

N O R T H C A R O L I N A

A G R I C U L T U R A L E X T E N S I O N S E R V I C E

A N N U A L N A R R A T I V E R E P O R T

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BLADEN
COUNTY

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COUNTY AGENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. Introduction-----	1
II. Organization and Planning-----	2-5
A. Work with Adults-----	Page 2
B. 4-H and Y.M.W. Club Work---	Page 2-5
III. Lines Of Work And Activities-----	6-19
A. Agricultural Engineering---	Page 6-7
B. Agronomy-----	Page 7-14
(1) Pastures-----	Page 9
(2) Small Grain-----	Page 10
(3) Cotton-----	Page 10-11
(4) Tobacco-----	Page 11-13
(5) Peanuts-----	Page 13-14
C. Animal Husbandry-----	Page 14-15
(1) Beef Cattle-----	Page 14
(2) Swine-----	Page 14-15
(3) Annual Horse and Mule Clinic-----	Page 15
D. Dairying-----	Page 16
E. Forestry-----	Page 17
F. Horticulture-----	Page 18
G. Poultry-----	Page 19
IV. General Summary-----	20
V. How Next Year's Work, In Light Of This Year's Accomplishments, Can Be Strengthened And Improved---	21

I.

INTRODUCTION

In presenting this annual narrative report for the Extension year 1950 we feel that in Bladen County the farm men and women have completed a very profitable year. It is true that this was an expensive crop to produce due to the expense of fertilizer, labor, farm machinery, but on the whole, it has paid definite dividends.

In writing this narrative we hope to cover some of the major projects conducted by the County Agents and the farm leaders in the county, and through our farm leaders. We hope to develop the individual communities which as a whole will make up the county organization. Through the community meetings held in 1950 timely information and facts have been given to these farm men and women and have been very valuable in aiding them to do better things in agriculture.

II. ORGANIZATION AND PLANNINGA. Work with adults:

In making our annual plan of work for 1950 we first reviewed our plan of work for 1949 and also the results obtained in 1949, and undertook to make considerable improvements over the previous years. We planned carefully and conservatively, taking into consideration things that might happen as from past experiences emergencies have always come up.

We continued our quarterly evening meetings throughout the county presenting educational pictures and discussing with the community leaders the program of agriculture that would be most valuable in their particular communities. Due to the size of the county and the fact that in reality it is two separate counties, because of the Cape Fear River and the historical background, we find that the people in the county must be dealt with as a section and not a county as a whole. We are undertaking, through these meetings, to build an agricultural organization that all people in these communities, which make up the county, will depend upon for true and timely information.

B. 4-H AND Y.M.W. CLUB WORK:

The plan of 4-H club work for 1950 consisted of activities planned as follows: 15 clubs meeting 135 times; Health, Home Gardens, Mail Box Improvement, Senior 4-H Camp, Records, Junior 4-H Camp, Collect Records, Election of officers and new enrollment, Nature Study, and Local Achievement Day programs were planned for joint programs; one County Council to meet 4 times; one Senior Camp in June and one Junior Camp in August; 3 leader schools having 3 meetings; 15 community projects; one Y.M.W. Club

meeting once each month; 2 shows; one Church Sunday in 20 different churches, and 1 Rally Day. The summary of plans for 4-H project activities of 519 projects were planned and included. Corn, cotton, tobacco, poultry, swine, dairy calf, baby beef, home garden, sweet potato, home beautification, forestry, wildlife conservation, tractor maintenance, room improvement, crafts, farm and home safety and making and keeping friends.

In 1950 there were 425 enrolled in the 17 different 4-H clubs in Bladen County. These boys completed 402 projects as follows:

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>NO. STARTED</u>	<u>NO. COMPLETED</u>
Corn	67	51-----55 acres
Other Cereals	2	2----- 2 "
Peanuts	5	3----- 3 "
Soy Beans	2	2----- 2 "
Potatoes, Irish & Sweet	22	17-----20 "
Cotton	5	3----- 6 "
Tobacco	15	11-----15 "
Home Gardens	63	57-----60 "
Poultry	49	37-----3,700 birds
Dairy Cattle	15	9-----9 animals
Beef Cattle	10	7-----7 "
Swine	191	156-----156 "
Home Beautification	15	9
Forestry	8	6-----3 acres
Wildlife	7	3
Agricultural Engineering	11	7
Home Furnishings & Room Imp.	12	8 rooms
Home Industry, Arts & Crafts	2	1 (2 articles)
Other	<u>19</u>	<u>13</u>
Total	519	402

