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A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF YOUNG
MEN IN MICHIGAN WHO RECEIVED
THE STATE FARMER DEGREE
DURING THE PERIOD
1940 TO 1947

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.
MICHIGAN STATE COLLEGE
Texten Robert Miller
1948


This is to certify that the

thesis entitled
A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF YOUNG
MEN IN MICHIGAN WHO RECEIVED
THE STATE FARMER DEGREE
DURING THE PERIOD
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TEXTON ROBERT MILLER

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RECEIVED THE STATE FARMER DEGREE
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1940 to 1947

By
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Establishment in farming is recognized as the primary objective of vocational education in agriculture. When a student of vocational agriculture receives the degree of State Farmer, he is recognized as the possessor of a well-developed farming program, designed to help him become established in farming. One realistic approach to the evaluation of vocational agriculture is to determine the occupational status of these young men.

McKim¹ reported a follow-up study of State Farmers of Michigan in 1942. He investigated the occupational status and leadership activities of 294 young men who received the State Farmer degree during the period 1930 to 1939, inclusive. McKim found only 56.1 per cent of these State Farmers established in full-time or part-time farming. This result was disappointing from the view-point of many teachers of vocational agriculture. It was to be hoped by these teachers that a study of the more recent and larger group of State Farmers would show that a larger percentage were becoming established in farming than was indicated by McKim's study.

¹ Earl C. McKim, "A Follow-up Study of Young Men in Michigan Who Received the State Farmer Degree During the Ten-Year Period 1930 to 1939." Master's thesis, Michigan State College, East Lansing, 1946. 42 pp.

It is of great importance to make available, for future guidance in the training of prospective farmers, a knowledge of the difficulties that State Farmers and other students face and the value of some of the helps they receive in reaching their goal of establishment in farming.

State Farmers must show, in addition to outstanding farming programs, evidences of leadership in school, chapter and community organizations. It is of further interest to determine to what extent this ability carries over into adult life.

To secure the foregoing information, the writer conducted a study of the 614 young men in Michigan who received the State Farmer Degree during the period 1940 to 1947.

I. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Future Farmers of America. "The Future Farmers of America is a national organization for students of vocational agriculture."²

State Farmer Degree. Each year the Michigan association of the Future Farmers of America awards the degree of State Farmer to its outstanding members. The qualifications for election to the degree as set up by the national association³ require the candidate to be regularly enrolled

² Official Manual for Future Farmers of America (Baltimore: The French-Bray Printing Company, 1943), p. 13.

³ Ibid., pp. 15-16.

in vocational agriculture or to have completed all of the vocational agriculture offered. He must have earned by his own efforts from farming or other agricultural work and have productively invested at least \$250. At least two thirds of this amount must have been earned from his supervised farming program, indicating that he is making progress toward becoming established in farming.

Each state is entitled to elect ten State Farmers annually, but in a state where membership exceeds five hundred, not more than 2 per cent of the total membership shall be elected.⁴

II. PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

The purposes of this study were (1) to determine the present occupational status of young men in Michigan who have received the State Farmer Degree during the period, 1940 to 1947; (2) to determine some of the factors related to their present occupational status; (3) to compare the findings of this study with the report of the first Michigan study of State Farmers made by McKim;⁵ (4) to provide suggestions for guidance in the training of prospective farmers.

⁴ See Appendix A for the copy of qualifications for election to the degree of State Farmer.

⁵ McKim, loc. cit.

III. PROCEDURE FOLLOWED

A list of the 614 young men in Michigan who received the State Farmer degree during the period 1940 to 1947 was secured from the records of the Michigan Association of Future Farmers of America, located in Lansing. A separate list was made for each school with the names of their State Farmers arranged in order of years in which they received the State Farmer Degree.

Because of the size of the group of State Farmers, it was decided that only half of them would be included in the study in order to reduce the amount of labor involved. A sampling technique was used in which the group was reduced to 311 names, but the number of State Farmers from each school was proportional to the total number on the list of each school. The procedure consisted of arranging the lists according to the number of State Farmers produced from each school and selecting every other name on each list. For schools with only one State Farmer, one member from every other school was taken. For schools with only two State Farmers, the sampling alternated between first and second members on each school's list. This last step was taken in order to keep the sample representative by years of the total 614 State Farmers.

Two form letters and a personal note were used to .

secure the addresses of the young men.⁶ The form letters were mimeographed and the names of the State Farmers desired were added to the forms sent to their respective schools. The first request for addresses was sent out in May, 1942, and a follow-up letter in September. A third attempt to get addresses was made through a personal appeal on a postal card sent out two weeks later. In several cases, after the first request was not answered, and where the vocational agriculture department was found to be discontinued, a personal letter was sent to the superintendent. In this way, addresses of 297, or 95.5 per cent of the 311 State Farmers were located.

A trial check-list and a letter to State Farmers were prepared after a personal interview with Earl C. McKim of Lansing, who had used a similar device in his study⁷ of State Farmers. Two State Farmers at Marlette were interviewed personally by the writer and asked to complete the check-list to determine its clarity and ease of completion. No major changes in the check-list were made.

The check-list⁸ and letter were mailed to each of the State Farmers for whom addresses had been obtained.

⁶ See Appendix B and C for copies of address request forms.

⁷ McKim, loc. cit.

⁸ See Appendix D for copy of the check-list used, and Appendix E for the letter sent to State Farmers.

Check-lists and letters continued to be sent to State Farmers as more addresses were returned. A second letter⁹ was sent to the State Farmers in September. A third letter¹⁰ was sent out three weeks later. In this way, returns were received from 262, or 84.2 per cent of the 311 State Farmers in the group used for this study.

As a test of the representativeness of the sample, the first eighty-four returns were compared with the second and the third eighty-four returns for Tables II, III, V, VI, VII, and VIII. By inspection, it was decided that the differences were too small or inconsistent to be of significance.

⁹ See Appendix F for second letter sent to State Farmers.

¹⁰ See Appendix G for the third letter sent to State Farmers.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There is much literature pertaining to establishment in farming of students in vocational agriculture. A considerable portion of these studies is devoted to reporting factors associated with establishment in farming. However, few studies have been conducted to determine the occupational status, and factors related to establishment in farming, of the State Farmer group.

