

ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT
on
EXTENSION WORK CONDUCTED
in
GLOUCESTER COUNTY, VIRGINIA
1938

REPORT FILES
EXTENSION WORK

COUNTY AGENT ANNUAL REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

This report is a complete narrative summary of Extension Work conducted in Gloucester County, Virginia, during the year 1938, containing accounts of the agricultural situation throughout the year and the methods used and achievements made by the Agent in meeting those situations. It reviews and explains the contents of the Statistical Report, and discusses other phases of the Work not included in or covered by that report.

THE AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

Gloucester farmers began the year with an abundance of food for their families and feed for their livestock. 350 of them had participated in the National Agricultural Conservation program the previous year. The operation of this program and the subsequent publicity regarding its principles had helped to make the farmers more soil-building conscious and laid the foundation for sound Extension work. Farm prices have been somewhat lower this year than last and crop yields decidedly lower too, but due to the widely diversified farming system in Gloucester our farmers have been able to come through the year in reasonably good financial circumstances, and have increased their soil improvement work. We have more winter cover crops than usual and most of the 583 farmers participating in the National program have added values stored in their soils for next year's crops.

PROGRAM OF WORK

Following the County Planning discussions conducted during the winter and early spring, the Agent formulated a plan of work based considerably on what the various groups of farmers felt were the most pressing needs of the county, and the things necessary to promote continuous agricultural development. This program has been followed very closely by the Agent with encouraging results.

PLAN OF WORK

The following is the Agent's plan of work for the year 1938:

1. Complete the 1937 Soil Conservation Work. This was done. The 349 farmers participating in the 1937 program received benefit checks netting them \$8123.73. There was also approximately \$1000.00 expense money which came to the county in connection with the program. The Gloucester Agent had charge of the Mathews program, which netted the 18 farmers participating there approximately \$500.00. There was also some additional expense money received for this work.
2. Conduct County Planning Program. This was done with limited success. Nine meetings were held with an average attendance of 16, or a total of 146 persons attended the meetings. The trend of thought of the discussion groups was taken into consideration in developing the program for the county.

3. Conduct 1938 Soil Conservation Program. This has been done with greater success than that of any previous year. 583 farmers signed up in the program and have actively participated in the principles of sound soil-building and conserving work.
4. Organize eight 4-H Clubs. This was done with a total membership of 111. 88% of the boys and girls enrolled conducted and completed projects with varying degrees of success.
5. Continue to improve county 4-H Council. The 4-H Council was reorganized and a program of work for the year developed which has been followed reasonably well.
6. Take Club members to State and District Camps, State Fair and other similar tours. Eight members attended the District Camp and 40 the State Fair. None were able to attend the State Camp. The annual tour planned was abandoned because of bad weather.
7. Cooperate with and improve Gloucester-Mathews Narcissus Growers' Association and enlarge its work. This was done with splendid success. Membership was increased; quality of work improved, and the cooperative effort much enhanced. Approximately \$700.00 was saved the members on purchasing supplies.

8. Increase county's attendance at State Farmers' Institute at V. P. I. Only 2 attended.
9. Organize Gloucester-Mathews Farmers' Cooperative for purchasing fertilizer. This was done with a membership of approximately 60. \$234.00 was saved the members on late spring and summer purchases, and a refund of \$39.75 has just been received as partial refund on fall purchases. Some clover seed was also purchased cooperatively this fall at a saving. We consider the results very gratifying.
10. Organize county Wildlife Association to cooperate with State and Federal organizations. Special effort was made on this project, but we succeeded only in setting up a temporary organization. No outstanding results were achieved.
11. Secure services of V. P. I. specialists for one-day poultry school in spring. H. L. Moore and A. L. Dean, poultry specialists of V. P. I. conducted the school on March 3rd, with an attendance of 30.
12. Secure services of V. P. I. specialists in series of garden and truck meetings in spring. L. C. Beamer and L. B. Dietrick conducted five meetings on March 5th, with an attendance of 56. Mr. Beamer

held 2 meetings March 7th with an attendance of 51, totalling 107. Our garden campaign was a success.

13. Secure service of V. P. I. specialist for forestry work during year. Wilbur O'Byrne cooperated in investigating pine beetle infestation which did some damage here. No extensive program was developed.
14. Make cooperative purchases of lime. Three cars of state lime were purchased through farmers' "pools". One car of this was in cooperation with farmers of Gloucester and Mathews counties.
15. Increase the county use of all State Experiment Stations, Agricultural Agencies and specialists. We feel that this has been done.
16. Begin work on securing State aid for manufacturing marl-lime in county. The State Geologist at Charlottesville checked our marl lime deposits and found them satisfactory. Effort was made to secure a State appropriation for setting up a plant in Gloucester, but we failed in this. However, we expect to renew this move in 1939.

