

PLAN OF WORK

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County Agent

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I. GENERAL SITUATION

Louisa County is located in the central Piedmont Plateau and is almost wholly in the Pamunkey River Basin. The divide between the main forks of the Pamunkey River, North and South Anna Rivers essentially bisects the county from northwest to southeast. The extreme eastern portion of the county is drained by tributaries of the James River. North Anna River forms the north eastern boundary of the county. Fairly large supplies of surface water are available from both North and South Anna Rivers during periods of normal rainfall. However, the flow of these rivers becomes extremely low during periods of prolonged drought. Storage dams would be needed to furnish dependable supplies continuously.

In 1954 land in farms totaled 173,583 acres, 53% of the countys' area of 328,960 acres. According to the 1954 census there were 1371 farms which averaged 126.6 acres in size, \$8,999.00 in value of land and buildings. Land in farms has been steadily declining since 1940, when 215,701 acres were recorded, and number of farms has dropped 43% from the peak number of 2,415 in 1935.

The land is rolling and altitudes vary from 200 to 500 feet above sea level. The temperature averages about 35 degrees in January and 75 degrees in July. The frost free growing period is approximately

182 days. Annual rainfall averages about 40 inches. July and August are normally the wettest months and November the driest.

The county has a wide variety of soil types. The most important listed in order of importance are:

Cecil
 Appling
 Durham
 Tatum
 Mason
 Iredell
 Chawacola

These soils respond well to lime, fertilizer and good management. Agriculture is the leading industry. There are few manufacturing concerns, but many people are employed in plants in Charlottesville, Richmond, Fredericksburg and Orange. The county has a well-balanced system of agriculture, and farm income is derived from many products. Poultry, including chickens, eggs and turkeys, leads in the value of farm products sold, with about 24% of the total, and is followed closely by cattle and calves which provide about 22% of the total. Milk sales have more than doubled during the past 10 years, and this product ranks third with slightly more than 16% of the total.

Louisa County in 1954 was the leading county in the state in the production of sun-cured tobacco and the crop was fourth in value of farm sales with about 12% of the total. Since 1954 the Soil Bank Program has drastically affected the planting of tobacco. With a county allotment of 1125 acres in 1957 growers signed up 571.22 acres in the Soil Bank and planted 454 acres. Although the sign-up for 1958 is not complete, the prospects are that about 600 acres will be placed in the Soil Bank and about 400 planted. If the Soil Bank Program continues and growers continue to find off farm employment

plentiful it seems only a matter of time until present marketing facilities, especially in Richmond, will no longer be able to operate and growers in this area will have a serious marketing problem, which, when added to all the other factors may reduce acreage grown to the vanishing point within the next few years. Grains, hogs, and forest products are also important sources of farm income.

About 60% of all farms are classed as part-time. Such farms include those that sold less than \$250.00 of farm products, and those with value of sales of \$25.00 to \$1199.00 and the operator reported 100 days or more of off-farm work, or reporting other income exceeding the value of farm products sold. Many of the farms produce much of their food requirements.

About 70% of the countys' area is wooded and about 94,000 acres of woodland are on farms.

From the standpoint of farm income all farm products sold in 1954 brought \$1,190,000 as compared to \$1,595,000 sold in 1949. The drop in farm income was in part a reflection of lower prices, but partly due to a prolonged drought. Approximately eight-tenths of this income came from four types of farm income which have already been mentioned.

Even though expansion of the countys' livestock and poultry industry have been halted temporarily by low prices and drought, it is the feeling of most farm leaders that the countys' soils, climate and geographic position relative to markets add up to a most favorable situation which is a basis for the production of livestock, livestock products and poultry. These activities, it is felt, should be encouraged to develop on a sound basis by every means possible.

High yields of grains, forage crops and pasture are highly essential, consequently, the efforts of the County Extension Agent plus all the cooperation obtainable from every available source will be directed in 1958, toward the following long-time objectives:

1. Increasing the average per acre yields of grain and forage crops.
2. Expanding the acreage and building the fertility of permanent pasture.
3. Improving the quality and increasing the population of livestock in the county.
4. Increasing marketing efficiency and facilities by working with Marketing Cooperatives.

