Why Not Agricultural Economics?

By Jimmye S. Hillman
Department of Agricultural Economics

Meet the youngest member of the agricultural family — the agricultural economist!

He was born of necessity to help solve problems which have arisen due to the commercialization of agriculture. His generation speaks of the machine, technological change, specialization, dollar receipts, and the income tax, but not the 19th century language of self-sufficient farming and domestic self-containment.

Farmers Must Sell

Today farmers must sell their product. The job of the farm economist is intimately linked with the efficient production and marketing of that product. The field of the economist is, therefore, the broad business aspects of farming. He is not only vitally interested in high production rates, low production costs, and easing the work-load of the farmer, but also in the manifold processes involved in transporting, processing, distributing and servicing the farm product.

The field of agricultural economics usually is divided into two categories — production economics and marketing. Three other branches of study — agricultural policy, statistics, and rural life — may be linked to the field but are of lesser direct importance. Chart I shows the constituent parts of the greater field.

Agricultural economics offers many opportunities to the student who wants to pursue graduate study. Many institutions offer the Ph.D. in almost any phase of the special fields shown in Chart I. Academic requirements are being increased for those who wish to hold many professional positions.

Job opportunities open to the holders of the bachelor's degree vary widely and are almost unlimited. About the only employment doors which are closed to him are those specialized positions in government and state institutions which require a great deal of technical training.

Many Job Opportunities

Chart II points out a number, but not all, of the job opportunities open to the holder of the bachelor's degree and to those who hold higher degrees. Agricultural economists are preferred for certain positions because of their familiarity with statistical technique and agricultural policy.

(Please turn to page 12)

Chart II. Job Opportunities Open to the Agricultural Economist

To Holders of Bachelor's Degree

1. In Domestic Agriculture:
   a. Farm or Ranch Managers.
   b. Cooperative Managers.
   c. Junior Executives with Cotton Companies.
2. In Commercial Work:
   a. Sales Representatives for Feed, Seed, Fertilizer, Machinery and Insecticide Companies.
   b. Agricultural Representatives for Commercial Banks, *e. g.*, Appraisal and Consultant Service.
   c. Cotton and Livestock Buyers.
   d. Plant Managers for Packing Houses or processors.
3. In Government With:
   a. Extension Service — County Agents or Specialist Positions.
   b. Production Marketing Administration.
   c. Farm Credit Administration.
   d. Commodity Credit Corporation.
   e. Farmers Home Administration.
   f. Reclamation, Forest, or Soil Conservation Services.
   g. Foreign Agricultural Relations Work.
4. Field Representatives, Workers or Analysis for Various Public or Private Agencies.

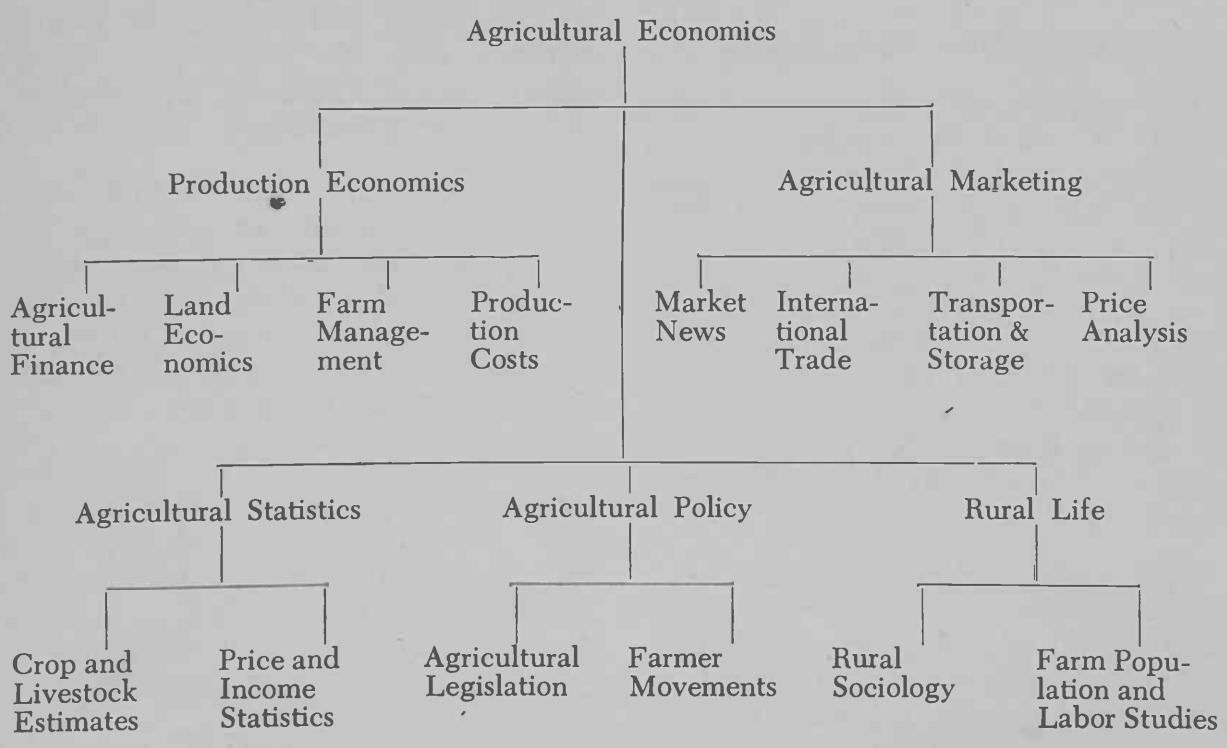
To Holders of Advanced Degree

Note: Holders of advanced degrees may find positions in all the fields listed in the opposite column. Moreover, there is an increasing tendency for all positions in public and private activities to favor the student with more training.

