

A PROPOSED METHOD OF PERFORMANCE
EVALUATION FOR COUNTY EXTENSION
AGENTS

Thesis for the Degree of M. S.
MICHIGAN STATE COLLEGE
George Erwin Whitham
1955



This is to certify that the

thesis entitled

A Proposed Method of Performance Evaluation

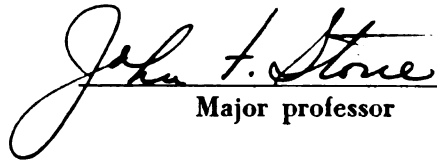
for County Extension Agents

presented by

George E. Whitham

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

M.S. degree in Agricultural Extension


Major professor

Date May 16, 1955



RETURNING MATERIALS:
Place in book drop to
remove this checkout from
your record. FINES will
be charged if book is
returned after the date
stamped below.

APR 16 1989
~~APR 16 1989~~

JUN 26 1989
JUN 2 1989

JUN 28 1989

A PROPOSED METHOD OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATION
FOR COUNTY EXTENSION AGENTS

By

George Erwin Whitham

A THESIS

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Michigan
State College of Agriculture and Applied Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

School of Agriculture

1955

10/10/10

10/10/10

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Sincere thanks is due Dr. John T. Stone, whose unfailing interest in the Cooperative Extension Service and the county extension worker stimulated this exploration of the subject of evaluating agent performance. His broad experience and astute understanding has been a constant challenge and source of inspiration.

Appreciation is felt for the many helpful suggestions of Mr. Bohn E. Musgrave and the use of his personal files on the subject of program planning and evaluation.

The graduate students and members of the Michigan Agricultural Extension Service who gave so freely of their time in discussing various phases of this paper deserve a special mention for their patience and wise counselling.

Finally, full credit should be given my wife, Helen Rogers Whitham, for her encouragement, inspiration, and uncounted hours of clerical assistance in the preparation of the manuscript.

**
*

ABSTRACT

In this study the problem involved is developing a method for the evaluation of performance of county extension agents.

To better understand the organization with which the evaluation is to be used there is a statement on the Extension Service and the job of the county extension agent. This points out the objective of the Extension Service of helping people to see, analyze, and solve their own problems. It also points out the conflict position of the county agent with the many pressures being brought to bear upon him from the administration and the people with whom work is being done.

A review of the literature and survey of extension directors shows the lack of uniformity as to what an evaluation system should contain and how it should be used. One school of thought holds that it should be used to determine rewards and penalties while another feels it is best used to establish rapport between supervisors and workers. Among the various state extension services evaluation is either on personal characteristics or a combination of these characteristics with program, administration, teaching techniques and skills, professional improvement, accomplishments, and relationships.

The method proposed was built upon the hypothesis that a sound evaluation program should be based upon accomplishments towards program objectives rather than on personality factors. It has as its main objective the strengthening of the entire extension program through furnishing a basis for a training and guidance program, an opportunity

for self-analysis, and focusing attention on over-all items of strength and weakness in the programs.

The system further specifies that the objectives of a county program need to be known and the evaluation conducted in relation to these objectives. A proposal is made as to the recommended type of program planning organization to have in a county. This organization will be one that fits the way people are organized locally and is representative of different interests, kinds of people, and types and size of farms. It is also one that takes advantage of local leaders and cooperates with other community and county organizations.

Criteria have been developed for an evaluation program. In addition to a sound program planning procedure they include:

1. based on facts which will show changes in behavior,
2. performances which show results on the job instead of personal qualities which might cause results,
3. a continuous process,
4. the cooperative responsibility of local people, county, workers, and the administration,
5. serving as a guide to establishing programs in the direction of the over-all objective of extension.

Also developed and applied to a case county is an evaluation sheet covering problem analysis, development of the program, execution of the program, accomplishments of the program and use of the evaluation, relationship with others, and office organization. For administrative agents there is a special section dealing with this phase of county office organization.

Use to be made of the evaluation is discussed mainly from the standpoint of the guidance it will give in strengthening an extension program. For those who need it to determine merit for advancement there is a section on the evaluation's application in this respect.

This evaluation system will meet the main objective of evaluation of strengthening the over-all extension program by showing where the program is, how far plans have progressed, whether or not changes have taken place in the behavior of people, locating strong and weak points, and indicating the direction the program should move if positive improvement is to be made.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	Page
I INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Extension Service.....	3
The Job of the County Extension Agent.....	6
II PERSONNEL EVALUATION AND PROGRAM PLANNING IN THE UNITED STATES.....	10
State Extension Service Evaluation Programs.....	16
Further Need for Evaluation.....	22
Program Planning.....	28
III CRITERIA FOR AN EVALUATION PROGRAM.....	36
Specific Criteria.....	36
A Proposed System of Evaluation.....	40
IV A COUNTY CASE STUDY TO USE IN APPLYING THE EVALUATION METHOD.....	53
A County Operating Plan.....	59
Accomplishments of the Program.....	63
The Forage Program.....	64
The Poultry Marketing Program.....	66
V APPLICATION OF THE EVALUATION METHOD.....	72
Facilitating the Evaluation.....	77
Use for the Evaluation.....	82
Determining Merit for Advancement.....	86
Conclusions.....	89
SUMMARY.....	92
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	100

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	Page
I Evaluation Form for County Extension Agent Performance.....	50
II Windham County Plan of Work.....	60
III Completed Evaluation Form for County Extension Agent Performance on Forage Program.....	73
IV Completed Evaluation Form for County Extension Agent Performance on Poultry Marketing Program.....	75
V Numerical Ratings for County Extension Personnel.....	87

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	Page
1. The Conflict Position of the County Extension Agent.....	27
2. Organizational Chart for a County Agricultural Advisory Council.....	34
3. Direction of Movement to Evaluate Performance.....	42
4. Organization for Program Planning in Windham County.....	54

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Extension Administrators are constantly looking for tools to aid them in strengthening extension programs.

This study is being undertaken to determine a method that may be used by extension administrators as a guide in evaluating agents. It will be based upon the hypothesis that a sound evaluation program should be based on accomplishments toward the program objectives and not primarily on personality factors--the method most commonly in use today. Agents will be evaluated, not to rank them in order of abilities or importance, but to strengthen the entire extension program, providing a positive direction in which to move.

Properly conceived and executed an evaluation system will give this needed direction and stimuli to the extension program by reducing some of the conflicts which lead to a feeling of frustration on the part of an extension agent.

To add strength to the extension program an evaluation program should be used to:

1. furnish a basis for pre-service and in-service training and guidance;
 - a) for new agents,
 - b) for experienced agents,
 - c) as a counselling guide for professional improvement,
 - d) to encourage the establishment of county objectives and development of strong programs and effective methods of extension teaching,

- e) to encourage integration of the over-all extension program;
- 2. furnish an opportunity for self-analysis by the individual
 - a) to remove pressures working on the agent,
 - b) to give security to the agent,
 - c) to objectively look at the work load being carried;
- 3. help determine merit for advancement;
- 4. focus attention on over-all items of strength and weakness in state and county programs.

As this study progresses an analysis will be made of the work that has been done to the present time in this area. Particular attention will be given to the status of county agent evaluation as being conducted in selected parts of the country. Criteria for an evaluation program to be used with county agents will be developed. An ideal method will be developed as to the best form for an evaluation system. This form will be tested on models taken from actual extension experience.

A final step in the development of this system will be a recommendation on how it may be used. Recognition will be made of the types of information which will be needed to carry on the work. There will also be a brief discussion on the weaknesses requiring future testing and research before universal adoption can be recommended.

The writer feels qualified to undertake the development of an evaluation system because of ten years experience with the Extension Service. During this ten year period he has been an assistant county agricultural agent, a county agricultural agent, county administrator and at the present time is County Agent Leader with the Connecticut Extension Service.

The Extension Service

The Cooperative Extension Service is an out-of-school educational system which received formal status with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914.¹ The most significant feature of this law was to be carried on cooperatively by the land-grant colleges and the United States Department of Agriculture. Local people, acting through their state colleges initiated the plan of work to be followed. Extension work in the language of the act was

...to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same.

One provision of the act required financial participation by appropriating a basic amount of \$10,000 with additional grants to be prorated in proportion to rural population. These additional funds were available only when matched by state or local funds raised or contributed within the state. To a large extent this provision may explain the high degree of cooperation which has existed between the county, state, and federal governments.

This act set up the legal machinery for an educational program that encompassed the whole farm family. It recognized the basic importance of agriculture, of its practitioners and their families to the nation. The philosophy and provisions as set forth have stood the test of time with very little modification.

¹ Brunner, E. deS and E. A. Yang, Rural America and the Extension Service, Columbia University, New York, 1949, p. 14.

In 1948 the Joint Committee Report on Extension Programs, Policies and Goals² took time to look at some of the accomplishments of the Cooperative Extension Service since its inception in 1914. Many of the basic achievements of extension are not subject to quantitative measurement although many accomplishments have through the years been recorded in state and national annual reports. The more fundamental contributions, however, may best be stated in qualitative terms. Among them are:

1. The application of the findings of research through various techniques such as demonstrations, farm visits, group meetings and the printed page.
2. Solving problems through group action has helped rural people learn the value of an organized approach to community problems.
3. Understanding economic and social factors has encouraged interest, not only in individual and family affairs, but also in matters of state, national, and international living.
4. Improving family diets and other functions of the homemaker.
5. Work with rural youth.
6. Counselling on farm problems.
7. Mobilizing rural people to meet emergencies.
8. Contributing to the science of government and education.
9. Aiding esthetic and cultural growth of farm people.
10. Contributing to Urban Life.
11. Developing Rural Leadership.

² Joint Committee Report on Extension, Program Policies and Goals, United States Department of Agriculture and Association of Land Grant Colleges and Universities, Washington, 1948, p. 3.

In short the accomplishments through the years have been a more specific breakdown of the general objective of extension of "aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same."

The 1948 joint committee report reiterates the basic objectives of extension work as being that of helping people learn to help themselves. It is pointed out however, that extension's early emphasis was on immediate problems of the farm and home. Improved practices which could be measured by increased incomes or better living were extremely gratifying to local people and extension workers. Extension should always recognize this as basic and not lose sight of the broad function of helping people learn how to solve their own problems. In addition, extension has a growing responsibility to help people understand the complex social and economic problems confronting them as they go about their daily duties.

The work of the Cooperative Extension Service might best be summarized by a statement of Smith and Wilson in their book The Agricultural Extension System in the United States:³

Extension work in its deeper significance is designed to develop the man....to draw him out through his taking part in worthwhile enterprises, through explaining his work to his neighbors, through making reports of accomplishments, through consulting with others on matters of common interest, through study with the Extension Agent his own farm and home problems and those of the county, state, and nation, to perfect his technique, to enlarge his vision..., to see that man grows.

³ Smith, C. B. and M. C. Wilson, The Agricultural Extension System in the United States, John Wiley & Company, New York, 1930, p. 6.

The Job of the County Extension Agent

In most states the county extension agents are staff members of the land-grant college. They are also cooperative employees of the United States Department of Agriculture. As such, they are representatives of these two levels of government, housed in their respective counties. They also are representative of a third level, the county, where they work with people toward the broad over-all objective of the Extension Service of helping people discover and solve their own problems. As a result of this the responsibilities of the county extension agents are many and varied. They are in a position to study the county in which they work, so as to know the resources, problems, and possibilities of the county. With the assistance of the people in the counties, they develop extension programs based upon the needs and problems of the people. Once these problems have been determined, the extension agent is active in promoting educational programs which will assist people to make the best possible decisions for their particular situation. In this process of determining needs and implementing programs the extension agent is bringing to the people in their counties, facts and procedures concerning state and national programs which affect their welfare.

Extension agents also have a responsibility to keep professionally abreast of the social and economic changes which affect the farms and homes of their respective counties. This will be done, not only by being close to their people, but also by having a close working relationship with the various departments at the land-grant institution with

which they are affiliated. If the relationships are close, the agent can be in a position, not only to pass on the experimental work of the various departments to the people, but also in a position to suggest areas of research for the departments.

With all of these responsibilities extension agents have a tremendous job. They must make the day-to-day objectives of their county program an integral part of the over-all, broad objective of the entire extension service. These objectives will be the program adopted to achieve changes that will be reflected by people who are healthy, happy, and conscious of the obligations of leadership which they are asked to assume.

Stone, has made an exhaustive study of the County Agent's job. One phase was concerned with the roles county agents played.⁴ Summarized this showed the following roles and time spent on each:

<u>Role</u>	<u>Percentage of Time</u>
Consultant	24.3
Salesman of Information and Ideas	17.4
Public Program Administrator	23.5
Organizer and Supervisor of Events	15.7
Organizer of Groups	7.2
Facilitator and Expeditor	5.1
Student	6.8

The same study⁵ also determined the amount of time devoted to different lines of work by the county agents studied as follows:

⁴ Stone, J. T., An Analysis of the County Agent's Job, Cooperative Extension Service, Michigan State College, East Lansing, Michigan, 1951, p. 256.

⁵ Op. cit., pp. 183-186.

<u>Line of Work</u>	<u>Percentage of Time</u>
Cooperative Agricultural Planning	17.98
Crop Production	20.93
Livestock Production	20.06
Marketing and Distribution	3.44
Housing, Farmstead Improvement, and Equipment	5.35
Conservation of Natural Resources	11.87
Farm Management	5.48
General Economic Problems	4.19
Nutrition and Health	.92
Clothing, Family Economics, and Community Life	6.04
Miscellaneous	3.74

Time was found to be divided fairly evenly between working directly with individuals, working directly with groups, and doing other things such as office administration and routine assignments.⁶

McNelly,⁷ made a descriptive classification of the daily activities of the county agent which showed many different activities engaged in during a day. They are:

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Percentage of Time</u>
Office calls	23.9
Evening meetings	19.1
Other meetings	8.1
Farm visits	10.0
Demonstrations	3.4
Publicity	1.7
Radio	2.0
Study and preparation	5.7
Mail and dictation	9.5
Reports and records	3.6
Conferences with co-workers	2.5
In-service training	6.6
Service organizations	1.4
Achievement days and fairs	1.5
Semi-personal	0.6

⁶ Op. cit., p. 212.

⁷ McNelly, C. L., A Study of the County Agent Work Pattern, Agricultural Extension Service, University of Minnesota, 1949.

These figures are cited to illustrate the size and complexity of the county agent's job. Extension agents are leaders--as such, through these various activities, they are influencing people to cooperate with each other to achieve a goal because they want to see accomplishments made.

CHAPTER II

PERSONNEL EVALUATION AND PROGRAM PLANNING IN THE UNITED STATES

Since the start of the Cooperative Extension Service more than fifty years ago many changes have taken place. Not the least of these has been the growth of staffs which have added to the responsibilities of administrators and created a condition whereby fewer contacts are made with agents. This has made it increasingly difficult to accurately measure agents according to their value to the county, to the Extension Service, or as to the progress they are making.

There are different schools of thought¹ as to what an evaluation system should be used for. One idea holds that it is to be used as a basis for salary increases, promotions, dismissals, or other forms of rewards or penalties. This has had a tendency to make evaluation an automatic procedure which, because of pressures within the organization, will put many people near the top of the evaluation scale. Opposed to this idea is one that evaluation is best used to establish rapport between supervisor and worker. This is based on the fact there is therapeutic value in evaluation as a device for developing, motivating, and stimulating workers. The theory behind this is a worker will develop a feeling of belonging to the organization when he and the supervisor

¹ Pfiffner, J. M. and R. V. Presthus, Public Administration, The Ronald Press Co., New York, 1953, p. 275.

can talk things over. At the same time the worker is getting a "mental lift" from belonging, the supervisor is encouraged to do a better job of evaluation and motivation.

Pfiffer and Presthus,² who advanced the ideas on the value to the worker, have also expressed the idea evaluation might be looked at entirely from the standpoint of what it would do for the supervisor. Their feeling was supervisors would be induced to discuss strong and weak points with each worker. This would lead to a definite plan of action for helping to strengthen those who needed help. The principle objective of an evaluation plan as visualized to stimulate supervisors would be to minimize personality bias by emphasizing accomplishments and the value of planning for future action. It would also help the supervisors overcome any preconceived ideas that they might have as to the evaluation score which a particular worker should be given.

At an Evaluation Workshop held in 1946,³ M. L. Wilson, formerly director of the Federal Extension Service, expressed the feeling that a well planned evaluation program provided for representation of all the people involved in the program. This did not necessarily mean every last person in a given county would get in on the evaluation of the extension agent in the county. Rather it meant that if one considered the objectives and goals of a county program as being important in the

² Ibid.

³ Wilson, M. L., Report of Extension Evaluation Workshop, United States Department of Agriculture, 1946.

evaluation process, to the extent local people helped with the formulation of these goals they would be represented.

