EIGHT HOME-STUDY LESSONS

IN COMMUNICATIONS

FOR COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORKERS

by

Dwight W. Fairbanks

A THESIS

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

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Agricultural Extension

1956

THESIS

7-10-56
9

CONTENTS

1. The
trained
know lit
and have
with peo
ed with
ing to
capabl
len.
in ex
how e
of

INTRODUCTION

1. The Problem: Staff Training. The new extension worker is well trained in certain agricultural and home economics disciplines, but may know little of the policies and goals of the extension service itself, and have few of the necessary skills required for working effectively with people. Our land-grant colleges, therefore, find themselves burdened with the task of giving additional pre-service and in-service training to their own graduates before these young men and women can function capably as Cooperative Extension Service employees.

This thesis relates to the in-service phase of this training problem. It deals specifically with the role of mass communications media in extension work. It is an exploratory study which suggests by example how extension workers can be given a share of their training in the use of mass media through self-study of correspondence-type lessons.

Correspondence, or home-study, is a new concept for in-service training of extension workers. Michigan Extension Service staff members began late in 1955 to prepare home-study lessons for county workers which dealt with all phases of extension work. The eight lessons of this thesis become part of this larger series of correspondence-type lessons.

2. Home Study vs. Conference-Type Training. The traditional approach to extension training is to call workers together for conferences or "workshops." This method, if properly used, combines the advantages of classroom teaching with the stimulation that comes from interaction with other agents. The healthy atmosphere of a stimulating conference in

which the agent learns skills and discusses problems with other agents and with supervisors and specialists should certainly continue as an important in-service training method.

But the disadvantage of the conference is that it takes the agent away from his other duties. The Michigan Extension Service studied how its county agents spend their time.[1] They asked 174 agricultural, 4-H, and home demonstration agents these questions:

"What percent of your working time do you estimate you are out of the county?"

"What percent of this time was for college-sponsored activities or events?"

The agricultural agents estimated they spent 12.54% of their time working out of the county; the 4-H agents, 14.65%; and the home agents, 15.40%. Of this time, the agricultural agents estimated they were working out of the county on college-sponsored activities 78.56% of the time; 4-H agents, 83.50%; and home agents, 80.96%.

Based on 285 working days in the year, it appears that agricultural agents estimate they worked out of the county about one day in 8; 4-H agents one day in 7; and home agents one day in 6. Then, if the average working days per month are 23, this means that each year the agricultural agents are taken out of the county for college-sponsored activities on the average of 1½ months; 4-H agents even more; and home agents nearly 2 months.

This thesis provides a series of lessons which helps take the preliminary step towards answering the question: Can training via the

---

[1]Stone, John T., "What Does a County Extension Agent Do?" Cooperative Extension Service, Michigan State University, East Lansing, pp. 19-20, mimeographed.

home-study lesson reduce the out-of-county working time now required of the average extension agent? Home study does not have the specialist-agent and the agent-to-agent interaction that makes conference training so effective. But home-study does permit the agent to study in his spare time and proceed at his own pace. The 55-year history of the American School and the International Correspondence Schools certainly attest to the effectiveness of self-study as a teaching method.

Before undertaking the thesis, the writer studied samples of correspondence lessons produced by:

American Correspondence School
Armed Forces Institute
Home Study Department, University of Chicago
International Correspondence School
Michigan State Department of Education
University of Nebraska Correspondence School

The Armed Forces Institute and the International Correspondence School wrote covering letters with the sample lessons they sent in which they pointed out the limitations, as well as advantages, of teaching via correspondence courses. USAFI Director Robert Johns wrote: "Adjust yourself now to the cold, hard fact that it is very expensive to develop good materials; but we find that the returns in the activities on the part of our students are almost directly related to the quality of the materials which we provide them."

John C. Villaume, dean of the ICS faculty wrote: "I might caution you that the field of correspondence education is vastly different from that of our more formal type of training. It requires special preparation of material that a person can study at remote points. We, at ICS, feel that we must in every way possible place the teacher in the text.

These statements were kept in mind as each lesson of the thesis was written. The sample lessons sent us by USAFI, ICS and the others

suggeste

exercise

3. The

That the

agent act

to relate

likely t

fore, ma

to the

value f

mates

Michig

answ

to b

a t

tr

a

s

a

suggested the format, style of writing, and the method of handling the exercises used in the lessons of this thesis.

3. The Thesis. One basic assumption guided the writing of the lessons: That the reader would be a new agricultural, 4-H, or home demonstration agent actually on duty in a Michigan county. Every effort has been made to relate the subject-matter to situations and problems the new agent is likely to meet in his current day-to-day activities. The lessons, therefore, may be more than pure academic exercises that are only tangential to the county agent's job. It is hoped, too, that the lessons will have value for experienced extension agents and specialists, for undergraduates interested in extension, and for persons in states other than Michigan.

Each lesson consists of three parts:

(1) An introduction, HOW THIS LESSON WILL HELP YOU. This answers the question, "What's in it for me?" by outlining the main points to be covered in the lesson.

(2) The lesson itself, divided into numbered paragraphs with a title for each to help the student grasp the key points and follow the trend of the subject-matter presentation.

(3) Work assignments, RELATING THIS LESSON TO YOUR JOB. These assignments help the student relate what he has learned in the lesson to situations and problems he may be currently confronted with. For example, one assignment for Lesson 2, HOW FARM PEOPLE ACCEPT NEW IDEAS, asks the student to list people in his county who fit certain "roles" discussed in the lesson, and show how plans for a future meeting can be improved to meet the needs of the audience. These assignments help develop skills, too. The lesson on the use of radio asks the student to

submit a series of tape recordings for the constructive comments of the extension information specialists. These work assignments, we feel, "place the teacher in the text."

Whenever possible, the writer took advantage of existing texts which he felt lent themselves to home-study. Lesson 3, REACHING FARM PEOPLE THROUGH NEWSPAPERS, is a syllabus for a section of Getting Information to Farm Families by Hadley Read. Lesson 8, REACHING YOUR AUDIENCE THROUGH TELEVISION, is a syllabus of a publication produced by the National Project in Agricultural Communications (NPAC). The syllabi guide the student in his study of the texts and contain the exercises to be carried out by him.

The lessons are planned to form a logical sequence from Lesson 1 through 8. The student will likely study other lessons prepared by the Michigan Extension Service before he comes to this "communications series." It is also possible that he will not be asked to study all 8 lessons in this series. The television lesson, for example, need not be required study for agents serving Upper Peninsula counties where television is not seen.

Certain lessons may serve as "introductions" to the particular communications area or medium they deal with. The author and members of the Information Services staff planned the visual aids lesson of the thesis so that it would be an "overview" lesson to be supplemented later by other lessons concerned specifically with particular visual methods. A lesson on "exhibits and displays," for example, would be studied after the visual aids lesson of this thesis.

Here is a topical summary of each lesson:

Lesson 1, COMMUNICATIONS IN EXTENSION WORK - The function of communications in extension as illustrated by the Adam Gramlich story; a

definiti

speaks co

syster;"

munica

to the

extensi

use of

functi

tion;

the

socia

the

acqu

ly

qui

sy

definition of communications and how much time the average county agent spends communicating to others; an explanation of the "communications system;" communicating effectively; communicating efficiently; and communications planning. Purpose of the lesson: To introduce the new agent to the subject of communications, illustrate it's function in a county extension program, and show how an agent can plan effective and efficient use of communications.

Lesson 2, HOW FARM PEOPLE ACCEPT NEW IDEAS - Teaching as a function of extension; how we learn - acquisition, retention, reproduction; applying the laws of learning; how farm people accept new ideas - the diffusion process, stages in the process of acceptance, personal and social characteristics related to adoption of practices, and roles in the the diffusion process. Purpose of the lesson: To help the new agent acquire a better understanding of the people whom he serves--particularly the psychological and sociological factors which influence their acquisition of new ideas.

Lesson 3, REACHING FARM PEOPLE THROUGH NEWSPAPERS - This is a syllabus to be used for studying Chapters IV - IX of Getting Information to Farm Families, by Hadley Read, University of Illinois extension editor. The chapter headings are: Know Your Editors Personally, Editors Like a Regular News Service, Your Source of News, Write So People Will Understand You, Put Your Personality into a Personal Column, and Let Pictures Tell Part of Your Story. Purpose of the lesson: To help the new agent understand the role of newspapers in communications and develop skill in preparing information for the press.

Lesson 4, COMMUNICATING WITH CIRCULAR LETTERS - Competition from commercially-produced direct-mail product promotion; importance of

appea

this

abov

ter

stu

ti

li

t

t

appearance to arouse interest in a circular letter; writing the message; tips on illustrations; mimeographing and mailing the letter; a word about "newsletters;" and nine examples of county agents' circular letters with a discussion of each. Purpose of the lesson: Develop the student's skill in the preparation and use of circular letters.

Lesson 5, TEACHING WITH PUBLICATIONS - Role of the publication in extension communications; where publications come from; how publications are produced; displaying publications; teaching with publications; "plugging" new publications on the air and by mail. Purpose of the lesson: To help the student make better use of available publications.

Lesson 6, REACHING YOUR AUDIENCE THROUGH RADIO - Radio: timely and universal; how society makes use of radio; building the radio program; the format; you and your microphone; the interview; use of the tape recorder; measuring the audience; getting along with the radio station; and sponsorship policies. Purpose of the lesson: To develop the student's skill in the use of radio.

Lesson 7, USING VISUAL AIDS EFFECTIVELY - The role of visual aids in extension teaching; surveying your visual resources; the "real thing," models, chalkboards, flannelgraphs, black and white photographs, 2x2 transparencies, slide films, motion pictures, charts and posters, exhibits and displays; how to visualize your subject; and the elements of visualization. Purpose of the lesson: To help the student visualize his subjects and use his visual tools more effectively.

Lesson 8, REACHING YOUR AUDIENCE THROUGH TELEVISION - This is a syllabus to be used for studying Creative Farm Shows, a publication of NPAC based on materials presented at the National Agricultural Television

Clinic he
the text
using te
and corre
productio
and under
To show
him use
Mos
ten for
dio) w
method
tions
value
less
the
co
in

Clinic held at the University of Missouri in 1955. The information in the text relates to the problems faced by the extension worker who is using television as a communications tool. The text presents educational and commercial concepts of agricultural television; program techniques; production and use of visuals for television; how to think creatively; and understanding and measuring the audience. Purpose of the lesson: To show the student television's potential as a teaching method and help him use the medium more efficiently and effectively.

Most of these lessons were mimeographed as soon as they were written for pre-testing on a limited basis. Lesson 3 (news) and lesson 6 (radio) were used by the author to teach these subjects in an extension methods class the spring quarter of 1956.

In presenting this series of eight home-study lessons in communications the author makes this observation: The new agent will get maximum value from the lessons when:

(1) He's convinced through proper indoctrination that the lessons will help him do a better job;

(2) His supervisor visits with him periodically to discuss the lessons;

(3) The lessons are supplemented with a reasonable number of conference-type training experiences; and

(4) The lessons are revised from time to time to meet changing conditions.

4. The Communications Training Program. Some of the material used in the thesis--particularly in Lessons 1 and 2--has come from the Communications Training Program (CTP). This Program has been endorsed by the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and State Universities and is sponsored

by NEAC.

tension a

tory. C

and orga

gram inv

At

signed up

staff ne

will be

at these

own sta

Th

a form

supple

5. A

train

ten

with

ness

Use

as

ar

by NPAC. The purpose of CTP is to strengthen in-service training of extension and other land-grant college personnel in every state and territory. CTP, in its present form, emphasizes face-to-face communications and organization at the county level of an effective communications program involving all media.

At this writing (May 1, 1956), 23 colleges and universities have signed up for CTP. Each participating institution will send two or more staff members to a three-week training institute. The first institute will be held at East Lansing, Michigan, August 5-24, 1956. Those trained at these institutes will then conduct communications training in their own states.

The lessons in this thesis follow the design of CTP. They suggest a form in which CTP subject-matter can be presented to county workers to supplement the conference-type training they will receive.

5. Acknowledgements. This thesis was suggested by Dr. John T. Stone, staff training officer for the Michigan Extension Service, and has been written under his supervision. I consider it a privilege to have worked with Dr. Stone in the initial phase of his experiment on the effectiveness of home-study for the training of extension workers.

The committee for the review of the thesis consisted of Dr. John Useem, professor of sociology and anthropology; Dr. Robert P. Crawford, assistant professor of speech; Dr. John Parsey, research director, NPAC; and Dr. John Stone. I am grateful to these gentlemen for taking their time to serve on this committee.

Michigan Extension Service staff members who assisted in the preparation of the lessons and made constructive comments were Earl Richardson, extension editor; Miss Margaret McKeegan, television editor;

Duane Nelson, visual aids specialist; Norman Kunkel, supervisor, bulletin office; and Elwood Shaffer, publications editor.

I also thank Hadley Read, University of Illinois extension editor, for permission to use his book as a text for Lesson 3; and Miss Margaret Nielsen, extension publications editor, State College of Washington, for help with the lesson on publications.

Special appreciation is extended to Stanley Andrews, director of NPAC, and his staff. The assistantship with NPAC made possible this stimulating and rewarding graduate study experience at Michigan State University. John Morrow, NPAC's audio-visual director, took a keen interest in the thesis and made many excellent suggestions for improving the lessons. Dr. Parsey also made valuable suggestions. And I particularly thank Mrs. Thelma Schumacher of the NPAC secretarial staff for typing and editorial assistance.

HOW
THIS LE
WILL H

1.

was

Feb

pr

r

H

i

LESSON 1

COMMUNICATIONS IN EXTENSION WORK[1]

HOW THIS LESSON WILL HELP YOU

This is the first of a series of 8 lessons relating to communications in extension work. We consider primarily mass communications media, but recognize the importance of person-to-person communications. This lesson helps you understand the function of communications in extension work and how to use the media efficiently. Lesson 2 of this series explains how people learn and how farm families get their information. Then follow lessons in the use of newspapers, circular letters, radio, publications, visual aids, and television.

1. The Gramlich Story. In 1908--six years before the Smith-Lever Act was passed to create the Extension Service--there lived near Papillion, Nebraska, a dairy farmer named Adam Gramlich. The butter and cream produced by his 13 Jersey cows provided Adam and his family with the bulk of their income.

When school started that fall, Howard Gramlich, Adam's nephew, enrolled at the Nebraska College of Agriculture. In one of his classes Howard learned about tuberculosis in cattle . . . the health and economic hazards of the disease; how difficult it was to detect diseased

---

[1]Adapted from material prepared for the Communications Training Program by K. F. Warner, extension educationist, U. S. Department of Agriculture, and George Axinn, extension service, Michigan State Univ.

animals;

animals

How

the new

cussed t

the neig

foolish

U. S. B

work wi

T

borhoo

their

each

in t

'test

'em

"a

th

a

animals; and the value of a new thermal test which identified infected animals before they could give the disease to other cattle.

Howard told his uncle what he had learned about tuberculosis and the new thermal test when he was home on vacation. The Gramlichs discussed the advisability of testing their Jerseys and talked it over with the neighbors. Most of the neighbors thought the test was "plumb foolish," but Adam and Howard weren't so sure. A veterinarian with the U. S. Bureau of Animal Industry, Dr. H. E. Smith, said he would do the work without charge, so Adam told him to go ahead.

There was mingled curiosity, excitement, and mistrust in the neighborhood as Dr. Smith took the temperatures of those 13 cows to establish their normal level. Then he injected a small amount of tuberculin into each cow, waited 16 hours, and again took their temperatures.

Dr. Smith's report dismayed Adam Gramlich and aroused indignation in the community. He reported that eight of the cows "reacted" to the test and should be sold for slaughter.

"Bet those cows were all right until that vet shot the poison into 'em," said one neighbor. "This whole thing's a fake," said another, "anybody can see those cows aren't sick."

But Adam had more faith in Dr. Smith. During Smith's visits to the farm, he and Adam had long talks. Adam learned that Smith had been a farm boy and that he knew cows and the problems of cowmen. Smith had offered ideas and suggestions that would help Adam in his dairy operation. Adam felt he was sincere and a man to be trusted.

So Adam decided to see it through. He picked three of his eight reactors at random and he and Dr. Smith hauled them to a slaughterhouse in nearby South Omaha to be dressed under the eyes and knife of a

federal meat inspector. Sixteen of Adam's neighbors agreed to go along.

The delegation from Papillion watched intently as the inspector opened the animals. His knife cut through gritty tubercular head glands. In one cow the tubercles were "sanded" all over the insides.

Adam was permitted to display the infected lungs and liver of his cow in a drugstore window on Papillion's main street. The weekly paper carried a statement signed by Adam and his neighbors certifying what they had seen when those three reacting cows were opened in the slaughter house.

This incident has a happy ending. Dr. Smith was busy for quite some time testing cattle in the Papillion area. Testing had not come in time to keep infection from spreading to eight of Adam Gramlich's cows, but it was early enough to root out sources of disease in other herds. The neighbors were now glad Adam tried the test. And they now appreciated Dr. Smith's help. Once all the facts were known, the people considered them and were convinced. Testing for tuberculosis had earned public approval.

2. <u>The Gramlich Story: A Study in Human Behavior</u>. What happened to Adam and his neighbors 50 years ago is typical of what still happens today when people face a problem.

First of all, there was no problem--or at least no one recognized a problem. People and cattle were suffering from tuberculosis but apparantly the disease was accepted as an inevitable consequence of life. Then a boy went to school and learned that something could be done about tuberculosis. He talked with his uncle and aroused his uncle's interest in giving the thermal test a try. The uncle, Adam, believed his nephew, but still wanted to find out what his neighbors thought of the idea.

