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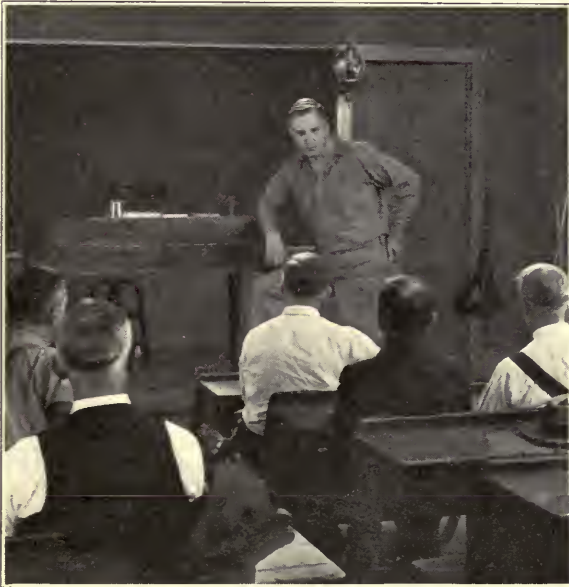






# Local Group Organization Among Illinois Farm People

By D. E. LINDSTROM



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## CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION.....	127
II. OPINIONS OF FARM PEOPLE CONCERNING DESIRABLE LOCAL FARM-FAMILY ORGANIZATIONS.....	130
The Need for Local Organization.....	130
Most Important Purposes.....	131
Desirable Qualifications and Restrictions in Membership.....	133
Frequency and Time of Meetings.....	136
Programs for Meetings.....	137
Relationships With Service Agencies.....	138
Matters Needing More Emphasis.....	139
III. ANALYSIS OF PRESENT LOCAL GROUP ORGANIZATIONS FOR FARM PEOPLE.....	140
Origins.....	141
Structure.....	144
Size of Area From Which Membership is Drawn.....	146
Original Purposes for Organizing.....	152
The Life Span.....	154
Membership and Attendance.....	156
Frequency and Place of Meetings.....	160
Programs for Meetings.....	162
Financial Policies.....	166
Relationship to Service Agencies.....	167
Functions Performed.....	168
Difficulties Common to All Groups.....	169
Group Adaptations to Promote Member Interest and Welfare.....	170
IV. SUMMARY.....	171
V. PRINCIPLES FOR THE SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATION AND CONDUCT OF LOCAL GROUPS OF FARM PEOPLE.....	173
VI. QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN STUDY.....	175



# Local Group Organization Among Illinois Farm People

By D. E. LINDSTROM, Associate in Rural Sociology

## PART I—INTRODUCTION

THE NUMBER and variety of local organizations now found active among farm people is evidence that the need is felt for something more than individual action in developing satisfactory economic, social, and cultural conditions in rural communities. Some form of local organization, such as a community club, farm bureau unit, farmers' club, home bureau unit, subordinate grange, or community unit, is to be found in a majority of the rural communities of the state.

These groups have one function in common—namely, the bringing together of a number of the rural people living in a particular locality at regular intervals for some kind of group action which will further the interests or desires of the members or of the community in which they live.

Whether farm people are satisfied with their local organizations, whether such organizations are adequate in kind and extent, and whether they are functioning effectively are questions which are worthy of study during these times. Approximately five hundred farm people in various parts of Illinois—men and women who were either officers or members of local organizations or were active or interested in community affairs—were asked by questionnaire to state their opinions on the desirable nature of farm-family organizations and to give detailed information concerning the rural organizations of which they, individually, were then members. About two-thirds of these people, from 25 counties, had come to county meetings upon the invitation of either the farm or the home adviser,<sup>1</sup> or upon the invitations of both, and the schedules of questions were submitted to them personally by the investigator. The other people who submitted information received and returned their questionnaires by mail. Usable data concerning the opinions of 433 farm people living in 306 localities in 60 counties of Illinois (Fig. 1), as to the desirable nature of

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<sup>1</sup>The county farm and home advisers are members of the Extension Service staff of the College of Agriculture, which cooperates with the United States Department of Agriculture. In some states they are called county agents and home demonstration agents.

farm-family organizations, were obtained in these ways. Of these 433 farm people 284 indicated membership in some rural organization. However, many of those who indicated that they were not then members of rural organizations stated that at some previous time, sometimes in some other locality, they had been members. The questionnaires were submitted in August, 1930.

Supplementary material concerning the areas from which local groups now draw their membership and areas from which loosely or-

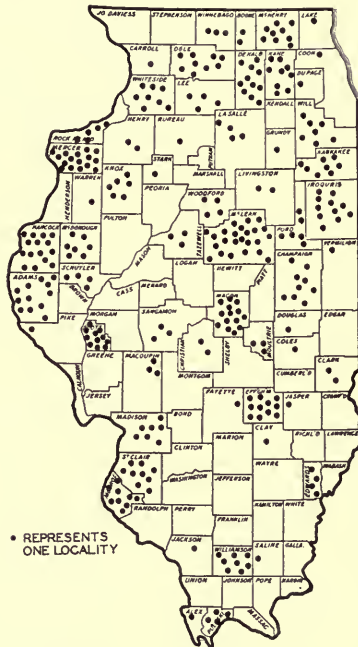


FIG. 1.—LOCALITIES AND COUNTIES REPRESENTED BY THOSE SUBMITTING DATA FOR THE STUDY

Three hundred six localities in 60 Illinois counties were represented in this study.

organized or informal groups might attract new membership by better organization was obtained by interviewing individuals and groups who had knowledge of the localities selected for study. Also, additional information on the origins and structure of the various types of groups, besides that secured by questionnaire, was obtained by the writer while working and talking with the members of the various groups.

The presentation and discussion of the opinions of these 433 rural people concerning the desirable nature of farm-family organizations

forms Part II of this study. It will be observed that there is considerable agreement in the opinions of members of such groups and non-members on the various questions covered in this part of the study. Part III, which is an analysis of present organizations, of both farm-family and nonfarm-family types, and is the main body of the study, presents and discusses the data obtained by questionnaire from those who indicated that they were then members of such organizations.

Part IV is a brief summary of the whole study. In Part V the author has set forth, as he sees them, certain fundamental principles which must be observed for the successful organization and guidance of local organizations for farm people. The author desires also to call the particular attention of rural group organizers and leaders to the last sections of Parts II and III on *Matters Needing More Emphasis* and *Group Adaptations*.

Part VI is a reproduction of the schedule of questions used in the study.

The text attempts to define any special terms it uses as it proceeds. However, there are a few terms rather specially employed whose explanation should properly precede the whole study. The *local groups* herein described are composed of people drawn together by mutual interest, residing in an area of such size that face-to-face contact is frequent and quite regularly maintained. As a rule, they may congregate without having to travel more than five or six miles. *Rural areas* may include, besides the purely farming areas, the towns and villages of, in general, less than 2,500 population. *Farm-family organizations*, as herein considered, are organizations composed predomi-

TABLE 1.—EXTENT TO WHICH PERSONS ANSWERING THE QUESTIONNAIRE WERE AFFILIATED WITH RURAL ORGANIZATIONS  
(Localities represented, 306; counties, 60)

Organization	Number of persons	Percentage of total
Community clubs.....	55	13
Farm bureau units.....	54	12
Parent-teacher associations.....	48	11
Home bureau units.....	40	9
Subordinate granges.....	29	7
Community units.....	28	6
Farmers' clubs.....	12	3
Miscellaneous.....	18 <sup>1</sup>	5
Total affiliated persons.....	284	66
Non affiliated persons.....	149	34
Total all persons reporting.....	433	100

<sup>1</sup>Includes 7 members of women's clubs, 5 members of 4-H clubs, 4 members of community councils, and 2 members of farmers' unions.

nantly of farm people that are set up to serve the whole farm family. *Group names*, such as community clubs, farm bureau units, home bureau units, community units, subordinate granges, farmer's clubs, etc., are names given locally to the groups and are in quite popular usage. The difference between the various groups going by these names is discussed in Part III.

## PART II—OPINIONS OF FARM PEOPLE CONCERNING LOCAL FARM-FAMILY ORGANIZATIONS

### The Need for Local Organization

Ninety-two percent of the 433 persons responding to the questionnaire stated their conviction that there is a definite need for local family organizations among farm people. Supporting this view were 93 percent of those who were members of organizations enrolling farm people and 91 percent of those who were not members. Thus there appears to be belief in these organizations where they are functioning, and a desire for them where none exist (Table 2).

TABLE 2.—OPINIONS ON THE DESIRABILITY OF LOCAL FARM-FAMILY ORGANIZATIONS

Sources of replies	Number questioned	Percentage answering question on desirability <sup>1</sup>				
		Affirming desirability <sup>2</sup>	Reasons given for need			Denying desirability
			Social advantages	Educational advantages	Development of cooperation	
Members <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	284	93	75	58	27	7
Nonmembers . . . . .	149	91	59	47	23	9
Total . . . . .	433	92	69	54	26	8

<sup>1</sup>Percentages are of the total number questioned and total more than 100 because some who replied indicated two and sometimes more reasons why farm-family organizations are needed.

<sup>2</sup>Those listed as members include all those who indicated membership in any one of the rural group organizations listed in Table 1, some of which were not farm-family groups.

Sixty-nine percent believed in these organizations because thru them "farm people can get better acquainted with each other." Fifty-four percent believed that organized local groups were needed because of the advantages in vocational education they provide the people in rural communities. Thru such groups, it was felt, farmers can obtain information vital to their interests; that is, they can exchange information of mutual concern and they can, thru a better expression of their wishes and desires, obtain more adequate service from the

agencies that are organized to serve their interests. Social advantages probably were mentioned more frequently than educational advantages because social advantages are the most obvious ones that local groups provide.

That farm-family organizations were necessary in order to develop cooperation among farm people was indicated by answers from 26 percent.

In view of the fact that only a few persons in replying to the question on the most important purposes of farm-family organizations indicated that they believed these groups should engage directly in buying and selling, it is reasonable to assume that the 26 percent meant that farm-family organizations were needed principally to promote cooperation in matters other than buying and selling and to promote the general spirit of cooperation. The general impression gained by the investigator was that local units were too small to engage with any distinct advantage in the cooperative buying of most commodities. It should be noted in this connection, however, that a few of these local groups were engaging directly either in selling or in purchasing activities, and in some cases in both.

Only 8 percent of those answering the questionnaire believed that there was no need for new groups of local family organizations in their communities, tho to what extent their belief was based on the feeling that there were already enough organizations was not ascertainable from the replies. More than half of this number said that if there is already a locally organized group of this type in the community, it would be better to adapt it to changing conditions than to organize another group whenever new needs or desires become evident.

Less than 3 percent of the 433 people answering felt that organizations for men only or for women only were the only type having any hope for success. Possibly there are some localities in which only highly specialized groups, such as those for men or women only, can function successfully. This situation, however, does not yet obtain in the majority of rural communities, judging by the expressed opinions of the farm people themselves.

### Most Important Purposes

A successful organization of any sort depends, as a rule, upon its having clearly recognized purposes.<sup>1</sup> Without them an organization drifts and is likely to become inactive.

<sup>1</sup>See "Special Interest Groups in Rural Society," by J. H. Kolb and A. F. Wileden, Research Bulletin 84, Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, 1928.

Fig. 2 depicts the purposes which the farm people questioned believed should be especially emphasized by local farm-family organizations. Some persons gave only one purpose and some two or more.

Sixty-four percent emphasized that providing for educational opportunity should be a purpose of local farm-family organizations. From the actual make-up of programs of rural organizations, one is led to

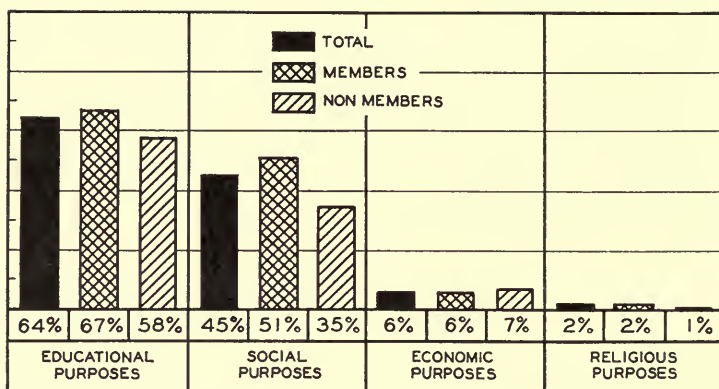


FIG. 2.—PERCENTAGE OF 433 ILLINOIS FARM PEOPLE WHO BELIEVED LOCAL FARM-FAMILY ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD EMPHASIZE THE PURPOSES DESIGNATED

Farm people in Illinois are apparently convinced of the practical value of instruction in improved farm and homemaking practices and projects for community betterment, judging by the frequency with which educational purposes were mentioned as worthy of special emphasis by these groups. Social purposes, also frequently mentioned, often support other purposes, since before people can work well together they must be acquainted and understand something of one another's interests.

interpret educational opportunity as the opportunity for members to improve their knowledge and skill in matters pertaining to their interests, especially their occupational interests.

