

VIRGINIA

BUCKINGHAM HOME DEMONSTRATION AGENT Annual report 1943

Index Page

8 a 2.6423 Recognition of leaders 6

10 d 11 Pressure cookers 8

13 a 8.2 Furniture - refinishing, renovation 9

19 b 2.1 Victory gardens 6-7

19 k 1 Bonds and stamps 10-11

mj 8

ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT HOME DEMONSTRATION WORK

BUCKINGHAM COUNTY

VIRGINIA

1943

Miss Blanche Howard

Home Demonstration Agent

December 1, 1942 to November 30, 1943

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Cover and Title Page 1

II. Table of Contents 2

III. Scope of Work 3

IV. Organization 3

V. Leadership 5

VI. Results 7

VII. Appraisal of Most Significant
Contribution to the County in
Meeting War Needs Made By the
Home Demonstration Program 13

III. Scope of Work

A. Home demonstration clubs

No. 18 Membership 330

Other groups sponsored by home demonstration clubs -
home nursing.

No. clubs - White 1 Membership 15

B. 4-H Clubs:

No. 9 Membership 158 girls

C. No. families reached through neighborhood and commu-
nity leaders 1000 (White)

D. Estimate total number families reached 1000 (White)
No. farm families in county 1724

IV. Organization

Last year the county was reorganized with a Professional Work-
er's Council, a County Agricultural Board and a County Home Demonstration
Committee. This same organization has been continued through 1943.
(In fact the entire report of this year's work seems to be a continua-
tion of the 1942 report since the county has continued to operate on
a wartime basis, attempting to meet wartime needs).

A. County Home Demonstration Committee

This committee seems to be more active this year than last.
The one planning meeting was attended by representatives from eleven
of the fifteen home demonstration clubs in the county. These women
were cognizant of many of the problems to be solved. They took active
part in discussions and planned a good program for the coming year;
a program that should satisfy many of the more pressing needs as ex-
pressed in discussion.

B. County Agricultural Board

The county agricultural Board has now been organized for
almost two years and now reaches the entire county but its develop-
ment is slow or perhaps reports of activities are slow in being returned.

There are twelve communities with a man and woman leader for each or 24 leaders. These are white leaders. The negro agent has organized the colored communities and has colored leaders. There are fifty-five neighborhoods with a man and a woman leader for each. Last year a very good report of the scrap drive was returned. This was easily measured by the scrap collected. This year scrap collection was not stressed but many people have been conscious of the need for salvage so that if the need arose a collection could be made very quickly, more quickly than the first collection was made.

The Victory Garden program this year was poorly reported. Proportionately few cards were returned but when canning reports came in they proved that the first returns were incomplete and that much more gardening was done than the Victory Garden cards showed.

One wholesome sign of development should be noted. The leaders are saying that they have not been active enough and they are not satisfied with the amount of work that they have done.

C. Professional Worker's Conference

This group of workers does not meet regularly. It meets only when there is a definite need or a special piece of work to be done. They met to promote the Victory Garden program, to consider labor problems, to further the work of Food Production, Conservation and distribution - "Share and Play Square". The Home Demonstration Agent assisted with all of these programs, especially with the gardens and with food conservation.

V. Leadership

The voluntary leaders, women of the county have continued to assume the increasing responsibilities that wartime needs have created and have a most creditable report to make of results attained. The fifteen club presidents have called regular meetings and have been almost perfect in attendance; they have helped with rationing as a matter of course. When a new rationing book is to be issued the people of the community knew that if they are far from the central office they can come to some club woman's home or that some of these club leaders will be assisting busy school teachers.

One club president presides over a large club the members of which are scattered over a wide area. She has definitely and carefully planned for meetings in different parts of her neighborhood so that all members might attend some of the meetings. In this way many new members were obtained and many more people were reached by her efforts.

One program planning and training meeting was held for these leaders with an attendance of twenty-nine and eleven of the fifteen clubs represented - this in spite of transportation difficulties.

The work of the fifteen club secretaries should be mentioned too. They were responsible for assisting the presidents, sending out notices of meetings and keeping records of results attained.

These thirty club officers gave more than 180 days of their time to the work.

Eight leader training meetings were held for project leaders with an attendance of fifty-three. Forty-five leaders gave 270 days of their time to projects in clothing, gardens, sewing machine, repair, re-upholstering furniture, poultry and canning.

