

NORTH CAROLINA

ALLEGHANY

COUNTY AGENT ANNUAL REPORT

1939

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REPORT FILES  
EXTENSION WORK

M. C.

NARRATIVE

REPORT

COUNTY AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WORK IN

ALLEGHANY COUNTY

DECEMBER 1, 1938 - - - - - NOVEMBER 30, 1939

BY

R. E. BLACK \* - - - - - COUNTY AGRICULTURAL AGENT

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COUNTY AGENT ANNUAL REPORT

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Miscellaneous Information:

Total days worked	295
Days in office	103
Days in field	190
Days annual leave	10
Days sick leave	5
Total miles traveled	15,031
Office calls received	3,264
Telephone calls received	6
Letters written	201
News stories written	13
Number of circular letters	34
Total farm visits made	554
Total number of farms visited	250
Method demonstration meetings held	10
Total attendance	353
Meetings at result demonstrations	6
Attendance	235

### III. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES:

Fourteen hundred and twenty-seven farmers signed work sheets under the Soil Conservation Program and compliance checked on eleven hundred and ninety-eight.

Two hundred and ninety-eight tons of Triple Superphosphate was used as a Grant of Aid.

It is estimated that seven thousand tons of lime were used this year, three thousand five hundred and fifty-nine as Grant of Aid.

Benefit payments for 1938 amounted to \$27,732.01.

Sixty farmers and farm women participated in the County Farm Tour.

Thirty-three pasture demonstrations with lime and triple superphosphate.

Conducted one potato demonstration with nitrate of soda and one plot of Sequoia potatoes.

Conducted two insect proof plant bed demonstrations.

Held one tobacco grading demonstration.

Assisted four farmers in securing and planting forty-two thousand tree seedlings.

Assisted twenty-four farmers with light terracing.

Two farmers built new silos.

Two farmers kept poultry records.

Assisted two hundred and fifty farmers in vaccinating approximately two thousand cattle against blackleg and Hemorrhagic Septicemia.

Placed five purebred beef sires.

Five 4-H Club boys finished five baby beebes.

Assisted one hundred and fifty-two farmers grade and ship one thousand two hundred and twenty-nine lambs.

Assisted two hundred and thirty-six farmers pool and sell fourteen thousand eight hundred and forty-three pounds of wool.

Assisted eight farmers market forty-five breeding heifers.

Placed three pure bred rams.

Placed twenty-three pure bred ewes.

Thirty-three demonstration farmers keeping farm records.

One hundred and fifty-five miles of R. E. A. lines constructed, serving four hundred farmers.

#### IV. CHANGE IN COUNTY EXTENSION ORGANIZATION:

##### (1) Form:

The County Extension Organization consists of The County Soil Conservation Association for the purpose of conducting the demonstration farm program in cooperation with the T. V. A., the AAA Committee and The Sheep Growers Association, organized for the purpose of marketing wool and lambs.

##### (2) Policies:

The general policies of the Extension Organization in the county are to encourage better systems of farming that will build and hold the soil, encourage livestock improvement, better marketing methods, higher standards of living, to use every possible means to get all farmers to take advantage of the AAA Program, be courteous to every body and cooperate with all Federal and State Agricultural Agencies trying to promote better farming and living conditions in the County.

##### (3) Procedure:

A county program of work best suited to Alleghany County was worked out in cooperation with the Extension Specialists which was followed as far as possible.

Meetings were held to explain the AAA Program, committeemen and supervisors went from house to house to explain the program and get ECR-315 and 315a filled out. All sheep farmers were mailed blanks on which to list their wool and lambs for sale. A similar form was mailed beef cattle farmers and a bulletin published giving a list of cattle for sale.

Farmers were kept posted on the Extension Program in the County by the use of news paper articles and circular letters.

Farm tours to outstanding demonstrations.

Vocational teachers have assisted with certain parts of Program.

#### V. COUNTY PROGRAM OF WORK:

##### 1. Factors considered and method used in determining Program of Work:

- (a) Farm income.
- (b) Standards of living and better living conditions.
- (c) Soil-building and erosion control.
- (d) Pasture and livestock improvement.

##### 2. Project activities and results:

###### CORN:

Very little time was devoted to corn and small grains other than to encourage the farmers to use them properly in the rotation and follow with legumes. A large percent of the farmers are using lime somewhere in their rotations either ~~in~~ before the corn is planted or after it is harvested before seeding small grain.