The annual 4-H encampment was held during the week of August 14-18 with 44 boys and girls attending. Crafts, Entomology (Insect Study), Farm and Home Repairs and Rope work were some of the subjects taught during the encampment. Two tours were conducted for the campers - one included a visit to the Bladen Lakes Forest Reserve with its saw mill operations and naval stores experiment. The other tour was of Greene Pastures Polled Hereford Herd.

The Spring Rally Day was held May 19 at the Bladen County 4-H Camp on White Lake. There were 255 club members with their leaders that attended the Rally. A health program was presented after which the County Health King and Queen were crowned.

The 4-H club meetings were held monthly with the agents giving method demonstrations. These were followed up by home visits.

There are two active project chains in the county. They are sponsored by Sears, Roebuck Agricultural Foundation. One is a pig chain and the other one a poultry chain. These project chains have 18 different club members participating yearly.

The Sears, Roebuck 4-H poultry show and sale and pig show were held on Farmers Day in Clarkton in September. Approximately 3,500 farmers and business people had the opportunity to see what the 4-H club members do with their gilt and poultry projects as well as what good management can mean in producing poultry and livestock.

Y.M.W. Club:

The Y.M.W. Club members have enjoyed good programs, picnics, weiner roasts and a banquet during the past year.

In the fall of the year a year book is drawn up, typed,

mimeographed and put together. Each member of the club receives a copy. The year book is made up of a program for each month giving the names of members responsible for the programs, refreshments and recreation.

The annual Christmas Banquet plans are underway and the banquet is to be held at Harry's Anchorage on Lake Waccamaw.

III.

LINES OF WORK AND ACTIVITIESA. AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING:

In 1950 we planned to aid in the construction of 300 buildings of all types on the farms in Bladen County. This assistance included securing of plans, drawing plans, assisting in locating materials, the location of sites and general information on a building well constructed. We did not reach our goal of 300, but according to our best count on the construction of buildings of all types assistance was given 255. This included plans for new homes, new dairy barns, new stock barns, poultry houses of all types, swine houses and all other small type buildings needed on the farm.

We have rendered considerable assistance to the remodeling and improving of the buildings now located on the farm. We planned 440 and have given assistance on 461. This, like the construction of buildings, included all types of buildings on the farm.

The County Agent conducted 6 community meetings in the county at which time information was given, using illustrated materials on "General Buildings". In these meetings the agent pointed out the importance of selecting the proper site for location and the importance of constructing a building which would be adequate as well as constructed in a manner that it would last for years. The agent has recommended that permanent farm buildings such as dairy barns, livestock barns, be of masonry construction, when possible financially. We have constructed, as a result of these meetings and the agent drawing the plans, 2 large concrete block barns with concrete foundations. The county agent has rendered considerable assistance in advising farmers about farm drainage. Terraces have

been laid out and constructed on one farm during 1950. The actual laying out and construction of ditches has been done by the Soil Conservation Service --- the Extension Service and the Soil Conservation Service working together.

Tractor Maintenance School: The Assistant Agent arranged for two tractor maintenance schools that were held in the county. One of the schools in Elizabethtown and the other one in Bladenboro, both in the High Schools' Agriculture shops. The farmers were instructed how they could get the most out of their tractors by proper care and treatment. After two hours of discussion, a demonstration on timing a tractor engine and adjusting the carburetor was given. Approximately 182 farmers attended the two schools. It is believed that these men will do a better job of caring for their tractors and other equipment in the future.

The agents are satisfied with the accomplishments in the field of agricultural engineering for 1950, however, we are planning a little more for 1951. In making these plans we are taking into consideration the use of rural farm leaders, and are expecting them to render valuable assistance in expanding the program.

B.

