

ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT  
HOME DEMONSTRATION WORK  
BUCHANAN COUNTY  
VIRGINIA

1944

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Home Demonstration Agent

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## County Agricultural Board

The County Agricultural Board is composed of the community and neighborhood leaders and the professional workers in the County. There are 11 communities with 11 chairmen and 11 chairwomen, and 47 neighborhoods with 47 chairmen and 47 chairwomen. Seven professional people in the county work with the board, these are: County agent, Home demonstration agent, President of the bank, Health officer, County nurse, Farm Security supervisor, and one member at large. Three meetings have been held in 1944 with good attendance and interest shown. At these meetings the "Food Fights for Freedom" program was discussed; recruitment of labor from the county for orange and apple pickers was decided upon, and the agricultural outlook for the year was explained. Other timely information has been sent throughout the county by these leaders from time to time.

Buchanan County contains 584 square miles and has an approximate population of 40,000 people. The 1940 census shows that there are 2517 farm families in the county. Not one of these families has a telephone or has access to a telephone. To get information out into the county the key people of the neighborhoods have been selected for chairmen. In most instances these are the people who run the small county post offices and stores. They can contact people by posters in the store or post offices and by word of mouth. Without this organization it would be almost impossible to get information out into all parts of the county.

## Professional Workers Conference

No formal professional workers conference has been held this year. The professional workers in the county work together whenever a program comes up that requires cooperation. The County Agent and the Home Demonstration Agent work with all of the agencies represented in the professional workers conference and act as go between in many cases where information or help is needed to be gotten out into the county.

## V. LEADERSHIP

### Adult Work

There are 50 women serving as officers in the 15 clubs and groups in the county. Two county committee meetings were held with an attendance of 36. Since there are no project leaders in the county no regular training meetings have been held. The agent has carried out the training of the officers individually through letters and at meetings.

There is good project leadership material in most of the clubs. The agent has used this leadership throughout the year without the women being aware of it. One woman gave a good demonstration on how to make draut. Demonstrations in sewing, crocheting, quilting, canning, and storage have been given by voluntary leaders who did not realize they were giving them. To them, they were showing the agent how they did the job. Through these demonstrations the agent has gained in practical knowledge for these mountain people have worked out efficient, practical methods of doing many things. Necessity has forced them to.

#### 4-H Club Work

There are 20 boys and girls who serve as 4-H club officers. These officers have improved in leadership in the past year, several have been relected for the coming year. The boys and girls take pride in being officers in the clubs and are anxious to make good.

Holland Hale, Vansant, a club officer for two years and a member for 5 years, was initiated into the All-Star organization. This is the first All-Star from Buchanan County. Holland was selected also to go to Georgia to help launch the 4-H Club Victory Ship. Three boys and three girls from Buchanan attended the 4-H club short course at V.P.I. These boys and girls show definite improvement in leadership since attending. One of the girls gave a very good demonstration on laundering after she returned.

There are 5 adult 4-H club leaders. Four are very good and are interested in the growth and development of the clubs. These leaders are trained individually at meetings and by letters from the agents. Two leaders have done outstanding work. One club could function, and does, without either agent attending each meeting. The other club is in a 3 room school and is only one year old. The leader is the teacher and the development of these children has been remarkable under her leadership. The 4-H club is the only organization these children in the 4-H clubs have ever belonged to. It is the brightest spot each month in many of their under priviledged lives. Through working in these clubs these children are gaining confidence and knowledge, and future adult leadership for Buchanan County is being built.

#### Older Youth

The older youth functioned without leadership other than than that of the agent.

