ANNUAL PLAN OF WORK FOR CAROLINE COUNTY

From December 1, 1955 through November 30, 1956

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Brief Description of County

Caroline County is a rural County with 1169 farms and according to the 1954 census the average size of the farms is 133 acres. General farming is the chief type of farming in the county with corn, wheat, oats, barley, soybeans, lespedeza hay and seed, alfalfa, tobacco and commercial vegetables being the chief crops. Poultry and hogs are on most farms in small quantities. Beef cattle numbers has increased three times during last 10 years. Dairy cattle numbers are decreasing.

The chief commercial vegetables grown in the county are cucumbers, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, cantaloupes, cabbage and sweet corn. Tomatoes and cucumbers are grown for local canneries.

About 2/3 of the farm land in Caroline County is in forest trees and every year a considerable sum is added to the farm income from forest products such as excelsior wood, lumber and cross ties.

Changing Situation Influencing Plans

Declining agricultural prices and the high prices paid by farmers is causing many farmers to loose money. The farm debt is increasing and many farmers will not be able to get the credit needed to produce efficiently this year.

Fifty percent of the farms in Caroline County have less than 100 acres. Seventy-three (73) percent of the farms have crop land under 50 acres. This acreage is too small for efficient use of machinery and labor and to supply the family with an income to meet the family needs. More and more farmers are forced to take other jobs to supplement the farm income or to increase the size of the farm. In fact approximately 60% of the farmers in Caroline County now have other income exceeding the value of agricultural products sold.

Program Development

The County Agent and Home Agent will organize a County Extension Planning Committee to arsist in planning and carrying out an Extension Program for the county. This committee will be composed of twelve men, six women and the president of the 4-H Club County Council.

The first planning meeting will be a supper meeting. Another meeting will be held later in the year to review the accomplishments.

At the first planning meeting problems to work on for the next five years will be selected and committees appointed to work on the various problems. The various committees will meet as often as needed during the year in an effort to solve the problems selected.

The agent will also work through the Ruritan Club, the Caroline Farm Bureau and other organizations in an effort to promote the Extension Program. The agent is Chairman of the Agricultural Committee of a newly organized Development Committee and he will work through this organization to promote the agricultural industry for the county.

General Problems and Needs of the County

The average size of farms in Caroline County is 133 acres. The size of farms need to be increased for more efficient production and to supply the family with the needed income.

Thirty-five (35) percent of the farms have a gross income less than $1000. More off the farm employment is needed to raise the farm income.

An improved method of marketing farm products is greatly needed inorder that farmers can receive a higher price for the products produced.

Project Activities

A. Agronomy

1. Corn Production

a. Situation: Corn acreage has decreased approximately 20% during the last ten years and yields increased about 100% except for the dry years. The price received for corn has decreased 40% during the last two years.

b. Immediate Needs: Less acreage, higher prices and more efficient production.

c. What Will be Done to Meet the Needs

1. Not much can be done to increase the price but something can be done about efficient production.
2. Encourage farmers to use Crimson Clover and manure to supply nitrogen for corn.
3. Encourage farmers to spray for weed control where necessary.

d. How and When Program Will be Done

1. General educational activities such as news articles, radio talks, circular letters and bulletins will be used to get the information to the farmers.
2. Result demonstrations will be set up by farmers in each community to demonstrate the value of crimson clover as a cover crop.
3. Information on weed control will be sent to farmers.

2. Tobacco

4. Situation: The acreage of sun-cured tobacco has been decreasing in Caroline County for many years because the farms are becoming more mechanized and farmers can get a greater return per man hour from other crops. Tobacco yields more income per acre than any crop grown in the county and for this reason it is mostly grown on the small farms. Acreage allotments has also caused the acreage to decrease.

There is no certified seed available of the most popular variety, Little Sweet Orinoco.

5. Immediate Needs

1. To have a supply of certified seed of the Little Sweet Orinoco variety produced.
2. Labor saving devices are greatly needed.

6. What Will be Done to Meet the Needs

1. A farmer will be selected to work with the Experiment Station in an effort to improve the Little Sweet Orinoco variety and to produce a strain true to type.

