

press
publications
radio
television
visual aids

Reaching People with information...



AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE • INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE • UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

October 28, 1964

- * *****
- * Please read, check, and circulate *
- * County Agricultural Agent *
- * County Home Agent *
- * County 4-H Agent *
- * County Ass't. Agent *
- * Secretary for Filing *
- * *****

ACROSS THE EDITOR'S DESK

It's nice to be back although swinging back into writing this column, after a year plus absence, presents its problems. My thanks to all my colleagues in the Department of Information and Agricultural Journalism, and especially to acting head Gerald McKay, for continuing and improving upon their efforts to better serve and participate in the efforts of the Agricultural Extension Service.

I'll be imposing on some of you for help. In the next few months I'll be asking county agents to cooperate in a study I'm doing. More about this later.

- Some Points We May Have Missed
- * "Is RAD a propoganda effort?"
 - * "Should we give people what they want?"
 - * "Should teachers (agents and specialists) and administrators determine what county educational programs should be?"
 - * "Is the mass media's influence direct or indirect?"

These are just a few of the issues Extension faces today. And they are the subject of discussion in the summer and fall issues of the Journal of Cooperative Extension. I hope all of you will support this real effort to improve the professional stature of Extension by renewing your subscription or, if you have been among the missing Extensioners on the Journal's rolls, by subscribing now. --(Please turn to Press Section)

TO H. A. 'S AND 4-H AGENTS

Excellent 4-H Week Coverage

Orchids to all of you for the work you did to get such excellent press coverage during National 4-H Week. Our clippings turned up stories, pictures, many fine editorials, articles by 4-H'ers and ads--all calling attention to various phases of 4-H work and to the Week. The Minnetonka Herald had a special 4-H edition--and no doubt there were other special 4-H editions, too.

Editors Air Some Gripes

On September 25 I had occasion to tell Minnesota Press Women at the Editors' Short Course about some of our services, including those of county extension offices. During a question period some of the editors aired two gripes that should be of concern to us: 1) Some had not yet received State Fair 4-H results from agents in their counties--and this was three weeks after the fair. (Isn't such a lag inexcusable?) 2) Several said they had told extension agents numerous times about deadlines--but their words had fallen on deaf ears. As a result, agents' articles or columns may not get into the paper at all or be used a week late--(a word to the wise...)

Word Corner

Many communications come across our desks violating the rule of agreement of subject and verb in a sentence. Here are some examples of such errors (subject and verb are underlined): "Safe use of agricultural chemicals are being emphasized..." "When the value of trading stamps were considered..." An intervening phrase that's plural should not change the number of the verb if the subject is singular. Watch your subject--not the phrase that's closest to the verb. --Jo Nelson

OFF THE PRESS



Here are some of the real issues that have been tackled by the Journal of Cooperative Extension recently that makes the Journal a must on the

desks of every professionally-oriented extension worker:

Is RAD a propaganda effort? The article by Stephen Brower, "Dilemma of Adult Educators" in the summer issue doesn't really say this, but the speech from which it was adapted did. But don't get too upset. Brower doesn't use the term in the usual sense. He deals with the question, "Who should decide what Extension programs should be? The people, the teacher (you and the rest of the land grant college staff), administrators, or who?"

Do mass media reach leaders or the people themselves? Verling Troidahl in the summer issue comments on this in "Communicating to the Suburbs." He reviews the well-established two-step flow of information idea. This states that mass media have their greatest influence by reaching opinion leaders who in turn influence their everyday associates. Troidahl found that in many cases certain information influences the mass through the media directly.

A true professional never confuses "giving the public what it wants" with "working with people where they are." You can't always do the first as a professional, says Jane Klingman, in the fall issue, but you must do the second if you are following the professional standards and knowledge of an educator.

"Intelligent Behavior in 4-H" by Robert E. Bills emphasizes that intelligence can be changed. He contends that 4-H's task is to create intelligence in boys and girls. He says Extension has the task of helping youth become more intelligent behaviors.

An Alternative to Extension's Future says Donald R. Fessler, is to take the lead in organizing people to recognize their needs, study alternative solutions, and then call upon whatever agencies or individuals are available to carry on educational programs. This is in contrast to other alternatives presented earlier in the Journal.
--Harold B. Swanson

ACROSS THE MIKE



University produced TV shows may be seen on WDSE-TV Channel 8, Duluth each Thursday 9:30 p.m. (same time as live show on Channel 2 in St. Paul) and at 3:30 p.m.

each Friday. KFME-TV Channel 13, (Fargo) retecasts our show at 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays. See latest radio-TV schedule for program topics and guests.

TV Surveys

Jack Evans, vice president of TV Bureau of Advertising, reports that 85 percent of farm families have one or more TV sets. They spend an average of 4½ hours daily watching TV.

A W. O. Lyon Company study of Iowa farmers shows that between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. 42 percent of farmers (not just farm homes) are watching TV. This compares with national sets in use of 25 percent.

Agents Active in R-TV

Seventeen home extension members of Ruth Spidahl's (Grant) tailoring class modeled their garments this spring on the "Extension News and Views" program, KCMT-TV Alexandria. Ruth conducted 34 radio programs in August (that's about her average) on 4-H, home program organization, civil defense, nutrition and safety.

Arvalda Nickel (Rock) was guest of the local Chamber of Commerce's radio program. The Chamber manager interviewed her on the work and activities of a home agent and how extension gets information to the people.

Cottonwood County added two radio programs, each week, to its schedule. Paul Sandager (associate agent) does one in field of 4-H and Herman Vossen (agent) does the other. Pauline Nundahl (home) continues with the men in conducting their regular weekly radio programs.

