

THE COOPERATIVE FARM MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

THROUGH TWO DECADES OF DEVELOPMENT

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CHAPTER I

AN IDEA IS CONCEIVED

History should be objective. For those involved in a historical process, complete objectivity is hard if not impossible to achieve. We each have our special interests. Some events are colored by our emotions. In any situation, there will likely be much that is left out. What would seem insignificant to one person might seem important to another. In the final analysis, we will each interpret events in the light of our own experiences and convictions. The one basic requirement is integrity. Only when history is documented with supporting evidence, can its credibility be accepted.

Many times programs fail to develop as rapidly as its authors would hope. The Minnesota Cooperative Farm Management Program not only developed slowly, but developed in a manner quite different from the original plan. The times called for patience from those who refused to be patient. Finally, it was impatience that prevailed.

When and where did it all begin? Like most programs, Cooperative Farm Management could trace its origin to many sources. An introduction to a new cooperative approach to adult education in agriculture was prepared by Dr. Milo J. Peterson, Head, Department of Agricultural Education, University of Minnesota in the summer of 1952.¹ Described as the Minnesota Cooperative Project in Adult Education in Agriculture, the plan described a cooperative effort to establish an educational program for farmers that would be centered around the farm business and its relationship to the farm family. The prepared program was described as one having a strong farm management orientation closely related to current and real problems of the farm family.

"Each participating farmer will keep a set of farm records and make available certain of the data for research and teaching purposes for comparison". The concept envisioned a cooperative effort among several educational agencies.

"The teacher of agriculture will conduct group meetings and classes will provide individual instruction on the farms of class members including technical assistance with farm records and analysis."

"Agriculture Economics will provide yearly account book analysis, farm management research and instruction to teachers of agriculture."

Agricultural Extension was designated for the providing of Department of Agriculture educational materials for instruction.

The State Department of Education was to assume responsibility for working with local school administrators in securing approval for programs and for arranging for reimbursement.

The plan also called for a project coordinator in the initial stages of development. It was felt that such a person would be needed to give immediate direction and supervision to the entire project. The coordinator was to spend about one-half of his time in the school communities and the other half in the Department of Agricultural Education, University of Minnesota, St. Paul campus. Financial support was necessary if a coordinator was to be employed.

The Cooperative Farm Management concept was not a sudden immediate divine revelation. It was a plan for implementation. Evolution of the idea went back many years. Soon after the inception of vocational agriculture, adult farm classes were offered in many schools. By the mid 1930's, some school districts were employing an additional instructor to teach adult farm classes. Much of the concept for the Cooperative Farm Management program had its origin in the Veterans Agriculture offerings. Any resemblance between Veterans Agriculture and pre-World War II adult agriculture training might upon brief examination, seem more imaginary than real. Yet, a study of the evaluation of the educational philosophy of Minnesota's Vocational Agriculture suggests that the uniqueness of the Minnesota Veterans Agriculture program was much more than a coincidence.

Back in the 1930's and early 1940's, many University of Minnesota Agricultural Education students were exposed to the teaching philosophies of A.M. Field. Dr. Field consistently reminded his classes that "the pupil learns through his own activities." He contended that skillful teaching is that which provides for and stimulates learning activity. The best communicative effort whether it be a lecture, a discussion group, or a visual demonstration is only an exercise in futility without pupil desire to learn. Students of Dr. Field were also told that it was not enough for the pupil to know. Learning was essentially a process of accepting and rejecting - making decisions from the choices of alternatives.

Old assumptions die slowly. Long after the A.M. Field era, the old assumptions that he had rejected often reappeared like weeds that were supposed to have been eradicated. Veterans Agriculture helped to explode the misconception that good instruction is largely a matter of salesmanship. The instructor is justified not in selling a product, but in selling to the pupil confidence in himself and in the ability to make logical decisions. Pre-World War II adult agriculture efforts were often grievously guilty of promotion rather than education. Both the objectives and the activities were usually based upon good information. Where the basic assumptions held by the instructor were responsible for pupil decision, promotion per se violated the basic principal of free choice education.

Stated simply, the philosophical contribution of Veterans Agriculture to a pupil-teacher communication was that education is "learner centered" rather than "teacher centered". This was the Field philosophy. Briefly summarized, it implied that the teacher does not instruct effectively by selling himself, his expertise or his ideas. To teach effectively, the uniqueness of the pupil and the situations of pupil involvement must be addressed.

The G.I. trainee found that his business was unique, and that his goals, interests and abilities were likewise unique. The assumption that an expert could give him the

answers necessary to successfully run his business was not generally accepted by the recently discharged veteran. In an earlier period of their lives when these veterans had been in Future Farmers of American Chapters and in 4H Clubs, vocational agriculture teachers, county agents, university staff members and researchers had provided much of the basis information for improved farming practices.

A different approach was needed to meet the problems of recently returned veterans faced with the many changed situations that confronted them. Through science, farming had progressed and was continuing to change rapidly. In fact, even recently acquired knowledge was rapidly becoming obsolete. The county agent and the vocational agriculture instructor spoke with less and less authority. To survive, farmers were forced to obtain new information, operate technical equipment and control large investments.

Instruction shifted from the teaching of approved practices to the adopting of practices appropriate to the management of each unique farming situation. In applying technology to his business, the farmer rather than the instructor became the expert. The instructor's expertise was general, whereas the farm operator's technology had to be specific. It had to apply to his business. One of the agonies of agricultural education was the recognition that the role of the teacher had changed. The instructor's role as the source of information had been diminished. His ability to direct and stimulate positive action had become paramount.

The Veterans Agriculture program in Minnesota was management oriented. Trainees were required to keep complete records in the Minnesota Farm Account Book. Very early in the program, a favorable relationship developed with the Agricultural Education and the Farm Management divisions of the University of Minnesota. Leo Knute, State Supervisor of Vocational Agriculture prepared a plan to include the analysis of farm records through the Farm Management division. The project did not materialize for a number of reasons. The Veterans Administration declined to cover the cost of such

an all inclusive project and the University was not equipped to analyze what could have been more than 10,000 farm records. A compromise proposal from the Veterans Administration resulted in the analysis of a limited number of records for the years 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951 and 1952.

Minnesota had been well in the forefront of farm record analysis for many years. The original analysis was research oriented. Research through farm record analysis was attempted as far back as 1902.² Hays and Boss set up three routes of fifteen farms each for the purpose of studying crop costs and returns. The routes were set up in three different areas of the state. Because transportation was by horse and buggy (or saddle) and visits were frequent, farms were selected within fairly close proximity of each other. Counties selected were Rice, Lyon and Norman. Some time after the initiation of the project, the number of routes was increased to four with the inclusion of Wright County; but the number of farms per route was reduced drastically. The Lyon County route was discontinued after 1910 and Rice after 1912. Norman County continued until the beginning of World War I. Wright County was a part of the project from 1912 to 1917. The project was entirely research oriented and designed for crop production analysis. Neither feedback or direction was provided to the cooperator.

In a presentation to the Vocational Agriculture Instructors July 17, 1967, Truman Nodland stated that a radical change in philosophy took place in Minnesota during the 1920's.³ "Farmers who kept records for the University were provided with a summary of the results from their farms and thus were encouraged to make an analysis from the standpoint of the organization and operation. Each association hired a field service person to supervise record keeping activities and to submit completed account books to Farm Management Division of the Economics Department.

"The second major change occurred in 1928 when the Southeastern Minnesota Farm Management Service was established". Nodland revealed that the analysis procedure

and the supervision organization were patterned after the Illinois Farm Bureau-Farm Management Service that began in 1924. This farm management service combined research, extension activities and service to the individual farmer.

A second Farm Management Service group began keeping records in 1940. These associations were a joint responsibility of the Farm Management Division of the University, the University Experiment Station and the Cooperative Extension Service.

Although still research oriented, the farm management implications of the associations were fully recognized. Those in agricultural education who were seeking a management emphasis for adult instruction recognized the potential of such analysis. The Minnesota analysis approach was one of the most comprehensive farm management studies in the country. Although participation by veterans in the special University of Minnesota offering was limited, classes were exposed to the analysis concepts. Summary information along with field trips to cooperating farms was often included in adult class activity. Self analysis of farm records was encouraged for veterans agriculture class members who did not submit accounts to the University. A procedure devised by graduate classes at the University of Minnesota summer school sessions was entitled Release No. 1.⁴ Actually its development is somewhat obscure. Initially it was used in the early 1950's. Several revisions had been made by 1957 when the last revision was duplicated.

The Cooperative Farm Management program was the culmination of the new concepts of adult farm education. The teaching emphasis would no longer center around information provided by the expert. The cooperating farmer would develop confidence in his application of available knowledge. His record and farm analysis were to provide much of the resource information. It was not that the need for technical knowledge was less. In fact, science and mechanization had completely revolutionized farming. Agriculture had become increasingly specialized. The application of the specialization in a management situation could be practically applied only by the farm operator himself.

Evaluations were to be made on the basis of factual records.

An interesting cost and time study of Southern Minnesota farms for the years 1951, 1952 and 1953, added a new dimension to the farm management concept. The study was released in 1954.⁵ It was a valuable resource for both farm management instruction and farm operation.

Except for Rease No. 1, no effort was made by Vo-Ag instructors to utilize the University of Minnesota analysis process until 1955 when Ralph Smith developed a technique of farm analysis procedure.⁶ Ralph submitted the study as plan B problem for his Master of Science degree. A Navy officer in World War II, Ralph had done graduate work and taught veterans agriculture after his separation from the armed service. By 1954, he was assigned a permanent staff position at the West Central School of Agriculture at Morris, Minnesota. Smith made a complete analysis of farm records from his Veteran's Agriculture classes. With the averages completed, he then prepared a report with detailed directions for the entire procedure. Without these directions, initial attempts at complete analysis by adult instructors would probably have failed.

The area vocational school concept and its development was a milestone in the history of Minnesota education. This report will deal only with the effect upon agricultural education. The first state financed vocational schools came into existence between 1948 and 1952. Others were to follow.

