

VIRGINIA

PUBLICITY
E. R. Rice, Editor

ANNUAL REPORT 1931

<u>Index</u>	<u>Page</u>
6 h 2.5 News service.....	1-2
*6 h 2.5A Extension Agents.....	3,4,6
6 h 2.6 Press.....	1-2,5
6 h 2.7 State extension publications.....	6,7-8

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REPORT OF
EXTENSION WORK IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLICATIONS

PROJECT 2

NOVEMBER 30, 1950 TO DECEMBER 1, 1951

E. R. PRICE, EDITOR

REPORT OF
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLICATIONS, EXTENSION DIVISION,
VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
NOVEMBER 20, 1920 TO DECEMBER 1, 1921

The purpose of the department of publicity of the extension division is to furnish the people of Virginia and others interested with information as to what the extension division has done, what it is doing and what it is prepared to do for the farmers, farm women, girls and boys of the state, and to give them through the medium of the printed word the latest and best in farm practice. It is the definite aim of this department to give the information in such a simple and concise manner that anyone who is trying to improve his or her farm or home practices, or who may have little previous knowledge of the subject, can understand it.

This information service is carried on through the daily and weekly papers of the state, through agricultural journals which circulate in Virginia, and through its own publications, the Extension Division News and the Virginia 4-H Club Letter; bulletins, circulars and special articles carrying a certain type of information. Practically all the daily papers in the state and more than two-thirds of the county papers cooperate by giving space to matter sent out from the central office. Except as regards some items of information concerning extension work which are of interest in all sections of the state, an effort is made to furnish the papers in each section with the kind of copy suited to the needs of the locality in which they are published, in other words, livestock articles

are sent to the papers in counties where the livestock industry is stressed, articles on dairying to the dairy counties, and so on through the list. During the year covered by this report an average of six articles per month was furnished the daily papers and an average of three articles per month sent the county papers. While it can not be claimed that all of the articles were published in full in either the daily or weekly papers, it can be said that both the dailies and weeklies were very liberal during the year in the matter of space.

One function of the information service is to help create a demand for the service the extension division offers along all lines. While this type of material is generally acceptable to the papers, the editors do not themselves seek it out, although they may know of it and appreciate its value. It must be furnished to them regularly and in such a way that they can handle it easily. The department of publications must, therefore, make such matter available to the press.

Articles sent the daily and weekly papers during the year were prepared by the director, state home demonstration agent, the state boys' club agent, the state girls' club agent and specialists, and were revised by the editor in order to give the news value to them that the papers require. The editor has prepared and had published in the daily and weekly papers a number of articles of general interest relating to extension work, items about the progress and development of the work, changes in the staff, meetings, etc.

Any report of the year's work would be incomplete unless special mention is made of the very excellent publicity work done by the farm and home agents in most of the counties where such agents are located. It can not be claimed that all of our agents, either farm or home, are doing the publicity work they should, but there has been a general improvement along this line during the year just ending. Their copy is better prepared and they have a keener sense of news value, as well as a better understanding of what people want to read concerning extension work. It is believed further that the publicity contest inaugurated in 1930 for the home agents and continued through 1931 has done a great deal towards stimulating the women agents to do better publicity work. There was an exhibit of the publicity work done during the year by the home agents in January 1931 and December 1931 and these exhibits were judged carefully. The winners in the four different classes were announced by the editor when he spoke to the home agents on publicity by invitation of the state home demonstration agent, Miss Marie E. Wallace. (The work done in 1930 was judged at the annual meeting in January 1931 and the work done in 1931 judged in December 1931 as the annual meeting was held this year before Christmas instead of after.)

The editor has continued during the year his efforts to give special help to the county farm and home demonstration agents in the way of preparing copy for the press. This was done by correspondence and by visits to the agents in their offices when agents asked for such visits. There

has been further distribution of the mimeographed circular, prepared by the editor several years ago and carrying suggestions and hints for preparation of copy, selected articles showing just how material should be prepared for the papers, etc. This outline is practically the same as that used in the course in agricultural journalism at V. P. I. in charge of the editor of the extension division.

This year, as usual, the editor has given a part of his time during the first term of the session to teaching a class in agricultural journalism, composed of seniors enrolled in the college of agriculture. This is done under a cooperative arrangement between the president and director. As quite a number of these students go out each year as assistant county agents and Smith-Hughes teachers, the course is so arranged as to give them, as well as all students enrolled, practical suggestions that will help in the preparation of copy for the press. A recent survey shows that our best publicity work is done by county agents who took this course. The head of the department of agricultural education has informed the editor that he considers this course of great benefit to his teachers.

