

**MEMORANDUM TO:** County agricultural and home demonstration agents, and representatives of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, and other cooperating agencies.

**RE:** The Cotton Mattress Demonstration Program in Texas.

issued by  
The Extension Service  
Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas and  
The United States Department of Agriculture  
H. H. Williamson, Director, College Station, Texas

## *The Cotton Mattress Demonstration Program in Texas*

Compiled from a memorandum from Mildred Horton and Jack Shelton, vice directors and state agents, to county agricultural and home demonstration agents, and from directions issued by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and the Federal Cooperative Extension Service.

## THE COTTON MATTRESS DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM IN TEXAS

The cotton mattress making program now underway in Texas is sponsored by the Extension Service in cooperation with the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation (FSCC), the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), and other agencies and organizations. The program grew out of the mattress making demonstrations offered by county home demonstration agents in Texas and other southern states for many years, through which many farm women and 4-H Club girls learned how to make mattresses in their homes.

For several years there has been a growing conviction among agricultural workers that one phase of the cotton problem lay in the lack of consumption. There was more cotton than the market would take; but there were millions of families who were in need of cotton goods. The establishment of the cotton research laboratory to find new uses for cotton was one attack on this phase. Another was the 'buy or make a cotton mattress' campaign, co-sponsored by more than a score of agencies and organizations following a conference held at Texas A. and M. College on October 2, 1939.

The campaign attracted attention at Washington, D. C. Director H. H. Williamson pointed out that mattresses offered the quickest avenue of approach to the cotton consumption program. In Texas alone, it was estimated, a million new mattresses were needed. This replacement would require 100,000 bales of cotton and would make a contribution toward improved health and sanitation.

Two Texans, Grover B. Hill, assistant secretary of agriculture, and Milo Perkins, of the FSCC, endorsed the idea at Washington. The result was the announcement by the U. S. Department of Agriculture of its plan to distribute surplus cotton to low-income families for use in mattress making.

The program was first tested on a demonstrational basis in 60 counties in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. In Texas, 12 counties, Ellis, Wise, Hockley, Collingsworth, Van Zandt, Nolan, San Saba, Rusk, Lavaca, Frio, McLennan and Austin, were designated to undertake the demonstration.

As success in the demonstration counties warrants, the program will be extended to other states and counties.

### **How Did the Program Start in Texas?**

The state Extension Service held a conference March 1, 1940, at College Station, Texas, with representatives of the state AAA committee, FSCC and other state agencies and organizations to learn the details of the demonstration and plan for its successful operation in the state. Cooperation of all agencies was assured and each agency agreed to notify its district and county representatives of the county meetings and request their attendance.

### **What Will the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation Do?**

Pursuant to the provisions of the law relating to the disposal of surplus commodities, this agency will make surplus cotton available to farm families in low-income groups in counties approved by the state and Federal extension offices for the purpose of processing such material into cotton mattresses for home use. The FSCC will furnish the cotton and ticking upon request of the respective state AAA offices.

### **What Will the Agricultural Adjustment Administration Committee Do?**

The Agricultural Adjustment Administration committee will determine the eligibility of the applicants, obtain the mattress material from the FSCC, and distribute it through the organization set up by the Extension Service.

State and county AAA committees will follow the instructions prepared by the Federal AAA office entitled "Procedure to be Followed by County and State AAA Offices in Connection with the Cotton Mattress Project." Application and report forms to be used in connection with the program are included with the AAA instructions and will be provided by AAA.

### **Who Will Call County Meetings?**

Through its county extension agents the Extension Service will be responsible for informing farm families regarding the program, receiving applications for mattress materials,

training demonstrators in making cotton mattresses, assisting in organization plans necessary for effective work, and for general supervision of the program.

The Extension Service will continue, as in the past, to cooperate with other government agencies, FSA, NYA, and WPA, in training their professional workers to make cotton mattresses.

### **What Counties are Eligible to Participate in the Program?**

Counties having both a white county agricultural agent and home demonstration agent may participate in the cotton mattress demonstration program. Where desirable, special arrangements will be made in these counties for Negro families.