###### ALFALFA:

R. E. Hawthorne of Sparta cut his alfalfa three times this season and a good yield each time. This demonstration encouraged many other farmers to start preparing to grow alfalfa for hay.

###### RED CLOVER:

Due to dry weather the red and mammoth clover crop was not up to standard this year. However, there is a great improvement in this crop since the farmer started using lime and triple superphosphate.



**LESPEDEZA:**

More lespedeza is being grown in the County each year. Eleven farmers were assisted in buying fifteen hundred pounds of clean seed at wholesale price.

**PASTURE:**

The Agent has placed special emphasis on pasture improvement. However, much of the results were accounted for under Farm Management and AAA.

Non-demonstration farmers have received equally or good results from the use of phosphate and lime as mentioned for demonstration farmers.

Clay Edwards of Sparta got out standing results by burning the broom sedge, cutting the brush and briars from an old depleted pasture, then he used a spring tooth harrow to break the surface, applied one and one-half tons of lime, two hundred pounds of triple phosphate per acre and seeded a mixture of red clover, white clover, alsike, red top, orchard grass and lespedeza. This was seeded in May 1939 and by Sept. 1 the white clover was blooming and the other grasses and legumes growing equally as well.

Thirty-three demonstration farmers conducted pasture demonstration with phosphate and lime. Since these farmers started using phosphate and lime on pasture the grazing period has been extended an average of twenty-five and three tenths days.

Since the demonstration farmers have gotten such good results from phosphate and lime on pastures five hundred other farmers have treated their pastures with lime and phosphate or both.

**TObACCO:**

Two fertilizer tests were made with sulphate of potash in 1938 but the crop was not sold in time to be reported last year. Only one accurate record was turned in which is as follows: On a four tenth acre plot side dressed with sulphate of potash, four hundred and eighty-six pounds of tobacco was produced which sold for an average of twenty and one-tenth cents per pound, or \$97.68. Another four tenth acre plot with no potash made a yield of four hundred and thirty-four pounds which sold for an average of nineteen and six-tenths cents or \$84.06. A difference of \$13.62.

Conducted two insect tight plant beds with a yellow cloth furnished by Mr. Rowell. There were no insects found in these plant beds, the plants grew off faster and seemed to be tougher at setting time than those grown under a white cloth.

Assisted with one grading demonstration. Held educational meetings to explain 1940 Marketing Quota Referendum. Only two farmers of the county voted against the quota. Fifty voted for it.

#### CABBAGE:

Assisted two farmers in getting Reed's strain Dannish cabbage seed.

A check was made on different varieties for yellows resistant. Hollander No. 8 seemed most resistant yet they ~~are~~ were criticised for growing too large.

#### HOME GARDEN:

Practically every farmer in the county has a garden for home use from which many vegetables are canned for winter consumption. The County Agent has given assistance on insect and disease control of garden vegetables.

#### MARKET GARDENS:

The County Agent arranged for the snap bean growers to get their seed at wholesale price from Associated Seed Growers of Atlanta, Ga. Twelve hundred pounds of seed were ordered for three farmers.

Will T. Pugh of Whitehead conducted a potato demonstration with Nitrate of Soda. One-fourth acre with the rates of two hundred pounds of soda per acre made a yield of thirty-eight and five tenths bushels. One-fourth acre with no soda, thirty-two and seventy-five hundredths bushels. One-eighth acre with the rates of four hundred pounds of soda per acre made a yield of twenty-four and twenty-five hundredths bushels, or an equivalent of one hundred and ninety-four bushels per acre. Mr. Pugh also planted one-fourth bushel of Sequoia and harvested two hundred and fifty-five pounds of potatoes, eighty percent of which were No. 1's.

#### HOME BEAUTIFICATIONS:

One farmer seeded his lawn according to recommendations.

#### FORESTRY:

Four farmers planted forty-two thousand tree seedlings as follows: Thirty-five thousand five hundred white pines, four thousand yellow pines, two thousand black locust and five hundred black walnut. Orders have already been placed for forty-one thousand and white pines, one thousand locust and one thousand poplar for 1940 planting.

#### AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING:

Twenty-four farmers were assisted in staking out terraces on approximately two hundred and eight acres of land. This practice is growing each year.

One trench silo and one upright concrete silo constructed. Furnished plans and assisted in staking out foundation of two combination dairy and beef cattle barns.

Assisted one farmer in construction of storage house. Two farmers were assisted in remodeling dairy barns to meet specifications for grade B milk.

