PLAN OF WORK

CUMBERLAND COUNTY VIRGINIA

1958

E. L. Seay, Jr., County Agent

I. Description of County:

Cumberland County is located in the Southern Piedmont section of Virginia. The average size of farms was 113 acres in 1945, and 122.2 acres in 1955. In 1945 there were 1,227 farms in the county and in 1955 there were 977 farms. The population dropped from 7,505 in 1940 to 7,252 in 1950. Cumberland is strictly a rural agricultural county, as there are no urban areas and no industry to speak of in the county.

Poultry, dairy and general livestock have increased greatly in the past 10 years. General crops are grown over the entire county, with tobacco being the main cash crop; 32.6% of entire farm income.

II. Changes in Agricultural Situation:

Cropland harvested in 1945 was 25,427 acres, and in 1955 was 21,919 acres. At the same time cattle numbers have increased from 5,590 in 1945 to 8,864 in 1955. The value of chickens sold has increased from $98,935 in 1950 to $479,264 in 1955. The number of chickens sold has increased from 110,740 in 1950 to 754,575 in 1955. The number of turkeys raised has increased from 3,059 in 1945 to 42,745 in 1955.

Tobacco farmers will have to turn more toward other crops or livestock for income due to the continued reduction in acreage. Also most farmers will be caught in the price-cost squeeze to some extent in 1958.

III. County Organization:

Special Interest Committees have been set up on Agronomy, Livestock, Poultry, Dairy and Forestry. These committees have met several times to study the county situation and set up long time goals, and what should be done in 1958 toward reaching these goals. Also these committees have organized and set up each member on a rotational basis in regard to the number of years he should serve on the committee.

Plans have been made to set up additional committees in 1958.

IV. General Problems and Needs of the County:

The following are the major problems and needs of the county as determined by the committees of the Agricultural Extension Service Board and the Extension agents: Marketing facilities for poultry, inadequate feed program for livestock, disease and insect control in crops, low crop yields in certain sections of the county, disease and parasite control in livestock, and the management of our farm woods.

The following are some of the major enterprises and projects that the agents expect to stress and promote in Cumberland County in 1958. The plan outlined below will be followed with the assistance of the County Agricultural Extension Service Board, County Professional Agricultural Workers, District Agent, Specialists and others.

V. Agronomy:

A. Pastures:

a. The county pasture program, with a few exceptions, has been progressing very good. Our acreage in improved pastures has increased, and the number of grazing days has increased greatly the past few years. However, the series of dry years that we have had has hit our pastures a hard blow. Some of these pastures have been reseeded, but due to price-cost squeeze, many farmers have not been financially able to reseed and fertilize. In order to bring these pastures back, more reseeding will have to be done. Also fertilizer and management practices will have to be changed to meet the need. There is also a need for seeding additional acres and to work toward a system that will give the maximum number of grazing days.

b. The immediate recognized needs are to reseed the stands that have died out, proper fertilization, proper management, and seeding additional acres to improved mixtures that will give the maximum number of grazing days.

c. In 1958 farmers will be encouraged to reseed pastures that have died out, take more soil samples and follow recommendations. Also the county-wide pasture program will be continued. The old pasture fertilizer demonstration will be continued on the farm of T. D. Cooke, and a county pasture contest will be conducted.

d. The program will be taken to the people by the use of radio, television, news articles, circular letters, posters, signs, bulletins, farm visits, general meetings, and organized tours.

e. The seeding and reseeding program will be stressed in the winter and early spring, and again before the proper seeding date in the fall. Soil testing will also be stressed at this time. The tour will be held in the latter part of July, weather permitting. The contest will be run during the growing season.

f. The pasture contest will be conducted in all sections of the county. The pasture tour will include farms in each section.

g. The county Agronomy Committee, county Pasture Committee, Extension Agents, and other professional agricultural workers will cooperate in carrying out the pasture program.

h. Goals for 1958:

1. Reseed 1,000 acres of pasture that lost its stand due to dry weather, close grazing, poor management, or a combination of these three.

