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AUGUSTA COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL PLAN OF WORK

1959

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PLAN OUTLINE

1. Brief Description of Augusta County
2. General Statement of Plan and Needs
3. Individual Activity Consideration:
 - a. Agronomy
 - b. Dairy Cattle
 - c. General Livestock
 1. Beef cattle
 2. Sheep
 3. Swine
 - d. Poultry
 - e. Horticulture
 - f. 4-H Clubs
4. Cooperative Effort with Other Agencies
5. Calendar of Work for 1959

COUNTY DESCRIPTION

Augusta County is located in the heart of the Shenandoah Valley and has excellent blue grass sod. The agricultural soils are generally of a limestone base with the main type being Frederick Silt Loam and Hagerstown Silt Loam. There is also a large shale belt through the county consisting of Berks Silt Loam and Berks Shale soils. The average rainfall for the County is 38.53 inches.

The average size farm in the County is 117.6 acres and there are 2,891 farms. The area of the county is 986 square miles with approximately one-third of this area in National Forest. The population of the county is some 37,000 people and the city of Staunton, the County Seat, has 24,000 people. Augusta County's other city is Waynesboro with a population of 22,000 people.

The agricultural income of the county is chiefly from livestock, poultry, dairy and fruit production. Crops grown in the county are marketed through livestock as feed grains and hay. The livestock consists of market cattle, sheep and hogs as well as a good relative amount of purebred cattle, sheep and swine. Augusta County has the largest sheep population of any county in Virginia.

Industrial expansion has leveled off somewhat after a five year period of marked increase. This industrial expansion is creating a trend towards an increase in smaller suburban farms, an increase in off-the-farm income for farm people and a shortage of agricultural labor. Plans and programs for the county are being adjusted to meet these changing conditions.

GENERAL STATEMENT ON SITUATION, PLANS AND NEEDS

The year 1958 was a good one for agriculture in the county. Prices received for farm products were good yet profits were small due to the cost of supplies. Production of all types of feed supplies was excellent and reserves were built up. The number of cattle, sheep and hogs are at all times high and poultry numbers continue to be great.

The Agricultural Plan of Work for 1959 for Augusta County is a continuation of the long range plan but with current changing conditions and programs some adjustments and alterations are necessary. The plan, again this year, was developed through commodity committees, recommendations of the County Board of Agriculture, individual suggestions, past experiences and 4-H and Youth Committees. Such committees were:

Agronomy Committee	Beef Cattle Committee
Horticultural Committee	Poultry Committee
Sheep Committee	Dairy Committee
Swine Committee	4-H and Youth Committee

The study of these committees revealed that some of the major problems in Agriculture in Augusta County are:

1. Some 1,375 farms have an income of less than \$2,000.00.
2. An over-population of livestock numbers in relation to pasture and feed supplies.

3. Inadequate market egg production program including marketing facilities.

4. Insufficient number of 4-H and Youth Leaders.

5. Inadequate farm water supply systems.

6. An over-production of broilers and turkeys at certain seasons.

7. Too many small, non-economical farm units.

8. The lack of good market outlets for apples and the need for diversification on fruit farms.

For the purpose of analysis and discussion, this plan of work is broken down into individual phases, elaborating on major activities and touching on the minor. For the sake of brevity a great deal of the work to be done will not be discussed in this report.

AGRONOMY - The ratio of livestock numbers to the available pasture land and to hay production has reached a saturation point. Livestock numbers must be held constant or advances in agronomic production must be achieved. Acreages of alfalfa continue to increase although the alfalfa weevil has created a serious problem. The acreages of wheat and corn continue to decrease, acreages of oats and barley to increase. Further feed reserves must be built up.

Probably the greatest needs in this phase are, (1) Pasture Improvement, Renovation and Management (2) Improved Hay and Forage Program, and (3) Insect Control on Forage Crops. It again appears that in the years ahead, the lengthening of the grazing season, a year-around-forage program and increased hay supplies will be very important.

