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PLAN OF WORK  
TAZEWELL COUNTY  
1955

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I. DESCRIPTION OF COUNTY

Tazewell County is located in the southwestern part of the State lying in the Appalachian Valley with its northern boundary adjoining the State of West Virginia. The county is oblong with its greatest length about 33 miles and ranging from 10 to 20 miles in width. The general surface features consist of sharp, elongated ridges, between which lie comparatively narrow and deep valleys. The elevation in the valleys ranges from 1,900 to 3,000 feet and on up to 4,500 on top of the mountain ranges.

This area leans towards a natural bluegrass area with general livestock farming being one of the chief enterprises. Corn, small grain, and forage crops are the chief crops grown in this county. Most of these are produced for wintering and fattening livestock. There are about 150 acres of burley tobacco grown in the western part of the county.

There are 1,712 farms in this county with an average size of 126.6 acres, according to the 1950 census. There are 47,512 people in this county with approximately 5,000 of these people directly connected with farming. Coal mining is one of the big industrial concerns of this county. About one-half of this county is primarily concerned with coal operations. There is some part-time farming done in this area also.

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● Within the past few months there have been people leaving the coal fields looking for employment in some other field.

## II. CHANGES IN THE SITUATION WHICH WILL INFLUENCE PLANS FOR 1955

With the decline of livestock prices during the past two years there has been some squeeze on Tazewell County farmers. Also, some of the dairymen have felt the effects of declining prices as the price of milk has dropped in this area. Last year's crops were good and this helped to relieve some of the pressure on farmers as less feed had to be bought to winter the livestock.

Some of the smaller farm operators have felt the price-squeeze more than the larger ones. Also, the part-time farmers who have been laid off from mining operations have gone back to farming. These individuals are looking for some means of improving their farms and income. All in all, most of the farming operations here in Tazewell County are on a sound basis. The farmers are taking advantage of the A.S.C. program more and more. Also, more and more farmers are going to grassland farming, cutting down on the amount of plowing that has to be done. The A.S.C. forestry practices are helping to get some of the steeper land back into trees to keep it from eroding.

The outlook for 1955 is better than it has been for the past two years, providing Mother Nature helps with some moisture.

- g. Stress need for parasite and disease control in livestock.
- h. Encourage re-seeding of forest lands and badly eroded areas.
- i. Help farmers with small farms to improve their farming methods so as to improve their income and standard of living.

V. MAJOR ACTIVITIES

A. PASTURE PROGRAM

1. Situation

At the meeting of the Agronomy Committee it was the feeling that our efforts should be to improve the pastures of Tazewell County.

This is a natural grass area and grass, in some form, is all the far-

pastures. Demonstrations will be set up for future use.

The Agronomy Committee made the motion that tours in each community should be held to show farmers what the right fertilization and management will do to pastures. The newspapers, radio, and community club programs will be used to get this information to the farmers.

#### 4. Calendar of Work

<u>Month:</u>	<u>Activity:</u>	<u>Assistance Required and Who will Do the Job</u>
January - December	Soil Testing	Farmers
March	Setting Up Tour	Agronomy Committee Associate Agronomist

ing a good sale if the number of calves can be increased.

2. Goals for 1955

- a. Increase the number of calves in the sale and to improve the quality by leaving calves out that do not meet the sale requirements.

3. Method

Feeder calf producers will be encouraged to consign calves to the sale and to encourage their neighbors to do the same.

The sale committee will inspect calves and see if the farmers are getting their calves ready to meet the requirements. If the farmer is not doing this the sale committee will help the farmer.

The results of previous feeder calf sales will be widely publicized.

The sale committee will help the Extension Staff to get farmers to consign calves and get them ready to meet health and sale requirements.

Newspapers, demonstrations, and radio will be used to help the feeder calf producers.

