

ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT

COUNTY EXTENSION WORK

Virginia Agricultural Extension Service

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1964

Craig
County

I. INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL LEADERSHIP IN PLANNING AND CARRYING OUT THE EXTENSION PROGRAM

The Extension personnel in Craig County recognize that their task is that of an educational nature. They also recognize education is a continuous change, the production of changes in human behavior. In view of this, major emphasis has been placed on the adult leadership role in planning and executing the Extension program for the purpose of keeping the citizens informed of the change.

Special emphasis was given to the involvement and training of local leaders. With limited Extension personnel in the county, local adult leadership is of paramount importance in carrying out an adequate Extension program.

The rapidity of change in educational levels, technological advances, population increase, shifts within urban and rural areas, specialization and the socio-economic status of the people have made the job of the Extension Agent and local leaders a complicated one, yet a challenging opportunity.

Local leadership in agriculture and home economics, community affairs and youth programs was vital to the overall success of the county Extension program during the year. The cooperation, interest, and willingness to work of leaders have greatly accelerated the long and short-time objectives of the Extension program in the county. A greater impact is felt when

the leaders have been stimulated to analyze and recognize their own problems and to take the necessary steps to solve them.

The scope of the Extension work in the county has increased considerably over the recent years. As the Extension Service branches out into the various segments of agri-business, home economics, youth work, community affairs, and local government, its educational responsibility becomes greater. Therefore, additional qualified leaders are needed.

Considerable assistance was given to the training of leaders in these various segments. The agent spent considerable time in training and the orientation of leaders for their specific area of endeavor. It is recognized that people have different personalities with different interests. Special efforts were taken to select the leaders for specific jobs to be done.

Training specialists as well as subject matter specialists from the college along with the county Extension personnel served in the orientation and training of new leaders. Existing leaders were used also to help in carrying out the leadership training opportunity. Specifically included in these training areas were farm management, marketing, natural resource development, agricultural production, community and public affairs, and 4-H leader training meetings.

Craig County has been primarily rural. Its citizens have not had the opportunity to fulfill leadership roles as might be the case in more urban areas. However, with the rapid changes taking place in our society, leadership opportunities are presenting themselves. With the merging of these leaders it is satisfying to find a group of people who are enthusiastic and willing to put every effort in carrying out their assignment. As the area is becoming more urban, putting the rural people on a level with urban people, their interest and goals in life are changing. This is especially true with the younger people in Craig County.

It is recognized that very little could be accomplished without the local leaders in planning and administering the county Extension program. The Extension personnel contribute the success of its program to the leadership role which the citizens have taken.

II. REPORT OF PROJECT AREAS

1. PROJECT AREA: AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, MANAGEMENT, AND NATURAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Phase: Farm Management--Increase Number of Farmers
on Mail-in-Record Program

Many farmers in Craig County do not keep accurate farm records and are not aware of areas where they are losing profits. More farmers need a system of keeping records whereby they can take a detailed look at their operation and make changes in their business to protect their net income, both immediate and longer-run changes.

The objective of this major emphasis was to increase the number of farmers on the VPI mail-in-record program in 1964 by five and to acquaint other farmers with the system with the aim of enrolling them in the near future.

An extensive educational program was undertaken through news media and the already existing farmers on the program in December. The purpose was to inform and stimulate interest among farmers on the value of keeping records and how they could use this as a tool in making adjustments in their farm operations.

Several potential farmers were visited and the record keeping system was outlined. No real effort was made for a farmer to sign up, only the program and its benefits to him were outlined. The decision as to whether he wanted to be on the program or not was left up to him.

As a result, four farmers asked to be put on the program. Extensive work was done with these farmers in setting up their inventories as well as acquainting them with the system of record keeping. The district farm management specialist and county Extension personnel assisted in this orientation. During the year these farmers were visited, assistance was given as needed, and also the quarterly summaries were reviewed when necessary.

Special news articles were written on several of the farmers emphasizing their record keeping program as well as their total farming operation.