The neighbors were suspicious and afraid of the test because they had no knowledge of such things, and they urged Adam to stay away from it.

But Adam, still interested, did find someone who knew more about the disease and the thermal test than he and his neighbors did and who could give him firsthand information--the veterinarian, Dr. Smith. The veterinarian saw an opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of the thermal test, and offered to test Adam's cattle free.

Smith was successful in getting Adam to adopt this new practice of testing cattle for tuberculosis because: (1) Adam saw the importance of ridding his cattle of the disease, and (2) Smith had a number of long talks with Adam in which he told Adam what he knew about the disease and --equally important--he won Adam's confidence. Adam agreed to the slaughter of his eight reacting cows. The neighbors violently opposed the idea because they were still uninformed--they hadn't talked with Smith.

Adam still retained his leadership role in the community in spite of his apparant foolishness in the eyes of his neighbors--or their curiosity could not keep them away--because he was able to encourage 16 of them to watch the slaughter. This vivid demonstration and Dr. Smith's continued work in the community eventually educated the farmers and solved the tuberculosis problem.

3. <u>The Gramlich Story: A Need for Extension</u>. It just so happened that Howard Gramlich went to the agricultural school that fall of 1908 and heard a professor talk about the new thermal test for tuberculosis in cattle. Howard, a bright young man, saw immediately how his uncle and the other dairy farmers in the Papillion community could profit from this test. And Howard was lucky that his uncle was an intelligent man

and didn't pooh-pooh the idea as "fancy book-larnin'." And Adam was lucky that Dr. Smith was close by to tell him more about the thermal test. And the dairy farmers of Papillion were lucky that Smith understood farm people and saw the possibilities of enlisting Adam as a "cooperator" to help him conduct a "result demonstration." If it hadn't been for this fortunate chain of events, people and cattle in that little community would have continued to suffer from tuberculosis until, perhaps, a few years later when the extension service was established in the county.

How would the Gramlich story have changed if there had been a county agent serving the community? To begin with, Adam and his neighbors would not have had to wait for Howard to learn about the thermal test in school and bring the knowledge home with him. A county agent, in place of the veterinarian, would already have had that information and would have suggested to the Papillion dairy farmers that they adopt the thermal test. In other words, the county agent would have improved the <u>communication</u> of the idea from its source at the land-grant college to the people who could benefit from it.

4. <u>Communications in Extension</u>. In Adam Gramlich's day, and when extension was young, the horse and buggy provided the transportation over muddy roads. Long distances isolated families or at least confined social activity within a neighborhood. Most families grew their own food and power. In a bad year, the banker might worry about his loan, but the family and the livestock could still eat. There were few telephones, long hours of heavy labor, sixth grade education, little reading, and little inclination to read.

We have a different picture of rural life today. Those muddy roads are surfaced now. Because they travel more easily, farm people see more,

and do more. They listen to the radio; watch television; read at least one weekly paper and possibly a metropolitan daily; subscribe to a number of magazines; and exchange ideas with their neighbor, a farmer from another state, and even with a farm boy from Pakistan.

Communication with the outside world helps the farm family learn more. And it helps them believe more. Few farmers had heard about the agricultural experiment station in 1914. Still fewer had ever seen it or planned to see it. "These experiments just aren't practical on our farm," they said.

Communication with the outside world helps the farm family to broaden its interests. Dad and Junior watch the Wednesday night fights on TV and follow the White Sox. Mom and the girls are active in church work, and the whole family takes part in school affairs. Farm and home is still their major interest, but they are occupied with other activities, too.

Extension has learned to use the many channels by which farm families communicate with the outside world, and the outside world communicates with them. Let's take a closer look at this communications process to get a better understanding of the role of communications in extension work.

5. What is Communications? Very simply, communications is the transfer of an idea from one person to another. You give instructions to your secretary. You run in to Farmer Schmidt in the bank and answer his question about the hog market. You call Mrs. Jones on the telephone and make plans for a homemakers meeting at her home. You write a letter to a farmer telling him he can get his soil tested. You write a circular letter to all the dairy farmers in the county to announce a brucellosis

control program. You write a news story, do a radio program, and appear on a television show. In every instance you have communicated--to one person or to thousands of people.

Most of your time as a county extension agent is spent communicating with someone else. The Michigan Extension Service, asked agricultural agents to estimate how they spent their working time.[2] They found that agents work:

Directly with groups of people about 31% of the time,

Directly with other individuals about 32% of the time, and

By themselves (not directly with people) about 37% of the time.

But half the time an agent spends by himself is occupied with answering mail; writing letters announcing meetings and other activities, or arranging programs; and writing news articles and preparing radio programs. So we can conclude from these estimates that the average county agent spends 81% (31 + 32 + 18) of his time communicating or preparing to communicate directly with others.

6. How Do We Communicate? A communications "system" consists of:

You, the communicator;

Your message;

The channel, or medium, by which you "send" your message; and

Your audience--the person or persons for whom your message is intended.

You have communicated successfully IF your message reaches the person or persons for whom it is intended, and IF the message isn't garbled in the transmission so he understands what you say.

---

[2]Stone, John T., What Does a County Extension Agent Do? Mimeographed, Cooperative Extension Service, Michigan State University.

You fail to communicate if he doesn't get your message . . . if he gets your message but can't understand it . . . and if he gets your message but isn't interested in what you say.

Actually, you have not one, but many communication systems. Through the course of one day you are sending a variety of messages through many different channels to reach many individuals and different groups of people. Our concern here is to help you keep your communication systems from breaking down.

7. Communicating Effectively. Each communications system we mentioned above will function effectively if you (a) understand your audience, (b) select the right medium (or media) to reach him, and (c) prepare your message so it will be most receptive to him and best suited to the medium.

Understand your audience - The Indians used to say, "Before you judge a man, walk in his mocassins two moons." You say, "Before you try to communicate with a man, look at your message from his point of view."

Do they know what you are talking about? Will they understand what you say? Will they apply what they understand? Are they interested? What is their attitude toward your subject? Do they appreciate what it means to them?

Select the right medium - You know your message. You know your audience. Now, which is the best medium, or combination of media, to get this message to the audience? Make a list of all the ways you know that will help you get your messages to people. The list will include personal visits, telephone, office callers, newsletters, and the other mass media. Remember that other persons in the county can carry messages for you: 4-H and homemaker club leaders, other agencies, business

people, teachers, and other professionals. We'll talk more about choosing the right medium for your message in paragraph 8.

Preparing the message - Your message must in in the language of your audience and suit the characteristics of the medium. Let's take a message on farm safety for example. The message for a group of homemakers will have a different design, or treatment, than the same message for a group of farmers or 4-H Club members. The message written for the newspaper will have a different treatment than the message prepared for radio. The lessons of this series which follow consider preparing the message in more detail.

8. Communicating Efficiently. An extension worker is somewhat like an account executive in an advertising agency. The account executive has a product to sell. He chooses among a variety of media--billboards, magazines, radio, to name a few--to find the best medium or combination of media to get his sales message to the public. The county agent's problem is not quite as complicated (nor as expensive since his space in the paper and time on the radio are free). But the agent must still decide which medium or what media to use to get his message to the farm families in his county.

The simple solution for the county agent has been to use all media. If grain sanitation is a problem in the county, hold a meeting, write a circular letter, put up posters, write a news story, talk about it on the radio, and use it as the subject of a television show. The more the merrier has been the slogan.

There is considerable wisdom in getting as much "mileage" from a story as possible. If you write a news story on grain sanitation, use the same material for a radio talk. If you prepare some visuals for a

television program you may be able to use those visuals for a meeting on the same subject.

It is also wise to tell the same story to the farmer at different times and in different ways. If he hears about it on the radio, sees it in the newspaper, and hears it discussed at a meeting, he is more likely, through repetition, to retain the facts you want to teach him.

But in your use of communications, as in economics, there is a point of diminishing returns. Your "inputs" are time, energy, and materials. Your "product," in this case, is the person your message has influenced. You use communications methods most efficiently when you get a maximum number of persons influenced by your message for a minimum total "input."

Let's use the grain sanitation problem as an example. The weekly newspaper published in your county-seat-town reaches better than 95% of the wheat farmers in the county. You write a story about grain sanitation for the paper. Will it be worth the time, effort, and materials to send a circular letter on grain sanitation to these farmers, too? You are planning a television program. You know that about half the farmers in your county who would be interested in grain sanitation have television sets. This group of farmers make up about 1% of the total television audience. Should you prepare a program on grain sanitation or choose, perhaps, another topic of interest to urban as well as farm viewers?

There are two radio stations in your county. One station airs your program at 12:30, a good time. The second station wants you to provide them a program, too, but the only time they can give you is 1:00. You know that most of the farmers are leaving the house about that time. You have an obligation to the second station, but would the returns be worth the time and effort?

These are the questions to be answered if you are to use your communications efficiently; if your "total product" . . . the number of persons influenced . . . is sufficient to warrant your "total inputs" . . . time and resources.

We cannot offer a formula to help you use your communications media efficiently. The situation in your county is unique. You and your staff are the best judges of what messages to send, what people to reach, and with what means. These judgments result from that process important to every extension activity: Planning.

9. Communications Planning. When we were in school our days were planned for us, hour by hour. Now that we are county agents we find that we are more or less free to plan our own daily schedules. One way to handle our jobs is to do very little planning at all and let the shifting winds of circumstance cast us into this activity and into that. We keep very busy this way, bouncing from one corner of the county to the other, but we don't accomplish much.

A better way to handle our jobs is to plan. It takes effort to plan, and sometimes our plans go up in smoke, but we accomplish more in the long run. To plan, means to study the past and the present in order to forecast the future--and in the light of that forecast, to determine the goals to be achieved; what needs to be done to achieve them; why those things need to be done; who shall do them; and how, when, and where they shall be done.

Each of us has our own technique for planning. But, usually, good planning involves four phases: Investigating, forecasting, developing alternative plans for action, and selecting which plan to use. We'll talk about each phase in turn.

Investigating - Here is where you ask yourself, "What do we have?" You find out what is going on in your county by collecting, assembling, and evaluating facts. Who are these people who compose this audience I am trying to reach? What are their needs, their motivations, and their attitudes? What papers and magazines do they read, do they have radios in their kitchens and in their barns, and do they have television? You do much more than assemble the facts about your county and its people--you fit these facts together into generalizations which lead you to some tentative conclusions about how you can best communicate with them.

Forecasting - Here is where you ask yourself, "What do we want?" The facts you assemble show that your people have definite problems which extension can help solve. You can see definite trends developing. More and more farmers are taking part-time jobs in the factories and you forecast an increasing need for meeting the problems of the part-time farmer. Another television station will soon be on the air in the county. You forecast increasing opportunities to make effective use of television but foresee an additional chore being piled on to an already heavy workload.

Developing Alternative Plans - Now you ask yourself, "How do we get it?" How can we serve the part-time farmer? What will we do when this new television station comes on the air?--cut our present commitments to the existing station in half? . . . double our time on television? . . . devote to television some of the time we now spend on radio? The more alternatives you can develop, the better. The more ideas you have, the greater the chance of good ideas.

Selecting the right plan - This is the decision-making step. You first investigated the situation and then forecast what needs to be done.

Your ideas spring the facts you have gathered. And now you select the best ideas, the best plan. Once you have made the decision step and selected your plan you know where you are going and getting there is just a matter of time.

What makes a good plan? First of all, the goals must be clear; everyone must understand where you want to go. Its chances of proving to be a good plan is increased if everyone concerned participated in its development. It is a good plan if some provision has been made to evaluate it. And it is a good plan if it involves more investigation and more forecasting because, after all, planning is a continuous process. You can count the seeds in an apple, but not the apples in a seed. Our plans are like seeds. The plan will grow, but until we see the fruits, we don't know whether the plan has brought us the rewards we hoped for.

10. Summary. We have surveyed the role of communications in extension, and have studied how we communicate effectively. Communications, we find, is that vital thread between us and the people we serve. It is a process which we must keep operating effectively if we are to do our jobs as extension agents.

We have seen the importance of planning your communications efficiently so that you get maximum returns for the time and energy you devote to the use of mass media.

Now ask yourself, "So what? I still don't know which media or which combination of media to use to communicate a particular message!"

Well, how do you pick a wife? How do you build a house for your family? These questions are answered by you alone after weighing a thousand and one factors. It's possible to develop a formula for picking a wife, building a house, and answering each communications problem.

But such a formula would be so costly to develop and so difficult to apply that the formula itself would be cumbersome and impractical.

Our suggestion is to proceed now to the lessons which discuss each communications media and method. Develop your skill in the use of these media and methods and continually seek ways to use them effectively to meet the problems in your county. Your knowledge of the media and your knowledge of your county will combine to give you sound judgements on which to base your communications decisions.

RELATING THIS LESSON TO YOUR JOB

1. What is your philosophy of extension work? What are your goals as an extension worker?

Answer these questions in a two or three-paragraph statement. Preparing this statement will help you clarify your concept of your role as a county extension agent.

2. Think back over the working day just ended (or your last full working day). List all the methods you used to communicate to individuals or groups of people.

3. Review your last five working days and estimate the amount of time you spent:

(a) Communicating with individuals,

(b) Communicating with groups,

(c) Working alone (studying, driving your car, making reports, etc.)

4. Select a particular problem you are now working on (hay drying, potato marketing, weight reduction, school lunches, feeding roughage to dairy cattle, etc.). List the channels or media you have been using to

convey to your audience a particular message relating to this problem. Then indicate how you could communicate this message more efficiently--to reach more people with less effort, but just as effectively.

LESSON 2

HOW FARM PEOPLE ACCEPT NEW IDEAS

HOW THIS LESSON WILL HELP YOU

As pointed out in Lesson 1, we must understand our audience before we can communicate with them effectively. We begin this lesson by discussing how people learn. Then we talk about farm people specifically, and one theory about how they accept new ideas. This lesson will give you a more complete understanding of the communications process so you can use your communications tools more efficiently.

HOW WE LEARN[1]

1. Extension's Job is Teaching. In the flurry of committee meetings, district conferences, farm visits, annual reports, and all the day-to-day activities in the life of an extension worker we tend to forget that --after all--our job is teaching.

The county is our classroom. Adult farmers and homemakers and 4-H boys and girls are the pupils. They look to the county agent for information. Some information they readily accept; other information is accepted only after skilful and time-consuming "teaching" on our part. We teach effectively once we understand how people learn.

---

[1]Adapted from material prepared for the Communications Training Program (See Introduction) by Milton Hanson, Training Director, Abbott Laboratories, North Chicago, Illinois, and adapted from Johnson, Donald M., Essentials of Psychology, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1948.

2. How We Learn. Think of a particular farmer (or homemaker) in your county whom you may know fairly well. Farmer Yost, for example, was an innocent babe fifty years ago asking nothing of the world but to be well fed and comfortable. Today he is a family man, a Republican, and a reasonably good farmer with some rather fixed ideas about the superiority of Holstein cows, the values of a trench silo, and the need for continued high support prices. Farmer Yost's development from infancy to maturity has been a very complex affair. Psychologists would separate his development into two processes: maturation and learning.

Maturation - a continuous and irreversible growth process, coextensive with life itself, and relatively independent of outside stimulation. For example, children grow legs and walk. It doesn't take much practice; it "just comes natural."

Learning - a different and biologically higher type of development than maturation. Learning is the development of adaptive behavior, changing with changes in the demands of the environment. Farmer Yost develops an interest in Poland China hogs. He becomes a skilful welder and the other farmers in the community pull their machinery into his shop to be fixed. These are not natural developments; they require practice; they do not occur in all farmers; they are not passed on by heredity. These are behavior patterns developed by a process called learning. The evidence that Farmer Yost has learned something is how his behavior changes over a period of time. On Monday morning you notice that he sets his basket of eggs in the warm sun immediately after gathering them and goes off and does something else. You talk to him about egg quality. On Wednesday morning he takes the eggs directly to a cool place after gathering them. Farmer Yost demonstrates that he has learned something.

Our contact with the world around us comes through the five major senses: hearing, seeing, smelling, touching and tasting. We observe the objects of our environment and adjust ourselves to them, seldom bothering to separate vision from hearing, or sensory functions from psychological functions. Our receptors, or sense organs, when stimulated by such things as lights and sounds, translate the stimulation into impulses which travel along the sensory nerves to the brain. Then we react to the stimulation. Learning is essentially the changes we make to adapt ourselves to the changing stimulations, or SENSATIONS, from our environment.

Some writers infer that we learn more by seeing than by hearing. This may be true for certain people in certain situations. But note that we learn <u>through</u> our senses and <u>with</u> our minds. The senses are <u>aids</u> to learning, and <u>all</u> the senses contribute to the learning process.

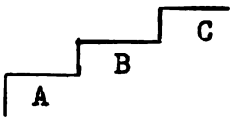
We are constantly bombarded with all kinds of stimuli. We can't react to everything at once so we select certain stimuli. This process of concentration on certain events is called ATTENTION. Obviously, Farmer Yost must have his attention on what you are saying, and not on a sick cow back home, if he is going to learn from you.

But what do these stimuli mean to us? How do we interpret what goes on around us? Our interpretation, or PERCEPTION, of the messages received by the brain via the sense organs are determined for the most part by our interests, attitudes, and our past experiences.

If Farmer Yost comes to your meeting on weed control, you can assume he has an <u>interest</u> in the problem. But if you spend your time talking about controlling mustard with 2,4-D spray when he is more interested in application of herbicides along roadways, he probably will learn little or nothing about controlling mustard.