4. Calendar of Work

<u>Month:</u>	<u>Activity:</u>	<u>Assistance Required:</u>
January	Annual Meeting	Local Producers Sale Committee
February	State Meeting	Sale Committee

<u>Month:</u>	<u>Activity:</u>	<u>Assistance Required:</u>
March	Letters to Producers Giving Requirements	Sale Committee Extension Agent
April - May	Castrating and Dehorning Demonstrations	Extension Agent
August-September	Inspection of calves for the Sale	Sale Committee
October	Sale	Sale Committee Assoc. Animal Husbandman

C. ARTIFICIAL BREEDING ASSOCIATION

1. Situation

The Artificial Breeding Association held their annual meeting and felt that the number of cows should be increased as this service is of great benefit to Tazewell County farmers. This past year the technician bred approximately 325 cows, which was a big increase over 1953. The members of the Association realize the importance of this program and want it publicized to other farmers who are not using this service.

2. Goals for 1955

- a. Increase the membership of the local Association so that a larger number of cows can be bred artificially.

3. Method

At meetings throughout the county the farmers will be encouraged to enroll in the Association. At the two fairs held each

fertilizer and consequently are not getting the desired results. Where farmers have been using the recommended rates and grades good results have been obtained. Through the use of educational media and demonstra-

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tions, it was thought that better use could be made of plant food. Farmers have realized the value of soil testing and are doing more and more testing. Through proper education as to the value of using the proper plant food, the productivity of Tazewell County soils can be increased.

2. Goals for 1955

- a. Encourage farmers to buy the correct grades of fertilizer.
- b. Encourage proper application of the amount of lime.
- c. Encourage farmers to take soil samples of their fields.

3. Method

Farmers will be requested to take a soil sample of their fields before any recommendations will be made. After the soil sample has been tested, recommendations will be made on the results of this test, the past history of the field, the soil type, and what will be grown on this field in the future. Other agricultural agencies, along with fertilizer dealers and other interested parties, will encourage farmers to take soil samples and use the proper grades of fertilizer. Demonstrations will be set up in different communities to show the benefits of proper use of fertilizer and lime. The agronomy committee and dealers will help in setting up these demonstrations.

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The Associate Agronomist will be requested to give assistance in setting up part of these demonstrations. After these demonstrations have been set up a tour will be conducted to show the farmers of this county the results.

4. Calendar of Work

<u>Month:</u>	<u>Activity:</u>	<u>Assistance Required:</u>
December-November	Soil Samples	Farmers
April	Pasture Demonstraion	Fertilizer Dealers Lime Spreaders Agronomy Committee Associate Agronomist
July	Pasture Management Clipping	Machinery Dealers

This project is of a long-time nature. As much as possible will be done this year, what is not accomplished will be carried on to the next year.

E. FARM AND HOME DEVELOPMENT

1. Situation

Tazewell County was selected as one of the pilot counties in Southwest Virginia. This county has received one additional worker, an Assistant Home Demonstration Agent. To date, this county has not received an additional worker for the farm side of this program. The present Extension Staff has started to work with families on this program.

is a premium here in this county some of the steeper land has to be cultivated. Farmers will be encouraged and shown the benefits of strip-cropping.

(b) Advise farmers of the recommended varieties and proper analyses of fertilizer of these varieties.

(c) Keep farmers informed of the results of experimental work conducted and emphasize the importance of carrying out the improved practices and recommended practices.

The above activities will be presented to the farmers in the following methods:

1. Timely radio programs and news articles.
2. Field meetings and tours.
3. Circular letters and memoranda.
4. Commercial concerns to mention such practices in their advertising.
5. Farm visits and the use of specialists.

B. LIVESTOCK

1. Beef Cattle and Sheep

(a) Goals - Castration, vaccination, and dehorning demonstrations, Sheep Shearing School, Livestock Marketing Program in Community Clubs, and emphasize the control of diseases and parasites.

(b) Method: Demonstrations will be held in all areas of

the county to show the proper way for livestock to be prepared for marketing and the benefits of this will be emphasized. This will be given special emphasis since an increased number of calves in the Feeder Calf Sale is desired this coming year.

