

# 4-H CLUB TRAINING

# An Analysis

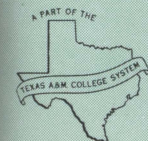
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THE EDUCATIONAL  
AND OCCUPATIONAL  
GOALS OF

4-H CLUB MEMBERS

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TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION . . . TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

College Station, Texas

## SUMMARY

This study was conducted by the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station (1) to determine the attitudes of 4-H Club members toward the training they received in the 4-H Club program, (2) to determine the educational and occupational goals of 4-H Club members and (3) to determine changes 4-H Club members and county agents deemed necessary in the program.

Schedules were collected from 394 4-H Club boys and girls who were attending junior leadership laboratories in Districts 3, 4 and 7, but 35 schedules were discarded because of inconsistencies. Exploratory type interviews were conducted with 36 county agents since a second phase of the present study will deal with the agents' attitudes toward the 4-H Club program.

Club members interviewed held a favorable attitude toward the 4-H program. Most suggestions made by members for strengthening the program fell within the scope of 10 objectives formulated by the State 4-H Club staff in 1952. Suggestions for improvement of the program revealed both a willingness to accept changes in the program and a positive desire for greater support of such changes by agents and adult leaders. Comments by agents revealed some hesitancy in accepting broader objectives for the 4-H Club program and also the recognition of need for in-service training programs to prepare them for leadership if broader objectives were to be incorporated in the program.

Suggestions made by 221 of the 359 members interviewed called for more effective planning of programs, more help from adult leaders and the development of a greater variety of activities and projects.

4-H Club members are interested seriously in career exploration. The lag which exists in such programs seems to be a part of a greater cultural lag. Greatly expanded facilities also are needed for informing farm people about job opportunities and personal adjustments required for new types of employment and living environments.

Home economics training seems to hold as much importance for urban female 4-H Club members as it does for rural farm female members. However, agricultural production demonstrations do not interest urban boys and rural nonfarm boys to the same extent as rural farm boys. If urban and rural nonfarm boys are going to be attracted to the program, it appears that agri-business and community approaches would have to be accentuated. Another alternative would be to develop more general projects, such as photography, woodworking, bicycle mechanics, leadership, health, personal development and recreation.

Community clubs are gradually replacing school clubs. Of the 359 club members, 185 indicated that theirs is a community club. Members were asked: "If you had your choice, to which type of 4-H Club would you choose to belong?" About 71 percent (254) preferred the community over the school or other type clubs. Despite their appreciation for the local community, both boys and girls indicated they would leave home in search of a career. Only 16.2 percent said they would not leave home to follow their first choice of jobs. These findings suggest continued migration of younger people to satisfy their desires for vocational and economic satisfactions.

This study did not confirm the criticism that 4-H Club training turns youth away from agriculture. The most frequently named course that the members planned to take in college was agriculture, with 82 members giving it first preference. Home economics, the choice of the girls, was second, with 63 members indicating it as their first choice.

Of those 235 4-H Club members who lived on a farm, 117 said they would prefer ownership and operation of a farm to an average job in town. The average job in town was the selection of 118 members. Although all 117 members who preferred ownership and operation of a farm will not be needed as replacements for existing farmers, they do represent the type of individuals who would make desirable replacements for retiring farmers.

The fact that only 52.8 percent of those members who worked on their fathers' farm received pay for their work points up the need for more business-like arrangements between farm fathers and their sons.

Only 30.6 percent of the rural farm fathers were serving or had served as adult leaders in the 4-H Club programs. While the results obtained in this study show that some local clubs need to broaden the scope of their programs to develop and maintain the interests of members who have no desire to farm, they also show that programs are needed which would interest farm fathers in the problems of sons who are interested in getting established in farming.

# An Analysis of 4-H Club Training and the Educational and Occupational Goals of 4-H Club Members

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**T**HE PRESENT 4-H CLUB PROGRAM is an outgrowth of the early corn clubs for boys and tomato clubs for girls. These clubs were already functioning when the state agricultural extension services were established by the Smith-Lever Act of 1914. In this act, Congress designated 4-H Club work as the youth phase of agricultural extension and assigned to the 4-H Club leadership the responsibility of providing instruction in agriculture, home economics and related subjects for boys and girls 10 to 20 years of age.

In the beginning, 4-H Clubs were organized in the schools with school teachers serving as adult leaders and county extension agents serving as instructors in agriculture and home economics. Beginning about 1940, 4-H Clubs began organizing on a community basis outside the school with adult leaders serving the club. Today approximately 30 percent of all 4-H Clubs in Texas are organized on a community basis. Community clubs offer more opportunities for adult leaders to function as a part of the program. Parents involved in the program as adult leaders do much to produce high morale on the part of the members.

Another factor causing the further development of community clubs is school consolidation. In previous years, there were many small rural schools with a very elastic schedule. The school administrators welcomed the county agents, and the teachers worked with the students on their club projects. Today, more and more, the schools are large with crowded schedules and many extra-curricular activities. As a consequence, the school has little or no time for 4-H Club meetings. Many of the present schools tend not to have as close a relationship to the small communities from which their students come as they do to the nearby larger-centered community where the school is located.

