

# ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT

## COUNTY EXTENSION WORK

### *Virginia Agricultural Extension Service*

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1962

CHARLOTTE

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**County**

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LOCAL LEADERSHIP IN PLANNING AND CARRYING OUT THE EXTENSION PROGRAM

Organizational leaders on both county and club level for farmers, home demonstration and 4-H clubs assumed the responsibility for planning and conducting programs and special activities for the year. Several planning committees have continued to take on responsibilities until it became necessary to form an organization and sometimes even a corporation.

This has happened in the case of the Dairy Herd Improvement Association, the Artificial Breeding Association, the Feeder Pig Marketing Association, and the Rural Areas Development Committee. A local branch of a National Farm Organization was organized as a result of a planning committee deciding that such a local organization was needed.

All of these organizations are playing a very essential part in the agricultural development of Charlotte County. The officers and directing boards are supplying valuable leadership to these organizations. All of these organizations give valuable support to extension programs in the county.

Representatives, both men and women, from each magisterial district compose the Rural Areas Development Committee. These representatives assist in recognizing and analyzing existing problem areas. They work with the technical panel and leaders from various fields in an effort to set up objectives that will enable them to make the best use of existing resources and to overcome existing problems.

Local leaders assisted in disseminating subject matter information in

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the 13 home demonstration clubs that they represent in the areas of clothing, food and nutrition, house furnishings, vegetable gardening and art in daily living. They served as superintendents of the Five County Fair and as 4-H project leaders. They trained 4-H members for district contests and assisted with 4-H camp activities. They assisted with countywide civic activities, planned and conducted a kitchen tour, and assisted with other countywide activities.

Extension specialists conducted training meetings in the areas of program planning, food and nutrition, clothing, house furnishings and horticulture. These leaders in turn presented this information to their clubs as discussions or demonstrations at appropriate times during the year.

Six 4-H leaders received training in use of the sewing machine.

Additional training was given individual 4-H and adult leaders by the agent at various time throughout the year.

Immediately after the election of 4-H officers, a county council meeting was held with the primary purpose of training the newly elected officers in conducting the duties of their offices.

Rural Areas Development

The Rural Areas Development Committee was organized during the year. Prior to the organization of the committee, the Technical Panel compiled and presented considerable background material to key people of the county.

One of the objectives selected by the committee was the development of rural recreation. In view of the potential offered along the line of recreation by the lakes developed in the Roanoke Creek Watershed, a tour of the watershed project in Charlotte County was planned and conducted for committee members to see some of the potentials for developing recreational areas for county people.

Six other objectives were set up, and each was assigned to a sub-committee, which is studying ways and means to solve what the committee termed as the most vital problems in the county.

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PROJECT AREA: Agricultural Production, Management and Natural Resource  
Development

PHASE: Dairy - Increasing Supply of High Quality Forage

Situation

According to the annual D.H.I.A. report, the average cost of feeding each cow for 1961 was \$240.00. Feed makes up approximately 50% of the total cost of production. The margin between cost of production and cash returns from milk is small. Most dairymen feed large amounts of the more expensive feeds, such as grain and alfalfa hay. In many or most cases, corn silage could replace considerable amounts of these more expensive feeds at no loss in production. Assuming fairly good yields, corn silage is usually the cheapest forage on the farm except pasture. If yields of 20 tons per acre can be gotten, corn silage is as inexpensive as pasture.

Objectives

The objectives have been to assist farmers to acquire the following skills:

1. To learn and use the least expensive methods of storing and feeding silage.
2. To understand substitution rates of forage for grain and silage for hay.
3. To know how to compare feed as to cost per 100 lbs. Total Digestible Nutrients.