To meet these Agronomy needs, the following will be done:

1. An Alfalfa Club meeting will be held in February with emphasis on weevil control and holding alfalfa stands.
2. Demonstrations on the use of granulated Heptachlor and fertilizer - Heptachlor will be conducted in February and March.
3. Soil sampling will be encouraged throughout the year.
4. Emphasis on better and wider use of ASC funds.

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5. Increased plantings of alfalfa will be encouraged in spring and fall.

6. Agronomy and fertilizer school will be held in February.

Most county ASC funds are being used to top-dress alfalfa. This emphasis should be on pastures and in new seedings. Efforts in this direction will be made by radio, press and by direct contact, particularly in January and July.

The Extension Agents, the Soil Conservation technicians and the A.S.C. personnel will carry these needs and suggestions to all meetings, farm visits and in publicity items. The Agronomy specialists will be used for schools, field trips, tours and on special problems.

In consideration of these needs and problems, the goals for the year in Agronomy will be:

1. To have every acre of alfalfa treated for the control of alfalfa weevil.

2. To increase the alfalfa acreage in the county from 17,000 to 18,000 acres and to raise the yield per acre by one-half a ton.

3. To increase the hay production per animal unit from one ton to one and one-half ton.

4. To increase soil sampling from 1,200 to 1,500 samples for the county.

5. To have the spraying of thistle added to the ASC handbook for 1960.

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Agronomy Committee:

B. B. Hanger, Chairman

Cecil C. Bowman

Thomas F. Clemmer, Jr.

O. C. Flory

W. A. Brooks

J. G. Fulton, III

Joseph L. Kanagy

DAIRY - Dairying continues to be one of the more profitable of all agriculture enterprises in the county. Cow numbers have decreased slightly although cows in Grade A dairies continue to increase. This trend will probably continue as more farmers convert from manufacturing to A Grade set - ups. Over 40,000,000 pounds of milk was produced in the county last year. Prices have been stable at a satisfactory level. Per cow milk production has increased slightly.

Major problems of the dairy farmers are: (1) Low production per cow (2) Lack of top quality replacement heifers, and (3) Lack of sufficient quantities of high quality forage and pasture. All of these are problems which the dairy farmers can do much about solving through use of the many good management practices known at this time.

The following extension teaching activities will be conducted:

1. Dairy School in conjunction with the annual DHIA meeting to stress value of records, proper grain feeding and care of dry cows and calf feeding in February.
2. Frequent farm visits to help farmers make better use of records and to educate farmers about the value of production records.
3. Inaugurate the Owner-Sampler testing program and increase the number of people participating in testing programs.
4. Provide timely information on control of garlic and off-flavors in milk during spring and fall months.

5. Frequent newspaper articles on timely topics.
6. Hold individual analysis conferences with DHIA and Owner-Sampler members in November.

With only 44 DHIA herds and two Weigh-O-Day herds having records on their cows, a major share of the dairy specialists time will be devoted to assisting these farmers to get more from their records and to getting more people on some form of production testing.

The following goals have been set for 1959:

1. Increase the number of herds on test by 15.
2. Increase the number of dairy cattle bred artificially by 10 percent.
3. Continue to increase calfhood vaccination for Bangs until 90 percent are vaccinated.
4. Increase production of all dairy cows by 200 pounds.

Also to continue to assist the Artificial Breeding Association with organizational and promotional activities to provide better service to more farmers. Assist milk producers and distributors in dairy problems. Assist the Guernsey Club in its activities.

DAIRY COMMITTEE:

David P. Turner, Chairman
John Jackson
Marvin Glover
R. R. Fravel, Jr.
Joe Early
Joe Kanagy
Paul Wright
A. F. Weaver

GENERAL LIVESTOCK - Augusta County is well adapted

to the production of livestock because of its topography, soil type, production of forage crops and grain, and nearness to market.