### **Who Will Call County Meetings?**

The district agents of the Extension Service in cooperation with county extension agents will call county-wide meetings of district and county representatives of the cooperating agencies and other individuals, together with full membership of county home demonstration councils and farmer representatives of county land use planning committees. The state Extension Service will notify state offices of cooperating agencies and organizations of the dates of county meetings and request attendance of their district and county representatives.

### **What is the Purpose of the County Meetings?**

The purpose of the county meeting is to familiarize county personnel and representatives of farm people with the general plans and suggested procedure; to make county plans and procedure for getting the demonstration started; to get a county group to care for storage and transportation; to arrange for a committee of the county home demonstration council to care for supplies for the county and assist with the program, and to make suggestions for home demonstration clubs, 4-H Clubs, and other community farm organizations to follow in carrying out the community program.

### **Who Will Designate Community Chairman?**

The county home demonstration council will designate a home demonstration club woman as chairman of the cotton mattress committee of the home demonstration club in each community wishing to participate in the program. In communities without home demonstration clubs, the council will designate a woman representing the local sponsoring group as chairman of the committee for that group. The community cotton mattress committee should include men and women.

### **What Will Be the Responsibility of the Community Chairman and Local Mattress Committee?**

The chairman and the committee of the home demonstration club or of the sponsoring group will:

Obtain the cooperation of local citizens.

Obtain central place at which all cotton mattresses in this program will be made.

Obtain equipment for making cotton mattresses and be responsible for such equipment.

Assist in making available other necessary materials.

Assist in developing a cooperative spirit in the citizens of the community to help each other in making mattresses, and get the demonstration under way.

Keep records and make reports in accordance with the system developed jointly by the Extension Service and AAA.

Be responsible for the mattress material upon its delivery to the center and until the finished mattress is delivered to the recipient.

### **When May the Demonstration be Undertaken in a County?**

The cotton mattress demonstration program may be started in a county when at least one hundred and twenty rural families of a county have been certified by the AAA committee, when a county group agrees to care for the storage and trans-

portation of cotton, when a committee of the county home demonstration council agrees to handle or have handled the purchase of thread, needles, etc., when community committees and centers are arranged for, when a committee composed of the chairmen of the county home demonstration council, the county land use planning committee, and the county AAA committee, make application to the state Extension Service to participate in the program and when approval is given by the state and Federal Extension offices. A county application form is reproduced on page 13.

County applications for participation in the program will be cleared through the office of Mildred Horton, vice director and state agent, Extension Service, College Station, Texas.

### **Who Provides Application and Report Forms?**

The AAA committee provides application and report forms. The three forms with which county Extension agents and those participating in the program are concerned are reproduced on page 13, 14, 15 and 16.

### **Who Takes the Applications?**

The county extension agents will supervise the taking of applications for mattress materials on Form SC-1, Applications for Surplus Cotton and Mattress Ticking. The county home demonstration agent will review each Form SC-1, initial it in the upper left-hand corner, and turn it over to the county AAA committee.

### **How Does the AAA Committee Determine the Family's Eligibility?**

The county AAA committee shall review the Forms SC-1 to determine whether the applicants for mattress material are members of low-income farm families, as the term is defined on the following page. The record of acreages and yields in the county AAA offices should serve as an accurate measure



of the amount of cash income received by the applicant's family from crops in 1939, and the community AAA committeemen should be able to furnish information as to any other items of cash income received by the family during that period. If the committee has reason to believe that the gross cash income of an applicant's family was in fact in excess of \$400 in 1939, it shall either reject the application altogether or call in the applicant for a complete analysis of the family's 1939 income.

### **What Is the Definition of a "Low-Income Farm Family?"**

For purposes of the Cotton Mattress Demonstration Program, the Secretary has defined "Low-Income Farm Family" to mean any family having a total income for the calendar year 1939 of not more than \$400, at least one-half of which was derived from agricultural occupations. The total income is the cash income received, or that was earned and is collectible, plus the local market value of any unsold farm products raised for sale or received as payment for services or rent and held for sale. As used in this connection, the word "family" means two or more persons having a common or pooled income and living together as an interdependent economic unit in one household.

