

VIRGINIA EXTENSION

THE VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE MAGAZINE

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A "Blumeing" Playwright



COMMENTARY



Mitch Geasler

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Vice-Provost
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Development Is A Priority

Economic development has been a major concern and program effort of the Virginia Extension System for many years. The excellent Extension programs in agriculture, community resource development, and all other program areas have contributed significantly to the economic development of the Commonwealth.

But, in the future, it is vital that we place stronger emphasis on economic development programming. Recently, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced a stronger

emphasis on rural economic development. USDA deputy secretary Peter Meyers told the conservation, credit, and rural development subcommittee of the House Agriculture Committee that "the Extension Service, which has a nationwide staff in place, will place additional priority emphasis on rural revitalization education."

This is the first item in a six-point plan that has been developed by the USDA. The Virginia Extension System, in concert with all concerned federal agencies, is working to better coordinate the rural economic development efforts of all agencies.

Prior to the USDA's added emphasis, economic development was the overriding theme of the state budget request that was developed for Extension and Research at Virginia Tech. It was presented to Governor Gerald L. Baliles for his consideration while preparing the state's biennial budget for submission to the General Assembly. The package that was approved by Tech's Board of Visitors contained a request for more than \$29 million in new funds.

The initiatives included in the budget package include the following Extension components:

- Returning profitability through diversification and supplemental enterprises;
- adding value through further processing, manufacturing, and development of food;
- increasing competitiveness of Virginia enterprises through harvesting, processing, manufacturing, and development of forestry products;
- adding value through harvesting, processing, manufacturing, and developing forestry products;
- reducing economic loss caused by disease;
- reducing economic loss caused by toxic and neurologic disorders;
- increasing safety and quality of food-animal products;
- increasing the reproductive

efficiency of livestock and poultry through disease control;

—improving human nutrition, health, and food;

—increasing international trade opportunities for Virginia's agricultural industry;

—promoting good health, exercise, and stress physiology;

—helping improve the competitiveness of the textile and apparel industry;

—developing corporate day-care programs;

—advocating sound family financial management;

—strengthening hospitality programs and tourism;

—promoting housing innovations;

—organizing a center for entrepreneurship; and

—directing assistance for Virginia localities to support economic development at the city, town, and county levels.

Initial reaction to these initiatives has been very positive. The total package reflects the ability of the system to respond to the issues facing the Commonwealth with educational resources from throughout the university.

In addition to the funds requested for this package of new initiatives, we have requested additional operating funds, especially those needed to cover some uncontrollable costs that the system has incurred.

Virginia State University's budget request for state funding also emphasizes economic development. It has proposed new initiatives in Extension aquaculture to complement the research program the university has developed in that area.

Both Virginia Tech and Virginia State, the Commonwealth's land-grant universities, stand ready to apply educational program resources to the state's economic development. Funding these proposed initiatives will provide Extension with exciting opportunities. We are confident that Extension programs will continue to have significant positive impacts on the economic vitality of the Commonwealth.

VIRGINIA EXTENSION

The Virginia Cooperative Extension Service Magazine

VIRGINIA EXTENSION

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FRONT COVER

George Blume examines copy of the Constitution. Story on page 10. (Photo by Rick Griffiths).



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The Spirit Of Cooperation Lives

The information flow in today's world makes it impossible for generalists to keep abreast of all developments. That is why Virginia Extension has begun a three-county pilot program that allows more specialization among its agents.

Residents in Greensville, Southampton, and Sussex counties and in the city of Emporia are expected to benefit if the two-year Extension pilot program succeeds. The Extension units in these localities have combined their operations so that they may provide better service to those who live there.

Begun in January, the project entails specialization by the Extension agents in the three-county area so that they can acquire greater expertise in certain areas and therefore be of greater assistance to their clients.

"The agents in the three-county area," says Charles R. Perkins, Southeast Extension District director, "are functioning largely as if there is only one rather than three offices. Each agent is conducting programs within his or her respective subject-matter specialty throughout the three counties. As they become more knowledgeable in their specialities, they are becoming more effective agents.

"The three offices are being maintained in their respective counties and their financing is still being done in the local, state, and federal funding formula," he says. Within the 1,400-square-mile area are more than 45,000 residents, 1,129 farms on 199,000 acres, 15,932 housing units, and 7,668 youths between nine and nineteen, the 4-H ages.

The idea for consolidating the program delivery system in the three offices came from Extension director Mitchell R. Geasler. Faced with fairly stable budget allocations and a hiring freeze on one side and growing demands from the public on the other, Geasler sees consolidation as the only viable alternative.

"The problems facing Extension are not going away and we have the obligation to help those in the counties we serve. By sharing resources, we can allow the agents to specialize so that they will be able to learn much more in one specific area and not have so much general knowledge about a multitude of subjects. The opportunity to try this arrangement came along and the local governments agreed to back the experiment. It was something we couldn't pass up."

The three staffs worked together to develop their program priorities in agriculture, 4-H, home



Bill Burleson Photo

The three-county pilot project covers a large area.

economics, and community resource development. A tri-county coordinator was named to coordinate, not supervise, the programs in each program area. Each staff also has a unit leader in each of the four program areas who is responsible for organizing and coordinating the program within the unit.

The amount of time spent by each agent in each county is specified. For example, in agriculture, Southampton County agent Wesley C. Alexander works in his home county forty percent of the time and devotes twenty percent to each of the other two counties. The remaining twenty percent is spent working in 4-H in the three localities.

Greensville County agent Peggy Emory spends forty percent of her time doing home economics work

in Greenville County, another forty percent in Southhampton, and ten percent in Sussex. She spends the remaining ten percent in Greenville working on the 4-H program. Similar allotments of time are given to each agent.

Perhaps the greatest specialization is among the six agricultural agents. As most are specialized in one or two areas, such as row crops or livestock, they have found that they spend a lot of time traveling across the counties to provide help to the farmers. The increased amount of traveling within the 1,400 square miles was foreseen and the counties increased their travel allotment to Extension to compensate for the additional time on the road.

To assure a quick response to producer calls, the ag agents are being equipped with mobile radio units so that they can be contacted by their offices while in the field or are traveling across the three counties. The agents believe the arrangement will enable them to reply more promptly when the farmers need quick answers about diseases, chemicals, and other potential problems.

