

ANNUAL REPORT - 1912

THE NORTH CAROLINA CANNING CLUB GIRLS

Jane S. McKimmon

Assistant Girls' Demonstration Work

FIRST COUNTIES ORGANIZED IN HOME DEMONSTRATION WORK -- FOURTEEN IN NUMBER

NOVEMBER 1911 to SPRING OF 1912

COUNTY

Madison	Home Agent	- Miss Ollie Hendricks, 40 to 50 years of age - Home Missionary of Northern Presbyterian Church. In charge of work in Big Laurel Section
Guilford	" "	Mrs. J. E. Coltrain, age 28 to 35 years. School teacher at Jamestown, Guilford County.
Catawba	" "	Miss Maude Eckert, age 30 to 32 years. Resident of Hickory. Business woman.
Mecklenburg	" "	Miss Mary Pressley, teacher in Mecklenburg County.
Wilkes	" "	Mrs. Blanche Miller, teacher in Wilkes County. Resident of Roaring River. Term of service, December 1911 ----
Granville	" "	Mrs. Lillian W. Capehart, citizen and homemaker of Granville County. Term of service, December 1911 --
Alamance	" "	Miss Margaret Scott, 23 to 25 years of age, living on farm, daughter of one of foremost farmers in state (Robert Scott, of Haw River).
Moore	" "	Miss McLeod, resident of Moore County. Teacher.
Wake	" "	Miss Nannie Leach, age 30 to 35 years, resident of Wake County. Teacher
Pitt	" "	Miss Ruth Evans, age 25 to 30, teacher in Pitt Co.
Edgecombe	" "	Miss Sally Eagles, age 30 to 35 years. Teacher. Living on farm in Edgecombe County.
Hertford	" "	Name of first home agent not available. Served only a few months before death. County did not continue.
Gates	" "	Miss Harrell, age 35 to 40. Teacher. Resident of Sunbury.
Wayne	" "	Miss Bertha Case, 35 to 40, resident of Wayne County. Teacher.

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The Girls' Canning Clubs of North Carolina enrolled last year 440 girls to grow and can tomatoes, 230 of whom held out to complete the work, canning to such purpose that before the first of October they had put up 70,000 quarts.

It was not all easy sailing - intense heat, continued drought, the many diseases which afflict the tomato plant, insect pests, and the long hours in canning season tried the metal, but those who stuck to it feel rewarded by the fine results they are able to show.

Fourteen counties were organized something after the following plan: In each county a woman of good business ability is selected to supervise the girls. She selects three communities near together and organizes a club in each, going to the schools and trying to enthuse both teachers and girls in the work. The state agents assist in this and there are usually more applicants for membership than can be accommodated. Where we have allowed the work to be scattered over a county we have not had very good results as one woman can not then look after the girls in canning season.

Girls are admitted to membership who are not older than twenty years nor younger than ten. We prefer not to admit those under twelve, but find that some of the ten-year-olds have done such good work that we cannot shut them out. Indeed, one little girl in Guilford County last year, only ten years old, made the best county record, canning something over hundred cans,

selling \$20.00 worth of fresh vegetables, paying all
expenses, making a profit of \$50.00. mark off a
tenth acre of good garden

deeply ploughed in the fall. Seed are planted in early spring
and the year's work is on.

A club member is expected to do all of her planting, cultivat-
ing, staking and gathering of the fruit, but she can have the
ploughing, harrowing and heavy work done for her.

Our tomato canning season opens about the first of July, but
the girls are able to secure berries and beans before that time
and become quite expert in the art of canning before beginning
on their money crop.

For instruction the agent gathers the girls at some appointed
place, notifying Club Number 1 to meet her with all the ripe
fruit on hand, and there they set up the canner and begin work.

The girls are divided into squads - sterilizers, peelers,
packers, cappers, and those doing the actual cooking and attend-
ing to fires. These positions are changed frequently so that
each girl learns every part of the process, and is then allowed
to can at home when she desires. Frequent meeting with the clubs
is advised, however, as it helps to keep up an organization pride
and then, too, our agents wish to keep an eye on the girls that
they may be very sure that quality and quantity can be guaranteed.

We are canning purposely to sell to the great American public
and we realize, though sentimental up to a certain point, when
it contemplates purchasing something to put into it's stomach, it

is not concerned so much with the age or sex of the producer, but wishes to know if the food has been properly sterilized, sanitary methods used, and the quality and quantity up to the mark.

We preach ripe fruit only, for canning one green peach or tomato will ruin any can as a salable article. One girl offered a can of tomatoes as a sample of her goods, and the weight and general appearance seemed to be very satisfactory, but when the can was opened a green tomato was found in the contents, and though that was, so far as I have been able to ascertain, the only instance where unripe fruit had been used, it was enough to make that would-be-purchaser chary of the girl's whole out-put and I think that little girl was taught a lesson she will never forget. Just one time falling below the standard had cast suspicion on all her work.