Perhaps you want to encourage Farmer Yost and his neighbors to use a pre-emerge spray to control weeds. Yost thinks it's a waste of time and money--he has a negative attitude toward pre-emerge sprays. You won't be able to teach him to use this type of spray until he changes to a positive attitude toward the subject.

Farmer Yost's past experiences are important, too, as he approaches a learning situation. If he attended a short course in farm crops at Michigan State University last winter he may be better prepared to learn what you have to say about weed control than others in your meeting who did not attend the short course. New experiences build on old experiences. We have to learn A, and then B, in order to learn C.



Psychologists say there are three phases of the learning process: acquisition, retention, and reproduction.

3. How We Learn: Acquisition. We learn new things in a number of different ways. One way is by frequency, or repetition. We learn to type by pecking out the same words and sentences over and over again until the number of errors we make is reduced to the point where we consider ourselves fairly competent typists.

Another way to acquire knowledge is by conditioning. Mrs. Yost pours herself a cup of coffee. Twenty minutes later she feels peppy. She goes through this sequence again and again. Then she notices that the peppy feeling comes immediately after smelling the coffee and tasting it. In other words, a stimulus evokes a certain response (coffee makes her feel peppy). A second stimulus (the smell of coffee) associated with the first stimulus (coffee) soon has the same influence as the first and is calling forth the same response.

We learn by doing. Farmer Yost climbs into the seat of a new tractor. He can find out which button, lever, or switch controls the power take-off by trying them all. Or he could note the relation of a particular lever with the power take-off assembly and thus learn which is the proper lever by insight.

And we learn by social interaction. In most cases the acts, ideas, and emotions that we practice come originally from someone else. Farmer Yost is a Republican because his dad always voted that way and he has a lot of respect for his dad's opinions. Billy Yost walks and talks like Farmer Yost because he has learned these mannerisms by a somewhat unconscious imitation. Or maybe he wears cowboy boots like his dad does because of a more conscious and wholehearted identification with his dad .....he wants to be just like Dad.

It is a general rule, which we will talk more about in the second half of this lesson, that children, and adults as well, are most likely to imitate, or identify with, or accept suggestions of, those whom they respect, and usually those people who occupy a prestige position in the community.

4. How We Learn: Retention. It is not enough to learn a new fact; we must retain it, too. Improvement in knowledge and skill is a race between practice and forgetting. If we keep using the same telephone numbers day after day we remember them. We move to another community and the learning of a new set of numbers crowds out the old ones. Most forgetting, some psychologists say, is due to learning something else.

One learning technique is association. You meet a fellow named Joe Black and you remember his name by associating it with his black hair. Recency is another factor: We are likely to retain what we

have learned most recently. Another factor is vividness: We tend to remember our most vivid experiences.

5. How We Learn: Reproduction (Recall). Why does Farmer Yost remember some things and forget others? As we indicated above, he will remember those things which seem important to him, and forget the unimportant. And, under certain circumstances, he may unconsciously not want to remember a particular fact he has learned. This is called repression, or inhibition of memory for a purpose. Psychiatrists correct this condition by hypnosis, free association, drugs or just developing the confidence of the patient.

Farmer Yost may recall a fact by association. Write the letters PTO on a plain card and he may not know what it means. Point it out to him in a tractor advertisement and he'll tell you right away that it stands for power take-off.

6. Applying the Laws of Learning. Let's assume that you are planning to hold a meeting. You are going to give a talk and will, in effect, be the instructor. The folks who are coming to your meeting will be learning from you.

As you make plans for the meeting, ask yourself these questions:

(1) What is the problem? (Weed control)

(2) What does the audience already know about weed control? (Weed control is important because weeds reduce crop yields. Mustard is the big problem in this county.)

(3) What do I want to teach them about controlling mustard? (Spray with 2,4-D in May and June.)

(4) What do they want to learn about controlling mustard? (How to control mustard inexpensively and with little effort.)

(5) What resistance, or negative attitudes, will they have toward my suggestion that they spray with 2,4-D? (Maybe mustard won't be so bad this year and we needn't bother to spray; 2,4-D is a health hazard and I don't want to fool with it; one fellow ruined his corn crop spraying 2,4-D last year.)

(6) How will I overcome these negative attitudes? (Explain that mustard will probably be as bad as ever this year; demonstrate how to calibrate the spray outfit to reduce fear of the chemical; point out that 2,4-D will not ruin corn if used early enough.)

(7) Will this one meeting be enough to teach the farmers in my county to spray mustard with 2,4-D? (No. Farm visits, news stories, and other means will have to be used, too.)

These questions help you check your knowledge of the people you are going to talk to . . . What do they know? . . . What do they need to know? . . . What obstacles prevent them from learning what you hope to teach? You need the answers to these questions before you can do an effective job of teaching.

You begin your presentation by establishing a common understanding with your audience. The French have a word for it: rapport. You tell a joke--if you tell them well--or relate an incident that bears on the subject. You explain what you are going to talk about, how it relates to their problems, and you may invite them to ask questions any time. Establishing rapport is the first step in teaching.

If you are new to the county, your audience is as interested in you as in your subject. They are "sizing you up:" "What sort of a fellow

is this new agent?" . . . "Does he know anything?" . . . "Does he have anything to say that will help me?" Your audience is receptive to what you have to say once they accept you as a creditable source of information.

Once you have their attention, you try to hold it throughout the meeting. You hold their attention and teach successfully if you overcome the obstacles to learning. How about the room you are using? Is the temperature comfortable, or is it so warm the people are getting sleepy? Can everyone see? Can they all hear? Is the noise being made by the refreshment committee in the kitchen distracting the audience?

What rewards are you offering them for learning? Pre-school children are usually eager to learn because they find that learning is easy and fun. Some grownups seem to lose their zest for learning. Perhaps they need more tangible rewards than just the fun of learning. They will make the effort to learn if learning brings them increased income and security, better health, more comfortable homes, social status, and so on. "Save soil to make money," is more rewarding than "save soil to conserve resources."

As you present the facts, you sense from the reaction of the audience that repetition is needed. Or you use an illustration that helps them associate the new fact with one they already know. You use colored slides and a flannelgraph so they can see as well as hear the point you are making. Perhaps you have a particularly interesting slide that will make a vivid impression and one they will not soon forget.

Throughout the talk you try to speak in their language. You try to relate yourself to their problems. The questions from the floor point out possible gaps in your story, and give you a chance to rephrase a

point or use another illustration that is more meaningful to the group. And, finally, you summarize. By repeating each major point in your talk, you help each listener retain them in his mind.

7. The Psychology and Sociology of Learning. We have been talking about the psychology of learning. In a very brief treatment of a complex subject, we have tried to understand how the individual, Farmer Yost in this case, acquires his knowledge, retains it, and applies it.

Now we are going to look at the sociology of learning. We will see how Farmer Yost and his neighbors accept new ideas. In other words, we have been talking about Farmer Yost in his group. Now we are going to consider Farmer Yost and his group.

HOW FARM PEOPLE ACCEPT NEW IDEAS[2]

8. The Diffusion Process. At one end of the communication system is a group of agricultural research people with information about a new farming practice. At the other end is a larger group of farmers who may be able to use this information. In between are the extension workers whose basic job is to expedite this flow of information. This is the process of diffusion. Diffusion is what takes place as the research information moves to and among the farmers, the extension workers, the research people, and others directly or indirectly concerned.[3]

---

[2]Adapted from Subcommittee for the Study of Diffusion of Farm Practices, North Central Rural Sociology Committee, How Farm People Accept New Ideas. North Central Regional Publication No. 1. Iowa Agricultural Extension Service Special Report No. 15. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State College, 1955.

[3]National Project in Agricultural Communications, Agrisearch, Michigan State University, East Lansing, October 1955.

Some farmers will try any new idea that comes along. Others will accept an idea only after it is proved in their neighborhood. Some new ideas and practices are accepted quickly and with little effort. Others are accepted only after county agents and other leaders spend years promoting the practice. Narrowing the time gap between the early and late adoptions of recommended practices is one of our major problems in extension.

Research workers studying diffusion have developed a theory to describe what happens as this process unfolds. This theory concentrates on the highlights of diffusion and makes it easier for the research worker and the practitioner to follow the process without getting lost in details.

We'll talk about diffusion from three points of view:

(1) The stages through which an individual goes from the time he first learns of an idea until he adopts it, and the media which are most effective at these various stages;

(2) Some personal and social characteristics related to the farmer's adoption of practices; and

(3) Some characteristics of farm people as they relate to rate of adoption.

9. Stages in the Process of Acceptance. Acceptance of a new idea is a complex process. The farmer will make his decision after multiple contacts with most communications channels over a period of time. The average Iowa farmer took 7 years from the time he first heard about hybrid corn until he decided to grow it. After his success with hybrid corn, he more readily accepted other hybrid seeds. Once an idea has been introduced and the process has been initiated in a given community,

some people can be found at all stages in the process of acceptance. Here are the five stages of this process:

Awareness - in this stage the person first becomes aware of a new practice. And it is at the AWARENESS stage that mass communications media have their greatest impact. More people, research studies show, become aware of new ideas from mass communications media than from other sources. Salesmen are important at this stage when a new product is involved. Friends and neighbors are important among the lower socio-economic groups.

Interest - in this second stage, awareness has developed into an interest in the new practice. The farmer is now receptive to--and may even seek--information about the practice. Mass media still play an important role in providing this type of information, but evidence points to the fact that mass media become less important as sources of information after the individual has become aware of the idea.

Rural people at this stage are looking for general information; information that is timely and readily available from many sources. The channels of communication which they accept as valid are most influential at this stage. Many rely on the county agent for information while others rely on friends and neighbors. Farmers with outside contacts are important in stimulating interest in new ideas and practices.

Evaluation - here the potential adopter evaluates the new idea in terms of his own situation. He weighs its economic aspects . . . land, labor capital, and net returns. He appraises it in relation to other values . . . personal preference, family resources, what the neighbors will say.

At this stage the farmer seeks information from sources he considers dependable. The earlier adopters look to agencies such as the extension service. They consult neighbors and friends whose opinions they respect. Mass media and salesmen apparently aren't too important in the evaluation stage because (a) the information these channels provide is too general, and (b) the farmer distrusts these sources because the information may be biased by the business interests involved in the new practice.

Trial - the farmer understands the practice, is satisfied that it might work for him, and is willing to try it out. He tries it on a small scale . . . just a bushel of the new seed corn the first year.

At this stage he is looking for how-to-do-it and when-to-do-it information. The county agent again becomes an important source of this information along with friends and neighbors. Salesmen are also depended on if a commercial product is involved. Mass media may be relatively unimportant as information sources at this stage.

Adoption - this is the stage in which the idea is completely accepted. The farmer was satisfied with the trial he made. But continued satisfaction depends upon his success with the practice under varying conditions. He talks with neighbors, friends, and the county agent to compare his results with the luck others have had.

Before we leave the stages of diffusion, here are several pertinent observations:[4]

(1) There is no attempt to describe more than the highlights of the diffusion process;

---

[4] Ibid.

(2) It is understood that each stage will have variations and sub-processes within it;

(3) Each stage merges with the ones that come before and after it;

(4) Diffusion will not always take place in one-two-three order. For example, a person faced with a diffusion decision may work back and forth between the "interest" and the "trial" stages for some time before moving to the "acceptance" (adoption) stage.

10. Personal and Social Characteristics Related to Adoption of Practices. Social and psychological factors as well as economic factors influence adoption of farm practices. It's important that we are aware of them as we use communications methods.

In some communities changes in farming are encouraged and expected. In others, more value is placed upon tradition and the individual has little freedom to deviate from the group's pattern of doing things. Where emphasis is placed on individualism and personal success, changes may occur rapidly. Where there is great emphasis on maintaining family traditions and values rooted in the past, changes occur more slowly.

In some communities, a key individual must be sold on a new practice before the rest of the community will go along with the idea. If there are organizations within the community interested in better farming or homemaking practices, the diffusion process is aided. But if social contacts in the community are primarily through kinship, visiting, and other informal activities, there may be greater resistance to change.

Neighborhoods and clique groups facilitate exchange of information among their members. But there is evidence that social cliques serve

as barriers to the spread of information outside themselves because the members rely more upon each other for information than they do upon outsiders.

Rigid class structure impairs interclass communication of ideas. Tenant farmers in some areas of the country do not get ideas from large farm owners because of their lack of contact with them. And small-scale farmers may fail to communicate with large-scale farmers.

The more education an individual has, the more likely he is to adopt new farm practices. Young operators tend to be more aware of and more favorable toward new ideas and practices, but are not always in a position to apply their ideas because of capital or, possibly, lack of freedom to make decisions. Participation in general farm organizations, favorable attitudes toward extension and other agencies, and family membership in 4-H Clubs or vocational agriculture programs, are positively related to acceptance of farm practices.

11. Roles in the Diffusion Process. In addition to stages in diffusion, research workers have described the "roles" played by the people who have a part in it.[5]

The Innovator - He is the fellow who is willing to try something new. He knocks on the door of the research worker to find out if better farming practices are available. He is willing to accept high risk to keep up to date and ahead of his neighbors. The innovator most often owns a large farm and has high social and economic status. He is a leader both within and outside his community and is usually "better educated" than his neighbors.

---

[5] Ibid.

The Early Adopter - Although he is usually not the first to accept a new farming practice, he is ahead of the majority. Contrasted with the majority, he is younger, has more education, is more active in the social life of his community, reads more newspapers and magazines, and takes a more active part in farm organizations.

The Informal Leader - Although he has many followers in his neighborhood, he is usually not designated as a formal leader either by appointment or election. Usually he is not an innovator. Except for his leadership status, he identifies closely with the "average."

The Majority - The farmers making up the majority of those who adopt a new practice are usually older and have less education. They read fewer newspapers, magazines, farming bulletins, and are less active in the activities of farm agencies and organizations.

The Nonadopters - This group differs from the majority by being somewhat older, with less education, having lower social and economic status, and taking a less active part in the activities of farm agencies and organizations. The nonadopters also read fewer newspapers and magazines.

One key role in diffusion appears to be that of the informal leader. When the informal leader accepts a recommended farming practice, he apparently sets the stage for rapid adoption by the majority. The innovator and the early adopter, while important in the early stages of practice adoption, are seldom mentioned by farmers as sources of information on new farming practices. Such questions as whether an informal leader can occasionally (and when) be an early adopter or an innovator have not been resolved.

12. Summary and Conclusions. People go through various stages in learning about and adopting new practices. The process that takes place as this information moves to and among farmers, extension workers, researchers, and others is called diffusion. There is a striking parallel between the explanation of diffusion and the description of the roles individuals play in the diffusion process. In effect, both explain how diffusion takes place; the one in terms of stages in the process, the other in terms of the roles of those who play a part in the process. In combination, the research on several practices suggests the following relationship between stages and sources:[6]

Diffusion Stage	Order of Importance of Sources
I. AWARENESS II. INTEREST	1. Mass media 2. Agricultural agencies 3. Neighbors and friends 4. Agricultural salesmen
III. TRIAL IV. ACCEPTANCE (ADOPTION)	1. Neighbors and friends 2. Agricultural agencies 3. Mass media 4. Agricultural salesmen

The explanation of diffusion in terms of stages, roles, and channels is both useful as a means for understanding diffusion, and as a guide for research. The theory presented here may need to be more complete and more consistent. But a theory doesn't have to be perfect to be useful.

---

[6] Ibid.

appli

It wi
while
obvi
find
ting
becau

has n
advic
about
encou
must e
an inf
positi
portan

stage
determ
be mos
cline

So
ting su
your ti
priate

This information will have meaning for you if you can make these applications, for example:

(1) You observe that Farmer "A" is obviously an "innovator." It will be easy to sell him on a new practice that you consider worthwhile. But will the others in the community follow his example? He is obviously an important person in the community, but you will have to find out by observation if other farmers accept his leadership in adopting new practices or whether they discount his experimental activities because they think he "just likes to throw money around."

(2) Farmer "B" is not the first to adopt a new practice. He has no formal leadership status, but the other farmers look to him for advice and information. He could be the "informal-leader" type talked about in this lesson. It might be worth your while to spend more time encouraging Farmer "B" to adopt this practice than Farmer "A". Your most effective use of the "informal leader" will be to work with him on an informal basis. Giving him public recognition may jeopardize his position of leadership and thereby the influence that makes him an important resource in extension.

(3) A knowledge of where most of your people are as far as stage of adoption of a particular practice is concerned will help you determine which communications method to use. Note that mass media may be most effective in the "awareness" and "interest" stage; and is inclined to be least effective after people have accepted the idea.

Some understanding of the stage of adoption is important in selecting subject matter to communicate to your public. You'd probably waste your time telling people how to do something . . . information appropriate for the "trial" stage . . . when your audience is still at the

"interest" stage and is needing basic information about the idea itself.

(4) Assume that you have a religious sect living in one community in your county. They are good farmers but cling to tradition. As a group, they are interested in new ideas, but no one individual is willing to deviate from the group pattern. A member of the sect might sincerely wish to improve a practice, but if he did so it would mean that he would no longer participate in a work-exchange group. This would deny him a social outlet and social status in his community. The elected or acknowledged leaders of this community, therefore, must be sold on the idea before the others will adopt it.

RELATING THIS LESSON TO YOUR JOB

1. As you look over plans for your next meeting, where can your presentation be improved in relation to:

(a) The needs of the audience.

(b) Their background, or lack of background, for the subject you are presenting, and

(c) Reduction of any negative attitudes toward your subject.