There also are other changes. In 1920, a large majority of club members expected to farm as a vocation or marry a farmer. Recent studies show that less than 20 percent of the farm boys expect to farm. In some areas, the figure is considerably below 20 percent.

In recognition of the changes occurring within agriculture, home economics and the totality of rural

life, the Texas State 4-H Club staff in 1952 formulated 10 specific objectives for the state program based on the new national guideposts that had been established. These objectives are:

1. To help young people acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes for a satisfying home and family life;
2. To help young people enjoy a useful work experience, together with the responsibility and satisfaction of personal accomplishment;
3. To help young people develop leadership talents and abilities to reach optimum citizenship potentials;
4. To help young people appreciate the values of research and learn scientific methods of making decisions and solving problems;
5. To help young people develop an appreciation of the importance of scientific agriculture and home economics and their relationships to our total economy;
6. To help young people explore careers related to agriculture and home economics and recognize the need for a continuing education;
7. To help young people appreciate nature, understand conservation and make wise use of natural resources;
8. To help young people develop traits of healthful living, purposeful recreation and intelligent use of leisure time;
9. To help young people strengthen personal standards and philosophy of life based on lasting and satisfying values; and

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- To help young people develop attitudes, abilities and understandings for working cooperatively with others.

### PURPOSES AND PROCEDURE

The purposes of the study reported in this publication are: 1. to determine the attitudes of the members toward training received in the 4-H Club program; 2. to determine the educational and occupational goals of 4-H Club members; and 3. to determine those changes 4-H members and county extension agents deem necessary because of the changing environment within which the 4-H Club program is operating.

Schedules were collected from 394 4-H Club boys and girls who were attending District 4-H Junior Leadership Laboratories in Districts 3, 4 and 7. Schedules received from 35 of the boys and girls were discarded because they were incomplete or inconsistent. The questions included on the schedule were primarily of a diverse nature. A more intensive type interview which allowed more "probing" was conducted with 36 county extension agents.

### BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

Farming areas from which the members came included the Blackland Prairies, West Cross Timbers, Rolling Plains, Central Basin and a part of the Edwards Plateau. The 63 counties represented by 4-H Club members ranged in size of population from Dallas (614,799) to King county (870).

The 1958 annual report of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service shows that more than 70 percent of the 111,000 4-H Club members in Texas had not reached their fifteenth birthday. Only 58.7 per-

cent of the club members in the study were under 15 years of age. Since the attendants at the leadership laboratories were selected on the basis of demonstrated ability and accomplishments in the 4-H Club program, one could assume that those attending were older and more mature than the average 4-H Club member.

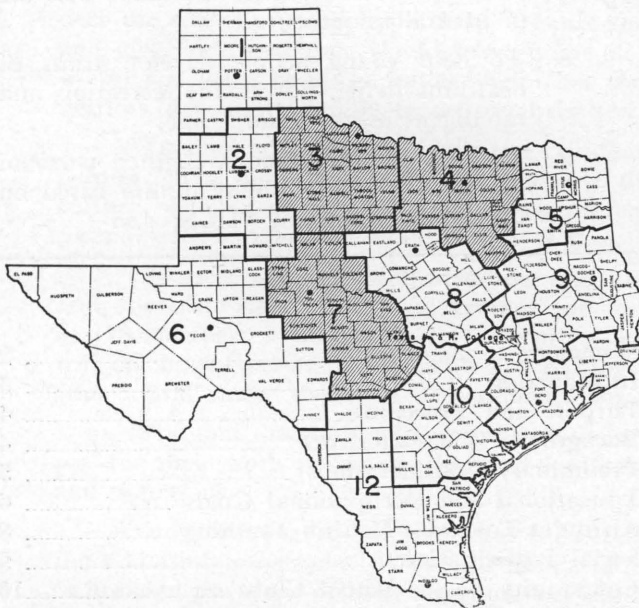
The 4-H Club members who were interviewed came primarily from farm families. Some 65.6 percent of the youngsters lived on farms. An additional 16.7 percent lived in a rural area, but were classified as nonfarm. Only 17.7 percent of those interviewed lived in an urban area.

Farming or ranching was the main source of family income for the majority of the families. Only 22.8 percent of the youth indicated that their families did not receive any income from farming, while 58.2 percent indicated that 50 percent or more of their families' income came from farming or ranching.

Only 9.8 percent of the club members indicated that their families had never made a living from agricultural sources. Seventy-eight club members said their fathers had farmed at one time, but were now part-time farmers or full-time urban workers. Reasons given why their fathers quit farming included: offered a better job in town (49 respondents); 2. could not make a living farming (14 respondents); 3. didn't have enough land (4 respondents); 4. high cost of machinery (2 respondents); and 5. other reasons (9 respondents).

Although farming or ranching constituted the major source of income for most of the members' families, off-farm work was engaged in by a great number of the fathers and mothers. Off-farm work was a source of income for 59.3 percent of the fathers and 32.0 percent of the mothers. Of the fathers working off the farm, 62.5 percent devoted more than 40 hours per week to such work. Only 30.5 percent of the mothers who worked off the farm indicated that they worked more than 40 hours per week.

