Girls at Brooklyn College Reg

Mrs. Barbara K. O’Neil of the Brooklyn College placement bureau interviews girl students who are interested in signing up for farm work this summer. They are Harriet Finkelstein, Toby Stein, Helen Kozack, Judith Karp and Norma Shleifstein.

World-Telegram Photo by Palumbo
Brooklyn College girls applying for farm work this summer know that the jobs are far from glamorous.

"I tell them that it means hard work, long hours and small pay," declared Mrs. Barbara K. O'Neill, placement associate in the personnel bureau of the college. "We don't take their applications until we are sure that they know the liabilities as well as the assets."

Most of these students had thought this all over before going in to sign up, apparently, for of the group that has applied during the first week the bureau has handled these jobs, less than 10 per cent has dropped out. There are about 50 girls enrolled.

"Most of these girls applied for farm work because they want to be of service during the war emergency," Mrs. O'Neill said. "Few of them have worked before or wanted to work this summer just because they needed the money."

Girls will do the lighter farm work, such as berry picking, tending vegetable gardens, helping in the milk rooms. In some instances they may take over for the farm wife in her house-hold duties so as to relieve her for outdoor work at which she is an experienced and valuable hand. It takes several weeks to a month for a beginner to learn enough to be of value to the farmer, experts have estimated.

That the girls are making a patriotic gesture can hardly be doubted, for Mrs. O'Neill explained that their pay for the summer season, exclusive of living expenses, will range from $60 to $75. They know, too, that there will be little social life, for the tire and gas situation will cut down the possibilities of many visits to villages where dances and movies might be available.

A New Life for Students.

Each day, as applicants are interviewed, Mrs. O'Neill has a man of the faculty sit in to advise the youngsters. These men members of the committee on employment and financial aid at the college, have had farm experience and are prepared to present a realistic picture of the work involved. One, for instance, is Professor Ralph C. Benedict, who was in charge of a students' farm work project in Hicksville, L. I., during the last war. Another, Dr. Charles N. Winslow, was a Vermont farm boy.

"This is a new life for most of these students," said Mrs. O'Neill. "A few have spent a week or two vacationing on farms, but almost none has actually worked on them. It is difficult for them to realize that the farmer's work is dependent on the weather. That he must work hours on end at the time a crop is ripe and the weather permits it to be harvested and then may have several days in which only the routine chores must be done. But they are very much interested.

The latest call for help comes from a New Jersey farm that wants girls to sort and pack vegetables that are to be dehydrated. The group of 200 workers will live in a schoolhouse with a woman supervisor in charge. Other calls have been for small groups of workers on smaller farms.

The bureau handles jobs for men as well as women, but there have been fewer male students asking for farm work than women. Most of them must work at jobs that pay more or that keep them near enough to college that they may continue their school work during the summer.

Encouraged to Work.

"We're encouraging all our students to seek temporary work rather than to go to defense plants where they are wasting time and money while training and then leave at the end of summer," Mrs. O'Neill pointed out.

One group of girl students is planning to work together on a farm and have arranged to be with a former woman instructor. The girls often request that they be sent where there will be other girls from the college.

"That's natural enough," Mrs. O'Neill observed. "The experience is strange and they like to feel they won't be lonesome."

Mrs. O'Neill has great confidence in these Brooklyn farm girls.

"I'm sure they will make places for themselves and be useful," she said. "And they in turn will get fine personal