2. Farmers will be encouraged to treat tobacco beds for weed control and spray for sucker control.

4. How and When Program Will be Done

1. G. R. Mathews, Extension Tobacco Specialist at VPI, will work with the Experiment Station and a farmer in my county in developing a good strain of Little Sweet Orinoco tobacco seed for distribution to farmers for the 1957 crop. The tobacco bed will be started in February of this year.

2. A method and result demonstration will be conducted on the use of Methyl bromide to control weeds in the plant bed. Tobacco farmers will be invited to observe the method demonstration and also be requested to visit the beds later to observe the results.

3. Five method and result demonstrations will also be held on the use of Maleic Hydrazide for sucker control.

4. The agent will visit tobacco farmers to assist them with individual problems.

1. Pastures

a. Situation: The acreage in pasture has decreased about 20% during the past ten years but the quality has greatly increased because 50% more livestock is grazing this smaller area.

b. Immediate Needs: A plentiful supply of pasture stretched over a larger period for more efficient livestock production.

c. What Will be Done to Meet the Needs

1. The agent will encourage farmers to continue the pasture seeding and fertilization program and to reseed the pastures where necessary. Also farmers will be encouraged to top dress grass with nitrogen where the stands are thick enough.

d. How and When Program Will be Done

1. General educational activities such as news articles, radio talks, circular letters and bulletins will be used to promote the pasture program.
2. The county pasture program will be included in the Farm Bureau and Raritan Club objectives.
3. A county Agronomy Committee will help to carry the information to the farmers.
4. The agent will make farm visits to advise with farmers on pasture establishment and maintenance.
5. Five result demonstrations on pasture fertilization will continue.

4. Small Grains

a. Situation: The wheat acreage has decreased one-third during the last ten years. Barley acreage has increased three times and the oat acreage has doubled during the last ten years. The rye acreage increased about 33%.

b. Immediate Needs: Improve marketing and storage.

c. What Will be Done to Meet the Needs

1. Farmers will be encouraged to improve and increase the grain storage capacity on the farm.

d. How and When Program will be Done

1. A marketing committee will be organized to study grain marketing and storage and a special effort will be made to increase the capacity of farm storage. The agent will

assist farmers in securing plans for a grain storage.

2. General educational activities such as bulletins, news articles, and letters will be used to keep the grain farmers informed on accepted cultural practices.

5. Soybeans

1. Situation: Approximately one-third of the crop land in Caroline was used last year for soybean production. The acreage has increased 33% during the last five years.

b. Immediate Needs: Effective method of weed control.

c. What Will be Done to Meet the Needs

Demonstrations will be conducted on weed control.

d. How and When Program Will be done

Five demonstrations on weed control will be conducted at planting time. Information on weed control will be sent to soybean producers in the county.

8. Dairying

1. Situation: Dairy cattle numbers decreased approximately 15% during the past ten years.

2. Immediate Needs: More efficient production.

3. What Will be Done to Meet This Need

a. To encourage farmers to use a longer grazing period.
b. To encourage farmers to use a better quality of hay and silage.
c. To encourage labor saving devices.

4. How and When Program Will be Done

a. Farmers will be encouraged to use rye for winter grazing, sudan grass for mid-summer grazing in addition to the regular pasture program.
b. Farmers will be encouraged to harvest hay in a younger and tender stage.
c. The information will be gotten to the farmers in the form of circular letters, news articles, farm visits and meetings.

9. Poultry

1. Situation: Most of the poultry in Caroline County is family size flocks and about the same numbers are maintained each year.

2. Immediate Needs: More efficiency in feeding and management.

3. What Will be Done to Meet the Needs

a. To keep poultry producers informed on accepted practices.

4. How and When Program Will be Done

a. Invite an extension poultry specialist to the county to assist with production through farm visitation and meetings.
b. Send circular letters to poultry producers.
c. Farm visits will be used as a method to improve poultry production.
d. General educational activities such as news articles and circular letters will be used to promote the poultry program.
e. Poultry production will be discussed at a county meeting.

B. Beef Cattle

1. Situation: The beef cattle numbers has increased three times during the past 10 years.

2. Immediate Needs: Still some improvements are needed in breeding, management, feed production and feeding.

3. What Will be Done to Meet This Need

A promotional program will be put on to encourage better breeding, feeding and management for beef cattle.