## VI. RESULTS

### Home Demonstration Clubs

#### Food

##### Production

Every available spot in Buchanan County that will lend itself to cultivate is utilized in producing food for man and beast. Gardens, this year, were good even if affected to some extent by the drought. Where one vegetable failed another was planted to take its place. As planned last year, the agents<sup>1</sup> held garden meetings in the clubs and community centers to stress the importance of correct garden planning, fertilization, cultivation, buying of seed and plants, and insect control. In most of the gardens results could be seen from these meetings. A number of families have cabbage to store this winter where before there was none because of the cabbage worm and yellows. Better potatoes have been grown in the result demonstration gardens from good certified seed, and correct fertilization. Potato planting and cutting demonstrations were given in 11 communities. More families had tomatoes enough for use this year because they planted good seed, and raised their own plants. Two families planted hybrid corn and attained good results. Others are planning to plant hybrid corn in 1945. Timely gardening information was given throughout the year to each club by the agent. More families this year are planting cover crops on gardens to help keep up fertility and for winter feed for chickens and cows.

Poultry meetings were held in 4 communities. Farm flocks are being culled out and decreased in number. People are not producing enough eggs to supply the demand in Buchanan County. This situation has been caused by the high cost and shortage of feed.

Milk, and butter production is about normal. Cottage cheese making demonstrations were given in 10 communities, 1 american cheese demonstration was given with good results. The people have a surplus of milk and no market so this surplus can be used for cheese and the by product feed to the hogs. The correct feeding of both cows and hogs has been stressed, as well as the importance of vaccinating hogs for cholera since this disease is so wide spread in this county.

Agent<sup>1</sup> Food production meetings were given by both County and Home Demonstration Agent cooperating together. The majority of farming in Buchanan County is gardening so this was carried as a joint program.

### Conservation

July, August and part of September was given to food conservation. A tour of the food storage places in the county would give some idea of the results. In many cellars a can of peaches or corn canned this year looks quite different from that of last year. The idea of quality as well as quantity is beginning to be seen in the canning displays shown to the agent. Products of pressure cooker canning can be seen, also. Approximately 50 new pressure cookers have been bought by the women, county wide, and if more were to be had on the market 100% of the club women would own one. A survey of 175 families shows that 102,640 quarts of fruit have been canned; 59,499 quarts of vegetables; 2500 gallons brined, 1740 pounds of fruit dried, 1105 pounds of vegetables dried; 19050 pounds of fruit stored, 117585 pounds of vegetables stored; 65540 pounds of meat cured. This survey brought out the fact that vegetable canning had been affected to some extent by the drough as some clubs reported that they had less corn and beans to can. It showed that the large fruit crop replaced the vegetables in the cans. Many families reported buying new cans to take care of the fruit surplus. Old coffee jars and other type jars were salvaged from town basements and taken into the county for use with the 63 size lids.

Fifty per cent of the club members are canning cull chickens this year as a result of chicken canning demonstrations given through the year. Meat canning has been an interesting topic to the entire county. Meat canning demonstrations have been given in 3 of the 5 high schools in the county. These are consolidated schools so reach over a large territory. Bulletins were given out at these meetings. The agent felt that more information could be gotten into the homes that could not be reached otherwise through the older girls in the schools who attended these meetings. About  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the 125 people attending were 4-H club girls. Information on correct butchering and care of meat is being distributed over the county. Too much meat is still being lost by bad methods of butchering and storage of meat.

### Nutrition

The importance of canning correctly to save food value was stressed at all the canning demonstrations. At each meeting the agent tried to get some fact concerning nutrition across to the members. Bread making demonstrations were given in June and were appreciated by the women for very few make any bread except cornbread. Twelve years ago Miss Lillian Gilbert, the only home agent to be in the county before the present agent, gave bread demonstrations. A very few women had kept up what they had learned from her. In September packed lunch demonstrations were given to all the clubs.

It come out at these meetings that many children in the county are going to school without breakfast and many without lunch. The agent is working on this problem through the 4-H clubs and adult groups. The last survey showed this situation is being altered for the better. More children are eating breakfast and carrying lunch to school. The school lunch program at Council High School, sponsored by the two agents, is carrying on again this year. The school garden planted by the 4-H boys produced potatoes, onions, corn and tomatoes. More equipment has been added. Children who used to sit out on the mountain side without lunch are now getting a hot nourishing meal. The importance of cheese in the diet has been stressed and more use is being made of surplus milk. Gardens, this year, show a green turnip patch for late fall greens and bushels of sweet potatoes are stored away to replace the fresh greens in the diet later. People are becoming nutritious conscious. The agent pointed out that the rate of accidents in the mines might be lowered if the men were properly feed at home and had good lunches to carry into the mines with them.

