision by a qualified vocational teacher on a twelve month basis. 9/

9/ "Administration of Vocational Education" Bulletin No. 1, Revised 1948, Federal Security Agency, Washington, D. C., p. 39.

The Montana State Plan for Vocational Education 10/ provides that teachers of vocational agriculture shall be employed on a 12-month basis. The purpose of employing a teacher of vocational agriculture for twelve months is to provide a program of vocational agriculture during the summer months as well as during the period of year that school is in session.

Review of Educational Literature

Present concepts of writers on the summer program of work of vocational agriculture instructors show the necessity for a relationship between the summer program and that of the regular school year.

Roy A. Olney 11/ pointed out in 1948 that the following activities will demand the attention of the teacher of agriculture during the summer months; (1) supervising pupils, (2) improving the facilities of the department, (3) maintaining public relations and self-improvement programs, and (4) participating in recreational activities.

Sherman Dickinson 12/ has stated that the alert teacher of vocational agriculture will not fail to recognize that summer affords his greatest opportunity for effective teaching. Schools are closed, class-

10/ "Montana State Plan for Vocational Education", State Board of Vocational Education, Bozeman, Montana, July 1, 1947, to June 30, 1952, p. 32.

11/ Roy H. Olney, "Summer Duties of the Teacher of Vocational Agriculture", American Vocational Journal, Vol. 23, No. 6, June 1948, p. 16.

12/ Sherman Dickinson, "Summer Sagacity", Agricultural Education Magazine, Vol. 10, No. 12, June 1932, p. 194.

rooms are empty, and shops are silent; there is every reason to expect that the teaching not only will continue, but that it will become more intensified than during the regular school period.

Carsie Hammonds ^{13/} states that a teacher of vocational agriculture has little difficulty in justifying, in the minds of his patrons and employers, his salary from September to May. Tradition has it that teachers do not teach during the summer. Many of those with whom we work, live in the realm of tradition. Vocational agriculture teaching with its year-round program represents a digression from the old idea of "school teaching" - a digression from what has been custom. It is up to the men engaged in teaching vocational agriculture to prove that the summer salary is justified. He further states that the agriculture teacher is employed on a 12-month basis primarily for the purpose of efficiently directing and supervising the farm practice work of his students. The close of the school term gives the student an opportunity to carry forward farm practice under more favorable conditions.

F. E. Heald ^{14/} stresses that teaching by the best teachers occurs on the job rather than in the classroom, often times during the summer months. The field or barn is the laboratory in agriculture. Here the boy learns the technique, but he also encounters problems which no amount of classroom teaching would have made so real. Farming is both

^{13/} Carsie Hammonds, "Summer Work, The New Year and the Old", Agricultural Education Magazine, Vol. 5, No. 1, July 1932, p. 2.

^{14/} F. E. Heald, "Summer Teaching vs Visiting", Agricultural Education Magazine, Vol. 13, No. 11, May 1941, p. 209.

an occupation and a mode of life. Teaching during the summer, or on the project at any time, must not omit either of these phases, and the interest of the teacher must be real rather than perfunctory if he expects to get results. This would indicate that an instructor should plan carefully to make each visit as profitable to the pupil as possible.

H. M. Hamlin 15/ recommends that monthly, as well as annual reports by teachers of vocational agriculture should be made, but no matter what other reports are made, a report of summer activities is needed. Employers often have little idea of the summer activities of the teacher. The community may also wonder what the teacher does in the summer. A plan for the use of summer time and monthly reports of summer activities protect the teacher from criticism and also from a temptation to be more lax in his summer work than in his work at other times of the year.

In Montana the teacher of vocational agriculture is required to submit an outline of his proposed program of work to the state supervisor of vocational agriculture in May. In September he makes a report to the state supervisor of activities carried on during the summer.

W. F. Stewart 16/ stated that some time in May it is appropriate for the teacher of vocational agriculture to take an inventory of the many activities which he recognizes he must perform or will want to do

15/ H. M. Hamlin, "The Community Program of Agriculture Education", Published by Illinois Union Bookstore, Champaign, Ill., 1943, p. 206.

