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E. R. Price - Editor

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REPORT

OF

EXTENSION WORK IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLICITY

Project 2

NOVEMBER 30, 1925 to DECEMBER 1st, 1926

E. E. Price, Editor



REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLICITY, EXTENSION DIVISION, VIRGINIA  
POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE, NOVEMBER 30, 1925 -- DECEMBER 1, 1926

The purpose of the Department of Publicity is to furnish the people of Virginia with the latest information as to what the Extension Division is doing and what it is in a position to do for the farmer, farm women, boys and girls of the State, and tell them what is best and most profitable in farm and home practices. This is done through the medium of the written and printed word, particularly the letter. The department of Publicity endeavors earnestly to convey this information through the medium mentioned in a clear and concise manner so that any person with average intelligence or limited educational opportunities may understand it. Experience and careful study of conditions as they exist in Virginia go to prove that successful publicity does not lie in the quantity of copy sent out but in the quality as regards the needs and conditions of the people who are expected to read it. The distinction between purely technical and instructional matter and news matter must be kept clearly in mind in preparing copy for newspapers and agricultural journals, particularly the former. News as to what is to be gained by doing a thing a certain way and who has followed some particular practices is more apt to get space in the newspapers and be read, rather than methods to be followed--people look to the county agents and specialists and to bulletins for this information and must be reached through demonstrations, personal visits, meetings, etc.

This service is carried on through the daily and weekly papers of the state, by items each month in the Southern Planter, a column each quarter

throughout the year to the Progressive Farmer, through articles furnished from time to time to the leading agricultural journals of the country (these usually furnished on request or when some special occasion demands) and through the Extension Division publications—Extension Division Home, Boys' and Girls' Club paper, bulletins, circulars etc. Practically all the daily papers in the state and at least one paper in each county cooperate by giving space to matter sent out from the Blacksburg office. The "Zone" plan is followed, that is, the papers in the various counties and sections of Virginia are furnished with copy suited to the needs of the locality in which they are published. During the year covered by this report an average of five articles per month were furnished the daily papers and at least two articles per month were sent to the county papers. In a number of instances certain papers that are particularly friendly to Extension work and whose editors show a willingness to publish any and all matter sent from this office, have been sent an article each week. This is especially true in the case of the pure-bred sire campaign and the campaign for docking and castrating of sheep promoted by the department of animal husbandry, and the intensive campaign put on by the department of plant pathology for the eradication of smut in wheat. It should be remembered that at the same time the county papers are publishing articles from this office, they are also carrying copy furnished by the county agents in their locality. At intervals during the year specialists have prepared articles and after these have been edited in this office they are mimeographed and sent to certain county agents with the request that they use them in their

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county papers. At the request of R. F. Nelson, Director of Publicity, Virginia State Chamber of Commerce, several articles have been furnished him during the year for such use as he saw fit to make of them in his work. Richard Henry, who has had charge for two years of the agricultural page in the Richmond-Times Dispatch, has been very liberal in the matter of giving space to articles furnished him from this office. Mr. Henry has recently been promoted to assistant editorial writer on the Times-Dispatch but will continue his oversight of agricultural copy sent his paper, although he will not be immediately in charge of the agricultural page.

A number of articles have been sent the daily and weekly papers during the year prepared by specialists and others connected with the work. These were revised by the Editor in order to give the news value to them that the papers now require. The Editor has prepared and had published 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, conventions etc. Several articles regarding the room improvement work that has been done in Virginia under the supervision of the specialists and agents in home demonstration work and reports as to the prize winners in these contests have been sent to the papers, also published in the Extension Division News. Daily reports were sent to the daily papers of the state covering the State Farmers' Institute, Boys' and Girls' State Short Course and other meetings held at the college.

Many inquiries are received by the Editor for specific information on farm and home problems, those occasioned by articles that appear in the Extension Division News, the Southern Planter, and Progressive Farmer, or articles in the newspapers. These are always referred to the specialists whose particular subject

is the subject of inquiry, and since it is reasonable to suppose that there are men or women in a community interested in the subject, others in that section need light on the same subject, the Editor frequently takes such replies and embodies them into newspaper articles. This gives the subject under discussion a much wider circulation. A further function of the information service is to help create a demand for what the Extension Division has to offer. As a rule, Editors of papers do not seek this material, although they may know of it and appreciate its worth. It must be furnished to them regularly and in such a way that they can handle it easily. Since all phases of Extension Work touch directly on the farm and home, there is a wide field for stories that the newspapers find valuable because of their "Human Interest" touch. It is the function of the information service to make such stories available to the papers.