Three water systems were surveyed and one other installed.

The Caldwell Mutual Corporation completed one hundred and fifty-five miles of R. E. A. lines in the county. At present there are four hundred farms/homes receiving service. Service lines have been constructed to approximately one hundred others who have not yet wired their homes. Fifty farmers would be a conservative estimate of the number who have purchased refrigerators and washing machines.

#### POULTRY:

The County Agent conducted one caponizing demonstration.

Two farmers kept production records. On an average of two hundred twenty-two birds per farm which produced forty-four thousand six hundred and ninety eggs or an average of one hundred and fifty-four eggs per bird. The average production for the year was fifty and six tenths per cent which was four and six tenths percent above the state average. Total feed cost per dozen eggs \$0.135 or \$1.74 per bird. Six and eight tenths pounds of mash and two and nine tenths pounds of grain were required per bird. It required nine and eight tenths pounds of grain and mash to produce a dozen eggs which was eight tenths pound above state average. Value of eggs per bird was \$4.38, leaving \$2.64 per

bird above feed cost. This was sixty nine cents profit above the State average.

Levi Vanhoy of Piney Creek raised one hundred and twenty-one turkeys on commercial turkey feed. These turkeys were sold on the Thanksgiving market for eighteen cents per pound, which brought a gross income of \$338.87, feed cost \$133.20, leaving a profit of \$205.47.

#### DAIRYING:

Due to the low price of milk and cream the interest in dairying has been on a decline this year.

One demonstration on artificial insemination was given in the county. The farmers selling milk to the Carnation Company have access to this type of breeding by field men put out by the Carnation Company.

#### BEEF CATTLE:

The Agent is expected to assist the farmers with vaccinating cattle against Blackleg and Hemorrhagic Septicemia. Two hundred and fifty farmers were assisted in vaccinating approximately two thousand calves.

Eight farmers were assisted in marketing forty-five breeding heifers to go to Piedmont and Eastern North Carolina. Other farmers were assisted in finding buyers for feeder cattle. Five farmers were assisted in locating and buying purebred beef bulls.

Five 4-H Club boys fed five calves who made a net profit of \$33.68 per calf. The five calves won \$53.50 in prizes which make \$221.90 profit or \$44.38 per calf.

Two hundred thirty-six farmers pooled and sold fourteen thousand eight hundred and forty-three pounds of wool to Chatham Manufacturing Company for thirty-two cents per pound. This was the highest price paid to any pool in this section of the country.

One thousand two hundred and twenty-nine lambs were graded and sold cooperatively for one hundred and fifty-two farmers. Due to three auction markets being operated near by cooperative marketing of lambs dropped off since last year.

One shearing demonstration was given by Mr. Bartlette.

Three farmers were assisted in purchasing pure bred rams.

J. H. Doughton was assisted in locating and buying twenty-three pure bred ewes.

Fifty farmers were given assistance in drenching for stomach worms. All sheep growers were mailed a circular on feeding and management of the farm flock.

SWINE:

The Agent conducted two pork cutting demonstrations and assisted three others in cutting and curing their pork the approved way.

HORSES AND MULES:

The Agent accompanied two farmers to Lebanon, Tennessee and assisted them in selecting and buying a Mammoth jack. This jack weighs eleven hundred and twenty pounds and is considered the best individual ever owned in the county.

FARM MANAGEMENT:

There are thirty-three demonstration farmers keeping farm records, eight of which were started in 1939. Twenty-five record books were turned in last year. There are twelve applications for calcium metaphosphate farms ready for typing.

The following is a summary of some of the activities of the thirty-three demonstration farmers:

There has been one hundred and thirty-nine acres of steep land taken out of cultivation since 1936. Eight hundred and sixty-five tons of lime used in 1939, an average of twenty-six and two tenths tons per farm. Four hundred and thirty-nine tons of this lime was used on pasture. The pasture grazing period has been extended an average of twenty-five and three tenths days from the use of phosphate and lime. These thirty-three farmers grazed eight hundred and twenty-four cattle in 1936 and nine hundred ninety-five in 1939; three hundred fifty-nine sheep in 1936 and five hundred and twenty-eight in 1939. Cattle have increased their weight an average of fifty pounds per head.

Eight hundred and ninety-five acres have been improved by cutting brush and briars, nine and eight tenth acres of galled spots healed and four hundred and thirty-one acres of pasture reseeded.

The yield of corn has been increased eight bushels per acre since 1936.

