

X. Social Relationships, Adjustments And Cultural Values

No special work this year.

XI. Rural Organization And Leadership Development

We expect to maintain the 4-H program but with renewed emphasis on livestock and crop project work for the boys. General activities such as camp, short course, county council and others will be continued. Four-H work will be continued in the schools and on a club to the grade basis. An effort will be made to enroll more members in the various contests.

XII. Farm And Home Buildings

Maintenance basis

XIII. Cooperation With Other Agencies

Maintenance basis

XIV. Professional Improvement

The agent will try to keep abreast of all experimental work being done in the area. The agent will read new bulletins, farm papers, study agricultural legislation so that he might pass on to Lancaster people the best information available. The agent plans to attend at least one state meeting of a commodity group not previously attended.

B. Soils

It is believed that many Lancaster farmers are not using fertilizer, lime and seed efficiently. Therefore, we plan to hold a meeting of professional workers; dealers in fertilizers, lime and seed; bankers and other rural leaders to acquaint them with this program and to enlist their help. With the help of this group we plan some community meetings, newspaper and radio publicity. Under this program soil testing will receive emphasis. Demonstrations on proper methods of taking soil samples will be given and instructions on reading results of soils tested.

VIII. Farm And Home Management

Lancaster County has been selected as a pilot county for the farm and home development approach to farm and home management problems. The Board of Supervisors and a committee of leaders have approved our plans for developing this phase of our work. A committee of three from the leader group has selected fifteen families scattered throughout the county as the initial group for farm and home development planning. Work has begun with three families and three other families are ready to begin.

The Extension agents are working on a team basis. The county agent and home agent are doing most of the farm and home development work but the assistant county agent is helping at practically all stages of the work except the early stages of explaining to new families.

We plan to help twenty families to develop rather complete farm and home plans during 1955. We expect to assist other families with less detailed plans which should lead to complete plans later.

IX. Economic Problems And Public Policy

Lancaster farmers in general are poorly informed on matters of public policy. It will be necessary to interest some group or groups before any work can be done. For the most part farmers are very complacent or unconcerned about matters of policy. We expect to make a start in 1955 on this problem. Our goal is to hold at least one series of meetings on public policy.

on time, more midsummer and winter grazing. To meet these goals we expect to cooperate with other counties in the area in promoting livestock, using the radio, newspaper, personal contacts and meetings. We expect to hold dehorning, castration and vaccination demonstrations as needed.

#### K. Dairy Cattle

There are eight dairy farms in the county. The census shows only about six hundred dairy type cattle in the county. Home milk cows continue to disappear from many farms and especially the small, part time and non-farm places. From a health standpoint the people of the county are not getting enough milk to meet minimum health standards. At a time when the national dairy outlook is not bright our eight dairymen find that their units are too small to be economical units. Dairy work will be carried on a maintenance basis which includes meetings of the dairy group, cooperation with breed groups, work with the local DHI and the usual work with home milk cow owners.

#### VI. Marketing and Distribution

The geographical location of the county is a factor in our marketing problems. Another factor is that Lancaster people have not learned to grade many of their products, particularly eggs and vegetables. The small quantities of some products, while too great to be absorbed by the local market, is difficult to market outside of the area. No special work on marketing is planned this year. Work will continue with fruit growers, canners and tomato growers and cattlemen.

#### VII. Conservation Of Natural Resources

##### A. Forestry

With the help of the Extension Forester in 1955 we plan a survey of the farm woodland situation and long time plans as needed. We then plan to submit the situation to a group of Lancaster woodland owners out of which we hope will come an active forestry committee. It is expected that this group will cooperate on a number of demonstrations, planning and killing weed trees.

so that they may be more profitable. Method and result demonstrations on vaccination against Newcastle and chicken pox will be conducted as needed. The poultry committee should be rejuvenated.

