

ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT

COUNTY EXTENSION WORK

Virginia Agricultural Extension Service

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Assistant Agent



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CHARLOTTE

County

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COUNTY AGENTS

CHARLOTTE COUNTY, VIRGINIA

LEE W. MORTON, JR., COUNTY AGENT

KERMIT BARBOUR, ASSISTANT COUNTY AGENT

DONALD A. GRAY, ASSISTANT COUNTY AGENT

POSEY E. VIPPERMAN, ASSISTANT COUNTY AGENT

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III. COUNTY ORGANIZATION

A. Board of Agriculture

The Board of Agriculture serves to make plans and lay down policies to be applied and used in developing agricultural programs in the county.

Chairmen of commodity groups and other leaders in the county are included on the board.

Extension agents consult with board in regard to plans and programs, and report on progress that has been made.

B. The Charlotte County Agricultural Conservation Association

The Charlotte County Agricultural Conservation Association follows the pattern of organization for such as this in the state. The county agent assists in the selection of soil building and soil maintenance practices that are made available to farmers in the county. He assists in educational phases of the program.

The county agent meets with farmers during certain periods to assist them in the selection of practices that are most suitable to be used on their farms.

C. Professional Agricultural Workers

The professional agricultural workers are organized for the purpose of keeping all workers informed on programs of countywide interest.

Experiment station recommendations are discussed in meetings with professional agricultural workers and an understanding is reached in regard to crop varieties, fertilizers, diseases, insect and weed control.

D. Dairy Herd Improvement Association

Eighteen dairy herd owners in Charlotte County are members of the Dairy Herd Improvement Association. These dairymen have 1021 cows on test.

The eighteen dairymen from Charlotte are grouped with seven dairymen in an adjoining county to form a dairy herd improvement association. The headquarters for this association are at the County Agent's office in Charlotte.

E. Artificial Breeding Association

The Charlotte Artificial Breeding Association is an organization of dairy cattle owners which has as its purpose the improvement of the quality of dairy cattle in Charlotte County by making available better sires. These sires are owned by the Virginia Artificial Breeding Association.

F. Roanoke Creek Watershed Association

The Roanoke Creek Watershed Association was formed in 1955 to promote the planning and development of the Roanoke Creek Watershed. This watershed consists of 139,569 acres of land in Charlotte County. This planning and development is being done under Public Law 366.

G. Beef Cattle Association

The beef cattle producers in Charlotte County are organized for the purpose of solving production and marketing problems. The sale of calves and steers through cooperative sales associations is sponsored by this Beef Cattle Association.

H. 4-H Clubs

An adult advisory committee was organized to set policies, advise the extension agents on needs and work out long time objectives for the 4-H program in the county. This group meets at intervals to review the club program and suggest necessary changes to meet the needs of the overall 4-H program.

The 4-H County Council is composed of the officers of all the seventeen clubs in the county. This group meets twice yearly for the purpose of training new officers, to set goals and to plan the yearly 4-H program. They also meet to review the yearly accomplishments of the clubs of the county.

The 4-H Honor Club is designed to recognize a certain percentage of club members who are eligible and to encourage these members to assist with the county program. They are also used as junior 4-H leaders to assist with county achievement day, camp, and other activities.

Each 4-H Club in the county has its own organization with five or six officers elected yearly. An adult sponsor, (usually a teacher in the school) is selected to assist the club in preparation for

for the meetings and arrange meeting place.

There are adult project leaders for the dairy, forestry, poultry, livestock and home grounds beautification members. They assist the agents in promoting the various projects, work with groups, and assist in putting on shows, fairs, and achievement day.

IV. TYPES OF AGRICULTURE

According to the Census of 1950, there are 14,057 persons in Charlotte County. The number living on farms is 9,988. The chief sources of farm income in the order of importance are: flue cured tobacco, dairying, fire cured tobacco, poultry and beef cattle.

Part time farming is on the increase in the county.

V. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

A. AGRONOMY

1. Extension-T.V.A. Demonstrations

Through 1959 there are six Extension-TVA pilot demonstrators in Charlotte County. These demonstrators try out new crop varieties and practices in cooperation with the experiment stations, in the process of determining the practices and varieties to be recommended to farmers. They are continuing their demonstrations on the use of high analysis fertilizers on crops.

Complete records are kept on these farms. At the end of the year the records are analysed and the records used as a basis for adjustments in the farm business. A farm management plan has been set up on each of these farms. The six Extension-T.V.A. demonstrators in Charlotte County used 110 tons of high analysis T.V.A. fertilizing materials during 1959.

