

**ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT**

**COUNTY  
EXTENSION  
WORK**

*Virginia Agricultural Extension Service*

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1960

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Isle of Wight  
County



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## Foreword

This narrative report presents some efforts produced by Extension work in Isle of Wight County. The Extension Service is sponsored by the Board of Supervisors in cooperation with the State and Federal Governments. This service was made possible under the Smith-Lever Act of 1914.

Isle of Wight County has an area of 314 square miles. It is located on the southeastern part of Virginia - bounded by Southampton County on the West and South following the Blackwater River which divides the two counties; by Nansemond County on the East; by Surry County on the north-west; and by the James River on the northeast.

The climate is oceanic. The average frost free season ranges from 190 - 210 days. The long growing season is adequate, combined with other factors such as moisture and temperature are important in crop production.

Peanuts, corn, soybeans, hogs and cotton are the main sources of income for most farmers in the county. Sweet Potatoes, truck crops, water-melons and poultry are grown for home use and the surplus sold on local markets and nearby towns and cities.

Market facilities are available for most commodities produced in the county. Local meat packers can consume all hogs produced in the county and must rely on areas as far as the mid-west and deep south to keep their operation going. These industries provide means for surplus labor and aid in keeping the economy of the county strong. Hog prices locally average higher than the Chicago market - making it profitable for farmers to raise more hogs in the county. Feed mills in the county and nearby cities and towns provide outlets for surplus corn and soybeans. Suffolk, the World's Largest Peanut Market, is readily available to farmers for transportation of their stock peanuts for sale.

Some Comparative Statistics of Tals of Wight County - 1959 Census

<u>Item</u>	<u>1959</u>	<u>1954</u>
Farms (all)	686	1,003
Land in Farms	106,409 A.	135,760
Average Size of Farms	151.1 A.	135.4 A.
Average Value per acre	\$165.10	\$162.31

Farm Operators

White	489	721
Non-White	197	282
Full Owners (no racial breakdown)	281	456
Part Owners (no racial breakdown)	182	186
Managers (no racial breakdown)	1	2
All Tenants (no racial breakdown)	222	359

By Residence

Residing on Farm Operated	581	914
Not Residing on Farm Operated	36	59
By work off Farms	147	280
With other Income of Family		
Exceeding Value off Farm Product sold: Operators reporting	90	205

Farm By Economic Class

Produce sold of 40,000.00 or more	Class I - 2
Produce sold of 20,000.00 - 39,999.00	Class II - 43
Produce sold of 10,000.00 - 19,999.00	Class III - 121
Produce sold of 5,000.00 - 9,999.00	Class IV - 165
Produce sold of 2,500.00 - 4,999.00	Class V - 140
Produce sold of 50.00 - 2,499.00	Class VI - 45

Specified Farm Expenditures

	<u>1959</u>	<u>1954</u>
Gasoline and Oils	\$312,150.00	\$403,939.00
Seed Bulbs and Trees	73,060.00	
Machine Hire	122,245.00	124,992.00
Labor Hire	545,925.00	800,379.00

Specified Facilities and Equipment

Home Freezers	461	575
Telephones	351	393
Grain Combines	105	88
Corn Pickers	335	440
Motor Trucks	560	540
Tractors	1,287	1,464
Tractors other Than Garden	1,227	
Automobile	614	1,074
Horses or/Mules	276	658

### County Organization

The Isle of Wight County Advisory Board is composed of fifty-seven men and women from the various communities in the county. The Advisory Board serves as adviser to the agents to coordinate the program in the county. The Board was represented at the annual meeting of the State Advisory Board which met in Franklin County in September. Delegates were Mr. Calvin Allmond, Route 2, Windsor, who is vice-president, and Mrs. Easter Barnes, Carrsville, along with the two agents. This State Board sponsors the Community Improvement Work in the State and reports educational features to give the various counties having extension workers an opportunity to see what the host and some other counties have and are doing to improve the living standards of the people. The Board sponsored a stock peanut grading demonstration in November. New equipment was demonstrated by Mr. C. E. Holland, Area Supervisor of the Suffolk area, that shakes and splits the peanuts automatic - ally which gives the farmers a fairer sampling of his peanuts. One of the great features of this equipment, the human element is removed. Also a meeting on peanut marketing and penalties was presented by the Board in September. Mr. Jack D. Gwaltney, ASC Office Manager was the speaker.