Weekly field reports of the home and farm agents are gone over very carefully each month and extracts showing things actually accomplished or good work done are compiled. These are furnished the public through the newspapers, our own publications and the agricultural journals circulating in Virginia.

Timely articles and items of interest about extension work are sent the district office of the Associated Press in Richmond under a special arrangement made several years ago. This material is used on a special agricultural clip sheet which the AP office in Richmond furnishes to certain papers or in connection with a special agricultural service which the AP features. This gives a wide publicity throughout the country to extension work in Virginia.

Continued conferences with editors of the leading weekly newspapers of Virginia continue to emphasize the fact that the greater part of publicity for extension work in the rural weekly papers must be furnished these papers by the farm and home agents in the counties where the papers are published. The county papers have a limited space to devote to any matter outside of local news and any free service they give space to must be suited to local conditions or at least have local application. It is practically impossible for the editor at the state office to know just what is of particular interest in any county at any time, though there are, of course, many general facts of statewide interest about the work that can be furnished the county papers from the central office. With this in mind, the editor has tried throughout the year to help the county agents in every way possible with suggestions for preparation of copy because the average county editor is too busy to edit or revise poorly prepared copy and our agents must know how to prepare copy so that it will require little or no work on the part of the county editor. As a rule, the agents have been most amenable to suggestions and seem to appreciate the help the editor has tried to give them.

The annual report of publicity work, insofar as it relates to county agents, would be complete without a word of recognition of the very excellent publicity work done by the Negro farm and home agents. Most of these men and women have contributed timely and well written articles to their county papers. The editors of the papers in the counties where these agents work are always glad to have stories from the Negro agents. They are surprisingly well written and do not require much editing. They also have a human interest touch that is unique in extension writing.

During the year the editor attended the mid-winter and summer meetings of the Virginia Press Association, district meetings of editors, and the annual meeting of the American Association of Agricultural College Editors at Corvallis, Oregon. The editor of the Virginia extension division completed his term as president of this association at the Corvallis meeting. He also attended during the year several meetings in the counties by invitation of the agents, three regional meetings of extension workers early in the year and spoke by invitation at three "Father and Son" banquets sponsored by Smith-Hughes teachers.

The plan for publication of the two extension publications, the Extension Division News and the Virginia 4-H Club Letter, continued unchanged through the year but a special effort was made to improve the quality of matter carried in these publications. There have been a good many evidences of the fact that both these publications meet with the approval of those who receive them. As a matter of fact, more letters were received this year commending the Extension Division News than in

any year since its publication was started. Several of the editors of agricultural journals who at first were inclined to regard the Extension Division News as a competitor of theirs have taken occasion this year to commend the work it is doing.

THE EXTENSION DIVISION NEWS

The Extension Division News is an eight-page, thirty-two column paper issued each month for the farmer, farm woman, bankers, ministers, public school teachers, Smith-Hughes teachers, state officials and all others interested in the betterment of conditions on the farms and in the homes of the state. It contains practical suggestions for the results of work done along the various lines that are being developed by extension workers. It is mailed free of charge to the names on the mailing list and the papers of the state are invited to use the material in its columns without giving credit for same if they wish. The papers quote freely from the Extension Division News, making use of such articles as may be of interest in their localities. About 40,000 thousand copies are mailed out each month.

MAILING LIST

The mailing list of the Extension Division News was made up originally from lists borrowed from various organizations in the state. Each year names have been added by individual requests, from lists furnished by county agents of representative farm men and women in their counties and from lists of members of various associations organized with-
in the year. Second class postage rate is paid on this paper and the post-

masters of the state are required to return any copies that may be undelivered. In this way we are able to keep our mailing list fairly up to date and, while it is far from perfect, it is said to be the most up to date mailing list in the state. Whenever a copy is returned because of the inability of any post office to deliver same, or for any other reason, this name is removed from the mailing list unless it develops that the wrong address has been furnished. The great problem is to avoid duplication of names and sending more than one copy to a household.

VIRGINIA 4-H CLUB LETTER

The Virginia 4-H Club Letter, a four-page, sixteen column paper, is issued monthly by the department of publications, the greater part of the matter being furnished through the state club office. An earnest effort is made to secure articles from the club members themselves in order that they may feel they have a share in the making of the paper. Twenty thousand copies of the club paper were sent out each month during the time covered by this report.

The names on the mailing list include boys and girls who are enrolled as members of the agricultural and home economics clubs, the farm and home demonstration agents, school superintendents, the newspapers, banks, teachers who request it, and certain people in the state who have shown an interest in club work. The material used is of the kind that will interest boys and girls and help them in the projects they are carrying out. Since the roster of club members changes each year, there must be complete revision of this mailing list each twelve months.

