

IV. General Appraisal of Past Year

The Highland County Extension Staff reached more people in 1964 by concentrating on the use of mass media facilities such as news articles in local and state newspapers and a weekly radio program, which has not been conducted in previous years.

Leaders have played an active part in the planning and executing of both adult and youth programs in the county. They have cooperated with the extension staff in carrying out an effective program.

One of the goals of the extension staff for 1965 is to train and involve more project leaders in the 4-H program.

III. Success Story

Maple Product Production

The Extension Staff of Highland County feels that the maple products production (Maple Syrup and Sugar) has made a very significant contribution to the overall county economy. Not only did the gross value of the products produced by this growing industry increase from \$10,000 to an estimated \$40,000, but it was also responsible for attracting 10,000 people into the county. These people came during the Highland County Maple Festival. Many segments of the county are gaining immediate returns from this, but the long time gains will be of even greater value. As the county develops its recreational potentials, the people who have been to the Maple Festivals will want to return to take advantage of new developments. The maple production has done more to focus attention on Highland County than any other attraction has in any county in the State of Virginia. Most all major newspapers in the State publicized The Maple Festival. Radio and TV Stations broadcasting out of Richmond, Roanoke, and Harrisonburg gave good coverage.

made articles for supplemental income.

3. Worked with home demonstration council in planning activities for the Highland County Maple Festival.

4. Assisted the Monterey Garden Club in securing Mr. Becher's help in landscaping the new county high school. This is a long-time project and will involve all the county civic clubs.

5. Worked with the fair committee in planning the adult and youth phase of the Highland County Fair.

6. Assisted the 4-H Council in planning and carrying out the county 4-H Share-the-Fun Program. Thirty-one members participated in the program.

7. Assisted with the planning and carrying out of the Holiday Lake 4-H Camp at Appomattox. Encouraged boys and girls to attend camp.

8. Met with the Stonewall Ruritan Club and discussed and presented facts pertaining the the proposed West Central 4-H Educational Center.

9. Trained home demonstration club leaders in various subject matter areas.

10. Trained 4-H club leaders in various project areas.

11. Worked with the home demonstration council in planning and carrying out the home demonstration achievement program.

12. Worked with 4-H colunteer leaders in organizing the Mill Gap Community 4-H Club.

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strengthened the 4-H club program as it gave the county people an insight into the scope of 4-H club work. He presented programs to all civic clubs in the county, all 4-H clubs, and other organizations and groups. This association was a wonderful experience for the people in the county. He made the extension staff feel as if we made a contribution when he said, "The Extension Staff of Highland County was the best and most cooperative he worked with during his stay in the United States."

b. The Highland Extension Staff also felt honored to have been selected as one of the counties to work with Foreign Agents studying in the United States under the Agency for International Development. Taweedsackdi Sesawech, Rice Specialist from Thailand, worked with us for a week to observe extension policies and procedures. We feel that we contributed to better world understanding by working with this foreign visitor.

10. Highland County Fair

The Highland Extension Staff worked very closely with the Highland Fair Association by assisting them with the planning of the county fair. We encouraged the county people to participate in all phases of the fair. The fair is a three-day function and attracted approximately 10,000 people.

Other Projects Areas: (Home Demonstration Agent)

1. The home agent worked with the local health department sanitarian in organizing a medical self-help class.

2. Worked with a newspaper reporter from The Staunton News-Leader featuring an article on four county women who make hand

explaining why the program had to be carried out again. Several news articles were written on the subject. Coordinated the inspection teams and assisted them with the program to its completion. Final results found no new cases of scabies. Farmers cooperated with the program again 100%.

7. Brucellosis Program

The agent was requested to get Highland County farmers to cooperate in a program to test all cattle in the county for brucellosis. A letter was written to the cattle producers requesting their cooperation and a news article was written on the subject. The testing program was completed in a two-month period, and only eight suspects were found - none of these were found to be re-actors. The county is now ready to be classified as a Brucellosis "Free" area.

8. Soil and Water Conservation Needs Program

All agricultural agencies have cooperated in conducting this program. The county agent has written several news articles on the subject and a brochure has been written with each agency supplying two pages to it. The front cover is in the printers hands and will be completed for distribution in early 1965.

