

PLAN OF WORK
FRANKLIN COUNTY

1958

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(one-third time)

I. Description of the County.

The population of Franklin County was listed as 24,560 in the 1950 census. Eighty-five and four tenths percent or 20,978 of these were white. There are 10,000 rural non-farm people. The county is considered entirely rural since the town of Rocky Mount has only about 1500 in the corporate limits. There are 697 square miles making 459,520 acres of land; 68.2% of which was in farm land according to the last census.

The size of farms is increasing, now averaging 106.5 acres, and the number is decreasing. There were 181 fewer farms in 1954 than in 1949. We have now a total of 2,941 farms.

The county is divided in two sections, roughly east and west. On the west side the soils are heavy, well drained, and adapted to dairy and livestock farming. On the east side and south side there is heavy soil but some lighter soils and the topography is flatter. This area is adapted to some livestock with flue-cured tobacco.

The continued restriction in tobacco acreage coupled with the high cost of equipment, supplies and labor have made it hard for a number of farmers to make satisfactory income compared with those who have taken work in towns. This is contributing to the change which is taking place in the increase in rural non-farm families.

The median income for families in 1950 was \$1512. This is low. In 1954 there were 264 fewer farms in the income bracket below \$2500. In

the income bracket below \$1200, there were 217 fewer farms in 1954 than in 1950. This is a healthy trend and still the income is not high enough to keep young farmers from going to the city for work.

The outlook for 1958 is good. Crop yields, especially hay and pasture, should be up. Rains in January and February have increased the water supply in the upper soils. Although prices paid for produce and livestock bought will be up, the farm price outlook should be better with poultry and livestock especially after the present over-supply of poultry is changed.

II. Changes in the Situation.

Because of the weather in the summer of 1957, more hay was produced than had been produced in past years. Generally, farmers had enough to carry them through the winter with their silage. Emphasis this year will be on quality of silage and hay.

The Soil Bank Program has taken a good many acres of tobacco which will relieve the over-production situation in the coming years.

In poultry, more farmers are contracting with feed dealers and processing plants to handle broilers. We are told that Roanoke is in a deficient area and that Virginia could use an egg production of two million hens.

Money is somewhat harder to get than in previous years. Farming seems to be a doubtful occupation in the minds of bankers.

III. How the Extension Program was Developed.

The Extension program was developed around the activities of various committees. The Agronomy Committee and the agents met to set up crop production. The Tobacco Committee and Poultry Committee met and the officers of the dairy organizations and farmers advised with the agents in setting up their programs for the coming year.

The tobacco committee suggested that proper plantbed fertilization be used, use of varieties that meet the market demands, proper analysis and amounts of fertilizer and proper cultural practices were things to be considered on tobacco. Quality was still to be the main goal of all tobacco growers.

The Agronomy Committee considered that the most important problem in plant production field, outside of tobacco, was the production of hay for dairy and livestock. They set up a goal for more soil testing and more acres of alfalfa.

The officers of the Franklin County Dairymen's Association are planning several meetings during the year with speakers from V.P.I. talking on dairy and quality roughage.

The poultry advisory committee set up goals for expanding by 40,000 hens and 250,000 broilers in the next five years.

The agents have kept in close contact with older 4-H Club members, junior leaders and adults interested in 4-H. A committee has assisted in setting up the county-wide club project.

IV. Problems, Needs and Opportunities.

Some of the problems in Franklin County:

1. A 20% reduction in acreage of flue-cured tobacco.
2. Restrictions in the use of seed varieties of tobacco.
3. Dairymen who would like to get on the Grade A market not being able to find a market.
4. Having 18,000 acres of idle land.
5. Disease spreading in tobacco land.
6. Low income from the woodland which makes up over 165,000 acres of the land area of the county which returns less than 4% of the income.
7. Problems in marketing fruit, eggs and meat at satisfactory prices.
8. Low median income; \$1512 per family in 1950.
9. Restriction limiting young farmers getting acreage or base sufficient to produce an income necessary to start a farm business.
10. High capital investment needed to start farming.
11. Poor eating habits of many people of the county.
12. Many children have deficient eyes which might be aggravated by poor lighting.
13. Heavy drop-out of children thirteen or more years old in organized activities.
14. Fifty percent of the homes were without running water and 56% without complete baths in 1950.

These problems indicate the needs.