J. P. Leagans⁴ at the same workshop advanced the idea that a scientific basis is needed for an effective personnel training program. He felt that a well organized program of evaluating programs and personnel would contribute important values to administrative effort. Properly organized an evaluation program would be an integral part of extension planning, teaching, supervision, and administration. Above all else such a program if properly executed, would provide a certain psychological security and self confidence to extension personnel.

Speaking before the Personnel Institute at Ohio State University, L. Appley⁵ mentioned that any evaluation program developed should have a simple method of comparing present performance with desired results. This enables each individual to know exactly where he stands with the administration. It also shows the individual clearly what he personally must do to improve himself. It develops a closeness between people and builds a mutual confidence.

The tendency in measurement, is not so much adding up a score, as a look at the profile. Evaluation indicates the apparent degree of performance in various areas. Decisions, when made, should be based upon concrete evidence and considerate judgment. The person doing the

⁴ Leagans, J. P., Suggestions for Setting Up an Evaluation Program, Report of Extension Evaluation Workshop, U. S. D. A., 1946, p. 52.

⁵ Appley, L., Proceedings of First Personnel Institute, Ohio State University Publication, 1938, p. 27.

evaluation must guard against rationalizing. Facts should be obtained, used, and faced up to. An evaluation scale calls for the evaluating of performance rather than native ability. Persons doing the evaluation must have worked with the individual to be evaluated and must be familiar with the program, the methods, and the results.⁶

The Commission on Teacher Evaluation has listed "Qualities of Cooperative Evaluation."⁷ By cooperative evaluation is meant one which is explored, understood, used continuously, freely, and creatively by all concerned. This is opposed to an authoritarian evaluation which guides individuals into unquestioning obedience and submissiveness to the person in a superior status. The qualities as listed by the commission were:

1. evaluation is a continuous process which is an integral part of the teaching-learning situation--it is not an end product but rather part of the whole,
2. evaluation is the cooperative responsibility of all concerned,
3. evaluation is part of a process which works toward changes in behavior,
4. behavioral changes should be in the direction of objectives of the group,
5. cooperative evaluation involves intelligent selection and use of techniques in gaining evidence of behavioral changes.

In setting up an evaluation system for industry Doohar and Marquis⁸

⁶ Professional and Program Evaluation, Agricultural Extension Service, Ohio State University, 1951.

⁷ Better Than Rating, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington, D. C., 1950, pp. 61-63.

⁸ Doohar, M. J. and V. Marquis, Rating Employer and Supervisory Performance, American Management Association, New York, 1950, pp. 21-25.

encountered problems which had to be resolved before a successful evaluation system could be established. These problems included:

1. What are the aims and purposes of evaluation?
2. Will the people be told how they ranked?
3. Who will do the evaluating?
4. How often should the evaluating be done?
5. Will there be an adequate amount of time for the evaluators to carry out the aims and purposes of the program?

These writers in establishing their basic principles for evaluation took these questions into account. Their basic principles⁹ are:

1. have a single purpose of helping supervisors deal with people,
2. keep the evaluating form simple,
3. have a definite job definition of the work to be evaluated,
4. observe the work of the employee in relation to the job,
5. explain the evaluation to the employee.

The appraisal or evaluating system being used by Chrysler Corporation¹⁰ has been analyzed and some observations have been made from this analysis. A few of the observations are:

A. The objectives of the appraisal system:

1. To improve the performance of people in their present jobs--to be a basis for counseling and coaching subordinates.
2. To make possible the most effective use of individual abilities--depends on a systematic collection of information on strengths and weaknesses.
3. To aid in long-range planning--provides a sound basis for selection, training, and promotion.

B. In evaluating performance it is important to:

1. Base it on facts.
2. Evaluate results on the job, not personal qualities which cause the results--describe the job.

⁹ Ibid., p. 71.

¹⁰ Management Development, Chrysler Corporation, 1954.

3. Judge responsibilities separately.
4. Judge performance for the period of the appraisal only.

C. In recommending action:

1. Make recommendations specific.
2. Set goals that are obtainable.
3. Concentrate on correcting one or two important weaknesses at a time.

Gallup and Sabrosky,¹¹ discussed evaluation for specialists in the Washington office of the Extension Service. To them a test of the value of appraisal was the degree to which the appraisal gave results consistent with other evidences regarding behavior and the extent to which in practice the device could be used. Extension workers find evaluation of special value in improving the quality of their own teaching and the teaching of those whom they help to supervise. It helps in the teaching job by limiting the objective to what can actually be accomplished. At the same time evaluation increases confidence in the programs by eliminating uncertainties and by improving the program increases the confidence of people in extension.

These writers also made some observations on using the narrative report in the process of evaluation. The narrative report had one serious defect as a vehicle of evaluation in that it provided no place for a statement of objectives. It can be used only as a vehicle for the description of activities and the enumeration of changes in attitudes.

Collings,¹² stated that there was a need to help Extension workers

¹¹ Gallup, G. and L. K. Sabrosky, How the Federal Specialist Can Evaluate His Work, Extension Service Circular 444, Washington, 1947.

¹² Collings, M. L., Use of Annual Reports as a Means of Evaluating Extension Work, Extension Service, Washington, D. C., 1949.

make better observations and to develop devices which they could use to collect and record evidence of changes in behavior of people. Although the narrative report enumerates changes in attitudes, unless people are taught what to look for and how to make observations it may be valueless.

Some difficulties in using narrative reports were also listed by Collings.¹³ They were:

1. Do not list objectives--evaluation from reports does not have the objectives clearly in mind of what it should evaluate.
2. Evidence of accomplishment is in terms of secondary level of evaluation--opportunities to change behavior rather than actual changes may be evaluated.
3. Standards as now conceived are not flexible enough to be based on and adopted to the local situation.

State Extension Service Evaluation Programs

In this study Extension directors selected at random, were surveyed to determine the status of county agent evaluation around the country. Twenty-two replies have been read on the subject of evaluation. Every letter supports the need for an evaluation system. The difficulty appears in what the various states feel should be included in an evaluation system. In some states the evaluation of extension work is largely in terms of the personal characteristics of agents. Other states have attempted a combination evaluation of program, administration, teaching techniques and skills, professional improvement, accomplishments,

¹³ Collings, M. L., op. cit.

relationships, and personal qualifications. Variation has also been found in how the various facts are weighted. These weights have ranged from assigning percentages to the various points being evaluated to a system of indicating a matter of degree such as unsatisfactory, satisfactory, or outstanding. In some cases this degree has been made even finer going to as many as ten categories.

The wide variation between states can best be shown by what has been written from these states.

C. W. Smith¹⁴ of Oregon writes:

...to date we have never put on paper our evaluation program for county Extension agents. It goes without saying, however, that we must and do rate the agents from time to time. Like many of the other states we get the supervisory staff together with state leaders and other members of the state administrative staff periodically to discuss the county programs, the attitudes of the agents, how they are getting along, etc.

From Maine, R. C. Dolloff¹⁵ writes:

As to the question of rating agents, we fall back on the same technique of what we hear and see, plus the evidence that is recorded in the county agent's weekly and annual reports. Now, don't ask me how we analyze this evidence as it is probably an impression rather than a real analysis.

It can be seen from these two states that formal evaluation of county agents is a problem to be wrestled with.

On the other side of the pendulum swing is Ohio. In this state according to W. B. Wood,¹⁶ a form has been developed which has as its

¹⁴ Smith, C. W., personal communication, Corvallis, Oregon, 1955.

¹⁵ Dolloff, R. C., personal communication, Orono, Maine, 1955.

¹⁶ Wood, W. B., personal communication, Columbus, Ohio, 1955.

purpose the measuring of personality qualifications and professional performance, the measuring of the program for which the staff member is responsible, and to provide a basis for the improvement of the staff member and the county extension program. It is also used as one of the three factors considered in promotions and salary adjustments for staff members.

J. B. Fawcett¹⁷ writes from New Jersey that they are not using a formal evaluation program. In this state they made a major effort to develop an effective evaluation program but let it drop. While in effect it operated on a voluntary basis. This program was patterned quite closely after the system being used in Ohio.

In his letter Fawcett pointed out that he felt the New Jersey system was not more successful because of psychological blocks, although these were not specified. It was further pointed out that good will and staff moral are very important. A system of evaluation, as developed, must keep this in mind. If operating successfully morale would be promoted rather than torn down.

In Michigan at the present time there is no formal system of evaluating agent performance although there has been a committee appointed to develop a method. Prior to this time there was a system in use which depended heavily upon the specialists for the actual rating of county agricultural agent programs.¹⁸ Although not now in use this system is

¹⁷ Fawcett, J. B., personal communication, New Brunswick, N. J. 1955.

¹⁸ Pierson, R. R., Vocational Interests of Agricultural Extension Workers as Related to Selected Aspects of Work Adjustment, Michigan State College, 1951, p. 124.

worth looking at as one in which a great deal of thought has been put. There was a feeling that the extension specialists and the administrators of the extension program knew the county extension agents intimately and were able to appraise the agent's effectiveness and observe the public acceptance of their phase of the over-all county extension program. Ratings of A, B, C and D were used corresponding to Superior, Good, Fair and Poor. All specialists evaluations were recorded on a master sheet for each county. To determine a single county evaluation from the many individual ranks the projects in the various counties were graded according to whether they were of major, average, minor or no importance to a well rounded program in a particular county. Differential weights were assigned the specialists evaluations based on the importance of each project to a sound extension program for a given county.

These differential weights were set up to remove the bias which might creep in because a particular commodity, of no importance in the county, was not pushed. Criticisms of this system included the facts that agents did not receive information on their evaluations or suggestions on how to improve, specialists didn't like to evaluate county agents and county agents felt they should have an opportunity to evaluate specialists, and finally it was felt that once an evaluation was made it was rather difficult to get it changed.

In Wisconsin¹⁹ a supervisor-agent check sheet has been developed. This sheet is used by supervisors in conference with individual agents.

¹⁹ Pollock, J., personal communication, Madison, Wisconsin, 1955.

The main accomplishment of this sheet is that it gives the supervisor an opportunity to record the date of the conference and the main subject discussed. These records and comments made by the supervisor for his own use allow him to be more objective when discussing the accomplishments of agents.

Massachusetts²⁰ has been trying out a method for the past year. Their scale deals entirely with personality attributes.

Georgia²¹ has developed a preliminary guide for evaluating county personnel. It covers such areas as training, length of service, work load, program of work, accomplishments, and working relationships. The basis for this evaluation is the agent's annual report.

C. A. Svinth²² of Washington states that the evaluation form used in that state is used as a basis for discussing personally with each agent his effectiveness in carrying on Extension work. This evaluation check sheet looks for accomplishments, organization, teaching skill, administrative and leadership capabilities, effectiveness of cooperation, and personal characteristics.

Indiana, according to H. S. Heckard,²³ is using an evaluation sheet as a training schedule for Assistant County Agents. This evaluation is made by the county agent after the assistant agent has been in training for one year in the county.

²⁰ Vaughan, H. S., personal communication, Amherst, Mass., 1955.

²¹ O'Kelley, C. R., personal communication, Athens, Ga., 1955.

²² Svinth, C. A., personal communication, Pullman, Wash., 1955.

²³ Heckard, H. S., personal communication, Lafayette, Ind., 1955.

J. U. Morris²⁴ of Missouri described a county Personnel Evaluation Form which looked for personal qualities and abilities of extension workers. This form is used by supervisors in helping them to evaluate county personnel, especially new Extension workers. The supervisors have the help of county agents and home agents in evaluating new personnel in the counties where they are trained.

T. G. Stewart²⁵ of Colorado indicates that an evaluation has been developed annually. Nine people in the state office rank the agents. These nine people are members of the administrative or supervisory staffs. After these rankings are made they are discussed by the group until a final rank is determined. This rank determines eligibility for promotion and salary adjustment. It also serves as a basis for study by the agent and supervisor in supervisory visits.

In Wyoming an evaluation method has been developed. W. T. Kirk²⁶ writes,

...it is my feeling, after making a survey and a rather wide one throughout the United States, that evaluation is important to us--that any kind of evaluation carried on regularly for all personnel is fairer than the kind that is used periodically or on the spur of the moment. In fact, I am of the opinion that we are continuously evaluating personnel. We do it each time we have a change in salary or a change in county position. For that reason any planned, organized method should be worthwhile.

Although there is considerable variation in the type of evaluation forms being used as well as the content, there are some items in common

²⁴ Morris, J. U., personal communication, Columbia, Mo., 1955.

²⁵ Stewart, T. G., personal communication, Fort Collins, Colo., 1955.

²⁶ Kirk, W. T., personal communication, Laramie, Wyo., 1955.

where evaluation is being done on a formal basis. These are program, administration, teaching techniques and skills, professional improvement, accomplishments, personal qualifications, public relations, and the use and participation of local people.

Every director felt personnel evaluation was important to the extension program. The only difficulty was "how" should evaluation be carried on so as to strengthen the extension program and aid in the development of the county agent being evaluated.

Further Need For Evaluation

Baker²⁷ in her book The County Agent, mentions that an objective evaluation program is needed because in some states supervisors are more aware of discontent among influential farmers and county officials than of the real quality of the county agent's work. Still other supervisors are prone to count the number of demonstrations held and number of farm visits made rather than evaluating directly the quality of the county agent's work.

The Cooperative Extension Service has been a partnership between federal, state, and county units of government and local people. Loomis and Beegle²⁸ indicate the part played by local people. They say,

...the more locally responsible the agent is for his original appointment and for the support of his program, the fewer are the typically bureaucratic features of the organization.

²⁷ Baker, G., The County Agent, University of Chicago Press, 1939, p. 126.

²⁸ Loomis, C. P. and A. J. Beegle, Rural Social Systems, Prentice-Hall Inc., New York, 1950, p. 660.

These writers go further than this when they say,

...the agent would have more solidarity, personal, and traditionally controlled relationships than he would if he were responsible only to a state, regional or federal director or other official.

The growth and development of local people has been fostered by the Extension Service. County agents are no less aware of this than are any other members of an extension staff. As a consequence they have looked to local people for guidance and counselling--even, in many cases, the evaluating of county agent programs and performance has been by local people.

In a study conducted by Preiss²⁹ concerning the Michigan Extension Service some interesting ideas have been uncovered in regards to the place county agents look for authority.

The internal bureaucratic structure of the Federal Extension Service has been kept small and simple by delegating responsibility to the state. This has been responsible, in part, for an attitude of conflict avoidance and passivity in group interaction. The high autonomy of local county units has rendered it vulnerable to external influences. With a pattern of delegation of authority being followed by the Extension Service there has been built up a great dependence upon local people--not only by county agents but all the way up the line of the administrative hierarchy. This continually puts county agents in a position where they encounter problems of choice between the desires of the local people and the desires of the administration. Often the choice will carry obligations which are completely incompatible. Stressful dilemmas can always be expected in the behavior of county agents who are in an exposed condition between the functional outlook of the supervisors and the wishes, desires, and expressed needs of the people with whom they work.

²⁹ Preiss, J. J., The Functions of Relevant Power and Authority Groups in the Evaluation of County Agent Performance, unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, Michigan State College, 1954.

Preiss,³⁰ in the same study also commented upon present evaluating processes as affected by the direction agents did or did not look for guidance.

The evaluating process itself constitutes an informal psychological procedure, in that it is based upon cultural stereotypes and ideological preconceptions rather than a scientifically objective inventory. This approach has the effect of social or situational factors being limited or ignored as significant variables in the evaluation which is on an informal basis. This may lead to the distinct possibility of conflict developing involving the extent of the agents autonomy of and loyalty to the administrative superior. The main component of many administrative evaluations has been the consensus of judgement and opinion which administrators have obtained from private groups and individuals in various counties. An evaluation made on this basis has a tendency to be self-perpetuating because it will be based on the judgement of the same people from year-to-year. This type of evaluation has encouraged agents to utilize local support to the "nth" degree. It implies that the administration has directed its allegiance against itself. This conflict situation the county agent is in continually points up the need for an objective evaluation system.

An evaluation of county agents which is not objective will cause agents to turn in the direction of the administration. More self-contained behavioral patterns will be developed which will tend to make county workers less sensitive to outside influence and domination and lead towards a more bureaucratic structuring of the extension service.

This leads into some of the writings on bureaucracy which also point up a need for an objective evaluation system as it affects agent-local people relationships and agent-supervisor relations. Some of the most

³⁰ Preiss, J. J., ibid.

complete writings on the subject have been by Weber.³¹ According to his viewpoint bureaucratic administration is from a formal technical point of view, the most rational type. For the needs of mass administration today, it is completely indispensable. To Weber, bureaucratic administration meant fundamentally the exercise of control on the basis of knowledge. The question never is will there be control but rather who will control the administration. This carries with it the power of appointment which makes for the purest form of bureaucratic authority. Advisory boards may be used in a bureaucratic organization. Such boards do not necessarily involve a weakening of the power of the autocratic chief but may well lead to a tempering of the exercise of authority in the direction of rationalization.

