

THE VISITOR

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THE PROJECT AND THE BOY

The financial aspect of the project is emphasized so strongly by its advocates, that the impression is given sometimes that profits and losses are the most important aims of vocational agriculture.

The project is intended to be a business enterprise, but the opportunity for financial gain is a strong motivating factor, fully appreciated by those directing youthful efforts. That a project-worker makes a satisfactory profit, however, is not to becloud his appreciation of other benefits arising from supervised farm practice.

The Visitor has read the stories of projects carried on by boys and girls in Minnesota in 1918-19, and from these has made a collection of the benefits named as derived from the performance of project work. It is gratifying to note the variety of influences exerted, such as value of accurate farm records, knowledge of improved methods of production, cost of production, importance of pure seed, or purebred animals, recognition of plant pest and animal disease control methods, renewed interest in farming, and experiences of responsibility and management. That Minnesota boys and girls are not so sordid in their thinking that they do not witness to the deeper, more abiding advantages of project work, is shown in excerpts from their stories. We commend them for careful reading.

"I think that this project has really been worth while for the following reasons: One gets interested in a project or any kind of plant when tending to it, and learns things that are practical. 2. I know how to select seed by 'hill-selection' which is one of the best methods. 3. One cannot raise a very good crop if the seed is not of a true-to-type variety or nearly so. 4. It is not a very good plan to hill potatoes for it makes it much easier for the moisture to evaporate and when the potatoes are growing they need plenty of moisture." Potato project.

(Continued on Page 3)

GETTING RESULTS FROM PROJECT WORK

F. L. Crowe, instructor at New Richland, is optimistic about the possibilities of vocational agriculture. He writes:

"I have had some splendid results from poultry projects. Christ Thurson (night school student) hatched and reared a flock of over 200 purebred White Wyandottes of an excellent laying strain. He bought a new incubator, a new coal-heated brooder, and built a new colony house. He won first prize at the Waseca County Fair and entered a full quota at the county poultry show held here January 18, 19, and 20. His pullets began laying the first of October. Before joining my evening class he had the ordinary farm flock of mongrels and took no interest in them.

"Oluf Liane (of the night school) hatched and reared 220 chickens from the same stock. He purchased a new coal-heated brooder, built a new colony house, adopted a modern system of feed, care, etc., and is planning to enter some of his birds at the show. His pullets also began laying in October. He had poor stock previously and took little interest in them.

"Frank Apley (night school student) hatched out and bought baby chicks and now has a fine flock where previously he had mongrels. He bought a coal-heated brooder, built a colony house, remodeled his chicken house, bought an oat sprouter, and built a dry-mash hopper. All these fellows and many more are anxious to win at the approaching show. We are setting apart one section of the exhibit space exclusively for White Wyandottes, offering special prizes, and expect to see some lively competition.

"Morris Berg, Hulbert Greiner, and Francis Wallace (of the day school) made a good showing also.

"Arvid Spoonberg raised a purebred Shorthorn calf and in six months, by feeding a balanced ration it put on 550 pounds or about three pounds a day. He won first in the dairy judging contest at the county fair. His

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father has adopted a balanced ration for his cows and young stock as a result of his work.

"The corn boys had projects ranging from 8 to 23 acres, yielding 65 bushels bushels to the acre for the best. We measured what we considered the best acre in Leonard Discher's seventeen-acre field and it husked out 90 bushels. He got a free trip to the state fair. Some of the boys who had dairy projects found several boarder sows and as a result their parents are going to raise better stock."

SWINE AND CORN DATA

S. E. Robinson, agricultural instructor at Alexandria, submits definite figures to show the value of agricultural instruction:

"Following are the number in the litter, the number of pounds gained per day, and the cost per pound of gain:

Sows.	Pigs in litter.	Lbs. per day.	Cents per lb.
1	9	0.98	9.0
1	4	0.81	13.0
1	6	0.80	8.6
1	5	1.00	14.0
1	10	1.10	7.0
1	9	0.84	7.6

In the case of the corn, only one boy finished the project. The following are some of the facts in this case: Five acres of Minnesota No. 13 corn, total yield 221 bushels, or 44.2 bushels per acre. The average in the county last year was only about 25 bushels per acre."