AGRONOMY

In planning the work in agronomy for 1950 we realized that this field is expanding faster than we have assistance to handle it however, such work as improving of corn yield has grown beyond the demonstration period. Ninety per cent of the farmers, in the county, can tell you how to increase corn yields. They can increase their corn yields if they would. There are still a few that cannot get out of the rut that they have been in for the past 25 or 30 years, as results, knowing a fact will do them no good. The same is true with pastures. We planned assistance

to seeding of new permanent pastures and renovating old pastures. There are still a few who fail to destroy the carpet grass sod and fail to use enough lime and fertilizer to make the pasture grow, therefore, the agents spend time with corn, pasture, and other activities in agronomy that should and could be carried on with very little assistance. In 1950, we had very few farmers who tried to make the 100 bushel club, but we had hundreds of them who used the information that they had received in the past two years in trying to grow a county and state record in producing corn on the farm basis. Bladen County will harvest in 1950 the largest yield per acre on an average that they have harvested since creation. However, there is a lot of work to do in teaching them the importance of soil testing and the right amount of the proper analysis of fertilizer to use. This year Stanley Edge, in the Live Oak section of White Oak township (this area is in the North West area of Bladen County and joins Cumberland County in the Cedar Creek community) consulted the county agent about soil testing. The agent, passing one day, gave his community a demonstration on taking soil samples and advised the farmers to use 6-8-6 instead of the 4-10-6 fertilizer that they have been using under their corn. Mr. Edge followed the agent's recommendations being somewhat doubtful checked it, and where the recommendations of the agent were followed the yield was increased 27 per cent by actual measure. It will be needless to say that in the future as a result of this information, the farmers of that community will follow the practice that Mr. Edge demonstrated. A complete farm program is going to be carried out on Mr. Edge's farm. The same can be stated on the poor sand hill located on H. M. Clark's farm, approximately 2½ miles South of Elizabethtown on U. S. Highway #701. In the summer of 1949 Mr. Clark planted

this field to Crotolaria. The growth was so thick that he had to secure service of a caterpillar tractor and a highway type disk plow to ever get this growth in. A few weeks after it was cut up with a heavy gang turn plow he managed in turning it under and seeded it to austrain winter peas. These peas being turned the middle of March and the field sowed to corn in 3 foot rows. During the drought of June this was the only field of corn in Bladen County that was not hurt any from the drought. It stayed very green from the ground to the top all through the month of June (our rains came on the 29th of June and lasted through July). Mr. Clark reports that by bulk measure in the barn that he will harvest between 90 and 100 bushels per acre on this field.

The boys having corn for their project in the 4-H Club did a better job this year than in 1949. The average yield was improved as a whole, but due to weather conditions some boys produced less corn than in 1949. Most of the club members planted NC27 yellow corn and found it susceptible to the corn weevil. The weevils were in the corn before it was harvested in many cases. Better corn practices and culture are being demonstrated by the 4-H boys. Gray Collier of the Bladenboro Senior 4-H Club produced approximately 110 bushels of corn on his acre.

PASTURES:

The farmers have purchased seed, fertilizer, materials, to plant over 5,000 acres of new pasture in the county the fall of 1950. This figure is for the seeding of permanent pastures alone, an additional thousands of acres will be seeded to temporary grazing such as rye grass, crimson, and a mixture of these two; also, austrain winter peas, rye, oats, and other small grain. The Greene Brothers seed several hundred acres annually to

austrain winter peas, rye, oats and other small grain for the grazing of Hereford cattle. It is definite that they get excellent results from grazing austrain winter peas. This year they will use a few hundred acres of vetch and small grain for the first time. They have used Crimson Clover and Rye Grass for the past few years. Very few farmers in the county will attempt to sow any of the clovers or other winter legumes without inoculation. We have found that a good Ladino Clover - Pescue or Ladino Clover - Orchard Grass pasture will carry from 3 to 5 cows per acre during an average season.

SMALL GRAIN:

The planting of small grain, especially wheat, has increased in Bladen County in 1950 over 20 per cent over 1949. The Atlas 66 wheat and Colonial Barley has increased the yield 25 per cent over the varieties planted in previous years. The bill bugs have destroyed or badly damaged over a thousand acres of corn in Bladen County in 1949, and this is one reason the farmers are diverting their acreage of corn to small grain. However, the Hessian fly and aphids damaged approximately 20 per cent of the small grain last year due to the extra warm mild winter.

