

ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT
HOME DEMONSTRATION WORK
WISE COUNTY
VIRGINIA

REPORT FILES
EXTENSION WORK

1941

Mrs. Julia Bolling

Home Demonstration Agent

September 15, 1941 - November 30, 1941

*Nothing
to
index*

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III. Summary of Individual Activities.

Days in field-----	39½
Days in office-----	25½
Days annual leave-----	1
Days sick leave-----	0
Days leave without pay-----	0
Legal holidays taken-----	1
Number home visits made (adult)-----	104
Number 4-H Club members visited-----	3
Total number different homes visited-----	85
Number of office calls-----	4
Number of telephone calls-----	2
Number of news articles or stories published-----	6
Number of individual letters written-----	87
Number of different circular letters written-----	5
Number of meetings attended-----	53
Number of miles traveled-----	1836
Number of radio talks given-----	0

IV. Current Economic and Social Conditions Affecting the County Program.

Wise County, a county of rolling hills and mountains, adjoins Kentucky on the west, Lee County, Virginia on the southwest, Scott County on the south, Russell County on the southeast, and Dickenson County on the east. The town of Wise is the county seat of Wise County. Wise County is not so large as most of the counties in the southwestern part of Virginia, though it is larger than many counties east of the Blue Ridge. Only one county in Virginia has a larger population than Wise. This is Spottsylvania, where 61,424 people lived in 1930. But of this number, about one third are negroes. Wise County has only a few hundred negroes, and has consequently, the largest white population of any county in the state. The population of Wise County is now some 53,000. It is not probable that our population will grow rapidly in the near future unless new industries are established.

Wise County is shut in on every side by rough mountains. For the railroads to reach the county it was necessary to cross these mountains, or to find a way through them. Fortunately the streams running out of the county have cut three good paths through the mountains. The railroads have used two of these paths. Up until 1910 or later, railroads and their spurs furnished the best and practically the only means of transportation into the county and between the various parts of the county. All the important settlements with the exception of Pound grew up along one or the other of them. Wise County has now 70 miles of hard surfaced roads.

There are now nine incorporated towns in Wise County. About two-fifths of the population of the county live in these towns.

In addition to the towns there are many other communities, or villages. Some of them are "mining camps", such as Stonega and Dorchester. Others have grown up around post offices, stores, or schools, such as Flat Gap and Hurricane. More than forty of these communities can be found in the county.

Wise County has four important natural resources. These are: (1) the coal, deposited in many layers whose edges are exposed on the sides of the hills; (2) the soil, which though not fertile enough for extensive farming, will produce some food and excellent forests; (3) the forests, which may grow and become valuable again. About four-fifths of the county is still covered with some kind of forest growth; and (4) the scenery. High Knob, a state park, the highest point in the county is 4,162 feet above sea level, located

5 miles from Norton. Hundreds of tourists visit High Knob every summer. The rapid succession of hill and valley, the streams now leaping over high cliffs and then flowing lazily through quiet meadows; the bewildering variety of wild plant life, and the invigorating climate all combine to make our region attractive to travellers. Many of them visit us each year, and are glad to spend time and money just to look at our picturesque scenery.

There are many coal mines in Wise County, a list of them would be too long to include here. Wise County coal is of good quality, it forms few clinkers, produces an average amount of heat, and is used for many different purposes. Coke ovens are a familiar sight in many parts of Wise County. Coke is made by heating coal very hot in partly closed furnaces. In Wise County the coke "ovens" are shaped something like a huge bee-hive. A little air gets in through the partly closed door of the oven and the smoke and gas escapes from an opening in the top. Some of the best coke in the nation has been produced at Esserville. The coal industry gives employment to a large number of people.

Wise County land is not suited to farming, as much of it is too hilly and the soil washes away readily. The best farming land in the county is found in Powell's valley. The 1940 Census tells us that 43,000 acres in Wise County were considered farms. But by far the largest part of this was either woodland or wild pasture land. Only a little more than 20,000 acres were used for crops. About 23,000 acres more were considered as pasture land. Some of the crops grown are: corn, potatoes, oats, hay, small amounts of tobacco, wheat, barley and rye. There are a great number of apple orchards in the county. Several farmers do truck farming and peddle their products.

In short, the outlook for farming, while not so promising as in many other areas, is by no means hopeless. It gives part time employment to many men who work in other industries the remainder of the time. This leaves more money for the purchase of materials not produced in the county, and so raises the general "standard of living". Better farming methods and better use of soil may further increase the advantages of the farms we now have.

More people are employed in mining than any other occupation in the county, with farming, wholesale and retail trade, railroads, building industries, and professional work next in succession.

V. Organization.

1. Developments that have taken place in the organization during the year.

a. Adult Work

The Home Agent began work in Wise County, Monday, September 15th. Miss Edith Vaughan, District Home Demonstration Agent was in Wise to assist the Home Agent in getting office space and office equipment. Contacts were made with prominent men and women in the county and information gained on where it would be advisable to organize Home Demonstration Clubs.

