

THE VISITOR

Devoted to the Interest of Agricultural Education in
Minnesota Schools

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SUPERVISOR GILE RESIGNS

B. M. Gile, State Supervisor of Agricultural Education in Minnesota since the Smith-Hughes law went into operation in 1917-18, has resigned and will be connected with the Security State Bank of Bemidji, as vice-president, and in charge of the new business and rural service department of the bank. His many friends regret this loss of a successful leader in the field of agricultural education, but their best wishes go with him into his new work.

DISTRICT CONFERENCE OF SUPERINTENDENTS AND AGRICULTURAL INSTRUCTORS

A very successful conference of superintendents and agricultural instructors was held at Albert Lea, February 25. Part of the day was spent in visiting agricultural classes where teaching methods were observed and where opportunity was afforded each member present to question the boys in regard to their project work.

The following topics were freely discussed at the round table conference:

a. Course of study in vocational agriculture

b. Shop work for agricultural students

c. How to interest farm boys in attending school

d. Purpose of six- and nine-months' courses

e. Problem of related and general subjects in six-months' agricultural course. Credits

f. How to make six-months' pupils feel that they are a part of the high school.

At the close of the meeting A. M. Field, of the Division of Agricultural Education, summarized the discussion and gave a brief analysis of the classroom work observed earlier in the day.

The conference was attended by Superintendent N. T. Tosseland, New Richland; Superintendent A. A.

Hayes, Preston; W. O. Lutz, Austin; L. H. Thurwachter and Paul W. Chase, Albert Lea; Paul Calrow, Fairmont; Robert McCausland, Faribault; F. L. Crowe, New Richland; E. N. Johnson, Madelia; H. B. Swanson, Owatonna; P. S. Dyer, Preston; R. E. Hubbard, Spring Valley; V. E. Erickson, Wykoff.

Summary for Smith-Hughes Agricultural Departments in High Schools, 1919-20

The Visitor is indebted to B. M. Gile, State Supervisor of Agricultural Education, for the following interesting data.

Number of schools.....	37
Enrolment in day school.....	585
Enrolment in evening school..	94
No. receiving agricultural instruction in high school normal departments—37 lessons	285
No. of 7th and 8th grade pupils receiving instruction in agriculture	1,153
No. of home supervised gardens	1,206
No. of school supervised gardens	259
No. of pupils in supervised project work	2,092
No. given instruction in associated schools	1,871
No. of adults requesting information or assistance	5,223
Labor income from recorded projects carried out on home farm by vocational pupils in agriculture of high-school age	\$33,887

State Schools of Agriculture

No. of schools.....	3
Total No. enrolled in project work	354

Summary for State-Aided Agricultural Departments, 1919-20

No. of departments of agriculture	65
Enrolment of boys.....	1,465
Girls	468

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No. of pupils receiving agricultural instruction in high-school normal training departments	310
*Short courses (4 schools).....	40
Enrolment of pupils in 7th and 8th grade agriculture.....	2,884
No. of home supervised gardens	3,142
No. of school supervised gardens	1,800
No. of pupils engaged in supervised junior project work....	1,471
No. of pupils given instruction in associated schools.....	1,916
No. of adults requesting information or assistance.....	1,824
* Short courses were offered at Blackduck, Redwood Falls, St. Cloud, and Stephen.	

Summary of Agricultural Education for 1919-20

Total state supported schools of agriculture (under University control)	3
Total high school departments of agriculture	102
Total individuals enrolled in agriculture in state schools of agriculture (under University control)	1,258
Total enrolment in high-school agriculture	3,051
Total enrolment in evening schools	94
Total enrolment in 7th and 8th grades	4,037
Total enrolment in home and school gardens	4,736
Total enrolment in junior project work	3,563
Total given instruction in associated schools	3,787

Total adults receiving itinerant instruction	7,047
Total individuals reached through secondary agricultural departments	27,479

