

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE WORK
IN
AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

Virginia Polytechnic Institute &
U. S. Department of Agriculture,
Cooperating

EXTENSION SERVICE
County Agent Work

PLAN OF WORK

COUNTY Isle of Wight

YEAR 1959

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Local Farm Agent

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Isle of Wight county has an area of 314 square miles. It is located in the southeastern part of Virginia - bounded by the James River on the northeast; by Surry county on the northwest; by Southampton county on the west and south - following the Blackwater river which divides the two counties; and by Nansemond county on the east.

The soils are of marine origin and are naturally deficient in plant food. The surface soils is generally a fine sandy loam - with subsoils ranging from sandy clays to sticky clays. The sandy soils drain naturally making leaching a problem to be reckoned with on such soils. The heavier soils are usually rich in organic matter and drainage - both surface and underground - is the problem to be reckoned with on such soils. The topography ranges from level to gently rolling, even though one occasionally runs into a situation that compares with mountain farms.

The climate is oceanic. The average frost-free season ranges from 190-210 days. The average rainfall is 47.8 inches annually. The long growing season and abundant - well distributed rainfall are factors that influence crop production in the county.

Market facilities are available for most crops grown in the county. Local meat packers can use all of the hogs produced locally and must rely on other hog producing areas to keep their operations going. These industries also provide outlets for surplus labor and aid in keeping our economy healthy. Feed mills provide outlets for surplus corn and soybeans. Even though cotton is sold as picked, local merchants purchase farmers stock and sell to ginners in other localities. Surplus vegetable and poultry are sold locally and in neighboring cities and towns.

SOME COMPARATIVE STATISTICS OF ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY - 1954 Census

<u>Item</u>	<u>1954</u>	<u>1950</u>
Farms (all)	1,023	1,246
Land in Farms	135,760 A.	139,327 A.
Average Size of Farms	135.4 A	111.8 A.
Average Value of Farms (Land & Bldgs.)	\$22,398.00	9,884.00
Average Value per Acre	152.31	90.57
White Operators	721	859
Non-white Operators	282	390
Full owners (No racial breakdown)	456	624
Part owners " " "	186	196
Managers " " "	2	1
All Tenants " " "	359	425
Proportion of Tenancy	35.8%	34.1%
Cash Tenants	27	35
Share-cash Tenants	20	12
Share Tenants	214	242
Crop-share Tenants	155	212
Livestock-share tenants	59	30
Other and Unspecified Tenants	29	26

Specified Facilities and Equipment

Telephones (No racial breakdown)	393	297
Electricity	965	993
Television Sets	524	
Piped Running Water	600	
Home Freezers	575	263
Corn Pickers	440	175
Motor Trucks	540	419
Automobiles	1,074	1,027
Tractor	1,464	1,075
Wheel Tractors other than Garden	1,399	1,024
No. of Horses and Mules	658	1,456
No. of Grain Combines	90	60

Farms by Economic Class

Produce sold \$25,000.00 or more	Class I	39	30
" " 10,000.00 - 24,999.00	" II	171	120
" " 5,000.00 - 9,999.00	" III	170	196
" " 2,500.00 - 4,999.00	" IV	240	259
" " 1,200.00 - 2,499.00	" V	95	223
" " 250.00 - 1,199.00	" VI	50	133

Specified Farm Expenditures

Gasoline and oil	\$ 514.00	\$373.00
Av. paid for fertilizers	1,107.00	
Av. paid for machine hire	248.00	212.00

County Advisory Board Officers

President: Mr. John Bowers, RFD #1, Zuni, Virginia
V. Pres.: Mr. Leland Chapman, RFD #1, Zuni, Virginia
Secretary: Mrs. Gracie Greene Porter, RFD #3, Windsor, Va.
Treasurer: Mr. James B. Evans, RFD #1, Carrsville, Va.
Agronomy Committee: Mr. A. S. Allmond, Rev. John D. Tynes, Mr. Calvin Allmond, Mr. Rogers Black, Mr. Lenard Clarke
Cooperative Committee: Mr. L. A. Lewis, Mr. James B. Evans, Mr. R. P. Robinson, Mr. A. R. Glover, Mr. Lee Herring
Livestock Committee: Mr. Joseph Briggs, Mr. James Slade, Mr. Walter Evans, Mr. J. S. Chapman, Mr. Benjamin Greene

A-H County Council Officers

President: Gloria L. Odum, 209 W. Washington St., Smithfield, Va.
Sec'y. Treas. _____
Reporter: Lavarna Gray, 203 W. Washington St., Smithfield, Va.