2. If you are expecting people at a meeting who have diverse experiences in the subject you are talking about, how will you bring the least experienced up on a par with the others so the entire group will respond equally to the idea or skill you will present?

3. If you are a new agent just getting acquainted in the county, can you already spot farmers or homemakers who fit the "innovator" and "informal leader" roles? Make a list of key individuals in the county and try to label them according to the role classifications presented here. List those who are <u>both</u> "informal leaders" and "innovators."

List others who are difficult to classify in these terms.

4. Talk over with the others on your staff the success (or failure) you've had in promoting the adoption of an idea. Determine at what stage most of the people are now in as far as their attitudes toward this idea is concerned.

LESSON 3

REACHING FARM PEOPLE THROUGH NEWSPAPERS

A Syllabus

HOW THIS LESSON WILL HELP YOU

We have talked about communications in general, how to develop an effective communications program for your county, and how farm families accept new ideas. Now we are ready to help you improve your skill in the use of an important mass medium--the newspaper. This lesson shows you how to get along with your newspaper editor, and how to write the stories he likes to print. We also discuss sources of news, how to write so people will understand you, writing the personal column, and the use of pictures to supplement your news material.

1. Text. Read, Hadley, Getting Information to Farm Families, University of Illinois, College of Agriculture, Urbana, 1955; Chapters IV - IX, pp. 29-64.[1]

2. How To Study This Lesson. First read the text assignment. Then read the study notes below. These study notes highlight important points in the text and give you additional information. Finally, reread the text keeping the study notes in mind.

---

[1]Copies of this book have been sent to each Michigan County Extension office. Additional copies are available from Information Services, 10 Agricultural Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.

3. Study Notes. Chapter Four - The author of our text, Hadley Read, is extension editor at the University of Illinois. He has worked with many newspaper editors and knows them well. He begins Part Two of his book with a chapter about editors and how to work with them because he believes our chances of using the newspaper effectively are slim unless we get to know our editors first.

Read stresses the importance of understanding the editor's problems while you attempt, through repeated contacts, to arouse and maintain his interest in what you are trying to do as an agricultural or home demonstration agent. He suggests that you take every opportunity to involve the editor in the agricultural affairs of the county by such means as inviting him to become a member of a planning committee. Another suggestion is to have him as your guest at a 4-H banquet and, perhaps, ask him to present the awards.

Your editor may be much more than just the fellow who prints your stories. A good editor--particularly a country editor--understands the people you are working with. He may be the source of good counsel on problems confronting you. A good editor can be considered an important member of your staff.

Chapter Five - Here is how you can demonstrate to your editor that you can be of service to him: Produce a regular news service, identified, attractive, interesting, and easy to read.

A regular service develops regular habits, says the author. What's more, farm people soon learn to expect news stories from the county agent and look forward to them each week.

Identify your own copy so it won't get lost in the heap of mail that clutters the editor's desk. Use your letterhead stationary or

consider printing an attractive masthead--in color, perhaps--on mimeograph stock on which you would duplicate your stories each week. Most important, however, is that your copy is neatly typed with wide margins and double-spaced so it's easy for the editor and the linotype operator to read.

Chapter Six - Where does the material for our news stories come from? Read tells us about a county agent who was so close to his work that he didn't see the material for more than a dozen news stories right on his desk. You, yourself, are your best source of news. The events you plan and participate in, the farm visits you make, and the questions you answer in your correspondence are all newsworthy. This information makes good news copy because it may relate directly to the interests and the problems of the majority of your readers.

The farm families you visit and work with day by day are also sources of news. Names make news. Particularly names of people who have successfully adopted a new practice or idea or about whom you can write an interesting "personal experience" story.

Chapter Seven - Writing so people will understand you is the essence of good news writing. Clear thinking . . . logical presentation of points . . . short and varied sentences . . . the language people understand . . . are all essentials of a good news story. Note Read's emphasis on writing as people talk. Have your reader in mind as you write your story. Write as if you are talking directly to him.

A group of news releases reviewed by the Michigan State extension information staff could be improved if the writers:

(1) Used more interesting leads.

(2) Included a local "angle" to the story.

(3) Included names of people important to the story.

(4) Used language the reader understands.

(5) Used active verbs.

(6) Used more specific details.

(7) Eliminated unnecessary details.

(8) Used fewer "should's" and "must's."

(9) Reduced the number of times one term was used.

(10) Included all essential details--who, what, when, where, why, and how.

Chapter Eight - A handshake in print, is the author's capsule definition of a column. A column is the place for your personality to show through, he says. Your personality provides the "style" in which your column is written. Every syndicated columnist . . . Walter Winchell, Louella Parsons, Drew Pearson, to name a few . . . has a "style" which identifies his column from all others. A well-known agricultural columnist is J. M. Eleazer, Clemson College, South Carolina. Here is a sample of Mr. Eleazer's writing:[2]

> Our certified seed man, Bob Garrison, tells me some planting seeds are bound to be scarce this year.
>
> This applies specially to adapted seed of hybrid corn.
>
> And cotton, too. Drought caused a lot of immaturity in cotton seed. Better look to their germination first.
>
> And our fast-growing acreage of shatter-resistant soybeans is bound to feel the pinch of scarce and sorry seed. Much of the acreage the past year wasn't worth gathering. And seed from much that was harvested are of very poor quality, County Agent Cain, in the big soybean county of Calhoun, was telling me. So here is another place we will need to check the germination carefully.

---

[2]Arbour, Marjorie B., When You Write a Newspaper Column, Extension Publication 1178, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, 1955.

Very little lespedeza seed was made.

> After about 4 short crops in succession, we sure need a good one in 1955. And we can't have it with poor seed or unadapted varieties. Before getting any good quality seed from a distance, you will do well to find out how they do here. Your county agent can help you with that. For you know, seed have to be acclimated to serve you best. It will be folly to send off and get high-priced, high-quality seed that don't suit here. Get the best of the adapted sorts you can find. That's the best we can do.

Note the skilful choice and sparing use of words. Note also the free and easy "style." It is a highly informative column, written in the language of the reader.

Mr. Eleazer carries a notebook all the time to jot down names, places, and ideas as they come to him. When he fills up one notebook he files it away and starts another. In this way he keeps a permanent record of his experiences. As Read points out in the text, there is no single formula for column writing. One suggestion is to write your column as you would relate the events of the day to your wife. Proceed from subject to subject in a logical order, including your personal comments and observations. Write as you speak. This adds your personality to your message and makes the column more inviting to read.

Chapter Nine - The home-study lessons on visual aids give you more information on photography than Mr. Read has had space for in his book. He includes this chapter on news pictures because--as he says--pictures can tell part of your story.

Note particularly (p. 60) how one county agent has used pictures to carry the burden of a number of messages about pastures to his readers.

Action pictures, Read says, are more effective than portraits (pictures of people having their pictures taken). And local pictures are more effective than those from other counties and other states.

RELATING THIS LESSON TO YOUR JOB

The best way to learn to write news stories is to write news stories. In the course of your daily work you will be called upon to write stories for your county papers. Submit copies of these stories to your district supervisor for his comments and suggestions.

On the following pages are the minutes of a church circle meeting and a 4-H Club meeting. Would your editor accept them in their present form for printing in his paper? If not, develop one story from each set of minutes that your editor would consider good news copy.

The Round Circle of the First Church met at 2:30 Wednesday afternoon, February 9, at the home of Mrs. John Bean. The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Harry Wood, the chairman, and the minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

Mrs. Clara Brown introduced the speaker, Rev. J. A. Christian. Rev. Christian reported on the church building campaign. He said that the fund drive will start at the end of next month, and that the church hoped to raise $400,000.00.

Then he showed pictures of the proposed new building. He pointed out that each Sunday School Class would have a separate building, to cut down noise interference with each other. The sanctuary will seat 50 people, and there will be a special vault under the basement in which crying babies can be stored during the service.

After the talk, we held elections of officers. The new president is Mrs. Brown; vice-president is Mrs. Horace Walden; and secretary-treasurer is Mrs. Doris Moore.

Mrs. Bean and her committee served coffee and cookies at the conclusion of the meeting. Mrs. I. L. Small and Miss Eustacia Bishop were also on the committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Doris Moore

* * * * *

The meeting opened in the usual manner in the vo-ag room of the Shady Hollow High School at 4:30 p.m. on October 10. Charles Featherstone, president of the chapter called us to order.

Mr. Jim Mark, our ag teacher announced that Edward Blake was leading the group in the pest control contest. From the records turned in

last Friday he had already trapped 146 rats; fifteen more than John Allen, who was in second place.

Stanley Bates reported for the Game Supper committee. He said that the date of November 3rd had been selected, and that Louise Bailey will be in charge of the Future Homemaker's Club cooking committee.

Mr. Mark asked about the trip to Kansas City to the National FFA Convention. He said that the bus from the East District would hold 40 passengers, and that we could send three boys. He also said that the Shady Hollow Rotary Club had contributed $100 toward this trip.

The chapter voted to send Bill Wilson, who was our high scorer at the dairy judging contest at MSU last June; John Green, who won the Soil Conservation project award last summer; and Bill Sparks, whose rural electric demonstration had been selected as best in the district. All of these boys were ahead in their studies, and assured Mr. Jim Mark that they could make up their work.

The chapter adjourned at 5:30 so that Bill Rogers could get to football practice.

LESSON 4

COMMUNICATING WITH CIRCULAR LETTERS

HOW THIS LESSON WILL HELP YOU

The circular letter is a time-honored extension device for reaching farmers and homemakers with timely information. Some counties have over-used circular letters; other counties have overlooked their potential. This lesson discusses the advantages of this medium and shows you how to prepare an effective circular letter.

1. The Billion Dollar Medium. Industry has discovered the effectiveness of direct mail advertising--your own mail will support this fact! Authorities place the annual dollar volume of direct mail produced in this country at well over a billion dollars. Businessmen use direct mail to get their sales message directly into the hands of the potential customer and motivate him to buy the product through a special offer, a sample of the product, a postcard to be returned for more information, and other means.

Businessmen sell products. You sell ideas and information. Study the direct mail techniques of business and you will find ideas to improve the effectiveness of your own circular letters. You have the advantage of being in closer touch with your audience than perhaps the average big business, and your audience may be more interested in your "product" than most products being sold via direct mail. But remember, your circular letter goes through the mail with professionally-produced advertising pieces. Earl Richardson, Michigan State extension editor,

says that your circular letters are facing their toughest competition in history. They are competing with a billion dollar medium!

2. Is it Worth the Effort? You have a particular communications problem. Will a circular letter help you get your message to the people you want to reach? That is the first question to be answered. G. O. Oleson, Massachusetts extension information specialist, quotes one of his county agents as saying, "Good secretaries are too darned hard to get, and keep, to wear out just stuffing mail."

In general, a circular letter can be effective if your message:

a. Is timely . . . of immediate concern to the reader (hay crop ruined by rain);

b. Is provocative . . . suggests to the reader what action to take (come to a meeting);

c. Can be stated briefly . . . on one page with illustrations -- two at the most.

These specifications help you determine the appropriateness of a circular letter in a particular problem situation. But the effectiveness of your circular letter depends on many other factors.

3. Appearance Arouses Their Interest. The reader must be attracted to your letter if he's going to read the message. An attractive circular letter (we'll discuss some examples farther on) has eye-catching illustrations, lots of open space so the printing and illustrations don't appear crowded, and is neatly reproduced.

The illustrations do more than "dress up" the copy--they add meaning to the written message. Plan the entire circular letter at one time so the illustrations don't look as if they were tucked in as an

after-thought. Have the illustrations in mind as you write the copy.

4. Writing Your Message. What's the problem? Wet hay? Slumping poultry prices? Confine your letter to one single idea.

What do you want your reader to do? Cull poor layers? Come to a meeting? Plan your message so that it builds to a climax--the action you want your reader to take . . . "Check your records today" . . ."Come to the Community Hall Thursday evening."

Have your reader in mind as you write the message. Pick out a farmer on the mailing list you know fairly well and write as if you were talking directly to him. Write as you speak using the language he understands. Keep your sentences short; avoid unnecessary words. A bit of humor, and a touch of your own personality add appeal to your letter. Chances are you've written a good letter if Farmer Brown puts it down with a chuckle and says, "I'd know Joe Smith wrote that letter even if he didn't sign it."

Begin with a salutation if you like, but be specific. "Dear poultryman," or "Dear 4-H Member" is better than "Dear Sir." But a salutation may be unnecessary. After all, the reader will relate himself more to the message than to the salutation.

A good opening sentence has direct appeal and indicates immediately the purpose of the letter . . . "You can cut down your feed bills this winter." . . . "Why support loafer hens?"

Another good test of your circular letter is the time it takes to read it. Someone has said, "if the farmer can't read it in the time it takes him to walk from the mail box to the house, it won't get read at all."

5. Tips on Illustrations. If you draw, or your secretary has a flair for it, you're lucky. Not all of us have this talent, but we can illustrate our circular letters just the same. You can trace line drawings and lettering from magazines and other printed materials. There is a wide assortment of lettering devices and other "art aids" that will simplify your illustration problem with little expense. The visual aids specialist of the Department of Information Services can tell you where to get these aids. Here's how one extension specialist solved a problem: He was producing a circular letter on when to buy meat cuts, and needed an illustration. He found one he liked. With the help of a local mimeograph supplier he used a special photo-chemical stencil. It cost him $2.25 and a six-minute wait while the photograph was put on his stencil.

6. Mimeographing. A neat mimeograph boosts the attractiveness of your circular letter 100%. Look over your secretary's shoulder occasionally to see that her typewriter keys are clean so they make neat, sharp cuts on the stencil. Then check the mimeographed letter itself before it's mailed. Is there enough ink flow so everything printed evenly? Or is there too much ink flow so that the lettering and illustrations are too heavy and the paper is covered with smudges? Is there so much ink that the printing on one sheet "offsets" on the back of the sheet laid on top of it? If you mimeographed both sides of the sheet, is the paper heavy enough so that you don't see the printing of the opposite side as you read the letter?

7. Now Comes the Mailing. Your letter isn't worth the paper its mimeographed on if it doesn't reach the right people. Not only are you the editor and publisher of your circular letter, but the circulation

manager as well. A good mailing list is up-to-date and is complete in that it has the names of all the people you want to talk to.

Circular letters are usually mailed in envelopes. The franking privilege (free of postage) is used if the content conforms to postal regulations. If your circular letter mentions a product or a commercial firm, for example, you can't use the frank, so your letter requires postage. By folding and stapling the circular letter and putting the address on the outside, you have a self-mailer. Self-mailing requires a special postal permit but it saves the chore of stuffing envelopes.

8. "Tie-In" Promotion. "Dairy Products are Wonderful Christmas Gifts," was the slogan used for a direct mail piece prepared last year by Jack Little, an extension dairy specialist stationed in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. He sold 4,700 copies of his letter to dairy plants in the Upper Peninsula for a penny each. The plants enclosed a copy with the checks they mailed to milk producers.

Jack's tie-in with the dairy companies saved him the mailing problem and assured him that the letter would reach his intended audience. The dairy companies were glad to cooperate with Jack and his circular letter campaign because they benefit directly from improved milk production.

This letter was one of a series Jack prepared each month for the dairy plants to mail with the milk checks. Other letters featured winter feeding of dairy cows, calf raising, and mastitis control. His experience illustrates the effectiveness of a series of letters mailed periodically.

9. A Word About "Newsletters." Many Michigan extension agents prepare periodical "newsletters." These are usually for a special audience . . 4-H'rs, home demonstration clubs . . . Have a title that is used every time. . . "4-H News Notes" . . . "News Around the County" . . . and run from two to five mimeographed sheets stapled together.

Most of what we have said in this lesson about circular letters applies to the "newsletter." These additional suggestions may help you if you are producing a "newsletter" in your county:

Be stingy with words - Many "newsletters" ramble on and on as if the writer is determined to fill up the stencil even though he has little to say. Go through your copy and see how many words you can eliminate without reducing the clarity of your message.

Be a good editor - Sometimes it's fine to follow the motto of the New York Times and include "all the news that's fit to print." But you have busy readers with other things to do, and other things to read. As the editor of your "newsletter," be discriminating with your copy. Will the reader be interested in this? Is it really news?

10. Examples: Good and Not so Good - On the following pages are examples of circular letters--some good, some not so good. Study these examples. Look for ideas for your own circular letters, and note obvious errors to avoid. Then check your reactions with our comments about these examples in paragraph 11. Challenge our opinions if you wish; there is no pat formula for circular-letter-writing.

EXAMPLE "A"

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
in
Agriculture and Home Economics
State of Michigan

The Michigan State College,
U. S. Department of
Agriculture and Nokomis
County Cooperating

Extension Service
County Agent
Home Agent and
4-H Club Agent

Phone 361
County Building
College, Michigan

November 22, 1955

Dear County 4-H Service Club Member:

Here are the last minute details regarding the County 4-H Service Club Thanksgiving Banquet and Party:

When: Saturday, December 3, 1955 - 7:30 p.m.
Where: Homade (3rd floor) College, Michigan
Who: All County 4-H Service Club members (each may bring a friend if you wish.)
Why: To dine and dance (short business meeting.)

The dinner will cost $1.25 per person. Two Service Club members are to be reimbursed from the club treasury for the turkeys for the banquet. Mr. Rudy Eckert (Homade Mgr.) stated that we could dance after the banquet until midnight if the group desires. I believe plans are being made for some light refreshments or something a little special a little later in the evening.

I would also like to state that a special invitation has been received from the Lenawee County 4-H service club for us to be guests at a Service Club dance near Bennett on Wednesday evening, December 28.

