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Most of our rural people have confidence in the Extension Service and are willing to accept new methods which result in better living. Gradual progress is being made annually and the Extension Program has been well received by the people. The County Extension Staff has enjoyed a fine spirit of cooperation with the people with whom they have worked and with other agencies.

*Flash*

*and*

**FILE SEPARATOR**

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outstanding young farmers, received a certificate of recognition for an outstanding job in soil and water conservation.

The Agent has cooperated closely with the three Vocational Agriculture Departments in many ways, such as, group discussions, supplying printed materials, blue prints, soil boxes, forestry work sheets, and other materials.

The Agent appeared before the Young Farmers Clubs on several occasions and discussed various subjects.

Assistance was given in helping farmers to purchase their tree seedlings.

Cooperation with other agencies has been very pleasant during the year.

#### VII. SUMMARY

It is impossible to measure accurately Agricultural progress in any given year. Perhaps the most outstanding progress made has been a change in the attitude of the people with whom we work. Various methods have been used to reach the people and assist them with their problems.

A new radio tape recorder was received in January and an Extension Radio Report has been made each week throughout the year. Other media used included, personal contacts, visits, telephone, individual letters, circular letters, newsarticles, meetings, demonstrations, 4-H Club meetings and Leaders.

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The Agent was successful in getting Sherrell Poff, a young farmer of this county, to agree to run as a Supervisor of the New River Soil Conservation District. A petition was circulated and sufficient voters' names were secured.

Two families from North Carolina, who have recently purchased farms along the Parkway, were visited and assisted with problems of sewage disposal, fish ponds, proper land use, planting white pines, sanitation, and water supplies.

The Agent judged crops, vegetables and livestock exhibits at the Carroll County Fair and also, at the Patrick County Fair during September.

The Agent assisted in the judging of four community improvement clubs in Patrick County during November.

#### VI. COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

The Agent has attended many meetings and cooperated with other agencies throughout the year.

Assistance was given in selecting practices for next year's ASC program. The Agent as chairman of the ASC Election Board called a committee meeting and the group performed the duties of selecting community election boards in the various areas. Several office conferences were held with the ASC Office Manager, and the Agent processed approximately 1,500 soil analysis sheets relative to the ASC program.

The Agent was an invited guest to the Farmers Home Administration Dinner Meeting, at which time their program was discussed with farmers seed and fertilizer dealers, machinery dealers, businessmen and leaders. The Agent was invited guest to the New River Soil Conservation District Supervisors' meeting at which time Sherrell Poff, one of our

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V. MISCELLANEOUS

The Agent assisted with, attended or was special guest at many activities throughout the year. A brief statement of each follows:

Attended Extension Conference in Roanoke for two days during December and another Extension Conference in Roanoke in May.

Held several conferences with the ASC Office Manager and attended the Southern States Directors' meeting in an advisory capacity relative to fertilization programs and ASC practices.

Attended Floyd FFA Father-Son Banquet as guest and also, as a guest at the Willis FFA Father-Son Banquet.

Attended Southern States annual Directors' meeting in Roanoke.

Attended Virginia Bankers' Conference at Natural Bridge as guest of local bank.

Was an invited guest and introduced C. E. Gill of the V.P.I. Forestry Department at the Floyd DAR. He discussed conservation of forests and wildlife.

Attended Institute of Rural Affairs and the Annual Extension Conference at V.P.I.

Was an invited guest at the Laurel Branch HD Club picnic and discussed termites and their control.

Was an invited guest of the County wide HD Achievement Day Program.

Showed slides and discussed insect control at HD Club meeting.

Attended the area meeting on Virginia's Changing Agriculture with six men and three women from the County.

Held a meeting at which time W. J. Nuckolls of the Agricultural Economics Department at V.P.I. discussed Farmers Income Tax and Social Security Taxes for self-employment. There were 12 people present and the weather was unusually bad.

2. Home Gardens and Home Grounds Beautification

As usual many individual calls were received relative to the control of diseases and insects, varieties, fertilization, mucking, etc.

Considerable information was given on garden problems and timely newsarticles, radio programs, etc., were prepared. The Garden Suggestion leaflets were mailed monthly to the mailing list of folks who had requested this material.