#### I. Swine

There are about twenty commercial hog feeders in the county, three purebred breeders, about twelve farmers who make a specialty of selling feeder pigs and several hundred small farms, part time farms and non-farm families with pen hogs. Erysipelas is prevalent in the lower part of the county and fairly common in the upper half. Internal parasites are common in all sections. The agent spends a great deal of time each year vaccinating hogs with Rovac and answering sick hog calls. There is a need for further educational work on the control of these diseases, particularly rotation of hog lots and the seeding of ladino pastures for hogs. There is a need for a few more purebred breeders and a better and bigger supply of feeder pigs. It is believed that expansion in the hog business offers one of the best possibilities for Lancaster farmers. Our goal in 1955 is to organize an "interest group" of hog producers which could possibly lead to feeder pig sales, more interest in better breeding, feeding and management. Our further goal is to foster the rotation of hog lots and the seeding of ladino for grazing. The Extension Swine Specialists will be called on to help with these goals.

#### J. Beef Cattle

Beef cattle are important on 35 Lancaster farms. All of these have cow calf herds and two of the number have started a steer feeding program. This feeding demonstration was started in 1953 and will continue. Records are being kept and it is believed that this demonstration will be of considerable value to other farmers.

It is believed that most Lancaster cattlemen attempt to carry too many cattle for their acreage. In many cases the acreage involved is too small for economical units. It is believed that our goal in 1955 should be to bring cattle numbers in line with feed, improve other management factors such as culling, castrating and dehorning

The Hunton Orchard near Mollusk is being used as a continuing result demonstration. This orchard is used as a demonstration of recommended pruning, spraying, fertilizing, thinning, grading and marketing. Arrangements will be made to continue this demonstration.

Two years ago a seven acre commercial vineyard was established in the county. The small fruits specialists have been most helpful in guiding this producer. This grower has now put out a commercial planting of raspberries. The same producer has a commercial planting of blueberries and is enlarging the planting this year. The agent will continue to work rather closely with this grower in 1955 hoping to find other profitable crops for farmers with small acreage.

#### G. Pastures

Most Lancaster livestock farmers have been sold on the value of ladino clover - grass mixtures. When cattle prices were high some class one land was put in these pastures. It now seems better use could be made of this land and pastures developed on less desirable land. The three year drought has reduced some good pastures to native grasses and weeds and it is planned to work with the livestock men to get better land use when establishing pastures.

Further work will be done on temporary pastures - summer and winter. This fits into the better land use program and is needed for dry weather insurance. The Agronomy Committee will cooperate on this program.

#### H. Poultry

Poultry is of some importance on about a third of Lancaster farms. In general the larger the operation the better the management. The small flocks are subject to much mismanagement and are not believed to be very profitable. Among the more common poor management practices are buying unapproved chicks, buying broiler type chicks to keep for layers, overheated, under ventilated brooder houses, no range for growing pullets, no vaccination programs, the limiting of feed, no parasite control program, no culling program and selling dirty ungraded eggs. The agent will use the radio and personal contacts to try to interest people in improving conditions of small flocks

planned to observe the soybean test and weed control experiments. The Agronomy Committee will cooperate on this program.

### 3. Crimson Clover

Maintenance basis including radio talks, newspaper articles and personal contacts giving information on cover crops and experiments.

### D. Tomatoes

Tomatoes for canning have long been an important Lancaster crop. In recent years Lancaster acreage has declined and green wrap production has increased slightly. It seems that the only way Lancaster farmers can make money on tomatoes is to increase yields of high quality fruit. Our goal in 1955 is to increase the yield of high quality fruit. We feel this can be done by proper fertilization, cultivation and insect and disease control. We plan to hold a mass meeting of tomato growers with the assistance of specialists to discuss approved production practices. We plan to conduct method and result demonstrations on insect and disease control as needed according to the season.

### E. Home Gardens

Many farm and non-farm families are without adequate vegetable gardens. In individual contact, on and off the farm, the agent plans to try to interest more people in gardens. Otherwise home garden work will be carried on a maintenance basis in 1955.

### F. Fruits

Fruit is produced commercially on about a dozen Lancaster farms. Peaches, grapes and apples are produced. For the most part these growers are doing a good job. In the past they have received considerable help from Extension agents. Now we are chiefly concerned with problems of marketing and keeping up with research developments. In cooperation with Extension horticulturists we expect to hold an Area Fruit Meeting where recent experimental work will be discussed along with other topics such as outlook, irrigation and new spray materials.

the recommended varieties, the fertilization practices and recommended spacing. Seed and fertilizer dealers will be contacted to see that they are recommending the same practices and to see that they have the proper varieties and fertilizers. A tour of the Experiment Station will be held to observe varieties, weed control and fertilization practices. The Agronomy Committee will cooperate on this program. Our goal is a county average yield of fifty bushels to the acre in 1955.

