

VIRGINIA

COUNTY AGENT

ALBEMARLE COUNTY

1926

Index

Page

6 a 2.21	.....Advisory	1 - 2
8 a 3.7	.....Varieties	3
8 a 8.1	.....Cultural practices	4
8 d 1	..... Alfalfa	6
*8 d 15	..... Sweet clover	6
14 a 5.2	..... Suet	4
16 c 3	.....Lime	6

EdP

NARRATIVE REPORT

of

S. S. TEEL, COUNTY AGENT

ALBEMARLE COUNTY

VIRGINIA

COUNTY AGENT WORK

1926.

Table of Contents.

	Pages
1. Introduction-----	--1-2
2. Boys and Girls Club Work-----	3
3. Agronomy-----	3-4-5-6-7
4. Poultry-----	7-8
5. Dairying-----	8
6. Livestock-----	8-9
7. Horticulture-----	9
8. Miscellaneous-----	9-10

Set forth in this report are the methods and results of the agricultural Extension activities in Albemarle County for the year ending November 30, 1926.

Having distributed last year the valuable information and recommendations contained in the State Five Year Program by getting a copy in the hands of most of the representative people of the county and following the example of other counties of the state, the County Agent was instrumental in organizing an Agricultural Advisory Board composed of representative farmers and educators of Albemarle County and business men of Charlottesville, the County seat.

At the organization meeting the members of the board were divided into committees to investigate and report on present conditions, with recommendations for the proper development of the different lines of endeavor which vitally effect the agricultural interest of the county. The reports and recommendations of the committees were published in pamphlet form by the Extension Department at Blacksburg, Virginia.

After receiving the published reports copies were distributed throughout the county and a copy sent to the business enterprises of the vicinity. By the distribution of the state and county programs a knowledge of the possibilities of a state and county plan was gotten into the minds of the people, but to make the plans workable and effective the program system had to be brought in closer touch with the people and their individual conditions. Therefore before making a plan of work the County Agent made a survey of the county and found there were twenty-two communities, each one different from the other in soil, people and general environments. The County Agent also found that in almost every community some organization existed, but without any program as a guide, especially relative to agricultural pursuits. So, in making a plan of work for the year, six projects were adopted as stated in the "Table of Contents", also miscellaneous, which included Home conveniences and beautifying, Year Round Home Garden, working with existing organizations cooperate with Extension Division Specialist, County Fair, etc., which gave a splendid outline of endeavors for the county at large, but having the various communities in mind and realizing that in order to get the communities interested a community program or an adoption of portions of the county program was needed, something prescribed by the community people themselves.

Having the plan of work as a basis, community programs are being adopted by the various communities of the county, suiting the program to existing conditions.

The main difficulty in starting the machinery of a community program to work is the lack of leadership, therefore, each project adopted by a community is headed by an elected leader, whose duty will be to stimulate interest in the project by being a demonstrator in his community and assisting others.

The community program is rather a slow process, but judging from the interest manifested at some recent meetings the plan will work and the plan of work for the following year will be based on the community plan with the development of the long time program as ultimate goals.

Visiting tours within the county during the late summer has been a great stimulus as each community is interested in what is termed "county projects" such as marketing eggs, fitting and marketing lambs and marketing dairy products.

The following pages of this report will be composed of method and result achievements based on the adopted plan of work and headed by projects as herein stated in the "Table of Contents."

Project Activities

Corn, pigs, poultry and soy beans are projects of club members.

Each corn club member has been furnished with purebred seed and it has been one of the outstanding means of getting adult farmers to adopt purebred corn. One boy last year sold his crop from five acres for seed mostly to his neighbors. Another boy in another section did the same thing. One of the farmers told the county agent that that boy starting with one acre of real seed corn has been a revelation to corn growers in that community.