Forty-five percent indicated that a chief purpose of a farm-family organization should be the promotion of social interests, especially the development of acquaintanceship among members, the providing of recreation for members, personal development, and the promotion of activities that will benefit the community as a whole. Community development—that is, the promotion of activities that will benefit all the people of the community—was mentioned frequently as an important purpose. Recreation was mentioned as an important purpose in approximately one-fourth of the answers; nonmembers mentioned this

point more frequently than did members. Likewise nonmembers gave personal development as an important purpose more frequently than did members.

These data would indicate that both social and educational purposes should be considered in any plans for the formation of new groups. The frequency with which educational purposes were mentioned indicates the faith which Illinois farm people have in the practical value of instruction in improved farm and homemaking practices and in projects undertaken for mutual benefit. It is also suggestive of the opportunity which local groups and service agencies have in providing such instruction. Social interests, aside from their intrinsic value, can often be used in the attaining of other objectives, since before people can work well together they must be acquainted and understand something of one another's likes and dislikes; as a rule, too, before people will undertake jointly any important projects for community welfare their community spirit must be aroused, and one of the best ways to arouse that is by the conduct of joint social activities.

Only a very small percentage gave economic purposes, chiefly buying and selling, as the ends which such organizations should serve.

The 2 percent mentioning the fostering of religious interests as an important purpose for local farm-family organizations had in mind the encouragement of church work rather than the direct undertaking of religious activities by such organizations.

### Desirable Qualifications and Restrictions in Membership

Organization presupposes membership, and membership is normally based on some means of distinction, usually pertaining to interests or to personal attributes. Membership distinctions may be considered from the point of view of desirability, and they may be considered from the point of view of requirement; that is, membership distinctions may be considered as desirable but not required, or they may be considered as desirable and required. The 433 farm people gave the opinions shown in Table 3 concerning desirable membership qualifications for their local family organizations.

Forty-five percent emphasized either the necessity for ownership of a farm, the operation of a farm, or a dominant and sympathetic interest in farming, as a desirable membership qualification. They felt that only those who are farmers, or landowners, or whose sympathies or personal interests are predominantly with agriculture should be en-

couraged to join farmers' organizations; otherwise organizations might have to contend at times against the influence of members whose interests were not then in harmony with those of farm people.

Nearly a third believed that members should be "home folks." More confidence evidently is reposed in those who live in the community than in those who do not, and it is felt that they can be counted on to carry thru a responsibility given them.

TABLE 3.—QUALIFICATIONS INDICATED AS DESIRABLE FOR MEMBERSHIP IN LOCAL FARM-FAMILY ORGANIZATIONS

Sources of replies	Number questioned	Percentage mentioning a specific desirable qualification <sup>1</sup>					Percentage stating that to set up qualifications is undesirable
		Have an interest in farming	Be a resident in the community	Demonstrate an interest in the organization	Be of good character and influence	Be of responsible age	
Members <sup>2</sup> .....	284	46	36	13	6	6	7
Nonmembers....	149	42	20	20	4	3	13
Total.....	433	45	31	15	5	5	9

<sup>1</sup>Percentages add to more than 100 for the same reason indicated in footnote 1 of Table 2.

<sup>2</sup>See footnote 2 to Table 2.

More nonmembers than members mentioned the need for members having an active interest in the organization. Members apparently assumed that one would not join an organization unless he would take some active interest in it.

Good character and influence were mentioned by 5 percent as desirable qualifications, and age limitation by 5 percent.

Table 4 shows the percentage of persons favoring fixed requirements for membership in local family organizations and lists the most commonly suggested requirements.

Almost half the 433 farm people believed that membership should be restricted by setting up definite requirements. Members of farmers' clubs, granges, farm bureau units, and home bureau units made up the bulk of those expressing this opinion. A larger proportion of members than of nonmembers favored some form of restriction.

Forty percent disapproved of membership restrictions. More than two-thirds of these replies came from members of community clubs and parent-teacher associations, many of which have a membership made up of both country and town people. It should be borne in mind, however, that all people answering this questionnaire were farm people, including those that belonged to groups having both town and country people in their membership.



The replies would seem to indicate that members of organizations serving purely farm interests were more in favor of membership restrictions than were members of organizations designed to serve the interests of both farm and town people.

Of those favoring membership restrictions almost one-third emphasized that membership should be limited to members of farm families. Almost a third, too, mentioned that there should be some restrictions based on character and influence; members of subordinate granges were most emphatic in this regard. The question arises, what was in the minds of those persons expressing a desire for restrictions based on character? It should be noted that while nearly a third were in favor of such restrictions, only a few (5 percent of the total), as was shown in Table 3, had mentioned good character and influence

TABLE 4.—OPINIONS ON MEMBERSHIP RESTRICTIONS FOR FARM-FAMILY ORGANIZATIONS

Sources of replies	Number questioned	Percentage favoring some form of restriction	Percentage of those favoring restrictions who would restrict membership to persons who are—					Percentage favoring no restrictions
			Members of farm families	Of good character and influence	Interested in farming	Actively interested in the organization	Interested in the community	
Members <sup>1</sup> . . .	284	49	27	31	26	27	11	40
Nonmembers..	149	44	35	25	25	20	2	40
Total <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	433	47	30	29	25	24	8	40

<sup>1</sup>See footnote 2 to Table 2.

<sup>2</sup>Percentages are of all those questioned. Thirteen percent gave no answer, and some who answered gave two or more types of desirable restrictions.

as leading desirable qualifications for membership. Accordingly one is led to believe that it is only when character comes into question that it is considered a bar to membership.

An interest in farming was mentioned as a desirable requirement for membership by a fourth of the 47 percent favoring restriction. Members of farm bureau units mentioned this restriction more frequently than did members of any other group.

A demonstrated interest in the organization was indicated by scarcely a fourth as a desirable requirement. Probably the fact that only a small number mentioned this restriction is explained by the fact it would be generally assumed that one who is interested in farming will have an interest in an organization for the improvement of farm life. Unfortunately this is not always true.

Interest in the community was mentioned by 8 percent as a desirable requirement. This interest is complementary to interest in farming and in the organization and means practically the same thing when the community is made up largely of farm people. More members of community units and home bureau units suggested this requirement than did members of other groups.

### Frequency and Time of Meetings

All but a few of the farm people questioned favored the holding of regular meetings (Table 5). Obviously no constructive program can be started, carried on, and finished properly without regular meetings.

TABLE 5.—OPINIONS ON FREQUENCY WITH WHICH MEETINGS SHOULD BE HELD

Sources of replies	Number questioned	Percentage indicating the frequency with which meetings should be held <sup>1</sup>						
		Weekly	Biweekly	Monthly	Bimonthly	Quarterly	Annually	Not regularly
Members <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	284	.4	8	76	2	1	.4	.4
Nonmembers . . . . .	149	.1	3	75	1	2	0	1.0
Total . . . . .	433	.3	6	76	1	2	.2	.5

<sup>1</sup>Percentages given are of total number questioned and will not add to 100 because some persons questioned did not reply. The similarity of the percentages in the "weekly" column and the "not regularly" column is purely accidental.

<sup>2</sup>See footnote 2 to Table 2.

Not much difference of opinion was expressed on how often regular meetings should be held. More than three-fourths favored monthly meetings. Variations from this opinion came most frequently from the members of subordinate granges, eleven of twenty-nine of whom favored holding meetings every two weeks.

Twelve percent favored afternoon meetings, and 69 percent favored evening meetings. Members of farmers' clubs, home bureau units, and farm bureau units made up the majority of those who preferred afternoon meetings. Afternoon meetings for these groups during the winter season seem to be coming more and more into favor. Farmers apparently find it profitable to spend at least one afternoon a month in meetings concerned with the improvement of farming and farm life. These afternoon meetings are likely to be concerned with definite and concrete matters, the more diffuse interests being left for other types of meetings usually held in the evening.

Eighteen percent indicated that the day for meeting should be arranged to suit the wish of the group or the community. Sixteen per-

cent favored Friday and 11 percent favored Wednesday. Friday was favored above Wednesday by members of community clubs, farmers' clubs, granges, parent-teacher associations, farm bureau units, and community units, whereas Wednesday was the first choice of members of home bureau units. Thursday was the second choice of members of granges, and Tuesday the second choice of members of farm bureau units.

### Programs for Meetings

Seventy-seven percent of the 369 persons who gave suggestions on the makeup of programs for meetings favored programs of a varied nature—that is, programs that are not only social and cultural but also educational in some phase of farming or homemaking (Table 6). Nineteen percent would direct the program toward a single end, such as the discussion of a report on cooperative marketing or the improvement of a farm or home practice.

More than 85 percent of members of granges, parent-teacher associations, farmers' clubs, and community clubs favored varied programs. Members of community units were more in favor of single-purpose programs than were members of other groups, 44 percent favoring them. Twenty-three percent of those who were members of farm bureau units, 22 percent of those who were members of home bureau units, and 23 percent of those who were not members of any of the listed organizations favored single-purpose programs.

Ninety-five percent reported that programs should have educational features, that is, features promoting adult vocational education. Farm talks and discussions were specified by 74 percent of those favoring educational features, and talks of general interest and reports by 26 percent.

TABLE 6.—SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING DESIRABLE FEATURES FOR PROGRAMS OF MEETINGS

Source of replies	Number of replies	Features recommended and percentages of number replying who recommended them				
		Varied program	Single activity	Making no qualifications	Educational features	Social and cultural features
		<i>perct.</i>	<i>perct.</i>	<i>perct.</i>	<i>perct.</i>	<i>perct.</i>
Members <sup>1</sup> .....	237	83	17	0	99	67
Nonmembers.....	132	65	23	12	86	45
Total.....	369	77	19	4	95	59

<sup>1</sup>See footnote 2 to Table 2.

The frequency with which educational features were mentioned as desirable is indicative of the practical desire of Illinois farm people to improve their farm and home practices. It may reflect, moreover, the extent to which they feel they have in the past profited from instruction in improved farm and home practices.

Audience singing and special group music, plays, recitations, stunts, and sometimes movies, were favored as entertainment features. These features, like outside speakers, are easy to obtain. Their importance, however, should not be obscured by their availability, since these features, with the possible exception of the movies, make important contributions to the cultural life of a rural community.

The social features mentioned most frequently were visiting and games, the latter particularly for the younger folks. Cards and dancing were mentioned by only a few. Interest is evidently centered in the more creative activities.

A business session as a part of the regular meeting was mentioned as necessary by but 14 percent of all those answering. Slightly over 20 percent of the members of the community units and community clubs indicated the need for devoting a part of each meeting to business. Most of the groups included in this study do, however, have a business session.

### **Relationships With Service Agencies**

The desirability of being affiliated with some service agency was emphasized by 92 percent of 382 people who expressed opinions on this point (Table 7). The county, state, or national organizations of the farm bureau, home bureau, grange, parent-teacher association, and similar bodies, the Agricultural Extension Service of the University of Illinois and the United States Department of Agriculture were the service bodies with which these local groups were most commonly affiliated, if they were affiliated with any.

