

NARRATIVE REPORT

OF

COUNTY AGENT WORK

HALIFAX COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA

December 1, 1944 to November 30, 1945

W. O. Davis County Agent, Weldon, N. C.

I. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

A. PERSONNEL:

This report covers work done in Halifax County, N. C. in 1945 by the following workers for the period shown:

W. O. Davis, County Agent, Halifax, N. C., Dec. 1, 1944 to Dec. 1, 1945. Louis Bowers, Emergency Farm Labor Assistant, Feb., March, April, Sept., Oct., 1945.

We did not have an Assistant County Agent at any time during the year.

B. BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

The Board of County Commissioners appropriates funds annually for a portion of the salaries of all Extension workers in the County. The County Commissioners furnish the County Agricultural Building, including Janitor service, heat, lights, and water. The Commissioners have always shown much interest in the Extension Program. The County Agent and the Home Agent report to the County Commissioners for their departments.

C. COUNTY BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

The County Board of Agriculture is composed of twelve farmers from different sections of the county, who are recommended by the County Agent and appointed by the County Board

of Commissioners. The Board of Agriculture is reappointed each year. This plan permits replacement of any member who loses interest. The purpose of the County Board of Agriculture is to serve in an advisory capacity with the County Agent, especially in preparing the County Plan of Work. One annual meeting is held for the purpose of adopting the County Plan of Work. Other meetings are held at the call of the County Agent or any member of the board.

II. 1945 PLAN OF WORK

1945 PLAN OF WORK

<u>Projects</u>	No. Days Plan- ned	No. Days Work- ed	Total Work Plan- ned	No. Dem. Plan- ned	No. Dem. Comple- ted
<u>Agricultural Engineering</u>	12	16.3			
Farm Machinery			10		
Farm Buildings			5		
Light Terracing			20		
Cotton Gin Improvement			15		
<u>Agronomy</u>	30	126.7			
Crop Rotations				4	4
Permanent Pasture			12	3	2
Temporary Grazing			12	2	1

1945 PLAN OF WORK

Projects	No. Days Plan- ned	No. Days Work- ed	Total Work Plan- ned	No. Dem. Plan- ned	No. Dem. Comple- ted
Small Grain			12	0	0
County Cotton Improvement			County	1	1
Cotton Seed Multiplication			County	5	7
Cotton Grading & Classing			19	17	17
<u>Beef Cattle, Sheep, Work Stock</u>	12	18.1			
Fattening			4	0	0
Herd Management			12	2	2
Bull Placement			3		4
<u>Entomology</u>					
Boll Weevil Control			County	1	0
Insect Control-Garden			24		
<u>Extension Organization & Com. Activities.</u>	12	18.9			
Program Planning			28		
<u>Farm Labor</u>	12	91.8			
Exchange of Labor & Equipment			28	7	7
Placement			28	8	8

1945 PLAN OF WORK

<u>Projects</u>	No. Days Plan- ned	No. Days Work- ed	Total Work Plan- ned	No. Plan- ned	No. Dem. Comple- ted
<u>Farm Management</u>	12	5.1			
Farm Planning			12		
Assist Veterans			23		
<u>Forestry</u>					
Pulpwood	6		5		
<u>Horticulture</u>	12	5.0			
Victory Gardens			23	12	10
Commercial S. Potatoes			6		
<u>Plant Pathology</u>					
Peanut Seed Treatment			23	4	3
Peanut Dusting			5	3	5
<u>Poultry</u>	18	7.1			
Replace Mongrel Flocks			12		
Culling			24		
Placing Purebred Chicks			12	12	12
Brooder Construction			6	3	3