There are about 175,000 acres of pasture, 37,000 acres of grain and 45,000 acres of hay and hay silage being produced in the County at the present time. The value of livestock sold during the past year has increased by 15 percent but net profits remain low.

BEEF CATTLE:

1. Situation - In the past 14 years, beef cattle numbers have increased from 30,000 to 50,000 head and these are located on 94 percent of the farms in the county. The acres in pasture, tons of hay, and acres of cropland per animal unit is such that the county can be considered near the saturation point in livestock numbers. There were no serious outbreaks of diseases. Testing for Bangs Disease is underway in the county on an area basis. Approximately 75 percent of all heifers used for replacements were vaccinated.

2. Problems - The major problems in the beef cattle field are:

- a. The inability of farmers to establish and maintain a balance between the agronomic production and beef cattle production on farms.
- b. The unawareness of farmers of the different grades of beef animals and their using such grades in their marketing program.

3. Goals for 1959:

(a) Create an awareness in farmers of the grades of cattle, particularly fat cattle.

(b) Increase the quality and number of purebred bulls used in the county.

(c) Increase the scope of the feeder calf sales and yearling steer sales.

4. Extension Program:

(a) Conduct demonstrations on farms in July and August to show the merits of culling low-producing and non-producing cows.

(b) Work with the beef committee and the purebred associations in finding a better supply of farm beef bulls. Supply cow herd owners with data on sales and assist them in selecting desirable bulls.

(c) Use the press, radio and public meetings as well as personal visits to show merits of having quality cattle.

SHEEP:

1. Situation - Sheep numbers have increased from 23,000 to 32,000 in the past 14 years. Only 33 percent of the farms in the county report sheep. Sheep have been the most profitable livestock enterprise in the past few years. Local markets for lamb sales constantly average well above the nation as a whole. Lamb feeding seems to be on the increase. There were no serious outbreaks of disease although foot-rot and over-eating disease were troublesome. The local markets for wool have weakened and too many small, underweight lambs are reaching market.

2. Problems:

- (a) A supply of quality replacement ewes.
- (b) Lack of organization among the sheep producers of the county.
- (c) Small and off-grade lambs reaching market in too great numbers.

3. Goals:

- (a) Find new supplies of replacement ewes, probably 7,000 per year.
- (b) Organize an Augusta County Sheep Producers Association.
- (c) Decrease the number of buck lambs and long tail lambs by 75 percent.

4. Extension Program:

- (a) Conduct three demonstrations in heavy sheep areas, on docking and castrating lambs in February and March for all interested.
- (b) Hold a sheep producers meeting in Staunton in March to start a Sheep Producers Association.
- (c) Use the radio, press, meetings and personal visits in February and March to inform sheepmen of the merits of castrating and docking lambs.
- (d) Continue to work closely with the stockyards to sell buck lambs separate from ewe and wether lambs.
- (e) Use press and radio in June and July to inform sheepmen of the merits of feeding late and smaller lambs to market size.

(f) Work with the sheep committee to find new sources of replacement ewes.

(g) Work with packers and producers to expand lamb feeding, both on contract and otherwise.

SWINE:

1. Situation - Swine numbers have remained steady for the past 10 years and prices in general have been good. About 70 percent of the farms in the county have swine. There were no serious outbreaks of disease in the county but internal parasites are constantly a factor.

2. Problems:

(a) Unawareness of swine producers of the different grades of market hogs.

(b) Internal parasites.

3. Goals:

(a) Create an awareness by swine producers of the different grades of market hogs.

(b) Decrease the loss of pigs by internal parasites by 25 percent.

4. Extension Program:

(a) In March and September, use press and radio to inform producers of methods and materials for internal parasite control.

(b) Advise local supply and feed dealers of the newest and best internal parasite control materials.

(c) Set up a swine grading demonstration to explain grades to producers. This to be done in April and September.