Eighty-one percent of those who indicated the desirability of such affiliations indicated also that such relationship should be purely "advisory," 43 percent indicated that the relationship should be "supervisory," and 12 percent "controlling." That there was some double, and perhaps even triple, checking is obvious. Some persons apparently felt that service agencies should be advisory in some matters and controlling or supervisory in others. Many checked both "advisory" and "supervisory" and some who checked "supervisory" checked "controlling" also. The nonmembers were more highly in favor of "supervisory" and "controlling" relationships than members (nonmembers,

TABLE 7.—OPINIONS ON DESIRABILITY OF HAVING RELATIONSHIPS WITH SERVICE AGENCIES<sup>1</sup>

Source of replies	Total number of replies	Percentage favoring connections with service body and type of relationship favored				Percentage favoring no relationship
		Favoring controlling relationship	Favoring advisory relationship	Favoring supervisory relationship	Total favoring some relationship	
Members <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	250	8	82	41	93	6
Nonmembers . . . . .	132	20	80	49	91	9
Total . . . . .	382	12	81	43	92	7

<sup>1</sup>Percentages of those favoring some relationship total more than 100 because some indicated two, some more than two, desirable types of relationship.

<sup>2</sup>See footnote 2 to Table 2.

it will be recalled, were also more in favor of restricting membership to farmers and their families than members were). All replies taken together indicate overwhelming sentiment in favor of "advisory" and "supervisory" relationships with service agencies as opposed to "controlling" relationships or to no relationship at all.

Further questioning about the details of desirable relationships brought forth only a few replies. Nine percent indicated that local groups should be able to obtain various types of service from the advisory agency.

Only 2 percent mentioned contacts of one group with another as desirable.

### Matters Needing More Emphasis

The question which was asked concerning matters that need more emphasis by farm-family organizations was answered (Table 8) only by those who were members of such organizations, tho it was asked of members and nonmembers alike. The importance of local organi-

TABLE 8.—MATTERS BELIEVED TO NEED MORE EMPHASIS THAN PRESENT GROUPS ARE GIVING THEM

Matters mentioned	Number mentioning each item	Percentage mentioning each item
Educational features . . . . .	51	32
Keeping members interested . . . . .	40	25
Affiliations with service bodies . . . . .	21	13
Publicity . . . . .	18	11
Informing members about new developments . . . . .	14	9
Adapting programs to young people's interests . . . . .	8	5
Training leaders . . . . .	7	5
Total . . . . .	159	100

zations being adaptable to changes in social and economic conditions is apparent from these data.

Approximately one-third of the 159 members who indicated that certain matters needed more emphasis than present groups were giving them believed that more educational features should be included in the program (Table 8). Apparently many local groups should give more attention to arranging programs that supply their members with information on farm and home-making practices and on projects for community improvement. Twenty-five percent of the members felt that their organizations should give more attention to keeping members interested. Thirteen percent of these 159 members expressing opinions on matters needing more emphasis felt there was a need for their organization to cooperate with other organizations. Also a few mentioned the need for having more in the programs that would be of interest to young people, and a few mentioned the need for training leaders. Since interest on the part of young people is often lacking and group leaders are frequently inadequately trained, it is surprising that so few of the members made suggestions for improving these conditions.

### PART III—ANALYSIS OF PRESENT LOCAL GROUP ORGANIZATIONS FOR FARM PEOPLE

Part II, as has been indicated, dealt with the opinions of 433 farm people concerning the need for, and the most desirable nature of, farm-family organizations. Part III, on the other hand, deals with facts concerning the actual groups to which 284 of these people belonged. Another person who failed to submit any "opinions" gave facts that

TABLE 9.—TYPES OF GROUPS CONCERNING WHICH FACTS WERE REPORTED BY 285 MEMBERS

Type of group	Number of members questioned	Number of groups on which facts were reported	Percentage of each type reported
Community clubs . . . . .	57	50	21
Farm bureau units . . . . .	54	46	20
Parent-teacher associations . . . . .	48	45	19
Home bureau units . . . . .	40	31	13
Subordinate granges . . . . .	29	25	11
Community units . . . . .	28	15	7
Others . . . . .	29 <sup>1</sup>	22	9
Total . . . . .	285	234	100

<sup>1</sup>Includes 12 members of 9 farmers' clubs, 6 members of 4 women's clubs, 5 members of 4 4-H clubs, 4 members of 3 community councils and 2 members of 2 farmer's unions.

are included in Part III, making a total of 285 persons contributing the factual information here analyzed.

Some of the groups considered in this division of the study are not of the farm-family type.

### Origins

In general there are three ways in which local organizations arise among farm people: (1) as the result of influence exerted by organizers from the outside; (2) by action of people in the locality who, having been members of or having attended local groups in other places, wish to have similar organizations in their present home communities; and (3) by the spontaneous action of the people in a locality who, having met together once or twice, wish to continue a joint activity. Without doubt most of the stimulus to organization comes from outside sources,<sup>1</sup> but there must, of course, be local willingness to cooperate.

Following are brief historical sketches of the principal types of local organizations studied.

*Community Clubs.*—Of the groups going by the name of community clubs, many began among the farm people of the locality, usually as social meetings. Sometimes these meetings included villagers and townspeople in their attendance. Other such clubs began among the townspeople but were opened to all the people in the community, including the residents in nearby rural areas. Organizations of the community type seem to be most successful in the small rural town or in the open country.

*Farm Bureau Units.*—County farm bureaus, as they exist in Illinois, grew out of local county organizations first established in DeKalb and Kankakee counties in 1912. These county organizations were established to meet the need for effective county agricultural agent work. Similar organizations were formed in several other states in the same year. The name Farm Bureau, for an independent agricultural association employing a county agricultural agent, was adopted for the first time in Illinois, and possibly in the United States, by Tazewell county in 1913. This name was soon widely adopted.

The spread of the Farm Bureau movement, like that of the Home Bureau movement, was greatly facilitated by the Smith-Lever Act (approved in 1914) and subsequent federal legislation, by war-time need, and by state legislation. The formation of state associations and of a federal association of farm bureaus has further helped in the

<sup>1</sup>See also page 21 of Wisconsin Research Bulletin 84, cited on page 131.

growth and spread of the movement. By 1916 state associations had been formed in several states. The Illinois Agricultural Association, which was originally a state federation of county farm improvement associations, was founded in January, 1916, and reorganized in its present form in January, 1919. In its present form it is an organization made up of the individual members of county farm bureaus. The various state associations were formed into a national federation, the American Farm Bureau Federation, in the fall of 1919.<sup>1, 2</sup>

Of the local farm bureau units many were started as the result of informal local meetings of county farm bureau members for the purpose of discussing farm matters of mutual interest. Others were started by county farm bureau officers calling local meetings of farm bureau members and their families. Quite often neighbors who were not farm bureau members were invited. Not all county farm bureaus, however, have organized local units.

*Parent-Teacher Associations.*—A large number of parent-teacher groups owe their origin to the activity of the county superintendent of schools or to the activity of some county or local official of the state or national parent-teachers' organization. Others came into being under the stimulus of the local school teacher.

*Home Bureau Units.*—Home bureau organization originated as a result of the Smith-Lever federal legislation in 1914, the first county organization in Illinois being established in Kankakee county early in 1915. War-time need for conservation of food and clothes accelerated the spread of these bureaus. Much of the immediate stimulus for the organization of the local home bureau units with which this study is concerned came from the Home Economics Extension Service of the University of Illinois cooperating with the Illinois Federation of Home Bureaus. At present, before there can be a county home bureau organization in Illinois, a specified number of homemakers within the county must be obtained. They then organize into local units.

*Subordinate Granges.*—The early history of the Illinois Grange dates back to the organization of the Eureka Grange at Nunda, Illinois, in 1869 by Oliver Hudson Kelly, the founder of the National Grange, who was then going from community to community organizing local granges which were to be subordinate to the county, state, and national organization, with ritual, secrecy, fraternity, and mutual benefit as ele-

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<sup>1</sup>O. M. Kile. "The Farm Bureau Movement." The Macmillan Company, 1921.

<sup>2</sup>M. C. Burritt. "The County Agent and the Farm Bureau." Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922.



ments working for permanency.<sup>1</sup> New groups are being organized today on much the same basis and by much the same method as were first employed.<sup>2</sup>

*Community Units.*—Community units, which are general-purpose in character, are now being formed in many counties of Illinois. The principal stimulus to their organization has usually come from mem-



FIG. 3.—A CONFERENCE HELD IN JERSEY COUNTY TO PLAN FOR COMMUNITY UNIT ORGANIZATION

In many counties officers and program committees of local groups are invited by the county farm and home advisers to come to an annual conference to discuss policies relating to local organization and programs for local group activity.

bers of farm bureau and home bureau units, 4-H clubs, and other local rural organizations. Their membership is composed of the members of the above organizations and, in many cases, of other farm people residing in the locality. Encouragement in the formation of these clubs has often been given by county agencies and by the Agricultural Extension Service of the University of Illinois.

*Farmers' Clubs.*—Most of the farmers' clubs included in this study started upon local initiative as a result of a desire for social intercourse. Some were aided by the county farm adviser. The oldest one

<sup>1</sup>S. J. Buck, "The Granger Movement." Harvard University Press, 1913.

<sup>2</sup>B. H. Hibbard, "Marketing Agricultural Products," page 195. D. Appleton & Company, 1929.

is the West Aurora Farmers Club of Kane County, which was started in 1894.

### Structure

The typical structure of the local groups studied cannot be considered particularly unique. Nevertheless, an outline of the principal features of this structure may be useful.

The structure of the various groups is disclosed by the officer and committee set-up. Tho the officers for the various groups vary in title, tenure, and number, the framework around which most of the groups organize is about the same. It generally has five main divisions: (1) administration, (2) record keeping, (3) care of finances, (4) program planning, and (5) care of special duties. The manner in which the officers function in the different types of organizations does not, it seems, vary as much as does the number of officers and their tenure. Table 10 gives a composite picture of these variations.

*Administration.*—Most groups have two administrative officers, designated president and vice-president, chairman and vice-chairman, or director and vice-director. They are usually elected yearly (in a minority of cases, every three or six months) and in many groups they may succeed themselves. Their usual duties are to be in charge of the meetings, to take the lead in making policies for the organization, and to see that the expressed wishes of the membership are carried out as far as possible.

*Record Keeping.*—Records are customarily kept by secretaries, who keep a list of the members, call roll if necessary, keep and report proceedings at meetings, and keep a record of committee work and of action taken by the organization.

*Care of Finances.*—The secretary, in many local organizations, acts as the treasurer, in which case he, or she, is called secretary-treasurer. Some groups, however, keep the offices separate. In general the treasurer takes care and keeps account of moneys received and expended by the organization, collects dues or other moneys owed or pledged, and pays bills when so empowered.

*Program Planning.*—In general there are three ways of making and executing plans for programs of meetings: (1) they are made by the administrative officers (sometimes termed executive committee) and executed by special committees or persons appointed for the task; (2) they are made and executed by committees appointed monthly by the chief administrative officer; or (3) they are made and executed by a program planning committee elected or appointed for a year's

tenure who may counsel with the administrative officers. The chairman of such a committee was, in some groups, the vice-president or vice-chairman.

*Care of Special Duties.*—Most groups have entertainment and social committees appointed from meeting to meeting to take care of

TABLE 10.—OFFICER AND COMMITTEE SET-UP IN LOCAL RURAL ORGANIZATIONS

Type of group	Administrative officers	Record keeping	Care of finances	Program planning	Charged with special duties and activities
Community club	President* and vice president*	Secretary*	Usually by secretary	Administrative officers and monthly committees	Entertainment and social committees,** special committees as needed
Farm bureau unit	Chairman or director*	Secretary*	Secretary	Program committee*	Project leaders,* hosts or entertainment committees,** special committees as needed
Parent-teacher association	President* and vice president*	Secretary*	Usually by secretary	Program committee*	Entertainment committees,** special committees as needed
Home bureau unit	Chairman* and vice chairman*	Secretary*	Treasurer*	Executive committee of 5 or more*	Local leaders,* music and recreation chairmen,* hostesses,** special committees as needed
Subordinate grange	Master* and overseer*	Secretary*	Treasurer*	Lecturer*	Officers of ritual,* special committees as needed
Community unit	Chairman* (or president) and vice chairman*	Secretary*	Usually by secretary	Program planning committee* (part of executive committee)	Project committeemen,* executive committee,* entertainment and social committees,** special committees as needed
Farmers' club	President* and vice president*	Secretary*	Usually by secretary	Administrative officers and monthly committees	Host or hostess,** program or social committees,** special committees as needed

\*Elected or appointed once a year (sometimes every six months).

\*\*Appointed monthly.