The Agent discussed pruning shrubbery, garden insects, diseases, etc., at the Poff Home Demonstration Club, Little River Home Demonstration Club, Floyd Garden Club, and New Town Homemakers' Club meetings. Several visits were made to determine insects and damage.

Although the Agent was attending the area soils school during August, 25 people from the county attended the V.P.I. Vegetable Field Day to observe the work being conducted at the experiment station on varieties, fertilization, chemicals, etc. This type field trip has proven very interesting and valuable to those who attend it.

The Agent assisted a few home owners with landscaping problems and prepared several articles on seeding lawns, fertilization, clipping and insect control. Mr. A. S. Beecher of the V.P.I. Horticulture Department met with a church committee to assist in planning the landscaping of the church grounds. Two other homes were visited the same day. Mr. Beecher also came over to assist the agents with landscaping plans for the new consolidated county high school, which is now under construction. Plans were also made for raising funds to finance the project.

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Each year there is a noticeable improvement in the quality of club work.

#### IV. MINOR ACTIVITIES

##### 1. Forestry

There were 81 L-H Club members who carried the Forest Establishment Project and received a total of 32,000 seedlings. Good weather conditions prevailed this year and from all reports a large percentage of the trees lived. This project has become one of the most popular projects with club members.

During January a White Pine Tree Pruning Demonstration was held on the Dillon farm in the Willis area. There were 12 people present and the weather was rather severe. W. A. McElfresh from the V.P.I. Forestry Department, along with the Chief Forester and representatives of the Virginia Forest Service, were present to discuss the methods and importance of tree pruning.

The Agent assisted many farmers during the year in filing tree seedling applications.

There were approximately 313,000 tree seedlings secured in 1961.

Mr. A. B. Lyons of the V.P.I. Forestry Department made a visit with the Agent to the Dorsey Thompson Farm to discuss the installation of a new type wood burning furnace.

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Several boys participated in the Junior and Senior Demonstration Contests and two boys participated in the area contest. The Agent assisted with the District Contests in April and with the Fat Stock Show and Sale.

Two Senior Clubs participated in the WSLC Club Improvement Contest. The Floyd Senior Club won first place in the county and received \$25 prize money, and this club won second place in the area contest and received \$50.

Gary Gray and David Allen, who are Senior 4-H Club members, attended the State Conservation Camp at Virginia Beach this year.

The annual Achievement Day Program was held in December with 72 club members, parents, and guests present. Twenty-three awards were presented to the boys.

In January a committee met and planned the talent show to be held in March. During February each club presented talent acts to their regular meetings and the best acts were selected for the talent show or Share the Fun Program. This year the county wide Share the Fun Program was held in March with 350 people attending. Approximately 60 club members participated and the occasion added \$95 to the County Council Treasury.

During March bulletins and project record books were secured, assembled and delivered to the club members. The Agent discussed soil conservation with the Floyd fifth grade upon special request.

The Agent judged the 4-H Club Contest in Montgomery County during early April. Also, during April Jim Johnson, who was an IFYE and who spent several months in Italy, showed slides and discussed his visit to Italy before the Floyd student body of approximately 125. Mr. Johnson is now a student at V.P.I.

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guest to the Check Senior Club Parents' Night program during May. The Agent met with other Extension workers at Christiansburg in May to work out detailed plans of the 4-H Club Camp. This Camp was held at the Southwest 4-H Club Center June 5-10. There were 74 Club members, 1 woman and 2 men leaders, with the Extension Agents of the county who attended. This was one of the best camps that the members from this county has ever had.

Only one 4-H Club boy attended the Short Course at V.P.I. during the summer. C. O. Eanes, Jr., was taken into the 4-H Club All Star Chapter during Short Course.

During June a Leader Training Meeting was held to plan the summer group meetings. These meetings created considerable interest and many club members participated.

During July a Lampworkshop was held at which time fifteen members and three leaders put together fifteen modern electric lamps. One boy was assisted in preparing his 4-H Electric Records for area competition. During August the Agent, with Roger Vest and Jo Ann Marshall, who had previously won the Electric Contest locally, attended the 4-H Electric Congress in Richmond. Upon return from the Electric Congress Roger Vest gave a radio report on his trip to Richmond.

