

VIRGINIA

WYTHE COUNTY

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REPORT OF
THE
WYTHE COUNTY WHEAT CAMPAIGN
BY
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STATUS OF COUNTY WHEN WHEAT WORK STARTED

Attitude of People Toward Organizations and Extension Work in General

There seems to be a prevailing bitterness against most organization and extension work throughout some sections of this county. This statement is proven by the fact that a number of years ago the County Agricultural Agent was done away with and only a comparatively small amount of extension work has been carried on in this county since. The fight against such work seems to have been carried on mostly through the efforts of a few large farmers and livestock dealers who were successful in getting some of the more ignorant farmers to join their ranks.

It is evident from the above remarks that the active farm organizations in this county are striving under difficult conditions.

Amount of Wheat Grown in this County and Number of Farms

According to a report of the County Wheat Statistics, State of Virginia, Wythe County is the largest wheat producing county in Southwest Virginia. Although the quantity of wheat produced in this county is comparatively large, the average production per acre and per farm is small. While there are quite a few farmers in this county who produce rather large crops, there are many who grow only enough to supply the needs of their family. There is close to twelve hundred farmers in this county and practically everyone of them produce some wheat in their rotation.

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PROCEDURE FOLLOWED IN CONDUCTING THE CAMPAIGN AND OPPOSITION
ENCOUNTERED

Educational Meetings

The first steps taken, with the assistance of the Vocational Agricultural Teacher, was to get a number of influential farmers in different districts of the county interested in the proposition and get them to serve on the temporary advisory board. After we had completed forming the board, the names of these men were published and a meeting called.

At this meeting we explained the plan to them fully and got their opinion as to the best procedure to follow in conducting such a campaign. The place, time, and number of educational meetings to explain the plan to the growers was decided on. Every farmer in the county was sent a schedule of these educational meetings accompanied by a mimeographed copy of a letter explaining the situation briefly and urging them to attend one of the meetings.

Thirteen regular, and a number of special educational meetings were held, and we were welcomed with a good attendance. With the aid of the Agricultural Instructor, the reasons why such a program was necessary and the benefits that would be derived from it were explained. Then by using a practical problem that we had worked out, they were shown how the allotments and contracted acres would be computed. They were also shown approximately how much more benefit the average farmer who

joined the Association would get than the non-signer. After we had answered all questions and given each attendant an opportunity to make himself familiar with the workings of the plan, we explained the tentative set-up of the County Association and how it would be financed and operated.

Oppositions Encountered During Educational Meetings

We found in some localities that quite a number of those present were there to fight the plan. The opposition consisted of farmers as well as those engaged in other business. This opposition seemed to be based on political prejudices and other reasons not even relating to the plan. Even though their arguments against the plan were satisfactorily explained, much of this opposition was continued to the last until they saw they were not making much headway, and in many instances, the leaders in the opposition came across and signed-up themselves. I don't believe similar campaigns will be met with the same opposition.

Sign-Up Meetings and Discussion of Individual Problems

A second series of meetings were held in order that those interested might file applications and discuss with us their individual problems. Two such meetings were held at different points in the county at the same time. I would take members of the temporary advisory board, representing a particular section

of the county, and spend the entire day at a central point going over each farmers situation and helping him fill out his application. The Agricultural Instructor would be following the same procedure in another section of the county.

We found that these meetings were very helpful in the campaign because many of the farmers were not familiar enough with the plan to be able to apply it intelligently even though they had attended the educational meetings and thought they understood it. It also did in putting a stop to much of the misleading information that continually arose from unknown sources.

Campaign Extended into Carroll County

At about this stage of the Campaign, the Agricultural Instructors from Carroll County told us that quite a few farmers from that county seemed to be interested, and that due to their small annual production and lack of a county agent, they had not been provided with a direct opportunity to put on a campaign of their own.

Immediately steps were taken to put on a similar campaign in that county but since the deadline for accepting applications was near at hand, we did not have enough time to conduct a very extensive campaign. We got quite a number of applicants but most of the farms were small and only a small amount of wheat was covered by an application. If time would have permitted, I feel sure that a large sign-up from Carroll County would have been the final result.

Meetings for Signing Contracts

The same procedure was followed in these meetings as was used to obtain applications except we were accompanied by members of the permanent Community Committee instead of members of the advisory board.

Practically every farmer who had filed application attended these meetings and signed their contract. All of the applicants who failed to appear were visited later and we were able to get every man who definitely filed an application to sign a contract. We attribute this to the fact that each farmer who filed an application had his individual problems cleared up at the meetings held for signing applications and he was not doubtful of the way the plan would operate.

Success of Campaign Proven by Type of Men Who Signed-Up

Even though we fell far short of a hundred per cent sign-up in Wythe and Carroll Counties, we feel sure that we got a majority of the real leaders. The number of signers was really larger than we had anticipated after some of the opposition was encountered at the start of the campaign.

ORGANIZATION OF COUNTIES INTO A WHEAT PRODUCTION CONTROL ASSOCIATION

Division of Counties into Communities

Just after the meetings for filing applications had been

held, we found that each of the five Magisterial Districts of the County represented about the same number of applicants and bushels. So on this basis we concluded that it would be best to let each district represent a definite community in the Association, as we had decided before the campaign started. This tends to eliminate confusion among the members as to the community to which they belong. We found further that the total applicants and production from Carroll County was about equal to one of our communities. So at their request and the advice of the Director of Extension Service, we let them come into the Wythe County Wheat Production Control Association as one community, this making a total of six communities, five from Wythe County and Carroll County forming the sixth.

Community Election of Officers

As soon as we felt as though we had received most of the applications, arrangements were made to hold a meeting in each community for the purpose of electing their officers.

