

VIRGINIA

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ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT
HOME DEMONSTRATION WORK
BUCHANAN COUNTY
VIRGINIA

1943

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Home Demonstration Agent

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III. SCOPE OF WORK

7 Home Demonstration Clubs with a membership of 89

8 groups have been met by the agent three or more times; membership of 76

4 4-H Clubs organized with a membership of 166

Total different families reached, 2155

Total number of farm families, 2517

IV. ORGANIZATION

County Home Demonstration Committee

Home Demonstration is a new work in the county.

Clubs are in the beginning and organization stage; therefore, there is no County Home Demonstration Committee. The plan of work the clubs and groups will follow for the year was worked out by the District Agent and the County Agent. This program was worked out to meet the needs and interests of the people in the county. When all the groups are organized and operating efficiently, a Home Demonstration Committee will be planned. Transportation problems, an item to be recognized in this county, may prove too big to allow many of these meetings to be held when organized.

County Board of Agriculture

The County Board of Agriculture is composed of a chairman in each of the county's 11 communities. There are 47 neighborhoods with chairmen. This organization has attempted to keep the Buchanan rural families informed regarding many educational war programs. This board sponsored the Victory Garden

campaign with good results.

Professional Workers' Council

The professional workers' council has ceased to function. No meetings have been held this year. There are no agriculture teachers or Farm Security workers in the county. Three schools have home economics teachers; only one could attend a meeting. The others are too far out in the county to get to the meetings. The agent keeps in contact with these teachers and the county health nurse.

V. LEADERSHIP

Adult

There are 49 women serving as officers of the seven Home Demonstration Clubs. These officers are being trained by the agent at the meetings. Since most of the women belonging to the clubs and groups have never belonged to an organized group before, the training of these women necessarily has to be slow. There is evidence of good leadership material in most of the groups. The agent hopes to encourage and build up this leadership by letting the women assist as much as possible in the meetings and demonstrations.

4-H Club Work

There are 20 4-H girls and boys who serve as officers of the four clubs in the county. These girls and boys show great promise as leaders, and are interested and enthused with their work.

Each club has an adult leader. One club has had the same leader for several years, and has done very good work under her

guidance. One new club has had one meeting under a leader with good results.

VI. RESULTS

Home Demonstration Clubs

Food

Production

Victory gardens were under way when the agent started work in the county. These gardens produced quantities of food that was put away for the families' winter supply. At each meeting, the importance of a fall garden was stressed, and the necessity for growing more green vegetables in the garden to insure a better balanced diet. Tomato blight and the cabbage worm offered a big problem to the gardeners. Information on ways to combat these were given by the agent. Next year, a campaign against these is planned, as well as a campaign for encouraging food production by the use of good plants, seeds, and certified seed potatoes. Better methods of planting and care of these plants and seeds will be stressed.

Chicken culling demonstrations have been given in seven of the eleven communities of the county. At these meetings, good methods of feeding and housing were stressed as a means of increasing production. The women were urged to can or sell culls, so that the good layers could have more of the food, an important factor now because of the feed shortage. Planting the gardens in rye or wheat was urged for pasture for the flock,

Conservation

Best methods of canning fruits and vegetables were demonstrated in each Home Demonstration Club and group during July and August. Dehydrators were in use in the county during the summer; apples, corn, beans, and sweet potatoes were dehydrated in quantities. Many of the women improved their methods of canning, especially of corn, beans, and tomatoes. Many were using the open kettle method for all foods. After attending the canning demonstrations these women tried the new methods and reported better results with their canned products. Fifteen women bought pressure cookers, and other families are using them. Many more want pressure cookers as soon as they can be bought. Too many cans spoil because of the habit of canning in tubs over an open fire in the back yard. It is hoped that this method will be eliminated when the women learn better methods and can get equipment.

The month of September was given to vegetable storage. Better methods of storage were studied. Three new dairies were built and a number were changed as to shelf space, ventilation, and potato bins. The storage of sweet potatoes proved to be a popular topic for almost every family grows its own supply.