COTTON:

Acreage of cotton in 1950 was decreased approximately 20 per cent from 1949 due to the P.M.A. control. As usual where the farmers did not dust or spray for the control of boll weevil their crop was a failure. The agents advised the farmers in the spring of 1950 that unless they were prepared to spray or dust, not to plant cotton. We will advise the farmers, merchants, and farm credit organizations that unless the farmers are in a position to spray or dust for the boll weevil not to plant it. The gins

in the county, operating this fall, report a loss this year. Unless something is done by the cotton producers to increase their yields in 1951, it appears now that one gin will be able to handle all of the cotton harvested in the county.

TOBACCO:

In the past 10 years the tobacco planters have increased their yield from approximately 1,000 pounds per acre to over a ton per acre. In the fall of 1940, when the present county agent came to Bladen, the original A.A.A. committee questioned a farmer producing as much as 1,200 pounds of tobacco per acre. Today the actual measured acreage of a large number of farmers are producing as much as one ton of marketable tobacco per acre. This has been brought about primarily by the introduction of new varieties, improved methods of fertilization and general management. With the control acreage the farmers have adequate help and barn room to harvest their crop leaving very little if any to burn in the sun.

Since 1946 all of the known flue cured diseases found in North Carolina can be located in Bladen County. The worse being Fusarium Wilt. Very few farms in the county are not affected with some disease. During the summer the agents visited as many farms as possible to determine the location of these diseases and a memorandum was made of these producers. Information will be released by November 30 to all of these farmers calling to their attention the fact of the kind of disease that they have in their soil and the varieties of tobacco recommended by the experiment station that will control this disease. Black-shank attacked two farms with a loss of over 70 per cent of all the tobacco, however, other farms were attacked to a lesser degree.

One of the outstanding fields to prove the value of disease resistant varieties of tobacco was lately found on the farm of Sidney DeVane in Lake Creek township. Mr. DeVane was a great believer in the Golden Harvest variety of tobacco and seeded a portion of his crop, but due to scarcity of plants set 1/2 of his acreage to Dixie Bright 101 in the same field and to the row where he set Dixie Bright was a 65 per cent loss due to wilt. No wilt at all was found in the Dixie Bright. This was not a planned demonstration, but one that we just accidentally found and used in a community that proved the value of the disease resistant varieties.

On the farm of J. C. Evans, approximately 5½ miles South of Bladenboro on the Chadbourn Highway, a demonstration on the control of nematodes was carried out. The result was so outstanding that Mr. Evans found that he could treat his land for 5 years at the present cost of treatment with the profits received from the treated area. Howard R. Garris reported to the agent, from his observation, that this demonstration was the most outstanding of any conducted in North Carolina.

The tobacco school that was conducted in January has been a great benefit to the tobacco growers in the county giving to them recent and important information that they should have in growing quality tobacco. Plans have been made for another school to be held in January, 1951.

During October, 5 plant beds were prepared on the farms of: James Monroe, Council, Route 1; B. C. DeVane of Elizabethtown, Route 2; W. C. McClure, White Oak; W. E. Cain, Fayetteville, Route 7; and Clark Allen, Council, Route 1. On the first 4 demonstrations, Uramon and Cyanamid, Cyanamid alone and 16-6-2 fertilizer was used in preparation of the plant bed for seeding

this winter. Each demonstration bed is 100 square yards. The plant bed on the farm of Clark Allen in addition to the chemical mentioned above we also treated 25 square yards with Dowfume MG-2 making a total of 125 square yards on his plant bed. The agents are going to observe these beds and photograph them for results. Three demonstrations were conducted during 1950 for the control of suckers, using mineral oil, and on the farm of J. S. Melvin of Fayetteville, Route 5 in Turnbull township, in addition to the mineral oil we used NAA Tablets with better than 80 per cent sucker control and in no case did the suckers get longer than 6 inches.

PEANUTS:

Peanuts is the second cash crop in value grown in Bladen County, but during 1949 the farmers realized that they had to change their system of cultivation if they expected to stay in the peanut production business. From the test conducted by the county agents on several of the farms, one being on the farm of W. G. Gilerist, a liberal application of potash and phosphate was applied to a winter cover crop in January. The following year's crop on the treated field showed as much as 20 per cent increase in weight, also the nuts were brighter in color and better shaped. The phosphate appeared to furnish considerable fiber to the stalks as the stalks on the treated portion were larger, cleaner, and held their leaves longer than on the untreated section.