B. Small Grains

Only seventeen Lancaster farmers have wheat allotments of over fifteen acres. Some small grain is grown on about 250 farms. Small grains are grown for market and livestock and poultry feed and because it fits into rotations well. We plan no special work on small grains this year but expect to tour the Experiment Station to observe varieties, fertilization and weed killing work.

C. Legumes

1. Alfalfa

Alfalfa is being grown on very few Lancaster farms. Our goal is to increase alfalfa acreage and promote better management of established stands. We plan to put at least one successful grower on the radio to tell how he does it, assist farmers with soil tests on fields to be seeded to alfalfa.

2. Soybeans

The primary need in soybean work in Lancaster is for higher yields. Our goal is a county average yield of twenty bushels per acre for 1955. We expect to conduct three chemical weed control demonstrations in soybean fields and hold a field meeting or tours of these demonstrations. We expect to see that all the farmers in the county know all the recommended varieties, seeding dates and spacing and assist more farmers to have their soil tested for soybeans. A tour of the Experiment Station is

declining prices of farm products and increases in many things they must buy, has brought this about. Most older established farmers are in fair shape. Many young farmers have no reserves and are financed close to the maximum to which local credit agencies will go. Local credit agencies are tightening credit for purchasing machinery, equipment and operating expenses. The production of early hay, hot weather pastures, trench silos and other devices for insuring the feed supplies need further stress in 1955.

### III. How The County Extension Plan Was Developed

This plan was developed with the help of the farm commodity committees, dairy, fruit, poultry, agronomy, beef cattle and hogs, the Board of Supervisors and others interested in agricultural progress such as the editor of the county paper.

### IV. General Problems And Needs Of The County

1. There is a great need to increase the size of the individual farm businesses. In most cases this cannot be done by purchasing land.
2. On many farms there is need for better farm management, particularly better labor distribution.
3. Erysipelas and parasites in hogs are prevalent in every section of the county.
4. Marketing of most farm products produced in the county needs improvement.

### V. Activities

#### 1. Agricultural Production

##### A. Corn

Corn is an important crop in Lancaster County. It is used for hog and poultry feeding and for market. Adverse weather the past three years has resulted in low yields. We need higher yields. To meet this need we plan to continue to use the newspaper, radio and personal contacts to see that all Lancaster farmers know

## I. Brief Description Of County

Lancaster is a long, narrow county of 128 square miles located at the southeastern end of the Northern Neck. The southern border of the county is the Rappahannock River for some twenty miles, the eastern border is the Chesapeake Bay. All the county offices, including the Extension offices, are located at Lancaster Court House in about the center of the county. Kilmarnock, located about one-half way between Lancaster Court House and the bay, is the largest town and trading center for not only this county but also the lower part of Northumberland County. Almost half of the population of the county lives east of Kilmarnock. The population of Kilmarnock is about 700, the county population 8,640.

Bank officials report income of the county almost equally divided between agriculture and seafood industries.

The 1950 census shows 627 farms. Figuring on this basis the average size of our farms is 60.8 acres. However, there are so many part time farms included that the figure is misleading. There are actually about 350 full time farms in the county.

The climate, the people, and the water have attracted many retired and semi-retired residents who have acquired property near the water. There are no manufacturing plants or railroads in the county. We are dependent upon agriculture and seafood for economic health.

The county's agriculture has, for many years, been predominantly crops. Since 1945 there has been a definite trend to more livestock. There are now some thirty-five farms on which beef cattle plan an important role, eight dairy farms, commercial hog production on about twenty farms and commercial poultry flocks on about fifty farms. There are two hatcheries, one mink farm, ten commercial orchards, one commercial vineyard, thirty commercial asparagus growers, about twenty large small grain and corn farms. Soybeans are grown on practically all farms and tomatoes for canning and fresh market on about one-fourth of the farms.

## II. Items Which Will Influence 1955 Plans

Lancaster farmers have been able to make very little money for the past three years. Three years of dry weather, coupled with

PLAN OF WORK

1955

LANCASTER COUNTY

VIRGINIA

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