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ANNUAL REPORT

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

STATE OF VIRGINIA

E. W. CARSON
EAST CENTRAL DISTRICT
DISTRICT AGENT

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I. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. ADMINISTRATIVE 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 for county workers.
- c. Work out with the county governing bodies, provisions for furnishing office accommodations for the county workers.
- d. Correlating the work of the subject-matter specialists and the county workers.
- e. Work with the several subject-matter departments on the development and holding of appropriate agent training schools.
- f. With specialists, plan and hold area schools for farm leaders in several subject-matter fields.
- g. Report to the Director, an evaluation of a county program and plans.
- h. Report to the Director, an evaluation of each individual county worker. This evaluation is made after consultation and approval of at least one representative of the State Administrative Staff.

B. SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. Work with agents in the development of county long-time extension programs, and annual plans of work.
- b. Arrange with specialists, training conferences with agents. These conferences are usually held on an individual county basis.
- c. Assist in the training of county workers, especially in the area of methods and procedures for doing an extension job.
- d. Work with county workers in developing a more effective program in the field of public relations.
- e. Work with industry on an area level in developing programs and facilities that will strengthen the over-all educational program.
- f. Evaluate with the county staff, county programs or phases of these programs.
- g. 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 twenty-four hundred 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 fiscal plant of the camp is in operating condition and that the proper provisions are made for the upkeep of the plant.

- b. Assume certain responsibilities with relation to field meetings of the Branch Experimental Stations located within the district.
- c. Cooperate with other agencies with the planning and holding of certain area meetings and events.
- d. Conduct the public relations program on the district level.

II. MAJOR SUPERVISORY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Evaluation of County Personnel

A comprehensive evaluation program has never been in operation at the district level. The need for such an evaluation has often been brought out at conferences with the county workers. County workers have expressed some dissatisfaction with the old evaluation system that has been used where the workers were evaluated on only six major items.

Just prior to 1960, a very comprehensive evaluation form was developed by representatives of the Administrative group and supervisory staff. This comprehensive form covering more than fifty different items was used in evaluation of all county workers who have been employed in the district for more than twelve months. This evaluation was completed during 1960 and reviewed by one of the Assistant Directors. At the close of the Extension year, these forms are ready to be sent to the Extension workers for their review and to be used as a basis of constructive conferences with the workers in the months ahead. The effectiveness and reaction to this type of evaluation will be reported in the 1961 District Report.

2. Evaluation of County Long-Time Programs

In most of the sixteen counties, all, or a part of the long-time

county program has been reviewed with the county workers. In some instances, it has been agreed that these programs will be completely reworked. In other counties, it has been decided that it will be best if only certain parts of the county program will be revised according to the need. By way of explanation, it might be pointed out that the total long-time county programs may be considered to be up-to-date and satisfactory under present conditions with the exception of one area. For example, conditions may have changed in the poultry field to the extent that it is necessary that the county program be completely revised in this particular area. If this be true, then county committees or bi-county committees will meet and the Extension agents and poultry leaders will develop the type of poultry program that seems advisable for the county or area concerned. It is believed that this approach will keep the county programs of work up to date and will not interfere with the day-to-day operation of the County Extension program as the only areas revised are those where changes would justify such revisions.

3. Dark Fired and Sun Cured Tobacco Variety Testing Program

Several years ago, Extension and Experiment Station representatives met with leaders of the tobacco industry and leading farmers and agreed that tobacco varieties were becoming so mixed that it would be highly advisable for someone to take the leadership in establishing some uniform tobacco varieties for these types of tobacco. After conference, it was agreed that the Experiment Stations would assume the responsibility for producing foundation seed stock for production of several varieties in these two types. In addition to the small variety trial plots that were conducted at the Charlotte Experiment Station, procedure

was worked out with the assistance of several county agents and outstanding tobacco growers for making an evaluation of these varieties grown on larger scale under normal farm operating conditions, and on varying soil types. As a result of these plans, growers were selected in six counties, on different soil types, where they were to grow from six to eight varieties of tobacco and keeping all of the varieties separate and selling these varieties separate on the market, and making available, the statistical information, to make comparisons of the dollar-value calculated on an acreage basis for the several varieties being tested. All of this work was done under the strict supervision and guidance of representatives from the Experiment station. County extension agents cooperated to see that the farmers understood how these plantings were to be made, how the several replicas were set out by each grower, and to be sure that all of the data was properly compiled.

This work has been continued through the years and was conducted again in 1960. The varieties in these tests, however, have changed from time to time dropping those where there was evidence that they were not of commercial importance and adding other varieties that showed indications of promise for growers in certain sections.

