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BEYOND THE CLOUDS IN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

The last few weeks have given us some assurance that the dark, threatening clouds of a prostrate agriculture and a paralyzed industry are beginning to clear away. Rays of optimism, confidence, and hope are breaking through the mist of despair and discouragement that has overtaken those who must work in order to live. Significant readjustments are in progress but we must be patient because complete recovery can not come all at once. There will be tax burdens to adjust, debts to pay, losses to forget, new credit to be established and many social ideals, traditions, and institutions to be preserved.

To many people, the era we have entered is called the re-construction period. Those who are interested in education are anxious that it be not a destruction period for the public schools. Hasty and unwise retrenchment in our program of education is an unfair blow at our defenseless youth. Material enterprises can wait for better times but our boys and girls, our rural youth, can not wait. They must receive their education, their preparation for future life now. Tomorrow will be too late.

The New Education for Rural Youth

In this brief discussion we are particularly concerned about the education for rural youth. We are interested in the sort of education that is most worth while for the young people who are to be farmers of the future. We are fully aware that the clouds of the present economic crisis cast cruel, dark, and heavy shadows over agriculture. We know that prices are low and taxes are high. Economies are inevitable—but, let us, like the Good Fairy, wave the magic wand and for a moment clear away this mantle of despair and peer through these already thinning clouds. There we see Minnesota in all its glory—its beautiful lakes, and its fertile prairies dotted with thousands of farm homes. If we look a little closer we see thousands of rural children happily at play and blissfully ignorant of the fact that all is not well with the world. We see thousands of young folk who are just passing the threshold of childhood and entering upon that most interesting and most fascinat-

ing period of adolescence with all its hopes, with all its romance and with all its dangers. We see thousands of young people who have reached the period when they begin to think seriously about what they shall do to earn a living, establish a home and become self-supporting citizens. And lastly, we see many, many parents seriously, anxiously wondering what the future holds in store for their loved ones. What can we do for the rural youth of Minnesota? There is but one answer and that is *Education*. Dr. Coffman, president of the University of Minnesota, in a message to the people of the state recently said, "The nation that has courageous and forward-looking leaders who dare, in the midst of the present world crisis, to provide, encourage, foster, and improve education and especially education for leadership will be the nation that will write the history of the next generation."

So it is for agriculture—the state that has the courage and the vision to provide the right kind of education, the *new education*, for its rural youth is the state that will prosper and move on to higher standards of living.

Ever since the first pioneer settler turned the first furrow on Minnesota's fertile prairies, agriculture has remained the basic industry of the state. If agriculture is prosperous, the state is prosperous. If agriculture fails, the final chapter in the history of a great commonwealth will soon be written. The importance and value of education in agriculture was given prominent editorial recognition recently (April 7) by the Minneapolis Journal as follows: "Certainly the agriculturist needs the highest kind of training right now. And not only the vocation, but the condition cries out for the best brains available. Not that agriculture has suffered from depression because of any lack of brains; for years, the agricultural schools have been turning out youth to engage in farming, and the farms themselves have been training up another and larger group of farmers in its school of hard knocks. Agriculture is passing through a great transition, along with other vocations. The work is going on—*schooling can not take a holiday*. Human replacement is part of so-

AWARD FOR SERVICE IN BARBERRY ERADICATION

An Agricultural Educational Project

By L. W. Melander, Associate Pathologist,
U.S.D.A., Barberry Eradication Leader
in Minnesota

The relation of common barberry to black stem rust has been taught consistently in the agricultural departments in high schools. Those in charge of the barberry eradication campaign have appreciated this effort on the part of the instructors to teach the coming generation that common barberry should be eradicated. They also have attempted to furnish material for the teaching of this subject. However, all of this material has been almost exclusively class-room subject matter. No definite field project has been outlined to fit in with other agricultural projects. The fine co-operation given by agriculture instructors and students in the work of barberry eradication has made it desirable to propose a regular project that would involve both class-room and field work.

After considerable discussion with various people, a plan has been evolved that has not only educational value but includes a means of recognizing faithful effort. A certificate entitled Award for Service will be given for searching the home farm for common barberry. This plan is so arranged that it can be a definite project in an agriculture instructional program. However, it is not expected that the agriculture instructor will be required to personally search all of the farms of the students enrolled in this project. All of the instructors have had enough experience to be able to determine by questioning how much a student really has accomplished.