#### Clothing

##### Consumer Problems

Problems on buying have come up throughout the year and have been worked out with the help of the agent. Where articles of clothing could not be found on the market old clothing was reworked into garments to take the place of those needed. Many times the mail order catalogs were turned to for help for a good many of the county people get into town very seldom and buy through the sale houses.

##### Conservation

The conservation of woolen garments was taken up in May along with dry cleaning and laundrying. Ways to store woolens properly were discussed, also the importance of having them cleaned properly before storage. About 100 women were given help on this. These women feel that the help they received on dry cleaning has saved them countless dollars in dry cleaning bills, saved clothing that might have been discarded, and has helped solve the problem of getting clothes to and from the dry cleaners.

##### Construction

The clubs worked on clothing construction in April. This is a subject dear to the hearts of most of the women and one that they need help with. Commercial patterns are sold at only one store in the county; very few of the women can use or get one so the agent carries a pattern book to every meeting each month and takes a few minutes to help any woman chose a pattern who needs one.

Often ways are found in the pattern book to remake old clothing. At the April meetings a demonstration was given on how to use patterns and how to do simple construction work. At other meetings after the main demonstration the agent has demonstrated how to put in zippers, make bound button holes, and take hems. Help has been given to the women throughout the year with whatever clothing problems they may have had.

No regular remodeling clinic has been held this year, but each month at almost every meeting some old garments are brought out to be looked over and decided what use they can be put to. Children's coats have been made from adult's coats. Jumpers have been made from old coats and dresses. One hat clinic was held. This clinic had one unusual feature; few of the women wear hats or own any so the hats were furnished by a church worker who lives and works in this particular community. These hats had New York, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia and Washington labels from exclusive shops in many of them. They have been sent into the county by people who could no longer use them; since many of the women do not wear hats they were accumulating. The hat clinic was planned to get the hats into circulation. This worked three ways: the hats were used as demonstration material, each woman choosing one or more hats and worked them over to suit her; the hats were gotten into use; the women will learn to wear hats because they had so much pleasure in working on them.

#### House Furnishings

##### Conservation

The women are aware of the need to conserve house furnishings, and have used the information they have received at the meetings to good advantage. Information has been given on ways to store blankets. Rugs are not such a problem for most families use linoleum. The necessity of caring for this correctly was stressed and more women are cleaning their linoleum rugs now and waxing them to insure longer wear. Several women asked how to clean woolen rugs and upholstery and were given aid on this.

##### Construction

Slip cover demonstrations have been given in 6 communities. Many people are covering furniture to protect it from soil and wear. One couch was covered with an attractive cover made from heavy feed bags. Slip cover material has been hard to get so not as much work has been done on slip covering this year as last.

The feed bag is the answer to many house furnishing problems in Buchanan. It has put the right finishing touches to bed rooms, dining rooms, kitchens, and has gone into the making of garments of many kinds. Quilts are being "set-up" with feed bags.

The importance of storage space for house furnishings was discussed in January. One closet for clothing and bedding has been remodeled, the woman doing all the work herself.

One club woman has redone a bed room and used feed bags for curtains, bed spread, dressing table skirt and cover, and chair covers. The walls of the room are a soft blue, so a part of the feed bags were dyed a blue to match. This was used as borders and lining on the natural-colored feed bags. The room is very attractive and has created much interest in the community among the women who have duplicated many of its features in their homes.

The "feed bag dining room" is a unique idea. This was carried out by one of the older club women in the county. The curtains, table linen and other linens are made of natural colored feed bags. There are joined together with a design in crocheting worked out by the woman herself. The agent has carried this idea to all of the clubs and at least one half of the club members plan to utilize feed bags to make their homes more attractive by using them in curtains, draperies, linens and to take the place of other materials that are almost gone from the stores.

