





3 1293 10420 5673

This is to certify that the

thesis entitled

HOW FIFTY YOUNG FARMERS BECAME ESTABLISHED  
IN FARMING IN LENAWEE COUNTY, MICHIGAN  
1939-54

presented by

John David Anibal

has been accepted towards fulfillment  
of the requirements for

M.S. degree in Agricultural Economics

Major professor

Date December 7, 1955

N.Y.



RETURNING MATERIALS:

Place in book drop to  
remove this checkout from  
your record. FINES will  
be charged if book is  
returned after the date  
stamped below.

~~40~~  
~~60~~  
**I 346**  
MAGIC 2

JAN 15 1999

JAN 10 7 2002

OCT 07 2002

HOW FIFTY YOUNG FARMERS BECAME ESTABLISHED  
IN FARMING IN LENAWEE COUNTY, MICHIGAN  
1939 - 54

By  
John David Anibal

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Michigan  
State University of Agriculture and Applied Science  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Agricultural Economics

1955





### Acknowledgement

The author wishes to express his sincere thanks to Professor Hill, under whose lofty inspiration, constant supervision, unfailing interest this research was undertaken and to whom the results are herewith dedicated.

The author also wishes to thank his wife, Kathryn who gave so willingly of her time and effort in helping compile the data and type this thesis. Her encouragement and assistance was a tremendous help.

To Mr. Bodell, Superintendent of Clinton Community Schools, Mr. Hartman, Principal, and the Board of Education for allowing the author time to work on this project, he says thank you.

## CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Objectives of the study . . . . .	4
Method of procedure . . . . .	5
Definition of terms . . . . .	6
Historical background and review of literature . . . . .	7
HOW YOUNG FARMERS BECAME ESTABLISHED IN FARMING . . . . .	11
In general . . . . .	11
With and without substantial parental aid . . . . .	13
Difficulties of young farmers . . . . .	14
FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH SUCCESS IN BECOMING ESTABLISHED IN FARMING . . . . .	16
Early environment . . . . .	16
Son's position among the brothers . . . . .	16
Education . . . . .	18
Farm experience . . . . .	19
Parent's role . . . . .	20
Home environment . . . . .	20
Attaining responsibility . . . . .	20
Attaining managerial ability . . . . .	21
Capital accumulation . . . . .	22
Interest in farming . . . . .	24
Time of deciding to be a farmer . . . . .	25
Wife's role . . . . .	27
Obtaining the use of a farm . . . . .	30
Ownership of farms on which young men became established in farming . . . . .	31
Capital accumulation . . . . .	32
Sources of income and savings . . . . .	32
Borrowed funds . . . . .	34
Earning first \$100 . . . . .	36
Use of credit . . . . .	37
Financial status and progress . . . . .	39
Starting to farm . . . . .	39
Financial progress . . . . .	42
Problems of young farmers . . . . .	43
SUMMARY . . . . .	45
APPENDIX . . . . .	47

	Page
APPENDIX, Continued	
Tables 1-16 . . . . .	47
Figures 1-11 . . . . .	63
Case studies and histories . . . . .	74
Evaluation of methodology followed . . . . .	112
Evaluation of study . . . . .	114
Bibliography . . . . .	115
Questionnaire . . . . .	117

HOW FIFTY YOUNG FARMERS BECAME  
ESTABLISHED IN FARMING IN LENAWEE  
COUNTY, MICHIGAN, 1939-54

by

John D. Anibal

Becoming established in farming continues to be a difficult task. This is especially true for young farmers without substantial parental aid. Securing capital to become established in farming and acquiring ownership of a farm may seem to many persons to be an almost unattainable goal.

There is much concern over the problems and difficulties of young families today who wish to become established in farming. It is quite apparent, however, that one way or another young families are becoming established in farming. The 1950 Census of Agriculture for Michigan reports that 15 percent, about one out of seven Michigan farmers were under 35 years of age as of April 1, 1950. Most of these must have become established in the last ten years. Young farmers are becoming established in farming both without as well as with substantial parental aid.

This research project was planned and conducted for the purpose of discovering ways and means which have been used by young farmers in Lenawee County, Michigan in becoming successfully established in farming both with and without sub-

stantial parental aid. In obtaining information on this subject, a total of 58 young farmers in the Clinton area were visited. Out of this number, 50 records were considered to be sufficiently complete to be included in the study.

It is in the best interests of our rural communities and also of our entire economy, that capable young farm families should be assisted in their efforts to become established in the farming business. Some agricultural leaders express the opinion that farming is becoming a "closed shop" available only to farm sons with "substantial parental aid". As a result, some persons think that many capable young men are now unable to become successfully established in farming largely because their parents are unable to provide them with suitable opportunities.

This research study included information from 50 young men who became established in the farming business in Lenawee County from 1939 to 1954. These young farmers became established during a period of generally rising prices of farm products, Fig. 1. During the '40s and early '50s Michigan farmers received good prices for their produce in relation to the prices paid for goods and services. Young farmers becoming established in farming in more recent years may be faced with a different situation with respect to prices of farm products and prices paid by farmers. The parity ratio started

the decline below 100 in 1949, continued to decline and in June of 1955 reached 82, Fig. 2.

Workers on farms in the United States have decreased rather steadily, see Fig. 4. This leads us to assume that each year fewer young men have an opportunity of entering the farming business. A decrease in the number of farm hands, tenants and of farms makes establishment in farming increasingly difficult for young farmers. Each year fewer farmers using more machinery and approved farm practices produce more farm produce, Fig. 5.

In many respects young farmers in Lenawee County are fortunate for it is one of the good agricultural counties in Michigan. Lenawee County<sup>1</sup> is first in the state in total production of corn, acres of corn harvested and yield of corn per acre. The county ranks fourth in the production of winter wheat, second in the production of oats and soybeans and first in yield per acre of soybeans. Lenawee County also ranks high in total number of livestock being second in "all cattle and calves", fourth in stock sheep, seventh in hens and pullets, and first in number of hogs farrowed.

---

<sup>1</sup>Michigan Agricultural Statistics 1954, Michigan Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Industry.

### Objectives of the Study

The major objective of this study is to determine what can be done to aid young families, particularly those without substantial parental aid, in becoming established in farming. This will be done by first discovering and studying ways and means that young families have followed in getting established in farming in Lenawee County. The answers to the following questions are believed to be closely related to solving the problem:

1. How essential is it to "get started early" in the farming business?
2. Of what importance are farm experience, farm managerial ability and financial competence in getting successfully established in farming?
3. Of what importance are kind and amount of education?
4. Of what importance is family environment and attitudes?
5. Of what importance is the cooperation and attitude of the wife?
6. How early should a young man start accumulating capital needed to start farming?
7. What are the different and best ways of accumulating capital needed to start to farm?
8. How much capital is needed for a young man to start farming on his own?



9. To what extent is the lack of credit a limiting factor?
10. What are the best sources of credit to help get started in farming?
11. How do young families locate and obtain the use of farms?
12. What effect does time interruption such as for military service or college education have on their becoming established in farming?
13. What kind of farm operating agreements appear to be the best as an aid to young families in becoming established in farming as renters?
14. What are the major problems that confront young families in getting established in farming now and in the past?

#### Method of Procedure

Literature pertaining to the study was reviewed. Then persons interested in and familiar with the problems encountered by young folks getting established in farming were conferred with. Clinton, Tecumseh, Macon and Franklin Townships in Lenawee County, Michigan were selected as the area of study.

The sample included young farmers who became established in the farming business during the period 1939 - 1954 and were 40 years of age or under. Cases were located through the use

of a plat book of Lenawee County and visiting with township supervisors, who pointed out the location of young farmers within the category of the study. Young farmers contacted were instrumental in the locating of other young men within their vicinity. A Farm Bureau insurance agent also assisted.

The young farmers were interviewed during the summers of 1954 and 1955. A total of 58 farmers were contacted, though only 50 of this group fit the classification of the study.

#### Definitions of Terms

Young Farmer: In this study, a young farmer was considered to be a person young enough to have the major part of his productive life ahead of him. For the purposes of this study, limited to men under 40 years of age.

Established in Farming: The date at which a person operating a farm received a sufficient farm income to carry his debt load and living expenses, without receiving substantial income from an outside source determined the time of becoming established in farming.

Without Substantial Parental Aid: Situations where the individual's own initiative, efforts and funds, rather than substantial financial assistance from parents made it possible for the person to become established in farming, was considered to have become established in farming without substantial parental aid.

## Historical Background and Review of Literature

Research in methods and technique of becoming established successfully in farming is a comparatively new field.

In a recent study, Shepard<sup>1</sup> states, there are opportunities in farming for capable young men and these should be encouraged to remain on the farm. Still the question often arises, "How can young families become successfully established in the farming business, especially those without substantial parental aid?"

Shepard states that education and farm experience are valuable assets in making the start in farming a success. He stresses that knowledge of successful farming is a powerful asset to the young farmer. Shepard points out the fact that the longer time needed to accumulate the large amount of capital needed for farming, the modernization of farm living and increasing competition for land has made it more difficult to become established in farming.

Phipps and Masters<sup>2</sup> find that establishment in farming in Illinois is not a difficult process except for young men who do not have assistance from their parents and relatives. The following is a statement from their findings. "A typical student of vocational agriculture who becomes established in

---

<sup>1</sup>

Shepard, Donald H., How Farm Sons Become Established as Farmers, Michigan State University, Unpublished Thesis, 1950.

<sup>2</sup>

Phipps, Lloyd J., Masters, William D., Future Farmer to Farmer, Division of Agricultural Education, College of Education, University of Illinois.

farming receives considerable help from his parents or relatives. They assist him by locating a farm for him or by taking him into farming with them as a partner. They loan him money. They also allow him to use their equipment and machinery if he is farming close to them. A student of vocational agriculture who does not receive help from his parents or relatives in the process of entering the occupation of farming usually has difficulty in getting started and needs all the help he can obtain from his teacher of vocational agriculture."

Pond and Moore<sup>1</sup> believe that experienced operators who now have established themselves in the farming business can supply valuable information and guidance to the beginner. "They started at an earlier period and perhaps under somewhat different conditions, but with their experience and seasoned judgement they are in a position to answer some of these questions that perplex beginners".

A review of literature shows how difficult it is to obtain information that relates specifically to the universe defined in this study. Few available references supply information as to how young farmers become established in farming without parental assistance.

---

1

Pond, G.A., and Moore, D.S. - Starting Farming: Suggestions and Advice from Successful Farmers, Report No.13, Department Agricultural Economics, Institute of Agriculture, University of Minnesota.

<sup>1</sup>  
Shepard's study covers only a select sample of young men who have completed four terms of Short Course in Agriculture, at Michigan State University. The problems and methods of establishment in farming of these young men would differ from young men without this training. The study is now somewhat out-dated, for most of the information is at least six or seven years old.

<sup>2</sup>  
Sweany's study in Indiana in 1947 supplies valuable information but the sample included only vocational agriculture students. The findings are of interest in connection with a somewhat similar study of young farmers in Lenawee County, Michigan, who are now becoming established in farming.

<sup>3</sup>  
In 1953, Phipps and Masters<sup>3</sup> conducted a study of how students in Vocational Agriculture in Illinois become established in farming. The findings, though from a select sample in Illinois, can be useful for young farmers in Michigan.

<sup>4</sup>  
Swanson, Pond and Cavert<sup>4</sup> have supplied a valuable reference though their findings are from a select sample of

---

<sup>1</sup>  
Shepard, Donald H., How Farm Sons Become Established as Farmers, Michigan State University, Unpublished Thesis, 1950.

<sup>2</sup>  
Sweany, Paul - Educational Significance of Opportunities and Pattern's for Becoming Farm Operators in Indiana, Michigan State University, Unpublished Thesis, 1947.

<sup>3</sup>  
Phipps, Lloyd J., Masters, William D., Future Farmer to Farmer, Division of Agricultural Education, College of Education, University of Illinois.

<sup>4</sup>  
Swanson, H.W., Pond G.A., and Cavert, W.L., Starting Farming Today, Report No. 211, Department of Agriculture Economics, Institute of Agriculture, University of Minnesota.

veterans in Minnesota who were taking "on-the-farm training". Most young farmers do not have the supervision that these men had unless possibly it came from their vocational agriculture teacher.

Wilt's<sup>1</sup> contribution on father-son partnerships is also of value to young farmers; it is of little assistance, however, to young men becoming established in the farming business without substantial parental aid.

Still other publications and research studies contribute much to the field of "establishment in farming", only a lack of representativeness make application of findings from these studies questionable beyond the use which they are intended. Few studies give satisfactory information as to how young farmers accumulate capital and how they solve credit problems. Most of the emphasis on previous studies have been on the routes, techniques and methods employed by young farmers, and no study has adequately touched on the selection and source of beginning farm operators.

The question as to how young farmers become established in the farming business without substantial parental aid still remains unanswered for no research to date has been directed to that field of study.

---

<sup>1</sup>  
Wilt, H.E., Father and Son Farming Agreements in South Central Michigan, Department of Agricultural Economics, Michigan State University, Unpublished Thesis, 1950.

## HOW YOUNG FARMERS BECAME ESTABLISHED IN FARMING

In General: Most of the young farmers included in this study became established in farming during the relatively prosperous period of 1939-54 as shown by Figures 1 and 2. Rising prices of farm products made it possible for many of the young men to pay off debts faster than during more normal times. Those young men who became established in farming in 1948 experienced some declining farm prices which slowed their rate of progress. For example, one young man bought soybeans for \$4/cwt. and received only \$2/cwt. when the crop was harvested.\* A steady increase in the price of farm land favored those who bought land in the "forties". This rise in land prices, however, would appear to make it more difficult for those who plan to buy land at the present time.

The majority of the young men interviewed became established in farming either in a "parent-son partnership" on the home farm or as tenants with a "crop and livestock share lease", Table 1. Parent-son partnerships composed 42 percent of the group whereas 21 became established as tenants. Nineteen of the tenants rented farms with a crop and livestock share lease. One of the tenants started "on his own" by cash

---

\*

A Renter's Son Now Well Established on His Own Rented Farm, see Appendix.

renting a farm, while another tenant became established in farming with a crop share lease.

Six percent of the young farmers included in the study became established in farming by renting land besides the land they owned. Five of the young men owned all of the land they were operating. Two of the owner-operators purchased their farms largely through income received from shop work, and two inherited their farms. Another owner-operator made the down payment on his farm from savings earned while working for his father and from his wife's savings while teaching school.

The young men included in this study became established in farming at various ages from 16 to 37 years. Some of these men had a greater opportunity to continue on the "home farm" after completing school, than did others. Table 7 shows that 54 percent of the young men became established in farming on the home farm. In the majority of cases, the parents of these young men did not contribute any substantial financial assistance toward their establishment in farming, but did give them an opportunity to farm if they so desired. Relatives\* were also instrumental in assisting young farmers by supplying 12 percent of the farms on which the young men became established in farming.

---

\*

This does not include parents.



With and Without Substantial Parental Aid: Parental assistance to the 50 young men in this study who became established in farming during the years 1939-54 ranged from the two who inherited a portion of their farms to those young men who did not even have an opportunity to gain farm experience on the home farm. One of the young men who inherited a 140-acre farm with livestock and equipment, appraised at \$30,000, had practically no farming experience and was working in the shop until shortly before his father's death.

Another young farmer, age 33, had stayed on the home farm and worked for his father without a wage or definite share of the income, except for family living, until his father died. At that time he inherited the 120-acre farm with incurred debts of \$16,000. The estate was appraised at \$47,000. This young man found it difficult to carry such a heavy debt load for he had had practically no experience in managing a farm business while his father was living.

Six of the young men with substantial parental aid had an opportunity to enter into a partnership on the home farm with their parents within one or two years after completing high school. Previous to this time, most of these six young men had an opportunity to accumulate livestock through 4-H

or FFA projects. The majority of these young farmers were single at the time they became established in farming on the home farm, and needed little additional capital. Where dairying was the main enterprise some of these young men received a share of the milk check, others received as high as 50 percent of the farm's net income.

The young men without substantial parental aid who entered into a partnership on the home farm after graduation from high school received little financial backing from their parents. Some of these young men rented land adjacent to their farm. They shared the work on the home farm with their fathers in exchange for the use of his machinery and equipment. In one case a father and three sons worked together and shared machinery.\*

In many cases, the young men interviewed had saved money by working in industry so they might become established in farming. Several men indicated their wife's income and savings were a major contribution to their being able to enter farming. Military savings and Veterans payments proved beneficial in helping some of the young men with financing their farming operations.

Difficulties of Young Farmers: Information obtained in this study indicates that some of the young farmers were able

---

\*

A Family Working Together to Help Their Sons Become Established in Farming, see Appendix.

to become established in farming with practically no assistance from their parents. One farmer borrowed all of the money that was needed to buy the necessary livestock and machinery to become established in dairy farming.\* At the time this young man started farming on his own he was 26 years old and had no savings except for his car and household goods. He is now having difficulty expanding his business and paying his debts at the same time.

One young farmer had been established in farming and gave it up for he was unable to continue. There are indications that he had gone very deeply in debt to buy machinery and was not able to make it pay. Another young man had an annual gross farm income of approximately \$8,000 and claimed that his yearly expenses were nearly as great on his 130-acre farm. He has a full-time job in industry and is contemplating either selling his farm or discontinuing his job in industry to expand his volume of business.

Most of the men seemed to believe that early and successful establishment in farming was partially associated with the degree of parental aid these young men received. This did not prove true for one young farmer who had received much financial backing from his parents besides having a home farm to work.\*\* He had shown very little financial progress and doesn't even have running water in his home.

---

\* A Renter's Son Who Was Able to Become Established on His Own Rented Farm With Financial Backing From His Landlord, see Appendix.

