A Survey on Situation of Agricultural Graduates in the Last Ten Years (Case of Iran):
Need to Amendment in Agricultural Higher Education Policy

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Introduction
Agricultural education system should be run on the base of need of agricultural section. In Iran, two kinds of university are responsible for agricultural higher education: first, Agricultural Faculties of Governmental Universities (AFGA) whose history refers to 1940 and are free of cost for students, second, Islamic Azad University (IAU) which is a private and nonprofit university that students must pay their entire educational fee. IAU was established in 1983 with a few branches but now has numerous branches in most cities of Iran. It is necessary that agricultural graduates be trained competently in the university to be able to work in different situations (governmental and private sections). Now a great number of agricultural graduates from different academic centers (AFGA and IAU) hope and expect to be employed by governmental section. On the other hand, in many cases, there is legal prohibition for employing in this section. So whereas they have not been learned applied knowledge, cannot be employed in private section. In the last ten years, four following important activities have influenced agricultural education system in Iran: 1- IAU has educated a great numbers of graduates in agricultural fields (as well as GU has). 2- Before 1992 there was limitation for female to enroll in agricultural fields but now there is no gender limitation. So from 1996 a great number of females have been graduated in agricultural fields. 3- According to government policy, governmental job vacancies have been decreased, and in many cases there is legal prohibition for employing in this section. 4- For organizing agricultural graduates, the greatest NGO with more than 110000 members which is called “Agricultural and Natural Resources Engineering Regulation Organization” (ANRERO) was established in 2001.

Purpose
The goal is to study some characteristics of agricultural graduates (i.e. occupational status, gender, their rural or urban-based, university of graduation, academic education level and et al.) and relationship between them for rational decision making in related programming.

Methodology
The studied population of this survey research included all members of ANRERO of Kerman province, Iran, who have been graduated from 1996 until July, 2005 (2254 persons with 14 different agricultural fields). Data were collected with use of members’ document which existed in archive files. Data were analyzed by SPSS/PC 11.5 with use of descriptive and inferential statistics (Mean, Frequency, Cross tabulation, $\chi^2$, Phi and Cramer’s’ V coefficient and T-test).

Results and Conclusions
According to findings the number of graduates is increasing (from 472 persons before 1996 to 2254 persons after1996 since now) and the growth rate of female graduates (from 16 persons before 1996 to 919 persons after1996 since now) is highly increasing, significantly. Also, 62.8% of total of 2254 persons who have been graduated during the last 10 years, are unemployed (661 male and 751 female). The academic fields of “Agronomy” (28.7%) and “Agricultural extension and education” (0.2%) have the highest and lowest percents of graduates, respectively. Also 93.6%, 6.1% and 0.4% of graduates are BSc., MSc. and Ph.D., respectively. Findings show that only 11.4% are rural-based students. The average age of unemployed (M= 26.8) and employed (M=31.7) graduates are different, significantly. Females (M=26.6) are significantly younger than male (M=30) too.

Recommendations
Budgetary and expert support and also applied education are needed for job-making as well as re-planning for agricultural higher education system. Also, it is recommended that candidates especially females be informed about agriculture and its private job opportunities. Compilation of legal law for obligatory use of agricultural graduates in farm units as counselor and also paying more attention to coordinating between university and job-market are parts of suggestions.