AN INTERESTING DEMONSTRATION

S. A. Aldrich, agricultural instructor at Mantorville, gives the following account of a demonstration in rural schools:

"Yesterday I was making a tour of the country schools with three of the older agricultural students. We took along two very excellent Rhode Island Red cocks and plaster of Paris, black leaf 40, gasolene, and carbolic acid necessary for making several kinds of lice powder. At the first school I gave a blackboard talk about lice, mites, and methods for getting rid of them. We gave them formulae for white-wash and other sprays, and while the talk was being given one chap was making the lice powder. At the end of the period this was passed around so that the children could smell it. They all agreed that if they were lice they would either scamper or die real soon. At the other schools the boys alternated in giving the talk and making the demonstration. We introduced our visit with some funny songs in which all the school joined after a few trials. The vocational boys seemed to enjoy the new work and the country pupils were enthusiastic in their promises to carry out our program for liberating the chickens from bondage to lice and mites and making them happy.

"Our project work for the coming year will include about fifteen or eighteen litters of purebred pigs, several projects with corn in five- or ten-acre plots, and considerable poultry work. I hope to have some calf, pig, and about twenty poultry projects with rural school children. My class of older boys will conduct their major projects in Farm Management. They will consist in taking the inventory and keeping the books for the farms and determining the relative profits of the various farm enterprises."

J. C. Hening, agricultural instructor at Canby, shows the value of an alfalfa demonstration as follows:

"One of the boys who had an alfalfa project bought Grimm seed and paid \$55 for his seed. He prepared the ground very carefully and inoculated the land with soil from another field, where alfalfa had been grown. The total cost of putting in the four and a half acres of alfalfa was \$118.15. The father of one of the boys became interested in inoculation of alfalfa. He did not know the necessity of it before."

(Continued from Page 1)

"The greatest benefit I received from my project was that with the aid of my parents and instructor I learned to raise potatoes properly. I also learned the best treatment for the various pests of potatoes, and I had a nice little sum to put in the bank besides." Potato project.

"This project has been of value to me because of the following: 1. I have never had the opportunity to try an incubator before. 2. I fed chickens before, but never intelligently. 3. My parents became interested in it. 4. Through my experience I have found that an agricultural project is worth while." Poultry project.

"Considering the good luck I have had with these hogs, I have decided to get more next spring". Pig project.

"My father had a field of corn beside mine and when the corn was about six inches high I could see the dividing line between his corn and mine. Mine excelled his by far. It was much higher and looked much healthier than his corn. Besides the instruction gained about my project, the instructor gave me much good advice about other things on the farm." Corn project.

"I think the greatest value I received was that it enables me to understand what it means to care for a piece of ground. When figuring up the yield of some ground that has not had the care which you have given yours, one can really see that it is just as well to have a one-hundred-acre farm as to have a two-hundred-acre farm and not care for the ground in the way it should be taken care of." Corn project.

"I think the greatest value I received from carrying on my project was that I learned more how it grew and what harmed it, and also how much or often the ground needed cultivation. I watched it more closely because I had an interest in it than if it had belonged to any one else. I think I made good enough profits on my corn and am well pleased with my returns." Corn project.

"By keeping records of this wheat field I found out how much it costs me to raise an acre of wheat and this I did not know before." Wheat project.

"By growing this field of corn I learned several things, one was how much corn can be grown to the acre, another was how much profit can be made per acre. Since this was my own field of corn I gave it more care-

ful attention and learned more than I would if I had not been personally interested." Corn project.

"My average yield was 65 bushels to the acre and the total yield 1,495 bushels. Because this was my own field of corn I took more interest in it than I did in the other fields and learned more about each operation. By keeping records I learned how much it cost to produce corn, something I did not know before." Corn project.

"Keeping records was very hard for me, for it was the first time I had done this kind of work, but I have learned a great deal by it. I believe every one ought to keep accurate records of all his farm operations because only in this way can one tell what farm operations are profitable." Corn project.

"The agricultural instructor visited me every two weeks to see what I was doing. He would bring out some farm papers for me to read every time he came." Pig project.

"I think that the greatest value I got out of my project was the experience. I found out many things by getting out and doing things myself." Corn project.

"I felt as though the greatest value I got from taking the project work last spring was that when I take another project, I will know more how to go at it, and how to prepare the soil, etc. I surely would not take into consideration very much, how much money I could earn from it, altho if the money is to be yours, you will feel a great deal more like putting energy into it." Corn project.