\*\* Wilbur R., see Appendix.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH SUCCESS IN  
BECOMING ESTABLISHED IN FARMING

Early Environment

Early environment and family conditions were factors that seem to affect all the 50 young farmers included in the study. Eight of the young men received considerable financial assistance from their parents, while the other 42 depended more on their own initiative, efforts and funds. Twenty-seven of the 50 young farmers interviewed became established in farming on the home farm, though this did not necessarily mean financial assistance from their parents. There were 21 of the group who became established in farming with parent-son partnerships, still only 5 of them received substantial parental aid. In many cases the home farm proved to be a place of opportunity rather than a means of financial assistance from their parents.

Son's Position Among the Brothers: Most of the young men included in this study as established in farming were either from a small family or else they were the youngest or oldest brother, Table 2. Twenty-two percent of those interviewed were the only son. In such a case there would be no argument as to which son was to take-over the home farm. The oldest son composed about 50 percent of those in the study with more than one son. This would indicate that the older

sons may have had a greater opportunity to become established in farming than their younger brothers. This situation might be explained because the older sons were the first to finish school and thus were of greater assistance on the home farm.

Being the youngest son seemed to have some bearing on the possibility of becoming established in farming for 26 percent of the young men from families with more than one son. Information obtained in the study indicates many of this group stayed on the "home farm" due to an ageing father or because of their father's ill health. Others were given an opportunity to take over the farm when their father was ready to retire or at the time of their father's death.

The young men who received substantial parental aid were able to become established in farming at an average age of 20.5 years, even though one of the men was 33 years old. Some were able to become well established in farming before reaching 20 years of age, by making use of the opportunity provided on the home farm. Those that did not receive substantial parental aid were a little older at the time of their establishment in farming, as shown in Table 3. One of the men was 37 years old and some of the others were over age 30.

Most of the men included in the study were married at a comparatively young age. The fact that most of those who

received substantial parental aid were established in farming before they were married, allowed them to enter the farming business with less capital than for those who were married, see Table 12. The majority of those who did not receive substantial parental aid were married before they became established in farming, Table 3. Therefore they needed more capital for they had greater family obligations, Table 12.

### Education

Formal education of the 50 young men in the study ranged from those completing an eighth grade education to those with four terms of short course training in agriculture at Michigan State University. Those with substantial parental aid had an average of 11.8 years of schooling, while those without substantial parental aid averaged 11.1 years. Only 69 percent of the young men without substantial parental aid had graduated from high school, as compared to 88 percent of those with substantial parental aid. In some of these cases the young men left school because they were needed on the farm; some quit school for they received very little encouragement from their parents to continue in school. One young farmer stated he couldn't get along in school so he quit in the ninth grade. This young man, now age 37, has proved to be an outstanding farmer.\*

---

\*

Samuel T., see Appendix.



There were 75 percent of the young farmers with substantial parental aid that had taken at least two years of vocational agriculture in high school as compared to only 41 percent of those without substantial parental aid.

Just 14 percent of the young farmers without substantial parental aid received short-course training in agriculture as compared with 50 percent of those with more parental assistance. Over half of the young men indicated a lack of sufficient experience or information at the time they became established in farming, Table 16. The majority of these cases were men with little or no vocational agricultural training in high school or else they had had little or no short-course training. A few of the men participated in veteran's on-the-farm-training.

#### Farm Experience

Practically all of the young men included in the study had had the opportunity of gaining farm experience before reaching the age of 18. Only 7 percent of the young farmers without substantial parental aid had not received farm experience as compared to 12 percent of those with substantial parental aid. In some cases this experience was very limited, especially for the young farmers who obtained little assistance from their parents. One of the men had always wanted



to be a farmer though he lived in town, so while still a boy, he rented a vacant lot which gave him a place for his FFA project. He also worked on a dairy farm after school and during the summer months for more farm experience. In a few cases, farm experience was gained by working for nearby farmers with a larger volume of business than on the home farm.

FFA and 4-H projects were instrumental in providing farm experience for most of those interviewed. This was especially true in situations where men received substantial parental aid, since 88 percent of them had gained farm experience from their projects. Many of the young farmers indicated the importance of what they had learned from their FFA and 4-H projects. These projects also proved to be a substantial source of income and capital accumulation as shown in Table 8.

#### Parents' Role

Home Environment: Table 5 shows that 88 percent of the young farmers with substantial parental aid were encouraged to farm as compared with 55 percent without substantial parental aid. This encouragement came largely from parents allowing their son's to participate in 4-H and FFA.

Attaining Responsibility: Most of the young farmers had received responsible jobs on the home farm. The degree of responsibility seemed to depend a lot on the health of the

father, the size of the farm business and the number of sons that were on the farm. In several instances the oldest son learned to assume responsibility earlier in life than his younger brother. This was especially true in those cases where the farm business was large enough for practically two men. Many of the "youngest sons" were required to take much responsibility when their fathers were older and not able to assume the amount of responsibility they had previously taken. When there was only one son, he usually had a better than average opportunity to gain a considerable amount of responsibility at a comparatively young age.

Only 57 percent of the young farmers without substantial parental aid were able to attain some degree of "competence in management of finances" as compared with 75 percent of those with substantial parental aid. In most cases this fact was attributed to buying and selling of 4-H and FFA projects. Sickness of their father caused some of the young men to learn financial competence and assume responsibilities earlier in life than they normally would have.

Attaining Managerial Competence; A somewhat greater percentage of the young men included in the study had attained a degree of managerial competence and production "know-how" than had attained financial competence. The attaining of this ability came mostly from 4-H and FFA projects. In one case

a young farmer was 33 years old before he did any of the managing of the farm business. At the time his father died, he found it difficult making the necessary decisions to operate the farm. In many instances the oldest son or youngest son was left with the task of managing the home farm because of illness of their father. One "only son" became established in farming at age 16 as a result of "taking over" the management of the farm when his father died. Seventy-five percent of the young men with substantial parental aid had attained a degree of managerial ability as compared with 57 percent without substantial parental aid.

Capital Accumulation: Early establishment in farming was closely associated with the amount of livestock and capital the young farmers accumulated at an early age. About one-half of the young men without substantial parental assistance had accumulated a small amount of capital before they reached the age of 18. The situation was quite different for those receiving substantial parental aid, for 88 percent of them had been able to accumulate capital before age 18. Also the amount they were able to accumulate was greater than those without substantial parental aid.

Livestock and machinery accumulation was slight for young farmers without substantial parental aid with only 38 percent reporting any accumulation as a youth on the home

farm. Practically none of this group had acquired any machinery and in most cases "livestock" represented only what they were able to acquire through 4-H and FFA projects. The picture was somewhat different for those with substantial parental assistance for 75 percent of them indicated a substantial accumulation of livestock and machinery. One young farmer in this category had approximately \$3,000 worth of livestock when he graduated from high school; also he had about \$1,500 worth of machinery.

About 90 percent of the young men with substantial parental aid were encouraged by their parents to enter farming. Yet only 55 percent of those without substantial parental aid were encouraged by their parents to enter farming. This situation could possibly be attributed to the degree of financial success on the home farm or the impossibility of expanding the volume of business on the "home farm". In many of these cases the parents were not able to give their sons much financial assistance even if they remained on the home farm. A good share of the young men who received substantial parental aid were taken into a partnership upon completion of school.

Though some parents were unable to help their sons by giving them any substantial financial backing, they did provide them with opportunities while still young to assume some responsibility in the home farm business. This was a

real contribution to their success in becoming established in farming. Those young men who had opportunities to attain financial competence as well as acquiring working capital had a distinct advantage over the young men without such opportunities. The acquiring of managerial ability was likewise a major factor in the successful establishment of many of the young men.

### Interest in Farming

Independence and an opportunity to be in business for themselves seemed to highlight the reasons as to why many of the young men included in this study, made the decision "to be a farmer". Some of the men indicated that farming was the vocation they were best suited for, while others entered farming during a time when they could not get work elsewhere. When many of them were asked why they decided to be a farmer they said "I guess I just liked it".

One young farmer who had been in the army and worked in industry said, "I wanted to work for myself and not the other guy". Another young man whose father was a prosperous farmer exclaimed, "I had an opportunity on the home farm and liked farm life, besides I don't like working for someone else". In many cases, because of their fathers' ill health some young men were required to stay home and assist with the farming business and just "took over". A young man who

previously had been a "shop worker" wasted no time in saying, "I like being my own boss; I worked in town and didn't like it". A nervous condition was responsible for one man deciding to farm for he "worked in the shop and just couldn't stand it". He is now successfully established in farming. When asked why he decided to be a farmer, one young farmer replied, "I spent my boyhood on the farm and I took a liking to farming".

The fact that the country was a good place for raising a family seemed to help some young families decide to become farmers for one young man stated, "Wife and I thought the farm was a good place to raise our children".

The business part of farming must have appealed to one young man, for he remarked, "Farming is a business where you are your own manager and can start with little and make it what you want; in the shop you are too much like a machine". Still another young farmer who entered farming stated, "I like it better than any other job I've ever done, I don't care for the shop at all".

Time of Deciding to be a Farmer: Most of the young men included in the study decided early in life to become farmers. Some of them made the decision while in the military service and still others decided while working at other types of employment. When asked when he decided to become a farmer, one

young man replied, "I guess it was about the time I saw an opportunity; I had always wanted to". The fact that the majority of those interviewed had had either 4-H or FFA projects if not both of them, indicated an early liking for farming.

The importance of an early start in farming was strongly stressed by the majority of the young farmers included in the study. Over 80 percent of them stated that an early start in farming was "very important". Most of the other 20 percent indicated that an early start was "quite important". Early experience was emphasized as one of the main reasons for the early start in farming. Another reason for an early start was, "It holds your interest in farming and you learn a lot". Another young farmer stated, "It helps you acquire livestock". One man put it this way, "You can't get started too young". Still another young farmer who was raised in the city and became established in farming with a small amount of capital suggested, "Get started early to get experience and build capital".

Another young farmer who worked in industry in order to save enough money to start farming said, "If I had had FFA in high school, probably I would now have a better start". One young farmer stated, "If you get an early start you can tell if you really want to farm". Another statement by a prosperous young farmer was "The earlier you start the more information and experience you can acquire. You can learn

something new every day". One statement went, "The sooner you get started the better chances you have". A successful farmer with many years of farming experience expressed his ideas as follows: "The later you wait, the harder it is to get started because of other obligations". Others indicated that an early start in farming was beneficial in learning how to make decisions as to which enterprise proved to be the most profitable.

The young men in the study who became established in farming at an early age, showed a distinct advantage over those men who did not have similar opportunities. Some of the young farmers interviewed seemed to have capitalized on the opportunity to start early in farming, while others possibly did not avail themselves to the opportunities that they had.

#### Wife's Role

The wives of many of the young farmers who became established in farming from 1939 to 1954, proved to be major factors in their success. A young "crop-farmer" remarked, "I just couldn't have made it without my wife's cooperation and understanding of farm problems". Another stated, "The most important factor in my successful establishment in farming is my wife". A young dairy farmer whose wife was a "town-girl", stated that his wife helped him with practically



all of the farm planning.

Thirty-three of the 50 young farmers included in the study, were married at the time they became established in farming. Only 55 percent of these men married "farm-girls". Personal observations and information obtained in this study indicates that "town-girls" made just as good farm wives as did "farm-girls". All of the men interviewed indicated that their wife liked living and working on the farm. When asked if his wife liked living and working on a farm, he answered "She loves it". His wife agreed, "That's for sure - I really do". Previous to marriage, she had been a "town-girl".

Only one man mentioned that his wife did not help him with the farm work; she had a full-time job in a hospital. Most of the wives were very busy with family duties but when needed they took "time out" to do the "odd-jobs" necessary. Many of them helped with the tractor work and some of the wives helped with the chores. One man remarked, "I wish I could get my wife off the tractor long enough to do some of the house-work".

One-third of the men stated that their wives took care of the book work. Others indicated that their wives paid the bills and did other similar errands. Still others told of how their wives help them with business decisions.

The fact that many of the young wives were reared on

a farm didn't seem to play a major role in the successful establishment of the young men in farming. The willingness of the girl to help her husband rather than the fact that she was raised on a farm or in town seemed to be more important. Practically all of the men interviewed stressed how important it is for young men planning to enter the business of farming to marry girls that like living and working on a farm.

### Obtaining the Use of a Farm

The majority of the 50 young farmers included in the study obtained a "lead" on the farm on which they started farming for themselves, from their fathers. When asked, "How did you obtain a "lead" on the farm on which you started farming for yourself?" 58 percent of the group, 29 in all, indicated they had help from "dad". Two of the 29 young men received assistance from their fathers in locating a farm other than the "home farm", whereas the other 27 became established in farming on their parents "home farm", Table 7, Fig. 9.

Five of the young men indicated they obtained a "lead" on the farm on which they started farming for themselves from a friend, and 4 of the group obtained a "lead" from a neighbor. There were 3 of the group who obtained a "lead" on the farm on which they started farming through a newspaper add, while another 2 of the young men obtained a "lead" from a real estate office. Other young men included in the study obtained their "leads" from an uncle, an implement dealer, father-in-law, and from a brother. One of the young men interviewed took over a farm on which he worked as a hired hand when the former tenant left.

Figure 8 shows the distribution of the 50 young farmers included in the study, by the years in which they became

established in farming from 1939 to 1954. There seems to be no specific reason as to why these young men became established in farming when they did, though they may have waited until then for an opportunity to farm. Their age or readiness to farm could have been a reason or in some cases interruptions by military service may have been an influence. Possibly the relationship which existed between the prices received by farmers to the prices paid by farmers during those years may have been a factor, Fig. 1.

Ownership of Farms on Which Young Men Became Established in Farming: Parents and other relatives of the young men included in the study owned the major portion of the land on which the young men became established in farming. More than half of the group, 27 in all, were fortunate to the extent that they were able to become established in farming on their parents "home farm", whereas 6 of the young men became established on farms owned by relatives other than their parents, Fig. 7. Information obtained in this study shows that only 6 of the 27 young men who became established in farming on their parents "home farm", received substantial parental aid, though the other 21 did have an opportunity "to farm" on the home farm if they so desired.

Four of the young men who did not become established in farming on farms owned by relatives, indicated having difficulty

in locating farms. Three of the 50 young men included in the study became established on farms owned by widows. Two of the widows were wives of former farmers and the other widows' husband had been a blacksmith. Only 12 percent of the group, 6 in all, became established in farming on farms owned by "retired farmers". Eight of the farms were owned by "business and professional men". This classification includes an electrical engineer, a lawyer, an automobile dealer, a judge, two contractors, and two other men employed in industry.

#### Capital Accumulation

Sources of Income and Savings: Table 8 shows "4-H or FFA projects" to be the most important source of income and savings that contributed to a start in farming for the 50 young farmers included in the study. Sixty percent of the group, 30 in all, indicated "4-H or FFA projects" to be important and over half of the 30 young men checked these projects to be "very important" sources of income and savings that contributed to their start in farming.

As shown in Table 4, a total of 14 of the 50 young farmers became established in farming before age 20. There were 12 of this group who had 4-H projects, 9 of the group had FFA projects, and 8 of the group had both 4-H projects and FFA projects. Only one of the young men who became established in farming under age 20 had neither 4-H or FFA projects. Two of

the young men in this group had 11 years each of 4-H projects and 3 of them had 10 years of each. Information obtained from the study shows the older the classification of men as to age, the fewer the number of projects they had in 4-H and in FFA.

More than half of the 50 young men interviewed, 28 in all listed "work as a farm hand" as an important source of income and savings that contributed to their start in farming. Approximately  $1/3$  of this group listed this source of income and savings as "fairly important",  $1/3$  listed "quite important" and the other  $1/3$  listed it "very important".

One of the major sources of "income and savings" that contributed to the start in farming for the 50 young farmers included in the study was "non-farm work in town". Fig. 7 shows the distance these men are from Clinton and Tecumseh, where if they cared to, could seek other employment. Fifty-two percent of the young farmers interviewed, indicated "non-farm work in town" as an important source of income and savings. Nearly half of this group stated this source as "very important".

"Custom work for neighbors" was checked by 40 percent of the young men as being an important source of income and savings, but over half of this group, 11 in all, checked it as only "fairly important". Only 4 young farmers listed "custom work" as "quite important" and 5 checked it "very important".

More than half of the 50 young farmers listed "wife's employment and savings" as an important source of income and

savings that contributed to their start in farming. Ten of this group checked "wife's employment and savings" as "fairly important".

Fourteen percent of the young men interviewed stated that "military savings" was an important source of income and savings, whereas only 10 percent listed "Veteran's payments". Only 8 percent of the young men reported "inheritance and gifts" as being important sources of income and savings that contributed to their start in farming.

Borrowed Funds: Only 6 out of 50 of the young farmers included in the study borrowed funds to purchase farm real estate, Table 9. Others indicated they wished to buy a farm, circumstances for purchase, however, were not yet favorable for them to do so. "Buying a farm is generally the most significant business transaction that is consummated in the entire lifetime of many people. The decisions reached by the purchaser at the time a sale is made may effect him and his family for a lifetime."<sup>1</sup> This may be the reason that more of the young farmers have not purchased farms.

Thirty-eight of the 50 young farmers included in the study borrowed money to purchase personal property to become established in farming. This included 37.5 percent of the young men with substantial parental aid, as compared with

---

<sup>1</sup>  
Hagen, Hans, Sound Financing of Real Estate Purchases  
Federal Land Bank, Farm Credit Administration.

78.6 percent of the young men without substantial parental aid. Information obtained from the study showed that on an average, the young farmers with substantial parental aid became established in farming at an earlier age and needed less capital than the young farmers without substantial parental aid. There were more loans secured from "commercial banks" than from any other source of financing, whereas the total amount the young farmers borrowed from "relatives" was greater than any other source. Loans secured from the Farmer's Home Administration averaged \$6,233 per loan which was larger than from any other source of loan. Though only one young farmer listed "merchants and dealers" as a source of borrowed funds to become established in farming, others interviewed mentioned using this source of credit after attaining a degree of establishment.