During September the Extension Agent visited all of the schools and worked out the club schedules for the coming year.

There were 81 4-H Club members who received 32,000 pine tree seedlings. W. A. McElfresh of the V.P.I. Forestry Department and the Agent visited several 4-H Club forestry projects to observe results.

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The Floyd Artificial Breeding Association Directors met several times during the year to conduct the business of the program. During December plans were made for the annual membership meeting in January. This meeting was held with 16 farmers present. This group during their July meeting planned the annual barbecue, which was held on the Sherrell Poff farm during August. There were 192 people present and the occasion was enjoyed by all. The Agent assisted with the selection of animals to be shown and with the planning of the annual barbecue.

The Agent and three dairymen attended the area DHIA conference in Riner during January.

Through the cooperation of the Vocational Agriculture Instructors in the three schools and in working through the FFA boys a list of farmers and the number of cows owned was compiled and sent to the area Veterinarian previous to the Brucellosis Testing program which is under way at this time.

### 3. 4-H Club Work

The 4-H Club program has operated very smoothly this year and, although the enrollment has not increased materially, there is improvement in the quality of work. There were 24 clubs with a total of 298 boys enrolled.

The County Council and Honor Club with their committees have been very active and have sponsored several projects. A planning committee met in May to plan for the Rural Life Sunday program, which was held at the Smart View Park on the Blue Ridge Parkway in June with 90 members and parents present. The Agent was an invited

The majority of farm families grow their own pork needs and very few hogs are marketed. Several farmers throughout the county sell spring pigs and considerable work is being carried on in an effort to interest farmers in the newly organized Feeder Pig Area Sale. Most of the work done with swine has been through 4-H Club members.

b. Dairying

Dairy cattle numbers have been reducing somewhat during recent years, however, the quality of dairy cattle has improved rapidly.

During February the Dairy Advisory Committee met and reviewed the minutes of the Agronomy Committee meeting in an effort to correlate the work of the two groups. Trends in cattle numbers, milk sales, production per cow, forage production, etc., were studied. Particular emphasis was placed on the Mastitis problem. Almost half of the farmers in the county sell manufactured milk, however, there are only 35 Grade A Dairies, selling milk to three companies. Four Producers are participating in the Dairy Herd Improvement Association and three are cooperating in the Weigh-A-Day-A-Month program.

A special effort has been exerted this fall on the production of ensilage for dairy farmers. Much interest has been shown and the prospects look good for considerable more silage feeding during the coming year. Although it is estimated that there are 200 or more trench silos being used, many more of the permanent type will be constructed in the coming season.

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Through the cooperation of the Vocational Agriculture Instructors at the three schools the FFA boys supplied a list of farmers with the number of cattle listed relative to the Brucellosis Testing Program.

Much emphasis was placed throughout the year on improving pasture, better feeding program, etc., and as the years pass results of this can be detected in observing the better grades of cattle our farmers are consigning to the sales. The Agent assisted several farmers in locating good bulls during the year.

Sheep numbers have remained rather steady during recent years. Although, flocks are small generally speaking our sheep producers are doing a very good job with their feeding and management program.

The Annual Wool Growers Membership meeting was held in February with 16 producers present. Officers and Directors were elected. The Agent and the County Wool Pool Representative attended the area wool meeting at Marion to plan for the marketing of wool this year. During May the Agent and Director attended a wool sales meeting in Abingdon, which was followed by a local Directors' meeting to plan for the pool. Although the Agent was attending 4-H Club Camp on the day of the local pool, everything was well organized and the pool was handled in a successful manner.

The wool pool was held on June 5 with 15,828 pounds of wool brought in. The clear wool sold for 59-cents per pound. The local Directors met to close out all accounts.

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Advisory Committee's objective has been to improve quality of beef cattle through better breeding, feeding, and management. Rapid progress has been made.