A county wide meeting was held at which time Dr. Collins gave an illustrated lecture on growing peanuts, especially bringing out the importance of fertilizer, and from his talk the farmers learned that the soils in Bladen County that have grown peanuts for several years have become somewhat depleted in the vital minerals that are so essential in the production of quality peanuts. We

are planning in 1951 to use a band fertilizer distributor, planting the peanuts between the two bands.

C.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRYBEEF CATTLE:

The interest in beef cattle is slowly but surely increasing in the county. The handicap to this program is the fact of small acreage available to grazing of beef cattle on the majority of the farms. A number of small land owners are purchasing beef type bulls to cross to their dairy type cattle and by this medium they are slowly going into the production of a few calves. H. J. White and Sons of Bladenboro and the Greene Brothers of Elizabethtown are the largest breeders in Bladen County. It is through the efforts of Mr. White and Greene Brothers that a number of registered bulls are being distributed over Bladen County and North Carolina. The Greene Brothers have 11 entries in the National Polled Hereford show at Kansas City this year and they will be judged on Tuesday November 21. Their winning places were as follows: One 5th place heifer; one 6th place yearling bull; two 7th place heifers; 8th place on 2 year old bull; 3 heifers at 9th place; and they placed 9th showing as a group of 6 head of cattle.

SWINE:

This year as in the previous years Sears, Roebuck and Company through the Fayetteville Store have cooperated in the Spotted Poland China Pig chain in the placing of registered gilts in Bladen County to 4-H Club members. In 1950, 6 boys and 2 girls had registered gilts. Seven of these were shown in the annual farmers day held at Clarkton in September and prize money was donated by Sears, Roebuck and Company. The amount of prize money

donated was \$125.00 which was distributed to the winners being judged by Jim Butler of the State Extension Service.

W. J. Melvin of Tar Heel, W. E. Bryan of Route 2, Bladenboro, John D. Ward of Clarkton are the three outstanding Poland China breeders in the county. I. W. Kinlaw of Bladenboro, Route 2 and Namon Rich of Tomahawk are the two outstanding Duroc breeders in the county and John A. McDowell is the outstanding Hampshire breeder in the county.

ANNUAL HORSE AND MULE CLINIC:

The annual horse and mule clinic was conducted during the second week in April. The farmers did not demonstrate much interest in these clinics. This, no doubt, was due to the fact that so many farmers have disposed of their workstock and purchased farm machinery. Others are not taking quite as much interest in their workstock as they have in the past years. The largest number of workstock were treated at the stables of H. J. White and Sons in Bladenboro; C. C. Britt's farm, approximately 5 miles South of Bladenboro; June Singletary's, approximately 3 miles North West of Bladenboro, and at the farm of James Monroe in Bladen Springs Community. Other clinics were scheduled and met but no farmers were present. This is the second year that the lack of interest has caused the agents and the veterinarian to wonder if they are worth while. We are planning clinics in 1951 to be held in and around Bladenboro, but unless farm leaders in the other communities especially request assistance we are not planning to go into these communities as it is not economical for the veterinarian to waste days trying to aid farmers who are not interested.

D.

DAIRYING

During 1950 Mrs. Laura Robbins and her son Ed have constructed a 6 stanchion dairy barn. On April 1, 1950 they purchased 6 registered Guernsey cows at the Greensboro sale, and on Friday November 17, at the disposal sale near Carthage, they purchased 4 more registered Guernsey cows. In addition to these registered cows they have two grade Jersey cows that they are using. All cattle have been tested and approved. In addition to Mrs. Robbins and her son, Earl Miller, Jr. of Council, Route 1, has constructed a 6 stanchion dairy barn, purchased 12 first calf Holstein heifers in Illinois this fall. These cows are rapidly coming into production and an official test will be made of his herd as he has joined the Dairy Herd Improvement Association. In addition to these two, we have several others who expect to go into the dairy business as soon as cows are available at a reasonable price. Mr. and Mrs. Henry Jessup of Clarkton, Route 1, are planning to build a barn as soon as they have 8 cows for milking. Lacey Gore from Columbus County moved over into Bladen and built a 26 stanchion barn near Hammonds Creek and at present is milking approximately 27 Holsteins.

