work in 4-H. About 12 4-H'ers participated in the "Share the Fun" contest. The winner in the junior division received $5.00 and the winner in the senior division received a scholarship to the State 4-H Short Course and will participate in the state "Share the Fun" contest.

Many of the 4-H boys and girls in the county entered exhibits in the Page Valley Agricultural and Industrial Fair. One of the clubs erected a booth and took second place in the scoring. Some of the older boys and girls help plan the fair. We feel the fair adds a lot to our 4-H program. It helps to show some of the accomplishments a boy or girl can reach through the 4-H program.

We are very proud that Page County had a state achievement winner, Bobby Mims. He is an outstanding boy not only in 4-H, but in all community and religious affairs. The agents feel he has been a big boost to the 4-H program in Page County. We were very happy that he had such an enjoyable trip in Chicago.

Another favorite project in the county is the Sears and Roebuck Foundation sponsored sheep project. Every two years five boys each receive five yearling ewes. They have two years to return enough money to buy another boy five ewes. These boys are encouraged to attend the annual sheep shearing school so they can learn to shear their own flock. Also, many of these boys put their lambs in the Winchester 4-H Fat Lamb Show and Sale.

The pig chain project in Page County consists of crossbred pigs sponsored by the Luray Lions Club. This year, eight boys were enrolled in this project. All the boys have given us a pig to pass on to another 4-H'er. In connection with the pig chain project is the Page-Warren Rappahannock Market Hog Show and Sale. This year, 14 4-H'ers fed out and showed 25 hogs in the annual show.

The county council is very active in this county. Usually two meetings are held each year, more if the need arises. The last county council meeting was devoted to a training school for newly elected club officers. This school has proven to be very rewarding in that the agents have noticed an improvement in the various 4-H club meetings.

The Page County honor club was inactive this year and there is little hope that it can be reactivated in the coming year.

The annual 4-H achievement program was held this year in the Luray High School. Approximately 100 members, parents and leaders attended to see the deserving 4-H'ers receive their awards of recognition for outstanding

Judging teams were trained in livestock, poultry and egg grading. The poultry and egg team entered the district contest, but due to being under age, the boys could not be considered in the final outcome. The livestock team entered the district contest and due to the stiff competition, we did not have any winners.

The tractor maintenance program was conducted this year by holding six meetings at various equipment dealers in the county. Units A,B.and D were taught by two junior leaders and agents. The junior leaders and assistant agent were trained at the district tractor maintenance school in Culpeper. Due to the district tractor contest being held early this year, we were unable to hold a county driver's contest. However, we did have a boy, Eugene Fox, enter the district contest. This being his first contest, he finished eighth in the contest.

Ten boys in Page County fed out and showed 13 baby beeves at the Page-Warren Baby Beef Show and Sale. Shirley Morse, Warren County, showed the grand champion and Jerry Varner, Page County, showed the reserve grand champion. The price for the first place calf was not too great (45¢ per lb.) but the average for the sale was very good, $30.88. Also, we are very proud of the fact that the average profit per calf was $35.75 not including prizes. The boys did a good job in feeding their calves, but they were a little weak in showing the calves. Plans are being made to hold two meetings this year on proper way to show and fit a calf.

V. 4-H CLUB WORK

There are twelve 4-H clubs in Page County for the year of 1959. Nine of these clubs are junior clubs and meet in the school during school hours. We have three senior groups, two which meet in private homes and one which met in the school during school hours until September. At this time, it became necessary to move this club meeting out of the school and to meet after school. Even though the enrollment was decreased to a few members, the agents felt this change was necessary and a step in the right direction.

Fourteen different projects were conducted by the agents this year. For a breakdown on the different projects refer to the FES-21 report.

To encourage more boys and girls to join 4-H clubs and to extend our tenure, we have tried to make our meetings more inviting and interesting. Also, we have stressed the many outside activities 4-H'ers can take advantages of such as our annual 4-H county picnic held at Hawksbill Recreation Park, the district camp in Powell's Fort Valley, 4-H Short Course, etc. The senior clubs usually have two socials each year which attract new members and hold the interest of the old members.

