

VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

RURAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF WORK

July 1, 1959 - June 30, 1960

<u>Major phases of project or subdivisions of project covered</u>	<u>Name of Workers</u>	<u>Percentage of time devoted to entire project by each worker</u>
Rural Development	Eugene L. Seay, Jr.	25%
	Mrs. Georgia Wilkerson	25%
	Herbert L. Jones	100%
	Mrs. Ann G. Sanderson	100%
	G. C. Price	25%
	Mrs. Glenna A. Runion	25%
	Hubert S. Widener	10%
	G. M. Adams	100%
	Miss Rosalind J. Harman	100%

Date submitted: May 30, 1959. Signed: W. H. DeLoach
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 Director of Extension

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I. Situation and Problem Statement

The State Rural Development Committee selected Carroll County and Cumberland County as pilot counties for the Rural Development program. Some of the basic reasons for their selection were that both were typically rural counties with small farm holdings, areas of rather unproductive land and inadequate opportunities for off-farm employment. Carroll County is located in Southwest Virginia and is classified as a "substantial" low-farm income county. Cumberland County is in the East Central part of the State and is classified as a "moderate" low-farm income county.

More specific information relating to the two counties follows.

Cumberland County

Cumberland County has a total population of 7,252. This is 44.3% white and 55.7% non-white. The population is showing a slightly downward trend. The median family income in 1950 was \$965. Seventy-five percent of the families had an income of less than \$2,000. The average size of farms has not changed significantly, averaging 122 acres in 1955. Eight-hundred and thirteen of the farms harvested less than an average of fifty acres of crops in 1955. Only 199 farms sold more than \$2,500 worth of farm products in 1955. Much of the county has an unproductive soil type and best land use is far from ideal. The county is not served by a railroad, but does have a relatively good highway system.

Carroll County

Carroll County has a population of 26,695, of which 98.5% is white and 1.5% non-white. The population has shown a slight increase in the last twenty years. The median family income was \$1,384 in 1950. Sixty-seven percent of the families had an income of less than \$2,000. In 1955, the county had 3,757 farms; the average size being 61.9 acres. The number of farms has shown a decline since 1950. However, the size of farms has remained relatively stable. Three-thousand one-hundred sixteen farms harvested less than fifty acres of cropland in 1955. In 1955, only 152 farms sold more than \$2,500 worth of farm products. The county has a good highway system, but very inadequate rail service. The population pressure on the land is tremendous and farms are generally too small for maximum efficiency and proper capitalization. Employment opportunities are limited.

Initiating the Program

After being selected, the objectives of the program were explained to local leaders of each county who accepted the program providing some additional assistance could be obtained to promote it. Funds for this purpose were made available January 1, 1957, and some additional assistance was secured near that date. County Extension staffs were acquainted with the objectives of the program and preliminary plans were developed at a meeting of the administrative staff, district agents concerned and county staff members.

The next step was to hold a meeting in both counties of agency representatives. This resulted in plans for a meeting of rural and urban leadership, at which objectives of the program were outlined, the situation in both counties was discussed in broad terms, and plans for the establishment of county rural development committees were made.

Subsequently, sub-committees were named in both counties to study the resources, to pinpoint problems, to point out opportunities and to develop programs leading to the solution of problems. Much time since the inauguration of the program has been devoted to this type of work, recognizing that it was basic to action programs.

Assistance was obtained in getting factual information from many state agencies and business and industrial organizations. The brochure entitled "Economic Studies of Cumberland County" lists 17 committees that were active in the gathering of information needed in the preparation of it. Carroll County proceeded in much the same way with some studies still under way.

In the agricultural phase of the Rural Development program, Extension agents have enlarged on the numbers and use of special-interest committees to get at the problems of farm people and develop more effective programs leading to their solution. Among such committees are those for poultry, livestock, agronomy, forestry, dairy, farm and

home lighting, horticulture, youth, and certain phases of home economics. The County Agricultural Extension Boards coordinate and approve the various programs developed.

Major Problems for Consideration During the Year

The following problems in agriculture will be considered during the year:

- A. Inadequate incomes of farm families resulting largely from:
 - 1. Lack of resources to adjust to present conditions.
 - 2. Lack of intensive types of enterprises for small farms.
 - 3. Failure to use the latest technical information.
 - 4. The need for the development of improved markets for some commodities.
- B. Lack of off-farm employment opportunities.
- C. Need for improvement in services in education, health, communications, highways, recreation, and the like.

II. Work to be Done and Methods and Procedures

A. Agriculture

- 1. The needs of the people in many fields have been studied through special-interest committees. Such committees study county resources, problems, and opportunities in their respective fields and make recommendations which provide the basis of educational programs. The particular fields that have been studied are agronomy, livestock, dairy, forestry and poultry.

2. Inventory of Soil and Water Conservation Needs

Under the leadership of county technicians of the Soil Conservation Service, the inventory of soil and water conservation needs will be completed during the year. Carroll and Cumberland Counties were used as pilot counties to get this program under way.

3. Farm and Home Management

Extension agents will assist as many individual farm families as possible in appraising their resources. They will work out various alternatives that might improve the situations of families. The alternatives may include a re-organization of the farm business, securing part-time employment, or moving to a new situation outside of farming. After a thorough study of alternatives, each family will make its own decision as to changes.