16/ W. F. Stewart, "Planning a Summer Program of Work", Agricultural Education Magazine, Vol. 12, No. 10, April 1940, p. 206.

during the summer. It will help doubtless to classify these under such headings as:

1. Supervision of all-day students.
2. Supervision of part-time students.
3. Supervision of evening-class members.
4. Future Farmers of America supervisory duties.
5. Publicity.
6. Preparation of reports.
7. Improvement of physical equipment of classroom and shop.
8. Reorganization of courses.
9. Professional improvement.
10. Miscellaneous

Aretas W. Nolan 17/ has stated that during the school year conditions for teaching vocational agriculture seem most ideal, but we have even a more nearly perfect teaching situation during the summer in connection with project supervision. During the summer the student is in the presence of actual farm problems, with a trained teacher at his side and a father as a cooperating assistant. If real teaching and learning cannot be achieved under such circumstances, the fault lies not in the situation.

M. C. Gaar 18/ maintains that during the summer the major part of the time should be taken up by farm visitations for the purpose of aiding the students in using superior practices as planned in class during the school year. He further suggests that the teacher of vocational

17/ Aretas W. Nolan, "The Problem of Summer Teaching in Connection with Project Supervision", Secondary School Circular No. 7, Department of Interior, Bureau of Education, Washington, D. C., Nov. 15, 1929, p. 1.

18/ M. C. Gaar, "The Summer Program in Agricultural Education", Agricultural Education Magazine, Vol. 20, No. 11, May 1943, p. 204.

agriculture select one day each week to remain in the department to take care of correspondence, maintain files and records, make up requisitions for supplies, work on the course of study, check references, check shop tools, work in shop, prepare news articles, and plan F.F.A. meetings. Gaar recommends that teachers spend four days each week visiting and teaching students (all-day, young farmers, and adults). While out on supervisory trips the teacher should visit prospective students, new farmers in the area, and make occasional surveys as opportunities arise.

Arthur M. Ahalt 19/ reports that through diplomatic home and public contacts with farmers, teachers of vocational agriculture are enabled to develop respect and good will for the public school system. The contacts of the teacher in his summer program are often responsible for the cooperative attitudes of parents toward the school program in rural communities. A good teacher can promote the work and program of the school. A teacher with a poor attitude can likewise do much harm.

Arthur Mellor 20/ states that beginning teachers sometimes hesitate in making project visits, not knowing how they will be received. There isn't much to justify this attitude according to reports in literature and from the writer's own experience. First of all, a boy is glad to be visited. He is grateful and frequently will say so. Furthermore, his

19/ Arthur M. Ahalt, "Summer Duties and Activities, Teachers of Vocational Agriculture", Agricultural Education Magazine, Vol. 20, No. 11, May 1948, p. 206.

20/ Arthur Mellor, "Plan for On-Farm Teaching This Summer", Agricultural Education Magazine, Vol. 23, No. 10, April 1951, p. 238.

mother and dad are pleased that their son is getting some attention. In addition to this, the teacher is a busy man, so the only sensible thing is to make the most of every minute.

Stanley S. Richardson 21/ stated that reports of summer activities are of value for the following reasons:

1. They furnish a definite record of the activities and may be submitted to the superintendent or other school officials who are anxious to know what the teacher did during the summer.
2. There is a definite record to show what is being done for the Federal, State and/or district money expended.
3. When a teacher leaves the job during the summer, there is a definite written record to show what has been done.
4. There is an excellent chance to find out what has been or is being done in part-time and evening class follow-up work, and other activities may also be checked.
5. As a basis for further research work they will aid in determining what has been or is being done and what can be done to improve the department.
6. Reports serve as an aid in the teacher-training program.
7. They keep instructors conscious of the job ahead of them.
8. The instructor has a written record as insurance in case of unfair or unjust criticism that may be given of his summer work.

Glen C. Cook 22/ brings out that the teacher of vocational agriculture is employed on a twelve months basis because of the need for

21/ Stanley S. Richardson, "Summer Activities of Teachers of Vocational Agriculture in Idaho", Report of Twenty-first annual Pacific Regional Conference, Issued by United States Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Misc. 2207, June 1939, p. 103.

