

# THIS WE BELIEVE!

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The material you will read in the article that follows is not original with me. I have selected this material from many sources and I feel that it best represents the thinking of those with whom I have worked in adult education in vocational agriculture in Minnesota. The material below just presents my efforts to put these thoughts together in a condensed form. I hope that they will add to the understanding of the program of adult education in vocational agriculture in Minnesota.

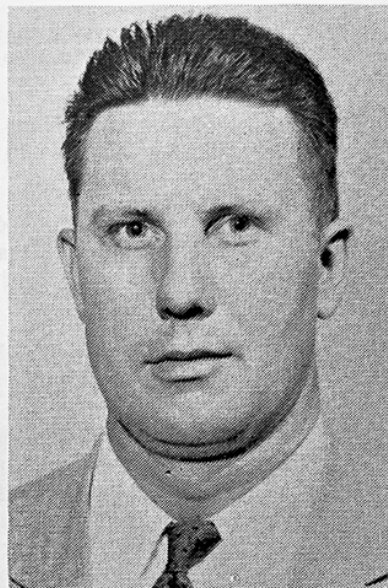
In many industries, at least those dealing with the production of products as contrasted to those dealing in services, we commonly find the personnel organized into the areas of management, production, and sales. Actually, the work of the farmer quite largely falls into these three general categories—with the difference, of course, that in the great majority of cases the farmer is management, is the production force, and has charge of sales. Over the years research and education has emphasized production. Our courses and our teaching at the high school and the adult level have emphasized production. However, we hope that we can give you a picture of a program of education for the farmer as a person who is concerned with management and important management decisions as well as a person who is concerned with problems of production and sales.

We feel that farm management as a basis for an adult program is sound, logical, and a forward step in our agricultural education program.

We would like to very briefly give you a background of adult education and farm management in the Minnesota program of vocational agricultural education. Last year there were 287 schools that maintained approved departments of vocational agriculture. Of these 255, or 88%, conducted evening or adult programs, 97, or 33%, conducted programs for out-of-school youth, and 9% had high school classes only. Reimbursement for salary paid to teachers for adult instruction is at the rate of 75% as compared to 50% for day salaries. When a school in Minnesota is approved for a vocational agriculture program we feel they have assumed responsibility for offering adult education for farmers and out-of-school youth as well as conducting a program for high school students. Last year we had 36 multiple teacher departments, 29 of these had an expanded adult or young farmer program, and 7 employed more than one teacher because of the large high school enrollment.

The information just presented gives you a broad picture of the vocational agriculture program for adults in Minnesota. When an enlargement of any program in vocational agriculture education is contemplated this expansion must be justified by needs in the community where the course is to be offered. The following procedure gives an objective evaluation of the need for an adult program in agriculture in your community. It is broken down into three parts.

First—a calculation of the number of farms in the community and the number of those farm families presently being served by your school district based on the numbers of those families that have students enrolled in the elementary or secondary schools.



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## Survey of Available Adult Farmers

Number of square miles in district  
(or high school area) - - - - - \_\_\_\_\_

Average size farm in acres - - - - - \_\_\_\_\_

Number of farms per square mile - - - - - \_\_\_\_\_

Number of farms (farm operators) in  
district (or high school area) - - - - - \_\_\_\_\_

Number farm families with children  
presently in school - - - - - \_\_\_\_\_

Number of additional farm operators  
without children in school that could  
be served - - - - - \_\_\_\_\_

Second—a form for the computation of the total investment in farm land in your school district, the gross income of those farmers, their operating costs or cash inputs, expenditures for capital improvements and for family living follows:

## Financial Scope of Agriculture in District

Total investment in agriculture  
in district - - - - - \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total annual gross farm income  
in district - - - - - \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total annual farm purchases from  
other than farmers:

Operating - - - - - \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Capital Purchases - - - - - \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total farm purchases - - - - - \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total annual family living expenses - \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Grand total farm and  
family expenses - - - - - \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Data to complete the above may be taken from southeastern or southwestern Farm Management Reports or latest Annual Report of the Vocational Agriculture Farm Management Program from the following schools: Austin, Duluth, Mankato, Morris, St. Cloud, Thief River Falls, and Winona.

Third—a table showing the enrollment in six selected schools that have employed full time adult agriculture instructors showing the enrollment in adult vocational agriculture the last year that this department operated as a single teacher department, and also in 1959-60.

### Comparison of Adult Vo-Ag Program Before and After Employment of Full Time Adult Teacher

#### Last Year One Man

| SCHOOL | No. Class Meetings | Students | On-Farm Instructional Visits |
|--------|--------------------|----------|------------------------------|
| 1      |                    |          | *                            |
| 2      | 10                 | 45       | 93                           |
| 3      |                    |          | *                            |
| 4      | 34                 | 55       | 107                          |
| 5      | 39                 | 58       | 50                           |
| 6      | 12                 | 60       | 57                           |

\* No records available.