A-H Club Committee: Mr. Elgin Love, Mrs. E. B. Godwin, Mrs. Gracie G. Porter, Miss E. D. Berry, Mrs. Marion Harrell

Older Youth Exploratory Committee: Mr. Charles Jones, Mrs. Gracie Porter, Mr. Milton Shivers

Organizations that the agent will cooperate with during the year:

1. Isle of Wight T.B. & Health Society
2. " Federal Credit Union
3. " Cooperative Club
4. Red Cross, Police, Health Department
5. FHA, ASC, Soil Conservation Service
6. Commissioner of Revenue, and Internal Revenue
7. Social Security
8. Department of Welfare
9. FTA & School Band groups
10. Riverview Street Light Group

Values In/of Economical Productions

A. Mye at Home Work: This phase of extension activity has been less interesting to farmers during years of good production and good prices; nevertheless, with declining farm incomes and reverses resulting from weather conditions, we plan to try to get farmers to come back to this fundamental of extension activity. Regardless of what they make in the way of incomes, they still must eat - and everything that they can produce at home for the use of the family will reflect in more money to meet current expenses that have gone up as their standards of living has improved. We plan to try to get farmers to return to the following four line poem:

"A garden, and a cow
A smokehouse and a rooster
Twenty-five chickens and a rooster
And you'll live better than you used to."

Since food commodities such a large item in our cost of living, everything that will cut this item can be used to make other improvements in our standard of living.

B. Crop Productions

Some Trends: The acreage of peanuts declined 16% during the twenty year period - 1934 to 1954; yields during this period increased 9% a 66% increase in corn acreage with yields more than doubled; a substantial decline in the acreage of cotton accompanied by an increase in yield; an increase both in acreage and yield of soybeans, and an increase in the number of hogs and pigs.

Goals: If weather conditions permit, to try to get farmers to continue the use of the recommendations that have set the above named trends by:

1. To give them the recommendations of field crops that have been proven at the Holland Experiment Station.
2. To encourage the use of soil samples as a basis for liming and fertilizer recommendations. To provide them with information as to how to collect soil samples, to process them for the laboratory, and to explain the results to farmers taking advantage of this phase of the program.
3. To encourage at least ten soybean growers to plant some of the newly recommended Hood variety of soybeans to check against some seed that they had saved for seed.
4. Where damaged peanuts are found to recommend the use of Aldrin and Heptachlor either in fertilizers or alone to control these borers.
5. To continue to encourage farmers to plant more sweet potatoes for home use, to sell, and as a supplement to their hog feeding program.

6. To try to increase the number of families participating in the Farm and Home Development from three to ten families.

C. Livestock Production:

Even though the outlook for hogs is not very bright, we plan to stress this phase of production for the following reasons:

1. Local Hog processing industries employ much of the surplus labor in this area. If our economy is to be kept healthy, we believe that local farmers should contribute animals to help keep these industries going.
2. If farmers in adjoining counties and states can raise hogs, ship them to the area, and stay in the business, we believe that local farmers can do the same.
3. Livestock will keep farmers from putting all of their "eggs in one basket".

What we plan to do:

1. We plan to continue to explain to farmers the meat-type hog that the market demands.
2. We plan to acquaint farmers with the multiple farrowing system in order to provide a more equitable distribution of income and also to make better use of their feed and other facilities.
3. We plan to try to get at least five farmers to get meat-type boars to "grade up their hogs".
4. Additional work will be done in trying to get farmers to provide farrowing facilities and guard rails in order to save more of the pigs that are farrowed.
5. Where feed, pasture and other conditions permit, farmers will be advised to increase their number of sows.
6. General information on feeding, sanitation, breeding, and management will be given.
7. Pastures as a cheap source of feed will be stressed.

