

included the ACP program and the Soil Bank Program. The ASC office and the County Agent's Office are conveniently located in adjacent rooms and each cooperates fully with the other.

This agent served as Secretary of the Robert E. Lee Soil Conservation District in 1959.

The Supervisors of the Soil Conservation District meet the first Friday of every other month. This agent has mailed notices of meetings to all of the supervisors, attended each meeting and kept minutes as required by the Secretary. The agent has also attended to all correspondence as instructed by the Chairman of the supervisors.

In cooperation with the FIA this office refers farmers needing various types of loans to this credit agency and assists the FIA supervisor with recommendations.

V. MEANS OF REACHING PEOPLE

This agent uses the following ways and means of reaching people of the county with information of timely interest:

1. A weekly newspaper column in the county newspaper and an occasional article in the Lynchburg News which reaches most of the homes in the county.
2. Announcements are sent to Wayne Tyler, WLVA's Farm Reporter, of events of interest to farmers.
3. Circular letters.
4. Personal contacts and farm visits.
5. Method and result demonstrations.
6. Telephone
7. Meetings of farmers on specific projects
8. Tours.

E. CAMPS

1. Holiday Lake 4-H Club Camp.

There were 65 club members from the county who attended district Camp at Holiday Lake. The week consisted of a full program of wonderful educational and recreational facilities and opportunities that were enjoyed by all. Five county junior and adult leaders assisted with the Camp.

2. Short Course

Three boys from the county attended Short Course at V.P.I., Blacksburg in 1959.

F. COUNTY COUNCIL

The Council met twice during the year. It is through this Council that objectives for all the 4-H Clubs in the county are set up. The Council arranged a program to train all the members in the duties of their respective club offices.

The Council set up the following list of objectives for the county for the year:

1. Have 4-H Electric Project Exhibit Day.
2. Arrange for each 4-H Club to go on an Electric Tour.
3. The 4-H Clubs sponsor a Share-the-Fun Contest.
4. Participate in Amherst County Day at Sweet Briar.
5. Have a county-wide Social.
6. Observe National 4-H Club Week.

IV. COOPERATION WITH SGS, ASC, AND FMA.

The agent met with the ASC Committee in developing their program for the county for the coming year and has assisted in informing the farmers of the county of the operation of the various undertakings of the ASC office. This has

B. COUNTY-WIDE PROJECT

The county-wide 4-H project for the year was Electricity. Methods of instruction included regular classroom instruction during club meetings and tours.

There were 562 members enrolled in the project and there were 449 completions. Club members responded to the project by repairing 240 extension cords, giving 89 demonstrations, attending tours of power plants or electrified farms and homes. One county-wide electric achievement day was held and each club was invited to enter an exhibit representing one phase of electricity they had studied. The Auburn Senior Club received the award for the best electric display.

County winners were selected to represent us at the Electric Congress in Richmond. Delegates were Wanda May, Temperance Club and Terry Mitchell, Auburn Senior Club. Four other county winners will receive the gold medal award for their achievement. Auburn had a first place winning exhibit at the Electric Congress. One of the highlights of the entire year was winning second place in overall state-wide competition for the county reports and achievements on the project.

C. LIVESTOCK

There is a great need for more 4-H livestock projects in the county. This would require more leader and agent supervision than is possible at the present time. Club members have good opportunities to exhibit at the Lynchburg Farm Show, Romde Harris of the Clifford Club won 5th. place on his purchased Angus heifer at the Farm Show this year.

D. SPECIAL SMITH PROJECT

The Agents feel that the special purchased siring project has helped to promote a more desirable line of breeding into many areas of the county. Agents have been fortunate in obtaining an ample supply of good gilts for 4-H projects. One of the main observations made by the agents, while working with this project, is that many times the under-privileged club member will do a better job with his project than the member with adequate facilities.

1. Arranged schedule for veterinarian to vaccinate calves for Bangs.
4. Results obtained:
  - a. 787 feeder cattle were consigned by 35 farmers to the three feeder cattle sales in Lynchburg.
  - b. 116 feeder pigs have been consigned to the Lynchburg Feeder Pig Sale by 7 producers.
  - c. Two new sheep owners in the county in 1959.

## II. MINOR PROJECTS

### A. DAIRYING

1. The agent assisted one 90-cow dairyman with a complete and thorough study of the loose-housing and milking parlor system to determine the feasibility of changing from his present stanchion set up. The dairyman decided against the change.
2. A complete analysis of the farming, dairying and material handling program was made for a 60-cow dairyman by the agent and a specialist from the Extension Economics Department to determine methods of improving the management and to determine the feasibility of increasing to 90 cows.
3. The agent assisted another dairyman with the design and arrangement of loose-housing system for a 20-cow set-up.

## III. 4-H CLUB WORK

### A. SITUATION

The 4-H program for Amherst County consist of 21 school clubs. There are 562 club members enrolled. The agent has devoted a large percentage of his time to the 4-H program and approximately one-fourth of the assistant's time was spent with Amherst groups.