BEEF COMMITTEE

J. E. Williams, Chairman
E. W. Spitzer
C. A. Marks
Harry Keister
G. D. Hodges
John Mohler
John Kindig

SHEEP COMMITTEE

S. F. McClure, Jr., Chairman
J. C. Sites
Moffett Black
Ray Gum
C. W. Lawson
J. Kemper Croft
S. H. McLaughlin
J. W. Riley, Jr.

SWINE COMMITTEE

C. W. Grove, Chairman
R. B. Dunlap
E. C. Burtner
C. S. Patterson
H. L. Lockridge
Shiflett Bros.

POULTRY:

1. Situation - A poor price year caused a decrease in poultry numbers and producers. There are still too many small producers of broilers and eggs. The egg marketing program improved materially. Better contractual arrangements are needed to improve the broiler program. A reduction in turkey producers took place in 1958 and probably will occur again. No serious outbreak of diseases took place during the year.

2. Problems:

- (a) Too many small units in both broilers and eggs.
- (b) Getting a better and stronger poultry association in the county.
- (c) A good cooperative program between producers, feed dealers and processors.
- (d) A good workable contract on broilers between producer and contractor.

3. Goals:

- (a) To increase the membership in the Poultry Association by 25 members to include all segments.
- (b) To reduce the cost of broiler production per pound by one cent through good management.
- (c) Create an awareness among egg and broiler producers that a minimum egg producing unit is 1,000 birds and broilers, 10,000 birds.

4. Extension Program:

- (a) Conduct a county-wide poultry school in February.
- (b) Conduct a poultry field day in August with emphasis on management.
- (c) Send out regular monthly poultry management letters.
- (d) By continuous use of the press and radio, encourage expansion of small units to large efficient units used to encourage growers and commercial men to join the poultry association.

POULTRY COMMITTEE:

Earl S. Parrish, Chairman

Marvin Campbell

H. S. Craig

Dan Strickler

Mrs. L. I. Young

Earl Spitzer

R. M. Shank

Ray S. Cline

J. D. Wine

J. W. Phillips

HORTICULTURE:

1. Situation - Fruit growers had a bad year with low prices and poor markets. Apple tree numbers continue to drop as do the number of producers. Orchards in general are receiving better care and management. The acreage of small fruits, particularly strawberries, should be increased due to good market demand in the area. Home gardens are still somewhat inadequate. Continued urban and sub-urban building has increased demands for landscape and lawn assistance. Insects continue to be a big problem.

2. Problems:

- (a) Adequate outlets for canner apples.
- (b) Diversification in fruit growing business to provide more income.
- (c) Suitable family garden for all rural and urban families, where practical.
- (d) More plantings of strawberries.
- (e) Insect control.

3. Goals:

- (a) Create an awareness in fruit growers for the need to diversify orchard projects.
- (b) To have at least 10 orchardists diversify with livestock.
- (c) To have a suitable family garden at each rural, urban and sub-urban home where practical.
- (d) To increase strawberry acreage by 10 acres.

4. Extension Program:

- (a) A fruit school will be held in February.
- (b) A pruning demonstration on apples and peaches will be held in March.
- (c) A tour of orchards with livestock as a diversity will be held in June.
- (d) Monthly garden letters will be sent to all families requesting same.
- (e) A fruit picking and packing school will be held in August.
- (f) By press and radio, sent out timely information on insects and their control.
- (g) Spray bulletins sent to all fruit growers and others with fruit.

HORTICULTURAL COMMITTEE:

W. F. Young, Jr., Chairman
Lyle Kindig
Wilbur Bedall
Paul Simmons
W. M. Martin
Davey Coffey
Joe Moonaw

4-H CLUB WORK

There are 555 Augusta County boys enrolled in 4-H clubs for 1959. Junior and Senior 4-H clubs operating in 25 different communities with 13 adult local leaders and six adult project leaders. There are Junior local leaders in all of the 4-H clubs in the county. The following Committees guide the 4-H program in the county:

A. The County Youth Council - This group meets in January to help plan the 4-H club program for the year. Members of this council consist of local leaders, parents of club members, bankers rural ministers and businessmen.