At the outset, there was much concern among progressive educators that Minnesota's greatest industry might be given little emphasis in the state's area vocational programs. Four persons much concerned and directly involved in area vocational education were: S.K. Wick, Assistant Director of Vocational Education, Erling Johnson, Superintendent of Mankato Public Schools and vocational school directors, Frank Kalin, Mankato and Floyd Luehen, Austin. Mr. Wick felt a deep concern that agriculture instruction be given a high priority. In addition to those directly engaged in

farming, at least 30% of the state's gainfully employed worked in farm related occupations. It is not to be assumed that other administrators were inactive. The four individuals mentioned were particularly visible in the formative stages.

With the impetus of the Veteran's Agriculture program, it would seem that the state's educational structure would be ready to adopt Dr. Peterson's Cooperative Farm Management concept. After contacting many prospective financial sponsors, he received encouragement from the Hill Family Foundation. This organization agreed to support the program through a three year grant that would provide for personnel to coordinate the management activities. Lauren Granger, a Veteran's Agriculture instructor had been granted a graduate assistantship in Agricultural Education. With the grant, he assumed coordinator responsibility starting April 1953.

The tentative fifteen month budget accepted by the Hill Family Foundation⁷ directors for a three year grant of \$46,800 was written down as follows:

Overhead to University of Minnesota	\$ 1449
Supplies and travel expense	2880
Salary - Lauren Granger, Program Coordinator	8000
Salary - Shirley Morine, Secretary	3165
Clerk	2550
Miscellaneous help	1600
Total allotted expenditures for 15 months	19564

Other financial aid for the project came from the Farmers Union Terminal Association and the Minnesota Iron Ore Resources Commission. Assistance from local banks, civic organizations and promotional agencies was in some instances to be provided at the local community level.

Even with generous financial support, the initial effort to launch the Cooperative Farm Management Program was agonizingly slow. Many factors contributed to the difficulty of overcoming inertia. Reluctance to keep adequate records was only one factor. Another was that for many instructors, record book supervision was considered no less than an ordeal. The discipline of time and effort necessary for a credible farm record was difficult to develop. Procrastination rather than disinterest tended to

delay participation in the new program. The superb salesmanship efforts seemed to be ineffectual. This was a program that needed to be promoted, yet promotion was not enough. It had to sell itself. Farm record book analysis had to be favorably experienced. Farmers had to learn by comparing experiences with other farmers. They needed to measure their own efficiencies with the superior cooperators within the group. They needed opportunities to tour the farms of cooperating class members. Finally, it was necessary for the interested farmer to realize that record book analysis was a personal involvement; the records of other farmers did not have the same direct application to his business as those that he kept. Sometimes it took only one contact for the instructor to get a commitment. Sometimes it took several years. Others were just not totally committed and never started.

While growth was slow, the roots penetrated deeply into fertile soil. It took three years to develop a program and another five years of careful nurturing before growth became phenomenal. Figures showing this growth will be presented later. Lauren Granger, a World War II veteran and a farm owner, had taught Veteran's Agriculture and was exercising his G. I. entitlement as a graduate student in agricultural education.

In anticipation of the Hill Family Foundation grant, Granger contacted the Agricultural Extension Division suggesting a desire for monthly aids. The recently organized Adult Education Association of the United States was also contacted and invited to utilize data from the project.

A November 1952 meeting of this organization (Adult Education Association) held in the Kellogg Building, Michigan State University had been attended by Granger, Gordon Swanson and Charles Painter. For many years thereafter, Minnesota Vocational Agriculture was represented at the annual Adult Education Association meetings and also at the meetings of the National Association of Adult Public School Educators. Vocational Agriculture teachers also contributed time and talent to the Minnesota Adult Education Association.

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CHAPTER II

LAUREN GRANGER - FIVE YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE

The contributions of those individuals dedicated to causes and projects are seldom fully appreciated till many years after the fact. The task assigned to Lauren Granger was not an enviable one. The challenge it presented was too often discouraged by inertia and procrastination. Instructors admitted the need for accurate and complete farm accounts but most of them had a full-time teaching load with high school classes and F.F.A.

Veteran's trainees did not respond to the new program as hoped. Many assumed that a "do-it-yourself" type of analysis provided essentially the same information as the University of Minnesota detailed analysis. The background of vocational agriculture instructors was still production oriented. Many teachers did not feel comfortable with either detailed farm records or farm management instruction.

Lauren Granger accepted for himself an ambitious program and a demanding schedule. Immediate correspondence was established with area vocational school directors, vocational agriculture instructors, county agents, University of Minnesota staff persons, the Vocational Division of the State Department of Education and the Minnesota Vocational Agriculture Director's Association. Officers of farm organizations and business groups were also invited to help promote the Cooperative Farm Management program. Two that responded with financial assistance were the Farmers Union Grain Terminal Association and the Iron Ore Resources and Rehabilitation Commission. Later credit agencies and other business institutions provided assistance at the local community level.

Granger's invitation to meet with instructors, farm groups, business men's organizations and others met with enough response to make his schedule difficult and sometimes impossible. It should be remembered that this man had also definite teaching assignments and was pursuing a graduate study program. He found an immediate endorsement for the program from the Adult Education Committee of the Minnesota Vocational

Agriculture Instructor's Association. Also offering support was the Agricultural Extension Farm Management staff. Dr. Erman Hartmans, who came to the University at this time, was very cooperative and helpful during the few years of his staff tenure.

The assistance and council of Dr. Truman Nodland was of tremendous help in establishing the program. Nodland also assumed the responsibility for record book analysis. Some records of Veteran's trainees were available at the end of 1953, but with the initiation of the coordinator position in mid-year, much activity was delayed until the 1954 business year.

Time does not permit relating many of the interesting and frustrating situations Lauren experienced. One instance sheds much light upon his patient determination. A letter from a banker in a small town somewhere north of the Twin Cities, can after 27 years, be read with some amusement and considerable amazement. The following is the text of the letter dated May 11, 1953.¹

"Dear Sir:

I have your letter in regard to the adult training asking that we cooperate in having farmers attend this public school. In the first place, your Minnesota farm book is way out of line for any kind of training. I would not recommend it to any farmer, and another thing, I would not ask any farmer to spend \$25. The farm account book doesn't have anything in it for farmers. We know this because we make out income tax reports. There is also a small percentage of the Veterans who have taken the course and understand it.

It seems a shame that we have a University and suppose to have educated men who are suppose to figure out the approach to their problems and cannot figure out a more practical approach. This will never work

Yours very truly,"

The letter revealed some of the problems Granger encountered in attempted to sell

the program to some prejudiced and uninformed persons. Even though this was an exceptional case, most of us would have completely ignored it. Larry Granger reacted differently. He gave the letter the courtesy of a reply. He defended his own position and the program he was promoting. His answer was immediate. The exchange revealed his patience and dedication.

May 12, 1953

"Dear Mr. _____:

We have your stimulating letter in regard to our new Cooperative Farm Management Service that we are sponsoring through the public schools in Minnesota. We are very sorry that you do not find the Minnesota Farm Account Book satisfactory for your use with farmers and their income tax problems.

I have worked with the Minnesota Farm Account Book over a period of seventeen years and I have used it for six years in teaching veterans classes and I have also used it for seven years in filling out the income tax report on my own farm operation. In all of their uses, I have found it served the purpose very well. We would be very happy to have you call on us if you are at the University sometime and perhaps we can discuss this matter of farm accounting and farm management approach in greater detail. We have found the farm management approach to adult education a very effective method of teaching adult farmers.

I am looking forward to meeting you sometime in the future.

Very truly yours,

Lauren Granger, Coordinator"

Results of the first years promotional activity were indeed disappointing. While a survey released September 1, 1953 showed 40 schools participating with 192 enrollees, the number of account books submitted for analysis was only a fraction of this estimate.

A report of the activities of the project for the first six months of 1954 was

made to the Hill Family Foundation September 9, 1954.²

Coordinator activities for the period were reported as assisting with close out of 1953 records, preparation of news releases, radio programs, monthly newsletters to vocational agriculture teachers and providing instructional aids.

"Arrangements were completed to hold a series of one day farm management workshops for agriculture teachers throughout the state in August. A graduate course for more than 30 agriculture teachers was taught by the coordinator during June. The subject matter covered in this course directly related to problems of how a local high school agriculture teacher would have his adult farmer students get maximum benefits out of enrolling in the Cooperative Project in Adult Education in Agriculture".

The report indicated close cooperation with the Adult Education Committee of the Minnesota Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Association, the State Board of Education, the Bankers Association, the School Administrator's Association, the State School Board Associators, and the State Department of Education.

Special mention was made of the cooperation with the Agricultural Extension Service and the contribution made by Dr. Hartmans, Extension Farm Management specialist. The Morris Branch of the University had agreed to participate in the program by offering its staff and faculty as a records analysis center for schools and farmers of West Central Minnesota.

The National Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Association convention asked for and received a report on the progress of the Minnesota Cooperative Project. A farm management summary "1953 Report: Vocational Agriculture and Farm Management Services - Southern Minnesota" was submitted with the report. The question of overload imposed on the Farm Management division was considered with alternative possibilities of the analysis being done at branch stations or assumed by the area vocational schools

Of the items covered in the report, the suggested responsibility for the yearly analysis report proved to be prophetic. Ralph Smith, University of Minnesota School

of Agriculture at Morris, assumed responsibility for record books from West Central Minnesota. Ralph Smith's completion of an analysis procedure not only served as a required graduate problem, but became the authentic reference for the analysis centers for ten years. As a returning naval officer from World War II, he continued his interrupted graduate study at the University of Minnesota. He also taught Veteran's Agriculture several years before completing the requirements for a Masters Degree. His interest in agricultural education continued with his appointment to the faculty of West Central Branch of the University of Minnesota, Morris, Minnesota. When the directorship of the West Central Experiment Station was vacated, Ralph was offered the position of acting director. After a short time, the appointment became permanent. During the many years that Ralph has served as director, his contributions to agricultural education have been innumerable and outstanding. It would indeed be unfortunate if the importance of his contributions to farm analysis were overlooked because of the enviable record he has since achieved as station director.

