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ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT

HOME DEMONSTRATION WORK

SURRY COUNTY

1942

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HOME DEM AGENT ANNUAL REPORT  
LUCILE Z. SEWARD - HOME AGENT

JANUARY 1 TO NOVEMBER 30, 1942

REPORT FILES  
EXTENSION WORK

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### III SUMMARY OF INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES

Holidays,	6
Days in Office,	80
Days in Field,	202
Days Annual Leave,	25
Days of Work with Other Agencies and War Work,	80
Miles Traveled,	9692
Number Farm and Home Visits,	554
Number Office Calls,	283
Number Telephone Calls,	499
News Stories Published,	168
Number Bulletins Distributed,	1259
Number Broadcasts or Talks Prepared for Broadcasting,	8
Method Demonstration Meetings Held,	157
Encampment Held,	1
Other Meetings,	51
Number 4-H Clubs,	2
Number Home Demonstration Clubs,	9

#### IV SCORE OF WORK

##### A. Home Demonstration Clubs

This is the first full year of home demonstration work in Surry County. The work began February 16, 1941. Surry is a small county of 278 square miles. Some one has written this history of the county. At the time Surry was cut off from James City County, its area was to the extent that its southern boundary was the North Carolina line, and from time to time as history reveals, the counties of Brunswick, Bedford, Campbell, Charlotte, Franklin, Henry, Halifax, Lenoir, Mecklenburg, Pittsylvania, Patrick, Sussex, and a part of Appomattox and Greensville were formed from its territory, thereby leaving it, which with a proper title "The Mother of Counties," with much less area than any of the above mentioned counties, and has furnished both in number and area one-eighth of our Commonwealth.

The entire area of the county is a great storehouse of old estates and historic places in a more or less state of preservation, that are more than reminiscent of time and a life that was. The old churches, which were not only places of worship but assembling places for the shires, indicate the solid nature of that raw life of primeval Virginia.

It is to be noted that Surry County has a living present, that its acreage has not diminished since the middle of the eighteenth century, and unlike most all other Virginia counties, has never been fortunate to have standard gauge railroads, manufacturing plants, yet we boast our standard of schools, roads, public buildings and other things supported from local revenues, as compared with most any other county in the State. Its climate is pleasant, soil produces timber in abundance and is adapted to the fertile growth of corn, peanuts, cotton, tobacco, grain and vegetables. Hog and cattle raising is beginning to interest a number of its farmers. Lying practically midway on the James River, its northern boundary, provides an interesting invitation to locations for manufacturing plants desiring deep water transportation. The soil at any point near the river is underlaid with an unlimited supply of marl.

At present there are nine home demonstration clubs with a membership of 158. There are some who come to each group but would never become members on roll.

##### V ORGANIZATION

##### A. County Home Demonstration Committee

The presidents of the home demonstration clubs make up the home demonstration committee. They have their officers as in the clubs. They take the place of the old Advisory Board for the agent, in helping to plan programs for the county and how to carry them out and help to put them across in their local groups. Then new presidents are elected in the clubs

the new presidents automatically become a member of the home demonstration committee.

#### B. County Agricultural Board

The county is divided into six communities and the communities are divided into neighborhoods. The smallest community has three neighborhoods and the largest number is seven. There are two leaders of the whole organization, chairman and co-chairman. Each community has a chairman and a co-chairman, then each neighborhood has a man and a woman leader or committeeman. The ideal plan, of course, is to have all programs worked out through the community chairman to the neighborhood leaders who in turn contact a certain group of people. This ideal plan does not always work, so the professional workers who are sponsors have to contact the neighborhood committeemen to get the work done effectively. Then the plan was started community meetings were held, and there the problems to be carried through, were presented by the community chairman and two sponsors. In some cases the meetings were successful and in some cases there were just a few committeemen present and the plans still had to be carried around to them individually. There are six professional county workers, two, a man and a woman, sponsor two communities. The problem of getting the work done is left up to them. There are thirty neighborhoods in the county. Programs carried over the county through this organization so far have been:

1. Anti-inflation
2. Victory gardens
3. Salvage program
4. Repairing farm machinery
5. Food preservation

The colored farm agent has his board lined up now in order. At first the two neighborhood workers selected two negro assistants and made them responsible for the programs with their people. A check up on some of the projects showed that more than 99% of the farm families in the county were personally contacted by the neighborhood chairman.