This past summer was spent mainly by the agents in visiting the 4-H club members. Practically every member was visited at least once this summer. This practice has paid off in our club meetings this fall.

Results

There has been a sizable increase in the number of commercial laying flocks during the year. It is estimated that some 6 or 7 farmers have started commercial laying flocks with 1000 or more birds each. These farmers have put in about 20,000 pullets during the year. Most of the well managed, larger flocks are producing 20 dozen eggs or more per bird annually.

Information on poultry production has been provided to growers through various circulars and leaflets, circular letters and farm and home visits. Agent has worked closely with feed suppliers in helping them to pass information along to individual farmers.

Although the price of eggs has been low, farmers who are following good feeding and management practices are finding this project to be profitable. Broiler production has further decreased during the year. Practically all the broilers are grown under some type of incentive contract. Farmers who are following best management practices and have the larger units continue to produce at a profit. The producers who have quit, generally speaking, are the ones with old buildings that are badly in need of repair.

in the number of laying hens kept for production of table eggs. There are now several farmers who have commercial laying flocks of 1000 or more birds.

Major Goals

Increase number of farmers producing flocks of 1000 or more hens for commercial egg production

Raise the production rate of these flocks to 200 eggs per hen

Improve management practices as a means of controlling diseases and lowering production cost

Increase the size of individual units

Methods

Letters prepared by the Extension poultrymen have been sent to poultry producers monthly.

This material has included information on all phases of poultry and egg production. Small farmers have been supplied information as to the possibilities of increasing their farm income by adding commercial laying flocks. Publicity has been given to the various problems of poultry production through radio programs and newspaper articles.

The agent has worked closely with banks and managers of feed stores as a means of getting information to individual growers. These groups have been helpful in distributing material to growers. A special effort has been made to get leaflets giving the latest information on broiler production and also leaflets on egg production in the hands of every grower. Many farm visits have been made in connection with poultry production problems.

D. Swine

Although hogs are not of major importance to Page County agriculture, they are produced on about 800 farms. It is estimated that 400 farms produced pigs or hogs for market. There has been some adjustment in hog numbers during the year because of extremely low prices. The type of hog being produced now is much different from that of a few years ago. Strictly bacon type hogs, that is ones with Landrace, Yorkshire or Tamworth breeding, are now the most popular kind of hogs found on Page County farms.

Information has been provided farmers on various phases of the hog production program through preparing and distributing circular letters, distribution of bulletins and circulars, and farm and office visits.

The production of swine has been one of the most popular 4-H projects. Club members with hog projects are worked with closely to assist them in conducting demonstrations in control of parasites and feeding balanced rations and other management practices.

E. Poultry

Situation

According to the 1954 census report 54% of the gross farm income was from the sale of poultry and poultry products. Since that time, there has been a great deal of adjustment in the kinds and numbers of poultry products.

Turkey production has been reduced more than 75%. Broiler production has been reduced probably 25 to 35%. There has been a sizable increase

Information was given to all interested persons as to the availability of stock ewes and purebred rams.

Assistance was given club members and other interested persons in the proper shearing of flocks and in preparing wool for market.

Results

Twenty 4-H club members completed farm flock projects. These boys had a total of 173 sheep and lambs at the beginning of the year from which they produced 164 lambs. Our records show that they made a profit of $1804.00. All of these boys conducted good demonstrations in control of internal parasites. Club members participated in two 4-H fat lamb shows and sales. They also attended sheep shearing school to receive training in shearing sheep. All club members who are large enough to handle sheep are now shearing their own flocks. Four 4-H club members did some custom shearing.

It is believed that practically all sheep in the county received at least one treatment during the year for internal parasites. Most flocks received three or four treatments.

There has been an increase in the number of ewes this year. From four to five new flocks have been established. Good winter pasture such as small grain is provided for most flocks of sheep during the winter months.

slightly this year. With the present cattle situation as it is and some prospect for some adjustment downward in price level, for cattle, it appears that this will influence more farmers to establish farm flocks. The lack of control of stray dogs continues to be the most important reason why more farmers do not have sheep.