The overall 4-H program leaves much to be desired, primarily a very low number of individual project completions. This deficiency can be related to the shortage of Extension personnel and lack of community leaders.

- d. Encourage farmers with farms too small for profitable cow-calf operations to turn to production of feeder steers.
  - e. Increase production of quality forage.
  - f. Eradicate stray dogs.
3. How the work was carried on:
- a. An all-day meeting of feeder cattle producers held in January. The following topics were presented:
    - (1) Organization and Operation of Feeder Cattle Assoc.
    - (2) The Bangs Control Program.
    - (3) Cow-calf Program vs. Steer Program.
    - (4) The Cause of Rejects at the Sales.
    - (5) Developing More Choice and Fancy Grade Calves Through Management.
    - (6) Results of Virginia Feeder Calf Sales.
  - b. Worked with Lynchburg Feeder Calf Producers Association in expanding and improving the feeder cattle marketing program.
  - c. Used newspapers to inform farmers of the available Extension publications which will be of value in forage and livestock production.
  - d. Used 4-H pig chain to get better type swine established in the county.
  - e. Assisted with organization of The Lynchburg Feeder Pig Sale.
  - f. Conducted demonstrations on preparing pigs for the feeder sale.
  - g. Through working with County Farm Bureau, got County Board of Supervisors to enact dog ordinance and establish dog warden position.
  - h. Worked with the Directors of the Lynchburg Feeder Cattle Sales in an attempt to establish a Bull Sale.

- h. Each month mailed 208 copies of "Garden Suggestions" to interested home gardeners. Each month mailed 98 copies of "Landscape Notes" to interested home owners.
  - i. Through the use of newspaper articles, informed home gardeners of Extension publications which are available related to garden production, insect and disease control in the home garden.
  - j. Keep seedsmen, country merchants etc. posted as to recommended varieties of garden vegetables, recommended fertilization practices and recommended insect and disease control practices.
4. Results obtained:

The 1999 fruit crop yield was below normal due to poor fruit set. The quality of fruit marketed was improved. Final analysis cannot be made at this time. The manner in which the fruits hold up in storage is the test.

D. LIVESTOCK

1. Why Emphasized:

- a. The latest census figures show 35% of total farm income derived from livestock other than dairy.
- b. Pasture and hay are better adapted to the topography than are row crops.
- c. Numerous springs and small streams make water available for livestock on every farm.
- d. Numerous farmers are employed off the farm - livestock production fits well into this type program.
- e. Three good markets convenient to the county.

2. What was attempted:

- a. Increase number of cattle, sheep and hogs in the county.
- b. Get more farmers to participate in the feeder sales.
- c. Improve the quality of the animals offered in the sales, i.e. more Choice and Fancy, fewer Rejects and Medium grades.

- (5) Packaging Fruit in Appealing Containers.
  - (6) Marketing Apples and Peaches.
  - (7) ACP for Orchardists.
- b. An all-day orchard Tour and Meeting was held in July of fruit growers from Amherst and Nelson Counties sponsored by the two Horticulture Committees. Demonstrations and talks covered the following topics:
- (1) Platform and Mechanical Pruning.
  - (2) Control of Poison Oak in Orchards.
  - (3) Salvaging Old Trees.
  - (4) Orchard Fertilization.
  - (5) Irrigation.
  - (6) 1959 Spray Program.
  - (7) Marketing Apples and Peaches.
  - (8) Packaging the 1959 Fruit Crop.
  - (9) Advertising Virginia Apples.
- c. Made available to orchardists Extension publications applicable to fruit production.
- d. Worked with representatives of Virginia Apple Commission in obtaining information relative to commercial producers of fruit in the county.
- e. Worked with representatives of commercial spray material companies in their association with orchardists.
- f. Encouraged commercial orchardists to participate in ACP practices related to their operation.
- g. Secured services of Extension Specialists in conducting series of pruning demonstrations for home orchards and ornamental shrubs.

C. HORTICULTURE

1. Why Emphasized:

- a. The latest census indicated 17% of total farm income was derived from fruit.
- b. New problems are arising as the result of the following:
  - (1) Fruit production is becoming more technical and highly specialized.
  - (2) The orchardist remaining in the business are increasing their tree numbers.
  - (3) Labor shortage and expense.
  - (4) Increased cost of spray materials.

2. What was attempted:

- a. The production, harvesting, storing and marketing of quality fruit.
- b. Wise use of spray materials for the control of diseases, insects and weeds.
- c. Better management practices to improve the efficiency of labor and machinery.

3. How the work was carried on:

- a. An all-day meeting in January of fruit growers from Anahet and Nelson Counties was sponsored jointly by the two-county Horticulture Committees. At the meeting the following topics were discussed by specialist in that particular problem area:
  - (1) Fruit Break-down in Cold Storage.
  - (2) Handling Fruit From Tree to Consumer.
  - (3) Results of 1958 Spray Program.
  - (4) Changes in 1959 Spray Program.