The anticipated growth of the Cooperative Farm Management Program suggested expansion problems. One problem was the eventual added work load that would be imposed on the already understaffed Farm Management Division of the University of Minnesota Agricultural Economics Department. The adding of Dr. Ermann H. Hartmans to the Agriculture Extension staff made available to farmers throughout the state a technical specialist. The team of Hartmans and Routhe made significant contributions to the progress of Minnesota agriculture in the 1950's.

The Farm Management division of the University appeared not to be the only understaffed department. If the adult program were to grow not only would the demand for trained instructors grow, but there would be an evident need for upgrading the subject matter covered.

In close communication with Milo Peterson, the Adult Education Committee of the Minnesota Vocational Agriculture Instructor's Association encouraged the University

to add subject matter specialists to the Agriculture Education Department staff. A letter to Dr. Milo J. Peterson dated April 29, 1954 expressed this concern.³ The request suggested areas of need with the immediate emphasis for offerings in farm management and farm mechanics. Other areas were reference sources and information, visual aids and curricula.

Ralph Smith's project suggested a solution to the dilemma of the Farm Management division. The charges for each analysis of from \$22 (for eight or more books from a school) to \$28 (for one book) were for direct costs. This covered no staff salary cost. One disadvantage of the arrangement was that the primary concern of the department was for the two management association records. These were a University staff responsibility and under University supervision. They also provided a more controlled situation. Vocational agriculture instructors also felt that the analysis was not completed early enough to influence the current years management decisions.

Could the farm analysis be done by others than University of Minnesota Farm Management staff personnel? Ralph Smith had done it on a limited scale. If the responsibility were to be transferred, to whom should it be assigned? The University Secondary Schools of Agriculture were being closed (with the exception of a new Waseca school). A logical suggestion was to set up a program within the area vocational school system (later to be designed as Vocational Technical Institutes). Such schools had recently been approved and were in operation at Mankato, Austin, Staples, Alexandria, Duluth and Thief River Falls. Winona had been approved and was in the process of building.

The early concept of the area vocational school gave little consideration to either Minnesota's leading occupation, agriculture, or to agricultural related occupations. This was a concern of certain school administrators and vocational school directors. It was of even more concern to those closely associated with agricultural education. One person, very sympathetic to those who would include agricultural

programs in the vocational system was S.K. Wick, Assistant Director of Vocational Education. (Mr. Wick was for much of this period acting director during the furloughed absence of Harry Schmidt.)

Several vocational schools employed adult agriculture instructors either on a permanent position basis or as Veterans agriculture instructors. Mankato and Austin had operating vocational schools in 1949 and 1950 respectively. Both had directors interested in agricultural education. Along with Frank Kalin, Mankato Area Vocational School Director, this interest was shared by Mankato Superintendent of Schools, Erling Johnson. Floyd Lueben, Austin Area Vocational School Director was also interested in agricultural education, and particularly the Cooperative Farm Management program.

An event of considerable historical importance to vocational agriculture was a meeting held Wednesday noon, September 15, 1954 at the Burton Hotel in Mankato.⁴ In reporting the meeting, Frank Kalin listed 25 persons in attendance. S.K. Wick chaired the meeting and expressed a concern that all vocations within the areas be served. The Cooperative Farm Management approach would seem appropriate in relating to the needs of farm families. A panel discussion chaired by Superintendent Erling O. Johnson, considered various approaches to the situation. Other panel members included: Milo J. Peterson, Head, Department of Agricultural Education; Lauren Granger, Coordinator for the Cooperative Farm Management program; and G. R. Cochran, State Supervisor of Vocational Agriculture. Dr. Truman R. Nodland, University of Minnesota Farm Management Division was called on to contribute his expertise to the general discussion.

The Mankato meeting represented a cross section of farmers, school board members, school superintendents, vocational school directors, and vocational agriculture instructors. Unfortunately, the record did not indicate the occupation of some who attended; it probably being assumed that such information was known to those in attendance. Out of the meeting came a recommendation that similar meetings be held in other parts of

Minnesota.

In an October 26, 1954 letter⁵ of appreciation to Harry C. Schmidt, Director of Vocational Education, Charles Painter as chairman of the Minnesota Vocational Agriculture Instructors Adult Education Committee refers to a second meeting and another meeting scheduled for Thief River Falls.

Tentative plans for farm analysis through area centers was formulated in the following two months. The official designation of the analysis centers came out of an April 28, 1955 meeting on the University St. Paul campus. Nine people participated. S.K. Wick and G.R. Cochran represented the State Department of Education (vocational division), Milo Petersen and Lauren Granger represented the Agricultural Education Division of the University. Frank Kalin, Mankato and Floyd Lueben, Austin were area vocational school directors. Stan Nelson, Thief River Falls; Del Hodgkins, Mankato and Charles Painter, Austin were involved with adult agriculture programs in their respective schools.

Lauren Granger⁶ recorded the activities of the meeting. The area vocational schools at Thief River Falls, Mankato and Austin were agreed upon as centers for analyzing 1955 records with other area schools to be added in 1956. A fee of \$22 per cooperator was to be charged for the clerical work involved in the analysis procedure. The Farm Management Division of the Agricultural Economics Department planned to continue with the Morris cooperators (Ralph Smith's program).

Two meetings were held in Southern Minnesota following the St. Paul decision. The activities of a meeting held in Faribault the afternoon of July 7, 1955 was reported by Harold P. Paulson⁷, Vocational Agriculture Instructor from Northfield that began as follows: "Meeting was called to order by Paul Marvin, Vocational Agriculture Instructor at Faribault. Mr. Cochran reported on the existing program and informed the group of changes that are going to be enacted by the development of the area schools. Mr. Cochran reported that the Farm Management program should be ar

integral part of the over all program and should be reported as such".

Mr. Wick reported on the role of vocational agriculture in the area vocational schools and informed the group of desirable laws in the state of Minnesota geared to the furtherance of vocational education. Mr. Wick discussed the function of the Cooperative Farm Management program in area schools and how he thought the program could be more effective with the use of the area schools .

Dr. Milo Peterson, Lauren Granger and Charles Painter made short presentations. Granger presented copies of the Morris farm management report for 1954 and reported a promising start with the Thief River Falls program under the promotion of Stan Nelson. Painter distributed a mimeographed copy of the farm management services offered by the area vocational schools. The attendance list included 33 names, 28 of whom were vocational agriculture teachers - high school, Veterans agriculture and adult.

The responsibility for the account book analysis was approached with misgivings and reservations by the three instructors involved. The only official position each held was "Adult Vocational Agriculture Instructor". Any activity in school territories outside of their school districts was by mutual understanding between the instructor and the director. Promotional activities and services to schools in the area depended upon the degree to which such activities were appreciated.

The greatest apprehension was for the mechanics of the analysis. The three instructors (from Austin, Mankato and Thief River Falls) spent some time with Ralph Smith at Morris in the spring of 1955. Compared to the "do-it-yourself" analysis through such aids as Release No. 1, this process seemed complicated and involved. The forms, the procedure, and the responsibility of securing competent clerical assistance at a \$1.25 per hour rate loomed as formidable barriers to a successful experience.

While all three instructors completed their reports by late spring of 1956, they

felt that the effort was a training experience. Errors seemed to be numerous. Some were real-others imaginary. One instructor was to later describe the first year's analysis experience as a nightmare but with an essential difference - bad dreams last only a few seconds. This was an eight week experience. The anxiety that preceeded the actual analysis was worse than the final act.

Considerable difficulty was encountered in securing trained clerical assistance. Once the program was established, interviews and training sessions made possible the securing of capable and knowledgeable workers. The quality of work done by these part-time workers was to become amazingly proficient.

Three analysis centers analyzed 153 farm account books for 1955. Most of these record books were from the three instructor's classes. Of the 44 books analyzed at Austin, 28 were from the Austin Adult Agriculture class, 5 records were from Winona, 3 each from Owatonna and Lake City. Others were from Kenyon, Byron, Rochester and Rushford. Thief River Falls analyzed 50 records of which 28 were from the Thief River Falls class. Mankato was the exception. Twenty-three of the 59 records analyzed at Mankato were from New Ulm. Eleven schools participated in the Mankato analysis. Winona was designated as an analysis center for 1956 with Harry Pierce Jr. responsible for the project. Three of the schools submitting 1955 books to Austin were assigned to Winona. Austin analyzed only 39 records in 1956. Twenty-nine of these were from the Austin class. Following Winona, the St. Cloud and Duluth Vocational Schools were also designated as analysis centers. A program at St. Cloud, under the direction of Edward O'Connell, provided a parallel but not identical foremat of the University of Minnesota or of the other area vocational schools procedure.

Measured by the number of account books analyzed, the Cooperative Farm Management Program was developing slowly and painfully. Encouragement came when the Hill Family Foundation indicated more optimism in the program than most of the people directly involved. A grant for Lauren Granger's continuance as coordinator was extended for

two more years.

In a July 18, 1957⁸ report to Mr. A.A. Heckman, Executive Director, Louis. W. and Maud Hill Family Foundation, Lauren Granger provided a summary of the 1956 reports from 5 area vocational school analysis centers and Morris (Ralph Smith's project). The report showed high labor earnings for Mankato and Austin areas, and low returns from the Duluth area. Granger used this information to emphasize the need for more education opportunities for farmers in Northeastern Minnesota. Analysis data was shown for Winona, Austin, Mankato, Morris, Thief River Falls and Duluth.

One of the bright little incidents in the Cooperative Farm Management development was an invitation of the analysis center instructors to report to a Hill Family Foundation director's meeting the afternoon of November 1, 1957. In a brief letter dated November 6, 1957, Mr. Heckman wrote the following to Milo Peterson.⁹

"Dear Milo:

While you and your associates were last on our schedule last Friday night, you topped off the day for all of us. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit with you and your associates. One of the directors said on the way home 'I could have spent another hour with those men'.

I think this expresses in a concise manner, the reaction of all of us to the review of the project on Adult Education in Agriculture.

Will you please extend to all of those who participate in this very enjoyable meeting, our sincere thanks.

