

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION

PLAN OF WORK

NOTTOWAY COUNTY

1961

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#### COUNTY SITUATION

Nottoway County was first settled in 1690, then known as Amelia County. It was later formed from Amelia County in 1788. Located in Southside Virginia, it is bordered by Amelia, Dinwiddie, Brunswick, Lunenburg and Prince Edward.

There are only 747 farms in the county, according to the recent 1959 census, with 308 square miles, and 197,120 acres. The average farm has 136 acres in 1959, compared to 1228 farms in 1950 with 97.4 acres per farm. Of the present 747 farms, those farms with less than 50 total acres are 270, compared to 745 farms in 1950. In comparing farms harvesting less than 30 acres of cropland, the county now has 509 farms, as compared to 882 farms in 1950. The soils that are the least desirable for agriculture have the largest rural population because these soils were the cheapest when settled. The most productive soils are in large dairy farms or tobacco farms.

About 65% of the total land is in woodland, exclusive of "public reserve and other commercial forest land". Most of this is heavily mixed with low grade hardwood. There are 17,840 acres of cropland harvested, 19,498 of pasture, 2,648 of idle land.

Agriculture is the most important industry, with manufacturing increasing in recent years. The 1955 census showed that livestock and livestock products sold for \$1,416,995.00, whereas crops sold for a value of \$1,352,522.00. Prior to 1955, crops brought in more farm income than livestock.

The average rainfall is 41 inches. The winters are fairly mild but there are frequent short, cold spells. The average frost free period from April 16 to October 24, or 191 days. The topography is gently rolling, with the soils mostly sandy clay and sandy loam. The county is divided into two main watersheds with highway No. 460. The land north of 460 drains into the Appomattox River. The area lying south of the highway drains into the Nottoway River.

Most of the tobacco farmers are adding some livestock to their operations. Many have switched to dairy and general farming operations of a family size with two or more sources of income. The principle types of farms are dairying, flue-cured tobacco, fire-cured tobacco, beef cattle and poultry.

There is a local livestock auction market and a fire-cured tobacco market located in Blackstone. The closest flue-cured tobacco market is located at Kenbridge and all other farm markets are thirty or more miles from the county.

The population of the county is 15,479, based on the 1950 census, with 35% farm, 42% non-farm, and 23% urban. There are 8,686 white and 6,739 non-white people. There are three towns located in the county; Blackstone 3,536, Crewe 2,250, and Burkeville 700.

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The 1089 farms are owned by 59% white and 41% non-white, with about 88% of the taxes of the county being paid by white people. There is no colored farm agent but there is a colored home agent.

#### COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION

The Nottoway County Agricultural planning is done by commodity committees, a youth and publicity committee. The agronomy, soil conservation, dairy, poultry and forestry committees have been active for several years and the livestock committee was set up in February, 1961, because of the increased interest in this phase of agriculture. This plan of work is based on the objectives set up by these committees. These objectives will be undertaken by the methods set up by the committee.

#### I. AGRONOMY

##### A. Present Situation and Trends

The year 1960 was the best growing season for several years and the average yield of all crops was above average. During the last five years the acreage of cropland pasture has increased by about 3000 acres and the acres of improved pastures has decreased by 3000. About 400 tons more fertilizer was used on about 1200 more acres now compared to 1955. Lime tonnage has increased by 1100 tons during this time.

Tobacco farmers are still fertilizing extremely heavy and planting close to increase yields. Tobacco diseases are causing more damage year by year.

There is a great need for farmers to take soil samples and get lime and fertilizer recommendations.

Many farmers are still experiencing a shortage of forage during the dry summer months.

##### B. 1961 Objectives and Methods to be used to accomplish them.

- i. To get 600 soil samples taken by Nottoway farmers to determine lime and fertilizer needs to assist farmers in making efficient plantfood applications by;
  - a. Personal contact by agricultural agency personnel.
  - b. Furnishing committee members with a supply of soil sample boxes and soil record sheets for them to contact their neighbors.
  - c. Radio, newspaper and meetings.