1. Specialists will be in the county during the summer to assist farmers in the production of Aromatic tobacco.
2. A paper company is purchasing pulp by weight. This is more attractive to farmers than the purchase by measure.
3. There is a growing market for tomatoes, small fruits, etc.
4. Sheep will do well for a few farmers.
5. The 18,000 plus acres of land that are idle could be devoted to crops of forests.
6. Roanoke brings in eggs from out of state. Poultrymen could sell several times the number of eggs that they do now in Roanoke.
7. Opportunities for better nutrition through better gardens and food conservation.
8. Higher milk yield per cow through testing programs and culling.
9. Better land utilization through cooperation of all agencies.

V. Major Activities.

TOBACCO

A. Situation.

Tobacco is still the most important agricultural enterprise in Franklin County. Approximately fifty percent of the cash income from farm products is from tobacco. In 1957, the county produced 2,557.5 acres. This acreage produced approximately \$1,917,000, making tobacco the leading farm enterprise in the county. The

1958 acreage will be 2,563.9 acres. Because of the small allotments on farms, eighty-one growers signed 134.24 acres in the soil bank.

Each year presents new problems in addition to the numerous problems already involved in tobacco production. The demand for somewhat different types and qualities of tobacco in 1957 has presented a confusing situation to the growers. The tobacco companies requested a heavier type tobacco in 1957, but at market time these grades were lower in price than the lighter grades. With last year's experience in mind, the tobacco growers are advised to grow a medium crop of tobacco, instead of all heavy or all light.

The long-time goal set up on the tobacco program is to produce the highest possible yield of high quality tobacco. The quality of tobacco will be stressed throughout the year with more emphasis than on yield.

B. Methods.

1. Conduct one county-wide meeting on tobacco production.
2. Hold community meetings on tobacco production in all communities in the tobacco area of the county.
3. Tour test plots on O. H. Adkins's farm in July.
4. Have television program on Aromatic and Flue-cured production.
5. Send timely news letter to all tobacco growers.
6. Hold demonstration on production of Aromatic tobacco.

C. Goals.

1. One hundred percent farmers planting varieties accepted by companies.
2. All farmers using recommended analysis and amount of fertilizer for plantbeds and fields.
3. One hundred more farmers using soil testing service for tobacco.
4. All farmers use deep placement or band placement of fertilizer.
5. All farmers treat for flea beetles in plantbeds.
6. Get more farmers to identify tobacco diseases.
7. Provide building plans to all Aromatic tobacco growers.
8. Have five Aromatic tobacco growers succeed with this year's crop.

AGRONOMY

A. Situation.

Acres of crops harvested has reduced from 68,816 in 1939 to 51,084 acres in 1954. This reduction has been in corn and wheat with some replacement in Lespedeza and Alfalfa. There also has been a reduction in clover and timothy production. In the past seventeen years, oat yields have doubled and acreage has doubled. Barley yields have doubled and acreage has increased twelve times. Alfalfa yields are the same as seventeen years ago. The yield is low because of dry years. Acreage has increased five times.

B. Methods.

1. Write news articles and have television programs on various crops.
2. Assist other agencies with meetings by furnishing speakers.
3. Have speakers at the April and August meetings of the dairymen on crop production.
4. Conduct demonstrations on silage.
5. Have television programs on silage and alfalfa production.
6. Have pasture demonstrations.
7. Work with T.V.A. on demonstrations.

C. Goals.

1. Conduct two demonstrations on supplemental pastures.
2. Two pasture demonstrations; one on Noel Parcell's farm and one on Eddie Bondurant's farm.
3. Get farmers to produce and store more silage.
4. Get the trench silo construction increased by ten.
5. Get five more farmers to use self-feeding methods with silage.
6. Have one T.V.A. demonstration farm.
7. Get 400 acres of alfalfa seeded for 1958.
8. Get 600 more soil samples sent in for testing.

DAIRY

A. Situation.

Six hundred and sixteen farmers were selling milk in 1949 and five hundred and thirty-five in 1954. The income in 1939 from

products of the dairy industry was \$186,390, in 1949 the income was \$1,028,497 and in 1954 the income was \$1,265,565. Although there were fewer farmers in the dairy business in 1954 than in 1949 the production increased. The production increased in 1956 and 1957 over previous years. This was brought about by increased production per cow and increase in number of cows on strictly dairy farms. The number of dairy cows has remained static in the last six or seven years.

B. Methods.

1. Hold a Dairy and Crops School in early February.
2. Work with dairy groups in three county-wide meetings on management and feeding during the year; one in April, one in August and one in October.
3. Work with the DHIA in their annual meeting and analysis meeting. One meeting to be held March 20th and the next year's meeting to be held in February.
4. Send monthly DHIA reports.
5. Write news articles and have television shows at intervals throughout the year.