These objectives have been planned and are to be achieved in cooperation with county committees dealing with Agronomy, Livestock, Cooperative Marketing and with local county organizations.

II. AGRONOMY

Situation

A meeting of the County Agronomy Committee was held on February 10th, and on the basis of available information the four most important problem areas in Louisa County relative to Agronomy are as follows:

1. Soil Testing and Use of Lime

Louisa County farmers are using on the average about 1/6 ton per acre per year. Fewer than 200 farmers are testing soil as the basis for applying lime. The Agronomy Committee feels that the number of farmers using soil tests should be greatly expanded and that the use of lime should be doubled.

Objective

- a. To increase the use of lime 100% during next five years.

Goal

- a. 300 farmers testing soil and applying lime as indicated by soil tests.

Methods

- a. Prepare newspaper articles setting forth situation with respect to liming needs.
 - b. Place posters in seed and fertilizer stores.
 - c. Soil tests will be made by Extension Service and ASC.
 - d. Personal contacts will be made by Extension Service, ASC and SCS.
2. Cropland and Permanent Pasture acreage as related to livestock population.

Situation

It was the considered opinion of the Agronomy Committee that an average 1.4 acres of cropland and 2.4 acres of pasture per animal unit is too low to provide adequate grain and forage unless the land is above average fertility.

Objective

- a. To double the acreage of pasture topdressed during the next five years.

Goal

- a. 300 farmers topdressing pasture

Methods

- a. Prepare and distribute Pasture Bulletins.
 - b. Prepare and distribute Varietal Recommendations.
 - c. Place Pasture Posters in seed and fertilizer stores.
 - d. Pasture Tour will be sponsored by Ruritan Club.
3. Alfalfa

Situation

Since no other perennial forage crop will produce more forage or is as drought resistant as alfalfa when grown on adapted soil, it was the opinion of the committee that acreage should be expanded and topdressing old stands increased. This should

be accomplished by an intensive educational program.

Objectives

- a. To increase alfalfa acreage to 3000 acres during the next five years.
- b. Topdress 75% old stands of alfalfa during year.
- c. Spray 90% of present acreage for control of alfalfa weevil.

Methods

- a. Copies of recommended varieties mailed to farmers in February.
 - b. Mailed circulars in February listing relative cost of producing 100 TDN from different forage crops.
 - c. Soil tests by Extension Service, SCS and ASC.
 - d. Set up 4 five year rotation demonstrations, using corn, small grain and alfalfa.
 - e. A county-wide tour of alfalfa and pasture demonstrations.
4. Corn

Situation

Average per acre yields are too low. With normal rainfall the average farmer can reduce the per unit cost of production by increasing the quantity of fertilizer used on corn. Some farmers are still planting varieties not recommended for this area. This needs to be corrected.

Labor returns on corn are relatively high.

Supplies of corn produced are still short of local needs.

Livestock population is on the increase and more corn is needed to provide feed.

Goal

- a. Produce an average yield of 60 bushels per acre.

Methods

- a. Establish four corn, small grain and alfalfa demonstrations.

- b. Provide each farmer with varieties recommended for this area.
 - c. Introduce new varieties from recommended list as available.
5. Tobacco

Situation

Louisa County is the leading sun-cured tobacco county in the State of Virginia. The county allotment is 1125 acres and it is expected that approximately 600 acres of this will be placed in the Soil Bank for 1958. The expected acreage to be planted is around 450 acres. It is estimated locally that the 1957 acreage yield was about 986 pounds or about one-half of the yield obtained by the more efficient producers. Better cultural practices and more adequate fertilization is needed to increase average yields.

Disease control is also a factor contributing to low yields and poor quality.

A good source of Little Sweet Orinoco Seed, true to type is also very desirable.

Goal

- a. Increase average yields by 100 lbs. per acre in 1958.

Methods

- a. Stress adequate fertilization with emphasis on sufficient potash.
- b. Set up 4 demonstrations using Aureomycin Sulphate for control of Wild Fire and Blue Mold.
- c. Set up 2 demonstrations using Methyl Bromide for controlling weeds in plant beds.
- d. Set up 4 demonstrations using MH-30 for Sucker Control.

III. ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

- 1. Beef Cattle

Situation

The County Livestock Committee met on January 15th and after considerable discussion selected the following problem areas in which work should be started and or continued:

Quality of beef herds needs to be constantly improved.

The control of Bangs disease is still a problem in Louisa County. Producers would benefit greatly by cooperating in the program to make Virginia a Modified Certified Free State.

Producers of Feeder Calves sold 311 calves through cooperative Feeder Calf Sales during 1957. This number is fewer than one-half the calves in the county eligible for Feeder Calf Sales. Some producers are missing the opportunity to earn additional income and also the educational values derived from seeing these animals graded and sold.

Objectives

- a. To improve the quality by organizing a BCIA in the county.
- b. To double the number of calves entered in Feeder Calf Sales.
- c. To make Louisa County a Modified Certified Bangs Free County.

Goals

- a. Secure a Modified Certified Bangs Free status for Louisa County by June 30, 1960.
- b. Have three beef herds entered in BCIA during 1958.
- c. Sell 350 calves through Cooperative Feeder Calf Sales during 1958.

Methods

- a. County-wide meeting on BCIA and Bangs Control during March.
- b. County-wide meeting of producers on Feeder Calf Sales during March.
- c. Circular letters to producers.
- d. Prepare newspaper articles.

2. Sheep

Situation

The breeding ewe population of the county has remained rather constant at about 800 for several years. Sheep-killing dogs discourage expansion more than any other factor. It seems little can be done about it.

Feeding, management and parasite controls are probably the next in importance, also training in sheep shearing is needed.

Goals

- a. Treat all sheep twice yearly for parasite control. Train one or more local men to shear sheep on custom basis.
- b. Inform wool producers of incentive payments for wool.

Methods

- a. Livestock Committee will organize sheep growers meeting in April to discuss management and demonstrate parasite control and shearing methods.

3. Dairying

Situation

Sales of milk from Louisa County have more than doubled during the past 10 years and now ranks third from standpoint of farm income with more than 16% of total. The price trend of milk, like most other farm commodities, has been downward for some time. This, of course, is something the individual farmer can do little about. On the other hand, lower production costs is definitely a matter which the individual farmer, in most cases can accomplish. Of all the factors affecting the cost of milk, a large yearly average production per cow is the most important. As the average production of cows in the herd increases, it becomes more and more difficult to select and own a bull whose daughters are better than their dams, or that will even maintain

a high level of production in the herd. In such herds, it is especially desirable to use proved sires. In January of 1957, this was made possible by establishing an Artificial Breeding Association.

In order to build and maintain high producing herds, some form of record keeping plan is essential. Louisa County dairymen, have made little, if any, progress recently.

Goals

- a. Cooperate with local Artificial Breeding Association with a goal of 1000 cows bred during 1958.
- b. Enlist a minimum of 10 herds in Cooperative Dairy Herd Improvement Program under Plan 1, 2, or 3.
- c. Tour to Artificial Breeding Center - Rocky Mount.

Methods

- a. News articles and ads in local newspaper.
- b. Circular letters to dairymen.
- c. Individual contacts.

IV. 4-H CLUB WORK

Situation

At present 4-H club work is carried on in nine boys' clubs in the county with a total membership of 297. All club members are held in the local grade schools with one hour allotted to each club meeting. Usually there are no meetings held in July or August.

1. Health -Home and Family

Objectives

To help club members:

- a. Recognize and meet their own health needs.
- b. Improve conditions for garbage and trash disposal.
- c. Get rid of rats and mice.

- d. Control household pests.
- e. Learn proper way to handle milk.
- f. Improve methods of dishwashing.
- g. Learn how to plan adequate meals.
- h. Equip a home medicine chest.
- i. Learn to take a water sample for inspection.

Methods

- a. Method demonstrations will be given by the agents as follows:

November - What Are your Health Needs?
 December - Get Rid of Rats and Mice.
 January - The Best Planned Meals
 February - Equipping a Home Medicine Chest.
 March - Improve Garbage and Trash Disposal
 April - Controlling Household Pests.