1945 PLAN OF WORK

<u>Projects</u>	No. Days Plan-Work- ned	No. Days ed	Total Work Plan- ned	No. Dem. Plan- ned	No. Dem. Comple- ted
Brooder House Construction			6	4	3
Laying House Construction			6	4	4
Broiler Production			1	2	2
<u>Swine</u>	18	8.0			
Feeding			12		
Self Feeders			12	2	2
Place Boars			6	5	5
Killing & Curing			2	1	1
<u>Dairying</u>	6				
Dairy Herd Improvement			2	2	1
Family Cow Management			12	3	2
Place Family Cow			25	2	2
Bull Placement			3	1	1

IV. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

A. AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING

1. Farm Machinery

Three Agricultural teachers were assisted in organizing farm machinery repair classes. While holding "Outlook Meetings", during January and February, farmers were urged to take part in these repair classes. Four farmers were assisted in putting up and equipping farm repair shops.

There was a big increase in 1945 in the purchase of planting and cultivating equipment for tractors to help meet the farm labor shortage. Last year Mr. A. L. Garner, R-1, Roanoke Rapids, N. C. cultivated 268 acres of cropland with three tractors, one horse, using three regular farm workers. All crops were planted and cultivated with tractors working two rows at a time. This farm produced and harvested 70 acres of corn, 30 acres of small grain, 75 acres of soybeans, 55 acres of peanuts and 100 hogs. Extra help was hired to stack and pick peanuts.

2. Farm Buildings

Plans were furnished and farmers assisted in building three general purpose barns, one milk house, two laying houses and five brooder houses. Two farmers were assisted in remodeling old buildings for poultry laying houses. Farm buildings were curtailed by shortage of building materials.

3. Light Terracing

Three farmers were assisted in rebuilding old terraces with farm equipment. Seven farmers were assisted in securing assistance from the Soil Conservation Service in staking and building new terraces with farm equipment. Our experience is that terraces built by the farmer using light equipment are better cared for and consequently give better results than terraces built with heavy terrace equipment.

4. Cotton Gin Improvement

Four cotton gins were assisted in rebuilding present equipment. One old gin was assisted in installing a cotton dryer.

Cotton gin improvement has been one of our projects for the past five years as part of the County Cotton Improvement program. During this period the total number of gins in

the County was reduced from twenty-nine to nineteen. Competition from better gins forced the poorer to either go out of business or remodel. Of the nineteen gins now operating, four have been built new including buildings and equipment. Fifteen other gins have done complete overhauling of equipment. Nine of the nineteen gins are equipped with dryers. During the 1945 season through Dec. 8th. Smith-Doxey classing service on 4335 bales of cotton shows 304 bales or 7% reduced to one grade on gin preparation. The State average is about 15 to 20%. Cotton gins in Halifax County are as good as anywhere in the State.

B. AGRONOMY

1. Crop Rotation

Four crop rotation demonstrations were conducted in 1945. All of these demonstrations covered the entire farm. These demonstrations have been running for five years and longer. Each rotation was worked out by the farmer, the County Agent and the Extension Specialist. Many farmers are adopting regular rotations as a result of these demonstrations.

2. Permanent Pastures

Ten farmers were assisted in establishing permanent pastures this year. For these demonstrations we are getting the farmers to select good land conveniently located. We are paying special attention to good land and liberal fertilization. We feel that if we can get these two things done properly, grass will grow. Our biggest problem is to keep the farmer from grazing too early and from overgrazing. All pastures gave excellent results in 1945 as we had plenty of rain all summer. Good pastures have more than doubled in number in the past ten years.

3. Temporary Grazing Crops

This work was done with swine growers using oats, rape and lespedeza for spring and summer grazing followed by soybeans alone or soybeans with corn for winter and fall grazing. These grazing crops have proved unusually successful in producing better hogs at cheaper cost of production.

4. Small Grains

Labor shortage has reduced acreage of row crops and increased the use of small grains. Small grains consist mostly of oats, barley and maize.

Maize is increasing in the lower part of the County very rapidly. At least 2000 to 2500 acres were planted in Halifax County this year. This grain is used as a substitute for corn. It can be planted any time during the month of June and until July 15th. This allows the farmer time to get his row crops well started before time to plant maize. The winter cover crop also has more time to develop. Maize is harvested with combines. We find that maize will produce better corn with much less manpower.

