

ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT

OF

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Assistant County Agricultural Agent

PIMA COUNTY

December 1, 1948 to November 30, 1949

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ADULT PROGRAM

ORGANIZATION

The Pima County Farm Bureau was re-activated in June, 1949. The only active local in the county is the Marana Farm Bureau, which elected Pat Tucker, President, and Mrs. J. E. Farrell, Secretary-Treasurer. The assistant agent met with this organization whenever possible and on one occasion used a motion picture film, "The Other Side of the Fence", to show farmers the important part which soil minerals play in the nutrition of animals and humans.

The assistant agent worked with the Southern Arizona Rabbit Breeders Association which meets on the second Sunday of each month. This organization has been active in promoting better producer-consumer relations in the rabbit meat industry; has promoted local rabbit shows to encourage use of purebred breeding stock; has conducted an educational program to teach association members and 4-H Club members to judge rabbits according to rules of the A.R. & C.B.A. As a result of this program some of the best New Zealand White breeding-stock in the nation is located in Pima County Rabbitries.

The assistant agent has cooperated closely with the Pima County 4-H Club Leader's Association in planning the county 4-H Club program.

The Pima County 4-H Club Educational Committee was active during 1948-49 on the same basis as in past years.

This agent attended the County Agents' Conference held in Prescott, September 6 - 9, and the annual Extension Service Conference held November 15 - 19 at the University of Arizona, Tucson.

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INFORMATION PROGRAM

The assistant agent used the radio broadcast 18 times in the past year to instruct county residents, both 4-H members and adults, in farming information. The facilities of Radio Station KTUC alone were used until March, 1949. In the following four months both KTUC (CBS) and KOPO (ABC) were used. The KOPO broadcast is at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday for 10-12 minutes. The KTUC program was at 1:00 p.m. on Mondays until it was changed to 2:45 p.m. on Saturdays. This was an undesirable time so the program was dropped, leaving only the KOPO broadcast. The ~~tree~~ county extension agents rotate turns at these broadcasts. Broadcasts are: (1) interview type using local leaders, 4-H Club members, farmers, or specialists from the University of Arizona Extension Service or teaching staff; (2) general farm news broadcasts using local farm and home news when possible.

The local press printed 14 news articles during the year which were prepared by the assistant agent. Twelve of these were 4-H publicity while the other two were news articles of interest to dairymen and poultryment. Two daily newspapers and one weekly are using material prepared by this office.

The assistant agent prepared 22 circular letter, mailing 1371 copies, in notifying county residents of 4-H and adult extension meetings, and in distributing information to farmers and 4-H Club members. More circular letters to distribute timely information could be used to good advantage by this agent if time and secretarial help permitted.

The assistant agent used kodachrome slides and/or educational motion pictures in 20 meetings with 257 persons attending. The kodachrome slides on "Culling Poultry" were the most useful of any slides used. This agent has requested that the county agricultural agent requisition a slide projector for use of this office. It is often difficult to obtain the quipment from the state office because of conflicting schedules. The assistant agent must travel many additional miles at times in order to pick up equipment at the University and carry on necessary field work at the same time. The kodachrome slides on 4-H fair projects and 4-H county and state events have been used to arouse and maintain interest in club work. These were used in window displays in Tucson and were used at local 4-H Club meetings. Club members enjoy seeing themselves in action.

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PROJECTS

AGRONOMY

The assistant agent advised local farmers on planting dates, improved varieties, where to obtain seed, fertilizer recommendations, irrigation practices, soil requirements, etc. for small grains and legumes and sorghums. Only two farmers asked for information on use of 2,4-D to control pigweed, both instances being in sweet corn fields. Approximately 70% of the questions which farmers asked this agent concerned control of insects such as flea beetles and earworms in corn and grasshoppers in corn and alfalfa. One bad infestation of the three-cornered hopper was seen by the agent in an alfalfa field. The owner was advised to dust the field with 5% DDT early in the 1950 season, since it was too late to control the 1949 crop.