Most of the 50 young farmers had very little difficulty in borrowing money, for 90 percent of them stated they were able to borrow all of the money they needed to start farming, Fig. 11. One of the young farmers included in the study, who became established in farming in 1939, had a great amount of difficulty obtaining credit at that time. At the present time he owns two well kept farms totaling 320 acres. This farmer stated, "Now that I don't need credit I can get it any place". Another farmer who stated he was not able to borrow all of the



money he needed to start farming, started with debts totaling \$15,900 from his father's estate. His total assets were \$47,200. This young farmer was 33 years old when he started farming on his own and indicated having practically no previous opportunity to assist in the managing of a farm business.

Earning the First \$100: As seen by Fig. 10, a total of 87.2 percent of the young farmers included in the study earned their "first \$100" from "farm work" as compared with 12.8 percent of the group who earned their first \$100 from "non-farm work". Information obtained from the survey showed that most of the young farmers who earned their "first \$100" from "farm work", earned it from 4-H projects or FFA projects. Table 8 shows that 60 percent of the 50 young farmers, 30 in all, reported "4-H or FFA projects" as an important source of income and savings that contributed to their start in farming. Sixteen of the 30 young men indicated the degree of importance of "4-H or FFA projects" as "very import". Over half of the young men also reported "work as a farm hand" as being an important source of income and savings.

The "first \$100" that the young men earned was spent in various ways with 41.4 percent of the young men spending it for "farm" use. When asked what did you do with your first \$100, a common answer would be, "I used it to buy more livestock". Not very often did a young farmer mention spending

his "first \$100" for machinery. Less than 1/3 of the group, 32.6 percent, spent their "first \$100" for "non-farm" use. In one case it was spent for a musical instrument, in another for a car and in five cases it went for "school needs". Some of the young men didn't remember for sure just what they spent it for.

Twenty-six percent of the group deposited the "first \$100" they earned in the bank. It no doubt proved valuable later to help many of the young men become established in farming.

Use of Credit: Seventeen of the 50 young farmers interviewed indicated a need for additional funds for such purposes as buying machinery and livestock. Still only 2 of the 17, mentioned having difficulty in obtaining additional credit, Table 11. Approximately half of the young men stated they did not want to go deeper in debt. One of this group had never borrowed any money for his farming operations.\* Generally speaking the more prosperous young farmers interviewed did not indicate being concerned as to further indebtedness. Personal observations and information obtained from the study indicated that the declining purchasing power of farm products was making it more difficult for the young men to pay off their debts. This no doubt was a factor as to why many of them did not wish to go deeper in debt. Family objections to further indebtedness

---

\* Wilbur T., see Appendix.

did not prove to be a major reason as to why the young farmers interviewed did not use more credit. Some of the men interviewed gave fairly logical reasons as to why credit for additional investments would not be profitable, whereas others possibly had not thoroughly analyzed the profitable use of credit. There appeared to be uncertainty among some of the group regarding the use of credit for additional investments. Three of this group mentioned, however, that maybe a "good buy" of a nearby productive farm would be a profitable investment.

Only 5 of the young farmers included in the study checked "uncertainty of weather and future prices" as a very important reason why they did not use more credit in the farming operations. According to 4 of the young farmers uncertainty of weather was not as much of a factor as was uncertainty of future prices in determining their use of more credit.

One of the "other reasons" for not using more credit was the interest rate the young farmers would have to pay; this was a factor in only 5 cases. Another reason mentioned by 3 of the group was that they were unwilling to go in debt "to buy land at present prices".

Lack of credit did not seem to be a sizeable obstacle to most of the 50 young men interviewed. According to Robinson,<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>  
Robinson, James L., Farmers Need Special Credit Administration - Farm Credit Administration, Circular E-26.

type of credit rather than amount of credit could be a reason why these young men did not make greater use of credit. He states that farmers need special credit facilities. Robinson lists these four characteristics which distinguish farming from most industry and commercial businesses; (1) small unit of operation (2) individual ownership (3) slow adjustment in production, and (4) slow turn-over. These factors should be considered by both lenders and borrowers when drawing up the terms of a loan.

### Financial Status and Progress

Starting to Farm: Information obtained in the study shows that as an average the married men had nearly as much invested in non-farm personal property as the total assets of the single men. This verifies what one young farmer said when he stated, "It is very important to get started as early as possible in farming before there are so many obligations to meet".

The 28 married young men averaged nearly five times greater assets than did the 17 single men at the time of starting to farm, Table 12. The single men started farming with less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  the amount of net worth as did the married men. This factor may be attributed to the fact that the married men average 4 years older than did the single men.

The married men had more assets than did the single men but they also had more debts. The average debt load carried

by the 28 married young farmers was more than six times as great as that of the 17 single men. No doubt those married found it necessary to borrow more money to have a large enough volume of business to support their families. The single young farmers had neither "non-farm personal" nor "farm real estate" debts.

Approximately 60 percent of the single young farmers were able to become established in farming without investing in machinery and equipment as compared with only 20 percent of the married men. Even though only a little more than half of the married men had livestock as compared with over  $3/4$  of the single farmers, the average investment of the married men with livestock was nearly  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times greater than that of the single men.

The single young farmers had no "household goods" or farm real estate at the time they became established in farming.

As shown by Table 12, there is a distinct advantage, with reference to capital requirements, of young men becoming established in farming while still single. Without as many obligations as married men, single men usually do not need an investment in household goods, nor do they need as much income to maintain the same standard of living. Single men have an advantage of investing the majority of their income into items to increase their volume of business, while a married man must also invest in "household goods". Some of the young

farmers had financial assistance from their wife's employment and savings which helped to solve the problem of the larger investment married men needed as compared to single men, see Table 8. As shown by Table 6 married men had their wife's assistance in operating the farm.

Table 13 shows the financial status of 45 of the 50 young farmers included in the study at the beginning of the year in which they started farming in Lenawee County from 1939 to 1954. This table shows a comparison of the young farmers without substantial parental aid to those with substantial parental aid.

Approximately 13 percent of the 37 young farmers without substantial parental aid included in this study became established in farming with ownership in farm real estate averaging \$12,750. This is compared with 25 percent of the young farmers with substantial parental aid who owned farms averaging \$21,000, Table 13.

Table 13 shows that the young farmers with substantial parental aid had an average of over twice the net worth as did the young farmers without substantial parental aid; still they averaged nearly 3 years younger. The average debt load was about the same for the two groups, and younger farmers with substantial parental aid became established in farming with over 1/3 more assets than did the young men without substantial parental aid.

Financial Progress: The financial progress of 26 of the young farmers who became established in farming in Lenawee County during the ten year period 1941 - 1950, is shown in Table 14. Fig. 8 shows the years during this period in which the young men became established in farming. The column "when first established in farming", in Table 14, shows the average financial status of the young farmers at the time they became established in farming. The column "after an average of nine years" shows the financial status of the group at the time they were interviewed, during the summers of 1954 and 1955.

Table 15 shows the financial progress of 16 young farmers who became established in farming during the 3 year period 1951 - 1954. The young farmers who became established in farming from 1941 to 1950 had only 60 percent as great assets as did the young farmers who became established from 1951 to 1954. Also their assets, listed under "yearly financial progress" were only about 60 percent as great as the latter group.

The young farmers who became established in farming from 1951 to 1954 started with nearly twice the net worth as did the group who became established in farming from 1941 to 1950. The "yearly financial progress" of \$1,983 in the group who became established in farming 1941 - 1950 was only 2/3 as much as the group who became established in farming from 1951 - 54.

The differences shown in Tables 14 and 15 may be partly due to changing price levels. Fig. 1 shows the difference in

farm prices which would affect the amount of capital that the young farmers included in the study needed to become established in farming.

### Problems of Young Farmers

The young farmers interviewed encountered several problems in getting started on their own in the farming business as shown by Table 16. Even though the young farmers indicated several problems only a few checked "much" difficulty with any one.

Though over half of this group checked "lack of sufficient farm experience or information" some of them seemed to do little to improve their present situation in this respect. Over half of the group, however, were attending or had attended adult classes in vocational agriculture. One young farmer who had had very little farm experience before entering farming, received a great amount of help from his county agricultural agent. Personal observations and information included in the study indicated that many of the better farmers felt they lacked sufficient information along certain lines of farming.

A "lack of available capital resources" was checked as a real problem by nearly 2/3 of the group. Table 1 shows that 42 percent of the 50 young farmers included in the study became established in farming in a "parent-son partnership"; and 38 percent became established as a tenant with a "crop and livestock share lease". Tables 9 and 10 show the sources of borrowed funds.



Some of the young farmers found that partnerships helped in attaining the use of sufficient livestock, machinery and equipment. Also, some of the group exchanged work and one family of several boys exchanged machinery with each other and their father.\*

One young farmer stated he didn't have enough capital when he was married, therefore he wasn't able to increase his volume of farm business as fast as he wished. He is still working in partnership with his father-in-law. Three young men mentioned that one of their problems when they became established in farming was starting with too large a business and they were not efficient in what they did. Another problem encountered by some of the young men was finding an adequate farm to operate.

---

\*

See Appendix, A Farm Family Working Together to Help the Sons Become Established in Farming.



## SUMMARY

Becoming established in farming continues to be a difficult task. This is especially true for young farmers without substantial financial assistance from their parents. Obtaining capital to become established in farming and acquiring the use of a farm were real problems to many of the group included in this study. They were able to solve the problems, however, and thus there appears to be opportunities for capable young men to become established in farming and they should be encouraged to do so.

The young men who gained farm experience early in life had a distinct advantage over the young men without experience.

Attaining farm managerial ability and financial competence was very important in aiding young men to become successfully established in farming.

Some of the young men without a high school education proved to be very successful farmers, though they expressed the importance of learning improved methods of farming. Training in the field of agriculture was a valuable asset to becoming established in farming.

Young men with 4-H or FFA training had a definite advantage over those without such training. Besides giving their sons an opportunity to start farming while they were still young, many parents encouraged their sons to remain in partnership on the home farm. This made possible an early start

in farming with a limited amount of capital. The young men who started farming on their own, without parental assistance required more capital.

Early establishment in farming was closely associated with the amount of livestock and capital the young farmers accumulated at an early age.

Cooperation from the wives of many of the young men proved to be a factor related to their success in farming. "Town-girls" made just as good farm wives as did "farm-girls".

Some of the more important sources of income and savings that contributed to a start in farming were: 4-H or FFA projects, work as a farm hand, non-farm work in town, custom work and the wife's employment and savings.

Exchanging farm machinery and labor was a big help in cutting capital investment and in reducing farm operating expenses.

The establishment of a good credit rating at an early age made it possible for many of the young men to become established in farming with but limited amount of their own capital.

Lack of credit did not appear to be a limiting factor to successful establishment in farming.

One problem confronting young farmers was the changes in the general price level. Another problem was locating a farm they felt was reasonable enough to be able to afford. The lack of sufficient farm experience or information in some instances was also quite a problem.

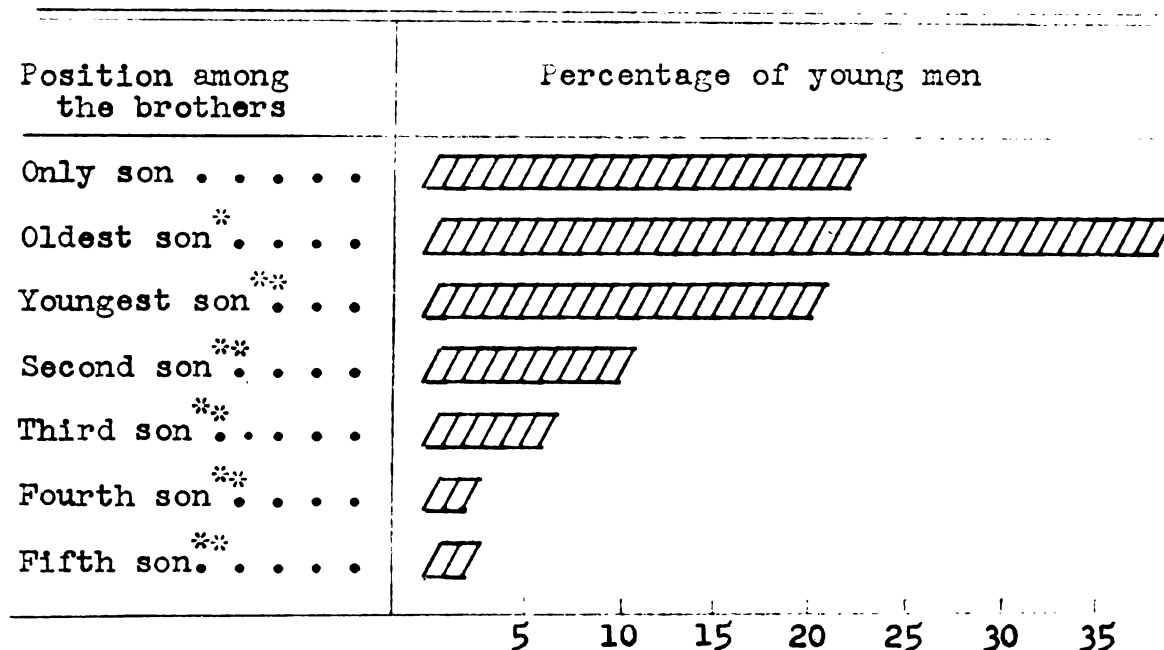
## APPENDIX

	Page
Tables . . . . .	47 - 62
Figures . . . . .	63 - 73
Case Studies . . . . .	74 - 94
Case Histories and Experiences . . . . .	95 - 111
Evaluation of Methodology Followed . . .	112 - 113
Evaluation of Study . . . . .	114
Bibliography . . . . .	115 - 116
Questionnaire . . . . .	117 - 121

Table 1. Operating Status in Relationship to Their Age of 50 Young Farmers at the Time They Became Established in the Farming Business in Lenawee County, Michigan, 1939 - 1954

Operating Status	Number	Percent- age	Ages of young farmers	
			Average	Range
Owner operator . .	5	10	29.2	23 to 33
Part-owner operator . . .	3	6	27.0	25 to 30
Parent-son partnership. .	21	42	20.9	16 to 28
Crop and livestock share lease. .	19	38	23.4	19 to 37
Crop share lease .	1	2	21.0	- - -
Cash rent. . . .	1	2	21.0	- - -

Table 2. Position Among the Brothers of 50 Young Men Who Became Established in the Farming Business in Lenawee County, Michigan, 1939 - 1954



\* This includes only cases where there were two or more sons.

\*\* Cases where second, third, fourth, or fifth son was the youngest, they were included in "youngest son".

Table 3. Personal Factors, Training and Experiences of 50 Young Farmers as Related to Becoming Established in Farming in Lenawee County, Michigan During the 16-Year Period 1939 - 1954

Factors	Degree of parental aid	
	Substantial	Not Substantial
Number . . . . .	8	42
Age when established in farming. .	20.5	23.2
Age when married . . . . .	22.7	21.9
Years of schooling . . . . .	11.8	11.1
Percentage of the group		
High school graduates. . . . .	88	69
Two years of Vo-Ag training. . .	75	41
Short course training. . . . .	50	14
Veteran's on-farm training . . .	12	14
4-H or FFA projects. . . . .	88	67
Married when established in farming. . .	38	69
Farm experience before age 18. .	88	93



Table 4. Age of 50 Young Men When They Became Established  
in the Farming Business in Lenawee County, Michigan,  
1939 - 1954

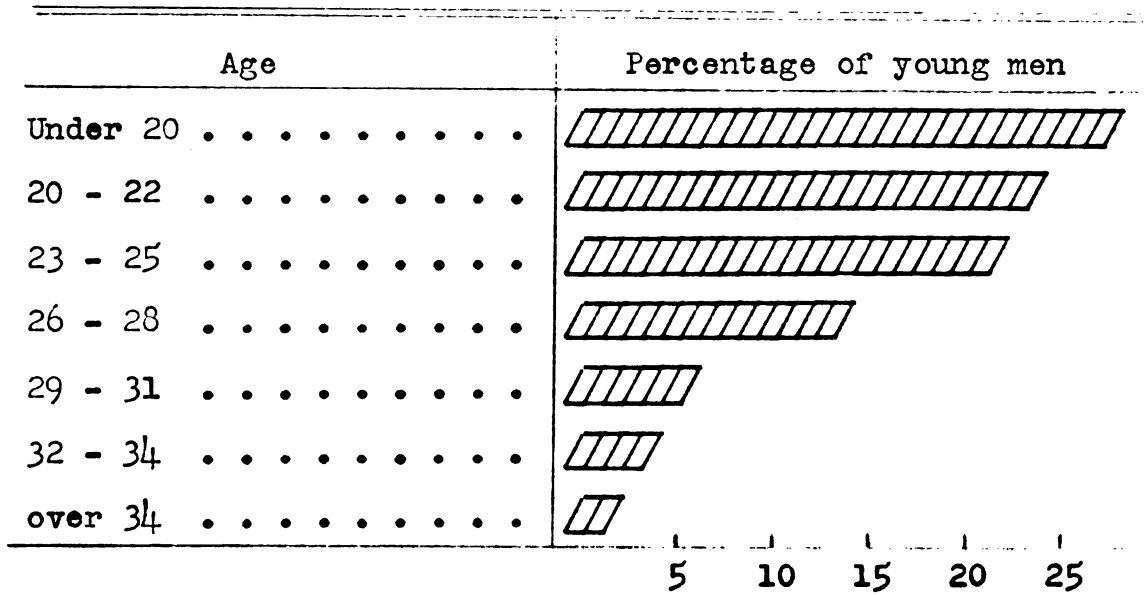


Table 5. Parent's Role as Related to 50 Young Farmers Who Became Established in Farming in Lenawee County, Michigan From 1939 - 1954

Factors	Degree of parental aid	
	Substantial	Not substantial
Number . . . . .	8	42
	percent	percent
Encouraged to farm . . . . .	88	55
Received responsible jobs on the home farm .	88	83
Had an opportunity to attain		
Financial competence . . . .	75	57
Managerial ability . . . . .	88	62
Capital accumulation . . . .	88	50
Livestock and machinery. . .	75	33
Encouraged to continue on the home farm .	88	43

Table 6. The Wife's Role in Helping 33 Young Married Farmers to Become Established in Farming on Lenawee County Farms, 1939 - 1954

Items	Wife's role in getting established	
	number	percent
Wife reared on farm. . . . .	18	55
Wife likes working on the farm . .	33	100
Wife helps with the farm work. . .	32	97
Wife helps with the book work. . .	11	33

Table 7. Ownership of the Farms on Which 50 Young Men  
Became Established in the Farming Business on Lenawee  
County Farms, 1939 - 1954

Farm owner	Young men who became established in farming	
	number	percentage of total
Parent's home farm *	27	54
Other relatives.	6	12
Non-relatives		
Widows	3	6
Retired farmers.	6	12
Business and professional men.	8	16

\*  
Two cases were after the death of the young men's  
father.