22/ Glen C. Cook, "Handbook on Teaching Vocational Agriculture" Fiftieth Edition, Interstate Printing Co., 1947, p. 741.

instruction the year-round. He lists the objectives of the summer program as:

1. To provide for an effective follow-up program of the instruction of all-day, young farmer, and adult farmer students. This provides for teaching on the farm while supervising the farming programs.
2. To provide opportunity during the summer to discover and select farm problems of the students to be included in the instruction.
3. To provide additional opportunity to render educational service to farmers in the community.
4. To provide organized class instruction for farmers in the community on a year-round basis.
5. To provide for the development of leadership abilities of F.F.A. members through conducting summer meetings, education tours, and camping trips.
6. To provide opportunity for the instructor to contact prospective students of vocational agriculture.
7. To provide for continuity of the instruction.

H. M. Hamlin 23/ states that the summer program needs especially careful planning. The summer work of the teacher of vocational agriculture is unstandardized and it is often unorganized. The summer may be one of the most fruitful periods of the year for educational work and for preparing for the year of teaching ahead.

N. E. Wilson 24/ maintains that if we accept the philosophy of vocational agriculture as set up, we are forced to the conclusion that

23/ H. M. Hamlin, "Agricultural Education in Community Schools", Interstate Printing Co., 1949, p. 109.

24/ N. E. Wilson, "Planning the Summer Program for Adult-Farmer Classes", Agricultural Education Magazine, Vol. 19, No. 12, June 1947, p. 225.

the summer program must be a continuation of, or closely related to, the basic instructional program. There are certain activities in adult work that may be best engaged in during the summer. He further states that it is his opinion, and also the opinion of those consulted, that we don't need a winter program and a summer program each independent and complete. We need a sound, continuing program that utilizes all of the time required to make satisfactory improvements. The activities involved in an adult-farmer program may be viewed by the teacher as follows:

1. Teaching.
2. Supervision.
3. Evaluating results.

Review of Thesis and Non-thesis Studies

A study was made of the "Summaries of Studies in Agricultural Education" to determine what studies have been made on the summer program and it was found that very few people have made any studies in this field even though there is a great need for investigations.

P. G. Frazier ^{25/} found that the pattern of high school activities based on days of work varied considerably in 120 different types of departments, but as a general pattern, test plots and visitations ranked first; office second; professional improvement third; tours and trips fourth; and meeting fifth; with an average of 157.3 different types of activities carried on.

^{25/} P. G. Frazier, "Summer Activities of Teachers of Vocational Agriculture", Agricultural Education Magazine, Vol. 12, No. 11, May 1940, p. 212

M. W. Wallace ^{26/} reports his findings in a study of the summer teaching load of twenty-seven teachers of vocational agriculture in Southwestern Ohio, Table I.

TABLE I. PERCENT OF TIME AND AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS PER TEACHER DEVOTED TO THE VARIOUS AREAS OF THE SUMMER PROGRAM OF WORK

| Areas | Percent of total time | Average number of hours per teacher for each area |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Professional Improvement* | 24.09 | 135.2 |
| School & Community Relationships | 17.16 | 96.5 |
| Supervised Farming Programs | 17.09 | 96.0 |
| Future Farmers of America | 11.92 | 67.0 |
| Physical Facilities | 11.56 | 64.8 |
| All-Day Teaching | 8.75 | 49.1 |
| Records and Reports | 4.46 | 24.9 |
| Adult Farmer Education | 2.51 | 14.1 |
| Young Farmer Education | <u>2.46</u> | <u>14.0</u> |
| TOTAL | 100.00 | 561.6 |

* Includes time devoted to special technical training courses

Wallace recommended that greater emphasis should be placed on project supervision; planning the all-day teaching program for the year; that every Future Farmer chapter should be active throughout the year;

^{26/} M. W. Wallace, "A Study of Summer Teaching Load of 27 Teachers of Vocational Agriculture in Southwestern Ohio", Thesis, M.S. Library, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, 1942, p. 92.