Progress in Reaching Objectives

The chief changes that have taken place during 1962 in connection with the forage provided for livestock in Charlotte County has been an

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increase in the acreage of alfalfa, a large increase in the amount of silage stored and a change from other sources of silage to corn silage. More practical ways of controlling the alfalfa weevil have served to encourage farmers to grow alfalfa. Some farmers, who very much needed this top hay crop, became discouraged and stopped or reduced alfalfa production because of serious weev and insect problems. Since the use of an insecticide in the fertilizer will provide satisfactory control without additional labor, the acreage of alfalfa has increased.

The recommended production practices in the production of alfalfa have been kept before livestock producers in meetings, through bulletins and circulars and educational radio programs.

Samples of grain sorghum silage and corn silage were taken from silos in the county and were sent to the laboratory at V.F.I. for analysis. These results of these analyses were given wide publicity and several producers changed to the production of corn silage as a result of this information. A field day was held for livestock producers in the county on one of the largest farms in the county to see the forages being produced and the methods being used in handling, storing and feeding these crops. This farm produces forage for 200 dairy cows.

PHASE: Corn - Controlling Weeds Through the Use of Chemicals

Situation

Chemical weed control in corn received major emphasis in the extension program in 1962 because corn is a major crop in Charlotte County. The acreage in 1961 was 9,200, and the average yield about 40 bushels. At this yield there can be very little financial profit in corn production. Corn is a major source of feed, both as silage and grain, for Grade A dairy herds and the larger beef herds in the county.

Because of the spreading manner in which the roots of corn develop, intensive mechanical cultivation damages the roots and thereby reduces yields. Adequate mechanical or chemical weed control must be used or weeds may reduce corn yields 25 to 50%. Chemical weed control has not been widely used in Charlotte County prior to 1962.

Objectives

The objectives have been to assist farmers:

1. To understand the extent of weed damage to corn.
2. To realize extent of root damage from mechanical cultivation.
3. To become familiar with chemicals used for weed control.
4. To acquire skill in using these chemicals.

Progress in Reaching Objectives

Letters were sent to the larger corn producers in the county giving experiment station recommendations on chemical weed control in corn. Newspaper articles and radio programs were used to give research results and opinions of local corn producers, who had used chemicals to control weeds in their corn.

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On one demonstration field of corn, several rows were left without chemical treatment to show to what extent atrazine would control weeds. A demonstration was given on calibrating sprayers.

Dealers and farmers contacted have estimated that the acreage of corn in Charlotte County on which chemical weed control was applied in 1962 has increased 33% over 1961.

Some farms reported an increase in yields as high as 25% on account of the use of chemicals, while moisture conditions were favorable during the early part of the growing season many farmers were of the opinion that the unusual amount of moisture in the early part of the growing season made satisfactory mechanical weed control impossible. Chemical weed control therefore gave better results than would have been the case in a year of normal rainfall during the growing season.

PHASE: Agronomy - Tobacco Fertilization According to Soil Type

Situation

This phase was given major emphasis because tobacco farmers in Charlotte County are using the same rates and analyses of fertilizer on all types of soil. Very little consideration has been given the productive capability of the soil type. Most farmers have several types of soil on the farm that would produce a more economical crop if soil types were used as a guide to fertilization.

Objectives

Objectives were to assist tobacco producers to recognize the basic soil types on their farms and then to fertilize according to the type of soil.

Progress in Reaching Objectives

Two demonstrators were selected, although a goal of from four to six had been set. These demonstrators were selected because of the different types of soils on their farms and as a result of soil tests that had been made on their farms. One of the demonstrators fertilized his tobacco according to recommendations for a light sandy soil. His fertilizer application was split on part of his crop; part being used at planting time and part at the second cultivation. This proved to be very effective on this type of soil because the tobacco grew and ripened more uniformly than where the full application of fertilizer was used at planting time.

A similar demonstration was carried out on another farm, which had a

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plastic soil. This farmer learned that he could produce as good quality tobacco with less fertilizer than he had normally used. Therefore the capability of the plastic soils is much lower than Appling, Cecil or other good tobacco soils.