The residents of the three counties are fortunate in that all three Extension units have, for the most part, long-time agents who know the people and problems within their respective areas. The agents are convinced the program will work.

Bobby L. Flippen, Greenville-Emporia agent whose specialty is row crops, says, "We had to do something to provide more service. Our clients needed the assistance and we had to find a way to do it. It's putting a little pressure on the ag agents to learn more in their specialties, but that should benefit the consumer.

"I am confident the pilot program will be successful. It has taken a lot of extra time at first but I believe this coordination will result in a better program. It is a two-way street in that we have to know the producers in three counties and they have to know us. We now are developing those working relationships and trust," the Greenville County-Emporia unit director says.

Kelvin O. Wells, Sussex County agent, believes the program will really develop as soon as the agents receive their mobile radio units. "The area is so large



Kelvin Wells prepares to leave to make a call on an area farmer.



Sarah Walden and Bobby Flippen work together to insure that advice is provided when it is needed.

that we often have to travel good distances. I would recommend other areas look into this type of operation as I think it allows us to become better equipped in our specialty areas to help the farmers." Wells' specialties are horticulture, vegetable crops, and small farms.

An example of developing relationships is in a weekly newsletter that now goes out under all of the agricultural agents' names to the producers in the three counties. This gives the agents additional recognition in the counties in which they had not previously worked.

Sarah H. Walden, Southhampton County agent whose specialties are physical well-being and health and nutrition for disease risk, echoes Flippen's remarks. "The new program will work. Although the ag agents are doing more traveling in the new area, the plan has changed the way all of us work. We cooperate and plan more. We are constantly aware of what our counterparts in the other two counties are doing. I feel very positive about the whole experience," says the Southhampton unit director.

"We are continually evaluating the program and making small changes in it," says Perkins. "But I think this may be the way in which we can compensate against some of the pressures being put on Extension and not interrupt the flow of information to those Virginia residents who need it." ❏



District Extension agents Charles Perkins, right, and Delbert O'Meara made sure that county government leaders played a leading role in setting up the pilot program.

IMPACT

DOLLARS AND SENSE FROM EXTENSION



Those rural entrepreneurs interested in setting up home-based businesses should be aware that ninety-five percent of those who go into business will fail. This statistic is the reason for a series of Extension conferences for aspiring businesspersons.

"Most entrepreneurs fail because they don't have the necessary management skills," says Ann M. Lastovica, Virginia State Extension specialist. "Keeping records on the dashboard of a pickup truck is a scary way to keep up with your business. It could come back to haunt you later." She points out that a business degree isn't necessary to be successful, but some training in management skills and business organization are.

The family management specialist says that while many farmers are looking to diversify their operations, it is often the farm wife who actually decides to start another business venture. Lastovica advises would-be entrepreneurs to learn how to manage a business and develop a business plan before actually starting up. Self-discipline and family support also are necessary components.

"Make certain that you have support from your family before

entering into a venture," Lastovica says. "Your family can make or break you."



The copper-rich South African nation of Zambia has turned to the United States for help in determining how its governmental policies affect agricultural commodities and its populace.

The U.S. Agency for International Development has contracted with Robert R. Nathan Associates Inc., in association with Virginia Tech, The University of Wisconsin, and Equator Advisory Services, Ltd., to undertake a Zambian agricultural training, planning, and institutional development project in support of the country's reform efforts.

Development objectives are to increase emphasis on market forces by decontrolling prices and deregulating markets, to move the economy away from dependence on mining, to attain self-sufficiency in the basic foods, to expand and diversify agricultural production, and to increase incomes in all areas.

More than eighty faculty and staff members from the project institutions are involved in short-term consulting on credit, fertilizer production, marketing, macroeconomics, rural enterprise, agribusiness, grain reserve, and socioeconomic.

From Tech, Brady Deaton, associate director for international development; Mary Rojas, assistant director for international development; Richard Zody, urban studies professor; and Jerald Robinson, management professor, made the initial trip to Zambia to start planning the program and organizing project teams.



Marketing history was made this fall when the first U.S. satellite livestock sale took place at Virginia Tech. More than 1,000 feeder cattle were auctioned via satellite in early fall.

"The satellite sale was a combination of a live auction and a tel-o-auction," says Bruce B. Bainbridge, Extension livestock specialist at Virginia Tech. The new technology offers buyers visual images of feeder cattle direct from the farm, while the sale is being conducted over telephone lines.

"Cattle buyers are like everyone else," says Mark L. Wahlberg, Extension animal scientist at Tech. "They like to see what they are buying."

While a satellite sale promises lots of "gee whiz" value, it also has definite benefits for both buyers and sellers. "It allows us to sell farm-fresh cattle that haven't been exposed to diseases or salebarn stress," says Bainbridge. The sale also provides increased awareness of Virginia feeder cattle throughout the nation—an attractive bonus for the state's beef producers.



Blood-pressure measurements taken at home can be more valid and more predictive than those taken in a doctor's office, but only if the home-monitoring unit is a good one and the correct procedures are followed, research at Virginia Tech has shown.



David W. Harrison, assistant professor of psychology, said home-monitoring systems allow the person to look at the relationship between stress and business and blood pressure and heart rate. "It may be that, at a meeting, the blood pressure goes sky high," he says, "but that's never measured unless you happen to have a home-monitoring system with you."

With medical costs rising and more emphasis being put on health care at home, more people are monitoring such things as blood pressure, blood glucose level, and heart rates. Harrison's research will be published in the *Journal of the Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation*.



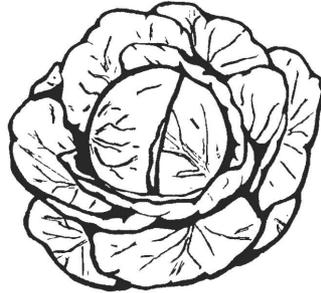
Introducing new crops in developing countries requires more than new production techniques. Any new crop has to be considered in terms of the nation's overall culture and economy, says a Virginia Tech horticulturist.

John S. Caldwell, an assistant professor, conducted a study of rainy-season vegetable production that looked at these broader concerns. The study is the result of research Caldwell has done in Taiwan and the Philippines.