\*\*\*Rotating committee; one new member appointed each month, one retiring.

these features in the programs of the meetings. Some groups have project leaders, local leaders, or project committeemen attend various special meetings, conventions, conferences, etc., and report on them at local meetings and in some cases make plans to carry out whatever recommendations are made.

Many local organizations provide for the appointment of special committees to inquire into problems or needs or to make plans for the carrying out of such activities as they may consider advisable. These committees, of course, are kept until the duty to be performed is accomplished.

### Size of Area From Which Membership Is Drawn

Road conditions and conditions of meeting places are, up to a certain point, the most obvious influences determining the size of the area from which membership in these local organizations is drawn. With the improvement of roads and the use of the automobile there has been a tendency for membership areas to increase in size, tho the extent to which the expansion has taken place varies with the function of the group and the number of potential adherents in the locality. However, there seems to be a modal size of area from which it may

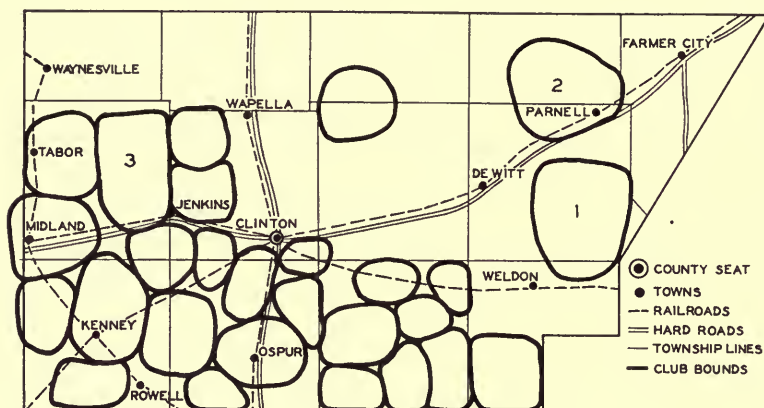


FIG. 4.—ESTIMATED BOUNDARIES OF COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL CLUBS IN DEWITT COUNTY, 1931

All but three of these areas approximate the area of a one-room-school district. The club functioning in Area 1 was originally set up as a community unit. Areas 2 and 3 are each a consolidation of the areas of two or more smaller clubs once functioning but now a part of the larger groups. Consolidation seems to be in process among some of the other groups also. The earliest of these clubs were organized between 1910 and 1915. The ones organized more recently seem to be taking in larger areas.

be expected that organizations of most of the types herein discussed will draw members. The accompanying maps have been chosen to show the modal tendency for each of several different types of organizations. These maps are based upon information obtained from personal interviews with representatives of the localities. Farm advisers and home advisers assisted, in most cases, in making these maps.

*Community Clubs.*—The estimated boundaries of 28 community clubs, sometimes called school clubs, in 9 townships in DeWitt county are shown in Fig. 4. The area from which the Sciota Community Club,

sponsored by the farm bureau of McDonough county but locally promoted, has attracted attendance is shown in Fig. 5.

*Farm Bureau Units.*—One of the earliest successful efforts in unit organization was that undertaken in 1924 by the Champaign County Farm Bureau. Fig. 6 shows the boundaries of the 26 units estab-

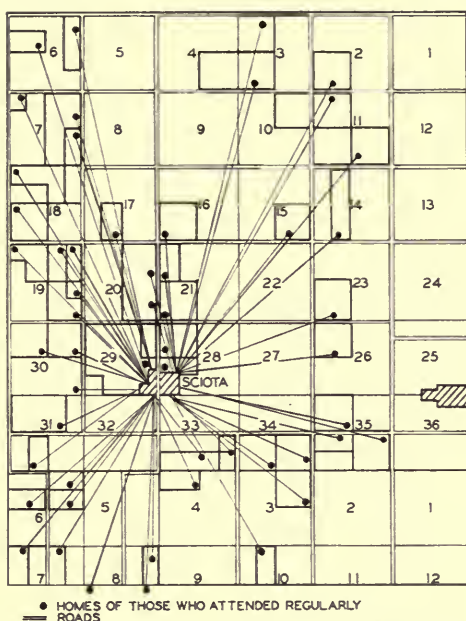


FIG. 5.—AREA OF INFLUENCE OF THE SCIOTA COMMUNITY CLUB OF MCDONOUGH COUNTY, ILLINOIS, 1930

This club, organized in 1924, holds meetings in the little town of Sciota. A careful check on the location of the homes of those who have attended meetings, there being no enrolled membership, indicated that the people came from two townships and from a distance of five or fewer miles from the center.

lished by the county organization. Each unit has its own director and most units have other officers who, with the directors, decide policies and plan programs for the more or less regular meetings of the units.

Fig. 7 shows the estimated boundaries of 10 farm bureau units in Monroe county. These were active in 1921 and 1922 under the leadership of the farm adviser then in office. They were inactive for a few following years, when a second farm adviser came in. A few became active again in 1928-1930 under the influence of a third farm adviser.

The boundaries of 18 farm bureau units in Livingston county (Fig. 8) were estimated by the farm adviser in accordance with information

supplied by the members of the farm bureau. Questionnaires were sent to all farm bureau members in the county asking which of a number of centers would be the most convenient for attendance at local meetings. The area represented by those who designated Pontiac as the most convenient center was the largest, probably because of the ease with which members can reach this town, there being hard-surfaced roads into it from four directions. Meetings at this point,

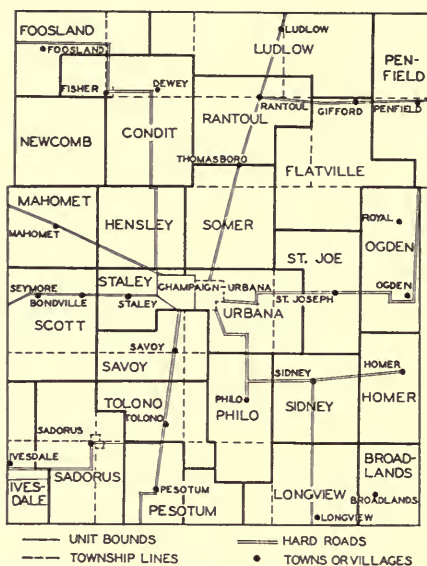


FIG. 6.—BOUNDARIES OF FARM BUREAU UNITS IN CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS, 1931

The boundaries follow arbitrary lines determined by the joint decision of the county organization and the local membership and do not coincide completely with the township lines. Unit areas vary in size, most of them being larger than township areas.

however, have attracted only a small percentage of the farm population of the area. Were a larger number to attend, difficulties of accommodation and administration would have to be faced. The modal size of area represented by these 18 farm bureau units is not unlike that of the community units in Adams county (Fig. 10).

*Parent-Teacher Associations.*—The area from which a parent-teacher association draws its membership is usually arbitrarily limited by the boundaries of the school district. These areas, especially in the case of rural one-room schools, are not, as a rule, large enough for the best promotion of other than school-club activities.

*Home Bureau Units.*—The areas from which the 19 local units of the Mason County Home Bureau drew its members in 1931 are shown in Fig. 9. These areas vary in size and their shapes are irregular. In three exceptional cases members traveled 8, 10, and 24 miles to unit meetings. In general, the areas are somewhat larger than those from which community clubs draw their members but not as large as those from which farm bureau units draw members.

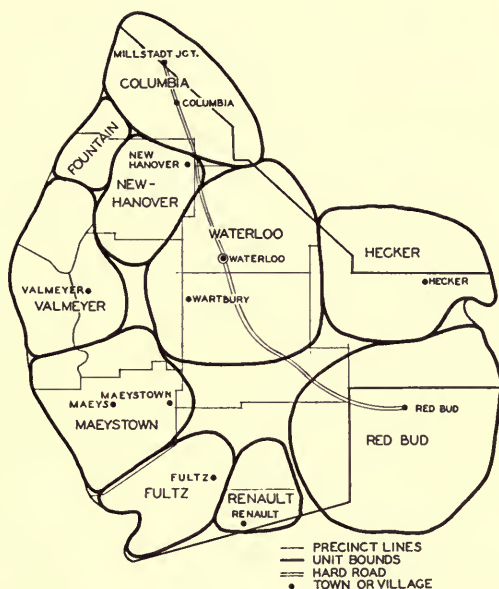


FIG. 7.—BOUNDARIES OF FARM BUREAU UNITS IN MONROE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, 1930

In each case the area mapped represents that from which members came to attend meetings held within the area. As contrasted with the boundaries of farm bureau units in Champaign county, the boundaries of these units are irregular and follow certain topographic features of the county.

*Subordinate Granges.*—Very little information was obtained concerning the size of the areas in which subordinate granges operated. The granges studied in representative counties attracted members from an area approximately a third the size of the township.

*Community Units.*—The boundaries of six community units (locally called community associations) which have been active from one to six years in Adams county are shown in Fig. 10. The areas are strikingly similar in size. Ellington-Riverside and Melrose, at the time of

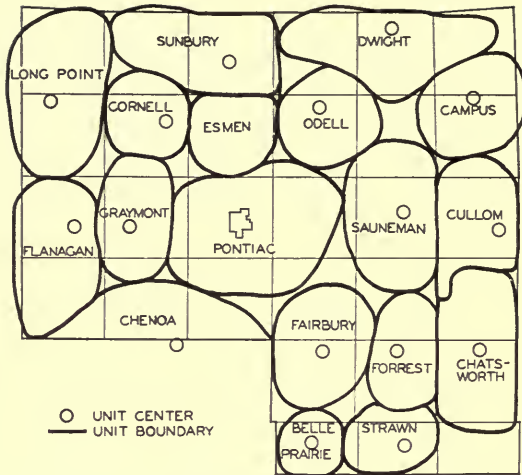


FIG. 8.—ESTIMATED BOUNDARIES OF FARM BUREAU UNITS IN LIVINGSTON COUNTY, ILLINOIS, 1931

The boundaries of these units were determined by members indicating their choice for place of meeting. Trade centers were usually designated as the most convenient place for local meetings.

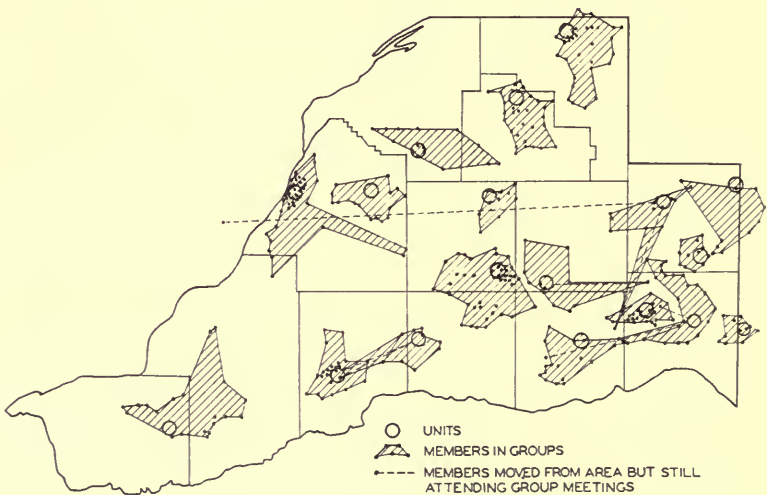


FIG. 9.—BOUNDARIES OF HOME BUREAU UNITS IN MASON COUNTY, ILLINOIS, 1931

In general, these areas are somewhat larger than those from which community clubs draw their members.



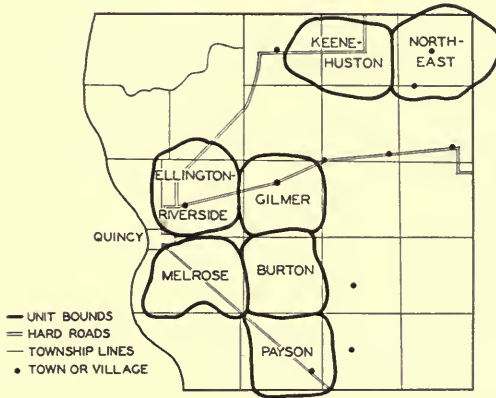


FIG. 10.—BOUNDARIES OF COMMUNITY UNITS IN ADAMS COUNTY, ILLINOIS, 1930

These units, formed under the same stimulus, show striking similarities in size of area from which each has drawn membership.

