

F. Farming For Better Living

We hope to develop a new program during this year known as Farming For Better Living.

This program will be sponsored by business organizations. This program is designed to help individual farm families have better farm family living. The families are encouraged to do so by their business friend. At the end of the year those families who are enrolled will be judged on how much they have accomplished toward more modern living on their farm.

The initial planning meeting for this line of work was held January 28, this year. Those in attendance for this first planning meeting were: Bob Templeton, Harry Hockenberry, and Keith Allen, representing West Penn Electric System. Terry Hicks, representing Soil Conservation, Mr. & Mrs. C. Stanley Dever, a farm family, Miss Gaye Osborne, and E. B. Jones, representing Extension work.

This group will visit farm families during the year and will encourage them to enroll in this program.

G. 4-H Club Work

The goal in 4-H Club work is to increase the enrollment of the age group in the County from 25.6% to 30 %.

Club members will be entered in the District Contests held in May. It is hoped that at least six members can attend 4-H Short Course in June. In August around 20 club members and leaders will attend 4-H Camp at Holiday Lake. The last of August Club members will be helped with their Fair exhibits at the County Fair. Boys and girls with top lambs and calves will be encouraged to take their top animals to the State Fair in Richmond. Achievement Day will be held in December.

E. Highland County Fair Organization

The County Fair Organization is the organization that brings together all working groups in the county. The organization certainly ties together the County Extension Program.

During the past six years of the Fair's existence it has been an uphill pull. People had to first learn how to operate or manage such an adventure. Then representatives of the three Puritan Clubs, the Monterey Lions Club, the County Woman's Club, the 4-H Council, the Home Agent, and the County Agent were in attendance for the first organizational meeting called for planning the 1958 Fair. The first planning meeting was held January 17, 1958. Officers of the Association were chosen: President, Glenn Hammer; Vice-President W. B. Folks; Secretary, Leslie Moyers; Treasurer, Betty Hansel; General Manager, Terry Hicks.

Dates were decided to be August 29, 30, 31. The catalog committee was elected with Dick Eagle as temporary chairman. This committee will begin work at once on the catalog. The goal is to have it ready for distribution on August 1. During March and April meetings, the following committees will be named and chairmen elected: Livestock and Field Crops; Horse Show; Jousting Tournament; Flower Show; Dance; Handicrafts, Arts & Hobbies; Food; Grounds; Traffic; Parade; Lighting; 4-H & FFA Projects; Publicity. Joe Fritchard was elected to head the publicity committee. He being the publisher of the county newspaper he is in a position to carry news of the fair's progress from week to week.

2. 4-H Club Lamb Show and Sale

This event will be sponsored again this year by the Sheep Committee.

The show and sale has been set for August 30 in conjunction with the Highland County Agriculture Fair already being planned.

3. Annual Commercial Ram Sale

The date for the Commercial Ram Sale this year has been set for September 12 again. This date will not conflict with anything else to happen during the bush month of September. It has been decided that twenty rams of the five different breeds be selected and sold in this sale. Mr. Geo. A. Allen, Extension Specialist, will assist with this sale. Advertising for the sale will be taken care of by the Northern Virginia Purebred Sheep Breeder's Association and the local organization. H. H. Terry will act as auctioneer for the sale.

D. Dairy Planning Work

Dairying in Highland County is somewhat of a minor enterprise as compared to beef cattle, sheep and wool, timber, and poultry production, yet many depend on the sale of commercial grade milk to make it necessary to do some work along this line. It is planned that the committee work closely with the Carnation Milk Company personnel to keep present milk routes working and to help get other routes established when the time presents itself.

Meetings with milk producers will be held during the year to help with management problems. Emphasis will be on more wintertime milk production; The committee's goal is to continue to work with the Virginia Artificial Breeding Association in hopes of having an organized group in this County sometime.

72

In that we would accept calves, both steers and heifers, from those herds bangs free and T. B. free. We would take steers only from herds not blood tested. This program was announced to all consignors by letter. By March 1 many herds in the County had already been tested.