Caldwell looked at the problem of limited availability of vegetables during the rainy season in areas where vegetables are an important part of the diet. Common cabbage,

tomatoes, mungbeans, and sweet potatoes were examined to find the best combination between production capability and product demand.

The study does not deal just with production, but involves the improvement of the household's well-being. Caldwell has found in his studies that a farm household will adopt new technology only if its members can understand the



technology and believe it will benefit them. Their perceptions of the benefits depend on how well the institutional, economic, and socio-cultural environments reward them for using more resources to increase production.

The study shows that cabbage exhibits the best possibilities for further development, although care is needed to not saturate the market. Caldwell has returned to the Philippines to continue his farming systems research.



The American farmer would have received significantly more money for his crop exports if there had been a policy to lower the value of the U.S. dollar during the first five years of this decade.

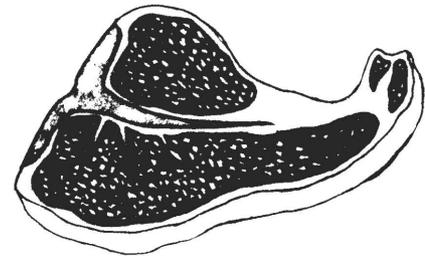
This is the contention of a study by Virginia Tech agricultural economist David Orden. He shows the extent that agricultural exports and real-crop prices received by farmers were reduced by the high value of the U.S. dollar from January 1981 through the first quarter of 1985.

The study states that U.S. agricultural exports would have been twenty-two percent greater and real-crop prices eleven percent higher if macroeconomical policies



had been used to lower by ten percent the dollar's value in foreign exchange markets.

He also examines the interaction of world agriculture and explores the future role of Russia and China in world agricultural trade. Agricultural trade with these countries can still expand, but only if they earn more income through non-agricultural trade.



To increase the value of unpopular cuts of meat, Virginia Tech food scientists are conducting research on how to restructure less popular cuts to gain flavor, and the public's favor.

So far, they have developed a mushroom extract that enhances the flavor of pork restructured into pork chops. This extract is already on the market. Treatments using restructured turkey could increase income from what have been poorly valued turkey cuts by ten cents per pound. This would offer consumers a new, reasonably priced meat product while increasing the income from the meat by five million dollars each year.



Richmond After-School Program Is Off to Good Start

A lack of supervision is taking its toll among today's adolescents. Contributing to the problem is the growing number of youngsters between the ages of ten and fifteen who are alone at home after school without adult supervision.

These unsupervised hours present many young people with open invitations to get into trouble. Unfortunately, many of the youngsters don't turn down the invitation. The result is that a large number of youngsters are involved in vandalism while others use the unsupervised time for sexual exploration. The latter was a contributing factor to the 1,100 babies born to teen-age mothers last year in Richmond.

Virginia Cooperative Extension Service personnel in Richmond have been active in the mobilization of the community to address these youth-related issues.

Richmond Extension Agent Noel Draine played a major role in the Parent-Child Task Force, a coalition of 37 organizations and agencies organized by the Richmond City Health Department by chairing a one-day agenda-setting conference that attracted more than 400 youths and adults to examine programs to address teenage pregnancy.

One result of the meeting was a community involvement liaison committee, co-chaired by Draine and Virginia Cooke of the Richmond Community Action Program, that involved sixty community leaders in workshops that looked at family life education, parent education, comprehensive health clinics in schools, an adopt-a-neighborhood program, and parent-teen skill building.

Extension and thirteen other organizations took the information that sprang from the liaison committee to support the development of an adolescent after-



The Rev. Paul Nichols and Richmond Extension agent Noel Draine discuss the after-hours program.

school care center in the Church Hill section of the state capitol. Draine applied for and received a small excellence grant from Extension to help get the program started, and he secured funding for an Urban Youth Extension paraprofessional to assist with the center.

The Good Shepherd Baptist Church, headed by the Rev. Paul Nichols, volunteered its community center for use in the program and appointed an Advisory Council with strong and valuable leadership. The center is in the heart of the area targeted for the program. "We are always looking for ways in which we may serve the community. This program to help those adolescents fits neatly into that category," Nichols says. Many in the church are working to make the program a success.

"We estimate that there were 1,600 youths between ten and fifteen years of age who reside in the area we want to serve," Draine says. "We surveyed approximately 1,000 of the young people and about 500 of their parents to determine the type of program that they wanted and also if there were potential volunteer workers among the parents. We got an excellent response."

Draine says the survey effort had the complete cooperation of targeted local school officials and teachers who encouraged the students to participate and who have endorsed the program. Paula Dail, Virginia Tech Extension specialist in human development, also is credited by the Richmond agent for using her knowledge of urban programs and adolescent behavior to get the effort established. "She has been invaluable," Draine says. Cooperative



Selena Cuffee, left, a member of the Richmond Department of Planning, and Virginia Cooke, a special coordinator with the Richmond Community Action Program, check over details of the after-school program.

Extension has supported the program by awarding it a \$1,000 grant.

Thirty volunteers involved in the program include individuals such as Selena Cuffee, Senior Planner with the Richmond City Department of Planning and Community Development, who has put her expertise to work in assisting with the development of grant proposals to support the efforts of the center and broaden its program delivery.

The Good Shepherd Church not only made available its center for the program but it provided center director Andrea Seward to help train the adult volunteers and young people. "We want the young people to have fun, but we also want them to broaden their educational horizons. That is why we have a volunteer for at least every twelve young people at the center," says Draine.

Core volunteers were trained in adolescent programming by Dail. The trained volunteers assumed responsibility for training the additional center volunteer staff. Training included coping with any problems that they may encounter understanding adolescent development as well as getting the



Andrea Seward, director of the Good Shepherd Baptist Church community center, helps train the volunteers who work with the young people.

assistance needed for the educational programs. In addition, Extension hired Vivian Hudson, a senior at Virginia Commonwealth University, to help with the 4-H Urban Program. As a part of her job responsibilities, she works from 2 to 6 p.m. each weekday at the center, offering the continuity of leadership in program delivery and serves as coordinator of volunteers.

The program began this spring with only limited teen-age involvement. The committee members, who represent an impressive number of local organizations, felt that it would be best to begin with a limited number of youths (20-25) and, after evaluation and expanding programming opportunities, to open formally in the fall. "We are not targeting our efforts at one group of young people," Draine says, "but are trying to make the center something that appeals to many in that ten-to-fifteen age group.