2. To continue to emphasize among tobacco farmers the value of a tobacco-oats-fescue rotation to control nematodes, by
  - a. contacts of agricultural workers,
  - b. personal contacts of committee members,
  - c. meetings, radio and newspapers
3. Set up a Liquid Nitrogen Demonstration on a main road to show the results.
  - a. Agents work with concerns selling liquid nitrogen
  - b. Agents erect proper signs explaining demonstration.
4. To get more tobacco farmers to grow sufficient forage needs for their livestock by,
  - a. setting up a Rowan Lespedeza demonstration on a farm known to have nematodes present.
  - b. emphasizing other sources of forage.
5. Continue to emphasize the growing of early forage needs before dry summer months, by
  - a. newspaper, radio and meetings,
  - b. personal contact of agricultural workers,
  - c. stressing spring silage.
6. To keep tobacco farmers informed on the latest tobacco information, by
  - a. tobacco meetings
  - b. radio and newspaper,
  - c. Variety Demonstration.

## II. SOIL CONSERVATION

### A. Situation

The soil survey made in Nottoway County in 1952-53 shows that there is much need for better land use in the county. There are many soil types found in this county and many ten acre fields will have from ten to fifteen soil types in them. Many soils are not being seeded to the crops most suited. Many of the farmers who are soil conservation cooperators have out-dated farm plans or do not have a conservation plan at all.

The Soil Conservation Service reports show that 2588 acres of cover crops, 4348 acres of contour farming, 17,707 acres of crop rotation, 21,030 acres of pasture improvement, and 247 farm ponds planned by Soil Conservation technicians in Nottoway County during the last twenty years.

Much land is still in need of conservation practices to control erosion and a watershed control project is being requested this year.

B. 1961 Objectives and Methods to be Used to Accomplish them:

1. To get 30 new basic farm plans developed during the year, by,
  - a. Soil Conservation personnel
  - b. Personal contact of Committee members
  - c. Personal contact and close cooperation of all Agricultural workers
  - d. Furnishing committee with farmers having basic farm plans.
2. To revise 20 existing plans during year, by
  - a. Soil Conservation personnel
  - b. By Committee Members and Agricultural Workers encouraging cooperators to revive old soil conservation plans.
3. To get more farmers to participate in the following ACP practices in 1961 and 1962,
  - a. Strip Cropping
  - b. Countour Farming,
  - c. Sod Waterways, by:
    1. Agricultural workers personal contacts
    2. Radio, newspapers and meetings
    3. Personal contact of Soil Conservation Committee
    4. Meet Committee in November to publicize ACP sign-up period.
4. To get ~~XXXXX XXXXXXX XXXXX~~ <sup>tobacco farmers</sup> set up a tobacco-@at-fescue rotation to control erosion by:
  - a. Contacts by Soil Conservation personnel
  - b. Contacts by County Agricultural workers through personal contacts
  - c. Assistance of Committee members.

5. To get a year round pasture program set up of grasses and legumes on two farms, by
  - a. Cooperation of Soil Conservation personnel and Extension Agents
  - b. Personal contact of Soil Conservation members.
6. To emphasize the Spring Development practice in place of small farm ponds, by:
  - a. Personal contacts of Agricultural Workers
  - b. Secure bulletins on Spring Development to send Soil Conservation Committee members for their use contacting neighbors.
7. To support the Little Nottoway Watershed project, by:
  - a. Send supporting resolution from Committee
  - b. Assist in educational program on project.

### III. DAIRY

#### A. Situation

Dairying has grown rapidly in the last several years, with 57 Grade A dairies at present. It is now, probably, the largest single source of income. Most of them have some sort of a year-round forage program, but much work still needs to be done in this field. Many dairymen still need a stricter disease program. On Jan. 1, 1961, 15 herds were on DHIA, four on owner-sampler, five on EDPM, and two on Electronic Bookkeeping system.

#### B. 1961 Objectives and Methods to be Used to Accomplish Them.

1. To get 90% of heifer calves 4 to 8 months of age vaccinated for Brucellosis, by:
  - a. Agents contacting livestock farmers by letter every three months to secure lists of farmers with heifers to be vaccinated.
  - b. By agents setting up schedule for Veterinarian to vaccinate.