### Problems In The County

1. The need for supplemental crops to augment the income from the so-called cash or money crops.
2. Better farm management to increase production, quality of produce and improve income.
3. The need for cooperation rather than an individualistic approach to solving common problems on farms, in communities, etc.
4. Better health and medical care for the whole family - with emphasis on preventatives rather than treatments.

5. Better housing.
6. Improvement of roads.

#### Values In and Of Economical Production

The economy of America is plague with over production. Farmers are to keep their eyes on production cost if they are to realize maxium profits from their efforts.

Peanuts provide the main source of income for most farmers in the county, the practices that are to be stressed to contribute to economical production, the ph of soil, use of sulfur to control leaf spot, the use of Nemagon to control nematodes, fertilizer applications, and the land plaster rather than applying it over the row. The transition from bagging peanuts to selling them in bulks is appealing to the farmer. Some few buyers are buying only peanuts in bags.

#### Major Problems Facing Crop Production In County

1. To imitate to production of other crops and enterprises to off - set out in peanut acreage because of allotments.
2. Maintain a high level of fertilization.
3. Use of recommended varieties of crops grown.

#### What Extension Will Try To Do To Solve These Problems:

1. To capitalize on crops and interest that may provide additional cash crops for farmers in the county.
2. To process soil samples for farmers; to explain and encourage farmers to follow recommendation.
3. Encourage farmers to select or purchase large peanut kernals that brings a premium on the market.

4. To encourage farmers through meetings, leaders and circular letters to follow fertilizer recommendations and seed variety selection.

#### Livestock

With hog production playing the role it does in the economy of the county, the Extension Service believes that local farmers should provide to keep this industry lucrative. Many farmers are experiencing handicaps because of their operations.

Emphasis has been placed upon the farmer to grow the meat type hog to please the consumer if he is to continue in business. The need to shift from the lard type hog and change to a longer animal that will provide meat packers to get more of the high price out from the carcasses upon slaughter. To encourage more pastures and less overgrazing of such pastures. Pastures, even though at times seriously overgrazed, still remain one of the cheapest source of feed.

Many farmers sell their corn at less than two-cents per pound immediately upon harvest. Efforts have been made to encourage farmers to hold their corn which could be fed to hogs and sold for an average of seventeen cents per pound. These problems are to be met to seize upon every opportunity through visits, meetings, news articles, tours, office calls, etc.

- (1) to acquaint and impress farmers the need for a sound efficient feed program.
- (2) to control parasites, and
- (3) to provide information on seeding and care of pasture.

4-H Club Work

Nine 4-H Clubs have been organized in the County - Bridger, Carrollton, Camptown, Lawnes, Trinity and Windsor (4). There are 191 boys enrolled in these clubs at the present time. Project selections have been made in Vegetable Garden, Farm and Home Electric, Home and Yard Beautification, Safety, Wildlife, Entomology, Sweet Potatoes, Forestry and Tractor Care. Instructional materials have been furnished by commercial concerns to train these young useful and desirable citizens.

Achievement Day - Contributions were received from Smithfield Packing Company and Gwaltney's Incorporated of Smithfield and Union Camp-Bag Paper Company in Franklin.

The 4-H, Farm and Home Demonstration Achievement Day program was held at the Georgie Tyler School. Special recognition was given to the leaders and members of 4-H Club. About 150 people attended this affair. The exhibits were illuminated with color, quality and information which will give an incentive to improvement of 4-H, Farm, and Home Demonstration work in the County.

### An Evaluation

As a new agent working three months in the county, all efforts have been made to keep Extension Service as practical and constructive as possible.

It is human possible that some mistakes have been made without knowledge of such incidents. I sincerely believe that prospective progress in years to come will out-weigh any shortcomings that might have been experienced in an attempt to establish a program to raise the level of living for the people with whom I have had the opportunity to work with.

It has been through, cooperation, faith, and the spirit of prayer that the agent has tried to work.