KMRS radio station (Morris) has asked John Loken (Grant) to do a 3-5 minute program each Friday. John agreed because "the station has high listenership in the county and because it provides extension personnel with another tool and serves to educate agents as well."

--Ray Wolf

Publications and Direct Mail

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Income-Improving Adjustment Alternatives on Grade A Dairy Farms in Minnesota. Sta. Bull. 473. W. B. Sundquist and James Holt. Purpose of study was to determine how Minnesota grade A dairy farms might be expanded or reorganized using resources typically available to farmers. 28 pages. Now available.

Consumer Use of Turkey. Sta. Bull. 474. James F. Richards, Carroll V. Hess, and Milo H. Swanson. Purposes of this study were to compare: (1) family characteristics of high- and low-level users of turkey, and (2) attitudes, preferences, purchases, and use patterns for turkey. 16 pages. Now available.

REGIONAL PUBLICATIONS

Market Organization of Grain Industries in the North Central Region. North Central Regional Research Publication No. 155. Reports results of a survey of grain merchandising and processing plants to determine the existing market organization and structure of component industries. Reynold P. Dahl, Department of Agricultural Economics, represented the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station on the project committee. 52 pages; single copies available.

REVISED PUBLICATIONS

Insect Control on Forage Crops. Ent. Fact Sheet No. 4. John Lofgren. Discard old copies; revision contains new chemical recommendations. Don't order till you receive notification copies.

REPRINTED PUBLICATIONS

Woody Plants for Minnesota. Ext. Bull. 267. C. Gustav Hard and Marvin E. Smith. 36 pages.

Check Up On Your Communications Skill. Comm. Bull. No. 4.

Speakers, Know Your Audience. Comm. Bull. No. 5.

You Don't Know How to Listen. Comm. Bull. No. 6. Ralph Nichols, with Leonard A. Stevens.

Test Your Discussion Leadership. Comm. Bull. No. 14. Paul Cashman.

Discussion Traps, Avoid Them. Comm. Bull. No. 15. Paul Cashman.

MINNESOTA FORESTRY NOTES

1963 Twin Cities Area Christmas Tree Sales. Minnesota Forestry Notes No. 148. Richard A. Skok, Marvin E. Smith, and William R. Miles.

Variation in Germination of Seed Collected from Individual Basswood Trees. Minnesota Forestry Notes No. 149. C. A. Mohn.

Power Driving Blunt Vs. Pointed Wood Posts. Minnesota Forestry Notes No. 150. J. R. Neetzel and C. H. Christopherson.

Factors Influencing Moisture Content of Hardwood Flooring Prior to Application in the Twin Cities Area. Minnesota Forestry Notes No. 151. Robert D. Thompson.

Timing of Seed Collections to Increase Germination of Basswood Seed. Minnesota Forestry Notes No. 152. C. A. Mohn.

MINNESOTA FEED SERVICE

The fall edition will reach you early in November; content is mainly condensations of papers presented at the Minnesota Nutrition Conference. If there are topics you'd like to see covered in Feed Service, let us know about them. Send your comments c/o Harlan Stoehr, agricultural bulletin editor. --Harlan Stoehr
Shelly Elliott

Communication Research Notes

What makes persons most readily accept new ideas or innovations? The answer may be "congruence."

Congruence of ideas, social scientists explain, is just another way of saying that the average person will accept more quickly a new idea if he can relate it to a similar experience which has proved successful. A social science study in Kansas has shown why this is true and how congruence might be used by business and education to gain acceptance of innovations.

The Kansas study, was conducted by Lowell Brandner, Kansas State University, and Bryant Kearl, University of Wisconsin. The study reveals that the principle of congruence was responsible for quadrupling the speed that hybrid sorghums, a multi-million dollar crop innovation, were accepted in Kansas.

The climate and geography of Kansas made the discovery by Brandner and Kearl possible. Farmers in northeastern Kansas were accustomed to using hybrid corn when hybrid sorghums were introduced. Southwestern Kansas produced essentially no corn. Both areas, on the other hand, had long experience with old sorghum varieties. This background gave the researchers a reliable, unique testing board in finding out how much hybrid corn influenced the acceptance of hybrid sorghums.

Previous studies have shown that the economic importance of innovations, the education of people involved, their age, how they travel, their income or size of business, their dissatisfaction with old methods, and other factors helped speed adoption of new ideas or innovations.

In the Kansas study congruence was a stronger influence than all these other factors combined. All of the others indicated that hybrid sorghums would be accepted fastest in southwestern Kansas. Only the congruence factor predicted fastest adoption would be in northeastern Kansas where the new hybrids were accepted four times faster than in southwestern Kansas.

The principle of congruence has obvious applications to business. When an executive of a major hybrid seed company complained that all his good hybrid sorghum seed salesmen were in eastern Kansas rather than in western Kansas where the crop was important economically, Brandner explained that hybrid seed--when it was first being introduced--was four times easier to sell in eastern than in western Kansas. The salesmen were "cashing in" on congruence because the eastern farmers knew what hybrids could do and needed little selling.

Like most research, the Kansas study of "idea acceptance" points to several questions. Brandner, for example, wonders about wheat exports. If wheat is to replace other foods abroad, he asks, would making it as much like the foods it is to replace--urging that it be cooked, served and eaten as much as possible like the food it replaces--increase the foreign market for wheat?

The Kansas study, "Evaluation for Congruence as a Factor in Adoption Rate of Innovations," is reported in the September issue of Rural Sociology. Adapted from University News, Kansas State University--Harold B. Swanson