Samples of the cured leaf were collected from each of these demonstrations for chemical analyses, but results are not yet available. The demonstrators were unable to secure accurate yield data this year, because of the necessary labor required to keep this portion of their crop separate.

Progress on this phase to date is very satisfactory, however it will probably take several years to get the necessary information to prove to farmers the importance of fertilizing according to soil types.

PHASE: 4-H Soil and Water Conservation

Situation

Progress is being made in the county's two watershed projects. The Roanoke Creek project has seven water holding impoundments completed, and 10 others in the planning stage.

The Cub Creek project is in the planning stage.

Two hundred ninety three boys were enrolled in 4-H Club work in 1962 with only six boys enrolled in the Soil and Water Conservation project at the beginning of the year.

Objectives

The objectives were:

1. To stimulate interest among 4-H members in conservation of soils and water.
2. To hold interest of older boys in 4-H project work.
3. To use more adult leaders and professional people in project instruction and planning 4-H program.
4. To emphasize the importance of soils and water in our growing economy.

Progress in Reaching Objectives

At the beginning of the year, two club meetings were devoted to explaining the 4-H soils project and the importance of soils and water to the future of Charlotte County. Assistance from a soil scientist was used in making these presentations. These discussions were presented to the boys of high school clubs. Immediate response was shown by the club members. Enrollment in the soils project increased and interest in soil judging

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contests developed to the extent that elimination methods had to be used to determine who would participate on the county judging team.

Special training meetings were set up for soils project members at which time assistance was given by extension specialists and a Soil Conservation Service Soil Scientist.

Two members of the county team were declared state winners and represented the State at the International Contest held in Oklahoma City last May. One member of the county team was top scorer in the State contest this year and will participate in the International Contest in 1963, as a member of the State team.

These achievements have greatly stimulated the interest in the soils project among the older club members as well as the younger members.

The junior club members are also asking to be permitted to enroll in this project.

Invaluable help was given by extension specialists and Soil Conservation Service Soil Scientists in promoting and carrying out the 4-H Soils project. Adults are also showing considerable interest in this phase of the 4-H project work because of the 4-H members' participation.

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PROJECT AREAS: Extension Home Economics

PHASE: Food and Nutrition

Four of the 11 monthly home demonstration topics dealt with Food and Nutrition. There were 229 4-H club members enrolled in Meal Preparation projects.

The interest of homemakers in new, time saving ideas and the felt need of basic nutritional information resulted in this phase of the program receiving major emphasis.

Objectives were as follows:

1. To improve their skills in preparing nutrition and variety in meals.
2. To apply good management practices to meal planning and food purchases.
3. To properly evaluate fad diets and reducing aids in the light of research and nutritional facts.
4. To provide local leaders with the latest nutritional information.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute Extension Food and Nutrition Specialists conducted two leaders' training meetings. Method demonstrations and discussions were used to reach the 200 members enrolled in home demonstration clubs. Bulletin racks were placed in a local store and in a laundromat in order to provide information to around 100 additional families. There were at least six talks on nutrition and consumer education given over WFLO. The agent and members of the Nutrition Committee attended the Annual Nutrition Forum held in Richmond in March. Approximately 1,000 leaflets and bulletings have been distributed through the channels mentioned above.

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In addition some 20 families with special dietary problems have been assisted with meal planning and preparation.

Nearly 90% of the homemakers available for comment indicate using the information received in meal planning, purchasing and preparation. They feel that they have a better understanding of nutritional facts as a result of these discussions. Around 30% of the members share information with non members. Ninety-five percent of 4-H members met the requirements for completion of this project. Four represented the county in district competition winning a first, two seconds and a third place.

All of the members surveyed feel that they are better informed and as a result will more carefully evaluate information and advertising in relation to fad diets and health foods.

Information on consumer buying of foods in this and previous years has resulted in comparative shopping and planned purchases by at least 75% of members reporting.