5. County Cotton Improvement Program

The Halifax County Cotton Improvement Program started in 1940 and was completed in 1944, but the program was so successful that it has carried itself on this year. Many farmers reduced their cotton acreage in 1945 due to labor shortage, but those planting cotton followed the plans of the old cotton program and made approximately a bale per acre straight through the County. We are still carrying on our seed multiplication program with key farmers located in several sections of the County, who buy seed stocks from the breeder each year and sell seed in their community. Ginners are continuing to furnish Smith-Dozey grading and classing service to farmers requesting it although nine gins refused to give this service in 1945,

objecting to the requirement of posting a bond. Cotton gin improvement work is still being carried on as the ginners and the farmers demand it.

This year sixteen farmers entered the State 5-Acre Cotton Production Contest. R. Hunter Pope of Enfield won first prize in this district composed of thirteen counties with a yield per acre of 1180 pounds of lint cotton per acre. V. I. Hockaday, R-1, Roanoke Rapids, N. C. won second prize in the district with a yield of 1132 pounds of lint less than the State winner.

Smith-Doxey grading and classing reports through Dec. 8th. (last report received) show the following information.

No. Gins Submitting Samples	10
No. Samples Submitted through Dec. 8	4333
No. b/c Mid. or better	265 or 6.11%
No. b/c SLM	2843 or 65.6
No. b/c LM	1193 or 27.5
No. b/c SGO	32 or 0.7

No. bales 7/8 in. staple	6	0.1
No. bales 29/32 in. staple	4	0.1
No. bales 15/16 in. staple	72	1.7
No. bales 31/32 in. staple	566	13.0
No. bales 1 in. staple	1661	38.3
No. bales 1-1/32 in staple	1712	39.5
No. bales 1-1/16 in staple	297	6.8
No. bales 1-3/32 in staple	15	0.3
No. bales normal preparation	4029	93.0%
No. bales reduced 1 grade	303	7.0%
No. bales reduced 2 grade	1	-

6. One Acre Corn Production Demonstration

In cooperation with State College Agronomy Dept. four one acre corn production demonstrations were placed in 1946. In each case the farmer was furnished an adapted Hybrid seed sufficient for one acre on condition that he would follow complete instructions for spacing , fertilization and cultivation. These demonstrations were placed according to soil types as follows:

J. R. Frank, R-3, Scotland Neck was selected for Roanoke River bottom land. This demonstration was destroyed immediately after planting by a rise in Roanoke River. This was our only failure.

J. J. Burt, R-2, Enfield, was selected for Norfolk fine sandy loam, which represents the very best soil type in the county. T-23 Yellow Hybrid was used . Our stand was not very good. This demonstration was estimated to yield 75 bu. per acre with poor stand.

V. I. Mohorn was selected for the Piedmont section of the county, using Cecil sandy loam. T-13 Yellow Hybrid was used for this demonstration. The yield on this demon-

stration was accurately weighed. This acre produced 6,930 lbs. of slip shuck corn that averaged 80 lbs. to shell one bu. of grain, which gave us a yield of 86.6 bu. per acre.

J. R. Twisdale, R-2, Halifax was selected to plant on Norfolk sandy loam. This demonstration was planted with T-23 Yellow Hybrid. This acre produced 5,660 lbs. of slip shuck corn. This weight was secured by weighing each wagon load on cotton gin scales as the corn was harvested. At 70 lbs. per bu. this gave us a yield of 80.8 bu. of corn per acre. The average for other worn on this farm was estimated at 30 bu. per acre.

C. BEEF CATTLE, SHEEP, AND WORK STOCK

1. Fattening for Market

Five farmers fattened 180 steers for market in 1945. Thirty of these farmers used steers and feed grown on their own farm. These are old beef cattle feeders who have had considerable experience in feeding and do not keep any farm records. Two farmers purchase one car of steers each year to be fattened on home grown grain and hay.