Table 8. Degree of Importance of Sources of Income and Savings that Contributed to a Start in Farming of 50 Young Farmers in Lenawee County, Michigan, 1939-1954

Items	Degree of importance of various sources of income			Percentage reporting the item
	Fairly	Quite	Very	
	percent	percent	percent	percent
4-H or FFA projects*.	12	16	32	60
Work as a farm hand.	20	18	18	56
Non-farm work in . . town	20	8	24	52
Custom work for neighbors. .	22	8	10	40
Wife's employment and savings.	20	10	22	52
Military savings . .	4	6	4	14
Veteran's payments .	--	6	4	10
Inheritance and gifts. . . .	--	4	4	8
Other sources. . . .	--	--	2	2

\*

Many of the young farmers had both 4-H and FFA projects.

Table 9. The Amount and Sources of Borrowed Funds Used by  
6 Out of 50 Young Families Included in the Study, to  
Purchase Real Estate to Become Established in Farming  
in Lenawee County, Michigan, 1939 - 1954

Sources	Farmers using	Acres per farm average	Borrowed funds	
			With substantial parental aid	Without substantial parental aid
	number	number	dollars per farm	dollars per farm
Relatives . .	1	100	0	2,500
Commercial banks. . .	2	92	0	2,350
National farm loan ass'n.	1	120	8,100	0
Individuals. .	2	103.5	0	18,100

Table 10. The Amount and Sources of Borrowed Funds Used by  
38\* of 50 Young Farmers Included in the Study to Purchase  
Personal Property to Become Established in Farming in  
Lenawee County, Michigan, 1939 - 1954

Sources	Borrowed funds					
	With substantial parental aid		Without substantial parental aid		All loans	
	number	dollars	number	dollars	number	dollars
Relatives. . . . .	1	5,000	13	4,267	14	4,320
Landlord . . . . .	0	0	1	1,050	1	1,050
Commercial banks .	2	4,450	16	2,010	18	2,281
Farmer's Home Adm.	0	0	3	6,233	3	6,233
Merchants and dealers. . .	0	0	1	1,000	1	1,000
Individuals. . . .	0	0	1	700	1	700

\*

Some of the young farmers borrowed money from more than one source.

Table 11. The Degree of Importance as to Why 45 Young Farm Families in Lenawee County Did not Use More Credit in Their Farming Operations During 1954

Items	Degree of importance of reason			Percentage reporting the item
	Fairly	Quite	Very	
	percent	percent	percent	percent
Cannot get any more . . . credit	4	0	0	4
Do not want to go . . . deeper in debt	4	30	16	50
Additional investments would not be profitable	16	22	9	47
Family objects to further indebtness. . .	9	9	2	20
Uncertainty of weather and future prices . . .	13	20	11	44
Other reasons . . . . .	9	4	4	17



Table 12. Financial Status of 45 Young Farmers at the Beginning of the Year in Which They Started Farming in Lenawee County, Michigan 1939 - 1954, Sorted on the Basis of Their Marital Status

Items	Financial status, average					
	Single*		Married**		All persons	
	number reporting	dollars	number reporting	dollars	number reporting	dollars
Number, total . . .	17		28		45	
<u>Assets</u>						
Cash on hand . .	15	347	16	1,638	31	1,194
Automobile . . .	5	850	27	959	32	942
Household goods .	0	0	28	1,519	28	1,519
Feed, crops, and supplies .	3	517	7	1,397	10	1,133
Machinery and equipment . . .	7	2,185	22	2,591	29	2,493
Livestock . . . .	13	1,337	15	3,016	28	2,236
Farm real estate	0	0	7	15,100	7	15,100
Total assets . .	17	2,516	28	11,783	45	8,302
<u>Debts</u>						
Non-farm personal . . .	0	0	6	583	6	583
Farm personal . .	5	1,840	15	3,817	20	3,323
Farm real estate	0	0	7	6,085	7	6,085
Total debts . . .	17	541	28	3,691	45	2,501
<u>Net worth</u> . . . .	17	2,081	28	8,593	45	5,801

\*

Average age, 19.4 years.

\*\*

Average age, 23.9 years.

Table 13. Financial Status of 45 Young Farmers at the Beginning of the Year in Which They Started Farming in Lenawee County, Michigan 1939 - 1954, Sorted on the Basis of the Degree of Parental Aid

Items	Financial status of young farmers					
	Average per person with substantial parental aid		Average per person without substantial parental aid		Average for all persons	
	number reporting	dollars	number reporting	dollars	number reporting	dollars
Number, total . . . .	8		37		45	
<u>Assets</u>						
Cash on hand . . . .	6	787	35	1,346	41	1,194
Automobile . . . .	5	950	27	941	32	942
Household goods . .	3	167	25	1,502	28	1,519
Feed, crops, and supplies . . . .	2	2,400	8	816	10	1,133
Machinery and equipment . . . .	5	2,710	24	2,448	29	2,493
Livestock . . . . .	7	4,273	21	1,558	28	2,236
Farm real estate .	2	21,000	5	12,750	7	15,100
Total assets . . . .	8	12,717	37	7,348	45	8,302
<u>Debts</u>						
Non-farm personal .	1	200	5	660	6	583
Farm personal . . .	2	6,400	18	2,981	20	3,323
Farm real estate .	1	8,100	6	5,750	7	6,085
Total debts . . . .	8	2,625	37	2,472	45	2,501
<u>Net worth</u> . . . . .	8	10,079	37	4,876	45	5,801

Table 14. Financial Progress of 26 Young Farmers Who Became Established in Farming in Lenawee County, Michigan Between the Years 1941 - 1950

Items	Financial status		
	When first established in farming	After an average of nine years	Yearly financial progress
	dollars	dollars	dollars
<u>Assets</u>			
Cash on hand . . . . .	1,206	818	-43
Personal: Non-farm . . . . .	1,089	3,467	264
Farm . . . . .	2,829	14,938	1,346
Farm real estate . . . . .	1,327	8,289	740
Total assets . . . . .	6,451	27,512	2,307
<u>Debts</u>			
Personal: Non-farm . . . . .	73	137	7
Farm . . . . .	1,527	1,352	19
Farm real estate . . . . .	692	3,373	298
Total debts . . . . .	2,292	4,862	324
<u>Net worth</u> . . . . .	4,159	22,650	1,983

Table 15. Financial Progress of 16 Young Farmers Who Became Established in Farming in Lenawee County, Michigan Between the Years 1951 - 1954

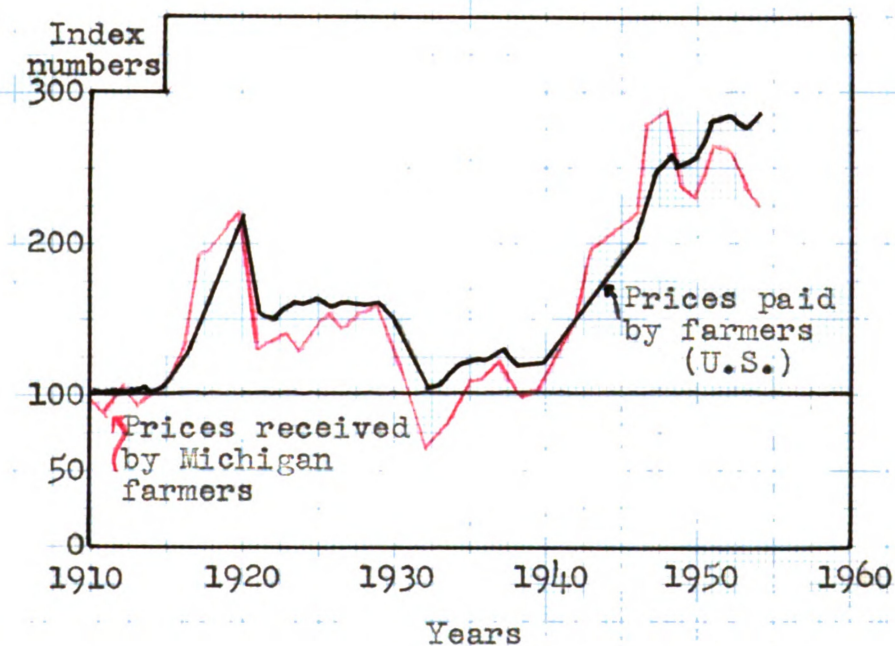
Items	Financial status		
	When first established in farming	After an average of 2.4 years	Yearly financial progress
	dollars	dollars	dollars
<u>Assets</u>			
Cash on hand . . . . .	1,419	1,384	-13
Personal: Non-farm . . .	2,698	3,106	170
Farm . . . . .	4,529	8,550	1,675
Farm real estate . . . .	2,025	6,582	1,899
Total assets . . . . .	10,671	19,612	3,731
<u>Debts</u>			
Personal: Non-farm . . .	100	122	9
Farm . . . . .	1,219	2,203	410
Farm real estate . . . .	1,494	2,556	443
Total debts . . . . .	2,813	4,881	862
<u>Net worth</u>	7,858	14,731	2,869

Table 16. Degree of Difficulty Which 45 Young Farmers in Lenawee County, Michigan Encountered in Getting Started on Their Own in the Farming Business 1939 - 1954

Problems	Degree of difficulty			Total
	Some	More	Much	
	percent	percent	percent	
Lack of sufficient experience or information . . . . .	44	7	7	58
Lack of available capital resources . . . . .	37	2	24	63
Obtaining sufficient credit .	2	4	4	10
Finding a farm of sufficient size to operate . . . . .	9	9	2	20
Obtaining sufficient live-stock, machinery and equipment	27	7	7	41
Starting with too small of a volume of business . . . . .	20	0	4	24
Changing price levels and future price uncertainty . .	20	20	7	32
Building facilities inadequate . . . . .	18	7	7	32
Other problems . . . . .	11	2	11	24

## FIGURES

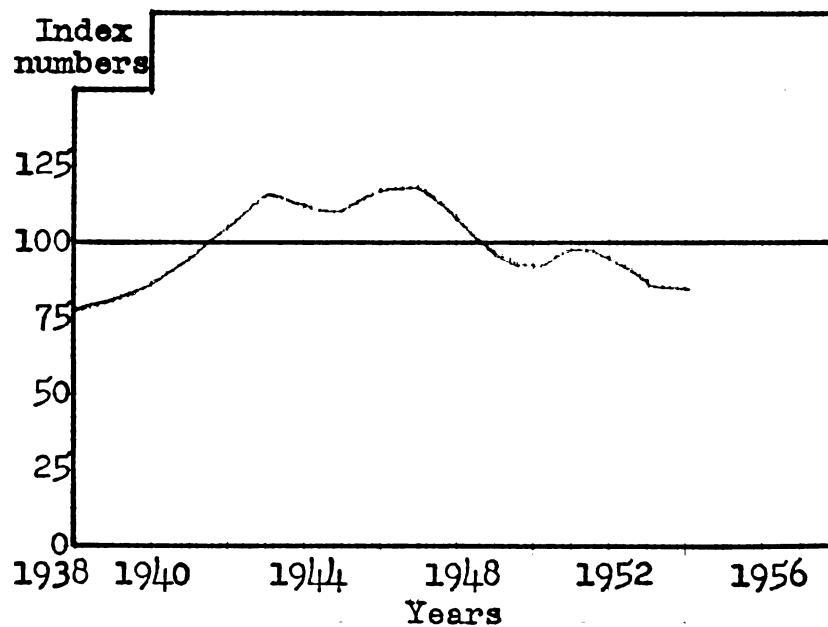
Figure 1. A comparison of prices of farm products received by farmers to prices paid by farmers, 1910-1955 (1910 - 14 = 100)



Source:

1. Michigan Agricultural Statistics - 1954  
Michigan Department of Agriculture,  
Pages 34 and 35.
2. Michigan Farm Economics - July 1955  
Department of Agricultural Economics  
Michigan State University, Page 4.

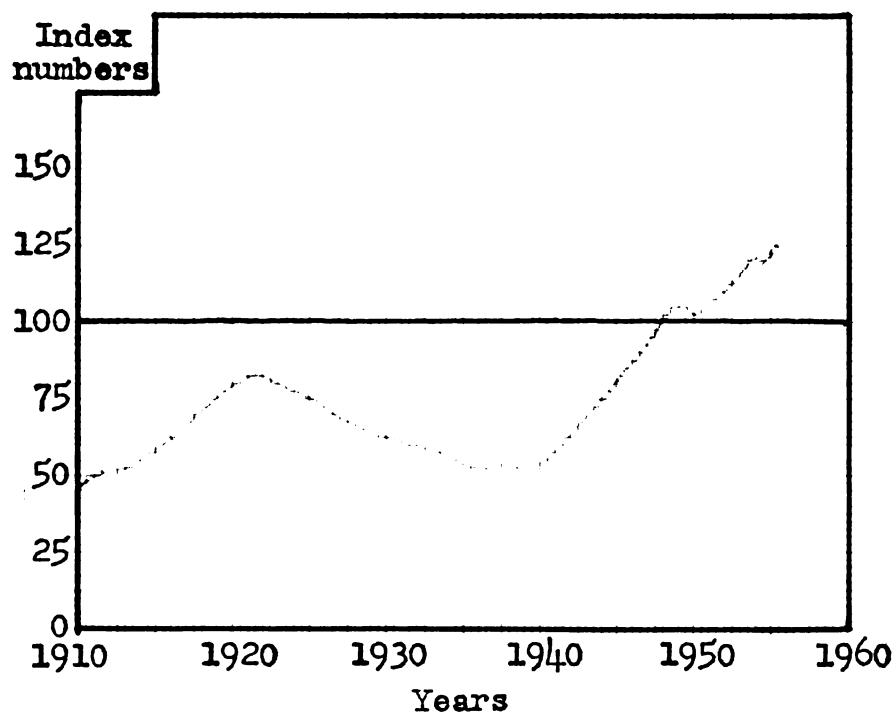
Figure 2. Relation of prices received for farm products to prices paid by Michigan farmers during the period 1938-55 expressed in terms of the parity ratio. 1910-14 = 100



Source: Michigan Agricultural Statistics - 1954  
Michigan Department of Agriculture,  
Pages 34 and 35.



Figure 3. Michigan farm land prices, 1912-55  
(1947 - 49 = 100)



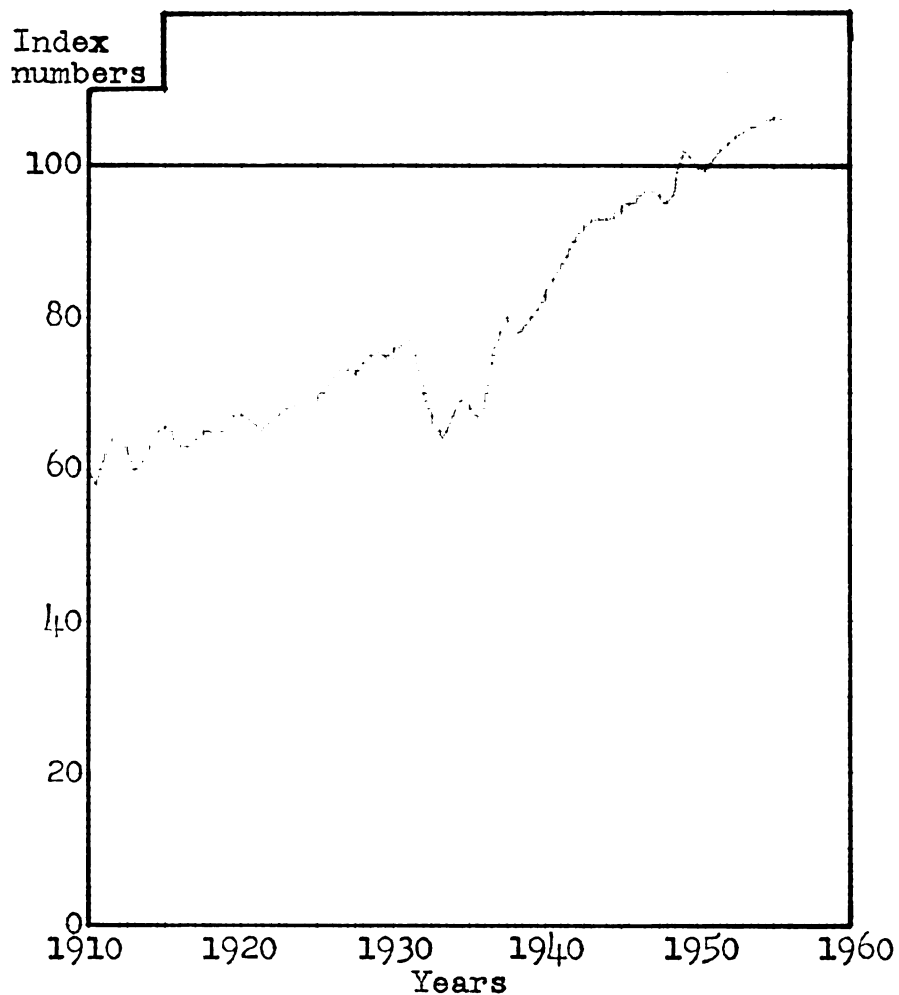
Source: Doane Agricultural Digest - July 1955  
Page 1013

Figure 4. Number of workers on farms in the United States, 1910 to 1955.