#### Home Management

##### Kitchen Arrangement

All of the clubs studied kitchen arrangements in January. So many of the kitchens need more working space and this is being planned by the families as soon as material can be purchased to go into cabinets and shelves. Three kitchens have been completely redone; two families have installed water in their kitchens. War bonds are being laid away to go into water installation and remodeling of homes when the war is over. The majority of the women say "water in the kitchen first."

##### Storage (kitchen and laundry)

The majority of the homes in the county are small and the space is needed for the family living. Too little thought has gone into home planning where storage is concerned. The storage in kitchens has been improved some since the January meetings, but the laundry storage is still a problem. No place has been planned in the homes or out for the laundry equipment.

The front or back porch is usually used as a storage place for the washing machine. This is a problem that will have to wait until the war is over and building material is released before it can be solved.

#### Time and Energy Management

At the January meetings the importance of time and energy management was discussed. This subject was referred to at other meetings; especially at the canning demonstrations. The club women and other women of the county are carrying double loads. They are doing their home work and the work of the farm, the husbands are at work in the mines or at other essential war work. One year's time has made a big difference in the health of many of these women. How much longer some of these women can carry on is a question.

#### Business Facts For Homemakers

The importance of making wills has been discussed by all of the clubs. Many of the women had never given any thought to what disposition they would make of their property until the discussions on wills.

#### Home Laundry

At the May meeting the importance of having the laundry tubs the correct height, and ways to save time and energy was illustrated and discussed. Two months in 1945 will be devoted to the problems of home laundry.

#### Home Demonstration Club Activities

##### Special Activities

The club women in Buchanan do not have time for special activities as do so many women in other counties. Here, they are doing a man sized job of farming, gardening, feeding the stock and running the home. Their leisure hours are few for almost all have large families. Probably a large part of this could be placed under "special activities" for it takes stamina, endurance and a willing heart to get the work done that these women accomplish. They are doing their part on the home front as much as the women who sew for the Red Cross. Two clubs have done some Red Cross sewing but the agent saw that it was adding to their already heavy load so this has been discontinued. All the members of the clubs are giving of their money to the Red Cross, U. S. O., and are buying war bonds.

### Year's Work Of One Outstanding Club

The Davenport club made up of 20 members, and located at the extreme end of the county has not accomplished any spectacular feat, yet it has done an outstanding year's work. This is measured by the interest of the members and by the enjoyment and appreciation they have shown at each meeting. In all of the large community of Hurricans the Home Demonstration Club is the only organization of any sort. There are no regular church services or Sunday schools for the women to attend. Therefore, their club has meant a great deal to them and results are being seen in their homes from the meetings they attend.

Changes in the personalities and behavior of the women can be seen by the agent. So much of this club's work is intangible, but priceless. They have some tangible results to show through, also. Two all day meetings have been held by the club, quilting was the main feature of the day along with information supplied on the subject of the month by the agent. Progress in canning methods can be seen in their cellars. One member's home reflects every meeting held. Her display in her cellar shelves are replicas of the canning demonstrations given by the agent. The walls of her home, the draperies at her windows, the arrangements of her kitchen shows what she has gotten from the meetings. Her home is a good result demonstration and the other members are following her lead. The members of this club do not have to be notified of a meeting. They remember the date and are there because it means something to them. This year's work has been one of good fellowship, cooperation and a desire to learn the better way of doing their everyday tasks.

### A Home Demonstration Club Member's Adjustment to War Conditions

Mrs. George Breeding, of Davenport, would be the first to say she had done anything unusual. To her, what she has accomplished is all in the day's work. If her work has been heavier than usual, and it has, she has not made any fuss about it. She has gone cheerfully and with a willing spirit about her work, taking on more tasks as they have been added.

Mrs. Breeding's youngest son is in the army and has been for over two years. When he left she quietly picked up his tasks. Her husband has county work for the school board, is away all day and cannot help with the home work. He makes furniture at night in his shop and occasionally a coffin which Mrs. Breeding lines and finishes. Her oldest son left for the navy this summer so Mrs. Breeding moved the wife and 2 children in with her family. More work added, yet nothing was said.