#### 1959-1960 Additional Teacher Only

| SCHOOL | No. Class Meetings | Students | On-Farm Instructional Visits |
|--------|--------------------|----------|------------------------------|
| 1      | 53                 | 91       | 515                          |
| 2      | 133                | 203      | 495                          |
| 3      | 60                 | 98       | 449                          |
| 4      | 112                | 185      | 610                          |
| 5      | 98                 | 73       | 309                          |
| 6      | 63                 | 79       | 487                          |

The problems of the modern farm family are vastly different from those of a decade or two ago. In a relatively simple business each problem can be identified, isolated, studied, evaluated and solved. This is not true in modern agriculture. We have a number of factors, each more or less independently involved but further complicated by the fact that each of these factors is so completely inter-related with others that it cannot be treated as a single variable. For this reason, it is necessary to set up a course of study that will keep each phase of the farm business in proper perspective with the others as they influence the whole farm business.

Along with a caution against over-simplification, a program of instruction to vocational agriculture for adults should include three identifiable phases: (1) the farm management phase, (2) the mechanized agriculture phase, and (3) the enterprise phase. A closer look at each of these will show its relationship with the other two.

**THE FARM MANAGEMENT PHASE.** The farm management phase must be the foundation for the program of instruction. It will begin with individual farm families enrolled in specific courses composed of definite units taught in an organized sequence. This study of farm management should be set up to include a period of two or more years to permit families to keep pace

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with the instruction in carrying out programs which will help them reach their objectives. The farm management phase may be subdivided into nine areas which must be approached in a definite chronological order. These can be stated briefly as follows:

1. Analyze the present situation.
2. Locate the problems.
3. Set up objectives or goals.
4. Size up the resources.
5. Look for various alternatives.
6. Consider probable consequences and outcomes.
7. Evaluate the expected results.
8. Decide on the course of action.
9. Put the plan into effect.

Because agriculture is a dynamic industry, we cannot locate a problem, follow through on alternatives, put a new plan into effect and expect the job of farm management to be completed. This must be a continuing process with new problems coming in and new solutions being found. Farm management decisions will be in various stages of consideration at all times. This program is simply the starting point in the over-all evaluation of the farm business and a systematized approach to problems that will follow.

A course outline for a three year program follows:

### Farm Management I—Teaching Unit Objectives

1. To stimulate the interest of farm families in developing a more profitable farm business and providing a more satisfying family living.
2. To demonstrate that earnings vary greatly from farm to farm and that reasons for these variations can be shown through a farm business analysis.
3. To stimulate farm families toward a self-appraisal of their farm and home situation and to help them establish measurements of farm family progress.
4. To define complete farm and home records and to demonstrate the usefulness of these records.
5. To demonstrate the importance of beginning inventories and to teach families how to make and record the initial inventory.
6. To teach families a systematic approach for making current entries in the Minnesota Farm Account Book with special emphasis on receipts and expenses.
7. To motivate families to keep feed records for each enterprise and to teach a method for keeping them.
8. To demonstrate the importance of a good cropping program and to assist families in beginning a systematic plan.
9. To teach families how to make a mid-year feed check and to assist them in making it.
10. To teach families the technique of checking the accuracy of livestock entries in the Minnesota Farm Account book.
11. To teach the importance of accurate crop yield records and a technique for determining and recording these yields.

12. To teach the value of managing income to minimize taxes and to teach a procedure for making an income tax estimate.
13. To teach the technique of making and recording inventories at the end of the year.
14. To teach the technique of completing the crop and feed check and adjusting feed records.
15. To teach the technique of closing the Minnesota Farm Account Book for analysis.

### Farm Management II—Teaching Unit Objectives

1. To teach families to compute and file income and social security taxes.
2. To acquaint families with the various methods of measuring farm profits.
3. To acquaint families with the various measures of farm business size and to show the relationship between size and earnings.
4. To begin families in a general interpretation of a farm business analysis.
5. To teach families how to interpret the summary of inventories in their farm business analysis.
6. To teach families how to use the farm business analysis to evaluate their cropping programs.
7. To show the relationship between size of business and farm earnings.
8. To teach families how to evaluate machinery, equipment and building casts, as shown in their farm analysis.
9. To teach families how to use their analysis reports to determine relative enterprise efficiencies.
10. To illustrate the importance of miscellaneous costs as shown by the farm business analysis.
11. To teach families how to minimize taxes through the use of an income tax estimate and careful tax management.
12. To close out the Minnesota Farm Account Book and prepare supplementary forms for analysis.

### Farm Management III—Teaching Unit Objectives

1. To create an awareness in the families that there are differences between good and poor farmers.
2. To teach families a method of determining the optimum level of production.
3. To teach families the increasing significance of the second year's farm business analysis.
4. To teach families how to evaluate their cropping program.
5. To teach families how to evaluate the livestock program.
6. To teach families how to evaluate their building program.
7. To teach families how to evaluate their family labor efficiency.
- 8-10. To teach families how to study their present program, develop alternative possibilities of crops and livestock and to develop a program to maximize income.
11. To teach families the principles of efficient farmstead arrangements.
12. To furnish background information for transitional plans of farm reorganization.