On the other hand, we had a club girl who went to a merchant to sell her goods and was told that the firm was already over-stocked. She insisted on showing what she had, cutting the can and exposing the ripe, red fruit and solid pack, and straight-way made a customer of that merchant. Not only did he take all she had at a remarkably good price, but when he found how well they suited his trade, he gave her an order for everything she could produce the next year.

It is just such examples as this that encourage the girl to do her best, and though at times, as in the past year, when the market is glutted with canned goods, and prices are low, she does not receive what she had hoped for her crop, expressions of

appreciation from purchasers encourage her to try another year and to charge up her loss to advertising. I think she realizes if she can establish a reputation for good weight, good quality, and sanitary methods, she will inevitably get the prices that first-class goods bring everywhere.

To be sure of a uniformity of weight and that we can guarantee to the public a full pack, each agent will be required to stamp every can put up in her county, thus: "Number 3 can, 38 ozs." No "No. 3 can" weighing less is allowed under our club label

The clubs became quite expert at canning last summer, using the new exhausting method almost entirely. They found it most satisfactory and the number of cans lost was practically negligible. What we gained in time and labor was so considerable, that I do not think we shall ever wish to go back to the old method. Then too the color and flavor of all fruits and vegetables seemed better. By the way, we found that by paying a fraction of a cent more per can we could get a can lacquered inside, which added greatly in preserving the color of berries. You, who have canned in tin remember what an ugly purplish hue blackberries assume when put up in an ordinary can.

I was very much interested to see how many mothers came out to the canning parties last summer and how proud they were of their girls' work. We have encouraged mother and daughter working together, and find in many instances where they have not canned before in the home, that they are becoming interested in canning the hitherto wasted fruits and vegetables and are providing a more varied winter diet for the family or are adding to the income by disposing of a few cans in the neighborhood.

A few months ago I was in Alamance County talking to a school-house full of club girls and their parents about club work when the county agent asked me to give them a demonstration of breadmaking. I prepared a simple equipment and after the talk, made for them several small pans of quick rolls. They seemed very much interested and when I asked who wished to take the rising rolls home and bake them, as I had instructed, every hand went up. Later, I heard from them in every instance, enthusiastic postals expressing a desire to pursue the thing for themselves and asking for recipes.

At the conclusion of the demonstration I suggested forming a little cooking club in conjunction with our tomato club, and found the girls eager to hear just how it could be done. There was no trained home economics worker in the neighborhood, but the wife of the minister, Mrs. Goodman, a cultivated woman and a good housekeeper, undertook to have the club come to her house every Friday afternoon and to instruct the girls in simple cookery. The school-teacher cooperating with us, encouraged the girls by allowing them to get off early on Friday afternoons and by giving them credit for the hours they spent on their cooking lessons. A good cookbook--Fanny Farmer's--was selected, one with exact weights and level measures, and the club was started.

Other neighborhoods are clamoring for just such clubs and I believe it will be only a short step from expert canning to better cooking, and with better cooking will come the desire and determination to have household economics taught in the rural schools.

REPORT OF GIRLS' CANNING CLUBS, NORTH CAROLINA

1911-1912

JANE S. MCKIMMON, ASSISTANT, GIRLS' DEMONSTRATION WORK.

COUNTIES	NO. lbs. produced	Total cost	Sold fresh	No. #3 cans	Home use	Profit	Number enrolled	No. girls reporting	Av. cost per girl	Av. profit per girl
Alamance	18,157	\$135.80	\$162.83	1,605	\$46.67	\$228.26	20	20	\$ 7.56	\$12.68
Anson	23,947	394.06	60.10	14,243	117.78	829.14	26	26	15.16	31.89
Catawba	Catawba did not send in any report, of any kind.									
Edgecombe	3,591	24.37	1.47	390	7.28	22.68	7	3	3.12	7.63
Guilford	560	3.00	.50	110	2.25	9.75	29	4	.75	2.44
Iredell	16,543	193.53	68.33	3,354	92.24	252.92	28	21	12.90	16.92
Johnston	8,516	27.55	39.00	99	12.00	33.75	12	3	9.18	11.25
Moore	13,489	153.17	6.98	1,313	30.60	117.31	44	44	3.48	2.67
Madison	10,310	87.65	9.05	1,235	77.00	128.20	27	17	5.15	7.55
Mecklenburg	37,374	175.10	480.25	1,272	142.93	621.42	74	33	5.31	18.32
Granville	14,411	122.67	70.20	1,955	40.10	178.78	21	8	15.33	22.35
Wilkes	35,444	224.06	158.50	2,526	55.76	727.44	30	15	12.09	28.23
Wake	6,799	124.87	-----	1,984	25.00	225.07	24	9	13.86	25.01
Warren	15,969	242.91	163.15	2,933	319.60	714.13	27	26	9.34	28.24
TOTAL	206,910	1,908.74	1,220.36	33,019	969.21	3,489.04	366	229	118.25	215.16
	Counties enrolled	14						Average cost	9.09	
	Counties reporting	13						Average profit		16.55
Average per county	14,779	136.34	87.17	2,358	69.23	249.22	28	17	8.45	16.37

COPY

Ithica, N. Y., June 23, 1913.

Mrs. Charles McKimmon,
512 North Blount St.,
Raleigh, N. C.