In nearly every instance where a boy or girl raised a purebred pig or standard bred poultry the parents adopt the breed and a marked improvement can be seen. One father said he never knew there was such a difference in "chickens" until his child joined the club and raised some standard bred chicks. Now there is one breed on the farm and the poultry is paying finally.

They soy bean members have introduced certified seed in communities otherwise the "Dad" would be planting "just soy bean" if he planted any at all.

Agronomy.

Corn.

Seed selection of corn has become a practice of most of the farmers of the county. We have three breeds of corn that prevail, Casey's Purebred, Reed's Yellow Dent and Virginia Shilage. Every farmer can identify these varieties and in most every community the seed growers are endeavoring to keep the seed pure and furnish good seed to the market. That is one of the duties of the elected community project leaders.

While the county average has been raised by the use of better seed and better methods there is still too much land being planted to corn that will not yield a profitable crop. The county agent not only advises better seed and better

methods of cultivation but advises not to grow corn on land that will not yield at least 30 bushels per acre. In most instances the cost of an application of 2-12-2 fertilizer will not exceed the cost of cultivating a larger acreage, that is not fertile enough to produce a profitable yield.

Soy bean to land that will not produce 30 bushels is much more profitable.

Wheat.

Five years ago the County Agent started some demonstrations with V. P. I. #112 and #131 wheat. The yield was above the average and much of the seed was distributed among the farmers but through carelessness in thrashing and the lack of cleaning facilities the crops would not pass inspection the following year.

Last year the county agent selected and persuaded a farmer to grow V. P. I. #131. He was so skeptical as to results he almost missed inspection as he had promised. But when the crop began to ripen he realized that he had something unusual and by sheer luck we got it inspected before harvesting time. His previous crop had averaged 16 bushels. The V. P. I. averaged 26 bushels. He sold most of the crop, 700 bushels, for seed at an advanced price and now he is a great advocate for improved seed. The seed from that crop was well distributed over the county, so in this fall seeding the #131 predominated over other varieties.

Each year the county agent conferred with local mills in getting a report relative to the appearance of stinking smut, but not until this year has the disease been an alarming factor.

This year investigation found considerable smut and the fact was extensively advertised by circular letters and newspaper publications.

One mill cooperated by constructing a barrel which farmers were allowed to use at the mill after the desired amount of seed had been cleaned.

The writer constructed a revolving barrel and demonstrated seed testing at the County Fair also held five demonstrations on farms.

The treated demonstrations will be carefully inspected during the following season.

Oats.

Our demonstrations with V. P. I. oats haven't proven equal to the Virginia Gray variety, therefore the Virginia Gray predominated over other varieties.

Rye.

Abruzzi Rye is growing in popularity each year for grain, grazing and a cover crop to be plowed under in the spring.

Owing to the appearance of the grain, being large and plump, the seed dealers sold lots of Rosen Rye for seed a few years ago notwithstanding the warning that was given by the Extension workers but a few demonstrations with Abruzzi proved the difference and now the Abruzzi is being used almost exclusively.

Pasture Improvement

There are several pasture improvement demonstrations completed that are striking results by the use of lime at the rate of 2 tons per acre and Acid Phosphate about 300 lbs. per acre.

During the extended drought strangers could identify the demonstrations by observing the difference in the growth of grass.

Crop Rotation

The adoption of a definite rotation with the use of better seed and an application of lime and a sufficient amount of fertilizer of proper analysis is recommended by the county agent in every community plan, as one of the essentials of good farming.

Soy bean.

The soy bean is by far the most popular legume in Albemarle County. This year 75 are growing seed, but owing to weather conditions the seed have not been thrashed, therefore a report of yield cannot be made.

The raising soy bean for seed has been handicapped by not being able to get them thrashed satisfactorily but through cooperation of the county agent and the small grain

thrashing machine owners we have several machines so adjusted that the work can be done satisfactorily.

There are very few farmers we found the "field" pickers satisfactory.

After trying out several means of saving soy bean seed, we find that cutting with grain binder and thrashing with properly adjusted grain thrashers is the most economical way.