Literature on State Farmers. McKim¹ made a study of 294 young men in Michigan who received the State Farmer degree during the period 1930 to 1939 inclusive. McKim's data show that 56.1 per cent of these young men were established in full-time or part-time farming and 22.5 per cent were engaged in related occupations. This makes a total of 78.6 per cent of these State Farmers engaged in farming or related occupations. He points out that the per cent of State Farmer young men in farming was not as large as might be expected. He also mentions the fact that only 10.5 per cent of the State Farmers had attended young-farmer classes in agriculture and that only 15.2 per cent had participated in adult-farmer classes. At the time of

¹ McKim, loc. cit.

McKim's study, the young-farmer and adult classes had not become very widely used in Michigan.

Further data secured from McKim's study² emphasize the leadership and scholarship ability of the group he studied. Nearly half, 41.4 per cent, had attended college at some period after leaving high school and 52.0 per cent had held office in some organization.

A study of 453 Ohio State Farmers³ showed 87 per cent of this group to be in farming or occupations related to farming. Fifty-seven per cent were farming full-time or part-time. Weiler points out, however, that of those young men who had advanced to the American Farmer Degree, 80 per cent were established in farming. He concludes that the farming program is the greatest factor or of greatest value in helping young men to become established in farming. He also observed that those State Farmers in the upper one third of their class were more likely to leave farming and enter other occupations.

Wayman's⁴ follow-up study of distinguished West Virginia Future Farmers does not corroborate all of the

² McKim, op. cit., p. 29.

³ Warren G. Weiler, "A Study of State Farmers in Ohio." The Agricultural Education Magazine, 12:234-235, June, 1942.

⁴ W. H. Wayman, "A Follow-up of Distinguished West Virginia Future Farmers." The Agricultural Education Magazine. 12:75, October, 1939.

findings of Weiler. Wayman reports that the difference between State and American Farmers is not significant, but that both groups are above average in their progress toward establishment in farming. He cites the following as being among the reasons for State Farmers not farming: (1) attending college, (2) earning money to attend college, (3) lack of money, and (4) "I did not like farming any longer." Mr. Wayman suggests that the F.F.A. is accomplishing its purpose of leadership, but points out that 19 per cent of the West Virginia State Farmers are going into non-related occupations and only 29 per cent are farming full-time.

Bertrand and Thurman⁵ made a study of 407 State Farmers in Texas over a period of eleven years. They found that 51 per cent of these young men engaged in agricultural pursuits of which farming constituted only 31.5 per cent. They brought out the following questions: (1) "Is our intended program falling just a wee bit short somewhere?" (2) "Are teachers hazy about the qualities needed for a State Farmer?" (3) "Where can the blame be laid for such large numbers of State Farmers severing connections with agriculture?"

In a comparison of State Farmers and non-State

⁵ J. R. Bertrand and R. L. Thurman, "Eleven Years with the State Farmers of Texas." The Agricultural Education Magazine. 12:136, January, 1940.

Farmers in Virginia, Sharitz⁶ found that State Farmers were superior to non-State Farmers in all factors studied. His study shows that 48 per cent of the State Farmers were established in full-time farming as compared to 37 per cent for the non-State Farmers. Twenty-five per cent of the State Farmers left farming for non-related occupations whereas 43 per cent of the non-State Farmers left farming and related occupations. The State Farmer group also showed greater participation in community activities.

A brief summary of the foregoing studies of State Farmers shows establishment in farming ranging from 31.5 per cent to 57 per cent. A range of 58.2 per cent to 87 per cent is indicated for establishment in farming or related occupations. From 13 per cent to 25 per cent of the State Farmers were reported in occupations not related to agriculture.

Literature on occupations of former students of vocational agriculture. Many studies have been made of former students of vocational agriculture without regard to their status in the Future Farmers of America organization. Some of these studies will be reviewed here in order to establish a concept of the success that the average student of vocational agriculture is having in becoming established

⁶ T. J. Sharitz, "Comparison of State Farmers and Non-State Farmers in Virginia." The Agricultural Education Magazine. 13:172-173, March, 1941.

in farming. Several of these studies contained suggestions for that part of this writer's check-list which asked for reasons for the lack of establishment in farming.

Adam⁷ made a study of former students of vocational agriculture of Oregon and found that 28 per cent went into farming while 41 per cent chose occupations unrelated to agriculture. He says, "We can't stop when boys are through high school." He is implying that the responsibility of the school for encouraging establishment in farming should go beyond the high school age.

Bartley⁸ reports in a study of 172 boys in one community in Michigan that 41.3 per cent entered farming and 46.6 per cent chose occupations not related to agriculture.

Clark⁹ in a study conducted with fifty former students of vocational agriculture in Richland County, Illinois, emphasizes that 87.5 per cent of those farming had partnership status. He points out the great variation in factors mentioned by the young men as influencing or helping them to become farmers, and concludes that leaders of farm boys must

⁷ R. M. Adam, "Follow-up Study of Former Students." The Agricultural Education Magazine, 13:95, November, 1940.

⁸ Hugh J. Bartley, "A Follow-up Study of Pupils Enrolled in Vocational Agriculture in the High School at Mason, Michigan." Master's thesis, Michigan State College, East Lansing, 1942. p. 28.

⁹ Lloyd T. Clark, "How Fifty Young Men Became Established in Farming." The Agricultural Education Magazine, 12:132-134, January, 1940.

be especially well trained and able to find the particular interest of the boy and to guide him.

Deyoe¹⁰ carried out a study of 818 farm-reared boys of Michigan who had one or more years of vocational agriculture, and reports that 60.5 per cent were established in farming and 33 per cent in non-agricultural occupations. His study shows further that the boys included in the last five-year period, 1930 to 1935, showed the greatest proportion established in farming, namely, 70.9 per cent. One of the major reasons given by the boys for choosing farming was that they had a chance to farm. Deyoe suggests further study on the question, "What one thing kept you from advancing?"