In other writings, Weber,³² expressed other viewpoints to consider such as the

...theory of modern public administration assumes that the authority to order certain matters by decree does not intitle the bureau to regulate the matter abstractly.

The idea has also been advanced that the decisive reason for the advance of bureaucratic organization has been its purely technical superiority over any other form of organization. Precision, speed, continuity, and discretion are raised to the optimum point in the strictly bureaucratic administration.

³¹ Weber, M., Theory of Social and Economic Organization, Oxford University Press, New York, 1947, p. 337.

³² Weber, M., Essays in Sociology, Oxford University Press, New York, 1946, p. 198.

Weber also stated³³

...that work organized by collegiate bodies causes friction and delay and requires compromises between colliding interests and views. Administration of this type runs less precisely, is more independent of superiors, is less unified and certainly slower.

Bureaucracy strives to level those powers that stand in its way and in those areas, that, in individual cases, it seeks to occupy. Democracy as we usually think of it is opposed to the rule of bureaucracy, in spite and perhaps because of its unavoidable yet unintentional promotion of bureaucratization.

It would appear from these writings that the most efficient form of Extension Administration would go straight down the line for bureaucracy. This is contrary to the established patterns that have been built up since the inception of the Extension Service in 1914. It underlines the basic conflict of the extension agent's position. The agent must travel a path with which the interests of the local people and the agents interests in the needs and expressed desires of the people are maintained. At the same time the extension agent needs to be oriented to his responsibilities to the administration and the administration's responsibility to the people and the agent. A properly conceived and oriented evaluation system will take the agent out of this conflict situation. (See Figure 1)

Another need for an evaluation system is found in what makes an organization and what are the functions of some of the people in the organization. Barnard,³⁴ has the concept of an organization as being

³³ Weber, M., op. cit., p. 214.

³⁴ Barnard, O. I., The Functions of the Executive, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1951, p. 73.

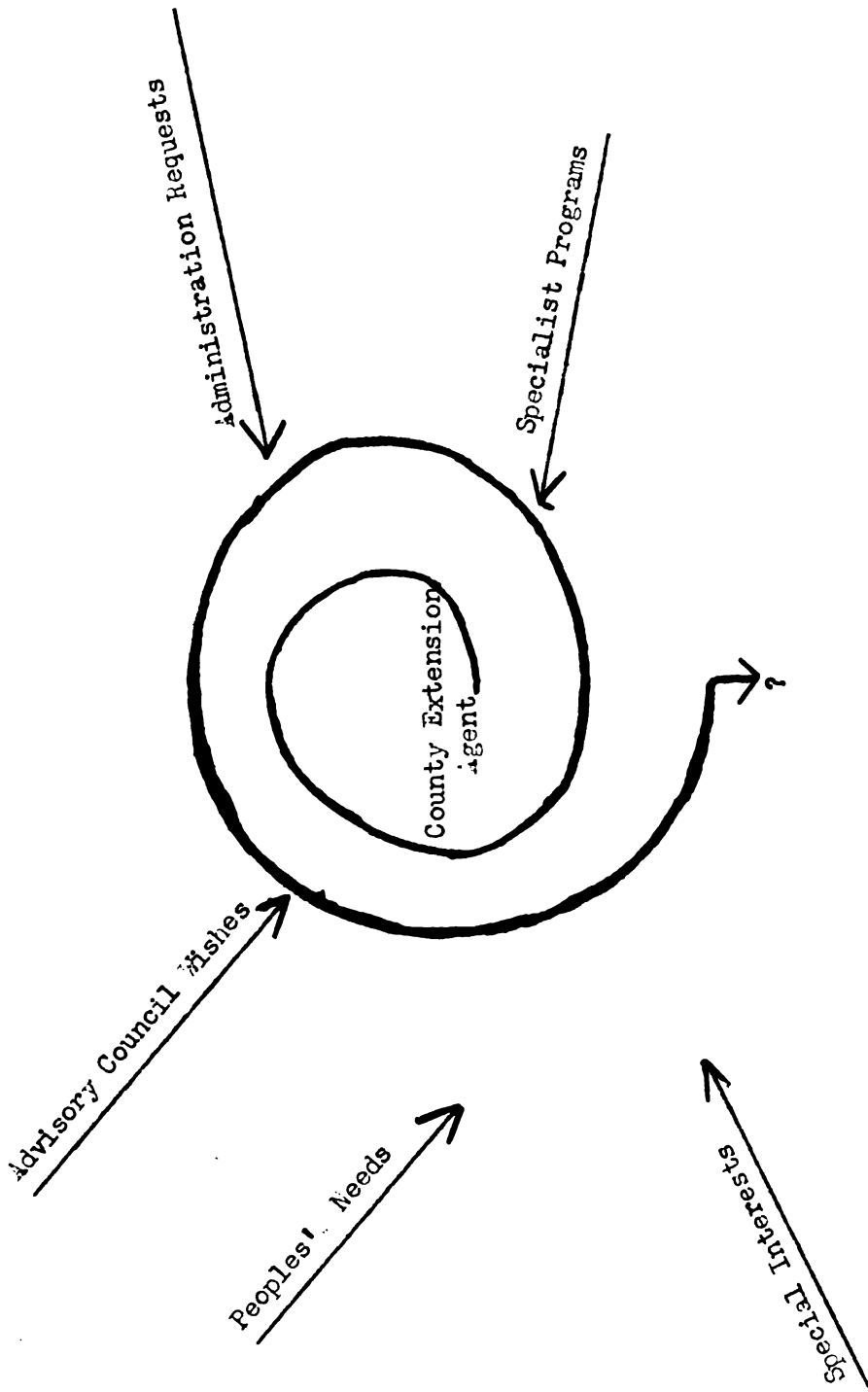


Figure 1. The Conflict Position of the County Extension Agents

a group of persons, some or all of whose activities are coordinated. A useful concept for the analysis of a cooperative system of consciously coordinated activities of two or more persons. The vitality of an organization lies in the willingness of individuals to contribute, but this willingness requires the belief that the purpose can be carried out. An objective evaluation system will help to build the program of such an organization.

Program Planning

A formal organization, such as the Extension Service, consciously coordinates the activities of people. To do this a program of action must be developed for each county.

A recommended county Extension program is one developed by people in cooperation with the extension agents. The program will set forth factual background information, describe the situation and problems and determine solutions for the problems described. It implies a long range consideration extending over a period during which the determining social and economic forces can be foreseen or predicted with reasonable accuracy. The program sets forth what is to be done. In brief the program should contain:

1. a description of resources,
2. an analysis of the present situation,
3. a list of basic problems,
4. a statement of the objectives and goals which clearly sets forth the desires of the people concerned,
5. recommended solutions to the problems which make it possible to reach the objective,
6. a provision for revising the program.

Matthews³⁶ defines a county program

...as an understanding arrived at cooperatively by the local people and the county extension staff of the following conditions:

1. the situation in which people are located
2. the problems that are a part of the local situation
3. the objectives of the local people in relation to these problems
4. the recommendations to reach the objectives.

Preparation of a program entails detailed study, committee work, and analyzing of local conditions. The objectives to be reached should be looked at from the standpoint of the farm, home, and community. Both long term and short term objectives should be considered. Musgrave³⁶ feels that longtime objectives and goals are fundamental in program development.

Egger's³⁷ has stated that

...when looking at program development or execution one should review it for technical feasibility, formalize the projects into working objectives, and determine the methods and techniques to be used.

A county program should develop and change with the securing of additional facts relative to the situation. Musgrave³⁸ has written that

...program planning is a continuous process of determining, developing and executing programs. It calls for continuous observation by councils and committees, their real participation in planning and their active assistance in carrying out the programs.

³⁶ Matthews, J. L., National Inventory of Extension Methods of Program Determination, Extension Service Circular No. 477, 1952, p. 2.

³⁶ Musgrave, B. E., Extension Program Planning, unpublished M. S. Thesis, Michigan State College, 1954, p. 129.

³⁷ Egger, R., Public Administration and Extension Work, Extension Service Circular No. 451, 1948, p. 37.

³⁸ Musgrave, B. E., op. cit., p. 13.

Throughout the process of building a program, extension agents should keep in mind that the people's program is being developed. Also to be remembered is the primary objective of the Extension Service of helping people develop a program that strikes directly at the problems with which they are faced and which both must work together with to solve. People are interested in a program based on their situation and needs as they see and understand them which they help to build.

The Wyoming Extension Service³⁹ has listed the characteristics which they like a county Extension program to have. They are:

1. based on over-all county agricultural and family life conditions as determined by local people,
2. flexible enough to meet changing conditions,
3. educational in character, and adaptable to all educational and age levels,
4. emphasize the general welfare of the people,
5. adapted to the resources of the available personnel, finances and leadership,
6. coordinated with the work of other agencies,
7. a program in which the family unit is strengthened,
8. starts where people are,
9. makes maximum use of local leaders in planning and carrying out program,
10. program is kept timely. Frequently evaluated and changed as needed.

One job of the extension agent is to help plan and carry out an effective educational program--one that is functional and adapted to the needs of the people. This requires thought and effort being directed towards definite objectives to help penetrate the maze of details and demands on the agent's time and to organize programs and procedures that will produce the most satisfying results.

³⁹ Agricultural and Family Life Planning, College of Agriculture, Laramie, Wyo.

Many methods are being used at present by agents across the country to get the job done. Matthews, in The National Inventory of Extension Methods of Program Determination⁴⁰ lists six ways most commonly found in the counties studied. These methods included:

1. a representative county committee planning a county program after the problems and needs have been discussed at community meetings,
2. discussion of problems and drafting of the program on the county level by selected representatives,
3. discussion by a committee not representative of geographic or other major interests in the county,
4. program planned by agents through personal consultation with leaders and well informed people,
5. agents do the planning after a mail survey,
6. programs determined by commodity or special interest groups not formed into a county committee.

Obviously there are many adaptations of these six forms of program determination as listed. However, if program planning is to furnish the basis for county agent evaluation, planning should be such that the administration can use it with confidence as the base. For this reason it is suggested that a representative committee be used. This will have the effect of involving local people in the program from a development and an execution standpoint. It will further give the agent assistance in the allocation of time, determining projects to emphasize, discovering needs, and pointing efforts towards definite objectives.

Knaus⁴¹ in 1948, concluded that as guides in our planning work there are a few principles that should be kept in mind. They are:

⁴⁰ Matthews, J. L., op. cit., p. 3.

⁴¹ Knaus, K., Notebook of Program Development, Extension Service Circular 855, Washington, D. C., 1948, p. 6.

1. program planning is a continuous process,
2. program planning is a teaching process,
3. establishing definite objectives is an essential part of the planning process,
4. good programs will be based on and grow out of basic information,
5. proper program planning procedures lead people to see beyond present felt needs to basic underlying problems,
6. good program planning develops leadership,
7. a well-planned program will contain procedures for evaluation,
8. the function of the extension staffs in program planning is to provide democratic leadership.

These principles point the way towards a representative committee.

Musgrave,⁴² in an unpublished thesis Extension Program Planning: Organization and Process has reviewed the work of an Agricultural Advisory Council. He says:

Organization is the key work in program planning. In Mecosta county the key organization is the Agricultural Advisory Council. This group has been willing to assume responsibility and leadership in the development and execution of extension programs, and the experience with it assists in deriving some conclusions.

Among the conclusions arrived at are:⁴³

1. planning group may best be organized for a definite purpose,
2. members should understand the purpose,
3. group may determine its own program and develop its own leadership, (with assistance of county agent),
4. membership should be definite and elected by representative organizations and groups,
5. responsibility to people who elected them must be instilled in the members,
6. responsibility to each other and to group as a whole must be felt by the members.

To arrive at these conclusions Musgrave kept complete records on all planning activities. This procedure was facilitated by the keeping

⁴² Musgrave, B. E., op. cit., p. 118.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 119.

of daily record sheets which accounted for such items as date, place, time spent, programs considered, groups, individuals, consultants, and local staff members involved in the planning process.

Because of this work and experience gained by the writer in extension program planning it is reiterated that objective program planning will make the base from which to build an objective county agent evaluation program. A representative county committee will help in conducting an objective job of program planning. It will help the Extension Service fulfill one of its major responsibilities of helping people by training people⁴⁴ in the counties to develop and examine information from which clear statements of major problems and recommended solutions to these problems may be made.

An organization chart which may be considered by county agents in setting up a county agricultural planning committee may look like Figure 2.

Such an organization, as suggested by Niederfrank⁴⁵ would allow for:

1. fitting the way people are organized locally,
2. representation of different interests, kinds of people, and types and size of farms,
3. people to know whom they represent,
4. integrating the over-all extension program,
5. cooperation with existing community or county organizations and agencies,
6. discovering the true needs and interests of the people,
7. representatives to speak for areas or organization rather than for themselves,
8. use of informal leaders.

⁴⁴ Jans, F. C., Extension Looks at Program Planning, Extension Service Circular No. 478, Washington, D. C., 1952, p. 3.

⁴⁵ Niederfrank, E. J., Main Types of County Extension Organization, Extension Service Circular 448, Washington, D. C., 1948, p. 30.

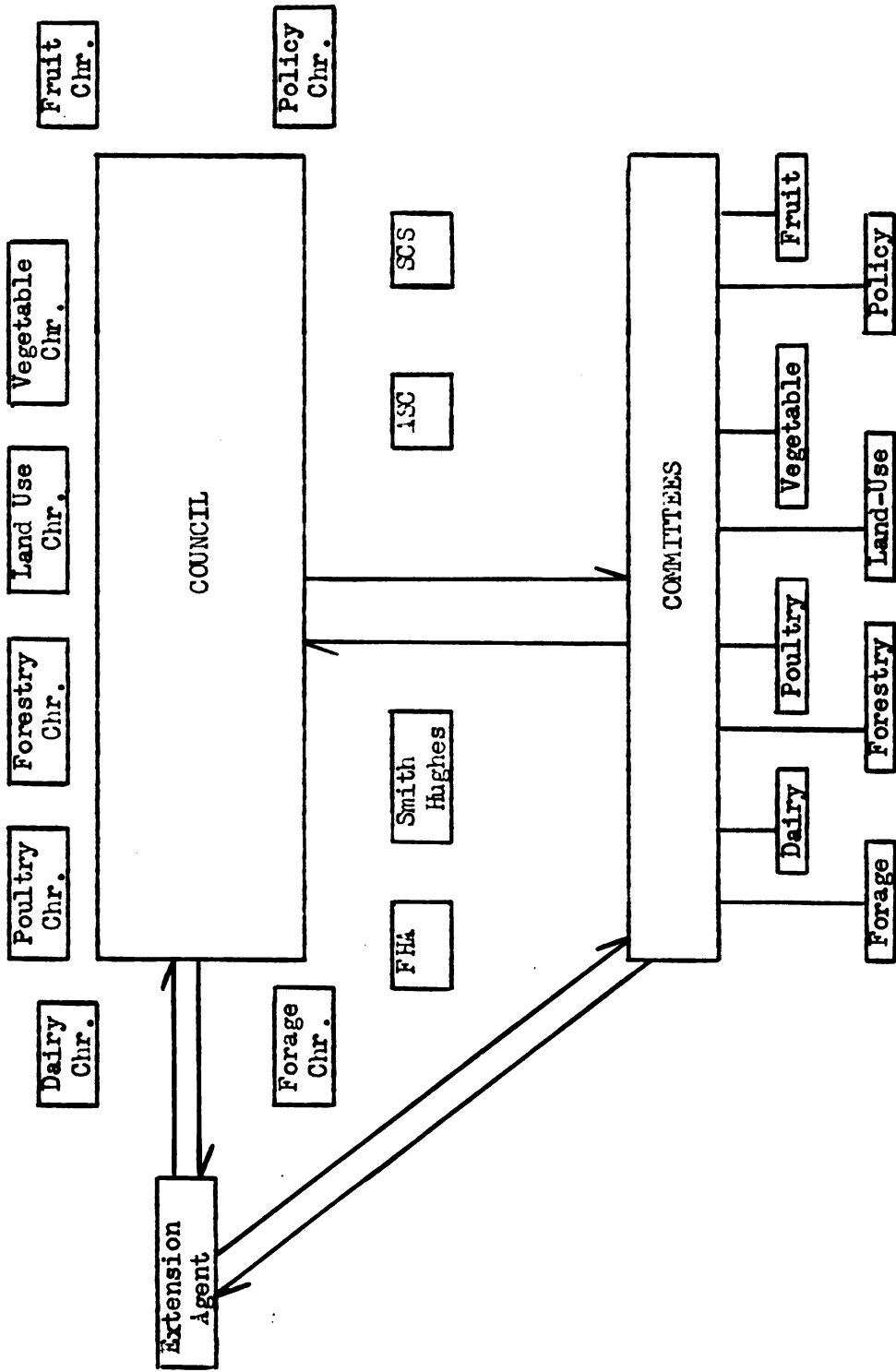


Figure 2. Organizational Chart for a County Agricultural Advisory Council.