Then her oldest daughter left home to work in a defense plant so the outside work has all fallen on Mrs. Breeding. This consists of milking and caring for three cows, feeding five hogs, working a two acre garden, and planting and cultivating one acre of tobacco. On the side she worked in the cornfield and potato patch; grew a big patch of melons to feed to her family and neighbors. When canning time came she canned for two families, her own and her son's. There is no sadness in this home or forebodings. Life is going on on the assumption that the boys are coming home and food will be needed. Over 1000 cans were filled, and bushels of sweet potatoes, potatoes and apples stored away. When time came to cut the tobacco Mrs. Breeding did that, cured and graded it herself. Along with all this work Mrs. Breeding has attended regularly all the club meetings except one. She missed this meeting because her brother needed someone to carry on for him in his store and post office while he took off a day to get married. Mrs. Breeding sews and quilts in her spare moments. She keeps a fire going in her cook stove at all hours so that she will have food ready if someone comes by. The latch string on her door is always out and her many friends use it. After the tobacco grading was finished a few weeks ago Mrs. Breeding quietly went to the hospital for a serious operation. No fuss was made about it at all. No fuss will be made when she returns. Life will continue on its even keel at the Breeding's for it has a steady hand at the helm. Shirley, Mrs. Breeding's 6 year old daughter, attends every club meeting, observes what goes on and takes an interest in all of it. She, no doubt, will fill her mother's shoes as president of the Davenport club in the years to come.

#### 4-H Clubs

##### Project Work

##### Bread

Bread projects were carried by 39 of the club members. Seven girls picked up the project during the summer, making a total of 44. Good work was done on bread by those carrying it. Demonstrations on bread making were given by the agent. Many of these girls are making all the bread eaten at home. The girls making loaf bread: 50, biscuits 554, cornbread 1707, other 61- Total 2433.

##### Clothing

The clothing project was harder for the girls to carry than the others for the meetings are held in crowded school rooms and there is little room to work. Thirty eight new garments were made and 39 old ones remodeled. Two of the clubs, boys and girls did good darning. Instructions were given by the agent at the meetings.

#### Home Laundry

One girl carried home laundry. She attended the 4-H short course and received her instruction work there. She later gave a very good demonstration on ironing to her club.

#### Poultry

Instructions on poultry raising was given by the Farm and Home Agent from time to time to the clubs. Four girls enrolled, with 3 completing. These girls managed the family flock. Receipts were \$68.40. These flocks were family size and were operated mainly to furnish the family supply of eggs and poultry.

#### Gardening

Sixteen girls carried and completed gardening. These gardens were either small gardens set off from the family garden or a part of the family garden. The agents gave gardening training in the early spring and later visited their gardens. These gardens were valued at approximately \$694.50.

#### Child Care

Two girls carried this project. Most of the girls take care of smaller brothers and sisters as a matter of course. These girls received help from the agent and information through reading material.

#### Housekeeping

Eight girls carried this project and seven completed it. One girl did especially good work and gave good demonstrations before her club on how to make a bed and set a table. Instructions were given these girls by the agent and other help was obtained from the project books.

#### Stop-Food-Waste

This project was selected by 20 girls and completed by 14. The agent instructed the girls in meetings and gave them literature at different times. Home visits were made to several of these girl's homes and the project work was discussed and help was given by the agent.

### Canning

Six girls enrolled and 6 completed this project. These were older girls and they showed they were interested in canning. They helped can a total of 2001 quarts, 239 quarts were canned by them alone. One girl canned all of the peaches at her home the way the agent had demonstrated. Three girls canned by a canning budget. Two helped improve storage space.

### Milk, Butter, and Cheese

One girl carried this project and completed it. She did excellent work and helped her mother by taking this project since the mother was busy in the gardens and field.

### Health

The importance of keeping well by eating and dressing correctly, and by getting enough rest is being stressed. A "no cold club" has been formed in one club, the ones who do not have colds can belong. The boys and girls are being urged to eat a good breakfast and carry all lunch to school. More children are doing both since the drive on "eat breakfast and carry lunch" was started by the agent.

