

# LOOKING BACK

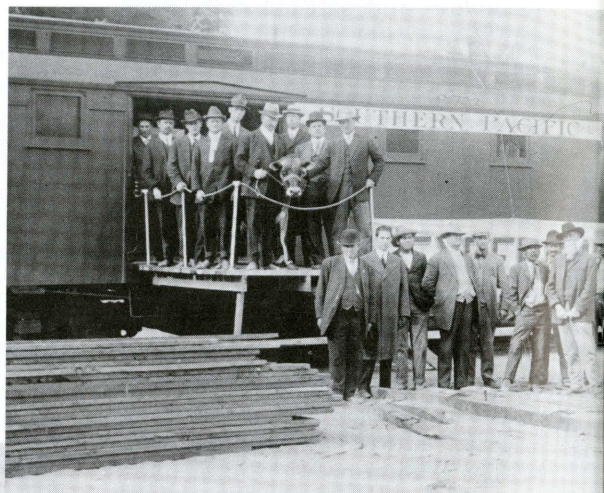


Range reseeding demonstration, Yavapai County, 1939.

**T**he Cooperative Extension Service began in 1914 when knowledge started to flow from the research and educational programs that had been vested in the land-grant universities years earlier. It was evident that this knowledge must be taken to the people of the nation. We were predominantly a rural society and our lives were dependent upon an agricultural economy and centered on the family and home. The well-being of the nation's people depended upon the development of technology and its application on the farm and in the home.

The concept of such a public education program developed in the early 1900s and finally took shape with the Smith-Lever Act, passed by Congress in 1914. In 1912, the year Arizona became a state, the College of Agriculture offered agricultural short courses to more than 150 participants and inaugurated the Demonstration Train. The train traveled

The Demonstration Train at one of its 30 Arizona stops, 1912.



Extension agents study Navajo corn field, Navajo County, 1920.

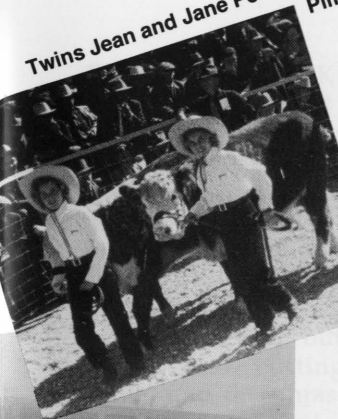
more than 2,000 miles throughout the state each November and December from 1912 to 1914. Researchers and educators gave lectures and demonstrations at each of the 30 stops.

With funding from the Smith-Lever Act, The University of Arizona hired Stanley F. Morse on July 1, 1914 as superintendent of Agricultural Extension. He was charged with introducing new principles,

demonstrating new practices, and teaching people how to apply them to their livelihoods and lives. Later that year, the College hired a livestock specialist, an agronomist, a state 4-H agent and county agents for Cochise, Santa Cruz and Maricopa counties. During the next two years, agents for Graham, Greenlee, Navajo, Apache, Pinal and Coconino Counties were added. In 1916, Estes P. Taylor was named the first

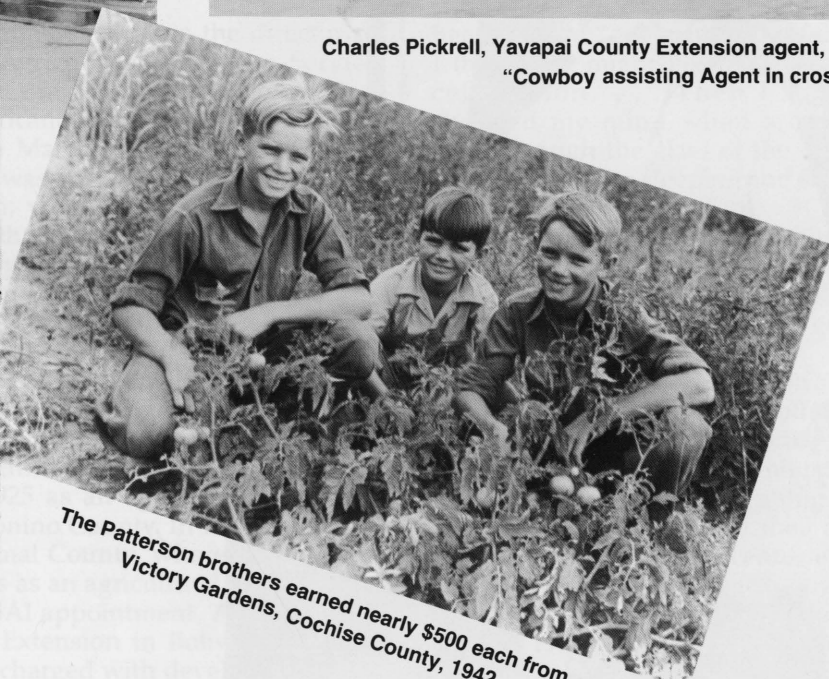


Twins Jean and Jane Percy show 4-H beef project, Pima County, 1941.



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Charles Pickrell, Yavapai County Extension agent, captioned this photo in his 1922 report, "Cowboy assisting Agent in crossing swollen stream."



The Patterson brothers earned nearly \$500 each from Victory Gardens, Cochise County, 1942.

director of Agricultural Extension in Arizona.

Extension specialists worked with their disciplinary colleagues on the University campus. The agents worked among the people in their communities. This provided the mechanism for solving local problems and influencing research to address problems for which there were no ready solutions.

The Extension of today is differ-

ent. The people today are different, and so are their needs. A mostly rural population became mostly urban. Advances in agricultural technology have been enormous. It is commonplace now for producers to use laser beams to level their land, keep records with computers, irrigate crops with sprinkler and drip systems, and control animal breeding through use of artificial methods.

As a result of wide-spread application of technology to agriculture, people today depend on relatively few producers for their sustenance. Yet food is more plentiful and its purchase takes less of our personal income than ever before. These advances occurred while the nation endured two world wars, the Great Depression, and countless other natural disasters, economic setback and resource limitations.

Extension mirrors society and the changes that society has undergone. The roles that Extension plays as educator and problem-solver are even more critical today in this time of rapidly changing technology and expanding knowledge.

We've changed to meet the needs of the people we serve. We are different today from long ago and we will be different in the future. That is our strength and it builds on the wisdom of the past.

From "College of Agriculture: A Century of Discovery, The University of Arizona, 1985"