The new farmers as well as the old on the program seemed to find the record keeping system very beneficial, especially in finding out some of the hidden costs. They should be able to make the necessary changes to increase the net income on their farm with the use of the annual summary.

A. OTHER AREAS OF WORK IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION,
MANAGEMENT, AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

a. Fields of Work in Cash and Feed Crops

Considerable work was done during the year in the area of cash and feed crops. Included in this was that of special educational program conducted on the recommended varieties of seed for cash and feed crops. Further work was done with promoting the correct fertilization program to use with their crops. The encouragement of using soil samples as a guide for lime and fertilization was emphasized.

Farmers were encouraged to take advantage of the ASC program. This resulted in increasing the quantity as well as the quality of pasture. All fertilizer and lime recommendations were made for the ASC Office according to the result of soil samples.

Several demonstrations were held during the year in regard to variety, yield, and weed control in row crops as well as forage crops and pasture. Special emphasis was placed on the control of weeds in pasture with demonstrations being held on controlling undesirable weeds in pasture and forage crops.

An agricultural field day was held at which time over 100 farmers had an opportunity to see the results of good fertilization on permanent and supplemental pastures.

b. Beef Cattle

The production of beef cattle furnishes the farmers their major source of income. In view of this, a major part of the agent's time was spent in this field. A continued educational program was used on informing farmers of the feeding and management of their beef cattle. Special news letters as well as newspapers were used to inform farmers of the innovations in the beef cattle enterprise.

Two demonstrations were conducted on using stilbestrol on steers going on pasture in the spring. One farmer had 2.18 pounds average daily gain with steers grazing on pasture using twelve milligrams of stilbestrol.

Several farmers used this on their steers as a result of seeing the demonstrations and hearing the information presented on its results, if used correctly. Livestock specialists from VPI assisted with these demonstrations.

Considerable work was done with farmers in acquainting them with the BCIA program as well as the commercial production program for farmers. Several herds were visited by the Extension Agent along with the BCIA representative in informing farmers of the program and how they could use it. One new herd was added to the program.

The Extension agent worked closely with the county livestock committee in carrying out objectives as set up by them.

Included in these was the livestock field day held at one of the local farms in the county. Special emphasis was placed on using good herd sires and how the BCIA program helps in selecting replacements at the field day.

Considerable work was done with farmers in marketing their calves through feeder calf sales. The number of farmers consigning to these sales increased approximately 200 percent this year.

The Extension agent worked closely with farmers during the early part of the year in informing them of available hay supplies. The previous year's drought resulted in farmers being short on forage for their beef cattle. A listing was made available to farmers as to where hay might be obtained.

The Extension agent assisted many farmers in selecting herd sires as well as replacement heifers. It is estimated that ninety percent of the beef sires are registered. The quality of the beef cattle has improved considerably as farmers are recognizing that good quality, fast growing calves are their money makers.

c. Dairy Cattle

An extensive educational program was conducted during the year to assist farmers in their overall dairy operation. Most all farmers in the county having dairy cows sell manufactured

milk or cream.

Specific work was done in assisting farmers in building grade C dairy barns in order that they might get a higher price for milk. Some farmers were encouraged to build barns that could be converted to grade A in the future. The agricultural engineering department assisted in formulating plans for many of the dairy barn constructions.

The feeding operation with many of the farmers was reviewed and recommendations made as to rations needed. Farmers were encouraged to have their silage and hay tested to determine the quality and this was used as a guide in formulating their feed program.

The agent worked with local milk companies in informing farmers to use better management in all phases of their dairy operation.

d. Sheep

The sheep industry in the county was very good this year. Farmers received a good price for their lambs and wool. Several farmers kept more replacement ewes than previously and it is estimated that the number of sheep in the county is up by 500.

Cooperative work was done with the veterinarians and the state health department in re-checking all flocks for the

purpose of the county becoming scabies-free. An extensive educational program was presented on this as well as other external and internal parasite problems farmers face.

