

EXTENSION PLAN OF WORK

FOR

WASHINGTON COUNTY

1960

W. H. Groseclose
County Agent

J. W. Derting
Assistant County Agent

I. County Situation

Washington County's economy is based primarily upon agriculture. The average size farm is slightly under 70 acres. At present there are about 4200 burley tobacco allotments in the county and the sale of this commodity accounts for about 50% of the farm income. Dairying accounts for approximately 20% of the farm income with the remainder divided between livestock and specialty crops.

The industrial plants of Bristol furnish employment for most of the part-time farmer, although many are employed at plants in Saltville, Damascus and Abingdon.

Washington County, and particularly Abingdon, serves as a marketing center for farm products for the surrounding counties. Eight tobacco warehouses market a major portion of the tobacco raised in the area. Two livestock auction markets; one in Abingdon, and one in Bristol, serve Smyth, Russell, Scott and Washington counties, as well as nearby counties in Tennessee.

The Tri-State Milk Producers Association transfer station handles the grade A milk produced in the four state area.

II. Agriculture Trends

The removal of farm land from production by the construction of new homes and new highways could run as high as 15,000 acres by 1975. The industrial growth of the area should be encouraged by the expansion of the Appalachian Power Company's Carbo plant in Russell County and the construction of three 3 million dollar high schools in this county.

The size of farms give little indication of increasing in size; however, more and more farmers are seeking part-time off the farm employment.

Dairying is continuing to grow. The combination of dairying and a small tobacco allotment has afforded the small farms a more intensified operation than beef cattle and sheep. As a result sheep numbers are declining and beef cattle appear to have leveled off after an increase in past years. There has been a definite switch from the Hereford breed to Angus, especially in cow and calf herds.

Poultry enterprises are undergoing an adjustment period. There are more empty poultry houses in the county than there are ones in operation. The hatching egg contracts that were so attractive a couple of years ago have been reduced to 8¢ per dozen where the farmer only furnishes labor and housing. This contract was 15¢ per dozen less than 18 months ago. Commercial egg producers that market their eggs directly to the consumer are holding their own.

The production of silage corn and alfalfa is continuing to increase and more and more grade A dairymen are purchasing all of their concentrates.

III. Problem Areas and Programs Planned to Help Solve Them

1. Dairying

Problems:

- A. Outlet for excess heifers on some Grade A farms
- B. Mastitis prevention and use of drugs.

- C. The use of insecticides.
- D. Many herds on DHIA with low production.

Programs:

- A. Hold an artificially sired heifer sale. (Though some farms have an excess of heifers, there is a local demand for good heifers.)
- B. Hold two barn demonstrations on mastitis prevention and send the mastitis control pamphlets prepared by the Dairy Extension Department to every producer in the county each month. Explain the proper use of antibiotics at the barn demonstrations.
- C. Send a circular letter to dairymen on approved insecticides.
- D. Make personal visits to lower 1/3 of DHIA members to discuss problems.

Goals:

- A. Market 50 heifers through artificially sired heifer sale.
- B. Have 100 dairymen attend barn demonstration and send 100% of producers mastitis circular.
- C. Have 95% of DHIA members above state average.

2. Livestock

Problems:

- A. Lack of organized sale for Angus feeder calves.
- B. The per centage of choice and fancy calves marketed at annual feeder calf sale has decreased during past years.
- C. Wool marketing lacks organization.

D. Foot rot has caused some sheep producers to go out of business.

E. Lack of fall market for feeder pigs.

Programs:

A. Hold a meeting of Angus cow and calf producers to evaluate interest.

B. Encourage by personal contact the feeder calf consignors to attend registered bull sales, and attend these sales to assist in selection of sires.

C. Hold wool pool committee meeting to explain advantages and disadvantages of all the Southwest Virginia wool pools selling their wool on one day at public auction.

D. Hold two foot rot control demonstrations.

E. Hold meeting to discuss the possibility of a fall feeder pig sale.

Goals:

A. Hold an Angus feeder calf sale if interest warrants.

B. Place 15 registered sires on feeder calf consignors farms.

C. Have wool fleeces consigned and participate in area wool organization.

D. Have 100 sheep producers attend foot rot demonstrations.

E. Hold fall feeder pig sale if interest justifies.

3. Agronomy

Problems:

A. Alfalfa weevil population has reached a level where considerable damage to the crop can be expected.

B. Chickweed in alfalfa has become a major pest.

C. Silage corn acreage is showing a steady increase; however, the yields and quality leaves something to be desired.

D. It has been estimated that area farmers lost over \$1,000,000 (one million) by sticking tobacco in the field, mix grading and selling wet tobacco.