This work is concerned primarily with the agricultural agent. The same principles of organization will apply to an over-all extension advisory council or to home economics and 4-H advisory councils. Specific adaptations of this type of organization should be made in view of the local conditions under which it is to be used.

CHAPTER III

CRITERIA FOR AN EVALUATION SYSTEM

To be able to evaluate county agent performance with confidence the objectives of the program need to be known. These are the objectives which the people have determined for the county extension program based upon their needs and problems. This is based upon a procedure describing the behavior of an individual is better than one which merely evaluates without being objective. The objectives may be either short-term or long-term--or stated another way are objectives carrying over a period of time and set up to meet immediate needs and problems. They will be more specific than the general objective of the Extension Service of helping people to see, analyze, and act on their problems. Also more specific than objective, such as "to help young people to develop into mature adults."¹

Specific Criteria

In establishing the criteria for an evaluation program it should be kept in mind that an evaluation program should:

1. be in terms of objectives and goals,
2. measure progress and development of the agent:
 - a) potential as well as present,
 - b) in terms of starting point,

¹ 1955 Plan of Work, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Connecticut, Storrs, Conn., 1955.

- c) in terms of condition of work;
- 3. be educational,
 - a) to improve performance,
 - b) to make best use of agent's abilities,
 - c) to aid in long-range planning.

A program planning procedure which establishes the goals and objectives of the county extension program is the first criteria for an evaluation program for county agents. By using the program planning procedure a base is established from which objective items can be measured. Standards are set-up against which the various behavioral situations can be measured. It allows for evaluation in terms of conditions to be found in a particular county eliminating the various differences between counties which lead to a feeling of frustration when one agent is compared with another agent, particularly when conditions of work are dissimilar. During the establishment of the base there is an opportunity for the coordination of the programs of the county and state, removing during the process of development, any area of conflict or misunderstanding which might develop. As background and source material is developed for use by the county planning committees there will be an opportunity to teach the objectives of the extension program-- not only the broad long term objectives of the Extension Service, but also the responsibility which they have in the development of objectives and goals to satisfy their needs and the needs of the people they represent.

With the objectives spelled out in detail the evaluation can be based on tangible evidence when changes in performance, attitudes, and knowledge are to be measured. An evaluation should not be decided upon

first--then evidence looked for to support it. Rather all pertinent events should be considered before evaluating a county agent. Changes which are discovered from the evidence should be in the direction of the objectives determined before beginning.

Performance which causes results on the job is the thing to be evaluated. Personal qualities which cause the results although indirectly affecting performance quickly remove one from an area of objectivity into an area of personal bias. Evaluating on performance and the results from it soon arrives at an answer to how goals are being reached. It will help to determine the effectiveness of the teaching skills and methods being employed by the county agent.

An evaluation system should judge each responsibility separately not allowing failure in one undertaking to overshadow the good which might be done in several others. It should also be so arranged that a single incident is not overemphasized. This might apply to one which is a conspicuous failure or an outstanding success. It will also guard against the most recent incident being stressed too strongly.

Evaluation is a continuous process which is an integral part of the county agent's activities. To minimize the influence of previous evaluations the system should be so constructed that an evaluation is made and decided upon without reference to past evaluations. After the decision is arrived at for the purpose of discussion with the agent all evaluations may be looked at to show patterns of progress or continued weakness. This would be a valuable tool in planning a helpful training program for either old or new agents.

Changes in behavior are brought about by evaluation. The system should measure individual progress and point the way for improvement. The measuring of accomplishments and results will be more effective in measuring success than will be the counting of numbers.

The system of evaluation designed should also be a cooperative responsibility of all concerned. This will insure everyone knowing the basis on which the evaluation is being conducted and will furthermore be sound enough so that it may be defended if the need arises.

In summary the criteria for an evaluation system might be listed as:

1. a sound program planning procedure which enumerates the objectives and goals of the program to be evaluated and indicates the extent to which local people are involved and how these objectives and goals are in terms of the people's expressed needs and desires,
2. be based on facts which will show changes in performance, attitudes, and knowledge,
3. uses performance which show results on the job instead of personal qualities which might cause results,
4. does not allow a single incident or responsibility to overshadow the entire job,
5. is a continuous process taking into account changes which might occur as people's needs and desires change,
6. is the cooperative responsibility of local people, county workers, and the administration,
7. will serve as a guide to the establishing of programs which will aid the agents and the Extension Service to show continued progress and development towards the over-all goals of extension of helping people to see, analyze, and act on their own problems.

A Proposed System for Evaluation

A broad general framework for the evaluation of county extension agents has been developed keeping in mind the criteria established for an evaluation program.

The first area of the framework to be discussed is establishing an objective base for the evaluation program. This base will incorporate the goals and objectives of the county program developed during the program planning process. The area of work to be evaluated during a given period will be mutually agreed upon by extension agent and supervisor. In establishing this area it should be kept in mind that it should be so stated that it will represent what should be done, not what is being done, will contain only ratable items; use simple language; and recognize that there are other functions necessary for a successful extension performance.

During the course of the discussion the supervisor will be in a position to determine the job of program planning being carried on in the county. Items the supervisor will look for will include how the local people function, the type of background material prepared for the people, and the role played by the agent in the development of the program. The burden of proof as to involvement of local people will rest with the county agent. If for any reason the supervisor is not satisfied local people are being involved in the establishment of goals and objectives for the program it becomes the responsibility of the supervisor to visit a planning meeting in the county to observe techniques.

This method of using an agent-supervisor conference to establish a base and evaluate performance is shown in Figure 3. It will keep the agent oriented towards the people. At the same time it will allow the objectives of the administration to be made known to the county agent and through him to the planning committee of the county. The objectives of all levels; federal, state, county and local people; can be meshed without a conflict developing when the conference approach is used to establish the objectives against which the evaluation system will be applied. This will insure meeting the criteria of an evaluation program of being based on a sound planning procedure which enumerates the objectives and goals of the program as developed by local people to meet their expressed needs and desires. This also makes it the cooperative responsibility of local people, county worker, and supervisor by considering the needs and desires of all when establishing the objectives and goals against which performance is to be measured.

With an approach such as this for establishing the base for evaluation it is possible that in any given period only one phase of the agent's program will be used for a specific evaluation program. This should not be objectionable. Michigan extension agents were asked² the percentage of time spent doing things required or sponsored by the administration or specialist staff, doing things expected by local people, and doing those things considered as most important in meeting the needs and desires as determined by local people. The study

² Stone, J. T., What Does a County Extension Agent Do? Cooperative Extension Service, Michigan State College, p. 21.

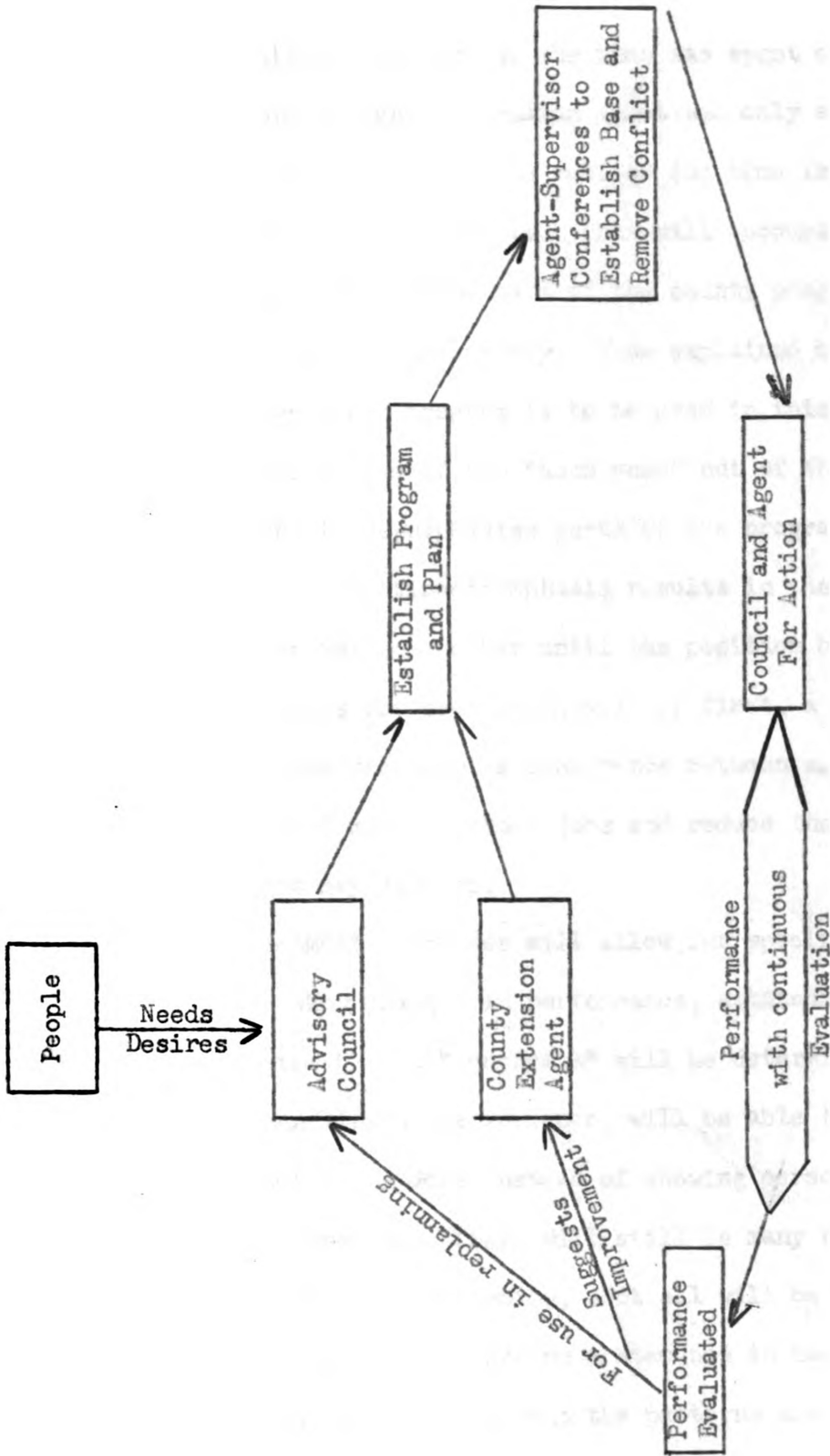


Figure 3. Direction of Movement to Evaluate Performance.

indicated that about one-third of the time was spent on each of the items. This meant a county extension agent had only a third of his time free to plan needed programs. The rest of the time is taken up with traditional or routine assignments. This will encourage the extension agent to think in terms of the part of the county program which will most nearly meet the needs of the county. When explained beforehand to the planning committee their program is to be used in this manner they will help the agent prune some of the "dead wood" out of the county program. It is as important to de-emphasize parts of the program as to continually emphasize sections. Continued emphasis results in the county agent putting one job on top of another until the position becomes unbearable. Setting a sound basis for evaluation will by first, a conference between agent and people and secondly, a conference between agent and supervisor; relieve the agent of many of those jobs and reduce the number of areas in which conflicts may develop.

The establishment of a base will allow for specific evaluation on facts which will show changes in performance, attitudes and knowledge. In establishing the base a "benchmark" will be determined so the evaluation system, when viewing performance, will be able to demonstrate results of the job being done instead of showing personal qualities which might cause results. There will still be many routine assignments the county agent will be performing. Not all will be eliminated during the planning process. The reporting system now in use will show these activities and statistics as to what the patterns are in the area of

these routine assignments such as office administration, farm visits, and telephone and office calls.

It must constantly be kept in mind that program planning is a continuous process of determining, developing, and executing programs. It calls for continuous observation by committees, their real participation in planning and their active assistance in carrying out programs. This will mean the evaluation program must recognize this fact by being a continuous process taking into account changes which might occur as people's needs and desires change.

Once the base has been established by mutual agreement it then becomes the extension agent's responsibility to develop a plan and carry it towards the goals and objectives as specified. During the process of establishing the base the supervisor will be evaluating the county agent's program planning procedures. This will set the tone for the entire evaluation program in that it will lead the way for the evaluation to be carried on cooperatively between agent and supervisor. Once agreement has been reached on the program to be evaluated approval has been made that it is a significant program to carry in the extension program.

The base will determine what is to be measured in relation to the goals and objectives of the extension program. Methods to use to measure performance should also be agreed upon by agent and supervisor. Evidence as to changes in behavior which may take place as a result of the extension program will be difficult to obtain. Sabrosky³ has written,

³ Kelsey, L. D. and C. C. Hearne, Cooperative Extension Work, Comstock Publishing Associates, Ithaca, N. Y., 1955, pp. 220-221.

...how can you tell that you have made progress or attained the goal toward which your objective was aimed? Education is successful when it has caused a change in the "right" direction ----The objective chosen for evaluation, as we have seen, must be in terms of behavior. Behavior, when considered as the result of education, is usually not in terms of an immediate physical action. It may be in terms of an improvement in skills, a better understanding of a concept, an increased ability to solve problems, a changed attitude, an appreciation of different things, a shifting of values, a change of interests, an adoption of improved practices, an increase in knowledge.

In order to select the types of behavior you will measure, a careful check must be made of the type of behavior which has been or will be brought about.--We need to decide which types of behavior we want to measure--only part of them or all of them. It is easier to measure changes of behavior which have tangible evidences of proof than it is to measure those which have intangible evidence.-----In order to determine the real results of extension teaching, we cannot ignore these intangible results just because they are hard to evaluate.-----

Measurement may take place at three points of attainment. First before any change occurs--the people's behavior before extension has done any teaching.

A second point would be at any step in the progress of the people toward the ultimate goal of the objective.

The third point for evaluation would be to measure the attainment of the final goal of the objective. When you find out if few, some or all the people have reached that goal, you know whether to retain the objective in your plan of work or to substitute another one; you can find out whether certain teaching methods have been effective or not, and under what conditions.

There are numerous devices which can be used to measure progress toward an educational objective. They include:⁴

1. Value scales to determine the value people place on things and to determine what people think is important.
2. Attitude scales to show how people feel toward things.
3. Opinion pools.
4. Knowledge and comprehension tests.
5. Interest checks to determine what people think is interesting.
6. Skill or performance ratings to determine the amount of skills attained.
7. Adoption of practices.
8. Case-history technique.

⁴ Kelsey, L. D. and C. C. Hearne, op. cit., p. 222.

To be completely effective any one of the devices for measurement listed should be valid, reliable, objective, practical, and simple. For the purpose of this evaluation system, although recognizing the need for this complete measuring to be obtained by these devices, simple adaptations of them must be found to measure relative degrees of change which can be used as part of the observations being made by supervisor or county agent.

In the preliminary plans the methods of measurement, and adaptations acceptable will be specified. This will have the added affect of establishing the rules for evaluation before it has begun. It will be another means of adding security to the county extension agent's position.

Evaluation of performance is the next activity. The county agent is evaluated on the methods used to reach the objectives and goals established in the base. In evaluating in terms of success in meeting specific responsibilities, emphasis is placed upon results and measurable facts using the methods established at the beginning of the evaluation program. Generalities such as tact, cooperation, personality, initiative, judgment, ethics, social habits, and community life should be used only as they have a direct bearing on the results. There is no question that items such as these have an influence upon a county agent's success but for the purpose of this evaluation program they are difficult to define and their direct bearing upon the success or failure of the program is not measureable at present.

The person best qualified to make the evaluation is the supervisor. This will be done in terms of the specific goals and objectives as set

up at the time the base is established. The supervisor may want to confirm with another person on the administrative staff his evaluation of the program as carried on by the county agent. During the evaluation of performance personality factors have been omitted. After the completion of the analysis of the job being done it would be well to look at the strong and weak points with the idea in mind of listing the characteristics which might cause a good or a poor performance. This may reduce some of the objectivity of the evaluation but will build program if it is kept in mind that only characteristics that have a direct bearing on the results will be used. At the same time this is being done it would be well to list specific recommendations that will help to build the county agent and strengthen the extension program.