In 1945 W. E. Smith purchased 36 yearling calves from the John W. Clark farm in this county. Previous to this year Mr. Smith has been buying larger steers from Western North Carolina. The John W. Clark farm at Scotland Neck has a surplus of cattle and a shortage of feed. Arrangements were made for Mr. Smith to buy 36 yearling calves in November of 1944 from the Clark farm. These calves were fed silage hay and grain during the winter of 1944 and 1945 and put on pasture in the spring of 1945. Mr. Smith states that gains made by these calves have been more satisfactory than with larger steers purchased in Western North Carolina. Mr. Smith is planning to buy all surplus calves he can get from the Clark farm from now on.

2. Herd Management

We are working with thirty-eight farmers who are raising beef cattle on a small scale as a side line with other farm operations. We think this is the most practical beef project for the county. In most cases these farmers have a low ground pasture that furnish grazing from April until November. The farmer winters only brood cows. These cows are bred so that calves are dropped during January and February. All calves are sold in September and October from the pastures. Several of these farmers practice creek feeding on their calves from June until they are sold. In this way we are producing calves that sell from \$60.00 to \$75.00 per head.

We have three outstanding herds of Hereford cattle in the county. The Douglas Hill farm at Scotland Neck, N. C. has a herd of twenty registered cows, thirty grade cows and two exceptionally good bulls. Calves from this herd won all prizes except second place for 4-H baby beeves and F.F.A. baby beeves at the Rocky Mt. stock show last March. Douglas Temple, R-3, Scotland Neck has a herd of seventy-five grade Herefords with three registered bulls. The John W. Clark farm, R-3, Scotland Neck has a herd of two hundred cows part registered and part

grade with five registered bulls. These three herds have sold a number of bulls to other farmers in the county.

3. Bull Placement

No work was done on this project in 1945.

D. ENTOMOLOGY

1. Boll Weevil Control

No work was done on this project in 1945 due to labor shortage and lack of interest in cotton. We had no calls for help of boll weevil control this year. During June we had an extremely hot dry spell that lasted from June 10th. to approximately June 28th. Evidently this dry weather destroyed the first crop of eggs layed by the over-wintered weevils. During the entire summer, although it rained continuously from July 1st. on, we had no weevil damage anywhere in the county, many farmers making one to two bales of cotton without weevil control.

2. Garden Insect Control

This project was handled through newspaper articles and neighborhood leaders. Information on control of garden insects was furnished to neighborhood leaders and timely newspaper articles published in local newspapers. Arrangements were made with local feed and seed dealers to carry recommended insecticides. No individual work was done on this project.

E. EXTENSION ORGANIZATION AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

1. Program Planning

Under the neighborhood leader organization, Halifax County has fourteen communities and twenty-eight neighborhoods. This organization was used in a number of ways in 1945 to further the Extension program in the county. This organization was especially helpful in handling war work, victory garden program, and the farm labor program. They were especially helpful in the swapping of farm labor and equipment in the various communities. Four circular letters were sent to neighborhood leaders giving timely information which they were requested to pass on to their various neighbors.

F. FARM LABOR

This program was handled by the County Agent with the assistance of the farm labor assistant during the months of February, March, and April and again in September, October and November.

5

1. Exchange of Labor and Equipment

Exchange of labor and equipment did more to help the farm labor shortage in 1945 than any other one thing. This program was pushed by the county agent and the farm labor assistant through neighborhood leaders, circular letters, news articles and radio programs. Exchange of labor in the harvest of the tobacco crop was the only way our farmers saved their tobacco. In many cases small farmers swapped labor in return for the use of tractors and planting equipment in order to get their crops in the ground. This exchange of labor and equipment by neighbors will continue for many years after the war is over.

2. Placement of Farm Labor

No work was done on this project for the reason that we had no farm labor to place.