Hudson is very positive about the program she is overseeing. "The young people seem to like it. We try to get them to do their homework and, when it is needed, offer tutoring. They are nice kids who are really raring to go. We have to keep on our toes to keep up with them. The center also gives them a place to call their own."

The program, she says, so impressed one Richmond school teacher that she periodically comes to the center to tutor after spending the day in the classroom.

Draine is quick to point out that the program is a team effort. "There have been many contributors." Included among the organizations that helped make the program and center a reality are the Richmond City schools, Common Cause of Virginia, the Capital Area Agency for the Aging, the Arthritis Foundation of Virginia, the Richmond Community Action Program, the YWCA, the Fairmont House for the Elderly, the Virginia League of Planned Parenthood, and the Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club.

The diversity of participants in the effort, Draine says, illustrates the seriousness with which the problem is viewed.

Programming efforts to address youth concerns in Richmond City have not gone unnoticed. The city-wide Parent-Child Task Force that began community efforts to address teen pregnancy was named one of the recipients of the 1986 Community Health Promotion Award by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for teen pregnancy programming. Adolescent After-School Programs initiated by Richmond Extension were also recognized by the American Home Economics Association by requesting Draine to testify at a Congressional briefing in Washington, D.C., in March about this pro-active strategy.

"Our program is only a part of a multi-dimensional effort that represents a good beginning in confronting the problem caused by these unsupervised young people. We are trying to prevent children from having children by providing a supportive environment that helps them develop the necessary life skills so that they can cope with their problems."

"You can tell by the number of organizations that are trying to do something about the problem that Richmond is a family community that cares." ❏

PEOPLE

In Nelson County

The Saunders Extension Service

The 4-H connection is not the name of a new rock group, but it is an apt description of the tie between the Paul Saunders family in Nelson County and the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service. For more than four decades, 4-H, at one time or another, has played a major role in the lives of one or more members of the family.

And quite a family it is. There are Paul and his wife, Tatum, and their seven sons: Massie, twenty-nine; Tom, twenty-seven; Bennett, twenty-six; Jim, twenty-four; Robert, twenty-two; John, nineteen; and Sam, seventeen. The only one in the family circle who doesn't have a 4-H connection is Frank Sirois, a French Canadian who came to pick fruit nine years ago and stayed. Nevertheless, Frank is considered by all to be an official member of the family, as evidenced by his being included in the family portraits and being responsible for a segment of the business.

All others are or have been members of 4-H and are 4-H All Stars. Paul, the father, was one of the first 4-H'ers to participate in the International 4-H Youth Exchange (IFYE) when he visited Bolivia in 1955. Tatum was elected state secretary in 1950 during the old short-course, the forerunner of today's state 4-H congress.

Paul and Tatum have served as volunteer leaders of the Piney River Community 4-H Club for twenty-nine years. They have seen four of their sons win trips to the national 4-H Congress in Chicago and another win a trip to Canada's national meeting. Two of the sons, Robert and Tom, have held the



Tatum and Paul Saunders take a few minutes to look over some records.

state offices of president and vice president, respectively.

And there are other links between Extension and the family. Paul and Tatum first met at a 4-H swimming party in her native Franklin County when Paul was serving as an assistant Extension agent. Tatum is one of the charter members of the Virginia 4-H Foundation board of directors.

Middle son Jim is a Madison County Extension agent who, as might be expected, is in charge of the county's 4-H youth activities. And, since the family is in the nursery, fruit, and beef cattle business, the Saunders are well known to Virginia Tech Extension

specialists who work in those areas.

The family is well known at Tech for other reasons. Paul, Massie, Tom, Bennett, Jim, and Robert hold degrees from that institution; John is a junior in engineering there; and Sam enrolled in horticulture at Tech this fall. Tatum also holds a nursing degree from the University of Virginia.

The family nursery business stems from a 4-H project in which Paul learned to propagate boxwoods. From that small beginning, the nursery now ships boxwoods, azaleas, white pines, rhododendrons, and hemlocks to 300 nursery centers in twelve states.

The slightly more than twenty-five acres being used for the nursery contain fifty-seven holding greenhouses and several ponds that hold water used to irrigate the plants during dry periods.

The Saunders orchard contains both peach and apple trees. The original orchard was all peaches, but it is slowly being changed to apples because second-generation peach trees do not do as well as their predecessors in the Nelson County soil. However, the operation still produces 10,000 bushels of Redhaven, Loring, and Blake peaches each year, and the family may plant some additional trees in the near future.

On another thirty acres, the family grows Red and Golden Delicious, Winesap, Rome, and Granny Smith apples. State apple growers are watching with interest a new variety, Gala, which Paul has planted. He expects the small reddish-orange golden apple, originally grown in New Zealand, to become a favorite in this country. After several trips and talking with growers in Washington state who have planted the tree, Paul and Tatum have planted 2,600 trees of the new variety. In about four years, the family will find out if consumers take to the new fruit.

Apples and peaches from the Saunders orchard are sold throughout Virginia and in Maryland and Pennsylvania.

The cattle operation involves the whole family. "All of the boys still like to keep cattle," Paul says. "It is probably a carryover from their 4-H days." In referring to the operation, he likes to say that "a



Robert Saunders pores over some of the books at the orchard.

cow is only as pretty as the calf she produces."

The registered angus herd consists of one hundred steers. The family is quite proud of the bulls the herd has produced, mentioning nine plaques it has received from performance-testing stations for top individual bulls and groups of bulls.

The performance of each animal in the Saunders herd is watched closely so that the herd will consist of only the best animals. "We take a great deal of pride in the operation," Tatum says.

All members of the family are interested in the cattle operation, and help by performing various duties in the other parts of the business. Tom is in charge of the nursery. Bennett manages the orchard. Robert looks after packing and shipping. Massie, an engineer with a Lynchburg firm, and Extension agent Jim have no connection with the orchard or nursery. The "adopted" son, Frank, who lives near the operation with his wife and three daughters, handles most of the



Tom talks with his dad, Paul, about a new order that has come to the orchard.

hauling operation unless the demand gets too great.