Major Goals

Increase sheep numbers by 10%

Establish flocks on six additional farms

Assist farmers in marketing of wool clip

Work closely with all 4-H members having sheep projects in helping them to demonstrate good management practices in feeding and caring for their flocks

Methods

Information on all phases of sheep production program has been given to farmers and 4-H club members with sheep projects through the year. Letters have been prepared and sent to all producers giving timely information on parasite control, feeding, marketing and management of flocks. Many visits have been made in connection with this, especially to 4-H club members. Special effort is made to see that every club member with a sheep project follows good feeding and management practices.

Information on management of sheep has been supplied to all farmers through discussions at meetings, circular letters and radio programs. The giving of publicity to 4-H sheep projects has been helpful in encouraging other club members and farmers to become interested in flocks of sheep

supply stores are now stocking recommended insecticides for control of lice and flies. The amount of this material being sold indicates there is an increase in the number of cattle being treated.

About 35 farmers were assisted in marketing some 800 head of cattle through feeder calf and yearling sales. The average weight of calves sold through the Fall feeder calf sale was 471 pounds on the steers and 443 pounds on the heifers, an overall average of 464 pounds. During a period of years, there has been a slight increase in the weight of feeder calves marketing through these sales. This indicated that farmers are realizing definite benefits in the selection of fast growing, good type heifer replacements. Most farmers now realize the importance of vaccinating their heifer replacements as a means of controlling bangs disease. It is estimated that about 80% of the heifer replacements in Page County will be vaccinated during 1959. There has been an increase in the number of cattle being fed on pasture for market during late summer and fall months.

C. Sheep

Situation

The latest report available shows there are 2250 sheep on approximately 100 farms. The trend for a period of years has been toward a slight increase both in the number of sheep and in the number of farms producing sheep. It is believed that sheep numbers have increased

Farmers were given information and assistance on marketing their feeder cattle by working with the feeder calf and yearling sales organizations. Some Page County farmers sold their feeder cattle through four different sales during the year. These marketing demonstrations are beneficial to all farmers who have feeder cattle to sell because cattle marketed in this way usually bring premium prices and other farmers having information on the prices received are usually able to sell theirs to a better advantage by having a price level established.

Results

As a result of the demonstrations conducted and information supplied on the advantages of stilbestrol implants, about 25 farmers treated a total of 1000 steers. If advantages of the implants to these 1000 steers was as much as the eight steers in the demonstration that outgained check animals by 40.6 pounds per head, the carrying out of this practice was worth $10,000 to the 25 farmers valuing beef at 25¢ per lb. It is believed that more than one-half of the cattle going in feed lots are now being treated with implants or are being supplied stilbestrol in their protein supplement.

Approximately one-third of the beef cattle in the county were treated for control of internal and external parasites. All local farm

during the year giving them suggestions for care and management of their herds. Three demonstrations were held to show farmers the advantages of and approved method of culling cow herds. Other farmers with some of the larger herds have established plans whereby they select for heifer replacements the fastest growing, best type individual heifer calves. These same individuals are conducting demonstrations in the culling of herds based largely on the quality and size of calf produced. All farmers were supplied information as to the possibilities of improving their herds through the use of better sires.

Information was furnished to all farmers as to the importance of calfhood vaccination as a means of controlling bangs disease. Information on this subject was furnished through newspaper articles, circular letters. Demonstrations were conducted to show the importance of controlling parasites, both internal and external. Wide distribution was made of leaflets showing the proper use of backrubbers as a means of fly control. Information was prepared and supplied to all farmers giving recommendations for controlling internal and external parasites. Throughout the year, farmers producing fat cattle for market was given information as to the need for increasing numbers of slaughter cattle during late summer and fall months. Some farmers are conducting demonstrations by feeding cattle grain on pasture. These have been very helpful and profitable. More farmers are becoming interested in this type of cattle production.

spent on this project. First, information giving the advantages of and results of experimental tests was furnished to all farmers known to have steer cattle through circular letters. Arrangements were made to hold four demonstrations to discuss advantages of using stilbestrol implants and to show farmers how to give the implants. Arrangements were also made with local farm supply stores to make available to farmers the implants and instruments to give them. Information was given on this subject through newspaper articles and through discussions with individuals at meetings and farm and office visits.

