

- March - (1) Boys' demonstration  
(2) Window judging  
(3) Appoint Rural Life Sunday Committee
- April - (1) Discuss plans of Rural Life Sunday Committee  
(2) Send out initial letter announcing Jamestown 4-H summer camp
- May - (1) Jamestown Camp discussion  
(2) Review 4-H records  
(3) Select 4-H delegate to Electric Congress in Richmond  
(4) Observe Rural Life Sunday
- June - (1) Attend 4-H Camp  
(2) Hold County Council Meeting  
(3) Attend State 4-H Short Course  
(4) Prepare Building for 4-H Keller Fair Exhibits
- July - (1) Institute of Rural Affairs  
(2) Detailed planning by Keller Fair 4-H Committee  
(3) County-wide Picnic
- August - (1) Keller Fair 4-H Exhibits  
(2) Set plans for Electric Congress  
(3) Extension Conference
- September - (1) Organize 4-H clubs  
a. Elect officers  
b. Reports of Camp Delegates  
(2) Electric Congress in Richmond
- October - (1) Complete Club organization  
(2) Project selection guidance
- November - (1) Achievement Day  
(2) Project selection
- December - (1) County Council Meeting  
(2) Community Project Planning

4. Send two members to 4-H Electric Congress in Richmond.
5. Have Rural Life Sunday Observance by all 4-H clubs.
6. Promote window displays by clubs in observance of National 4-H Week.
7. Declare an Achievement Day at which time to present county winner awards.
8. Hold a county-wide 4-H picnic.
9. Hold an exhibition of 4-H accomplishment and progress in the 4-H Exhibition Building at Keller Fair Grounds, at such time as to coincide with the annual Keller Fair.
10. Publish in the county newspapers all reports of 4-H club meetings and special 4-H events.

#### D. PROJECT PHASE

1. During the time allotted for 4-H club project work, material will be presented for those members carrying the following projects:
  - (a) Farm and Home Electric
  - (b) Entomology
  - (c) Safety
  - (d) Poultry
  - (e) Gardening
  - (f) Crops
  - (g) Livestock
  - (h) Rabbits
2. Encourage all 4-H club members to take one year of Rural Electrification Project.
3. Limit project participation to two projects the first year of club work of each member.
4. Stress high caliber record keeping.
5. Guide members in project selection.
6. Enter qualifying records of outstanding project achievement in district and state contests.
7. Encourage project demonstration on the part of the members.

#### E. CALENDAR OF WORK

- January - (1) Appoint Committees  
(2) Girls' Demonstration
- February - (1) Discuss Community Project  
(2) Discuss National 4-H Week  
(3) Parliamentary Procedure Quiz

## NORTHAMPTON COUNTY 4-H CLUBS

Hugh H. Robinson

### A. PRESENT SITUATION

The 4-H club program in Northampton County is increasing. More interest and specific membership interest is noted. The agents have more cooperation by the schools. The clubs meet twice a month, in the schools during school hours. The first or joint meeting is devoted to conducting the business of the club. The second or project meeting is devoted to project instruction.

Project participation is excellent and interest is diverse.

The outlook for the 4-H Club program is bright. The trend, if continued, points toward more members getting more benefits from 4-H club activity.

### B. ORGANIZATION

1. Follow the 4-H Plan of Work as set up by the county 4-H council.
2. Teach Parliamentary procedure as based upon Robert's Rules of Order, so that all club presidents and officers will be able to conduct their business.
5. Each club to have two meetings each month; one of these to be a joint meeting and the other a project instruction meeting.
6. Maintain an interesting, instructional program to attract and hold active young people of 4-H age of diverse interests.
7. Encourage adults, 4-H parents, where feasible, to participate in club functions and to serve as lay leaders.
8. Visit the homes of as many club members as possible in addition to those that specifically request help.

### C. ACTIVITIES

1. County 4-H Council will hold two meetings.
2. Send the full county quota of qualifying members to the State 4-H Short Course.
3. Send the full county quota of eligible members to the Jamestown 4-H Camp.

