

November 7, 1955

Dr. Clarence Poe  
Editor and Board Chairman  
The Progressive Farmer  
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Dr. Poe:

Enclosed please find a brief article entitled, "How North Carolina Farmers Can Improve Their Financial Situation in 1956". I used the outline method of presenting this material in order to reduce the amount of space which would be required if the same material was presented in strictly narrative form. You may edit or change this material in any way you see fit. I am enclosing herewith a picture of the actual food consumed or which should be consumed by one person year. This picture was made at a series of demonstrations on the production, conservation, and use of food for the farm family.

I am also enclosing herewith a glossy print of myself, as you requested in your letter.

Sincerely yours,

David S. Weaver  
Director

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Encl.

HOW NORTH CAROLINA FARMERS CAN IMPROVE THEIR FINANCIAL SITUATION IN 1956

By

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Agricultural Extension Service  
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Farmers as a group have not been doing as well as other segments of our national economy. It is believed, however, that there are many farmers who could greatly improve their financial situation beginning in 1956. We recommend that careful consideration be given to the following actions which have been briefly condensed under ten headings:

1. Use every practice that will improve the QUALITY of your product such as choosing the best variety for your conditions, using the best cultural practices, and careful handling, grading, and packaging.
2. Adopt every practical method of LOWERING PRODUCTION COSTS of the commodities you are presently producing such as increasing labor efficiency through the use of machinery, chemical weed control, and similar practices. Usually increased yields per acre or per animal result in lowered unit cost.
3. Study alternative enterprises and make those changes that are practical, carefully considering all such factors as the suitability of your land, labor, present equipment, and the availability of present or future markets.
4. Use every resource at your command -- do not waste anything. Make each acre, each hour, of human labor work to produce a higher net profit to you.
5. Don't buy anything you can economically produce. This applies particularly to home-grown feed for your animals and food for your family. Why should farmers buy at retail prices many products they must sell at wholesale prices? A normal person consumes about 1800 pounds of food per year, most of which must be grown on some farm -- why not grow most of it on your farm? With land, labor and know-how available, a little capital applied to the home production of vegetables, fruits, milk, meat will yield enormous returns. This is one sure way for low-income families to increase their net income

by not purchasing things they can successfully grow. In addition to cash savings, higher quality and better nutrition are possible through the use of fresh products. Know-how for the preservation, conservation, and better use of these products is readily available.

6. Take advantage of all federal and state services and aids, such as education by consulting your county agent, home demonstration agent, and other agricultural agency workers. Direct financial assistance is available to you through ACP, FHA, SCS, etc.
7. Reduce replacement costs of equipment, buildings, fences, etc. by a carefully planned system of repair and preventative maintenance. Most machines could be made to give two to five times the service now obtained through careful handling, adjustment, storage, cleanliness, lubrication, etc.
8. Buy wisely, plan ahead for needed purchases -- know what you need and know what you are buying. This applies to farm equipment and supplies as well as household appliances and family needs.
9. Join with others in your community, your county, and the state to improve the marketing situation in all of its aspects. Marketing is one example of the necessity of farmers developing local leadership for their community, their county and their state because as individuals farmers can do relatively little about the situation, but as members of an organization real progress can be made.
10. Personal advancement. Without exception, every person in the United States can make progress; take pride in your work -- farmers are making as valuable a contribution to the welfare of the nation as any other group. Join a farm organization, as there is strength in numbers. Keep yourself well informed on all phases of technical matters by reading farm magazines, technical bulletins, attending meetings, making tours, listening to radios and watching television programs.

Although the farmer is caught in a financial squeeze at present, the future holds great promise for those who will prepare themselves. With 7500 new mouths to be fed every day and fewer farmers to feed them, those who remain and qualify themselves will prosper. With more customers, fewer competitors, and more know-how, farming faces a great future.