

Narrative Report of Agricultural Agent for  
Maricopa County, Arizona.

From December 1st, 1918 to November 30th, 1919.  
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Organization:

In my annual report of last year a summary of agricultural conditions, and the status of organized extension work was fairly well described. The report of this year is arranged largely as a supplement to that of 1918.

A year ago, hope was entertained that we might work out a plan of Farm Bureau organization which would be effective. The influenza epidemic kept us from accomplishing this during last winter and spring, while during the summer it was considered unwise, largely because of our climatic conditions, to attempt the matter. Meanwhile, the situation has been more carefully studied and our course appears plainer, with better chances for success.

The successful organization of a Farm Bureau seems difficult. The statement was made last year that our conditions here are different from those of any other communities, and that we have little precedent to go by. This fact at present is more clear than ever. In studying Farm Bureaus in other neighboring states, in as far as possible, it appears that those which are apparently successful are in a healthy condition because of one of three reasons; first, the personnel in the county agent's office is strong enough and sufficiently numerous to furnish the motive power of the Farm Bureau; second, the Farm Bureau is essentially centered about some glaring need, such as control of a serious rodent pest or marketing of some particular product which the community has been unable, prior to the organization

of a Farm Bureau, successfully to market; and third, because the first burst of enthusiasm has not completely waned and is still sufficiently strong to keep the organization on its feet.

At present Maricopa County has a nominal Farm Bureau, organized according to the generally accepted and approved plan which was in effect a year and a half ago. Local committeemen were selected but have failed to take hold of the work, either because there have been no particular problems which the Farm Bureau could solve, or because they needed outside help to carry the weight of the organization and to keep the interest from waning. If Maricopa County had had a staff of five agents a year and a half ago, which she seriously needs, they could have been able to carry the weight of the organization until such time as it became self operative and self perpetuating, with whatever modifications experience would have dictated as advisable. Since we have never had but one agricultural agent at a time in the county, its geographical area and its great number of agricultural enterprises have made it a physical impossibility for a single agent to carry the weight of the Farm Bureau, and at the same time, render such services as the people have demanded.

There have appeared to my attention during my tenure of office no glaring problems which the Farm Bureau could solve sufficient to furnish motive power enough to make a Farm Bureau organization self operative and self perpetuating. Because marketing and similar problems of major agricultural enterprises in Maricopa County are quite well cared for by existing specific organizations, the purpose of the Farm Bureau must be essentially educational.

Past efforts at organization, which have largely been

evident failures, have warned us against the futility of starting another such organization to be carried on by the momentum furnished from the beginning enthusiasm. Because of the difficulties mentioned, it is not our policy to attempt a complete job in the near future, but will be necessary for us to proceed step by step. While there are possibilities of our having a smoothly running, self perpetuating Farm Bureau with a large number of paid up members within the next six months, our first job must necessarily be to install the Farm Bureau plan of work and proceed step by step, if necessary taking two or three years to finish the organization in permanent form.

It has been the policy of the present county agent to work on the Farm Bureau plan in as far as possible and our next step is to officialize this work. This method of Farm Bureau organization must necessarily be followed until such time as our conditions change, the most desired change being the addition of about four assistant agents. An attempt was made in two communities to bolster up the work of the Farm Bureau and to create an interest by doing work planned by local committeemen and leaders on the exact plan of the Farm Bureau as described by numerous circulars and visits of men whose duties are Farm Bureau organization. In one community only one piece of work was suggested and was satisfactorily carried out.

Local committeemen realize fully that they are considered responsible for additional <sup>work</sup> of any kind within the province of the county agent but have so far failed to call for help. Not a single constructive suggestion was offered at the meeting of local leaders in the second community meeting referred to. A third community, in response to suggestions, has asked the county agent

to assist in just the kind of Farm Bureau organization which was attempted in the two communities mentioned above. Organization in this community will probably be very effective,

While we are naturally optimistic over the results of our quiet ~~at~~ Farm Bureau campaign scheduled for the next few weeks, it will not be surprising if the organization fails to meet its possibilities in more than half of the communities in the county. If such be the case, those communities which do organize satisfactorily must be used as the basis of a County Farm Bureau and as the nuclei for other community organization without undue haste or pressure, at least until such time as the county agent has some assistance.

If the above statements regarding Farm Bureau organizations appear pessimistic or indicate a lack of desire to work on the accredited Farm Bureau plan, they are entirely misleading. My criticisms of Farm Bureau organizations in this county are the results of a great deal of careful study and considerable experience in trying to put the organization across in the county. My somewhat cautious method of procedure has been adopted after the failure of the usual Farm Bureau plan to accomplish anything worth while in Maricopa county. As an indication of my desire to ~~##~~ see a Farm Bureau in Maricopa county, it may be mentioned that one month in the past year has been spent on Farm Bureau organization project.

#### Crops:

Because of the profits made in Arizona Egyptian cotton growing, the acreage has increased until 85,000 acres or one-third of the cultivated land in Maricopa county is in cotton. The value of this crop is greater than any other two crops com-

bined, hence two month were spent in carrying out educational propoganda in connection with Arizona Egyptian cotton growing. Much individual service was rendered and a great number of calls for advice came to the office. The most effective work in cotton education was accomplished by means of field trips, which ordinarily covered about four farms, on representative soil types and with different cultural methods. Growers accompanying these trips were invited from all parts of the county and a great deal of valuable information was gained from discussion of conditions found, as well as inspection of the different demonstrations in progress. These demonstrations pointed out especially desirable methods of irrigation and spacing and an apparent failure of increased yields from commercial fertilizers or intercropped legumes. (see exhibit A. )

Field crops other than cotton occupied sixteen days, with greatest efforts centering around irrigation of small grains, introduction of Hairy Peruvian Alfalfa, leguminous cover crops, and hegari. A car of first class seed potatoes was brought in by the combined efforts of the county agents of Cochino County, Arizona, and Maricopa County. Extravagant claims of a commercial legume bacteria company were thoroughly tried out, attention was called to the results and it is highly probable that a great number of farmers will save two dollars per acre next year by not buying this culture which is not needed.