In addition to those jobs which are open to students with the bachelor's degree there are:

1. Teaching positions in Colleges and Universities.
2. Public Research Positions:
   a. State Agricultural Experiment Stations.
   b. Bureau of Agricultural Economics.
   c. Other Government Research.
3. Private Research Positions:
   For example:
   a. Doane's Agricultural Service.
   b. National Cotton Council.
   c. National Bureau of Economic Research.
   d. Industrial Commodity Corporation.

Chart I. The Field of Agricultural Economics



Late Spring Lettuce

(From page 9)

wrap, shape, butt, rib, presence of Tip Burn and Rib Discoloration for each strain. Size data were taken by individual head grading and counting from 200 feet of bed. Marketable heads included four dozen and five dozen per crate sizes only. In most of the strains, over two-thirds of the marketable heads were the more desirable 4 dozen size.

As each lot was packed in the shed, sample iced crates of fifteen strains were taken from the line and rushed to a storage room at the University of Arizona, Tempe farm. These crates were held in storage at 34°F. for thirty days, opened at room temperature for one day and then examined for keeping quality.

Best Strains Noted

Comparisons between the twenty-eight strains tested in regard to all the characteristics were made from the data assembled. Of special interest are the following: Best strains yielded well over 80% cut-out. Two strains, Imperial 615-Ferry Morse strain 383 and Woodruff's variety A36, showed poor yields.

Color was remarkably uniform between the lots, and Ferry Morse variety K1 was the best desirable dark green. There was little variation in wrap; all strains were quite satisfactory in this character. Shape was fairly good throughout.

There was more variation in rib type than in other characters. Contrary to general belief, the Imperial 615 type did not have the best ribs although their ratings were reasonably high. Desirable rib characters were shown by Dr. Thompson's #4164 which contrasted greatly with Great Lakes 428 that had extremely thick and curved ribs.

Tip Burn and Rib Discoloration are the two head maladies which most seriously affect the marketability of late spring lettuce. While neither disease appeared in severe form in the Earl Recker Farm, their presence was noted when found and the resultant ratings given varieties on susceptibility to these troubles give good indication of the suitability of the strains for the late spring crop. Dr. Thompson's #3867 was the only strain in the test entirely free of either disease.

Storage Results

The number of marketable heads left in a crate after as long a period as 31 days gives a good indication of the ability of the strain to withstand storage shipping. Of the fifteen strains subjected to the storage test, Great Lakes 428-Loomis was the best. Ferry Morse Great Lakes 1180 had the poorest keeping quality.

In this grower cooperative test conducted as a late spring lettuce variety trial for the 1952 season, Ferry Morse Great Lakes 366A was judged best of the trial on the basis of good storing ability, good head characters and high yield.

Selected Lettuce Varieties and Strains with Yield Data (28 strains tested)

Variety	Strain	Source	Yield as % Marketable Heads
Great Lakes	366 A*	Ferry Morse	82.4
Great Lakes 59	67095	Associated	84.9
Great Lakes 428	1-505	Loomis	66.3
A 36		Woodruff	45.4
Special	3188	Thompson U.S.D.A.	69.5
Special	20965	Whitaker U.S.D.A.	64.0
Imperial 615	385	Ferry Morse	69.7
Imperial 615	27563	Associated	41.8
K 1	34362	Ferry Morse	58.6

*Best of 12 Ferry Morse Great Lakes Strains tested.

Why Not Ag Economics?

(From page 8)

The Agricultural Economics Department at the University of Arizona has outlined a course of study which best prepares the student for work in the diverse group of positions listed. It offers the Master's Degree for those who care to pursue graduate study.

Students interested in this field — the business aspects of farming — should contact the Department Head and arrange a program of work which will best achieve their desired goals or which will put them in positions of high demand upon graduation.

Control Mesquite By Fire

(From page 10)

The first of these is that everything, even range land, costs something to maintain.

The second is that if burning is done in June, the summer rains and new feed are just around the corner. Cattle won't eat the dry feed anyway when the green feed comes on. One has to decide whether he can afford to sacrifice a little feed today to do a job that 10 or 20 years from now will cost twice or four or ten times as much.

Need Grass to Carry Fire

The major obstacle to burning today is the lack of grass to carry a fire. In some places and in some years this is true. In a thick stand of mesquite the trees use up all the water and little grass can grow even without a hoof of stock on the ground.

However, there are still many areas where mesquite, cholla, burroweed and other shrubs are just coming in that will burn in some years. In places of this sort fire can be used effectively in maintaining and improving a range.

Costs of Pumping Water Compared

(From page 3)

natural gas wells, an increase in lift from 150 to 300 feet resulted in an increase in operating costs from $3.25 to $5.25, or $1.33 per additional 100 feet of lift.

The cost advantage of natural gas over electric wells is much less at the shallower lifts. As the lift increases, the cost advantage of gas over electricity increases. This relationship is a result of the high initial installation cost for a natural gas unit coupled with a steeply graduated natural gas cost rate. As the amount of gas used per month increases, the average cost per unit decreases rapidly.

Other factors such as dependability, convenience and initial cost should, and do, influence the type of power to be selected. Under conditions as they exist at the present time in Pinal County, natural gas appears to be a cheaper source of power than electricity assuming a five year write-off on the equipment.