Source: Agricultural Outlook Charts - 1955,  
United States Department of Agriculture  
Page 29.

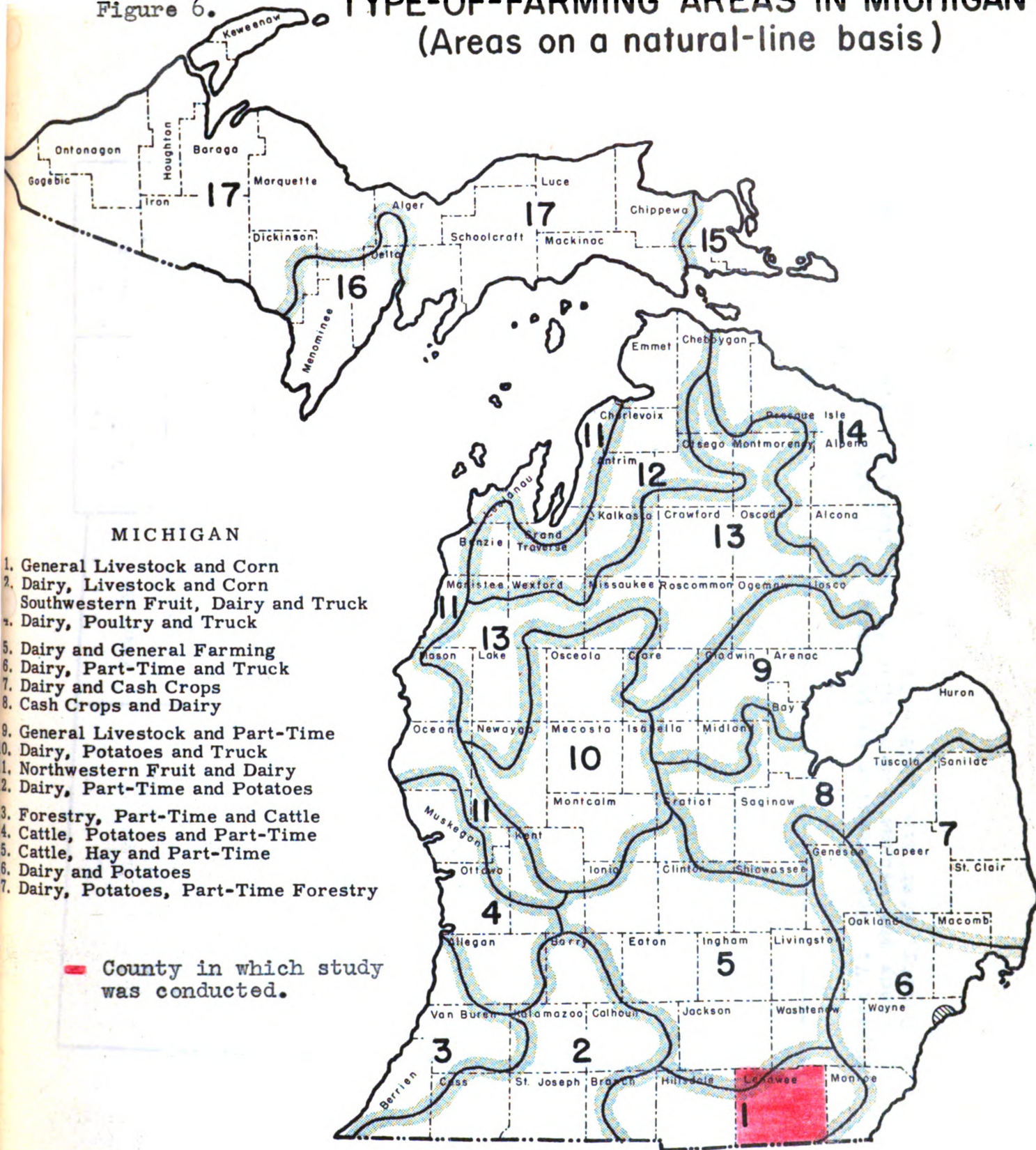
Figure 5. A comparison of United States farm output from 1910 to 1955 to the base period 1947 - 1949.



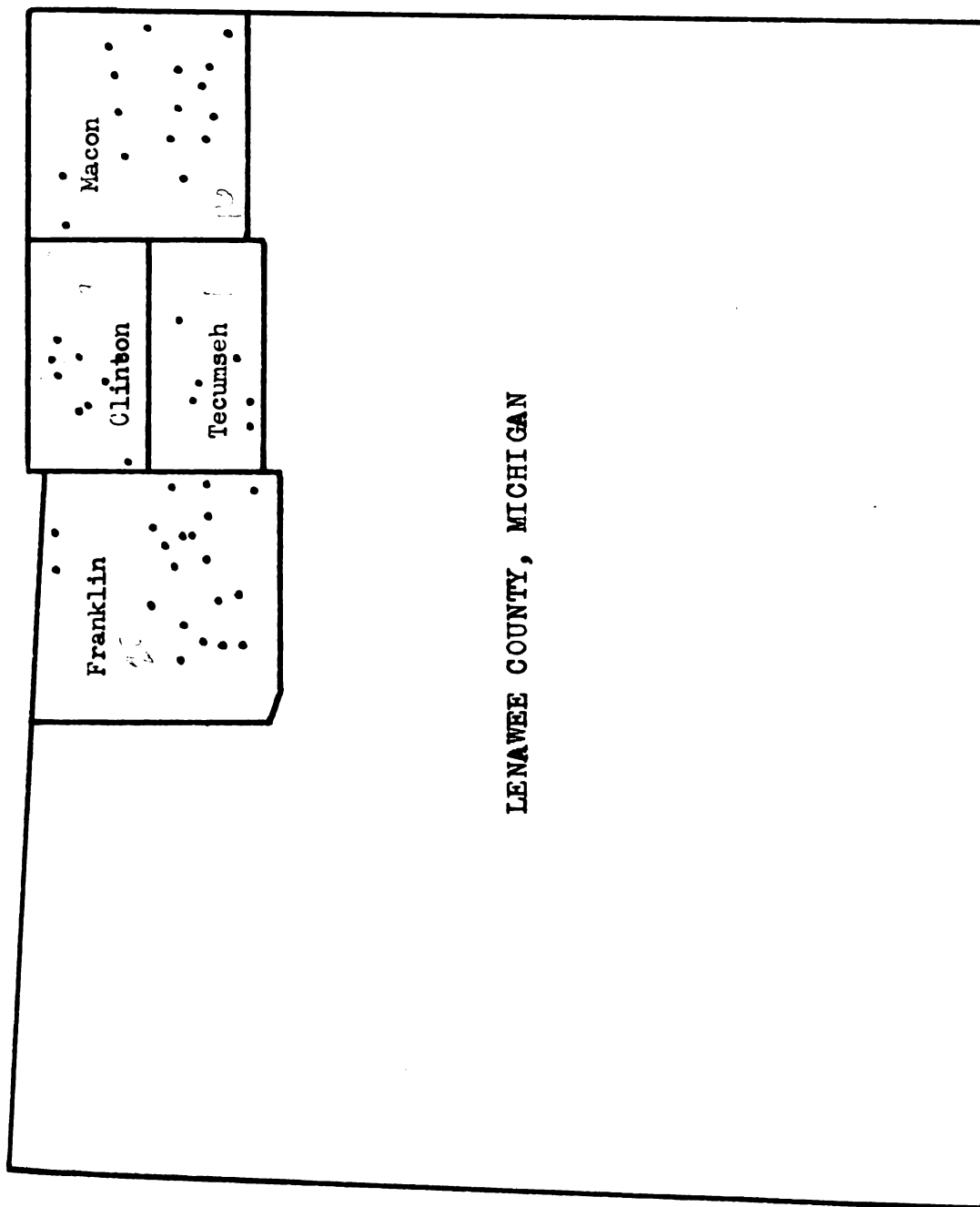
Source: Agricultural Outlook Charts - 1955  
United States Department of Agriculture  
Page 1.

Figure 6.

# TYPE-OF-FARMING AREAS IN MICHIGAN (Areas on a natural-line basis)



The 83 counties in Michigan are here grouped into 17 type-of-farming areas as indicated in this map. The "natural" boundaries of these areas do not, however, follow county boundaries, but lines representing the influences of soil, climate and markets.



**Figure 7.** The location by townships of 50 young farmers in this study who became established in the farming business in Lenawee County, Michigan, 1939 - 54

Figure 8. Distribution of the 50 young farmers included in this study, by the years in which they became established in farming, in Lenawee County, Michigan, 1939 - 54

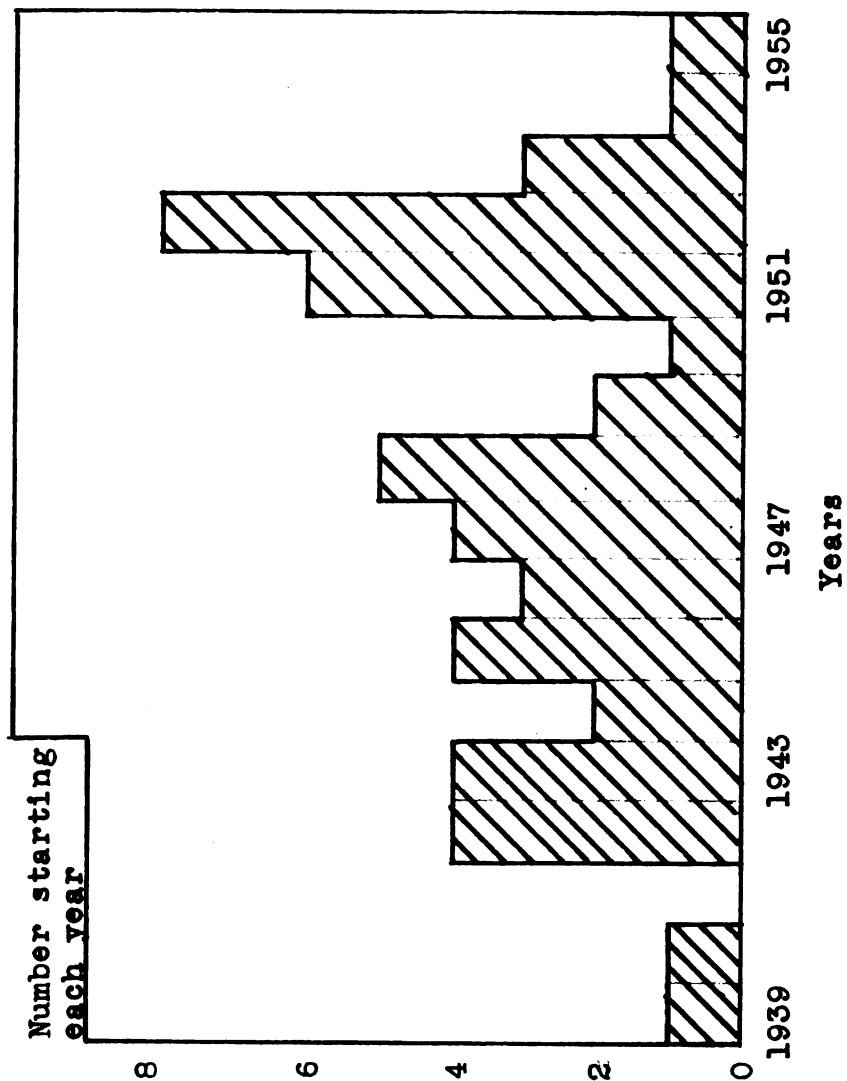


Figure 9. Percentage distribution showing who owned the farms on which 50 young men became established in the farming business on Lenawee County farms, 1939 - 54.

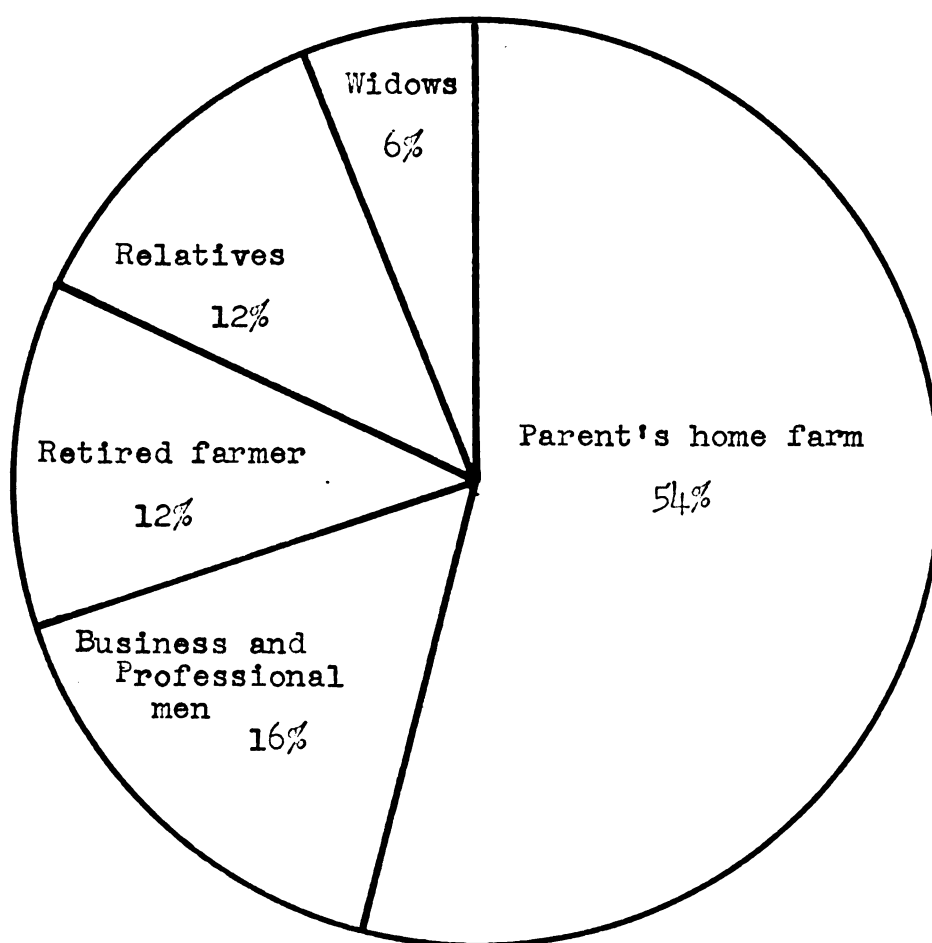


Figure 10. Percentage distribution showing how 47 young Lenawee County, Michigan farmers who became established in farming in 1939 - 54, earned and used their first \$100