PROJECT AREAS: Extension Home Economics

PHASE: House Furnishings

The rural nature of Charlotte County and resulting distance from urban shopping centers makes it difficult for homemakers to keep abreast of the newer trends in house furnishings. Their desire to create attractive homes and to make the best use of existing furnishings resulted in the selection of the four topics chosen for demonstrations during the year. There were also 32 4-H girls enrolled in Room Improvement projects.

Objectives were to:

1. Enable homemakers to choose attractive and appropriate type of window treatment and methods of correcting problem windows.
2. Enable them to select furniture of good construction and pleasing lines that will result in attractive and comfortable furnishings.
3. Enable them to select and use pictures to add charm and interest to their homes.
4. Help them to develop skill in renewing and using old picture frames thereby adding beauty to their homes.

The Extension House Furnishings specialist held two training meetings for leaders for four demonstrations in the 13 clubs. Two educational exhibits were displayed at two fairs covering nine counties. Around 400 leaflets were distributed. Six talks were made over radio station WFLO.

A tour, held in connection with the Farm and Home Electrification Program, included two complete homes as well as four additional kitchens. This afforded homemakers additional opportunity to observe well chosen home furnishings. There were around 100 homemakers making this tour. One

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result demonstration in living room improvement is currently in progress. Requests for additional assistance and observation indicate the interest in this phase of the program. At least 25% of the homemakers contacted have made some change in accordance with the information received.

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PROJECT AREAS: Extension Home Economics

PHASE: Clothing

Clothing received minor emphasis with a demonstration on Labels and Hang Tags and one on Selecting Becoming Hat Styles. One training meeting was held by the Extension Specialist.

An educational exhibit on Hatmaking was displayed at two fairs covering nine counties. Four radio programs relating to clothing selection and care were given over WFLO. There were 188 girls enrolled in clothing projects. The agent conducted a two day workshop on Hatmaking with 10 women taking part. One clothing construction class for young homemakers was conducted with six taking part. These young women all mothers of small children, acquired skills needed in construction and remodeling garments for themselves and their children. Around 20 garments were made or remodeled during the eight weeks course. Four of these women are mothers of 4-H members enrolled in clothing projects. They now feel that they have the ability and the confidence to assist as 4-H leaders.

Six additional 4-H leaders were trained in the Singer Course in "Know Your Sewing Machine". There are now 13 leaders who have had this training. Around 40 4-H Club members have been trained by these leaders. This resulted in an increased number of entries and a higher percentage of winners in fairs covering nine counties in which the girls participated.

PROJECT AREAS: Extension Home Economics

PHASE: Housing

Through radio talks, the local paper and personal contacts, the agent has attempted to acquaint the public with the services in house planning and remodeling available through Extension. Individual assistance has been given on improving lighting, storage and selection of wall and floor finishes.

The extension housing specialist has assisted with remodeling plans for seven homes and additions to three churches.

In cooperation with the Farm and Home Electromation Committee, work was continued on improved kitchen and laundry facilities. Seven homes, two Gold Medallion, both newly built and remodeled, were included in a tour to highlight the year's activities. Around 100 persons registered attendance in spite of a rainy afternoon and conflicting events.

At the conclusion of the Electric project, members of the Wyliesburg 4-H Club assembled 30 lamps during a morning workshop under the direction of extension agents and electric cooperative representatives.

At special interest meetings held in five communities, homemakers made around 100 kitchen space and storage savers. A local carpenter cooperates by cutting these articles from scrap material during his spare time, thereby keeping the cost at a minimum.

### Landscaping

The agent answers frequent requests for assistance in landscaping and home ground improvement. Included are churches and public buildings. Around 12 talks on this subject have been made over Radio Station WFLO. Around 1000 leaflets and bulletins have been distributed through the Garden Club, Home Demonstration Club, and bulletin racks. The associate extension horticulturist conducted a demonstration on pruning shrubbery and held a meeting on Planning for Year Round Color and Enjoyment.