During November the canning of meat was demonstrated to the clubs and groups. Chicken was canned at most of the meetings. At one club, twenty quarts were canned. Each woman picked and canned her own. A group of 4-H Club girls attended this meeting.

At each of these meetings the correct way to butcher and dress a hog was discussed; also the ways to cure and preserve meat. The women were urged to can all varieties of meat, especially liver. The making of sausage was discussed, and ways to can and keep it were studied. Bulletins on butchering on the farm, and canning meats and chicken, were given to the women with recipes on how to use the canned meats.

At many of the meetings, vinegar making was discussed. Next year, if there are apples, many families will make their own vinegar.

Nutrition

At each meeting, canning, clothing, or storage, the agent tried to get some nutrition information into the programs. Many of the women know nothing at all of the requirements of a good diet, or the correct feeding of children. The planting of more green foods, and the canning of these green foods was urged in order that the family might have a year around supply. The importance of the use of milk, butter, eggs, and cheese in the diet has been discussed. Cheese making demonstrations have helped add a supply of cheese to the diet. Lunch packing is a big problem to the women of the county, for many pack lunches for husbands who work in the mines and for the school children. Much work can and has been done in helping these women pack nutritious as well as attractive lunches.

Clothing

Construction

The construction of new garments has proven to be a popular subject. Very few of the women know anything at all about clothing construction and are very anxious to learn how to sew for their families. Garments for children are becoming very scarce in the stores here because of war time conditions and the women realize that they will have to conserve what they have on hand, and learn to construct what they can not buy ready made. The use of patterns, how to lay and cut, has been taken up; more time will be given in the spring to these topics.

Seven clubs have had remodeling meetings. Eleven communities were reached, for women from four communities attended one meeting. Coats were remodeled at four of the meetings; at all the meetings dresses were remodeled or cut down for children. Two men's suits were made over into suits for women, and many suggestions were given for uses of out-grown or partly worn clothing. Bulletins and style sheets were distributed to the women. The covering of old umbrellas was taken up at each meeting. Many of the women have covered old frames that have been out of use for years. The members of all the clubs are eager to save and conserve any material that will help the war effort in any way. One club woman is making beautiful hand made baby clothes and selling them for a good price. The agent has assisted by getting her patterns and designs.

House Furnishings

Construction

Ten slip cover demonstrations have been given in the county. Many old pieces of furniture have been reclaimed by the new covers made by the women. The new furniture covered will be protected by the slips made since the meetings. About half of the women attending the meetings have, or are now constructing slip covers.

Storage Space

Storage space for clothing and bed covers has been stressed. The importance of the correct storage of canned foods where there is no dairy or basement has been talked about in the September meetings.

Home Management

Care of household equipment was stressed by every club. The shortage of these very necessary everyday appliances is becoming more evident all the time; therefore the women are repairing and caring for what they have.

Kitchen Arrangements

Much can be done in the county on kitchen arrangement. A few families have been helped with this problem so far. These families have added more working space; one a new stove, and one a light paint to the kitchen walls. More help will be given in January on kitchens.

Storage

More storage space is needed in most of the homes.

The agent has talked with several of the women about their needs, and plans have been discussed to add more storage cabinets.

Home Demonstration Club Activities.

One of the clubs has had two all day meetings. The women quilted in the mornings, helped cook the large meal served at noon, then had the meeting in the afternoon. They enjoy these meetings very much, for it is their only form of recreation. Some of the women get to the house by 8:00 o'clock in the morning, for they ride with the mail carrier; they help milk, and clean house, then start to quilting. At these meetings the regular demonstration is carried out in the afternoon. The agent has found that by participating in these meetings and by quilting and talking with the women, she is becoming better acquainted with the women as individuals and is learning what problems they face and what help they need.

One club took charge of the S. C. F. clothing and distributed it to the needy families of the community.

