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EXTENSION SERVICE BULLETIN B14

Outline of Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics in Texas

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Clarence Ousley, Director Extension Service,
College, Station, Texas.

Co-operative Extension Work in Agriculture
and Home Economics, Agricultural and
Mechanical College of Texas and
U. S. Department of Agri-
culture Co-operating.

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WHAT EXTENSION IS.

Agricultural Extension is comparatively a new factor in solving the problem how to make farm life more profitable and enjoyable. For more than a quarter of a century the state and federal governments have co-operated in establishing and supporting agricultural colleges and experiment stations, the latter to discover the best methods of farming and the former to teach these methods to students, mostly boys and young men.

In their development agricultural colleges and experiment stations came to employ large staffs of specialists in all branches of agriculture and home economics and accumulated a vast store of information on subjects of vital interest to every member of the farm home. While the number of students who have enrolled in our agricultural colleges is large and hundred of thousands of bulletins have been circulated annually by the colleges and experiment stations and the federal Department of Agriculture, the efficiency of these institutions as agencies of rural betterment was below the need of the hour. Out of this need grew what has come to be known as "Extension in Agriculture and Home Economics."

The growth of this new agency of service was slow at first. There were no precedent by which to guide it. The purpose only was clear and distinct. It was to utilize all existing agencies of agricultural education and demonstration, and other agencies to be created, to make life on the farm more profitable and therefore more enjoyable and attractive.

Within a comparatively brief time there have been evolved definite and comprehensive methods of instruction and demonstration in all branches of agriculture and home economics and an efficient organization has been formed for rendering useful service to every member of the farm household.

In 1913 the federal government gave its endorsement to the principle of agricultural extension through what is known as the Smith-Lever act, which appropriated the sum of \$10,000 to each state unconditionally for each year, with provision for an annual increase until the total annual appropriation reaches the sum of

\$4,580,000. These conditional sums are apportioned on a basis of rural population and on the appropriation by each state of an amount equal to that state's apportionment. Texas' share of the Smith-Lever fund for the fiscal year beginning Sept. 1, 1915, is \$45,969.67 and the state of Texas appropriated for extension work the sum of \$35,696.67. Texas' share of the federal fund (in addition to the \$10,000 unconditional appropriation) will be \$65,945 in 1916-17, and will increase annually until it reaches a total of \$245,795 in 1922, provided the Texas legislature continues to match the federal appropriation dollar for dollar with state funds.

The Smith-Lever act makes provision for unifying the extension work of the states and the federal government, with the result that all these powerful agencies are now co-operating instead of operating independently and often at cross-purposes, as was frequently the case in the past.

Many phrases and terms have been employed to express briefly the work of the Extension Service, but none is more apt than "The Legs of the College," for, in truth, this service carries the stored knowledge of the college to the people who cannot go to college.

Under the terms of the Smith-Lever act and the co-operative agreement between the A. & M. College of Texas and the United States Department of Agriculture the work of the Extension Service is definitely outlined in advance in the form of "projects" which are prepared by the college authorities and approved by the United States Department of Agriculture. The budget for the fiscal year names the following projects:

1. Office administration.
2. Home demonstration, canning, cooking, etc.
3. Movable schools.
4. Creamery extension.
5. Dairy extension.
6. Boys' club work—
 - (a) Pig clubs.
 - (b) Corn and other clubs.
7. Rural credits.
8. Negro work.
9. Publications.

10. Farm demonstration.
11. Rural organization.
12. Farm terracing.

The extension staff, exclusive of clerks, stenographers, bookkeepers, mailing clerks, etc., consists of the director, the state agent in charge of demonstration work, six district agents, 84 county demonstration agents, two men and one woman engaged in work among negroes, and specialists in the following branches of agriculture and home economics: Animal husbandry, hog cholera prevention, dairying, creamery, poultry husbandry, horticulture, agronomy, two rural organizers and market advisors, advisor in rural economics, farm reporter, rural credit, rural gardens, terracing, pig clubs, other boys' clubs. In the home demonstration division are the state agent, demonstrator in home economics, 31 women county agents, organizer of rural women and one assistant. In addition, members of the instruction staff of the A. and M. College and of the Experiment Station staff do special work in extension under the direction of the extension department.

It is impossible within the proper limits of this paper to do more than state the bare outlines of the various projects constituting this year's program of the Extension Department. The Movable Schools are proving to be popular and useful. Under this project a corps of specialists give special demonstration to farmers and their families in livestock, agronomy, horticulture, entomology, home economics and other special topics. More than fifty of these schools were conducted last year and a much larger number will be held this year. Beginning early in November the specialists engaged in this work will be in the field continuously, holding schools from one day to one week in rural communities.

