

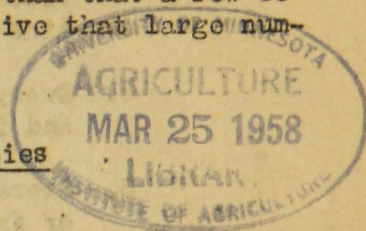
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DIVISION OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Misc.

MAXIMUM FARM PRODUCTION IN 1944
MINNESOTA

The problems confronting Minnesota farmers this year are the very sort of thing which farmers themselves are best equipped to solve, providing (1) they have the available information bearing on those problems, (2) they are brought together so they can discuss the situation with each other and can pool their judgment and experience, and (3) that they get at it soon enough. It is a situation in which the great mass of farm people must be urged to action, rather than that a few be given advanced help. Whatever methods are used, it is imperative that large numbers be reached.



Extension Emphasis on Farm Production Activities

I. Fall and Early Winter, 1943-44

Adjusting feed supplies to livestock needs is the major problem confronting farmers during this period and should receive major extension emphasis. Attention also needs to be given to the livestock breeding program and to conserving seed supplies for next spring.

Phases of Problem:

A. Direct feed adjustment steps

1. Rough computation of feeds on hand as compared to feeds needed, on the individual farm.
2. Planning feeding programs for the different classes of livestock that will make best use of grain and of high protein concentrates.
3. Insofar as grass or other forage crops are still available and where hay supplies are more liberal than grain, make such adjustments as are possible to save grain by using pasture and roughage.
4. Determine which classes of livestock are most essential for war needs and put as little feed as possible into those classes that are less essential.
5. Determine the weight of hogs, and the degree of finish of beef cattle and lambs, that represent the best compromise between limited feed on the one hand, and customary livestock condition on the other hand, and aim to sell at those weights.

B. Factors related to economies in use of feed

1. Cull out low-producing cows and hens, and reduce the crowding of hens or other livestock.
2. Control parasites and prevent disease, so far as possible, on all classes of livestock.

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3. Plan numbers of livestock for 1944,
4. Farrow more spring litters on pasture so these pigs can
 - (a) have pasture to supplement their feed
 - (b) have cleaner conditions from the start
 - (c) by coming later, be fed out on 1944 corn instead of 1943 reserves.

C. Seed for 1944

1. Every farmer should take immediate steps to supply himself with Vicland or Tama seed oats. Obtain supply of recommended varieties of other grains that may be needed.
2. Everyone should consider his needs for clover or alfalfa seed and if he needs to buy, get it early.
3. Storage conditions should be examined to be sure that good seed or feed does not go bad from excess moisture, rats, or other storage damage.

II. Late Winter and Spring, 1944

To plan the crop and livestock program for 1944, and for succeeding years, that will best meet wartime needs and that will fit the conditions of soil, labor, machinery, and other factors of the farm, is the big problem facing each farmer during this period.

Phases of Problem:

A. The cropping program

1. How far should a farmer go in expanding corn acreage, considering feed needs, labor and machine limitations, soil erosion considerations, adaptability of land to the various crops?
2. What new seedings of alfalfa or clover are desirable, considering acreage of old stands, quantity of hay needed, need of legume hay to relieve protein shortage, cost and availability of seed? What is being achieved locally in connection with labor-saving hay making methods?
3. What shifts in classes or varieties of small grains are desirable - oats, for example?
4. How much treating of seed grain should be done?
5. What balance is best between feed crops and the various cash crops? Which cash crops for this county?
6. What should be done and what can be done about efficient use of commercial fertilizers?
7. Weeds are especially severe in connection with flax. What should be done through seed cleaning, time of planting, spraying?

8. How do the crops planned for 1944 fit into a sound cropping program for 1945 and 1946?

B. The livestock program

1. How far should a farmer go in shifting numbers of livestock from those raised in 1942 and 1943? What combination of livestock will
 - (a) most completely utilize the resources of the farm for war needs
 - (b) within this pattern, be best adapted to the feed, labor, equipment, and experience of the farmer?
2. How can the livestock be best guarded against the diseases and parasites that will interfere with total production or with efficient use of feed?
3. What labor-saving plans can be used that are an improvement over present methods?

III. Methods to Use

As indicated in the statement above, the farm production program for this year is closely associated with the planning of the farm business. There are very large opportunities for increased production, but the most significant are those which are directly subject to the decisions of the individual farm operators.