Todate we have two milk companies with routes in the county, the Cumberland Dairies of Fayetteville serving approximately 2/3 of the county and White's Milk and Ice Cream Company of Wilmington is serving the remaining 1/3. These routes will be extended as soon as farmers start producing enough milk to justify its expansion.

E.

FORESTRY

The County Agents are working with the saw mill operators and the pulp wood industries in creating forest management on all the farms in the county. The Southern Craft Paper Company of the International Paper Company and the Cape Fear Wood Company are cooperating with the agents in carrying out recommended forest projects. The saw mill men are realizing now, more than ever, the importance of good timber to keep them in business. They are cutting more conservative than they have in the past. Two of the pulp wood operators have pledged themselves not to clean out any timber land unless it is recommended and approved by the County Agents Office for this land to be put into cultivation or pasture.

The Southern Craft Company has recently spent several thousand dollars in constructing a barge landing on the Cape Fear River near Elizabethtown for the purpose of loading barges of pulp wood to transport to Georgetown and other places. Timber is the only natural resource found in Bladen County.

F.

HORTICULTURE

Thirty seven farmers were assisted in selecting varieties of trees for their home orchard during January and February, 1950. Seven farmers were assisted in securing the "Cape Fear" variety of pecans which were developed by the Experiment Station at Willard and were set on the different farms. Fifteen farmers have secured grape vines. Information was given on the setting and establishing of strawberry patches on 4 different farms.

The late freezes caused considerable damage to our fruits not only with our pears, plums and apples, but the few strawberries which we had were damaged and most of the top fruit on pecans were lost also. We are putting forth every effort to promote better managing practices on horticultural crops in the county as we feel that it is essential that a good supply of home fruits be produced.

G.

POULTRY

Sears, Roebuck and Company, through the Fayetteville Store, again placed 1,000 R.O.P. baby chicks in the different communities in the county to 4-H club boys and girls. The poultry project has increased considerably in value and in quality of eggs produced. A young ambitious man during 1950 opened up a feed store in Elizabethtown and has been instrumental in creating poultry interest. During the summer slump of eggs, he would purchase at a loss eggs to keep the interest among the farm men and women, and in addition he established his own flock and assisted in establishing other flocks for people who were not financially able to do so. He reports some loss, but he has had a lot of fun with it.

We have at present two commercial hatcheries in the county, one in Clarkton and one in Elizabethtown. The hatchery that was located in Bladenboro was destroyed by fire in early summer.

IV.

GENERAL SUMMARY

The major activities and accomplishments of the County Agents Office during 1949 can show definite results in the increased number of people securing information of extension nature. The corn program has been stressed in previous years to the extent to where the farmers and farm leaders can carry on community programs without the direct and constant assistance of the county agents.

The tobacco program is rapidly becoming a responsibility of the communities, but due to the diseases that we now find present in all sections of the county and the similarity of so many of these diseases the agents office is constantly called upon to determine the kind of disease this tobacco is effected with.

The cotton program, we can show considerable increase in the number of farmers poisoning for the control of boll weevil. The fact of planting improved seed of one variety is beyond the demonstration period. The community leaders have assisted in the securing of improved cotton seed as well as small grain, peanuts, and the pasture programs.

The agents have done considerable more work in pushing the livestock program in the county, because we realize the importance of developing a community around all phasis of improved livestock. During 1950, one young farmer became interested in sheep and purchased 15 head through the State Department of Agriculture, and by close supervision we feel that this program will radiate to other farms in this community and to other communities in the county.

We have three new dairies completed during 1950, two, 6 stanchion barns and one, 26 stanchion barn. In looking back over 1950 we are making larger plans for 1951.

V. HOW NEXT YEAR'S WORK, IN LIGHT OF
THIS YEAR'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS,
CAN BE STRENGTHENED AND IMPROVED

In 1951 we have planned to hold as many county wide educational meetings as practical. We are planning to have a livestock school with emphasis placed on all phasis of livestock that will be practical in the county, and information presented to the farmers in a manner in which they will understand. We have scheduled the continuation of the tobacco school, pasture tour, and are planning other tours if the crops develop that will justify calling the farmers together.

We have planned meetings to give the farmers definite information on the production of cotton, especially insect control. A meeting will be held during July at which time identification of diseases of tobacco will be presented so that the farm leaders will become more familiar with these problems. We are expecting considerable improvement for 1951 over 1950.