3. Prisoner of War Labor Camp

A Prisoner of War Labor Camp was located in this county at Scotland Neck, N. C. from September 17th. through November 10th. This camp served, Halifax, Edgecombe, and Nash Counties; furnishing 260 workers for Halifax, 150 for Edgecombe and 40 for Nash County. From September 17th. through

October 20th. these workers were used for stacking peanuts. During this period 260 workers were assigned to Halifax County. These workers served 123 farmers, put up 133,295 stacks of peanuts or approximately 3332 acres. This labor furnished 6017 man-days of work. For the use of this labor, farmers paid 12¢ per stack and hauled the labor to the farm and returned the labor to the camp each night.

When peanut stacking was completed on Oct. 20th., arrangements were made to keep the camp in the county until Nov. 10th. to assist farmers in harvesting essential farm crops. For this period the camp was reduced to 250 workers. 150 of these workers were assigned to Halifax County and 100 to Edgecombe County. These workers were used to operate peanut pickers and hay balers; also to harvest corn. During this period, this labor served 37 farmers, furnishing 2492 man-days of labor. For this work farmers paid 30¢ per hour for an eight hour day.

G. FARM MANAGEMENT

1. Farm Planning

No work was done on this project with individual farmers due to pressure of farm work and shortage of farm labor. During January and February nine meetings were held with farmers

and neighborhood leaders to discuss 1945 farm outlook and war goals. In these meetings farm planning was heavily stressed trying to get our farmers to plan their farm operations so as to meet the labor shortage by more efficient use of machinery and labor.

H. FORESTRY

No work was done on this project in 1945.

I. HORTICULTURE

1. Victory Gardens

A county wide victory garden program was put on in 1945 with the assistance of neighborhood leaders, civic clubs, and newspaper articles. As a result of this program, many victory gardens were produced. These gardens were mainly by the town people, living in our five towns. We have no record of the number of gardens planted. Victory gardeners were assisted by news articles on timely subjects throughout the year. Victory gardens contributed materially to food production for the war effort.

2. Commercial Sweet Potatoes

No work was done on this project in 1945.

J. PLANT PATHOLOGY

1. Peanut Seed Treatment

Peanut seed treatment is being adopted as a general farm practice. In 1945 thirty-five to forty per cent of all peanuts planted were treated before being planted as compared to from fifteen to twenty per cent in 1944. We have several commercial peanut shelling machines in the county. They include the cost of seed treatment in with shelling. It is our opinion that peanut seed treatment is more necessary and more valuable than cotton seed treatment for the reason that replanting peanuts is much more expensive than replanting cotton. In a few years peanut seed treatment will be used by 90% of the peanut growers. Field observations show that seed treatment is necessary on machine shelled peanuts and the labor situation is forcing our farmers to shell their peanuts by machine.

2. Peanut Dusting

Dusting peanuts to control leaf spot is becoming a general practice in the county. Results in 1945 were

the best we have ever had due to the rainy season from July through harvest time. Approximately 40% of the 1945 acreage was dusted. Dusting was limited because farmers could not buy dusting machinery. Four farmers operated tractors with powder dusters doing custom dusting for the public. Some dusting by airplane was done in Enfield and Scotland Neck communities, by a plane located at Rocky Mt. and Tarboro.

K. POULTRY

1. Replacing Mongrel Flocks

Seven farmers were assisted in purchasing pure bred baby chicks to replace mongrel farm flocks. These farmers were assisted in converting two old buildings and in the construction of five new poultry houses.

2. Culling

Culling was stressed through neighborhood leaders and newspaper articles. Farmers were urged to dispose of culled birds not only as a good management practice, but in order to conserve poultry feed and to furnish food for the war effort.

3. Placing Pure Bred Chicks

Twelve farmers were assisted in purchasing 2300 pure bred baby chicks. All of these chicks were bought in lots

of 100 to 200 chicks for home use.