Ekstrom¹¹ lists several factors in his study associated with establishment in farming, and says assistance from parents and relatives are the most important ones. He states that building up savings and personal assets are the biggest problems, followed by the securing of land. Ekstrom concludes that boys need to be taught how to establish their credit and that teachers must be familiar with placement opportunities. He states that the group out of school is interested in matters pertaining to establishment of a home, and in

¹⁰ G. P. Deyoe, Young Men From Michigan Farms. Bulletin No. 256, Lansing, Michigan. State Board of Control for Vocational Education, 1939. pp. 9-10.

¹¹ G. F. Ekstrom, "How Graduates Become Established." The Agricultural Education Magazine, 17:14-15, July, 1944.

various rural and community activities, as well as farm problems.

Hoopes¹² published a study on one hundred young men of Muscatine, Iowa which shows that 64 per cent engaged in farming while only 19 per cent left the field of agriculture entirely. A total of 74 per cent engaged in farming and related occupations. He suggests that future surveys contain the following questions as one method of determining why young men leave farming: (1) "Did you lack capital?" (2) "Was the outlook for agriculture poor?" (3) "Could you get good cash pay at another job?" (4) "Was there an excess of help at home?"

Hamlin¹³ reported in 1941 that the job of establishing boys in farming can be more successful than the past record shows. He points out that one Illinois teacher had, over a twelve-year period, succeeded in establishing 90 per cent of his students in farming. Hamlin feels that enough is known so that at least 60 per cent of those enrolled will farm and 75 per cent will engage in some agricultural occupation. He emphasizes that young-farmer classes and adult-farmer classes need to be increased.

¹² L. B. Hoopes, "Factors Affecting Establishment in Farming." The Agricultural Education Magazine, 10:194-195, April, 1938.

¹³ H. M. Hamlin, "How Can We Identify Our Prospective Farmers in High School?" The Agricultural Education Magazine, 13:146-147, February, 1941.

Hill¹⁴ found that, in a study of Texas young men from one vocational department over a period of 19 years, 47 per cent of the graduates were in farming and 33 per cent were in occupations not related to farming.

Byram¹⁵ reported a study of 490 out-of-school young men on farms in eleven Michigan communities. Included in Byram's study were 219 former students of vocational agriculture of which 40.2 per cent could be classified as farm laborers and 37.8 per cent as farm partners. Only 8.7 per cent were renter-operators and 3.2 per cent were owner-operators.

Byram¹⁶ also points out in his study that less than one per cent of the 490 young men owned land in their own right and only 10.8 per cent owned land in partnership. Furthermore, Byram reports that only 20.1 per cent owned any equipment with which they might work in becoming established in farming. Of this group, 56.7 per cent had not advanced beyond the farm-laborer stage in establishment in farming and only 8.4 per cent had advanced to either a renter or owner status.

¹⁴ J. M. Hill, "What Becomes of Vocational Agriculture Students." The Agricultural Education Magazine, 15:175, March, 1943.

¹⁵ H. M. Byram, Out-Of-School Young Men On Farms. Bulletin No. 274, Lansing, Michigan. State Board of Control for Vocational Education, 1941. p. 11.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 14.

From these studies, it is quite evident that there is considerable range in the proportion of vocational students who become established in farming. The exact percentages range from 28.0 to 64. At the same time the evidence shows that fewer of the State Farmers are found in occupations not related to agriculture. Three studies of the total group of students of vocational agriculture report over 41 per cent in non-related occupations. Only one study reports as many as 25 per cent of State Farmers in non-related work. From the standpoint of establishment in farming, State Farmers have a very narrow margin over the non-State Farmer group.

In many of these studies the writers point out the implications of the data for future guidance in the training of prospective farmers. They insist that since establishment in farming is the primary aim in vocational agriculture, more emphasis should be placed on securing a more favorable ratio of established young men. While one study indicates that a goal of 90 per cent established is not impossible, and that at least 60 per cent should be a reachable goal, most studies ask for more information about why young farmers leave farming.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION OF DATA

This is a study of 311 State Farmers of Michigan whose names were taken, by a sampling technique, from the total group of 614 young men who received the degree during the period 1940 to 1947.

Addresses were secured for 304 of the group and check-lists were mailed to them. Since seven letters were returned unopened, indicating incorrect addresses, only 297 received letters. Two hundred sixty-two returned check-lists; a return of 88.2 per cent of those reached, or 84.2 per cent of the original 311. Of 123 schools included in the sample, 117 are represented in this study, a return from State Farmers in 95.1 per cent of the schools sampled.

Table I shows that except for the 1940 group the returns were quite evenly distributed over the years studied. Although the major consideration in the sampling procedure was to make the sample representative by schools, it is evident that the sample by years is fairly representative of the entire group by years.

A comparison is made in Table II of the occupational status of two groups of State Farmers of Michigan. Data for Group I were taken from McKim's¹ study and data for

¹ McKim, op. cit., p. 14.

TABLE I

DISTRIBUTION OF YOUNG MEN RECEIVING AND RETURNING
CHECK-LISTS ACCORDING TO YEAR IN WHICH
DEGREE WAS RECEIVED

Year degree was received	Number who received State Farmer degree	Number receiving check-lists	Number returning check-lists	Per cent returning check-lists
1940.	32	13	9	69.2
1941.	58	32	27	84.4
1942.	52	23	20	87.0
1943.	66	35	29	83.0
1944.	62	33	26	78.8
1945.	109	52	43	82.7
1946.	107	53	47	88.7
1947.	128	70	61	87.1
Total	614	311	262	84.2

TABLE II
A COMPARISON OF OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF
TWO GROUPS OF STATE FARMERS
OF MICHIGAN

Occupational status	Group 1* 1942 study		Group 2 1948 study		Differ- ence (G ₂ -G ₁)
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	
Farming full-time. . .	87	45.6	145	56.0	+10.4**
Farming part-time with other work. . . .	20	10.5	17	6.6	- 3.9
Total in full-time and part-time farming	107	56.1	162	62.6	+ 6.5**
Occupation related to farming***.	43	22.5	40	15.4	- 7.1
Total in farming and related occupations.	150	78.6	202	78.0	- .6
Occupation not related to agriculture	41	21.4	57	22.0	+ .6
Total reporting. . .	191	100.0	259	100.0	

* McKim, op. cit., p. 14.

