

# Annual Report

## COUNTY EXTENSION WORK

Virginia Agricultural Extension Service



1955

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1955

## AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION PROGRAM OF WORK

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Changes in Agricultural Situation.

With lower prices for farm products, lessened reserves because of the short crops of 1953 and 1954, and the necessity for extensive re-seeding to replace grass and forage stands destroyed by the past year's drought, Prince William County farmers have gone through 1955 under a rather tight squeeze. It was necessary to try to make every dollar spent on the farming operations go as far as possible. Fertilizer prices were high in comparison with the anticipated prices for products, seed costs were excessive and less new farm machinery and equipment could be purchased. Because of the high wages demanded and increased competition from industry and other fields for labor, less help was hired. A number who were attracted to farming during the period of higher farm income have returned to their old line of employment. A favorable growing season, wider use of owned and custom operated labor-saving machinery, and wider adoption of grassland farming practices have helped to relieve the situation and lessen the squeeze.

An increase in permanent (not cropland or woodland) pasture from 12,029 acres in 1950 to 24,164 in 1954 was reported by the last farm census. Additional permanent vegetative cover was established in 1955. While there was a sharp decrease in the acreage of corn and

small grain during the between-census period, cattle numbers increased from 15,436 to 18,400, and sheep and lambs from 1,187 to 1,503. Poultry numbers remained about the same. Fewer hogs were reported in 1954 but this was due largely to curtailed garbage feeding operations, resulting from tighter feeding regulations and other restrictions, rather than on the smaller feed grain production. There were 116 whole milk shippers in 1950 and 131 in 1954. Whole milk sold increased from 27,679,205 pounds to 28,206,107 pounds. Because of the unfavorable growing seasons of the previous year and in 1954, expenditures for feed increased from \$675,700.00 to \$725,167.00 but the outlay for hired labor dropped from \$471,220.00 to \$342,353.00.

An analysis of the above and other census figures, and of the prevailing conditions for both years, would lead to the conclusion that the shifting toward grassland farming practices has made it possible to produce more meat and milk with less grain and a smaller outlay for labor.

Development of County Extension Program  
for 1955

Local problems were discussed and general county agronomy plans were made for 1955 at a well-attended meeting of representative farmers at the County Agent's office on Tuesday, January 11. It was decided to have an over-all county agronomy committee for the year, rather than separate committees for pasture, corn, etc. A county agronomy committee, made up of from five to seven members from each district, was elected from the floor at this time. Later meetings of the committee

were held to check on progress and make more detailed plans.

Vegetable and small fruits committeemen were named and a county home food production program planned at a county school for gardeners and small fruit growers at Manassas on January 21.

General dairy plans for 1955 were made at a meeting of the directors of the two Dairy Herd Improvement Associations, who serve as the county dairy committee, in December. Three other meetings of this committee were held during the year. A county livestock committee of four men has helped in setting up and carrying out general livestock improvement and marketing plans. A county chairman with three additional men, elected by the members of the Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers' Association, which is responsible for marketing practically all of the milk produced in the county, together with the regularly elected Association Director, made up an able marketing committee to represent the interests of local producers.

Four adult men leaders, with a few older club members, have helped in setting up 4-H club plans and in carrying out the club program during the year.

Twenty-eight Veterans' Farm Club members make up the county agricultural fair committee, which is not only responsible for holding the annual fair, but cooperates with different extension activities.

Three Buritan, two Kiwanis, and one Lions club have adopted and carried out various agricultural projects, including encouraging better farm and business relationships, sending of 4-H members to short courses and the sponsoring of a 4-H beef cattle project.

Objectives Set Up and Activities Carried Out by Leaders,  
Committeemen and Farmers, include the following:

Pasture and Forage Improvement

1. Hold regular meetings of agronomy committee to check on pasture and forage improvement program and to make further detailed plans for the year.
2. Place special emphasis on the 12-months' feed program.
3. Offer all farmers an opportunity to participate in the county pasture program.
4. Conduct county tour of work at the Middleburg Pasture Research Station and get out attendance for other meetings. Hold seeding and fertilizing demonstrations and district and county tours.
5. Work up material for a special newspaper supplement and furnish local weekly with current stories and news pertaining to the program.
6. Conduct district and county pasture improvement contests. Award trophies to county winners.
7. Invite representatives of county civic clubs, farm bureau, county chamber of commerce and farm supply agencies to serve as associate members of the county committee.
8. Hold county agronomy school with special emphasis on the 12-months' feed program.
9. Arrange for 12-months' feed program booth at county fair.
10. Work closely with farmers signing up for permanent vegetative practices in the ASC program. Encourage farmers to sign up for these practices.