This program has done much to standardize the varieties that are being grown and to reduce the number of varieties grown by the growers throughout the tobacco belt. By reducing the number of varieties, we are able to see a much more uniform crop at market at marketing time. This program has been so effective, it is expected to be continued for several years in the future.

4. Increase in the Involvement of More People in the Development of County Programs

In the 1958 report from this district, it was pointed out that there was a real need for the development and writing of county long-time programs. Emphasis was subsequently placed on this area of Extension work and some very good county programs were developed by several counties. However, in a few counties, local committees were not brought into play to the extent that they should have been in the development of these programs. Two such counties were Albemarle and Mecklenburg. In Albemarle County, the emphasis to a great extent had been on livestock and fruit production. During 1960, the county workers developed, with the assistance of local leaders, programs in forestry and dairying and brought far more adult people into the planning phase of the 4-H Club program. It was interesting to observe the keen interest that was manifested by several farmers in the development of certain 4-H programs and activities. Albemarle County for several years, has had an outstanding Tractor Maintenance Program. Some of the same leaders who had been active in this tractor maintenance program, cooperated in setting up one of the pilot 4-H projects in the one-cylinder motor project. It was pointed out that there was a need for this type of project, that in a thickly settled area such as Albemarle County, there were a large number of one-cylinder motors on the farms and in and around the homes throughout the county. It will be interesting to observe the success of this type of project. When the need for such a project is realized by the local leaders and cooperation from garage people and dealers in equipment secured, it

is to be expected that this type of project will be successful.

On the southside of the district in Mecklenburg County, which is one of the principal flue-cured tobacco producing counties in Virginia, the emphasis for many years has been on tobacco production. There have been very active committees in Agronomy, particularly on tobacco, these committees meeting on a community basis and planning programs for Agronomy and for tobacco. There was a lack of committee activities however, in such fields as livestock, dairy and forestry. During 1960, committees on livestock, dairying, a sub-committee on swine marketing, became very active in assisting with the development of a long-time Extension program in their particular areas. The committee that perhaps spent the greatest time in trying to develop something, was the swine marketing committee. This committee worked very hard, meeting a number of times to try and work out satisfactory marketing facilities for handling feeder pig sales. To date, these marketing facilities have not been developed but plans have been set up so that if there is a sufficient number of animals available, marketing facilities can perhaps be established.

5. Forage Production Contest

Several years ago, the Extension Service in this state started a forage production contest in cooperation with the Plant Food Institute. This contest has attracted considerable participation down through the years. It was continued again in 1960. It was decided that rather than to request the agents to set up any special program to participate in this contest, the activities of the agronomy and other committees would be reported at the end of the Extension year, and the contest would be

judged on the basis of the type of program developed and executed by the committees and Extension workers in the several counties participating. Approximately three-fourths of the counties participated with about one-half of the counties doing a very creditable job. Three plaques were awarded to the top three counties in the district.

III. SPECIAL EMPHASIS PROGRAMS

1. Farm Management

The rural population in the sixteen counties comprising the East Central Extension District has been decreasing for a period of years with the exception of one county. In Appomattox County, the population has not decreased. However, the increase has been very small. In addition to the decrease in farm population, there has been a marked reduction in the number of farms. Some of the reduction has been due to a change in census definition, however, there has been a substantial decrease in the number of commercial farms throughout the entire district. A study of the area showed the following major problems contributing perhaps to this shift. Farming units were perhaps too small for economical farm units; in some instances farmers were trying to operate on soils that were not productive enough for them to compete with their neighbors; there was an apparent lack of finances - not a lack of credit, however; farmers were rapidly seeking off-farm employment to supplement farm income; there was definite evidence of a lack of managerial ability to efficiently operate many of these farms. It was clearly evident that in every county, there was a need for a more effective farm management program on the part of all county extension offices. With these facts it was decided to give certain agents special training in the field of

farm management. Four agents in the district were given intensive farm management training, district meetings were held where the activity of farm management was emphasized. At this district meeting, the state programs were explained that might be of some assistance to the county workers in coping with farm management problems in their county.

During 1960, agents in this district took the lead in the interest in mail-in farm records. There were more farmers participating in this state-wide program from the East Central District than from any other district in the state.

Agents also showed considerable interest in linear farm planning programs.

When we further studied the farm management problem throughout the area, it was determined that the number one stumbling block in giving assistance to the farmers in the field of farm management was the lack of adequate farm records. County agents and their assistants in every county have been active in getting farmers to keep their own farm records and getting them enrolled in the state mail-in farm record program.

Agents who have been most active in this field have reported that there was a lack of knowledge on the part of farmers as to the kind of record that should be kept in order to properly analyze their farming operations. It was also found that farmers were not keeping adequate records to intelligently file their tax returns with the Internal Revenue Department. Many farmers were not aware of how the depreciation provision could be properly used in connection with their income tax. Others were entirely unaware of the capital gains

provision applicable on the sale of certain farm items.

