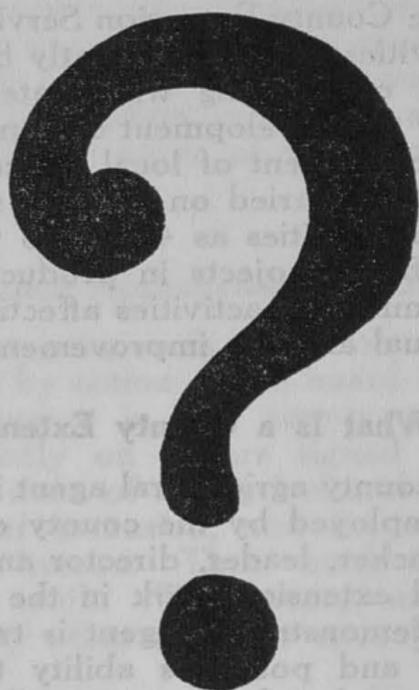


**What
do
you
know
about**



Agricultural Extension Work

Some Questions and Answers

EXTENSION FOLDER NO. 34

Published by the University of Minnesota, College of Agriculture, Extension Division, F. W. Peck, Director, and distributed in furtherance of the purposes of the co-operative agricultural extension work provided for in the Act of Congress of May 8, 1914.

What Is a County Extension Service?

The County Extension Service is a term applied to activities carried on jointly by the people of the county, cooperating with state and federal agencies for the development of community welfare and the improvement of local agricultural conditions.

This is carried on through such commonly recognized activities as 4-H club work, home project work, farm projects in production and marketing and community activities affecting the farmer as an individual and the improvement of his community.

What Is a County Extension Agent?*

A county agricultural agent is a specially trained man employed by the county extension committee as a teacher, leader, director and organizer of educational extension work in the county. A county home demonstration agent is trained in home economics and possesses ability to work with farm women and girls in organized extension projects.

The county extension agent also serves as a connecting link between the people of a county and the valuable results of research from the State College of Agriculture and U. S. Department of Agriculture; and between the individuals and communities within the county.

The qualifications of agricultural agent include: farm reared, actual farm experience sufficient to enable a man to operate a farm for himself; technical training required in 4 years of agricultural college work or its equal; experience in working with individuals and groups; and experience in county extension activities. High personal standards are also required.

Who Employs the County Extension Agent and Directs the Work?

The county extension committee, and the county farm bureau executive committee, cooper-

* As employed in this leaflet, the term, County Extension Agent, applies to either county agricultural agent or county home demonstration agent.

ating with the dean of the College of Agriculture. The extension committee is composed of three members of the farm bureau executive committee, the county auditor, the chairman of the county board of commissioners, one other county commissioner and the farm bureau director at large. State supervision of policies, plans and projects is provided through the office of the Director of Agricultural Extension of the University.

The program of work of the extension service in a county is formulated by the executive committee of the farm bureau, the township directors and others, working with a representative of the College of Agriculture.

What Does the County Extension Service Do?

It teaches the more successful farm methods to farm groups by demonstrations, meetings and individual instruction.

It helps the farmer to do in an organized way with others that which he is unable to do working alone.

It develops boys and girls in leadership and organized work. It gives them practical training in farming and homemaking. It develops in them worthwhile characteristics that make for success, such as thrift, cooperation, interest in country life, resourcefulness and the ability to speak in public.

It brings many problems of the farmer to the state experiment stations for solution.

The organized extension work brings new and practical methods in homemaking to women of the county. It assists in bringing new opportunities to rural women leading to improved home conditions.

Ideas are exchanged, problems are studied, and action secured on community problems through organization.

All farm problems such as: the prevention and control of plant and animal diseases and insects, the eradication of weeds, the introduction of alfalfa, sweet clover, and adaptable varieties of farm crops, the feeding, breeding and care of livestock, efficient marketing of products, and the use of economic

information are prominent activities of the county extension programs.

The officers of the statewide cooperatives including the Twin City Milk Producers association, the Central Co-operative association, the Minnesota Wool Growers association and the Land O'Lakes Creameries Inc., give much credit to the extension service, particularly the county agents, for assistance in organizing these cooperatives and maintaining good will towards them.

How Is the County Extension Work Financed?

The state aid to each county agent is \$1,175; the federal aid is \$660. The county makes an appropriation which averages for all the counties of the state \$2,150 per county. The county farm bureaus supplement these funds from their own resources, averaging approximately \$600 per county cooperating.

How Is the Money Used?

A budget is prepared by the local extension committee, consisting of allowances for salaries, mileage for travel expense, office clerk, supplies and miscellaneous expense. All accounts are audited by the county auditor. Salaries of agents are fixed by action of the extension committee cooperating with a representative of the dean of the University Department of Agriculture.

How Much Does This Service Cost the Average Farmer?

On the basis of the average county appropriation in the state the county tax amounts to approximately 60 cents per farm or less than one-half cent per acre out of an average tax of \$1.47 per acre in 1930. In those counties appropriating for two agents the tax is about 90 cents per farm annually. This is equivalent to the cost of two picture shows or five gallons of gas or two meals or so "in town."

In addition to the county expense the average farmer pays approximately 30 cents towards the

state appropriation, including state aid to counties for agents, all supervisors, specialist help, 4-H club work, publicity and expense for all extension purposes. This should be added to the county expense per farm. The federal aid is so small in actual contribution from farms of this state as to be negligible.

How Is the County Appropriation Made?

The county appropriation is made for cooperative extension work by action of the board of commissioners and remains in the county treasury. Money is drawn only on orders signed by the county auditor, the dean of the agricultural college, the state director of extension, and the secretary of the county farm bureau. These funds are used only for extension work. The county authorities contribute no money other than the appropriation.

Why Are the Terms "County Extension Work" and "Farm Bureau Work" Used Interchangeably?

County farm bureau work was at one time what we now call county extension work, and the shorter term, "farm bureau work," came into general use when speaking or writing of county extension activities.

The Minnesota Legislature in 1913 passed an act authorizing the incorporation of county farm bureaus as an organization, to foster and develop county extension work, and until the organization of the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation in 1919, confined its whole interest to county extension work. Naturally the term, "farm bureau work," came into general use in describing extension activities.

With the development of the national and state farm bureaus, with commercial and legislative programs, the meaning of "farm bureau work" has changed somewhat, but custom has continued its use in the old sense to indicate their educational activities.

What Is the Present Relationship of the County Farm Bureau and the County Extension Service?

The county farm bureau is designated by an act of the Minnesota Legislature as a legal cooperating agency in the promotion of the extension work in a county. It usually appropriates a part of its funds obtained from membership dues for extension work, but in no case are public funds appropriated to the farm bureau. It cooperates in the promotion of various parts of the extension program, through its various local units, and the directors take an active and essential part in the development of extension work in the county. Commercial and legislative projects carried in cooperation with the state and national federation are distinct from the extension projects, and are not developed through the extension program. The officers and directors of the farm bureau are responsible for these activities with the extension service providing information and educational assistance as requested.

Is Extension Work Limited to Any Group or to Certain Individuals?

No. All services of the county agents and the state extension organization are free to all members of the public without discrimination or exception. Every individual in any county may feel perfectly free to take advantage of any opportunity for service available in the county or state extension organization.

For further information write the Agricultural Extension Division, University Farm, St. Paul.

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