3. How the work was carried on:

- a. Encouraged use of soil test to determine lime and fertilizer needs on each field that has not been tested in the past three years.
- b. Furnished all alfalfa growers of the county with MS-105 - Revised, "Control the Alfalfa Weevil."
- c. Furnished all farmers of county a copy of "Recommended Variety of Field Crops for Amherst County for 1959."
- d. Made available to seedsmen and fertilizer dealers information on recommended varieties and recommended fertilization practices.
- e. Encouraged dealers to attend area agronomy meetings and assist dealers and professional workers in keeping abreast of the changes occurring in field and crop management.
- f. Through newspaper articles farmers were informed of the Extension publications relating to forage production, crop production and fertilization which were available.
- g. Conducted series of meetings relating to tobacco production with emphasis on results of variety tests, improved cultural practices and insect and disease control.
- h. Set up two tobacco fertilization demonstrations showing increase in yield by using recommended amount of correct analysis tobacco fertilizer.
- i. Had representative of U. S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, assist with series of demonstrations using groundhog bombs to eradicate the groundhogs.

4. Results obtained:

- a. 428.5 acres of pasture on 71 farms were topdressed with lime and/or fertilizer as needed as result of soil tests.
- b. 583 acres of permanent pasture were seeded in 1959.
- c. Approximately 800 acres of alfalfa were topdressed and 142 acres were seeded.
- d. Four additional horizontal silos were built and put in use.
- e. The yield of fire-cured tobacco was increased to an estimated 1,350 pounds per acre.

4. Results obtained:

- a. 178,400 trees were planted on 51 farms in 1959.
- b. Eleven farmers requested Forestry ACP practices through the ASC office.
- c. 1,198 acres, on 22 farms were examined by the County Forester.

B. AGENCY

1. What Emphasized:

- a. 21% of land in county is cropland.
- b. The production of adequate forage is essential to successful livestock production. (Income from dairy and livestock production makes up 48% of the total farm income for the county.)
- c. The total fire-cured tobacco allotment for the county is 660 acres which is divided among 600 farms with an average yield of 1,287 pounds per acre in 1958.
- d. Cullies and broom-straw fields are common in Amherst County.

2. What was attempted:

- a. Improve pasture management through the use of soil tests, fertilizer and lime applications and rotation grazing.
- b. Establish more permanent pasture and reclaim more natural blue-grass pasture.
- c. Increase the production of high quality hay through improved production and harvesting practices.
- d. Increase production and use of silage.
- e. Divert idle acres to pasture or woodland.
- f. Increase the yield of fire-cured tobacco.
- g. Encourage use of Soil Conservation practices.
- h. Encourage use of ACP B-1 and A-2.

- b. Latest Census Report showed income from wood products to be only 6% of total farm income.
- c. Farmers have a convenient market for hardwood pulp and pine pulp in Lynchburg or Big Island; for veneer logs in Asherst Courthouse and for saw timber to numerous saw mill operators throughout the county.

2. What was attempted:

- a. Make farmers more aware of the potential value of their woodland.
- b. Get farmers to practice better woodlot management.

3. How the work was carried on:

a. The Extension Forestry Committee:

- (1) Sponsored and attempted to organize the Extension Forestry Contest.
- (2) Planned and conducted tour showing result of demonstration set up in 1958.

- b. Furnished landowners available publications showing methods of planting and spot-planting seedlings.
- c. Encouraged woodland owners to secure the services of Virginia Division of Forestry in marking timber before marketing.
- d. Used newspaper articles to publicize the advantages of good woodlot management.
- e. Used mass media to caution woodlot owners to be on the lookout for pine sawfly.
- f. Worked with representatives of Virginia Division of Forestry, Meade Corporation, West Virginia Pulp & Paper Company and Chesapeake Corporation in their forestry programs in Asherst County.
- g. Encouraged landowners to participate in forestry practices in the ACF.

GENERAL

1. Location

Amherst County is situated in the west-central Piedmont Plateau with the Blue Ridge Mountains on the western border.

2. Topography

Rolling to hilly and mountainous with adequate streams and springs to supply water for livestock on every farm.

3. Climate

Temperatures average about 38° in January and 77° in July. The frost free growing season extends from around April 15 to about October 25.

4. Rainfall

Annual precipitation averages about 40 inches.

5. Size of county

Total land area of 470 square miles or 296,880 acres.

6. Woodland Acreage

179,226 acres or 55%.

7. Cropland Acreage

65,155 acres or 21.8%.

8. Pasture Acreage

67,248 acres or 22.5%.

I. MAJOR PROJECTS

A. WOODEDNESS

1. Key Emphasized

- a. Approximately 77,000 acres, or 53% of Amherst County farm land is woodland.

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**ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT**

**COUNTY  
EXTENSION  
WORK**

*Virginia Agricultural Extension Service*

BAILEY G. WILKINS

**Name**

COUNTY

**Title**

**Agent**

G. D. GILLIAM, JR.

**Assistant Agent**

**Assistant Agent**

**Assistant Agent**



1959

AMHERST

**County**