Each year more and more farmers attend and participate in the organized Feeder Calf and Yearling Sales. This year ten farmers consigned 83 animals to the Feeder Calf Sale, however, only one farmer consigned 21 animals to the Yearling Sale.

The Livestock Advisory Committee met in February to study the county situation, discuss problems, and plan for the coming year's program. During the year the Agent and Feeder Calf Sales Committee attended six meetings outside the county to discuss and plan for the organized sales and to attend the annual meeting of the Virginia Feeder Calf Association at Natural Bridge. Six feeder calf consignors from the county also attended the annual dinner meeting of Feeder Calf Consignors in the Roanoke Area.

The Agent attended a meeting in Salem in February to assist with plans for the 4-H Club-FFA Fat Stock Show and Sale, which was held in April.

A Beef Cattle Spray Demonstration was held on the Dorsey Thompson farm in October with 43 people present. Dr. J. O. Rowell of the V.P.I. Entomology Department and a representative of a chemical company discussed the importance of controlling cattle grubs, flies, ticks, etc. They also discussed materials to use and demonstrated the application of chemicals. As a result fifteen or more beef producers sprayed their cattle this fall.

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There were 400 or more soil samples submitted during the month of December and lime and fertilization recommendations were supplied. The Agent had many contacts with farmers relative to carrying out ASC practices.

The Agent attended a two weeks soil school in the area during August. During this time we studied soil formations, types of soils, capabilities, etc. This course was very valuable to all of us because we studied the soils in our own area.

During the year the Agent attended a forage meeting at Woolwine, Virginia, with J. F. Shoulders of the Agronomy Department of V.P.I., and assisted two Agricultural Instructors in judging the area FFA grain show at Floyd. The Agent also attended the forage meeting in Lynchburg during October and assisted in judging the forage program reports for the Southwest District.

Many visits were made, newsarticles and radio programs prepared during the year on chickweed control, alfalfa weevil control, and corn weed control, as well as the usual recommendations on varieties, fertilization, etc.

Through a weekly column in the local paper and in working through seed and fertilizer dealers most farmers had an opportunity to keep posted on new developments and recommendations in agronomy.

## 2. Livestock

### a. Beef Cattle, Sheep, and Hogs

The latest census report shows that the number of Beef Cattle has not changed very much in recent years. The Livestock

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A Chickweed Control Demonstration was held on the W. C. King farm December 28. Mr. Allan Kates, Weed Specialist from V.P.I., showed the group how to calibrate a sprayer, discussed the materials to use and the expected results. There were 17 farmers present. The Agent checked the results of this demonstration several times and kept farmers informed on results through newsarticles, radio programs, etc.

The Agronomy Advisory Committee met in February to study the present agronomy situation, discuss problems involved and to make plans for the coming year.

Due to cool, damp weather late in the spring considerable alfalfa troubles developed. The Agent made visits to observe alfalfa diseases and three specialists were called in to assist with this problem. After warm weather set in the diseases apparently disappeared.

During September a Silo Demonstration was held on the William Whitlock farm with 19 farmers present. Mr. G. D. Kite from the Agricultural Engineering Department at V.P.I. discussed the construction of silos and demonstrated the tilt-up, above ground, bunker type silo. Three of this type of silos were built in the county in 1961.

Many farmers visited the ensilage corn demonstration on the Harman Spangler farm during early September. This was a demonstration of the use of ample fertilizing, thick planting, and the use of atrazine to control weeds. The corn was planted one day, sprayed with atrazine the following day and no cultivation whatever followed.

### III. MAJOR ACTIVITIES

#### 1. Agronomy

The Agronomy Committee's Objective for several years has been to improve pastures, reduce corn for grain acreage, increase corn for silage acreage and increase alfalfa acreage, and at the same time increasing yields per acre with all of these crops.

The last census report shows 3,875 acres of corn in 1959 as compared to 5,606 acres in 1954. The average corn yield now is about 58 bushels per acre. While the total acreage has not reduced materially during the past two years there has been a tremendous shift from corn for grain to corn for ensilage. Corn for ensilage acreage increased from 697 acres to 926 acres from 1954 to 1959, and it is estimated that this acreage for 1961 would be about 1,500 acres. There were 577 farmers growing 2,363 acres of alfalfa in 1954 and 768 farmers in 1959 reported 4,990 acres. It is estimated that this acreage has increased slightly, however, the big problem of low yields still exists. Actually the yields are perhaps higher than reported due to the fact that for census information farmers reported alfalfa acreage from fields that at one time were in alfalfa and now only have a scattering of plants left.