#### C. Professional Workers' Council

This group includes the Farm and Home Agent, R. R. Supervisor and Home Management Supervisor of the Farm Security Administration, Vocational Agriculture Teacher, Home Economics Teacher, Superintendent of Schools, Key Banker, and Commonwealth's Attorney. The Farm Agent is chairman of this group and calls a meeting when there is a county wide program to be put on or for a check up on projects and progress made. The group does not meet monthly and is called together when there is a purpose for a meeting. The home agent has attended all the meetings and sponsors two communities with the Vocational Agriculture Teacher. Monthly evening meetings have been scheduled in one community. There are six neighborhoods so the neighborhoods are combined to cut down on travel for the sponsors. These meetings have been very successful considering scarcity of tires and gas.

The men have studied such topics as: dusting peanuts, cover crops, supplemental feed for swine, and preparing feed for swine. The women have had demonstrations on food preservation, bottoming chairs, school lunches, whole wheat products, and sugarless Christmas sweets. It has been a means of reaching women who have never attended home demonstration club meetings and it is the only time that neighbors take off for visiting.

## VI LEADERSHIP

### A. Adult Work

With the help of neighborhood leaders, community leaders, demonstration kitchens, and garden demonstrators, the leaders number eighty-eight. Campaign chairmen spent their efforts this year on pushing along the war programs. The club presidents have done a good job this year helping to plan and add parts of the war program as the needs arose. Seven leader training meetings were held with attendance of eighty-two. After gas rationing in this section, leader training meetings had to be cut down. Only two training meetings were held for project leaders. It has not been necessary, yet, to divide the clubs into smaller groups, but there is some difference in attendance. The leaders in each group gave two demonstrations.

### B. 4-H Work

Each home demonstration club had a 4-H club chairman this year who gave the groups information about club work and what the clubs were doing. If the agent had enough office help to get this information out to the chairmen monthly it would be great help. These women were asked to help the 4-H club members of their community with their projects and to encourage more home projects. The club sponsors have been teachers. One leader training meeting was held and five women attended.

## VII RESULTS

### A. Home Demonstration Clubs

#### 1. Project Work

##### (a) Feed

##### (1) Production

With the help of the garden specialist and a garden school held early in the spring, both men and women attended and were urged to plan early and get good seed, to use fertilizer wisely and to have a better garden than ever before. The garden was studied step by step and local problems were discussed. Slides on garden diseases and insects were shown and they were told how to fight them. All were urged to have a year round garden as their part for Victory. In the

fall another school was held on storage. The storage suitable for this part of Virginia was given. Proper storage was stressed to save everything and lose nothing because the people who could not have gardens and fruit would have to depend on the market. There was a volunteer garden demonstrator in each group who in most cases had a good garden and in some cases kept records.

## (2) Canned Fruits

Canning demonstrations were given in the clubs and to the neighborhood groups. Demonstrations on drying fruits and vegetables were given. The reasons for drying when the vegetables were just at the proper canning stage were stressed many times. Housewives were urged to do more drying this year to save jars and rings for vegetables and fruits that could not be saved in any other way. String beans, peas, corn, apples, pears, and peaches were dried. Reports give 580 pounds of dried fruits and 606 pounds of dried vegetables. Canning records give 4,442 quarts of tomatoes and tomato juice canned; 1,913 quarts of other vegetables; 7,409 quarts of fruit and fruit juices; 605 quarts of meats and 5,769 quarts of others, such as jelly, jams, preserves, pickles, etc. The last figure seems quite high with sugar rationing but maybe quite a few used the agent's recipes for honey and syrups for preserving. The home agent did quite a bit of experimental work with berries using syrup since this is a good strawberry section. Two American cheese demonstrations were requested but a very small amount of cheese has been made and stored.

The club women were shown how to store eggs in waterglass so they would have eggs all the time for home use and could sell their fresh eggs when they were high. They were taught to cull the home flock for egg production and urged to cull the culls for part of the meat supply. The chicken canning demonstration was given for each group.