When agreement is reached on the evaluation and suggested recommendations to be made the evaluation will be discussed with the county agent being evaluated. Prior to sitting down to discuss the evaluation with the county agent the supervisor will review what has been done to this point. This review will be made to orient in the supervisor's mind what the evaluation shows so that he may discuss it in an unbiased manner with the county agent, presenting it in a manner that will not emphasize one strength or weakness overlooking all others. All strong and weak points in the county agent's program will have been developed and highlighted by the time the review is completed. From the point at which the county agent and supervisor sit down to confer on the evaluation will be the real beginning of the training program. The conference will be so arranged that the county agent will know not only what the

evaluation is but will readily recognize the strengths and weaknesses. This will prevent being left with a feeling of uncertainty and anxiety.

An agent-supervisor conference so arranged that it will give a feeling of confidence will have to be adapted to the agent in question. It is here that the supervisor may need to know some of the personal characteristics such as ability, ambition, and temperament. The supervisor should be certain before approaching this meeting that facts are at hand to verify the strength or weaknesses as they come up. During the conduct of the conference the supervisor will make every effort to put the county agent at ease, allow the agent to discover his own weaknesses and encourage the agent to talk and develop his own plan for self advancement and program strengthening. A detailed study has been made by Morrow,⁵ on the personal interview, which is recommended to all interested in this follow through to an evaluation program.

To facilitate the job of evaluation a check sheet has been developed as a guide. This evaluation sheet will cover the main objective subjects to be evaluated with a partial weighing of each factor. It is shown in Table I. A scale from 1 through 10 will be used to indicate the degree of accomplishment under the various items on the evaluation sheet. This is being used because there is not a sharp break between one rank and another but rather it is a continuum which is relative. As a guide however the scale is broken down to mean as follows:

⁵ Morrow, E. R., The Personal Interview as a Method in Agricultural Extension Supervision, Agricultural Extension Service, University of Minnesota, 1954.

- 1-2 Unsatisfactory -- performance which does not meet the requirements and shows no progress towards the goals and objectives.
- 3-4 Fair -- performance which lacks quality and can be improved greatly.
- 5-6 Good -- meets the normal requirements of the program and is showing progress towards accomplishing the goals and objectives established. Improvement can still be made.
- 7-8 Very good -- performance is of a high type. Improvement can be made in minor details.
- 9-10 Outstanding -- performance more than meets the requirements set up at the beginning. It is the type of performance which can be used as an example of how to reach the goals and objectives in a clearcut manner.

The important idea to be kept in mind when using this evaluation is that it is relative. Supervisors using it should be uniform in the performance required for points along the scale. This can best be worked out for a given state or area by the personnel doing the evaluating.

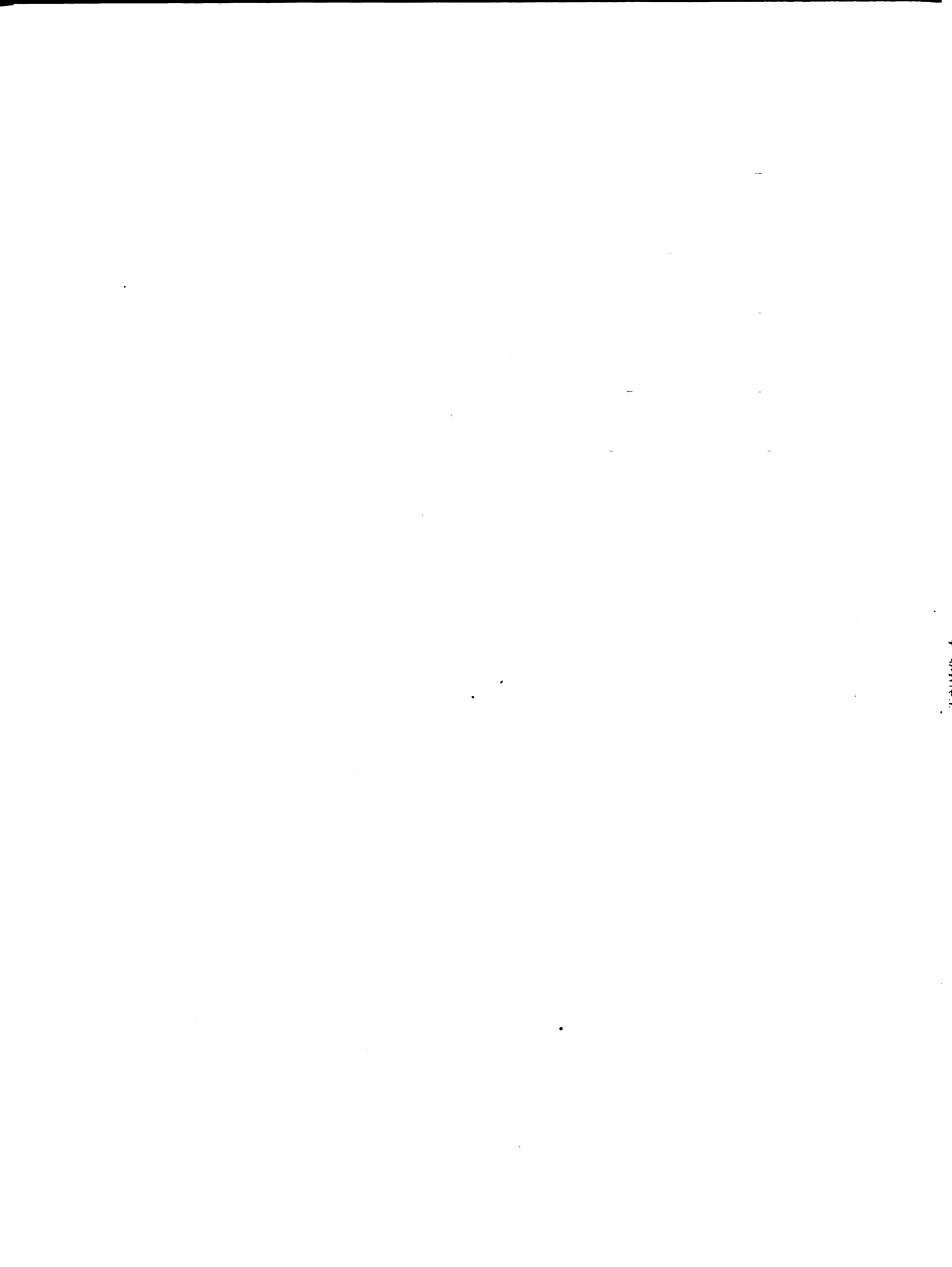


TABLE I
EVALUATION FORM FOR COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT PERFORMANCE

Name: _____ County: _____ Evaluated by: _____ Date: _____

The purpose of this evaluation is to furnish a guide to strengthen the county extension program and improve agent performance.

The evaluation program will be in terms of objectives and goals, measure progress and development, and be educational to county extension personnel.

The program to be evaluated is:

PROBLEM AND SITUATION: _____

OBJECTIVES (in terms for which program is planned): _____

GOALS (in terms of anticipated adoption of practices): _____

JOB DESCRIPTION (in terms of responsibilities to the county extension program): _____

Item to be Evaluated	Unsatisfactory		Fair		Good		Very Good		Out- Standing		Support for Evaluation
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

- I. Problem Analysis
 - A. Preparation of Background Material
 - 1. Local people
 - 2. County Extension Worker
 - 3. Extension Specialist
 - B. Use material to study over-all situation to determine interest, needs, problems, and objectives.
 - C. Involvement of People
 - 1. Committees represent
 - a. Areas of county
 - b. Income levels
 - c. Interest groups
 - d. Ethnic groups
 - 2. Leadership Development
 - 3. Leadership Participation
- II. Program Development
 - A. Objectives Defined
 - B. Goals are:
 - 1. Obtainable
 - 2. Measureable
 - C. Jobs are outlined for:
 - 1. Local leaders
 - 2. County extension worker
 - 3. Extension specialist
 - 4. Other organizations
 - D. Provides for:
 - 1. Leadership development
 - 2. Leadership participation
 - 3. Cooperation of extension workers
 - 4. Cooperation with other organization
 - E. Allows for periodic review of:
 - 1. Objectives
 - 2. Goals to be reached
 - 3. Methods of teaching
- III. Execution of Program
 - A. Responsibility is:
 - 1. Shared
 - 2. Delegated
 - B. Assistance given as needed
 - C. Teaching devices are:
 - 1. Appropriately selected
 - 2. Well prepared
 - D. Organization Which Cooperates
 - 1. County workers
 - 2. Extension specialists
 - 3. Other agencies
 - 4. Farm Organizations
 - 5. Civic and community organizations
- IV. Program Accomplishments & Use
 - A. Changes Affected in:
 - 1. Performance
 - 2. Knowledge
 - 3. Attitude
 - B. Summarized to:
 - 1. Re-plan
 - 2. Improve methods and procedure
 - 3. Improve leadership
 - 4. Improve public relations
- V. Relationships
 - A. Within County Staff
 - 1. Cooperates with other members
 - 2. Informs others
 - 3. Presents unbiased reports
 - 4. Is punctual
 - B. With other agencies
 - 1. Harmonious and friendly
 - 2. Teamwork on county projects
 - C. With Others
 - 1. Farm organizations
 - 2. Civic groups
- VI. Office Organization
 - A. Records Systematically Kept
 - B. Reports in Relation to Objectives
 - C. Reports on Time
 - D. Correspondence Answered Promptly

Item to be Evaluated	Unsatisfactory					Out- Standing					Support for Evaluation
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

VII. For County Administrators Only:

A. Familiar with all phases of extension program

- B. Considers Welfare of other staff members
 1. Adequate facilities
 2. Represents fairly on salary and promotion
 3. Gives recognition fairly
 4. Proper stenographic help

C. Support for extension

- 1. Budget adequate considering resources of county
- 2. Advisory council functioning

D. Office management

- 1. Secretaries business-like
- 2. Work load fairly allocated among secretarial staff
- 3. Equipment cared for
- 4. Team work prevails
- 5. Office records concise and complete

E. Assumes responsibility in

training, guiding, and counselling other staff members

In addition to the items checked comment should be made on:

1. Action to improve since last appraisal:

2. Characteristics contributing to success:

3. Characteristics hindering program progress:

4. Recommended action to strengthen extension program and to build the county agent:

CHAPTER IV

A COUNTY CASE STUDY TO USE IN APPLYING THE EVALUATION METHOD

To test the evaluation method it will be applied to a specific county. This county program was selected because the writer is thoroughly familiar with the situation. One of the features of the method being proposed is that the person doing the evaluating must be familiar with the program being evaluated and conditions under which the program was developed.

The program information as written up was obtained by interviewing agents in the county, studying annual narrative reports, and from the writer's knowledge of the situation.

In this county program development was carried on through an advisory council. This council was composed of twenty-eight members. At the time of the development of the program to be used these 28 people included 21 men and 7 women. The chairman of the home economics, 4-H Club, dairy, poultry, fruit and vegetable committees were included in the 28. The organization looks like Figure 3. They represented the 15 towns in the county. The majority were from farm families although four were not. This committee developed and approved the program for the county extension service from recommendations made by commodity committees. Specific commodity committees made their recommendations after studying the situation in the county. These recommendations

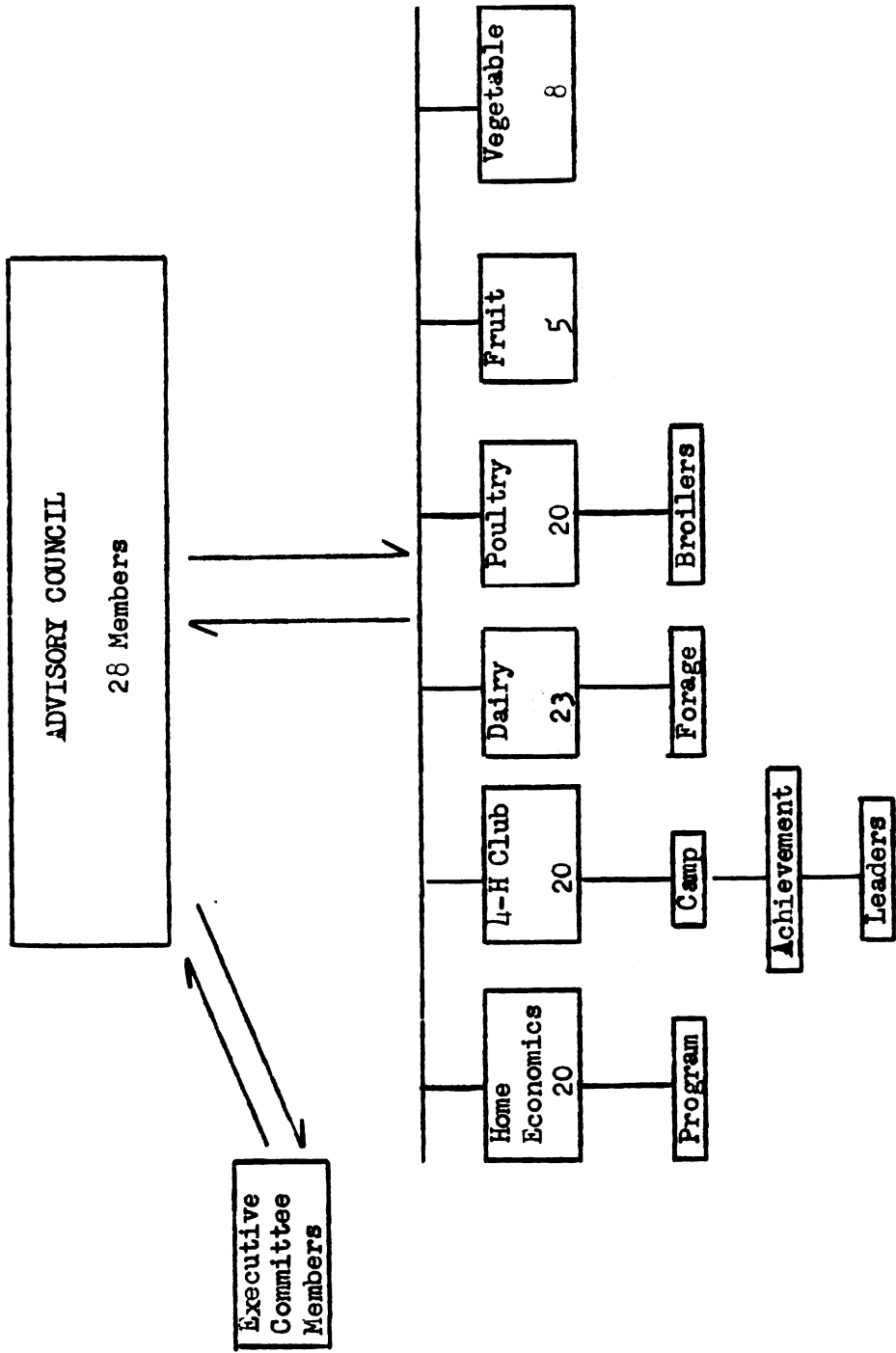


Figure 4. Organization for Program Planning in Windham County.

included not only problems facing the people in the county, but also objectives, either long-term or short term, needing emphasis in the immediate future. The home economics and 4-H Club committee met bi-monthly while agricultural commodity committees met as conditions warranted. The council also met bi-monthly. To act between regularly scheduled meetings there was an executive committee of seven members including the four officers and a representative from home economics, 4-H Club work, and agriculture. Extension agents in the county were advisors to the committees.

Excerpts from the program as developed in this county are as follows:

Windham County is located in the northeast corner of Connecticut. In 1950 about 53 percent or 32,529 of the 61,759 inhabitants were rural. In terms of density of population, the county ranks sixth with 150 people to the square mile. It is fourth in acreage in farms, number of farms, and average size of farm. The percentage of rural population changed about 11 percent between 1940 and 1950, which was the smallest change of any county during that period.

In the county there are nine cities of more than one thousand people. There are fifteen towns and 516 square miles.

Many changes have occurred since 1945. The number of farms have decreased by about one-fifth. Among the farms there has been a shift in percentage according to major farming enterprises.

The largest increase has been to 512 dairy farms, or 8 percent.

The other increase was in the number of poultry farms to 676 or 3 percent. Fruit farms decreased until there are now only 10 in the county and vegetable farms decreased from 30 to 5.

[In 1951 an extension effectiveness survey was run in county.

This survey was used as a supplement to the situation presented in the program to give the council an idea about the county.

These included facts about:

1. where people obtained their income
2. educational level of the people
3. change in age of extension clientele
4. conveniences available in the home
5. attitudes towards extension
6. participation in extension
7. where people obtained information]

Agricultural expansion continues in dairy and poultry. Not so much in the number of farms as in the size of farm units. Five more cows are found per dairy farm than in 1940. Where poultry flocks had 400 layers they now have over 2000. Broilers have increased by 180 percent. The poultry industry is now three times the size of the dairy business with a gross income of about 9 million dollars. All concentrates needed by both the dairy and poultry industries are imported, the dairy industry also imports about 5,000 tons of hay per year. Overhead on farms has doubled. At present, with a surplus of food resulting in reduced prices for farm products, but with prices for things that farmers buy staying high, agriculture is in a vulnerable

position particularly the poultry segment which must export the bulk of its product.