Cordially yours,

Al"

The "men" referred to were besides Dr. Milo J. Peterson; G.R. Cochran, Dr. E.H. Hartmans, Stan Nelson (Area Vocational School Director, Thief River Falls), Harry Pierce, Del Hodgkins, Charles Painter; University graduate assistants L. Joos, and

Phil Teske; University staff members Dean W.W. Cook, Stan Wenberg, Dr. Harry Kitts and Dr. Gordon Swanson.

With the two year extension, Lauren Granger's tenure was extended until 1958. Lauren had worked hard. He had given the project his best. The termination of the Hill Family Foundation project ended an epoch of determination and persistence without corresponding evidence of success. The Cooperative Farm Management program had grown, but that growth had been far short of expectations. For the great effort expended, the results seemed meager and unfulfilling. The fruits of Granger's efforts would be harvested several years after his departure from Minnesota. Probably no one deserves more credit for the final success of the program than Lauren Granger.

In retrospect, the difficulties in achieving the Cooperative Farm Management goals became more understandable. The promotion efforts were near faultless. The Minnesota Vocational Agriculture Instructor's Association financed the publication of thousands of brochures prepared by the adult agriculture instructors from four analysis centers. This effort was to be repeated twice before 1965. The cooperative efforts of the Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service were much appreciated by those who were attempting to build a strong adult education base for Minnesota agriculture. Lauren Granger was especially appreciative of the efforts of Hartmans and Routhe.

Ermond H.R. Hartmans was assigned to the University staff in 1953. Born in the Netherlands and active in underground resistance movement during the Nazi occupation of World War II, he had recently received his doctor's degree from Michigan State University. He was both colorful and knowledgeable. A true specialist, he desired to learn from his constituents. He was determined to acquaint himself with Minnesota agriculture.

Much of the Hartman - Routhe workshop activity centered around "substitution budgeting". As a concept, it was very useful in its analytical approach to farm

management. As a core method of solving management problems, it proved to have some limitations. Certain factual materials were necessary and these could be provided only through farm records.

With so many positive influences for building the Cooperative Farm Management program, why was the early growth so disappointingly slow and the later development so surprisingly rapid? Several factors should be considered. Keeping records is not a popular activity. Few people record their personal expenditures. Accounts kept by many other small businesses are also inaccurate and incomplete. The self discipline required of farm families to keep accurate farm accounts is exacting. However important such activity may be to many people, it is still monotonous and often boring.

Not only do those keeping farm records find the activity a chore, instructors and others supervising such records sometimes choose to avoid their responsibilities. Both often procrastinate until the point of no return has been reached.

Most high schools had only one vocational agriculture instructor, whose work load with Future Farmer activities and farm visits was often excessive. Much of the responsibility for the development of the Cooperative Farm Management program was dependent upon these teachers. It is not surprising that a few resented any pressures for them to take on additional work. Some of us can now look back with deep appreciation for the vision and dedication of those who did assume added burdens. These were uncommon people.

The acceptance of an accounting system was often based upon income tax convenience with little consideration for the contribution to farm management analysis. Tax consultants preferred records with which they were familiar. A few were unwilling to accommodate their clients by becoming familiar with a different system. Most credit agencies were cooperative with Farm Management participation, but place a high

priority on record systems with a cash flow emphasis. Farmers Home Administration had one of the better such account books. This agency demonstrated its interest in the Cooperative Farm Management program by accepting the Minnesota Farm Account book for those of its clients enrolled in adult agriculture classes.

Those few vocational agriculture instructors who resented change, presented both an annoyance and a challenge. The recorded proceedings of a meeting held in Warren, December 13, 1957, reported that a dissident group attempted to dominate the meeting and succeeded in frustrating much positive action. In a letter to Dalton Seeling of Bemidji, Charles Painter (representing the M.V.A.I.A. Adult Education Committee) denounced the meeting for its negativism.¹⁰ The letter may have been ill advised because Dalton was laid up from an accident and had not attended the meeting.

Almost everything new is suspect. It will be opposed among others by those who are jealous, those who feel threatened, and those who would define strict limitations for education. Change was the order of things for the agriculture of the 1950's. Many people saw an opportunity to gain from what was taking place. Commercial ventures offering services to farmers became numerous. Some services were by-products of another service or an organization (along with the business or membership a certain service was provided). Commercial farm management services were offered by professionally trained people. The field of farm related businesses was growing.

A few of these organizations felt that the Cooperative Farm Management Program was in competition with their personal ambitions. As previously referred to, some income tax consultants discouraged clients from enrolling in farm management classes. Certain farm organization efforts would suggest that the program as conducted under public education, be limited. Some credit institutions provided a welcome challenge, by attempting to offer a program superior to Cooperative Farm Management. After 25 years, the quality of the analysis program remains unsurpassed.

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CHAPTER III

AREA COORDINATOR POSITION-A REALITY

The designated analysis centers were not directly associated with the area vocational technical schools. The adult agriculture instructor designated for supervising the analysis was a member of the high school vocational agriculture department. Technically, his direct administrator was not the vocational school director. He might be directly accountable to either the high school principal or the superintendent of schools. He was working with the director but was not a member of the vocational school faculty.

A large proportion of the cooperating farmers were from the classes of the instructors assigned to do the analysis. This situation tended to give the program a local rather than an area image. The program tended to be identified with the analysis center. For the most part, the administration gave the instructor-analyst a free hand to travel to designated schools in the assigned area. Promotional activities were developed individually and cooperatively. Field trips and demonstrations within the area and cooperatively developed workshops were a part of the educational and promotional activity pattern of the analyst-instructor schedules. Cooperation from neighboring schools varied from non-existent to enthusiastic. Acceptance was not a requirement. All relationships with schools within the area were entirely voluntary. The situation sometimes placed the analysis center in an awkward and even embarrassing position. In a few rare instances, he seemed to be resented as an unwelcome busybody. In other situations, he was viewed as someone assuming prerogatives that were unauthorized. For the most part, he was well received, but the indefiniteness of his situation was somewhat uncomfortable.

The state-wide workshops tended to give the program a greater sense of direction. Minnesota's loss of both Dr. Ermond Hartmans and Lauren Granger, left a temporary void to which adult agriculture instructors immediately reacted. A supreme effort

was needed to provide some replacement to the instruction provided to adult agriculture that these men had provided. Statewide workshops seemed to be an appropriate action.

As of the spring of 1958, several changes had taken place. The extended Hill Family Foundation grant had expired. Dr. Hartmans had left the University for a foreign assignment. Stan Nelson had accepted the position as Director of Thief River Falls Area Vocational Technical Institute. He had been succeeded by Arndt Aune. The Northeast area analysis had been assigned to Leo Keskenin at Duluth Area Vocational Technical Institute. Lauren Granger, having completed his doctorate, was preparing to move to an out-of-state position. At St. Cloud, Edward O'Connell pioneered a somewhat different approach from the University of Minnesota procedure mainly in format. The Morris project continued under the auspices of the University. Harry Pierce Jr. had completed two analysis experiences at Winona and was assigned to a different position. He was succeeded by Gordon Ferguson.

Suggestions for summer workshops growing out of a June 18, 1958 meeting were summarized in a letter from G.R. Cochran, State Supervisor, to Delbert Hodgkins, Mankato.¹ The workshop offerings for Rochester and Worthington were to include two days and one evening of activity. Some of the purposes were: to get better and more complete farm accounts; give instructors a better understanding of records and of analysis procedure; give instructors a broader basis for interpreting analysis information; and sell instructors a farm accounting and management curriculum for high school pupils.

Suggested resource persons were Dr. Truman Nodland, Harry Pierce Jr., Delbert Hodgkins, Charles Painter, Arndt Aune, J.R. Corhan, T.A. Anderson, Ralph Smith and Milo Peterson. Vocational agriculture instructors recommended for presentations included: Ernest Freier, Lake Crystal; Malcolm Brandt, Madelia; C.E. Dowling, St. Peter; Ernest Palmer, Hastings; and John Zwiebel, Owatonna.

The Rochester workshop was held July 24-25. Sixty-eight² persons attended. Lauren Granger made a farewell appearance at the Rochester meeting.

The Worthington meeting of July 31-August 1, listed 58 people attending, 5 of whom were Iowa vocational agriculture instructors. This list did not include a number of resource persons.³ As of this time (1979), no record of the Thief River Falls meeting is available.

By the spring of 1959, it was evident to those involved that analysis centers needed full-time personnel if the potential for the Cooperative Farm Management Program was to be reached. The adult instructor could not carry 40 to 50 families in his own program and still provide services to the schools in his area. Except that schools were arbitrarily assigned to an area, the relationship of vocational agriculture instructors to the analysis center was not clearly defined. Other than for the account book, analysis activity relationships between the center and area schools was strictly informal. Activities outside the local district were technically extra-curricular. In a few situations, the analysis center instructor encountered a climate of indifference that made him feel like an intruder. He was not a supervisor, nor did he represent any administrative function. He was aware that some instructors, perhaps some schools, resented the sense of being pressured. Obviously, the program could not expand satisfactorily unless the total vocational agriculture structure was involved.

S.K. Wick, who had a major role in establishing the analysis center arrangement, was to follow Harry Schmidt as Director of Vocational Education. He was aware that the program was growing in acceptance by farm families and participating schools. He also recognized that without relief from their local adult responsibilities, the analysts could not reach their maximum proficiency. Conferring with G.R. Cochran, and William C. Knaak, Assistant Supervisor of Vocational Education (in charge of area vocational technical schools) various alternatives were considered. Bill Knack chose to study the program thoroughly before making a final recommendation. He

supported the concept that would provide an official position on a full time basis, but hoped to establish some clear cut guidelines as to qualifications, purposes, and responsibilities.

Four workshops were held in the summer of 1959. The State Department of Vocational Education actively participated in two of these workshops. Much planning went into preparation for this ambitious undertaking. It started with a special weekend retreat experience.

Ralph Smith extended an invitation to a May weekend planning meeting at his Rachel Lake cabin, between Glenwood and Alexandria. Attending were Dr. Milo Peterson, Arndt Aune, Del Hodgkins, Charles Painter, Leo Keskinen, Ed O'Connell and Gordon Ferguson (who was to succeed Harry Pierce, Jr. at Winona).

