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WHAT ARE THE ATTITUDES OF YOUTH TOWARD YOUR COMMUNITY?



The Texas Agricultural Experiment Station initiated an intensive study on the agricultural resources and opportunities for further development in east Texas. As a part of this work, Bardin H. Nelson made a study of attitudes of high school seniors toward opportunities and social services in an east Texas county. All of the white senior girls and boys in the county, 127 boys and 107 girls, were interviewed during the first half of 1956. Of the 234 students, 78 were classified as rural farm youth, 72 as rural nonfarm youth, and 84 as urbanites.

Two methods were used in obtaining an insight into the attitudes of the high school seniors: (a) an attitude scale and (b) a personal interview of the depth type, which included various counseling methods.

The survey revealed that the students had very favorable attitudes toward rural life and most institutional services provided by the local area. The three general areas which the students felt were inadequate in their home county were job opportunities, opportunities to obtain special training or skills, and recreational opportunities and programs.

On the basis of the students' responses, Professor Nelson made some suggestions for action programs, which concentrate on several aspects of the problems facing the youngsters.

1. A counseling service, with particular reference to employment opportunities.

2. Training programs to develop special skills, particularly for youth not going to college.

3. A public relations program to inform students of local efforts to attract industry and acquaint them with plans for growth and development of the local area.

4. Increased emphasis on part-time farming as an acceptable means of combining the advantages of off-farm employment with those of farm life.

Summarized responses from the study on such questions as farm ownership versus town jobs, supplemental farm enterprises, employment in home county, and the school program are as follows.

Farm Ownership versus Town Job

Male students were asked the 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 situations they would prefer their future husbands to select.

Of the 47 boys who lived on farms, 32 indicated their preference for the average job in town, while 10 out of the 15 who selected the other alternative gave qualified answers. Seven of the 10 who made qualified answers indicated that they would farm only if they could begin with the right setup. Only 2 of

the 31 girls who lived on farms preferred to have their husbands farm.

Among the 71 rural nonfarm boys and girls, only 4 indicated a preference for farming, and even these 4 added significant qualifications. Also, only 4 of the 84 urban students selected ownership and operation of a farm. Some reasons given for not choosing farming as an occupation included low income, risks involved, large capital required, hard work, and long hours.

Supplemental Farm Enterprises

Twenty-one of the 47 farm boys indicated that broiler production has been helpful to farmers in the county; 9 of the boys had negative attitudes about broiler production, while the remaining 17 were either neutral or uncertain. Generally all except 6 of the students felt that broiler production offered little permanent hope to farm people, and none of the students thought that the broiler business offered an occupational opportunity for him personally.

Attitudes of 28 of the 47 farm boys were favorable toward dairy farming, while 5 were negative and 14 were either neutral or did not know. The big investment required and the long hours involved were the basis of the negative attitudes.

All of the farm boys indicated a very strong reaction against the idea of borrowing money to go into either dairying or broiler production, because the returns are too small and uncertain for the risks involved. Analysis of the attitudes of the students indicated that they were determined not to become burdened with debts or other long-term obligations, except for a car, home, and furniture.

The Texas A. & M. study analyzed the attitudes of students with respect to other supplementary or full-time employment opportunities in the community. Of the 47 rural farm boys, 33 had strong inclinations against pulpwood cutting and sawmill work. Two of the boys stated that it did pay well, but it was hard work. The remaining 12 youngsters indicated that they were not familiar enough

with the work to know how they would like it.

Nearly every student interviewed indicated that industrial development in the community will determine the county's progress. This attitude illustrated the lack of faith they have in the future of agriculture in the area. Many reasons were advanced as to why industry had not developed more rapidly. The broad classifications of half of the respondents' reasons fell into three categories. Forty-four believed that the city council and other people had blocked industrial development; 35 students thought that the lack of adequate water was a limiting factor; and 15 of the seniors believed that the necessary changes and developments were hindered because too many people were set in their ways and were unwilling to change. These varied responses, according to the study, revealed that a significant proportion of the students had little appreciation for the adult business and industrial leaders of the area.

Employment in Home County versus Elsewhere

Thirty of the 47 farm boys preferred employment in their home county, 16 preferred work elsewhere, while 1 was undecided. The general attitude of the rural farm girls did not differ materially from that of the boys as 21 of the 31 girls preferred to work in the home county, 7 preferred employment elsewhere, and 3 were undecided. The urban boys and girls were more critical of the employment situation in the home county than were the rural farm or rural nonfarm youngsters. Slightly more than half of the urban group stated that they would prefer to work elsewhere. Although a significant proportion of all students desired work in their home community, many had grave doubts about the availability of job opportunities and many felt that the better-paying jobs were not available locally.

School Program

The programs and facilities of the high schools in the area were rated adequate by 132 seniors and very adequate by 18; an inadequate rating was given by 62 students,

and very inadequate, by 7. The lack of course offerings was the primary weakness cited by more than three-fourths of the students. The interviewer sensed that the students' strong appreciation of higher education as a means for obtaining acceptable employment played a large part in determining their attitudes toward their schools.

Generally, the students had very favorable reactions toward 4-H Club and vocational agriculture programs, but they expressed strong opinions that vocational agriculture should include more shop or industrial training, or that separate industrial educational courses should be established.