Programs:

A. Write each farmer in the county a circular letter to explain the recommended control of alfalfa weevil, as well as placing three alfalfa weevil control plots in different sections of the county. A tour will be held on these plots during the summer.

B. Place demonstration control plots for chickweed in conjunction with the alfalfa weevil demonstrations.

C. Start a silage corn club.

D. Hold a meeting in August of 100 farm leaders to discuss losses from sticking tobacco in the field, mix grading and sale of wet tobacco. This will be followed by an individual letter to each tobacco producer outlining proper harvesting practices. During October six grading demonstrations will be held throughout the county.

Goals:

A. Have 30% of alfalfa treated for alfalfa weevil control.

B. Have 10% of alfalfa treated for chickweed control during the winter of 1960-61.

C. Have 15 farmers in a silage corn club.

D. 100 farm leaders to attend a barbecue lunch to discuss burley harvesting problems. Reduce the practice of sticking tobacco in the field by at least 50% and have at least 300 farmers attend grading demonstrations.

4. 4-H Clubs

Problems:

A. Consolidated high schools are making it more difficult to schedule 4-H meetings.

B. Shortage of adult leaders.

Programs:

A. Start two out of school 4-H clubs on a trial basis.

B. Hold special training meeting for adult leaders in out of school clubs.

C. Continue monthly meetings for in-the-school clubs.

D. Hold one fall achievement day and a spring awards day.

E. Conduct or assist with the following livestock shows, 4-H lamb show, county and Bristol Junior fat calf show, county and Bristol Junior fat hog show.

Goals:

1. Enter 12 baby beeves in Bristol and County shows.

2. Enter 35 fat hogs in Bristol and County shows.

3. Take a District Dairy Herd to State Fair.

4. Have 300 members attend Bristol Achievement Day and Spring Awards Day.

5. Train a dairy, livestock and soils judging team.

6. Enter and sell 50 lambs in special 4-H lamb show and sale.
7. Have 5 members enter speaking contest.
8. Have 15 members enter share the fun contest.
9. Hold tractor maintenance school and driving contest.
10. Hold a leaders and officers training meeting.
11. Send 40 boys to 4-H club camp; send 1 boy to TVA Natural Resources Camp.
12. Place 5 gilts from 4-H pig chain in new community.
13. Hold two county council meetings.
14. Send representative to Electric Congress.
15. Send representatives to State Short Course.
16. Hold two Honor Club meetings.
17. Enroll 500 members with 700 projects.

Hold the following special events: county public speaking contest, Share the Fun program, tractor maintenance and tractor driving contest, and rural electric school.

5. Unit Test Demonstration Program

Problems:

- A. The lack of fertilizer available makes it difficult to keep 20 active demonstrators.

Programs:

1. Hold annual meeting.
2. Have IBM records on 4 demonstration farms.
3. Use farms to demonstrate varied use of fertilizer rates for different crops.

Goals:

1. Have 16 active demonstrators.
2. Complete record books on 100% of farms.
3. Have 4 members attend Valley Association Meeting.
4. Have 12 members attend Southwest Virginia Agricultural Association meeting.

Miscellaneous:

1. Furnish bulletins and farm plans on request.
2. Have 1000 soil samples tested and recommendations given.
3. Meet with ASC County Committee and assist with program.
4. Have 40,000 tree seedlings set out by 4-H members.
5. Assist Holston River Soil Conservation District with program.
6. Assist with Tobacco Festival.
7. Publish news articles and give weekly radio broadcasts.
8. Assist Southwest Virginia 4-H Club Center board.
9. Assist four community clubs with planning and carrying out their programs.
10. Work with breed association with shows and sales.
11. Advise artificial breeding association.
12. Initiate a mechanized forage handling program.

1960 Calendar

December:

1. Hold barn demonstrations on mastitis control.
2. Assist with the preparation of the Holston River Soil Conservation District annual report.

January:

1. Attend State SCD Association meeting.
2. Hold educational program while experimental tobacco is displayed.
3. Requisition Unit Test Demonstration fertilizer for spring seeding.
4. Set up 5 new IEM farm records.
5. Hold forestry tour for professional workers.

February:

1. Prepare plan of work.
2. Attend State feeder calf sale meeting.
3. Start 4-H tractor maintenance school.
4. Hold wool pool sale committee meeting.
5. Submit 4-H All Star recommendations.
6. Work with analysis of IEM records.
7. Hold DHIA analysis meeting.
8. Start chickweed demonstrations.

March:

1. Start mechanized forage handling program.
2. Hold Angus feeder calf producers meeting.
3. Start alfalfa weevil demonstrations.
4. Attend Bankers Convention.
5. Hold 4-H camp planning meeting.
6. Assist with Tri-State Hereford sale.
7. Hold 4-H public speaking contest (county).
8. Start 4-H Rural Electric project meetings.
9. Continue 4-H tractor maintenance project.
10. Plan 4-H Spring Awards Day.