The county nurse supplied material, the T.B. chairwoman, the agent, and goal chairman gave fifteen demonstrations on the federation goal "Health" with especial emphasis on tuberculosis, its early diagnosis, proper housing and health habits to prevent spread of the disease and proper nutrition to prevent infection.

The nutrition chairwoman assumed full responsibility for the campaign goal of nutrition after the professional worker selected to help her left the county. This chairwoman sent out poster, talked at several community and neighborhood meetings, collected timely material from papers and magazines, attended the Home Economics meeting in Roanoke and kept her home demonstration club in her community informed. She gave some thirty days of her time to the work.

One training meeting was held for community leaders with an attendance of 20 men and ten women. Eleven chairwomen and fifty-five neighborhood leaders gave about 100 days of their time to promoting victory gardens. This is 100 days of organizational time. No accurate record can be made of the times a team was lent to a neighbor, or seeds given, or garden information.

One leader expressed much concern for a new neighbor who had never had a garden, never done any home canning, never baked bread. A team was loaned them and seeds given for the garden. The home maker was shown how to make rolls. Later at a meeting when more gardening was being stressed and one woman remarked "Well, I think we all do that in our community", this leader told of her experience adding that she doubted that we knew all of our neighbors. The women were surprised at finding one such family in a rural county. They were felted out of any complacency they might have had.

B. 4-H Club Work

Four training meetings were held by specialists with an attendance of 44. One meeting was for training in gardening, one for dressmaker finishes and tailoring tucks such as inset pockets and bound button holes, one for repairing sewing machines and one for repairing household equipment. Both adult and junior leaders attended these training meetings.

Twelve adult project leaders and sponsors have continued to do the fine work that they began last year with 4-H clubs. They have assisted with programs at meetings, advised and encouraged girls and boys with their projects, helped keep records and make reports. One leader helped the club present a program and give demonstrations on garden pest control. This was a real demonstration, live beetles and all. Another leader got the 4-H members of her neighborhood together for work and play during the summer months. Whenever possible these leaders trained the boys and girls to give the demonstrations. When a county achievement day seemed impossible in war time, the leaders sponsored canning exhibits for each club. It was from these exhibits that the county winner was selected. Later the Ruritan Club decided to sponsor a county fair and Achievement day and again the adult leaders assisted with the exhibits. In all the twelve leaders gave seventy-five days of time to 4-H work.

The seventeen junior leaders conducted 76 meetings, gave or assisted with 5 demonstrations on dressmaker finishes, 6 on garden pest control, 3 on poultry. They did a great deal of work in collecting old phonograph records which were sold to raise money to buy the ambulance which was presented to the army by 4-H boys and girls of Virginia. Each leader gave at least 4 days of time and some gave ten to 4-H work aside from individual projects.

VI. Results

A. Home Demonstration Clubs

Home demonstration clubs did not carry a "major project" this year unless all projects might be grouped under "Health and Better Living in Wartime". Projects were varied to meet the needs of each club and community.

1. Project work:

a. Food

Fifteen clubs and three groups reaching 330 families directly and 850 families indirectly, continued nutrition and feeds work with thirty demonstrations on adequate production of a varied diet and review of nutrition needs. All club members had gardens which were surprisingly productive even through the drought. On the morning of November 5, 4-H Achievement Day, an exhibit was brought in collected from the garden that morning of salsify, carrots, beets, Swiss chard, turnips, turnip salad, radishes, and lettuce. Comments heard at this exhibit were, "I could have brought mustard salad", "We have rape and kale", "We have new cabbage". Many had turnips and turnip salad, that is a popular salad in the county. Swiss chard is one of the new salads for most county gardeners. Some of the "Victory" gardens in the village are supplying greens for the pig and for the hens as well as for the family.

More gardening was done in the county this year than formerly - that is more families had a garden. Various folks remarked that more land had been plowed in the county than had been for a long time.

Fifteen canning demonstrations, using a pressure cooker, and twelve storage (potatoes, etc.) were given. Most of the canning demonstrations were for chicken canning. Many women did not can chickens, preferring to "kill one when needed," but the feed shortage made canning of chicken practical. On club meeting day the women brought dressed chickens and the agent and some club members brought pressure cookers and really had a canning bee. One club with two 7 quart cookers canned 38 chickens. The women are now much in favor of canning chicken so that the practice will probably continue to grow in favor. The agent's pressure cooker was borrowed by groups of neighbors all over the county and was in use every day in August and most of the days in September. Now it is being used to can pork. Twelve new pressure cookers have been purchased in the county and more are desired. Last year the average canning budget for Bowlingham County rose to 100 quarts per person. That average remains the same but should be differently interpreted. Where the 1000 quarts canned by some last year made the average 100 per person the 500 quarts of many are keeping the average up. The fruit crop was a failure except for berries. Vegetables were canned instead. People who have been buying canned goods all their lives have canned at home this year according to the report of club women who are also neighborhood leaders. Sweet potatoes and Irish potatoes have been stored in sufficient quantities to supply the county.