2. Forage Crops

Forage crops are very important in Charlotte County as indicated by the following livestock population in the county: 5200 dairy cattle, 4625 beef cattle, 280 sheep, 4500 hogs.

There are 18,547 acres of permanent pasture on the farms in Charlotte County, 14,100 acres used for hay production, and 1107 acres used to produce silage.

Twelve radio broadcast have been made that had as their purpose helping to solve problems on producing and storing high quality forage. Fifteen newspaper articles have been written on forage problems. Five meetings were held for farmers who had forage production problems. Specialists assisted in these meetings.

Three tours were held in which 105 farmers participated in which the purpose was to point out correct varieties and management practices in alfalfa, and pasture grasses.

County extension agents visited 142 different farms, on which were dairy and beef cattle, to assist farmers on problems connected with producing, storing and feeding high quality forage.

As a result of soil analysis reports, 410 recommendations have been made on the fertilizing and liming of 2600 acres of land in which forage crops were concerned.

Crop variety recommendations were sent to seed dealers and farmers in early spring and again in the fall.

Fertilizer dealers have been sent recommendations as to fertilizer analyses for various crops.

3. Corn Production

Corn is a basic grain feed for livestock. On account of the number of livestock in Charlotte County, corn is a major crop in the county. The number of acres planted for grain in 1959 was 9,700 and for silage 1,400. Corn yields in 1959 were very satisfactory in most of the county.

Lists of recommended corn hybrids were sent to 250 corn producers, announced over the radio and in the county newspaper.

This list was also put into the hands of seed dealers within the county.

Fertilizer and lime recommendations for 85 producers were made as a result of soil analyses.

4. Tobacco

Five types of tobacco were produced in Charlotte County in 1959. Tobacco accounted for 56% of the total county income from agricultural commodities. The five types of tobacco were grown

in the following percentages of the total acreage: flue cured 76.7%; fire cured 22.7%; sun cured, burley and aromatic 0.6%.

The acreage of each type allotted and the acreage harvested was as follows:

Type	Allotted Acreage	Planted Acreage	Number Allotments
Flue cured	3396.04	3377.48	1304
Fire cured	1044.76	997.86	623
Sun cured	10.43	6.33	14
Burley	16.98	16.88	27
Maryland	0.68	0	2
Aromatic	No controls	1.50	2

The 1959 overall yield and quality of tobacco in Charlotte County was lowered due to a prolonged dry period in June and early July and then an extremely hot, dry period in late July and August. A few localized showers made the yield about average in a few sections of the county. Farmers in these areas and the few that used irrigation produced over 2,000 pounds per acre with an estimated value of \$1200. In other sections of the county the yield is expected to be about 1400 pounds per acre with an estimated \$750 per acre. The dark fired tobacco yield averaged about 1400 pounds per acre with an estimated \$525 per acre value

Disease remains the biggest problem tobacco farmers have at the present time in tobacco production. Among the most prevalent diseases in 1959 were blackshank, granville wilt, rootrot, root rot, meadow nematodes, pythium, mosaic, ring spot, bacterial soft rot and chemical damage. Among these, blackshank continues to do the most measurable damage, but it is felt that nematodes cause far more damage.

Light infestations of nematodes were apparent in most fields during the harvest season.

Fythium caused poor stands in the cool, wet planting seasons, but good stands were obtained after the weather warmed.

Bacterial soft rot took about the third largest toll on tobacco this year due to a prolonged cloudy period and in some cases heavy applications of oil.

Farmers using Cokers-187-Hicks on blackshank infested land found

that it does not stand up under hot, dry weather as well as other varieties.

The agent made 5 radio broadcast and two news articles dealing with the diseases affecting tobacco and how to control them. Numerous farm visits were made for the same purpose. The majority of the farms with serious nematode problems fumigated in 1959.

Insects also continue to be a big problem in tobacco production. Among the insects attacking the 1959 crop were wire worms, cut worms, aphids, flea beetles, grass hoppers, stink bugs, bud worms and horn worms. Aphids did extensive damage to some fields in the county this year. It was the first damage of such proportions ever noted. One radio program was devoted to the use and hazards of insecticides.

One countywide meeting was held in cooperation with one of the farm organizations. Mr. E. M. Matthews assisted with the production portion and Mr. Weeks from the Stabilization Corporation spoke on the importance of growing quality tobacco rather than stressing pounds per acre.

Other local flue cured meetings were held with the assistance of Mr. Rodgers from the Chatham Research Station.

