

VIRGINIA

SUSSEX HOME DEMONSTRATION AGENT Annual report 1943

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ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT

of

Nancy A. Kelly

Sussex County

December 1, 1942 - November 30, 1943

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III. Scope of Work

A. Home demonstration clubs

No. 10 Membership 175

Other groups sponsored by home demonstration clubs:

No. Clubs - (White) 0 Membership 0
(Negro) 0 Membership 0

B. 4-H Clubs, Girls:

No. 3 Membership 30

C. Older Youth Groups:

No. 0 Membership 0

D. No. reached through demonstrations given by agent 85

E. No. families reached through neighborhood and community leaders 500 app.

F. Estimate total number families reached 785 No. farm families in county 1500

IV. ORGANIZATION

A. County Home Demonstration Committee

In September, the presidents and vice-presidents of the county Home Demonstration groups and outstanding members of unorganized groups met at Sussex Courthouse for a program planning meeting. At this meeting, with the help of Miss Helen Ricks, District Agent, a County Home Demonstration Committee was organized. The membership of this committee is composed of the presidents and vice-presidents of the organized clubs and other outstanding women in the county selected by the home agent.

The function of this committee is to plan county programs, to take up problems pertaining to womens interests in the county and to foster friendship of clubs through-out the county. The Committee made plans to meet twice each year for the duration. The only result of the Committee's work is the 1944 Home Demonstration Program, which was planned at the September meeting.

B. County Agricultural Board

The County Agricultural Board was organized two years ago and since that time has developed very slowly. There are 6 communities and 56 neighborhoods. There are 6 community chairmen and 6 community co-chairmen (women) and 72 neighborhood leaders, men and women. The negro board is a separate organization and is handled entirely by the negro farm agent. The chairman and co-chairman of the communities have functioned about 75% on all programs attempted. In the Victory Home Food Supply Campaign, the leaders were very cooperative and in most cases got the information out to county people. Last spring Mr. B. L. Hummel, Organization Specialist, spent 2 days in the county with Home and Farm Agents in making plans and changing some leaders and neighborhood boundary lines. Neither of the agents feel that the County Agricultural Board is functioning as well as it might but agree that more time and opportunity to work with the leaders might alter the situation.

C. Professional Workers' Conference

The agencies represented on the Professional Workers' Council are the same that were reported last year. The council met three times in 1943. In December the Council had an organization meeting and the following officers were elected: The County Agent, Chairman; the Farm Security Farm Supervisor, Vice-Chairman and the Stony Creek Home Economics Teacher, Secretary.

In the Victory Home Food Supply Campaign, the Home Agent took the responsibility for planning, and called the community and some neighborhood meetings. Because the teachers had no means of travel and the F.S.A. Home Supervisor lived in another county, it fell to the Agents lot to carry

through meetings for the others.

In the county, a T. B. Clinic was held. The Home Agent was asked to help make plans and publicize the clinic. She took the opportunity to contact some community and neighborhood leaders to get this done.

V. LEADERSHIP

A. Adult Work

There are 32 club officers in the Home Demonstration Clubs of Sussex County. There are 8 clubs with elected officers. Each has president, vice-president, secretary and reporter.

Two project leaders were elected from each group and in several cases there was an alternate for a project leader. In 7 clubs there were 23 leaders and in a newly organized club there are 7 leaders. This club was following the plan for 1944 of having a different leader for each type of project. The leaders of 1943 have not given many demonstrations. The agent did not feel that they were quite ready to be left entirely alone to give them but in some cases she recognizes that this was a mistake. During the year, there were 8 leader training meetings with 68 leaders present. The leader training meeting for slip covers given by Miss Ruth Jamison resulted in 4 slip cover demonstrations given by leaders. Eight of the women present helped and showed others how to make slip covers. Approximately 25 covers have been made and much more work will be done in 1944 as a result of that clinic given by Miss Jamison. As a result of her furniture clinics, approximately 40 pieces of furniture have been repaired or refinished. Miss Iva Byrd Johnson gave a leader training meeting on Restyling which resulted in restyling of around 30 garments and 10 women helping others. November 30,

2 leader training meetings were given by Miss Helen Alverson with 15 leaders present and 7 of the 8 expected clubs represented. This training was for January meetings on Household Storage.