### Community Activities of Clubs Relating To War Activities

The 4-H clubs have taken a big part in the Bond Drives. A contest was carried in the 5 high schools among the girls and boys to see who could sell the most bonds. A 4-H club girl from Hurley club won a \$25.00 war bond by selling \$10,000 worth. The clubs have taken part in the scrap paper drive and the collection of milkweed pod. They have assisted in the U.S.O. and Red Cross drives and are members of the Junior Red Cross.

### Work Of One Club

The Hurley 4-H club has done good work under its excellent club leader. They have completed their project work, taken part in other work not carried as project, done outstanding work in the Bond Drives and have included 2 socials along with the work. At these, the Grundy 4-H club boys were entertained. Their summer canning project was a success, and they are planning to help with the meat canning after attending a meat canning demonstration. Two members attended the 4-H short course and brought back an added interest and information to their club. One gave a good ironing demonstration at the July meeting. They carry on with the help of the leader whenever the agents cannot attend a meeting.

### Older Youth

The older youth group met during the summer months to do a clothing project. They learned to lay patterns, cut out and fit dresses, to alter patterns, to remodel old clothes, to dry clean, and to work together. Seven girls worked on these projects and five new dresses, one jacket and one bonnet were cut out, fitted and construction started. These girls are now in school and will complete in Home Economics Class what was not finished this summer.

### Other Work Done By Home Demonstration Agent

#### County Home Economics Workers

The Agent is chairman of the County Home Economics workers in the county. There are 4 home economist employed. No meetings have been held but the agent contacts these when visiting the schools, and problems are discussed at these visits.

#### Rationing Board

The agent has carried rationing information to the members of the clubs and has cooperated with the rationing board in distributing news of timely interest.

#### War Bond Committee

The War Bond Committee has asked the agent at each War Bond Drive to assist in planning for the drive and to help with the Special Events Program put on by the committee. A beauty contest for men was given during the 5th Bond Drive. The agent acted as chairman of the committee and helped to put the contest over. Also the country people have contributed generously, upon being contacted by the agents, of their farm products to the Auction Sales held at each drive. The agents are depended upon to get all educational material out into the county concerning these drives, and have used the neighborhood leader system in helping to get the information into as many homes as possible.

#### School Lunch

One school lunch program is still sponsored by the agents. The other one sponsored last year is going on it's own now. The campaign to get children to carry lunch to school where they have no hot lunch program is under way and succeeding.

### Red Cross

The agent belongs to the Red Cross Executive committee and meets when possible each month with this committee. The committee asked the agent to act as Junior Red Cross chairman because of her contacts in the schools. This has worked out very satisfactorily for more schools have joined and a larger membership has been enrolled than in previous enrollments.

### Other

The Save the Children Federation clothing is distributed by the agents to the three high schools in the county who made use of it. The proceeds from the sale of this clothing has financed one hot lunch project. The agent has the baby layettes that the Save Children Federation sends into the county and these are placed where they are needed by the members of the Home Demonstration clubs. Some very pathetic cases have been uncovered through these contacts. Many of these mothers are having the 8th or 12th baby and will say with tears in their eyes, "with all the others put together I've never had that much before." These contacts are being carried farther when it is possible and information on home making is being given to these "forgotten" women.

The Boy Scout Committee asked for help with the banquet they planned to have to explain the Boy Scout program. The agent helped plan and serve this banquet to the important mine operators of the county and to the business men of the town. It was a distinct success for it had mother's of Boy Scouts working together to push it across.

### VII. APPRASIL

The most significant contribution to the county in meeting war needs made by the home demonstration program has been in the development of the women; and in helping keep up the morale of the families of these women. The club members have worked together and shared each others heartaches and problems. Time is not taken up at the meetings with social entertainment; that time that is usually used for this in well organized groups is here devoted to talk: good talk that unburdens the heart because someone else may have the same problem. It is a sharing, and it is helping in the development of better and stronger women. After a meeting these women can go home feeling that after all the neighbor across the mountain has boys in the service and is carrying on doing a good job, so why can't she?

Aside from this the food conservation program has helped in meeting war needs. Through the work on this more and better canning is being done; old gardening problems are being worked out and newer and better methods of food production are being tried.