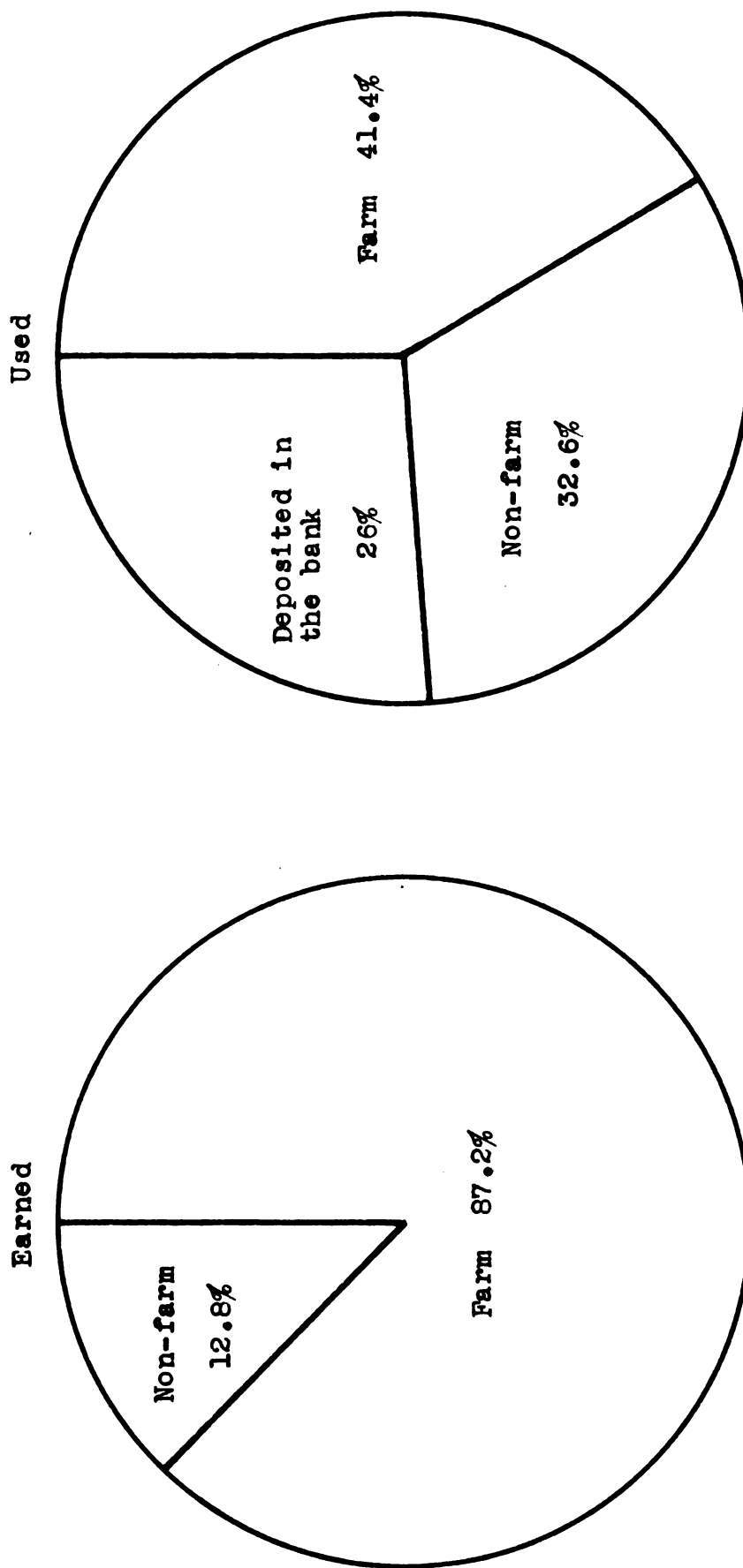
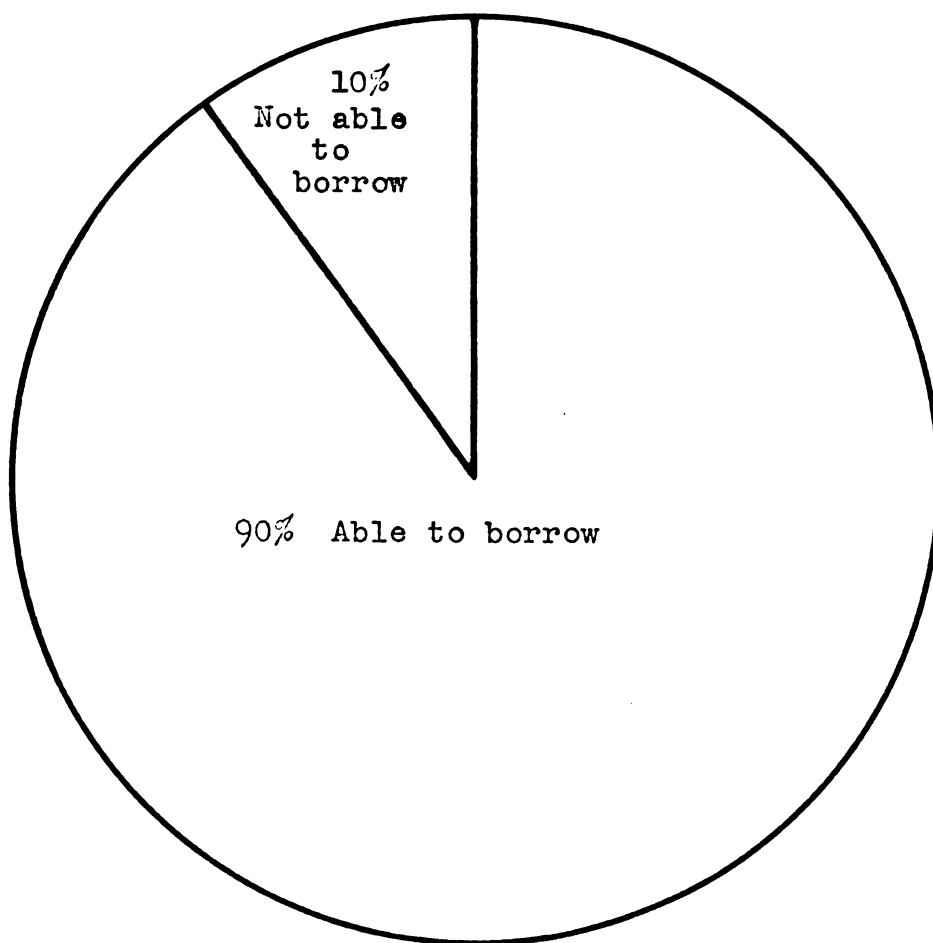




Figure 11. Percentage distribution showing how many of the 50 young farmers were able to borrow all of the money they needed to start farming on their own in Lenawee County, Michigan, 1939 - 54.



## CASE STUDIES

A RENTER'S SON WHO WAS ABLE TO  
BECOME ESTABLISHED ON HIS OWN RENTED FARM WITH  
FINANCIAL BACKING FROM HIS LANDLORD

Murray\* is an example of a young man who was not encouraged to stay on the home farm, for it could not support him and five other brothers. After being away from the farm for eight years, a farm owner greatly assisted him in becoming established in the farming business on a 320-acre dairy farm as a tenant on a 50-50 crop and livestock share rental basis.

Murray Brown, age 28, was born in 1926, the fourth of six brothers; he also had six sisters. Though he was born on a farm which his father rented, much of the farm experience Murray gained was while he was young, and on another farm. Since Murray had older brothers to help his father he had an opportunity to spend the majority of his spare time working away from home on a 500-acre dairy farm.

During high school, Murray had 3 years training in vocational agriculture, with dairy as his FFA project. Murray also had 10 years experience in 4-H, with the majority of his projects being in dairy. From the time he was a child, his main ambition has been to become a dairy farmer. Though Murray's parents were not able to give him much of an opportunity to earn money toward a start in the farming business, they did however, encourage him to enter farming by assisting

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.

him with his 4-H projects. His father was not well and "sold out" about the time Murray graduated from high school.

After the sale, Murray continued working on the farm where he had been working part-time while in high school for about one year and then quit to go to work at Tecumseh Products. During the eight year period from 1945 to 1953, Murray had several different types of employment. He worked in a shop three different periods, and he also drove a gas truck for a while. In November of 1952, a farm owner contacted him and asked him if he cared to lease his 320-acre dairy farm. Murray was very interested, but did not have any capital with which to purchase livestock or machinery.

Immediately, he began to see if he could obtain a loan sufficient to buy machinery and livestock. Since Murray had only household goods and a car for collateral, he was not able to secure as large a loan as he needed. Murray's landlord was confident of Murray's ability to repay the money that he needed to become established in the farming business, so he co-signed two notes with him. One note for a loan of \$3,000 was from the Tecumseh bank and the other loan of \$7,000 was from the Farmers Home Administration. This amount was not sufficient, so Murray's landlord took a note for \$1,050 to cover his full share of the dairy enterprise. This gave him a debt load of \$11,050 to start in the farming business. At this time, their savings amounted to about \$2,400 which was invested

in household goods and an automobile.

The first two years in the farming business, Murray increased his net worth from \$2,400 to nearly \$10,000. Previously during the time when he was not farming, all of his earnings seemed to be spent with very little to show for it. From statements that Murray made, there is reason to believe that a major part of his factory earnings were spent at the local taverns; now he is too busy to patronize those places, and can't afford to with so many bills to pay.

Murray stresses that it is very important for young people to get an early start in farming. He thinks that if they don't have a good start by the time they are out of high school, it's almost impossible to get started in the farming business later. Murray considers himself most fortunate to find a man that was willing to back him when he had nothing of his own to start with. Though the start was rather difficult, his wife has been very helpful by taking care of the "book work", and helping drive the tractor when needed.

A FARM OWNER'S SON, NOW WELL ESTABLISHED IN A FATHER  
AND SON FARM PARTNERSHIP AND BUYING 80 ACRES OF THE HOME  
FARM; THE SWITCHING OF FARM HOMES AND ARRANGEMENTS  
MADE AS TO FARM TRANSFER

Bob\* exemplifies a hard working young man who saw an opportunity in staying on the home farm. His father was a great source of inspiration and backing for him.

Bob was born in 1924 on a very productive farm in Clinton township, Lenawee County, Michigan. He took an active part in 4-H work and in FFA winning many awards and honors; one being a Short Course Scholarship to Michigan State University. The steer feeding projects in 4-H and FFA proved very profitable to Bob and helped him save enough money to start farming on his own. In addition, these projects gave him experience in feeding and management. He still feeds steers and is thankful for his early experience.

Bob learned to assume responsibility as a young lad on his father's 200-acre farm. His father gave him the feed for his steers for working on the farm during the summer. When he completed high school in 1943 he entered a 1/3 - 2/3 partnership with his dad. At that time he had about \$1,000 worth of machinery, \$1,800 worth of livestock and \$350 in savings. The livestock was three beef cows and a few steers as a carry-over from 4-H and FFA.

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.

Being brought up on a good farm and with an opportunity to continue on the home farm greatly influenced Bob to become a farmer. As he saw a bright future ahead for him as a farmer he more fully decided to become one. He feels that it is very important to get an early start in farming, even as a child of 10 or 12 years of age, for what one learns in their very early years can prove very valuable.

Bob's wife, though not a farm girl, likes living and working on a farm. She assists her husband by caring for a flock of 700 laying hens and driving the tractor and doing other odd jobs when needed.

After Bob was married in 1946 he bought 80 acres with a complete set of buildings from his father. He and his dad entered a 50-50 partnership, and worked together on the two farms. As for finances, dad was always willing to take Bob's note so he didn't have to do much borrowing from the bank. When Bob was very young he established a good credit rating and has never had any difficulty getting credit; he just has to be careful not to use too much.

Bob, his wife and family enjoy a very good standard of living in a beautiful modern home, leaving almost nothing to be desired. Bob's wife is from a very good home in the city, so he feels that he wants things equally as nice or nicer for her than if they lived in town. The family takes pride in the tidiness of the yard and buildings.

Bob's half of the machinery is not all new, but very well kept. He is always checking his machinery on rainy days or when he has any other spare time. He also keeps his eye on the buildings since they are fairly old, but well kept and painted. When you enter his place, you feel as though this is a business that you would like to own.

The two Johnson families switched homes about three years ago, and Bob and his family now live in their parents' home which was the best and most modern of the two. Bob and his father, with a lawyer's assistance, drew up a farm transfer with the following provisions.

1. Upon the death of Bob's parents, Bob has the opportunity of paying the heirs of the estate \$15,000 for his parents' farm of 120 acres, \$5,000 going to each of the other two heirs.
2. Bob's parents are to have a life lease of the house where they now live, in exchange for the home Bob is now living in.
3. Bob is to be fully responsible for his parents' care for the rest of their lives.
4. When his father reaches the age of 65, if Bob so desires, he may purchase his father's farm for \$15,000 for which his father would hold the mortgage. Bob would annually pay \$1,200, including interest and principal. His parents would still have a life lease on the house where they now live.



5. Providing that Bob would buy the home farm, upon the death of his parents he could continue the mortgage as it now stands, only the mortgage would be held by the estate, instead of by his parents, or Bob could pay the heirs their equity if he so desired.

Bob and his father also had a lawyer draw up a paper showing that all livestock and machinery is now jointly owned and that when the father reached the age of 65, Bob had the privilege of buying out his father's equity at it's inventory value. If he should die sooner, he still could buy out his father's interest at its inventory value. One of the main reasons for having this farm transfer arrangement drawn, was because Bob's father felt that some members of the family might not be fair in the settling of this estate in the future.

Bob keeps farm records to show the weak and strong parts of his business. He attends extension meetings, adult classes in agriculture and studies bulletins and magazines to keep up-to-date. Putting into practice what he learns, keeps him up to date; such as trying stilbestrol and also improved his fertilizer program according to the needs of the soil and the crop.

Bob's daughter now only six years of age, fed out a steer that was Reserve Grand Champion at the Clinton Community Fair in August of 1954. Of course, dad gave her an assist.

A RENTER'S SON NOW WELL ESTABLISHED ON HIS OWN RENTED FARM

\*

Jim is an example of a young man who did not agree with his dad's way of farming, as a result, he had to get started in the farming business the hard way. With his wife's cooperation, they endured some tough years at the start, but now enjoy a comfortable standard of living with vacations.

Jim was born in 1926 on a 200-acre farm which his father was renting. He did not have the opportunity of taking vocational agriculture in high school; however, through his 4-H club, he won state honors for his production of sugar beets. He also had 3 years of 4-H corn projects. The awards won from 7 years experience of growing sugar beets were mainly responsible for his winning an Eight-Weeks Short Course Scholarship to Michigan State College.

The money that Jim made and saved from 4-H club projects were a great aid to his start in farming. Jim, however, received very little financial assistance from his parents. Upon completing high school, he rented an 80-acre farm. Since Jim was the oldest of the boys, he learned how to assume responsibility at an early age. The illness of his father caused most of the responsibility of operating the 200-acre farm to be shifted to Jim at age 14. During the next four years, he assumed most of the responsibility of the managing the farm.

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.

After graduation from high school, Jim's dad offered him a wage to continue on the farm which the dad rented, but Jim felt that he could do better elsewhere. He and his dad did not entirely agree on the need of education for farming, so Jim had a hard time convincing his father to let him take an eight-weeks short course at Michigan State University.

After Jim completed his Eight-Weeks Short Course at Michigan State University, he continued to be a student of agriculture and always strives for new and better ways to farm. He attends extension meetings and also adult class in agriculture.

When asked, "What caused you to decide to become a farmer?" Jim said that he had worked in the shop and didn't care for it; "In the shop you don't have to have a mind of your own" he said. He decided to farm about the time that he graduated from high school for he felt with his initiative he could make a much better living there than in the shop. He stresses that it is very important to get started early in farming, especially for the experience.

Though his wife was not a farm girl, she is a great asset to his business and she likes it very much. When they first started in 1948, Jim says that they never could have made it if it had not been for her patience, business ability and willingness to start with practically nothing. Even now, with children to care for, she keeps the books, pays the bills, takes care of the garden and helps outside if needed.

The Smiths were married in the fall of 1947 and started farming in the spring of 1948 on an 150-acre rented farm, which a friend had told him about. They started with an old car, \$1,000 that was borrowed from relatives, \$2,000 worth of machinery and fairly nice furniture. Jim's wife contributed to payments on the furniture with \$800 that she had saved at age 18, though from a rather poor family. The landlord carried the fertilizer and seed bill on a charge account for them the first year.

One of the biggest problems that Jim had in starting to farm was obtaining machinery and equipment. When he started, most of his machinery was purchased as "used machinery" which kept him busy checking and keeping it up in shape. He went without some articles at first rather than to buy poor, worn out machines. He stress the importance of buying quality, for you can't afford breakdowns. In 1948, the first year he started to farm, he paid \$4 a bushel for soybean seed and then sold the crop for \$2 a bushel. Jim feels that no factor is more important in connection with getting started in farming, than having a wife's cooperation, especially the first few years. During the six years the Smiths have been farming, their financial net worth has increased at a satisfactory rate.

The Smiths enjoy a high standard of living, with a new automobile and over \$4,000 worth of household furniture and goods. Everything on the farm looks neat and tidy inside and out.

Jim's machinery is now (1955) mostly all new and in excellent shape. He still has some of the equipment that he started with, for example, one tractor that is in better condition than it was then. Since he is a crop farmer, he has spent over \$10,000 for machinery, which really pays off. His share of the crops for 1955 have been appraised at over \$10,000 on the 240 acres which he is now renting.

His spare time is spent maintaining and improving his machinery, testing his soil and planning better ways of farming. During the school year he drives a school bus for a few extra dollars. Christmas vacation is spent soaking up sunshine in Florida.

A FARM OWNER'S SON NOW WELL ESTABLISHED ON A RENTED FARM

\*

Frank exemplifies a young man who was given an opportunity to gain farm experience and accumulate capital on the home farm. At age 20, he became established in the farming business on a rented farm.

Frank Thomas, the older of two sons, was born in 1930 on his father's farm. Frank was progressive as a 4-H member and as a FFA member winning many awards in each. He had eight years experience in 4-H, with dairy and beef as his main projects. In his four years of FFA, his main projects were dairy, beef and hogs.

Frank gained a lot of his experience in the farming business at an early age, on his father's 240-acre farm. His father also rented 120 acres. Frank was given responsible jobs on the home farm, which included practically all phases of farming. He attained a degree of financial competence and responsibility from his 4-H projects and from his FFA projects. During his senior year in high school, Frank rented an 80-acre farm, which he completely managed. When he graduated from high school, Frank had acquired some livestock and machinery besides accumulating a small amount of money.

After graduation from high school, Frank continued to work the 80-acre farm, which he was renting, besides helping

---

\*An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.

his father on the home farm. Frank was married in 1950, and in 1951 he and his wife rented a 164-acre farm and became established in the farming business. Frank's wife was raised on a farm and also won honors with her 4-H projects. She entered several projects in the state 4-H show. Besides taking care of the family, Mrs. Thomas helps with the keeping of the farm records, and assists with any odd jobs when needed.

Frank was only 20 years of age, when he and his wife started in the farming business on their own. At that time, they had \$1,000 in cash, a \$500 car, household goods valued at \$1,000, \$800 worth of feed and supplies, machinery and equipment worth \$5,000, and livestock valued at \$4,300. This gave them assets totaling \$13,800. Frank and his wife borrowed \$5,000 of this amount from their parents. The loan was interest free.

Frank indicated that the income and savings from his and his wives' 4-H projects and FFA projects were a very important contribution toward his start in farming. His savings from shop work in town and from custom work also proved to be quite important.

During their first four years in the farming business, Frank and his wife have increased their net worth from less than \$9,000 to approximately \$26,000. This is an average yearly increase of over \$4,000. They enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with many modern conveniences. Though

the house in which they live is old, it is pleasant and quite modern.

Frank, now (1955) has about \$9,000 invested in machinery, which is well kept. His livestock is from very good breeding and is in very good condition. Frank and his wife are very careful in the planning and operation of their farming business and attempt to make each farm enterprise very efficient.

The Thomas's have been on the lookout for a good farm for about two years. Before he makes such a purchase, he wants to be sure that it will be adequate for his type of farming. He and his wife have saved a considerable amount of money by "shopping around" for good buys.