Those who will assist in this program are: The breed association, Artificial Breeding Associations, the Dairy Herd Improvement Associations, the two dairy organizations in the county, individual dairy farmers, vocational agriculture departments, Soil Conservation Service, Agricultural Stabilization Corporation, and others.

C. Goals.

1. Get two more dairymen in the Weight-A-Day-A-Month Program.
2. Get three more herds in the Dairy Herd Improvement Associations.
3. Increase the number of cows on DHIA by 100.
4. Get 50 more farmers on Grade A markets.
5. Have 10% increase in the use of artificial breeding.
6. Get increased use of silage in the dairy ration.
7. Get two new milk parlors constructed.
8. Increase participation in junior dairy work.

POULTRY

A. Situation.

Poultry products sold from farms increased from \$340,060 in 1949 to \$744,734. The number of chickens sold increased from 209,905 to 507,484. Most of this was in broilers. There is an opening for more eggs in Roanoke, Martinsville and other towns near Franklin County. Some poultrymen are making a good living by careful management. Contracts are keeping the number of broilers to a point where the price is low.

B. Methods.

1. Publishing news articles.
2. Personal contacts.
3. Letters.
4. Hold one county-wide meeting on poultry production.
5. Meet with certain feed dealers, poultry producers and Extension workers from Franklin and surrounding counties to discuss poultry expansion.

C. Goals.

1. Add 8,000 hens and 60,000 broilers to the poultry of the county.
2. Work for standard recommendations from feed dealers for all poultrymen.

HORTICULTURE

A. Situation.

Fruit in Franklin County in 1954 brought in \$506,832. Five years earlier it brought in half of this amount. Variations in price and in yield due to weather cause a wide variation in annual income from fruit. The number of trees of bearing age is gradually growing smaller. More emphasis is being placed on quality fruit and the varieties which bring better prices. Some growers are planting new plants of the highest recommended varieties.

B. Methods.

1. Five demonstrations will be held this year; three on pruning and two on tree management.
2. Fruit School held in February.
3. County-wide fruit growers meetings to be held each month.
4. Letters and news articles to be published when timely.
5. One community fruit meeting to be held during the year.
6. News articles, letters and television programs to be conducted in the field of gardens and small fruits.

C. Goals.

1. Increase the number of home gardens.
2. Increase the varieties of crops grown in the home garden.
3. Increase berry production by four acres.

4-H CLUB WORK

A. Situation.

One thousand and nine boys were enrolled in 4-H Club work in 1957 and nine hundred and fifty-nine in 1958. Club completions have been poor with the boys. The senior clubs could not be organized this year because room space could not be found.

The need for the coming year is to get greater completion of records, especially with boys; and to get more participation of members in demonstrations to increase the interest of leaders.

B. Methods.

1. Give more publicity to 4-H Club activities.
2. Meet with all clubs where possible.
3. Provide better demonstrations.
4. Have member participation in demonstrations on television and in meetings.
5. Write letters to parents to club members.
6. Make more visits to club members.

C. Goals.

1. Train 4-H Dairy Judging team.
2. Train 4-H Poultry Judging team.
3. Train an Egg Grading team.
4. Train 4-H Land Appreciation team.
5. Hold an Achievement Program.
6. Develop more junior leaders.
7. Increase the number of records turned in by two hundred.
8. Bring the number of completions to more than seventy percent.
9. Get thirty entries in Junior Dairy and Livestock Show.
10. Get three entries in the Atlantic Rural Exposition.
11. Hold a 4-H Club picnic during the summer.
12. Hold a 4-H Talent Show.
13. Participate in 4-H Club Sunday.
14. Get fifty percent of the clubs to have window displays or bulletin boards for National 4-H Club Week.
15. Get twenty-five boys to attend 4-H Camp.
16. Get five boys to attend Older 4-H Camp at Virginia Beach.
17. Get twelve boys to attend State Short Course.
18. Hold two County Council meetings.
19. Recommend two members for the All Star Chapter.

VI. Minor Activities.

FORESTRY

Forest land in Franklin County covers 38% of the land. Income is approximately 9%. Forestry experts tell us that income per acre

can be doubled and the length of time a farmer can draw income can be increased by good forestry management practices.

The agents hope to conduct three demonstrations on forestry management, appear on television shows and otherwise publicize good forestry management practices.