Gordon Ferguson in a three page report, recorded that the meeting convened at 3:20 p.m., Saturday, May 23rd.⁴ The first order of business was the election of Charles Painter as group chairman and Gordon Ferguson as secretary. Workshop plans for four locations were discussed. Dates were set as follows: July 20-21 at Bemidji; July 23-24 at Morris (School of Agriculture); July 27-28 at Rochester and July 30-31 at Waseca (School of Agriculture).

During the afternoon session, workshop assignments were discussed with general agreement that area school farm management instructors (designated analysts) should if possible, participate in all four workshops. The pattern of the 1958 workshops would be followed that had included two days and one evening. Assignments included Charles Painter, general arrangements (but with each area instructor responsible for contacting teachers, farmers and other resource persons); Ralph Smith, for organizing the sessions and securing adequate farm analysis procedures; Del Hodgkins, for presenting course materials for farm management in high schools. Other area instructors were to submit suggestions and suitable materials to Del Hodgkins and Ralph Smith for screening. By 8:30, a tentative agenda had been adopted. The remainder of the evening

was devoted to the less serious of societies problems (such as when to stay in the game with a pair of sixes). Milo Peterson provided some expert but costly instruction to novices.

The Sunday morning session did not get under way until 10:30. Discussion centered on future courses of action. The question of continuing the informal organization was resolved with consensus that such activity was desirable and perhaps even essential. The inputs of certain individuals were considered indispensable to the total workshop program. These individuals included Dr. Truman Nodland, Dr. Milo Peterson, G.R. Cochran and William Knaak.

Because the group and the activity were informal, it was decided that guests might be invited to future meetings subject to the convenience of and invitation by the host (sleeping space in the cabin was limited).

The group agreed that more teaching aids should be prepared for presenting analysis statistics. Guides for interpreting individual analysis reports were suggested to give the program state wide uniformity. Public relations was considered an important responsibility for the area instructors. Both radio and television stations were looking for program material dealing with agricultural education. Daily and weekly newspapers also provided good publicity outlets. The group agreed to discuss last minute workshop details at the M.V.A.I.A. Conference in Duluth.

The summer workshops varied somewhat from the printed agenda due to restricted schedules of involved personnel⁵. After the preliminaries of registration, welcoming speeches, and instructions, a panel composed of area adult instructors discussed "tips on getting adequate farm accounts". At two of the meetings, Ralph Smith presented "Problems Relating to Farm Inventories and Farm Capital", Del Hodgkins presented "Teaching Farm Management in High School" (with suggestions for a four year curriculum). Resource persons were included in both presentations.

The second days activity included a symposium on "Interpreting Analysis Information" followed by a brainstorming session. G.R. Cochran and William Knaak participated

in one meeting each, Knaak at Rochester and Cochran at Waseca. Their assigned topic was "Area Schools and Farm Management". The workshops concluded with a panel discussion following brainstorming sessions on "What We Want and Need". (Because the workshops were designed to both sell the program as well as to give assistance to participants, subject titles were appropriate at the time if seemingly vague at this writing.)

Kermit Kleene, adult vocational agriculture instructor from New Ulm, proved to be a resource person in his presentation at two workshops. His experiences, enriched with Kleene humor, led to interesting discussions at both sessions. Hodgkins, Painter and Ferguson directed and had inputs for all four workshops. It was a rugged schedule with the four workshops crowded into a twelve day period.

A memorandum⁶ dated August 14, 1959 to S.K. Wick, State Director of Vocational Education from William C. Knaak, Assistant Director of Vocational Education, reviewed the observations of the workshops. Among the observations were: that farmers in the program were enthusiastic about this educational approach; the improved practice approach does not provide the whole answer to the farmers management problems as some farmers are highly efficient and still show losses; individual farm record analysis is the "heart" of the program being offered. "Farmers on the panel testified that they probably would keep such records anyway, but they eagerly awaited the return of the analysis report".

As to the activities of the area schools adult agriculture instructor, Knaak suggested that they did not have enough time to carry on a good local adult program and still do a good job on farm analysis. Three points were made relative to the area schools. 1) The analysis program is a valuable use of the area school to enhance the vocational agriculture program. 2) It will strengthen the support for area schools from the rural communities. 3) It should provide more needed instruction as a follow-up to farm analysis.

Mr. Knaak followed his observation with some specific recommendations. Included

in these recommendations were: that a farm analysis consultant with specific services (as outlined in a special report) be hired by the area school and the salary be 100% reimbursed, that the University of Minnesota Agricultural Education Department be requested to conduct an annual farm analysis seminar, that introductory work in farm record analysis begin in the high school program.

A letter from Leo Keskinen⁷, farm management analyst at the Duluth Vocational Technical Schools to Charles Painter dated October 30, 1959, would seem to refer to Mr. Knaak's recommendations. Leo expressed a number of concerns. The first was that the employer of the farm management coordinator be the local school district even though the state would completely finance salary and travel costs. It seemed desirable to provide some authority for the coordinator to consult with school superintendents and vocational agriculture teachers within the area. A job description should define both responsibilities and also relationships to the school and the State Department of Education. The letter suggested some of what might be included in a job description and recommended work loads based on units rather than hours.

On April 20, 1960⁸, the State Vocational Education Advisory Committee met and unanimously agreed to recommend to the State Board of Education that the position of Vocational Agriculture Program Coordinator be included in the Minnesota Plan for Vocational Agriculture. Letters from William C. Knaak to instructors at the analysis centers announced that this was an important initial step. He felt that because of the limited time allowed at the hearing, members of the committee might not fully appreciate the work being done. He suggested that members be sent copies of the 1959 farm analysis reports.

Another request from Knaak dated November 14, 1960, was for information that could be used in a presentation to the A.V.A. Convention. The replies of Ferguson and Painter to eight questions was found in the Austin and Winona correspondence files.⁹ Painter's reply on November 15, suggested that the coordinator work through the vocational

agriculture instructor and in no instance by-pass him in dealing with administrators and cooperating farmers. He suggested that "farm management" was the heart of the farm operation and was what distinguished this type of education as "vocational". Both Ferguson and Painter gave similar brief answers relating to costs, the need for promotion, high school instruction, and post high school vocational agriculture programs.

Asked in what direction the program might expand, the instructors felt that there might be some danger of expanding in too many directions in the early stages of the program. After establishing a strong foundation, expansion should grow out of need. A strong need for liason between vocational agriculture and the University of Minnesota was emphasized.

As of the fiscal year July 1, 1960, to June 30, 1961, the Cooperative Farm Management Program Area Coordinators' position were initiated. Some positions operated only on a part-time basis. The program in some instances needed to be explained to local board members. In one instance, adverse pressure was applied by a regional representative of a farm organization interested in promoting a similar project to replace the Cooperative Farm Management Program. In addition to the local advisory committee, William Knaak, Dr. Milo Peterson, W.G. Weigand, Assistant Supervisor of Vocational Agriculture, Edwin Peterson and Lyall Larson, Mower County Farm Bureau Board members were particularly supportive and helpful. Lyall and Edwin were among the first cooperators in the Austin area. The influence of these people and the local advisory committee guaranteed approval of the Austin position.

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CHAPTER IV

GROWING PAINS

The growth of the Cooperative Farm Management program following the establishing of official area coordinator positions was phenomenal. To conclude that this growth was entirely due to the efforts of area coordinators would be a gross exaggeration. As will be indicated later in this chapter, dedicated instructors and the promotion from enthusiastic farmers contributed significantly to rapid growth. The quality of clerical assistance was in most instances superb. The conscientious interest of the part-time helpers inspired both instructors and coordinators.

An example of the rapid growth after 1960 is the experience of East South Central analysis center at Austin. With only 50 records analyzed for the 1959 account book year, the 1962 analysis had doubled to 102 and quadrupled to 202 for 1964. The three initial centers reported the following analysis cooperators for 1966; Mankato 197, Thief River Falls 278, Austin 230. A total of 1045 analyzed records were reported from six centers. In addition, there were records from a seventh center at St. Cloud with a slightly different analysis summary.

Eleven years later, the total number of analyzed records reported from eight analysis centers would exceed 5000. Workshops continued as a summer activity but with each coordinator restricting his activities to two meetings. One central meeting was held at the University of Minnesota for correlating analysis procedure.

This meeting on September 19, 20, 1961¹, was arranged through Paul Marvin, Assistant Professor Agricultural Education. The program was planned by Marvin, William Guelker and Charles Painter. Dr. Truman Nodland, along with Dr. Sam Engene and Harvey Bjerke, presented basic information and supervised the discussion. Engene was Nodland's fellow staff member in the Agricultural Economics division. Harvey Bjerke was field supervisor for the Southeast Farm Management Association. Much of the meeting dealt with yields, inventories and feed records.

In correspondence with Mr. Knaak, it seemed that the prospective coordinators were in agreement on the philosophy that was to determine basic activities. In one coordinator's Newsletter of August 1961,² this consensus was interpreted in the following paragraphs. "The area coordinator's role is that of rendering service to vocational agriculture departments. Some of our responsibilities are clearly defined. This is particularly true in the area of farm management. It is anticipated that in another two years, we will (all) be working full-time with area activities. It becomes very important that we establish good working relations with all vocational agriculture departments in the area. To do this, it is highly important that our function be understood. First, it should be understood what we are not. We do not have supervisory or administrative functions. We do not dictate a particular program or course of action. We do not tell you what to do.

We are working for vocational agriculture departments in our area. Our activities in farm management are rather definite. Other activities are flexible and can be adopted to meet some of the requests for assistance that come from vocational agriculture teachers. We do request the privilege of visiting all agriculture departments, offering our services and securing such data as we think may be useful. Suggestions from vo-ag departments relative to our activities will help make our work more effective. We are an official part of vocational agriculture in Minnesota".

Many outstanding accomplishments in adult farmer education have failed to receive the recognition they deserved. During the 1950's, there were few two man vocational agriculture departments. The Cooperative Farm Management program was supported by small enrollments from one instructor departments. These instructors usually carried heavy work loads with their high school responsibilities. It may seem unfair to the many who should be recognized to cite examples. Unless certain individuals are given praise, the efforts of all might go unrecognized. Instructors who responded to the challenge were willing to face what must have often seemed an unsurmountable task.