Results of the studies in nutrition are noticed in the number of different vegetables produced and canned or stored; in the good attendance at nutrition studies or demonstrations and at the variety of "new dishes" reported as prepared by club women when the usual survey of the years work was made.

B. Clothing

Three clubs carried clothing as a special project with demonstrations on, buying, selection of fabric, study of war production regulations and the effect on style trends and patterns, and tailoring. Fifty women in these three clubs saved as much as 40% on clothing budgets. One leader gave an excellent demonstration on clothing. She made posters showing current styles, brought samples of materials available, had one last years dress brought up to date with a new neckline, borrowed a figure from the store and arranged a display on a table of a made tafeta hat and bag to match with two sets of gloves and accessories.

In addition to the work of the three clubs, fourteen demonstrations were given on storage and care of woollen garments and the women were invited to bring any clothing problem to any club meeting when a few minutes would be given to it. As a result, a child's coat was cut from her mother's discarded one, six coats were altered, collars changed, shortened, sleeves changed, mens coats fitted for women, ten dresses were remodelled or refitted. Seasonal pattern books and current home magazines were brought to club meetings and loaned to any who desired them.

In like manner new developments in consumer buying whether food or clothing were discussed for two or five minutes at monthly meetings.

Three sewing machines clinics were held during the year and 24 machines were put into good condition. Again only three clubs requested these clinics but other clubs have asked that clinics be held in the coming year.

During the month of October club women brought hand work and gift ideas to club meetings. These were practical and useful ideas. Four clubs turned these meetings into quilting parties. The quilts were pieced from scraps or made from feed bags. Slip covers for these favorite chairs, dressing table skirts for a girls room, an apple cushion for a chair back from calico print for the little sewing rocker, a baby's dress hand made, and embroidered.

c. Home furnishings

Four clubs held upholstering clinics. The spring cushions of a suite of furniture that had become lumpy and shapless, were reconditioned, three couches were re-upholstered entirely, springs tied, new burlap and cotton feed bag linings and covers, new freisette or tapestry finish or slip covers. Other clubs had these clinics in former years. They reported a great deal of work done along this line when they sent in summaries of achievement for the year. Old chairs were refinished, one living room suite was refinished and re-upholstered, a dining room table and chairs were refinished. Ten chairs were resected. Twenty women reported new slip covers made. Ten demonstrations on "war time" windows were given using flowers and plants, gingham or print or feed bags for curtains, painting old but good quality shades. Sixty windows were renovated.

4. Home management

This project was recently carried as a major one so that it was not a part of this year's club program. However, thirty women reported kitchens painted or rearranged six reported new cabinets, or built in cupboards, put in kitchens. Twenty women painted or papered other rooms than the kitchen or painted porches or mended steps. This last mentioned item was reported as one of the results of the fifteen safety on the farms demonstrations.

Farm and Home unit demonstrations

One of the two demonstrations in the county is completing the third year. Most of the time was given to outside projects, poultry and garden this year. A new pressure cooker was purchased and neighbors were invited to use it. It was the only one in the community at first but a second one has been purchased and a third requested as a direct result of this demonstration work. Both demonstrators were successful with gardens, canning and poultry production. Both canned chicken.

Fifteen result demonstrations in poultry were conducted by club women and two culling schools with an attendance of thirty were held by a specialist. These result demonstrations seem to be very successful and seven new members have asked to join these farm flock improvement projects.

2. Home Demonstration club activities

The month of January was given to federation goal work of Health with study of contagious diseases, prevention of epidemics among school children and especial attention was given to tuberculosis, since the county nurse described that as the most urgent health problem in the county.

The campaign goal of better nutrition has already been delineated under nutrition work.

Home demonstration clubs cover the county more nearly and reach more people than any other organization. So when the county chairman of bond sales wished to reach people quickly he asked the assistance of home demonstration club women. The county had not been reaching its quota, largely because there were so few selling places and because it was consequently easier to

buy bonds outside of the county. This information was given to the women. This time the county oversubscribed its quota and the chairman gave the credit to home demonstration women.