2. Seed 800 acres of additional permanent pasture in mixtures that will best fit in the county program in order to increase the number of grazing days on the farm.

3. Encourage 15 farmers to top-dress and manage their pastures properly. These are to be farmers that are not carrying out this practice at the present time.

i. Specialists will be needed to help with the pasture tour.

B. Hybrid Corn:

a. In 1944 there were 9,047 acres of corn grown in Cumberland, with an average yield of 19.7 bu. per acre. In 1954 we grew 7,000 acres, with an average yield of 19.5 bu. per acre. However, the low yield in 1954 was due to extreme dry, hot weather; in 1949 the yield was 30.1 bu. per acre; and the estimated yield in 1956 was approximately 38 bu. per acre.

It is estimated that our farmers are using an average of 500 lbs. of fertilizer per acre on their corn, however, there are some who use much less than this. There are still some farmers who do not use hybrid corn or follow good management practices. Also many farmers still grow corn on land unsuited for row crops.

b. The immediate needs are to get farmers to plant corn only on land suitable for cultivated crops, and get more farmers to use recommended varieties and follow good cultural and fertilization practices.

c. In 1958 all farmers will be sent a list giving the recommended varieties. Information will be given out on proper fertilization and cultural practices. Farmers will be encouraged to attend the Field Day at the Charlotte Experiment Station. Also a meeting of all seed and fertilizer dealers in the county will be held to keep these dealers properly informed as to the recommended varieties of all seeds, and proper analysis of fertilizer to use.

d. The program will be taken to the people by the use of radio, television, news articles, circular letters, bulletins, farm visits, general meetings, and field trips.

e. The information on varieties will be sent out in January. Information on fertilizer and cultural practices will be given on radio and in newspaper in March, and again just before planting time. The Field Day at the Experiment Station is usually held in August. The meeting with the seed and fertilizer dealers will be held in November each year.

f. The field trip will be to the Experiment Station at Charlotte Court House.

g. The county agronomy committee, professional workers, Extension agent, and seed and fertilizer dealers will cooperate to carry out the corn program.

h. Goals:

1. Increase the average yield of corn to 40 bu. per acre, provided we have a good growing season.

2. Get 92% of the farmers to plant a recommended variety.

3. Have 8 farmers test soil and fertilize their crop according to recommendations that have not been doing so in the past.

i. Specialists help will be needed for the seed and fertilizer dealers' meeting.

C. Small Grain:

a. The Agronomy Committee feels that our yields of small grains are in line with other crops. The yield has increased greatly the past few years, but there are still some farmers who are getting yields much below average. They feel that the greatest need today is to have all farmers seed good clean recommended seed, make a good seed bed preparation and use proper amounts of fertilizer. They also feel that all farmers should treat their seed for diseases before seeding.

b. The immediate recognized needs are to raise the yield of the low yield producing farmer up to the county average, which was 24.8 bu. per acre for wheat in 1955; 39.5 bu. per acre for oats; 30.7 bu. per acre for barley; and 30.8 bu. per acre for mixed grains.

c. In 1958 farmers will be urged to try new varieties recommended for the county the first time, also take soil samples and apply proper amounts of fertilizer and lime. Farmers will be urged to seed the recommended varieties and follow recommended methods of seed treatment.

d. The program will be taken to the people by use of the agronomy committee, radio, television, news articles, circular letters, farm visits, and bulletins.

e. All of the above educational programs will be presented at least one month before seeding dates, and again immediately before the seeding dates for the crop concerned.

f. The agronomy committee, Extension agent, professional agricultural workers will cooperate to carry out the program.

g. Goals:

1. Work with the farmer that has a yield below county average and try to increase yield by 3%.

2. Have 10 farmers who have not been treating their seed before planting to treat according to recommendations.

D. Winter Cover Crops:

a. There are a number of farmers who seed winter cover crops each year, however, there is a lot of land that is left out each winter with no cover.