2. To promote prevention of Mastitis through better management practices:
  - a. Agents send out monthly bulletins on the control of Mastitis.
  - b. Committee members to stress the need for controlling Mastitis to other dairymen.
  - c. Hold a demonstration on managed milking.
  
3. To continue to emphasize the EDPM system of DHIA, and the Electronic Bookkeeping System by:
  - a. Agents discussing these programs at meetings and on personal contacts.
  - b. Participating farmers and dairy committee members telling their neighbors.
  
4. To encourage dairymen to feed a larger amount of forage the year round, by
  - a. Agents and Committee members emphasizing the value of corn silage
  - b. Agents encouraging farmers to produce more hay and feed it heavier when needed.
  - c. Agents to point out the advantages of green forage feeding.
  - d. To plan and carry out a forage field day.
  - d. To encourage free choice forage feeding.
  - f. To take tour to see Haykeeper.
  
5. To encourage the serving of milk whenever possible, by
  - a. Publicizing June as Dairy month
  - b. Agents and Committee members encouraging civic and farm groups to serve milk at the dinner meetings.
  
6. To encourage better management and feeding in rearing dairy heifers, by
  - a. Dairy meetings
  - b. Personal contacts by agents

IV. LIVESTOCK

A. Situation

From the 1959 census we find that there are 6,058 head of beef cows, with 1525 cattle sold and 2384 calves sold. Few beef cattlemen are testing for T.B. and Bangs disease and only twelve to fifteen farmers selling calves through the Feeder Calf Sales.

There are 5,335 head of swine, with about 4300 head of hogs and pigs sold annually.

There are about 800 head of sheep in the county, with about 700 lambs and 3,000 pounds of wool being sold each year.

B. 1961 Objectives and Methods to be used to accomplish them:

Beef Cattle

1. To emphasize the need for a good quality Purebred Sire, by
  - a. Letter to producers in November or December giving advantages of buying good quality sires.
  - b. Letter to producers in February or March reminding them that it is time to breed cows for calves in feeder Calf Sales and give comparison of good quality sires as compared to ordinary sires.
  - c. Use of radio and newspaper.
  - d. Personal contact by agents and committee members.
  
2. Encourage marketing calves through Feeder Calf Sales to increase beef cattle income, by
  - a. Sending producers information comparing prices from graded sales with regular sales.
  - b. Sending producers in March the rules and regulations of othe Feeder Calf Sales.
  - c. Reminding producers the best time to breed cows to drop calves to go to sales at weights that sell best.

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- d. Personal contacts by agents and committee members.
3. To encourage the calfhood vaccination program, by,
- a. Securing a list of farmers wanting calves vaccinated every three months.
  - b. Setting up vaccination schedule with local veterinarian.
4. To publicize and initiate a county beef cattle grading program, by
- a. Writing beef producers details of grading program.
  - b. Secure list of interested producers.
  - c. Arrange schedule for grading.

Sheep

5. Continue to promote and conduct the local wool and lamb pools, by
- a. Notifying producers of pool dates.
  - b. Sending helpful information to producers on marketing.
6. To promote higher quality through a sheep grading demonstration, by
- a. Securing farmers to cooperate with demonstration.
  - b. Secure sheep grader to conduct demonstration.
  - c. Notifying producers of demonstration.

Swine

7. Encourage marketing pigs through Feeder Pigs Sale to increase swine income by,
- a. Sending producers feeder calf rules and regulations.

- b. Sending producers a schedule of sale dates and encourage breeding of sows to farrow pigs at time to go to sales at weights selling best.
  - c. Personal contacts by agents and committee members.
8. Encourage tobacco farmers to purchase a few sows to produce opigs for feeder pigs sales as an added source of income, by
- a. Sending letter to tobacco farmers giving them the advantages and disadvantages.
  - b. Discussing with interested farmers the dates and rules and regulations of these sales.