"The greatest value in carrying on the project was the knowledge I learned about pig raising and how to keep a record of all transactions relating to it. I know, too, what kind of quarters must be provided for the old sow and the little pigs and what they must get to eat." Swine project.

"The value of the project was to show me the gains per day and for a period of time according to the feed which was fed. I also learned more about feeding and caring for the sow and litter." Pig project.

"I believe the greatest value I received from carrying on the project was the cost of producing an acre of corn. Most men just think what the corn brings them, not what it costs to produce it. I believe if every man kept track of all expenses on his corn there would be cheaper corn raised in the country." Corn project.

"I gained several things by raising my acre of corn. First, I acquired a

better knowledge of corn, which I think every boy should have. Second, I made use of many hours of time which otherwise would probably have been wasted." Corn project.

"I have learned a great many things about corn through this project but do not know which I should prize as to greatest value. I have learned when and to what depth to cultivate and many other things. Last spring when I started the project I did not know much about caring for a field of corn, but feel sure I know a great deal more now. I took pleasure in the work, because I did it all myself except the planting, which my father did for me." Corn project.

"The most advantage I got from my project work is that you have to attend to work and business if you want to make anything, and to plant the crop that you will get the most from." Corn project.

"My project cleared only \$18, but as my chickens have now started to lay eggs, I figure that I made a little better. In this work I have decided that it pays to care for chickens and that a man can make nearly as much from his chickens as from other projects. And I have decided to improve my breed as much as possible and to enlarge it by producing more chicks next year." Poultry project.

"I think the greatest value that I received from carrying on the project was the experience in feeding and caring for stock, and proving to my own satisfaction and that of my father, that purebred stock, fed properly, pays, and pays well." Pig project.

"I think I was most benefited in this work by learning how to feed right. I had some vague notion of feeding before but this work cleared up most of my difficulties." Pig project.

G. H. Atwood, agricultural instructor at Pine River, gives the following returns from a few of the projects which he supervised.

"My best boy in the potato project raised 196 bushels of potatoes at a cost of \$90.30, and received \$137.20, a gain of \$46.90. The best corn project was of seven acres, worth \$136 and cost \$102.30 to raise it, a gain of \$33.50. The best two poultry projects were as follows: Fifty chickens were hatched and the value of those that lived until fall was \$39.40, the cost to raise \$22.65, a gain of \$16.75; seventy-one chickens were hatched and those that lived until fall were worth \$35.68, and cost \$16.25 to raise, a gain of \$19.42."

FATHER AND SON

L. H. Thurwachter, agricultural instructor at Albert Lea, shows that successful project work is a convincing argument for the adoption of improved methods of farming and giving the son a share in the management of the farm:

"Joseph Kermes had a five-acre corn project in 1920. He purchased some of the best 100 per cent Silver King corn obtainable in Freeborn county. His average yield per acre was 85 bushels. His father has a poor type of yellow dent corn. He did not think his corn would yield 40 bushels per acre. He is planning to grow only Silver King corn and thus increase his yield.

"Arnold Skaar was a second-year pupil in the Smith-Hughes agriculture class. He had a swine project in 1920. He purchased a purebred Poland China gilt at an auction sale last March and paid \$95. In April this gilt had four boar pigs and one sow pig. He raised them all. He sold two boars for \$50 each. Two boars were not of the right type, so they were sold in the market when fat for \$49.20. He is keeping the gilt. He values her at \$50, and he values the old sow at \$120, for at the present time she has a litter of six. Arnold realized \$224.20 on an investment of \$95. His feed and labor cost were \$79.60. Not only has he shown the value of purebred pigs on the farm, but has interested his father and the other members of the family to such an extent that they will keep only purebred Poland China swine. The farm is now Skaar and Sons' Farm."

RECENT BULLETINS

The following are recent bulletins desirable for agricultural departments: Seventy-two Exercises in Soils and Crops, by the State Board for Vocational Education, Little Rock, Ark.

Project Study Outlines, Bulletin 121, Department of Education, Austin, Texas.

Farm Shop Work, Special Bulletin No. 1, State College, Pennsylvania.

Development of Agricultural Instruction in Secondary Schools, Bulletin 85, 1919, by H. P. Barrows, Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, Washington, D. C.

Control of the Root, Stalk, and Ear Diseases of Corn, Farmers' Bulletin 1176, Washington, D. C.

Wisconsin Farm Record Book, issued by the College of Agriculture, Madison, Wisconsin. Price 50 cents.