Alfalfa.

Alfalfa growing has passed the experimental stage in Albemarle County. We find that a supply of humus lime and Acid Phosphate will usually give satisfactory results. One of the most outstanding demonstrations was conducted with Mr. Kennedy, manager for Young & Company, who owned a 11 acre lot adjoining the plant, on which they wished to grow hay for their work team. The land was worn out by one horse cropping to corn, but two crops of abuzzi rye turned under and a crop of soy beans put humus in the soil, three tons of lime, three hundred pounds Acid Phosphate, well prepared seed bed, and twenty pounds of inoculated Northwestern seed resulted in an abundance of choice alfalfa hay.

Sweet clover.

For a number of years our sweet clover demonstrations were disappointing. We tried to prepare the soil and seed as other grasses.

The best results have been attained by broadcasting seed on wheat or oats on a snow during February or March, a practice that has been almost abandoned with other clovers. As one farmer expressed it, "lime the land and just throw the seed away on it."

Last fall the County Agent saw that a shortage of feed, owing to the extended drought, would be a serious problem with farmers, and in discussing the matter with the District Agent we decided to advocate "catch" hay crops, something that would furnish an early hay crop. So the county agent sent out 750 circular letters and published several articles in local newspapers which resulted in a great deal of good.

One of the best results was obtained by Mr. Rynold Fox of "White Hall" farm near Scottsville, Va., who sowed the

mixture advocated, 40 lbs. wheat, 3 pks. oats and 15 lbs. vetch. The attached picture is a "snap" of little Joe Fox locking for a turkey nest in the field several days before they hay was cut. The ten acres averaged between 2 and 3 tons of excellent quality hay and was then seeded to soy beans which was also saved for hay. The small acreage supplied the farm with abundance of hay and at the same time the land was improved.

Poultry

Comfortable housing, one breed and proper feed is the advice of the County Agent to poultry raisers.

Many new houses have been erected by plan from agent and several of old houses made comfortable.

Eggs from select breeding pens of hens headed by outstanding sires has greatly improved the flocks.

Early hatched pullets has greatly increased the winter production of eggs.

A balanced ration of growing mash and laying mash has been well established in the county by the Farmers Company having installed a power mixer and mixing feeds according to formulas as recommended by the Poultry Department of V. P. I.

At the last meeting of the Albemarle Poultry Association a county wide cooperative egg marketing project was started. A member from various communities was selected to grade, pack and ship eggs for the community with the hope of starting a receiving station as soon as the volume of business justifies.

Dairying

A report of the Cow Testing Association of last year compared with previous years shows that the average production has greatly increased, which shows that cow testing will eventually cull out the unprofitable cow.

Each dairyman has adopted one of the leading breeds and has developed splendid foundation herds including many purebred cows and by using sires of meritorious ancestry and keeping heifers from the best dams they are developing some high producers.

The next step that is being strongly advocated by the county agent is economical production of growing and feeding milk producing feeds on the farms thereby cheapening the cost of production of lessening the need of high price concentrates.

The campaign, for better dairy products, conducted during the month of June, the Extension Department, Bureau of Markets and local creameries cooperating has resulted in much good. More sanitary methods and better grades of dairy products are being marketed by the producers.

Livestock

Breed cattle.

The cattle raisers are being reminded at intervals throughout the year, of the importance of better sires, by publications and circular letters. There are still too many cross breeds of cattle in the county but the improvement is very noticeable especially in uniformity.

Sheep.

The agent has gotten very satisfactory cooperation with the sheep raisers this year.

About 50% are treating for stomach worms and about 60% of the last spring lambs were castrated and docked.

Several who did not castrate have told the agent they they learned a dear lesson and have already spoken for a demonstration the coming season.

A member of the County Board of Supervisors told the agent that the sheep treating, castrating and docking demonstration that he attended was worth one hundred dollars to him.