C. Sheep Production Planning

The Committee for sheep production planning is composed of H. C. Lunsford, Chairman, H. B. Hooke, B. L. Armstrong, W. B. Folks, Jay Hammer, Carl Armstrong. Heretofore the main projects planned by this committee was to hold a cooperative wool pool, to sponsor the 4-H sheep program which included a lamb show and sale and to sponsor an annual commercial ram sale.

1. Wool Pool

This year a wool pool is planned. Wool will be handled during the last two weeks of May and the first two weeks in June. During the last two years there has been quite a lot of complaint among our 400 odd wool producers and consignors as to the grading and handling of our wool in selling through the United Wool Grower's Association. The committee this year is working on a solution to this problem. The demand might become so great that our wool will be pooled and stored and sold straight out to the highest bidder.

Practically a whole new group will have to be selected to work with the wool pool this year as several of our older hands will not be available this year. Older ones that we can depend on are: Grover Samples, Wm. Simmons, and Chas. Varner. We will need new clerks this year.

We do have a working agreement with Southern States Monterey Cooperative this year whereas they will take wool and pay for it at the store on days that we do not have a regular take-up.

B. Beef Cattle Production Work

People interested in beef cattle production met on the 4th day of March this year to elect a new committee for beef cattle work and decide on a program to be carried on.

New members were chosen for the committee for the coming year. Jay Hammer and Ray Eagle were elected to work with old members, Leonard Hammer, Geo. R. Swecker, Juns Rexrode, Roy Robertson, B. L. Armstrong, Lewis Shumates, and E. B. Jones, as Secretary.

Work to be done:

1. A calfhood dehorning demonstration will be held in each of the three districts.
2. A yearling steer sale will be held around the 20th of September depending on the date that the State Committee gives us.
3. Two calf sales are again planned for. One sale will be held the first week of October. This will be an all hereford sale. A second sale is planned for around the 20th of October.

Members of the Committee will group into three groups to inspect and vaccinate the calves at least thirty days before sale date. All beef cattle sales will be held in cooperation with Bath County consignors. The County Agent will tend to all necessary advertising for the sales.

The agreement the committee has with the market management is that they will handle the sale and pay all bills of work of the sales. Half of the profits of each sale less the insurance will be turned back to the local Calf Sale Committee.

In one of our committee meetings, it was decided that our organization would go along with plan No. II of the Virginia Veterinary Health Program.

their adaptability so that recommendations can be made to those who wish to grow corn. The new Virginia Hybrid #126 was tested last year and showed possibilities of being well adapted variety for this County. Provided the seed can be obtained, this variety will be tested or demonstrated again this year.

3. The Committee will sponsor a program to encourage land owners to grow more alfalfa. The program will be called "one acre of alfalfa on each farm for each buck flock". A buck flock is 20 to 25 head of ewes. A little alfalfa grown on each farm will help winter the sheep flock in better condition and will also help the dairy cows that get some good hay do a better job of winter milk production.

With newer varieties of alfalfa and better seeding practices the growing of this legume is much more successful than it used to be.

J. J. Swecker, Blue Grass, Virginia, John Hiner, Monterey, Virginia, and Carlton Hull, Vanderpool, Virginia, have agreed to test the newer variety of alfalfa Narragansett to test this varieties adaptability to conditions here.

Corn Hybrid Work By Agronomy Committee:

The Agronomy Committee will continue demonstrations with early maturing varieties of corn hybrids. This work will be carried on to keep ourselves acquainted with the more adapted varieties so that corn growers can be advised.

Four persons will be asked to cooperate and grown a different hybrid. This year Wisconsin 412: Wisconsin 355: Penn. 444, and Ohio K54 will be tested. A field trip to look over the hubrids will be conducted, during the first week in September. Stories on the success of the hybrid will be carried in our County newspaper during September.