Most farmers are using the better varieties and are doing a good job of liming, fertilizing, and controlling the alfalfa weevil.

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Work in planning with other groups was very helpful in developing the Extension program. These groups included the Agronomy Committee, Dairy Committee, Dairy Herd Improvement Association, Artificial Breeding Association, Wool Pool, Young Farmers' Clubs, Feeder Calf Committee, 4-H Council, 4-H Honor Club, and Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation County and Community Committees. The work done with milk company representatives and other professional workers along with individual farmers was most valuable.

Other professional agricultural services available to the people include Vocational Agriculture and Home Economics in the three High Schools, two Young Farmers' Clubs, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation, Soil Conservation Service, and Farmers Home Administration.

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11. Communications - Dial telephone service has recently been completed in the county; 2,000 telephones in 1961.
  12. Towns - Floyd, the County Seat; population 480, only incorporated town. Seven shopping centers outside of county within radius of 45 miles.
  13. Number of Farms - 1700 -- Average size 102 acres.
  14. Agricultural Income - Livestock 88.6%  
                                   Crops       7.5%  
                                   Forest  
                                   Products 3.9%  
     Value of all products sold \$2,259,324. Almost half of the farmers have income exceeding farm income.
  15. Population - (1950) 11,351  
                                   10,860 white  
                                   491 non-white  
                                   9,481 rural farm  
                                   1,870 rural non-farm
  16. Industrial Developments - 1 Shirt Factory  
   1 Garment Factory  
     Employing approximately 400 women and 50 men.

## II. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COUNTY ORGANIZATIONS

The Extension program started in the county in 1936 with a County Agent being employed. Since 1941 the county has had the services of a County Agent and Home Demonstration Agent. The office personnel includes the County Agent, Home Demonstration Agent and Office Secretary.

There were 24 4-H Clubs for boys and girls including 3 Senior groups with a total enrollment of approximately 700. There are 19 Home Demonstration Clubs with a membership of 326.

I. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COUNTY

A. General Characteristics

1. Historic Background - Formed in 1831 from Montgomery, named after John Floyd, Governor of Virginia 1830-1834.
2. Location - West Central Extension District. Blue Ridge Plateau, 42 miles west of Roanoke City.
3. Size of County - 376 square miles or 240,640 acres.
4. Elevation - 2200-2800 feet. County Seat 2494 feet.
5. Rainfall - 45.97 inches.
6. Climate - Last killing frost in spring - April 21.  
First killing frost in fall - October 10.  
Average growing season - 172 days.  
Average January temperature - 36 degrees.  
Average July temperature - 72.2 degrees.  
Maximum 103 degrees - Minimum -8 degrees.
7. Topography - Rolling to steep. Small areas of level land along streams.
8. Soil Types - Varies from sandy to clay. Talladage, a poor type, makes up a major percentage of the area. Belvins, average crop soil. Alleghany and Raburn, good crop soils, are limited.
9. Woodland Acreage - 52,057 acres.  
Cropland Acreage - 56,962 acres.  
Pasture Acreage - 73,017 acres.  
Other Land Acreage (buildings, roads, waste, etc.) - 9,194 acres.
10. Transportation Facilities - 4 buses daily on Route 221. Nearest rail facilities 22 miles from County Seat. Motor vehicles owned by a majority of families. Two freight lines, daily service. Primary road mileage 55.57; Secondary road mileage 664.61; (untreated light surface 202.71; unsurfaced 201.81; untreated all-weather 195.61; Hard surfaced 64.54).

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ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT

COUNTY  
EXTENSION  
WORK

*Virginia Agricultural Extension Service*

E. M. Talley  
**Name**  
County **Agent**  
**Title**

None  
**Assistant Agent**

Assistant Agent

Assistant Agent



1961

Floyd  
**County**