** Double asterisks indicate differences found to be statistically significant.

*** "Occupations related to farming" include college students in agriculture. "Non-related" include college students taking courses of study not related to agriculture.

Group II come from the present study. Of the latter group, only 259 State Farmers returned data usable in this table. Check-lists for three other young men were returned, but not included here because one was deceased, and the other two confined to army hospitals. In the latter two cases, both were farming in 1947.

Wherever data from this study have been compared with data from McKim's² study, the differences have been tested for significance using the following formulas: $\sigma_d = \sqrt{p_1 + p_2}$ and $\sigma_p = \sqrt{\frac{p \times q}{N}}$.

Table II shows that 62.6 per cent of the State Farmers in this study were engaged in farming and 15.4 per cent in a related occupation. This makes a total of 78 per cent who were pursuing occupations for which they had received some training, and agrees closely with the results of McKim's³ study of 1930 to 1939 State Farmers. Only Weiler,⁴ of Ohio, has reported a larger percentage of State Farmers in farming and related occupations.

In this study, however, the 62.6 per cent of young men reported in full-time or part-time farming is larger than any of the studies cited in the review of literature and furthermore, a larger portion of the State Farmers, 56.0

² McKim, loc. cit.

³ McKim, op. cit., p. 12.

⁴ Weiler, op. cit., p. 234.

per cent, were in full-time farming than was reported by any of the above studies,⁵ and this portion is significantly higher than the 45.6 per cent reported by McKim.

It is pertinent to note that the increase in percentage of full-time farmers can be accounted for in the decreases of part-time farmers and young men engaged in occupations related to agriculture.

The average age of the young men included in the present study is 21.4 years compared to an average age of 25.4 years for the State Farmers in McKim's study. It is reasonable to assume that this age difference of four years would make more significant the differences in establishment in farming. Being an older group, the State Farmers studied by McKim had a longer period in which to become more fully established.

This difference in ages can be largely accounted for by the following facts: (1) McKim's data came from State Farmers who had received their degree from three to thirteen years prior to his study. (2) The present study involves data from young men who have received the State Farmer degree from one to eight years prior to this study.

While this study shows that State Farmers of recent years in Michigan reached new heights in percentage of

⁵ Cf. ante, pp. 1, 8, 9, 10.

establishment in farming, Hoopes,⁶ of Iowa, reported 64 per cent engaged in farming and only 19 per cent engaged in occupations not related to agriculture. These are slightly better than the results of the present study and were made by students of vocational agriculture without regard to State Farmer status.

It is pertinent to note that this study exceeds the goals of 60 per cent in farming and 75 per cent in farming and related occupations set by Hamlin⁷ in 1941.

Table III shows the farming status of 145 State Farmers of this study who reported being in farming as compared with a similar group from McKim's study.⁸ While it is difficult to make comparison in this table since some in McKim's group reported more than one status, there is a decided difference in the percentages reporting as owners. Twenty-four and two tenths per cent of the earlier study were owners and only 6.9 per cent of the present study. More young farmers in the present study reported in the laborer class and none reported as a farm manager.

In connection with this portion of the study it might be well to note that in times of high prices, the cost of securing a farm is a big financial burden. This is further

⁶ Hoopes, op. cit., p. 194-195.

⁷ Hamlin, op. cit., p. 146-147.

⁸ McKim, op. cit., p. 16.

TABLE III
A COMPARISON OF FARMING STATUS OF TWO
GROUPS OF STATE FARMERS
OF MICHIGAN

Farming status	Group 1--1942*		Group 2--1947		Difference
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	
Owners	21	24.2	10	6.9	-17.3
Managers	4	4.6			
Renters	15	17.2	27	18.6	+ 1.4
Partners	46	52.9	83	57.2	+ 4.3
Farm laborers . . .	9	10.4	20	13.8	+ 3.4
Others	4**	4.6	3***	2.1	- 2.5
Unknown	4	4.6	2	1.4	- 3.2
Totals	103	118.5****	145	100.0	
Number reporting .	87		145		

* McKim, op. cit., p. 16.

** Herdsmen for large farms.

*** Armed service in 1947, but farming in 1948

**** Per cent reporting is over 100 since some reported more than one status.

indicated in the high per cent of young men in the partnership stage of establishment in farming. The number of young men reporting as renters, 18.6 per cent, is not significantly higher than that reported by McKim.

Table IV shows the changes by years in farming status of 110 State Farmers which took place from the time they received their degree through the year 1947. The data for the 1940 State Farmers were not included because only nine check-lists were returned, and the 1946 and 1947 State Farmers were omitted because they have received their State Farmer degree so recently. The farming status of the State Farmers at the time they entered the armed services is considered unchanged for the years they were in the service.

In Table IV, the State Farmers show a steady decrease in numbers in the "laborer" status for each of the year-groups studied. The number of partnerships has increased, although not to a great extent. However, it is to be expected that the increase in partnerships would not be very large because more than half of the State Farmers were in partnership at the time they received their degree. The 1941 group shows the largest gain in partnerships of all the groups, but it is pertinent to note that (1) they had the smallest proportion of their members in the partnership classification at the time they received their degree, and (2) they have had a longer time in which to become established than the other groups.

TABLE IV
 CHANGES IN FARMING STATUS OF 110 YOUNG MEN FARMING
 IN 1948 BY YEARS AFTER RECEIVING
 THE STATE FARMER DEGREE

Farming status	No.*	Year*	No. of State Farmers in each status by years after receiving State Farmer degree							Difference**
			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Laborers										
	15	1941	5	4	4	3	3	2	2	-3
	20	1942	6	4	4	4	2	1		-5
	18	1943	6	4	4	3	1			-5
	26	1944	4	4	2	1				-3
	21	1945	5	6	4					-1
Partners										
	15	1941	6	7	6	7	7	9	10	+4
	20	1942	9	8	8	8	10	9		0
	18	1943	11	12	12	12	10			-1
	26	1944	5	4	6	6				+1
	21	1945	10	9	10					0
Renters										
	15	1941	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	+1
	20	1942		2	2	2	2	3		+3
	18	1943		1	1	1	4			+4
	26	1944	1	2	2	3				+2
	21	1945	2	2	1					-1
Owners										
	15	1941								0
	20	1942	1	2	2	2	2	3		+2
	18	1943				1	2			+2
	26	1944	1	1	1	1				0
	21	1945	2	2	4					+2

* This refers to the total number of young men in any farming status in 1948 who received the State Farmer degree in the year indicated in the adjacent column to the right.