All hay crops have increased in acreage. Alfalfa acreage in 1939 was 19 acres as compared to 617 acres in 1954. With clover and timothy there was a little increase. Old meadow hayland acres increased some. In livestock, dairy cattle, sheep, and hog production remained near the same in Highland during the period 1939 - 1954. We have around 2300 head of dairy cattle, 22,200 head of sheep, and 2400 head of hogs. Poultry numbers have increased enormously during the past few years. In fact so fast that we do not have census figures to tell the story. Beef cattle census figures are surprising. In 1939 there were 635 head of beef animals in Highland. In 1954 there were 9700 or a 34.6% increase in number during the fifteen year period. The 34.6% increase in beef cattle number is being care for on practically the same acreage of pasture and hayland. This proves that the use of lime, fertilizer, and seeding practices carried on by our land owners has certainly helped for more and better pasture and hay. In figuring the number of beef animals on hand and the acres of pasture and hayland it figures that there is one beef animal for each five acres. Yet on that five acres, there are two and one-half head of ewes and their lambs plus some dairy animals, some hogs, and some poultry.

Highland County is the third largest sheep producing County in the State with 22,200 head. We generally recommend to people to keep one ewe for each head of beef stock. Here it figures two and one-half head of ewes for each beef animal.

After studying data and trends, the committee decided to follow this line of work for the coming year.

1. To continue with lime, fertilizer and seeding demonstrations.
2. To continue testing early maturing varieties of corn hybrids for

ten County communities, two members representing the County Federation of Woman's Clubs, two members representing the County 4-H Club Council, one member from each of four civic organizations, one banker and one member from each of the special interest groups. The County Board of Agriculture will be called into session when needed. Most of the planning for the Extension Program this year has been done by special interest groups.

General Problems and Need of the County

As mentioned before, one of the main problems confronting the people of this county is the problem of keeping our population at home. During the past years all organizations have worked toward a solution. In 1950 a Chamber of Commerce was organized in hopes that through this organization's efforts some small industry would be encouraged to locate here. An industry that would give work to only 100 people would be a boost. In Agriculture there is a trend toward more poultry production and more dairying than ever before. The two mentioned farm enterprises will give more people work and more farm income and will encourage some to stay on the farm rather than seek work elsewhere.

A. Agronomy Committee Planning

The Agronomy Committee met to study the county data and trends in regard to things pertaining to agronomy this year.

By using census figures for 1939, 1944, 1949, 1953, and 1954, we find that corn acres had dropped continuously during the period. In 1939 there were 1966 acres in corn compared to 950 acres in 1954. Yield per acre has increased from 36.8 to 45.8 during that period. All small grains - wheat, oats, barley, rye, buckwheat acreages decreased along with corn. And especially wheat acreage, 1314 acres in 1939 compared to 340 acres in 1954.

Highland County Agriculture

Highland County is situated in the west central part of the Great Valley of Virginia and borders West Virginia. In 1950 there were 150,908 acres in farms, 56.7 per cent of the total area of 266,240 acres. There were 609 farms averaging 247.8 acres in size and \$8672 in value of land and buildings, according to the 1950 Census of Agriculture.

Highland is one of Virginia's most beautiful counties and contains fertile valleys and rugged mountains. Altitudes range upward from 2000 to 4600 feet above sea level. Temperatures at Monterey, the County Seat, at 3000 feet elevation, average about 30 degrees in January and 67 in July. The frost-free growing season is about 146 days. Annual precipitation averages over 42 inches.

Agriculture is the principal industry. Highland is among the leading livestock counties in the State and ranks third in the number of sheep. Livestock supplied 79 per cent of the value of farm products sold in 1949, poultry 10 per cent, forest products 5 per cent, dairy products and crops 3 per cent each. Highland is one of the few Virginia counties which produces maple sirup and sugar.

Forests cover over one-half of the County. In 1950 farms contained 67,000 acres of woodland, the George Washington National Forest 53,461 acres and the remainder is in commercial forests. Lumber, pulpwood, and fence posts contribute to the farm income.

County Organization to Plan the Extension Program

The overall advisory group to formulate an Extension Program is the County Board of Agriculture. This group is made up of two leaders from each of the

PLAN OF WORK

1958

HIGHLAND COUNTY

E. B. JONES, JR.
COUNTY AGENT