A demonstration was set up in May to show advantages of using stilbestrol implants. Fifteen steers were ear-tagged and weighed individually. Eight were given implants. Early in October these cattle were weighed again. It was found that the ones receiving implants had outgained the untreated ones by an average of 40.6 pounds per head. Arrangements were made to hold a meeting of interested farmers to show them the results from this demonstration and to discuss recommendations for use of implants. There has been a great deal of interest in this project this year.

In order to supply farmers with necessary information to ade them in reaching the goal of producing high percentage of calf crop, information was prepared and sent to all beef cattle farmers twice

sold direct to feeders or put in feed lots and fed by original owner. There has been a slight increase in the number of cattle fattened on grain during recent years. The cattle industry also includes feeding grain on pasture. The number of cattle fed in this way seem to be increasing slowly.

Major Goals

That 75% of the steers being grazed in Page County during 1959 be given stilbestrol implant

That farms with beef cow herds raise until weaning age 85 calves for each 100 cows wintered, average of 400 pounds

Vaccinate 80% of heifers being kept for herd replacements

Increase number of cattle being fed on pasture and market during late summer months

Improve marketing facilities by assisting farmers in cooperative marketing of feeder cattle through sponsored sales.

Methods

Information on all phases of beef cattle production and management has been supplied to beef cattle farmers throughout the year by the distribution of circulars and bulletins. Other methods of supplying this information has been through individual contacts such as farm and office visits, preparing circular letters; through discussions at meetings and newspaper articles.

As one of the major goals for the year was to get farmers grazing steers to implant them with stilbestrol pellets, a good deal of time was

herd replacements. Building plans have been supplied to farmers interested in going into milk production. Agent has worked closely with dairymen who have gone into milk production business during the last couple of years to help them make the desirable changes in crop rotation and feed production program to assist the individual farmer in producing more of his needed grain and feed supplies.

B. Beef Cattle

Situation

The latest reports show that as of January, 1958, there were 16,300 head of cattle in Page County. Cattle numbers have increased from 9,000 head in 1940. There has been an increase practically every year. The cattle population is made up of 3500 milk cows; some 4000 steers, yearlings and two-year olds. During the last two or three years a big part of the increase in numbers has been in steer cattle. There has been a very slight increase in the number of beef cows. It is estimated that there is about 80 beef calves raised to weaning age for each 100 cows and heifers bred. Many phases of the beef cattle industry may be found on Page County farms. About one-half of the beef calves raised are sold when weaned through feeder calf sales, weekly auctions and direct sales to other farmers. Some of the cattle that are not sold when weaned are put into feed lots and sold as fat cattle when 12 to 15 months of age. Others are grazed through the summer months when they are yearlings and

The provision of adequate forage crops has been of major importance in conducting dairy Extension program. Information on this subject has been provided to all dairymen several times during the year. Demonstrations were conducted on dairy farms to show advantages of providing adequate 12 month forage program and the need for providing supplemental pastures for summer months.

Results

Reports show that about 60% of the grade A dairy farmers are breeding all their cattle artifically and 25% are breeding a part of their cattle artifically. The quality of dairy cattle has been improved a great deal as a result of dairy farmers using services of Artificial Breeding Association. This, along with culling of low producing cows, has brought about an increase in the average production per cow on commercial farms. All farmers who are testing their herds through DHIA and "Weigh-A-Day-A-Month" average about 9500 pounds of milk per cow. Practically all the A grade dairymen and several of the producers of manufactured milk are producing supplemental pasture crops for both winter and summer pasture. These pasture crops along with better quality hay and silage, has had a great deal to do with the increased production of these herds.

All farmers producing A-grade milk are now testing their herds annually for TB and Brucellosis. All these farmers are selecting their

this area are becoming interested in producing milk for the Washington market because they do not have many of the problems that dairymen within 25 to 50 miles of Washington now have.

A report of a study of all grade A dairy farms made available this year shows that Page County farmers are following reasonably good production, feeding and management practices in comparison with dairy farmers in other areas. This study was made by the State Department of Agriculture and the Extension Service.

Practices that have been recommended and stressed through the Extension program that are now in use on most dairy farms are to provide supplemental pastures for herds, vaccination of heifer replacements for the prevention of bangs disease and the use of Artificial Breeding Association services.

