

NR2000 RRP
3/16/59



- press
- publications
- radio
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- visual aids



Reaching Rural People *with information tools*

University of Minnesota
March 16, 1959

 * Please read, check and circulate *
 * County Agricultural Agent *
 * County Home Agent *
 * County 4-H Agent *
 * County Asst. Agent *
 * Secretary for filing *

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

In Retrospect

Looking back over 10 years, there have been some interesting changes---- but one point is evident: home and 4-H agents were working hard at using radio and press effectively. And they were just beginning to use TV.

A Look at Radio Ten Years Ago

Agents' programs were likely to be 15 minutes long then, instead of the 5-minute spots the trend now.

Home agents in Nobles, Cottonwood, Jackson, Martin and Faribault counties had weekly 15-minute programs on KSUM (Fairmont). They got together regularly to do organized planning of subject matter for several months ahead.

In a daily 15-minute show on KSUM, "Home Agent's Morning Mail," Martin county's Hilda Taylor enrolled 300 women in a weight control class. In four weeks she received 300 cards and letters.

Merle Sherman had a 15-minute radio program each Tuesday on KBUN, Bemidji.

Agents were trying "on the spot" interviews with tape recorders. Cottonwood county's Virginia Blackwood, for example, made a recording with a buyer in the drapery department of a Twin Cities department store.

Columns Becoming Popular

Columns were "catching on" with home and 4-H agents 10 years ago. Kandiyohi's Rosella Qualey had started a column; so had Chippewa's Peggy Jacobson (Home Ec-oes). Cottonwood's home agent was commended for her chatty you-and-I tone, her use of local names and information of local interest (still qualities to strive for!) - - - Jo Nelson

ACROSS THE EDITOR'S DESK

Ten candles are burning today on our "Reaching Rural People" birthday cake. In March, 1949, we started this tip sheet as a clearing house for ideas on press, radio, publications and visual aids.

Our staff was fairly new, then. During the year Ray Wolf had joined us from East Ottertail county, and Bob Rupp, (now on the Farmer staff) came to us from Iowa State College. Gerald McKay had been with us four years after teaching vo-ag at Brainerd. Jo Nelson had been with us a little longer, after several editing and writing jobs and teaching English and journalism at Concordia College, Moorhead. Lettie Gudmestad was our bulletin editor. And a year earlier, I had taken over for Paul Johnson, who is now editor of Prairie Farmer magazine.

Ten years ago, Glenn McCleary, Washington county, and Howard Grant, then of Crow Wing county, were doing a good job of publicizing the dairy-egg quality show. Ed Slettom, then in Rice county, had arranged an attractive bulletin display. "Jap" Swedberg, recently retired Redwood agent, was placing his pictures in national magazines. Frank Forbes, then in Marshall county, was doing a good job working with the Warren Sheaf. Ronald McCamus, Kandiyohi county, had 25 stories in his local papers in one week, and Verna Mikesch, then Lac qui Parle home agent, had published her 10 commandments for 4-H demonstrations. Harold B. Swanson

OFF THE PRESS ---

ACROSS THE MIKE-



What has happened to county agent news work in the past 10 years? You could easily say "plenty." About 50 weeklies in the state have had readership studies



Let's go back to March, 1949. Ray Wolf had been farm radio director only 8 months. Jo Nelson was known as Jo Bjornson. The first tape recorders

conducted since World War II. Of those before 1955, less than a fourth of the issues involved contained county agent news columns.

(Brush) had just been placed in 5 counties. Wire recorders were being used by about 15 agents. Fifty-two counties had farm and home programs on 26 stations. Thirty-minute programs were common. A converter was installed for the first time in an agent's car for on-the-spot tape recordings. Paper-backed recording tape was used almost exclusively. Plastic tape and plastic reels were just coming on the market. Chet Graham (formerly of Scott) and Deke Grussendorf (" " " So. St. Louis) were still beaming -- they had recently been named tops in radio in our first Information Contest. Twenty of our present radio stations were not even on the air. KSTP-TV was the only television station operating in Minnesota.

Today, nearly two-thirds of the weeklies you pick up have a personal news column written by the agent.

The way columns are used is improving, too. There's more local stuff in them. And agents are adapting State-supplied material to local situations.

Arnie Sandager in Scott county recently took a short paragraph on laying hen confinement from a news release. He followed this up by mentioning a local poultryman who was applying this principle of closer confinement,

Today - 1959 - nearly every county has a portable tape recorder. Seventy-five counties have regular programs on 50 stations. Average length of programs is 5 to 10 minutes. Sixty-four radio stations and 10 TV stations are operating in Minnesota. The other facts are known.

George Gehant, Jr., Lac qui Parle county, did the same thing with a story on corn plant populations. He told how one farmer rigged up his planter to get 17,600 kernels in every acre.

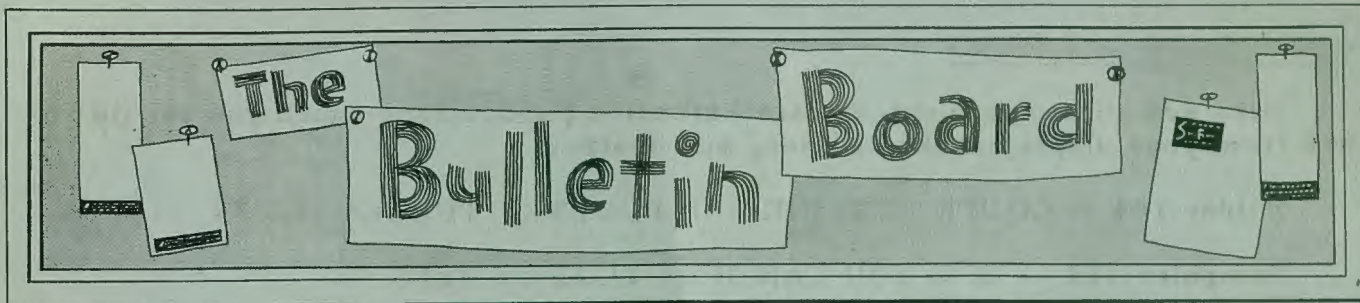
Now let's look in the crystal ball to learn about 1969. Every agent has a pocket size recorder operated by cosmic rays. His small movie camera records sound and pictures instantly without a flash attachment or wires. He does live radio programs by short wave from field, home or plane. To dictate letters and reports he talks into his typewriter. He sees who he's talking to on the telephone. Most agents have a weekly TV show on one of the 20 stations. Group meetings are a thing of the past.