The Saunders have not escaped national recognition. Paul is a past president of the National Peach Council and the Virginia Beef Cattle Improvement Association and is currently head of the Virginia Angus Association. He is a firm believer of sharing information with others in the same business. "You avoid a lot of mistakes that way," he says with a grin.

As to goals, Paul would like to see the three operations conducted in such a way that there would be no peaks and valleys in the work load. "If we could get our calving, fruit ripening, and nursery buying seasons so that none would occur together, it would take a lot of pressure off. It may never happen, but we are working on it," he says.



Madison County Extension agent Jim Saunders watches secretary Margaret Clatterback type a letter.



Bennett Saunders answers a telephone query about apples.



During harvest, John Saunders finds time to come home and help with the apples.

IN BRIEF

NEWS OF INTEREST FROM ACROSS VIRGINIA

Several thousand people have clearer understandings about how the U.S. Constitution came into being, thanks to a Virginia Tech Extension rural sociologist. *George T. Blume* wrote a one-act drama, "The Constitution: Little Short of A Miracle" for high school students to inform them about the Constitution.

The play is being given across the United States in conjunction with many observances of that document's bicentennial. Blume was also asked to participate in several of the celebrations.

Blume, a member of the American Legion, was asked to be on the Legion's bicentennial committee. As part of his work on the committee, he researched and wrote the forty-minute drama. "I first wrote it in the language of the time," he says, "but I later did an update of the words and sentence structure. It's still historical," he says.

The play takes place in the Pennsylvania State House in Philadelphia, September 17, 1787, the day the Constitutional convention ended with the signing of the document. James Monroe serves as spokesman, carrying the audience back to the convention's beginning and bringing it up to the day of the signing.

The drama focuses on five major events: the situation that resulted in the convention; the introduction of the Virginia plan, the New Jersey plan, and Alexander Hamilton's plan; the Connecticut Compromise, which called for the representation of both people and states in the legislature; the refusal of three important delegates to sign the document; and the actual signing.

The American Legion, which funded the project, printed 30,000 copies, sending 25,000 to high schools throughout the country. The National Commission on the



George Blume

Bicentennial distributed another 500 copies. The remaining copies are available to any group.

Blume's initial effort as a playwright was good enough to cause President Ronald Reagan to write him a thank-you for his copy, and numerous others who have produced the work have sent him thank-yous.

And the National Bicentennial Committee has asked him to write a version for elementary students. The constitutional bicentennial celebration will last until 1991, the anniversary of the Bill of Rights.

Anyone wishing a copy of the play may contact the American Legion, c/o Marty Justis, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, Ind. 46206.

□

The Community Work Alternative Program, which was written by the *Caroline County* Extension staff, has been named the winner of the National Achievement Award by

the National Association of County Administrators.

The program is a comprehensive effort to prevent young people who are first-time offenders from getting into additional trouble with the law. The program combines work in the community with education and personal contacts with those connected with the law in the hope that the young violator will not break the law again.

□

The Extension staffs at Bedford, Prince William, and Westmoreland counties have received honors. The Bedford County unit, headed by *Brenda M. Mosby*, was named the Extension office with the most outstanding electric energy program in Virginia at the annual State 4-H Electric Congress in Richmond.

The Prince William and Westmoreland offices were named outstanding at the annual conference of Extension professional associations (CEPA) at Virginia State University.

The Prince William unit, headed by *Marilyn W. Grizzard*, was cited for its volunteer development program, which has resulted in more than 215 volunteers working in the master gardener, gypsy moth, diet, financial counseling, parent discussion, 4-H survival skill, and 4-H middle manager programs.

The Westmoreland County unit, headed by *Samuel M. Johnson*, received its outstanding unit award among the smaller offices for its work in 4-H resource and unit volunteer development.

The outstanding team award went to a group that represents both Virginia Tech and Virginia State, each of the six Extension districts, Extension specialists, and volunteer staff. During a

thirty-month period, the team planned and conducted three effective interstate study tours to allow one hundred and ten staff members to learn how successful programs in sixteen states operated.

□



Helen Ryan

A twenty-year member of Extension Homemakers is *Henrico County's* Extension Homemaker of the Year. *Helen Ryan*, parliamentarian for the county clubs, received the honor during the annual recognition program.

Ryan, a charter member of the Elizabeth Adam Crump Manor Auxiliary, has held many offices, including council president, district director, area parliamentarian, and president of the Lakeside Extension Homemakers Club. She is also active in the Virginia Needle Woman's Guild.

Runnerup among the fourteen nominated for the honor was *Nettie Korusek*, president of the Highland Springs Club. A member of Extension Homemakers for forty-seven years, she has been a club officer for seventeen years and has been an active volunteer worker in area nursing homes and at the New-bridge Baptist Church.

Honorable mention went to *Thelma Harris*, educational pro-

grams coordinator, and *Doris McClammy*, yearbook chairman.

□

Many Virginia young people are finding blue to be beautiful this year—especially if it is under their feet. "Blue Skies Below My Feet" is the name given to three twenty-eight-minute video tapes on forces, fibers, and foods and how they have been changed by space research.

The program, which has a variety of supporting materials and includes a mission manual for the youngsters, is being offered through 4-H in schools, community clubs, and school enrichment programs. The project is dedicated to the memory of the space shuttle Challenger crew members who lost their lives last year.

The tapes, made by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) working in conjunction with the National 4-H Council, are being shown on all public television stations in Virginia.

□

Three Virginians are among the twenty-seven farmers and agribusiness people from five southern states who are participating in the second Philip Morris Agricultural Leadership Development Program at North Carolina State University.

John C. Bledsoe of *Blackstone*, *J. Wendell Brooks* of *Rocky Mount*, and *Lucy A. Conner* of *Nathalie* are the Virginia representatives in the group that includes persons from North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

The program, which includes nine multi-day seminars on such topics as communications, economics, political science, international trade, and agricultural policy, covers two years and will end with a visit to an as yet undetermined foreign country. It is being sponsored through a \$300,000 grant from Philip Morris U.S.A. and is being conducted by North Carolina Extension.