A wildlife display was exhibited at the Highland County Fair, continuing with the theme of last year's program "Outlook - Highland County Soil and Water Conservation."

9. International Farm Youth Exchange Program

a. Highland County participated in the IFYE Program by being host county to Sigvard Johansson from Sweden. Two farm families served as host during his seven week visit. Having Sigvard in the county has

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facilities, it would be almost impossible to get the job done. They held another meeting and planned their drive for the pledges. Publicity went out the first week of July and solicitation started the following week. The agents were requested by the committee to meet with the civic clubs to give the slide presentation that was available on the camp. Pledges have been much better than was expected, and to date, 82.8% of the quota has been reached and everyone is confident that it will be topped. The agents have found this has been a wonderful tool to bring 4-H club work closer to the people in the county, and it has given the people a wonderful insight into 4-H club work.

5. Drought

This disaster took considerable time during the summer and fall. Met with the county drought disaster committee on several occasions and drew up reports to send the state drought disaster committee to have the county declared a disaster area. Worked with farmers and showed them alternatives they could use in making decisions as what to do with their livestock. Wrote several news articles on the subject. Worked with many individual farmers helping them set up feeding programs for the coming winter using short supplies of roughage and ccc stored corn. Helped set up commercial breeding cow and heifer sale for those who were dispersing their herds.

6. Scabies Eradication Program

We were unfortunate enough to have to run the scabies inspection again this past winter, as a case of scabies was found in the county on a spot check by the agent. Letters were written to all sheep producers

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decided to close down in June. This left the farmer in a bad position as they would now have to travel about 40 miles to get supplies. This great need of a store of this type was soon felt. A group of farmers met and discussed the possibilities of forming a Highland Cooperative Farm Bureau Store. One of the men was requested to serve as manager. He accepted and started to get pledges toward stock in the proposed coop. He counseled with the county agent on numerous occasions. After \$20,000 had been pledged these farmers met and decided to go ahead with the setting up the cooperative. Assisted them with the drawing up of by-laws and articles of incorporation. They rented the existing building from Southern States with an option to buy at the end of the first year's business. The cooperative has been in business now for three months and is holding its own even though it is starting off at the end of a bad drought year.

4. West Central 4-H Educational Center

When it was proposed that a 4-H center be constructed in the West Central Extension District, Highland County 4-H leaders saw the need for such a structure and indicated their backing of this undertaking. Two men volunteered to serve on the Sites and Facilities Committee and the Finance Committee. They attended the planning meetings of their committee. Leaders were then contacted to serve on the Highland County Fund Raising Committee. Fourteen consented to serve and attended a meeting conducted by E. B. Craun, Assistant County Agent, Rockbridge County. They were set back when it was learned Highland's quota was set at \$5000. They felt with our small population and the distance we were from the proposed

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a nice antique display and also sell maple flavored cookies. On the last day of the festival, the two civic clubs serving meals grossed over \$1200.00. This is an indication as to the extra benefits the county is receiving from maple syrup production. The extension staff drew up the Highland County Maple Syrup Festival Brochure which was used to advertise the festival and the county. We also wrote news releases which were sent to all papers in the state. Worked with news reporter from the Richmond Times-Dispatch and The Staunton News-Leader in developing a news feature on Highland County Maple Production. Highland County was also publicized in the National Maple Digest. A picture using a scene of one of our maple producers making syrup is being used on the official State Highway May, Department of Highways. Assisted with the making of several radio programs on the subject and also appeared on a TV program originating in Roanoke. Assisted the Chamber of Commerce with the drawing up and planning of a place mat which was used during the festival and is being used in local restaurants throughout the year. The place mat depicted the three products unique to our county - Maple Syrup Production, Trout Production, and The Ruffed Grouse.

It is felt that the Maple Festival is attracting attention to the county, not only are we gaining immediate returns, but in years to come the same people who attend our festival will return as tourists to take part in other recreational activities.

