

Statistical Summary
 December 1, 1958 - November 30, 1959
 R. O. Russell

Item	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Totals
I. General													
Days in office	18.5	21	19	12	14.5	18	12	21	19.5	12	16	19	202.5
Days in field	3	2	2	12	9	4	1	4	4	12	8.5	3	64.5
Days leave	0	0.5	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	11.5
Sick leave	0	0	1	0	0.5	1.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.0
Mileage	1050	725	578	2130	2500	1800	450	700	1500	2400	2570	800	16,653
II. Office Activities													
News articles	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	10
Radio programs	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	0	2	16
Feature articles	0	1	0	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	6
"Economic Analyst" articles	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
"Farm Economics" articles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
III. Field Activities													
Talks to groups	2	3	1	5	2	1	4	1	0	7	0	2	28
Conference with agents	0	0	0	5	3	4	2	4	3	2	0	1	24
"Clinics and Short Courses"	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Assistance to Marketing Firms	2	3	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	5	0	0	13

The farm record program must also be subject to evaluation after the program has been in operation for several years. Thus far the program has great potential for pointing up needed adjustments on many farms.

Further work and development is needed to promote cooperative work arrangements between the program of this Department and the Animal Husbandry Department. However, many factors indicate that a great deal of progress has been made in developing cooperative programs.

(10) Southern Region Marketing Conference

The Department held a short course for cooperative managers during September of the past year. A total of 26 managers attended this conference. I participated in this conference by sharing the job of discussion leader on "Economic Integration" with M. C. Conner and M. E. Juillerat.

III. Evaluation

Some progress has been made in all areas of work outlined in the plan of work. However, it is difficult to appraise the success of such a program because the success of any such program depends upon cooperative efforts of many people and many factors. However, favorable comments were received by members of the industry, members of the Animal Husbandry Department, and others with whom I have worked.

The short courses held for county agent groups on various economic subjects have been well received. Agents have followed up such discussions with requests for additional information and for additional programs.

The report issued on the outlook for sheep, lambs, and wool was well received too. County Agents and members of the Animal Husbandry department have requested that such reports continue on a regular basis and be expanded to other species.

The work with special sales, including feeder pig sales and wool pools, will be difficult to appraise until they have been subject to the test of time. However, early reports indicate that at present, these organizations are operating smoothly and performing a needed function.

Program in 1959. To coordinate the program, a specialist was assigned to each district. I was assigned the Southeastern district consisting of 14 counties. A group meeting of all county agents in the district was held to present the program and to outline its objectives. Follow up discussions were held in seven counties to present more detail information to individual agents and to outline the program for prospective participants. Time was also devoted to securing beginning inventories on three farms.

During the year, a total of six participants entered the record program. My duties included checking the beginning inventory, checking monthly mail-in sheets and returning summaries to agents. Additional county visits were necessary in three counties to make additional corrections in inventories and re-explain the procedure.

5. Miscellaneous Activities

Many activities engaged in during the year are difficult to group under any heading. Many were training schools and conferences which should help to strengthen the marketing program over the next few years.

These activities included:

- (1) Animal Husbandry Departmental Conference
- (2) Conference with representatives of Federal Extension Service
- (3) Regional Meetings of Livestock Marketing Personnel
- (4) National Institute of Animal Agriculture
- (5) Institute of Rural Affairs
- (6) National Extension Workers Cooperative Conference
- (7) Annual Extension Conference
- (8) Departmental Exhibit for State Fair
- (9) Communications Training School

ful, and as a result, the facility was not erected.

3. Individual Marketing Firms

(A) Wool Marketing Cooperative

A regional wool marketing cooperative in the State has been assisted in planning a progressive management program designed to reduce costs and improve membership relations. Such a program was designed after careful consideration of all the factors which has contributed to its problems. Recommendations included alternative methods of securing additional capital needed for refinancing to reduce costs, elimination of unprofitable services, reductions in overhead and other such excessive costs, and assistance in developing membership and marketing agreements with county wool pools.

(B) Retail Chain Store

In a co-operative effort with Don Long, Consumer Education Specialist, a program was presented to managers of five retail food stores on meat merchandizing. The program was designed to present a few criteria so these managers could appraise their own operation. The program was well received and will be developed into a clinic or school for managers during the coming year.

4. Farm Record Program

The Department initiated the V. P. I. Electronic Farm Record

In the analysis of needs for, costs of, and alternative methods of organizing firms to provide such functions. A total of five such firms have been assisted in planning their operations, applying for their charters, developing their by-laws, and determining costs and services rendered.

(B) Wool Marketing Pools

Wool marketing in Virginia is a relatively small and a highly seasonal program. Yet, a number of problems arise due to relatively small volume, scattered production. Hence, producer groups have been assisted in organizing firms designed to perform the marketing of such a product. These organizations have been assisted in developing charters, by-laws, and accounting procedures for their operations.