The results which we hope to obtain over a long period of time is better use of land, greater income per acre from forest acres, marketing of timber according to grade, more acres planted and greater control of poor species by girdling and spraying.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CLUBS

Five community improvement clubs are continuing to hold meetings. The agents hope to get two clubs to be judged.

The agents will meet with the community clubs and help them with their programs. Special emphasis will be placed on community problems and raising the standard of living.

LIVESTOCK

Although the number of cattle has increased materially, the last sixteen years the income from livestock has not been high as build up of numbers has been the desire of the farmers.

Sheep have never been numerous in Franklin County although those who have sheep find that they pay. Hogs are kept almost entirely for home use.

The agents will work with the beef cattle men in purchasing stock and in sales, in construction of barns, and the feeding programs.

The results which the agents hope to get are larger numbers of calves sold in feeder calf sales, better stock, early dehorning, better control of external parasites.

FARM AND HOME DEVELOPMENT

There are ten farms under the Farm and Home Development at the present time. This year the agents will add four more farms. From these farms, we hope to have demonstrations on supplemental income, efficient feeding of dairy cattle and farm and home lighting.

WORK WITH OTHER AGENCIES

The Agricultural Extension Service will continue to work with other agencies assisting the farmers in the following ways:

1. By attending and taking part in meetings of agricultural workers.
2. By working with vocational agriculture teachers in shows, sales and other joint activities.
3. By working with other agencies on the Governor's Pasture Program.
4. By supplying materials, speakers and other assistance to the agencies for work on their programs by participating in regular meetings of other agencies when invited.

VII. Calendar of Work.

December

64 4-H Club meetings
 5 Community Improvement Club meetings
 4-H Honor Club picnic
 2 television programs
 4 radio programs
 County-wide fruit growers meeting
 Agronomy Committee meeting
 Camp planning meeting

January

64 4-H Club meetings
5 Community Improvement Club meetings
2 television programs
4 radio programs
Tobacco Committee planning meeting
Annual Fruit Growers meeting, Roanoke
State Dairymens' Convention, Roanoke
DHIA Analysis meeting
Poultry Committee meeting
County-wide Tobacco meeting
Annual Dairy and Crops School
Old Belt Tobacco meeting, Danville

February

64 4-H Club meetings
5 Community Improvement Club meetings
2 television programs
4 radio programs
Weed Control Demonstration
Annual meeting, Virginia Artificial Breeding Association
Area Fruit School
Agronomy Committee meeting

March

64 4-H Club meetings
5 Community Improvement Club meetings
2 television programs
4 radio programs
Farm Credit Conference, Natural Bridge
Two garlic control demonstrations
4-H Foultry Judging practice
4-H Dairy Judging practice
Land Appreciation Contest work
4-H Talent Show
County-wide fruit growers meeting

April

64 4-H Club meetings
5 Community Improvement Club meetings
2 television programs
4 radio programs
DHIA Annual meeting
Feeder calf Sale, Hollins
County-wide fruit growers meeting

May

64 4-H Club meetings
 5 Community improvement club meetings
 2 television programs
 4 radio programs
 Agricultural Exposition, VPI
 District Contests, Roanoke
 County-wide fruit growers meeting
 Camp meeting, Holiday Lake
 County Council meeting

June

5 Community Improvement Club meetings
 2 television programs
 4 radio programs
 State 4-H Short Course, VPI
 All Star Conference, VPI
 Orchard tour
 4-H Club picnic
 County-wide fruit growers meeting

July

5 Community Improvement Club meetings
 2 television programs
 4 radio programs
 4-H District Camp, Holiday Lake
 Institute of Rural Affairs, VPI
 Senior 4-H Camp, Camp Farrar
 County-wide fruit growers meeting

August

5 Community Improvement Club meetings
 2 television programs
 4 radio programs
 Annual Extension Conference, VPI
 Annual Junior Livestock Show
 Score 4-H pig projects
 4-H Electric Congress

September

64 4-H Club meetings
 5 Community Improvement Club meetings
 2 television programs
 4 radio programs
 Atlantic Rural Exposition
 4-H Leaders Association meeting
 Fruit Picking School

October

64 4-H Club meetings
5 Community Improvement Club meetings
2 television programs
4 radio programs
Lynchburg Farm Show
Judging Community Improvement Clubs
County-wide fruit growers meeting

November

64 4-H Club meetings
5 Community Improvement Club meetings
2 television programs
4 radio programs
4-H Achievement Program
4-H County Council meeting
County-wide fruit growers meeting
County-wide poultry meeting