

ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT

COUNTY EXTENSION WORK

Virginia Agricultural Extension Service

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1960

KING WILLIAM
County

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PREFACE

This report attempts to narrate our activities, our accomplishments and failures in executing our plan of work for 1960. At the outset a few explanations would appear in order concerning the agents method in preparing this report. "Situations" mentioned under the various project headings are the situations existing at the time the annual plan of work was prepared. "Goals" are our annual steps toward reaching our long-time objectives as stated in our long-time program, where applicable.

An example is our 1960 goal in the corn project activity. Our long-time objective is to get an average yield of 75 bushels per acre on all farms. One of our 1960 goals is to get 5 farmers to increase yields by 10 bushels per acre. By using the same goals and situations in this report as were used in the plan, evaluation is made easier and our year-to-year goals can be more realistic as to purpose.

"Methods" as reported here are not necessarily the same methods as planned, but are the methods actually used during the year. Contingencies necessitate changes from time to time and usually the methods used seemed most appropriate at the time actions was needed.

Results have been gathered from a number of sources. Demonstrators, cooperators, farm and office visits and one survey was used to determine, as nearly as possible, accurate results.

III COUNTY SITUATION

Three boundaries of King William County are formed by the York, Pamunky, and Mattaponi Rivers. Caroline and Hanover Counties form the North-west boundary. Prevailing soils are Elkton, Sassafras, Kempsville, Wicham, Altivista, Norfolk, Atlee, Keeport, Lenora and Evansboro. These soils range in quality from Class I through Class V. Therefore, a wide variety of crops are grown.

Most of the Negro operated farms are operated on a general basis, their cropping program consisting of corn, soybeans, hay, milo, and small grains. There are a few specialized farms producing truck crops, poultry, and tobacco. In some instances these specialized crops, are blended with the general farming program.

Considerably more and more off-farm income is being realized by oystering, fishing, serving as hunting guides; sawmill labor, work in the pulpwood industry, government work, domestic work, and seasonal work in canneries. Many work at varied occupations in near-by Richmond.

In addition to poultry, livestock produced is hogs, dairy and beef cattle.

The average farm income appears to be \$2,500.00. Negro operated farms seem to vary between \$250.00 and \$6,000.00. As would be expected, in the lower extreme we find practically all of our part-time farmers. This part-time group continues to be

the most difficult to work with and they seem to have more than their proportionate share of problems.

Living conditions are below what would be considered a fair standard. Overcrowded homes, unsightly environs, and the lack of modern conveniences contribute to a blighted overall picture in spite of many modern, attractive and convenient homes.

IV COUNTY ORGANIZATIONS

The overall county extension organization is the County Advisory Board. Composed of 48 men and women and five committees, the groups meet three times each year. By helping to plan and conduct extension activities, the Board renders valuable assistance to the agents. Officers and committees are as follows:

Advisory Board Officers

President	Augustus Edwards	West Point, Va.
Vice President	Mrs. Lottie Johnson	King William, Va.
Secretary	Mrs. Zelma Jones	King William, Va.
Treasurer	W. H. Berkley	Aylett, Va.

Advisory Board Committees

4-H Club	Mrs. Zenobia Washington	Chairman
Home Grounds	Mr. Gemalia Harris	Chairman
Poultry	Mrs. Zelma Jones	Chairman
Agronomy	Mr. Perry Harvey	Chairman
Achievement	Mrs. Louanna Gaines	Chairman

V PROJECT ACTIVITIES

From the problems mentioned under county situations, we have selected seven major needs for emphasis in 1960. They are as follows:

<u>AREA</u>	<u>NEED</u>
Corn	Better varietal selection, better fertilization
Landscaping	Home, church and school ground beautification
Swine	Better feeding and breeding practices
Poultry	More commercial flocks
Soybeans	Up-to-date cultural practices
4-H Club Work	More leaders, more project completion

1. Corn

SITUATION:

Corn is raised on every farm in the county and is the largest cultivated crop. Yields for the last five years have averaged about 40 bushels per acre. Fertilization practices have improved since 1950 but is still deficient in several communities. Generally, these same communities are not using recommended varieties.

GOALS:

1. To have five farmers to increase yields by 10 bushels per acre.
2. To have eight additional farmers use recommended varieties for first time.
3. To have ten farmers observe proper planting time according to maturity dates of varieties.

METHODS:

Three members of the Agency Committee were contacted on an individual basis. The corn situation and possibilities were discussed with them. They were provided with the needed technical information and given help in setting up fertilizer demonstrations. All corn growers were sent circular letters regarding fertilizers, varieties, and cultural practices. Spot checks during farm visits served as follow-ups.

RESULTS:

The fertilizer demonstrations were conducted as planned, showing significant results. Generally, a good growing season and good cultural practices are evidenced by good yields. Agronomy Committee members are reporting satisfactory progress in their communities toward use of recommended varieties.

2. Landscaping

SITUATION:

Only three Negro owned homes are considered attractively landscaped. Generally, they need shrubbery, walks, drives, painting and screening. Community respect and property values could be increased 100% by developing attractive environs. Our hardest job has been motivation, since there is little or no interest in home grounds beautification by persons needing it most. Seven families have started work on their yards but seem to lack finances to complete.

GOALS:

1. To help six families develop complete home grounds beautification plans.
2. To have five families already started to complete their project, as a demonstration.