Alfalfa and permanent pastures plantings required the advice of the assistant agent on several occasions. Farmers have met with success in use of permanent pasture mixes only where water is plentiful and controlled grazing is practiced. Ninety percent of the questions asked of this agent regarding alfalfa culture came from "dudes" and other people new to this county.

Cotton is the major crop in Pima County. Ten days of the assistant agent's time was devoted to this project. Six cotton fertilizer and variety result demonstrations have been made in cooperation with cotton farmers. The assistant agent helped to record harvest data on these plantings and attended field days to acquaint cotton farmers with results of these demonstrations.

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PROJECTS (continued)

HORTICULTURE

The assistant agent devoted 24 days to advising county farmers and home owners on horticultural problems. These dealt with garden, landscaping and fruit plantings.

Local gardeners have had serious trouble with cutworms in tomatoes, aphids, red spiders, flea beetles, corn earworms, leafhoppers, blister beetles, squash vine borer and grasshoppers. In making recommendations for control of these insects this Agent has followed the recommendations of the University of Arizona Extension entomologist.

The sale of commercial fertilizers for gardens has had a rapid increase in recent years and County gardeners are becoming fertilizer "conscious". This resulted in many questions on fertilizers which the Assistant Agent answered. Copies of the Extension Service bulletin "Arizona Home Gardening" were very useful in explaining this question to gardeners. This Agent prepared and presented four radio broadcasts on gardening problems. A great many "service" calls were made to County home in response to requests for personal assistance. Such calls are kept to a minimum but it is often necessary to visit the scene to identify injurious insects, explain solution to irrigation problems, or advise on fertilizer needs. This Agent also assisted County residents on garden problems through telephone calls and office visits.

Landscape problems demanding information on pruning of evergreens, planting dates and varieties of shrubs and shade trees, cultural information, etc. demanded much of the Agent's time. Wherever possible these problems were answered by telephone or office calls but some instances required personal visit by this agent to the landowners houses to make recommendations. Excessive irrigation of shade trees and shrubs accounted for 70% of these problems. Iron chlorosis of eucalyptus and other shade trees, red spiders on arbor vitae, Texas Root Rot of Mulberry, Chinese Els, Pepper and Chinaberry trees, mesquite borers in Pepper trees, fertilizer injury and fertilizer needed, and cottony cushion scale on roses accounted for the remaining landscaping problems.

Fruit trees in Pima County are confined to backyard plantings except for two commercial orchards. The Assistant Agent visited the Beal Peach Ranch at Saporì at the owner's request for advice. Samples of peach leaves collected here by this Agent were sent to the University Plant Pathology laboratory for examination.

PROJECTS (continued)

HORTICULTURE (continued)

Bacterial shot-hole disease was reported as the cause of the trouble and Dr. Brown, University of Arizona Plant Pathologist, recommended a 3-4-50 Bordeaux spray as control. However, Mr. Beal elected to wait until winter before spraying, since there was danger from Bordeaux injury by summer spraying. Apricots on this ranch were suffering from iron chlorosis.

This Agent visited the Dudgeon Orchard in Flowing Wells community and obtained information on grape and plum varieties. This Agent also advised the owner on pruning of three year old apricot trees.

Green June beetles plagued County fruit plantings during June, July, and August. The only two controls found for small plantings are mesh-cloth coverings for trees (or paper bags on grape clusters) and sour milk in gallon cans for traps. Mr. Beal, Saponi, reported success with use of a spray using pyrethrum alone or a mixture of pyrethrum and 5% DDT wettable powder.

This Agent was assisted by Mr. Steve Fazio, University of Arizona Horticulturist, in demonstrating the patch-bud system of propagating pecan trees. Burkett and Mahan buds were worked on Success seedlings. Mr. G.F. Woods, Flowing Wells dairy farmer, cooperated in this demonstration.