There are, as stated previously, 6 community co-chairmen and 36 women neighborhood leaders on the County Agricultural Board. These leaders have functioned fairly well. The co-chairmen seem to understand their importance as leaders but many of the neighborhood leaders do not.

On several occasions it has been necessary for the agent to take material to a leader and train her for a demonstration. In each case, the leader gave the demonstration and good reports of the meeting were presented.

B. 4-H Club Work

The 4-H Club work of Sussex County has been passed from hand to hand by a number of Club Agents in the last few years. The Home Demonstration Agent has only been working with 4-H Clubs in Sussex County for about 3 months. There are no adult leaders at the present. There are three 4-H Clubs in the county. One of them has its separate organization of boys and girls. Each has its officers. There are 16 officers in the 4-H Clubs. The girls who are officers are girls who have belonged to 4-H for several years. They are good officers and know what 4-H work means. During the summer months the home agent worked with 3 groups with an enrollment of 15. These groups were called Victory 4-H groups and each one had a junior leader. The junior leaders notified the others of the meetings and took initiative in planning the meetings.

C. Older Youth

There was an attempt made to get some older youth groups started in Sussex

County but due to wartime conditions, the number of youth available was not sufficient to justify the attempt.

VI. RESULTS

A. Home Demonstration Clubs

1. Project Works

a. Food

(1) Production

The clubs did a great deal to help with the Victory Home Food Supply Campaign in March. Each Club has had a meeting on fall and winter gardens and during the spring and summer months a little time was spent by the agent or a leader to stress the importance of good gardens. The high production figures for 1943 show that the gardens did their share in helping to win the war. More emphasis will be given to garden work in 1944. Each club will have a garden leader who will devote a few minutes of each meeting to timely garden information.

(2) Conservation

More of the agent's time has been devoted to conservation than to any other phase of work. Each club had a demonstration on root crop storage. Each club has had a vegetable and fruit canning demonstration and several had dehydration ones. A number of special demonstrations were given to groups other than Home Demonstration Clubs. One of the P.T.A. groups in the county was given a talk on preservation of food by the Agent, and two of the Womens Clubs were given canning demonstrations. Many pressure cooker applications were received as a result of these demonstrations using cookers. The Agent gave individual help to a number

of families and tested out, with the owners, several of the new pressure cookers. The War necessitated a greater effort on the part of every homemaker to do something to feed her family more adequately. The Agent feels proud of the way her people have met the need.

(3) There have been no programs devoted entirely to nutrition work in 1943. There have been, however, a constant awareness of its importance and on many occasions an opportunity arose to stress the value of this or that food from a nutritional standpoint. The Agent would like to mention one figure in connection with nutrition. She believes that 75% of her club members have been influenced by her to use whole grain products.

(b) Clothing

(1) Consumer problems

The Agent has given some help to individuals on buying of furniture and clothing. In the Home Demonstration Clubs, a study of textiles and buymanship of textiles was taken up. Some study of new materials was done. Each time new war production regulations came out in regard to clothing, they are read ^{to} and discussed with the Home Demonstration Clubs.

In the Waverly Club, one member is a member of a consumer organization. Each month she gives a report to the club on wise buying. This has proven quite helpful and the members look forward to it.

(2) Conservation

(a) Woollen Garments

Each club had a demonstration on care and storage of woollens. Several of the clubs had drycleaning demonstrations. The Agent found that moth control was important but silverfish control was almost more of

a problem with her women. As a result of the drycleaning demonstrations, about 50% of the members do their own drycleaning.

(b) Sewing Machine Clinics

All Home Demonstration groups in the county had a demonstration on cleaning and care of sewing machines, or a clinic, except two. Actually cleaned and adjusted at clinics were 88 machines, but the agent knows of approximately 25 others who were helped by those who learned at a clinic. Counting other members present, who looked on, but did not have machines to work on, there were 173, the total that received help on sewing machines. The Agent found that 75% of the women did not know their own machines. They had not read the instruction book years ago and did not know about the most simple adjustments.

(3) Construction

The only construction work in the county has been remodeling or restyling. Miss Johnson gave a leader training meeting which was attended by people other than leaders. From that meeting, approximately 30 garments were restyled and the Agent is aware that 10 of the women present went out and helped others with ideas received at the meeting.