Truman Tilleraas initiated a new vocational agriculture program at Blooming

Prairie, Minnesota in 1958 and immediately won recognition for an outstanding Future Farmer program. At the same time, he was developing a strong adult program. After two years, Truman's efforts were rewarded when the Board of Education saw fit to hire a young teacher with special qualifications to assume the adult program. Eugene Francis proved to be an excellent choice and built rapidly on the Tilleraas foundation. After three years, a third instructor, Harold Ulrich was hired. A fourth instructor was added when Veteran's Agriculture was added years later.

For Dwain Vangsness at Adams, it took only three years to build up to an enrollment of fifteen farmers in the Cooperative Farm Management program. This was done while carrying a heavy high school teaching load. It took a little longer to convince his superintendent that a second instructor should be employed. The rapid growth of the adult program soon required a third instructor. In 1975, the new consolidated district that became Southland, employed four vocational agriculture instructors.

A very effective adult program by Ernest Frier, Lake Crystal in 1959,³ introduced a four year curriculum for adult agriculture. Frier initiated an adult and young farmer program along with high school vocational agriculture instruction in 1956. He was not employed for full-time adult instruction until 1959. A brochure put out by the Lake Crystal Vocational Agriculture courses of twelve meetings each in Farm Management I, Farm Management II, and Farm Management III were described showing offerings in Planning and Budgeting, Beef Production, Farm Marketing, Crop Production and Concrete Construction along with Farm Accounts and Record Analysis.

Ralph Palan in a very short period developed what was to become a very effective and well publicized adult program at Faribault. Eventually, it employed four adult agriculture instructors. Ralph's Farm and Home Management I, II, III, IV and Advanced Farm and Home Management provided a model curriculum for many other departments. The Faribault program emphasized farm family participation. The attendance of wives at meetings was often nearly as high as that of the men.

One of the problems anticipated as numbers of enrollees increased was the unwieldiness of computing averages. Manual calculations were adequate for individual farms but became increasingly difficult as greater numbers were included in averages. The prospect of adding columns of two hundred figures, often including six digits each, could be anticipated. Studies of data processing became inevitable in the search for the problems solution.

The first attempt at electronic farm record analysis by Minnesota instructors was initiated as a semi-private enterprise venture. Vocational agriculture instructors provided a leading role in both the technical and promotional activities of the project. The Minnesota State Department of Education provided some assistance to determine its feasibility through some allocated research funds. It is unfortunate that few people involved in the Cooperative Farm Management analysis were selected to serve on the evaluation committee. For this reason, any account now of what happened to the project is only somewhat more than speculation. History deserves integrity based on evidence. At some later date, meeting records and correspondence may be found that will disclose the reasons for the eventual failure of the venture. Without documentation of information, we refuse to succumb to making an indictment of the project. We can only afford the indulgence of speculation.

The program eventually incorporated as Agrifax may have been ahead of its time. The Cooperative Farm Management Coordinators observed the development with considerable interest but were either unable to understand the program or were not given a satisfactory explanation. Two things seemed evident. 1) The project was not designed for a specific farm accounting system. 2) No accounting system was suggested to fit the concept of the project.

To the coordinators and many adult agriculture instructors, it seemed that the proposed concept was to provide answers where there were no questions.

A letter from one coordinator to an adult agriculture instructor dated November 6, 1961, poses some of the problems that made the concept difficult to accept. It

reads in part: "Our meeting on electronic analysis was interesting. We finally got down to realities ----- . The facts of life are simply that accurate records are needed for accurate results in electronic procedures. The commercial pitch they made turned out to be a lot of wasted talent. We know more arguments for electronic analysis than they did. The question as to who could get the job done wasn't answered with evidence that convinced me. The analysis will have to be done electronically before many more years".

"We cannot afford to waste time traveling dead end roads, but it is difficult to know how progress is to be achieved. Since I was not asked to participate in the 1960 electronics venture, I am in no position to suggest whether or not we are justified in further exploration with this group.

I always welcome an opportunity to approach problems on their merits but I want no part in these situations in which I am only to be told and never asked".

One of the problems encountered in data processing before 1960 was that it was adapted to situations dealing with relatively few calculations. These calculations often involved an extremely large number of cases that were sometimes very complex. The Minnesota Farm Account Book analysis involved hundreds of calculations. The calculations were simple but highly involved.

In defense of Agrifax, one might conclude that the complexity of a Minnesota Farm Account analysis was recognized and with realistic honesty was not attempted. Avoiding the challenge of the Minnesota Farm Account Book analysis was unfortunate. If the program were to fail in this attempt, it would still have contributed much in experience to future attempts at electronic Cooperative Farm Management analysis.

Stanley Nelson, who had initiated the farm analysis program at Thief River Falls in 1956, later became Director of the Thief River Vocational Technical School. In the fall of 1960, he enrolled for a doctorate program in Agricultural Education at the University of Minnesota. For his thesis problem, he chose to design a program for the electronic analysis of the Minnesota Farm Account records for 1961. With

the help of Madge Anderson, he selected ten cases from the Austin files. Using Ralph Smith's manual, he attempted to correlate a computerized program with manual computations. After the knowledge gained from this experience, a more detailed correlation was made from the records of the 1962 Mankato cooperators. Stan then presented a program to be refined and tested by Agricultural Records Cooperative of Middletown (and Madison), Wisconsin. When Nelson left Minnesota for a Unesco assignment, Edgar Persons, Vocational Agriculture instructor at Hoffman, succeeded him as graduate assistant.

Ed had made an impressive record as a high school instructor. His spare time activity with adults was spectacular. Within a few years, adult enrollment exceeded twenty families. The accuracy and completeness of the Hoffman account books drew high praise from Ralph Smith farm management analyst.

Upon assuming responsibility for continuing the evaluation, Persons studied and attempted a more thorough testing of enterprise analysis. As of the fall of 1964, the coordinators agreed to a data processing service with Agricultural Records Cooperative. The consensus was not unanimous. There was a strong feeling that any total commitment should be preceded by a complete trial run. One suggestion would have included only one area in the first year's experience. A superb sales pitch by Jim Benes from Agricultural Records Cooperative was very impressive. Four areas agreed to give data processing the responsibility for a complete analysis.

Agricultural Records Cooperative agreed to do the analysis for a fee of \$8 per record. The University of Minnesota Division of Agricultural Education was designated to provide technical assistance with Edgar Persons assigned this responsibility.

One of the problems that arose was the insistence by Agricultural Records that one area office be responsible for collecting fees for the analysis and for communicating certain information to cooperating centers. No one wished to assume this responsibility. Charles Painter suggested that since Del Hodgkins had been involved with the most recent

of Stan Nelson's research efforts, he was the local candidate for the responsibility. Del's plea to be excused seemed both logical and fair. He was recovering from a back surgery. When Del agreed to assume the responsibility at a future time, Painter accepted the task of providing a clearinghouse function.

Coordinators cooperating in the electronic analysis program were Robert Anderson, Duluth (Robert had recently replaced Leo Keskinen who had accepted another position); Del Hodgkins, Mankato; Gordon Ferguson, Winona and Charles Painter, Austin. This rather elaborate system proposed by Agricultural Records Cooperative may well have provided certain conveniences for them. It was not without numerous frustrations for the cooperating schools. For Austin as the administrative center, it proved to be cumbersome and confusing. Lines of communication were difficult to maintain partly because designated responsibilities were not always clear, and also because certain correspondence got short circuited or misdirected.

The analysis experience with Agricultural Records Cooperative for the 1964 analysis (completed in 1965) is difficult to appraise. Review of the 1965 correspondence file might indicate that the venture was a failure. It was obvious at the start that the program was full of inaccuracies. For most of the participants, data processing was a mysterious and complicated procedure. When the first reports showed turkey analysis information with no turkey enterprises involved, an explanation that this was an item stored in "memory" only reinforced the confusion. There were innumerable errors. There were delays, some averages being compiled as much as six weeks later than with the previous years manual calculations.

There were those among the coordinators who felt that Agricultural Records Cooperative had exaggerated its ability to perform with either satisfactory analysis procedure or report. In a letter received by one coordinator from a cooperating instructor, this question was raised. "I don't know how complete the details were worked out in advance, but the area coordinators have been putting these analysis together for a number of years - with certain differences in procedure" (the assumption that procedures

differed was of course erroneous). He added: "How can anyone be so positive that he can bring in an outside group and in two years have such a complicated project error free?"

Whether the writer was suggesting that some other data processing center should be approached is not clear. Those who had some misgivings about the Madison organization faced the question as to whether any other group could do as well. A return for one year to manual analysis with a trial computer check might be considered. It seemed certain that electronic processing would be a must within two years. Was Agricultural Records Cooperative capable of doing such an analysis? Could anyone do it?

The experience did create misunderstandings, doubts and often breakdowns in communication. One embarrassing situation grew out of a confusion for a scheduled appearance at a summer workshop. A breakdown in communications resulted in a speaking invitation for the second day of the workshop being delivered at the close of the first day. Confusion in schedules is not uncommon. Under less emotionally charged situations, it would not have been given a second thought.

In spite of all this, the 1965 analysis effort was a milestone in data processing achievement. In retrospect, the magnitude of the effort can be understood. The coordinators and instructors who remained skeptical had to admit that even with its many imperfections, the project had demonstrated that a detailed farm business analysis by an electronic process was possible. Not only was it possible, but it could be done at a reasonable cost. Cooperators were much more patient and tolerant than instructors and coordinators. They were almost unanimous in their willingness to give Agricultural Records Cooperative another chance.

At a meeting with Agricultural Records Cooperative on August 25th, Del Hodgkins and Charles Painter discussed some of the details for the 1966 arrangement. In a letter to a cooperating school, Painter explained some outcomes of the meeting. "Even though I had spent half a day with Agricultural Records Cooperative last March, there were many unfounded suppositions that I held until August 25th. Del and I learned

that some of our assumptions were just not correct. Many of our problems stem from inaccurate knowledge. Changes in personnel at both the University of Minnesota and Agricultural Records Cooperative had much to do with the problems encountered. Everyone seemed to assume that most of the project details had been completed, when as a matter of fact, there were huge unbridged gaps that had not been worked out. No one was to blame for this, but as coordinators, we should have made a more careful study before committing our cooperators. To suggest as some have thoughtlessly done, that we should have been more involved in Stan Nelson's project is most unfair. We cooperated fully with all three research projects. We didn't advise him on his PhD thesis as we hardly felt that to be our prerogative".