July is travel month.

No particular activity is planned for August. The chief work scheduled for September, October and November is in the field of marketing snapbeans, peppers and sweet potatoes. Also some work should be done during this time on corn marketing.

Gold  
Bond

BUILDING PRODUCTS

not specific as to  
objectives or goals and  
~~how and~~  
what, how and where,  
various actions will be  
carried out to achieve  
goals

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being handled by the three organizations of farmers that exist in this county. This contest will be continued in 1955 and is stimulating considerable interest in improved practices.

7. There are several crops of less importance on which the County Agent will work with farmers individually. These include cabbage, sweet corn, cucumbers, lettuce, spinach, kale, collards and strawberries.

#### D. Farm and Home Development

After much deliberation and due consideration, a committee of men and women, selected from organized groups, determined that some work should be attempted with a few families in the field of Farm and Home Development. This work should be done as extensively with each family as they may desire. There was a feeling that only a limited number of families would be interested in participating extensively. It was also agreed that Extension personnel not entirely familiar with the county and its people would meet with limited success. For that reason, they recommend that the work be started by existing personnel and expanded only as demand may arise.

It was agreed that Extension services in this field should be limited to no social or economic group and that the services should be made available to both farm and non-farm families.

As a result of the above committee determinations, the County Agent and the County Home Demonstration Agent will, when time can be spared from other duties, inaugurate Farm and Home Development work with a few families. The names of some families have been supplied by the committee and others can be secured by Extension personnel as the time to work with them permits. The plan of procedure from this point has not been developed but it will be as experience directs.

#### E. Calendar of Activity

It is impossible to say just what days, weeks or months will be devoted to certain activities. However, there are certain seasons of the year in which certain activities are predominate.

The chief activity during the months of December, January and February include the dissemination of outlook information and the individual farm planning, including a study of soils' reports. In March and April quite a bit of work will be done to promote the more efficient production of corn, tomatoes and sweet potatoes. May and June will probably be used chiefly to do clinical work in the field of entomology, pathology and plant physiology. Also, during the months of May and June considerable work will be done to promote more efficient marketing of the spring vegetable crops.

in turn has a tendency to make marketing more efficient. These varieties often bring a small premium price on the market and they usually yield a few more bushels per acre.

In the field of marketing, the following should be attempted by the County Agent: disseminate market information, pointing out the market advantage of such things as better quality, better appearance and the market's preference for packages of different sizes.

2. Tomatoes - It is evident that the greatest demand for Northampton tomatoes is during the earlier part of its harvesting season. For this reason, an effort should be continued to promote practices that will bring about early maturity. Some accomplishment has been noted in this, in the past few years, however, there is still considerable room for improvement. This can be accomplished by using earlier maturing varieties and by the judicious use of fertilizers.
3. Sweet Potatoes - The proposed work on sweet potatoes is divided into two parts, first, an effort to promote the use of better seed selection and, secondly, to promote better culling at marketing time. The latter practice will stimulate market for the best potatoes sold fresh; potatoes culled to be sold to processors. If livestock on farms where produced, poorest quality should be fed to
4. Snapbeans - It is evident that in recent years that the quality of snapbeans produced in Northampton has been exceptionally good. ~~Further~~ ~~some~~ ~~effort~~ ~~should~~ ~~be~~ ~~made~~ ~~to~~ ~~promote~~ ~~harvesting~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~proper~~ ~~times~~ ~~being~~.
5. Peppers - The fall pepper crop, which accounts for most of the acreage, is usually planted after some spring crop. Disease, during the past few years, has drastically reduced the yield of this crop. Apparently the best method of correcting this condition is the use of disease resistant varieties and the control of disease carrying insects. Probably a circular letter to all growers, about the time seed beds are being prepared, would be advisable.

advantageously to feed a few beef cattle. It is estimated that the county sells, for cash, 300,000 bushels of corn per year. No doubt, it would be more profitable if more of this were fed to hogs.

