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ANNUAL REPORT

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

STATE OF VIRGINIA

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EAST CENTRAL DISTRICT

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I. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

The district agent is responsible to the State Director for the Extension program at the District level. This includes:

a. Working with agents in the development of County Long-Time Extension Programs and Annual Plans of Work.

b. Correlating the work of the subject-matter specialists and the county workers.

c. Work with the several subject-matter departments on the development and the holding of appropriate agent-training schools.

d. With the specialists, plan and hold area schools for farm leaders in several subject-matter fields.

e. Conduct a public relations program on the district level.

f. Work with industry on an area level in developing programs and facilities that would strengthen the over-all educational program.

g. Report to the director the evaluation of county programs and plans.

h. Report to the director the evaluation of each individual county worker.

B. SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

A. With the assistance and approval of the State Office, maintain adequate field staff for the district in line with budget limitations.

b. Obtain from county governing bodies, certain financial

support for Extension work. A high percentage of the county funds appropriated are used as a part of the salary of the county workers.

c. Work out with the county governing bodies, provisions for furnishing office accomodations for county workers.

d. Train county workers, especially in methods and procedures for doing an effective Extension job.

e. Arrange with specialists, training conferences with agents. These conferences are usually held on an individual county basis.

f. Assist counties with the development of long-time county extension programs and annual plans of work.

g. Evaluate the county programs.

h. Evaluate each county worker, including the secretary, using the prescribed forms in evaluating each individual.

C. OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

a. Supervise the operation of an area 4-H Club Camp that serves a part of three Extension districts. The camp serves twenty-five counties with approximately two thousand youth attending each year.

Responsibilities in connection with this camp include the selection and supervision of the camp personnel with the exception of the kitchen staff. There is also the responsibility of seeing that the physical plant of the camp is in operating condition, and that the proper provisions are made for the upkeep of the camp.

b. Assume certain responsibilities with relation to field meetings

at the Branch Experiment Stations located within the District.

c. Cooperate with other agencies with the planning and holding of certain area meetings and events.

II. MAJOR SUPERVISORY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. DEVELOPMENT OF LONG-TIME COUNTY PROGRAMS

For many years there has been a real need for the development and the writing of County Long-Time Programs. Some of the reasons for needing these long-time programs are a continued demand on the county workers from many sources, for a higher percentage of the workers' time; the fast shift in agriculture that is taking place throughout the area; the intensification of farming in this area is taking place at a more rapid rate than in previous years; there is some evidence that programs in counties are not meeting the needs of the people; in many counties, farm leaders were not conscious of the seriousness of the agricultural situation.

A goal of 100% counties preparing written long-time programs was set for 1958. Fifteen of the sixteen counties completed their county programs. The change of personnel in one county, near the end of the year, caused one county not to submit a county program. In order to get this job done, it was realized that considerable emphasis would have to be placed on this phase of activities for the year. It was emphasized to all agents, the importance of preparing a long-time program, and the importance of subject-matter or special interest committees was emphasized also. Most counties already have fairly active special interest committees. During 1958, these committees

throughout the district were very active. In one county (Cumberland), the Livestock Committee held five planning meetings before completing their job. In most counties, County Boards of Agriculture, or County Committees were established to review the work of the several special interest or subject-matter committees. It was the responsibility of this particular committee, to tie together the recommendations and activities and eliminate duplications of the several sub-committees working in subject-matter areas. The county agents and assistants wrote up the long-time program using the work of the committees and the County Board as the basis of their program determination. For the first time, we have long-time county programs in the counties. These programs will prove valuable to the present Extension worker and will be an invaluable instrument in the hands of new workers who may be transferred to the county. The sixteenth county is now setting up the machinery to prepare and submit their Long-Time Extension Program in the Spring of 1960. This county will make the district 100% on the county extension programs.

2. POULTRY PROGRAM

For the past ten or twelve years, there has been considerable emphasis on broiler production in a part of the district. More recently, there has been considerable interest in the development of the commercial laying flock throughout most of the counties in the district. One company has already constructed a large egg buying facility in the center of the district, that will provide a market for certain eggs produced from West Virginia, south to Northern Georgia.

The fast-moving poultry program throughout the area demanded that the Extension workers in the field become more familiar with many phases of the poultry program. Subject-matter specialists from the Poultry Department, and the district agent, met and planned a Seminar type of training program for the county agents and assistants in the district. This program was held and the agents received very valuable training. This educational program was followed up by other programs. These meetings were put on by several members of the Poultry Extension staff and covered the major phases of poultry production. Emphasis, however, was placed on commercial laying enterprise. As a result of this training program, the agents throughout the area should be in a better position to advise with the farmers on problems relating to the poultry industry.