The one day that Mr. Wallace, from the U. S. Marketing Department of Agriculture, spent with the agent last spring was very helpful to growers whom he met as well as the County Agent.

While there was no cooperative grading and shipping of lambs done the growers realized too late that they made a mistake by not doing so.

There are some expressions of interest both from the shippers and growers therefore we are hopeful of results the coming season.

Hogs.

It was proven by hog feeding demonstrations that the difference resulted in favor of the "hogging" method by about one half.

Cooperative marketing of both hogs and lambs is incorporated in the community program here to fore stated in this report.

The writer heard a farmer remark that the County agent has saved the county more money in the last two years by combating hog cholera than his salary will amount to the next ten years.

Horticulture

Fruit growing being one of the main industries of Albemarle County, Mr. P. E. Worrefield, Assistant County Agent, is employed to specialise in that work therefore his report will deal principally with that project, especially the workings of the Piedmont Virginia Fruit Growers Association of which he is secretary and manager, and large commercial orchards.

Miscellaneous

In our plan of work for 1926 an endeavor would be

made to have agricultural committees appointed from local civic organizations.

The committees were appointed and the writer recommended projects to be considered, but each arranged conference has been put off and no action has been taken.

To encourage year round home gardens the agent published a list of seed and time of planting, judging from inquiries received and improvement observed the circulated information did much good.

Usually the farmer makes a great "to do" about planting a garden in the spring of the year but before fall the garden is a neglected spot all covered with weed. A systematic planting gives a year round supply of vegetables and creates an interest in the project.

Improved small fruit for family use is another project that has given good results.

It is astonishing how little thought some farmers give to these "small" things and how much they are appreciated where once established in the plan of work for home and farm.

Each department of the county fair for the last three years has increased in exhibits and educational features.

Visitors from elsewhere said that the last fair was one of the most creditable fairs in the state.

Each visit by specialists from V. P. I. Extension Department has proven very helpful to the writer. No county agent can afford not to seek cooperation from the Specialist.

Albemarle Co. Va
1926

Charlottesville, Va.
November 24, 1926

COUNTY AGENT WORK

Mr. W. F. Moore, Ass't Director
Extension Service
Blacksburg, Va.

My dear Mr. Moore:

We are just finishing, what appears to me personally, to be a very successful year in the advancement of the raising of fruit in Albemarle County. I say this for the reason that I am of the opinion that the fruit growers of our County have taken a greater interest this year in the raising and packing of a much better grade of fruit, having taken advantage of the suggestions and help given them by our department.

At the beginning of the year 1926, after the leaves had fallen, we held a number of public pruning demonstrations in the fruit growing districts and a great many personal demonstrations. Our growers seem to realize that the pruning of their orchards was one of the necessary ways of getting the trees in a position to carry a crop of good apples, both as to ventilation and for sun light and again placing their trees in a way that spraying may be done thoroughly. This has been carried on to the extent that now there are but few commercial orchards that are not pruned yearly.

Also during the winter season we assembled orders for fertilizers used mostly in orchards, such as Acid Phosphate, Nitrate of Soda or Sulphate of Ammonia. These orders we assembled in a way that such materials could be shipped to the various stations in the County in our load lots, thus saving our growers a great expense. Also allowing the smaller growers to get their fertilizers at equally as low a price as the larger growers. During the spring we assisted the growers in purchasing over 400 tons Acid Phosphate, approximately 175 tons Nitrate of Soda and Sulphate of Ammonia.