V. FORESTRY

A. Situation

The total land area of Nottoway County is 67% wooded, exclusive of "public reserve" and other commercial forest land. This amounts to 132,200 acres, most of which has a below overage sale value due to hardwood growth crowding out desirable species.

In 1955 there were 18 sawmill operations and ten other dealers of timber in the county.

Forest products are an important source of income in the county's economy. Recent reforestation and improved management practices are being directed toward a greater timber growth.

In 1957, with the help of the county owner tree planter and two dozen planting bars, there were 521,000 tree seedlings planted.

B. 1961 Forestry Objectives and Methods to be used to Accomplish them.

- 1. To plant 1,775,000 seedlings between December, 1960, and April 1, 1961, by
  - a. Personal contacts by agricultural workers.
  - b. Talks before farm and civic groups.
  - c. Use of 48 handplanting bars available to farmers at county agent's office.

- d. Use of Radio and newspaper
2. To conduct a county Forestry Contest by,
    - a. Securing additional new members
    - b. Holding kick-off meeting to explain contest and stimulate interest.
    - c. Visit farmers needing technical assistance.
    - d. Score contestants' projects.
  3. To recommend a farmer for the Tree Farm award by,
    - a. Having forestry committee visit farm and make selection.
    - b. Send in recommendation.
  4. To set up a direct seeding demonstration, by
    - a. Selecting site on main road
    - b. Secure farmers help in preparing seedbed.
    - c. Seed trees
    - d. Erect signs
  5. To publicize fire prevention during February to May, by
    - a. News articles and radio
    - b. Talks before farm and civic groups
    - c. Erect posters
  6. To encourage woodland owners to use the service available through the Virginia Division of Forestry, by
    - a. Use of news articles and radio
    - b. Personal contacts of agents and committee members
    - c. Talks of farm organization.

VI. POULTRY

A. Situation

The number of broilers grown in the county have dropped off considerably in the last three years, with many houses now empty. The number of layers have increased slightly. In case of broilers or layers the size of operation has increased with fewer farmers producing poultry.

The county is close enough to Richmond and Norfolk that egg producers could economically market their eggs, but there is no going local market for eggs. Several feed dealers are carrying eggs to grading stations in Richmond.

B. 1961 Objectives and Methods used to Accomplish them.

1. To improve poultry management practices, by
  - a. Farm visits to breeder flocks
  - b. Farm visits to commercial egg flocks
  - c. Farm visits to broiler flocks
  - d. Discuss recommendations with producers while on above visit on management and follow up visit with a letter to each producer listing recommendations.
2. Assist local hatchery with breeder flock management meeting, by:
  - a. Getting Poultry Specialist to assist with program.
  - b. Personal contact by agent.
3. To continue the 4-H Club Sears Poultry Chain, by
  - a. Personal contact to secure new club project members.
  - b. Continue working with club members carrying out this project last year.
  - c. Hold meeting of members and their parents.
4. To cooperate and participate in the Area Meeting of the P.D.E.P program, by
  - a. Assisting in planning meetings
  - b. Securing and arranging place of meeting.
  - c. Contact poultrymen in regard to announcing meeting.

5. To investigate any interested concern and assist in planning an egg grading station, by
  - a. Arranging technical assistance from V.P.I. and State Department of Agricultural specialist.
  - b. Contact interested poultrymen in regard to new station.
  
6. To improve present Poultry Housing Conditions, by
  - a. Encourage greater use of insulation and ventilation.
  - b. Secure technical assistance necessary for remodeling.
  
7. To encourage better Poultry Records, by
  - a. Distributing and encouraging the use of egg record and management check sheet.
  - b. Enroll one or more poultrymen in the Electronic Farm Record Program.

#### VII. FARM AND HOME MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The County Extension Agents will continue to work with families already in the program. With the full-time assistant, several new families will be added under this program. The families will be assisted with individual farm problems, as well as with the entire farm planning. The agents will also encourage these families to enroll in the IEM record programs.

Other agricultural agencies will be consulted when a problem arises in relation to their field of work.