□



Dennis Hartman and Eleanor Burton

The current outstanding 4-H club dairy leader in Virginia is *Eleanor Burton* of *Fauquier County*. She succeeds *Tracy* and *Janet Stiles* of *Frederick County*. She is the eighth person to receive the honor, which is presented each year at the annual Virginia Dairy Youth Field Day in Harrisonburg. Previous winners of the honor were *Robin W. Dodson*, *Powhatan County*; *Margie Ann Dick*, *Fauquier County*; *Rhoda Johnston*, *Madison County*; *Ellen Blose*, *Rockingham County*; *Alice Forrest*, *Culpeper County*; and *Carol McComb*, *Loudoun County*. Burton is a long-time 4-H club leader who has trained hundreds of 4-H dairy members and has seen many of her charges go on to win state and national honors.

□

Virginia 4-H continues to grow in popularity. Last year, total enrollment grew to 125,534 members in 4,391 clubs, an increase of nearly 10,000 members. Membership in the community clubs rose by 592 youths and fifty-nine clubs.

The most popular projects were animal science and poultry with an enrollment of 47,926 and home economics with 43,526. The number of projects each member participated in increased slightly to 1.77. More than 20,000 4-H'ers participated in camping programs during the year.

□

Mums Mean Money To Prince William 4-H'ers

Twenty-one Prince William County 4-H'ers shouldn't be surprised if all their dreams this summer are in pink, white, and yellow—those are the colors of chrysanthemums that they are growing for sale to area residents this fall.

This horticultural endeavor is part of a 4-H pilot project that is designed to teach the youngsters basic economics, as well as to show them a little about the care and feeding of plants. And, if all goes as expected, the young people will make some money from their labors.

The project had its start nearly two years ago when Marilyn W. Grizzard, Extension unit director, told two staff members about a flower-raising project that she had heard about while she was on vacation in another state. The two Extension agents, Deborah Carter and Deborah Smith, thought the effort would be a good avenue to teaching good business practices to Prince William 4-H'ers. Carter, a 4-H agent, and Smith, an agricultural agent, are collaborating on the project that is teaching young people about profits and losses.

The first thing the two agents did was recruit a Master Gardener to help them work with the young people. Last year, the volunteer was Jackie Ralya, and Sue Clark is working with the young people this year. It is hoped that the entire program will be conducted by a volunteer within two more years.

The two agents also boned up on how to raise mums. Knowing that different plant varieties require more care than others, the two agents and the Master Gardener made certain that they conveyed the correct information to the 4-H'ers.

A local greenhouse grower who specializes in raising mums came to their aid by providing information concerning the ups and downs of mum growing and by donating the use of his greenhouse when the youngsters received their plants from a local plant company that agreed to donate cuttings and deliver them.

Project enrollment, which was limited to fifteen in the first year, was increased to twenty-one this year because those associated with the project better understood the possible problems that might occur. Despite the increase in enrollment, the same number of plants, 1,800, were distributed this year.

Each 4-H'er last year was charged fifteen dollars to cover any possible cost and was given sixty plants. This year, each 4-H'er was charged forty-three cents a plant and had to buy a minimum of twenty, but could have as many as he or she felt could be successfully grown and sold.

As was the case last year, the group met before getting the plants and learned about growing and caring for them. During the summer, meetings were held monthly to give the participants information on



Debbie Smith Photos

The young people enthusiastically mix the moistened soil.

growing mums and such topics as pest control, marketing, accounting, and record keeping. Rather than using pesticides, the young people were taught how to use Safer's soap, a potassium-based soap that handles most pests that might bother the plant.

Speakers to the group came from the local chapter of the Old Dominion Chrysanthemum Society, the accounting profession, and Virginia Tech. One problem, especially for the speakers on accounting and economics, was to simplify the topics so that the younger 4-H'ers could understand them.

Each of the 4-H'ers was assigned to one of three committees—quality control, advertising, and sales.

The members of the quality control committee try to insure that all plants will be quality products when they are sold. They determine that each 4-H'er is taking care of his or her plants as promised, especially by doing the pinching and watering, which are the main duties. The plants are also put in one of two grades by the members just prior to the sale. The grade determines the price that will be asked.

About half of the plants will be sold in shopping malls across the county, and the remainder will be sold under individual contract. Last year's plants failed to follow the blooming schedule and flowered late. It is hoped that this year the plants will follow the script and look their best when the mall sales are scheduled.

This year's twenty-one participants include seven repeaters from last year. There also are two pairs of brothers and sisters. One entrepreneur last year used the profits from his paper route to pay his sister to care for the plants. Despite the fact the he had to make regular payments to his sister, he did quite well financially. This year, the sister is growing her own plants.

Carter and Smith were surprised at the parental



Sandra Douglas, foreground, and Lane Pickell warily eye the stack of pots that need filling with soil.



Prince William Extension's two Debbies, Smith, left, and Carter, study the plans to distribute the mums.

involvement in the project. Although parents were asked to attend the initial meetings so that they would know what their sons or daughters should be doing, it was not expected that most of them would keep actively involved in the project. "They were surprised at the work it took to grow the plants," say the agents.

This year, the two Extension agents made out a calendar that listed the daily chore, pinching or watering, for the young horticulturists to follow. It was found that the calendar was easier to follow than verbal instructions given at a meeting, and that participants who went on vacation could rely on the calendar to guide the person who cared for the plants in their absence.

Even though this year's project has not yet ended, the 4-H'ers are finding out that it's hard work making money. Few realized the work they would put into such a project to make a profit. How much profit? If this year's group does as well as last year, it will average about \$150 per member.

"But, they will remember their lessons in profit and loss, accounting, and cost analysis long after the money is gone," say the two Extension agents. And many of the 4-H'ers will feel the same as one of last year's participants who said, "I got sick of mums but I loved the money." ❏



Sticks tell the 4-H'er what varieties are in which pots.

Christmas Came in April To Alexandria

A group of Alexandria residents can testify that the spirit of Christmas knows no season—they were recipients of its infectious mood during the spring. The occasion was Christmas in April, a campaign designed to help disadvantaged home owners spruce up their dwellings and to plant the seeds of pride of ownership in their minds.

The idea for the Alexandria observance came from the Reverend John Sorensen, assistant chaplain at St. Stephen's School. He had been associated with the program previously, liked it, and contacted several local organizations and agencies in an attempt to drum up support to get the observance established in Alexandria. One of his letters filtered from the human services to the Extension office and Barbara Joseph, a local Extension agent funded by Virginia State University.