At these meetings we explained fully the set-up of the organization and elected a Director and two other members of the Community Committee by ballot. The director serving as Chairman of the Community Committee making the third member. These meetings were rather poorly attended. The reason for the poor attendance is attributed to the fact that most of the members felt that they were willing to

except anyone that was elected by the members present. However, we feel sure that capable men were elected. In every community the director was chosen from members of our original advisory board that had been representing them from the very start of the campaign.

Board of Directors Meet

Since the Communities had definitely elected their director, we were in a position to begin definite work on our organization set-up. A meeting of the Board of Directors was called and a budget was drawn up, officers and Allotment Committee Members were elected, etc., according to the order of business prescribed in the Articles of Association for the first meeting of the board. Since the director from Piper's Gap Community (Carroll County) was the only representative from that county, it was decided that he should be elected to the Allotment Committee.

METHODS USED IN FISCAL PREPARATION OF FORMS

Procedure of Community and Allotment Committees

After all applications were received, they were sorted according to communities and given to the chairman of the Community Committee to be gone over by that Committee to see if any changes needed to be made and to be signed. Not a single correction was necessary according to Community Committee reports.

After the Community Committees had completed the applications, they were again assembled and the figures necessary to fill in the County Allotment Committee Certification of Application on the back of the application forms were computed. These figures were computed by the use of a work sheet and carefully checked before filling them in on the application form.

Final Check-Up and Disposition of all Material

After all the applications, contracts and all other material relating to the Control Association had been completed by the various committees, it was brought into my office and checked over thoroughly. They were stamped with serial and code numbers and the various forms sent to the proper authorities. The applications, contracts and forms proving conclusive evidence were separated according to instructions. The forms W-2, W-3 and W-8 that were to go to the Contract Wheat Unit in Washington were sent to them by express October 19th. The forms to be retained by the Wheat Production Control Association are on file, and those to be retained by the members have been turned over to the Secretary for distribution.

Use of Press and Mimeographed Material

From the start of the campaign the public was continually reminded of what was going on by the articles that were published in the county papers. Several stories relating to

the work were published and one paper printed a number of mats furnished them by the Wheat Section. All schedules of meetings and proceedings of Committees were published. A mimeographed schedule of meetings was sent each member or interested party accompanied by a letter of explanation.

The wheat production and acreage statements and notice of farm allotments and maximum acreage were published at the proper time according to instructions.

STATUS OF COUNTY ASSOCIATION

According to unofficial reports this association has more members and involves about as large a production as any association in Southwest Virginia. We were the first from this section and among the first in the State to get our material completed and before the wheat Section.

If the status of the association is judged by this, which is about all we have to go by at present, it is one of the best, and I believe it will continue to be so.

SUMMARY

This campaign met considerable opposition to begin with. Extension work in this county is somewhat behind neighboring counties.

Wythe County is the biggest wheat producing county in Southwest Virginia, although much of it is grown on small farms. Few large crops are grown.

The Agricultural Instructor deserves much credit for his able assistance in putting on this campaign.

First steps were to get leaders interested and form a temporary advisory board. Ideas were obtained from them and educational meetings arranged. Growers were then notified of meetings.

A number of educational meetings were held to explain the plan. These were followed up by meetings to discuss individual problems and accept contracts.

The opposition met was based mostly on unrelated reasons. By the end of the campaign most of this opposition was broken down.

Carroll County farmers requested to enter the Wythe County Association late in the campaign. Time did not permit an extensive campaign in that county.

A third series of meetings were held and contracts signed. Every applicant signed a contract.

The county was divided into Wheat Communities according to the five Magisterial Districts. Carroll County came in as the sixth district.

Meetings for election of community officers were poorly attended. Directors were chosen from men on the original temporary advisory board.

At the first meeting of the directors a budget was prepared and officers elected.

The applications were checked over by Community Committees

and then turned over to the Allotment Committee for the computations necessary for completion.

A final check-up was made and all forms sent to their proper sources. Forms W-2, W-3 and W-4 sent to Washington October 19th.

The local papers and mimeographed material were resorted to in order that proper information was conveyed to all.

The Wythe County Association ranks high judging from the work already completed.

PRODUCTION-REDUCTION CAMPAIGNS
ASSISTANCE RENDERED THE AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION

Nature of assistance or activity	Cotton	Wheat	Tobacco	Hogs
	60	20	20	60
(Agricultural agent		70		1
Home demonstration agent				
Boys' and girls' club agent				
Emergency agent				
1. Days devoted to campaign by agent or agents				1
2. Days State extension workers assisted in campaign in county		6		2
3. Smith-Hughes teachers assisting in campaign		1		3
4. Days such Smith-Hughes teachers assisted in campaign		28		4
5. Number voluntary county or community local leaders assisting in campaign		8		3
6. Total days spent on campaign by such local leaders		15		6
7. Farm visits made to explain plans for reducing production		140		7
8. Office calls to discuss reducing production		250		5
9. Individual letters written in interest of campaign		153		9
10. Circular letters written for use in campaign		3,005		10
11. Total copies of such circular letters mailed		2,962		11
12. News articles relating to reducing production furnished local papers		15		4
13. Meetings held to advance campaign		85		13
14. Total attendance at such meetings		980		14
15. Farms for which production-reduction contracts were completed		214		15
16. Total reduced production contracted for on such farms (acres, animals, etc.)		603		16
17. Number of farmers following advice of agent in the planting of replacement crops or other use of land removed from production of basic crops				17

¹ Insert name of any other crop or livestock enterprise on which a definite production-adjustment campaign has been conducted in your county.