All the women of the clubs are buying war bonds. Most of them have sons in the service. One mother has four sons in the army, and another soon to go. Some have husbands in the service. The women of Buchanan County are doing their part largely and generously in the war effort by giving of their families, time, and money. Many are taking the place of the men who have left the fields for the army. These women are carrying a double burden; heavy house work, for all have large families; and the work of the man in the fields. Often, the father is in the mines, working.

Whatever these women do in Home Demonstration work means leaving work undone at home, for they have no leisure time as most women have.

Outstanding Club Member

Mrs. Ireson Hale, president of the Big Prater Club, has done an outstanding work this past year. Mrs. Hale, with the help of her two sons, worked a three-acre garden this summer. This garden contained 32 vegetables; leafy, root, and stalk. She has canned approximately 1,000 quarts of fruit, vegetables and meat this summer. One hundred and four cans of this were for the Holston Orphanage at Greenville, Tennessee; thirteen dozen cans for a family up on the mountain who could not do their own canning; four dozen for the Presbyterian missionary at Vansant. Besides the gardening and canning, she raised 150 young chickens, cared for 100 laying hens, and milked and cared for two cows. Mrs. Hale displayed at our festival and received \$4.50 in defense stamps for blue ribbons, the largest amount given to an individual exhibiting at the festival. I am proud of Mrs. Hale's work, for her standards of work are high. She endeavors to produce what her family needs and, over and above that, for needy neighbors and orphans. To me, Mrs. Hale is an example of what America needs to stand behind our firing lines. She is a producer and a conservator.

4-H Clubs

Four 4-H Clubs are functioning in the county. Two are new clubs. The County Agent and the Home Demonstration Agent

work together with these clubs, having joint meetings. There are approximately 166 members in the four clubs. The two old clubs had a Field Day meeting in October, and are planning a get-together in December.

This is the first year that the girls will have the guidance of a H. D. Agent. They are showing much interest in the selection of their projects for the coming year; most of them are taking gardening and poultry, thereby showing an interest in aiding their mothers in the essential work around the home.

Other Work Done by Agent

Office of Civilian Defense

The Defense Coordinator has been contacted several times, and the agent has cooperated with him at all times.

War Bond Committee

The War Bond Committee asked for the cooperation of the County Agent and the Home Demonstration Agent in the last bond drive. Two meetings were attended and plans for the bond drive were made and carried out by the Agents and the Committee.

School Lunch Program

The County Agent and the Home Demonstration Agent have had an active part in the school lunch program in the county. They have assisted with one program already established and have been responsible for the establishment of a new project in a section of the county that badly needed a hot lunch project.

Red Cross

One club has done Red Cross sewing; others have offered to assist if needed.

Red Cross monthly meetings are attended by the Agent. Forty schools have been visited in the county in cooperating with the Red Cross program. This gives the agent a good insight into the educational situation of the county, as well as giving a chance to become acquainted with the teachers and students.

Others

A harvest festival was held in September in cooperation with the war bond drive. This festival was something new for Buchanan County. Much interest was shown by the people, and approximately 300 good exhibits of canning, vegetables, grains, grasses, and handiwork, were displayed. This festival lasted two days and was visited by at least 500 people. Very much interest was shown in the canning display, and many questions were asked of the agent about methods used in canning. A dehydrator and dehydrated foods were on display and created quite a bit of interest. The women of the clubs responded to requests for displays for the festival very nicely. Next year they are planning for a bigger and better festival.

VII. APPRAISAL

The Home Demonstration program is new in the county, yet much has been accomplished. It has helped the rural women to:

Cooperate in meetings and in work planned.

Learn new and better methods of producing, conserving, and using foods.

Become more aware of their neighbors and of their problems through getting together and talking out these problems.

Realize that what they have on hand is in many cases un-
replaceable; therefore it must be taken care of.

Learn more about outside conditions by discussions at meet-
ings.

Practice better nutritional habits through preparing the
right foods correctly for their families.