17. Inaugurate an annual flower festival for Gloucester and Mathews counties. This initial move was considered a great success. Approximately 10,000 people visited the flower farms here during the festival. We expect to make the flower festival an annual event in the county.
18. Conduct general Extension program for county covering the usual work in soils, crops, poultry, livestock and other lines. This has been done.
19. Cooperate with 4-H Club Agent and nearby County Agents. This has been done.
20. Continue efforts to secure REA lines in county. REA funds were used by the local power company in constructing approximately 30 miles of lines in Gloucester. We are still trying to get further extensions of the lines.
21. Make special effort to coordinate all agencies affecting county's agriculture and rural life. We have made this special effort with some success and are continuing in this direction.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Some Extension work has been done along the line of every project planned. In many cases the work was limited, but in others it has been outstanding and very satisfactory.

SOILS

Soil improvement has been stressed always by the Agent as the most effective way the individual farmer could meet his economic problems. Cost of production is more closely tied up with soil fertility than any other element of the equation. The Agent has urged farmers to improve their soil with legumes and to plant them in every available spot of ground at all times. He has urged them personally, and through the press, to make, conserve, and use all farm manure possible as a means of soil-building and economic production of crops. He has advised farmers to keep winter cover crops on all their land to prevent leaching out of valuable plant foods; to fertilize liberally with phosphate and potash, using lime whenever they could get it at reasonable costs; and to grow legumes for nitrogen and humus, planting the kinds of legumes which require the least amount of lime. With this system we believe we can constantly improve the quality and efficiency of our soils.

Much of this work has been done in connection with the Soil Conservation program. We believe that this program has been of inestimable value in accelerating the effect of the Extension educational work. The constant agitation of the importance of using soil-building practices, coupled with the cash payment idea for this work, has no doubt driven home to many farmers a message that might have required a longer period of years to do through any other means. Tremendous interest has been shown by farmers participating in the program in the use of lime, legumes, cover crops and green manure crops. Many of them have made special effort to put in the above practices and we feel that the educational effects of the Soil Conservation program will be seen long after the benefit payment checks have been forgotten.

583 farmers enrolled in the Agricultural Conservation program this year, as against 349 last year. All of these appear to consider activities in this line as largely soil-building effort. Three carloads of State limestone were purchased cooperatively, and a considerable amount of other lime through commercial concerns. Far more interest than usual has been shown in the use of phosphate and potash, all of which adds up to improved soils, the great thing we stress in our efforts to lower cost of production.

Located as our county is in a section which has acid soils and is far from the sources of commercial lime, thus making the price of lime almost prohibitive for many farmers, we are forced to plant the annual legumes whose lime requirements are not so high as those of the perennials for soil-building use and for hay and pasture as well.

Soybeans, cowpeas, crimson clover and lespedeza are used universally for hay and soil-building. Farmers in Gloucester are becoming more aware of this situation and are showing a greater appreciation of the value of these crops, especially when grown with the use of such lime and phosphate as they are able to purchase. The success of this policy as practiced here is evidenced by the constant improvement of our average soil fertility. While our acreage of cultivated land is gradually decreasing, our soil fertility is more rapidly increasing. This indicates that our farmers are tending towards the development of a land use program suitable to their needs and conditions.

Judicious use of lime and phosphate is profitable here, and our farmers appear to realize it. This is especially evident among the members of the soil conservation association. Farmers here are conscious of the importance of increasing acre yields as a means of controlling the labor factors involved in the economics of production. The tendency is strongly towards fewer acres and greater yields by use of the many soil improving methods at their disposal. This, we believe, is in line with the principle involved in the great national farm program.

FARM CROPS

Our farm crops here can be classed as general, although we have a limited acreage in the special crops, Irish potatoes, English peas, tomatoes, snap beans, cucumbers and melons. The special crops are all treated according to up-to-date recommendations. The best seed, fertilizer and cultural methods are used. General farm crops are greatly in the majority and have proven to be the stabilizing factor in our county's agriculture. Wide diversification makes for a steady well-rounded farming system. As proven by the fact that 95% of our farmers own their homes. No other section or system in the entire United States has done as well in this respect. Thanks in part to the Agricultural Conservation program, we are entering the winter with our soils unusually well covered with growing crops.