Three meetings of the committee were held following the general planning meeting to make more detailed plans for meetings and other activities. Committee members were contacted frequently by the agent, and the new county chairman, who capably took over where the retiring chairman, who had served for the past five years, had left off.

Added interest was worked up in the 12-months' feed plan by Dr. R. E. Elaser's discussion at the county agronomy school in early February. All available literature was distributed to all farmers and many had an opportunity to obtain more information on its advantages by attending the winter pasture schools, and joining in on the county tour to the Middleburg Research Station in the early summer. A 12-months' feed plan exhibit, prepared with the help of John F. Shoulders, Extension Pasture Specialist, attracted a great deal of attention at the county fair from August 15 to 20. Work on this project has been purely informational but it is hoped that one or more farmers have, or will have, their operations sufficiently under way to serve as a local demonstration in 1956. Under normal conditions in Prince William County, more than half of the growth from grass and legume mixtures is produced during the first third of the growing season. Under the 12-months' plan, seedings are planned to more evenly distribute the growth throughout the season; surplus early growth is harvested and stored for later use, and the aftermath growth is used for hay, silage or grazing as needed. It is realized that pasturage is cheaper than any other source of feed, but that pastures alone do not furnish a year-around dependable feed supply.

Thirty-two (32) farmers joined in on a county tour to the Middleburg Pasture Research Station on May 4. Early summer comparisons of the different pasture mixtures were made and, in addition, results from the mixtures over the past few years were presented. At this time, those on the tour were able to see the 12-months' feed plan seeding layout developed at the station at first hand. Delegations of dairymen and general

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Livestock farmers attended the pasture schools at Middleburg on February 16 and 17.

Material was prepared and assembled for the Fifth Annual Pasture issue of the local weekly newspaper in May. Local, as well as articles prepared by members of the V. P. I. staff, were used, along with illustrations of local interest. Informational articles by V.P.I. and other agronomists, as well as local stories, appeared in the local newspaper frequently during the year.

Representatives to serve as associate members of the county pasture committee were named by the Ruritan clubs of Heikesville, Manassas, and Gainesville, the Manassas Kiwanis Club, the County Chamber of Commerce, the County Farm Bureau, and two of the leading farm supply agencies. All of the feed and fertilizer dealers cooperated by attending meetings, stocking up on approved seeds and fertilizers, and passing on the committee recommendations to their customers. Literature pertaining to pasture seeding, fertilizing and management was placed with the dealers for their information and for distribution. All cooperated by stocking only certified ladino clover and domestic orchard grass seed; keeping sweet Sudan grass seed on hand; and in handling approved alfalfa seed varieties. Nineteen men, evenly distributed through the county, made up the regular committee with the agent, local soil conservationist, the county A.S.C. office manager, and the two agricultural instructors in the county, acting in an advisory capacity. The regular committee-men, elected from the floor at the January planning meeting, were for the most part active in carrying out their responsibilities during the year.

Participation in the pasture program was larger than in 1954, when 158 cooperators were enrolled in the county pasture club. There was no formal pasture enrollment in 1955 but it is estimated that, at least, 275 farmers established new or renovated old stands and carried through better seeding, fertilizing and management practices. The committeemen, through personal contacts, called attention to ASC A-2 and B-1 practices and the benefits available from carrying out these permanent vegetative cover practices by establishing new or renovating old stands; using lime in such amounts as a need was shown for by test; applying, at least 800 pounds of fertilizer of approved analysis; making proper preparation for seeding and using an approved grass-legume mixture when seeding or reseeding. Circular letters were mailed all farmers during the initial sign-up period for the 1955 ASC program, and again during the late summer, calling attention to the opportunity to receive financial assistance with these practices. Soil sample boxes and field record sheets were enclosed for use in submitting soil samples with applications for these benefits. As a result, 227 farmers made application and were approved for the A-2 and B-1 practices under the 1955 program. Approval was given by the county committee for a total of approximately 2,500 acres. Some of the applicants did not complete the practices but many established, or renovated, considerably larger acreages than those for which their applications were approved.