b. The immediate recognized needs are to have a green crop on all cropland during the winter months.

c. Stress winter cover crops at every available opportunity. Also stress the fact that these crops can be used for temporary pasture and silage, and that if a legume is included in the mixture they will receive a large amount of cheap nitrogen.

d. The program will be taken to the people by radio, television, press, farm visits, and general meetings.

e. Farmers will be constantly reminded throughout the year in regard to seeding all acres to some cover.

f. Goals:

1. Increase the number of acres seeded to cover crops 10% over 1957.

E. Tobacco

a. Cumberland County grows four types of tobacco - Flue-Cured, Dark Fire-Cured, Dark Air-Cured and Burley. Our average yield on all types is very close to the State yield, and in some cases exceeds it. However, our Agronomy Committee feels that we should try to get all tobacco growers to increase their yield at least up to the State average; also that we should strive to increase the quality of our tobacco. This could be done if everyone followed the recommendations from the Experiment Stations on varieties, fertilization, disease control, plant bed management, and proper curing and grading.

The 1956 crop was one of the best crops that we have had for several years. The quality was much improved and the average price much higher. The 1957 crop was damaged considerably by dry weather, but still yielded very good.

b. The immediate recognized needs are to have all farmers have a per acre yield of at least the State average and also improve the quality of the tobacco grown in comparison to the increase in yield.

c. In 1958 a county-wide tobacco meeting will be held to discuss the tobacco disease situation, plant bed management, varieties, fertilization, and cultural and curing practices. Farmers will be encouraged to take more soil samples and follow recommendations. Two variety demonstrations will be conducted in the county.

d. The program will be taken to the people by special meetings, radio, television, press, bulletins, and farm visits.

e. The county-wide meeting will be held the first part of February. Other information will be given whenever it is timely.

f. The Agronomy Committee, Extension agent, and other professional agricultural workers will cooperate in carrying out the program.

g. Goals:

1. Have 15 farmers take soil samples on tobacco land and follow recommendations. These are to be farmers who have not been taking soil samples.

2. Increase the per acre yield and quality 5% on all farms producing less than the State average.

F. Hay:

a. A large number of our farmers depend on lespedeza and other late hay and have no early hay. This caused many farmers to have a complete hay crop failure during severe dry years. Our alfalfa acres have increased slightly, but have not come anywhere near keeping up with our increase in livestock.

In the future we should try to get our hay crops more in line with our livestock numbers. Also farmers should grow more early hay while there is ample moisture in the ground.

b. The immediate recognized needs are to increase our alfalfa acres from 860 to 1600 and increase the alfalfa yield to 3 tons per acre. Also grow enough good quality hay to provide an ample amount for the livestock we have in the county.

c. In 1958, the importance of proper fertilization, liming, and proper cutting and curing different types of hay will be stressed. Farmers will be encouraged to seed more clover and grass mixtures for early hay crops, and also more alfalfa on land suitable to it. Farmers will be urged to pay closer attention to alfalfa insects and diseases and make a better job of controlling them; also weed control in alfalfa will be stressed.

d. The program will be presented by radio, press, television, general meetings, bulletins and farm visits.

e. The different programs will be presented when each topic is timely.

f. The Extension agent, professional agricultural workers and agronomy committee will cooperate in carrying out the program.

g. Goals:

1. Seed 350 acres of alfalfa on land suitable for alfalfa.

2. Increase the average yield of alfalfa to 3 tons per acre.

3. Increase the amount of clover grass hay mixtures by 5%.

VI. Poultry:

a. In 1950 only 110,740 chickens were sold from Cumberland; in 1954 the

number sold was 754,575. Also there are a large number of breeding and commercial laying flocks in the county, and the number of turkeys has jumped from 6,139 to 42,745.

b. The immediate problems are an improved market outlet, a good management and sanitation program, a standard price scale for hatchery eggs, improved diagnostic laboratory facilities, and an improved stray dog law for the county; also proper construction of buildings.