The bulb and flower growing industry continues to be an extremely important one for a limited number of farmers here. About 60 of the 100 growers in the county are now members of the Gloucester-Mathews Narcissus Growers' Association, a cooperative organized for the purpose of buying supplies for the members and doing general cooperative work pertinent to the affairs of the association. Approximately \$700.00 was saved the members of the cooperative on the purchasing of supplies during 1938. The members are showing progress in their cooperation and we believe the association has made satisfactory improvement in its second year of operation.

HORTICULTURE

Small fruits and home gardens for family use continue to be the most important horticultural enterprise in Gloucester. The Agent has made special effort to stimulate interest in the home gardens in the county. Garden specialists of V. P. I. assisted in conducting a home garden campaign during the early spring. News articles and circular letters have urged from time to time that the farmers utilize the home garden as a means of meeting economic and health problems. Small fruit growing is progressing slowly, but rather steadily. Tree fruits are grown only for home use. The Agent has done a limited amount of orchard management work. Truck crops for market are losing favor among our farmers, due to unfavorable markets and severe competition from other sections where labor and transportation facilities are more favorable. However, the best truck crop practices known are being used by our growers. Information from the Experiment Stations and Extension Division play a big part in successful horticulture here.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

Animal husbandry is practiced to a limited extent universally here. Producing farm animals is an integral part of our diversified farming system, and while the animals are used almost entirely at home, the industry is indispensable from an economic standpoint. Only poultry is produced for market.

We constantly stress the importance of improving the breeding of our livestock, and of producing enough to consume the roughage the farms will grow. Gloucester farmers have a high appreciation of purebred sires and are gradually increasing their number and use. We strongly recommend that our farmers produce an abundance of poultry, eggs, milk, butter and pork products for home consumption.

HOGS

Hogs for home use are raised by practically every farmer in the county. Pork and bacon produced from home grown feed is one of Gloucester's most important enterprises. Almost every farmer keeps hogs sufficient to meet his home needs. The stock is all well bred with a limited number of purebreds. The Agent has made special effort in disease control this year. Cholera, which caused a big problem last year, has not taken a single animal this year. This was due in part to the special sanitary measures taken last year. Burning all carcasses and pens was urged in a clean-up campaign and was almost in every case accomplished. Telling results have brought us a gratifying measure of protection this year.

During the year the Agent castrated 40 pigs for ten farmers; treated a number of pigs for worms; vaccinated 41 against cholera for 22 farmers, and advised many farmers regarding parasitic control, sanitation and other hog problems.

SHEEP

Only a few farmers here raise sheep. However, the industry is usually profitable to the producers. The Agent frequently advised sheep owners regarding parasitic control and related sheep problems. This year he gave only one demonstration with sheep in which 10 lambs were docked. All the sheep in the county are highly bred grades, with a limited number of purebreds.

COWS

Cattle raising is largely on the family cow basis. Almost every farmer, except in a few sections, keeps sufficient cattle only for home supplies of milk and butter. These are always good grade cattle except for a limited number of purebreds. The Agent has stressed the need of good milch cows for family use as a means towards the county live-at-home program. The cow, like the home garden, is one of the very best factors in helping to "balance the budget". This is especially true in Gloucester where the well-rounded farm program is inherent with the conception of farm life.

The Agent has urged and encouraged the use of purebred bulls as a means of improving the quality of cattle throughout the county. Farmers generally realize the value of good breeding in cattle and are using this means of improvement.

The Agent is constantly called on to diagnose diseases of cattle and prescribe treatment. Indigestion, milk fever, calving difficulties, and miscellaneous ailments necessitate many calls. The Agent treated five cows for milk fever this year, and numerous others for calving and kindred troubles.

In recent years our county has had the Bangs' and tuberculin test and our cattle are practically free of both of these diseases. We have two commercial dairies which sell whole milk in the county. A very limited number of farmers ship cream.

HORSES

The county Advisory Board and the Agent have urged more breeding of horses and better feed as a means of more efficient farming and as an additional farm enterprise. The chairman of the Board has made considerable progress towards the cooperative purchasing of a Jack for use in this

work. Horses and mules still furnish the major part of the farm power in Gloucester and are an essential item in the county's agriculture.

The Agent is often called on to help and advise in treating sick work stock. He has assisted in many cases of indigestion, lockjaw, injuries, and sundry other troubles. We secured the services of a veterinarian in treating 18 horses and mules against botflies this year, using the carbonbisulphide treatment.