The educational level of parents of these 4-H Club members was exceptionally high; for 79.2 percent had completed or gone beyond high school training. The 1950 Texas census shows that only 14.6 percent of the rural farm population of 25 years of age or more and 29.9 percent of the total population



Texas Agricultural Extension Service Districts 3, 4 and 7 are the shaded areas on the above map.

TABLE 1. EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF PARENTS

Educational level completed	Number of mothers	Number of fathers
Grade school	46	102
High school	200	165
Two years of college	56	41
College degree	55	48
No answer	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>359</b>

**TABLE 2. AGE OF PARENTS**

Age	Number of mothers	Number of fathers
Under 30 years old	5	1
30 to 39 years old	137	74
40 to 49 years old	169	186
50 to 59 years old	46	81
Over 60 years old	0	14
No answer	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>359</b>

of 25 years of age or more had completed or gone beyond high school.

The level attained by mothers was considerably higher than of the fathers. Only 46 mothers had not gone beyond grade school, as compared with 102 fathers. Mothers who had completed college outnumbered those who had just completed grade school, 55 to 46. Fathers did not show up so well with only 48 having completed college.

Parents 40 years of age or older constituted 69.6 percent of all parents. Only one father was under 30 years of age while 14 were over 60 years of age. Mothers were somewhat younger than fathers with five being under 30 years of age and none being over 60 years of age.

A recent study published by the Federal Extension Service, "Getting More Effective Results from Local Leaders," presents the following characteristics as being significantly related to 4-H Club leadership: 1. The parents have passed the youth classification and are mature individuals; 2. they are moderately successful financially; 3. they have above average educational attainments; and 4. they have a farm background. On the basis of these qualifications, the parents of the boys and girls interviewed are or represent a potential of local leadership for the program.

**PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS**

Significant developments are occurring rapidly within the agricultural industry. The shift of many persons from work in farm production to work connected with the farm supply and marketing processes has brought about the greatest degree of business integration ever experienced in American agriculture.

Farmers as well as consumers in general are finding it more and more to their advantage to buy services which they once performed themselves. For example, the farmer of today purchases most of his power in the form of machines and fuel instead of raising workstock and feed as was done in earlier years. The modern broiler grower could not stay in business without the services of a modern farm supply, processing and distribution system which, in many cases, also finances his operation. In 1940, farmers as basic producers of agricultural products, accounted

**TABLE 3. DISTANCE CLUB MEMBERS TRAVEL FROM THEIR HOME TO SCHOOL**

Distance in miles	Number
Less than 5	184
5 to 10	101
11 to 20	55
21 to 30	16
More than 30	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>359</b>

for 34 percent of the personnel involved in the agricultural industry in Texas. In 1958, farmers accounted for only 11 percent of the personnel. As a result of this drastic shift of workers from basic production to the supply, processing and distributing phases of agriculture, the farm population of Texas now accounts for little more than 10 percent of the total population.

These drastic changes in agriculture have been accompanied by changes in vocational goals of rural youth. Enrollment statistics for the United States show that in 1948 there were more than 45,000 students enrolled in agricultural schools, while in 1957 there were only 33,500 students. In 1948, 2,382 students were enrolled in agriculture at the A&M College of Texas. By the fall of 1958, there were only 860 students enrolled in agriculture at A&M.

The motivation for the acceptance of all educational programs has undergone considerable change. At one time, the fact that a program had been in operation long enough to be considered a traditional way of doing things was sufficient justification for its continuance. When traditions did not suffice to guarantee the continuation of a program, the personality of outstanding individuals who were associated with the program served as a motivational force for the acceptance of the program.

Today people tend to be more rational and less emotional about the value of educational programs. Programs are judged more by tangible contributions. Our society has become more complex, with a variety of special interests and diversity of endeavors. This tends to make it difficult to develop individuality and personal concern. In other words, people have become more concerned in many instances with services being rendered than they are with the persons who render the services.

**TABLE 4. TIME REQUIRED TO TRAVEL FROM THEIR HOME TO SCHOOL AND RETURN**

Travel time required, hours	Number
Less than one-half	163
One-half to 1	109
1 to 2	69
More than 2	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>359</b>

One of the better known agricultural magazines recently carried an article entitled "What Shall We Teach?" This question confronts the 4-H Club program, vocational agriculture, agricultural colleges and to a very great extent any educational program.

E. W. Foss of Cornell University states: "I am one of those individuals who believes that Agricultural Education is (or should be) much broader than Vocational Agriculture — at least Vocational Farming . . . We certainly cannot reach many boys and girls if we continue to teach production agriculture — particularly the techniques that are out-of-date almost by the time the bulletin gets into print — general agriculture courses as well as vocational."

Much of the current writing points up the need for a *redefinition of agriculture*. The need for this redefinition has become more intense with time because of certain deeply entrenched ideas. Such ideas are not only held by the general public, but in many cases are held by professional agricultural workers and other educators. For example, a recent pamphlet distributed by a land-grant college in an attempt to increase enrollment in agriculture carried the following question "How can I decide whether I would like Agriculture?" The answer to this question begins with the clause "If you love the out-of-doors."