A Sheep Shearing School will be held in April to demonstrate the correct way to shear sheep and prepare wool for the market.

The four Community Clubs of Tazewell County cover the major livestock areas and one of the programs will be on marketing livestock.

Farmers will be encouraged to control and eradicate diseases and parasites in their livestock.

2. Other Livestock Projects to Receive Attention

Hold annual purebred calf sale in October. Hold the annual 4-H Baby Beef Show and Sale at Richards. Enlarge the livestock show at both fairs. Cooperate with the existing agencies and organizations in the Bang's program, pest control, and vaccination for Blackleg and hemorrhagic septicemia. Continue Horse Bot campaign. Encourage the use of better sires. Assist with local shows and sales.

G. HORTICULTURE

Since this is not a horticultural area there is very little assistance or information requested. When requests for assistance and information are received, the County Extension Staff will request aid from

the Horticulture Department when it cannot be answered locally.

Where assistance is requested on ornamental shrubs and lawns, this information will be given locally.

All experimental information and data on horticultural items of interest in this area will be presented to the public by radio and newspaper.

D. 4-H CLUB WORK

(a) Goals:

1. Hold annual 4-H Stock Show and Fair.
2. Increase number of adult leaders.
3. Conduct county-wide "Share the Fun" contest.
4. Increase membership in 4-H Clubs.

(b) Methods:

1. The 4-H Stock Show and Fair is sponsored by the Rich-lands Chamber of Commerce. Special interest and emphasis will be placed on 4-H booths: Each club will be encouraged to have a booth with their achievements represented in it. A prize will be given to the best booth.
2. Interested people will be contacted and encouraged to become adult leaders in those communities where clubs do not have adult leaders. A training meeting will be held to teach the leaders their duties and responsibilities.
3. Two U. S. Royal Tire dealers are sponsoring the "Share

Adequate facilities for handling livestock on farms is lacking or in a bad state of repair.

Farmers in two of the major farming communities are required to do considerable drainage in their cropping fields.

(b) Goals - Assist with a fencing demonstration. Encourage construction of hay sheds, barns, and cattle holding chutes.

(c) Methods - Plans for the construction of adequate facilities for handling livestock and hay storage will be distributed in community club meetings and articles will be published informing farmers that this information is available.

A demonstration of proper fencing will be held on one of the major highways going through the county.

A demonstration with the use of dynamite will

2. Encourage farmers to keep better farm records.
3. Continue participation in the farm and home radio programs.
4. Eliminate personal service work where possible.
5. Visit individual 4-H projects when possible.
6. Work with the A.S.C. Committee in advising farmers as to the best selection of practices and materials used in these practices.
7. Work with the newly organized Tazewell Soil Conservation District in getting their program started in this county.
8. Continue to improve the county fair and 4-H fair and stock show.
9. Encourage re-seeding of harvested timber areas and land that is too steep for grazing or badly eroded.
10. Assist with poultry management and disease problems.

VIII. CALENDAR OF WORK FOR 1955

- January - T.V.A. Planning Meeting  
Feeder Calf Sale Meeting  
Advisory Board Meeting  
Artificial Breeding Association Annual Meeting
- February -- Fertilizer Meeting  
State Feeder Calf Meeting  
Emphasis on Soil Sampling
- March - Ditching Demonstration  
Set up Pasture Tours  
Membership Drive - Artificial Breeding Association  
Emphasis on Soil Sampling  
Farm and Home Development
- April - Castrating and Dehorning Demonstrations  
Sheep Shearing School  
"Share the Fun" Contest

- October - Castrating and Dehorning Demonstrations  
Feeder Calf Sale  
Purebred Calf Sale  
Community Club Contest
- November - County Council Meeting  
Leader Training Meeting  
Bristol Area Improvement Contest  
Annual Reports
- December - Evaluation of Records for T.V.A.  
Special Emphasis on Building Hay Sheds and  
Improving Livestock Handling Facilities