POULTRY

Poultry has for many years been produced universally by Gloucester farmers, constituting one of the major incomes of the county. The best up-to-date methods are practiced in varying degrees throughout the area. Farm flocks still predominate, but small commercial flocks are gradually increasing. It is the farmers' intentions to keep enough poultry to consume all surplus farm grain, which in many cases is supplemented with commercial feeds.

Egg production is the principal phase of the poultry industry with all the larger poultrymen and consequently they keep the Mediterranean types and breeds. However, the farm flock producers go in for meats as well as eggs, and produce dual purpose birds. Practically all poultry produced here is purebred and farmers constantly make an effort to improve their flocks.

Poultry constitutes one of the Agent's greatest fields of endeavor. He is called on daily for some phase of poultry work. Producers have been urged constantly, through every available means, to practice the methods known to pay. Special emphasis has been placed on the importance of culling flocks for egg and breeding purposes. The Agent this year has culled personally 1215 birds, eliminating 368 culls. He has made numerous calls concerning sick poultry. Diseases such as roup, botulism, colds, pox, feed poisoning, and the parasitic infestations necessitate many visits by the Extension Agent. Here the Extension Service is a real and tangible help to a vast number of everyday farmers. No less important in the general educational program are the office calls, telephone calls, letters, and news articles that pass through the Agent's office. Advice on breeding, feeding, baby chick sanitation, housing problems, general sanitation, parasitic control, marketing and a thousand and one related problems is freely sought and given. Poultry, being a universal enterprise, it is highly essential that the people have a convenient source of information such as the office of the County Extension Agent where they can get immediate help on continuously arising problems.

During 1938 the Agent gave 80 caaponizing demonstrations, caaponizing 2332 birds. These capons will be produced largely on home grown feed and sold on the market at a higher price than that of any other type of poultry. He also vaccinated 257 birds against chicken pox. Farmers readily learn to do this work and practically all commercial poultrymen vaccinate their own poultry.

WILDLIFE

Wildlife in Gloucester has long been one of the major interests among sportsmen here. In the past year we have made special effort to interest farmers generally, as well as sportsmen, in this important item of the county's assets. Special effort was made to organize a county unit of the State Wildlife Federation. We succeeded only in setting up a temporary organization. It will be one of our goals in 1939 to develop an active group organized to carry out a planned promotion of wildlife here.

FORESTRY

The Gloucester forests have long been one of the county's greatest assets. Saw logs, piling, fish poles, pulp and cord wood, furnish a considerable income to many farmers and labor to numerous woodsmen. Improved practices are gradually replacing the old, and farmers are showing a greater interest in woodland than in former years. Fire protection through the State system has done much to conserve this great natural resource. Wide interest was shown this year in the pine beetle infestation that menaced several tracts of growing timber. The Extension Forester, Wilbur O'Byrne, of V. P. I. gave timely and constructive advice in this emergency, which fortunately has subsided. We expect to develop a more concrete Extension program on forestry and one worthy of the importance the project holds in our county's agriculture.

AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Outlook information is used throughout the county in the winter and spring farm meetings. We believe this information is highly beneficial to farmers who give it proper consideration.

FARMERS' COOPERATIVE

In the spring of this year, the Gloucester-Mathews Farmers' Cooperative was organized for the purpose of doing a general cooperative business. Fertilizer was purchased during the late spring and summer, with a saving to the members of \$234.00. The membership in this organization has constantly increased, and the prospects are good for a much larger participation next year.

Likewise, the Gloucester-Mathews Narcissus Growers' Association, which cooperative has just ended its second year of business, has shown splendid progress and achievement. Approximately 60% of the 100 growers of narcissus have become members of the cooperative. A saving of approximately \$700.00 was effected this year on the purchasing of supplies.

Other farmers have pooled orders for 3 cars of lime. In general the cooperative idea has grown in popularity and achievement during the past year and bids fair to continued progress in 1939.

FARM FINANCE

Sources of farm finance, other than local credit, operative in the county are the Federal Land Bank (land loans), Production Credit Association, Farm Security Administration, and Emergency Crop and Seed Loan. All of these agencies have served our farmers this year, but a noticeable falling off of credit demand has occurred. Farmers have used government credit where it was an advantage, but have used it wisely and effectively. Fertilizer agencies still furnish a certain amount of credit, but this is hardly as popular as in former years. Farmers here are in a much better position regarding finances than in recent years.

FLOWER FESTIVAL

The Agent, with local assistance and enthusiasm on the part of the people, instituted a flower festival during the narcissus season which proved a big event as well as a big job. In spite of many difficulties encountered common to any new and untried project, the festival was a splendid success. Approximately 10,000 visitors came to the county during the several days of the festival. We expect to effect a permanent organization for making the flower festival an annual event.