A leading vocational interest test has scores for 10 broad areas of vocational interest. One area is labeled "Outdoor." Counselors and students view the "outdoor" area as being synonymous with agriculture. Students who score high in the "scientific" area are directed toward chemistry, physics or medicine, but not toward any phase of agriculture.

C. P. Wilson, director of the School of Agriculture of Kansas State College, expressed essentially this same idea when he stated: "We also need to promote among high school counselors the idea that science applied to agriculture is fully as important and respectable as science applied to military preparedness and the physical sciences."

As more and more evaluations are made of various educational programs in agriculture, the list of possible changes has grown extremely long and cumbersome. For example, a review of articles in farm magazines and other periodicals revealed these suggestions: 1. establishing an urban 4-H Club program as an urban counterpart of the present program; 2. redefining the 4-H Club program, making it primarily a leadership training program; 3. making vocational counseling and guidance the primary program of 4-H; 4. making the 4-H Club program a vocational training program with more emphasis on skill training; and 5. changing projects from production to more general areas.

To follow any one of the suggestions would involve a fairly complete revision of the 4-H Club program. Revisions of this scope in any program should occur only after careful, painstaking analysis of the

present program and the development of new objectives made necessary by cultural change. It is hoped that the present study will serve as a springboard for further intensive analyses which may be used as guides for further changes in the 4-H Club program.

## EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL GOALS

Answers to questions concerning educational and occupational goals of the members indicated a relatively high degree of maturity among the students. These 4-H Club members, though, were not average members, but were attendants at district 4-H Club leadership laboratories. It seems valid to assume that these selected youngsters would be somewhat more mature individuals than just average members.

More than half of the members (57.4 percent) indicated they had definite plans as to what they were going to do upon graduation from high school. As one might anticipate, a higher proportion of the older children (15 years or more) had definite plans than did those who were younger (12 to 15 years of age). In the older group, 63.5 percent had formulated definite plans, while in the younger group only 53.1 percent had such plans. Of the remaining members, practically all indicated they were undecided as to which plan they would follow. Only 6.4 percent of all the members indicated that they did not know what they would do after high school.

National 4-H Club leaders have, as one objective, the instilling of a desire for further learning. Although there is little doubt that other factors than 4-H Club training played a significant role in determining their attitudes toward further training, it is evident that the members had a most favorable attitude toward higher learning. Only 4.5 percent of the members stated that they would not attend college even if they had the opportunity to go. In addition to college training, some 108 members said they planned to take some type of specialized training. Half of this latter group indicated they would like some phase of secretarial training.

One criticism that has been made of 4-H Club training and vocational agriculture is that the training, instead of holding youth on the farm, directs them away from the farm. Program leaders respond that they develop leadership qualities and allow the individual student to select his own alternatives. Results obtained in this study do not confirm the criticism that 4-H Club training turns youth away from agriculture. For example, the most frequently named course that the students planned to take in college was agriculture. Some 82 members indicated that they preferred to major in agriculture. Home economics was second, with 63 indicating it as their choice of majors. Business administration came next with 44, while engineering was fourth with 41 students.

These results are strikingly different from those obtained in a study of high school seniors in Cherokee county. Every high school senior in Cherokee

TABLE 5. RANKING OF THE COLLEGE COURSES AS PREFERRED BY THE 4-H CLUB MEMBERS ACCORDING TO PLACE OF RESIDENCE

Rural farm		Rural nonfarm		Urban	
Course	Per- cent list- ing	Course	Per- cent list- ing	Course	Per- cent list- ing
1. Agri.	25.9	1. Agri.	20.0	1. Home eco.	25.3
2. Home eco.	17.4	2. Bus. adm.	16.6	2. Agri.	12.6
3. Engr.	11.9	3. Engr.	10.0	2. Bus. adm.	12.6
4. Bus. adm.	11.0	3. Home eco.	10.0	3. Engr.	11.1
5. Nursing	8.5	3. Nursing	10.0	4. Lib. arts	6.3
6. Lib. arts	5.1	4. Lib. arts	6.6	4. Medicine	6.3
6. Medicine	5.1	4. Medicine	6.6	5. Nursing	3.1
7. Law	1.7	5. Law	3.3	6. Law	1.5
8. Arch.	1.2	5. Arch.	3.3	6. Arch.	1.5
9. Misc.	12.2	6. Misc.	13.6	7. Misc.	32.3
Total	100.0		100.0		100.0

county was interviewed to determine their attitudes toward occupational opportunities and social services in the county. Engineering was the first choice of the majority of the boys in Cherokee county, while business administration was the first choice of a majority of the girls. Only 6 boys out of 127 gave agriculture as their choice of majors, and only 4 girls out of a total of 107 gave home economics as their first choice. The fact that 86 4-H Club boys of a total of 173 gave agriculture as their choice of majors in college and that 63 of some 186 girls selected home economics does not seem to support the theory that 4-H Club training leads youth away from agriculture. If a valid comparison could be made between this and the Cherokee county study, one would conclude that 4-H Club training develops and maintains an interest in agriculture in the minds of its members. For further information concerning the Cherokee county study see TAES Bulletin 859.