Farm management schools will supplement the individual type of approach. These are designed particularly for full-time farmers.

4. Intensification of Farm Operations

Farmers who are adapted to intensifying or expanding their operations will be encouraged to do so and will be provided with the best information available. Some of these will be used as pilot units.

5. Crops

The possibilities of expansion of such cash crops as aromatic tobacco and soybeans will be further explored in Cumberland County. In both counties, programs will be conducted for the improvement of pastures and forage crop production. An increased acreage of high yielding forage crops, particularly alfalfa, will be emphasized.

6. Woodland Management

Farm forests occupy a high percent of land in both counties. Good woodland management will provide increased income to farmers and also provide more employment. Emphasis will be on increased plantings and improving present stands. Methods to be used are management demonstrations, tours, junior activities, and pilot demonstrations.

7. Livestock

In dairying, emphasis will be on improving foundation stock and getting more herds on production testing. The incentive for improving meat animals will be provided by selling on a graded basis, when practical, and working individually with those interested in improvement practices.

8. Marketing

For most farm products markets are reasonably good. In general, efforts will be directed to producing

the quality of products that meet market demands. However, there are some areas, such as in marketing apples and vegetables in the Carroll area, that need special attention.

There is also a need of better markets in both counties for hardwood. An egg grading plant at Farmville has helped the egg marketing program.

B. Employment Opportunities

Studies made indicate a surplus of labor in both counties. A recent survey in the Carroll-Grayson area indicates that around 4,000 men and women are employed in industries within these counties or in nearby counties. The last survey indicates an additional labor force of 2,000 people in the area. The Hillsville-Galax Chamber of Commerce is working to secure additional industry. A brochure has been prepared outlining opportunities for industry in the area including available sites for plants.

The Carroll-Grayson area is also working on the establishment of a trade-technical school. The establishment of such a school would enable adapted students to learn a specific trade or skill and thereby qualify for positions in industry outside the area as well as within. The Carroll-Grayson Industrial Commission is taking the lead in developing the project.

In the field of industrial development, the Cumberland County Committee will:

1. Distribute the economic study brochure to interested firms and industries.
2. Investigate the possibilities of locating such small industries as rock crushing and charcoal production.
3. Make the services of the industrial committee continuously available to any industries interested in locating in the county.

C. General Problems in Improving Services

1. Schools

Both counties through appropriate committees will continue to study school problems and recommend changes. This involves consolidation, transportation, curricula, and drop-outs at the high school level.

2. Beautification

Both counties will continue beautification programs, both in rural communities and in towns. This will include homes, public institutions, churches, businesses and industrial establishments, highways, and the like. This will be carried out through community and other organizations by such methods as clean-up campaigns, publicity, and provision for trash disposal.

3. Recreation

Improving recreational facilities will be given attention in both counties. Committees will work on improving picnic facilities, and providing playgrounds and athletic equipment. Recreational committees will work through school boards and other organizations to carry out programs.

4. Public Services

Studies have indicated needs in services, such as better roads and telephones, in some areas. Committees will take appropriate action with those who are in a position to improve such services.

5. Farm, Home and Institutional Lighting Program

This program is designed to improve lighting for study, work and play. It includes lighting for churches, schools, farms, and homes. It will primarily be promoted by the Extension Service, cooperating with other agencies and organizations.

6. Education in Services Available to People

In Carroll County, particular educational work will be done to better acquaint residents with the services available to the people of the county. This will include: employment service, health and public welfare departments, Soil Conservation Service, Farmers Home Administration, National Farm Loan Association,

Agricultural Conservation Service, Agricultural Extension Service, Forestry Service, and Social Security Administration.

7. Other Activities

In both counties much time will continue to be devoted to work with resource development committees and special committees in analysing situations, finding problems, and developing programs designed to solve problems. One of the problems, of course, is resistance to change. Inspired leadership, patience, and devotion are required to overcome this resistance.

There is no single answer to most of the problems.

It will take coordinated effort over a period of years to show substantial improvements in either Carroll or Cumberland County.

III. Educational Materials--Publications and Visual Aids

Both counties have completed brochures which contain much information of value to people in the county and to individuals or organizations that may be interested in moving to them. No other publications are planned for the year.

Visual aids in the form of charts will be prepared, as needed, for presentation of facts to committees and at general meetings. Assistance will be given committees in the preparation of reports.

Informational material in the form of surveys and statistical data will be secured from State and Federal agencies, Chambers of Commerce, and industrial organizations for local use. Special posters, leaflets, and circular letters for use in activities, such as clean-up and beautification campaigns, will be prepared at the local level.

No special educational publications are planned for the year. The vast number of publications now available, covering a wide range of subjects, will be adequate to take care of almost all the needs in the fields of agriculture and home economics. County personnel, with the assistance of specialists, will analyze and adapt the most recent results of research to local conditions. These results will be gotten to the people through group activities, mass media, and personal contact.

Much visual aid material in the form of movies and slides prepared on the State level is available, as well as such material obtained from the USDA and industry. This will be screened for local use.