Club women have assisted with Red Cross work, with rationing programs with salvage collection. Last year they talked cannery and the tomato cannery has proven a success. Just recently they have begun talking freezing lockers.

3. Brief account of year's work of one outstanding club

Two clubs should be mentioned. The first was mentioned last year and is the charter club of the county, composed of elder well educated women. They have held meetings every month with good attendance, often without the agent. They have been foremost in promoting the health program in canning and live at home programs in neighborhood and community work. They reported over 3000 quarts of canned goods; kitchens improved, old furniture reconditioned, they carried the sewing project.

The second club is the one mentioned under leadership whose president held meetings in different neighborhoods in order that all might attend some of the meetings. There are really three groups but since the officers are the same they are recognized as one club. Some of these meetings were held in, - the new two room cottage of a young married couple, the temporary three room cabin of a Tennessee family who came from the pack area and valley authority and who were planning to build when war time restrictions caught them, and in one of the oldest houses in the county with giant crepe myrtles by the doorway. Members of this club borrowed the pressure cooker for chicken canning and are planning to buy one or two cookers to be used in their community. They do a great deal of their work co-operatively. One truck went for apples for all. They have canned and stored food for the winter. They need only go to the store for a few staples this year. The outstanding club member is a home demonstration club leader and a community leader as well. She with the help of her two sons, one just turned eighteen operates a farm, raises hogs - 4-H registered hog -, runs a combine for the neighborhood. She has attended training meetings and in turn given demonstrations to her club. She was Red Cross Chairman for her neighborhood and paid visits to almost every home. When her neighborhood

leaders met to discuss the Victory Garden and food production with a specialist present, she brought nutrition sheets which she had made, a copy for each member, showing the food value of different garden crops, so as to help in planning what to plant in a garden. This information had been obtained from the food specialist at one of the home demonstration leader training meetings. She has contacted in some way every person in her community. She may move to a new farm in a community without a home demonstration club. If so she plans to organize a club. Yet she is the woman who feels that she has not been sufficiently active in the community neighborhood work.

B. Agricultural Boards

The one special program sponsored by the board was the Victory garden, food production campaign. The garden part of the program was again turned over to the women. The cards returned at the time of the drive do not give a fair picture of the results attained. Many cards were not returned if the farmer could not co-operate entirely. This called for at least one cow. The garden part of the program was carried to 75 percent completion.

C. 4-H Clubs

Of the 158 girls enrolled in 4-H work 75 carried foods and nutrition projects with 70 completing the work. They canned 1500 quarts of fruit and 3000 quarts of vegetables, dried 70 pounds, planned 900 meals, 70 learned to like a new food, 30 improved school lunches and 133 kept the food habits guide.

Outside projects were much more popular than indoor although 40 of the 65 enrolled completed clothing projects made 70 new garments remodeled 85 at a cost of \$130.00. Only 5 were enrolled in home improvement and 3 in home management.

16 of the 20 enrolled completed garden projects with profits of \$490.00 and 30 of the 31 enrolled completed the poultry projects raising 3000 birds with a profit of \$1825.00.

2. Health

All members were required to keep the food habits guide and to continue the program of last year.

3. Community activities

The chief activity of the clubs was the collection of old phonograph records to raise money for the ambulance presented to the army. They also helped with the sale of bonds and stamps. They continued to assist with the salvage collection.

The girl who won the food for fighters county award raised registered hogs, 200 chickens, the pullets to be kept for layers, a garden and had a canning project. She was secretary of her club and helped to write, produce and act a play for the club program.

D. Other Work Done by Home Demonstration Agent

Work done in this respect is largely a continuation of last years work. All of the nutrition educational work in the county was done in the home demonstration clubs. O.C.D. meetings, Agricultural Board, and other special meetings were held in the home demonstration agent's office. Work with the War Bond committee has been reported. The home agent's chief contribution to the war effort, this year as last seems to be getting the correct information concerning war measures to the people of the county. The people of the county are most patriotic and co-operative. They are anxious to do their share and they rely greatly upon the home agent for the latest information, be it rationing, feed production needs, consumer news or selective service regulations.

VII. Approval of the most significant contribution to the County in meeting war needs which was made by the home demonstration program

The continued study of the nutritional needs of the county, the increased food production and conservation and the successful bond sales drive are the greatest contributions that home demonstration program has made. As a result of these contributions more people will be able to "live at home" this year in good health and more lives will be saved because bonds have been bought.