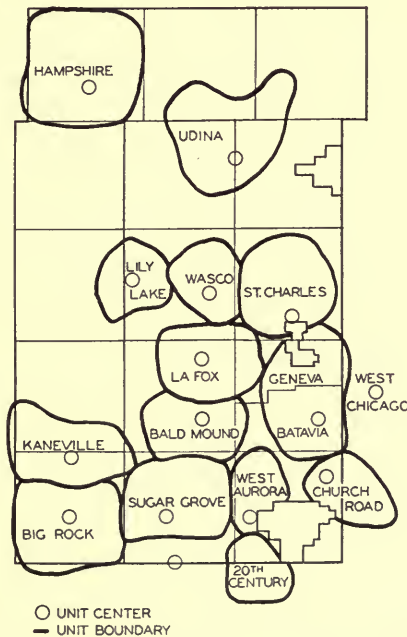


FIG. 11.—BOUNDARIES OF FARMERS' CLUBS AND COMMUNITY CLUBS IN KANE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, 1930

The older clubs are the smaller ones, probably because at the time of their organization transportation facilities were less well developed, whereas social relations between near neighbors were probably more highly developed.

this study, were as active as any of the other units, despite the fact that they neighbor upon the city of Quincy, which has a population of more than 35,000. Burton is an open-country community with no trade center.

*Farmers' Clubs.*—Areas from which a number of farmers' clubs in Kane county draw their membership are shown in Fig. 11. Some of these are among the oldest organized rural groups in the state.

The West Aurora Farmers' Club has been holding regular monthly meetings since 1894. The area from which its members come is a little larger than a third of a township. The Hampshire unit, organized in 1930, approximates the size of a township. The Sugar Grove Community Club, organized in 1904, covers approximately two-thirds of a township.

*Summary.*—Tho the size of the areas from which members come who attend meetings of these local organizations varies, the range is not great. The modal size approximates 30 to 35 square miles. The maximum distance from which people come who belong to these groups is seldom over 6 or 8 miles, even where the roads are improved and motor transportation is common. In general, the areas do not conform to boundaries of political or civil units except where they are arbitrarily determined, as in the case of school groups. Since the distribution of the membership is, as a rule, determined by the natural inclinations of the members, which in turn are determined by acquaintance, convenience of meeting place, similarity of trading interest, and visiting or social habits, the groups establish their own boundaries. These boundaries are not fixed but fluctuate as the conditions that determine them change.

### Original Purposes for Organizing

Members of 230 groups gave data on the original purposes for which their groups were organized. In Table 11 these original purposes are reported under five classifications, which, tho not mutually exclusive, represent divisions made by the farm people themselves.

Perhaps the most significant thing which the table reveals is that nearly half the groups were originally organized to serve "educational purposes." Experience of the writer with farm people and rural organizations leads him to believe that those reporting educational purposes meant that their groups were formed to give the members a chance to acquire knowledge and skill in the various aspects of farm life, particularly in farming and homemaking practices. It should be noted also that "better farming" was reported specifically as a purpose of 25 per-

cent of all groups. Farm bureau units, home bureau units, and community units were the groups giving most emphasis to educational purposes. All three of these types of groups give information of occupational value to the farmer and to the homemaker.

More than a third of the groups were originally organized chiefly for social purposes. Social purposes most frequently mentioned were: the developing of acquaintanceship and fellowship, the providing of opportunity for the exchange of ideas which would in any way con-

TABLE 11.—ORIGINAL PURPOSES FOR WHICH 230 GROUPS OF FARM PEOPLE WERE ORGANIZED

Type of organization	Number of groups	Educational purposes	Social purposes	Better farming	Community development	Improvement of the school
		<i>perct.</i>	<i>perct.</i>	<i>perct.</i>	<i>perct.</i>	<i>perct.</i>
Community clubs.....	47	27	54	13	31	8
Farm bureau units.....	46	70	26	60	13	13
Parent-teacher associations..	45	30	27	0	20	70
Home bureau units.....	31	84	3	41	16	0
Subordinate granges.....	24	44	60	20	20	0
Community units.....	15	60	40	27	20	0
Others <sup>1</sup> .....	22	39	48	9	18	0
Total.....	230	49	35	25	20	17

<sup>1</sup>Includes 9 farmers' clubs, 4 4-H clubs, 4 women's clubs, 3 community councils, and 2 farmers' unions.

tribute to the social welfare of the community, and the satisfying of purely recreational needs thru games, dances, and the like. Granges, community units, and community clubs gave more emphasis to social purposes than to educational.

The emphasis given to educational and social purposes by these groups from their origin was quite in harmony with the opinions of farm people concerning the purposes for which farm-family groups should be organized.

Thirty-three percent of the 285 members who gave usable data on their organizations answered that the original purposes were fulfilled well, 17 percent, fair, 5 percent, poor and 1 percent, not at all. Granges and home bureau units seemed to be fulfilling their purposes best. The more definite the purposes, it seems, the better they can be realized by the group.

Table 12 indicates that more than half of 230 groups had made no change from the original purpose which led them to organize. Of those that had made changes, the greatest number, 20 percent of all groups, made changes for the better serving of educational interests. Fourteen percent made changes to promote social activities. Home

TABLE 12.—CHANGES WHICH 230 GROUPS MADE FROM ORIGINAL PURPOSES

Type of group	Number of groups	Remained unchanged	Made purposes more educational	Made purposes more social	Type of change not specified
		<i>percl.</i>	<i>percl.</i>	<i>percl.</i>	<i>percl.</i>
Community clubs.....	47	49	15	17	19
Farm bureau units.....	46	64	15	4	17
Parent-teacher associations.....	45	41	25	17	17
Home bureau units.....	31	42	35	13	10
Subordinate granges.....	24	50	17	17	16
Community units.....	15	53	27	19	0
Others <sup>1</sup> .....	22	63	9	14	14
Total.....	230	51	20	14	15

<sup>1</sup>See footnote to Table 11.

bureau units, community units, farm bureau units and parent-teacher associations had made more changes in purpose to further educational interests than they had to further social interests. On the other hand, community clubs and those listed as "others" had made more changes in purpose favoring social interests than favoring educational interests.

The questionnaire brought out, however, that many members still felt that changes should be made in the details of group aims. Forty-two percent of the 285 questioned believed, for example, that more opportunity should be given individuals and the group to develop self-expression in ideas, cultural tastes, and desires. It is important to note in this connection that only 2 percent of the groups when they were first formed emphasized the providing of opportunity for the development of such expression as a purpose for organizing, and only 2 percent emphasized recreation.

### The Life Span

The years when most of the groups included in this study were organized were 1918, 1920, 1926, 1929, and 1930 (Fig. 12). Many of the home bureau units were organized in 1918. Four of the granges and two of the farm bureau units were organized in 1920. Six parent-teacher associations, 5 community clubs, and 4 farm bureau units became active in 1926. Eight parent-teacher associations and three community units were organized in 1929. Ten farm bureau units and seven parent-teacher associations were organized in 1930. The years 1918 to 1920 and 1929 to 1930 were the periods of most active organization, with minor activity in 1926.

Fig. 13 shows the percentage of groups active in 1930 that had been active in previous years. The oldest, a grange, has been active since 1871. Three other granges and three farmers' clubs were organized before 1910 and were still active in 1930. Fifty percent of

all the groups were five or more years old. Thirty percent were ten or more years old, but only 5 percent were twenty or more years old.<sup>1</sup> In Illinois the grange and the farmers clubs are the oldest rural organi-

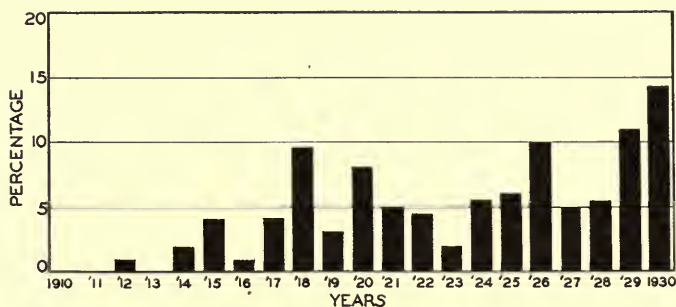


FIG. 12.—PERCENTAGE OF 172 LOCAL GROUPS ORGANIZED EACH YEAR FROM 1910 TO 1930

Previous to 1910 one group was organized in each of the following years: 1871, 1875, 1890, 1894, 1901, 1904, 1907.

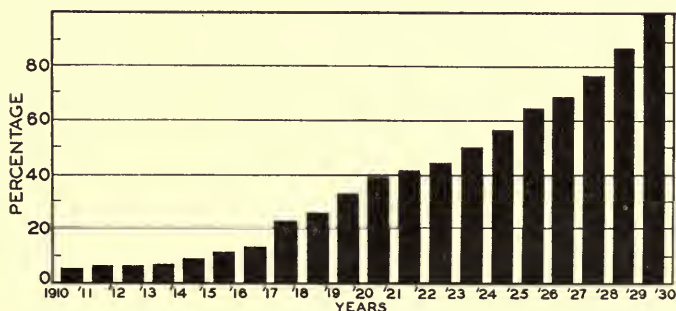


FIG. 13.—PERCENTAGE OF 172 LOCAL GROUPS ACTIVE EACH YEAR FROM 1910 TO 1930

Fifty percent of all groups active in 1930 were at that time five or more years old.

zations. More recently the parent-teacher association, the home bureau, and, in the last few years especially, the farm bureau unit and the community unit seem to be developing more rapidly than other organizations.

<sup>1</sup>J. H. Kolb and A. F. Wileden found that the modal length of life of organizations similar to those considered in this study has been two years or less (see "Special Interest Groups in Rural Society," Wis. Agr. Exp. Sta. Res. Bul. 84, p. 47, 1927).

The trend in number of groups active each year has been downward in the last few years, perhaps indicating that more organizations came into being within a period of a few years than could continue on a permanent basis, altho some other factors may have been operating to reduce the number of groups.

### Membership and Attendance

The size of membership and the type of members is important to the success of any organization. The ideal size of membership may differ, however, according to the type of organization and according to local conditions. Home bureau units, for example, may flourish best with a membership of about 25; on the other hand, community units may flourish best with much larger memberships.

*Size of Membership.*—The organizations included in this study usually consisted of fifty to a hundred members each. Twenty-five percent of them had more than 90 members, 23 percent had 16 to 30 members. Forty-four percent had memberships distributed between these two ranges.

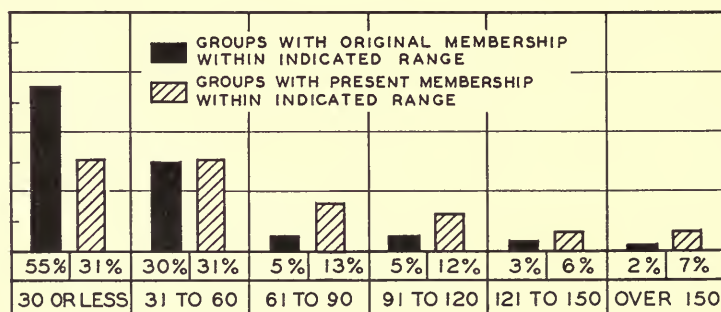


FIG. 14.—PERCENTAGE OF 178 LOCAL GROUPS HAVING ORIGINAL AND PRESENT MEMBERSHIP WITHIN SPECIFIED RANGES

Most groups had a smaller membership when they were first organized than they had at the date of the study.

Most groups had a smaller membership when they were first organized than they had at the date of the study. The modal size of the original membership was less than 31 members, whereas the mode for the present (1930) membership was 31 to 60 (Fig. 14). Twenty-five percent of the groups reported a present membership of more than 90, whereas only 10 percent reported an original membership of that size. Likewise, while only 31 percent of the groups reported having a present membership of 30 or less, 55 percent reported an original membership of 30 or less.

The percentage of granges, community clubs, and community units reporting present memberships of more than 90 was larger than the percentage of other groups so reporting, tho most of these groups reported original memberships of 30 or less. Home bureau units, which appeal only to women and place most emphasis upon technical matters concerned with homemaking, were small in membership, 93 percent having a present membership of less than 60 and 73 percent having had an original membership of 30 or less. Farm bureau units also were small in membership, 73 percent of them having a present membership of less than 60 and 50 percent having had an original membership of 30 or less.

In most cases it is probably safe to say that increase in membership beyond that at the time of organization indicates that the organization has increased its stability.