Since a basic distinction has developed between the terms farming and agriculture, it was necessary to pose further questions to determine the students' attitudes toward farming or ranching. Each student was asked to respond to a five-point scale constructed to determine how strongly favorable or unfavorable he felt toward farming as a vocation. The results are presented in Table 6. As may be noted, the largest group (32.1 percent) were undecided about farming as a vocation. However, 22.6 percent felt favorable toward farming as a vocation, while only 8.9 percent felt unfavorable toward farming as a vocation.

The students also were asked the following question: "If you were ready to begin your life's work and had a choice of the following two situations, which would you choose: (1) an average job in a town or city or (2) to own and operate your own farm?" Girls were asked which of these two jobs they would prefer their future husbands select if he had to make a choice between the two alternatives mentioned. Of the 4-H Club members who lived on a

TABLE 6. ATTITUDES OF 4-H CLUB MEMBERS TOWARD FARMING OR RANCHING AS A VOCATION

Attitude	Number	Percent
Very favorable toward farming as a vocation	81	22.6
Favorable toward farming as a vocation	87	24.2
Undecided about farming as a vocation	115	32.1
Unfavorable toward farming as a vocation	44	12.2
Very unfavorable toward farming as a vocation	32	8.9
Total	359	100.0

farm, 117 selected ownership and operation of their own farm, while 118 selected the average job in town. The rural nonfarm and urban youngsters reacted much more unfavorably toward ownership and operation of their own farm than did the farm youngsters. The average job in town was selected by 70.0 percent of the rural nonfarm club members and by 66.7 percent of the urban club members. Thus, it appears that although agriculture led in the selection of major subjects by rural farm, rural nonfarm and urban club members, the rural nonfarm and urban members were not favorably disposed toward farming as a vocation. It is, undoubtedly, within these two groups that the distinction between farming as basic production and agriculture as an industry is of the greatest importance.

The 4-H Club members showed no clearcut group sentiment or feeling toward their home counties. When asked if they would leave their home county to follow their first choice of jobs, 83.8 percent answered "yes." The remaining 16.2 percent said they would not leave their home county to obtain their first choice of jobs. Despite the willingness of an overwhelming majority to leave the county if necessary, 52.0 percent felt they would not have to leave the county to find their first choice of jobs. The remaining 48.0 percent felt they would have to leave the county to find the employment they desired. In answer to the question: "Do most of the young people in your class plan to remain in their home county?" 66.9 percent answered that they did not know. The remaining group was equally divided, with 16.2 indicating that most of the young people planned to remain in the county and 16.9 indicating that most young people planned to leave.

TABLE 7. SALARY LEVEL THAT WOULD SATISFY 4-H CLUB MEMBERS ON THEIR FIRST JOB

Salary level per month	Number
Less than \$150	49
\$150 to \$250	130
\$251 to \$350	103
\$351 to \$450	43
More than \$450	34
Total	359

Approximately half of the members (49.8 percent) indicated they would be satisfied with a job that paid \$250 or less per month. Only 9.5 percent indicated that they would expect to make more than \$450 per month in their first job.

One significant difference between the 4-H Club members and farm boys and girls studied in other sections of Texas involved their participation in the operation of the farm or ranch. Almost three-fourths of the members indicated they helped their parents in the operation of their home farm. Only 28.1 percent of the 359 4-H Club members indicated that they never participated in the work of the farm or ranch. But 23.9 percent indicated they worked more than 20 hours per week. Of the 359 youngsters interviewed, 248 indicated they performed some work on the farm.

When students who work on their fathers' farms receive low pay or no pay, they generally regard off-farm work as better than farm work. Of the 248 students who had worked on their fathers' farms, only 52.8 percent indicated that they received pay for their work.

Only 128 of the 359 students had earned money working off the farm during the year prior to this interview. Of this group, 89 had earned less than \$100. Only 11 had earned more than \$400. The favorable attitude of the 4-H Club members toward agriculture undoubtedly was influenced by their lack of experience in off-farm jobs and by the small earnings of those who did have such experience. As a comparison, every farm boy in the Cherokee county study held a part-time job during his senior year with average earnings of \$474.40.

Vocational counseling is a subject that has been receiving more and more attention by 4-H state and national leadership. The suggestion has been made that in view of declining interest in production phases of agriculture, vocational counseling might be an effective means of restimulation of interest in 4-H Club training.

Results from this study reveal that at the present time neither 4-H Club agents nor school teachers are giving students direct help in vocational guidance. Only 34 of the 359 members said they had received any vocational guidance from teachers or county agents. Eighty-six said they had not received any help in vocational counseling from anyone. Of the 273 who had received help, 220 said this help came from parents or relatives.

A very high percentage of those interviewed (87.5 percent) indicated they would like to receive help in vocational guidance. Forty-five students (12.5 percent) indicated they would have no interest in such training.

Some attempts were made to determine why, with all the manifest interest, only 9.4 percent of the members had received help in vocational guidance from

either teachers or 4-H Club agents. While no definite conclusions can be drawn from the interviews with teachers and 4-H Club agents, one interesting hypothesis was formulated and will be used as the basis for further study.