4. Brooder House Construction

Three farmers were assisted and plans furnished for construction of brooder houses. One old building was converted to a brooder house and two new brooder houses were built.

5. Laying House Construction

Four farmers were assisted in building laying houses. Two of these were old houses converted into laying houses and two were new houses.

6. Broiler Production

No work was done on this project this year.

L. SWINE

1. Feeding

Three farmers were assisted in commercial hog feeding project using grazing crops to supplement feeds. We had one exceptionally good demonstration on the Douglas-Hill farm at Scotland Neck. This farm produced a crop of 103 March pigs from 19 sows. When the pigs were three weeks old all sows

and pigs were turned into a field of oats, lespedeza and rape, which had been planted in January. Pigs were fed grain and mineral mixture by creeps. We have no record on feed consumed or the gain, but results were much better than we had expected. We had three other farmers who use soybeans as a grazing crop to supplement grain feeding.

2. Self Feeders

Three farmers were assisted in building new self feeders this year. We believe that self feeders and grazing crops is the answer to commercial pork production in this county.

3. Placing Pure Bred Boars

Two pure bred Duroc boars and one pure bred Poland China boar was placed this year. These boars were brought into the county by local breeders. Seven local farmers were assisted in purchasing pure bred boars from local breeders in the county.

4. Killing and Curing

No work was done on this project in 1945.

M. DAIRYING

1. Dairy Herd Improvement

The Chocoyotte Dairy at Roanoke Rapids is the only dairy in the county doing dairy herd improvement work. This is a registered Guernsey herd with thirty cows. This work has been going on for nine years.

2. Family Cow Management

This project was worked through neighborhood leaders and newspaper articles. Farm families were urged to give their family cows better management through better pastures and more liberal feeding of home mixed dairy feeds. No individual work was done on this project.

3. Placing Family Cows

Five farmers were assisted in purchasing family cows. this year.

4. Bull Placement

No work was done on this project this year.

N. 4-H CLUB WORK

Due to lack of an assistant county agent 4-H club work was seriously handicapped in 1945. Our club work consisted of 13 boys, who planted one acre each with N. C. 31 peanuts. These seed peanuts were secured from the Edgecombe Experiment Station. Due to bad weather conditions only four boys have reported on their project. The others have not been able to harvest their peanuts due to weather conditions.

Results of those reporting are as follows:

Name	No. Bags	Weight	Per Cent Meat	Per Cent Extra Large	Price
Herbert Morris	19	1876	72	32	9.70
Ray Strickland	19	1900	73	44	12.00
Sam Twisdale	18	1692	72	30	9.65
Jerry Johnson	25	2351	73	22	9.11

These peanuts showed an average meat content of 72½ with an average of 32½ extra large. The per cent of meat content was much better than the county average and the

yield per acre was approximately 400 lbs. above the county average. In all cases these peanuts are being saved for seed purposes in 1948.

We expect to get reports from the remaining club members as soon as weather conditions will permit the harvesting of peanuts.

V. 1945 EMERGENCY WAR WORK

During January and February the County USDA War Board and the County A.A.A. Committee with the assistance of the County Agricultural Council held five county wide meetings explaining 1945 war goals. These meetings were followed up by A.A.A. committeemen to sign up 1945 farm plans. In spite of shortage of farm labor, farm machinery, tires, gasoline and bad weather, our farmers met and exceeded practically all war goals.

2. Halifax County USDA War Board

The County Agent served as secretary to the county USDA War Board, handling correspondence, calling meetings and keeping records. The County War Board did not hold regular meetings but met at the call of the Chairman and Secretary. During the year the County War Board assisted with war goals, selective service, release of farm labor to essential war work and farm machinery rationing.

287 cases of farm workers requesting release from agriculture were handled by the war board at the request of U. S. Employment Service. Of this number, 165 requests for release were denied and 122 requests granted.

Information on 1240 farm workers was furnished to Selective Service.