

VIRGINIA

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**ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT
HOME DEMONSTRATION WORK
DINWIDDIE COUNTY
VIRGINIA
1943**

**AMELIA H. FULLER
HOME DEMONSTRATION AGENT
DECEMBER 1, 1942-NOVEMBER 30, 1943**

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SCOPE OF WORK

Home Demonstration Clubs:

Number	9
Membership	155

4-H Clubs:

Number	7
Membership	140

Number families reached through neighborhood and community leaders.....	1000
Number families reached by radio, newspaper articles...	750
Number farm families reached by individual visits, telephone calls, office calls, and subject matter.....	450
Estimated total families reached.....	1000
Number farm families in the county.....	1834

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ORGANIZATION

County Home Demonstration Committee

This committee is made up of the presidents of the local home demonstration clubs with a few members at large who are interested in the work. The officers for the club consist of a chairwoman, secretary and treasurer. When the agent started to work in the county approximately 15 months ago this organization had ceased to function as a body. New officers have been elected and the group may be given credit for much of the success of the county planning meeting, also in helping to strengthen local clubs.

County Agricultural Board

There has been no change in this organization during the past year. Refer to Annual Report 1942.

Professional Workers Council

The Professional Workers Council held two meetings during this period. The agencies represented were: Farm Security, Farm Credit, AAA, Soil Conservation, Vocational Education, Welfare, Superintendent and Supervisor of Education, Extension, and Health Department. During the year the workers have promoted the following war time activities: (1) share-the-meat program, (2) increased crop production,

(3) gardens, (4) food preservation, and (5) farm labor.

The home agent has been responsible for:

(1) Distribution of subject matter, ordering and distributing to the group the subject matter which they wished to use in (a) gardening, (b) canning, (c) improved care of milk and butter.

(2) She helped the Vocational Teachers in getting Course 15 under way in the different communities. She worked with the teachers in the Smith Grove Cannery which was the largest cannery in the county.

(3) She encouraged her members to work in the community cannery at Smith Grove, and help can for the school cafeterias. Several of the clubs volunteered a days service at least twice during the summer.

(4) She worked with the Welfare Agent in making a simplified food preservation plan which could be used by the clients of the Welfare Department in planning their food supply for the year.

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LEADERSHIP

Adult Work

Types of Leaders: The nine clubs in the county each have their officers consisting of a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. In addition to this each club has at least two project leaders. In the case of larger clubs there are four project leaders. The county has been divided into nine communities which in turn has been sub-divided into some thirty-two neighborhoods. Each community has its own chairman and chairwoman. These individuals are assisted by 55 men and 49 women neighborhood leaders.

During the past year 10 leaders training meetings were held with 21 men present and 112 women. It is estimated that local leaders gave at least five days of their time to the extension program. Leaders have given demonstrations on cleaning and adjusting sewing machines, repairing electric cords and appliances, using patterns, clothing construction, bottoming chairs, canning and food demonstrations, care of furniture and furnishings, and culling.

If there has been one single accomplishment of importance this past year I would say that it has been in the strengthening of our existing organization and developing with the women an awareness of their ability to be leaders, and also getting them to accept the responsibility of leadership. This has been evidenced in such things as: (1) better

attendance at leader training meetings, (2) willingness to become leaders, (3) enlarging the number of project leaders for each club, so that more members will have a definite job thereby creating interest and developing better leaders, (4) carrying information and news received in their meetings to neighbors and friends who are not club members, (5) willingness to give more of their time to work even in spite of the increased war time responsibilities.

4-H Club Work

One of the apparent weakness of 4-H club work during the past year has been a lack of adult leadership. The few leaders who helped with the program were school teachers who were unable to give a great deal of assistance because of their heavy teaching load. During the summer the agent held small neighborhood meetings and received much valuable assistance from mothers and friends who attended these meetings. It is her feeling that this is the type of leadership which is needed to strengthen the whole 4-H club program.

However, the work has been strengthened in the following manner. An Honor Council consisting of 14 boys, 6 girls, and 3 All-Stars was formed last December. During the year the group held four meetings, for organization, initiation of members, public insillation service at Achievement Day Program and a picnic.