Certain changes⁴ were agreed upon with Agricultural Records Cooperative. While Del Hodgkins at Mankato agreed to assume the responsibility as a clearing center, Agricultural Records Cooperative was to discontinue billing one center for all fees as had been done through Austin the first year. Edgar Persons was to receive correspondence on all corrections and problems. This would point up common errors and inconsistencies that could be studied and hopefully resolved by those trained in data processing. Changes agreed upon by the analysis centers and Agricultural Records Cooperative would be programmed by Ed Persons and Agricultural Records Cooperative's technicians.

Area Coordinators, whose sanities had now survived 1965, geared for a new year. Many of the headaches of data processing were behind them. With the headaches had also come a wealth of experience. Like 1956 and 1959, it was a landmark year. It was an achievement even though many more problems would be encountered with data processing before all of the major calculations were accurate for each individual analysis.

By 1967, six areas were involved in data processing under Agricultural Records Cooperative. When Ralph Smith became Acting Superintendent (shortly to become Superintendent) of the West Central Experiment Station, the Willmar Area Technical Institute

School was designated as an analysis center with Mike Cullen as coordinator. For a time the University Farm Management Division continued to prepare the analysis reports. Mike was given the responsibility for developing a statewide young farmer program. When Mike was given the position of area school director, he was succeeded by Edward Hartog. John Thell, who followed Ed, prepared the 1967 summary of 88 farms. William Guelker at Staples held a statewide coordinator position similar to that of Mike Cullen except that his assignment was in Agricultural Mechanics.

The coordinator position at Thief River Falls had a few rapid changes. Stan Nelson, who was responsible for the analysis center, was followed by Arndt Aune who followed Stan as area school director. Fred Sorensen, who followed Arndt, accepted an appointment with the local bank.

He was in turn followed by Peter Probasco, who also did enviable work as coordinator and later accepted an assignment in agricultural extension with the University of Alaska. Thief River Falls had the largest farm analysis enrollment of the six cooperating areas. Ed Sissler followed the excellent performance of his predecessors with continued expansion and development. His enthusiasm and dedication has been an inspiration to instructors in the area.

Leo Keskenin, coordinator at Duluth, also accepted a promising position at Grand Rapids. Robert Anderson, who succeeded him was later offered and accepted an administrative position in the Duluth Area Vocational Technical Institute. Rodger Palmer succeeded him with a program designed for Northeastern Minnesota Agriculture. Rodger would later complete graduate requirements for a PhD in Agricultural Education.

Ed O'Connell, who for a number of years operated as part-time area coordinator at St. Cloud, continued with a program considered appropriate to the community.

When Gordon Ferguson left Winona for a teaching assignment in Uganda, the years analysis was completed by Loyal Hyatt. Donald Walker became area coordinator at Winona Area Vocational Technical Institute in 1967. Don had in a few short years built

up a large adult agriculture program at Plainview. His contributions to high school farm management instruction has come to be appreciated throughout the state and in some out-of-state communities.

Because of the heavy case load in the Mankato area, Jackson was designated as an additional center in 1970. John Murray became coordinator for the new area.

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CHAPTER V

PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS - AN APPRECIATION

The purpose of this modest effort has been to cover one epoch of history - the Minnesota history of adult education in agriculture from about 1950 to 1970 including the conception of an idea, promotion of a plan and the development of a program.

This pioneering period evolved through rather distinct phases. Previous to 1955, promotion was accorded a high priority. Farmer education through both traditional patterns and trial and error was pursued with dedication and persistence. The year 1955 initiated analysis centers within certain designated area vocational technical schools. This phase lasted till the 1960-1961 school year when area coordinator positions were given official approval. The third step was the development of and adjustment to computerized analysis.

A period of program expansion, growth and consolidation has followed this epoch, and will hopefully be covered at some later time by those involved in the program since the post 1973 "price-cost" agricultural economics boom. This is also an important era. The genius needed to maintain growth and quality is no less than what was necessary to initiate the program in the 1950's and 1960's. Hopefully the present period will be covered in a more expert manner than this sometimes faltering but always sincere presentation.

In recent years, the Cooperative Farm Management program has been systematically organized in other states. The interest-or perhaps curiosity-was evident from the beginning. Lauren Granger's correspondence included letters of inquiry from numerous out-of-state locations. Later similar letters were received at the analysis centers.

This out-of-state interest prompted Dr. Milo Peterson to offer a special summer course that extended from June 28 to July 3, 1963. The course was designed to be a part of the regular three week credit offering. Known as the "Farm Management Institute", it was described by Del Hodgkins in a July 17, 1963 newsletter as follows:

"Many things have taken place this summer with respect to vocational agriculture

activities. The Farm Management Institute at the University was considered by those in attendance as a success. There were teachers from 14 states and 9 foreign countries in attendance. Our thanks to those of you who helped to make it a success by your presence and participation".

The area coordinators were involved in two half-day panel discussions. One of the "Institute" activities was a tour to Austin and Faribault. The Austin activity included a demonstration of analysis procedure. The process was explained by Madge Anderson, who had spent seven years doing analysis calculations and directing the clerical activities of the Austin analysis. Her explanation of the manual process (then in use) was thorough and impressive. Madge had also helped train clerical assistants for satellite stations at Faribault and Blooming Prairie.

At this point, it seems appropriate to express an appreciation for the contribution of the clerical assistants involved in the analysis process. No description of the farm analysis experience would accurately disclose all of the reasons for its success without the recognition of the young women involved with the procedure. Madge's contribution to the tour activity was typical of her interest and dedication to the farm record book analysis. From the beginning of her clerical responsibility, Madge proved herself to be loyal, dedicated and intelligent. Her approach to her work was professional.

She respected the confidentiality of records and never disclosed individual analysis information. As the program developed, she helped to train other workers with patience and humility. Her diplomacy in reviewing farm accounts with farmers and instructors established her credibility as both knowledgeable and concerned. Nor were her qualities and talent limited to the mechanics of farm analysis. She was on other occasions involved in instructor workshops. On one occasion, she substituted for her physically incapacitated boss at a coordinator's meeting.

Working with Ralph Palan at Faribault, Audrey Anhorn supervised the operation of a satellite center with equal dedication and efficiency. Without the genius of the

many such assistants, the Cooperative Farm Management program could never have succeeded. Coordinators have been in general agreement that their "girls Friday" have assumed responsibilities not reflected in low hourly wages they have been paid.

The Austin-Faribault tour included a noon luncheon meeting with a special talk by Lyall Larson, a cooperating Hayfield farmer. Lyall was also a member of the Hayfield School Board and of the Area Farm Management Advisory Committee. Some cooperating farm families in the Faribault community were visited in the afternoon. Ralph Palan, instructor, provided analysis summary information with the permission of the farmers visited.

Previous missionary efforts may have been partially responsible for the substantial attendance at the Farm Management Institute. One such contact came through a request to the University of Minnesota Agricultural Education Department for an analysis workshop in Northwestern Iowa. The request was referred to Del Hodgkins and Charles Painter, who met with the group at Spencer, Iowa, January 9, 1958. The instructors conducted a late afternoon and an evening session that involved the complete analysis procedure. Indirect information received later, indicated that these instructors did complete a group analysis although neither Hodgkins or Painter received copies of any summaries.

On another occasion, Charles Painter spoke to a small group of farmers and instructors at Armstrong, Iowa. For a number of years, trial sporadic analysis ventures were initiated outside of Minnesota. A Nebraska project involving a cooperative agricultural education and agricultural extension existed for a short time in the late 1960's. A North Dakota group also participated in the Minnesota Farm Analysis plan.

The 1963 venture was not Dr. Milo Peterson's first workshop venture designed to bring Cooperative Farm Management information to other states. As visiting instructor at Mississippi State University in the summer of 1959, he introduced the Minnesota program in a seven day workshop.

His approach suggested a review of the Minnesota adult agriculture program to determine what application it might have to Mississippi agriculture.

Another of the more intensive out-of-state "missionary" venture was a seminar offering by the Agricultural Education Department of the University of Missouri at Columbia. The Farm Management workshop was a five day offering - July 21 to July 24, 1969, by Del Hodgkins.¹

The first days schedule provided a history of the development of Minnesota's Cooperative Farm Management Program, the experiences of cooperating farm families, objectives and desired results. The second day was largely spent on considerations for organizing and developing a program in the local community.

Course outlines and curriculum materials were introduced on the third day. Considerable emphasis was also placed on closing account books for analysis. The last two days were devoted to the use of farm analysis in class and individual instruction.

Sixteen vocational agriculture instructors attended the workshop. Their teaching experience ranged from 0 to 25 years.

Del reported the experience to be stimulating but exhausting.

What these efforts contributed to permanent programs is difficult to evaluate. It would not be until after 1970, that these programs began to grow in numbers that would assure continued expansion. The analysis format had been developed for the Minnesota Farm Account Book. Familiarity with the records was needed to assure confidence in their use.

Previous discussions described the effort made to publicize the management program in Minnesota. Even with thousands of brochures, numerous newsletters, magazine articles, radio and television programs and instructor contacts, farm families were probably most impressed by the profession of cooperating farm families. Their eventual involvement often came about from the witness of neighbors that participated in the program.

For a number of years, recognition was given for farm management excellence at

the annual University of Minnesota Farm and Home week. Cooperative Farm Management cooperators from different areas of the state were selected for honors and competed for a Farm Manager of the Year Award. The award reflected the operators excellence in farm management factors, adaptation of management practices to the farming situation, conservation of resources, and family living. State winners did not consistently come from particular farming areas or general enterprise combinations. Some had large farms. Others were small. One state winner, on a rather limited acreage, raised hogs and turkeys. Another fed beef. An unusual winner was a farmer who excelled in only four management factors -- those that were important for his farming situation. His operation included 120 owned and 80 rented acres in a dairy production area -- but this operator produced sheep, pork and eggs.