c. In 1958 the agents will help interested farmers in obtaining recommended plans for poultry houses and equipment, also in locating houses. Sanitation and management practices will be stressed, also farmers will be urged to buy chicks from reliable State hatcheries. A poultry tour will be conducted. Committees will check to see what can be done to improve on the stray dog law and the diagnostic laboratory facilities.

d. The program will be taken to the people by radio, television, press, general meetings, bulletins, and farm visits.

e. The poultry tour will be held in the late summer, and other material will be presented at various times throughout the year.

f. Goals:

1. Work with 20 poultrymen, helping them improve the management and sanitation practices in their poultry operations.

2. Have county Poultry Committee and new county Marketing Committee continue to work on an improved marketing outlet, also to study ways of improving the diagnostic laboratory facilities and stray dog law.

VII. Dairying:

a. We now have 19 farmers selling Grade A milk, approximately 35 Grade B producers, and also several farmers who sell cream. This number has not changed much in the past 5 years, however, the number of cows has increased in most of the Grade A herds, and some of the Grade B.

b. The immediate recognized needs are better dairy management, proper culling of cow herds, better quality milk, and the use of better herd sires.

c. In 1958 farmers will be encouraged to cull their herds and, if necessary, purchase some good high producing cows, and also purchase and use good registered sires. Farmers will be urged to continue to make use of the D.H.I.A. in the county and take advantage of the artificial breeding program that is available to about 3/5 of the county. Farmers will be assisted with the construction of dairy barns, milking parlors, water systems, etc. Also stress good management and sanitation practices and promote the new weigh-a-day-a-month testing program.

d. The program will be taken to the people by the dairy committee, radio, television, press, circular letters, bulletins, meetings and farm visits.

e. The dairy committee, Extension agent and other professional agricultural workers will cooperate on this program.

f. Goals:

1. Get 5 dairymen to start testing under the weigh-a-day-a-month program.

2. Have 60% of heifer calf replacements vaccinated against Bangs.

3. Assist 5 farmers to cull their herd that are not following a strict culling program at the present time.

4. Encourage 10 farmers to use artificial breeding of their dairy cows who are not doing so at the present time.

VIII. General Livestock:

a. The number of beef cows has increased from 852 in 1950 to 2,275 in 1955. The hog and sheep numbers have remained fairly constant. In many cases the farmers have gone out for numbers of beef cows and neglected type, breeding, and quality. Some farmers are taking advantage of feeder calf sales for marketing their beef calves, but many are still marketing their calves through regular channels. In the future farmers should become more type, breed, and quality conscious. Also farmers should sell more on a graded basis.

b. The immediate recognized needs are improving the quality of livestock by culling, and in some cases, purchasing better animals; also by buying only good type registered sires. Farmers should also practice better feeding and management in the herd, and should take advantage of grading and marketing facilities available. Sheep numbers could be increased in the county and the quality could be improved.

c. In 1958 sanitation, feeding, and management practices will be stressed. Farmers selling beef calves will be encouraged to sell them in feeder calf sales.

Hog growers will be encouraged to buy only locally grown pigs from healthy herds, and follow a good sanitation and management practices.

d. The program will be taken to the people by radio, television, circular letters, meetings, bulletins, farm visits, and livestock committee.

e. The Extension livestock committee, Extension agent and other professional agricultural workers will cooperate to carry out the program.

f. Goals:

1. Assist 20 farmers in selecting a good registered sire.

2. Get 5 new members to put calves in the feeder calf sale.

3. Have 60% of heifer calf replacements vaccinated against Bangs disease.

4. Increase the number of sheep in county by 100.

5. Work with 10 farmers, encouraging them to cull out all cows with dairy breeding and replace them with well bred beef cows or heifers.

IX. Horticulture:

A. Home Vegetable Garden Production:

a. A large percentage of our county people have some type of home garden, however, a lot of these gardens are small and do not have a variety of vegetables. Also many do not have any fall garden.