Therefore, the results to be achieved in any county will be directly proportionate to the extent to which the individual farmers are influenced to study their own situations in the light of the available facts and to plan ahead for individual farm results. This means that the methods used must be those that will reach large numbers and that will stimulate constructive thinking and planning.

Farm women as well as farm men must be reached, as the decisions on farm production plans are commonly arrived at through family consultation. The wife as well as her husband needs to know that a move is being made, and extension plans must take into account the need of influencing men and women both, rather than the men alone.

A. Fundamentals. The detail of methods will vary with conditions, but these fundamentals should be kept uppermost:

1. The plans adopted in a given county must aim at stimulating as nearly as possible every farm family in the county to give definite and serious thought to the farm program that will be most effective on the individual farm, first for the fall and winter feeding program, second for the spring and summer production program.
2. Each such family must be assisted to learn the facts that will be most helpful in making sound decisions on their own farm.
3. Aim at doing these things at the proper time. Get the facts to the families and get the families to doing their planning at the time when such steps will be most effective. That means early action in the case of the fall and winter feeding plans.

4. In order to make it possible for the county extension agents to plan and carry out effective programs directed at these objectives, the various extension activities in the county will need to be ranked in importance and the less important ones sidetracked if necessary while the major farm production program is being carried out.

B. Extension Methods. Within the limitations of the fundamentals stated above, the various counties will utilize the combination of methods that seems to promise best results. However, the need of large scale and effective action should be kept uppermost, and the methods proposed for use should take this into account.

1. Newspaper publicity, bulletins, pamphlets, other literature.
2. Meetings, general and special.
3. Cooperation with commercial agencies, such as feed dealers.
4. Large number of small discussion meetings, with assistance of neighborhood leaders.

(a) Plan 1. Use neighborhood leaders to arrange meetings, help get good attendance, but not as subject matter leaders. County agent would be present to lead discussion on the subject matter topics with which those present were concerned. Limitation of Plan 1 is in the large number of neighborhoods in the county; therefore, it would be necessary to group two or more neighborhoods, making the group larger than desirable for good discussion.

(b) Plan 2. A modification of Plan 1, in counties where one or several persons could be found, competent and willing to help the county agent in handling neighborhood meetings. With such extra help, the farm people of the county might be met in small groups within a reasonable length of time.

(c) Plan 3. Train neighborhood leaders, or special leaders selected by the regular neighborhood leaders, and have these trained persons lead the discussions in their local neighborhoods. A county choosing this careful training method

(1) would need to have the neighborhood leader system of the county thoroughly organized before starting.

(2) could plan on a series of discussion meetings throughout the winter in each neighborhood on the different phases of this year's work, each series to be preceded by a special training session.

(3) would be able to get special help from University Farm in planning and conducting the training program.

C. Economic Background. There is urgent need for every agent to keep constantly informed on the facts and the significance of the important economic developments as a background to all his extension teaching. Moreover, he should have the support of as many as possible of his county leaders, similarly informed. A variation of the district group discussion plan is suggested to assist agents to obtain this background training.

1. Program to be set up primarily to train agents but on a basis whereby other county leaders can be brought in also.

(a) One series of about 12 to 15 district conferences be arranged, each to continue all day (10:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.) at which agents and selected leaders will meet with economists for discussion of economic topics. Where possible, an extension economist and a station staff member of the Division of Agricultural Economics would both be present to assist in the discussion.

(b) Topics would include such matters as inflation control, taxation, land prices, transportation, post-war economic problems.

D. Continuing Activities and Cooperative Relationships. There are a large number of activities in which extension is associated with organized movements, and the wartime needs of each, as well as its long-time relation to Minnesota agriculture call for consideration in the amount of time and energy of the extension staff which each may receive. Obviously, each case must be considered on its merits.

1. Established Activities. Certain of these movements represent established extension activities, which must be continued. Included in this group are the various marketing agencies such as creameries, cold storage lockers, oil associations and similar movements; D.H.I.A. groups and breeding associations; the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association and related activities; the organized farm management services; Soil Conservation Service and activities growing out of this relationship; T.V.A. demonstration service; hog cholera schools; state weed control services.

2. Cooperative Relationships. In addition there are cooperative relationships involving the extension agents. The war boards represent one such field; the farm labor contacts are another, and these include relations with the Selective Service, U.S.E.S., businessmen and schools; the groups of feed dealers and other organized commercial groups are an important group with which to work. Then, there are the various farm organizations which deal with the farm public and with which extension cooperates in various ways. These movements need to be given attention in planning extension activities.

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