B. The County Youth Committee - This Committee works on certain individual assignments that the County Youth Council has planned. The following two problems are the most important in the 4-H program:

1. The rural-urban 4-H club enrollment shows an increase over 1958. This situation has created a number of changes in projects offered in the program, such as: Safety, Rural Electrification, Home Grounds and Landscaping, Forestry Appreciation. Finding a suitable meeting place for this group has been quite a problem.

2. The 4-H County Camping program has made some progress. Last summer we conducted the Older Youth Week-end Camp prior to the regular week camp. There were 30 older 4-H club members attending from Augusta and Highland Counties. Last year the

week-end camp was strictly recreational. We were not too pleased with the number attending, but we hope this will stimulate more older youth to attend in 1959.

The immediate needs to improve and correct these problems are:

1. Project and Organizational leaders in every community.
2. Recruit more councilors for the two 4-H camps and plan more crafts and leadership classes for 1959.
3. More Junior leaders in school clubs.
4. Divide the enrollment of 4-H clubs in the larger schools, to encourage more interest.
5. Organize two older youth 4-H clubs on a community basis. To encourage the boys to remain in 4-H club work after graduating from High school.
6. Local sponsors such as banks, merchants and industrial groups.

In order to meet these needs as nearly as possible in 1959, All Stars, Honor Club members and adults are being encouraged to act as leaders both in and out of school.

This program will be presented to the farm boys and girls and to adults through continued press and radio publicity, by demonstrations and educational tours, by contests and by personal visitations.

The two summer camps (older youth and 10 - 14 years old boys and girls) will be held in July. The educational tours in January, April and June. The schools on Tractor Maintenance, Rural Electrification, Livestock, Land Appreciation, Dairy and Poultry judging will be held by specialists and extension personnel in February, March and April. A Leader Training meeting will be held in February and the conference with rural ministers in March.

To make such a broad program effective, the cooperation of parents, Ruritan Clubs, Rural ministers, Livestock Associations and the Extension Service is necessary and these and others will do the job. Also, the services of project specialists, the 4-H club State Agent and other specialist will be needed.

The County-wide goal for 1959 is to have a good active 4-H club in every community of the county and to serve every farm and urban home where the desire for youth to cling to rural living exists. Some of our future goals are: (1) To encourage high school club members to continue their 4-H work so they will be more qualified to enter contests on State and National levels. (2) To organize more Junior and Senior 4-H clubs on the community basis in future years ahead, and (3) To have 90 percent completion of all projects started.

Goals:

1. Encourage club members of rural-urban families to enroll in the following projects and contests: Land appreciation, forestry appreciation, rural electrification, entomology, home garden and crops.

2. Encourage 15 new club members to enroll in the Sheep Shearing School in April.

3. Secure 10 additional adult project leaders to assist with projects as dairy heifers, beef heifers, market hogs, poultry, sheep, garden and forestry.

4. Encourage older 4-H club members who have won County and State contests to serve as project leaders and to assist with livestock, dairy, poultry judging and sheep shearing.

5. Conduct educational schools for the following contests: Rural electrification, Livestock judging, Tractor Maintenance, Safety, Land judging, Poultry and Egg grading, dairy judging, Sheep Shearing and Fitting and grooming schools for beef cattle, sheep, hogs and dairy heifers. These schools will be held in March, April and May.

6. Continue the Sears Roebuck Pig Chain, Tractor Driving contest and plan to have a father and son banquet in August.

7. Encourage 10 percent of the 4-H club enrollment to exhibit their projects in shows and county and state fairs in 1959.