** This difference was found by subtracting the number in column "0" from the number in the last column in which farming status is indicated.

In the renter classification, all year-groups show an increase except the 1945 State Farmers, and they have received their degree only three years ago. Few State Farmers classify as owners in this table, but their numbers have increased over the years covered in this study.

In summary of Table IV, it might be stated that the evidence indicates that the State Farmers studied made advancements from the laborer status into a partnership, a renter, or an owner status.

In Table V, a comparison is made between two groups of State Farmers of Michigan on the basis of participation in education beyond high school. Group two, State Farmers in the present study, had only 11.5 per cent who attended young-farmer classes. This is almost identical with what McKim⁹ found in his study of State Farmers of eight years ago. State Farmers of the present study took part in adult-farmer and veterans-institute classes in almost equal numbers, which amount to 7.7 per cent each. These figures fall short of the results of studies in other states. Weiler¹⁰ found in a study of a similar group that 82 per cent had at some time been enrolled in young-farmer or adult classes.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 19, 20.

¹⁰ Weiler, op. cit., pp. 234.

TABLE V
 A COMPARISON OF PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION
 BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL BETWEEN TWO GROUPS
 OF STATE FARMERS OF MICHIGAN

Kind of education	Group 1* 1930-1939		Group 2 1940-1947		Differ- ence (G ₂ -G ₁)
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	
Number reporting.	191		261		
Young-farmer class.	20	10.5	30	11.5	+ 1.5
Adult class	29	15.2	22	8.4	- 6.8
Veterans institute.			19	7.3	
College	79	41.4	68	26.1	-15.3**
Michigan State College.			52	19.9	
Other colleges.			16	6.1	
Short course***	45	23.6	67	25.7	+ 2.1

* McKim, op. cit., pp. 20, 21.

** Double asterisks indicate differences found to be statistically significant.

*** Short course in agriculture at Michigan State College.

Sharitz¹¹ reported 29.2 per cent of the Virginia State Farmers as members of young-farmer classes.

McKim¹² found that 41.4 per cent of his group attended college. This is compared with 26.1 per cent of the present group, which indicates a decided drop in college attendance and has been found to be statistically significant. Nearly three and one half times as many of the present State Farmers attended Michigan State College as attended all other colleges. Twenty-five and seven tenths per cent of the present group attended some short course at Michigan State College, which compares favorably with the 23.6 per cent reported by McKim.

It is pertinent to note here that in 1944 the State Association of the Future Farmers of America dropped the requirement that a State Farmer must be in the upper 40 per cent of his class scholastically.¹³

Table VI shows a comparison of leadership between two groups of State Farmers of Michigan. It will be seen that Group one, McKim's study,¹⁴ has a larger percentage, 91.7, reporting membership in organizations. This is

¹¹ Sharitz, op. cit., p. 173.

¹² McKim, op. cit., p. 19.

¹³ The Michigan Future Farmer, Vol. XIII, No. 5, p.5, May 15, 1944.

¹⁴ McKim, op. cit., p. 22.

TABLE VI

A COMPARISON OF PARTICIPATION OF TWO GROUPS OF
STATE FARMERS IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS
AND ACTIVITIES

Participation in community organizations and activities	Group 1* 1930-1939	Group 2 1940-1947	Differ- ence
Number reporting.	191	261	
Organizations			
Number reporting membership . .	175	219	
Per cent.	91.7	83.9	- 7.8
Number of memberships	511	621	
Average per member.	2.9	2.8	- .1
Held office			
Number holding office	91	86	
Per cent.	52.0	39.3	-12.7**
Number of offices held.	164	147	
Average number per member . . .	1.8	1.7	- .1

* McKim, op. cit., p. 23.

** Double asterisks indicate differences found to be statistically significant.

compared with 83.9 per cent for the present study. However, the average number of organizations participated in by the young men is practically the same for the two groups. The two groups show a difference, too, in the percentages holding office. Fifty-two per cent of McKim's group that were members of an organization also held office. In the present study, only 39.3 per cent were officers. This difference of 12.7 per cent in favor of "Group 1" has been found to be statistically significant. Again, however, the two groups are similar in the number of offices held per member.

If it is assumed that age is a factor in the selection of officers for organizations, then some significance can be attributed to the fact that McKim's¹⁵ group were, on the average, four years older than the State Farmers of the present study.

One of the major purposes of this study was to determine some factors associated with young men leaving farming. In making up the items for this part of the check-list, the writer included several of the commonly accepted reasons of young men for leaving the farm. Table VII is a summary of the reasons checked by State Farmers who were not farming full-time in 1948. Thirty-one per cent of these young men reported that they were attending college at that time. "Lack of land" was a limiting factor for 29.7 per cent, and

¹⁵ Cf. p. 20.

TABLE VII
 REASONS GIVEN BY 116 STATE FARMERS
 FOR LEAVING THE OCCUPATION
 OF FULL-TIME FARMING

Reasons for leaving the farm	Number	Per cent
College.	36	31.0
Lack of land	35	29.7
Lack of capital.	34	29.3
Armed forces	19	16.4
Lack of machinery.	15	12.9
Low cash income.	10	8.6
Lack of buildings.	9	7.8
Lack of livestock.	7	6.0
Couldn't get along with Father	6	5.2
I didn't like farming.	5	4.3
No progress.	3	2.6
Farm run-down.	3	2.6
Others	3	2.6
No future in it.	2	1.7
Wife didn't like farming	2	1.7

"lack of capital" ranked third as a reason for not being in farming.