The homemaking program has 26 groups with approximately 900 women. They are located in 14 of the 15 towns in the county. More and more of the homemaking groups have been meeting in the evenings due to small children and women working. Many homemakers have already felt the cut back on industry. As a result they are anxious to do "make it yourself" projects to help the family income.

At present, the 4-H Club program reaches boys and girls in 14 of the 15 towns. Project work is strongest in dairy, poultry, clothing and foods.

The over-all objective for Extension work in Windham County is better living for the family. This will mean the program should be geared as closely as possible to the desires and needs of the particular families with which extension works. Specific objectives and their solution towards the broad over-all objective were:

1. Developing people through group participation
 - a) Committee chairmen aided to strengthen county program through better planning meetings.
 - b) Leader training meetings on discussion methods.
 - c) Provide more effective junior leadership program.
2. Development of a sound farm and home planning program.
 - a) Farm and home planning with family groups.
 - b) Dairymen develop a year-round forage program to meet their pasture and barn feeding needs.
 - c) Establishing young farmer clubs.

3. Marketing of eggs and poultry meat.

- a) Improving egg-holding, grading facilities, and marketing methods.
- b) Adoption of quality control measures and improved merchandizing of home dressed poultry products.
- c) Inform farmers of market reports available and how to use them.
- d) Marketing broilers at optimum weight.
- e) Developing marketing facilities for broilers.

4. Making family living a worth-while experience.

- a) Encourage families to make their homes safe from fires.
- b) Encourage better understanding of teen-agers.
- c) Landscaping home grounds.
- d) Making housekeeping easier.
- e) Teaching care and construction of clothing.
- f) Help families plan for remodeling homes.
- g) Furniture renovation taught.

These objectives are long-term. They are not the complete list as listed by the advisory council. They do, however, illustrate how one program planning committee develops objectives. At the time the commodity committees made their recommendations they also recommended to the advisory council certain solutions to the long-term objectives be considered short term objectives and given emphasis during the ensuing year. Two of these short-term objectives selected for concentration and emphasis will be discussed as handled by the commodity committees involved. It might be said that from this point on the commodity committees developed a plan of work which according to Matthews,¹ is a statement of the activities to be undertaken by an individual, agency or group, within a definitely stated time, to carry out recommendations expressed in the program.

¹ Matthews, J. L., National Inventory of Extension Methods of Program Determination, Extension Service Circular No. 477, Washington, D. C., 1952, p. 2.

The two objectives to be developed as needing emphasis are:

1. Dairymen developing a year-round forage program to meet their pasture and barn feeding requirements.
2. Developing additional marketing facilities for broilers.

A sample county plan is shown in Table II.

A County Operating Plan

The need for emphasis being put upon the long-time objective of dairymen developing a year-round forage program to meet their pasture and barn feeding requirements had first been suggested by the forage committee, an action unit of the county dairy committee. This recommendation had been made on the strength of the perennial shortage of forage, high level of concentrate feeding, and continued high prices of purchased items of production. On the strength of this recommendation the advisory council agreed that the county agent emphasize this in the work plan. They also turned it back to the forage committee for implementation.

First the county forage committee determined that this objective could be reached by teaching how to:

1. estimate the forage production of present fields and pastures,
2. estimate the forage required by the present dairy herd during the pasture season and barn feeding period,
3. check the balance between the estimate of forage requirements and forage production,
4. analyze adjustments which are possible to improve the forage program on the farm,

TABLE II
WINDHAM COUNTY PLAN OF WORK

Objective and Goal	What to Do	By Whom	When
1. Determining needs for year-round forage program to meet pasture and barn seeding requirements by teaching how to:	1. Development of work book	Specialists: farm management and agronomy	Dec.-Jan.
	2. Conduct of workshops	Committee member assisted by:	Feb.-early March
	a) Estimate present forage production	county agent soil conservation technician	
	b) Estimate forage requirements for present conditions of herd size	Smith-Hughes instructor Specialists	Season changes
	c) Check balance of requirements and production		
d) Analyze adjustments possible to balance program	3. Mass Media		
	a) 5 management joggers		
	b) News articles	County agent	
	c) radio		
	d) twilight meetings (3)		
e) Determine long range objectives for dairy enterprise	4. Individual follow up	Committee members County agent	Apr.-Oct.
	a) discuss analysis		
	b) observe results		
This to be done with 100 dairymen			
2. Improve marketing of eggs and poultry	1. Discussion of situation	Poultry committee, dressing plant operators, hatchery men, feed dealers, poultry buyers, specialists	Nov.
	a) Establish a Del-Mar-Va type broiler auction		
	2. Trip to study Del-Mar-Va type auction	County agent, marketing specialist, poultrymen	Dec.
	3. Explain situation to county poultrymen:	Poultry committee county agent	Jan.
	a) meeting		
	b) newspaper		
	c) radio		
	5. Establish committee to determine made of operation	Poultrymen State poultry association (County agent and marketing specialist advisors)	Feb.
	a) number of birds available		
	b) number of birds needed		
	5. Establish auction	Poultrymen	Mar.
	6. Evaluate results	Poultry committee County agent	At each step.
	a) people involved (number and kind)		
	b) successful auction		
	c) actions of poultrymen to support auction		

5. determine long-term objectives for the dairy enterprise and to estimate how the forage program can help move toward these objectives.

The committee felt that one hundred dairymen would be as many as could be worked with for any given period. To reach this number the committee decided to hold a series of eight workshop type meetings with attendance limited to fifteen persons. Committee members were responsible for arranging meetings and inviting dairymen to attend. They were to be assisted at the meetings by the county agent, soil conservation technician, Smith-Hughes instructor, two farm management specialist, dairy specialist, agronomist, and county agent leader. All meetings were to be held on the same night with two meetings scheduled for each group. These to be during February and early March. Material in the form of a workbook was to be prepared by the extension specialists (farm management, and agronomy).

Other jobs assigned to carry throughout the year included mass media information to all dairymen in the county to be prepared by the county agent. These included a series of forage management releases, news articles, and radio broadcasts timed according to seasonal changes and twilight meetings in May and June.

The last responsibilities assigned were the follow up and the evaluation of the program. The county agent and committee members were to call on each dairyman who had participated in the workshop. Discussing in detail what the workshop meant to the dairyman and observing whether or not the workshop had caused any changes to take place in the dairyman's thoughts or action.

In the poultry phase of the program one of the objectives had been to discuss and improve the marketing of eggs and poultry meat. As with the dairy segment of the over-all program this had a recommendation from the poultry committee that it was worthy of emphasis. It was turned back to them for implementation. The poultry committee determined that this objective could best be reached the first year by developing one additional marketing facility for the use of broilermen.

As outlined the plan called for:

1. A meeting to discuss the situation between county poultry committee and interested parties such as dressing plant operators, hatcherymen, feed dealers, poultry buyers, and extension specialists.
2. Trip to study Del-Mar-Va type auction by county agent, poultry marketing specialist, three poultrymen.
3. County poultry meeting called by county agent to present situation and description of auction.
4. Committee established to determine mode of operation. County agent and extension specialist to consult with committee;
 - a) cooperate with state poultry association,
 - b) establish number of birds for successful operation,
 - c) determine whether birds were available in the area,
 - d) locate place and time for sale.
5. Newspaper and radio coverage by the county agent to keep people informed of situation.
6. Evaluation of results by:
 - a) number of people involved,
 - b) establishment of auction,
 - c) actions of poultrymen to support the auction.

Accomplishments of the Program

The results obtained are reported in relation to the action taken toward the objectives as listed in the plan of work. Evaluation sheets were applied only to that part of the program agreed upon as significant and worthy of major emphasis first by the extension agent and local people and finally by the agent and supervisor. Once the agent and supervisor have agreed this should only be changed as a base by mutual consent of all parties concerned. The programs to which the evaluation sheet have been applied were agreed worthy of evaluation.

Information for the introductory sections of the evaluation sheet were obtained from the county program of work, plan of action, and agent conference. This included information on:

1. Problem and situation.
2. Objectives in terms of period for which program is planned.
3. Goals in terms of anticipated adoption of farm and home practices.
4. Job description in terms of responsibility to the county extension program.

The body of facts for the evaluation sheet have been obtained from reports, interviews, and observation. These may not at times be as objective as a formal study but if used with a realization of their limitations will strengthen the extension agent and the county extension program. Such a procedure turned up the following information for use in the evaluation.

The Forage Program

As a basis for their recommendation that the forage program be emphasized the committee had considered background material on the dairy marketing situation, the effects of prices on the dairy situation, and the amount of purchased feed used. This was prepared and presented to them by the extension agent and specialists. This study of the situation led to the recommendation and action discussed previously. The plan of action was immediately put into operation with the development of a 24 page workbook by the farm management and agronomy specialists. Committee members arranged eight strategically located meetings and assumed the responsibility of inviting 15 neighbors to each meeting. These workshops were held on the same night so professional assistance for the committee member at each session was obtained from the county agent; soil conservation technician; Smith-Hughes instructor; two farm management, agronomy, and dairy specialists; and county agent leader. A total of 112 dairymen took part in the eight workshops and 16 sessions.

In the plan the committee members had assigned to themselves the responsibility of calling upon dairymen they had invited to the workshop. Thirty of the 112 dairymen were called upon by committeemen. To complete the fourth objective of analyzing adjustments possible to balance forage needs and forage requirements a personal visit was necessary. The county agent assumed the responsibility of calling on the additional farmers. Seventy-one dairymen were visited by the county agent leaving 11 not contacted as individuals.

From the standpoint of the short-term objective to be taught it was observed at the workshop that all 112 dairymen worked at estimating present forage needs, requirements for present herd size, and checking the balance of requirements and production. During the course of the visitations to dairymen it was asked how many had completed these three steps. Of the 101 visited 92 indicated they had completed this work and used it in considering adjustments possible to balance their forage program. Adjustments were observed during visits. They ranged from changing rotations to complete renovation of fields. None of the dairymen visited had made any attempt to determine the long range objectives of the dairy enterprise and the place of the forage program in these objectives.

One statement made to the county agent was of interest as to how the program affected people. A committee member asked the agent what he was doing with his time. When asked the reason for such an inquiry he stated, "my neighbors used to visit or call your office, now they come to me for information." This statement is one piece of evidence as to how the program helped to develop leadership.

In regards to mass media the reports showed that the 5 management "jogger" cards were sent, 10 news articles were written, and 4 radio broadcasts made. Samples of these indicated that they were aimed at stimulating interest in knowing how to analyze the farm rather than towards specific practices. Twilight meetings were held as planned to relate the workshop to an actual on-the-farm situation.

At the end of the program year the forage committee reviewed the program. They recommended as a result of the review that the program be continued with emphasis the next year on helping farmers learn how to set up their long term objectives for the dairy enterprise, integrating the forage program with the over-all program of farm business.

The Poultry Marketing Program

The decision to establish a Del-Mar-Va type auction was based more upon enthusiasm for what had been read in trade journals than upon a detailed study as to whether or not there was a need for such an auction in the area. The advisory committee accepted the recommendation on the basis of knowing the poultry industry was expanding rapidly. It was given back to the poultry committee to develop and execute a plan of action.

A meeting was called by the poultry committee of dressing plant operators, hatcherymen, feed dealers, poultry buyers, and extension specialists to discuss the Del-Mar-Va type auction. This group felt the need existed for additional facilities as they indicated the committee should go further. A trip was arranged to Selbyville, Delaware, to observe an auction in action. This trip was made by the county agent, poultry marketing specialist, and three poultrymen. After the return of this group a county poultry meeting was called to explain the situation and operation of such an auction. Seventy-five of the 676 poultrymen in the county attended the meeting. To acquaint more of the poultrymen with the project six news articles and four

radio broadcasts were made on the subject by the county agent explaining the actual functioning of the organization being proposed. After a time interval of three weeks another county meeting was called.

This one enlisted the aid of the state poultry association. The purpose of this meeting was to appoint a committee to determine whether or not to go ahead with the idea and the mode of operation to follow for an auction type sale. From studying the experience of other auctions and with the counsel of the poultry marketing specialist the committee determined that 100,000 birds would be needed for a weekly auction. Next they surveyed the county to find out how many birds could be expected per week for the auction. Although this was a committee affair some of the members were not enthusiastic about the project so the county agent and one member of the committee did the farm-to-farm canvassing of poultrymen.

This canvass indicated there would only be 75,000 birds available per week. At the same time there were indications that opposition was developing to the program. However, the committee decided to proceed to establish the auction. Other organizations helped. An egg marketing cooperative donated facilities, the Farm Bureau underwrote the initial mailings to obtain pledges of birds for the auction, the broiler marketing committee of the state poultry association helped to publicize the auction, an auctioneer donated time, and the local radio station broadcast the proceedings of the auction.

When the committee sat down to evaluate the results of this program they found that after limping along for five months the auction had

failed. Many different kinds of people had been involved in the program. Every phase of the poultry program was involved at the beginning. As plans progressed they were left out of the planning. Meetings, radio, and newspaper were expected to inform people fully about the program. Subsequent action by the poultrymen indicated that these media were not being effective for this type of program. Poultrymen supporting the program were not the broilermen for whom the auction was established. It was the owners of laying flocks who were putting birds through the auction. Instead of the 100,000 birds needed for a weekly listing the number went as low as 30,000. When committee men and the county agent contacted poultrymen they said they didn't know enough about the program to determine whether to be "in or out." Being the type of program it was the committee, after appraising the situation, decided to drop this phase of the marketing program and to recommend that effort be placed on egg quality and understanding egg and broiler pricing procedures. The important thing is that the committee could, by the periodic review in the plan of work, have picked up the trend and not been in the embarrassing position of having a project fail.

The evaluation sheet also calls for an objective appraisal of extension agents general work habits. In the case of the administrative agent it provides for a measurement of administrative ability. At the time of the interviews to obtain facts on the program in the county some observations were made on these areas. In the case of agent "1", who worked with the forage program and was administrator of the county

program, it was observed that he was well liked by members of the county professional and secretarial staffs. He always let them know what was going on and was unbiased in actions. In working with other agencies the feeling prevailed that there was a part to be played by everyone--there was a team in the county to serve the people. Records were kept to indicate the point at which a project would be at any given time. Time was set aside daily for necessary correspondence and other assignments of similar nature.

As the administrator of the county program agent "A" did not feel a need for regular staff conferences to familiarize agents with each others activities. Coffee breaks were a regular part of the office routine with this time being used for conference purpose. The work load in the county was well distributed there being one or more agents for each line of work. Financial records were complete as shown by an official audit. County finances were adequate and support for extension could have been shown by a 100% increase in the county appropriation. Other agents in the office felt the administrator was always fair to them, watching salary increases, giving credit for jobs well done, and having supplies with which to work. There was some feeling that the administrator may not have always been positive enough in actions. He was always available for counselling on the programs of the other agents. Regardless of the field it was in--he had a sympathetic ear. A weakness indicated, however, during the interview was the agent did not assume responsibility for training and guiding the county extension staff. An example of this was in connection with the poultry marketing program.

From contacts made around the county and talking with the other agent it soon became obvious that there was a major weakness in the poultry program of not involving enough people in the decision making process. No attempt was made to discuss this with the agent responsible--or any other phase of the program except when asked for specific information. There was a tendency to do this with other programs also--on the theory other agents could best learn by doing.

Agent "B", the agent on the poultry marketing program, was found to keep to himself not letting other members of the staff know how the program was progressing. Reports to the advisory committee were not well handled with a reprimand being made at an advisory council meeting for the way they were presented. There was a conflict in his actions that while telling no one what was going on with his program at the same time he would go out of his way to help other agents and organizations to have successful programs. Poultrymen, with whom he worked, liked his program very much as evidenced by their indignation after the reprimand over reports. Other people in the county did not know much about him. There was no system of records or reports being used. At the time of the program being discussed there had not been a report to the state office for twelve months.

The facts as have been developed will be applied to an evaluation sheet to demonstrate the application. In this case, as previously mentioned, these have been obtained by scanning reports, interviews, and from personal knowledge. For the purpose of supervision this is

probably as accurate as such facts can be without a formal survey with scientific sampling methods, developing a questionnaire, and pretesting. With the main idea for evaluation being the strengthening of the county extension program this will suffice as the evaluation sheets will demonstrate.

CHAPTER V

APPLICATION OF THE EVALUATION METHOD

The model evaluation sheets developed have been applied to the county program discussed in the preceding chapter. The forage program is shown in Table III and the poultry marketing program in Table IV. Five agents are employed in the county. The evaluation sheet will be applied to the two agricultural agents. This is being done first because it is the phase of the county extension program with which the writer is most familiar and secondly if the evaluation system is to serve its primary purpose of strengthening a county extension agent's performance and building a county extension program the individual segments of the program must be examined and appraised before the over-all program can be evaluated. There has been a difference in application as the senior agricultural agent is administrator of the over-all county extension program. As such his responsibilities for program development are broader than the responsibilities of the other agents.