The situation throughout the district is so serious in this entire area of farm management and record keeping, that it has been agreed it will be necessary to give agents further training in this particular area, and that the agents will have to become more involved in this Extension activity. It is difficult to estimate the saving that can be made by the rendering of this type of service to our farm people. It is evident that unless we do service the farmers in this particular field, we will be falling far short of what is being expected of us.

As the agents get to working on this general field of farm management, in the vast majority of cases, marketing problems always become very prominent in analyzing most farm situations. The tremendous overhead in farm machinery is also presenting a very serious problem.

With the reasonably good participation in the farm record program in 1960, and evidence that there will be considerable increase in participation in this program for next year, it is hoped that sufficient information can be obtained on enough farms, under different circumstances, to prove invaluable in working with farmers from day to day in their general farm management problems.

2. Evaluation of office Facilities

Albemarle	Good
Amelia	Fair
Amherst	Poor
Appomattox	Fair
Buckingham	Poor
Charlotte	Good
Cumberland	Good
Fluvanna	Good
Goochland	Fair
Louisa	Fair

Lunenburg	Good
Mecklenburg	Good
Nelson	Good
Nottoway	Good
Powhatan	Poor
Prince Edward	Poor

3. Summary of County Appropriations

	<u>1940</u>	<u>1945</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1955</u>	<u>1960</u>
Albemarle - County Agent	\$ 1437	\$ 1800	\$ 2220	\$ 2956	\$ 2640
Assistant	1000	1320	1740	1500	1800
Amelia - County Agent	600	900	1080	1260	1260
Assistant	--	--	600	860	860
Amherst - County Agent	1000	1120	1500	1500	1800
Assistant	--	--	--	--	700
Appomattox - County Agent	1500	1500	1500	1800	1800
Assistant	--	--	--	--	700
Buckingham - County Agent	1200	1200	1200	1500	1620
Assistant	--	--	--	--	500
Charlotte - County Agent	1200	1200	1200	1600	1600
Assistant	300	300	420	1200	1200
1/3 Assistant	--	--	--	600	600
Cumberland - County Agent	800	1140	1200	1400	1400
Fluvanna - County Agent	1000	1100	1100	1600	1600
Assistant	--	--	300	300	700
Goochland - County Agent	720	960	1356	1600	1800
Louisa - County Agent	600	750	1020	1020	1020
Lunenburg - County Agent	800	800	1700	1700	1800
Assistant	--	--	800	800	1400
Mecklenburg - County Agent	1080	1200	1200	1500	1500
Assistant	180	--	750	900	1200
2/3 Assistant	--	--	--	1200	1200
Nelson - County Agent	1080	1200	1200	1400	1400
Assistant	--	--	--	--	1400
Nottoway - County Agent	1200	1500	1380	1600	1720
Assistant	--	600	600	700	1400

	1940	1945	1950	1955	1960
Powhatan - County Agent	500	625	625	900	1140
Prince Edward - County Agent	1680	1680	1680	2000	2000
Totals	\$17877.	\$20895.	\$26371.	\$35396.	\$39760.

IV. SUMMARY

1. Evaluation

As has already been pointed out in another section of this report, one of the major activities during the year was a thorough evaluation of each individual worker. The results of this evaluation are to be made available to every worker who has been employed for twelve months or more.

2. 4-H Club Programs

The 4-H Club Program has continued very active throughout the district. District contests have been held annually within the district. We are fortunate to have the facilities of Longwood College, one of our State Institutions, to hold our district contests to select representatives to participate in the State contests.

3. Special Interest Committees

Special interest committees are becoming more and more active in most of the counties. Committee members are beginning to realize that they can make a definite contribution toward planning the agricultural programs for their counties. In most counties, agents have given good recognition to lay leaders for their contribution towards the development and execution of agricultural programs. This has done much to stimulate even greater interest in this area.

4. Farm and Home Development

Farm and Home Development, or Farm Management, as I have always referred to this program, will continue to be one of the major areas that will demand the thinking and efforts of all county Extension workers. It is perhaps in this area of farm management that we stand to render the greatest service in the years ahead to rural people of this district, Virginia, and of other States in the Union.

It has been pointed out, however, that there is an urgent need for additional farm records on the farms throughout this area, if we as Extension workers are to be of maximum benefit to the farm people. Without adequate records we cannot intelligently counsel with the farm operators with the hopes of increasing their farm profits or perhaps decreasing their farm losses.

5. Personnel

At the end of the Extension year, there are two positions in the district vacant - the assistant county agent position in Buckingham County, and an assistant county agent position in Charlotte County. At the present time there are no satisfactory applications for these positions.