During the year the farm and home demonstration agents, with a few exceptions, have done excellent publicity work. In fact, a careful reading of the county papers received in this office each week and conversations with the Editors of some of these papers leads to the belief that most of them are now doing really efficient publicity work. Their copy is better prepared and they have a keener sense of news value, with a better understand of what people want to read about concerning extension work. Believing that the agent who is closely in touch with the needs of his people and knows conditions in his county is in a better position to decide what is the best material to furnish his county paper rather than some one not so well acquainted, the Editor has striven earnestly, not only this year but for the last eight years, to impress upon the agents the need for more and better publicity and has tried in every way possible to instruct

the agents in the preparation of copy. Each year there are fewer agents who refuse to believe that there is anything in publicity work and who in some instances actually seem to resent the efforts on the part of the Editors of the papers in this county to get them to furnish at least an occasional article for the papers.

The Editor has endeavored to give special help to the county farm and home demonstration agents in preparing copy for the press by visits to the agents in their counties, talks on publicity at the group meetings of the men and the annual meeting of the women agents, and by personal letters of encouragement and suggestions to any agent who seems at all receptive to such help. During the year eight prospective home demonstration agents who have spent a month or more in training in Montgomery county, with headquarters at the college, have been given an intensive course in the preparation of copy for newspapers. These agents were given at least five lectures and required to prepare an article for criticism by the Editor. The text used in this intensive course for prospective home demonstration agents is a monograph outline of the course in agricultural journalism at V. P. I. of which the Editor of the Extension Division has charge. The Editor thus gives a part of his time to teaching a class in Agricultural Journalism, composed of seniors enrolled in the college of agriculture, and to certain correspondence duties as agreed upon between the director of the Extension Division and the president of V. P. I. He is a member of the Virginia Press Association and of the National Editorial Association and the opportunity afforded through his connection with the State Association to know the Editors of the Virginia papers personally and to find out from them just what kind of material they are willing to publish

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has resulted in a closer cooperation and understanding between the Extension Division and the daily and weekly papers of the State. During the year the Editor attended the mid winter meeting of the Virginia Press Association in Farmville, the summer meeting of this association at Pulaski, a meeting of the Agricultural Editor Association at Michigan State College in July, and the annual meeting of the Country Life Conference in Washington in November, also the two group meetings of the farm demonstration agents earlier in the year, and by special invitation, a "Bally Day" in Hottelway. At the request of E. F. Nelson, Publicity Director of the Virginia State Chamber of Commerce, the Editor was present and took part in a conference at Richmond late in June of representatives of the colleges and various organizations of the state that are doing public work. The purpose of this conference was to consider various methods for getting the work of the colleges and organizations before the public through the newspapers.



EXTENSION DIVISION NEWS

The Extension Division News is an eight page, thirty two column newspaper issued each month for the farmers, farm women, bankers, ministers, public school 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 and results of work done along the various lines that are being developed in the home office and the field. 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 circulation of the Extension News is now 50,000 and new names are added to the mailing list almost every day.

HOW MAILING LIST IS ORGANIZED AND REVISED

In the beginning the mailing list was made up from lists borrowed from other organizations in the State such as the Farmers Union, Farm Bureau, etc. It was found that most of these mailing lists were very much out of date and many of the addresses were incorrect. As fast as the envelopes carrying the Extension Division News were returned to this office because of inability of the postmaster to deliver same these names were removed from the mailing list. Copies of names of those listed on our lists to receive mail at the larger offices in the State were sent to the postmasters at these offices with the request that they revise the lists for us. The responses of the postmasters were very gratifying and they have been of inestimable help. Each year several thousand names have been added to the mailing list of the Extension Division News. These names have been secured in many ways-- by individual request, from lists of names sent in by the farm and home demonstration agents, copying roster of membership or such organizations as the cooperative tobacco association, peanut growers association, etc., and from lists furnished us by the

agricultural and industrial agents of the various railroads in the State. The mailing list is kept as far as possible up to date and whenever a copy is returned because of the inability of any postoffice to deliver some every possible effort is made to find the correct address. If this cannot be done the name is removed from the list.

#### AGRICULTURAL CLUB LETTER

The Agricultural Club Letter, a four page, sixteen column, paper is issued monthly by the Department of Publicity, the greater part of the matter being furnished by the State leaders and specialists in club work. 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. Thirteen 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, 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 change each year there must be complete revision of this mailing list each twelve months.

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SELECTING AGENTS REPORTS.

All weekly field reports from agents, both white and colored, are gone over carefully by the Editor and the best in each report is noted. Particular attention is paid to human interest stories. Such extracts from these reports as are worth while are compiled and used in various ways. Those that show progress of Extension work, or that give a real insight into what the county agents are doing for the betterment of conditions on the farm and in the homes of Virginia, are sent out as separate items to the newspapers, are published in the Extension Division News and furnished the Director for use in making up copy he sends each month to one of the agricultural journals. Some of the papers in the State publish these extracts in full; other papers use them as fillers or give space to those that are of particular interest in their locality.

REVISIONS AND EDITING MATERIAL

All material prepared by specialists and agents and intended for distribution in bulletin, or circular 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 and to put in proper shape. When there is any doubt on the part of the Editor as to suitability or form he confers with the writer and in case of disagreement the matter is referred to the director as final authority.