This hypothesis is that vocational counseling or guidance has not received the active support of teachers or 4-H Club agents because of their fear that the community might react negatively to such programs. One teacher stated: "People are already saying that none of the kids who graduate stay around here. If we had some kind of formal program dealing with all sorts of jobs that you can't find around here, there would be some head knocking." A 4-H Club leader said: "We are already being criticized for the choices which our members make. If we got into something like this program of vocational counseling, it might kill off 4-H Club work in some areas."

These comments and similar ones seem to reveal the presence of a cultural lag. Despite the many changes in farming and the apparent necessity for many farm youth to shift away from farming or other local jobs, it appears that some teachers and 4-H Club leaders believe that community people still have strong emotional feelings about youngsters leaving the farm or the local community. This hypothesis will be explored fully in another study. It must be recognized that greater industrial development can expand opportunities which in many cases may make it possible to shift away from farming without making it necessary for young people to move away.

#### ATTITUDES TOWARD 4-H CLUB TRAINING

4-H Club members "learn to do by doing." Each member is expected to conduct a result demonstration or project concerning improved practices in agriculture, home economics and related fields. In addition, to crops and livestock, these projects include such things as food preservation, home improvement, safety and tractor maintenance.

Clothing, the most popular project, had been selected as a project by 154 students, or 82.8 percent of all the girls. Food preparation demonstrations were carried out by 110 students. Swine and beef cattle projects were next in popularity.

Showmanship was the primary activity in which 4-H members engaged. Some 238 students had taken part in fairs, livestock shows or dress revues. Ranking next in importance was leadership activities, with 172 participating. Recreation was third with 158 participants.

Some 267 of the 359 members interviewed had been in club work 4 years or more. Since the average length of membership for 4-H Club members in the United States is only 2½ years, one might assume that tenure alone would indicate a favorable attitude toward 4-H Club training by these students in Texas. This assumption is supported by other factual infor-



mation. The attitude of 276 members toward 4-H training was very favorable. Those indicating a favorable attitude numbered 72. Seven members were undecided and only one indicated that he felt very unfavorable toward the training. On the negative side, however, 128 members indicated they did not have the opportunity to participate in every 4-H Club activity they wanted to. Some 103 students did not have opportunities to conduct all the 4-H demonstrations desired. Various reasons were given for lack of participation in given activities. Members often have other things to do or lack transportation.

Types of 4-H activities which the students indicated they would like to see included in the program were: recreation (46 respondents), leadership activities (43 respondents) and public speaking (36 respondents).

Result demonstrations desired by club members were: safety (64 respondents), beef production (61 respondents), electricity (44 respondents), dairy production (38 respondents) and food preparation (36 respondents).

All activities and result demonstrations which these students suggested for inclusion in the program already were included in the program of some clubs in their district.

The organizational structure within which the 4-H program operates is highly informal; consequently the 4-H Club program in one county may have little or no relationship to the program being conducted in an adjoining county. The lack of a definite structure creates a problem for the new agent.

Sometimes an agent's search for expectancies that his superiors have concerning his functions reveals a need for apprentice training and guidance. The following portion of one of the interviews with an agent provides some insight into the attitudes of agents: "I feel that a great many agents working with 4-H Club programs have the feeling that district agents are not fully aware of all the implications involved in developing a successful program. The loose knit structure of the program, from the state to local level, leaves the agent somewhat confused. This is particularly true for new agents, but practically all assistant agents are new agents. There are some exceptions and, of course, in some counties the agents themselves work with the club program.

"When I entered 4-H Club work I had certain conceptions as to what the work should be. I changed my conceptions several times in 3 years. I believe the program need not be clearcut, but it would help us if it were better defined and had plenty of usable material for us and our leaders. Other incentives than awards also are needed in 4-H work, but it is difficult for agents to develop additional incentives."

The need for more and more training of both agents and leaders is evident from the study. Local people also need a broader concept of 4-H work.

## SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

It is through social participation that the socialization of an individual occurs. In a social group, a person learns to analyze personal problems in a social context and to develop ways of solving them in collaboration with others. Interaction with others may broaden understanding and afford a laboratory for the development of personal and social maturity.

The individual whose social participation is confined to one social group is generally more limited in his opportunities for growth and development than the individual who participates in a variety of groups.

The 359 4-H Club members did not suffer from a lack of participation in social activities. Approximately three out of four of the youngsters indicated they spent 1 to 4 hours per week in church activities. The remaining one-fourth indicated that they were engaged in such activities more than 4 hours per week.

Going to school meant much more to these students than just attending class. Only 87 of the 359 indicated they never attended social activities at their school at night. Some 112 indicated they attended such activities at school at least once a week, 83 at least twice a week and 77 three times or more per week. Only five students failed to respond to this question.

Most of the social activity of the members was related to the church, school or 4-H Club. For example, 78.2 percent did not belong nor participate in any organizations other than these three. Other organizations of numerical consequence were the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Campfire Girls. Only 44 boys were Boy Scouts while 20 girls were Girl Scouts and 11 girls were Campfire Girls. These data emphasize the potential value of 4-H work in the community.

Leisure time activities not necessarily related to a particular group were engaged in by most of the students. Listening to radio, records or TV ranked first among such activities, with 81.3 percent indicating they spent some time each week in such activities. Next in popularity was attendance at sports events (64.0 percent). Going to movies ranked third, with 57.6 percent indicating this activity.