The specialists in creamery extension devotes his time to studies of existing creameries and advising how they may be strengthened. He will, also, investigate proposed sites for new creameries and give advice touching the practicability of plans and best methods of procedure. His services are at the disposal of

the people of any community interested in developing the creamery business.

The dairy division is closely allied with the creamery division and by advice, suggestions and demonstration endeavors to promote dairying on Texas farms. It is prepared to give advice on the selection, management, feeding and breeding of dairy herds, the handling of milk, butter making and other subjects relating to dairying.

There are two men in charge of boys' club work. The assistant state agent handles corn, cotton, kafir, maize, feterita and kindred clubs, and a specialist in pig club work has charge of the boys' pig clubs organizations. Many thousands of Texas boys are enrolled in these clubs and receive systematic instruction in the growing of crops and the breeding and feeding of livestock.

The rural credit division will give instruction and advice to groups of farmers in farm management based upon the experience of the best farmers in the community and will assist county agents in establishing and supervising definite farm management demonstrations and will also give advice and information to bankers and merchants in working out a safe basis of farm credit. The "Plan of Safe Farming as a Basis of Bank Credit" devised by Mr. R. L. Bennett of this department is a notable achievement in farm economics and has received the endorsement of the bankers' association of Texas and of leading financiers and business men in other states. This plan calls for the production on the farm of all the food and feed crops necessary for the farmer's family and livestock and embraces a definite rule whereby such a system of farming becomes the basis of credit at the bank and with the merchant.

A corps of organizers experienced in co-operative farm organization and marketing of farm products is constantly in the field organizing diversification and marketing clubs. To date 210 such organizations have been formed and the members receive semi-monthly special bulletins containing information and advice on their several lines of work.

A specialist in farm terracing is in charge of the work of conserving the fertility of Texas

soils by giving instruction how to save farm land from erosion by rain. When the farmers of any community in the state so desire the terracer will visit them and give instruction in farm terracing. The 84 county agents also render this service.

The home demonstration and girls' canning club work, under charge of a state agent, is engaged in organizing women and girls in rural communities for the study and demonstration of home economics and labor saving devices. This division, also, organizes girls into canning clubs for the purpose of interesting and instructing them in the principles of successful home gardening, canning and poultry raising, securing prizes for competition in these lines of work and organizes and carries on work of instruction in home economics and allied subjects in the homes and rural districts by directing the work of county home economic agents, of whom there are now 31 at work in the same number of counties.

Closely related to the women's work just outlined is the division in charge of the work of home economics which seeks to reach the remote rural home and take to the women of the farm demonstrations in the most practical phases of modern domestic science. This division aims to teach the *how* and not the *why* to those who need immediate, every-day help. Farm women are organized into Bands of Good Neighbors and furnished with a reading course in farm home topics and follow-up work is done by sending to each group a demonstrator who gives practical demonstration in bread-making, canning, sanitation, hygiene and other phases of farm life.

The educational and demonstrational work in hog cholera prevention of the Bureau of Animal Husbandry of the United States Department of Agriculture is carried on in Texas in co-operation with the Extension Service of the Agricultural and Mechanical College and an expert veterinarian devotes his entire time to lectures and demonstrations to farmers on how to combat the ravages of this dread swine plague. The work of the specialist is of untold value to the swine industry of Texas.

The members of the Extension staff answer scores of letters daily from farmers asking for

information on specific subjects and in addition thousands of leaflets and circular letters are sent out monthly relating to matters of current interest. From time to time printed bulletins are issued for free distribution. Copies of any of the following bulletins may be had by writing to the Director of Extension, College Station, Texas:

- No. 2 Money Crops in Place of Cotton.
- No. E S 3 Peas and Peanuts.
- No. E S 4 Cotton Crop Mortgage Credit.
- No. B 4 The Dairy Cow.
- No. B 5 Successful Marketing—East Texas Fruit and Truck Experience.
- No. B 5 Sweet Potatoes for Profit.
- No. B 8 Homemade Household Conveniences.
- No. B 9 Rations for Fattening Cattle for Market in Texas.
- No. B 10 Poultry in Texas (Ready Dec. 1, 1915).
- No. B 11 Land Bedding as a Method of Drainage in the Gulf Coast Region of Texas.
- No. B 12 Boys' Club Work in Texas.
- No. B 13 Suggestions for the Better Care of Texas Peach Orchards.

The foregoing is but a brief outline of the more important projects being carried on by the Extension Department of the Agricultural and Mechanical College and the United States Department of Agriculture in Texas. No attempt has been made to even epitomize the results accomplished or to calculate the influence of these agencies upon the social and economic life of the farm population of Texas. These will appear to even the casual observer in due time. In the meantime it is the earnest desire of the Extension Department to render a larger measure of service and to this end it tenders all its facilities and invites the farmers of Texas and their families to make free use of them.