Other areas of work which received attention were the importance of keeping good rams, economic importance of using winter pasture, as well as the total feeding and management practices of sheep.

e. Swine

Swine numbers in the county have not changed over the recent years. This is probably due to the lack of grain produced locally to feed them.

The number of farmers consigning pigs was not as large as anticipated. This was mainly due to a lack of feeder pig markets in the immediate area.

Educational work was done with farmers in keeping them informed of recommended feeding and management practices. Circular letters and newspaper articles were used to inform the housewife of new and better methods of preserving pork.

f. Poultry

Farmers were informed of new developments in the poultry industry which included feeding and management of flocks.

Cooperative work was done with the Virginia and U. S.

Departments of Agriculture in sending out questionnaires to small flock owners. The questionnaire dealt primarily with avian tuberculosis.

g. Entomology

Considerable work was done on the control of insects on alfalfa and other forage crops. A detailed educational program was conducted on the control of alfalfa weevils and aphids. Several newspaper articles were written, circular letters mailed, and personal visits made.

Assistance was obtained from entomology specialists in educating the farmers of the results of using certain sprays on controlling alfalfa weevil.

Work was done on educating the public on the proper use of all insecticides. This was stressed by various news media and at farmers meetings.

Several farmers were visited for the purpose of identifying the corn webworm. Serious damage was done to several fields of corn before the insect was brought under control. This is the first year farmers had any trouble with this insect and considerable concern was shown over it. The control measures were quickly obtained and sent to farmers.

Work was done with local farm supply dealers in keeping farmers informed of the recommended insecticides for various

crops and the correct amount to use.

h. Pathology

Several farmers as well as rural non-farmers were visited and information given on the control of various diseases. Work in this area was centered primarily around ornamental and garden diseases.

Specialists presented information to Garden Club members on lawn diseases and control. News media was used to inform home owners of lawn and garden disease problems.

i. Forestry

The agent has worked closely with the Virginia Division of Forestry, VPI Extension Forestry Department, and the U. S. Forest Service in conducting and carrying out educational programs on proper woodland management.

The Extension office cooperated with the U. S. Forest Service in conducting a tour at which time farmers had an opportunity to see tree planting plots, killing of undesirable hardwoods, and natural seedings of pines. An educational program was presented on the value of reforestation with information included on how tree seedlings could be obtained.

Demonstrations were given by 4-H club members to adult groups on this.

J. Soil and Water Conservation

The Extension Agent has worked closely with the Soil Conservation Service on the Johns Creek watershed project. Construction of the dams was delayed due to all plans not being formulated as quickly as anticipated from the state department. The release dates on the four dams has been scheduled to start in April 1965. The agent has visited several people and made many trips during the year in connection with this project.

The agent attended monthly meetings of the SCD Supervisors and assisted with various activities carried out during the year. The Craig County Agent is scheduled to become a supervisor of the district starting in January 1965.

Assistance was given in the preparation of the plan of work for the district gearing it around the needs of Craig and the other two counties in the district. Considerable work was done with farmers in informing them of the needs for soil and water conservation practices on their farms. Assistance was pointed out to them by using ACP practices. Several farmers were referred to the county soil conservationist to receive assistance in drainage, contouring, and construction of farm ponds.

2. PROJECT AREA: MARKETING AND UTILIZATION OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

Phase: Marketing Feeder Calves

This area received major emphasis again this year because it was felt that additional work was needed to be done in marketing of feeder calves. According to a recent livestock survey, 3,200 beef calves will be raised in the county in an average year and approximately 2,000 of these will be sold as feeder calves.

At present, a very small percentage are consigning calves through organized feeder calf sales. According to statistics compiled on Virginia feeder calf sales, calves in these sales brought from two to four dollars per hundred more than calves marketed through other sources.

The objective of this major emphasis phase was to increase the number of farmers selling calves through these organized sales.

In reaching the objective as set forth, the educational phase began in February by taking a group of farmers to the state feeder calf meeting. Here, information was presented on the feeder calf sales. In turn, the feeder calf directors were asked to make personal contacts with community farmers and explain the advantages and procedures in selling calves through these sales. The county livestock committee worked on the

educational part by having a special livestock program in connection with the county agricultural field day.