TABLE 8. YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS IN WHICH 4-H CLUB MEMBERS PARTICIPATE

Organization	Number
Boy Scouts	44
Girl Scouts	20
Camp Fire Girls	11
Y.M.C.A.	1
Y.W.C.A.	1
Other	1
Did not belong to any	281
<b>Total</b>	<b>359</b>

**TABLE 9. LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES IN WHICH 4-H CLUB MEMBERS PARTICIPATE**

Activity	Number <sup>1</sup>
Listening to radio, records and watching T.V.	292
Attending sports events	232
Attending movies	207
Reading and music	199
Hobbies	168
Fishing and hunting	161
Riding in autos just for fun	153
Others	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,424</b>

<sup>1</sup>Many members listed two or more activities.

The social activity of the youngsters apparently also was characteristic of their parents. Some 251 of the 359 members indicated their family entertained friends, neighbors or relatives in their home five times or more per month. Families also apparently visited in other homes fairly regularly because 261 students indicated their family visited five times or more per month in the homes of friends and relatives.

Family group activity also was characteristic of the families of these students, since 183 indicated the family attended as a group some type of special activity such as movies or athletic events five times or more per month.

More than half of the members indicated that their fathers belonged to some other social or civic organization. The organization given most frequently (21 percent) was a fraternal organization or lodge.

Slightly less than half of the fathers belonged to a farm organization. The Farm Bureau was named most frequently with 139 indicating their fathers were members, as compared with the Farmers' Union with 23 and the Grange with 2.

More mothers of the members served as 4-H adult leaders than did fathers. Only 91 fathers were serving or had served as adult leaders, as compared with 143 mothers. Breakdowns by place of residence indicated that a much higher proportion of the adult leaders came from rural farm parents than from rural

**TABLE 10. SOCIAL PARTICIPATION BY FAMILIES OF CLUB MEMBERS**

Number of organizations to which families belong	Number
One	102
Two	106
Three	62
Four	23
Five	7
Six	1
Seven	1
Did not belong to any	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>359</b>

nonfarm or urban parents. Of all rural farm fathers, 30.6 percent had served as adult leaders, while among the rural nonfarm fathers only 13.3 percent had served in this capacity. Of the urban fathers, only 17.4 percent had served as adult leaders. Approximately half of the rural farm mothers, one-third of the rural nonfarm mothers and one-third of the urban mothers had served as adult leaders. While further study is needed, these facts indicate that the recruiting of adult leaders from rural nonfarm and urban areas poses a greater problem than the recruitment of 4-H members from these areas.

### COMMUNITY VERSUS SCHOOL CLUBS

The consolidation of many schools in Texas and the development of greater curricular and extra-curricular offerings within the high school program have caused a deterioration of the environment under which 4-H Clubs had previously operated. More and more clubs are finding that the crowded school schedule does not allow for a satisfactory time and in many cases a satisfactory place for the club meeting. As a consequence, many clubs no longer meet in the school.

Of the 359 club members interviewed, 174 indicated their club met at the school. The remaining group (185) belonged to a community club that met at a time other than during school hours. The club members were asked: "If you had your choice, to which type of 4-H Club would you choose to belong?" Some 254 members, or about 71 percent, preferred the community club over the school or other type clubs.

The most common meeting time for 4-H Clubs was in the evening. Some 122 clubs held their meetings between 6 p.m. and 10 p.m.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

Both members and agents were asked for their suggestions as to how the local 4-H Club program might be improved. Of the 359 members interviewed, 221 offered suggestions for improvement. All 36 of the agents interviewed offered such suggestions. They gave evidence of the need for more agent and leader training, which is now receiving greater attention in the state program.

Practically all of the students suggested changes in the meetings. Typical comments included: "We should have meetings regularly and more often. By the time we get back together we've lost interest."

"Our meetings are all speeches. We should have more demonstrations, outdoor activities and field trips."

"We need something that would interest the members more. They had rather do something else than attend our meetings because they are not interesting. I don't think anybody plans these meetings well enough ahead of time."

"In our club it seems that some kids receive special awards, but there are a lot of others who work just as hard and receive no credit."

"Have a club for the older boys and girls and one for the younger boys and girls. Not many of the older boys and girls stay in because there are so many little kids."

"We need more and better adult leaders, more planning for the meetings and demonstrations which would be of interest to the members."

"We need a more active club. I'd like to see them put some fun in the 4-H program."

"Each member should be allowed to take part in some program. In our club we have two members that just take over and often hurt other people's feelings who want to say something. More participation should also be true in the council meeting."

"The main factor that holds my club's membership and interest down is the lack of interest on the part of parents. The club also should stress public affairs so the 4-H'ers would have experience in meeting and dealing with the public."

"We have a community 4-H Club with 54 members. However, only about 10 of them actually participate in the activities offered by the club. A lot of things are done to get them to join, but we don't do anything to hold them after they join."

"If we had more activities on a countywide basis which our club could participate in, it would increase interest in our club."

"Our club should stress other activities and projects that are not so commonplace. We always have dairy production, swine production and home improvement, the same old things."