*Type of Membership.*—Membership is established in several ways, according to the group. In some cases all persons in the locality who indicate an interest in the organization by regular or even occasional attendance are considered members. They may or may not be enrolled. In other cases membership is established by meeting more specific requirements, for example, the paying of dues. Some organizations count all members of the family as members if the heads of the family sign up.

Farm bureau units, home bureau units, subordinate granges, and parent-teacher associations especially stressed the importance of some way of distinguishing members, such as enrollment and payment of membership fees. Most community clubs and community units, tho permitting all who came to meetings to participate in the activities, counted as members only those formally enrolled.

Of 285 members representing 234 local organizations 48 percent reported that their organizations counted the entire family as members, if the head or any responsible member joined. Forty-six percent reported that their groups included hired help, and 37 percent reported that they included people not engaged in farming (Fig. 15).

Community clubs, parent-teacher associations, granges, and community units admitted into membership practically everyone in the family old enough to take an interest in the organization. According to grange rules, however, children cannot become members until they have reached the age of sixteen. All members of the family over this age may become members of the grange. Parent-teacher associations include in their membership both school children and their parents, as well as others in the community interested in the education of

children. Home bureau units include only homemakers in their membership. Farm bureau units include in their membership chiefly farm owners and farm operators. The entire family of the members of farm bureau units, however, often attend the meetings.

*Participation by Members in Group Activities.*—The serviceability and stability of an organization are largely determined by the extent to which members take an active part in its affairs. Seventy-seven percent of the 200 groups for which data on membership participation were obtained gave all members the opportunity to take part in some activity. Half or more of the members of these 200 groups did take part


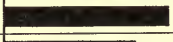
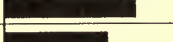
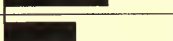
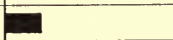

MEMBERSHIP CONSTITUENCY	MEMBERS REPORTING	
ALL MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY	%	
HIRED HELP INCLUDED	46	
NONFARMERS INCLUDED	37	
HOMEMAKERS ONLY	29	
FARM OPERATORS ONLY	20	
CHILDREN ADMITTED INDIVIDUALLY	10	

FIG. 15.—PERCENTAGE OF 285 PERSONS WHO INDICATED THAT THE GROUPS TO WHICH THEY BELONGED HAD THE MEMBERSHIP CONSTITUENCY SPECIFIED

About half these people belonged to groups in which the family was admitted to membership as a unit.

in the activities of the organization and most of these members took part in the programs of the meetings. More than 50 percent of granges, community units, and community clubs had over half their membership taking part in the activities of the organization (Fig. 16). These groups, as just shown, are the same ones that included all members of the family in their membership. Wider interests, it seems, makes participation by more members possible.

*Attendance.*—Regardless of the size of the membership of a group, it is important that attendance nearly equal membership, since a fairly regular attendance is the first requisite for sustained interest on the part of members.

Thirty-six percent of 185 groups had an attendance of 31 to 60, 33 percent an attendance of 30 or less, and 16 percent an attendance of 61 to 90 (Table 13). In general, community clubs, parent-teacher associations, and community units had the largest attendances, whereas farm bureau units and home bureau units had the smallest.



A small attendance (30 or fewer) at regular meetings makes it easier to get members to take part in the programs; it often makes possible better discussions and a more informal type of meeting, and the meetings, moreover, can be held in homes. Also, with groups having small attendance members as a rule feel a greater degree of responsibility for the success of the meetings. On the other hand, meetings with small attendance may be discouraging, especially to the farm-family type of organization, since the programs may lack the requisite variety or the kinds of features that only large attend-

NO.	KIND	HALF (+) MEMBERS PARTICIPATING	
		%	
23	SUBORDINATE GRANGES	65	
15	COMMUNITY UNITS	59	
44	COMMUNITY CLUBS	51	
27	HOME BUREAU UNITS	48	
43	PARENT-TEACHERS ASSN.	44	
15	FARMERS' CLUBS, ETC.	40	
33	FARM BUREAU UNITS	35	
200	ALL GROUPS	43	

FIG. 16.—NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF EACH OF SEVERAL TYPES OF LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS IN WHICH HALF OR MORE OF THE MEMBERSHIP TOOK PART IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ORGANIZATION

The types of groups that most frequently had half or more of their members taking part in the activities of their organization were the ones that included all members of the family in their membership—subordinate granges, community units, and community clubs. Wider interests make participation by more members possible.

TABLE 13.—RANGE IN AVERAGE ATTENDANCE AT MONTHLY MEETINGS OF 185 GROUPS

Type of group	Number of groups	Percent reported as having average attendances within the specified ranges					Over 150
		30 or fewer	31-60	61-90	91-120	121-150	
Community clubs.....	46	15	43	13	9	13	6
Farm bureau units.....	25	64	16	12	4	4	0
Parent-teacher assoc.....	38	29	50	13	3	3	2
Home bureau units.....	23	87	13	0	0	0	0
Granges.....	24	13	50	33	4	0	0
Community units.....	14	7	29	13.5	29	7	13.5
Others <sup>1</sup> .....	15	33	33	34	0	0	0
Total.....	185	33	36	16	6	5	3

<sup>1</sup>Includes 10 farmers' clubs and 5 women's clubs.

ances can assure, the work involved may put too heavy a load on a few, or attendance frequently may seem not to justify the amount of labor spent on the program. Moreover, frictions are more likely to arise with smaller attendances than with larger ones.

### Frequency and Place of Meetings

Many of the problems which arise in making a local organization effective are occasioned either by the difficulty of holding regular meetings or the difficulty of obtaining satisfactory meeting places. Practically all the successful groups studied held regular meetings, altho there was considerable variation in attendance from meeting to meeting. Meetings were held in various kinds of places.

*Frequency of Meetings.*—Seventy-eight percent of the 195 groups for which reports were obtained held regular monthly meetings (Table 14). Fourteen percent held meetings every two weeks, 3 percent weekly, 3 percent quarterly, and but 1 percent yearly. In other words

TABLE 14.—FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS OF 195 GROUPS

Type of group	Number of groups	Regularity of meetings					
		Weekly	Biweekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Semi-annual	Annual
		<i>perct.</i>	<i>perct.</i>	<i>perct.</i>	<i>perct.</i>	<i>perct.</i>	<i>perct.</i>
Community clubs.....	47	2	2	85	7	2	2
Farm bureau units.....	26	0	8	73	8	3	8
Parent-teacher assoc.....	42	0	2	98	0	0	0
Home bureau units.....	27	0	0	100	0	0	0
Subordinate granges.....	23	4	83	13	0	0	0
Community units.....	12	0	0	100	0	0	0
Others <sup>1</sup> .....	18	17	22	61	0	0	0
Total.....	195	3	14	78	3	1	1

<sup>1</sup>Includes 10 farmers' clubs all of which met monthly or oftener, 4 women's clubs all of which met monthly, 2 community councils, and 2 4-H clubs.

ninety-five percent of these groups held regular meetings at least once a month.

Forty-nine percent of all groups held regular meetings all twelve months of the year. A majority of all but three types of groups met every month in the year (Fig. 17). Granges, home bureau units, and community units held regular monthly meetings twelve months of the year. Forty-six percent of all groups held regular meetings at least once a month except during the summer. Parent-teacher associations and community clubs in particular suspended activities during the summer. A few farm bureau units and community clubs held their meetings annually.

The practice of these groups probably indicates that regular meetings, held monthly or oftener, are necessary to the carrying on of a definite program and the building of group solidarity.

NO.	KIND	HOLDING MEETINGS ALL 12 MONTHS	
		%	
23	SUBORDINATE GRANGES	100	
12	COMMUNITY UNITS	78	
27	HOME BUREAU UNITS	78	
18	FARMERS' CLUBS, ETC.	60	
26	FARM BUREAU UNITS	48	
47	COMMUNITY CLUBS	25	
42	PARENT-TEACHERS ASS'N.	6	
185	ALL GROUPS	49	

FIG. 17.—NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF EACH OF SEVEN CHIEF TYPES OF GROUPS HOLDING MEETINGS TWELVE MONTHS OF THE YEAR

A majority of all types of groups, except three—community clubs, parent-teacher associations, and farm bureau units—held regular meetings at least once a month throught the year. Parent-teacher associations, and frequently community clubs also, being closely related to school activities, often suspended activity during the summer months. Many farm bureau units became inactive during the summer, probably because of the influence of summer work on attendance.

*Meeting Places.*—Homes and school buildings were the most popular places of meeting. Thirty-two percent of the 234 organizations for which reports were given met in homes, 31 percent in schools, 7 percent in their own club hall, 6 percent in community buildings, and 5 percent in privately owned halls (Table 15).

Most of the home bureau units and slightly more than half of the groups listed as "others" held their meetings in homes. Nearly 90 percent of the parent-teacher associations met in the schools, and more than half the granges met in their own halls. The other types of organizations met in a variety of places, but none had a marked preference for any one type of meeting place. For all organizations the home and the school were the most popular meeting places; 32 and 31 percent, respectively, of all meetings being held in them.

Sixty-eight percent of the 285 members making reports on deficiencies of meeting places reported that meeting places for their organizations were satisfactory. Only 9 percent expressed dissatisfaction. Most of the dissatisfaction expressed was of three kinds and varied according to the organization to which the member making the complaint

belonged: (1) members of the family type of organizations were the most inclined to report that meeting places (homes and one-room school buildings especially) were too small; (2) members of home bureau units especially reported that halls used by their units did not have necessary equipment (such as suitable seats, dishes, a stage, adequate light and running water); and (3) members of community

TABLE 15.—PLACES IN WHICH 234 GROUPS HELD MEETINGS

Type of group	Number of groups	Home	School	Church	Town hall	Club hall	Community building	Private hall
Community clubs. . . . .	50	25	36	16	7	4	7	5
Farm bureau units. . . . .	46	30	20	15	22	2	2	9
Parent-teacher associations. . . . .	45	9	89	2	0	0	0	0
Home bureau units. . . . .	31	71	3	6	0	0	11	9
Subordinate granges. . . . .	25	15	0	4	8	54	11	8
Community units. . . . .	15	35	29	18	12	0	6	0
Others <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	22	52	17	7	13	0	7	4
Total. . . . .	234	32	31	10	9	7	6	5

<sup>1</sup>See footnote to Table 11.

clubs and farm bureau units particularly reported that rental on halls was too high. Usually, however, there was no serious objection to payment for janitor service, lights, and a small maintenance rental charge.

When the organization is just starting and when it is not too large, homes of members seem to be the best places in which to meet. School buildings, churches, and halls come to be used if homes are too small.

### Programs for Meetings

Probably the most important factor in the success of any rural organization is the careful planning and carrying out of programs of meetings to meet the needs and desires of the membership. Well-planned programs require, and also facilitate, the holding of regular meetings in suitable meeting places.

The principal features on the programs of the 234 organizations studied were: a business session, and cultural, educational, and recreational features (Fig. 18). Cultural features, as defined for the purposes of this study, were the features primarily designed to improve or cater to tastes in the arts. Similarly, educational features (following the current usage of the farm people themselves) were features designed to improve knowledge and skill by instruction. Such instruction was principally in better farming and homemaking practices and

in matters pertaining to general community betterment. Recreational features included the social activities and other diversions. The business session and the cultural and educational features were usually formal, the recreational features informal.

Emphasis given to the different features varied somewhat among organizations. Parent-teacher associations, home bureau units, and granges laid more emphasis on business sessions than did the others. The groups spending most of their time on educational features were farm bureau units, home bureau units, community units, and parent-teacher associations. Community clubs and farmers' clubs, especially

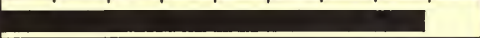
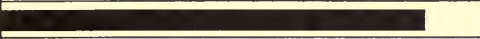

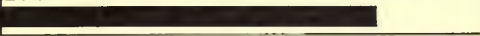
FEATURES	GROUPS REPORTING	
BUSINESS SESSION	79	
CULTURAL	79	
EDUCATIONAL	77	
RECREATIONAL	70	

FIG. 18.—PRINCIPAL TYPES OF FEATURES ON THE PROGRAMS OF MEETINGS OF 234 GROUPS, and PERCENTAGES OF GROUPS REPORTED AS HAVING EACH OF THESE TYPES

The majority of groups have four major types of features on their programs—a business session, and cultural, educational, and recreational activities.

those having committees to plan programs from meeting to meeting, had programs devoted largely to cultural and recreational activities. Eighty-four percent each of granges and community units were reported to have recreational activities as a regular part of the program. Granges spent a great deal of time in meetings on ritual and on the conferring of degrees.