At the present time the following have paid reservations for this service club banquet: Marilyn Stoker, Gale Loveland, Mr. and Mrs. Verne Moeckel, Mr. and Mrs. Lysle Crites, Wendell Crites and Guest, Mr. and Mrs. James Cuatt, Wilma and Ray Lamb, and Mrs. Francis Pierce has paid for three.

Also the following reservations are in and not paid for: Gerald Surbrook, Darlene Dixon, 3 for Hubbards and 4 for the R. C. Leatherberry's.

The candidates selected by the candidate committee for consideration as members for the Nokomis county Service Club are as follows: Patty Baum, Louise Lewis, Sharon Warnock, Phyllis Reed, Nancy Dearing, Kay Carty, Margeurite Pierce, Evenlyn Wood, Ruthig, Barbara McMurtrie, Linda Hoffman, Donna Klink, Mary Ann Klink, Sharon Hall, Margaret Leonard, Joan Losey, Virginia Gibson, Elsie McDonald, Edith Lewis, Charles Weeks, John Surbrook, Duane McCorkle, Glenn Brail, Richard Stuart, David Rainey, Llewellyn Lehman, Ronald Jakubas, Warren Thorne, Larry Cockroft, Dwight Ellison, Eddie McMurtrie, Donald Kellicutt, George Lininger, Carroll Perrine and Orsen Beeman.

EXAMPLE "B"

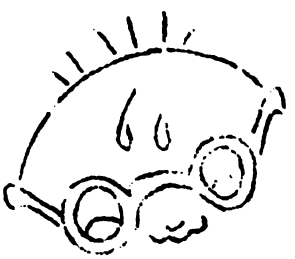
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK IN AGRICULTURE
AND HOME ECONOMICS
State of Michigan

Michigan State University
U. S. Dept. of Agriculture
Nokomis County
Cooperating

Phone 301
County Building
Collins, Michigan

Cooperative Extension Service
County Agricultural Agent
Home Demonstration Agent
4-H Club Work

August 8, 1955



SEEING IS BELIEVING! !

Want to know how to control weed and brush? See for yourself at any of the demonstration areas listed on the sheets attached.

I want to acknowledge the cooperation of the folks listed on the enclosed sheets who supplied the locations; the Nokomis County Board of Supervisors for purchasing the necessary equipment to conduct the demonstrations; the Collins Kiwanis Club in working and supplying signs and materials for the poison ivy demonstrations.

Sincerely,

Bill Blake

County Agricultural Agent

BB:rh

P.S. If you want more information, contact my office in the County Building, Collins.

EXAMPLE "C"

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
in
Agriculture and Home Economics
State of Michigan

Michigan State University,
U. S. Department of
Agriculture and Nokomis
County Cooperating

Extension Service
County Agents
Home Agent and
4-H Club Agent

Phone 3612

January 31, 1956

County Building
Collins, Michigan

Dear 4-H Administrative and/or
Project Leader:

FEBRUARY NEWS NOTES - 4-H

The Nokomis County 4-H Annual Calendar of events for 1956 is enclosed. We hope this will give you something to go by in the planning of your very busy life as a 4-H leader. We are sending three copies of the National 4-H Club Week poster to all 4-H Administrative leaders. "Improving Family and Community Living" is the theme for 1956 and the dates for National 4-H Club Week is March 3-11.

February 1 8:00 pm . Mr. John Bird, chairman of the Leaders' Association Recreation Committee, has called a meeting for this hour at the Extension Office.

February 1 8:00 pm Photography Judging committee meeting. Mrs. Gerald Fuller, Mr. Philip Shimberg, Mr. Clark Lang and Mrs. L. L. Johnson.

February 2 7:30 to 10:30 pm Roller Skating - Collins Park

February 2 7:00 pm Club Agent to assist the Langley Wolverines with a Plastic Workshop.

February 4 9:00 to 1:00 pm Weed Lake Square and Round Dance. County 4-H'ers invited.

February 6 2:30 pm County Landscaping meeting. 4-H Board of Directors invited. County Building.

February 7 8:00 pm Nokomis County 4-H Leaders' Association meeting - County Building.

February 8 8:00 pm 4-H Tractor Maintenance Project meeting - County Building

February 9 7:30 pm Club Agent to assist with Darwin Men's Club Meeting.

February 9 and 10 State Cherry Pie Contest. Carol Hanson is the Nokomis County Cherry Pie Contest winner to participate in the State Cherry Pie Baking Contest. Ten girls participated in the county contest. Barbara Morrison took second place, and Judy Cassidy took third place. The other seven contestants were Roxanne Lewis, Virginia Lindquist, Jean Casttle, Mary Shoe, Darlene Pemberton, Dorothy Ann Hess and Virginia Holton

EXAMPLE "D"

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
IN
Agriculture and Home Economics

Michigan State University, U. S. Department of Agriculture and Nokomis County Cooperating

Extension Service
County Agents
Home Agent and
4-H Club Agent

State of Michigan

Phone 361

County Building
Collins, Michigan

January 30, 1956

Dear Home Demonstration Member:

EXTRA:

Council Members:

Meeting on February 8
Basement Auditorium
10:30 am to 3:00 pm
Bring your table service for lunch.

Thanks to Council Members for making the Officers' Tea such a success. We also appreciate having the cookie recipes.

PROJECT LEADERS:

LEADER Training Lesson on February 21 and 23.
PLACE: Basement Auditorium, County Building.
TIME: 9:30 to 12:30 (Meeting will start promptly).
SUBJECT: Effective Use of Time and Energy.

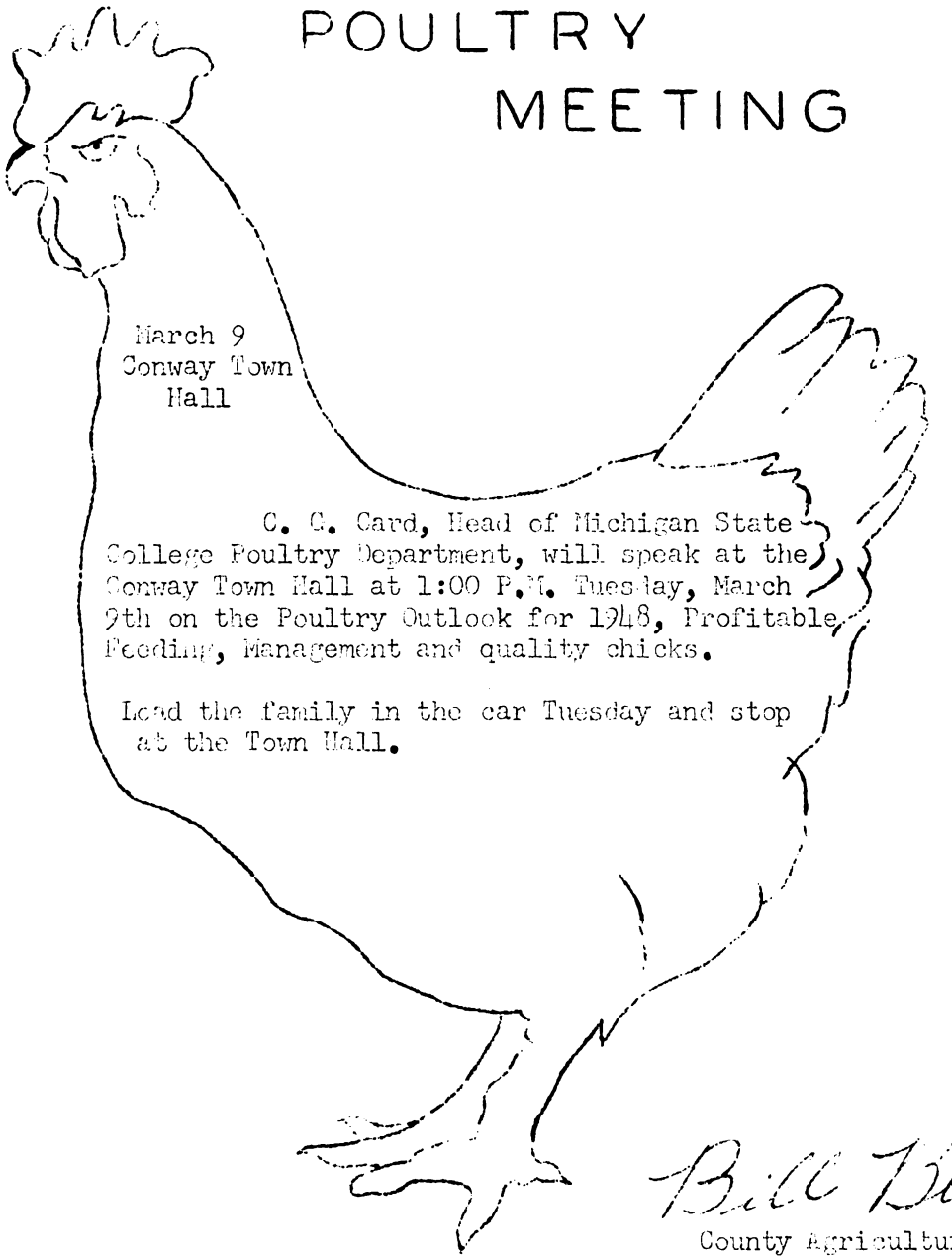
Remember the old saying "Man works from sun to sun, and woman's work is never done". Homemakers are reminded of it day after day as they try to crowd all the demands placed on them into one twenty-four hour day. In the lesson you will consider the application of "work simplification" to household tasks. You will go beyond that to the importance of decision making in time management and will discuss on what basis families might decide to simplify, expand or cut out various activities.

EXAMPLE "E"

Cooperative Extension Work
in Agriculture and Home Economics
State of Michigan
Collins

Michigan State University
U. S. Department of Agriculture
and Nokomis County Cooperating

Extension Service
County Agent Work
Phone 361
March 5, 1948



POULTRY MEETING

March 9
Conway Town
Hall

C. C. Card, Head of Michigan State College Poultry Department, will speak at the Conway Town Hall at 1:00 P.M. Tuesday, March 9th on the Poultry Outlook for 1948, Profitable Feeding, Management and quality chicks.

Load the family in the car Tuesday and stop at the Town Hall.

Bill Blake
County Agricultural Agent

EXAMPLE "F"

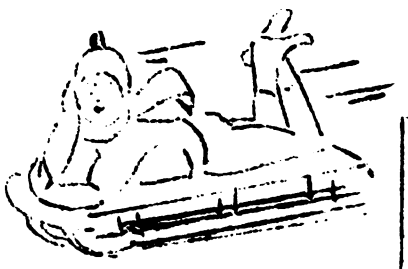
4-H CLUB NEWS

NEWS SHEET

FOR

NOKOMIS COUNTY 4-H MEMBERS

Volume XXIII - No. 1 | Collins, Michigan | January, 1949



COME TO:

4 H WINTER SPORTS PARTY

NOKOMIS SPORTS PARK

FEBRUARY 5, 1949

(If weather permits)

Mich. State College
U. S. Dept. of Agr.
Nokomis County
cooperating

Cooperative Extension
in
Agr. and Home Economics

Extension Service
County Agents Work
August 12, 1949

To All Nokomis

Dear Friend:

Your exhibit chairman Mrs. Joyce Thompson

REMINDS YOU!

of the coming

EVENT Bainbridge 4-H Fair

DATE Aug. 18, 19, 20

SET UP Aug. 17 - Wednesday

TIME 10:00 a.m. til noon
All exhibits must be in place - ready for judging by noon Wed. Aug. 17.

NOTE: It is suggested that Flowers and vegetables be brought in on Thursday morning.

ENTRYBLANK All entry blanks must be in the Extension Office not later than Tuesday Aug. 16. Entry fees to be paid when checking in your exhibit.

RESPONSIBILITY

Each leader will be responsible for his or her club exhibits, and will furnish all necessary materials (sheets, pins, labels, tacks, card table, scotch tape, etc.

Paper ribbons must accompany all 1948-49 winter exhibits

Your cooperation with these items will insure a successful exhibition.

Yours truly,

Bill Blake

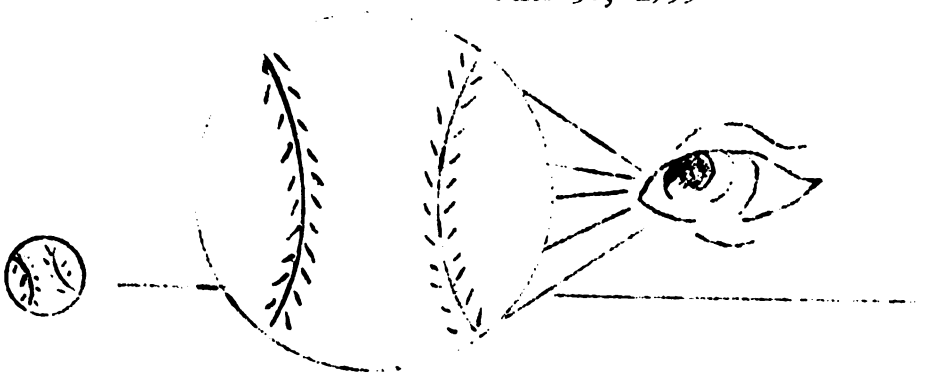
EXAMPLE "H"

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
In Agriculture and Home Economics
Nokomis County
Collins, Michigan

Cooperating:
Board of Supervisors
Michigan State College of Agriculture and Applied Science
U. S. Dept. of Agriculture

Extension Service
County Agricultural Agent
County 4-H Club Agent
Home Demonstration Agent
County Building
Telephone 35-431

June 30, 1955



KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE BALL

Summer Greetings:

How do you like the idea of a newsletter to be sent four times a year, giving information on what other clubs and club members are doing? Let us hear what you are doing.

* * * * * *

Keep open the date July 19 to 22 for Homemakers' Conference. Those who have indicated they hope to go as full time or one day visitors are: Mrs. H. L. Decker, Mrs. A. Kovac, Mrs. Mark Young, Mrs. Sherman Smith, Mrs. Z. Little, Mrs. M. Lowery, Mrs. M. Gray, Mrs. Robert Wilson, Mrs. Milo VanVranken, Mrs. Robert Kingman, Mrs. Orves Cook, Mrs. L. Elliott, Mrs. Neva Rawson and Mrs. J. Barager.

Program for Thursday morning - Mrs. M. Taepke, Home Lighting Specialist, Detroit Edison Company, "There is Light in Your Future." Afternoon; Dr. David Molyveux, First Presbyterian Church, Flint, Michigan, "The Challenge to a Hungry World." Evening - Daraine and Ellis, "Romance in Song" costumed cameos of famous musicals.

We will charter a bus for this one day at Homemakers' Conference if enough are interested. Cost will be $1.00 for registration and $2.75 for bus transportation plus your meals, which you can purchase in the Student Union Cafeteria. We think Thursday's program would be a wonderful day's outing and some of you have never been to our Homemakers' Conference, M.S.C. East Lansing, and this would be a wonderful opportunity for you. We must have your reservation in by July 8th, with $3.75 to cover transportation fees and registration so that we might make final plans relative to the number of buses we will need to have.

* * * * * *

EXAMPLE "I"

CORN

FIELD DAY - SEPTEMBER 26-27

HENRY SMITH Farm--south of Dixon
on
Center Road

C O M E A N D S E E !

comparisons of --

planting methods
fertilizer use
tillage methods
weed control
airplane seeding
seed treatment
harvesting
drying and storage

Bill Blake
County Agricultural Agent

11. What's Your Opinion? . . . A Discussion of the Preceding Examples.

Example A (Page 59) - This is heavy reading for a busy farmer or homemaker on the run. A catchy illustration, a little more imagination in the opening, and wider margins would make this letter more attractive. Notice how words can be saved by eliminating, "I would also like to state," in paragraph three, and rewriting the first sentence of the last paragraph to read: "Here are the candidates chosen by the Nokomis County Service Club membership committee."

Example B (Page 60) - This is much better. An intriguing illustration attracts your attention. A snappy opening sentence in the form of a question leads you into the body of the letter. One suggestion: the heading and illustration would be more effective if larger. Note the P.S.; the agent is reminding his readers where they can go for more information.

Example C (Page 61) - The Valentine's Day heart is appropriate for a February newsletter. But the illustration makes the text hard to read. Double spacing has helped, but the page is still too crowded. The letter could be improved by running the schedule on the back of the sheet.

Example D (Page 62) - The heart is used more effectively in this example. The design and the text complement, rather than compete with each other. All the information about the meeting is included, and the writer goes a step further to tell the reader what she may expect to get out of the meeting. The leader training meeting could have been the only subject on this page, however. And a more interest-getting heading than

"Project Leaders" could have been used. The "Extra" and the thank you note to council members belong elsewhere.

Example E (Page 63) - This illustrates the point we make above: Restrict your circular letter to one idea. The illustration attracts attention and lends meaning to the message. If anything, the text may be too short. There's room to elaborate a little on what the speaker is going to talk about. This is simply a meeting notice. In some situations it may be necessary to "sell" the meeting a little more than is done here. An interest-getting opening sentence would help. For example: "Having turkey troubles? You may find some answers . . , etc."

Example F (Page 64) - Here is a good example of the front page of a 4-H newsletter. The art work is appropriate to the subject and is neatly done. It invites the reader to turn the page and see what follows. Note that the lettering is in character with the illustrations. The few words tell us all we need to know about the forthcoming 4-H winter sports party.

Example G (Page 65) - The publications folks would call this a fairly good "layout" for a circular letter. Note how your eye falls on the Town Crier figure in the upper right-hand corner and then is guided by the large lettering to the bottom of the page. The large lettering emphasizes the key points. Could you suggest an improvement in the salutation and the opening sentence? How about the heading, "Responsibility?" Is it necessary?