ISSUES OF BUREAU JOURNAL

The Extension Division News, and Agricultural Club Letter are distributed as

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outlined above. The distribution of bulletins and circulars is largely in the hands of the specialists who 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 department of publication as outlined above and exercises a general supervision over the force employed in the coming out of the Extension Division News, <sup>and</sup> Agricultural Club Letter. This force at present consists of one young woman who divides her time between the mailing list and acting as secretary to the Editor, another young woman who devotes her entire time to work on the mailing list, and several college boys who work by the hour as their services are needed.

#### BULLETINS

The general character of the bulletin series of publication remains the same each year. An effort is made to have each bulletin meet some definite demand and the subject matter of every bulletin deals with conditions peculiar to Virginia. Six bulletins were issued in the twelve months covered by this report.

#### CIRCULARS

During the year which this report covers sixty one 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 Florida papers and agricultural journals published in this section 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, 1925 to December 1, 1926:

BULLETINS

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>AUTHOR</u>
No. 75 Secretary's Minute Book	500	Devis
No. 95 Hints	6,000	McGowan
No. 98 Breeders Directory of Pure-bred Livestock	5,000	Am. Bureau & Dairy Dept.
No. 99 Twenty Lessons on Corn Production	5,000	Patterson
No. 100 Annual Report	7,000	Patterson
No. 78 Breakfasts and Suppers (Reprint)	2,500	Walker

CIRCULARS

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>AUTHOR</u>
E-122 Weekly Field Report	5,000	
E-221 Monthly Report	3,000	
E-169 Membership Record Sheet (Revised)	5,000	Klein
E-247 Harvesting, Handling Storing and Curing Sweet Potatoes	500	Seamer
E-72 Club Enrollment Cards Program for Developing Alachua County's Agriculture	10,000	Montgomery
(No No.)	15,000	
E-155 Poultry Record Book	1,000	

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<u>File</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Author</u>
E-109 Dns. Farn Flock Monthly Expense and Sales Record		2,000	
E-40 Expense Acct. 1st. sheet		2,000	
E-125 Salary Vouchers		2,000	
E-34 Pig Kill Sheet		1,000	
E-162 Weekly Field Report		5,000	
E-232 Mailing List for Agricultural Club Letter		1,000	
E-248 Better Feed Club Score Sheet		1,000	
E-114 Boys' and Girls' Livestock Record Book		5,000	Montgomery
E-27 Boys' and Girls' 4-H Community Club Soap's Minute Book		5,000	Montgomery
4-H Club Song Book (Unappropriated)		10,000	
E-249 Spray Calendar for Apples		5,000	Apperson
E-250 Application Va. Register of Production		1,000	Bushman
E-237 4-H Poultry Club Record Book 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th year Five Year Program for Rocklenburg County (No No.)		1,000	E. H. Williams
E-162 Weekly Field Report		10,000	
E-201 Monthly Report		5,000	
E-226 Weekly Field Report		2,000	
E-202 Monthly Report Five Year Program for Campbell County (No No.)		1,000	Anderson
Five Year Program for Rockridge County (No No.)		1,000	Louis
E-109 Farn and Flock Exp. and Sales Record		2,000	
E-282 Clothing Club Record		10,000	Ritch
E-193 Va. Farn Flock Management Demonstration Certificate		500	Dege
Head Summary for Cow Testing Assn's		100	Bushman
E-232 Mailing List for Agri. Club Letter		1,000	
E-282 Refinishing Furniture		6,000	McGowan
E-248 Better Feed Club		10,000	Davis
E-253 Use of Explosives on the Farm		5,000	Seitz
E-25 Time Card for Employees		250	
E-27 Travel Card (Revised) Subvoucher Book		200	
E-172 Personal Data Memorandum		200	
E-254 Quality Crows		2,000	
E-255 "Don't the Corn"		2,000	
E-254 Quality Crows		2,500	Bushman
E-68 Poultry Club Exhibit Tag		500	Montgomery

<u>FILE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Author</u>
E-348	Weekly Record of Breed Club Members	10,000	Davis
	A Five Year Agricultural Program for Halifax County (No No.)	2,000	
E-354	Quality Green	2,500	
E-355	Copper Carbonate Prevents Sticking Sut of Wheat	25,000	Godkin
	Augusta County Five Year Program	2,000	Fenne
E-357	4-H Bee Club Record Book	1,000	
E-318	Instructions for Clothing Club Members-2nd year	1,000	Hughes
E-317	Instructions for Clothing Club Members-4th year	5,000	Hughes
E-40	Expense Account (1st page)	2,000	
E-169	4-H Club Membership Record Sheet (Revised)	5,000	
E-345	Better Feed Club	10,000	Davis
E-354	Quality Green	2,000	
E-78	Club Enrollment Card	10,000	
E-350	"Sut the Sorral" (Dairy)	5,000	Fushman
E-380	Report Card for Club Members Five Year Agricultural Program for Smith County	10,000	Montgomery
		1,500	
E-122	Weekly Field Report (Revised)	10,000	More
E-308	Monthly Report-Specialists	2,000	