"The city had been working at upgrading some of the downtown neighborhoods and so there was high interest in Mr. Sorensen's approach," Joseph said. "City officials correctly saw that any efforts at rejuvenating housing would supplement their efforts and help at improving the area."

Christmas did not come in April just because various people thought it would be a good program, however. There was a lot of work to be done before



Nina Tisora Photo

Meeting to review the results of the Christmas in April program are, from left, Rev. John Sorensen, assistant chaplain of St. Stephen's School and chairman of the program; Maxine Clark, vice president of the Arlandria Civic Association; Michael Hadeed Jr., chairman of the Potomac West Trade Association, and Barbara Joseph, program coordinator for the Alexandria Extension Service.



Bill Burleson Photo

One of the homes in the Christmas in April program sports a new sodded lawn and an air conditioner.

the small army of volunteers could do their thing in mid-April. First came organizing. Newsletters and personal pleas recruited helpers who formed an organization. Officers were elected with Mr. Sorensen as president. Incorporation papers were filed.

Alexandria joined seven other communities across the nation with Christmas in April programs, including two that were fairly close—the District of Columbia and Virginia Beach. The program in D.C. has grown steadily since it began, starting with twelve houses being refurbished in the first year and increasing to where fifty-five were worked on last year.

"We looked at several neighborhoods, walking them and talking with the residents," Joseph says. "We decided we would begin the program in Potomac West in north Alexandria as it was a small, compact neighborhood and the city had done some work there. We wanted to work with those who owned their property, not landlords."

But, the Christmas in April officials found that the neighborhood residents might have other ideas. The residents treated the program officials as Greeks bearing gifts rather than April Santas. Having been exploited previously and being wary of getting something for nothing, the residents had to be sold on participating in the program.

Joseph recalls the selling was "extremely difficult. We worked through the neighborhood associations, talking to their members and explaining the program. Several of the first enlistees were extremely wary of

us. In fact, one family decided not to participate just hours before the big day and a substitute had to be found."

The fledgling organizations found business, as well as the general public, ready to offer assistance. A number of firms donated materials and others sold items at cost. Donations for materials and other items topped the \$7,300 mark.

The homes that were to receive paint and repairs were inspected by professionals who would know exactly what work was needed. "The inspections were important," Joseph says, "for it was the recommendations by the professionals that told us what equipment, paint, and other items we needed to buy."

The recommendations needed to be specific for the work crews would only work between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on the selected Christmas Day.

The 4:30 quitting time was set so that all participants and recipients could get together for a cookout. The affair ended the day's activities on a pleasant note and everyone had an opportunity to get to know each other.

Five of the eight homes that were worked on belonged to senior citizens. Three were single women who were heads of households and four were handicapped. One of the recipients of the Christmas in April "presents" spent the day a few doors away working on the home of a neighbor.

The volunteers also worked at the Guest House, a half-way house for women who had been convicted of crimes. The volunteers painted the first floor and built conference rooms and a computer training room in the house's basement. The volunteers also did some painting and cleaning at the Alive Child Development Center, a day-care center.

Lloyd Blain, a mechanic who owned one of the houses receiving the work, says the work kept his family from just giving up. The house, a former rental property, had been allowed to run down and presented the family of six with an almost insurmountable cleaning task. The volunteers worked on the wiring, installed a sump pump to prevent flooding during severe rains, and did some painting and wall papering on the first floor.



Lloyd Blain and his eleven-year-old daughter Vashti admire the roses in their yard. Blain plans to be a volunteer worker in next year's Christmas in April program.



Rev. John Sorenson, seated, gives directions to a volunteer so that he can find the assigned house in the Arlandria section.

A group of hardy rose bushes were found among the high grass surrounding the corner lot and Blain received some horticultural information from Extension on how to keep them healthy. The advice was sound, as evidenced by the healthy bushes later in the summer.

The volunteers also showed the family that it was not impossible to get the house in good shape. Blain and his wife, Lynette, tackle other fix-up jobs around the house as time and money permit. Blain has become a stalwart backer of the program, saying he will be one of the volunteers next April.

Some of the effort's success can be measured by the thank-you letters the program received from the recipients. They cited the volunteers for being "so helpful and kind" and called the whole day "exciting" and "fun". One said she was "overjoyed with happiness for the blessing you brought my way in helping to make my home a nice place to stay (in)."

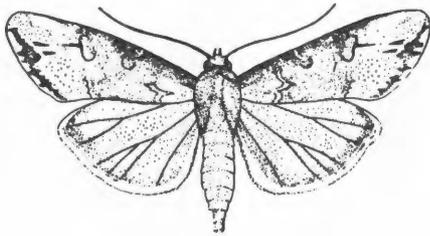
Alexandria City Council presented the program and volunteers with a certificate of appreciation for the efforts at improving the area. And what was the cost? There was \$7,330 in donations for the various items that were needed. Several business firms made the money go further by selling building items at cost. The 174 volunteers lost a day of leisure but gained a great deal of self satisfaction as evidenced by the number who said they planned to repeat the effort next year.

And Barbara Joseph found a new job. The Rev. Sorenson accepted a call from an Episcopal church in Midland, Texas, early in the summer and Joseph is the organization's new president. She thinks next year's effort will be easier to conduct because it is better known in the area and there already is a corps of volunteers.

"The residents see that it is a program that can help them without risk, and it is an undertaking that offers people with or without skills the opportunity to provide a service to the community. And besides, it always is easier the second time around," she says grinning. ☞

INNOVATIONS

RESEARCH TO BENEFIT VIRGINIANS



Efforts to forestall damage by the gypsy moth have resulted in the Fairfax County Extension staff winning a national award. They have received the 1987 Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties as the first locally established gypsy moth integrated pest management program.

When the program was established in 1981, projections indicated that between 15 and 20 percent of the county's trees would be defoliated by 1985 if nothing were done. Because of the program, only one-half of the anticipated defoliation occurred by 1985.

The Fairfax County program sought to delay the spread and buildup of gypsy moth populations in the county, reduce nuisance problems to citizens, prevent tree defoliation, and increase citizen involvement in the programs to eliminate the pest.