News articles were used to inform farmers of the necessary steps and procedures in consigning calves to the sale. Circular letters were sent to all beef cattle producers. A schedule was arranged with farmers and the veterinarian to have the necessary health requirements met for consigning calves.

The number of farmers consigning calves to the sale was increased two hundred percent. Farmers were well pleased with the sales, and in almost all cases received considerably more than by selling on the open market.

A. OTHER PHASES OF MARKETING AND UTILIZATION OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

The agent has spent considerable time in other phases of marketing of the county's agricultural products. Included in this is dairy products. Work was done with the local milk companies in securing an additional route for farmers. This included also creamery routes. Farmers were encouraged to put in additional marketing equipment where it was economical and feasible to do so.

Work was done with the director of the county wool pool in securing higher prices for the wool clip. Farmers received \$74.33 per hundred pounds this year.

Information was sent to farmers who had flocks informing them of the special lamb sale dates. This was done by working in cooperation with the local livestock markets.

Work was done with purebred beef cattle producers in the county in getting them to consign purebred cattle to the sales.

Considerable progress has been made in the marketing and utilization of the county's agricultural products. However, additional market outlets are needed.

3. EXTENSION HOME ECONOMICS

At present, there is no home demonstration agent in the county. Consequently, very little work has been done in this area.

The work which was done centered around special interest meetings on sewing, and foods and nutrition. The meetings were conducted by specialists from VPI. Prepared news items released from the college on home economics are run in the local newspaper.

Bulletins and other subject matter are kept in the office for distribution on request from homemakers.

4. PROJECT AREA: 4-H AND OTHER EXTENSION YOUTH PROGRAMS

Phase: Organization of County Honor Club

It is recognized that there are many senior 4-H club members in Craig County who have done outstanding club work. The county doesn't have any other way of recognizing these club members other than being tapped into the 4-H All Stars. This permits only a limited number of the outstanding members to be recognized.

The organization of a 4-H Honor Club would provide a system for recognizing more members for their exceptionally good work and in turn would stimulate more active leadership.

The objective of this major emphasis was to organize a 4-H Honor Club for the recognition of these members.

In January, it was discussed with the local leaders and members of the County Council the possibilities of organizing the club. They expressed great interest and were willing to do all they could in setting up the organization. A list of those eligible was worked up and fifty percent of the eligible members were selected to be taken into the Honor Club by the Extension personnel and adult leaders.

The organization of the Honor Club was set up for February and thirty-two members were invited to join. Members of the Botetourt County 4-H Honor Club initiated the new members into the club.

This proved to be a very good way of recognizing senior members and in turn it has helped to stimulate interest in the total 4-H club program in the county. These Honor Club members are used as junior leaders in helping with all phases of the club program.

A. OTHER PHASES OF 4-H AND OLDER YOUTH PROGRAMS

The 4-H Club program in Craig County has been very outstanding this year. Participation and interest in all activities have been exceptionally high. The increase in the number of adult leaders as well as a program based around the needs and desires of the young people have contributed greatly to the success.

Parents have been most cooperative and are willing to help in any way they can. It has been a real pleasure to work with the club boys and girls of the county and to see them grow in those traits which the 4-H club teaches.

The following is a brief outline of some of the activities conducted by club members during the year.

Over 175 parents, club members, and guests attended the awards banquet for members who received medals the previous year.

In the county's share-the-fun program, forty-one members participated. During the summer, most of these contestants had an opportunity to entertain at Camp Easter Seal and the YWCA Camp located in the county. Six entertainment programs were presented by club members to these groups. Craig County was happy to have had a group which won state honors in this program.

Twenty-nine members participated in the county public speaking contest.

In the electric project, 180 club members were enrolled with ninety-five attending the two-day electric school. Two members were selected to attend the Electric Congress in Richmond. Craig County also had a blue ribbon exhibit at the annual event.