<u>HONOR CLUB COMMITTEE</u>	<u>ALL STAR COMMITTEE</u>	<u>OVER ALL 4-H COMMITTEE</u>
Phyllis Reed	Franklin Wilson	Mrs. W. A. Quick
Jacob Shaner	Glenn Grove	Franklin Wilson
Charles Harris	Ray Weaver	Ray Weaver
Martha Jan Almarode	Patricia Botkin	Rev. George Kopp

COOPERATIVE EFFORT WITH OTHER AGENCIES

The Extension Service is charged with the Educational phase of all programs and agencies of the Department of Agriculture. Some major items of educational cooperation are as follows for 1959:

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE AND FLOOD CONTROL:

1. Cooperate in the completion of the Augusta County USDA Conservation Needs Survey.
2. Coordinate all publicity for Natural Resources Conservation Week.
3. Coordinate farm planning and farm management with SCS Technicians.
4. Arrange conservation and water programs with local civic clubs.

AGRICULTURAL STABILIZATION AND CONSERVATION:

1. Serve as an ex-officio Board member and advise the Board on Agricultural problems.
2. Assist with planning the 1960 program in February.
3. Assist farmer sign-up during December and July.
4. Conduct radio programs and prepare newspaper articles of a timely nature regarding all phases of the ASC program.
5. Conduct a county-wide training meeting for committee-men on new program content.

FORESTRY SERVICE:

1. Participate in the "Keep Virginia Green" program of the Virginia Forest Service.
2. Participate in the Governor's "Plant More Trees" program in Virginia.
3. Serve on the County Forestry Committee.
4. Prepare newspaper and radio publicity on the Brush Burning Law.

FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION:

1. Serve in an advisory capacity to the county committee.
2. Prepare timely newspaper and radio material on different phases of the FHA program.
3. Enroll all FHA borrowers in all Extension activity during the year.

<u>December</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>March</u>
Meeting of the Agricultural Extension Board 4-H Honor Club meeting 4-H Achievement Day	Commodity Committee Meetings 4-H Officer Training 4-H Planning Meeting Meeting Artificial Breeding Association Pruning Demonstrations Docking and Castrating demonstrations	Fruit Growers School Dairy School ASC Planning Meeting Agronomy School Alfalfa Club Meeting Poultry School Feeder Calf Meeting 4-H All-Star Meeting Fat Stock Show Meeting	Docking and Castrating demonstrations 4-H Tractor Schools Bankers Credit Conference Fair Planning Meeting Fair Planning Meeting Alfalfa Weevil Control demonstrations Vegetable Gardening School Purebred Bull Sales 4-H Fitting and Grooming School 4-H Electric Workshop Schools
<u>April</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>July</u>
4-H Fat Stock Show 4-H Livestock Judging 4-H Dairy Judging 4-H Poultry Judging Weed Control Demonstration Sheep Organization Meeting	Pasture Tour Sheep Shearing School 4-H Tractor Contest Sheep Inspection Tour Circular letter on dipping and shearing sheep Feeder Lamb Conference	Eastern Stud Ram Sale Circular letter on cattle spraying Summer Poultry Meeting 4-H Lamb Show and Sale Circular letter on Feeder Calf sales	Cattle culling demonstration 4-H Club Camp Older Youth Camp Ram Sale Summer Dairy Meeting Circular on drenching sheep
<u>August</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>November</u>
Cattle Culling Demonstration Tractor Driving Contest Extension Conference Fall Pasture Tour Fair Conference Dehorning and castrating Demonstration	Agricultural Fair Feeder Calf Sale Fruit Picking and Packing School Circular letter on internal parasites and lice Circular on drenching sheep Atlantic Rural Exposition	Yearling Steer Sale 100 Bu Corn Checks Hereford Calf Sale Harvest Festival Feeder Lamb Placements	4-H Achievement Day Bred Ewe Sale Feeder Calf Sale Annual Reports