Among the methods Extension used to keep the moth numbers at reduced levels were the scraping of egg masses, involvement of homeowners in self-help methods, spraying in specific areas, release of parasites that are enemies of the moth, and use of sex-lures as a mating disruption control. These were explained and promoted through educational campaigns to increase public awareness and understanding of the efforts. The Fairfax unit is directed by Robert

Doyle and includes Mary K. Osborn, Rajandra N. Waghray, Nancy L. Mannix, Ann E. Gurney, Mary Bean, Tina MacIntyre, and Nancy Corrigan.



A \$1.1 million grant has been given to the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek, Michigan, for the development of stand-alone Extension information stations. This new technology, referred to as "interactive video", is expected to make a significant improvement in getting a variety of information to the public.

The information stations will use microcomputers and laser-disc technology to provide easy and quick access to information. The information can be stored and retrieved as motion video, still pictures, audio, or text. *Mary G. Miller*, Extension specialist in instructional design at Virginia Tech, is project director.

These stations will be placed in selected malls and libraries across the state. The systems located in malls will be packaged in such a manner that persons interacting with the system will only have to touch the computer screen to select program options or control presentations. Those systems located in libraries will have the additional capabilities of keyboards and voice recognition.



Fluctuating temperatures in pig nurseries can make pigs sick, but a producer can save 35 percent in energy bills by lowering temperatures ten degrees. Researchers at Virginia Tech and the Agricultural University of The Netherlands



have shown that by adding the antibiotic compounds mecadox or ASAP-250, and with careful observation and treatment, health problems can be overcome with no adverse effect on weight gain nor abnormalities of tissue or organs.

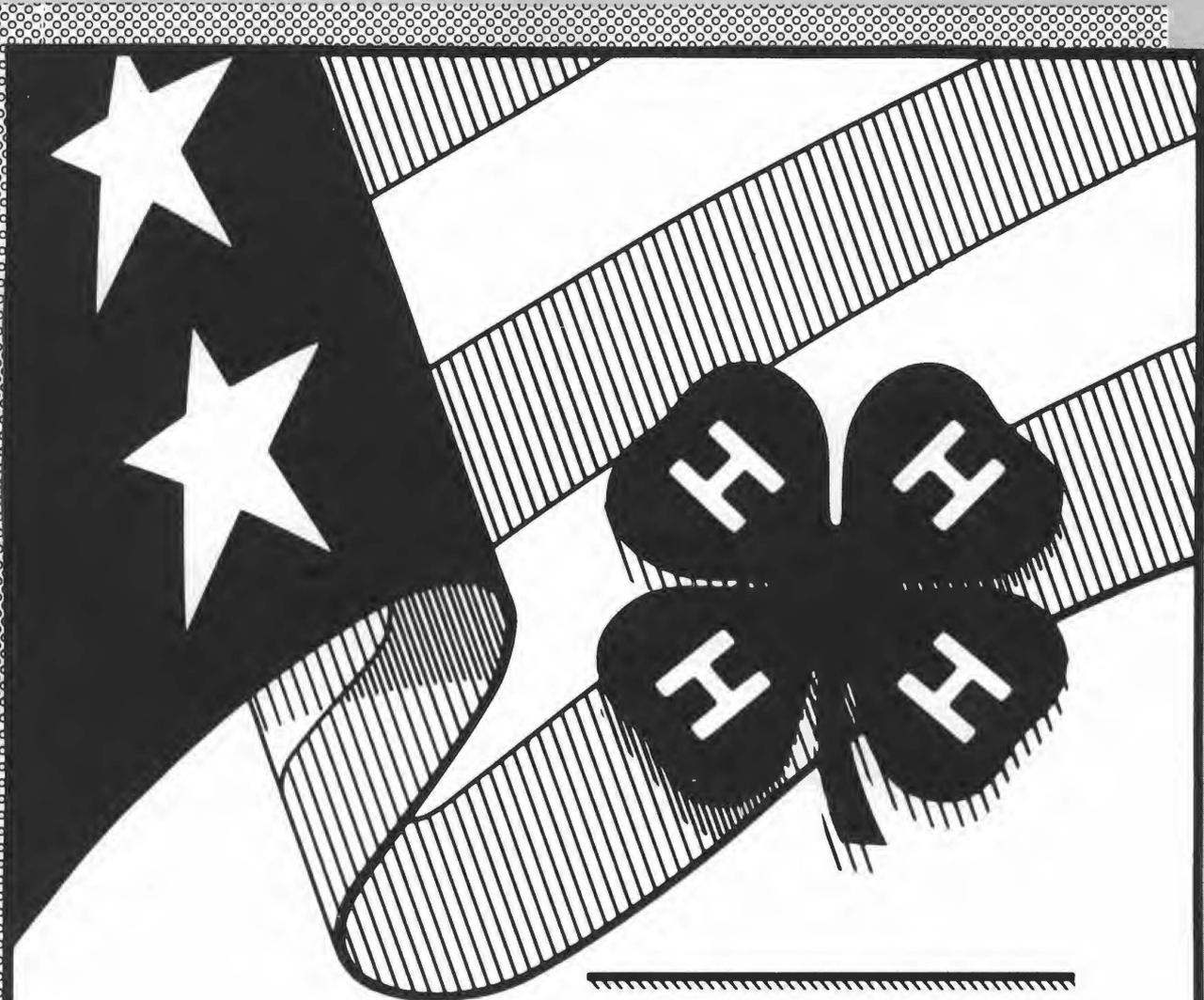


It pays to nip fruit in the bud—but not by hand. Hand-thinning of fruit trees to achieve an optimal crop of quality fruits is time-consuming and, consequently, expensive.

Ross E. Byers, Extension horticulturist at Virginia Tech's Winchester Agricultural Experiment Station, has found that some chemical thinning agents reduce thinning costs almost 88 percent—\$20 per acre for chemical thinning vs. \$170 per acre for thinning by hand. Some dessicants, surfactants, and fertilizers (such as ammonium thiosulfate), when applied at blooming, reduce the number of buds that develop into mature fruits. The result is increased fruit size, quality, and yield and reduced production cost.

In Virginia, chemical thinning of peaches could annually save a quarter of a million dollars in labor while increasing the yield and value of the crop between two and four million dollars.





4-H

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