Due to the high cost of living, the lack of money due to adverse weather conditions, and price-cost squeeze, it is more necessary than ever that every farm family have a good early and late garden.

b. The immediate recognized needs are to have each farmer have a good well rounded garden program.

c. Goals:

1. Stress gardens at 2 monthly meetings of all eleven 4-H Clubs to get them to help plan and grow a better garden at home.

2. See that all merchants and seedmen have information on recommended varieties of seed and proper insecticides.

B. Fruits:

a. The only fruit trees we have are in small home orchards.

b. Goals:

1. Devote one radio talk to the latest methods of pruning, spraying, and tree management. Also furnish information on tree management to any interested farmer.

C. Small Fruit:

a. Approximately 40% of our farmers have some type of small fruit plantings for home use. Also a few farmers sell some grapes and strawberries.

b. It is felt that most of our farmers should attempt to grow enough grapes and berries for their own use.

c. Goals:

1. Encourage 20 farmers to put in enough grapes or berries for their own use. These to be farmers who do not grow small fruit at the present time.

X. Farm Labor:

a. At the present time it does not look like the farm labor situation will present too great a problem this year.

b. Goals:

1. The agent will assist in the farm labor program when needed.

XI. Agricultural Planning:

a. In 1956 special interest committees were set up for agronomy, livestock, dairy, poultry and forestry. Each of these committees met a sufficient number of times to set up long-time goals and plan a program for reaching the goals.

b. Goals:

1. Hold meetings of all special interest committees and have them draw up plans that will be used in 1958 toward reaching their long time goals.

2. Set up a committee on Youth and various committees on the Rural Development Program as needed.

XII. Farm & Home Development Program:

a. Since Cumberland County was selected to work on the Rural Development Program, very little time has been spent on the Farm & Home Development Program up to the present time.

b. Goals:

1. Work with at least 10 families on the Farm & Home Development Program in 1958.

XIII. Cooperatives:

a. The agent will continue to work with the cooperatives in the county in an educational way.

XIV. Forestry:

a. Two-thirds of Cumberland County is now in some type of woods. The timber and pulpwood on this land is being cut at a much faster rate than it is growing back. A large percentage of this land is growing up in worthless hardwoods.

b. The immediate recognized needs are more selective cutting of timber and farm forest improvement; also a need for planting more seedling pines on land not suited to crops and on land growing scrub hardwoods.

c. In 1958 farmers will be encouraged to improve their farm woods and to protect farm woods from fire and grazing.

Farmers and 4-H Club members will be encouraged to plant pines on land that has been cut or burnt over, and land not suited for other farm practices. Also a hardwood poisoning demonstration will be set up.

d. The program will be taken to the people by radio, television, circular letters, press, tours, bulletins, meetings, and farm visits.

e. Educational information will be presented at timely intervals. The demonstration will be set up in the spring. The tour will be held in March.

f. The tour will be held on the State Forest. The demonstration will be conducted on Route No. 60, west of Cumberland.

g. The Forestry Committee, Extension agents, specialists and Virginia Forest Service will cooperate on the program.

h. Goals:

1. Have 28 4-H Club members plant 500 pine seedlings each.

2. Increase the number of pines planted in the county by 10%.

3. Conduct an educational tour through the Cumberland State Forest.

4. Continue to work with the hardwood poisoning demonstration on Rt. # 60 West of Cumberland.

5. Hold a post peeling and treating demonstration in the south end of the county.

Specialists help will be needed on the demonstration and tour.

XV. County Farm Organizations:

a. Continue to work with the county farm organizations in an educational way.

XVI. 4-H Club Work:

a. In 1949 there were three 4-H Clubs in the county with an enrollment of 67 boys. In 1957 there were 11 clubs organized in the county with an enrollment of 220 boys. This rate of increase cannot be continued as we are now reaching a very high percentage of the boys that are of club age.