Major Goals

Increase number of dairy cows to 4000 head

Increase number of farmers producing A-grade milk to 30

Increase average production by 500 pounds per cow

Establish system of keeping production records on 2 additional farms

Methods

Dairy farmers have been supplied information on the management and feeding of their herds through farm and office visits, dairy meetings. They have also been supplied information through various bulletins and circulars which have been distributed individually and by mailing revised publications to all dairy farmers.

All requests for such assistance was given by one of the following methods: office visits, telephone calls, home visits and through the furnishing of copies of various publications giving information on these subjects.

IV. LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY

A. Dairying

Situation

The latest records available show there are 3500 dairy cows in Page County. There are 27 farmers producing A-grade milk. These farmers own about 1000 cows. The remaining dairy cattle are kept for cream production, manufactured milk and family milk supply. Although the number of grade A dairies has not changed very much, the trend is toward larger size. Some of the farmers with smaller numbers have quit dairying and other farmers have established dairies with a larger number of cows. Some 40 to 50 farms are producing milk for manufacturing purposes and many others sell cream. The sale of dairy products is an important source of farm income.

It is estimated that the annual production per cow in Page County is now about 5000 pounds. There are individual herds that are producing over 10,000 pounds per cow.

The long time trend is for an increase in dairying. It appears that this is desirable because dairy farmers close to Washington are now dispersing of their herds because of high labor cost. Farmers in

D. Other Crops

(1) Small Grain

Information was supplied to all farmers and to managers of farm supply stores on small grain. This consisted of leaflets and bulletins giving recommendations on varieties, rate of seeding, fertilization of small grain crops. Information was also supplied on insect and disease control of various small grains.

(2) Vegetables

Snap beans, upland cress and tomatoes are grown commercially for canning purposes. Operators of canneries were assisted in holding meetings with a group of growers to supply them information on the production of these crops. Timely information was prepared and furnished growers and cannery operators on the control of diseases and insects.

(3) Home Gardens

Monthly letters were sent to 4-H club members and committeemen furnishing them with information on home gardens. Newspaper articles were prepared monthly during the growing season furnishing the same type of information to the public. Many individual contacts were made through farm visits, office visits, telephone calls, etc. in regard to diseases and insects of home gardens.

(4) Lawns and Shrubs

Many contacts were made in reply to inquiries about control of insects, diseases and other problems in connection with lawns and shrubbery.

Methods

Meet with the agronomy committee early in year and supply them with information and recommendations on the corn production program. Discuss with this committee the needs to increase corn acreage on farms where there is suitable land. Discuss with committee the advisability of growing corn in one year rotations. Information on the corn production program was prepared and sent to all farmers through circular letters. A similar type of information was supplied to managers of all farm supply stores. Demonstrations were set up to show the advantages of growing corn in a one year rotation on bottom lands. Wide publicity was given in regard to the need for heavier applications of commercial fertilizer, growing thicker stands of corn and on weed control program. This information has been helpful by encouraging farmers to adopt these practices.

Results

Although not as good as the 1958 crop, a good crop of corn was produced in most sections of the county in 1959. Most farmers are now fertilizing their corn crop heavier than they did a few years ago. Many farmers are now using a 10-10-10 fertilizer on their corn crop. Managers of farm supply stores are making available recommended varieties of seeds. In general, practically all farmers are now planting their corn thicker. The adoption of these practices are helping farmers to increase their yield per acre.

This year there was a period during the mid-summer when rainfall was short and additional pasture was needed. At this time, a large number of farmers grazed the third crop of alfalfa rather than make hay from it. This enabled them to keep their livestock, especially dairy cows at a high level of production.

C. Corn

Situation

The 1929 census report shows that Page County farmers produced 10,492 acres of corn and harvested 256,000 bushels or about 24½ bushels per acre. In 1958, Page County farmers produced over 300,000 bushels of corn from 5,000 acres or 61 bushels per acre. Page County farmers are now growing about 5,000 acres of corn for grain and silage. It appears that there is a need for a slight increase in acreage of corn provided it is grown on land where erosion will not be a serious problem. This can be accomplished by shortening the rotation systems and by growing corn in one year rotation on suitable land. Corn is now grown as a cash crop and is much more important than wheat and other small grains as a cash crop. There has been a notable increase in the number of farmers producing corn silage during the past few years. Many new silos have been constructed.