### **How Is Information Regarding Relief Clients Secured?**

The county AAA committee shall secure from the local welfare agency a certified list of all farm families in the county who are on relief, and shall check each Form SC-1 against such list. Families whose names appear on this list may be considered as low-income families without any further check by the committee. If the applicant's family is on the relief rolls, or the Form SC-1 indicates that such family is receiving any public assistance, the committee shall confer with the local representatives of the agency furnishing the assistance to determine if such agency has furnished or is about to furnish the applicant's family a mattress or the material to make a mattress. If it is found that a mattress or the material to make a mattress has been or is being furnished, the committee shall reject the application.

### **Who Approves Applications?**

If the county AAA committee determines that the applicant is eligible to receive the mattress material, it shall authorize one of its members to approve the application on behalf of the committee. If it rejects the application for any reason, the word "Rejected" shall be inserted in the space for the signature of a county committeeman on Form SC-1.

### **What Is the County Home Demonstration Agent's Responsibility in Assembling Approved Applications?**

After applications have been approved by the county AAA committee, they shall be returned to the county home demonstration agent. She will assemble the approved orders by communities and execute Section 1 of Form SC-2, "Community Summary and Receipt for Materials," in duplicate. Both copies of Form SC-2, together with the supporting applications, will then be transmitted to the county AAA office.

### **What Records Should be Kept in the County Extension Agent's Office?**

A list of applications indicating whether families were certified or rejected should be in the county extension office. The county extension agents should keep a copy of Form SC-2 or make a record of the information for their files. Arrangements should be made whereby the county extension agents will obtain the information submitted on Form SC-3 from the community chairman or the county AAA committee.

### **For What Amount of Material May Application be Made?**

Only one person in each eligible family may make application for the mattress material. The application is for 50 pounds of cotton and 10 yards of ticking, which is the amount of material required for making a full-sized double mattress.

The minimum county order (until further notice) is 12 bales of cotton and 1 bale (approximately 1,200 yards) of ticking; larger orders shall be in multiples of these amounts.

### **Where Will Mattresses be Made and Who Will Make Them?**

All mattresses in the cotton mattress demonstration program will be made in community centers by the family receiving the cotton with the assistance of their neighbors.

It is desirable to have all families (those receiving public assistance and those certified as "low-income families") participating in this program to make mattresses at the same center.

In this demonstration, as in all others, full advantage should be taken of the leadership already developed. The county extension agents will train demonstrators in each community participating in the program. These demonstrators in turn will be responsible for helping others through mattress making demonstrations. This leadership and assistance is voluntary unless otherwise arranged for in the county or community. Mattress demonstrations should be given in accordance with the plans and directions of the State Extension Service.

In communities where families receiving public assistance, as well as low-income families, are to make mattresses, it will be necessary for the representatives of the Extension Service, FSA, and other agencies concerned to work together closely in making plans, in order that the representatives of each agency may assume and carry their share of the work.

### **How Is Mattress Material Distributed to Communities?**

The person who has been designated in Section 1 of Form SC-2 as trucker for the community club will call at the county AAA office and receive the original of Form SC-2 and the applicable forms SC-3. He will present the Form SC-2 to the person distributing the mattress material and secure the material for his community. At the time of receipt, the trucker will turn over the original Form SC-2, properly signed in Section 3 thereof, to the person distributing the material. At the end

of each day, the latter will turn over the receipted copies of all Forms SC-2 to the designated consignee. The trucker for the community club will deliver the mattress material and the Forms SC-3 to the chairman of the community club, who will thereafter be responsible for the material.

### **Who Signs Receipts for Finished Mattresses?**

The chairman of the community club will then take the necessary steps to carry out the processing and delivery of the mattresses. It will be her duty to fill in the number of pounds of cotton and yards of ticking on Form SC-3, to secure the signature of the applicant, and to approve such form at the time the finished mattress is delivered. At least once a week she will transmit to the consignee in the county AAA office the Forms SC-3 executed during the period.

