



**CLUB WORK FOR** youths began early in Pinal County. At left, a winning team in garden demonstration methods explains how to form earth for ridging for irrigation. This picture was taken nearly 40 years ago.

**IN CENTER PHOTO,** Pinal County youth club work shows a 4-H miss intent on sewing a straight seam. At right, a swine showman at the Pinal 4-H fair rests with his prize porker before going into the show ring.

## *Through Cooperation, Cotton and Cattle* **PINAL COUNTY THRIVES**

By Charles E. Robertson

Pinal County is a desert area with a colorful past. A look into the past some 3200 years indicates the rise and fall of civilizations in this area which have been directly related to water.

The ancient HoHoKam civilization has left ruins of canals and cities that indicate this area supported a population as large or larger than the population of today. Speculation on the fall of the HoHoKam is easy to associate with water; either a lack of water or a decline in quality.

### **HoHoKams Came and Left**

These ancient people worked together on their problems and built a thriving community but failure somewhere resulted in a return to the desert. Today the people of Pinal County have built a thriving community.

Charles E. Robertson is an Indiana native characterized by a friendly manner and his staunch loyalty to Pinal County. He attended Indiana University in 1937-38, received his bachelor's degree in agriculture from Purdue University in 1941, and was in the Air Corps 1941-45. Chuck Robertson then was an assistant in agricultural economics at The University of Arizona, 1946-49, then went into cotton and cattle farming in Pinal County, until named assistant county agent at Casa Grande in the fall of 1955. He was promoted to agent-in-charge Sept. 1, 1960, succeeding Al Vincent.

Pinal County's 300,000 irrigated acres and its cattle ranches put \$75,000,000 into the economy annually. The county's 130,000 acres of upland cotton is two-fifths of the state's total, its 9,800 acres of long staple American-Egyptian cotton a fifth of the Arizona total.

Pinal harvests 44,000 acres of barley, more than a quarter of the state's barley production, and the 26,000 acres of sorghum grown in Pinal County is nearly a fifth of the state total. A third of the state's wheat acreage is in Pinal.

### **Food and Fiber**

Translated for the layman, Pinal County's cotton could put a new shirt on every man in America in 1964, plus enough yardage left over for shifts for every suburban housewife. And the beef produced in Pinal County feedlots and ranches would furnish steak, hamburger or roast beef for every person in the city of Tucson — 300,000 people — once a day for an entire year. Also, Pinal County people spend \$6,000,000 per month, as indicated by retail sales records.

Most important, perhaps, is the fact that the county's agriculture is well organized and integrated. The tremendous volume of feed grains and alfalfa are utilized largely in feedlots within the county, barley turned into steaks without going across a county line. Feedlot operator Jim Benedict, one of the ablest men in the business,

mentions casually that his mills and feedlot at Stanfield use 35,000 tons of feed grains per year — most of it bought from growers within the county.

Will this area again return to desert? No one thinks so. The agricultural problems of the people are being systematically overcome by the application of scientific methods. In 1928 a demonstration on how to grow more with less water was being carried out. The Farm Bureau is active in providing assistance to Agricultural Extension work. A sprinkler demonstration on how to grow more

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**HORSES AND RIDING** are important parts of 4-H activity in Pinal County. One of the most enthusiastic of the adult leaders is Mary Taylor, ramrod of the Lasso Riders. In photo below she is shown resting a bit and conferring with two of her young charges.





**A TREMENDOUS INVESTMENT** in the feedlot business is the feed processing mill. This one, at the Benedict feedlot, is the very latest thing in efficiency. Through its huge metal maws go over 35,000 tons of grains per year, as well as vast quantities of alfalfa.

**ONE OF THE MOST** efficient feedlot operations in the nation is in Pinal County, the James Benedict feedlot west of Casa Grande. Here animals are fed and cared for scientifically, with every effort to make fast, efficient gains in weight.



**MOM, I WON!** This young miss saw hours in the kitchen pay off in first place ribbons at the Pinal County 4-H Fair.

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with less water was a cooperative venture with the Farm Bureau.

There is an Extension Advisory Board made up of local people familiar with local problems, to assist in meeting the demands of today's society. Not only the demand for supplying bread and meat, but the activities in the home and the development of our youth. About 600 4-H youths and 120 leaders make up today's 4-H clubs in Pinal County.

#### **4-H on Horseback**

The many activities of 4-H are valuable training experiences for both young and old. Trail rides have become very popular and educational. Great pride is taken in discipline and etiquette. Leave a clean camp; leave a good impression. Cleanliness is next to Godliness. Make the Best Better.

Through the years the home economics section of extension work has been active. The 16,000 Pinal County families may still avail themselves of the opportunity to improve their lives, as so many have done in the past.

## Dwarf Fruit Trees Have Advantages

Dwarf fruit trees have some advantages for the home gardener, according to Harvey Tate, horticulture specialist with The University of Arizona.

"More trees can be planted in a limited area and they come into pollination earlier," he explains. The home gardener can spray and harvest the trees easier because of their size.

"Before planting them, here are some things you should know," says Tate. Dwarfs are not as hardy as standard trees because their root system is shallow and more susceptible to dry soil conditions, and low temperatures. He suggests mulching around a dwarf tree's base to help maintain even soil moisture and temperature levels during the winter.

Dwarfs are achieved by grafting a standard variety on a dwarf rootstock which will dwarf the size of the tree. Principal dwarf fruit trees are apples, which grow best at elevations 4,000 feet and above in Arizona.

However, Tate does not advise planting a real dwarf apple tree because the roots will not support the plant and staking is required.

Other dwarf fruit trees include a peach called Bonanza, dwarf pears from grafting on quince rootstock, and cherries dwarfed by grafting on Nanking rootstock. Dwarf trees are available from commercial nurseries.

"It's usually easier to buy the dwarfs than to try to graft the rootstock yourself," suggests Tate.