## (3) Nutrition

This has been the project kept before the people constantly, as part of the club program and in cooperation with the nation-wide nutrition program. One demonstration on food values was given to all groups. It was called School Lunches as Measured by the National Yardstick, and how important it is for school children to take lunch. The teachers say that about one third of the children come to school without lunch and as many do not eat breakfast. All housewives were urged to do more planning on the family meals, and to plan the lunches as part of the daily food supply.

Vegetable Cookery was given at the October meeting to every group. It was impossible to get fresh vegetables so canned greens, corn, and beets were used. Recipes given and prepared were Harvard beets, corn picking (encouraging the use of yellow corn), and tasty greens. These recipes were used because the fresh canned or left over vegetables could be used. The tasty greens recipe was suggested as a meat substitute dish since it contained cheese and eggs. Rules for cooking all vegetables were stressed such as: cooking in a small amount of water; using salt to preserve the green color and to leave out the soda; also cooking until just tender. For November, sugarless sweets have been demonstrated. Molasses, syrup, dried fruits, and nuts were

used. Merchants have been asked to buy enriched bread instead of the old style.

(b) Clothing

(1) Conservation

Cleaning trucks used to come from Hopewell, Petersburg, and Suffolk to collect clothes for cleaning but have stopped. So far cleaning fluid has been available and the women have been trained to do their own cleaning. 197 garments have been cleaned -- amount saved \$134.00.

In the spring the folks were reminded to wash carefully and store woollen garments where moths would not destroy them.

(c) House Furnishings

Five clubs held all day meetings and worked on furniture. Thirty-nine chairs and stools were bottomed or rebottomed -- amount saved \$37.00. Cane and fiber bottoms were put in. After gas rationing, it became quite a fad for small groups to meet at night and make stools.

Sixteen pieces of furniture got upholstered, saving twenty-five dollars for the owners.

Fifty-seven slip covers were made with a saving of at least seventy-five dollars.

As part of the conservation program, demonstrations were given on cleaning furniture and rugs. Reports give forty-eight rugs cleaned and seventy-four pieces of furniture cleaned. Fifty-nine pieces of furniture have been refinished this year and savings reported add to \$96.00. This work was started last year.

(d) Home Management

(1) Household Equipment

Several pieces of kitchen equipment were homemade, such as weed boxes, pig bucket holders, pot lid holders, and knife racks.

Small kitchen equipment was part of one meeting, discussing good and bad buys in equipment. Sixty Feley Food mills were bought by the home agent for the club members.

Twenty-nine club members say they own pressure cookers and eight of them were placed by the home agent.

Club members pooled orders for jars, caps, and rings. Two hundred and ten dozen jars were placed where needed. This was done at a saving of \$51.00.

Early in the spring, a kitchen in each club was offered as a demonstration kitchen. These kitchens were visited by the Home Management Specialist who gave suggestions for improvements. It has been impossible to make the tour of these kitchens as planned but the October or November club meetings were held in these homes and the hostesses told of improvements made and the cost of improvements. Where the work had been done by members of the family, the cost was quite low but in some cases quite high because carpenters had done the work.

Fifty-two women report some work done in their kitchens. In some cases it was nothing more than rearrangement and in some cases only working heights were checked and improved. Sixty-two women say they have their kitchen arranged for the greatest convenience.

#### (2) Storage

Only eighty club members report sufficient space in the home for storage. Part of one meeting was devoted to the subject but only five did very much about storage space. The five put in extra shelves and improved their storage space for canned goods.

### 2. Home Demonstration Club Activities

#### (a) Federation Goal

Health was the one of the seven Federation Goals chosen for the year to be stressed. The February meetings were given to this subject. All members were urged to do everything possible to prevent colds and how to treat colds. The local doctors were very cooperative and gave their time. They came to as many meetings as they could get to and gave a talk on colds and treatment of colds.

#### (b) Campaign

The county campaign has been war work, helping to organize the home nursing class and taking part in the class. Sponsoring the victory garden campaign and helping anywhere they were needed. Their slogan was more and better gardens than ever before and more canned goods than ever before.

### B. Agricultural Boards

The set up of the agricultural board has been given. Their first program for this year was the victory garden campaign; then drying, canning, and storing fruits, and vegetables.