2. Electricity - Unit I

Objectives

- a. Acquaint members with electricity in general and the use of electricity.
- b. To help club members learn how to use electricity safely.
- c. To teach the club members how to make an extension cord which is safe and useful.
- d. To teach club members the importance of good lighting.
- e. To help club members learn how to improve their home and farm lighting.
- f. To help club members see the need for and learn to care for lighting equipment.
- g. To teach club members proper uses, cleaning and storage of small kitchen appliances.

Methods

- a. Method demonstrations will be given by Virginia Electric and Power Company representatives as follows:

November - Is There An Octopus In Your House?
 December - Care of Appliances, ²use Boxes.

January - How to Plan A Good Study Center
 February - How to Make Or Improve a Study Lamp
 March - Extension Cords

3. Tree Identification

Objectives

To teach members:

- a. Identify forest trees found near their home.
- b. How to collect leaves, twigs, bark and wood.
- c. How to make leaf prints.
- d. How to mount materials collected.
- e. Uses of woods identified.

Methods

- a. Method demonstrations will be given by the agents as follows:

October - How to Press Leaves
 November - How to Identify Trees by Leaves.
 December - How to Identify Trees by Twigs, or Bark
 January - How to Mount Materials Collected.
 February - Uses of Woods we have Identified

- b. A trip in the school yard or nearby field will be held in March to study trees.
- c. April - Tree Identification Contest

The following objectives and methods will be used in each of the foregoing projects:

- a. To teach how to keep records neatly.
- b. To teach how to give demonstrations.
- c. To participate in contests.
- d. To encourage exhibits

Methods

- a. Personal contacts will be made
- b. Exhibits will be made.
- c. Method demonstrations by members.
- d. Contests in each project.

V. YOUNG MEN AND YOUNG WOMEN'S WORK

Situation

Representatives from the Young Adult Club and the Extension Agents planned the following program for 1958:

1. January - Banquet
2. February - The Importance of our Health Department
3. March - Parliamentary Procedure
4. April - The Watershed Project in Louisa County.
5. May - Entertain High School Seniors
6. June - Make the Fish Bite
7. July - Water Safety - Watermelon Feast
8. August - Outdoor Cookery
9. September - Visit another YMW Club
10. October - What Kind of Insurance Do I Need?
11. November - IFYE Speaker
12. December - The Role Our Welfare Department Plays

Objectives

- a. To become acquainted with current Outlook trends and facts.
- b. To learn the part our Health and Welfare Departments play and how we can cooperate.
- c. To learn to use correct parliamentary procedure.
- d. To learn more about the watershed project and how we can help in carrying it out.
- e. To increase membership
- f. To learn about fishing and wildlife.
- g. To learn how we can carry out recommended water safety measures.
- h. To learn new methods and recipes for Outdoor Cookery.
- i. To strengthen relationships between our club and neighboring clubs.

- j. To learn what types of insurance are available and what is the best type for different individuals.
- k. To promote a better understanding of our foreign neighbors.

Methods

- a. The agent expects to serve in an advisory capacity.
- b. Tours will be made.
- c. Members will participate in leadership camp at Camp Farrar, Virginia Beach.
- d. Mr. E.W. Carson, District Agent, will speak on Outlook Information and Louisa County Facts at the January Banquet.
- e. Dr. J.B. Kenley, County Health Director and Mrs. Agnes Belser, County Health Nurse will conduct a discussion on the work of the Health Department.
- f. Members of the FFA will conduct a meeting on Parliamentary Procedure.
- g. Col. H. E. Waldrop, Soil Conservationist, will conduct a discussion on the Watershed Project.
- h. Entertain high school seniors with a recreational meeting.
- i. Mr. Max Carpenter, Game and Inland Fisheries will conduct the June Meeting.
- j. Trooper Dwight Ozment will conduct a meeting on Water Safety, at a private pool.
- k. The agents will conduct a method demonstration on Outdoor Cockery.
- l. A qualified individual will present October's program on Insurance.
- m. A recent IFYS delegate to another country will conduct a discussion in November.
- n. Mrs. Sadie Ellis, Head of Louisa County Welfare Department, will discuss the work of the Welfare Department.