One radio program and one news article was made by the agent stressing the need for using good cultural practices and fertilization rules to raise the quality of the tobacco.

One dark fired tobacco meeting was held in the fire cured tobacco section of the county. Mr. G. E. Mathews, Extension Agronomist from V.F.I. and Mr. R. D. Sears, Superintendent of the Southside Experiment Station assisted in discussing new practices in dark fired tobacco production. They also discussed fertilization experiments and variety experiments they had conducted in previous years.

The agent working with tobacco had 12 radio programs and wrote two news articles in which new or improved practices of tobacco production were discussed. Special emphasis was placed on treating plant beds for weed control, plant bed location and preparation, plant bed care, varieties, fertilization, disease control, sucker control, soil analysis, and harvesting practices. The agent also arranged for all interested farmers to visit a large seed company and the Onford Experiment Station to observe methods of combating disease, developing new varieties and

improving cultural practices. Timely letters and bulleting were mailed to each tobacco farmer on two occasions.

The agent assisted in planting breeding line varieties on two farms to get information for the experiment station to use in evaluating them. The agent also assisted in finding a cooperador to grow a new resistant variety under large scale farm conditions to help determine if it should be released as a new variety for 1960.

There was one official variety test for flue cured tobacco and one company evaluation test conducted in the county.

The purpose of the variety test is to determine variety characteristics as a basis for furnishing information to producers on flue cured tobacco varieties.

The agent assisted in setting out observation plots for A. S. B. fieldmen to study in order to identify discount varieties of flue cured tobacco.

One dark fired tobacco variety and one fertilization test was conducted on farms in the county. The variety test is one of the official tests on the basis of which varieties are recommended to growers.

The fertilization test is for the purpose of determining the effects of various amounts of plant food elements on dark fired tobacco.

Aromatic tobacco, which was introduced into Charlotte County for first time in 1958, was grown by two new growers this year. One countywide meeting, two radio programs and numerous visits to interested farmers were used to stimulate interest in this new crop as a means of supplemental income. The tobacco grown this year was also used for demonstration purposes and several farmers have expressed interest in growing the tobacco in 1960. A tour of outstanding growers' farms in Mecklenburg County was conducted to show prospective growers ideal curing units and other equipment needed.

The first aromatic tobacco sale was held in Chase City in mid-September and the final sale in mid-October. The Charlotte County growers were well pleased with the price their tobacco brought.

3. Soil Conservation

1. Rossmore Creek Watershed

The landowners within the Rossmore Creek Watershed in Charlotte County applied to the State Soil Conservation Commission in 1935 for the planning and development of the watershed under Public Law 506, A Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act.

The Rossmore Creek Watershed consists of 139,569 acres and forms almost all of the eastern half of Charlotte County. There are 1015 farms in the watershed with an average size of 116 acres. Approximately 1413 families live in the watershed.

The Rossmore Creek Watershed Development Plan has been given Congressional Approval in Washington, and at the present time blue prints are being made by engineers of the first dams to be constructed as flood retarding structures.

Landowners and residents in the Watershed have been kept informed on the progress and importance of this flood prevention plan. This has been done by means of meetings, newspaper articles, radio broadcasts, letters and personal contact. The county agent has carried most of the responsibility for this educational work.

2. Agricultural Conservation Program

During 1939, 22c farmers in Charlotte County received assistance in the amount of \$40,763.15 in the establishment of soil building and maintaining practices. There are approximately 1900 farms in the county.

The county agent, together with other agricultural workers in the county, selected the soil building and maintaining practices that were offered to farmers in 1939.

The county agent and the assistant agent put on an educational program whose purpose was to enable farmers to make the best use of the agricultural conservation program on their own farms. Many farmers were interviewed as they came into the office during the preliminary sign up period for assistance through the Agricultural Conservation Program.

C. Forestry

Interest in forestry and forest products in the county as a source of income to the landowners is growing. More landowners are using better methods of harvesting, and are planting more trees each year.

Three years ago, four land owners sprayed between four and five hundred acres of undesirable hardwood. This land has been planted to pin seedlings and the stand and growth of the seedlings shows excellent results.

During the 1959 planting season 1,008,100 pine seedlings were planted in the county. These plantings were done by 4-H members, farmers, pulp and paper companies and lumber companies.

Approximately thirty farmers have received A.C.F. assistance in carrying out forestry practices in the county.

The pine sawfly was more widespread in the county during 1959 than in any previous year. Surveys were made by extension agents, along with the county forestry committee to determine the extent of infestation and damage by the sawfly.