Procedure for Issuing Award for Service Certificates

Rôle of agriculture instructor in the Award for Service project:

1. Includes the shrub identification project in his annual program of projects.
2. Devotes one or more class periods to the study of the identification and the economic danger of some shrubs. Pupils should learn to recognize common shrubs such as prickly ash, wild currants, wild gooseberries, raspberries, dogwood, wild rose, common barberry, Japanese barberry, honeysuckle, wolfberry, buckthorn, and snowberry. As a special laboratory exercise the instructor could have the students make a collection of specimens of all of the different shrubs on the individual home farms.

3. Explains requirements to win Awards for Service.
4. Has students fill out application blanks.
5. Confers with students regarding the service they have performed so that there is no question regarding the applicant fulfilling the requirements. This can be done when visiting students in connection with other projects.
6. Certifies applications and sends them to the Barberry Office, University Farm, St. Paul, Minnesota.
7. Receives Award for Service certificates and signs them.
8. Makes awards at assemblies.

Requirements for agriculture students qualifying for Award for Service certificates:

1. Learn to recognize the common shrubs and how they differ from each other.
2. Make a diligent search of common barberry of following places on home farm (any size): the garden, orchard, woodlots, pastures, along fence lines, along ravines, streams, and other places. In case of city agriculture students they can search a farm belonging to a relative or friend but they first must obtain permission to search it for common barberry.
3. Make application for Service Award Certificate.
4. Give a precise explanation to agriculture instructor of procedure followed in searching farm.
5. Continue to be on the lookout for and report all common barberry found.

Special Notes

1. If any student desires to search additional territory he will be given an additional award for each section of land searched.
2. Students living in a village, town, or city may qualify for an Award for Service certificate by searching a farm (must be at least 160 acres) of a friend or relative.
3. Every student who finds a location of common barberry will be awarded a Rust Busters medal and a Life Membership Certificate in the National Rust Busters Club, provided no medal previously has been awarded for that property.

The possibility of finding common barberry and winning medals might be an incentive for agriculture students to search other farms besides their own. An additional award in the form of a special seal to be attached to the Service Certificate also will be given for each section of land checked. In this connection it will be necessary to obtain the signatures of all the occupants on this

Award for Service

Recognizing that the eradication of the rust-spreading barberry is necessary to prevent the destruction of future grain crops by black stem rust,

JOHN J. DOE

has searched the home farm, located in NW. quarter of section 12, Ramsdell township, Johnson county, State of Minnesota, believes it to be free from common barberry at this date, and agrees to report any such bushes that may be found in the future.

In recognition of the above service, this award is presented on this 2nd day of March, 1933.

Countersigned by:

Bernard W. Melander
Leader, Barberry Eradication Campaign in Minnesota

Recommended by:

(Signed) Richard Roe

Awarded by:

Donald G. Fletcher
Executive Secretary, Committee for the Prevention of Grain Rust

Title Agricultural Instructor

section of land. However, this phase of the project has not been worked out in detail.

There perhaps are several questions that will arise. What if there are two students from the same family; can each receive a Service Award? The answer is yes. Is it necessary for an applicant to be an agriculture student? The answer to this question is up to the agriculture instructor. The answer for the present is yes. Can agriculture students living in the city win Service Awards? The answer is yes. They may search a farm of at least 160 acres, belonging to a friend or relative, provided permission is obtained from the occupant to make a search for common barberry.

In conclusion, a project of this kind has a distinct educational value. The average American citizen knows little about common shrubs. More and more emphasis is being placed on decorating home grounds with hardy shrubs. Often, escaped common barberry has been brought in from the woods and planted in yards, because the people doing it were not aware of the fact that they were transplanting common barberry, the spreader of a destructive cereal disease. In certain parts of the state other shrubs spread other kinds of rusts that are destructive in those communities. It is important therefore that all agriculture students know common barberry, wild currants and gooseberries, buckthorn, and red cedar.

APPLICATION FOR SERVICE AWARD

I have searched our farm located in the ...quarter of section.....,township.....county, State of Minnesota. The following places on it have been inspected for common barberry: (Mark places with an X) 1, the yard (); 2, the orchard (); 3, the woodlot and pastures (); along fence lines (); and, along ravines and streams (). I found..... common barberry bushes.

Having searched our farm thoroughly and believing it to be free from common barberry, I hereby apply for the SERVICE AWARD given to boys and girls for helping to protect future grain crops against black stem rust.

.....Applicant

Certification of Parent or Guardian

I certify that..... has made a thorough search of this farm for common barberry.

.....Parent or Guardian

Recommendation of Instructor or Supervisor

I have conferred with the above applicant and believe he has fulfilled the requirements. I therefore recommend that he be given an AWARD FOR SERVICE certificate.

.....
(Give Title)