**COUNTY APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN COTTON  
MATTRESS DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM  
TEXAS**

*We, the undersigned chairmen of .....  
County Home Demonstration Council, Land Use Planning  
Committee, and AAA committee, request approval to partici-  
pate in the Cotton Mattress Demonstration Program.*

..... County has

*120 rural families certified by county AAA committee.*

*A county group to care for storage and transportation of  
cotton.*

*A committee of the county home demonstration council  
to handle or have handled the purchase of thread, needles, etc.*

*Community committees and centers arranged for.*

*The program can begin in our county upon receipt of cot-  
ton and ticking.*

.....  
County Home Demonstration Agent

.....  
Chairman, County Home Demonstration  
Council

.....  
County Agricultural Agent

.....  
Chairman, County Land Use Planning  
Committee

.....  
Chairman, County AAA Committee

(Send county application to Miss Mildred Horton, Vice  
Director and State Agent, Extension Service, College Station,  
Texas.)

Form SC-1 (Sample)  
United States Department of Agriculture  
Agricultural Adjustment Administration

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(Community)

**APPLICATION FOR SURPLUS COTTON AND MATTRESS  
TICKING**

**(Cotton Mattress Project)**

Name..... Address.....

Name of head of family if other than applicant .....

No. of persons in family residing at domicile .....

Owner  Tenant  Sharecropper  Laborer

Residing on farm bearing AAA serial No.....

Farm Operated by .....

Estimated income of family in 1939: \$..... \$..... P.....  
(From (Other (Total)  
farm) sources)

If family is receiving public assistance, designate agency.....

-----  
*I hereby apply for 50 pounds of cotton and 10 yards of mattress ticking, which is the amount of material necessary to make one full-sized double cotton mattress, and certify that (1) to the best of my knowledge and belief the above information is true and correct; (2) upon notification, I will report at the time and place specified, to process the requested material into a mattress in accordance with the directions issued by the State Extension Service; (3) I will furnish the additional material needed to prepare such mattress; and (4) when the mattress is completed, I will utilize it for the use of my family and I agree not to sell, trade, or dispose of it in any manner whatsoever.*

-----  
(Date)

-----  
(Signature of applicant)

-----  
*I hereby certify that the county agricultural conservation committee has reviewed the above application, and that, to its best information and belief, the foregoing information is correct, and the applicant, as a member of a low-income farm family, is eligible to receive the material requested.*

-----  
(Date)

-----  
(Signature of county committeeman)

**Delivery Order No.:**

-----  
(Cotton)

-----  
(Ticking)

-----  
(Community)

**COMMUNITY SUMMARY AND RECEIPT FOR MATERIALS**  
**(Cotton Mattress Project)**

*Section 1.—Certificate of County Home Demonstration Agent*

Attached hereto are ..... Forms SC-1, "Application for Surplus Cotton and Mattress Ticking," totaling ..... pounds of cotton and ..... yards of mattress ticking, submitted by applicants from the above-named community and previously approved by the county AAA committee. The chairman of the community home demonstration club (or other sponsoring group) is ..... and it has been indicated that the materials will be called for and delivered to the designated community center by .....

-----  
(Date)

-----  
(County home demonstration agent)

*Section 2.— Approval of Designated Consignee*

The above cotton is included in delivery Order No. .... and the above mattress ticking is included in Delivery Order No. .... This material, in the quantities indicated, should be segregated from the main lot in case it is received as part of a larger shipment, and delivered to the person indicated in Section 1 above.

-----  
(Date)

-----  
(Signature of consignee)

*Section 3.—Receipt for Material.*

I have this date received the material listed in Section 1 above, the same being in good condition. I am receiving this material on behalf of the chairman of the community club indicated in Section 1 above, and agree to deliver it to her in good order at the place approved by the county home demonstration agent.

-----  
(Date)

-----  
(Trucker for community club)

Form SC-3 (Sample)  
United States Department of Agriculture  
Agricultural Adjustment Administration

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(Community)

Delivery Order No.: -----  
(Cotton) (Ticking)

**RECEIPT FOR COTTON MATTRESS**  
**(Cotton Mattress Project)**

Name ----- Address -----

I hereby acknowledge receipt of one cotton mattress in good condition processed from ----- pounds of cotton and ----- yards of mattress ticking furnished by the Federal Surplus Commodities Comporation. I agree to utilize this mattress for the use of my family and not to sell, trade, or dispose of it in any manner whatsoever.

-----  
(Date)

-----  
(Signature of applicant)

**DELIVERY CERTIFIED:**

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(Signature of club chairman)

Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating.  
Distributed in furtherance of the Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914.

10M—3-40