With the discontinuation of Farm and Home week, the state award was no longer offered. Some centers continued to designate a Farm Manager of the Year for the area they served.

A weekly farm news television program from the Austin station often presented farm management cooperators, vocational agriculture instructors, farm specialists, and visual farm management concepts. These programs provided visibility to interested individuals who were in turn contacted by other persons.

However slow the process, farmer to farmer communication did much to provide a permanent basis for growth. Some instructors were particularly qualified to exploit this process. When combined with sound exchange of farm management concepts between cooperator and instructor, it was highly successful. A very effective public relations asset has always been the Vocational Agriculture Advisory Committee. The concept was in some instances effectively applied to the coordinator position.

One Area Farm Management Advisory Committee exerted its influence in getting the area coordinator position approved by the school board. This committee included

cooperating farmers, vocational agriculture instructors and urban community leaders. Distance is a problem in selecting an advisory committee to represent an area. A limitation of twenty-five miles from the center seemed advisable. Such a committee is much more than a supporting body. It contributes to the on going development of the program. Plans and policy become a group consideration rather than being coordinator dominated.

"Above and beyond the call of duty" is an often quoted military citation. Vocational agriculture is quite removed from military activity but instructors who have performed "above and beyond the line of duty" are legion. If all of the examples of great achievements in the past twenty-five years of Minnesota Vo-Ag instruction were revealed, the testimony would fill volumes. Unfair though it is, most history is unrecorded. It would be even more unfair to record no history.

The instances cited in this chapter are those that have been impressive and at the same time revealed a sense of dedication. They are limited to those of a certain area and known by the author. They involve the promotion and development of Cooperative Farm Management programs. Many high school instructors providing outstanding programs are not mentioned. It must be recognized that heavy class schedules often allowed no time to promote adult instruction. Many did double duty and made contributions that deserve recognition. Apologies are in order that we have chosen to discuss so few.

Some communities have attributes that can be recognized and developed by perceptive and dedicated instructors. Faribault and Blooming Prairie might be cited as examples. Faribault provided adult farmer education several years prior to World War II. The community had developed a responsive attitude to adult education.

Ralph Palan's background in vocational agriculture and agricultural extension was uniquely suited for developing a Cooperative Farm Management program in the Faribault community. Both his agricultural extension activity involving a special pilot undertaking and previous vocational agriculture teaching experience provided

him with an ideal background for the Faribault position. Initiating the Cooperative Farm Management program in 1959, Ralph applied many of the basic principles of his previous experiences. Within seven years, the program had grown to 80 families completing the analysis process. The Faribault program put special emphasis on family involvement. The attendance of women at class meetings was often nearly as high as for the men.

Blooming Prairie had not had a Vocational Agriculture Department since before World War II. The enrollment from the World War II veterans in the G.I. training was unusually high. Most of these veterans were enrolled in the Austin on-the-farm training program. Some enrolled at Owatonna. Interest in re-establishing a vocational agriculture department ran high but action was delayed pending the completion of a new school facility.

Under the direction of Truman Tilleraas, the new ag department achieved enviable success. In addition to a heavy high school schedule, Truman conducted an adult farmer class that enrolled seven farm management cooperators for 1958. While expanding the adult program, the Blooming Prairie FFA almost immediately became one of Minnesota's outstanding chapters with two state officers and two national judging championships. After two years, the district added an additional instructor assigned full-time to the adult farmer program. Eugene Francis came to Blooming Prairie without previous teaching experience but with very favorable credentials including the American Farmer award two years after his graduation from high school. His achievements even exceeded the high expectations of the school board and administration. Under Gene's direction, the adult program developed rapidly and a third instructor, Harold Ulrich, was added to the department to share Cooperative Farm Management and Farm Mechanics responsibilities. Fifty-two 1968 record books were submitted for analysis. A Veteran's Agriculture instructor was to be added in 1974.

Dwain Vangsness carried a heavy high school load while developing an adult program at Adams. Even with a double work load, Dwain provided superior service in

both programs. After four years and twenty farm analysis cooperators, the Adams school administration recognized that the contribution of the Cooperative Farm Management program to the community demanded a two instructor department. LeRoy Swanson was secured to teach high school agriculture freeing Dwain for full time adult activity.

The Adams Vocational Agriculture experience did much to promote a three district consolidation that eventually provided a four instructor Vocational Agriculture department. The school has provided an opportunity for several able administrators to advance to greater responsibilities in larger school districts. The impressive experience with the Adams agricultural program has been a positive influence in developing similar instructional services in other communities.

Before pursuing a doctorate program in Agricultural Education, Edgar Persons carried a double teaching load at Hoffman that included a complete high school vocational agriculture schedule and twenty families submitting records for analysis. Ralph Smith who at that time was performing the analysis, attests to the contribution of the Hoffman program to the area project. The completeness and accuracy of the Hoffman farm records was particularly gratifying.

The impressive program developed by Ernest Frier at Lake Crystal was discussed in a previous chapter. Ernie and Ralph Palan at Faribault were early initiators of a four year adult agriculture curriculum.

Romeo Cyr provided a Farm Management program at Red Wing while carrying a full high school load. He was also eventually assigned to full time Cooperative Farm Management.

At a somewhat later period, John Januschka promoted a very ambitious Cooperative Farm Management project at Winona. A participation of sixty farm families in the analysis process was supplemented with organized class instruction and frequent farm visitation to both active and prospective coöperators.

One of the morale building yearly rituals for those involved in the Cooperative Farm Management program has been the annual weekend workshops at Lake Rachel. When Ralph Smith invited the instructors from the area analysis center to his cabin in May of 1959, the mood was one of serious concern for the future of the growing program. Instructors responsible for the analysis had no official position other than adult agriculture instructor. The lake cabin experience provided an opportunity to compare farm analysis problems, seek improvements in the procedure, provide summer meetings for vocational agriculture instructors and seek to establish permanent coordinator designation.

The experience not only contributed much to achieving the original objectives but provided a relaxed atmosphere of mutual appreciation. Following the intensive concentration on farm record analysis, everyone involved welcomed an opportunity to unwind. Also there was a feeling of a need to recharge.

Over the years most of the original problems have been largely resolved, only to be followed with new problems. The format and agenda for the Lake Rachel weekend, have been somewhat altered but the original need for sharing experiences, renewal and relaxation remains. Ralph's cabin was in the process of construction in May of 1959. During the years since then, expansion and modernization have added to the comfort and congeniality. More recently, Milo Peterson has built a cabin just a stones throw from the Smith structure. The event has continued unbroken over the years. (Once it was held in September instead of May.) The spirit of fraternity brings back guests and retirees years after their active participation in agricultural education.

Ralph's famous pontoon may have constituted the entire Lake Rachel navy. The notorious craft being unchristened as well as uncommissioned, evoked much skepticism as to her seaworthiness. A midnight cruise of this "Jolly Roger" was one of the Lake Rachel events that has become somewhat of a legend. Recent guests would be inclined to treat the several folklore versions as totally fictitious.

It would be difficult for a recent visitor to realize that a raft could be hidden behind an island that no longer exists. A heavier rainfall cycle has increased the lake's depth and added to the shoreline.

Lake activities have followed a ritual pattern. Variation in the menu has not changed basically over the years. The Friday evening barbecued pork chops prepared under Ralph's direction are remembered as a gourmet's delight. Only Del Hodgkins is allowed the privilege of preparing the roast beef for Saturday's dinner meal. It can be described as flavorful, tender and well done.

Over the years, Friday's evening workshop activities has diminished considerably from farm management information (and correction by Truman Nodland or some other representative from the University's Agricultural Economics division) followed by a revising of Saturday's agenda. More recently, the card game gets underway by 8:30 p.m. Even the game preference has changed. Forrest Bear representing "Farm Mechanics", preferred the technical approach involved sophisticated game versions. Milo Peterson chose old fashioned no-holds-barred poker. Ralph Smith covered any losses (seldom) by doubling the anti. Contests were hard fought with everyone declaring losses (sometimes exceeding three dollars) but admitting only success when reporting back home to their wives. Since 1970, rugged individualism seems to have been replaced with mathematical conservatism in the form of blackjack. Saturday forenoon is now the main work session. By midafternoon, golfing, fishing and loafing take over.

When area coordinators rendered service to 34 to 40 schools with a total of from 40 to 55 instructors, some attention was given to high school vocational agriculture programs. Curriculum materials to be incorporated into four years of high school were prepared for classroom use. Don Walker, while coordinator at Winona, provided a farm accounting and analysis problem that was used extensively in Minnesota high school classes and by some Wisconsin and Iowa schools. Other coordinators have prepared curriculum materials including manuals for both high school and adult classes.

One of the pleasant experiences of the coordinator was the visitation of all vocational agriculture departments in the fall months of the new school year. The promise of a venturesome experience was anticipated from schedules, enrollment and teaching plans. Seldom did the schools in the total area served employ more than a total of sixty instructors. Within a two month period, all could be contacted. In the last ten years, the number of instructors has nearly doubled. With as many as 109 instructors in 47 schools as indicated from one coordinator's mailing, the personal visitation to every teacher has become a luxury when it should be a necessity. The coordinator must concentrate on adult instruction or dilute the entire program.

With Farm Management and Farm Mechanics as two areas of instruction that distinguish the vocational from the academic concept, the coordinator's skills for high school agriculture programs would seem essential.

Farming continues to be an ever changing occupation. The economics of farming was drastically effected by the unprecedented 1973 situation. The usually high production and favorable price-cost ration of that year was a phenomenon that rarely occurs in the history of agriculture. This prosperity brought about the tripling of land prices within a four year period. Other farming costs doubled while farm prices declined.

Continued mechanization contributes to increased size. The situation of the 1970's has been economically baffling. Today's farmer certainly faces new problems and new challenges. It is hoped that farming will also offer new opportunities.

Other chapters will be added to the Cooperative Farm Management program. Hopefully someone will find time to record the activities of the 1970's and 1980's, 1990's and the 21st century. Agricultural education can approach the future with confidence because we know where we have been in the past. Our roots have depth.

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