In the salvage campaign the neighborhood committeemen received the scrap collected in their neighborhoods and passed it on to the junk dealer. The home agent took part in each program and with her co-sponsor lined up the programs in the two communities where they were responsible. She has talked the fat saving program but so far the local meat dealers will not buy it.

## G. 4-H Clubs

### 1. Project Work

#### (a) Personal

Fifty-five girls enrolled for club work. Five helped to work the home gardens and asked the family to keep some kind of greens in the garden the whole year for good health. The work they did probably didn't amount to so much but it gave them a feeling of sharing in the family duties.

Fifteen girls took poultry. Five of them had a few chickens they called their own and the others helped to care for the home flock. They helped to feed, gather eggs, and a few did a pretty good job learning to cull.

Fifteen took food preservation for their project. They canned 250 quarts of food to add to the winter pantry and helped to prepare fruit and vegetables for drying.

Twenty girls enrolled for clothing. Sixty-five garments were made and forty-eight remodeled to help keep the family clothing budget meet the needs.

#### (b) Family

Each club member was required to take some household duty which would fit into the family schedule and help to make the housework lighter for other members of the family. Duties chosen take in most all types of home work such as, making bread once a day, washing dishes, helping with at least one meal each day while in school, carrying in wood, cleaning living room real good once a week, caring for own clothes, feeding chickens, gathering eggs, helping mother with canning through the summer and caring for own room.

### 2. Health

The nutrition program has been part of the 4-H program as well as the adult programs. They kept the Food Guide Sheets and some of them started eating foods that they thought they did not like. They were urged to eat breakfast before going to school and to take a lunch.

### 3. Community Activities of the Club

#### (a) Recreation

Christmas parties were held at the December club meeting. Home recreation was encouraged since they could not do so much going for outside entertainment. The larger members sponsored a dance for amusement and money making but it did not prove so successful financially.

(b) Only two girls attended the District Camp at James-town. It seems to be too close home to draw many from this county.

## E. Other Work Done by Home Demonstration Agent

1. County home economics workers up to September included only three home economics trained folks in the county; Farm Security Home Management Supervisor, one home economics teacher, and the home agent. The new school year brought another home economics teacher. The three workers have served as the nutrition committee for Red Cross and all Civilian Defense work. Two classes in nutrition were taught by the three workers.

### 2. County Nutrition Committee

(a) The home economic workers have served as the nutrition committee and carried through all the nutrition programs.

### 3. Office of Civilian Defense

(a) The home agent has attended all meetings called by the civilian defense offices. She organized a home nursing class and attended some of the classes. There are so many organizations working on the same thing that it is hard to remember just which organizations started the different phases of the work first. She has taken her turn every two weeks on duty at the air raid warning post. A new duty is Home Management Specialist for the Civilian Defense and Rationing Board. She helped with the sugar registration, car registration, and helped the farmers register trucks.

### 4. Salvage Committee

(a) As part of the work sponsored by the Professional Workers' Council, the home agent helped to advertise and get receiving stations lined up for the campaign. All this work has been carried through all the organized groups in the county.

### 5. Rationing Board

(a) The local rationing board has appointed the home agent as the educational worker for all rationing programs in the feed and household equipment line. Last summer, the home agent set up Deputy Sugar Boards, one in each voting precinct over the county. There were three women on each board who took applications one half day each week, then checked them to see whether or not the amount of sugar asked for came anywhere near the amount of canning for last year. The agent supervised these deputy boards.

### 6. Red Cross

(a) This organization wanted to give the certificates for one of the nutrition classes, so they got credit for that. The home agent has been messenger boy in Red Cross work since she came in contact with more people than anyone else over the county. The production chairman has a list of the neighborhood chairmen and says she will use them to contact the people with their garments to be made. The home agent took the Red Cross First Aid Class.

7. Mattress program

(a) This project was started last year but had to be carried over and completed when warm weather came again. Four hundred, sixty-eight mattresses were made in the county and ninety-five per cent of them were made by the Negroes.

VII APPRAISAL OF PROGRAM FOR THE YEAR

It is hard to pick out any one thing in the program and value it any higher than the others. So much of the time was spent on the war programs that the agent feels that she has had a very important part helping to meet the problems and helping the people in the county to adjust themselves to the changes. The club members had the advantages of getting accurate information through their National and State Agricultural and Home Economics Department.