SCHOOL FAIR

The Agent cooperated with the Smith-Hughes teachers in putting on a school fair this year. Participation by the children was almost universal and much enthusiasm was shown by the general public. We expect this project to grow until a county association can be formed.

RELIEF WORK

General agricultural recovery throughout the county has greatly reduced relief problems. The W. P. A. has made work available to the majority of men who could qualify.

A. C. A. WORK

Gloucester farmers who signed up with the Agricultural Conservation program this year numbered 583, almost double the number of signers last year. The 1937 program netted the 349 signers \$8123.73. In addition, approximately \$1000.00 expense money was brought into the county. While the 1938 cash benefits have not been determined, it appears now that they will be approximately \$10,000.00. In addition to this and of far more far-reaching importance is the wide educational stimulation of farmers as to the methods and need of soil improvement. A very noticeable increase in soil-building practices throughout the county is evident. In a county survey of local merchants' legume seed sales for the year, practically every merchant reported a noticeable increase in sales over former years. We feel that the A. C. A. program has been of tremendous and permanent value to our people in stimulation and demonstration.

R. E. A. WORK

Efforts with the R. E. A. work has been partly successful. It has secured about 30 additional miles of line constructed by the local power company. We are still trying to get extensions and it is possible that about 50 miles of additional lines may yet be secured.

4-H CLUB WORK

Many difficulties have stood in the way of successful 4-H Club work. However, Guy R. Davis, special 4-H Club Agent, and the County Agent organized 8 clubs with 111 members, 88% of which completed their projects. The county 4-H Club Council functioned fairly well. Eight members attended the district camp, and 40 attended the State Fair. Many children entered exhibits at the county school fair. Much of the success of Club work here was due to the untiring efforts and splendid leadership of Mrs. L. P. Oliver, secretary to the Agent and leader of one of the Clubs. Several good outstanding Club leaders have been of much importance in getting the work done under the circumstances. We expect to continue Club work next year, although much of it will have to be done through night meetings.

PUBLICITY

This year the Agent wrote 144 news articles for the county paper and outside dailies coming into the county, and 16 circular letters, distributing through the mails 5935 copies. The office also distributed 271 bulletins. All of this was effective in getting the Extension program before the

people. Splendid cooperation and support has been given the Agent by the county paper, which has been of inestimable value to Extension work in the county. Much credit is due this paper in getting the program over to the people and helping to accomplish what was done. Several daily papers coming into the county constantly carry articles giving publicity to the various Extension programs.

SUMMARY

This summary is intended to cover briefly the principal statistics of the work carried on by the Agent this year.

Days in field	200 $\frac{1}{2}$
Days in office	97 $\frac{1}{2}$
Farm visits	701
Meetings or demonstrations held or attended	310
Attendance at above meetings	7078
Office calls received	3951
Telephone calls	2935
4-H Club visits	188
News articles written	144
Personal letters written	1706
Circular letters	16
Copies circulated	5835
Farm bulletins distributed	278
Farmers' cooperatives organized	1
No. farmers' cooperatives in county	2
Membership in above cooperatives	126
A. C. A. organizations formed	1
Membership in above organization	583
Total miles traveled in Extension work	13660

In addition to the foregoing summary of the Agent's work, Guy R. Davis, assistant in charge of 4-H club work, made 225 visits (estimated) to 4-H club members and their parents, and traveled (including mileage from his headquarters in Saluda) approximately 3834 miles. He was with the Agent much of the time in Club work summarized in the Agent's report above, especially in Club meetings. He also sent copies of 17 circular letters which he prepared to 4-H Club members in Gloucester and wrote 10 personal letters.

OUTLOOK AND RECOMMENDATIONS

recommends

The Agent, that concerted effort in Extension work be made towards developing and improving the County Agricultural Advisory Board; strengthening and expanding Club work; cultivating the interest of business people of the county in Extension work, and securing the continued support of the press for Extension work. He urges all possible cooperation with every public agency affecting agriculture or rural life in any way. He recommends close cooperation with the county school system, especially the Smith-Hughes branch, and with the local Negro Extension work.

The Agent would recommend that Extension work for the coming year be directed along the line of development of the county's soils, and carrying as major projects a program of agronomy, poultry and home gardens. Special attention should be given the continued improvement of the two cooperatives, the county planning committee, the flower festival, the school fair, and the livestock improvement work begun this year by the late W. S. Mott, chairman of the county planning committee.