*Educational Features.*—The leading educational features on the programs of meetings were talks, instruction,<sup>1</sup> and discussion. Each one of these was found on the programs of nearly half the organizations (Table 16). Parent-teacher associations and community units included talks in their programs more frequently than did other organizations. The proportion of groups giving instruction to members was highest, in the order named, for the community units, home bureau units, and farm bureau units. Instruction was usually provided

<sup>1</sup>Instruction, which was the term used by the farm people, was detailed explanation of a vocational practice or of methods for carrying out a project for community betterment. With some groups instruction frequently took the form of a demonstration, tho the term demonstration was not used by the farm people themselves in answering the questionnaire.

either by authorities from outside the groups or by people in the groups who made special preparation on the matters under consideration. The home bureau units and community units gave more place on their programs of meetings to discussion sections than did other groups.

TABLE 16.—EDUCATIONAL METHODS EMPLOYED IN PROGRAMS OF MEETINGS OF 234 GROUPS

Type of group	Number of groups	General talks	Instruction	Discussions	Debates
		<i>percl.</i>	<i>percl.</i>	<i>percl.</i>	<i>percl.</i>
Community clubs.....	50	48	24	22	18
Farm bureau units.....	46	51	53	40	2
Parent-teacher associations.....	45	60	24	24	4
Home bureau units.....	31	16	63	63	0
Subordinate granges.....	25	32	44	24	24
Community units.....	15	56	69	69	13
Others <sup>1</sup> .....	22	50	41	50	9
Total.....	234	46	42	37	9

<sup>1</sup>See footnote to Table 11.

*Cultural Features.*—These features provided most scope for local talent. The use of local talent in the programs of meetings was reported for 43 percent of 234 groups (Table 17). This figure would probably have been much higher if specific questions on this point had been asked. Music, elocution (recitations and readings), and dramatics were popular forms of cultural activities in which members found it easy to take part. Pictures were reported to some extent in the programs of community units, granges, farm bureau units, and community clubs. They were usually provided by some outside person or agency, in many cases by the farm or home adviser.

*Recreational Features.*—The recreational features that were popular with a majority of the groups were visiting, refreshments, and games. Dancing and cards were in the regular programs of only a small percentage; they were most popular with granges and community clubs. The sentiment of many of those members questioned was that if either dancing or cards were included regularly in the program, other features would gradually be crowded out.

*The Business Session.*—Most of the groups usually devoted from 10 to 25 minutes at the beginning of meetings to a consideration of the business of the group. In this session roll was usually called, minutes read, committees appointed, committee reports given, and the programs for meetings and the general activities of the organization considered. Individual members had, during this session, their opportunity to re-

examine any phase of the activities of their group and to help determine its future actions.

TABLE 17.—CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL FEATURES ON PROGRAMS OF MEETINGS OF 234 GROUPS, AND PERCENTAGES OF GROUPS HAVING THESE FEATURES

Type of group	Number of groups	Used local talent	Cultural features			Recreational features				
			Music	Elo- cution and drama	Pic- tures	Visit- ing	Re- fresh- ments	Games	Danc- ing	Cards
		perct.	perct.	perct.	perct.	perct.	perct.	perct.	perct.	perct.
Community clubs.....	50	46	50	34	8	91	71	54	20	20
Farm bureau units.....	46	28	28	4	13	58	53	33	8	0
Parent-teacher associations.....	45	56	31	13	7	79	91	53	3	3
Home bureau units.....	31	19	16	0	0	57	66	83	0	0
Subordinate granges.....	25	56	56	13	7	86	88	76	33	14
Community units.....	15	44	31	19	19	67	88	40	0	0
Others <sup>1</sup> .....	22	27	41	18	18	41	68	23	4.5	4.5
Total.....	234	43	36	12	9	79	73	55	11	7

<sup>1</sup>See footnote to Table 11.

*Educational Features Held Most Valuable for Members and Also Most Important in Maintaining the Life of an Organization.*—Forty-seven percent of 285 members felt that educational features furnished the most value to members and to the community as a whole (Table 18). Educational features, it will be remembered, included talks, instruction, and discussion on farm topics (Table 16). Twenty-nine percent and 21 percent, respectively, reported that cultural and recreational features were of most value. Often a member would mention all three features as valuable.

TABLE 18.—OPINIONS OF 285 MEMBERS OF 234 GROUPS ON THE MOST VALUABLE FEATURES OF PROGRAMS OF MEETINGS

Type of group	Number of members questioned	Percentage indicating features which they held to be of most value <sup>1</sup>			
		Educational features	Cultural features	Recreational features	The business session
Community clubs.....	57	37	42	14	11
Farm bureau units.....	54	44	20	20	11
Parent-teacher associations.....	48	50	44	40	15
Home bureau units.....	40	67	12	7	7
Subordinate granges.....	29	45	34	24	24
Community units.....	28	50	21	21	4
Others <sup>2</sup> .....	29	41	26	22	15
Total.....	285	47	29	21	11

<sup>1</sup>Percentages total more than 100 because some of the members indicated two, and some more than two, of the features as being most valuable.

<sup>2</sup>See footnote to Table 9.

The 285 members were asked not only to indicate which features on the programs of their organizations they felt were most valuable to the members as a whole, but also to indicate which features they felt were most important in maintaining the life of the organizations. (It is assumed that the features that were most effective in keeping members interested and active were the ones that contributed most to the life of the organizations, tho they were not necessarily the ones of most value to the members.) Forty-two percent believed that educational features were most important in maintaining the life of their organizations. Somewhat less than a third held recreational features, and a little more than a fourth held cultural features, the most important in this regard (Fig. 19). Some members, again, mentioned more than one feature. Only a small percentage mentioned specifically that speakers brought in from the outside were the most important.

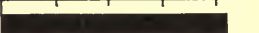
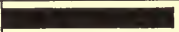
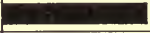


FEATURES	MEMBERS MENTIONING	
	%	
EDUCATIONAL	42	
RECREATIONAL	32	
CULTURAL	27	
OUTSIDE SPEAKERS	9	
SCREEN PICTURES	1.4	
BUSINESS SESSION	0	

FIG. 19.—FEATURES WHICH 285 MEMBERS OF 234 ORGANIZATIONS HELD MOST IMPORTANT IN MAINTAINING THE LIFE OF THEIR ORGANIZATION AND PERCENTAGE OF MEMBERS MENTIONING EACH FEATURE

Features held most important in maintaining the life of an organization may be defined as those which were believed to draw and hold attendance best. Educational, recreational, and cultural features held first place in the opinions of these people. Business sessions, while voted by some the most valuable feature to the members (Table 18), were not mentioned by any of these people as among the most important in drawing and holding membership.

Speakers from the outside no doubt have their value, but they probably should not be depended upon for maintaining the life of an organization.

The above data not only emphasize the need of balance and variety in meetings but especially emphasize the importance of carefully planned educational features.

#### Financial Policies

Most local groups require some financing. Many find it difficult to raise money, especially if no policy was adopted regarding finances



when the group was organized. Several methods are used. Data on this point were obtained from 285 members of 234 organizations.

*Dues Chief Means of Obtaining Money.*—Of the 285 members nearly half reported dues as the chief source of income for the organizations to which they belonged. More than 70 percent of the members of parent-teacher associations, of granges, and of home bureau units reported that their organizations required their members to pay dues. Almost 50 percent of the members of the community clubs reported dues required. But less than one-fourth of the members of farm bureau units and community units reported paying membership dues to the local unit. Farm bureau members, however, paid dues to the county organization.

The advantages of dues are that they provide a regular income and make unnecessary the irregular and unfixed assessments which are usually so unwelcome. The disadvantages lie in the difficulty of collecting them and in settling the conflicts that arise over disposal of surpluses or the making up of deficits. On the whole it is probably true that if local groups need money regularly, the levying of dues is the fairest and surest way of obtaining it.

Over one-fourth reported raising funds by the sale of refreshments. In most cases the funds so raised were used to pay for necessary incidentals rather than to provide a regular income.

Collections, subscriptions, and admissions were used in most groups only as occasion required. Collections and subscriptions were made for special purposes or projects, and admissions for special events, such as plays or full evening entertainments. Other methods mentioned as employed for raising money were the holding of bazaars or food sales, basket or pie suppers, carnivals, and public dinners.

### Relationship to Service Agencies

Over 70 percent of 234 local organizations were stated to have some form of relationship to a service agency.<sup>1</sup> The three chief types of relationship which existed between local organizations and service groups were promotional, directional, and advisory. Where the relationship was promotional, the membership of the local was the same as of the service organization. Where the relationship was directional, the local had been set up and was sponsored by an outside service body.

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<sup>1</sup>Some of these service agencies are the supervisory or parent organization of the local group. The other service agencies have no structural relationship to the local organization, and are usually county, state, or national bureaus or departments (see section on Relationships, page 138).

Where the relationship was advisory, the local had usually been organized independently but had voluntarily sought relationship with a service body. Fig. 20 shows the frequency of the different types of relationships.

RELATIONSHIP	MEMBERS REPORTING	
PROMOTIONAL	%	54
DIRECTIONAL		14
ADVISORY		5
NONE		27

FIG. 20.—TYPES OF RELATIONSHIP WITH SERVICE AGENCIES REPORTED BY 285 MEMBERS AS MAINTAINED BY THEIR 234 GROUPS

Approximately 75 percent of all the groups studied had some kind of relationship with service agencies.

In general, promotional relationships are maintained by granges, farm bureau units, home bureau units and parent-teacher associations; directional, by community units; and advisory, by community clubs and farmer's clubs.

### Functions Performed

The success of a local organization depends to a large extent on how well it accomplishes the purposes for which it was set up. The 285 members of the groups with which this study is concerned reported six principal functions performed; namely, the undertaking of projects for mutual benefit, the procuring and disseminating of information from outside sources, the development of group spirit, the providing of social activities, the creation of belief in farm organizations as valuable mediums for the improving of farming and farm life, and the furthering of acquaintanceship among farm people (Table 19). Obviously not all members reported. Also, many reported more than one function.

It is important to note that of the three functions most frequently reported, two—the undertaking of projects for mutual benefit and the procuring and disseminating of information—are of an immediately practical nature.

More members of granges and home bureau units reported the carrying on of group projects for mutual benefit than did members of other groups. Home bureau units were the most active groups, according to the data, in producing and disseminating information. Parent-teacher associations, subordinate granges, and community units led

in the development of group spirit, and parent-teacher associations and community clubs in the providing of social activities.

TABLE 19.—FUNCTIONS PERFORMED BY 234 GROUPS AND PERCENTAGES OF MEMBERS REPORTING THEM

Type of group	Number of members reporting	Projects of mutual benefit undertaken <sup>1</sup>	Information procured and disseminated	Group spirit developed	Social activities provided	Belief in value of farm organization developed	Acquaintanceship improved
		percl.	percl.	percl.	percl.	percl.	percl.
Community clubs.....	57	21	14	26	26	11	14
Farm bureau units.....	54	11	20	11	15	24	11
Parent-teacher associations.....	48	38	10	38	29	0	21
Home bureau units.....	40	45	48	13	13	23	0
Subordinate granges.....	29	48	10	28	17	17	7
Community units.....	28	25	32	18	14	25	11
Others.....	29 <sup>2</sup>	33	14	11	18	11	7
Total.....	285	29	21	21	20	15	11

<sup>1</sup>Trading of work, and group work such as improvement of roads, purchasing of supplies, and eradication of insect pests.

<sup>2</sup>See footnote to Table 9.