Major Goals

Increase acreage 10%.

Maintain or increase average yields.

during the year, all dairymen were written letters enclosing circulars and bulletins giving them information on the year-round forage program. Many farm visits were made to dairymen in connection with this work. Demonstrations were established on ten dairy farms to show the benefits of supplemental pasture, sudan or millet for summer grazing. These demonstrations have been very important as a source of encouraging other farmers to provide supplemental grazing for their dairy herds. Wide publicity was given in regard to the recommendations for grazing of alfalfa. This year, many farmers grazed the third crop of alfalfa rather than harvested it as hay.

Results

Reports from the ACP office show that approximately 55% of the ACP funds were spent to seed and improve permanent pastures. About 2600 acres were improved through the use of ACP funds. However, many other farmers fertilized or limed their pasture in addition to the amount on which they received assistance through the ACP program. About 2/3 of the dairymen are now growing supplemental summer pasture, from 400 to 500 acres, largely sudan grass or millet. Most all dairymen are now providing some winter pasture for their dairy herds. These seedings consist mostly of barley which is planted early. In years when there is good growing conditions in the Fall, these crops provide grazing in late Fall and again in March or early April.

the pasture land in the county. These consist of summer annuals, such as sudan and millet and alfalfa and lespedeza fields that are grazed part of year. The increase in livestock numbers is the primary reason for the need for further development in improvement in pasture. Even with the need for additional pasture, many farmers rent or own pasture outside the county. The last census shows that only 7,000 acres of the permanent pasture is classified as improved. This leaves some 15,000 to 18,000 acres that is not producing possibly any more than one-half of what it is capable of producing.

Major Goals

For farmers to use at least 50% of county ACP allotment for seeding and improving pastures.

To establish pasture demonstrations on at least one-half of the dairy farms using sudan or pearl millet for supplemental summer pasture.

Methods

One of the most important projects conducted during the year has been that of pasture improvement. A great deal of time and effort has been devoted to the importance of the 12 month forage program, supplemental pastures, and improvement of permanent pastures. All farmers have been supplied information on this program through farm visits, office visits, meetings, circular letters, preparation of radio programs and newspaper articles and the distribution of various publications.

All farmers were advised of the availability of funds through the ACP program to help seed and improve pastures. Some two or three times

There has been a notable improvement in the quality of hay produced. This was due partly to the fact that there was better weather conditions for making hay at the time first crop was harvested and also a great increase in the number of hay conditioners being used. Farmers using hay conditioners report that they are able to bale their hay in about one-half the time as was formerly required for curing. A good many farmers, especially dairymen, are now grazing the third and fourth crop rather than harvesting it as hay. This year, the third cutting was short because of shortage of rainfall, and dairymen found that by harvesting as pasture they were able to keep up their milk production. Most farmers now top-dress their old stands of alfalfa with an 0-10-20 borated fertilizer. It is estimated that from one-third to one-half of the acreage of old stands are top-dressed annually.

B. Pasture

Situation

About one-half of the farm land or 50,000 acres is being used for pasture. 24,000 acres of this is classified as permanent pasture which consists largely of native grasses and legumes, mostly bluegrass and white clover. 14,000 acres is classified as cropland pasture. This is land that is grazed a year or two in long rotation systems and consists largely of mixtures of orchard grass, lespedeza. 9,000 acres of woodland is being grazed. Various supplemental pastures make up the remainder of

Arrangements were made for holding demonstrations on controlling alfalfa weevil by applying insecticides in fertilizer and also by spraying. Information on control of insects was supplied to managers of farm supply stores. This group has been helpful in supplying information to the growers. Publicity was prepared for radio and newspapers in regard to the proper management of alfalfa when using for grazing. Demonstrations were conducted on grazing of alfalfa to show advantages of proper management in regard to this practice.