One new home valued at \$1500.00 constructed this year. Improvements on other dwellings amount to \$2,916.02. Improvements on farm buildings \$1,114.00, farm improvements \$2,405.00.

Increased on farm income an average of \$130.90.

#### AAA PROGRAM:

Compliance was checked on eleven hundred and ninety-seven farms. Approximately one thousand eighty will receive a payment for the carrying out of soil-building practices.

\$27,732.01 was received under the 1938 Program.

Five hundred and fifty-five farmers took a Grant of Aid on their 1939 allowance. Two hundred and ninety-eight tons of triple phosphate and three thousand five hundred and fifty-nine tons of lime were used. It is estimated that seven thousand tons of lime were used in the county this year.

#### VI. OUTLOOK AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

(a) With the increased use of lime and phosphate on pastures the livestock of the county should increase both weight and numbers. More clovers, lespedeza and green manure crops are being grown which will mean an increase in yield of row crops.

The price of beef cattle is uncertain. There is a chance for a decline and good possibility that there will be a break in price during 1940.

Since the start of the war in Europe the price of wool has advanced fifty percent. Outlook for lambs are reasonably bright. Dairy products have been unusually low through 1939. If there is a change in price it should be an increase. With the grazing capacity of our pastures being increased the cost of production should be decreased to such an extent that the total income from livestock should be above that of last year.

(b) Recommendations:

Every farmer should try to produce corn and small grain for home consumption.

Tobacco farmers should grow their full allotment.

Use lime and legumes in every rotation.

Sell wool and lambs cooperatively. Breed all ewes to pure bred rams of thick block conformation. Dock and castrate lambs, drench for stomach worms every thirty days from June to October.

Inferior bulls should be replaced with pure bred bulls of good beef type. More silos should be constructed for wintering beef cattle.

Poultry farmers should have chicks hatched earlier for fall layers. Flocks should be culled and better feeding and housing methods practiced.

A small farm flock of turkeys will add to the farm income when properly handled.

Every farmer should earn one hundred percent of his soil-building allowance and I recommend that ninety percent be taken in phosphate and lime as a Grant of Aid.

Income from livestock should be supplemented with truck crops, tobacco and poultry.

More farmers should practice terracing. Since we have R. E. A. in the county more homes should have water and sewerage systems.

There should be at least five hundred acres of land planted to timber.

Lawns need reseeding, homes painted and a general clean up about rural homes to improve their appearance and to make rural life more abundant.

## HISTORY OF EXTENSION PROGRAM IN ALLEGHANY COUNTY

Up until 1929 there was no County Extension Agent in Alleghany County. At that time W. E. Collins was hired by the County Commissioners. In order to get the work started it was necessary for the Agent to work at a sacrifice in salary. Mr. Collins, who served the county until March 1935, did much to improve the sheep and beef cattle of the county. It was he who made the first cooperative shipment of lambs from North Carolina.

During Mr. Collins' career in the county the farmers became more interested in planting improved seed and growing resistant varieties of vegetables.

Then came "The New Deal" and many farmers sought the help of the County Agent who had never before recognized him as an asset to the farmer.

In March 1935 Mr. Collins resigned to take charge of the Extension Program in Watauga County. At that time there were rumors that the County Commissioners would not hire a successor but the farmers demanded another agent to fill the vacancy and on May 1, 1935 R. E. Black was appointed County Agent and has served in that capacity since his first appointment.

In 1935 there were only two hundred fifty to three hundred farmers cooperating with the county extension program. Now there are twelve hundred farm families cooperating. Since we have the Agricultural Conservation Program the extension agent has devoted a good part of his time with it and encouraged the farmers to use lime and phosphate as a soil-building practice. In 1939 the county used approximately seven thousand tons of lime, half of this was taken as a Grant of Aid. In 1937 the farmers of the county took thirty-two and six tenths tons of triple phosphate as a grant of aid, 1938 they took one hundred forty-five and eight tenths tons and 1939 two hundred and ninety-eight tons.

In 1936 there were twenty-five demonstration farmers selected to use T. V. A. phosphate. Now there are thirty-three. By the use of triple phosphate and lime the grazing capacity of our pastures has been increased from ten to fifty percent.

Through the cooperation and influence of the extension agent there has been one hundred fifty-five miles of R. E. A. lines constructed in the county, serving four hundred rural homes.

The Extension Program in this county is only ten years old, however it has grown every year until now an assistant agent is badly needed to help carry on the enlarged program.