### Difficulties Common to All Groups

Getting members to attend meetings was the difficulty most frequently reported for local groups. The only 16 percent of the 285 members reported that their groups had difficulty in getting members to attend meetings, this difficulty is faced by all groups at some time (Fig. 21). Almost as frequently mentioned was the difficulty of obtain-










DIFFICULTY	MEMBERS REPORTING
GETTING MORE MEMBERS TO ATTEND	16% 
PRESENTING AN ATTRACTIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM	14% 
SECURING LEADERSHIP	9% 
GETTING MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN PROGRAMS	9% 
OVERCOMING SELFISHNESS, DISLOYALTY, ETC.	8% 
OVERCOMING OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE	7% 
OVERCOMING BAD ROADS AND WEATHER	5% 
COMPETING WITH OTHER ACTIVITIES	5% 
SECURING A SUITABLE MEETING PLACE	3% 

FIG. 21.—DIFFICULTIES REPORTED FOR 234 GROUPS AND PERCENTAGES OF 285 MEMBERS REPORTING THEM

The comparatively small percentage of members reporting difficulties would seem to indicate that most of these groups are existing on a stable basis.

ing educational features of value for the programs for meetings. Securing leadership and getting local people to participate in programs were each mentioned as difficulties by 9 percent of the members.

Some members also called attention to the problems caused by bad roads and inclement weather. However, it has been the experience of the writer that in localities where the roads are improved and are passable in any season, meetings are frequently best attended when the regular farm work has been held up because of the weather.

Five percent of the members of these groups reported that the existence of too many other organizations and activities prevented their particular groups from attaining the success they might otherwise attain.

### Group Adaptations to Promote Member Interest and Welfare

Changes of many kinds, involving programs, purposes, affiliations, meeting places, and the like, have been made by organizations in order to do away with difficulties which threaten the functioning or life of the organization. Thirty-nine percent of the 285 members of the groups with which this study is concerned reported no changes made in their groups. Twenty-four percent, on the other hand, reported that their groups had made changes. Thirty-seven percent made no reply to this question. More members of home bureau units reported changes in their organizations than reported no changes. The percentage of members of granges reporting that their groups had made no changes was higher than for any other type of local group.

*Most Changes Occur in Type of Program.*—Table 20 shows that the changes made involved the type of program, the amount of local participation, the place of meeting, purposes of the organization, and affiliations with a service organization or institution. Doubtless these changes were made in order to increase attendance, make programs more valuable, secure leadership, get more members on the program, and avoid intra- and inter-group conflicts.

Members of community clubs, home bureau units, parent-teacher associations, and community units, especially, reported changes in the general makeup of programs of meetings. Many granges changed meeting places, many moving into their own halls. For details of the changes in purposes the reader is referred to the section on *Original Purposes*, page 152, and to Table 12.

Parent-teacher associations and farm bureau units were able to get more members to take part as they became older.

TABLE 20.—ADAPTATIONS REPORTED BY 67 MEMBERS IN THEIR GROUPS TO PROMOTE MEMBER INTEREST AND WELFARE

Type of group	Number of members reporting changes	Percentage reporting specific changes					Percentage not reporting type of change made
		Nature of the program altered	More local participation secured	Better meeting place provided	Purposes altered to suit conditions	Affiliations made with service body	
Community clubs.....	16	38	6	13	6	0	27
Farm bureau units.....	10	0	20	10	10	20	40
Parent-teacher associations.....	16	25	31	0	19	6	19
Home bureau units.....	10	30	10	0	0	0	60
Granges.....	7	0	14	43	0	0	25
Community units.....	4	50	25	0	0	0	50
Others.....	4 <sup>1</sup>	25	25	0	0	0	50
Total.....	67	24	16	9	9	4	38

<sup>1</sup>Members of 4 farmers' clubs.

*Further Alterations Necessary.*—Sixty-eight individuals believed further alterations were necessary in the groups to which they belonged. Changes in group practice and purpose that were mentioned as still needed included the addition of more educational features to the programs of meetings, the use of more local talent, better adaptation of programs of meetings to needs and desires of the members, more frequent meetings, the avoidance of small meetings and an increase in membership restrictions (that is, a closer restriction of membership to those who take a definite and constructive interest in the organization).

It is to be noted that the changes which can as a rule be made most easily were mentioned most frequently. The fact that some changes can be made more easily than others does not, in the opinion of the writer, indicate that they are any the less significant. However, some local organizations would find it difficult, or impossible, to make some of the changes that were reported as necessary, because the constitution of the parent organization, as construed, prevents such action.

#### PART IV—SUMMARY

Farm people in Illinois, the evidence shows, believe in local farm-family organizations to further their educational, social, cultural, and economic interests.

Sixty-four percent of the 433 farm people submitting data expressed the opinion that farm-family groups should, ideally, give special emphasis to "educational purposes." Moreover, since only a few

persons stated definitely that farm-family organizations should enter into buying and selling activities, it is to be assumed that those mentioning "economic interests" as a desirable pursuit of such organizations had in mind the furthering of economic interests thru educational activities. Of the actual rural organizations studied, nearly half were originally organized to serve educational purposes particularly. Changes in purpose had been more in favor of educational activities than other activities.

The general opinion of the farm people questioned was that farm-family organizations should have definite membership restrictions based upon an interest in farm life, an interest in the organization, and residence in the community; that meetings should be held regularly, preferably monthly, and in the evening or, on occasion, in the afternoons; that the programs of these meetings should be varied, balanced, and so planned as to include educational, cultural, and recreational features and a business session.

Farm bureau units, parent-teacher associations, community clubs, home bureau units, granges, community units, and farmers' clubs are the types of groups most prevalent in the state. The largest percentage of 234 such groups studied included all in the family as members.

Some groups were started as the result of the activity of professional organizers or by people in the locality who had come under the influence of similar organizations in other localities. Others had their origin in spontaneous social gatherings of farm people.

Fifty percent of all the groups studied were five or more years old, 30 percent were ten or more years old, and 5 percent were twenty or more years old.

Most of the 234 groups studied functioned about a structure providing for (1) administration, (2) the keeping of records, (3) the care of finances, (4) program planning, and (5) the care of special duties or projects.

Membership or attendance was drawn from areas ranging in size from the area of a rural-school district to approximately 45 or 50 square miles.

Purposes for organizing generally centered around the exchanging and acquiring of information of an occupational character, the improvement of acquaintanceship, the promotion of community welfare, the providing of recreation, and the rendering of assistance to the local school.

A majority of the groups held their meetings monthly and in the evening. A few of those holding meetings monthly found afternoons

the best time of day to meet. Homes and school houses were the most popular meeting places.

Programs at meetings consisted of a business session, and of cultural, educational, and recreational features. The most valuable features were those of an educational nature. Educational features seemed, moreover, to contribute most to the life of the organizations.

Seventy-seven percent of all groups gave all members the opportunity to take part in group activities. Usually the wider the interests, the greater was the percentage of members participating in the activities of the group.

The most popular methods of financing were the collection of dues in order to supply regular income; and refreshment sales, special collections, subscriptions, and admissions to special functions, as means of supplying funds for special needs.

Most local groups had relations with service agencies. The relation of the service body to the local group was of three main types: promotional, directional, and advisory. The advisory and directional relationships were the types most favored by the farm people questioned, promotional relationships were the most frequently reported as existing.

The functions most often reported as performed by these local groups were: the development of interest in farm organizations, the stimulation of group spirit, the procuring of outside information and the disseminating of it, the improvement of acquaintanceship, the performance, as a group, of work, chiefly of an occupational character, and the satisfying of social and recreational wants.

These functions were also the chief ones, which, as reported in Part II, farm people believed should be performed by farm-family organizations. This does not necessarily mean, however, that farm people considered either the quality or the amount of service performed by present local groups sufficient for their needs.

Altho there had been many changes in group purposes and practices, the general opinion of members and nonmembers was that more were necessary.

Difficulties in maintaining the life and value of the organization were reported by but a comparatively small percentage of the members of these groups; difficulty in getting members to attend meetings was most frequently reported, tho even this was mentioned by only 16 percent of the 285 members. Most of the difficulties reported might be encountered by any rural group. The implication would seem to be that most rural organizations of the types studied are existing on a stable basis.

## PART V—PRINCIPLES FOR THE SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATION AND CONDUCT OF LOCAL GROUPS OF FARM PEOPLE

A study such as set forth in this bulletin is of value to the extent to which it helps to establish or confirm general principles whose application will lead to the successful functioning of organizations of the type observed. It should be stated, perhaps, that a group may be considered successful according to the extent to which it fulfils its purposes.

As a result of this study and of supplementary observations, the author suggests the following principles as of primary importance in the successful organization and conduct of local groups of farm people:

1. Farm people must feel the need for local organizations before such groups can be successfully organized.

2. Organizations need a framework or structure that provides for: (a) ways and means of administering the affairs of the organization; (b) the keeping of records of meetings, of action of committees, and of group activities as a whole in the realization of group purposes; (c) care of finances; (d) the planning of programs for meetings and for group activities as a whole and; (e) the care of special duties and objectives not regularly provided for in the administrative set-up of the organization.

3. The purposes of such groups should be constantly kept in mind and the activities of the group consciously directed toward their fulfilment. The purposes which are most likely to benefit farm people and to arouse their interest are: (1) the education of the members in better farming and homemaking practices and in community betterment; (2) the undertaking of activities (other than educational) for the advancement of the social, cultural, and general economic life of the members and the community; and (3) the promotion of the interests of farm people as a class.

4. Groups can best fulfil their general purposes by the performing of specific functions which either cannot be done at all in some other way or cannot be done so well.

5. Programs for meetings, being an important medium for carrying out the various purposes of the group, must be planned with all those purposes in mind and must be so balanced that adequate emphasis will be given to the advancement of each.

6. The persons for whom an organization chiefly exists should be enrolled in that organization upon a basis of specific membership



requirements, for only then, as a rule, can they be made to feel responsible for the organization and interested in it.

7. Most local organizations, particularly those of an occupational type or those interested in formal education, will find it to their advantage, in fulfilling their purposes, to maintain relationships with other organizations and service agencies.

8. Organizations must speedily recognize and readily adapt themselves to such needs for changes as may arise in the kind of services they perform and in their manner of functioning, if they are to succeed in keeping their members and contributing significantly to their welfare.

## PART VI—QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN STUDY

The following list of questions was submitted to some five hundred rural people. The replies that were received form the principal basis for this study. Both members of rural organizations and nonmembers were asked to fill out the first seven questions. The other thirteen questions were directed only to members.

1. Do you believe that there should be a local farm-family organization in your community?.....Why or why not?.....
2. What should be the purposes of such an organization?.....  
.....
3. Who should be included in its membership?.....  
Should there be restrictions as to who may be members?.....What?.....
4. Should regular meetings be held?.....If so, how often?.....  
What day of week?.....Time of day?.....
5. What should programs at these meetings consist of?.....  
.....
6. Should there be any affiliation with a county organization?.....If so, should the county organization serve the local by (1) advising?.....(2) supervising?.....(3) controlling?.....or (4) if otherwise, how?.....
7. Do you now have in your community a local organization which is somewhat similar to the above?.....If so, do you think it is doing all that it should?.....If not, what should it be doing that it is not now doing?.....  
.....
8. What is the name of this local organization?.....
9. Year originally organized?.....Original purpose in organizing?.....  
.....Has the organization run continuously since beginning?.....If not, when did it stop?.....Start again?.....  
What is its present purpose?.....  
To what degree does it fulfil this purpose?.....
10. Approximate number of members when first organized?.....  
Approximately what is the present membership?.....

11. Underline if membership is open to (1) men, (2) women, (3) children, (4) all members of the farm family, (5) hired help and their families, (6) people without farm interests.
12. Annual dues per member, if any?.....Other sources of income?  
.....
13. Underline if in 1929 meetings were held (1) weekly; (2) semi-monthly; (3) monthly, (a) 12 months of the year, (b) less than 12 months of the year; (4) quarterly; (5) semi-annually; (6) annually.
14. Where have meetings been held?.....Is this arrangement satisfactory?.....If not, why not?.....
15. About what was the average attendance in 1929?.....
16. Is the organization affiliated in any way with a county organization?.....  
If so, how?.....
17. Of what have the programs of the meetings usually consisted?.....  
.....Underline which of the following occur in the regular order of the meetings: (1) business sessions; (2) educational program; (3) entertainment; (4) social period with (a) games, (b) dancing, (c) cards, (d) visiting; and (5) refreshments. Which seemed to be most valuable?.....  
.....Name one to three of the activities which in your judgment have been most responsible for maintaining the life of the organization.....
18. Did all members have a chance to take part on the programs in 1929?  
.....What proportion took some part?.....%
19. What have been the chief accomplishments of this organization?.....  
.....What have been the chief difficulties?.....
20. Have any changes been made since the organization started?.....  
If so, what?.....Are changes now needed?.....  
What kind?.....











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