Only seven leader training meetings for 4-H club leaders were held with an attendance of 58. Older club members were given training for the following demonstrations:

(1) care and repair of clothing, (2) cleaning and blocking sweaters, and (3) canning.

A County-wide Achievement Day was held in November with approximately 150 persons present. The program was planned and carried out by the members. Demonstrations were given by both boys and girls showing what they had done with their projects. Reports given on the occasion indicated that forty-four girls participated in three contests, namely: (1) Victory Garden, (2) Victory Achievement and, (3) Rural Electrification. One girl was recommended for the state award in the Victory Achievement Contest. Four girls who had especially good projects were given special awards. These were Victory garden project, (2) poultry, (3) safety-in-the home, and (4) canning.

RESULTS

Home Demonstration Clubs

Food: The major emphasis of the home demonstration program has been on those activities and projects which will promote the war effort. As might be expected the chief emphasis has been on production and conservation of food. Ninety-five percent of the members enrolled had a garden, and all of these canned. A severe drought and a fruit crop failure cut down the total amount of food canned, but according to reports from various clubs the amount conserved in the county by club members alone was 28,800 quarts. In addition to this they put up 1,420 containers of fruit butters, jams, jellies, marmalades and relishes. They stored over 426 bushels of potatoes, squash and other root crops.

There has been a great increase in the number of persons requesting assistance with canning. During the summer the home agent visited in more than thirty-five homes in which the mother was not in any organized HDC or Course 15, and gave instructions and demonstrations.

Not only this, but there has been marked increase in the sharing of pressure cookers. Of the thirty-eight members who reported they had pressure cookers, fifty percent said their cooker had been shared by one or two families and in some instances by as many as five. In many instances the

members went with her pressure cooker and showed how it should be used. In other neighborhoods they worked together thus helping each other and at the same time increasing the usefulness of the pressure cooker. Six home demonstration club members bought pressure cookers this year.

Each club devoted one meeting during the year to the important topic of adequate nutrition in war time. Such topics as sugar-saving recipes, and meat substitutes have been popular subjects of demonstrations in all the clubs.

Over 1,000 leaflets on canning, dehydration, pickling, salting and brining were distributed to individuals not enrolled in any form of extension work.

The women of the county made three trips to Camp Pickett to secure jars. 312 dozen jars were secured by these women for distribution to their own and neighboring families. Many were gallon jars, but the one which proved most popular was an odd sized jar holding between a pint and a half. By using the small 65 tops the women were able to use these. Not only this but they proved satisfactory when used in the pressure cooker.

Cheese making demonstrations have been given in six communities of the county. Forty-three individuals attended these demonstrations. Interest has grown and the agent has had numbers of requests for information on making cheese, both cottage and American. Recently the Farm Security, Home

Management Supervisor and Home Economic Teachers asked for information on these topics. Two-hundred bulletins have been distributed to them.

Two poultry culling schools with an attendance of 38 persons was held in August in an attempt to encourage persons to cull their flocks and thus cut down expenses and save valuable food. Individuals attending this school report they have culled their own flocks since that time.

Clothing: Emphasis in the clothing field has been on care and repair of clothing, and re-styling. Demonstrations on simple repairs and removal of stains has been held in six clubs. Demonstrations on using and altering patterns have been given in three of the clubs. Two clubs worked on re-styling. Of the 155 women reporting on the clothing work carried on during the year, 78 report they made clothing for themselves or their family, 25 report they have made over garments, 125 report that they do their own laundering and take care of their clothes.

One very important part of the work this year has been on cleaning and adjusting sewing machines. All day meetings were held in five of the clubs at which time 40 machines were over-hauled. One community clinic for sewing machines was held at which time nine machines were put in running order. Twenty-four individuals in addition to club members were taught how to do this work.

House Furnishings: In the house furnishing field the

emphasis has been upon: (1) care and repair, (2) chair seating, (3) upholstering. Every club had demonstrations on such things as removal of scratches, gluing and tying springs. Twenty-five club members report they have repaired furniture at home. Two upholstery and cushion repair demonstrations were held at which time 12 upholstered pieces and nine cushions were repaired.

While slip cover work and draperies has not been a part of the regular program six club members were given demonstrations and help which enabled them to make covers for eighteen pieces of furniture, including chairs and sofas. Draperies were made by two of these ladies.