IMPROVING AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS

H. H. Amos, of Sandstone, gives an encouraging account of agricultural improvements.

In 1919 I had three boys growing potatoes. The total area was seven and a half acres, and the total production 833 bushels. This is not a big yield, but they produced very fine potatoes, as the boys had all treated their seed with corrosive sublimate at the school laboratory, and planted it on land that had not grown potatoes for five years. Two planted on sod land, the yield on the sod being not as great as that of the other three. This cut down the total production. In two instances the fathers knew the treatment was of no value because they had treated their seed and planted in the same old ground. Of course, the potatoes were scabby, so they positively knew it did no good. Well, the boys proved it did, if the seed were planted in new ground. The druggist told me he has never sold so much corrosive sublimate as he did this year, and I have had at least twenty-five inquiries as to the method of treatment of seed potatoes. I have kept the two banks supplied with Minnesota bulletins relating to this and other agricultural activities in this section.

"In 1920 we shipped 2,300 day-old chicks into this community, not all for project work but for farmers as well. There were nine projects in poultry, with 310 single-comb White Leghorn chicks valued at \$558. Two storekeepers told me last week that they had never received so many eggs as they have this winter; one really complained of getting too many. The number is due to the large number of Leghorn pullets hatched at the proper time. This is my biggest work here.

"We have started five purebred Guernsey herds. Two of the project boys are raising purebred Guernsey bull calves. These boys have finally interested their fathers in purebreds by telling of incidents studied and by taking reading matter home.

"The bee projects are coming along in fine shape. Four pupils have completed the work this year, with a total production of 1,025 pounds, and a total profit of \$210. I have assisted in managing 72 hives in this community this year. Ten farmers have inquired about bees this winter. I am planning to put purebred queens in all hives this spring.

"The sheep projects number three; two of the boys won their way to the Junior Livestock show at South St. Paul. The best lambs in this county were raised by Smith-Hughes boys under our management. Sheep are being shipped into this section in greater numbers than ever before. Some of this is due to our studying sheep in our classes. The fathers have called me several times in regard to the management and care of sheep and the best breeds for this section.

"Results are beginning to show in this community of the efforts made to better agricultural conditions. There is still a great deal of room for improvement."

SLACK SEASON COURSES IN AGRICULTURE

The Visitor is pleased to give the following summary of the address of G. W. Gehrand, State Supervisor of Agricultural Education in Wisconsin, at the Vocational Education Association of the Middle West, in Minneapolis.

Vocational agricultural education will help the individuals in the vocation to the extent that such education affects the job of farming. The more closely agricultural education is brought into direct contact with the real, practical, farm operations and the related problems in farm management, the more certain may one feel that present day agricultural practices will be improved upon through such a type and practice of education.

In the northern states there are several weeks during the winter season when the farmer is not rushed with work. This may be called his "slack season." The boys on the farm—boys who have completed the rural school or who feel that they have outgrown their home school, either because of their age or because the school fails to meet their immediate needs—are excellent subjects for a "slack season course in agriculture."

The following illustration is based upon the type of work done in Wood County, Wisconsin. In 1919-20, there were twelve two-week schools or-

ganized. The schools were held in town halls, vacant store buildings, and a few in farm homes. The twelve school centers touched one hundred eighty-two homes. Each person attending these schools was asked to take up a man-sized home project. Most of the projects were of the nature of an operative job, but closely related to the managerial aspect of the job and its particular relation to the immediate farm in question. Such part-time schools must adopt individual instruction methods after the general principles have been established and are thoroly understood by those members of the class interested in a similar or the same farm problem.

Such topics as the following were studied:

1. How may I improve my dairy herd?
2. The advantages and disadvantages of keeping purebred stock.
3. Soil improvement through rotation of crops.
4. The best roughage for the dairy cow.
5. Housing the dairy herd.
6. Sandy soil and the soybean.
7. The general principles of feeding livestock.
8. The farmer and good roads.
9. Test your soil! Why?
10. The silo a permanent factor in dairy farming.

Definite conclusions and practices were cited and projects assigned according to the needs of persons enrolled. The communities were organized into Farmers' Clubs, with some wide-awake progressive farmer as leader of each group doing project study farming. The crop and projects were visited by the director of the school, as far as possible, but the local group inspected the projects listed. Group visits or inspections are very valuable.