PROJECTS (continued)

PROJECT #1 - POULTRY

The writer devoted 12 days to advising County flock owners on poultry problems. This Agent held two poultry culling demonstrations and one demonstration on post mortem examinations of diseased birds.

Disease reduced Pima County poultrymen's profits but were not serious for long periods. Permission to bring live virus vaccine in the state was granted in the early spring by the State Veterinary's Office. This enabled the larger commercial flocks to vaccinate for Newcastle Disease. Losses from Newcastle disease was less than 2% in either vaccinated or unvaccinated flocks during 1949.

Bronchitis caused heavy chick losses in small flocks but was not serious to most commercial brooders. Laying flocks' production dropped about 30% in April due to Bronchitis but production rose soon after.

Intestinal coccidiosis caused serious losses during August, 1949. The Valley View Poultry Farm, largest commercial producers in the county, secured good control by using sulfaquinoxalyn tablets dissolved in the drinking water. However, it was necessary to start treatment at the start of signs of the disease. Late treatment did not give good response.

Housing has been the most frequent question brought to the attention of this agent by people interested in the poultry business. Tucson is located in an egg and poultry meat efficient area; therefore, it offers possibilities of expansion. The large influx of out-of-state people who come to Tucson and have no livelihood creates a definite problem. These people are naturally interested in an industry offering a fair return. However, 80% of these people have little or no experience with poultry and 98% of them have insufficient capital to finance an economical poultry unit. A bulletin on this subject of poultry housing for southern Arizona complete with blue prints and cost of material estimates, would save this agent many hours of explanation. As an example: This agent devoted a total of two hours in office calls, two hours time and 36 miles of travel in the field to teach a Mr. Julius how to plan and construct a poultry building to house 800 hens. The finished product is still not all that could be desired in housing, at that! I might add that Mr. Julius is an intelligent man and required less instruction than some others. It is difficult to draw "word pictures" of shape, dimension, and materials needed in poultry housing when one is talking to a novice at poultry farming.

Fowl ticks and body lice were chief external parasites of poultry in Pima County in 1949.

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PROJECTS (continued)

PROJECT #1 - POULTRY (continued)

Mr. Wesley McCarney, manager of the Valley View Poultry Farm, cooperated with this agent in providing information on housing experiments conducted at this farm. These experiments are to compare the temperature variations beneath the metal sided and wooden-slats type of siding in gable-roofed houses. Also, comparisons of aluminum roofing and aluminum-painted iron roofing are being made.

Summer temperature records indicate that the aluminum roof keeps the hen-level temperature 3° to 5° cooler than the iron roof painted with aluminum paint.

First year results indicate that wooden slates placed vertically on the south, west, and north sides of the shed will reduce the temperature within the house to from 4 to 6 degrees under that temperature of the houses having raised metal flaps. Winter temperatures will be compared and reported in 1950.

PROJECTS (continued)

PROJECT # 4 - DAIRY

There are three retail dairies and ten smaller dairies, who sell wholesale to the other three in Pima County. Twelve dairymen belong to the Pima-Pinal D.H.I.A. There is no chance of expansion of this program at present. The cow tester has all of the herds that he can handle.

The G. F. Woods' (Fairview Dairy) herd of registered Holsteins was classified on October 31, 1949. This was the only Hostein herd classified here in this county since 1946. This agent prepared advance publicity and assisted in the demonstration of classification by Mr. Weeks of the Holstein-Friesian Association.

The Shamrock Dairy, University of Arizona, Jim Ewing and Raskob Guernsey herds were classified in February 2 and 3, 1949. The assistant agent attended these meetings.

The outlook for the dairy industry in Pima County is good, but there is little, if any, chance for expansion. If more land is put into alfalfa and grain sorghums as a result of the threatened reduction in cotton acreage, dairymen may gain the advantage of cheaper feed.