Informational pasture literature supplied to all farmers of the county during 1955 included:

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The County Pasture Handbook  
Managed Grazing Pays  
Ladino Clover Pasture  
Good Feed, Low Cost  
The Grassland Livestock Handbook  
For Top Pastures, Top Dress  
Grow More Feed With A Forage Plan  
Winter Cover Crops  
Here's How To Seed That Pasture  
Sweet Sudan Grass for Summer Pasture  
Good Pasture, Your Cheapest Feed  
A Forage Crop Plan (Reprint from R.E. Blaser article in Plant  
Food Journal.)

Pastures were not judged and as a result county winners were not named to receive trophies. The practicability of judging pastures and naming district and county winners had been questioned from time to time and it was decided during the summer to dispense with this in 1955.

More Corn Per Acre Project

1. Continue County Corn Club organization.
2. Hold meetings and distribute bulletins and mimeographed material giving recommended practices for increasing corn yields.
3. Continue with county corn production contest and make official yield estimates to all farmers upon application.
4. Make a tour of county farms having outstanding corn crops during the late summer.
5. Arrange for giving recognition to and awarding 100-Bushel Corn Club certificates to qualifying farmers.

Corn yields up to 155 bushels per acre in 1954, with the attendant publicity, caused many farmers of the county to strive to better this record and to, at least, qualify for the 100-Bushel Corn Club. The growing of more corn per acre was emphasized by W. W. Lewis, V. P. I. Extension Agronomist, at the County Agronomy School in January. Mimeographed

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letters, newspaper articles and bulletins were made use of as a means of trying to get over information as to how to increase yields. The county corn committeemen, chosen for their interest in corn, and for their past success in making high yields, were equally as enthusiastic about building up corn yields in the county, as the pasture committeemen were in trying to bring about pasture improvement. Personal assistance was given by the agent to some forty farmers in planning for the planting, fertilizing and cultivating of their crops.

The result of these activities was the poorest corn crop since the big drought of 1930. There were some fair crops but, for the most part, the crop turned out to be mainly rubbins or ears that were poorly filled. Several conditions accounted for the abnormally low yields. There was a short early dry period that held back growth to some extent. At the shooting stage for most crops, there was another short dry period, accompanied by extremely hot weather, that hindered pollination, and a hurricane later blew over and uprooted many crops before they had matured. In general there was little difference in the crops regardless of what hybrids were used; when plantings were made; and how the corn was fertilized or managed.

#### General Agronomy

1. Supply all farmers with instructions for taking soil samples and filling in soil data sheets. Make soil sample boxes available and emphasize importance of submitting samples for testing early. Follow through with fertilizing and liming recommendations.
2. Cooperate with work of Soil Conservation District.
3. Give widespread publicity to Experiment Station varietal and fertilization results and recommendations.

4. Look into possibility of having another Land Appreciation School.
5. Hold further meetings for coordinating the different agronomy projects to help farmers produce necessary feed to take care of their needs for the entire year.

All farmers were mailed soil sample boxes and the field record sheets giving clear directions for taking samples. When writing farmers encouraging them to take advantage of the cost-sharing benefits for certain practices - particularly for pasture establishment and the improvement of old pastures - sample boxes and field record sheets were enclosed for submitting samples as was required under the ASC program. Liming and fertilizing recommendations were made, after receiving results of tests on approximately 300 soil samples forwarded to the Extension Agronomy Office. It is felt that farmers obtained their tests earlier because of being reminded of the need in advance, and by their having their soil sample boxes and field record sheets on hand.

Cooperation has been given with the work of the Soil Conservation District by participating in the Supervisors' Conferences and other district meetings, by encouraging farmers to apply to the local conservationist for farm mapping and conservation plans and, particularly, in recommending that farm ponds be placed where they would be of the most help in making better use of pastures. The construction of new ponds had a place in the pasture program, along with pasture seeding, fertilization, and management. About sixty ponds were built in 1955, ranging in size from a quarter of an acre to ten acres, and there are now more than 300 ponds used for watering livestock in the county.

Reports of Experiment Station varietal results applying to the

county and 1955 fertilizer recommendations were mailed to all farmers of the county.