Five club members have worked out improved storage for their kitchen or pantry. This phase of work has not been a part of the regular scheduled program, but was carried on by those women who had special need for this help.

Market: There has been no change in the organization or time and place for sales.

The market was open 52 days during the year. Six women sold produce amounting to \$4,521.89. The highest individual sales was \$1,365.00, the lowest was \$150.00. This individual sold only for a period of six months. The bulk of sales has been on poultry, eggs and vegetables.

Home Demonstration Club Activities: The Federation Goal was on health. Each club had a special program on this topic during the year. Since there is a rather high proportion of

Tuberculosis in this county, each club devoted a special study to this topic at one of their meetings. One club in the county made improvised equipment and bed pads for the County Health Department as a part of their health work. The importance of a first aid kit and a good medicine cabinet was also stressed as very important for every farm family especially during war time when doctors and nursing service is so hard to secure. One club in the county sponsored a class in Home Nursing. Eighteen persons took the course fourteen of whom were club members.

Special Activities of the Clubs Include the following:

1. Planning and equipping a reading room at Camp Lee.
2. Sending over 50 Christmas packages to soldiers at Camp Pickett.
3. Sending potted plants for Hospital Ward at Camp Pickett.
4. Helping with the Bond Drive in May and again in November.
5. Sending subscriptions to magazines for Hospital Wards at Camp Pickett.

Individual Club Work: The club which has done the most outstanding work this year has been the Smith Grove Junior Club. This club has only been organized for a year yet during this time it can boast of the following accomplishments:

- A. Increased membership from eight to fourteen.

B. Had ten demonstrations during the year, four given by own leaders and assistance given agent at all others.

C. Leaders attended all leader-training meetings.

D. Group sponsored request to local bus company in Petersburg for extended bus service to the rural area. By so doing the route was lengthened approximately five miles and hourly transportation to the city was extended to those individuals living in this area.

E. In spite of the difficulties of serving a group under war time rationing and transportation they assumed the responsibility of serving the local Ruritan Club each month because they did not wish to see the club disband. The project was not undertaken for a financial return but rather as a public service, however, members have been generous in contributing food products and they have managed to clear \$28.00 from them during the year.

F. The club has made contributions as follows:

\$5.00 to Red Cross

\$5.00 to War Fund Drive

\$18.75 purchased war stamps. Eventually hope to buy a bond for the club.

Eight members have made garments for the Red Cross.

Fourteen christmas boxes for soldiers at Camp Pickett.

Sent Sunshine Box to a bed ridden individual in the community.

G. Sponsored a Home Nursing Course for individuals in

their community. Eighteen took the course, fourteen of whom were club members.

H. Every individual in the club had a garden and canned for her family. Four of these women had never canned before this year. These women followed recommended practices given by the agent.

Agricultural Boards

The programs which have been sponsored by the Agricultural Board are as follows:

1. Farm labor
2. Farm machinery
3. Victory Garden
4. War Bonds

The home agent worked on the Victory Garden and War Bond program. Approximately one-third of the farm homes of the county agreed to cooperate with the food production program by producing as much food as possible. For War Bond work see Page 13.

4-H Clubs

One hundred-forty girls carrying 153 projects were enrolled in 4-H club work. Eighty-seven project records were secured. The projects which were most popular were: (1) home gardens, (2) food preparation, (3) food selection

and preparation, (4) keeping expense accounts and (5) clothing.

The thirty completed records on food preparation showed the girls had canned alone 490 quarts of fruit and vegetables and helped with some 3,844 quarts and dried 40 pounds of vegetables.

Thirteen girls completed a garden project. These girls reported their garden was approximately one acre in size, that they helped plant, cultivate and gather the products.

Other completions were as follows: ^{13 girls completed this project} 13 on food selection and preparation. Of these 10 girls planned and packed school lunches for themselves over a period of five months. Approximately 602 lunches were planned and packed by these girls. Seven girls planned and prepared approximately 422 meals over a period of five months.

The eight girls completing their clothing project reported they had made 43 new garments, remodeled 24, repaired 55. Each girl reported she laundered her clothes at least twice a month.

Eighteen girls kept a complete record of their expenditures for clothing, school supplies, recreation, church and savings for a period of five months.

Two girls improved their bedrooms by painting, making new furnishings and rearranging the furniture.