Twenty-five senior members participated in the district contest with sixteen being eligible to compete in the state contests. Twenty-two members attended the State 4-H Short Course. State winnings included share-the-fun, second in land appreciation with one member on the state team, second in egg grading, ninth in livestock judging, and fifth in poultry judging, with a blue ribbon on the soil and water conservation demonstration.

Four club members were tapped into the All Stars. Achievement winners announced at Short Course included one club member who received a trip to Camp Miniswanca for his citizenship activities. Other club members receiving awards and trips included the Fact Finding Conference at Kansas City, Poultry Federation Convention, Short Course Scholarships, as well as two nineteen-jewel watches in the field crops program.

The Bridle Club was very active during the year and conducted two horse shows and two trail rides. The horse shows

were very successful with entries from the surrounding area. An endurance trail ride was conducted with a total of 120 taking part. Riders were represented from four states. A total of eighty-five riders participated in the fall round-up trail ride. Several 4-H club members participated in the district and state 4-H horse shows.

Activities conducted by the Bridle Club have been very outstanding in bringing new people into the county as well as informing the public of some of the activities which the 4-H club conducts and the leadership and citizenship training they receive.

The agent has attended several meetings of the State Light Horse and Pony Committee in planning activities for the state 4-H horse program. He also made several talks to 4-H groups interested in horses during the year.

The second annual 4-H Dress Revue was held with twenty-five girls entering. This was conducted by the leaders in the clothing project.

Fifty-five club members attended the junior and senior camps. One of the most successful 4-H endeavors this year has been that of raising funds for the West Central 4-H Educational Center. Citizens of the county seemed to be very interested which was demonstrated by a group of adult leaders as well as other leaders in the county in raising Craig County's share.

The 4-H members pledged \$650.00. This project has been outstanding not only in its purpose of raising money for an educational center but the citizens have a clearer understanding of what 4-H is and its objectives.

Four-H members who did outstanding work during the year were presented over 120 awards and medals at the achievement day program. The number of records turned in as well as the quality was the highest received. This was largely due to the assistance of the 4-H adult and junior leaders.

Club members assisted in many community projects which included the Red Cross Drive, Christmas Basket Bureau, Cancer Fund, presenting programs to civic clubs, and the county fair.

One new senior 4-H club was organized during the year. Six new project and local leaders were secured this year and the enrollment increased by twenty-two members.

5. COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Phase: Community Recreation Center

There is a great need for a community recreation center which will accommodate large groups. This center could be used for recreational purposes as well as for meeting places for the various organizations.

The objective of this project was to continue the interest in a community center and start construction of such a center if all details were worked out.

The RAD Community Recreational Center subcommittee met several times during the year to work out all legal aspects of leasing a tract of land from the Craig County Fair Corporation. The Fair Corporation leased the land to the RAD. Everything has been worked out except all the finances of building the center.

At present, approximately \$8,000 have been raised toward the construction of this center and the committee is trying to raise an additional \$2,000 before it starts construction of the estimated \$25,000 building. It is hoped that construction will start in early 1965.

A. OTHER PHASES OF COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Various committees in the RAD have been working actively this year. The Economic Recreation Development Committee has continued to promote the various projects such as hunting and fishing rights, cabin rentals, farm lodging for the purpose of increasing the income for land owners in the county.

The Extension Agent has also worked closely with developing a game reserve farm in the county. The farmer is in the business on a small scale but plans to enlarge his operation to include hunting and fishing rights as well as picnic areas.

The agent, working with the RAD Recreational Development Committee and a member of the County Board of Supervisors, met and submitted a long-range county recreational plan to the Governor's Outdoor Recreation Study Commission. Needs for the next ten years were incorporated in this plan.

The Industrial committee of the RAD has worked to secure industry for the county.

The agent has continued to work with the RAD Executive Committee in trying to secure a doctor for the county. Several letters have been written as well as talking with several potential physicians. The committee hopes that it has a doctor lined up. The physician is now serving his enlistment in the army and will be out in early 1965.

The agent has worked closely with other government agencies

during the year. Assistance has been given in promoting their work and furnishing technical information as needed. A talk was made to the high school assembly on the Extension Service and Its Function in the County.