#### VIII. 4-H CLUB PROGRAM

There are twenty-two 4-H clubs organized and meeting regularly during 1960 in Nottoway County, with 502 club members. Nineteen of these clubs meet during school hours, which limits these meetings from forty-five minutes to one hour. The other clubs are community clubs that meet at night and are composed of high school students. It is becoming harder and harder to hold

meetings in the older age groups due to the many high school and community activities.

County organizations in the club program include the County Council, Honor Club and All-Star Group. There is an urgent need for project and organizational leaders in the County Club Program.

B. 4-H Objectives

1. Organization Work

- a. To plan the 4-H County Activities through the County Council, which will meet four times during the year.
- b. To have each club participate in the National 4-H Club Week, Talent Show, Rural Life Sunday, County Picnic and Achievement Day.
- c. To train Honor Club members to be active junior leaders in their local clubs and to develop their own individual contest record.
- d. To solicit the County All-Stars to assist in various phases of the County Club program by serving as project leaders and with activities.
- e. To encourage each 4-H Club to have a representative to attend an out-of-county activity, such as District Camp, Short Course or Conservation Camp.
- f. To solicit help of more local people in the different communities to act as 4-H organizational and project leaders.

2. 4-H PROJECT WORK

- a. To develop a greater interest and appreciation for our forests and products of forests.
  1. To teach the club members the different parts of a tree, how a tree grows, the enemies of forests, the advantages of a good forestry program, and the advantages of forests to man.
  2. To teach these members to identify at least ten different forest trees.
  3. To teach the members many of the forest products and the value of forest products.

- b. To organize and carry on a Light Horse and Pony Project.
- c. To assist members in the selection of out of school projects.
- d. To assist club members in the following projects: crops, livestock, poultry, garden, and Light Horse and Pony, having project meetings for these projects.
- e. To encourage every member to complete project records
  - 1. Require up-to-date record to be eligible to go to camp.
  - 2. Soliciting help of local leaders.
  - 3. County Achievement awards.
  - 4. Explain how and encourage members to keep permanent records and start members on achievement records.
- f. To encourage certain members to join and participate in the newly organized forestry club.

#### IX. PUBLICITY

The three weekly newspapers of the County publish weekly columns of the Agents. The Richmond Times Dispatch daily is subscribed to by a large number of Nottoway people. Four rural farm organizations meet regularly each month, which the agent has a close contact with. The present County Publicity Committee is composed of Ed Silverman of the Blackstone Courier, Mr. James Eanes, Editor of the Crewe-Burkeville Journal, and Jody Rainwater of Radio Station WSVS, and Harris Umpstead of Radio Station WKLK. All of these committee members give excellent cooperation with the Agent in publicizing the total extension program through their publicity medium.

The agent will maintain good cooperation with the above groups in attempting to reach all the people of the county. The agent also will keep new and timely bulletins on the Extension bulletin racks he has in farm and country stores.

#### X. CALENDAR OF WORK

##### A. December

- 1. Meet 4-H Clubs
- 2. Urge the Planting of Pine Seedlings

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3. Arrange Calhood Vaccination Schedule
  4. Give annual report to Board of Supervisors/
  5. Do some work on Farm and Home Management.
  6. Send letters to beef producers on need for good quality purebred sires.

B. January

1. Meet 4-H Clubs
2. Meet Agricultural Commodity Committees for planning objectives.
3. Publicize Soil Samples
4. Hold County Council meeting.
5. Hold Honor Club Meeting
6. Stress the Planting of Fine Seedlings
7. Do some Work on Farm & Home Management
8. Hold Annual DHIA Meeting

C. February

1. Meet 4-H Clubs
2. Complete Agricultural Program Plans
3. Hold "Kick-off" Forestry Club Meeting
4. Work with Nottoway Artificial Breeding Association with annual meeting.
5. Hold Tobacco Production meeting
6. Hold Beef Cattle Marketing meeting
7. Set up two Tobacco Variety Demonstrations
8. Give technical assistance to Forestry Club Participants.
9. Do some work on Farm and Home Management
10. Encourage the taking of soil samples.