Sixteen and four tenths per cent of the group listed "armed forces" as a major factor keeping them from farming. Lack of machinery was checked by 12.9 per cent as a problem. Lack of buildings and low cash income was mentioned by only 8.6 per cent of the group.

It can be noted that many of the commonly conceded "causes" of boys leaving the farm did not receive much attention by the boys. Seven items were checked more frequently than the item "couldn't get along with father," which was checked by only six young men. Only five mentioned the factor "I didn't like farming" as a reason for leaving the farm. Only three State Farmers stated that "no progress" or "farm run-down" were causes for not being in farming. Just two State Farmers saw "no future" in farming, and only two young men mentioned "my wife didn't like farming."

Wayman¹⁶ in his study of distinguished West Virginia Future Farmers agrees that lack of capital and college attendance are two reasons for State Farmers failing to farm. However, Wayman also stated that two thirds of the group not farming indicated that they did not like farming any longer. Only 4.3 per cent of the young men in this study reported they did not like farming.

¹⁶ Wayman, op. cit., p. 75.

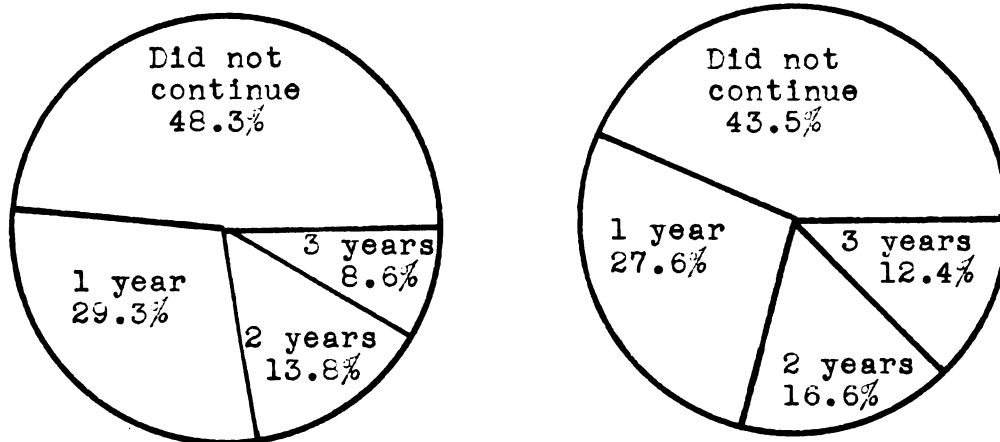
Table VIII contains an evaluation of several items as helps to the 145 State Farmers who were established as full-time farmers in 1948. Outstanding among these items is the item of family help. Ninety-one of these young men revealed that their family was of much help and only twenty-four said they received no help from their families. The farm programs of these young men ranked high as factors in helping them become established in farming with the livestock projects getting the most credit. While 4-H club work was ranked above Future Farmer chapter activities, it must be remembered that the F.F.A. projects were classified separately from other chapter activities, whereas 4-H club work probably included the 4-H livestock and crop projects in the minds of the young men. Having a "farm of sufficient size" ranked sixth in the list of helps although sixty-five young men mentioned it in the "much help" column, and it was second only to "family help" in this column.

In Figure 1, the extent of membership beyond high school in the local chapter of the F.F.A. is compared between the farmer and non-farmer groups. These graphs show little correlation between membership in the F.F.A. after leaving school and establishment in farming. Both groups took part in F.F.A. to about the same extent their first year beyond high school, which amounted to about 28 per cent. Sixteen and six tenths per cent of the farmer group kept their membership two years and 13.8 per cent of the

TABLE VIII
EVALUATION BY 145 STATE FARMERS OF HELPFULNESS
OF SEVERAL FACTORS IN BECOMING
ESTABLISHED IN FARMING

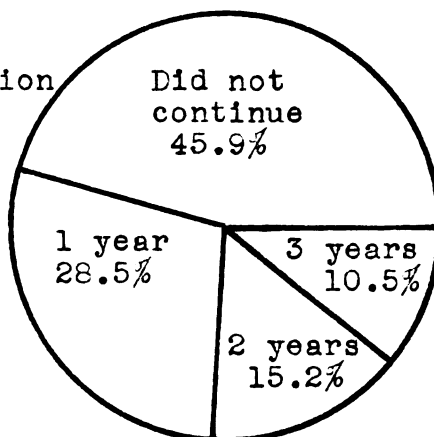
Rank*	Helps	No. of State Farmers reporting		
		Much help	Some help	No answer
1	Family.	91	30	24
2	F. F. A. livestock projects.	69	35	41
3	F. F. A. crop projects.	57	51	37
4	Teacher of agriculture.	57	48	40
5	Agriculture classes	58	44	43
6	Farm of sufficient size.	65	26	53
7	4-H club work	39	41	65
8	F. F. A. chapter activities.	32	54	59
9	County agent.	12	43	90
10	Inheritance	8	10	127

*The rank was found by giving two points to the "much help" column and one point to the "some help" column.



Distribution of 116 Non-farmers in relation to membership in the F.F.A. after leaving high school.

Distribution of 145 farmers in relation to membership in the F.F.A. after leaving high school.



Combined data for both groups (261 men)

Figure 1

Distribution of State Farmers in Relation to Membership in the F.F.A. After Leaving High School

non-farmer group continued F.F.A. work. In the third year beyond high school 12.4 per cent of the farmer group were in the F.F.A. and only 8.6 per cent of the non-farmer group. On the whole, 10.5 per cent of the State Farmers continued F.F.A. memberships for three years, 15.2 per cent for two years and 28.5 per cent for one year beyond high school.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary: This is a study of 311 young men in Michigan who received the State Farmer degree during the period 1940 to 1947. They were sampled from the total group of 614 State Farmers of this period. This study was made (1) to determine the present occupational status and leadership activities of these young men, (2) to determine some of the factors related to their present occupational status, and (3) to provide possible suggestions for guidance in the training of prospective farmers. An effort was made to determine some of the factors associated with their present occupational status in order to provide suggestions for guidance in the training of prospective farmers.