3. Highland Cooperative Farm Bureau Store, Inc.

Highland County had only one store that farmers could buy farm supplies and this was a Southern States Cooperative Store. They were having trouble keeping management personnel for any length of time, so

Other Work Within Project Areas:

1. Highland County Sheep and Wool Producers Association, Inc.

Continued to work with the Highland Sheep and Wool Producers Association, Inc. Assisted the board of directors with surveying the wool producers for the purpose of seeing how much wool would be put up for bid. This estimate came within 4% of the amount that was actually pooled. The association pooled 114,676 pounds of wool which grossed \$85,504.23 for the farmers - this was an increase of \$15,000 over the 1963 wool pool. Highland County's wool sold for 75.27 per pound. This was the highest price paid for wool in Virginia and second highest in the United States. Assisted the association with their second annual meeting. Dr. W. R. Vandresser, Extension Veterinarian, and George Allen, V.P.I. Sheep Specialist, presented educational information. W. R. Backus, Quality Control in Meat Animals Specialist, gave a lamb barbecue demonstration to get sheep producers to utilize their own products. There were 135 in attendance.

2. Highland County Maple Festival

The Highland County Chamber of Commerce has sponsored the Maple Festival since its origin. The extension staff has coordinated all activities of the festival. It was estimated that about 10,000 people came into the county on the two week-ends of this year's festival. It takes the coordinated efforts of all organizations in the county to staff the facilities which are needed to feed this influx of people. The cafeterians of all four schools are opened in the county with the civic clubs manning them. The home demonstration clubs unite to set up

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to attach a collar, set in sleeves and make buttonholes. Bulletins from V.P.I. were used to teach this objective. After the participants completed their garments, a summary was held and each point was emphasized. A fashion show was held of all participants at the Highland County Fair.

Extension Home Economics

1. Phase: Clothing, Textiles, Design, Selection, Construction
And Care

a. This phase received major emphasis because the clothing committee felt many homemakers were interested in constructing own garments, but lacked the necessary skills. Shopping for ready-to-wear garments is a problem since there are no facilities available.

b. The program objective was to improve sewing skills.

c. A news article was written in the local newspaper stating a workshop in basic construction would be held. The home agent announced the workshop at each home demonstration club meeting. The high school home economics teacher cooperated, and the class was held in the home economics department. A preliminary meeting was held with the clothing committee to discuss the workshop and set up the objectives. The workshop was conducted on the demonstration type method using illustrative materials as visuals.

The teaching objectives were: 1. to teach homemakers how to determine correct pattern size as related to body measurements. The methods used to carry out this objective were; bulletins from V.P.I., pattern books and an actual demonstration on how to determine pattern size; 2. to teach homemakers how to use a sewing machine. Many of the participants were not familiar or did not know how to properly use a sewing machine. A demonstration machine was set up to teach this objective; 3. To teach homemakers how to construct a simple blouse. This objective was accomplished by using illustrative material on how

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E. Agricultural Production Management and Natural Resource Development

1. Phase: Beef Production - Improving Quality and Weight of Calves

a. This phase received major emphasis because the beef committee saw that the calves produced in the county were not grading enough and the average weight of the calves were not high enough.

b. The objectives of this phase are to improve the quality of beef cattle through selection of better bull and replacements and to have calves dropped earlier in the year.

c. Several news articles on this subject were written and a meeting of beef cattle producers was held at which K. C. Williamson, V.P.I. Marketing Specialist, and Dave Walker, Livestock Section of Virginia Division of Markets, along with the county agent, gave educational talks on the subject. Eighty (80) producers were in attendance. Assisted several farmers with the selection of bull and replacement heifers. These management practices will be stressed for many years as it takes quite a period of time before the results of this type of educational activity can be readily seen.

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from sixteen (16) to thirty-two (32) over 1963. Four new upright silos have been constructed with the remainder of the new producers using black plastic stack, trench and snow fencestacks as storage facilities.

Ensilage samples have been taken from all silage that has been opened so that feeding recommendations can be better made. A survey has been made of varieties used, harvest dates, type of weed control, etc., so this information can be compiled for information to be used at a meeting of corn producers and those farmers who have indicated interest in the production of corn for ensilage. This meeting is planned for early 1965.