No evidence of pines being killed by the sawfly has been seen, but damage and lack of growth is being seen. So far only Virginia and short leaf pine are being attacked, by the sawfly. The young plantings of loblolly pines have escaped the fly.

One member of the Extension Forestry Committee has set up an interesting planting demonstration on a severely eroded area, he used a tractor with a subsoiler to mark off rows to plant the seedlings. These rows were spaced six feet apart and opened to a depth of 18 inches. These rows were marked off on the contour. The pine seedlings were planted in these rows at intervals of six feet, an almost perfect stand of pines resulted with a rapid growth the first season. Other pines were planted in an adjacent area the conventional way. After two years of growth, the pines planted in the area prepared by tractor and sub-soiler are much further advanced in growth than the pines planted by the other method.

Further demonstrations were conducted in the county by the extension forester in methods of killing undesirable hardwood growth.

One 4-H member, along with his dad have successfully cleared an

area of 20 acres of hardwood by the banding method of poisoning. This area has been planted to pine seedlings.

There has been an increase by the landowners in the use of the services of the extension and state forestry services. These services include timber marking, proper harvesting, planting methods, and eradication of undesirable hardwoods.

More farmers are coming to look upon their forests as a source of income to supplement their other cash crops.

B. Livestock

1. Beef Cattle

There are 125 beef cattle producers in Charlotte, and 4625 cattle kept for breeding.

Thirty-six producers sold 682 calves and steers through cooperative feeder sales during 1959. The grading of the calves and steers at these sales and the extra price paid for the higher grade calves is having an important influence on the desire of beef cattle producers to improve their herds.

Two meetings of beef cattle producers were held during the year for the purpose of assisting these producers in solving feeding, management and marketing problems of beef herds.

Annual tests for brucellosis and tuberculosis are being made on all herds from which heifers are sold through feeder calf sales as well as many other herds. Calftooth vaccination to control brucellosis is being made on about 601 out of 1160 of the heifers that remain in the herds until they are eight months old.

The forage situation for beef cattle is very satisfactory this year. Moisture conditions are such that pastures, both supplementary and permanent, should provide grazing well into the winter.

The county agent worked closely with a spring and two fall feeder calf sales and one steer sale. He assisted in planning these sales and was present on the days that calves and steers were delivered to the market, graded and penned.

2. Dairy Cattle

There are 41 grade A and 52 Grade B dairy herds in Charlotte County,

who sell whole milk. Approximately 75 dairy cattle owners sell cream.

The total number of dairy cows in the county is 5,200. Nineteen herds in the county are enrolled in the Dairy Herd Improvement Association. In these 19 herds there are 1171 cows that are on test.

Ninety-five owners of dairy cattle in the county are using the services of the Artificial Breeding Association. These herd owners bred 1160 cows artificially during the past year.

Four meetings for dairymen were held during the past year. One of these was an all day educational meeting. The subjects that were discussed in these meetings were: weed control in forage crops, improving quality of forage, making more use of records, more economical rations, breeding difficulties.

An auction of artificially sired dairy cows and heifers was put on by the Charlotte Artificial Breeding Association for the purpose of advertising to the public the high quality animals that are being produced through artificial breeding, and making a few of these animals available to the public. Forty-three cows and heifers were sold in this auction sale.

E. Poultry

During the past two years poultry production in Charlotte County has undergone great changes. Several commercial organizations have provided markets for eggs, where the size of the production is sufficient to justify collection points. This means that the average size farm flock is being replaced by the commercial laying flock of one to several thousand hens.

There are at present 18 producers in the county with flocks ranging from 1,000 to 3,800 layers. These producers have modern houses with modern equipment. The extension agents have furnished plans for these houses.

The agents have also met with and discussed poultry production with those farmers, who have expressed an interest in this subject.

The farmers, who are now going into commercial egg production, are looking upon this enterprise as a major factor in their farm income.

The county agent is a member of and attends regular meetings of a

district group of professional workers and feed distributing representatives. This group is known as Poultry Development and Education Committee, and its purpose is to keep members up to date on solutions to poultry problems and to initiate activities, including meetings for producers, that will help the poultry industry.

VI. FARM AND HOME MANAGEMENT

The Farm and Home management program is being carried out in every section of the county. More farmers and their families are requesting help in making changes in their farm operations in order to meet the changing needs.

Since there has not been an agent in the county during the year designated to do farm and home management work, this part of the extension program has not been worked as much as was planned. However, assistance has been given to farm families, who have requested help. Work has been continued with families who began the program in past years. Changes in their original plans had to be made due to conditions on the farm, conditions forcing these changes were: labor, cropping conditions, need for additional income.