One hundred-twenty six girls made a food preservation plan for their family.

Every girl who completed her project reported that she had bought war bonds or stamps. All of them reported they had collected either scrap iron, fats, tin cans, hose or rubber.

Mention should be made of the fact that the following changes have taken place in the county during the past three months which accounts for some of the incompletions: one girl married and moved away, 12 finished school and are no longer living in the community, and 2 left home to go to work.

4-H club members of the county contributed \$32.24 to the State Ambulance Fund. \$16.92 of this amount came from the sale of 462 pounds of old victrola records collected by them.

They made 60 over-sea bags for the Red Cross.

Fifteen members helped contact neighbors during the garden campaign.

Seventy-two collected scrap materials of some kind.
(See paragraph in project report on Page 17, Paragraph 1)

One club member who has done particular outstanding work this year is Mildred Anne Ritchie, age 14. She carried a project on Food for the Family, and food for our school cafeteria. She did the following: (1) helped plant the family garden, (2) worked in the field helping with the peanut and corn crop, (3) planned and fixed school lunches for five persons for a period of five months, (4) cooked dinner for the family every day for a period of three weeks, (5) during the summer carried on a canning project, canning

alone without assistance from anyone 112 quarts of food. In addition to this she helped her mother can 333 quarts of vegetables and fruits. (6) She worked approximately 150 hours in the Smith Grove cannery helping to gather around 175 bushels of produce from the garden and helping to can approximately 3,000 quarts of food. (7) She helped care for 400 chickens and 10 cows. (8) With the money earned during the summer, working at home and at the cannery, she purchased a \$100 bond.

Older Youth

There has been no work with the older youth other than with Older Honor Council Members. (See Page 7)

Other Work Done By Home Demonstration Committee

The Home Economic Teachers and the home agent have worked together on the following activities:

(1) Specialist and the home agent held training school for Professional Workers on repairing electrical equipment and cleaning and adjusting sewing machines. Following this the home agent assisted two home economic teachers who were holding such clinics for the people in their community. The home agent also worked with the teachers in promoting the garden and food preservation work. She has furnished subject matter to these people on (1) canning, (2) gardening, (3) poultry, (4) cheese making, (5) milk production and

(6) house furnishings.

The assistance which the agent has given the salvage committee is in helping to promote the saving of waste fat, scrap materials and paper.

As far as the rationing board is concerned she has served as Consumer Consultant trying to carry information regarding the rationing policies and price control to the people with whom she has worked.

The home agent has also worked with the war bond committee by (1) getting HD clubs to assist with bond drive in May and October, (2) contacting key persons in different communities getting them to help with the bond drive.

The only assistance given the school lunch was to get different club members to work in the Smith Grove community cannery and help can for the school cafeterias.

The Red Cross has been helped by (1) encouraging the women to make articles for the Red Cross. Carried materials to women and collected the garments when finished. (2) Encouraged women to contribute to Red Cross. (3) Christmas boxes for soldiers in Camp Pickett Hospital.

APPRAISAL OF WORK.

It is hard to say just what has been the most significant contribution to the county in meeting war needs which was made by the home demonstration program, but it seems to me that it might be summed up in saying that the subject matter, demonstrations and projects which have been stressed this year were built on common needs and problems and as a result definite training on food production, conservation, and repair of equipment, furniture and furnishings have enabled women to take on jobs formerly delegated to some one else, to relieve a husband or son of some task thus giving him a chance to concentrate on doing more actual farming than in former years. For in spite of all the difficulties with which our farmers have been faced they have increased production, but back of that production lies the story of a farm wife who has assumed new duties, acquired new skills and developed a deeper philosophy of life which in turn has made possible this story of increased production. It is my feeling that the home demonstration program has helped these women develop these new skills, abilities and philosophy.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

No report would be complete without mentioning the individual growth of the person responsible for the program described in this report. If all the women with whom the agent worked learned as much as the agent the county would be compelled to show results. Not only has knowledge and skill been acquired, but a deeper, keener understanding of farm people has grown with the months. Certainly the agent of to-day has a far better working knowledge of the people with whom she works, a keener awareness of how to help them with their problems, and a firmness born of experience which should lead to stronger, better work in the promotion of the extension program.