D. March

1. Meet with 4-H Clubs.
2. Work with 4-H Judging teams and demonstration teams.
3. Assist clubs with National 4-H Club Week Activities.
4. Assist club members with State Contest Records.
5. Stress alfalfa and alfalfa grass mixtures.
6. Set up Brucellosis Calfhood Vaccination Schedule.
7. Do some work on Farm and Home Management.
8. Publicize and promote the Town and Country Institute at Blackstone.
9. Assist with 4-H County Talent Show.
10. Work with Farmers on their DHIA Record.
11. Publicize the value of soil samples.
12. Set up Rowan Lespedeza demonstration on farm having tobacco nematode.
13. Assist Soil Conservation Service personnel with educational work on watershed.
14. Contact pig producers on April Feeder Pig Sale.
15. Publicize Fire Burning law.

E. April

1. Meet 4-H clubs
2. Work with 4-H District contest participants.
3. Assist with District Contest.
4. Assist with plans for Wool Pool.
5. Assist with Spring Feeder Yearling sale.
6. Set up direct forestry seeding demonstration.
7. Work with dairymen on their DHIA Records.

8. Hold Demonstration on managed milking.
9. Do some work on Farm and Home Management.
10. Publicize the taking of soil samples.
11. Assist Soil Conservation Service personnel with educational work on watershed.

F. May

1. Meet 4-H Clubs.
2. Hold Rural Life Sunday.
3. Stress value of summer pastures (sudan grass and millett) and give seeding recommendations.
4. Collect 4-H Forestry Project Books.
5. Do some work on Farm and Home Management.
6. Work with dairy o farmers on year-round forage feeding problems.
7. Encourage farmers to either get an S.C.S. farm plan or to revise their present farm plan if needed.
8. To hold a county beef grading program

G. June

1. Meet Senior 4-H Clubs.
2. Assist 4-H club members going to Short Course.
3. Make final arrangements for 4-H District Camp.
4. Arrange calfhood vaccination schedule.
5. Do some work on Farm and Home Management.
6. Hold County 4-H club picnic.
8. Encourage farmers to plant temporary pastures.
9. Assist in holding wool pool.
10. Contact pig producers on July feeder pig sale.

H. July

1. Attend District 4-H Club Camp
2. Meet Senior 4-H clubs.
3. Encourage attendance at Institute of Rural Affairs.
4. Contact Farmers to participate in County Farmers Days.
5. Do some work on Farm and Home Management.
6. Give technical assistance to Forestry Club participants.

I. August

1. Meet Senior 4-H Clubs.
2. Hold Honor Club Camp.
3. Attend Extension Conference.
4. Contact farmers to participate in County Farmers Days.
5. Do some work on Farm and Home Management.
6. Encourage farmers to seed alfalfa early.

J. September

1. Reorganize 4-H Clubs.
2. Collect record books.
3. Work on Farmers Days.
4. Assist farmers consigning feeder calves with health requirements for the feeder calf sale.
5. Stress fall and winter pastures.
6. Arrange calfhood vaccination schedule.
7. Do some Farm and Home Management work.
8. Contact pig producers on October Feeder Pig Sale.
9. Contact beef producers in regard to Feeder Calf Sales.

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K. October

1. Meet 4-H Clubs.
2. Collect Record Books.
3. Assist Club Members in selection of out of school projects and assist with starting records.
4. Hold County Council Meeting.
5. Assist with Farmers Days
6. Assist with Petersburg and Richmond Feeder Calf Sale.
7. Do some work on Farm and Home Management.
8. Work with farmers on DHIA records.
9. Encourage farmers to seed oats and fescue in tobacco rotation.

L. November

1. Meet 4-H Clubs.
2. Hold County Achievement Day.
3. Assemble 4-H Club reports.
4. Prepare Annual Extension Report.
5. Urge the planting of Pine Seedlings.
6. Do some work on Farm and Home Management.
7. Try to get farmers to seed oats and fescue in tobacco rotation.
8. Send letter to beef producers on need of good quality purebred sires and remind them it's time to breed for good calves in Feeder calf sales.