While it would have been very desirable and would probably have been well attended, the opportunity for having another Land Appreciation School was not taken advantage of in 1955.

All phases of agronomy were discussed at a County Agronomy School, attended by approximately 150 farmers, at Manassas on February 18. The program included discussions of "Establishing New Pastures and Renovating Old Pastures" by John F. Shoulders, V. P. I. Pasture Specialist, and "A 12-Months' Feed Program" by Dr. Roy E. Elaser, In Charge of Pasture and Forage Research, Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station. Recognition was given the 1954 Prince William County Corn King and 100-Bushel Corn Club members by Wm. F. Hale, Chairman of the County Agronomy Committee. Mr. G. H. Clark, District Extension Agent, presented the county pasture award. "More Bushels Per Acre Corn Production Methods" were recommended and "1955 Crop Variety Recommendations" were made by W. W. Lewis, V. P. I. Extension Agronomist. "Recommended Fertilizer Analyses, Placement and Time of Application" was discussed by Dr. H. L. Dunton, Head, V. P. I. Agronomy Department.

The Agronomy School at Culpeper on December 3 was attended by five professional agricultural workers from the county, including the agent, assistant agent, soil conservationist, and the two conservation aides.

Another Extension Agronomy School at Culpeper on November 18, 1955, was attended by the agent and assistant agent.

A county agronomy program for 1956, and through 1960, was adopted at a meeting of the County Agronomy Committee at Manassas on November 16, 1955. A build up of the present alfalfa acreage of 1,500 to 2,200 acres in 1956, and to 5,000 acres by 1960, was set up as an objective. It was planned at the same time to try to increase the present average yield of 2.0 tons per acre to 2.5 tons in 1956, and to 4.0 tons by 1960. Other objectives were to continue with the present pasture program and with the corn project but not to work for any increase in the corn acreage. Fourteen of the 20 county agronomy committeemen were present and participated in the planning. Mr. W. W. Lewis, Extension Agronomist, was present.

The attention of all farmers, through a circular letter, has been called to the liberal 1956 ASC program allowance for establishing additional alfalfa-light orchard grass stands. Soil sample boxes, with field record sheets and directions for taking samples, along with appropriate literature on the growing of the crop, were also included. Reports from the County ASC office manager indicate that the increased acreage objective may be met by farmers signing up for the A-3 practice alone by the end of the initial sign-up period on December 9, 1955.

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DAIRY IMPROVEMENT

Plans made by the committee in an effort to bring about greater production per cow and more efficient production included:

1. Work for increased membership in the local Dairy Herd Improvement Association groups.
2. Have committeemen and extension workers give closer supervision to the work and records of Dairy Herd Improvement Association Supervisors.
3. Stress the importance for Dairy Herd Improvement Association members to check more closely on and make better use of their records by culling lower producers and feeding according to production.
4. Bring about still wider use of the artificial insemination service available.
5. Hold annual Dairy School and special informational meetings from time to time during the year.
6. Continue cooperation with the disease control program.
7. Cooperate with marketing and distributing agencies.
8. Bring about larger participation in dairy shows and fairs.
9. Place more emphasis on h-H dairy project work.

The DHIA work in group 2 was carried through without interruption but the resignation of the supervisor in group 1, on the expiration of his contract on October 1, has made it necessary to arrange for substitute testers to fill in until such time as a regular man for that group can be employed. Although substitute testers can usually be obtained after considerable effort, a vacancy of this kind never works out to the best interests of the work. Although only one additional member was enrolled during the year, three applicants for the service are now on the waiting list to be taken on when a new regular supervisor can

be arranged for. Only thirty-six (36) of the 131 whole milk shippers have their herds on test and there is a wide field for extending the service. In the past there has always been a build-up in membership when a good supervisor stayed on the job for as long as two or three years and then it has dropped with the use of temporary or unsatisfactory regular supervisors. The solution to working up to a third testing group, in addition to the two now in operation, will rest on being able to obtain and hold longer-tenure satisfactory supervisors in the future.

The herd records have been checked by both the agents and committeemen on several of the farms and others have brought in their books to two meetings during the year. With only three or four exceptions, the supervisors report that the records are having good use made of them on the farms. Copies of the monthly herd summaries and barn sheets are checked and kept on file at the agent's office. Monthly reports of the high herds and top producing herds are published in the local newspaper. It is evident that these reports are followed and read by the number of inquiries that come in when they do not appear in the paper on time.

