

1. Mental attitude - developing the proper mental attitude is probably the most important preliminary preparation by the student, but it is most difficult to program and insure success. This process takes considerable faculty time and effort and the key seems to be faculty enthusiasm, student confidence in his or her ability to succeed and adequate information on the new work or study environment.

2. Expertise in chosen discipline - assisting with the instruction of a basic course in the discipline seems to be an excellent review technique and will help to instill student confidence.

3. Knowledge of the new environment - library work is the key to this information. Also, visiting with recent travellers can be helpful if their information is evaluated against the time they spent in the country involved and their expertise in the discipline discussed.

## Summary

If the college and department are willing to engage in this type of program, it will return benefits many times greater than we have been able to achieve by other teaching techniques. However, in terms of faculty time and total cost this is an expensive program. All returning students have been extremely enthusiastic about the benefits of their educational experience.

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# What Student in Farm Management Classes Think About Farming As A Career

James O. Wise

## Abstract

*Surveys of students in farm management classes at the University of Georgia from 1974 to 1977 showed that a high percentage of the students planned to farm after graduation. If these students are typical of students graduating from other U.S. agricultural colleges, there will be adequate numbers of qualified farm operators and managers available for U.S. agriculture in years to come.*

A great deal of concern has been expressed about the future supply of farm operators or managers for U.S. agriculture, and in particular the quality of these persons (1, 2, 3, and 4). This concern arises because of the ever-increasing need for technical and managerial skills, the fact that farm operators are getting older, and that most graduates of colleges of agriculture do not return to the farm.

To assess the quantity of young college graduates who plan to return to the farm and to assess how strong their desire was to return to the farm, we have since 1974 surveyed the students in farm management classes at the University of Georgia. This paper reports the results of the surveys for 1974-1977. Students in these classes were primarily junior and seniors and a few graduate students. Most of them were majoring in Agricultural Economics, but a number were majoring in Animal Science, Agronomy, Agricultural Education, and a few in Horticulture. A small number were females. Most were in their early twenties. Over the 4-year period there was a total of 66 respondents.

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## Results

A majority of the students responding indicated that they planned to go back to the farm (Table 1). The results show that on the average only about one-fourth of the students planned to depend on farming as their only source of income. These results parallel, of course, the increase in part-time farming in general. The largest group of respondents indicated that they planned to work in a farm related business as a source of income other than the farm. Examples cited included farm supply stores, farm equipment dealers, and poultry processors. The next largest group indicated that they wanted to combine farming and teaching agriculture in high school. A few in this category were interested in agricultural extension work. A number of the respondents indicated that they were interested in working at a non-farm job so that they could accumulate the capital necessary for a farm.

Farm operators on the average earn less than persons employed in non-farm jobs, consequently persons choosing to farm usually give up some income. The questions reported in Table 2 show how much income the respondents were willing to give up and still farm. Overall results show that 92.5 percent of the students indicated they would go back to the farm even though they could make more money at a non-farm job. The amount of income the students were willing to give up demonstrated their strong desire to farm for a living. Only one person indicated he would be attracted to non-farm work by an income of \$2,000 above the farm. All others indicated it would take at least \$3,000 more income than the farm to attract them out of farming. The majority of the respondents indicated it would take more than \$5,000, over what they could make farming, to attract them away. Five respondents (12.5 percent) indicated that they would remain on the farm even though they could earn \$20,000 more from a non-farm job.

**Table 1. Responses From Farm Management Students to Questions Pertaining to Whether They Are Going To Farm and Sources of Income Other Than Farming, University of Georgia, 1974-1977**

	1974		1975		1976		1977		Total				
	Yes	No	Yes	No (no.)	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes (no.)	(%)	No (no.)	(%)	No Response
Are you going back to the farm?	7	0	17	1	10	1	17	10	51	81.0	12	19.0	3
Are you planning on farming as your only source of income?	2	5	3	16	3	8	8	20	16	24.6	49	75.4	1
If you plan on another source of income other than farming, list the main sources.													
Farm related business	1	-	7	-	3	-	6	-	17	34.0	-	-	-
Teaching Vo-Ag and extension work	3	-	3	-	3	-	4	-	13	26.0	-	-	-
Finance	0	-	2	-	1	-	1	-	4	8.0	-	-	-
Forest or nursery related	1	-	1	-	0	-	2	-	4	8.0	-	-	-
Real estate	0	-	0	-	1	-	2	-	3	6.0	-	-	-
Non-farm business	0	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	3	6.0	-	-	-
Food Science	0	-	0	-	0	-	2	-	2	4.0	-	-	-
Trade and other	1	-	2	-	0	-	1	-	4	8.0	-	-	-
Totals	6		16		9		19		50				

**Table 2. Responses From Farm Management Students to Questions Pertaining to the Amounts of Income They Are Willing to Give Up and Still Farm, University of Georgia, 1974-1977<sup>1</sup>**