From day to day the Home Agent visited women in a particular community. The Home Demonstration program was explained to each woman. This woman gave to the Home Agent the names of other women in the community who would probably be interested in organization of a Home Demonstration Club. These women decided when and where to meet in a group. Each woman visited agreed to invite her neighbors to the meeting. The Home Agent made a record of the place and date for the next visit to that community. The Home Agent went back to the community on the date set, and explained the Home Demonstration program, just how it is carried out and what a Home Demonstration member might expect from such a club. The Home Agent was instructed not to organize as a Home Demonstration Club in a community where there were not as many as eight interested women. In some communities the Agent had to go to group meetings more than twice to get as many as eight interested.

Two Home Demonstration Clubs were organized in September, nine in October and two in November, making a total of thirteen clubs.

b. Youth Work

(1) 4-H Clubs

The Farm Agent had six 4-H clubs in the county; five senior clubs and one junior club. These clubs have been organized for a few years and the girls have been taking such projects as livestock, flowers, poultry and garden vegetable crops. The girls have not been able to take girls projects due to the fact that the county did not have a Home Demonstration Agent. The Farm Agent has been compiling data and records on the past years work in the county during October and November. The Home Agent has gone to the 4-H clubs with the Farm Agent and explained what the 4-H program for 1942 will be for girls.

The Home and Farm Agents have visited in three new

communities and organized clubs in three two-room schools.

(2) Older Youth.

There has not been any work done in Wise County by extension agents in older youth groups. There are many out-of-school youths in the county who could profit from such an organization. Many of the older boys have joined the Army and Navy and CCC camps. Some of the girls have NYA work, but many of them are at home without work, and do not have any educational organization to become a part of. The Home Agent thinks that work with older youth should be done in Wise County, due to the fact that we have such a large population and so many older youths unemployed.

2. Table of Enrollment

a. Adult.

Year	No. Clubs	Membership
1939	0	0
1940	0	0
1941	13	158

b. Youth Work.

(1) 4-H

Year	No. Clubs	Membership
1939	8	227
1940	8	182
1941	6	123

3. Relations between adult and youth program

The Home Agents has explained the 4-H program to each Home Demonstration Club in order that the women may fully understand what 4-H club work purposes to do in 1942 in Wise County. The need for women 4-H leaders was stressed.

The Farm and Home Agents prepared a letter to be taken to the parent along with the child's 4-H enrollment card. This explained the purpose of 4-H club work, and the part that each person (boy, girl, parent, agent) played in the program. The Agents believe this letter will help parents to become more willing to help boys and girls to get the needed supplies and materials for the project.

4. Agent's Relations with other Agencies.

The Home Agent, since beginning work in the county in September, has contacted the Health Department and received information on the health conditions in the county. The Welfare Department also was contacted and gave to the Home Agent information on the number of families on relief rolls; the types of relief given in the county, and the different surplus products given to clients. The Home Agent has had several discussions with the two women Farm Security workers in the county. The number of farm loans and the type of help given to the individual farm loan homemakers was discussed. From the County Superintendent of Schools the Home Agent received data on the total number of school children in the county; the number of one-room schools, two-room schools and other valuable information on the school system of the county.

The Home Agent has attended four Agricultural Defense Board Meetings held in the county. One Agricultural Community Fair was attended in October.

VI. Program Planning.

1. Adult.

We have had very little program planning in the two and one half months work in the county. The Home Agent has asked the women what they would like to do in November and December.

The first County Home Demonstration Committee Meeting will be held December 3, 1941. The District Home Demonstration Agent will attend the meeting and assist the County Home Agent and the presidents of the Home Demonstration Clubs to formulate a program for the county for 1942. At this meeting a major project will be selected. Some of the minor projects may also be selected at this time. The major project will cover five months work (not necessarily 5 consecutive months) and will be on a county wide basis. The program planning will include work to be done on our National Drive: Food for Defense.

2. Youth.

a. 4-H.

The Home Agent has not had a part in the 4-H planning for 1941.

VII. Leadership.

1. Adult.

As our clubs have only been organized for a little over a month there has been nothing done toward leadership training. The president has been considered the leader in each club. The women in Home Demonstration Clubs in Wise County have never been in a Home Demonstration Club before and do not understand much about the program. There are many capable women in the clubs and we hope to have leader training meetings sometimes later in the coming year. The president and sometimes one other person has assisted the Agent in getting together certain needed supplies and materials for demonstrations. They have not been considered a trained leader. The Home Agent plans to give the demonstrations monthly in each club for at least the first six or eight months work in the county. We hope to have leaders trained there after to give a few demonstrations in order that the agent can have more time to organize more clubs in the county.

b. Project.

We have no trained project leaders.

2. 4-H

a. Club Sponsors.

In some of the 4-H clubs there are two leaders, a man and a woman. The man works with the Farm Agent and boys, while the woman works with the Home Agent and the girls. Some clubs have no man leader; other clubs no woman leader. Most of our 4-H adult work is more that of a sponsor than of a trained leader. These teachers who acts as sponsors meet with the club members at each meeting and help the Agent in the work that is being carried on.

b. Project Leaders.