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**THE MECHANIZED AGRICULTURE PHASE.** The average farmer in Minnesota has more than half of his capital invested in machinery, equipment and buildings. This major area of investment and use of resources cannot be overlooked in any comprehensive adult farmer program. This area of study will include instruction in the following areas:

1. Farm power and machinery.
2. Farm buildings and conveniences.
3. Soil and water management.
4. Rural electrification and processing.
5. Agricultural construction and maintenance (commonly referred to farm shop).

These areas of study will include a determination of the need for and selection of machinery, equipment and buildings as well as the economics of ownership. The influence of machinery and equipment on the labor output per man is of major significance in modern agriculture. At the same time the capital expenditure must be carefully weighed to determine whether increased production and labor efficiency will justify the acquisition cost. The farmstead planning and building requirements fall into this same important category as well as the development of the skills necessary to properly operate, adjust and maintain complicated farm machinery.

A series of meetings should be conducted each year on some specific area of mechanized agriculture. One year it might be concerned with operation adjustment and maintenance and repair of harvesting machinery. Another year it may deal with planting machines, materials handling, or farm building construction. This should be determined according to the needs and interests within

the community. This area of study is so broad and so diversified that all of the important areas cannot be covered before the community needs will require a repeat of the popular phases. This means that in some years there will be two or more courses in mechanized agriculture.

**THE ENTERPRISE PHASE.** The enterprise phase of a balanced adult farmer program bears the most similarity to adult farmer classes of the past. Technological changes make the approved practices of yesterday an out-of-date practice today. For this reason it is necessary to systematically provide opportunity for farmers in the community to get up-to-date on new production and management practices within an enterprise. This can be done by offering one or more courses each year in such areas as swine feeding and management, crop production, dairy feeding and management, or other enterprises.

**SUMMARY OF PROGRAM.** The adult education program in agriculture must be organized in such a manner that at all times the class instructions as well as the individual instruction is aimed toward the overall objectives of the course. To be effective in meeting the needs of enrolled farm families it must be organized and systematized around the basic principles of farm management.

Adult instruction in agriculture is quite similar to other courses offered by the public schools. It must be systematized instruction possessing the following four characteristics:

1. Specific enrollees in each course.
2. Specific units taught as part of each course.
3. A definite and regular sequence of courses.
4. Continuity between courses with progression to

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### TOTAL TEACHER PROGRAM OF YOUNG FARMER AND ADULT FARMER INSTRUCTION

| Class Instruction                             | Number of<br>Class Sessions   | Time      | Hours   |
|---|-------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| At School - - - - -                           | _____                         | x 3 hours | = _____ |
| Other Than School - - - - -                   | _____                         | x 4 hours | = _____ |
| TOTAL _____                                   |                               |           |         |
| Group Instruction                             | Number of Mtgs.<br>or Trips   | Time      | Hours   |
| Group Meetings - - - - -                      | _____                         | x _____   | = _____ |
| Field Trips - - - - -                         | _____                         | x _____   | = _____ |
| TOTAL _____                                   |                               |           |         |
| Individual Instruction                        | Number of<br>Individual Calls | Time      | Hours   |
| On-Farm Instruction<br>(Farm Mgt.) - - - - -  | _____                         | x 3 hours | = _____ |
| On-Farm Instruction<br>(Other) - - - - -      | _____                         | x 2 hours | = _____ |
| Individual Instruction<br>at School - - - - - | _____                         | x 2 hours | = _____ |
| TOTAL _____                                   |                               |           |         |



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ward the most effective business organization and the greatest operating efficiency.

**Reimbursement of a full time adult education program in agriculture, and calculation of teacher load.** An instructional program designed primarily to fit the needs for out-of-school youth and adults is somewhat different in its organization than a traditional secondary school program, therefore standard methods for calculation of teacher load both from the standpoint of time spent on vocational work and the definition of that vocational work would need to be somewhat different. The following titled "Total Teacher Program of Young Farmer Instruction" gives a formula for the calculation of the time spent in the adult area of vocational agriculture instruction.

Using the data developed above, the following policy is used to establish the reimbursement for the program. A full time load will be considered 1200 hours (organized classroom and individual instruction). If 1200 hours of adult instruction has been provided the school will receive reimbursement of 75% of the salary paid. In the event the instructor does not meet the full 1200 hours the reimbursement will be pro rated on a fractional basis. Reimbursement will be calculated on the same fraction that the instruction offered is of the 1200 hour minimum.

**Faculty Status of the Adult Instructor in Vocational Agriculture.** The status of the adult instructor in vocational agriculture is the same as that of any other teacher on the faculty. He should be subject to the administrative authority set up by the Board of Education and shall assume those duties which are expected of all faculty members such as attendance at faculty meetings, presentation of weekly or in the adult instructors case, probably monthly lesson plans, schedule of activities including on-farm instruction, etc. He should also expect to assume his fair share of faculty assignments. These however to be assigned with due regard to the special and unique responsibility of his position as an adult instructor.

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