(C) Buying Stations

Producer groups are often agitated by low livestock prices to establish an assembly agency to by-pass existing agencies. Yet, often such tactics may increase the cost of marketing livestock. An analysis must be made as to the need for, capital requirements of, and volume need to make such agencies successful. One such analysis was made during the past year for a three county producer group. The analysis indicated that an attempt to establish a buying station would probably be unsuccessful.

articles on outlook. Regular articles were written for a trade publication with wide circulation in the swine production area of the state to keep producers informed as to developments affecting the Outlook for swine. Articles were also included in Economic Analyst and Farm Economics on the Outlook for livestock.

(D) Livestock Letter

Efforts were made to establish a monthly livestock outlook letter to place emphasis on the need for rational marketing decisions. Problems of an acceptable format and procedures for releasing such information prevented such letters from becoming a reality. However, one such letter was developed and mailed to agents on the Outlook for sheep, lambs, and wool.

2. Special Livestock Marketing Firms

(A) Feeder Pig Sales

Because of the nature of grain production in Virginia compared to many areas of the nation, Virginia producers are at a relative disadvantage in the production of market hogs. However, other factors indicate that Virginia producers may have a relative advantage in the production of feeder pigs. Increased production of a speciality product such as feeder pigs pointed up a need for special types of facilities and procedures for performing the functions of assembly and standardization. Hence, producer groups have asked for assistance

this information has been disseminated to county agents through correspondence and personal contacts. However, this information should be compiled, analyzed, and published.

1. Educational Outlook Material

Efforts to disseminate outlook material have been directed through four channels. These channels are:

(A) Group Meetings

Meetings were held in various counties with various interest groups to present material on the outlook for livestock. Programs were designed to give information as to what was likely to occur as well as why such conditions seemed likely.

(B) Schools

Schools and clinics were held for two entire districts of agents to present educational material on the why and how of outlook to provide agents with the tools necessary for making their own analysis of the situation. These programs also included information on the relative advantage or disadvantages of Virginia in the production of various types of livestock with emphasis placed on supply and demand, elasticity, and the seasonality of marketings and prices.

(C) Mass Media

Mass media, including radio, newspapers, and trade magazines, were relied on to give broad coverage to

system. However, an educational outlook program is needed to provide individual producers and marketing firms with the tools necessary to make rational marketing decisions on the basis of their own analysis of the situation. Such outlook information should include an analysis of factors affecting the entire marketing structure such as vertical integration and interregional competition. All of these things are of immediate and future concern to all segments of the industry.

II. Results and Accomplishments

Areas of emphasis in livestock marketing over the past year have been:

1. Dissemination of educational outlook materials.
2. Assisting special livestock marketing firms.
3. Developing management programs for individual marketing firms.
4. Supervision of District farm record program.
5. Miscellaneous activities.

The year covered by this report has been a year of orientation for me. Hence, a great deal of time has been devoted to developing contacts with firms and individuals who could and would assist in the delineation of problem areas. A great deal of time has been needed to establish working relationships and cooperative programs with specialists in the Animal Husbandry Department. Such a working relationship has been of great value to both programs.

A great deal of office time has been spent in compiling and analyzing data significant to the Virginia Livestock Industry. Much of

been needed, and still is, to inform all segments of the need for cooperative problem solving programs and to obtain cooperation among specialists to approach major problems.

Virginia Livestock producers have enjoyed several years of prosperity due to high livestock prices and low feed grains. However, processors experience difficult problems in the procurement of livestock during periods of scarce livestock production. Virginia continues to remain a deficit livestock producing state. Slaughter capacity in the state is approximately twice that of production. Therefore, packers are concerned with the problem of securing adequate livestock volumes for efficient labor utilization throughout the year. In addition procurement costs on livestock needed to adequately utilize labor forces are extremely high. Programs designed to assist packers with problems of labor utilization and procurement costs are needed.

Producer groups are often agitated to organize special sales organizations. These organizations are designed to perform the function of assembly for special classes of livestock. Hence, programs designed to determine the feasibility of such sales are needed with these special interest groups. In addition consideration must be given to alternative methods of marketing such livestock due to the variations in cost of marketing livestock.

Educational outlook material, material that tells the whys, the hows, the whats, and the whens of outlook, is needed by all segments of the livestock industry. Outlook information regarding short run prices and marketings is available at all levels of the marketing

ANA Project (Project 2525-98)

Annual Report
in
Improving the Efficiency in Livestock Marketing
and
Meat Distribution

R. O. Russell, Jr.
Assistant Agricultural Economist

December 1, 1958 - November 30, 1959

I. Introduction

Livestock marketing program of the Virginia Agricultural Extension Service has been directed toward helping all segments of livestock industry understand the scope and functions of the marketing system. Efforts have been made to inform each segment of the livestock industry of the nature and complexity of the problems facing all other segments in an effort to initiate cooperative problem solving programs.

In the past, most livestock marketing programs, both at the county and state level, have been producer oriented. That is, the programs have been designed to overcome problems at the first handler level of the marketing system. Hence, it is difficult to initiate marketing programs designed to assist marketing firms beyond the first handler level with their problems. The task has been difficult for two reasons. First, county agents and producer groups are skeptical of programs designed to assist marketing firms with problems. Secondly, marketing firms are hesitant to accept assistance since most programs in the past have been producer oriented. Therefore, considerable effort has

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