Value in and/of Economical Marketing:

Changes in the marketing processes of crops in the county make it necessary to acquaint farmers with market grades for corn, peanuts, beans, vegetable, and hogs in order for them to better understand the why's of their produce checks.

As old methods are displaced, adjustments must be made to fit into the new marketing structure. Yet there are many, unaware of the changes, who advocate outmoded methods, or ill adapted to the present situation.

Values in and/of Economical Purchasing:

Farmers must purchase supplies, equipment, land, and services in order to operate their business. Unlike other business men, farmers have had to buy at retail prices and to sell at wholesale prices. Every effort will be made to make farmers aware of their situation in this particular.

Goals:

1. To try to get ten additional persons to purchase fertilizer through the Isle of Wight Cooperative Club.
2. To get ten farmers to use soil sample returns as a basis for purchasing fertilizers rather than using general fertilizer recommendations.
3. Where farmers' economic status will permit, to encourage them to purchase water systems and/or bathroom outfits to raise their standard of living. We shall try to get at least five demonstrations.
4. To encourage farmers generally to 'shop around' for credit and to avoid causing such credit to be a master rather than a servant.

Methods to be Used:

1. We plan to use individual contacts; office calls, visits, personal contacts.
2. We plan to use group contacts: meetings, work-shops, tours, etc.
3. We plan to use letters, posters, bulletins, demonstrations, newspaper, and visual aids--slides, film--strips, motion pictures, models, etc.

Other Activities:

Farm Building - Advice upon request and general about screening, storm windows, repairs, and building plans

Home, Church, & Cemetery Beautification - upon request and general

Agricultural Economics:

1. Farm Credit - General and upon request
2. Farm Records " "
3. Social Security " "
4. Income Tax " "
5. Outlook " "
6. Public Problems " "
7. Individual Farm Planning " "

Ferestry:

1. To continue to arouse an interest in farm owners to the importance of their wood-land as a source of income.
2. To capitalize on the ASC program once they have been aroused.

Work with 4-H & Older Youth:

1. 4-H Clubs will be organized at Trinity, Lawnes, Windsor, Bridger, Camptown.
2. To represent at many State-wide meetings with as large a delegation as the clubs can afford to send.
3. To try to furnish 30 animals for the Junior Market Hog Show & Sale.
4. To aid in trying to get sweet potatoes started as a 4-H project and to exhibit at least five entries in the Tidewater Sweet Potatoe Show when and if plans for it materialize.
5. To assist with an Achievement Day in October.
6. To continue to explore the possibilities of organizing church sponsored Older 4-H Groups in Ivy Neck, Rushmere, and Shiloh church groups.

County-wide Activities:

1. County Advisory Board Meetings - December, February, July or August, September
2. County Farmers Conference - February
3. Livestock Meeting - March
4. Health Emphasis - X-ray Clinic, etc. - April
5. Water Emphasis Month - May
6. Tour of Experiment Station - August
7. Other Tours or activities as may be needed or required
8. 4-H County Council Meetings - December, February, March, July, October.

Calendar of Activities:

December - Evaluation, Assisting Secretary, Farm Records

January - Plan of Work, Tax returns, Social Security, Communication meeting

February - A-H Council, County Farmer Conference

March - Livestock Meeting, Fertilize recommendations, Tax returns,

Demonstration Community

April - Health Emphasis - X-ray Clinic etc.

May - Water System Emphasis Month

June - Short Course, checking demonstrations

July - Planning Fall Activities, Vacation

August - Wild-Life Conference, Tours, Exp. Station, etc.

September - State Advisory Board, Checking Demonstrations, etc.

October - Achievement Day, Tidewater Fair, Agents Meeting

November - Annual Reports, etc.