(4) House Furnishings

With help from Miss Ruth Jamison, a good number of springs have been repaired, chairs mended. Last spring an agent's workshop was held in Mawerly. Six local women came and brought their repair problems. Three other home agents and two Farm Security Home Management Supervisors attended. Miss Jamison gave excellent instructions on furniture repair.

(c) Furniture Clinics

Most of the clubs have had their reseating clinics in their club meetings. Approximately 45 chairs have been reseatd this year as a result of work done in Home Demonstration clubs. One member learned at the club and then caned 6 chairs herself.

Miss Jamison gave 1 day's help on refinishing of furniture to club leaders. At the meeting, 10 pieces of furniture were refinished and as a result of that, 3 clubs have planned special meetings for their clubs to learn to refinish furniture.

Upholstering was taught at the agents workshop but as the program for 1943 had already been planned, it was not included in this year's club work. Three chairs were upholstered at the workshop.

(2) Construction

Miss Jamison also gave a leader training meeting on Slip Covers and as a result, 4 clubs have had slip cover demonstrations at their meetings, given by leaders. As a result of the help received from Miss Jamison, approximately 25 slip covers have been made.

The Agent has given individual help on draperies, and selection of materials for them, to 5 families.

d. Home Management

There has been scarcely any work done on home management. Miss Alverson gave leader help on kitchen arrangement November 30 but this will not be given clubs until January.

e. Markets

There are no Home Demonstration markets in the county.

2. Home Demonstration club activities:

There have been no special activities and the new committee has just begun to function for 1944.

3. Account of Outstanding Member

The Agent wishes to give an account of not only the county's most outstanding club member but she is also the most outstanding woman in the county. Mrs. C. H. Dale is president of the Home Demonstration Committee and co-chairman of the County Agricultural Board. She is Red Cross Chairman in her neighborhood, on the Welfare Board and on the F.S.A. Advisory Committee and by far the most public spirited person in Sussex County. Her greatest ambition is to see Sussex County using the best methods to help the county people.

Her contribution to Home Demonstration work has been invaluable. She never attends a club meeting that she does not go home and try out the suggestions in the same day. Her enthusiasm carries to those around her. She has attended all special meetings and all leader training meetings. She is constantly recruiting new members for her club and often suggests to the agent a possibility for a new club.

She does her own work, for a family of 6. She makes all of her 3 daughters' clothes and remodels and restyles her own, does all the family laundry and helps with the outdoor work besides. The Agent finds this woman her greatest comforter and advisor and she wishes to pay

tribute to a fine American woman.

B. See B. and C. under Organization

C. 4-H CLUBS

(1) Project Work.

See 4-H Club work on County Agent's report.

(2) Health - Have done no health work.

(3) The 4-H Clubs did help with the various salvage programs in the spring of 1943. Many had gardens and poultry as projects, which the Agent feels was a direct contribution to the war effort.

(4) Account of a Club

The Jarratt Girls 4-H Club is composed of younger girls.

During the summer months, the agent divided this club into two summer groups, and these groups met 3 times and planned the family canning budget, sewed and discussed 1944 project work. They had a social hour after each meeting.

When school began this year, they elected officers from their group of girls. The boys will be separate. At the school Halloween party, they planned and arranged a booth which made \$4.00 for their club.

D. Older Youth

No older youth work has been done.

E. Other Work

(1) The Agent has offered her assistance to the 3 County Home Economics teachers in the carrying out of the food program. She has

publicised it to Home Demonstration members and gave a canning demonstration to help one teacher get her canning work at the school started.

(2) If there is a county nutrition committee, the Agent is not aware of it. She expects to see that one is organized in 1944.

(3) The Agent has offered her services to O.C.D. coordinator in any way possible. Have not devoted any actual working time to O.C.D., however.

(4) She has continually made announcements at meetings about the necessity of carrying on the salvage program.

(5) Have been asked by Rationing Board to act as Consumer Advisor on a committee to be appointed by them.

E. Others

The Agent spent some time helping to publicize the T. B. Clinic in October. The Agricultural Board was the tool used in helping with this.

VII. The most significant contribution made to the war effort in 1945 in Sussex County was the production and conservation of food.

The Home Demonstration Program has contributed to this in an educational way. Canning demonstrations and use of pressure cookers have made people aware of the need for correct and safe food preservation. The Agent knows of no Home Demonstration member who will have to buy canned food

to maintain her well balanced family diet. The Agent feels that this increased production and conservation was a great contribution to the war effort.