The results far outweighed our expectation and fondest hopes. Every district in which a school was held during the winter of 1919-20 called for a school in 1920-21 very early in the fall. Besides these, three new districts applied for schools. The attendance this year shows an increase of about 2 per cent, but the interest and spirit this year far exceeds that of the general average of last year.

From the financial aspect, about 87 per cent of the projects showed marked success. About 8 per cent were little above former returns, and about 5 per cent were failures. These failures were almost entirely due to the very dry summer of 1920.

ADVANCING THE CAUSE OF BETTER FARMING

Paul Calrow, agricultural instructor at Fairmont, believes that his agricultural department is an asset to the community. He has cause to feel proud of the following results:

"One of my boys states that his project Duroc pigs were more uniform, heavier boned, and produced a half pound a day more than his father's Chester Whites and the result is that father has sold his Chester Whites and has gone into partnership with his boy, using all the project pigs. After next year's expenses were subtracted from the gross profits, the net profit will be divided one third to the boy, one third to father, and one third to the estate for improvements.

"On another farm the father raised scrubs and had no suitable hog house. The boy started with purebred Durocs and inside of one year the father has sold all the scrubs and has seventy-five pure-bred Durocs and a new hog house. The father believes in his boy's ability to raise hogs but hates to admit it.

"In orchard work, through proper pruning, spraying, and fertilizing, the boys have produced more apples, larger and better quality. They were free from all disease, and worms. In each community this project has cut quite a figure and many people remark what a change has taken place on these farms where the boy handles the orchard.

"One of the boys had two Holstein calves of the same age, one a grade and the other a purebred. Both were fed the same balanced ration and accurate records of weight were kept. During one month there was a noticeable difference in gain, the grade gained 58½ pounds and the purebred, 98 pounds. This was typical during the six months feeding and goes to show the value of purebred calves.

"With regard to poultry culling, on one farm we culled sixty out of 130 hens. They were getting thirty-two eggs a day from the 130 hens and two days after culling they were getting thirty eggs from the remaining seventy, and increased production through better feeding to sixty eggs a day. This has been done on many of my boys' farms, but is told just to prove what has been and is being done here.

"We have a livestock judging record this year that is hard to beat. Our Smith-Hughes department furnished one boy on Minnesota's judging team of three at the Inter-State Fair and al-

so one on a different team which represented Minnesota at the International Livestock Show."

INTERESTING COMPARISONS

A. H. Frick, agricultural instructor at Grand Rapids, Minn., gives the following concrete evidence of the value of teaching agriculture in the high school:

"The average yield of potatoes produced by the boys enrolled in the vocational agriculture course was 294.5 bushels per acre. This is not as high as it would have been if the season had been more favorable. In some cases the yields were cut severely by drowning out in the extremely wet spring and other unfavorable conditions. One of the boys grew only fifty-seven bushels per acre, which you can readily see reduced the average considerably. The same unfavorable conditions reduced the yield throughout the county, the county average being 130 bushels per acre, as nearly as we can estimate it.

"Some of the differences between father's and son's yields were as follows:

	bu. per acre.	Father's yield Bu. per acre.
Harold Aiton	345	175
Ralph Sisler	400	150
Emil Erickson	300	200
Clarence Bunnell ...	462	250

"Another point which I think would be of interest is the difference between the percentage of agriculture class boys applying for certification on their potato plots who were successful in passing the inspection, and that of adult farmers applying for certification who passed. Eight boys applied for state inspection and six were successful, a percentage of 75 per cent. The county agent's estimate of the percentage of adult farmers applying who were successful in passing was '50 per cent or less.'

"A club of boys from the agriculture class, all from one community, won the State Potato Club championship, with an average yield of 413 bushels per acre. Another club, composed of pupils from other communities, won third place in the state contest with an average yield of 357 bushels.

"Another member of the class had a corn plot in addition to his potato project. He secured 64 bushels per acre of mature hard corn. That is pretty good for this north country. He started with good Minnesota No. 13 seed which had matured the year before on the school plot."