METHODS:

We worked closely with the three garden clubs in the county, urging use of native shrubs and offering help in their selection, use and care. Four-H club members were encouraged to develop a step-by-step plan of home ground beautification.

RESULTS:

Other than the 4-H club group, we made but little progress towards our goals as planned. However, we were able to create some desirable attitudes toward yard improvements. We worked closely with two home demonstration clubs in landscaping church grounds. We are hoping that these will serve as demonstrations as a means of creating interest in the two communities.

3. Hogs

SITUATION:

All farms have some hogs. About 15 or 20 are producing market hogs on a fairly large commercial scale. Others raise feeder pigs or raise hogs for home use, some do both. There is a scarcity of good breeding stock in the county. Feeding could be vastly improved in nearly all cases. Farmers are generally unaware of the Corn-hog ratio.

GOALS:

1. To have three additional commercial hog raisers get a purebred boar, of the best type.
2. To have five farmers develop an adequate feeding program of corn, pasture, protein, and mineral supplement.

METHODS:

Monthly outlook and inspirational letters were mailed to all swine producers in the county, along with market information. Average cost-profit facts have been kept before our hog raisers at all times.

RESULTS:

Five years ago, Cassie Foster was a three-sow hog raiser. He now has 9 breed sows. He keeps informed as to market trends and sells both feeder pigs and market hogs. Formerly, nearly all of his feed crops were sold. Now, he sells only a small part of his feed grains and adjusts his hog numbers by culling and selling feeder pigs. He usually attends the pure bred swine sales each spring and has learned to select neat type boars and gilts. We have not been able to influence any additional hog raisers to obtain pure bred boars. However, the four already placed are doing an excellent job of improving swine types in the county.

4. Poultry

SITUATION:

There are only 8 large commercial laying flocks on Negro operated farms in the County. Two of these are breeding flocks, and while they receive premium prices for eggs, their breed is not noted for a high laying percentage. The home flock prevails on nearly every farm, consisting of from 25 to 100 layers.

There is a need for more commercial flocks to supplement income on small farms as well as a need for more home flocks to provide better diets. In 1956, with the help of Mr. Dean, Poultry Specialist, we made a start in what we hope is the right direction.

GOALS:

1. To get an average increase of 10% in size of existing flocks.
2. To have three flocks increase their laying percent at least 5%.
3. To get two families without poultry to start a small laying flock with an eye for expansion.

METHODS:

The use of mass media and four demonstrations were the methods used to reach our goals in the poultry enterprise.

RESULTS:

The unfavorable relationship between costs and egg prices early in the year has been a deterrent toward our flock size expansion goal. The family size flock still prevails with the exception of the eight large commercial laying enterprises. By encouraging selection of better strains and by urging better management, we have caused a higher laying percentage.

5. Soybeans

SITUATION:

Soybeans is second only to corn as a cultivated crop. It is the highest acreage of cash crops grown in the County for cash only. Varieties grown are primarily Ogden and S-100. A few Lee were grown last year for the fourth time. Good rotations as a rule, are not followed. Yields seem to be approximately 20 bushels per acre. This could be easily raised to 30 or more with good cultural practices and observation of proper seeding rates and dates. In a few cases, soybeans are double cropped, following oats, barley and sometimes wheat.

GOALS:

1. To have five farmers realize yields of 35 bushels per acre.
2. To have two farmers realize the possibilities with proper rotations.
3. To have three farmers recognize proper planting dates.

METHODS:

Agency Committee members were asked to serve as a task force by conducting variety demonstrations. This was followed up by circular letters to all soybean growers and personal visits to the demonstrators.

RESULTS:

From all reports, we have good reasons to believe that there is a gradual increase in soybean yields due to using

recommended varieties and better cultural practices. The fact that two of the demonstrations yielded over thirty bushels per acre is evidence that we are nearing our goal.

6. 4-H Club Work

Two hundred and seventy-four boys and girls were enrolled in seven 4-H clubs during 1960. Six of these clubs met in the elementary schools.

One unorganized club of high school age was worked with by home visits and letters. A little better cooperation by the school would have resulted in a better program for the high school group. We even experienced difficulty in working with this group out of school.

We participated in a local Rural Life Sunday program, the State 4-H Short Course, the Wildlife and Conservation Conference, and the District 4-H club Sweet Potato Show.

7. Feature Story

A complete face lifting soil and water conservation program has paid handsome dividends to the Moore Family of Falls, farm and home development family.

In 1955 the Moore family was getting corn yields of about 35 bushels per acre. They were buying hay and were short on pasture. Soybeans were yielding 17 bushels per acre. In 1960, five years after the plan was put into effect, it's an entirely

different story. Corn yields were reported at 58 bushels per acre, soybeans at 24 and there is an ample supply of hay from the rotated strips. Although the total acres devoted to corn is half the pre-plan acreage, there is more corn on hand due to increased yield and more rented land.

VI. EVALUATION

While we can point with pride to several significant achievements, we are not without our share of disappointments and failures. Noticeable progress has been made in our corn and soybean program, but home grounds, swine and 4-H club work are seemingly our weak spots.

Circular letters and home visits have proved to be our most effective teaching tools. Good result demonstrations are declining in importance and will be used less in the future but not discarded altogether. The increasing number of part-time farmers who cannot attend field meetings and tours have minimized the importance of these activities.

Our program for 1961 will take the above and other changes into consideration.