4. How and When Program will be Done

a. Farmers will be encouraged to cull their herds and replace with animals of better breeding.
b. The agent will cooperate and work with pure-bred sales and all farmers will be encouraged to use pure-bred males.
c. 4-H club members will be encouraged to use pure-bred animals for their project work.
d. The agent will help to promote a Feeder Calf Sale in Fredericksburg.
e. The agent will help to promote a Baby Beef Show and Sale at Fredericksburg.
f. Beef cattle farmers will be encouraged to use winter grazing crops and to allow the cattle to harvest as much of their feed as possible.
g. County farmers will be invited and urged to attend a livestock school to be held at Tappahannock.
h. A beef cattle specialist from VPI will be invited to the county to discuss beef cattle production at a county meeting.
i. General educational activities such as news articles, bulletins, letters and one radio talk will be used to promote efficiency in beef cattle production.

Swine

Situation: Hogs are grown on paractically all farms in the county for home use and a large number of farmers produce hogs for market. The number has remained about constant during the past ten years.

Immediate Need: Some few farmers are grazing hogs on ladino clover, but there is a great need for more grazing crops for hogs. Still a great majority of farmers think hogs should be grown in a dry lot and the feed hauled to them two or three times a day.

What Will be Done to Meet This Need

Farmers will be encouraged to graze hogs on ladino clover as a source of protein feed.

Better feeding, management, disease and insect control will be stressed.

How and When Program Will be Done

Six result demonstrations with the use of ladino clover as a pasture for hogs will be established in each community in the county to show farmers the value of ladino clover pasture for hogs.

The value of ladino clover pasture will be discussed with all 4-H club members and they will be urged to use ladino clover pasture for their pig projects.

One radio talk, news articles, and a farm meeting will be devoted to ladino clover as a hog pasture.

When the agent is visiting farmers, he will encourage them to use ladino clover pasture for hogs.

The agent will vaccinate pigs whenever called to control cholera.

General educational activities will be used to inform hog producers on management, insect and disease control.

Vegetables

Situation: The sweet potato and tomato acreage were decreased four times during the past ten years. The cucumber acreage was greatly decreased.

Immediate Need: Better yield and quality.

What Will be Done to Meet This Need

Quality and yields of vegetables will be stressed during the year.

1. How and When Program Will be Done

a. Encouraging farmers to spray their vegetables to control diseases and insects.
b. Encouraging farmers to adopt improved cultural practices in the production of tomatoes, cucumbers, and sweet potatoes.
c. General educational activities will be used to attain goal.
d. Agent will assist farmers with vegetable production by farm visits.
e. L. L. Wilkins of the VPI Extension Service will assist the agent with a tomato and sweet potato meeting in March.

D. Forestry

1. Situation: Approximately two-thirds of the farm land is in forest and considerable income is derived each year from the sale of forest products.

2. Immediate Needs: There is a great need for re-forestation of the cut over area.

3. What Will be Done to Meet This Need

a. The agent will teach and encourage farmers and 4-H club members to carry out a sound forestry program and to set out pine trees in the cut over areas and badly eroded areas.

4. How and When Program Will be Done

a. A Forestry Committee will be set up to give special emphases to forestry.
b. The agent will discuss forestry with 4-H club members.
c. The agent will invite a forestry specialist to come to the county to discuss a forestry program with farmers.
d. Three result demonstrations will be set up on forestry management.
e. General educational activities such as farm meetings will be held to discuss forestry with farmers. News articles will be published on forestry.

E. Farm Management and Public Policy

1. Immediate Need: Farmers are anxious for information on Social Security, Income Tax and other items of public policy.

2. What Will be Done to Meet This Need

a. Inform farmers of the Income Tax Law as it applies to farmers.
b. To encourage farmers to keep accurate farm records.
c. To inform farmers on the Agricultural Outlook.
d. Inform farmers on Social Security.