3. SUN-CURED TOBACCO

In reviewing the Sun-Cured tobacco situation with the Extension Tobacco Specialists, several very pertinent facts were pointed out; (1) the yield of sun-cured tobacco had shown only small increases for the past ten to fifteen years. A study of the quality of tobacco at markets, showed evidence that there was need for a concerted effort to get farmers to plant true sun-cured tobacco varieties. In revieweing the acreage figures for the sun-cured tobacco area, it was evident that most counties had been planting only about fifty percent of the sun-cured tobacco acreage allotment. There were a number of individual farmers however, in the area, who had made substantial progress in increasing the yields and improving the

quality of the leaf. With this in mind, it was decided that educational meetings would be held in the Sun-cured tobacco producing counties. The first meetings planned were meetings of the agents to give them the necessary training for them to hold the educational meetings in their respective counties. At this meeting, the importance of a good publicity program was emphasized and plans were made to reach the producers with pertinent information through the press, radio, etc.

4. DISTRICT FORAGE PRODUCTION CONTEST

In 1958, without any unusual effort on the part of the supervisor, fourteen of the sixteen counties in the district submitted reports in the District Forage Production Contest. Although a high percentage of the counties are participating in this program, there is little evidence that an intensified program was conducted in very many counties.

III. FARM AND HOME DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

There is some emphasis in all counties on the Farm and Home Development phase of Extension work. Special personnel are in four of the sixteen counties. Counties with additional personnel to work on this phase of Extension work are Amelia, Buckingham, Charlotte and Lunenburg. In this district, we have been very fortunate in keeping the assistant positions on Farm and Home Development, filled most of the time. The only exception during 1958, was for a very short period in Buckingham County. While progress in this phase of the program has not been outstanding, andperhaps nothing phenomenal can be pointed out in a county, or with a farm family, I feel that definite progress is being made with meny of the farm

families. The Farm and Home Development phase of our program lacks some of the color or glory that we can attach to other programs. In working on programs on projects that require a relatively short period of emphasis before adoption, we can add glamor. For example, it is easy to introduce a new variety of tobacco as it may return on the average of $80.00 per acre, more income. It is a different story on farm management problems. We have a farmer with a very low net income; his trouble may be one, two, or many. In most cases the problem cannot be solved by more fertilizer, a new variety, better disease control, etc. The problem is usually more basis. I shall list only a few of the major problems that the workers have encountered.

1. Small units.
2. Acreage control on certain crops.
3. Poor soils.
4. Need for off-farm employment opportunity.
5. Lack of finances (not lack of credit).
6. Mental resistance to changes.
7. Lack of managerial ability.

Many of the above are problems that cannot be solved by the farm operator; they are area or national problems.

The agents, in working with the farmer on farm management problems, have assisted in offering solutions in many instances. The areas in which most farms have been assisted, include:

1. Improvement in management by getting farmers to study and analyze their problems.

2. Shift in land uses.

3. Emphasizing need for off-farm employment.

4. Getting operators in someinstances to realize the hopelessness of their operation - they then find other employment.

5. On a very limited number of farms - accept new crops (as aromatic tobacco).

6. Slow progress in the area of mental resistance to change.

IV. SUMMARY

A. COUNTY APPROPRIATIONS

The matter of county appropriations presents a perplexing problem. There has been no substantial increase in county appropriations in any county. Most counties have made small increases. In specific instances, there seems to be little correlation between obtaining additional funds and quality of the job being done by county workers. In a few counties, increases have been held back because of one vocal member of the Board of Supervisors.

It is fair to state that the Extension Service's relationship with the Boards is strengthening. This was in evidence in working out personnel changes in several counties near the end of 1958. Other problems that have arisen, have been constructively discussed and appraised.

B. OFFICE EQUIPMENT

There has been considerable improvement in the office equipment that is being made available for the county staffs.

C. EVALUATION GUIDE

For the first time, this state now has a very comprehensive

evaluation guide that will prove very beneficial.

On this point, it may be added that a satisfactory form for secretarial evaluation is needed.

D. 4-H CLUB PROGRAMS

There continues to be a real challenge to the Extension Service to develop 4-H Club programs for the older members. Competition continues to increase for this age group. Perhaps the solution, or a partial solution to this problem, would be more emphasis on the organization of additional Community 4-H Clubs.

E. FARMER COMMITTEES

Farmer committees are playing an ever-increasing important role in the planning of county extension programs. This is evidenced by the number of new committees that we have organized throughout the district and the effort that is being put forth on the part of the limited number of these committeemen to help analyze the problems and arrive at possible solutions.

F. LONG-TIME EXTENSION PROGRAMS

The number one emphasis in the district for 1958, was on the development of Long-Time Extension County Programs. Real progress was made in this field. It is hoped that in the years ahead, the program can be re-written from time to time as changes in conditions and situations arise.