After applying the model sheets the gathering of evidence will be discussed in more detail than in Chapter III with suggestions for the type of evidence necessary for the evaluation to serve its purpose of building a county extension program.

arrangements and invites by
Leaders

X

X

- 2. Leadership participation
- 3. Cooperation of extension workers

TABLE III

LEADERSHIP PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE

	Leadership participation	Cooperation of extension workers	Leadership participation and performance	Leadership participation and performance
2. Leadership participation		X		
3. Cooperation of extension workers			X	
B. Considers welfare of other staff members				agents have supplies and tools change in budget
1. Adequate facilities	X			
2. Represents fairly on salary and promotion		X		action at budget meeting
3. Gives recognition fairly		X		secretary for each line of work
4. Proper stenographic help		X		100% increase 5% of total county budget
C. Support for extension				meets bi-monthly
1. Budget adequate considering resources of county		X		
2. Advisory council functioning		X		
D. Office management				
1. Secretaries businesslike		X		gossip--poor telephone manners
2. Workload fairly allocated among secretarial staff		X		each helps the other yearly contracts
3. Equipment cared for	X			
4. Teamwork prevails	X			yearly audit shows good records
5. Office records concise and complete		X		
E. Assumes responsibility in training, guiding, and counselling other staff members			X	reluctant to show interest without being asked

In addition to the items checked comment should be made on:

1. Action to improve since last appraisal.
2. Characteristics contributing to success:
sense of responsibility for welfare of county.
3. Characteristics hindering program progress:
tendency to overlook little details--leave them to chance.
4. Recommended action to strengthen extension program and to build the county agent;

Farm organizations have something to offer an extension program--see if they can help;

Review program periodically--this helps involve people and keeps their interest high. It will also keep the program from going astray;

Discuss office techniques with secretaries;

Do not wait for questions from other agents--to build the entire program take some initiative in guiding and training newer agents.

TABLE IV
EVALUATION OF COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT PERFORMANCE

Name: Agent "B" County: _____ Evaluated by: _____ Date: April 14, 1955

The purpose of this evaluation is to furnish a guide to strengthen the county extension program and improve agent performance.

The evaluation program will be in terms of objectives and goals, measure progress and development, and be educational to county extension personnel.

The program to be evaluated is:

PROBLEM AND SITUATION:

Lack of adequate marketing facilities for broilers.

OBJECTIVES (in terms of period for which program is planned):

Developing better marketing facilities for broilers.

GOALS (in terms of anticipated adoption of practices):

Establishment of Del-Mar-Va type auction.

JOB DESCRIPTION (in terms of responsibilities to the county extension program):

Agent will counsel with the committee and execute jobs assigned, cooperate with other staff members, maintain adequate records on the project, evaluate the program, and work with other agencies.

Item to be Evaluated	Unsatisfactory		Fair		Good		Very Good		Outstanding		Support for Evaluation
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
I. Problem Analysis											
A. Preparation of background material											
1. Local people			x								were not involved in preparation only description of auction prepared price information given
2. County extension worker				x							
3. Extension specialist				x							
B. Use material to study overall situation to determine interest, needs, problems, and objectives											
						x					industry representatives gave opinions to help committee
C. Involvement of people											
1. Committees represent											
a. areas of county						x					broiler areas represented
b. income levels					x						one low income farmer
c. interest groups						x					industry well represented
d. ethnic groups		x									largest ethnic group in poultry producers not represented
2. Leadership development		x									one man carried the load
3. Leadership participation						x					members could participate
II. Program Development											
A. Objectives defined											
						x					plan of work
B. Goals are:											
1. Obtainable						x					
2. Measurable						x					performances measures
C. Jobs are Outlined for:											
1. Local leaders			x								jobs only given to a few agent responsible--jobs outlined
2. County extension workers					x						knew information expected from them
3. Extension specialists							x				not definitely outlined
4. Other organizations				x							
D. Provides for:											
1. Leadership development			x								jobs keep to a very few poultrymen
2. Leadership participation			x								
3. Cooperation of extension workers						x					other agents not involved
4. Cooperation with other organizations					x						not specifically outlined
E. Allows for periodic review of:											
1. Objectives						x					every committee meeting
2. Goals to be reached						x					was an opportunity for review
3. Methods of teaching						x					
III. Execution of program											
A. Responsibility is:											
1. Shared				x							one man carried the burden
2. Delegated				x							
B. Assistance given as needed											
					x						agent assisted--assumed responsibility canvassed for bids
CC. Teaching devices are:											
1. Appropriately selected			x								mass media did not reach enough--language barrier
2. Well prepared					x						
D. Organization which cooperates											
1. County workers				x							county workers not asked for help
2. Extension specialists						x					specialists prepared criteria for success
3. Other agencies						x					State Dept. of Agr. helped on prices
4. Farm organizations							x				poultry ass'n and Farm Bureau
5. Civic and community organization							x				radio station donated time
IV. Program accomplishments & Use:											
A. Changes affected in:											
1. Performance		x									auction foiled
2. Knowledge				x							poultrymen report they do not know about it
3. Attitudes				x							buyers viewed as a competitor
B. Summarized to:											
1. Re-plan						x					new program developed
2. Improve methods and procedure			x								not discussed
3. Improve leadership		x									not discussed
4. Improve public relations		x									not discussed
V. Relationships:											
A. Within County Staff											
1. Cooperates with other members							x				always willing to help only when asked
2. Informs others					x						committee complained of reports usually late
3. Presents unbiased reports			x								
4. Is punctual				x							
B. With other agencies:											
1. Harmonious and friendly					x						
2. Teamwork on county project					x						
C. With others											
1. Farm organizations							x				poultry ass'n particularly good
2. Civic groups					x						
VI. Office Organization											
A. Records systematically kept		x									very haphazard--only for mileage
B. Reports in relation to objectives			x								no reports for 12 months
C. Reports on time			x								no reports for 12 months
D. Correspondence answered promptly						x					if nothing else comes up

In addition to the items checked comment should be made on:

1. Action to improve since last appraisal:

oral reports to committees were improving;

2. Characteristics contributing to success:

a dedication to poultrymen and their problems,
excellent grasp of subject matter;

3. Characteristics hindering program progress:

impatience with the slowness of working with and through
committees;

4. Recommended action to strengthen extension program and
to build the county agent:

The development of a more adequate and representative
advisory committee;

Time spent in discussing the job of committee members with
them;

Development of an adequate picture of the situation before
the goals are established;

Communication with all members of the committee rather than
just one;

Recognizing value of reports in evaluating past work and
indicating the way for new work.

Facilitating the Evaluation

The model evaluation sheets compiled have been based on reports, interviews, and observations. To obtain the advantages from an interchange of ideas to assist in building an extension program this will be the most adaptable method to use. An evaluation cannot be made from reports alone. However, reports properly prepared and used will do much to make the interview meaningful.

At the time of the agent-supervisor conference to establish the base for evaluation the first section of the evaluation form concerning problem and situation, objectives, goals, and job description should be determined. As previously mentioned the agent needs to verify that these have been determined in cooperation with the local people. This can be found in a description of the planning procedure as described in the program of work. All of the information can come from the program and plan of work. They need be in no more detail than the sample discussed in Chapter IV. For easy reference the chart form for the plan of work with an attached statement as to situation, objective, and goals should be sufficient. Such a statement supported by observations will aid the supervisory in completing Sections I on "Problem Analysis" and Section II on "Program Development."

Section III "Execution of Program" will come entirely from reports, observations, and interviews. Reports are the basis from which to start. They will indicate what to observe and how to interview. Reports; national and state, annual and monthly; are expected of county extension agents. The Annual Report of County Extension Agents or

Form ES-21, a 32 page statistical report developed by the Federal Extension Service, is familiar to all county workers. To cover all activities engaged in by all agents across the country this report must from necessity cover a multitude of subjects. Accompanying the statistical report is a narrative enlarging upon the important segments of the program for any given county. The narrative supposedly covers, what, why, who, how and results of the program being written up.

State Extension Services require monthly statistical and narrative reports to be submitted. These follow the ES-21 form although not with the same amount of detail.

The assumption was made at the beginning of the development of this evaluation method that only a segment of a county program should be evaluated at any one time. This was based on findings that Michigan agents had one-third of their time to devote to programs which they and the people in their counties felt were important. The other two-thirds of the time was spent doing traditional, routine assignments and assignments the state office wanted time spent on. It was further stated that general statistics on a county program such as found in a statistical report are useful indicators of workloads and patterns of the county program. As such they should continue to be made after adaptation to the conditions to be found in the state. However, they are meaningless for application to this proposed evaluation method as the statistics as now reported are broad, all inclusive and not in relation to the objectives of the program.

It is from the narrative report information will come to assist with the evaluation. Changes will be required in the narrative report made by many agents. These reports, as now written, have a tendency to be all inclusive but not in terms of objectives of the program or what has been accomplished--rather they are written in terms of what has been done and how the program has been carried on.

Narrative reports should be limited in their coverage. A general outline for the narrative report should come from the plan of work and accompanying statement in regards to situation, objectives, and goals. With this as a guide the narrative report should show why the program was set up, what and how action has been taken, and whether or not any changes in behavior are discernible. When available, supporting statements should be made on changes observed in the behavior of people being worked with in the program. This then presupposes that the main body of the narrative will be in terms of the program being evaluated. Administrators may still desire short statements on other activities related to over-all extension work in a county. Brevity will be a virtue in this case. There are assignments county extension agents have which will be continued in addition to the program being evaluated. Examples of these are a county agent who is secretary of the county Agricultural Stabilization Committee or who is an ex-officio member of the Board of Supervisors of the Soil Conservation District. Statements elaborating on these meetings attended need not be made unless they are an integral part of the program being evaluated. In this case cooperation with

these groups would be incorporated in the main body of the report.

Otherwise it will suffice to state, "attended ASC committee meeting."

A narrative report written in this manner will aid the supervisor in preparing himself for the interview with the county extension agent. It will suggest areas in which questions should be raised if an evaluation sheet is to be filled out without bias. Some supervisors may feel a need for a guide sheet. When necessary this can be developed as each narrative is read.

There is one area of the reporting and evaluating which will need further investigation. This is in relation to Section IV on the evaluation form dealing with program accomplishments or changes affected in behavior. To determine changes in behavior it is necessary to know the point at which people have been before the educational program began. This is usually referred to as the "benchmark". The distance moved from the "benchmark" indicates the changes affected by the program. For the purposes of this evaluation the situation statement; as developed cooperatively between local people, county workers, and supervisor; will indicate where people are and the point from which changes taking place will be measured.

Committee members can be relied upon heavily for observations in this area. For the purpose of this paper the writer will suggest tests which have helped determine changes. Although simple they will be useful in determining changes without running a scientific survey with correct sampling procedure, pre-testing of questionnaire, and statistical

analysis of results. They are not a substitute for more formal procedures but adaptations which involve local people and increase interest in a program.

Changes in performance may be obtained by a simple mail questionnaire, observation while making farm visits, or by asking committee members a question in regards to how many of their neighbors are now using a recommended practice who were not when the extension program started. Rough, to be sure, but partial evidence **nevertheless**.

Comprehension tests can be used to determine changes in knowledge. Their use is restricted to meetings but do give an indication as to how effective a program might be. A simple questionnaire can be passed out at the beginning of a series of meetings. At the end of the series the same questions may be asked. The two sets of questions are then compared. Any improvement in score would indicate a change in knowledge.

Knowledge and attitude changes may also be determined by committee members. This can be done by asking them to call on a certain number of their neighbors, selected according to a particular pattern, i.e., to call on six neighbors starting with the third farm to the east of their farm and taking every third one on the right hand side of the road. A questionnaire with four or five properly worded questions will produce evidence as to whether or not there has been any change in behavior.

As stated previously these are suggestions which have been used with one county program. It is an area in which more work is needed and in which county extension agents need help.

Another method of reporting changes is by the case-history method. Although having limitations because it may deal with only one farm or group of farms it has the advantage of giving the complete account of how the extension program has affected the farm and the changes which may have taken place.

Those sections of the evaluation form dealing with relationship of the agent with others and how he organizes his share of the office management will best come from observation. The county administrator's opinion and assistance should be enlisted in completing this section as he is the person in the best position to judge these items.

In the section dealing with the county administrator observation and an examination of office records and procedures will be relied upon to determine the evaluation.

Throughout the entire evaluation the pattern of agent-supervisor conference to establish the base will be continued. By following this procedure the agent will know at all times what is expected and how best to fulfill these expectations. Both the agent and the supervisor will see the areas of possible conflict and how they can be resolved.

Use for the Evaluation

In the introduction it was stated that evaluation would be used as a means of strengthening the county extension program by serving as a guide for in-service training, furnishing an opportunity for self-analysis by the individual, aiding in the determination of merit for

advancement, and focusing attention on the over-all items of strength and weakness in the programs.

It is not the purpose here to develop an in-service training program. Rather it is to point out how the areas covered by the evaluation sheet can be analyzed to strengthen the training--indicated will be the method to use to affect a worth-while training program. Universally conferences and workshops are used across the country to aid extension workers in keeping abreast of methods and subject matter. The topics to be covered are determined by various means such as agent suggestions or supervisor preferences. In the area of specific subject matter training the agents will know their weaknesses. It is here that their suggestions will be more helpful in determining the content of a training program. This proposed evaluation method will be of the most value in strengthening the extension program and determining content of a training program in the area of methods of program determination and execution. The main objective of the Extension Service is helping people see, analyze, and solve their own problems. Eighteen per cent¹ of an agent's time is spent in planning agricultural programs. Only 2.5 per cent² of an agent's time is spent on evaluation of whole or part of the county extension program. With such a relatively small percentage of time spent on evaluation as compared with planning this method of evaluation will be an excellent medium for determining agent needs in the area of program determination and follow through.

¹ Stone, J. T., op. cit., p. 183.

² Ibid., p. 233.

The evaluation will highlight areas of weakness and strength in an agent's program. For example in the case of agent "B" it can be seen that major weaknesses in the program are in the preparation of material to use in planning, the establishment of a representative committee, the use of the committee to develop leadership, participation by committee members and not evaluating as the plan progressed. Agent "B" did an acceptable job of working with other people and defining objectives and responsibilities.

Agent "A's" evaluation of a particular program shows weakness in using local people to help develop background material, and making a periodic review of the program as it progressed. This would indicate that a supervisor would have a common area for emphasis with both agents. If the same weaknesses were found to persist amongst all agents evaluated for any one period, regardless of subject matter the program was concerned with, there would be an indication of the direction training programs could take. Scattered weaknesses that appear would be best handled by individual consultation.

The same analysis would be followed for administrative agents to determine whether or not there were common areas of concern for the training programs.

Once a supervisor had evaluated all the agents in his district a pattern of strength and weakness would be shown in regards to program planning, program execution, working relations and administrative ability. This in essence would become the supervisor's plan of work for use with both new and experienced agents in the building of a stronger extension program.

Extension agents are interested in a formal program of professional improvement. This evaluation, when analyzed, would indicate areas in which an agent might be interested in doing advanced academic work. It may also be used to indicate subjects to be emphasized in the establishment of a graduate course for extension personnel.

One of the more valuable uses to come from this evaluation method will be the encouragement it will give county extension agents to work with their advisory committees, to establish county objectives, and to develop county programs in relation to these objectives. County administrators will be encouraged to think in terms of an integrated program for the county which will develop the respect of all agents for all segments of the county extension program.

With the evaluation program being a cooperative venture between the extension agent and the supervisor there will be ample opportunity for an objective look at the work load being carried. This will prepare the agent when meeting with an advisory committee to explain in detail how the work load is distributed. It will aid an advisory committee in determining the problems of the county which need emphasizing. As new problems arise it will constantly be before the committee that to incorporate new problems in a program all problems must be weighed one against another with a decision being made as to where the major emphasis will most closely fit the expressed needs and interests of all people in the county. By looking at the workload first with the supervisor and then with the advisory committee any conflicts which may arise because of differences of opinion, as to what the extension agent should

emphasize in the plan of work, between the administration and the local people can be resolved before any unreparable breaks are made. The removal of this type of pressure on an extension agent will strengthen the building of a county extension program. The county extension agent will be placed in a position of security by knowing what is expected by the local people and the administration.