Example H (Page 66) - An interesting illustration guides your eye into the copy. But then you find that the illustration has

nothing to do with the message. Wider margins, fewer words, and more material moved to the additional pages, would make this a more attractive and readable circular letter.

Example I (Page 67) - This is an example of an enclosure to be inserted in an envelope with another letter. The enclosure can be signed but it need not carry the "Cooperative Extension Work" heading required of other letters. Note the effective use of lettering and that all the essential details about the field day are given without the use of unnecessary words.

12. Circular Letters That Click. Here, in summary, are nine points to follow in producing a circular letter that clicks:

a. Have the purpose of the letter clearly in mind.

b. Decide exactly what action you want your reader to take.

c. Write in the language the reader understands.

d. Appeal to personal interest (his farm, his cows, his pocketbook) with a snappy statement in the opening paragraph.

e. Point up the punch in the lead paragraph with an appropriate headline and/or illustration.

f. Suggest what the reader can do to help alleviate or solve his problem.

g. Be sure the latter is appealing to the eye; if it's attractive, it's more likely to be read.

h. Protect your professional reputation by checking the stencil carefully for grammatical errors and misspelled words.

i. Do a clean, neat job of duplicating the letter.

RELATING THIS LESSON TO YOUR JOB

1. Write a circular letter--preferably one that you will actually use right away or in the near future.
2. Test the effectiveness of your circular letter. If the purpose of your letter is to get people to come to a meeting, report the number of people present, but, more important, the number of people who came in response to the letter. There are a number of ways you can determine this number.
3. Talk over your circular letter, and the result of your test of its effectiveness, with your district supervisor.

LESSON 5

TEACHING WITH PUBLICATIONS

HOW THIS LESSON WILL HELP YOU

You may never write or edit a publication, but you will use publications that others have written to help you teach and inform the people in your county. This lesson describes the types of publications available for your use, explains how a publication is produced, and suggests how publications can help you do a better job.

1. The Publication, A Ready Reference. The information we present on the radio lasts as long as the listener remembers what we said. The information in our news columns may be read again and again. The farmer may clip it and post it on a bulletin board, file it, or paste it in a scrap book. It's more likely, though, that the edition of the paper in which our news story appears will be read once, put aside, and eventually thrown away.

But the publication has a longer life-span. If it is well written, amply illustrated, and keyed to the reader's interests, it will be read and reread until it's dog-eared and smudged before it's finally thrown away. And a publication may tell a complete story; the reader has all the essential facts before him to absorb at his own pace.

2. Bulletin or Publication? If it's printed, bound in a soft cover, and available for distribution from your extension office, we call it a publication. This printed piece may also be called a bulletin, circular,

leaflet, folder, or report, depending upon local terminology. But all of these are particular types of publications, so we will use the more general term, publication, in this lesson.

3. Where Your Publications Come From. The array of publications available from your office come from different sources. You'll notice that some come from the U. S. Department of Agriculture, some from Michigan State University, some from other state universities, and possibly some from commercial firms. And it's possible that your own county has prepared for the public mimeographed or printed material on specific subjects.

Michigan State University publications are written by university staff members and are distributed by the publications distribution officer of the university's department of information services. When a new publication is ready for distribution, your county extension office receives a copy. Your staff then decides how many copies of this publication you will need for distribution in your county, and will order this quantity from the information services.

In the case of U. S. Department of Agriculture publications, you will order the copies you need direct from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. If you need large quantities of a USDA publication, the publications distribution officer at the university can help you get them.

Most Michigan State University and USDA publications are distributed free. Some must be charged for, and these require special handling. Policies for the distribution of publications change from time to time. Your office has the latest distribution policy on file to guide you if you have questions about publication distribution procedures.

One important distinction is made between extension service and experiment station publications. Extension publications are written for the farmer, the homemaker, or the 4-H Club boy or girl. They are "popular" treatments of the subject, written in simple language and usually illustrated. Most experiment station publications are written for the technically trained person. Scientific terminology is used and fairly complete research data is usually presented. The average farmer would find it more difficult to apply information presented in an experiment station publication than a publication from the extension service.

4. How Are Publications Produced? You may never become a publications editor, but the chances are good that you may write a publication some day. And there is a good chance that you will serve as a subject-matter advisor on the production of a publication. There is more than one way to produce a publication, but this is how one publication may have grown from an idea into an effective source of information. Let's use a fictitious example of a publication on pastures to describe the process.

Stage 1: The Problem - County agents are encouraging farmers to improve their pastures. A publication is available on pasture management, but it is out-of-date. Extension farm crops specialists recommend that a completely new publication be written.

Stage 2: The Plan - Once the writing of the publication is approved by the department heads involved and the extension state leader in agriculture, an informal committee gets together to plan the new publication. This planning often includes filling out a check list developed by MSU editors. The committee consists of a farm crops specialist, a farm management specialist, the state leader and the extension publications editor. They decide that the publication will emphasize

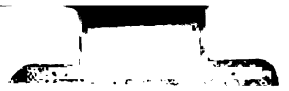
recommended varieties, rates of seeding, and fertilizer applications. Such problems as grazing, hay production, and weed control will be left for other publications to cover in more detail. They also choose the title, "Pasture Management."

The committee also decides that the primary audience will be the dairy farmer, and that the publication should be ready for distribution by January to reach the dairymen before they firm up their cropping plans for the coming growing season. This means that the manuscript should be ready for the printer by about November 1.

They also determine what the total distribution . . . and, therefore, the number of copies printed . . . should be; what colors of ink and paper might be most effective; and what size and format the publication will take. This latter decision determines the publication "series" it will fit into: bulletin, folder, or other category. It's agreed that "Pasture Management" will be a regular 6x9-inch bulletin on white paper, with green and black ink. The first printing will be 15,000 copies, which will take care of the regular mailing to libraries, educators, and other persons, and an adequate supply for county offices.

Illustrations are then discussed. Some photographs are already available, so the committee determines their suitability for this publication. Other pictures are needed so arrangements will be made to take them. Some art work is involved in the cover design and in some inside pages, so the editor and the authors arrange to meet with an artist to get this work started.

The farm crops specialist agrees to write most of the copy and do the "leg-work" necessary to collect manuscript and illustrations for editing. The farm management specialist says he'll prepare some information on pasture production costs.



Stage 3: Editorial Production and Layout - The publications editor has the job of pulling the manuscript, illustrations, and other parts of the publication together and shaping them into a unit that the dairy farmer will understand and find useful.

The editor strives for clarity and simplicity as he reworks the manuscript to match the level of writing to the ability of the intended audience to read and understand. A manuscript written in technical or stilted language won't appeal to farmers. Certain tests based on readability research make this job easier for the editor, along with his common-sense "feel" of the audience.

The editor must also decide on the printing process to use: Will the publication be printed by the letterpress or offset method? Letterpress--printing from raised type and engravings--is best for material with few pictures or small distribution. Offset lithography, which uses photographic reproduction of the type and pictures on a flat metal "plate," usually is cheaper when many photographs, a high number of copies, or rough paper are involved.

Making plans for proper use of the two colors of ink--green and black in "Pasture Management"--is part of the editor's job. Color will not only make the publication more attractive, but it will help compare different applications of fertilizer on pastures. He decides how and where to use the green color in the illustrations and text.

In planning the "layout" or arrangement of pictures and type on the pages, the editor considers the size of pictures and other factors. If the publication is complicated, he makes a sketch of each page which shows the size and position of all the printed material and illustrations. Otherwise, he uses proofs of these two elements to paste up a

"dummy" from which the printer makes up the pages. The editor assigns size and "face" of type to the manuscript before sending it to the printer.

After setting the manuscript in type, the printer sends back galley proofs, which are proofs of columns of type without spacing or position considered. The engraver submits proofs of the cuts or metal reproductions of illustrations. The editor and authors check these. The editor pastes up his "dummy," and the printer makes up the pages. He submits page proofs for the editor and authors to check and approve. The final step is for the printer to print, fold, bind, and deliver the publication. And so, "Pasture Management" is ready for distribution.

As you can see, printing a publication is a complicated process and takes time. It may take as long as three months from the time the manuscript is turned over to the editor until the publication is off the press.

In summary, we approach the production of a publication by considering:

a. Its content - what we want to say.

b. Readability and clear expression - how to say it so the reader will understand; and

c. Layout and illustration - how to use the graphics to clarify what we want to say and make our publication attractive.

5. Display Your Wares! As soon as the shipment of a new publication arrives, some county offices stow it away in a back room and offer it to a farmer or homemaker only when he or she suggests a problem that publication might answer. Other counties make an attractive display of their publications in the office. Visitors can browse through the display and

help themselves to any publication that appeals to them. It's true that many people will take one because of its attractive cover--and because it's free. But these are outnumbered by those with a genuine interest in the publications they select.

Your bulletins can also be displayed in fair booths, window displays and other exhibits. If a particular problem arises--an animal disease problem, for example--you can make an effective exhibit of the available publications on the subject. These publications are your "silent salesmen." Make their salesmanship more effective by putting your county stamp on each copy. "Ingham County Extension Service, Mason" reminds the reader where he can go for more information.

6. Teaching With Publications. A farmer appears at the office with a question on rodent control. You offer him a publication which answers his specific question and gives him additional information which he can take home to refer to again.

It's impossible to carry in your car copies of every publication you have on hand. But at certain times of the year you can anticipate questions farmers will ask you. Publications relating to these questions are handy to have in the car to help you give farmers or homemakers the information they want. And if they write you for information, enclose a copy of an appropriate publication with your answer.

Publications can supplement your talk at a meeting. In some situations you can distribute the publication ahead of time and ask your listeners to refer to certain illustrations during your talk. This is a little dangerous because the people may give their full attention to the publication and ignore what you are saying. It's safer to tell them about the publication, perhaps show the illustrations on a slide or opaque

projector, and invite them to pick up a copy at the door as they leave.

7. "Plugging" the Publication on the Air. A radio talk is more effective when you can tell your audience where to get more information. This can be done by inviting the listener to write to the county extension office for a particular publication. This makes your teaching efforts via radio more meaningful and gives you a chance to "plug" another source of information: the publication. It may also give you an idea of the size of your audience. Television gives you a fine opportunity to promote your publications. You can actually show the viewer the publication and give him a glimpse of what's inside.

8. "Plugging" the Publication by Mail. It is a common practice with many counties to announce new publications by sending postcards to a mailing list of extension cooperators. A research study on the effectiveness of this method was made by Richard Venne at the University of Wisconsin.[1] Venne tested the effectiveness of double postcards listing 18 to 25 extension publications that readers could get by completing and returning half the card. Cards of one color, addressed to "Rural Route Boxholder" were sent to one group in May. In August, cards of a different color were sent to a second group addressed "Rural Route Boxholder," and by name to those responding to the first mailing. This procedure was extended to include a third group in November, a revised card was sent to a fourth group in January, and a final announcement card, similar to the first cards, was sent in March to all respondents in all four groups.

---

[1]Richard V. Venne, "Direct Mail Announcement of Agricultural Publications." Bulletin No. 21. Madison, Wisconsin: Department of Agricultural Journalism, College of Agriculture, University of Wisconsin, 1954. Pp. 43, mimeographed

As far as response is concerned, the study indicates that if one began with a list of 100 farmers selected at random, about 10 or 12 would act on the first postcard announcement. Of these 10 or 12, about 4 to 6 would act on each of the succeeding announcements. In short, mail announcements of extension publications can be expected to draw requests from 10 to 15 percent of the rural audience.

Succeeding announcements sent to those who reply to the first announcement can be expected to yield 40 to 50 percent returns.

The study reveals further that the majority (nearly 60 percent) of respondents to mail announcements of publications will be persons not active in extension work. Also, the larger farmers are a better market for extension publications than are the smaller farmers.

Finally, a publication announcement card draws more responses when the list of publications is short, annotated, and contains items that have proved to be popular.

RELATING THIS LESSON TO YOUR JOB

1. Check the use that is being made of the bulletins in your office. You may proceed in this manner:
   a. Select a group of 30 publications at random, including in the group--or sample--agricultural, home economics, experiment station, extension, and USDA bulletins.
   b. Count the number on hand of each bulletin in the sample the day you begin your study. Then check the number on hand every two weeks for a three-month period, keeping some tab on where the bulletins went. You can ask your office secretary to help you do this.
   c. At the end of the three-month period, analyze your results.

Prepare a brief report in which you present these data showing which bulletins were used the most, and which used least. Then explain why, as best you can, Publication "A", for example, was used more than Publication "B". It may be that publication "A" a clothing bulletin, was used most because you had a series of clothing workshops in the county. Publication "B" a 4-H publication on fitting and showing dairy cows, was not used at all because during the season in which you are making your study, no fitting and showing is being done. However, you may find that publication "C", on hay drying--a very timely subject during this period--was not used at all. Can you explain why?

d. This little study will give you and your staff (1) a better idea which publications are being used the most, which the least; (2) raise questions for further study about publications with important subject matter that should be heavily used, but are not; and (3) suggest ways you can make better use of your publications.

2. Suggest a subject or problem you are now concerned with in your county but for which no publication is available. If you think a publication would help you teach this subject or deal with the problem more effectively, prepare a brief synopsis of the needed publication. Include in your synopsis:

   a. Who the readers will be;

   b. What you want the publication to say;

   c. What points you would illustrate and how;

   d. What use would be made of the publication;

   e. Other specifications such as size, color, type, etc.

LESSON 6

REACHING YOUR AUDIENCE THROUGH RADIO

HOW THIS LESSON WILL HELP YOU

This lesson will develop your skill in the use of radio. We talk first about radio itself and how it fits into the lives of people. Then we consider your own program; how to plan it and present it on the air. And, finally, the lesson guides you in your relations with the radio station.

RADIO IS HERE TO STAY

1. Radio: Timely and Universal. You take your place at the microphone. The engineer gives you the "cue." You are on the air! If your show is well organized, skillfully presented, and filled with useful information of immediate concern to farmers or homemakers, you can be sure that your voice is being heard in a good share of the rural--and urban--homes in your county. That's the beauty of radio. It places you, the county agent, within earshot of everyone tuned to your station. And there is no delay in the transmission. Your warning of the coming hailstorm, your reminder of tonight's meeting, is heard immediately.

But radio has its limitations, too. When your program is finished there is no turning back. If the farmer didn't understand you the first time, or was distracted from the radio the moment you made your announcement, the message is gone and he can't refer to it a second time. If your program is of little interest to the farmer and his family, they aren't listening anyway. Your voice bounces harmlessly across the countryside, and you are wasting your time.

Success with radio depends a good deal on you. When you write a news story, the editor polishes it up for you if he can take the time. But the manager of your radio station provides only the microphone and the time for you to use it. When the engineer gives you the cue, you're on your own.

2. "Wherever You Go, There's Radio." Before we take up the skills that will help you use radio effectively, let's see how society makes use of radio. When we understand what radio does to people and what people do with radio, we make better use of the medium.

Many of us can remember our first radio set. It was a "cabinet" model that occupied an important place in the living room. When it was time for Amos 'n Andy, the family gathered 'round and gave the radio its undivided attention. Radio was a leisure time activity. The best programs started at seven in the evening because the supper dishes were done by that time and the family was not yet involved in the evening's activities.

When television came along right after World War II, some prophets predicted the end of radio. In fact, television's mounting popularity indeed threatened radio's financial position. Radio's total revenues in 1954 ($449 million) failed to set a new peak for the first time in 16 years, and, for the first time, was below television's total ($593 million).[1] Backed into a corner in this poker game for the broadcast dollar, radio--as one writer puts it--plays the ace.[2] The "ace" in this

---

[1] Broadcasting-Telecasting, December 5, 1955, pp. 33.

[2] Broadcasting-Telecasting, January 15, 1956, pp. 85.

case is radio's newly discovered asset: multiple attention. People don't have to pay exclusive attention to radio; they can do other things while listening.

The television set now sits where the family's one radio set used to be. The old cabinet radio has spawned a school of "portables." Mom has a set in the kitchen and she listens while she does the dishes. Sis has a clock radio that wakes her in the morning. There's a radio in the family car. Dad and the boys have the radio on in the barn while they milk the cows. And dad likes to listen to the county agent while he eats his dinner at noon.

The family's listening habits provide the cues for every decision you make concerning the content and presentation of your program. Keep asking yourself these questions:

When are they listening?

What are they doing while they listen?

What do they want to hear?

3. When Are They Listening? Early morning and the noon hour are traditional times for a farm show. Farmers usually get up early and may listen to the radio while eating breakfast or milking the cows. Most farmers come into the house right at noon, and by the time they have washed up and are eating dinner it's 12:15 or 12:30. This is a good time to broadcast to the farmer. His mind is on the day's work. He is interested in weather and market reports and is receptive to other information about farming.

But not all farmers get up early or come home at noon. It's important to check into the habits of those you want to reach with radio. Maybe the farmers in your county don't have cows to milk or chickens to

feed and get up the same time city folks do. Your farmers may have part-time jobs in town and don't hear a radio at noon. If you are a home agent, your problem isn't quite so difficult. The homemaker will probably be listening to her radio through most of the morning hours at least. You would be wise, however, to query the women with whom you work to find out for sure when they are listening.

Another characteristic of your audience is that listening to the radio is a habit. The homemaker is in the habit of turning on the radio the moment she steps into the kitchen in the morning. The farmer is in the habit of listening to the county agent program at 12:30. People learn to expect your county agent program at a certain time and get into the habit of listening at that time. This is how you develop a steady audience over a period of time. We will discuss audiences again later on in this lesson.