All in all, as Burton Olson in Benton county puts it, the news column is a pretty important "tool" in our kit. Says Burt: "It may be the only contact we have with some people in the county. So it is important to consider carefully what goes into a column to make it most effective. But it's worth the time it takes and you never know what will 'grow' from a seed planted by means of a news column."

In a week or so, we'll be sending a packet of stories on weed control. The material will be quite similar to what went out last year with one difference: changes in recommendations concerning a number of chemicals. We will supply mats of weeds on an individual request basis.

Well, enough of that! We've come a long way in 10 years and we've got a long way to go. When and how we get there is up to you and me. - - -Ray Wolf

- - - Phil Tichenor



March 16, 1959

HAPPY SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY TO US!

Certainly you know by now that Reaching Rural People celebrates a 10th Anniversary with this issue. The BULLETIN BOARD, however, can't claim to be quite as venerable as the sections on Press, Radio, and Visual Aids--not by some three years.

It's true that Harold Swanson's inaugural column of March, 1949 gave space to a report on bulletins by Mrs. Lettie Gudmestad, bulletin editor at the time. And it's also true that Maggie Nielsen, her successor, reported progress on publications from time to time through Harold's column. But it wasn't until the February, 1952 issue that Miss Nielsen's "Bulletin Board" received equal billing. And it was March, 1952 when the BULLETIN BOARD blossomed out, in full-dress blue, as a separate feature.

So this is really only our 7th Anniversary. But we're proud to have been associated even that long with the other sections of Reaching Rural People. And with a bow to Mrs. Gudmestad, Maggie Nielsen, Mrs. Gwen Haws, and Jean Metcalf--all predecessors to the present editors--we hope you've found these "reviews" of in-the-mill publications valuable in your county offices.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

FARM AND HOME RADIO-TV PROGRAM--April, May and June schedules for Hi-lights in Homemaking and University Farm Hour, KUOM, and Town and Country on KTCA-TV. Available before April 1.

CLEANING SOILED EGGS--Poultry Husbandry Fact Sheet No. 1. Milo H. Swanson and Robert W. Berg. Tips on producing nest-clean eggs and methods for cleaning eggs. Early April delivery.

SULFUR FOR MINNESOTA SOILS--Soils Fact Sheet No. 5. C. J. Overdahl and A. C. Caldwell. Lists sources of soil sulfur and sulfur-bearing materials. Also has sections on sulfur removal by crops, leaching losses, and recommendations. Now available.

BEING REPRINTED

Sta. Bul. 434 (NCR#71) -- QUACKGRASS CONTROL

MORE SPRING CLEANING

Here are some more out-of-date Extension publications which you should remove from your display racks or files, and destroy.

Folder 144 -- CONTROL SWINE AND POULTRY TUBERCULOSIS

Pamphlet 123 -- HOW YOU CAN SPOT LOAFER HENS
137 -- GET THE JUMP ON MIDSUMMER SLUMP

Bulletin 231 -- JUNIOR PARTNERSHIP IN RURAL YOUTH
234 -- BETTER CREAM RETURNS
276 -- DAIRYING WITH A FUTURE

USDA "SEEDFLAX" BULLETIN

Extension agronomist Bill Hueg tells us that a supply of USDA Farmers' Bulletin 2122, Growing Seed Flax in the North Central States, has been placed in the Bulletin Room. The bulletin has direct application in counties where flax is important. If your county is one of those, you can get up to 10 copies by writing directly to the Bulletin Room. Total quantity is limited, however, so please don't order if the bulletin has little interest or value for you.

USDA "PUBLICATIONS INVENTORY"

Here are some new titles to add to your office copy of the Annual Inventory List of USDA Popular Publications. Contact J. F. Kuehn if you feel you need any of these for your county use.

F 1263 -- BREEDS OF SWINE (Reprint).

F 1727 -- SELECTING HENS FOR EGG PRODUCTION (Reprint).

F 2003 -- LEGUME INOCULATION--WHAT IT IS, WHAT IT DOES (Revised 1959).

F 2120 -- RICE DISEASES. (Replaces F 1854).

F 2126 -- THE FARM BEEF HERD. (Replaces F 1592).

F 2128 -- HOSE PUMP FOR APPLYING FERTILIZER SOLUTION. (Replaces F2096)

F 2132 -- IMPROVING YOUR DAIRY HERD. (Replaces F 1974).

L 154 -- PRODUCTION OF PARSNIPS (Reprint)

L 359 -- KIEFER PEARS FOR HOME USE (Slightly revised 1959).

L 364 -- CHINCH BUGS: HOW TO CONTROL THEM (Revised 1958).

L 441 -- CATTLE WARTS. (Replaces L 75).

Also note that F 1017, CATTLE SCAB AND METHODS OF CONTROL AND ERADICATION, has been discontinued by the USDA. Any copies you may have on hand can be used; but when those are gone, scratch the title from the Inventory, since the USDA supplies are exhausted.

---Earl Brigham, Maxine Larson