1. Over half of the State Farmers, 56 per cent, were engaged in full-time farming in 1948, a statistically significant gain of 10.4 per cent over a similar group studied in 1942.
2. A total of 62.6 per cent were in full-time and part-time farming, a statistically significant gain of 6.5 per cent over the group studied in 1942. Seventy-eight per cent of the present group were in farming or related occupations, which is almost identical with the previous Michigan study.

3. About one fifth, 22.0 per cent, had left the field of agriculture and related occupations, which is almost identical with the previous Michigan study.
4. Few of the State Farmers of this group, 6.9 per cent, had become established as owners, although 57.2 per cent reported partnerships in farming and 18.6 per cent were classified as renters.
5. Thirteen and eight tenths per cent of the State Farmers had made little progress toward establishment in farming and were classified as laborers.
6. After receiving the State Farmer Degree, State Farmers continued to make gains toward establishment in farming as the number in the laborer class decreased and the number of partnerships, renters, and owners increased.
7. Fewer State Farmers in this study had attended college, 26.1 per cent, as compared to the 41.4 per cent for the State Farmers in the former Michigan study. The difference was found to be statistically significant.
8. More than one fourth of the young men in this study, 25.7 per cent, had attended short course at Michigan State College. This is slightly more than the 23.6 percentage recorded by the previous Michigan study.

9. Participation in young-farmer classes, 11.5 per cent, was practically the same as reported for the first Michigan study.
10. Only 8.4 per cent of the State Farmers attended adult classes. The same percentage attended veteran institute classes. The combined percentage of the attendance in adult classes and veterans classes is about equal to the percentage of State Farmers in the first Michigan study who had attended adult classes.
11. Eighty-three and nine tenths per cent of the State Farmers reported membership in organizations. Of this group, 39.3 per cent had held offices. The first Michigan study showed nearly 92 per cent in organizations and 52 per cent having held office. The difference between the two studies in the percentages holding office was found to be statistically significant.
12. The average memberships per State Farmer and the average number of offices held per member was practically the same for the two Michigan studies.
13. Of the reasons given for leaving farming, "going to college" ranked first with 31.0 per cent of the young men checking it, "lack of land" second with 29.7 per cent, and "lack of capital" third with 29.3 per cent.

14. Family help was ranked first by respondents as a factor in becoming established in farming. F.F.A. crop projects were ranked second and third respectively. The teacher of agriculture and the vocational agriculture classes were ranked fourth and fifth. Having a farm of sufficient size was ranked second in a list of items entitled as "much help," although it was sixth in the final evaluation.
15. State Farmers who remained in full-time farming continued membership in the Future Farmers organization in slightly larger percentages than non-farmers. The difference increased slightly for the second and third years beyond high school. Fifty-four per cent remained in the F.F.A. at least one year.

Conclusions: The following conclusions seem warranted as a result of the present investigation:

State Farmers of Michigan are becoming established in some farming status to an increasing extent.

The evidence suggests that State Farmers of Michigan are becoming established in full-time farming to a greater extent than was true ten years ago.

As the number of State Farmers has increased, the improvement in the degree of establishment in farming has not been accompanied by increased evidences of leadership ability.

State Farmers leave farming because of "lack of capital" and "lack of land," as well as, for "going to college." This would seem to indicate that the establishment of credit, capital, and land should receive increased emphasis in vocational agriculture.

Assuming that young-farmer classes are concerned with the problems of helping young men secure capital, equipment, and land, the small percentage of State Farmers who have attended these classes indicates a need for more emphasis on the establishment of young-farmer classes.

If it is assumed that the local chapter of F.F.A. should hold the membership of students of vocational agriculture for three years after graduation from high school, then it is failing to do so and a study of the reasons for this failure is indicated.

In view of the fact that "chapter activities" were rated low as a help to State Farmers in becoming established in farming, a need is indicated for local chapters to study the "supervised farming" section of their program of work.

Suggestions for further study:

1. A study of the reasons why Future Farmers are not continuing to a greater extent their memberships in the F. F. A. after leaving high school.
2. A follow-up study of the State Farmers in Michigan from 1949 to 1958.
3. A study of the effect of the supervised farming program of State Farmers upon their establishment in farming.
4. A study of parent-son relationship and its effect upon establishment in farming.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A

OFFICIAL MANUAL FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA

ARTICLE IV. ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP DEGREES AND PRIVILEGES

SECTION D. State Farmer Degree.

Minimum qualifications for election:

1. Must have held the Degree of Chapter Farmer for at least one year immediately preceding election to the Degree of State Farmer, have been an active member of the F.F.A. for at least two years, and have a record of satisfactory participation in the activities of the local chapter.

2. Must have satisfactorily completed at least two years of instruction in vocational agriculture, have in operation an outstanding program of supervised farming, and be regularly enrolled in a vocational agriculture class (or have completed all the vocational agriculture offered in the school attended).

3. Be familiar with the provisions of the constitution of the State association and national organization.

4. Demonstrate proficiency in parliamentary procedure.

5. Be able to lead a group discussion for forty minutes and pass some occupational or F.F.A. test provided by the State executive committee.

6. Must have earned by his own efforts from farming or other agricultural work and deposited in a bank or otherwise productively invested at least \$250 (at least two-thirds of the amount must be derived from his supervised farming program).

7. Show outstanding ability as evidenced by his leadership and cooperation in student, chapter, and community activities, and have a satisfactory scholarship record as certified to by the local school superintendent or principal.

8. Must have participated in an outstanding way in

activities for community improvement and the development of agriculture.

9. Each State shall be entitled to elect ten qualified individuals annually, but where State membership exceeds 500, not more than 2% of the total State membership shall be elected (fractions counted to the nearest whole number). Written records of achievement verified by the local adviser shall be submitted to the State adviser by the local executive committee at least one month prior to the State convention. The State adviser will then review the records, prepare briefs, and submit his recommendations to the State executive committee. This committee will nominate at the regular State convention the candidates who have been found most worthy to receive the honor. Briefs of the records shall be made available to the delegates when the candidates are nominated. The delegates shall then proceed to elect to the Third Degree the candidates found most worthy.