Emphasis has been placed on higher per-cow production rather than on increasing cow numbers. Reports on the D.M.A. averages and of the yields of non-member herds for 1955 are not available, but an increase of approximately one million pounds of milk over 1949 (from approximately the same number of cows) is shown by the last census on farms shipping whole milk to market.

The services of the American Breeders' Service and Curtis Candy Farms are available in the county and three breeding technicians are

employed. The number of cows artificially bred was built up to approximately 3,000 during the year. Copies of the records of the service bulls have been obtained and forwarded to dairymen and representatives of the two breeding services have been invited and given an opportunity to participate in all dairy meetings held in the county. A formal artificial breeding association has never been set up in the county due to the fact that the dairy committee and other leading dairymen, after considering possible advantages and disadvantages of such an organization and checking on the organizations in adjoining counties, have felt that the present competitive plan is working out very satisfactorily.

Full cooperation has been given to the Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers' Association which is responsible for marketing practically all the fluid milk sold in the county. There is a marketing committee, made up of a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, and three additional members who are largely responsible for the calling of membership meetings, checking on membership sentiment on the adding of new marketing facilities, arranging for adjustments and settlement of complaints, arranging for fieldmen's services, etc. Two membership meetings were held to discuss the desirability of the recently acquired surplus by-product plant at Laurel, Md. Approximately 80 shippers attended the annual banquet and meeting held in Washington, D.C. on February 7. The annual meeting and banquet of the local members was held at the Hokesville Fire Hall on October 21. The agents worked with the fieldmen in planning the barn locations and equipment for two new shippers during the year.

Seventy-five dairymen and h-H dairy club members, representing all dairy breeds in the county, attended a Twilight Dairy Meeting at the farm of L. R. Cowne at Hokesville on May 25. Showing and fitting, de-horning and judging demonstrations by Wm. N. Patterson, Associate Extension Dairyman, and Thos. D. Bently, Fieldman, Holstein-Friesian Club of America, made up the program. A judging contest was also held in connection with the twilight meeting.

Upon invitation of the officers of the Virginia Jersey Cattle Club, a demonstration was given by the county h-H dairy cattle judging team showing correlation between dairy type and production at the State Summer Field Day at the farm of W. M. Johnson at Manassas on July 15. Mr. Patterson acted as moderator. A judging contest was held under the supervision of Prof. Paul M. Reaves of the V. P. I. Dairy Department and William Armstrong of the Virginia Artificial Breeding Service. Speakers included Tom Wiley, Editor of the Jersey Journal, Prof. Reaves and C. L. Hall, Jr., Jersey Cattle Club Fieldman.

Due to D. C. health requirements, educational efforts, and the active cooperation of the three county veterinarians, Prince William is probably one of the leading counties in the dairy cattle Brucellosis control program. However, more participation by beef cattle breeders is needed to protect the dairy cattle on nearby farms.

The dairy committee feels that h-H dairy projects have done more towards bringing about dairy improvement than is generally realized, and has been instrumental in influencing local purebred cattle breeders to donate or make purebred animals available to club members at reasonable prices. h-H dairy activities and results are listed in the h-H section

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of this report.

The county dairy committee has been made up of the officers and directors of the DHIA groups in the past. While this committee arrangement has been satisfactory, it is planned to include dairymen who are not DHIA members in 1956 when making up the committee.

#### LIVESTOCK IMPROVEMENT

The following general livestock improvement plans were made for 1955:

1. Hold County Livestock School and special informational meetings.
2. Continue to arrange for consignments to feeder calf sales.
3. Keep all farmers advised of the better purebred livestock sales in the area.
4. Continue to work closely with purebred swine breeding projects, particularly with those of h-H club members.
5. Work toward the development and improvement of more purebred and commercial beef cow herds in the county.
6. Continue assistance with livestock disease control programs.
7. Work for larger participation in shows and fairs. Give publicity to and work for larger number of entries in the swine carcass contest at the County Fair.