VI. FARM AND HOME DEVELOPMENT

Situation

There are a number of farm families in Louisa County, which have a definite desire to improve their operation. Few have made

the maximum application of all the improved practices now known.

Goals

- a. Select and work with three farm families during 1958 as outlined below:

Methods

- a. Help in thinking of the several possibilities open to them.
- b. Provide specific information.
- c. Provide some guidance in choosing what is best.

VII. COOPERATIVE MARKETING

1. Wool

Goals

- a. Sell 90% of wool through Cooperatives.

Methods

- a. Inform growers of the advantages of Cooperative Marketing.
- b. Provide instructions relative to clipping, handling and tying of fleece.
- c. Inform growers as to wool loading date.

2. Milk

Goals

- a. Cooperate with Richmond Milk Producers Cooperative by furnishing information to producers relative to the Cooperative Program.

3. Sun-Cured Tobacco

Goals

- a. Cooperate with sun-cured tobacco marketing association in keeping membership informed relative to the affairs of the association.

4. Feeder Calf Sale

Goals

- a. Work with Livestock Committee and local Director of Richmond Feeder Calf Sale toward consigning 350 calves to the 1958 Sales.

VIII. GENERAL ACTIVITIES

1. ASC

Goals

- a. Cooperate with ASC to insure all farm owners and operators the maximum benefits under the Agricultural Conservation Program.

2. SCS

Goals

- a. Cooperate with SCS in securing additional cooperators and maintaining practices which have already been established.

3. South Anna Watershed Project

Goals

- a. Cooperate with County Committee and SCS in program to develop South Anna Watershed Project.

4. FHA and Farm Credit

Goals

- a. Refer prospective borrowers to FHA and Farm Credit.
b. Furnish applications to prospective persons.

5. Organize and Conduct Farm Tour

6. Hold County-wide Farmers Picnic in August.

7. Check this plan of work weekly for the purpose of insuring the timely performance of each phase of work.

CALENDAR OF WORK

1958

DECEMBER

Plan for 4-H District Camp
Prepare Boxes for Needy Family -YMW
Assist with ASC Program
Artificial Breeding Association
Watershed Development
4-H Projects, Electricity, Health and Forestry

JANUARY

Commodity Committee Program Planning
Farm Bureau Program Planning
YMW Program Planning
Watershed Development
YMW Banquet
4-H Projects, Electricity, Health, and Forestry
Artificial Breeding

FEBRUARY

4-H Dairy Judging
Varietal Recommendations
Health - YMW
4-H Projects, Electricity, Health, and Forestry
Plan of Work

MARCH

Artificial Breeding
Tobacco Demonstration - Disease control
Parliamentary Procedure YMW
4-H Projects - Electricity, Health and Forestry
BCIA County-Wide Meeting
Farm Credit Conference

APRIL

4-H Dairy Judging
Tobacco - Disease control
Feeder Calf Sale
Sheep - Parasite control
4-H District Contest
4-H Projects - Electricity, Health and Forestry
Watershed Project YMW
4-H Fat Cattle Show
Pest Control -Alfalfa

MAY

Party for High School Seniors -YMW
Dairy Tour - Artificial Breeding Center
4-H Projects - Electricity, Health and Forestry
Plan for 4-H District Camp

JUNE

Fishing and Fish Pond Management - YMW
Farm Tour
4-H Picnic
Cooperative Marketing Wool
Sheep - Internal Parasites

JULY

Visit 4-H Projects
Tobacco - Sucker Control
Water Safety - YMW
Bangs Control Program
4-H District Camp

AUGUST

Camp Farrar -Leadership Camp-YMW
Annual County Picnic
Annual Conference
Visit 4-H Projects
Outdoor Cookery - YMW
Bangs Control Program

SEPTEMBER

Sheep - Parasite Control
4-H Reorganization
Feeder Calf Sale
Bangs Control Program
Visit out-of-county YMW Club

OCTOBER

Insurance - YMW
Bangs Control Program
4-H Projects
4-H Records
Feeder Calf Sale

NOVEMBER

IFYE Speaker - YMW
Bangs Control Program
4-H Records
4-H Projects
Annual Report