A little work was done in connection with fruit and truck crops but no more attention was given to this class of products than was necessary. It is probable that more time will be devoted to horticultural products next year.

Livestock;

along livestock lines than has been necessary. A hog feeding demonstration of considerable value was carried out and the results were given a great deal of publicity. A number of farmers were assisted with feeding problems and with advice on silo construction. No doubt partly because of the county agent's work, a dozen silos were erected in one rather isolated community which heretofore had none, but unfortunately an enterprising salesman got into the territory at a time when other duties made it impossible to counteract his efforts, and sold a number of silos of undesirable type. While it is regrettable that the best silos were not put in this community, those built will probably be sufficiently satisfactory to materially increase the use of silage. Competition with the cotton industry has resulted in the sale of a large number of dairy cows, and in several cases I have assisted in connecting buyers with those having stock for sale. A range livestock school was assisted in the county, (see exhibit B.)

#### Soils & Soil Fertility:

A good many people unacquainted with irrigation or arid formed soils have requested help in planning for irrigation and selecting soils. Where possible I have spent considerable time in helping the newcomer get located without making the serious mistakes that many people unacquainted with irrigation are not properly warned against. A great deal of help has been rendered individuals in alkali problems, while one drainage system covering 900 acres has been partially planned. A large scale experiment on the use of acid phosphate on different soil types for both cotton and fruit was engineered in the spring. Thirty-seven tons of fertilizer was brought in and distributed and its

use planned from the county agent's office.

Many suggestions were made regarding land leveling and an attempt has been made to acquaint more people with the use of the buck scraper. In several instances diagrams and plans for making buck scrapers were left with the farmers.

#### Farm Business:

Probably the most valuable work under this heading is a county wide rodent control campaign which is at present under way. Pocket gophers have done considerable damage to fruit and irrigating ditches, and while individuals have successfully poisoned and trapped, this is the first attempt which has been made to make the campaign county wide and all inclusive. It is undertaken in co-operation with the Bureau of Biological Survey which has control of ample funds from the Government, State and county to distribute reasonable amounts of poison free to the farmers in a farm to farm canvass, at which time the men in charge also demonstrated the use of the poison. The campaign was begun with several articles in local newspapers and is being followed up by a series of a dozen demonstrations, which in turn is to be followed by a farm to farm canvass. It is likely that the gophers on 150,000 acres will be poisoned.

Since tractors are economically used in this vicinity, especially because of the lessened usefulness of horses during our hottest weather, several tractor demonstrations have been arranged under the county agent's direction, at which time quality of work was particularly emphasized, a better class of work having been done at these demonstrations than I have ever noticed in any other. The county agent's office is responsible for the creation of a tractor and implement department at the

Arizona State Fair, held in Phoenix in November. Twenty different models of tractors of ten different makes were shown this year, while the exhibit of tractor and horse drawn implements was very complete. A month was spent in this type of work, more than half of which was in connection with the 1919 State Fair. (see exhibit 'C')

Assistance was rendered in the formation of a cotton marketing association which has since made very satisfactory progress. Preliminary work, looking to the formation of two Farm Loan associations has been done. It is likely that both of these associations will be organized in a reasonable time.

#### Miscellaneous:

Nineteen days were spent in assisting in the county display which was set up at the International Soil-Products Exposition at Kansas City, the Southwest Cotton Carnival at Mesa Arizona, and the State Fair at Phoenix. During the first two shows probably 30,000 persons saw the exhibit, 25,000 of which visited it at Kansas City. A great deal of value came from this display which was essentially educational in its nature, and which took more honors than any two competing displays in the Soil-Products Exposition. Its effect will probably be seen in immigration. (see exhibit 'D')

The third Farm Bureau field day was held at the State Experiment Farm at Mesa on May 24th, with 1,000 people in attendance. This meeting was essentially educational rather than a picnic. The program consisted of the best tractor demonstration ever held in the county, a clothing demonstration for the women, and inspections of the experimental work on the farm, and numerous addresses. The occasion was an unqualified



success and was managed in a very similar manner to the second Farm Bureau field day held October 5th, 1918, and described in my last year's report. For various reasons no fall meeting of this sort was held. Assistance was rendered the Home Demonstration Agent and a specialist from the Washington office at a cottage cheese demonstration which attracted a crowd of fifty-five people.

Few pictures are submitted with this report since the county agent's office has been without a camera until very recently.

Future plans which have not been indicated in the above, include a series of extension schools to be held at different points in the county. In these schools no attempt will be made to cover other than the specific matters of interest to the community, and in as far as possible, local men will be put in charge of the schools. It is planned to hold seven or eight schools of one or two days bearing on cotton alone, three or four bearing on fruit and probably three or four livestock schools.

The year's work has been reasonably satisfactory and is at present suffering as much from lack of sufficient help as from any other reason. The future prospects are fairly bright and the office has attained a standing in the county which is all that can be hoped for at present. Especial care has been taken not to advertise the office cheaply by means of a flood of newspaper articles of no interest to anyone, though when interesting and readable matter has been available, it has been supplied to local publicity channels rather freely. All of the larger campaigns conducted by this office have been quite thoroughly advertised, and the most courteous treatment has been given by all of the papers and magazines published in the county. Probably the most effective factor in maintaining a satisfactory standing and dignity for

the office has been the result of definite service rendered  
to those applying.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "W. C. Leonard". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

County Agricultural Agent.