

PLAN OF WORK
SURRY COUNTY
1955

EDGAR L. RAWLS
COUNTY FARM AGENT

PLAN OF WORK

Edgar L. Rawls
County Farm Agent

Surry County - 1955

1. Surry County is a relatively small county covering 306 square miles. There are approximately 775 farm families, including white and colored. The type of soil is well suited for peanut production, corn, pastures and small grain. There is practically no industry in the county, it being strictly rural, and agricultural. It is one of the leading hog producing counties in the state and for the last few years, beef cattle have been on the increase. Practically all of the farms are owner operated, and there is very little tenant farming.

2. Sections of Surry County were hard hit in 1954 in regards to the drought. Peanut yields in the county were approximately two-thirds of an average crop. Corn yields were slightly higher than 1953, nevertheless, Surry County had a short corn crop. A large number of Surry County farmers cut their soy beans for hay instead of harvesting them. There was approximately two-thirds of a soy bean crop in the county.

The Agent feels that farmers in the county will have very little trouble in borrowing money for financing their 1955 farming needs. The way things look now, if we do not have too much of a drought during the year, the Agent feels that Surry County farmers will do well in 1955.

3. The Agent met with the Agronomy Committee and Mr. M. P. Lacy, Associate Extension Agronomist, and developed the Plan of Work for 1955. The Agronomy Committee has been very helpful in working with the Agent in various types of work pertaining to Agronomy.

AGRONOMY - Corn

a. Situation

The corn crop in Surry County for the past three years has been relatively short due to drought conditions. The Agent had corn hybrid demonstrations on five farms in the county during 1954. Although more high yields were made, the Agent was able to determine which of these hybrids stood up better and were better suited for our section.

b. The Agronomy Committee and the Agent feel that the farmers need more factual information on the different corn hybrids and proper fertilization methods.

c. The Agent plans to conduct demonstrations in all sections of the county on the different types of hybrids and in instances these demonstrations will have different maturing hybrids. There will also be demonstrations conducted using the three different kinds of nitrogen, namely, solid, liquid, and anhydrous. The same amount of actual nitrogen will be used in each demonstration, but the demonstrations will vary in time of application.

The farms on which the demonstrations will be conducted will be publicized in the local paper for the benefit of farmers who wish to observe the progress of the demonstrations in their

vicinity. Through the cooperation of the County Agronomy Committee, the Agent plans to have county or committee tours for farmers and visit the different demonstrations. The Agent plans to publish the recommended corn hybrids for this section, as well as the fertilizer recommendations of the Holland Experiment Station.

A county-wide Agronomy Meeting was held to furnish information to the farmers on the recommended hybrids and fertilization practices. The Agent's goal for 1955 is to get as many farmers as possible to follow Experiment Station recommendations as to fertilization and corn hybrids.

Peanuts

a. Situation

Peanut production in Surry County increased for the past few years with the exception of the year 1954. The reason for the decrease in 1954 is due to the fact that there was practically no rainfall during August, which is the month that peanuts are making and rain is needed. The Agent feels that Surry County farmers are doing a good job in peanut production.

One of the problems in the county is the damage done by subterranean insects, leafspot and leaf hopper. This problem was not as bad in 1954 as in previous years. The Agent feels that due to the widespread publicity given on the control of insects, in a matter of just a few years, the problem will be at a minimum.

The following demonstrations will be conducted:

1. Applying additional fertilizer on corn and cover crops and applying no fertilizer on the peanut crop. These demonstrations will be conducted on our heavier type of peanut soils and on rotations where all corn and peanuts are used.

2. Demonstrations will be conducted in the county on different lands of applying land plaster. The results of these demonstrations will be publicized at farm meetings and in the local newspaper in the Fall of this year. The Agent's goal for 1955 is to urge all farmers to use Experiment Station recommendations on fertilization and spacing of peanuts.

3. Demonstrations will be conducted in the county on the control of grass and weeds. Three demonstrations were conducted last year and were very successful. The Agronomy Committee felt that more demonstrations of this type would be beneficial to farmers in 1955.