Determining Merit for Advancement

A method of evaluation as proposed is best used as a training device and a media for strengthening the over-all extension program. However, there are some who will desire to use it as a measuring device for granting salary increases and making promotions. This is a possible use of the evaluation if kept in mind that the evaluation is restrictive and relative. At any one time only a segment of the extension agent's program is being evaluated. The segment being looked at can be appraised only in terms of the objectives and goals established--never in terms of one agent's performance in relation to another. Keeping this in mind agent's can be placed as to their relative effectiveness of performance. This placement, while putting an agent in a certain position relative to other agents in the state, does not indicate a better over-all performance than the agent placed before or the agent placed after. Rather it indicates with the segment of program the evaluation is on the performance is favorable or unfavorable compared with that part of the program for which other agents are being evaluated.

The acceptance of this type of evaluation as a guide for determining salary increases and promotions necessitates the assigning of a numerical rating to each person to determine position on the staff scale. This numerical rating may be determined directly from the evaluation sheet by obtaining the sum of the checks appearing in each column. On the evaluation sheet proposed for the administrative agent there are sixty-six items. If all checks were in the column scoring "1", there would be a gross score of sixty-six. With all checks in the column scoring "10" the possible score would be six hundred and sixty. The same procedure would be followed for other extension workers. On the proposed evaluation sheet there are fifty-three items or a possible low score of fifty-three and a high score of five hundred and thirty. A table could be set up from which an agent rating could be determined directly.

TABLE V
NUMERICAL RATINGS FOR COUNTY EXTENSION PERSONNEL

Rank		Administrative Agent	County Extension Agent
Unsatisfactory	1	66	53
	2	132	106
Fair	3	198	159
	4	264	212
Good	5	330	265
	6	396	318
Very Good	7	462	371
	8	528	424
Outstanding	9	594	477
	10	660	530

An example of how this would apply is found in the two model evaluation sheets completed. Agent "A" has a total score of 360, while "B's" score is 199. This would mean that Agent "A" performance on the administrative scale would be "Good". Agent "B's" performance on the extension agent scale is "Fair".

To make this meaningful for salary increases or promotions more than one program per agent needs to be evaluated. Supervisors, as they obtained additional information on agent evaluations could determine a profile of agent's performance. If in this case Agent "A" persisted in evaluating higher than "B" there would be a basis for justifying promotion or a larger salary increase. Another method would be to take a simple arithmetic average of all programs evaluated for a given agent applying this average on the scale in the same manner as the one program has been above. This method would remove some of the bias of comparing all agents in terms of a specific program whether or not this program had been of equal importance in all counties. It should also minimize criteria now used such as meeting attendance, office calls, and farm visits until they have been proven to be an integral and important part of reaching the objectives and goals established.

This suggested method is only a guide to be used for salary increases and promotions. Undoubtedly at the present time attention will be paid to the desires of the local people. Although it will take some of the objectivity out of the ranking and evaluating, there can be no condemnation if kept in mind that positive support for extension work depends upon the good will and active support of local people.

Conclusions

Up to this point the proposed evaluation has been applied to two actual county programs. There has been no detailed study as to whether or not the evaluation method proposed will work under all field conditions. It would appear, however, from the limited application made that this proposed system will be one more tool in the hands of Extension Administrators to help build strong, worth-while extension programs.

This system has been discussed in detail with ten county extension agents. They all felt that it was a system which would be accepted by county extension agents. An advantage in the proposed system is it allows for active participation on the part of county workers at all stages of evaluation. This starts with the development of the county extension program through the final agent-supervisor conference on the results of the evaluation. It gives to county workers a sense of security by keeping them informed on how the evaluation is conducted, what the evaluation shows, and how the county program can be strengthened.

Another advantage in the proposed program is the affect upon the relations between agent and supervisor. This method will call for an intimate understanding of counties and their problems by supervisors. It will do much to narrow the spread that now exists between agents and supervisors because of the many activities supervisors have which do not allow them time to observe county situations. As mentioned previously the evaluation may become the supervisor's plan of work forcing the pruning of "dead wood" out of the supervisor's program as well as out of the county program.

A possible disadvantage is the emphasis on the need for a strong program planning organization in the county. This is stated as "a possible disadvantage" because of the attitude agents may have towards program planning. Agents who encourage and work through formal advisory councils will not find this method a disadvantage. They will have an organization functioning which will be able to help them determine the needs and desires of their people which are worthy of emphasis. It is agents who do not have an adequate organization for determining major problems who may find this approach a disadvantage. Although agents may argue in this vein the writer is convinced it will ultimately be to the advantage of the Extension Service first as a teaching device in helping local people to analyze facts and decide the relative importance of problems and secondly in the active involvement of local people in the organization of the extension program.

In meeting the main objective of evaluation of strengthening the over-all extension program this proposed evaluation method will show where the program is, how far plans have progressed, whether or not changes have taken place in the behavior of the people, locate the strong and weak points and indicate the direction the program should move if positive improvement is to be made.

Still remaining to be done is validation in the field. The writer will apply this system to twenty Connecticut agricultural agents. The twenty agents will include eight county administrators and twelve associate agricultural agents. The length of service of these men will

range from three months to thirty-one years. These men all work with the adult agricultural program. Although the system has been developed with these agents in mind it should also be used in the field on home economics and 4-H Club agents. An attempt will be made to obtain this application also in Connecticut.

SUMMARY

The Cooperative Extension Service is an out-of-school educational system carried on, as the name implies, cooperatively by the land-grant college, United States Department of Agriculture, local governing bodies, and local people. In the words of the Smith-Lever Act, passed in 1914 to give formal status to extension work, it was

...to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same.

The early emphasis of extension work was on the immediate problems of the farm and home. Improved practices which could be measured by increased incomes or better living. Extension now has a growing responsibility to help people understand the complex social and economic problems confronting them as they go about their daily duties.

The key person in the Extension Service is the county extension agent who works with the people towards the broad over-all objective of helping people discover, analyze, and act on their own problems. As such they study the county in which they work and with the assistance of the people develop extension programs based upon the needs and problems of the people. During this process the agent is in a conflict position between the wishes of the people and desires of the administration. An evaluation system properly conceived and executed will do much to remove the pressures and dispell the frustrations under which an agent works.

There are different schools of thought as to how an evaluation system should be used. One idea holds it is to be used as a basis for salary increases, promotions, dismissals or other forms of rewards or penalties. Another idea is that evaluation is best used to establish rapport between supervisor and worker. Throughout this discussion the idea has been uppermost that an evaluation program is an integral part of extension planning, teaching, supervision, and administration. As such it is of more importance to establish rapport than to indicate rewards and penalties although a short section is devoted to its use as a media for determining advancement.

Extension directors selected at random were surveyed to determine the status of evaluation among the various state extension services. Every director supports the need for an evaluation system. The difficulty appears in what the various directors feel should be included in the system. At the present time the evaluation is in terms of personal characteristics or a combination of program, administration, teaching techniques and skills, professional improvement, accomplishments, relationships, and personal qualifications. Variation was also found in how the various facts were weighted. This ranged from assigning percentages to the various points to a system indicating degree of difference for each point on a continuum.

The proposed method of evaluating county extension agent's performance is based upon the hypothesis that a sound evaluation program should be based on accomplishments toward program objectives and not primarily on personality factors--the method most commonly in use today.

The primary objective of the evaluation program is to strengthen the Cooperative Extension Service. Strength will be added to the extension program by furnishing a basis for training and guidance, focusing attention on the strengths and weaknesses of the over-all extension program and determining merit for advancement.

To be able to evaluate a county extension program or a county agent's performance with confidence the objectives of the program need to be known. These are the objectives which the people have determined for the county extension program based upon their needs and problems. To facilitate the determination of the objectives a county should have a functioning program planning organization. One which fits the way people are organized locally with representation of different interests, kinds of people, and types and size of farm. Members of the planning organization should know who they represent, speaking for the area or organization rather than for themselves. They should also cooperate with existing community or county organizations and agencies in discovering the needs and interest of the people and in the execution of their program.

The planning organization will function most efficiently when it is organized for a definite purpose, the members understand the purpose, and membership is definite with a feeling of responsibility to each other and to the group as a whole.

A program planning procedure which establishes the goals and objectives of the county extension program is the first criteria for the evaluation program for county agents. This establishes a base from

which objective items can be measured and indicates the extent local people are involved in determining goals and objectives.

An objective evaluation program should be based upon evidence which show changes in performance, attitudes and knowledge. It should use performance which shows results on the job instead of personal qualities which might cause results. Generalities such as tact, cooperation, initiative, judgment ethics, social habits, and community life are only used when they do have a direct bearing on results towards an objective.

Other criteria for an evaluation program would be that a single incident or responsibility not be allowed to overshadow the entire job; that evaluation is a continuous process taking into account changes which might occur; is the cooperative responsibility of local people, county workers, and supervisors; and will serve as a guide to establishing programs which will aid the Extension Service to show continued progress and development towards the over-all goals of helping people to see, analyze, and act on their own problems.

In the system for evaluation being proposed the first step is the establishment of an objective base. This base will incorporate the goals and objectives of the county program developed during the planning process and will indicate that part of the agent's program to be evaluated during a given period. This base will be mutually agreed upon by agent and supervisor and be so stated it will represent what should be done, not what is being done. The base should also contain only rateable items and recognize that there are other functions necessary for a successful extension performance.

Establishing a base by agent-supervisor conference will allow the objectives of all levels of extension administration to be meshed into an integrated whole preventing unrepairable conflicts from developing. It is possible with this approach to evaluate only one phase of an agent's program during a specified period. This is not objectionable and is based on work in Michigan which showed that an agent has approximately one-third of his time to devote to program and problems as developed in the county. The remainder of the time is spent on traditional, routine items or suggestions from the administration.

When explained to an advisory committee that their planning process will be used to determine a base against which to measure agent performance they will help the agent to prune some of the "dead wood" out of the county program.

During the process of establishing the base the supervisor will be evaluating program planning procedures. Evaluation of performance is the next activity. This is on methods used to reach the objectives and goals in terms of success in meeting specific responsibilities. Emphasis is placed upon results and measurable facts. Actual measuring devices should be agreed upon at the time the base is established. By **and** large though supervisors will depend upon reports, interviews, and observations. Where possible case-histories, comprehension tests, and actual adoption of practices will be used as evidence of change in behavior. Present methods of writing narrative reports will have to be modified. As now written, there is a tendency to be all inclusive in terms of what has been done or how the program was carried on--not in

terms of objectives of the program or what has been accomplished. The modified narrative suggested would be written specifically in terms of the base established for evaluation showing why the program was set up, what and how action was taken, and whether or not any changes in behavior were discernible.

An evaluation sheet was developed covering six main categories.

These categories include:

1. analysis of the problem,
2. development of the program,
3. execution of the program,
4. accomplishments of the program and use of the evaluation,
5. relationship with others,
6. office organization.

In all there are fifty-three items which are judged on a continuum from one through ten which ranges from "Unsatisfactory" to "Outstanding."

The evaluation sheet also calls for a listing of the problem, objectives, goals, and job description in relation to the county extension program.

It also requires supporting statements as to why the evaluation is where it is on the continuum. In addition there are thirteen additional items which refer to the agent who may be administrative head of the county extension office.

The evaluation sheet was applied to a specific county situation with which the writer was familiar. This application clearly showed that the evaluation sheet can be analyzed to strengthen the training program and in the long run the entire extension program by showing

specific points of strength and weakness. Although for only a phase of a program, over a period of time a profile would be constructed on an agent which will be invaluable both to him and the administration.

In those cases where it is felt an evaluation system is essential for salary increases and promotion this method is adaptable. To use in this manner it must be kept in mind that the evaluation is restrictive and relative. Restrictive in that only one segment is being evaluated at any time and relative because it never compares agents on a common basis but only in terms of performance on a specific project adaptable to the agent and county in question. For these reasons it can only be a guide for granting promotions or salary increases.

The system has been discussed in detail with ten county extension agents. They feel it would be acceptable to county workers because it allows for active participation by them at all stages of the evaluation. Another advantage is in the affect it will have upon the relations between agent and supervisor. There will be an intimate understanding on the part of supervisors of counties and their problems. A possible disadvantage is the emphasis placed on the need for a strong planning organization in a county. Agents who do not favor the type of planning recommended may also object to an evaluation based on objectives and goals determined by a representative committee.

This evaluation method will meet the main objective of evaluation of strengthening the over-all extension program by showing where the program is, how far plans have progressed, whether or not changes have

taken place in the behavior of people, locating strong and weak points and indicating the direction the program should move if positive improvement is to be made.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Baker, G., The County Agent, University of Chicago Press, 1939.
- Barnard, O. I., The Functions of the Executive, Harvard University Press, 1951.
- Brunner, E., and E. A. Yang, Rural America and the Extension Service, Columbia University, New York, 1949.
- Dooker, M. J., and V. Marquis, Rating Employee and Supervisory Performance, American Management Association, New York, 1950.
- Kelsey, L. D., and C. C. Hearne, Cooperative Extension Work, Comstock Publishing Associates, Ithaca, New York, 1955.
- Loomis, C. P., and A. J. Beegle, Rural Social Systems, Prentice-Hall Inc., New York, 1950.
- Pfiffner, J. M., and R. V. Presthus, Public Administration, The Ronald Press Co., New York, 1953.
- Smith, C. B., and M. C. Wilson, The Agricultural Extension System in the United States, John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1930.
- Weber, M., Essays in Sociology, Oxford University Press, New York, 1946.
- _____, Theory of Social and Economic Organization, Oxford University Press, New York, 1947.

United States Department of Agriculture Publications

- Collings, M. L., Use of Annual Reports as a Means of Evaluating Extension Work, Extension Service Washington, D. C., 1949.
- Egger, R., Public Administration and Extension Work, Extension Service Circular No. 451, Washington, D. C., 1948.
- Gallup, G., and L. K. Sabrosky, How the Federal Specialist Can Evaluate His Work, Extension Service Circular No. 444, Washington, D. C., 1947.

Jans, F. C., Extension Looks at Program Planning, Extension Service Circular No. 478, Washington, D. C., 1952.

Joint Committee Report on Extension Program, Policies, and Goals, United States Department of Agriculture and Association of Land Grant Colleges and Universities, Washington, D. C., 1948.

Knaus, K., Notebook of Program Development, Extension Service Circular No. 855, Washington, D. C., 1948.

Leagans, J. P., Suggestions for Setting Up an Evaluation Program, Report of Extension Evaluation Workshop, USDA, 1946.

Matthews, J. L., National Inventory of Extension Methods of Program Determination, Extension Service Circular No. 477, Washington, D. C., 1952.

Niederfrank, E. J., Main Types of County Extension Organization, Extension Service Circular No. 448, Washington, D. C., 1948.

Wilson, M. L., Report of Extension Evaluation Workshop., USDA, 1946.

Miscellaneous Publications

Agriculture and Family Life Planning, College of Agriculture, Laramie, Wyo.

Appley, L., Proceedings of First Personnel Institute, Ohio State University Publication, 1938.

Better Than Rating, Association for Supervision and Circulum Development, Washington, D. C., 1950.

Management Development, Chrysler Corporation, Detroit, Mich., 1954.

McNelley, C. L., A Study of County Agent Work Patterns, Agricultural Extension Service, University of Minnesota, 1949.

Morrow, E. R., The Personal Interview as a Method in Agricultural Extension Supervision, Agricultural Extension Service, University of Minnesota, 1954.

Musgrave, B. E., Extension Program Planning, unpublished M. S. Thesis, Michigan State College, 1954.

Pierson, R. R., Vocational Interests of Agricultural Extension Workers as Related to Selected Aspects of Work Adjustment, unpublished M. S. Thesis, Michigan State College, 1951.

Preiss, J. J., The Functions of Relevant Power and Authority Groups in the Evaluation of County Agent Performance, unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, Michigan State College, 1954.

Professional and Program Evaluation, Agricultural Extension Service, Ohio State University, 1951.

Stone, J. T., An Analysis of the County Agent's Job, Cooperative Extension Service, Michigan State College, 1951.

_____, What Does a County Extension Agent Do? Cooperative Extension Service, Michigan State College, p. 21.

1955 Plan of Work, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Connecticut, 1955.

Written Communications

Dollof, R. C., Crono, Mo., 1955.

Fawcett, J. B., New Brunswick, N. J., 1955.

Heckard, H. S., Lafayette, Ind., 1955.

Kirk, W. T., Laramie, Wyo., 1955.

Morris, J. U., Columbia, Mo., 1955.

O'Kelley, C. R., Athens, Ga., 1955.

Pollock, J., Madison, Wis., 1955.

Smith, C. B., Corvallis, Ore., 1955.

Stewart, T. G., Fort Collins, Colo., 1955.

Svinth, C. A., Pullman, Wash., 1955.

Vaughan, H. S., Amherst, Mass., 1955.

Wood, W. B., Columbus, Ohio., 1955.

DE 12 '55 INTER-LIBRARY LOAN

JUL 20 1960

ROOM USE ONLY