Results

Practically all of the alfalfa is now sprayed for control of weevil. However, there are a few fields where stands are becoming thin this year that were not sprayed. Satisfactory control of the weevil was not given in most of the demonstrations where Heptachlor was used in fertilizer. Possibly the reason for this was the fact that there was uneven distribution of fertilizer and some areas did not get the minimum amounts of insecticide recommended. More than one-half of the fields that were treated in this way had to be sprayed. There has been some 600 to 700 acres planted to alfalfa during the year by from 80 to 100 farmers. ACP reports that they assisted 77 farmers in seeding 590 acres. Practically all farmers seeding alfalfa are now liming and fertilizing this crop according to recommendations made based on a soil test. Most farmers have used results of experiment stations in determining the variety to seed.

Major Goals

Increase alfalfa acreage 10%.

Improve quality of alfalfa hay by control of weeds and insects and by the use of improved harvest methods.

Make multi-purpose use of alfalfa crop by using the first crop for silage and by grazing third and fourth cuttings when needed for pasture.

Methods

Early in the year the agent met with members of the Extension Agronomy Committee. In discussing the agronomy program for the year, a great deal of importance was put on the alfalfa program. Members of the agronomy committee and distributors of farm supplies were furnished with the latest information available on alfalfa production. These included circulars on varieties which gave results of official experiments conducted for several years. Other publications included leaflets on weed and insect control. Publicity was prepared in both Spring and Summer for radio and newspapers giving all farmers information on seeding and management of alfalfa. Timely circular letters were prepared and sent to farmers giving suggestions on control of insects and on fertilization.

A list of all farmers planning on seeding alfalfa was secured from ACP office. Each of these persons were mailed leaflets and circulars giving the latest information on varieties, seeding methods and fertilization. Demonstrations were conducted during the winter months to show advantages of weed control.

III. AGRONOMY

Situation

The census report shows there are 74,000 acres of open land in Page County farms. Crops are harvested from 24,000 acres and 50,000 acres are used for pasture. Crops were harvested from 23% of the farm land. Twenty-two percent is in permanent pasture and 16% in cropland pasture. Approximately 8,000 acres have been removed from crop rotations and converted to permanent pasture within the past 10 to 15 years.

Wheat, which at one time was the most important cash crop, is now grown on about 4,000 acres. Corn is grown on 5000 acres. The acreage of other small grains, oats, barley and rye, is a little over 4,000 acres. Hay crops consist of alfalfa, red clover, lespedeza and orchard grass and clover mixtures. There is a trend toward more pasture and forage crops and less grin crops. Most farmers are striving to make improvements in their land use so as to enable them to grow the grain crops on smoother land less subject to erosion and to remove from the crop rotation steeper land on which it is difficult to operate machinery.

A. Alfalfa

Situation

The 1954 census report shows that 254 farms were growing 2700 acres of alfalfa. However, it is estimated that the acreage has increased since this time by at least 300 acres per year. At present, some 325 farms are producing this hay crop.

I. COUNTY ORGANIZATION

Extension planning is carried on largely through commodity committees. Early in the year, a group of commodity leaders were asked to meet with the agent and extension specialist to discuss and plan for the years work. These committees have been very cooperative and helpful in deciding what phases of program to stress and in carrying information to other individuals.

II. TYPE OF AGRICULTURE

The latest census shows that there were 1185 farms in the county, the average size of which is 86 acres. The number of farms has increased slightly during the past five years and the size has decreased. Most farms are family size and operated entirely with family labor.

The agriculture in Page County is very well deversified. Nearly all farmers have income from several sources. The main crops consist of about 5000 acres of corn; 8000 acres of small grain; 7200 acres of hay; 2000 acres of seed crops—clover, orchard grass, and lespedeza; 600 acres of vegetables, consisting largely of tomatoes and snap beans and upland cress for canning.

Livestock includes 8000 hogs; 16,300 cattle, of which about 3500 are dairy cows; and 2500 sheep.

The major sources of income are from the sale of whole milk, cream, beef cattle (both slaughter and feeder cattle), poultry and poultry products. The sale of eggs, turkeys and broilers represents over 50% of the total gross income from Page County agriculture. Hay, corn, wheat and orchard grass seed are sold by many farmers.

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Virginia Agricultural Extension Service

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Henry Hutton Jr.
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