APPENDIX B

Marlette, Michigan
June 2, 1948

Dear Fellow Agriculture Teacher,

You will remember that I made an appeal at Summer Conference for help from you in securing the addresses of some of your State Farmer boys. Several teachers indicated afterwards that my proposed study of State Farmers should bring to light valuable suggestions for the development and selection of future State Farmers.

This study, which I am using for my masters thesis, will be entitled: "A Follow-up of Young Men in Michigan Who Received the State Farmer Degree during the period 1940-47."

I am enclosing a copy of the check-list I plan to send to these young men.

If you have had more than one State Farmer, you will notice that I have asked for addresses for only a part of your group. This is because I am using only a sampling of the group.

Will you please fill in the addresses of the following young men and return them to me in the enclosed envelope?

	Name	Post office	Route
1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____	_____
11.	_____	_____	_____

Sincerely yours,

T. R. Miller
Instructor of Agriculture
Marlette, Michigan

APPENDIX C

Olivet, Michigan
September 20, 1943

Dear Fellow Teachers of Agriculture:

In June of this year, you probably received a letter from me asking for the addresses of some of the young men from your school who received the degree of State Farmer during the last nine years. So far, I have received answers from ninety-four of these schools, but there are still thirty schools on the missing list. These thirty schools have fifty-four boys whom we will need to include in this study to make it valid enough to summarize.

I know that some of you men may not have received my first letter or may have mislaid it at the time. I feel sure that you do recognize the value of this study and I most certainly will appreciate your effort to return to me the addresses of your boys within a very few days. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Tex Miller
Teacher of Vocational Agriculture

CHECK-LIST FOR STATE FARMERS

Name _____ Address _____ Age _____

State Farmer Degree received in _____ (Year) School _____

I. What is your present occupation: _____

II. Fill in the following table to indicate your educational progress:

Did you attend or are you attending	Check		Where?	Number of Years?	What course of study
	Yes	No			
A. College?					
B. Short Course at Mich. State College?					
C. Part-time or Young Farmer Class in Agriculture in your community?					
D. Adult Class in Agriculture in your community?					
E. Veterans Institute?					

III. Check the following of which you are a member: Church _____, Sunday School _____, Lodge _____, Grange _____, Junior Farm Bureau _____, Senior Farm Bureau _____, Farmer Co-operative _____, (Kind) _____ Dairy Herd Improvement Association _____, Crop Improvement Association _____, Artificial Breeders Association _____, Others _____

IV. Have you ever held offices in the above organizations? Yes _____, No _____.

V. Offices held and organizations _____

VI. Did you continue your F.F.A. membership after leaving school? Yes _____, No _____. If so, for how many years? _____

VII. Please write in below your occupation (or occupations) for each of the years since you became a State Farmer:

1940 _____	1944 _____
1941 _____	1945 _____
1942 _____	1946 _____
1943 _____	1947 _____

VIII. This section is needed to show your status in farming FOR THE YEARS THAT YOU HAVE BEEN FARMING. PLEASE CHECK ONE FOR EACH YEAR.

Farming Status:	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947
A. At home for spending money								
B. Wages at home								
C. Wages away from home								
D. Income from one or more enterprises								
E. Partnership at home								
F. Renter-operator								
G. Owner-operator								
H. Partnership away from home								
I. Manager for someone else								
J. Others (Describe)								
1.								
2.								

IX. For the years you have been farming, check any of the following items which helped you become established.

	Check one column	
	Much help	Some help
A. Family help		
B. Inheritance		
C. F.F.A. crop projects		
D. F.F.A. livestock projects		
E. County Agent		
F. Teacher of Agriculture		
G. 4-H club work		
H. Agriculture classes		
I. Farm of sufficient size		
J. F.F.A. Chapter activities		

X. If you are NOT farming, check any of the reasons listed below which applies to your situation

A. Lack of capital _____	J. Farm run-down _____
B. Lack of land _____	K. No future in it _____
C. Lack of livestock _____	L. Was drafted _____
D. Lack of machinery _____	M. Wife didn't like farming _____
E. Lack of buildings _____	N. I didn't like farming _____
F. Low cash income _____	O. Others (Please list)
G. Days too long _____	1. _____
H. Couldn't get along with Dad _____	2. _____
I. No progress _____	

APPENDIX E

Marlette, Michigan

Dear State Farmer,

Do you know that in the last eight years 614 young men in Michigan became State Farmers? You are one of this group. Have you ever wondered what these State Farmers are doing now?

Your former teacher of agriculture and all the other teachers of vocational agriculture are very much interested in knowing how you have solved that big problem of making a living. We would like to know, so that we can do a better job of teaching, what your big problems were as you became established in farming--or, what difficulties caused you to leave farming. Your answers will decide what problems need emphasis in developing future farmers.

Information concerning your particular situation will be treated confidentially; only totals will be shown in the summaries.

Will you please fill out the enclosed check-list (both sides) and return to me in the enclosed envelope? It will take you about seven minutes to do the whole job.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Texton R. Miller

APPENDIX F

Olivet, Michigan
September 20, 1948

Dear State Farmer:

One hundred and forty of your fellow State Farmers have returned the check-lists sent to them during June and July. I have summarized the first 84 returns and I find that 58% of these State Farmers are farming full-time. Of those that are not farming at all, 40% say that the lack of land caused them to seek other occupations.

I don't know if these facts represent all the State Farmers because I have not heard from you. Agriculture teachers all over the State are eager to see the results of this study of State Farmers. They will use the results to do a better job of training Future Farmers.

Perhaps you didn't get my first letter. Perhaps you just mislaid it. Will you please fill out the enclosed check-list to the best of your ability and return it by return mail? Thank you.

Yours truly,

T. R. Miller
Teacher of Vocational Agriculture

P.S. You can do it in 5 minutes.

APPENDIX G

Olivet, Michigan

October 11, 1948

Dear State Farmer,

It is not yet too late to send in your check-list --if you will mail it within the next few days.

Two hundred and five young men have returned their answers. Your reply will help to make the results of this study more accurate. Future State Farmers will profit from your experience.

We need your ideas. Will you please help us?

Sincerely,

T. R. Miller

Teacher of agriculture

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