Some of the activities and achievements for the year are:

One hundred and seven (107) farmers attended an all-day County Livestock School at Pitts' Theatre in Manassas on March 9. The program included discussions of "Problems of Livestock Producers and Possible Solutions" by C. C. Mast, Extension Animal Husbandman; "Economic Reasons For an Increase in Sheep Numbers in Prince William County" by George A.

Allen, Extension Sheep Specialist; "The Beef Cattle Marketing Outlook" by K. C. Williamson, Extension Livestock Marketing Specialist, and an illustrated lecture on "Practical Farm Buildings, Equipment and Fences" by G. D. Kite, Extension Agricultural Engineer.

Although much publicity was given to the feeder calf sales, consignments were made by only one farmer. Reasons given were the distance to the nearest sale at which the calves would be accepted, the local demand for feeders and more rigid health requirements for calves consigned to the 1955 fall sales.

Mailing lists of prospective buyers were sent to sales managers and secretaries of most of the purebred livestock sales held in the general area. At the Gilnockie Angus "Sale of the Peers" at Haywood on March 8, a new breeder, who brought home seventeen desirable heifers, was the largest purchaser at the sale. At least eleven local farmers purchased purebred foundation Angus, Hereford, Shorthorn, and Santa Gertrudis breeding cows and heifers at sales or by private treaty from outstanding breeders. Four of the leading Angus herds of the state have been developed in the county. The highest averages for sales in the state have been developed in the county. The highest averages for sales in the state, and probably in the east, were received at two Angus sales in the county in 1955. One new farmer purchased and brought in a small purebred Hereford herd from Pennsylvania that, with good management, can be developed into a good herd. The excellent herds of two deceased Hereford breeders, taken over by heirs, will soon be disposed of. For the most part, these better purebred beef herds have been built up without appreciable help from extension workers. On the

other hand these breeders, through the agents, are helping neighboring farmers to build up their commercial herds with good bulls (usually without registration certificates) and heifers that will do them good at nearly down to market beef prices. One breeder placed forty some excellent purebred heifers and cows, without registration certificates, bred to top bulls to calve in February and March, at, or at less, than market beef prices.

It has been the feeling of the agent and the livestock committee that beef cattle farmers, with farms large enough for herds to justify the periodic buying and keeping of a reasonably good bull, will be better off by keeping a cow herd than by depending on buying and grazing, or feeding steers or heifers. The practical observation has been that these farmers who buy and re-sell usually find it necessary to restock on contract while the cow herd men have their cattle coming along for sale without financial assistance. For the smaller farms, the buying of feeders or stockers has been recommended unless the service of a good beef bull from a nearby farm is available. Use of artificial insemination, through the breeding associations, has not proven to be practical.

The Sears' Revolving Hampshire h-H Pig Project has accomplished much toward improving the quality of hogs raised in the county over the past several years and particularly during 1955. Just about every desirable sow weanling pig, as well as many of the boars, from the 1955 project litters as well as those from the litters of members holding on from previous years, found a ready market at about double the current price for weanling pigs. Choice gilts are passed on each year

by each of the five chain club members and a new bear is bought each year for the group by the Sears' Foundation. h-H club members realized more than \$300.00 in prizes from their swine entries at the Prince William County and nearby fairs in 1955. Five Yorkshire and two

Berkshire h-H members have been about equally as successful in marketing their litters during the past year. Except for one Tasmorth, one Hampshire, and one Yorkshire breeder, adult farmers have not gone in for the marketing of purebred breeding stock.

Over 200 hogs were entered in the 1955 Prince William County Fair for the classes as listed:

Tuesday, August 16, 10:00 A.M., Judging of Market Hogs.  
 Wednesday, August 17, 6:00 P.M., Judging of Swine by Breeds,  
 h-H and adult.  
 Wednesday, August 17, 10:00 A.M., Judging of Hog Carcasses.  
 Thursday, August 18, 6:00 P.M., Judging of h-H Swine Showing  
 and Fitting Classes.  
 Friday, August 19, 7:00 P.M., Parade of Winners (including  
 Swine), featuring the Livestock Champions of the Fair.

The hog carcass contest, as in 1954, was feature of the fair.

Only the five top barrows, weighing between 180 and 230 pounds, as placed by the judges in the market class, were eligible for slaughter. The judge (A. T. Lassiter of Shen-Valley Packing Co., Inc.) graded the carcasses and determined the comparative value to be received from wholesale cuts according to current market price. The cuts of the winning carcasses were exhibited, with a meat hog exhibit borrowed from the USDA Office of Exhibits, in an open front refrigerated case, on Thursday, Friday and Saturday of the fair.