Additives in Cattle Rations

In extended feeding trials, combinations of stilbestrol and antibiotics in yearling steer rations resulted in higher, more economical gains and heavier carcasses than either stilbestrol or antibiotics alone, report animal husbandmen at the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.

In a 96-day feeding trial, only slightly higher gains were noted when cattle were fed dual combinations of stilbestrol and terramycin, aureomycin, or ilotycin; but in a 140-day test, specialists detected a decided advantage of the antibiotic additives. During the 140 days, steers receiving rations containing both stilbestrol and an antibiotic gained an average of 29 pounds more than those fed stilbestrol alone and 94 pounds more than a control group receiving neither form of supplement. Carcass weights of steers fed combinations of stilbestrol and antibiotics generally were more satisfactory than those of animals fed single additives.

Additional feeding tests reaffirm earlier research results that feed additives promote faster gains. In a 96-day experiment, yearling steers fed only stilbestrol at the rate of 10 milligrams per head daily weighed an average of 44 pounds more when marketed than a control group receiving none. The average carcass weight was 31 pounds heavier. In similar tests extended to 140 days, stilbes-

trol-fed steers weighed an average of 65 pounds more when marketed than the control group and dressed out 31 pounds heavier.

Cattle fed only the antibiotics terramycin, aureomycin, or ilotycin at a daily rate of 75 milligrams per head made higher gains than the control animals but lower gains than stilbestrol-fed cattle in either the 96-day or the 140-day tests.

Texas Goat Outlook Good



According to a recent report from the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, the future looks relatively good for the State's goat producers. Many farmers and ranchers are combining cattle, sheep, and goats on the same ranges and are obtaining better weight gains and higher monetary returns.

Selection of heavier-fleeced bucks for breeding herds has increased the average mohair clip three-fourths of a pound during the past 12 years, says Dr. John McNeely, agricultural economist with the Texas Experiment Station.

The Texas goat supply is seasonal, and most producers sell culls and undesirable animals, regardless of price at the time of marketing. There seems to be no short-term production or marketing response to high or low prices. Farmers buy or sell goats because of range conditions and mohair prices. Packers vary purchases with the spread between prices for goats and those for canner and cutter cows.

Although about 47 percent of Texas producers sell some goats to neighbors or individual buyers, over half the total annual volume of goat marketings is handled through stockyards and auctions. The marketing season begins in March and April and is relatively steady through July. A larger volume is marketed in August, September, and October.

Spanish-type goats are produced for meat, brush control, or slaughter and stocker sales.

Angora goats are raised primarily for the production of mohair but are also useful for brush control and eventually are sold for slaughter.

Sorghum Head Smut

During the past summer, serious infestations of grain sorghum head smut in the Coastal Bend area and Medina County, Texas, were reported by Harlan Smith, plant pathologist with the State Agricultural Extension Service. Farmers in areas where the outbreaks occurred should make plans now to prevent further spread of the disease.

Seed treatment — effective only where soils are free of the fungus — helps prevent introduction of head smut into areas free of the disease. Such fungicides as Arasan, Phygon, Spergon, Dow 9B, and Delsan are recommended for seed treatment.

Once fields are badly infected, sorghums should not be planted for as long a period as possible, and smut-resistant varieties should be used. According to Mr. Smith, Martin milo is not as susceptible to head smut as is Combine 7078, and indications are that Hegari is resistant. RS 610 and the other Texas hybrids recently introduced are susceptible to the disease.

The plant pathologist urges farmers to use measures to prevent head smut. Seed from infected fields should not be used for planting, and farmers in areas free of the disease should treat all planting seed to prevent introduction of sorghum head smut into their fields.

Eggs Under Two Management Systems

The Department of Poultry Science of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station recently made a study of the market quality of eggs laid by hens held in cages and the quality of those from hens on the floor. Four different strains of layers were used, and comparisons were made of the variations in albumen quality, shell thickness, shell porosity,

cracked eggs, body checks, leakers, and number of clean eggs.

Little difference was observed in the albumen quality and shell thickness of eggs from the two groups; however, eggs from hens held in cages were more porous and weighed slightly more than those from layers on the floor.

More light-dirty eggs were observed from caged hens, while the number of medium- and heavy-dirty eggs was about the same for both groups. Hens in cages produced about three times as many cracked eggs and more leakers than did layers on the floor.

Penicillin Crackdown

Unless dairymen do a better job of keeping antibiotics out of milk sold, officials of the Food and Drug Administration have announced that they will favor a complete ban against penicillin udder infusions, according to E. E. Anderson, Extension dairyman at New Mexico A. & M. College.

Claims are made that more than 95 percent of all mastitis ointments contain penicillin. In 1956, a total of 75 tons of penicillin was produced for mastitis preparations, or about one-sixth of the annual output of this antibiotic for all purposes.

Under a regulation effective July 29, 1957, ointment makers must put a warning on the package label for proper use of the preparations. The warning advises farmers to withhold from the human market all milk from treated cows for 3 days after treatment. With twice-a-day milking, this length of time is required for the antibiotic to be washed out of the cow's udder.

Another regulation concerns the strength of ointments. The regulation provides that no single shot of mastitis ointment can contain more than 100,000 units of penicillin.

The *Agricultural News Letter* is prepared in the Research Department under the direction of J. Z. ROWE, Agricultural Economist.