There has never been a County 4-H Council or a project leader training meeting of any kind in Wise County. The Home Agent hopes to organize a 4-H County Council early in December to formulate county plans and set up standards for the clubs to work toward. It has been hard to find leaders who will work regularly with the girls and who are capable of becoming a trained project leader.

VIII. Achievements.

a. Major Project.

Wise County has no major project for 1941. During September and October the Home Agent spent most of the time visiting in homes, explaining the program of Home Demonstration work. The home visits in a community were followed by a group meeting. At this meeting the Home Demonstration Program was explained and the women were given the opportunity to decide whether or not they wanted a Home Demonstration Club in their community. They were also asked to decide on the day of organization of their club. Sometimes the organizing was done on the day of the first meeting and sometimes a later date was set for organizing. Two clubs organized in September, has demonstrations in October on "Points to Keep in Mind When Buying Fall Clothes". In these demonstrations the wool act, fur tax, silk situation, the hosiery and style trends were discussed. Points on buying hats, winter coats, woolen sweaters, and yard materials were discussed.

During October seven more Home Demonstration Clubs were organized. At the organization meeting each club decided what they would like to do in November. Most of the clubs wanted to know "How to Can Meat". One club wanted to know "How to Make Rag Rugs at Home".

Two new clubs have been organized in November making a total of thirteen to date. During November the Agent will give ten demonstrations on meat canning. November is the best time for canning meat as it is usually the month for butchering and this makes the information on canning meat usable immediately. The Agent thinks that women should can meat in order to have fresh meat the year round. Liver has been stressed in every club meeting and a pint demonstration jar has been given to the woman who brought a pound of liver for the jar. The National Program: Food for Defense has been stressed at each club and each club member is urged to study food charts and to try to plan balanced meals for her own family.

b. Special Activities.

(1) Nutrition.

There is a nutrition committee in Wise County, with community committee men and women in each community. This nutrition program began in late May. In many communities that the Agent has visited they have not heard anything about the nutrition program and the conclusion drawn would be that the community chairman has not been very active in the nutrition program. The Agent hopes to contact the community chairman in the communities where she has clubs and help in any way she can in arousing more interest in nutrition. The Agent hopes to work with the county nutrition chairman during the coming year wherever and whenever possible.

2. Youth Work.

a. 4-H Clubs.

(1) Project Work.

The Home Agent does not know how much has been achieved in 4-H project work in the past year. The girls did not of course take girls projects. In one community that the Agent knows very well, there has been keen interest in flowers and flower gardens aroused through 4-H club work. The Farm Agent will make the 4-H record for 1941 in Wise County.

There has never been a County 4-H Camp, a County achievement Day, or any countywide 4-H program. Most clubs have sent one or more representatives to the State Short Course at Blacksburg each July.

IX. Progress made during the year and appraisal of the year's work.

1. Adult.

The Home Agent feels that much progress has been made in the county in the short two and one-half months that the work has been going on. There has been an increase in membership of from one to five each meeting in every club. The clubs will continue to grow because the women in the clubs are really interested in the type of work they receive from a Home Demonstration Club.

Very few members in the Home Demonstration Clubs of 1941 ever knew the Home Agent that worked in Wise County in 1931 and they know very little about what the Home Demonstration program is really designed to do.

2. Youth.

a. 4-H.

The 4-H clubs have made progress in their work. The Home Agent can not state the things they have done, having not worked with them in 1941.

X. Plans and goals for 1942.

1. Adult.

The county plans are far from complete in any way. There will be held December 3, 1941, the first meeting of the county Home Demonstration Committee. To this meeting will come the presidents from all the Home Demonstration Clubs in the county. The District Home Demonstration Agent will attend this meeting and help the Home Agent and committee to formulate plans for the coming year. Committee officers will be elected, committees appointed to work on various things as: (1) plans for a county camp (2) plans for the Institute of Rural Affairs (3) County Achievement Day (4) and County Council. The Home Agent hopes that each club will elect a poultry and garden leader. These leaders will bring to the clubs monthly information on gardening and poultry. Much stress will be placed on nutrition and that every farm family plan to grow and conserve in some way food for an adequate diet. The Home Agent plans to contact every agency in the county that is interested in nutrition and try to work out a plan whereby every family in Wise County will have an opportunity to learn more about nutrition and what an adequate diet means.

2. Youth.

a. 4-H.

The girls in 4-H club work in Wise County in 1942 will do work in clothing. Each girl will be expected to carry through to completion three projects as follows: (1) a personal project (2) a family project (3) and a citizenship project. The Farm and Home Agents will meet each club at a regular monthly meeting. There will be a joint session

for the first few minutes of both boys and girls. Then the Home Agent will work with the group of girls as planned. The Farm Agent will work with the boys.

We hope to have a County 4-H Council, a County Camp, Achievement Day and many more 4-H activities than there has been in Wise County in the past.