Frank sells fertilizer to increase his yearly income. Another aid to his getting established in farming was the exchanging of help with his father the first two years that he was married, while baling and combining. Frank's father furnished the combine and baler.

When Frank was asked what factors he considered to be the most important in connection with getting started in the farming business, he replied:

1. You need schooling along with experience.
2. You should establish a good credit rating.
3. You need cooperation of the entire family.



A CITY BOY, WITH FARM EXPERIENCE, MARRIED EARLY AND  
FINDING IT DIFFICULT TO BECOME ESTABLISHED IN FARMING

\*  
Lee is an example of a boy born in t̄won, who obtained farming experience on his uncle's farm. He was married at age 18, and finds it difficult to support his family and become established in the farming business.

Lee Jones, age 22, was born and raised in the t̄won of Britton. Lee took vocational agriculture the only year it was offered while he was in high school. He had 6 years of experience in 4-H, though his projects were practically garden projects, and the produce went for home consumption. Lee raised  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre of tomatoes his last year in 4-H, which was the first real chance he had to earn very much money.

While in high school, Lee learned to accept responsibility working on his uncles farm. When he was in the 11th and 12th grades, his uncle took vacations, and left Lee in full charge of the farm. Lee had little opportunity to gain financial competence, except from his 4-H tomato project. The profit for the tomato project was used to make a down payment on a car.

After Lee graduated from high school in 1951, he continued to work for his uncle, for he was too young to get a job in the shop. The following fall he was married, and in the

---

\*An assumed name, but description of an actual situation

spring of 1952, he entered a farm partnership with his father-in-law. For his work, Lee received  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the milk check, meat, milk, eggs and a house to live in. His father-in-law also paid the light bill. At that time, Lee had no farm machinery or livestock. He is still working on his father-in-law's 240-acre farm, with the same agreement, except for one addition; he now receives  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the profits from an 80-acre farm which they are now (1955) working. At the present, Lee has \$1,000 worth of machinery and \$350 of livestock, although this does not change the original agreement.

There is little evidence which shows that Lee will soon be on his own. One of his difficulties, he claims, is that he did not have enough capital when he was married. At the time the Jones's were married, they had \$30 in cash, a car worth \$1,000 with a lien on it of \$250, and household goods worth about \$800. Approximately all of the money that Lee earns goes to provide for his family. Lee and his wife now have a net worth of about \$5,800 with most of it invested in household goods and a car.

Lee was not able to save much money before starting in farming, for he was married shortly after graduation from high school. His main sources of savings came from his 4-H project of  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre of tomatoes and from what he saved working on his

uncle's farm. He feels that he would not have to struggle along at such a slow rate, if he had not gotten married so young, or started to raise a family so soon. Lee also believes that it would have been beneficial if he could have had more agricultural training in high school or a short course at Michigan State University.

Mrs. Jones is now working as a nurse at the Tecumseh hospital to earn additional money to care for the family. The Jones's have two children, the youngest being about 13 months old. Mrs. Jones hires someone to care for them while she is working.

The Jones's enjoy a better than an average standard of living and seem to be very happy. They are still quite young and feel that when the children get a little older, they will be able to be on their own.

A FARM FAMILY WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP THE SONS BECOME  
ESTABLISHED IN THE FARMING BUSINESS

The Williams\* are an example of a family that together have worked hard toward a common goal of helping each of the boys become established in the farming business.

Joe was born in 1923 on a 78-acre farm, which his father later lost during the depression when the mortgage was foreclosed. Jack was born on the same farm in 1927, the third of five boys, Joe being the oldest. Though their father, Mr. Williams, lost practically everything that he owned during the depression of the '30s, he owns a 200-acre farm at the present, (1955).

Joe took a very active part in 4-H and won many awards during his 6 years of participation. He also took part in FFA for 3 years. Likewise, Jack gained much of his farm experience with his work in FFA and 4-H. Both of the boys took all of the vocational agriculture offered in high school, plus Veteran's "on the farm training". Joe and Jack still are active students of agriculture, by attending adult class in agriculture, as well as extension meetings.

Both Joe and Jack learned to take responsibility young in life, and gained a small amount of financial competence from the money and livestock which they acquired from 4-H and

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.

FFA projects. Though their accumulation seemed very small at the time, yet both feel that this source of income and savings was a very important contribution to their start in farming on their own.

Upon graduation from high school, Joe helped on the home farm for a while and then left to work in the shop, since the home farm was too small to support him. Later, he was drafted into military service. He later returned to the shop to earn enough money to help him start farming on his own. In April 1951 Joe joined his dad and Jack in a 3-way farm partnership, which gave each  $1/3$  of the receipts from the hogs and dairy cattle.

When Jack graduated from high school, he spent a year in military service. Upon his discharge he worked as a machine operator for about a year. In June 1946 he entered a partnership with his father, which gave him  $1/3$  of the receipts from the hogs and dairy.

In 1951 when Joe, Jack and their father entered their partnership, they worked 220 acres besides the 200 acres owned by the father. Each of the boys had bought in on  $1/3$  of the livestock and paid  $1/3$  of all expenses, such as feed, gas, oil, fertilizer, seed, etc. No machinery was jointly owned, each bought his own, but used it in common in the partnership. The receipts from the cash crops and feed crops were divided in proportion to the investment of each.

In the spring of 1954 there was a slight change in the partnership for Joe bought a 240-acre farm of his own. Since he couldn't get enough money to swing the deal, his brother Tom agreed to buy 80 acres of it. He was able to raise enough money for the balance. This, he did by selling his house in town on a land contract, which gave him a portion of the amount he needed, the rest coming from the National Farm Loan Association and his father.

The 3-way partnership continued, including the 160 acres Joe had purchased in 1954. His investment in machinery during this time was less than \$400. He and his wife worked long and hard to fix two apartments in the house which they rent for \$50 each. This income from the house makes up the major part of the monthly payment on the farm.

In the spring of 1955 Joe left the partnership and a younger brother, Bob a high school junior, entered on a partial basis. He bought out 1/3 of the hog partnership which belonged to Joe and he receives the milk from the cows which he raised for FFA projects. Bob contributes not only his time to the partnership, but also his tractor and 1/3 of the expenses of the hog enterprise. He was able to borrow the money for the tractor, when he obtained a letter of recommendation from his Vocational Agriculture teacher.

As the partnership stands today, Jack still receives 1/3 of the receipts from the hogs and cows. He also makes a little

money on his own doing custom baling with his own baler. Bob will be a senior in high school this year and plans to work into a full 1/3 partnership on the home farm upon graduation from high school. He will enroll in his fourth year of vocational agriculture and is president of the local FFA. Joe is now on his own farm, but still exchanges machinery with the rest of the family. Tom works full-time in the shop and owns 80 acres which the rest of the family work. He owns some machinery and helps with the work when he is able, however his hay fever does not enable him to farm full time. The father sells Farm Bureau seeds and fertilizer and also shears sheep for additional income.

Joe and Jack admit that there are misunderstandings which come about in a partnership, but they feel that it is the only way they could get established on their own. They stress the importance of starting in the farming business at as young an age as possible. Joe and Jack have encouraged Bob to continue to take advantage of the farming opportunity on the home farm, which they did not have at his age.

CASE HISTORIES And EXPERIENCES  
IN The LIVES OF YOUNG FARMERS, WHO BECAME ESTABLISHED  
In The FARMING BUSINESS In LENAWEE COUNTY,  
MICHIGAN FROM 1939 to 1954



ROBERT A.

Robert A.\* was the oldest of four boys and had to quit school after completeing the eighth grade to help support the family. He left home at 16 years of age during the depression of the '30s to earn his own living. During this time he worked for two years on a 240-acre general farm and then went to work in the shop.

Robert became established in farming in 1939, when he bought the interests of the rest of the heirs of his fathers' 40-acre farm, after his fathers' death. At 25 years of age he was only worth \$2,000 while today 16 years later, he has a 240-acre farm in excellent condition and completely paid for. Robert just bought another 80 acres which is also a very good farm.

His wife is a great help to him and keeps the books. He sells fertilizer and lime to increase his income, and is also a licensed electrician. Robert is constantly experimenting on his farm, and attends adult classes in agriculture in search of better methods of farming. His son is very active in FFA and has a very outstanding supervised farming program, which includes both crop and livestock enterprises.

Robert suggests that anyone just starting out in the farming business should seek advice from those trained and experienced in the field.

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.

RAY N.

Ray N.\* graduated from high school in 1935 when work was hard to get, though he did have an opportunity to stay on the home farm. He took Vocational Agriculture all four of his high school years and for his projects raised corn and potatoes. At this time, Ray received a portion of the profits from feeding sheep besides getting a share of the other livestock during his junior and senior years. Upon completing high school he received \$5 a week, had an interest in the livestock and was paid by the acre for working his uncle's 80-acre farm.

Ray feels that it is very important to get started in farming at an early age, for he says "The longer you wait, the harder it is to get started because of other obligations to be met". Though his wife was not a farm girl, she helps him in planning and doing the farm work.

Ray lists these factors as being most important in connection with getting started in the farming business:

1. Make sure that you are acquainted with the problems of farming
2. You can't start on a shoestring, establish credit and then borrow

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.

3. In case of a father-son partnership, separate housing is a must
4. Share machinery with someone that you can work with and trust.

WILLIS R.

Willis R.<sup>\*</sup> has no brothers or sisters and so is his mother's only heir. When he graduated from high school he entered a partnership with his father and received  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the profits from the farm. The partnership included the 110 acres owned by his father and 35 acres which they rented. Willis tried working in the shop one winter but did not like it.

When his father died, his mother entered into a 50-50 livestock and crop farm operating agreement with him. Willis and his mother now jointly own all of the machinery and livestock, and each pay  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all bills. Each receives  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all the profits. Willis recently bought another 80-acre farm, but his mother still gets  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the receipts from it and pays  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the bills. Upon his mother's death, all of the equity in the farming business is to go to him.

He was able to start farming in full-time partnership with his father in 1942 when he graduated from high school with only \$275 that he had saved and \$1,100 which he borrowed from the bank. Willis became established in farming while he was only 17 and still single. The savings and experience from his FFA projects were very important to his start.

Willis stress that a young man just starting in farming

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.

should - 1. Have lots of ambition

2. Have someone back them to get started

3. Have sufficient experience and education  
in the field of agriculture.

RONALD M.

Ronald M.<sup>\*</sup> is the only child of a farmer who owned 200 acres of excellent crop land. Besides the money that he earned and saved from 9 years of 4-H project work, Ronald received 20 percent of the milk check while he was in high school. He states that he really took an interest in "how to make cows produce more" when he started getting a share of the milk check. Ronald also stresses the value of his projects as a source of education as well as savings.

When he graduated from high school in 1942 he and his father entered into a father and son partnership as outlined by Michigan State University. Each received from the business in accordance to what each had invested. They worked together until 1949 but never seemed to agree with the other. His dad was offered a good price for the farm so he sold it in the spring of 1950.

Ronald was married in 1949 and moved on to a 180-acre farm which his father bought for him to work, after he sold the previous farm. Ronald now works the farm on a 50-50 crop and livestock lease and he also cash rents a nearby 45 acres. He bought his father's share of the machinery for about \$10,000 and his father took his note for it. He and his father still do not get along for since his father owns

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.

the farm and holds his note for over \$10,000 he feels that he should have a lot to say about the way the business is to be run. Ronald has now had several years of farm experience, besides Short Course training at Michigan State University, and feels that he is capable of running his own business.

ROBERT T.

Robert T.<sup>\*</sup> is now 34 years of age, and 3rd of four boys. He graduated from high school and had four years of Vocational Agriculture. His parents rented 112 acres which provided little farm experience for him. They in no way encouraged him to enter farming.

In 1943 Bob was married and he and his wife had about \$3,000 besides a car that was worth nearly \$500. A friend of Bob's told him of a 112-acre farm which he was going to quit working, so Bob rented it. The landlord (a retired farmer) furnished the combine and corn picker and the farm is worked on a 50-50 crop and livestock lease.

Today the buildings are well kept and everything looks neat and tidy. The original volume of business has expanded slowly in terms of a few additional head of livestock and some custom work. He now has liabilities of less than \$1,500 and when asked why he did not want to use more credit, he said that he did not want to go deeper in debt. His net worth is about \$11,000 which is only a yearly increase of about \$625.

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.



BILL G.

Bill G.<sup>\*</sup>, age 23, was born in town, and lived there most of his life. He gained some farm experience while working for a nearby stock farm. Bill was married in 1952 while in the military service and started farming on a rented farm in October of 1953 when he was discharged.

Bill pays \$70 a month cash rent for this 80-acre farm. The buildings are not at all well kept, and the house is in very poor condition and without even having running water. In practically two years time, Bill has increased his inventory about \$3,500 most of which apparently came from his savings from working in the shop. Bill is now farming full-time since he is laid off at the shop. He wished to continue to farm full time. There is hardly a sign or possibility of Bill ever becoming a success in the farming business.

He has an opportunity to attend veteran's school, but he says, "What they try to teach you is a lot of hooley". When called on at eleven a.m., he was lying down asleep, and hadn't milked the cow yet. When he did milk her, the milk that was left after the calf that got out had her share, was given to the pigs.

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.

WILBUR R.

Wilbur R. \* - age 30 has no brothers and one sister. He graduated from high school in 1942 with a high scholastic rating. He was chosen by his vocational agriculture teacher as the most outstanding graduating senior. As a youth he gained experience in farming from both 4-H and FFA projects and his father gave him a share from the proceeds of the farm. With all of his training, high scholastic standing, and farm experience, Wilbur still has not learned how to make decisions and is very dependent on his father. He has never borrowed money and since graduation from high school has been looking for a big depression. Wilbur's father remembers the last depression and is sure that Wilbur shouldn't go into debt. When asked why he did not use more credit now, he said he didn't want to go into debt since the weather and future prices were too uncertain.

Upon graduation from high school, he entered a partnership with his father on his father's 200-acre farm, after working for wages until 1944. Wilbur is still in partnership with his father, receiving  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the dairy receipts and  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the receipts from the rest of the farming enterprise.

The house in which Wilbur and his family live is on one of his father's farms. It is not modern in any, nor

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.

does it have running water. The house shows no signs of ever having been painted. The yard is not kept up and the buildings are badly in need of repair. The crops are often not put in or harvested on time.

Much of Wilbur's difficulty seems to come from his lack of ability to think and plan for himself.

HENRY J.

Henry J.<sup>\*</sup> was born in 1915, the youngest of three boys. He always liked farming so he took two years of Vocational Agriculture in high school. The first \$100 that Henry ever made was from his garden project, but unfortunately he lost it during the depression. He gained a small amount of farm experience as a youth while working for a dairy. He had no encouragement to farm from his parents for they died when he was a small child.

Henry worked in the shop after graduation until he was 30 years of age. He greatly disliked the shop and always wanted to farm but didn't feel that he was financially able to make a go of the farming business. In 1944 he had a nervous breakdown and upon recovery he immediately began to look for a farm to buy. He bought a 107-acre farm in 1945 for \$12,500 which was in fairly good condition though the buildings were very inadequate. Henry and his wife are very happy on the farm and have had to do quite a lot of repairing and remodeling on some of the buildings, especially the barn to make it adaptable to the dairy business. The buildings and general conditions of the farm are now better than average. The Jones's have increased their net worth in 10 years, about \$20,000.

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.

Henry and his wife suggest that in order to be successful in the farming business you must:

1. Like farming and spend long hours of hard work
2. Know how to budget close and spend money wisely
3. Work and plan as a family
4. Save enough money so that you don't have to borrow over 50 percent when buying a farm.

Henry said that more important than any of these is that he couldn't have entered and continued in the farming business without faith in God.

DOUGLAS K.

Douglas K.\* graduated from high school in 1942 at the age of 16. His father bought a 140-acre farm at that time and Douglas became established in farming with his father. They also rented another 260 acres giving them a total of 400 acres to farm.

In 1952 he gave up farming and went to work at Tecumseh Products. Douglas still owns a large self-propelled combine and other farm machinery. It is believed that perhaps one difficulty of Douglas in getting established and failure to continue in the farming business was that he perhaps went into debt too deeply and bought too much high priced machinery.

Since Douglas's father has a heart condition, it is difficult for him to do much heavy farm work. Douglas does much work yet on the farm, though he receives no pay or income from it. All of the earnings go into payment of debts on the farm and farm business, most of which incurred during 1942 - 1952.

Douglas was laid off last summer during June and July and this was a real blessing since it enabled him to be home and do the harvesting and other farm work.

Douglas is an only child and upon the death of his parents will inherit any assets or liabilities which the farm enterprise may have.

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.

SAMUEL T.

<sup>\*</sup>  
Samuel T. could not get along in school, so he quit in the 9th grade and stayed home to help his dad on the home farm. At that time he had no particular interest in farming but stayed on the home farm for there wasn't much else to do. He had no training in 4-H or FFA nor did he take any short course work.

Samuel was married in 1939 at the age of 21. It was then he decided to farm for a living. He continued to work for his father as a farm-hand until 1946, when he and his father entered a partnership on his dad's 400-acre farm. From that time on, Walter received 50 percent of the receipts from the crops and livestock, sharing one-half of all expenses. At that time, he also bought out half of his dad's livestock and machinery.

When Samuel went into partnership with his father in 1946, he was worth less than \$12,000 and now he is worth over \$60,000. Samuel and his father made a large portion of their income from borrowed money for the purpose of buying and feeding steers. They would buy as many as 200 head, at a time, to be fed out and sold.

Samuel stresses the wise use of credit can be very helpful, and that there are disadvantages to a partnership, that he might have been able to do better elsewhere.

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.

DON S.

Don S.<sup>\*</sup>, age 19, is the younger of two boys and lives on an 81-acre farm which his father owns. His father works in the shop and has given Don an opportunity to get started in farming while yet young. At the present time he has had over 60 projects in FFA and 4-H. During his senior year of high school Don was awarded the State Farmer degree in FFA. He has also won many state awards in 4-H and has been a representative to the National 4-H Convention.