4. <u>What Are They Doing While They Listen</u>? We made the point in paragraph 2 that people listen to the radio while they are doing something else. Observe your own activities while the radio is on. The music provides a pleasant background while you read the evening paper, eat your meal, or putter around the house. You hear the music, but your mind is not on it. Now comes a news cast. You may pause in what you are doing and listen more intently. Or the announcer's voice will continue in the background of your thoughts until he says something that catch's your attention. Only then do you actually "listen" to the radio.

So when you, yourself, are on the air, remember that you are <u>not</u> talking to a vast radio audience. You are talking to a large number of individuals. These individuals are driving cars, making beds, feeding chickens, eating dinner, and doing countless other things. They are <u>not</u>

transfixed in front of their radios hanging on each and every word you are saying. This means that if you want to be heard you must have something interesting to say and you must say it in a pleasant and positive manner.

5. What Do They Want To Hear? We suggested in Lesson 3 that everything that crosses your desk and many of your daily activities have potential news value. They have potential radio value, too. So when you plan an information campaign to help solve a problem in your county, don't think in terms of a news story alone--think of radio and the other communications methods, too.

There are two kinds of information best suited to radio:

(1) Timely information: Today's weather, today's markets, tonight's meeting, and other upcoming and current activities.

(2) "Idea" information: Information that plants an idea into the farmer or homemaker's mind and encourages him or her to seek more information on the subject. This brings us back to the point we made in paragraph 4: People listen to the radio while they do something else. They are likely to retain a general statement . . . "Certified seed is safer to use because it is relatively free of weed seed and has high germination" . . . less likely to retain specific detail . . . "use 3 cups of flour, half a cup of sugar, and a quarter teaspoonful of salt."

This news item written for the local paper can be saved and referred to again when the farmer is ready to apply the information:

> Chinch bugs may be a threat to Midland County farmers again this year, reports County Agent Bob Mathews.
>
> These insects, he says, are about one-eighth inch long when full grown with white wings folded on their backs to form an X. When newly hatched they are smaller than a pin-

head, red and wingless, but their wings develop and they lose their red color as they mature.

An effective control is to use an insecticidal dust containing 4 per cent of dinitro-o-cresol, 10 per cent of DDT, or 1 per cent of benzene hexachloride applied in a narrow band on smooth, hard-packed soil or in a truck wheel track at the rate of 1 to 2 pounds per rod. Adults found on corn and other small grains being grown for seed can be controlled by dusting with 4 per cent by weight of sabadilla powder in pryophyllite, used at the rate of 50 pounds or more per acre.

The same story read on the air goes right over the farmer's head. He can't possibly remember more than one or two of the specific details in the story. Here is one way you can adapt this information for radio.

It looks as though chinch bugs are going to be a problem in Midland county again this year. Dave Brannon, the extension entomologist from the University, and I were in the Potter community yesterday and Dave spotted chinch bugs just hatching out. They're hard to see because they're smaller than a pin-head. Right now they're red in color and don't have any wings. But Dave says that later on the bugs'll lose their red color and start sprouting wings. By the time they're full grown chinch bugs are about an eighth of an inch long and you can tell them by the way their wings fold across their back to form an X.

The best way to control chinch bugs, Dave says, is to set up a barrier they can't cross. One way to do this is to mix up dust with DDT or benzene hexachloride in it and apply it in a narrow band on smooth, hard-packed soil, or--better yet--in a track made by the wheel of your truck.

If you'd like to know the right proportions of chemicals to use to make up this dust, and how much of the mixture to use, call the county agent's office or drop us a card and we'd be happy to send the information along to you.

The radio version of the story is "wordy", but it's easier to <u>listen</u> to than the original news story. These key words snare the farmer's attention: Chinch bugs . . . problem . . . just hatching out . . . barrier . . . You give his mind a chance to grasp each key word by spacing them apart with these words and phrases: It looks as though . . . they're hard to see . . . right now . . . But Dave says . . .

The reference to Dave and your visit to the Potter community add interest to the chinch bug story, and the informal approach to the subject puts you on a friendly basis with the folks listening in.

You have given the farmer an idea. You haven't weighed down your story with a lot of detail he can't retain, but your invitation to call or write for more information doesn't leave him high and dry without the facts he needs to follow through on your suggestion.

Now that we understand how the farmer and his family use their radios, we are ready to plan your county agent or home agent program.

BUILDING YOUR PROGRAM

6. The Format - There are many ways to organize a radio program. Radio is a personal medium, like a column or a letter, and every county agent and professional radio farm director likes to handle his own show in his own way. But every successful farm show, no matter how it's organized:

Catches the listener's attention in the first few seconds;

Maintains interest with variety and changes of pace;

Runs smoothly from one topic to the next with skillful transitions;

Closes on a positive note which leaves the farmer with something to think about, to chuckle over, and certainly looking forward to the next show.

You may have a 15 or a 30-minute program. The station will usually take 30 seconds to a minute within the quarter or half hour for station identification, "spot" announcements, and commercials. As one example, this is the format of a 15-minute farm show beginning at 12:30 and closing at 12:44.

TIME			
12:30:00	MUSIC:	THEME	THEME
12:30:30	ANNCR:	Farm Facts! Brought to you each weekday at 12:30 by KWNK, and featuring your county extension agent, Dan McGreevy. Come in, Dan.	ANNCR'S OPEN
	DAN:	Hello friends! Secretary Benson lashed back at the critics of his farm program again today. The state university has announced release of its new wheat variety that shows promise of being resistent to the 15-B strain of rust, and it looks as though a hen on the Daniels' farm north of Osceola has set some sort of a record--we don't know what. But before we get to the details of these stories, let's look at the weather and market reports . . .	INTEREST-CATCHING LEAD
12:31:10		WEATHER	WEATHER, MARKETS (regular items farmers expect)
:33:15		MARKETS	
:35:30		So much for the markets. Now let's see what's going on in our nation's capitol that's of interest to farmers . . . Secretary Benson, who has been under constant attack by critics of his program since he announced the drop in price supports . . .	TRANSITION FARM NEWS

12:38:00		. . . And this item about exporting our surplus farm products including wheat leads us right into a discussion of the new wheat variety just announced by the state university. And we're lucky to have a first hand report on this variety because our extension farm crops specialist, Kenny Morrison, is in the county today. Tell us where this variety comes from, Ken.	TRANSITION TO TODAY'S FEATURE
	KEN:	It's parents are familiar to most farmers, Dan . . .	
12:42:30	DAN:	Your report on the new Kan Ro Wheat variety has us all excited about it's possibilities in winning this battle against 15-B, and thanks for being with us, Ken Morrison, extension farm crops specialist . . .	SUMMARY OF FEATURE REPEAT GUEST'S NAME AND TITLE
		. . . Turning to local farm news, here's a dandy little yarn I picked up from Jim Daniels who farms north of Osceola. Seems that Jim has a little rooster named Mike . . .	INTERESTING CLOSE
		. . . and with that this is your county agent, Dan McGreevy, saying goodby, good luck and good farming.	"SIGNATURE"
	MUSIC:	THEME	THEME

12:44:00	ANNCR:	Your county agent, Dan McGreevy, will be heard again at twelve thirty tomorrow.	ANNCR'S CLOSE

This is only one of countless ways to handle a 15-minute show. A 30-minute show might have musical numbers through the program and two features instead of one. Attention-getters, variety, and changes of pace are doubly important if you are to hold your audience a full 30 minutes.

The time allotted each segment can vary with the amount and type of material you have. Our example of a farm show format illustrated a "live" interview with a guest who came to the studio. This interview could have been taped (paragraph 9) earlier in the day or the previous day for broadcast on this show. Or there might have been more than one person interviewed.

Your own show can have a "question and answer" session using questions farmers or homemakers are asking you in their letters or at meetings. You can "plug" the latest bulletin available from your office. You can devote a minute or two of your show to the "farm calendar," announcing coming events. The possibilities for program material are unlimited. Let your imagination and ingenuity work for you.

7. <u>You and Your Microphone</u>. You will probably have a mild case of that occupational disease, "Mike Fright." Everybody does. In fact, a bit of nervousness during those few seconds before you go on the air is a good sign. You will do a better job.

The most important--and perhaps most difficult--skill to develop is to <u>be yourself</u>. Beginners will naturally mimick the professionals. You

would like to sound like Edward R. Murrow or Lowell Thomas. If you don't watch yourself, you may be imitating the pace and inflections of the announcer who introduces your program. Imitating others may hinder, rather than improve, your own performance.

Ask a member of the radio station staff to listen to your shows and give you some constructive suggestions. Use the tape recorder frequently so that you can listen to yourself . . . you may be your best critic. One of the exercises at the close of this lesson is to send your tapes to the state extension office at regular intervals for constructive comment.

A second skill is to talk to people--not to the microphone. Imagine you are seated at the table with the farm family as they eat their dinner. Talk as if you are their guest, engaged in a friendly, informal conversation with them.

A third skill is to speak informally, but with conviction. Be "sold" on what you have to say.

But, above all, be yourself. Successful radio professionals are those who can project their personalities through their voice. Take it as a real compliment when some one stops you on the street and says, "You sound just like you sound on the radio."

8. The Interview. Two voices talking about a subject can be better than one. An interesting guest adds spice to your program and contributes to the realism of the subject you are talking about, particularly if he or she is an authority on the subject.

Some of your guests--extension subject-matter specialists--for example, may be easier to interview on the radio than farmers and homemakers who are unsure of themselves in front of the microphone. The

experienced people may talk all the time and wander away from the subject; the inexperienced will probably be tongue-tied. Your job is to keep the interview "on the track" and to get your guest to do his share of the talking.

It's possible to write out a complete script for you and your guest to read. But most people who read aloud can't conceal the fact they're reading. It's a better interview if you both ad lib. When your guest talks ad lib about a familiar subject, he uses his own words, speaks informally, and the interview becomes more spontaneous and interesting to listen to.

Let's assume you decide to do a radio program with Emil Hansen, an up-and-coming young poultryman in your county. His story: An efficient method of handling eggs. Your purpose in interviewing him: To encourage other poultrymen to follow his example, and--equally important--to tell the consumers listening in how poultrymen make every effort to market top quality eggs.

You decide to load up your tape recorder and do the interview at Emil's place because (1) Emil will be more at ease in familiar surroundings, and (2) the noise of the hens in the background will add realism to your interview.

After walking through the hen houses and egg-handling rooms with Emil to familiarize yourself with his operation, you both sit down and plan a 5 to 7-minute interview. You decide the one point you want to get across is the importance of cooling the eggs immediately after they are gathered. Your questions build up to that point. You and Emil decide what questions you will ask him and he gets his answers to your questions in mind.

It's easier for you to write out the opening and the close. You may have done this before you left the office. The written opening gives you a well-planned start. The written close is handy to tie to when you are ready to wind up the interview.

You start the recorder, read the opening which introduces your subject and your guest, and then proceed to visit with Emil using these notes as a guide:

1. Size of Emil's operation
   a. Number of birds
   b. Average annual production

2. Emil's experience
   a. 4-H poultry project
   b. Took over business from dad 5 years ago

3. Egg handling methods
   a. Collection
   b. Cooling
   c. Temperature of cooling rooms and time eggs held
   d. Marketing procedure

Emil may have lots to say about feeding, culling, parasite control and other poultry problems. But the interview dwelled on one topic alone, except for points 1 and 2, which acquainted the audience with Emil and his business.

The questions you ask, and the way you ask them, will get your guest to talking, or will let him get away with just "yes" or "no" responses.

Begin your questions with How, What, Who, When, Where, or Why. Ask, "How long do you let the dough rise, Mrs. Jones?" Not, "You let it rise 20 minutes, don't you?"

Talk directly to your guest . . . minimize the importance of the microphone. Give his or her full name and title or other identification at the close so those who missed the introduction will know who you have been talking to.

Don't worry about an occasional "flub," cough, pause, repeated word . . . they all make the radio interview sound even more like an informal conversation.

9. The Tape Recorder. We have already mentioned that the tape recorder can be used to help you improve your radio performance, and--in the case of the interview with Emil Hansen--to make on-the-spot recordings for broadcast at another time. You can use the recorder to "tape" an early-morning program or any broadcast that you can't be on hand for in person.

Most radio stations are happy to use the tapes you make in the field or in your office provided they are of "broadcast quality." This is a general term which means that the voices on the tape sound natural and can be understood, and that there are no unrelated sounds produced by faulty recording equipment. There are many makes of recorders. Your radio station may recommend that you use a particular make that is most compatible with the play-back equipment used by the station. Ask your station for suggestions if you are having trouble with your present recorder or are thinking of buying a new one.

10. Who's Listening? There is a true story about a county agent in Pennsylvania who did a regular radio program faithfully for a number of years. He wasn't sure who, if anyone, was listening, but kept on doing the show because he felt it was part of his job. Then, with the help of his state extension radio specialist, he took the time to survey his audience. The total count: 0.

It's worth-while to check on who's listening. You are probably doing much better than the Pennsylvania agent, but if you have only a handful of listeners, something is wrong.

Visiting with people about your program gives you some idea how the show is being received. Offering a bulletin on the air and keeping track of the requests is another simple audience check. Either of the following two schemes will give you an even better picture of your listening audience:

This is the "Random Sample" method:

(1) Get a map. Draw a boundary line around your station's broadcast area.

(2) Decide who your primary audience is. If it is rural, cross out the urban areas.

(3) Put a pin in the northern-most point of your county, but assuming you have crossed out urban areas, not in a town.

(4) Get someone to the area you have pin-pointed within 24 hours after your program and have them interview a quota of homes as close to that pin-point as possible.

(5) Repeat the process, putting the pins in a new and arbitrary spot each time.

To make these surveys, you may be able to get 4-H clubs or homemakers' clubs to work for you. In the interviews you can ask what they liked and did not like, what they got from the program, and any other question that will help you.

This is the "Research Panel" method:

(1) Make up a panel of members of 4-H clubs, garden clubs, or any organized group in your county. Your panel may be from only one group or a combination of them. You can begin with as few as 50 or 100, but 200 to 300 is better.

(2) Arouse the cooperation of your prospective panel members by appealing to their interest in your activities and by "inviting" them to participate on the panel.

(3) Develop a simple questionnaire that will net specific answers. It's a good idea to try out your questionnaire before mailing. This makes sure your questions are clear.

(4) Use your panel as respondents at first. Later on, panel members can gather information for you. Each panel member, for instance, could telephone so many of her neighbors to ask if they heard your show today and how they liked it.

This is only the skeleton of a basic procedure. You can modify it to fit the information you are after and the time and money you can spend.

GETTING ALONG WITH YOUR RADIO STATION

11. The Station's Responsibilities. Your radio station is licensed by the Federal Communications Commission to provide a program service that is in "the public interest, convenience, and necessity." In granting or renewing your station's license, the Commission has been assured that "time will be devoted to local news at frequent intervals, to market reports, agricultural topics and to various civic and political activities that occur in the city."[3] And "it has been the consistent intention of the Commission to assure that an adequate amount of time during the good listening hours shall be made available to meet the needs of the community in terms of public expression and of local interest."[3]

In return for the time and other investments you make to provide the station a farm or home program, the station is obligated to (1) provide you a time to broadcast when a reasonably good share of the audience is listening, and (2) not change the time of your program indiscriminately and without sufficient advanced notice.

12. Your Responsibility to the Station. Although the station is licensed to serve the public interest, it is still a business which must make money to survive. The only product the radio station sells is TIME. It sells time on the basis of the number of people listening during a given time. "Class A" time has the largest audience and is

---

[3]Reader in Public Opinion and Communication, Berelson and Janowitz, The Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1953, pp. 252 et seq.

sold for the highest price. "Class B" time has fewer listeners and sells for less.

If you are doing a good job with your county agent program, you are winning a segment of the total audience for your station. Farm folks and others who make it a point to listen to your program every day will likely stay tuned to the station and hear its other shows as well.

The advent of television has forced most radio stations to improve the quality of their programs and even change their program structure. Many of the smaller stations have abandoned so-called "talk" programs in favor of strictly news and music shows (for people to listen to while they are doing something else). Fair-to-middling county extension programs aren't as secure in the news-and-music program structure as in the type of programming which preceded the television era.

The point is this: Your station is a business. Both you and your station are interested in reaching as many people as possible. Your station is interested in you, the county agent, because your program attracts and maintains an audience. You are interested in your station because it provides you with a medium for reaching the people in your county. Keeping on good terms with your station manager, and understanding his problems, assures you the continued use of a valuable extension communications tool.

13. How About Sponsorship? Michigan State University Extension Service permits you to conduct a regular program that is sponsored or appear on another sponsored radio or television program provided:

a. You have an understanding with the station that you are free to present information without influence of the sponsor.

b. The sponsor's product does not embarrass Michigan State University or yourself as a servant of all the people of your county.

c. You do not directly or by implication endorse the sponsor's product or encourage a guest on your program to do so.

d. That the commercial announcements proceed and follow, but do not come within the format of your own program.

RELATING THIS LESSON TO YOUR JOB

The information presented in this lesson will have value as soon as you apply it to the planning and production of your own radio program. Your regular activities with radio should be readily adaptable to the following exercises, designed to help you measure your progress. Hand the tape recordings to your District Supervisor. He or she will discuss them with you and be available to answer any questions you may have.

1. To test your skills in the use of radio <u>immediately following</u> the study of this lesson, plan and produce the following tape recordings:

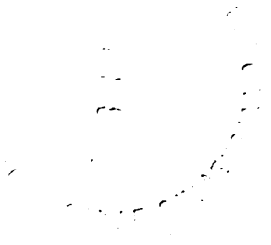
(1) A 3 to 4-minute segment of a complete farm or homemaker program in which you read (a) at least two news items,
(b) a weather report,
(c) announcements of coming events.