REVISIONS AND EDITING MATERIAL

All material prepared by specialists and agents and intended for distribution in circular or bulletin form, whether printed or mimeographed, is first submitted to the director for his approval and authorization. It is then referred to the editor for editing. If the editor and the specialist who wrote the bulletin can not agree on proposed changes or any other matter connected with the bulletin, it is then referred to the director as final authority. In line with the policy now being adopted by the United States Department of Agriculture and extension divisions in other states, an attempt has been made to "popularize" all extension bulletins. This is not an easy task and calls for close cooperation and understanding between the author of any bulletin, the editor, and finally, the director.

METHODS OF DISTRIBUTION

The Extension Division News and Virginia 4-H Club Letter are distributed as outlined above. The distribution of bulletins and circulars is largely in the hands of the specialists who wrote same and are sent out to names on the mailing list of their department. Bulletins are sent on request but no attempt is made to distribute any bulletin or circular to the names on the mailing list of the Extension Division News. This would result in a waste of material and much lost motion since thousands of people would receive bulletins in which they had no interest.

ORGANIZATION OF FORCE

The editor has charge of the publications as already outlined and general supervision over the force employed in sending out the Extension Division News and Virginia 4-H Club Letter. This force at present consists of one young woman who divides her time between the supervision of the mailing lists and acting as secretary to the editor, and boys who work by the hour as their services are needed in sending out the two monthly publications.

BULLETINS

As already stated, an effort is now being made to "popularize" all bulletins in order to meet what those who have given careful study to the subject believe is a demand for agricultural matter that is less technical in nature and easily understood by the average farmer or farm woman. It is just another case of drawing a very sharp line of distinction between bulletins issued by extension divisions and colleges of agriculture and those prepared by experiment stations and research workers. Someone has characterized the extension bulletin as a popular book, the experiment station bulletin as a technical treatise or text book. Eleven bulletins were issued in the twelve months covered by this report.

CIRCULARS

During the year which this report covers twenty-three circulars were published. The circulars vary in size from one to four pages and cover a variety of subjects.

The extension division does not issue what is generally known as plate material and serials, particularly to the newspapers. It has been

found that the Virginia papers and agricultural journals published in this state prefer all matter sent directly to them with due regard paid to locality, seasons, etc. An effort is made to avoid duplications as far as possible in matter sent papers.

Appended hereto is a list of bulletins and circulars issued from November 30, 1920 to December 1, 1921.

BULLETINS

<u>Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Author</u>
119	The 1938 Agricultural Outlook For Virginia	10,000	J. E. Hutchinson
120	Farm Account Book	1,000	W. J. Bushels
121	Crop Account Book	1,000	W. J. Bushels
91	Poultry Production (Revised)	10,000	Mr. & Mrs. A.F. Trookie
99	Corn Production (Revised)	5,000	W.H.Hyams & S.D.Freeman
122	Rural Electrification in Virginia	1,000	C. E. Smith
123	Information for Virginia Fruit Growers	8,000	A. H. Weeks
118	How to Keep a Poultry Account	1,000	Dr. H. H. Young
124	Farm Forestry - A Concrete Example	5,000	J. W. O'Daynes
88	Livestock Judging (Revised)	5,000	Members of Animal and Dairy Husbandry Departments
104	Pork Production	4,000	G. G. Herring

CIRCULARS

<u>Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Author</u>
B-100	Report Card for Club Members	10,000	
B-119	Food for Health	1,000	Janet Cameron
B-120	Breakfast - Dinner - Supper	1,000	Janet Cameron
B-121	Food Preservation	1,000	Janet Cameron
B-72	Club Enrollment Card	10,000	
B-222	Mailing List for Club Letter	2,000	
B-89	Crop Record Book	5,000	G. A. Montgomery
B-114	Livestock Record Book	5,000	G. A. Montgomery
B-294	Leaflets	5,000	W.H.Hyams & S.F.Grabbs
B-119	Food for Health (Reprint)	1,000	Janet Cameron
B-120	Breakfast - Dinner - Supper	1,000	Janet Cameron
B-85	Time Cards	80	
B-86	Record Cards	80	
B-87	Travel Cards	80	
B-125	Salary Vouchers	5,000	
B-122	Weekly Reports	10,000	
B-201	Monthly Reports	5,000	
B-225	Vegetable Garden Suggestions (Revised)	20,000	L. B. District
B-222	G-H Club Garden Record Book	5,000	G. A. Klean
B-226	Mechanical Refrigeration for Dairies	5,000	H. H. Gordon
B-226	Quality Egg Posters	1,000	G. H. Vard
B-220	Monthly Herd Summary Report (Revised)	80	W. F. Sailer
B-222	County Agents' Weekly Reports (Reprint)	10,000	
B-72	Club Enrollment Cards	10,000	