D. Agricultural Production, Management and Natural Resource Development

1. Phase: Forage Production

a. This phase received major emphasis because farmers were not producing forage economically. They were not fertilizing and liming pastures and meadows properly to get maximum production. Farmers could not see that corn silage is the most economical forage produced and the best means of increasing cattle and sheep numbers.

b. The objectives of this phase were to show farmers the most economical forage that could be produced and how liming and fertilizing would increase production on his existing forages.

c. The drought situation started farmers to look for means of producing a high yielding, low costing forage. This gave me the opportunity to introduce corn silage as a forage to them. Several news articles were written on the subject and educational meetings were planned. A school on forage production was conducted by the agents from Highland, Bath, Alleghany and Rockbridge as instructors. This created much interest in better management of forage production. Another meeting was held with the subject: Production, Storage, and Handling Facilities for Corn Silage being discussed. This also created a great deal more interest for the growing of corn silage. John Shoulders, V.P.I. Agronomist, and Dan Kite, V.P.I. Agricultural Engineer, presented the information. Many individual on-the-farm contacts were made, and these subjects were discussed. An informal survey was made, and it has been found that the number of farmers producing corn silage have increased

C. Marketing and Utilization of Agricultural Products

1. Phase: Beef Cattle Producers Association

a. This phase received major emphasis because the beef committee was concerned over the fact that they were not conducting their own business and the producers of yearling and feeder cattle were using the graded sales as a lever to sell their cattle to buyers outside of the sales.

b. The objectives were to get the calf and yearling sales into the hands of the producer and to have regulations that could be backed by the organization.

c. The Beef Committee met and discussed the situation and decided to have an annual meeting of all beef producers from Highland and Bath Counties at which time they would make the proposal that a Highland-Bath Cattle Association be formed and incorporated. This meeting was held with eighty (80) producers in attendance. It was decided an association would be formed and the incorporating directors were elected and given the go-ahead to work on the situation. These men met with D. Upton Livermore, V.P.I. Economist, and drew up its articles of incorporation and their by-laws. The association received the Certificate of Incorporation on May 21, 1964.

Their first business was to conduct two feeder calf sales which handled 1952 calves and grossed the producers \$177,988,71. They also held a yearling sale which handled 926 head and grossed \$117,454,000 for the farmers in the two-county association.

which were to be culled out. Selected seven (7) other plots which will be marked next spring. These are located in all areas of the county.

Two new sugar camps have been constructed, one producer installed a new oil-fired evaporator that will turn out 7-8 gallons of syrup per hour. This is the first such equipment to be installed in the county. He also switched to plastic tube collection. Two gas-fired finishing pans have been put into use during the past year. Another new evaporator system will go into production during 1965 season. One producer has almost completed a store that is modeled after buildings constructed during colonial times. This will be used to sell maple products and other farm products. Three producers have erected road signs to advertise their sugar camps. These are a few of the changes which have been made during the past year in our maple industry. By survey, it is estimated the gross maple products moved from \$10,000 in 1963 to \$40,000 in 1964.

B. Agricultural Production Management and Natural Resource Development

1. Phase: Maple Syrup Production

a. This phase received major emphasis because there are many acres of maple trees that are not in production. Many producers are not using desirable production techniques and are not managing their orchards properly. There is not enough syrup and sugar products to meet the market demand.

b. The objectives were to improve production techniques and to improve management of maple orchards; thereby increasing production and income to the farmer.

c. This phase received major emphasis this past year and will continue to do so for several years due to its great potential to the county not only as a farm product but as a major tourist attraction. The need for greater maple products production has been brought on by the annual Maple Festival that has been sponsored by the Highland Chamber of Commerce. There were no formal meetings held this year as several were held in 1963, and producers needed time to develop new techniques they had already gained. Many individual farm visits were made throughout the production period to assist with problems such as proper installing of plastic collection tubing, sanitation at the tree and in the syrup house, testing sugar water to see if sugar content was high enough to be economically reduced to syrup, testing syrup to see if sugar was a right point for proper canning, taught proper use of hydrometer for syrup and sap testing, etc. Set up management demonstration plot and marked trees

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and boating lake in the western section of the county. Approximately sixty (60) acres of land has been secured through donation by a land owner for this purpose.