Approximately twenty new farmers have been given assistance in some phase of farming program. This help included additional livestock, cash crops, home planning, farm buildings, livestock production and marketing and farmstead layouts.

These farm families were encouraged to take advantage of help offered by other agencies, the A. S. C., Soil Conservation Service, and Forestry Service.

Farm maps were furnished to those who requested them. Farm record books were furnished and assistance given the farmer in setting up farm accounts for better records.

Several farmers were given help in the county in planning poultry production units. Plans for poultry houses were furnished. Market outlet information was given, and feeding and management help was given.

VII. 4-H CLUBS

Four-H Clubs are organized in each school in the county on the pattern designated by the State Office. Each senior club has

six elected officers. The junior clubs have five officers. In the junior clubs the secretary and treasurer are combined. The treasurer in the senior clubs handle all the monies for both clubs. The senior clubs are composed of 6th and 7th grade students. Junior clubs have 4th and 5th grade students.

In the consolidated high school there are three 4-H Clubs. The 8th grade forms one club, 9th and 10th grades one club, and the 11th and 12th grades one club. Each club has six elected officers and an adult sponsor.

The 4-H Clubby Council is the governing body for the County Program. This group met in November to receive officer training, to set goals for the year, and to review the previous year's work and accomplishments.

Members in the 17 clubs in Charlotte County for the year was 244 boys. These members were under the supervision of the assistant county agent. A total of 444 projects were carried by these boys with 402 completions.

All 4-H Clubs were met in the month of September for the purpose of discussing the district and county fairs and plan with club members for preparing and exhibiting their projects.

The November meetings were devoted to re-organization and election of club officers, and selecting projects for the coming year.

Each club in the elementary schools selected as a joint project, Home Grounds Beautification. Several specific jobs in this project were agreed upon by each of the clubs, such as: roadside improvement, mail box and post, and lawns. Each member participated in this program and did some phase of the project. With the results that many of the mail boxes and roadside entrances have been improved.

In preparation for the 4-H District Contest that was held in Farmville in April, special training was given members during the winter and early spring. Specialists from V.P.I. were used in conducting training courses for the various contests.

Teams and individual contestants were selected as follows: Dairy, four members; Livestock, four members; Land Appreciation, four members; Egg Grading, two members; Forestry Demonstration, one member; Home Grounds Beautification, one member; Tractor

Operation, one member; Sheep Shearing, one member; Public Speaking, one member.

Results at the District Contests were as follows: Dairy, first, Land Appreciation, second; Egg Grading, third; Public Speaking, third; Tractor Operation, first; Sheep Shearing, first.

Each of the eligible teams and individuals represented the district at the State Short Course at V. F. I. Results there were: Dairy Team, first; Tractor Operation, first; Forestry and Home Grounds Beautification were among the blue award group.

Gerry Watts the state winner in the tractor contest represented the state at the Atlantic Rural in Richmond. In competition with 20 other state winners, he tied for third place.

Edward Hall and Johnny Watts along with two 4-H members from other counties represented the State at the Atlantic Rural in Dairy Judging Contest. The same group represented the State at the National Cattle Congress in Waterloo, Iowa, to compete for national 4-H dairy judging honors. As a team the Virginia team placed eleventh among 33 teams competing. This being the highest rating any Virginia team has scored since the contest began. Edward Hall placed ninth as high individual judge of all breeds.

The County quota for 4-H Camp and State Short Course was filled.

Thirty six 4-H members planted 18,000 pine seedlings during the 1959 season. Records of planting and care were kept by these members.

Four-H County Council booths were entered at the Farmville and Chase City fairs. Fourth place was won at Farmville and first place at Chase City.

Radio programs were devoted to various 4-H programs and members participated in a program during National 4-H Club Week.

Meetings of the County 4-H Council were held. Special training was given the club officers in parliamentary procedure and leadership at these meetings.

Special training classes were held for dairy, livestock, poultry and forestry club members.

Exhibits by 4-H members at the district and county fairs were up

as compared to last year. Quality of exhibits showed a marked improvement over preceeding years.

Approximately two thousand youths and adults attended the County Achievement program in conjunction with the County Fair.

In summarizing, the 4-H program in the county has shown marked progress. Not so much in increased enrollment, but in the quality of work. More older 4-H members are taking a keener interest in club work. Better quality project work is shown by the record made by members in district and state competition. Junior and adult leadership have been major factors in the improvement of project work.