One agent stated: "We have a career week out at the high school every year, but I don't participate in it. Farming and ranching have too many sides to it already. You'd have to divide your club between those interested in agriculture and those not interested. The problem already in 4-H is trying to have a program for ages 9-19. You'd have to have a homogenous group for any kind of vocational program. In fact, we should have it for the present program."

Another agent stated: "If a boy or his parents haven't a farm or ranch background, you have a difficult time interesting him in the 4-H Club program. The program's not going to change much because we aren't trained for something else. I'd predict the program will become smaller with less people on the farms and ranches."

Another added: "We have too many clubs to work with. All ages are lumped together since we have so many clubs. We need to cut down so clubs can be more specialized from the standpoint of the interests of the members."

"Most assistant agents stay in one place only 2 or 3 years at the most. The agent knows of the 4-H program but not about it. The new assistant agent generally starts a new program. About the time he gets acquainted and gets things set for a good program, he gets an opportunity to move."

"Most county agents who have no assistant view 4-H Club work as an added appendage to an already overcrowded schedule of work." (To work with more leaders will help this agent.)

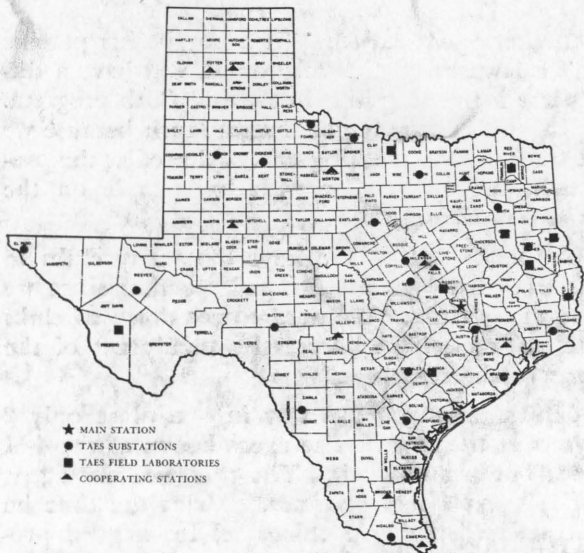
"All too often an assistant agent may feel that his promotions depend more upon his work with adults and the assistance he gives the agent than it does upon his 4-H Club program."

"In 1950, ..... county had a population ratio of 92.6 percent urban, 6.2 percent rural nonfarm and 1.2 percent rural farm. We find in the city that the competition for a boy's time is very keen. In our personal opinion it is a mistake to encourage city youths without parents of rural background to become 4-H members."

"You hear a lot about competition with F.F.A., but that's not the problem. It's the competition of all the other interests. The youngster just doesn't have enough time. After he gets to 15 his time is so severely limited, you just might as well mark him off the record."

It is clear that such opinions, undoubtedly generally held, reveal a need for staff training, leadership development and new concepts of extension and 4-H on the part of local people. 4-H should, and is, becoming more of a joint community-extension responsibility in Texas.

AHM 7964



Location of field research units of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station and cooperating agencies

# State-wide Research



The Texas Agricultural Experiment Station is the public agricultural research agency of the State of Texas, and is one of ten parts of the Texas A&M College System

## ORGANIZATION

IN THE MAIN STATION, with headquarters at College Station, are 16 subject-matter departments, 2 service departments, 3 regulatory services and the administrative staff. Located out in the major agricultural areas of Texas are 21 substations and 9 field laboratories. In addition, there are 14 cooperating stations owned by other agencies. Cooperating agencies include the Texas Forest Service, Game and Fish Commission of Texas, Texas Prison System, U. S. Department of Agriculture, University of Texas, Texas Technological College, Texas College of Arts and Industries and the King Ranch. Some experiments are conducted on farms and ranches and in rural homes.

## OPERATION

THE TEXAS STATION is conducting about 400 active research projects, grouped in 25 programs, which include all phases of agriculture in Texas. Among these are:

- |                                      |                                 |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Conservation and improvement of soil | Beef cattle                     |
| Conservation and use of water        | Dairy cattle                    |
| Grasses and legumes                  | Sheep and goats                 |
| Grain crops                          | Swine                           |
| Cotton and other fiber crops         | Chickens and turkeys            |
| Vegetable crops                      | Animal diseases and parasites   |
| Citrus and other subtropical fruits  | Fish and game                   |
| Fruits and nuts                      | Farm and ranch engineering      |
| Oil seed crops                       | Farm and ranch business         |
| Ornamental plants                    | Marketing agricultural products |
| Brush and weeds                      | Rural home economics            |
| Insects                              | Rural agricultural economics    |
|                                      | Plant diseases                  |

Two additional programs are maintenance and upkeep, and central services.

*Research results are carried to Texas farmers, ranchmen and homemakers by county agents and specialists of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service*

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH seeks the WHATS, the WHYS, the WHENS, the WHEREs and the HOWS of hundreds of problems which confront operators of farms and ranches, and the many industries depending on or serving agriculture. Workers of the Main Station and the field units of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station seek diligently to find solutions to these problems.

# Today's Research Is Tomorrow's Progress