Their second project has been to try and get the Game Commission to establish a pay-as-you-go fishing stream and state park in the eastern section of the county. At this writing the Commission has not given any indication as to what they plan to do about either request.

The Committee is planning to meet with the Virginia Outdoor Recreation Commission on January 27, 1965 and present several proposals at this hearing. They are also planning a meeting at which time they will discuss the material that was presented at the Production Area Meeting and see how they can apply this to the county situation.

II. Project Areas

A. Community and Public Affairs

1. Phase: Rural Areas Development Committee

a. This phase received major emphasis because there has been no coordinated efforts on the part of the leaders to develop the County's resources to its greatest potential.

b. The program objectives were to assist county leaders to analyze their problems and to appraise alternative uses of resources and to aid them in organizing and carrying out action programs.

c. The Highland Extension Staff had been using the Highland Chamber of Commerce to get its Rural Area Development Programs initiated. It was soon seen that the Chamber did not embrace all segments of the county's interests and needs. This was discussed with the Chamber officials and they suggested an over-all county committee should be set up. This suggestion was discussed with other key leaders in the county, and a committee composed of the County Board of Supervisors, presidents of all civic clubs, president of the Monterey Town Council, the county farm bureau and other key leaders were called together. This group made the decision to form a permanent committee to be ready to take action on any emergency plans that might effect the county, and also to study the needs of the county, make action programs to help develop the county's resources to their fullest. They took on a permanent name for the committee to be the Highland Conservation and Development Committee.

The first project they have undertaken has been to contact and meet with the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries to locate a fishing

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The quality of the leaders in Highland County is good, however in many cases we use the same people too many times and should strengthen the extension program by drawing on new sources of leadership.

with the extension staff acting only in an advisory capacity. The staff teaches exhibitors how to plan and display their educational exhibits.

The Maple Festival, which is not a festival in a true sense, but is an educational tour. Highland County farmers participate in this endeavor by opening their sugar camps to the public during the two week-ends that are designated as the festival. They take time out from their busy schedule and explain the production of maple sugar and syrup. An example of the number of people that are being reached; one farmer registered 3000 people on the first week-end of the festival. Many other exhibits are displayed during the festival. An antique display is set up, a weaving shop is opened and demonstrations given and other activities of this nature are conducted. The Trout Company has open hours during this time so people can get an insight into our trout production. Here again the extension staff serves only in an advisory capacity and assists with the publicity. The festival is so successful because of the coordinated efforts of the leaders of the civic clubs, home demonstration clubs, farmers, the town council, and others.

Leaders in Highland County, when shown a need or see one, will work on it until its completion. An example of this; they saw the need for better preparation of wool and the marketing of it. They worked on this situation until this year Highland's wool brought the second highest price in the United States. Another example of this; the only farm supply store went out of business, and within three months they had arranged a cooperative and had another farm supply store in operation.

I. Involvement of Local Leadership

Local leaders have been a most valuable asset to the Highland County Extension Staff. Without their assistance in planning, organizing, and conducting the extension program, it would not have made the advancements it did. The attitudes and cooperation of these people have been outstanding. Leaders have assisted with the setting up of all major extension programs. On many occasions leaders have functioned with little or no encouragement from the extension staff. An example of this was the formation of the Valley View 4-H Club. Leaders approached the agents and expressed a need for a 4-H club in their community. An organizational meeting was held with them in June. The club became established and has been meeting monthly to date with sixteen in attendance. These leaders have worked on many activities without the assistance of the agents. They put on a function to help raise money for the West Central 4-H Educational Center, made a window display on 4-H club work, and have given instructions to 4-H club members. This type leadership is taking place over the entire county in 4-H club work. Without the cooperation we have received from our leaders, the fund drive for Highland's quota of the proposed West Central 4-H Center would have been a complete failure, instead we are only 7.2% away from our goal.

The Highland County Maple Festival and The Highland County Fair are two county-wide functions that takes the efforts of all leaders in the county. These two activities attract approximately 10,000 people each year. The fair is strictly an agricultural one with very little carnival atmosphere. The leaders organize and conduct all activities

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ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT

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1964

HIGHLAND

County