3. How and When the Program Will be Done

a. A bulletin on Income Tax will be sent to leading farmers, businessmen, and professional workers.
b. Leading farmers will be sent a farm record book.
c. A county meeting will be devoted to Social Security. W. J. Nuckolls, Agricultural Economist at VPI, will be invited to the meeting to discuss Social Security and Income Tax as it applies to farmers. Information on Social Security will be kept at County Agent's office. The agent will assist farmers with Social Security problems.
d. Publicity will be given farm record keeping.
e. General educational activities such as news articles, circular letters, bulletins and visitation will be used to inform the farmers on farm management problems.
f. The agricultural outlook for 1956 will be discussed at a farm meeting and a bulletin on agricultural outlook will be sent to the farmers. News articles will also be published on the agricultural outlook.

4. Agricultural Engineering

1. Immediate Needs. Farmers are in need of better plans and information on building farm buildings and irrigation.

2. What Will be Done to Meet This Need

a. The agent to secure plans for agricultural buildings and equipment for farmers and advise with them on planning the buildings and equipment.
b. To assist and advise with farmers on irrigation drainage, etc.

3. How and When The Program Will be Done

a. The agent will secure the desired plans for farmers and assist them with the planning.
b. An Extension Agricultural Engineer will be invited to the county to assist with planning irrigation systems.

5. Farm and Home Development Program

1. Situation. This is the second year such a program has been tried in Caroline County and it will be tried on five additional farms.

2. Immediate Needs. To select the five farms.

3. What Will be Done to Meet This Need

The committee will select these five farms and assist the agent with the program.

a. How and When the Program Will be Done

The program will be done during the year. An inventory will be made with the farm family to determine what is available and what is being done at present. After the inventory is made, the agent will budget with the farmer on several alternatives and let the farmer decide on the alternative of his choice.

K. 4-H Club Work

1. Situation and Need

4-H clubs are operated in each of the five schools in the county.

There is considerable interest among Caroline County farmers in the 4-H club program and more personnel is greatly needed to carry on an effective 4-H club program.

2. Organization

a. What Will be Done

(1) A county 4-H club committee will be organized to plan the 4-H club program for the county and to assist in carrying on an effective program.
(2) Seven clubs will be organized.
(3) 135 members enrolled.
(4) Organize a County Council.
(5) Add 5 additional adult leaders.
(6) To have 2 delegates from county attend 4-H short course.
(7) To recommend one member for All-Star.
(8) To encourage members to attend 4-H Camp at Jamestown.

b. How Program Will Be Done

(1) Organized clubs in the schools of the county.
(2) Offer variety of projects.
(3) Place importance in County Council.
(4) Personal contact for prospective leaders.
(5) The influence of previous delegates.

3. Project Work

a. What Will Be Done

(1) Each member will carry at least one agricultural project.
(2) Members of each club will exhibit outstanding projects at Fredericksburg Fair.

b. How Programs Will be Carried Out

Notify all members that project work is one requirement of club membership. Relate personal success stories of former and present members. Also make farm visits to aid members in selecting suitable projects. Distribute catalogues of the Fredericksburg Fair as soon as possible and talk with members concerning exhibits during summer visits. Organize transportation for taking exhibits to and from fair. A baby beef show and sale will be sponsored for beef cattle projects. A Sears-Roebuck Pig Chain will be conducted.

c. Cooperating With Other Agencies

1. Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation

a. The county agent through personal contacts, letters, news articles and meetings will help to carry on the educational programs.
b. The agent will help with a community meeting to explain the programs.
c. The agent will attend county committee meetings whenever requested.

2. Credit and Loaning Agencies

a. The agent will cooperate with loaning agencies by recommending farmers needing credit to the proper loaning agency.
b. The agent will work with the FHA Supervisor and help where necessary in making recommendations.
c. The FHA Supervisor will be informed of new developments by circular letters, meetings and bulletins.
d. The agent will cooperate with the local bank and keep the personnel informed on agricultural programs.
e. The agent will attend Agricultural Credit Conference held at Natural Bridge.

3. District Soil Conservation Service

a. The agent will work with the county SCS personnel in helping farmers conserve soil and water.
b. The agent will assist the Tidewater Soil Conservation District in formulating and executing district plans.
c. The agent will attend Tidewater Soil Conservation District Supervisors meetings.
d. The county planning technician will be informed of new developments in Agriculture in the county.
e. The agent will assist the local soil conservationist whenever requested in making recommendations for his farm plans.
f. The agent will give the local soil conservationist the names of farmers requesting soil conservation help.