### Family Economics

Through the press, radio and personal contacts, homemakers have been advised of current trends. They have been provided with consumer education material in an effort to assist them in making the wisest use of their resources. This is a continuation of a consumer education program which has been in progress during the past three years. It has covered food purchases, household supplies, clothing and furniture. Families have been informed as to types of sales, interpreting labels, hang tags, and other sources of information concerning the product. Family record books are made available and individual assistance given with family spending. These results are difficult to evaluate, but the agent feels that as a result, homemakers throughout the county are more intelligent and inquisitive consumers.

SUCCESS STORY: Local Leadership

The Phenix fire house is a splendid example of community cooperation.

In June 1960, Phenix got its first fire truck and had to park it on the street. Then the town council and Chamber of Commerce got together with the Home Demonstration Club and things began to hum.

The Home Demonstration Club had already outgrown their homes and was looking for a suitable meeting place.

Land was donated by Mr. R. S. Chamberlayne, a local banker, for the project.

All work except plumbing and heating was done by volunteer labor under the direction of Garnett Harris, a local brick mason and carpenter.

Cost of the 30 x 60 foot structure is set at \$3,000. This was raised by local donations and by chicken fries, and other meals served by the Home Demonstration Club members and firemen. These members have equipped the kitchen with electric range, refrigerator and hot water heater.

Cabinets are now being installed, which will provide storage for dishes to serve 100, their next planned purchase.

Fire equipment consists of two trucks, one a tank, the other a pumper.

The property and equipment has an insured value of \$6,000. Eleven of the 23 members have earned certificates in fire fighting.

The facilities are available for community meetings of all kinds. The Home Demonstration Club meets there, teenage and 4-H members hold dances, the Town Council and Chamber of Commerce meet there and it is a voting precinct at election time.

Land behind the house has been developed into a recreational area which

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in the summer is the scene of some exciting soft ball games.

Community people agree that its greatest value lies in the fact that it has brought the community together and is evidence of what can be accomplished when folks work together.

APPRAISAL OF PAST YEAR

The past year has been marked by an increase of interest in marketing livestock by grade and cooperatively. By using these types of marketing, producers not only usually get better prices for their products but they get an incentive to improve quality that is very effective.

The situation in regard to quality in flue cured tobacco is causing much concern among those who are interested in this crop. With reduced acreages farmers are attempting to get all the poundage possible, and they are not using the most approved practices with which most of them are familiar. This is a very unsatisfactory situation, but it will probably continue to exist until the support price system penalizes those types of tobacco that are undesirable to buyers.

Soil testing is being relied upon more each year as a basis for liming and fertilizing crop, pasture and hay land.

Forage testing, which started in the latter part of the year, is becoming more popular among farmers, especially dairymen.

All types of farmers are looking for labor saving equipment for their farms. This has been especially true among hog and beef cattle producers and dairymen.

The overall 4-H County Program has proven very satisfactory. The elementary school clubs were organized by grades and this has definitely increased enrollment and participation.

Additional projects have been offered club members of high school age and these projects have created considerable interest in the 4-H Program.

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It is hoped that such projects as the Soils, and Soils and Water Conservation will continue to hold the interest of the older boys in high school. These projects are also involving more adult leaders in working with 4-H members.

Adult interest in the 4-H program continues to increase. Leaders have responded willingly to assist with such activities as fair exhibits, food booths and project leadership. There is yet a great need for more trained leaders to work with project groups in each community.

The home demonstration program was carried out successfully as planned for 1962. While there has been on spectacular program or no noticable increase reflected in enrollment there have been nearly enough new members added to off set those lost to employment outside the home. Of especial interest has been the program on house furnishings. This has appealed to the younger age group.

In addition to loss of active members returning to work, it has been difficult to maintain active home economics committees for the same reason. This we feel is one of the least successful phases of the home demonstration program.