Don believes that farm experience is of great importance, but it must be supplemented with formal agricultural training. He took 4 years of Vocational Agriculture in high school and a 4-term Short Course in agriculture at Michigan State University.

When Don became established in farming on his own at the age of 17, he had saved over \$1,500. He then borrowed \$100 from the bank and \$500 from his father for tools and machinery. Two years later, at the age of 19, he had increased his net worth to nearly \$9,000.

Don says that if young folks want to farm, they should start while they're yet young, and work their way in to obtain capital. He stresses the importance of experience and having plenty of courage.

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.



TOM P.

Tom P.<sup>\*</sup>, age 26, is the older of two brothers and though he didn't have any 4-H or FFA training he gained plenty of farm experience on the home farm. When Tom graduated from high school at Macon, he had practically all A's. Since he felt that he needed more training in the field of agriculture, he took a 4-term Short Course in Agriculture at Michigan State University.

Tom was married in 1950 and continued to work in a partnership with his father until 1952 when he bought his own 140-acre farm for \$14,000. At that time, the buildings were in a poor state of repair especially the house. The house wasn't at all modern, and very filthy inside. He and his wife, with the aid of friends scrubbed and dug dirt for weeks, before they could start painting and papering. Tom and his wife did the plumbing, carpenter work and most all the rest of the reconditioning work themselves. They sanded the floors and even laid the linoleum without any assistance.

They now have a good income from the upstairs apartment, which they also remodeled. Besides teaching school, Tom's wife also helps on the farm and the two have practically doubled the value of the farm. Their farming business, however, has been temporarily halted for Tom was drafted into the service January 4, 1955.

---

\*

An assumed name, but description of an actual situation.

## EVALUATION OF METHODOLOGY FOLLOWED

The author believes that the period of becoming "established in farming" should have been changed from the actual beginning of the year to include the entire first year. The change would have made possible the obtaining of more valuable information with the questionnaire, particularly of the young farmer's finance and credit operations during his first year of becoming established as a farmer.

It was difficult to evaluate the actual amount of substantial parental aid that the young men included in the study had received. The opportunity to farm, provided by many parents, was very beneficial to many of the young men, even though their parents gave them very little if any other financial backing.

The author does not believe that Question 11 of the schedule "Degree of financial success of your home farm" was very closely related to the problem under study, and therefore could well have been omitted. Questions 25 and 29 referring to soil ratings did not seem to provide data of much value.

The questionnaire did not supply information as to the source and amount of borrowed funds the young farmers used after the date they became established in farming. The author believes this data might be of more value than just information pertaining to the borrowing of funds at the date of establishment in farming. More emphasis should have been put on the borrowing of funds after establishment in farming.

It took approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours to take a schedule, depending on several factors. If the farmer was real busy and didn't have time to visit, it might have taken as little time as  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an hour. Those contacted in the evening sometimes wished to visit, so more time was usually required. On an average, four schedules were completed in a day. Many times return trips in the evening were required.

The general reception by the young farmers was very favorable. Not one of them refused to supply information. They seemed to be in favor of the study and wished to be of help to other young men entering the business of farming.

### Evaluation of the Study

The author feels that if the study could have covered a larger area with more young men within the category, the results from the study would be more representative of the actual situation studied. This was not possible, however, in this project.

The young farmers were interviewed at a very busy time of the year, for that was the only time the author was able to contact them. Possibly if they had not been so busy the young men could have supplied more valuable information.

There is doubt in the author's mind as to how well established in farming those interviewed really were. Some had been farming for many years and do not seem to be as well established in farming now as they previously had been.

There is need for study as to how young men established in farming made satisfactory progress.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Agricultural Outlook Charts, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture 1955.
2. Darral, L.B., and Bruckner, J.H., Getting Started in Poultry Farming, Cornell Extension Bulletin 679, 1949.
3. Farm Land Price Subcommittee, Improving Land Credit Arrangements in the Midwest, Purdue University Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 551.
4. Hagen, Hans, Sound Financing of Real Estate Purchases, Federal Land Bank, Farm Credit Administration, mimeographed publication, 1952.
5. Harris, Marshall and Hill, Elton B., Family Farm - Transfer Arrangements, Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station, Circular 680.
6. Heady, E.O., Economics of Farm Leasing Systems, Journal of Farm Economics, 1947.
7. Hill, Elton B., and Harris, Marshall, Family Farm - Operating Agreements, Michigan State University, Agricultural Experiment Station, Special Bulletin 368, 1952.
8. Hougland, C.R., Facts for Prospective Farmers and Ranchers in South Dakota, South Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station, Circular 59, 1945.
9. Larsen, H.C. and Johnson, N.W., United States Department of Agriculture, Miscellaneous Bulletin 449.
10. May, Clyde O., Do I Want to Farm?, Michigan State University, Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 267, 1945.
11. Michigan Agricultural Statistics 1954, Michigan Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Industry.
12. Norton, J.L., Ackerman, J. and Fayre, C.R., Capacity to pay and Farm Financing, University of Illinois, Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 449.

13. Phipps, Lloyd J., Masters, William D., Future Farmer to Farmer, Division of Agricultural Education, College of Education, University of Illinois, 1953.
14. Pond, G.A., and Moore, D.S., Starting Farming: Suggestions and Advice from Successful Farmers, Report No. 13, Department Agricultural Economics, Institute of Agriculture, University of Minnesota, 1954.
15. Robinson, James L., Farmers Need Special Credit Administration, Farm Credit Administration, Circular E-26.
16. Shepard, Donald H., How Farm Sons Become Established as Farmers, Michigan State University, Unpublished Thesis, 1950.
17. Swanson, H.W., Pond, G.A., and Cavert, W.L., Starting Farming Today, Report No. 211, Department of Agriculture Economics, Institute of Agriculture, University of Minnesota, 1953.
18. Sweany, Paul, Educational Significance of Opportunities and Pattern's for Becoming Farm Operators in Indiana, Michigan State University, Unpublished Thesis, 1947.
19. Simpson, George and Kafka, Fritz, Basic Statistics, W.W. Norton and Company Inc., New York, 1952.
20. Wilt, H.E., Father and Son Farming Agreements in South Central Michigan, Department of Agricultural Economics, Michigan State University, Unpublished Thesis, 1950.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Number \_\_\_\_\_

GETTING ESTABLISHED IN FARMING\*Personal History

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_
2. Age \_\_\_\_\_ No. of brothers \_\_\_\_\_ No. of sisters \_\_\_\_\_
3. Your position among the brothers (oldes-first, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Year of marriage . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
5. Highest grade in school completed \_\_\_\_\_ Years of Vo. Ag. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Other agricultural training (short course, veterans, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
7. 4-H or F. F. A. projects and years of each \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
8. Years spent doing farm work away from the home farm:  
 During school \_\_\_\_\_ After completing school \_\_\_\_\_  
 Give the kind of farm or the kind of work \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
9. Years spent doing non-farm work:  
 During school \_\_\_\_\_ After completing school \_\_\_\_\_  
 Give a brief description of the types of work or jobs. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
10. Size of the \_\_\_\_\_ farm: Acres, Total; owned \_\_\_\_\_ rented \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Write in home or other. This question refers to the farm on which you gained  
 most of your farm experience up to the age of 18).

\*Michigan State College, Agricultural Experiment Station, Department of Agricultural Economics project.

Parent's Role

11. Degree of financial success of your home farm: Average \_\_\_\_\_  
Better than average \_\_\_\_\_ Lower than average \_\_\_\_\_
12. Did your parents encourage you to enter farming? \_\_\_\_\_ How \_\_\_\_\_
13. Did they give you responsible jobs on the home farm while you were home? \_\_\_\_\_  
If so, what were they? \_\_\_\_\_
14. What opportunities did you have to attain:  
Financial competence and responsibility: \_\_\_\_\_  
Managerial competence: \_\_\_\_\_  
Accumulate money: \_\_\_\_\_  
Acquire livestock and machinery: \_\_\_\_\_
15. When you completed school, did your parents suggest any plan to encourage you to continue on the home farm, such as a partnership, or a wage, etc? \_\_\_\_\_
16. In what manner did your parents help you in becoming established in farming other than in question 15? \_\_\_\_\_

Interest in Farming

17. What caused you to decide to become a farmer? \_\_\_\_\_
18. When did you decide to be a farmer? \_\_\_\_\_
19. How important is it to get started early in farming, i.e., while in grade or high school? \_\_\_\_\_
20. Was your wife a farm girl? \_\_\_\_\_ Does she like living and working on a farm? \_\_\_\_\_
21. In what manner does your wife assist in the farming business? \_\_\_\_\_



1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for ensuring transparency and accountability in the organization's operations.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods and techniques used to collect and analyze data. It highlights the need for a systematic approach to data collection and the importance of using reliable sources of information.

3. The third part of the document describes the process of identifying and addressing potential risks and challenges. It stresses the importance of proactive risk management and the need to develop effective strategies to mitigate potential threats.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the role of communication and collaboration in achieving the organization's goals. It emphasizes the importance of clear communication and effective teamwork in ensuring the success of all projects and initiatives.

5. The fifth part of the document outlines the various tools and technologies used to support the organization's operations. It highlights the importance of using modern, efficient tools and technologies to improve productivity and reduce costs.

6. The sixth part of the document describes the process of evaluating and improving the organization's performance. It stresses the importance of regular performance reviews and the need to implement effective measures to improve the organization's overall performance.

7. The seventh part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining a strong relationship with the organization's stakeholders. It emphasizes the need for open communication and collaboration with all stakeholders to ensure the organization's long-term success.

8. The eighth part of the document outlines the various challenges and opportunities facing the organization. It highlights the need for a proactive approach to identifying and addressing these challenges and opportunities to ensure the organization's continued growth and success.

9. The ninth part of the document describes the process of developing and implementing a strategic plan. It stresses the importance of a clear, concise strategic plan that outlines the organization's vision, mission, and goals.

10. The tenth part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining a strong financial position. It emphasizes the need for careful financial management and the importance of ensuring that the organization has sufficient resources to support its operations.

Obtaining the Use of a Farm

22. Date you started farming on your own or in full-time partnership on home farm?  
\_\_\_\_\_
23. How did you obtain a lead on the farm on which you started farming for yourself?  
\_\_\_\_\_
24. Its size — Acres: Total, owned \_\_\_\_\_ rented \_\_\_\_\_  
Tillable, owned \_\_\_\_\_ rented \_\_\_\_\_
25. What would be a fair rating of the soil on this farm? \_\_\_\_\_  
Excellent ( ) Good ( ) Fair ( ) Poor ( )
26. Who owned the farm on which you started to farm for yourself? Retired farmer?  
\_\_\_\_\_? Near-by farmer \_\_\_\_\_ Widow of a farmer \_\_\_\_\_  
Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
27. If you started on a rented farm, what kind of a farm operating agreement did you have? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
28. If your present farm is not the one on which you started, what is the acreage:  
Total, owned \_\_\_\_\_ rented \_\_\_\_\_  
Tillable, owned \_\_\_\_\_ rented \_\_\_\_\_
29. Soil rating? Excellent ( ) Good ( ) Fair ( ) Poor ( )
30. What kind of a farm operating agreement do you have now? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
31. Why did you change to another farm? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Accumulating Operating Capital

32. Indicate the degree of importance of the following sources of income and savings that contributed to your start in farming on your own.
- |  | fairly | quite | importance | very | amount |
|--|--------|-------|------------|------|--------|
| 4-H or F.F.A. projects . . . . .       | ( )    | ( )   | ( )        | ( )  | _____  |
| Work as a farm hand . . . . .          | ( )    | ( )   | ( )        | ( )  | _____  |
| Non-farm work in town . . . . .        | ( )    | ( )   | ( )        | ( )  | _____  |
| Custom work for neighbors . . . . .    | ( )    | ( )   | ( )        | ( )  | _____  |
| Wifes employment and savings . . . . . | ( )    | ( )   | ( )        | ( )  | _____  |
| Military savings . . . . .             | ( )    | ( )   | ( )        | ( )  | _____  |
| Veteran's payments . . . . .           | ( )    | ( )   | ( )        | ( )  | _____  |
| Inheritance & gifts . . . . .          | ( )    | ( )   | ( )        | ( )  | _____  |
| Other (specify) . . . . .              | ( )    | ( )   | ( )        | ( )  | _____  |



33. How did you earn your first \$100.00 \_\_\_\_\_

34. What did you do with your first \$100.00 \_\_\_\_\_

35. Indicate the approximate amount of borrowed capital that you obtained to get started in farming on your own:

	Real estate	Chattel
Relatives . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
Landlord . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
Commercial bank . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
Production Credit Association . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
Farmer's Home Administration . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
Federal Land Bank . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
Merchants (retailers or dealers) . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
G. I. Loans . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
Others (specify) _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

36. Were you able to borrow all the money you needed when you started farming? \_\_\_\_\_  
If not, what other needs did you have? \_\_\_\_\_

37. Do you need additional funds and for what purpose; like buying more land, improving present property, buying machinery and livestock? \_\_\_\_\_

38. Check the degree of importance as to why you do not use more <sup>credit now;</sup> importance

	fairly	quite	very
Cannot get any more credit . . . . .	( )	( )	( )
Do not want to go deeper in debt . . . . .	( )	( )	( )
Additional investments would not be profitable . . . . .	( )	( )	( )
Family objects to further indebtedness . . . . .	( )	( )	( )
Uncertainty of weather and future prices . . . . .	( )	( )	( )
Other _____	( )	( )	( )

Interest rate you would have to pay \_\_\_\_\_

### Financial Progress

39. Approximate your assets and debt obligations at the time that you got started in farming and at the present time:

<u>Assets</u>	<u>Items</u>	<u>Started farming</u>	<u>Present time</u>
	Cash on hand . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
	Automobile . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
	Household goods . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
	Feed, crops and supplies . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
	Machinery and equipment . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
	Livestock . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
	Farm real estate . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
	Total . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____



Debts: Non-farm personal property . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
Farm personal property . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
Real estate . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
Totals . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____
Net worth . . . . .	\$ _____	\$ _____

40. Of the total value of the property owned when you started farming for yourself, how much came from: Savings \$ \_\_\_\_\_; Inheritance \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Gifts \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Borrowed funds \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

41. Was there an interruption in your farming business after you completed school (such as entering the army or going into another business) and before you became established in farming? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, for how many years and how seriously did it hinder your getting established in farming? \_\_\_\_\_

Problems in Getting Started

42. Indicate the degree of difficulty that you encountered in getting started on your own in farming.

	<u>Difficulty</u> some more much		
Lack of sufficient experience or information . . . . .	( )	( )	( )
Lack of available capital resources . . . . .	( )	( )	( )
Obtaining sufficient credit . . . . .	( )	( )	( )
Finding a farm of sufficient size to operate . . . . .	( )	( )	( )
Obtaining sufficient livestock, machinery, and equipment . . .	( )	( )	( )
Starting with too small a volume of business . . . . .	( )	( )	( )
Changing price levels and future price uncertainty . . . . .	( )	( )	( )
Building facilities inadequate . . . . .	( )	( )	( )
Other (specify) _____	( )	( )	( )

43. Would you explain how the major difficulties affected your getting started in farming? \_\_\_\_\_

44. How did you solve the difficulties and problems? \_\_\_\_\_

45. What factors do you consider to be the most important in connection with getting started in the farming business? \_\_\_\_\_



## ABSTRACT

### How Fifty Young Farmers Became Established in Farming in Lenawee County, Michigan, 1939-54

This study shows how 50 young farmers in Lenawee County, Michigan became established in farming from 1939 to 1954. Four methods of becoming established in farming were used by the young men included in this study. Five of the 50 became established in farming as owner-operators, 3 as part-owner operators, 21 with parent-son partnerships and 21 as tenants on rented farms.

Eight of the young men received substantial parental aid in becoming established in farming, whereas the other 42 depended more on their own initiative, efforts and funds. Many of the young farmers who did not receive financial assistance from their parents, did have some help from their parents, such as exchanging machinery and labor. Also some of the group had an opportunity to farm on the home farm on shares or in partnership.

The young men who followed their 4-H experience with vocational agricultural training in high school, while accumulating farm personal property, were fortunate.

A review of the information secured from the survey as to how the young farmers became established in farming reveals several interesting facts. There are various systems and



techniques of becoming established in farming, and methods vary from farm to farm. There is no system that is adaptable to all cases. Some of the main factors for successful establishment in farming can be stated as follows:

1. A prospective farmer needs sufficient farm experience and an adequate education
2. A young man must have a definite interest in farming to be successful
3. The accumulation of capital at a young age is an asset to early and successful establishment in farming
4. Cooperation and assistance of the wife in the farm business is important
5. In cases of parent-son partnerships, the father and son must enjoy working together and must share in the managing of the entire farm business
6. The size of the farm business must be large enough to provide sufficient income to maintain a satisfactory standard of living
7. The farm must be operated in a business-like manner
8. Assistance in solving problems arising from farming operations could well be from successful farmers or specialists in the field of agriculture
9. The early establishment of a good credit rating and

the wise use of credit are assets to establishment  
in farming

10. Farm leases and father-son farm business arrangements  
should be in writing

Young men add vigor and enthusiasm to any business. The  
business of farming and society in general should benefit  
through keeping the most capable young men in farming. There  
are still opportunities in Michigan for capable young men to  
become farmers and they should be so encouraged and assisted.

ROOM USE ONLY

JUN 13 '58

ROOM USE ONLY

~~JUN 13 '58~~  
~~AUG 20 1961~~

MAR 19 1962

~~NOV 7 1962~~

~~MAR 21 1963~~



MICHIGAN STATE UNIV. LIBRARIES



31293104205673