Dear Mrs. McKimmon:

We should like to send an order for tomatoes canned by the girls' club to be filled after the new product is canned. Will you please advise me when you would like to have this order placed and whether I should send it direct to you? We were very much pleased with the tomatoes which we ordered this season. The price is a little more than we should pay here, but we consider the quality better.

In the extension work of our Department, we want to do some canning in the rural districts. It will not be confined to vegetables, but will include fruits. May I trouble you to tell me what canning outfit it would be best for us to buy if it is to be used out of doors. Further, would it be possible if we could arrange to send a senior student who understands the chemistry connected with canning and who knows canning methods, into your state to observe methods of conducting girls' clubs? Would she have any opportunity if she were there a week to see the work, and if so, when is the best time, and where is the best place to go? We would not wish to be a hindrance at all, but would appreciate the assistance.

Yours very cordially,

(signed) Martha Van Rensselaer

C O P Y

Raleigh, N. C., September 2, 1913.

Dear Miss Florence:

I was very much pleased to get your letter. I didn't know the little bit I have been able to accomplish would ever reach your ears.

I am enclosing a write-up of the Club Work, which I made for the News and Observer, in its educational edition. This may not be at all what you want, but it is all I have available at present. We have had such a call for pictures of the girls at their work, and I sent so many to the Observer, which were burned in the fire they had at their plant this summer that I am practically out of pictures, but I will try to get some and send them to you later.

Mr. O. B. Martin, who is in charge of our work at Washington came down with his moving picture man and took films of our girls at work in their patches, at work canning, at recreation, and at the dinner table. I believe these pictures turned out very well, and the man who took them said that his company would most likely, if they were good, put them on in some of their weekly news rolls.

Eliza suggests that I send you a little write-up of our Housewives Convention which was held here last week. Three years ago this Convention was attended by fifteen women. Last year we had 250, and this year, we had approximately 400 at a session. Mrs. Julian Heath, of New York, founder of the Housewives League of America, so charmed us and aroused our enthusiasm that I believe we are ready to form housewives leagues almost all over the state.

Thanking you for your kindly interest, and hoping if I come to New York this winter, to see you, I am

Sincerely yours,

(signed) Jennie McKinmon

In Charge Girls'
Demonstration Work

JMcK/K

The Housewives Convention held in Raleigh, N. C., August 26-28, was one of the most successful meetings of women ever held in the state. More than 350 women, fifty percent of them from the country, were gathered together for the discussion of questions concerning the betterment of the community, the betterment of the home, and better methods for the expenditure of the moneys placed in the woman's hands for administration.

Mrs. Julian Heath, founder and organizer of the Housewives Leagues of America, was the principal speaker and made a fine impression on her audience. She is a level-headed, broad-minded woman of pleasing personality with a most convincing way of presenting her subject.

She spoke of the wonderful opportunity the organized woman had to secure pure food, fine market facilities and sanitary bakeries, dairies and laundries, by simply refusing to patronize anything that did not come up to standard. "Why, Women", she said, "we have the whole situation right in our own hands".

She made a plea for personal marketing and for the neglected market basket, and told in how many ways the town and country woman could come together on this market question for their mutual benefit.

Many women went away eager to start Housewives Leagues in their own communities, and enthusiastically spoke of coming to the convention next year and trying to bring a neighborhood delegation with them.

We hope to make this Housewives Convention a yearly meeting of all the housewives of North Carolina; not only those that are organized into leagues, but the housewife at large who is interested in

the bettering of home conditions. To increase that audience of 350 until we have 500 women from the country, and not less from the town is our aim. Think what it would mean for North Carolina to have her women meeting yearly to discuss plans for the uplift of her citizenship.

In our daily program we had short, wholesome talks by Mr. T. B. Parker, Major Graham, and Dr. Hill; demonstrations of appetizing dishes, - savory meats, dainty salads, breads and vegetables, by Miss Bossong of New York, and a fine talk by Dr. Root on the care of our children.

Mrs. Henley of Lee County and Mrs. J. M. Barbee of Raleigh, kept their audience in gales of laughter by their witty sallies when they were demonstrating vacuum washers, patent wringers, and other household conveniences.

The little Tomato Club girl, Margaret Brown, of Mecklenburg County, who in partnership with her sister cleared \$213.00 on one-fifth of an acre planted in tomatoes, opened our eyes to what can be done in marketing by children of eleven and fourteen years of age.

The Alamance team of Canning Club girls gave a demonstration of canning in tin for market, and Mrs. Heath was so pleased with their sanitary methods that she ordered a case of tomatoes to show to the members of her Housewives League.

The size of the convention was gratifying. The fact that on one day many did not get in because they could not secure seats, proves that the women were interested, but the thing that pleased most of all, was the spirit of good fellowship and kindly feeling which pervaded the meeting.

The officers elected for next year were:

President, Mrs. Charles McKimmon
 Vice-President, Mrs. J. G. Boylin of Wadesboro
 Secretary, Mrs. C. R. Hudson
 Chairman, Publicity Committee, Mrs. J. H. Henley