The reasons for our increase in club enrollment are the cooperation of teachers, leaders and parents, and the breaking down of the clubs into age groups.

b. The immediate recognized needs are to obtain more volunteer leaders and to add some additional joint projects which will interest high school boys and will not compete with F.F.A. projects; also provide more recreation for all club members.

c. In 1958 an effort will be made to try to get at least one volunteer leader for each club. Also joint projects will be conducted in all clubs from the sixth grade up. Also more emphasis will be placed on recreation and tours in all clubs.

d. The program will be taken to the people by using specialists, radio, television, press, circular letters, general meetings, 4-H meetings, special meetings, achievement day programs, tours, picnics, fairs, camps, and project visits.

e. Camp will be held the second week in June. The achievement program will be held on the first Friday in November. The fair will be held the last full week in September. The picnics will be held in May. The tour to Bremo will be held in May and the tour to Richmond will be the first week in October. The other activities will be taken care of at the time of year that it is felt the best results can be obtained.

f. The 4-H picnics will be held on the school grounds. The boys and girls will attend 4-H Camp at Holiday Lake. The county achievement program will be held at the Cumberland High School. Cumberland 4-H Club members will exhibit at the Farmville Five County Fair. Tours will be conducted to the Atlantic Rural Exposition and the Bremo Power Plant.

g. The Adult Advisory Council, 4-H Council, 4-H Honor Club, teachers, leaders, parents and businessmen will cooperate with the Extension agents in carrying out the 4-H program.

h. Goals:

1. Conduct the 4-H Electric Project in all clubs from the sixth grade up. This project will begin in January and run through May.

2. Have 25 boys attend the District 4-H Camp at Holiday Lake; also have the county represented at the State Short Course and State Conservation Camp.

3. Hold a county 4-H Achievement Day Program at the Cumberland High School the first Friday in November and give out county medals for each project taken.

4. Sponsor the Sears Roebuck pig project in the John Randolph district.

5. Have at least 35 boys take part in the Five County Fair.

6. Have 4 teams entered in the District Contests.

7. Sponsor 4-H tours to the Atlantic Rural Exposition and Bremo Electric Power Plant.

8. Sponsor at least one 4-H party for the Cumberland 4-H Club.

9. Have 28 boys plant at least 500 pine seedlings.

10. Have at least 80% project completions.

11. Obtain two new 4-H Club leaders.

i. Specialists will be used to help with the achievement program, pig project, fairs, camps, and judging teams.

XVII. Cooperation with A.S.C.

a. Goals:

1. The agent will continue to serve as ex officio member to the county committee and be in charge of educational work.

The radio, television, press, general meetings, and farm visits will be used to publicize the program.

XVIII. Cooperation with District Soil Conservation Program:

a. Very few farmers are taking advantage of the complete soil conservation plan, however, many are following some conservation practices.

b. Goals:

1. Urge more farmers to take advantage of the complete soil conservation plan.

2. Help local representative of Soil Conservation Service in making contacts with farmers. Radio, news articles, general meetings, and farm visits will be used to familiarize the farmer with the program.

XIX. Rural Development Program:

a. Since Cumberland County was selected to work on the Rural Development Program the following steps have been taken: A meeting was held for the county leaders to be introduced to the program. A county Rural Development Committee was selected. A Chairman and Secretary were elected for the county group. A survey was conducted to determine the industrial needs in the county, the available labor, etc.

With the help of the Virginia Electric & Power Company representatives, a large county brochure was published containing all facts necessary for an industry to determine if they would like to come to the county. A small county brochure for wider publication is now being prepared.

County committees have been appointed to work on problems in the following fields: Industry, health, school - education, marketing, cash crops, lighting, housing (home beautification), recreation, publicity and promotion, conservation & watershed.

b. Goals:

1. Assist the Rural Development Committee and the sub-committees from this group in organizing and carrying out their programs.

2. Give intensified on-the-farm assistance to individual farm families; giving counsel and assisting them in analyzing their present situation and discussing alternative plans and opportunities.