There are not very many tons of commercial fertilizers used among fruit growers except by those who do more or less farming. In such instances we have assisted them in buying this commercial fertilizer in quantities. During such work we have held our meetings on spray and kept our growers in line for the spray schedule for the year. There are very few orchards in the County now that do not receive the regular spray schedule. These spray schedules were gotten out by the department in good time for the growers use and their attention was continually called to the necessity of doing this spraying at the proper time. We have had quite a time in convincing the grower

that the " proper time " was the time to put the spray on. Many seem to think that after they put the required number of sprays on, that was all that was necessary. They are now beginning to appreciate the fact that when the spray is put on at the proper time, better results will be had and fewer sprays will be necessary. In order to get the growers interested in their spray work, we assembled orders, devoting considerable time to them, for spray material purchasing Sulphur, Lime, Oil spray, Lead, Bluestone and others in large quantities. We assisted them in buying something over 40,000 lbs. Arsenate of Lead this last year, 130 barrels Bluestone, 2 or more cars Oil Emulsion, some 2 or 3 cars Sulphur and other spray materials in large proportions.

We held several meetings thru out the County in reference to the spray work, particularly in having this spray made at the proper time, possibly cutting out one of the later sprays in order that the apples may be clean of the unnecessary amount of spray residue, which for the first time our foreign markets have insisted must not appear on the fruit shipped abroad. we have also done considerable work on small fruits such as strawberries and raspberries and have interested a few planting grapes.

We are now seeing the fruits of our former work in the berry line as in a number of neighborhoods, strawberries and raspberries are now being raised in such quantities as to bring a considerable amount of money to our growers and establish what we think to be a rather permanent market. We have also assisted growers in arranging their cover crops for the season and a considerable quantity of seeds such as Soy Beans, Cow Peas and Clovers have been sown.

In the gathering of fruit this year a number of packing sheds were built and in several some elaborate lines of machinery were placed, in the way of brushes to clear the apples of the spray residue. These have proven very satisfactory. We have also assisted the growers in purchasing materials for packing apples such as apple boxes of which we ordered eight cars of the Standard Northwestern Box, one car load of oiled wrapping paper for box use and shredded oiled paper for barrels, six car lots of barrel caps or approximately 600,000 caps, one car of barrel liners and other materials used for this work.

Taking it as a whole, we figured we have assisted our growers in purchasing something upwards of about \$60,000.00 worth of materials this year with a saving of from 15 to 20% to the grower had he been obliged to have bought in the open market.

What I deem the most successful feature of this work has been in the grading, standardizing and inspecting of fruit. While we did considerable of this work in the years 1924-25, a much greater interest has been shown by the growers this year in this line than ever before. We had five inspection rings in the County for whom I acted as Sec-Treas. something over 100,000 bbls of apples under contract for State Inspection, having six inspectors

in this County. Aside from the State Inspection we had something like seventy five wares of apples Federal or car inspected.

One of our hard problems has been, for the last two years, to convince the buyer that it was wise to have them insist on car inspection. This has not shown itself until this year to any great extent. Now many of the buyers visiting this County insist that all apples they buy must be State or Federal Inspected and so much so that they now ask that we continue one or more inspectors in this section to inspect apples as they come out of storage in car lots. We are very glad to learn that such inspection is now being appreciated by the buyers. This in itself teaches our growers, both large and small, that they must give their fruit proper attention in order to make the grade and standards required for the State stamp.

We are also doing considerable in getting the growers and buyers together in the way of marketing. There is seldom a day that we do not receive letters from some one in some part of the country wanting to know where they can secure one or more barrels or boxes of the highest grade fruit. As an example, a short time ago I received a letter from a gentleman in Chicago asking us to get him in touch with someone who could furnish him thirty barrels of No. 1 Pippins to give away Christmas. This we did and the grower received an extremely good price for that quantity and the apples were shipped to thirty grateful recipients. Another man told me yesterday after receiving fourteen barrels of one variety, which he had given away, that he had received very complimentary letters from fourteen friends. We to-day received a letter from a gentleman in Pennsylvania asking that he be shipped three barrels of the best Virginia Winesaps and would leave the price to us. This seems very gratifying and makes us feel that our work has not been an entire failure.

Yours very truly,

F. E. Merrifield
F. E. Merrifield,
Asst County Agent.

FEM/H