April:

1. Hold 4-H Spring Awards Day.
2. Hold county 4-H baby beef show.
3. Southwest Virginia Agricultural Association meeting.
4. Hold 4-H Share the Fun program.
5. Start silage corn club.
6. Special 4-H Guernsey sale.
7. Assist with State Holstein sale.
8. 4-H sheep shearing school.

May:

1. Wool pool.
2. 4-H lamb show and sale.
3. 4-H District contests.
4. Plan artificially sired dairy heifer sale.

June:

1. Two 4-H camps.
2. 4-H Short Course.
3. Fontana Natural Resource Camp.
4. Second 4-H lamb show and sale.
5. Hold tour of alfalfa weevil and chickweed demonstrations.

July:

1. Institute of Rural Affairs.
2. Commercial ram sale.
3. Plan burley tobacco meeting.
4. Plan artificially sired heifer sale.
5. Aid in identifying insects and diseases.
6. Requisition Unit ~~Test~~ Demonstration fertilizer for fall seedings.

August:

1. Extension Conference.
2. Hold Burley Tobacco harvesting meeting.
3. Hold artificially sired dairy heifer sale.
4. Score silage corn club members.
5. Hold 4-H county and area fat pig show.

September:

1. Complete 4-H records.
2. Steer sale begins.
3. Hold conservation program for Civic leaders.

October:

1. Bristol 4-H Achievement Day.
2. Tobacco Festival.
3. Hold six tobacco grading demonstrations.
4. Community club judging.
5. Feeder calf sales.

November:

1. Annual report.
2. Tobacco sales begin.
3. Hold fall feeder pig sale.
4. Special interest committee meetings.

Soil Stewardship. Farmers will be reminded that their Maker only "loaned" them their farms during their lifetime and it is their responsibility to leave it in better shape than they found it.

Goal: Churches to hold Soil Stewardship Programs: 1960: 15 1965: 25

Method:

- a. Meet with ministers groups and explain Soil Stewardship Program

III. Conservation Week

Special emphasis on conservation will be urged during Conservation Week. This will be accomplished through the use of mass media. A special program, at the regular October meeting, on Conservation with the presidents of all civic clubs, Chamber of Commerce and business leaders invited, will familiarize the non-farm public with the problems of conservation and how each of them is affected.

IV. Conservation Education in Public Schools

The district will furnish one scholarship for county teachers to attend the Conservation Short Course and nominate two teachers to attend. They will be asked to report on their trip at a regular district meeting.

V. Land Appreciation

The district will furnish an appropriate plaque or trophy to the high individual in the county 4-H land appreciation judging contest. This incentive will tend to make our youth more conscious of the importance of our basic resource, soil.

VI. Annual Report

The district will publish an annual report at the end of each year to familiarize the public with the accomplishments of our district.

VII. Equipment

The district will continue to furnish tank forms for the livestock tanks and the sheep's foot roller to cooperators to assist them in accomplishing their projects. This will be done at a minimum cost to the cooperators.

VIII. Tobacco Festival

The district will arrange for an educational exhibit on Conservation for the Tobacco Festival. Over 5,000 people attend this event. The exhibit should be on a practice that could be applied to the farm.

IX. Goodyear Award Program

The district will participate in the Goodyear Awards Program. This award encourages the districts to have a more dynamic program and through a competitive spirit further conservation work throughout the state.

CALENDAR

January:

- I. Decide upon annual plan of work.
- II. Supervisors attend State SCD Association Meeting.
- III. Encourage farmer to sign up for conservation practice.

February:

- I. Hold tree planting demonstration in cooperation with Forestry Service.

March:

- I. Order soils judging trophy.

April:

- I. Plan Soil Stewardship emphasis program and order necessary materials.
- II. Present trophy to 4-H member for soils judging.

May:

- I. Follow up on Soil Stewardship Week.
- II. Select teachers to attend Conservation Short Course.

June:

- I. Send Senior 4-H member to Conservation Camp.

July:

- I. Send teacher to Conservation Short Course.

August:

- I. Hold a tour for business men to observe conservation work on farms.

September:

- I. Plan Conservation Week program.
- II. Have teachers attending Conservation Short Course report to supervisors.
- III. Prepare conservation exhibit for Tobacco Festival.

October:

- I. Put Conservation Week program into operation.
- II. Have educational exhibit at Tobacco Festival.

November:

I. Assemble annual report.

December:

I. Publish annual report.

II. Encourage farmers to order tree seedlings.