Not through extension influence but because of State and Federal regulations, hog feeders are complying with regulations for the cooking of garbage fed to hogs. Less available garbage, because of it not

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being practical to cook that which was formerly available to holder-  
numbers at the District of Columbia dump, has resulted in a sharp reduc-  
tion in the number of hogs fed and sold in the county. Although the  
market outlook forecasting lower hog prices was forwarded to all hog  
feeders, those still in the business are now marketing heavy hogs at  
from \$8.00 to \$10.00 per c.w.t., less than that were bought at from 90  
to 120 pound weights.

All garbage feeders have been instructed how to vaccinate their hogs  
and help given them in obtaining permits to give the double (serum and  
virus) treatment to their hogs. Other farmers have been given informa-  
tion on the use of the single treatment which seems to be taking care  
of cholera on other farms.

A small livestock committee has been active but it is planned to  
add to this committee and work toward having a stronger general live-  
stock improvement program in 1956.

Practically all of the wool sheared in the county in 1955 was sold  
through the Fauquier pool at Marshall.

We are behind on calfhood vaccination of beef cattle for Brucellosis  
and it is hoped that the new 1956 committee will see fit to make this a  
major project in 1956.

#### 4-H CLUB WORK

The following objectives were set up by local leaders and the  
agents at the beginning of the 1954-55 club year:

1. Organize five additional community clubs.
2. Enroll 300 members for agricultural projects.
3. Work for a higher percentage of project completions.

4. Have 40 boys to attend the Jamestown 4-H Camp.
5. Fill quota allowed at State 4-H Short Course.
6. Train dairy cattle, beef cattle, and egg judging teams.
7. Encourage the County Honor Club and 4-H County Council to accept more responsibility for assisting with club program.
8. Hold a County Summer Rally, a County Achievement Program, and observe National 4-H Week.
9. Work for larger participation in fairs and shows. Plan for 4-H Day at County Fair.

The following is a general summary of the accomplishments in 4-H Club work:

- (a) The number of community clubs was increased from 14 to 23.
- (b) Three hundred and fourteen (314) boys and six (6) girls were enrolled in agricultural projects.
- (c) The percentage of project completions was 71% giving an increase of 90% over the previous year.
- (d) The County 4-H Camp was held at Jamestown August 8 to 10, along with Fairfax and Arlington Counties. The camp was originally scheduled to continue for the entire week but the approach of Hurricane Connie made it necessary to break camp on Wednesday. Thirty-two boys, two adult men leaders, and the Assistant County Agent attended from the county. The camp program included nature study, handicrafts, group recreation, vespers, tribal competition, swimming, and other sports.
- (e) Seven boys and two adult men leaders attended the State 4-H Short Course at Blacksburg from June 27 to July 2.

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- (f) The county dairy judging team placed second in the District Contest and eighth in the State Contest. The county egg-grading team placed fourth in the State Contest.
- (g) The 4-H County Council helped with the 4-H program by assisting in planning for the Achievement Day Program, preparing a float for the Manassas Christmas Parade, holding an officers' training meeting, and general help on county-wide club activities.
- (h) National 4-H Club Week was observed by having special pages in the local newspaper.
- (i) The County Achievement Day Program was held November 1. The program consisted of a panel discussion by members on "What We Have Achieved in 1955," recognition of new Honor Club members; Danforth Awards; and County Awards.
- (j) 4-H club members took an active part in the county fair, August 15 to 22. There were a large number of 4-H entries in all classes at the fair. A great deal of interest was shown in the fitting and showing contests which were held in the beef, dairy, and swine departments. A 4-H Day was held at the fair during which 4-H members were admitted free by wearing 4-H emblems that had been mailed to all members of the past year. Special 4-H contests held during the afternoon of 4-H Day included a sack race, wheelbarrow race, and hog-calling contest.