### III. HOW THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

This plan was developed by the County Agent in cooperation with members of the County Board of Agriculture and other organized groups. County Agent has discussed various problems with many individuals who have displayed community interest and leadership.

### IV. GENERAL PROBLEMS

Some of the general problems facing farmers of Northampton County, which should have the Extension's attention, include: 1. Farm records and reports (including Social Security) and some analyses of per unit production cost. 2. Farm resource development. 3. Adjustments to meet changing market demands. 4. Labor efficiency.

### V. Specific Activities

#### A. Soil Productivity

Though the net farm income, during the past two years, has been considerably reduced, the use of soil conserving and soil building crops has not declined. An earnest effort should be made to prevent its decline and to encourage an expansion of the practice on some farms. The maintenance of organic matter is most necessary on the soils of this county.

#### B. Livestock

It recognized that many farms could be operated more efficiently by including the production of a limited number of hogs or beef cattle. However, since most of the farm operators have had no experience with livestock, it is necessary that this expansion be slow and every effort be made to train the individual operators to produce efficiently.

This can be done by a few farmers working closely with the County Agent in planning the details of such livestock production.

#### C. Crops

1. Potatoes - Two problems facing the potato industry in Northampton are production of the variety (Irish Cobbler) that is not most desirable on the markets and ~~an~~ inefficient marketing procedure. Some work has been done in past years and will be extended in 1955, to encourage the planting of part of the county's acreage in varieties other than Cobbler. The use of such varieties as Fungo and Kathadin will prolong the harvesting season, which

## I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There are in Northampton County a little over 500 farms. About 400 of these are classified as commercial truck farms and cropland acreages are from 50 to 500 acres. There are very few having more than 500 acres. This is a V-shape county, ranging in widths from one to eight miles and its length is about 35 miles. It is between the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean and is attached to Accomack County on an eight mile boundary. The land is quite level and most of it is well drained. The predominant soil types are sassafras sandy loam and sassafras fine sandy loam, with scattered small areas of Keyport and Elkton soil types. Following is a list of truck crops grown, approximately in their order of importance: Irish potatoes, tomatoes, snapbeans, sweet potatoes, peppers, cabbage, broccoli, lima beans, sweet corn, cucumbers, spinach, collards and kale. This county also produces about 7000 acres of corn, almost all of which is sold in Maryland and Delaware.

Farmers generally follow good cultural practices. They use cover crops extensively and in almost every instance use adequate quantities of fertilizer. There is some evidence of excessive fertilization on some farms:

Though there has been some increase in livestock numbers in recent years, this enterprise is still of minor importance. There are very few herds of commercial hogs and a few beef cattle. Dairy cattle numbers are exceedingly low and have been slowly declining in recent years. There are about 50 small flocks of sheep.

## II. THE CHANGING PICTURE

In 1953 Northampton County farm income declined substantially and there was a further severe decline in 1954. The cost of production, during these two years, increased slightly. The net effect of these facts is a poor financial position for the average farmer. Since the farming operation requires large amounts of capital, there will be heavy demands on all credit facilities. This condition also stimulates demand for Extension assistance in individual farm plans.

There is a definite and rather rapid trend in demand for processed vegetables. This means that each year a smaller acreage is being devoted to vegetables for strictly fresh market consumption and more acreage is being devoted to the same crops probably for processing. It is also a matter of degree of processing. For instance, many potatoes are now being moved in 10-lb. bags. This trend means that more work must be done at packing houses, on the farm or in other houses operated in the community by non-farm people.

The trend toward processed vegetables also means that some work should be done to improve farmer-processor relationships.

There is evidence that this county could profitably produce some additional livestock. Crop residues and winter cover crops could be used

PLAN OF WORK  
COUNTY AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY

Eastville, Virginia  
December 1, 1954 to December 1, 1955

Roy U. Nottingham  
County Agent

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