Pastures

For the past three years permanent pastures have suffered tremendously from the dry weather. In many instances, permanent pastures have completely dried up and new pastures will have to be seeded. The Agronomy Committee feels that farmers should be prepared for an emergency of this type.

Demonstrations will be conducted on the use of different types of supplementary pastures; such as sorghum, Sudan grass, and millet. At our last Agronomy Meeting, supplementary pastures were

stressed and through local newspapers, aid is given the Agent in urging farmers to plant some type of supplementary pasture in case of another dry year. The Agent plans to have a county-wide pasture tour during the last Summer or early Fall and plans to have an Extension Specialist to stress the importance of sound pasture management.

Cover Crops.

The Agent plans to publicize the value of cover crops as a grazing for livestock and building up the soil by using news articles and circular letters as well as the farm meetings. The Agent's goal for cover crops during 1955 is to have at least 90% of row crop land in some kind of cover crop during the winter months.

LIVESTOCK

Swine

Educational activities will be carried on to promote the use of the ten point hog management program through newspaper articles, farm meetings, farm visits, specialist aid, and circular letters. The Agent plans to continue this educational program on swine and try to get across to farmers the value of using a good

can be of no benefit to a herd. These educational activities will be discussed at farm meetings, through newspaper articles, and on visits to the farm by the Agent. In 1955 supplementary pastures will be stressed a great deal. This has been one of the failures of a lot of farmers in the past few years who have gotten in a few beef cattle.

Poultry

General Educational Activities: With the aid of Extension Specialists, several poultry producers in the county will be contacted periodically as to the value of keeping records and practicing sound poultry management.

Forestry

a. Goals: To conduct a demonstration with the aid of Extension Specialists showing the proper methods of thinning, cutting and selection of pulpwood, the killing of hardwood, fence post treatment, and general practices used in the care of our forests.

b. Methods to be Used:

1. Work with the local forester, the district forester, and the Extension Specialists in selecting suitable locations for this demonstration.

2. Publicize the time and place of this demonstration in the local newspapers, radio and by circular letter.

FARM AND HOME DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Agent, in cooperation with the Home Agent, plans to have from five to seven Farm-Home Unit Programs starting in Surry County during 1955. The Agents will call in members from the Home Demonstration Committee and members from the Board of Agriculture Committee and ask their cooperation in working on this program as to helping selecting participants.

EXTENSION 4-H PROGRAM

A. Organization of Clubs in County

1. Where possible, leaders will be obtained for each club.

2. Train officers in their duties and responsibilities in regards to parliamentary suggestions and order of procedure in conducting meetings.

3. The 1955 4-H enrollment goal will be 65 active members (boys).

B. Project Work

1. The Agent will work with each 4-H club member in selecting projects most suitable for his needs.

Encourage cooperation and assistance of parents with members on their project work.

C. Definite Plans and Schedules for Holding 4-H Club Meetings.

1. Monthly meetings will be held in the school by each club for the months during school session. Schedules will be met

up as to a time and place of meetings by the Agents and principal of the school.

2. Visit L-H projects during the summer and assist members on their projects and record books.

D. Have Regular Meetings of the County Council for Setting Up Goals for L-H Club members in the County.

E. Set Goal of Completion at 80%.

1. To use all available contests on County and District basis.

2. Announce the rules and awards of each contest.

3. Present prizes and awards on Achievement Day held in conjunction with the annual County Picnic.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES THROUGH COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD

A. Encourage each family to:

1. Have a good year round garden.
2. Use recommended varieties of seeds.

3. Practice disease and pest control.

4. Increase yields rather than acreage through better farming methods.

5. Use to the maximum the machinery available.

6. Use fertilizer wisely and purchase early.

7. Treat all seed peanuts before planting.

B. Use Advisory Board in selection of farms for demonstrational work.

C. Use Advisory Board in getting vital information to the farm families.

BM
134
72

IV. COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

1. To assist the ASC Committee in all educational phases of conservation program.
2. To serve as ex-officio member of the ASC Committee.
3. To assist Soil Conservation Service with its program in the District.
4. To assist the Veterans Instructor in his work with veterans.