	1974		1975		1976		1977		Total				
	Yes	No	Yes	No (no.)	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes (no.)	(%)	No (no.)	(%)	No Response
Would you still farm if you could earn more in a non-farm job?	6	0	11	2	5	1	15	0	37	92.5	3	7.5	11
Would you still farm if you could earn the following amts. more than the farm:													
\$1,000	7	0	14	0	7	0	14	0	42	100.0	0	0.0	9
\$2,000	7	0	14	0	7	0	13	1	41	97.6	1	2.4	9
\$3,000	6	1	13	1	6	1	13	1	38	90.5	4	9.5	9
\$4,000	5	2	12	2	6	1	11	3	34	81.0	8	11.0	9
\$5,000	5	2	8	6	5	1	7	7	25	61.0	16	39.0	10
\$7,000	4	3	7	7	3	3	6	8	20	48.8	21	51.2	10
\$10,000	2	5	6	8	2	4	3	10	13	32.5	27	67.5	11
\$15,000	2	5	2	12	1	5	3	10	8	20.0	32	80.0	11
\$20,000	1	6	1	13	1	5	2	11	5	12.5	35	87.5	11

1. Based on those who said they were going back to the farm.

**Table 3. Responses From Farm Management Students to Questions Pertaining to Future Plans and Reasons for Preferring Farming Over a Non-farm Job, University of Georgia, 1974-1977.**

	1974		1975		1976		1977		Total				
	Yes	No	Yes	No (no.)	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes (no.)	(%)	No (no.)	(%)	No Response
Would you like to go back to the farm even though you do not now have plans to go back?	5	0	11	0	3	0	15	3	34	91.9	3	8.1	29
If you prefer farming what is the most important reason you do?													
Independence "own boss"	1	-	10	-	4	-	5	-	20	34.5	-	-	-
Enjoyment and interest	3	-	1	-	3	-	10	-	17	29.3	-	-	-
Being outdoors	1	-	1	-	0	-	3	-	5	8.6	-	-	-
Personal satisfaction	0	-	2	-	2	-	1	-	5	8.6	-	-	-
Challenge and/or opportunity	2	-	1	-	0	-	2	-	5	8.6	-	-	-
Dislike city environment	1	-	2	-	1	-	0	-	4	6.9	-	-	-
Financial benefits	0	-	1	-	1	-	0	-	2	3.4	-	-	-

Table 3 shows that about 92 percent of the students responding indicated that they would like to go back to the farm even though they did not currently plan to. This table also shows that being independent or "own boss" ranked first as the reason for preferring farming. Enjoyment or interest in farming ranked second; and "being outdoors," personal satisfaction, and "a challenge" ranked about even for third place.

### Concluding Statement

Data from surveys of students in farm management classes showed that a large number of students planned to go back to the farm. The majority of those going back to the farm indicated that they planned to combine farming with a farm related job. The desire to farm was very strong among the respondents since they indicated a willingness to give up a considerable amount of money to remain on the farm. A strong interest in farming was also indicated by the fact that most of the students said they wanted to go back to the farm even though they did not plan to do so at the time of the survey. Finally, being independent and the enjoyment of farming were the main reasons given for preferring farming over a non-farm job.

Public policies and programs for agriculture, general economic policy, and college of agriculture curriculums should take into account the preferences expressed in this study. Although these results are from a fairly small sample they suggest that with reasonable monetary rewards and proper training the quantity and quality of managerial resources in farming could be substantial. Other studies should be made to see if these results can be extrapolated to students in other colleges of agriculture. If these results were true for other student populations then we could be assured that the quantity and quality of managerial resources needed in farming would be forthcoming.

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# Urban Agriculture

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### Abstract

*The training of students in urban agriculture at Colleges of Agriculture may be a worthy venture, with the goal of improving the quality of life in the city. Urbanization throughout the world continues to increase at a rate twice that of the growth of the world population, creating enormous difficulties. The potential of producing food within the city may be sufficient to improve significantly the diet of the city dweller, thereby countering the problem of malnutrition and its associated social aspects. But in order to train students to bring the farm to the city research and practical experience are needed before courses can be offered and faculty made ready to teach.*

The influx of students from the city into our colleges of agriculture has caused much concern, as these colleges are in the midst of a student interest boom with no end in sight (1). Increasing student interest in agriculture may be prompted by ecological concerns as well as by recent emphasis on future world food needs of an expanding world population. There may be an increasingly important alternative to the conventional farm oriented careers in agriculture for students with urban backgrounds; they may bring the "farm" to the city. Many people living in cities and their suburbs have had an interest in plants as witnessed by the boom in home gardening and house plants in recent years. The question is, can this interest in plants and ability to grow them be cultivated to provide nourishing food. Some think so, for the Washington, D. C. based Institute of Local Self-Reliance has coined the term "Urban Agriculture" to apply to activities designed to improve the plight of the city dweller by providing food and beauty from plants.

With urbanization currently occurring at twice the rate of the increase in the world population, cities are becoming crowded, dirty, with high crime and disease rates and high unemployment. In fact, many in cities are undernourished.

The recent boom in home gardening in this country has added \$14 billion to the food supply and resulted in a significant increase in the consumption of fruits and vegetables (2). Nutritionists rate the lack of adequate inclusion of fruits and vegetables in the diet as a major cause of malnutrition (3). If home gardening can be brought to the innercity, its impact on the diet of the innercity dweller might be significant.

To stimulate interest in home gardening, particularly among the poor and elderly in 16 of the larger cities in the United States, \$3 million was provided by the Federal Government in 1978 to develop community gardening projects (4). A composting and gardening project

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