III. SUCCESS STORY

Mr. W. H. Robertson of the Maywood Community is a mighty busy man these days. He owns and operates a 360-acre general livestock farm and does this by himself except for swapping community labor at harvest times. He has been able to do this only through mechanization and planning of his time.

Mr. Robertson has not always been a farmer. He bought his father's farm about ten years ago. Since then, he has been a constant visitor to the Extension Office to receive up-to-date information on the different phases of farming. At present, he is milking twenty-four dairy cows. He maintains a herd of sixty-three brood cows and steers, and has a flock of forty sheep.

Mr. Robertson recently built a milking parlor. This replaced the old slow process of cow-to-can milking. This past year lightning destroyed his hay barn which he also used as a lounging shed for the dairy cattle.

In working with the agricultural engineering department at VPI, plans were made to incorporate in his new barn enough individual lounging stalls for thirty cows. He is very happy with his new barn and arrangements for his dairy cows.

This Craig County native keeps a herd of brood cows and also feeds out steers. He is constantly mechanizing his feeding

operation in order to save time. All beef cattle are fed in feeding lots with the trench silo nearby. He believes in materials handling, moving a large load as short a distance as possible. His beef cow herd averaged over ninety percent calf crop last year and a group of steers on pasture gained better than 1.75 pounds per day.

His flock of sheep is used as a secondary source of income. His lambing percentage was over 125 percent this past year.

Mr. Robertson believes in practicing good soil and water conservation. He strip crops his rolling land on the contour and also does some intensive growing of corn silage on some of his fertile bottom land.

He was a TVA demonstrator for seven years and his farm has been used for demonstration purposes several times. A corn silage demonstration yielded over twenty-five tons per acre on his farm recently. His fertilization program is followed from results of soil samples and recommendations made by the Extension Service. He has been on the VPI mail-in-record program for three years and follows recommendations made to him by the county agent and farm management specialist.

He cooperates with the Soil Conservation Service and has constructed two farm ponds, open ditch drainage, as well as doing contour farming and sod waterways.

With all this work to be done, one can see where Mr. Robertson has to be efficient to manage and do the work of such an operation. He is always looking for new labor saving devices and recently built a granary with everything being automatic.

Mr. Robertson is married and has two adopted children. His wife is a 4-H club leader and one of their adopted girls is active in 4-H work. He also finds time to be a member of the County School Board as well as being active in other community affairs.

IV. GENERAL APPRAISAL OF THE PAST YEAR'S WORK

In appraising the year's work it has been satisfying to see progress which is being made in different areas. One can see new practices being used, people volunteering for leadership roles, attitudes and skills changing. These and many other signs point to purposeful systematic learning by the clientele.

The plan of work for the year was planned to meet the needs and desires of the people. In some instances it had to be changed in order to meet new and unexpected conditions. The special activities planned were geared to emphasize new and improved Extension practices and methods.

Probably one of the most satisfying results of the year's work has been that of watching the club boys and girls develop into useful and desirable citizens. The 4-H club program is the main youth program in the county and approximately seventy percent of the county's youth that are of club age belong to it. Considerable thought and planning go into developing monthly programs that will be interesting and at the same time teach the young boy or girl traits that will be helpful to them in a changing society.

The interest and enthusiasm that the club members take in their work is most gratifying to the adult leaders and Extension

personnel. Another hidden aspect of the club program is that of not only developing young boys and girls but of developing older people who serve as leaders.

The Extension Service has been called upon to give information and assistance and to take the leadership role in many county government agencies and civic organizations. It is felt that the Extension Service's responsibility will spread out into many facets in the near future. These will, no doubt, include such things as working more in the fields of adult education, expansion of youth work into the metropolitan areas, specialists in the fields of agri-business, soils, recreation planning, city planning, and the coordination of all the county agricultural agencies.

In final summary of the appraisal of the year's work it is felt that the Extension program has been successful, yet there is more to be done and only with sound systematic planning can this be successfully accomplished.