Two senior and two junior clubs had exhibits showing their

work for the past year and the County Council and Honor Club combined to present an exhibit. The exhibit prepared by the Nokesville Senior Club on electricity was taken to the State Electric Congress and placed in the red ribbon group there. County 4-H members also exhibited at the Fairfax County Fair; Fredericksburg Fair; Northern Virginia, 4-H Dairy Show; and the Atlantic Rural Exposition. Prizes, totaling more than \$1,000.00, were won by local 4-H members in the different events.

Miscellaneous

Other activities for the year included:

Vegetables and Small Fruits

A County Vegetable and Small Fruit School was held at Manassas on January 21, with H. B. Aroian, Associate Extension Horticulturist, and F. H. Scott, Assistant Extension Horticulturist, leading the discussions. The approximately thirty (30) men and women who attended were furnished handbooks dealing with the various phases of vegetable and fruit production, and asked to serve as leaders in carrying back information to their communities and neighborhoods.

Vegetable planting and management guides were supplied to farmers and others on the mailing list. Interest in small fruits in the county is limited but help was given by the agents, or through the extension specialists, to some twenty men and women requesting recommendations on selection of varieties, planting, management, etc. Practically no vegetables are produced commercially but just about every farm family, or rural non-farm family, has a vegetable garden of some sort and assistance with different problems, mainly with insect and disease control, has been given to conservatively 200 home gardeners during the year.

Ornamental Trees and Plants

The demand for help with ornamental problems has gradually increased, but too often the agents have not been able to give satisfactory answers to the questions and problems that have come up. However, the small extension ornamental horticulture and plant pathology and entomology staffs have ably filled in the gaps by identifying diseases and

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insects, and by recommending control measures from specimens of affected plants mailed to them. New publications showing insects and disease symptoms in their natural colors are proving helpful.

#### Agricultural Engineering

③ One hundred and seven (107) farmers heard G. D. Kite, Extension  
④ Agricultural Engineer, discuss, and illustrate with slides, practical farm building and equipment at a meeting in Manassas on March 9. Interest was stimulated by his talk in labor saving buildings, equipment, and general accessory set-ups. Help has been given with the construction of nine trench and bunker silos; with the installation of two pipe line milkers in conventional dairy barns; with plans for an Iowa type automatic chopped hay feeder; with plans for three additional irrigation systems; with the selection on one farm of equipment for removing pasture for feeding in bunkers; with the installation of laying cages for a 4,000 hen flock; and with selecting and obtaining plans for 32 miscellaneous farm buildings. Fencing plans were furnished to approximately 30 farmers. Emphasis on new ponds to make better use of pastures as a part of the county pasture program undoubtedly had much to do with bringing about the construction of ponds by farmers during the year.

#### Emergency

Following a survey of drought conditions in the county and a meeting of the county drought committee on December 2, the county committee met with the state drought committee on December 3 to present an application for drought assistance. The application was approved by the state committee but was later turned down. An appeal was made, after

a follow-up survey, but this was also rejected. Help was given in locating hay that was brought in mainly from midwestern states.

The alfalfa weevil, as far as is known, showed up in the county for the first time in late April. Much injury to alfalfa was caused before it was generally discovered and control measures were not gotten under way until after the county Middleburg pasture and forage tour on May 4, at which time control measures were recommended by members of the V. P. I. agronomy staff. Eleven new field sprayers were immediately purchased and these, along with several already owned, were used in spraying a greater part of the approximately 1,500 acres of alfalfa in the county.

#### Poultry

Approximately twenty poultry flock owners were given help with disease problems. A few years ago several times this number of requests for help with sick flocks would have been received but better sanitary methods, preventitive measures, and the use of better chicks has apparently reduced the prevalence of disease. Growers have become acquainted with the new and more effective drugs and have been encouraged to take sick birds to the regional diagnostic laboratory located in an adjoining county. Lists of approved hatcheries were supplied to flock owners. Although about two-thirds of the some 1,200 birds in the county fair were entered by stringer exhibitors, there was a creditable exhibit by local utility producers.

#### County Fair

The agents have cooperated with the county fair committee by obtaining judges, soliciting exhibits, arranging for educational booths

and helping with the general publicity for the fair. The judging of the various dairy and general livestock classes was distributed more evenly through the week in order that more people would have an opportunity to observe and learn why the better animals rated their top placings. The number and quality of exhibits was ahead of past years and it is felt that the fair, which is headed by the County Veterans Farm Club, is having a marked influence in bringing about the betterment of agriculture in the county.