(2) A 3 to 4-minute interview with a farmer, homemaker, or extension subject matter specialist.

(3) A complete 15-minute farm or homemaker program.

NOTE: If recording (3) includes the materials requested in recordings (1) and (2), you need not submit recordings (1) and (2).

2. At least 30 days after you have completed Exercise 1 (or longer, if you and your supervisor agree you need more experience), repeat the requirements in Exercise 1. This will show you how much progress you have made and will point out areas where you need more help.



REMEMBER, your training in radio does not end here. Keep asking for suggestions of those who listen to your program, and keep listening to your tape recordings. There is always room for improvement.

LESSON 7

USING VISUAL AIDS EFFECTIVELY

HOW THIS LESSON WILL HELP YOU

Most of us know that visual aids help us do a better job of teaching. But we tend to "specialize" in one type of aid . . . flannelgraphs, color slides, motion pictures . . . rather than use a variety of aids. This lesson is the first of a series on visual aids.[1] We will explain how to visualize your subject and discuss each class of visual aid. The other visual aids lessons will show you how to produce each of the many aids and give you more details about their use.

1. The Role of Visual Aids. That motley assembly of signs, charts, pictures, models, and what-have-you known as "visual aids" is not a mass communications media like the press and radio. The visual aid is a supplement to these media and the other means of communication we've talked about in previous lessons. The county agent relies on a visual aid in practically every teaching situation. It is the pencil he uses to illustrate the position of a ridge pole . . . the rough sketch on the back of an envelope . . . the 4-H safety poster . . . the display in the county extension office . . . the chart at a meeting . . . the picture with a news story . . . the exhibit at a fair . . . the tour . . . the motion picture . . . and even the television program. The visual aid is

[1]The other visual aids lessons are being produced by Michigan Extension Service staff members and are not included in the thesis.

the word-saver, the time-saver, the fact-clincher. It is the catalyst that speeds up the learning process.

Let's talk first about the visual tools available for you to use. Then we'll attack the problem of visualizing your subject.

2. Surveying Your Visual Resources. List on the sheet attached to this lesson the visual aids equipment owned by your county extension office. You will likely put down such things as chart stands, portable chalkboards, easels, cameras, light meters, slide and motion picture projectors, and screens. Some equipment may be borrowed from other county offices and schools. List these, too, because they are included among the visual tools available to you.

This equipment is part of the kit of tools you use to produce and present your visual aids. But your kit is not complete until you include paper, paints, lettering devices, and all the miscellaneous odds and ends around the office and at home which help make effective visual aids.

We will now describe the ten most commonly used visual aids: The "real thing," models, chalkboards, flannelgraphs, black and white photographs, color transparencies, slide films, motion pictures, charts and posters, exhibits and displays.

"The Real Thing" - If you are going to demonstrate fitting and showing a dairy heifer, why not actually fit and show a dairy heifer? The heifer, halter, brushes, and the other equipment are visual aids. There isn't a better visual aid than the actual objects you are talking about, provided you can adapt them to your teaching situation, of course.

Models - If you want to demonstrate how a tractor can be turned over if handled improperly, and you can't actually demonstrate it, try

a table-top demonstration using a model tractor and towed implement. Scale models are effective when you can't take your group to the object or bring the object to the group. It takes skill to use a model effectively, and models are most effective with smaller groups.

The Chalkboard - This is about the oldest visual device, but still one of the most popular with county agents. Words on a chalkboard become ideas to keep in mind. Simple drawings on a chalkboard visualize your subject and save hundreds of words. A perfectly clean chalkboard set up in front of the room introduces an element of suspense. The audience wonders what you are going to put on it. You continue to capitalize on this touch of showmanship by holding their interest as you actually write or draw on the board.

A chalkboard small enough to fit into the back seat of your car is a handy device. A good chalkboard will last a lifetime.

A first cousin to the chalkboard is the newsprint pad, available from most book and stationary stores. The pad is mounted on an easel, and you write on it with grease pencil, either before or during the meeting. The top sheet on the pad is used, flipped over, and the second sheet becomes visible. Your chalkboard scribblings must be erased eventually, but the sheets of newsprint can be used over and over again.

The Flannelgraph - A refinement of the chalkboard and newsprint pad is the flannelgraph. The flannelgraph is a flat surface mounted on an easel and covered with flannel or other material to which paper or cloth cut-outs will adhere. The cut-outs are prepared ahead of time. As you talk, you apply the cut-outs to the flannelboard, creating a picture or other graphic presentation that helps you put your point across to the audience. The flannelgraph has few limitations as far as color,

texture, and design are concerned. It gives your imagination free reign, but calls for skill and showmanship to use effectively.

The Black and White Photograph - The camera can be the county agent's best friend if he keeps it handy and knows how to use it. Black and white photographs record events, illustrate successful practices, and help people identify objects and places. Your newspaper editor welcomes a good picture pertinent to a timely subject. Photographs add realism to posters and exhibits, and help record important activities in the county. Black and white photographs are relatively inexpensive, and it's easy to learn to take good pictures with a simple camera. The lesson in this series on photography will help you develop this skill.

The Color Transparency - Many a county agent feels that color transparencies (2x2 slides) are the backbone of his visual aids program. The color slide has a number of advantages. A set of slides takes little room and is portable. Slides can be filed and the entire collection can be arranged and rearranged into sets to fit a particular subject and a particular audience. Color adds realism to the subject. Slides can be seen by one or two people (with a table viewer), by a hundred or more in an auditorium, and by thousands watching television.

The color transparency is more expensive than the black and white photograph, and the color camera usually costs more than the box or simple folding camera used for black and white pictures. You will need a projector to show your colored slides, and the room must be darkened. Color photography requires more skill, too, but not so much that the color camera cannot become a valuable tool for you to use.

Slide Films - A series of black and white or color transparencies reproduced on a single strip of film is called a slide film or filmstrip.

The slide film serves the same purpose as a set of transparencies. It's major advantage is that it can be rolled up to fit a small can about the size of an ink bottle, making the slide film less bulky than a set of slides. On the other hand, the pictures on the slide film cannot be rearranged as can individual slides. And slide films require a special adapter if you want to show them using a slide projector. A wide selection of slide films on most subjects in agriculture and home economics is available from commercial sources.

The Motion Picture - If you want to show your audience how they farm in Australia, pick corn in Illinois, and manufacture prepared foods in Battle Creek, use a motion picture. Motion pictures are effective in teaching most skills, too. In fact, Schuller says that "when appropriate films are properly used in instruction, not only does more initial learning take place, but information learned is better remembered than when films are not used."[2] But note the words appropriate films and properly used. A film on marketing of apples in Washington State is not appropriate for a meeting of Michigan apple producers considering problems of insect control. A film is properly used only when a group is oriented to what it is going to see before the film is shown, and a summary is made at the close of the showing. In other words, the motion picture cannot do the entire teaching job for you. The film is effective if supplemented by group participation of some kind before and after showing.

Motion pictures provide the maximum of realism and today's film libraries are stocked with films on most every subject. If your purpose

---

[2]Schuller, Chas. F., The School Administrator and His Audio-Visual Program, National Education Association, Washington, D. C., 1954, p. 13.

is to entertain, select a title at random from the catalogue, and all you have to do is turn on the projector. But if your purpose is to teach, you carefully select one or more titles from the catalogue, preview the film before meeting time, prepare your audience for what they are going to see, and supplement the message of the film with your own material.

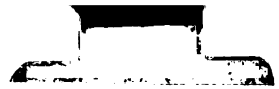
The motion picture is a window of the world, but it's easy to become overenthusiastic about films and use them indiscriminately and with little effect.

Charts and Posters - The chart is the time-honored extension teaching device. Charts are permanent aids that can be rolled up and used again. You can make them yourself using stencils, lettering sets, speedball pens, pastels, and other artists' equipment and materials. Good charts convey one idea, show only essential elements relating to that idea, and are easy to read and understand.

Charts can be visual catalysts to your spoken message and have value only as part of your presentation. But posters stand alone. The poster has the same qualities of the chart . . . one idea readily understood . . . but the poster must tell a complete story. Since it stands alone it must be eye-catching, and since it may have competition from other eye-catchers, the viewer must be able to get the poster's message in a glance.

Poster-making is an artistic skill. But you'd be surprised how many effective posters are made by people who claim little artistic talent.

Exhibits and Displays - An exhibit helps you tell a story to casual passers-by at a fair or other public gatherings. We usually think of an exhibit as a presentation in which the viewer can participate. You,



yourself may be present to talk to the viewer, or the viewer may be free to examine the displayed materials or help himself to a publication relating to the exhibit. A display on the other hand, has little or no audience participation. A store window display is an example.

Like charts and posters, exhibits and displays must present but one idea to be effective. They must attract the viewer or he will walk on by. The message must be readily understood or he will go on his way unimpressed.

Exhibits and displays take time, materials, and ingenuity to build. But they are well worth the effort if they attract the viewer, hold his attention, and send him on his way with a new idea or better attitude.

3. How Do You Visualize? The farmers in your county are facing a serious problem. You have a solution to that problem, but realize that the farmers have basic attitudes that must be changed before they become receptive to your idea. You decide that a visual treatment of the subject will help convince the farmers that your idea is sound.

But how can you visualize the subject?

You put your imagination to work. You think about the problem while shaving in the morning. You turn it over and over in your mind while driving to the office or on your way to make a farm visit. You look over the material pertaining to the subject, make notes in the margin, and doodle on a scratch pad. Then other problems clamor for attention and you forget this one until perhaps late evening when you are getting ready for bed.

This mental rumination goes on for a day or two, maybe a full week. Then, while you may be thinking of something else entirely, you suddenly "see" in your mind's eye the right visual treatment for the idea you want to sell your farmers.

Therefore, there are two steps in the process of visualization. First, you put your imagination to work until the process produces a mental image of what you want to show. Secondly, you select the visual tools that can best transform your mental image into reality.

4. The Elements of Visualization. Visual aids are means to an end, rather than ends in themselves, says Charles F. Schuller, director of the Audio-Visual Center, Michigan State University.[3] In the hands of a skilled teacher, he says, visual aids can be powerful and effective. Ineptly used they are worth little or nothing.

There is no best tool in the visual kit. Each has its particular strengths. Each has its limitations. Each has its particular applications and there are some situations where certain visual aids cannot be used at all. Example: A set of slides showing leaf-eating insects is a more effective method of teaching identification of those insects than a motion picture on the subject.

Visual aids, Schuller goes on to say, are normally best used in combination with other teaching devices. Example: A motion picture about a step-saving kitchen is more effective when a model of the kitchen is made available to the audience to inspect before or after the film has been shown.

Finally, Schuller concludes, the visual materials we select must be integral parts of the entire presentation. He means that your visual aid must be as much a part of your presentation as the talk you give . . not a "side-show" activity thrown in just to keep the folks awake.

---

[3] Ibid.

Four basic elements are considered in the production of an effective visual aid: You, your subject, your audience, and the setting. We will talk about each of these elements in turn, suggesting an approach you may take toward the creation and use of visual aids.

You, the Visualizer - Visual aids is a state of mind. Some county agents are continually thinking up new ways to visualize their subject so they will be more easily understood. Other agents plod along, pinning their faith on the spoken and written word. Visual aids is a little like religion; you have to practice it to believe in it.

Another characteristic of visual aids is that it is a personal medium, much like radio. Two individuals would never give the same speech in the same way. You will use visual aids one way, another person may visualize the same story quite differently. But both of you would still make an effective presentation. For example you, the county agent, and your county home agent are giving a series of presentations about farm and home planning. The home agent may develop a flannelgraph using stylized designs and lots of bright colors--definitely feminine in character. Her flannelgraph would tell the story effectively but would be entirely inappropriate for you, the county agent, to use.

The first step in the effective use of visual aids is to be "sold" on their use and to adapt them to you, the visualizer.

The Subject - What is your message? Your message becomes manageable once you boil it down to one single idea. Once the single idea comes into focus, the elements to be visualized are sharply defined.

Your Audience - Now that the elements to be visualized are defined, you face the major problem: How do I visualize these elements of my message? The answer comes from an understanding of your audience.

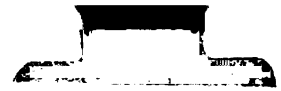
Who are you talking to? A 4-H Club? An adult farm audience? A civic group? Where are they in the learning process as far as this subject is concerned? What point will be easy for them to grasp; what other points will be more difficult? In other words, they know what an ear of corn looks like, but do they recognize a corn ear worm when they see one, and are they familiar with the damage it does?

What will appeal to them? A story built around a clover-leaf idea would appeal to 4-H Club boys and girls but may not appeal particularly to their dads. Visuals produced in a feminine motif are fine for your homemakers club, but may not be suited for a mixed adult audience. If your audience represents a particular nationality, you can capitalize on certain visual treatments that will flatter or intrigue them, and avoid other treatments that may offend them.

What do you want your audience to do? Each visual aid, like each tool in a carpenter's kit, is designed for a particular job. Some visual aids are best used to motivate, others to clarify, and so on.

For example:

If you want to -	Such as -	You may use these visual aids:
Arouse or maintain interest in a problem or idea	Farm safety	Posters, Photographs, Exhibits, Motion pictures
Develop a better understanding of a subject	The basic seven foods	Posters, Flannelgraphs
Show others how to do something	Prune an apple tree	The "real thing" (demonstration) Color slides
Develop desirable attitudes and ideals	Weight control, Cooperative action, etc.	Motion pictures Flannelgraphs Posters



Teach identification	Weed and insect identification	Mounted specimens Color slides Exhibits
Show results	Successful erosion control	Tours Color slides Motion pictures

The chart is not complete. You may encounter other problems than those listed, and use other visual aids than those suggested.

The Setting - The visuals you choose depend not only on you, your problem, and your audience, but upon the setting. In the case of a meeting, is it to be held in an orchard, a machine shed, a community hall, a school room, or a private home? If the room can be darkened, you may use projected aids--slides and motion pictures. But you will have to know the size of the room and number of people expected before you can select the right type of projector and size of screen. The number of people is a factor to think about when deciding, for example, how large your charts or flannelgraph figures should be. If you are demonstrating pruning in an orchard, the equipment you use and the trees themselves will be your visual aids. But if it rains that day you'll have to bring some branches inside, perhaps, and supplement your demonstration with drawing and pictures. Solutions to the problems of setting or location may be obvious, but the problem must be anticipated and solutions worked out if your visual aids are to be effective.

5. Summary - The first step in visualizing your subject is to boil your subject down to one single idea. Then the points to be visualized come into sharp focus. Next, you put your imagination to work to determine how to visualize your subject. You strive to develop in your mind a mental image of the visual you will use. This mental image may pop into your mind immediately or it may take considerable thought.

Once you have this mental image, you proceed to select the visual medium that will best present that mental image to your audience. You select this medium or media after considering yourself, the visualizer; your audience; and the setting.

RELATING THIS LESSON TO YOUR JOB

1. Fill out the following and present it to your District Supervisor.

VISUAL AIDS RESOURCE SHEET

Item	County-Owned	Borrowed
Display Devices		
Photographic Equipment		
Projection Equipment		

2. In the course of your day-to-day activities as an extension worker you are faced with problems of "selling" a particular idea . . . weight-reduction, weed control, poultry disease control, etc. Select one of these problems and explain in a short narrative the methods you used to visualize this subject at meetings or in other ways. Or, if you prefer, take a problem you expect to face in the future and tell how you would use visual techniques to help "sell" the practices you purpose.

LESSON 8

REACHING YOUR AUDIENCE THROUGH TELEVISION

A Syllabus

HOW THIS LESSON WILL HELP YOU

A lesson about television is logically the last in a series on communications. Not because television is the newest medium but because successful television results from a combination of the information and skills you've developed in previous lessons: Understanding your audience, organizing your thoughts, expressing yourself in the language of the audience, projecting your personality, and visualizing your subject. This lesson discusses many of these same elements of the communications process, but in the context of television. It will not tell you how to produce a farm or home television show. But it will help you think through and solve your television problems.

1. Text: Creative Farm Shows, National Project in Agricultural Communications, Wells Hall, Michigan State University, 1956.

2. How to Study This Lesson. First read the text to become familiar with its content and scope. Then read the study notes which highlight and supplement the text. Finally, reread the text more carefully, keeping the study notes in mind.

3. Study Notes: Viewpoints, pp. 3-10. Director Paul Miller's 13 points present a basic philosophy of television as an extension tool. He says our land-grant colleges and universities provide the strength for agricultural television, but the information available to television (and other media, too) is patterned after the departmentalized structure of the university and not for the needs of the farmer. Director Miller develops the point that our television programs can interest urban as well as rural people, that there is much more to the story of agriculture than how-to-do-it information, and that our farm television shows don't have to be dull to be educational. Note, too, that television, in his opinion, offers no panacea in the educational process. And that "television should not be doing the same things other media have been doing for so long . . . it must find its proper place among the media disseminating education or it will merely contribute to a 'layering on' process."

The "Panel Comments," pp. 6-7, present a variety of opinions from a group of men representing educational television, commercial television, television management, television production, and the audience itself. The comments reflect dissatisfaction with our television farm shows . . . "Our farm programming isn't what it should be;" and general suggestions for improving farm shows . . . "Think of the program as a whole; don't think only of subject matter."

Some comments concern the commercial aspects of farm television. Don't ignore these just because you are a public servant, divorced from problems of management. The station managers and advertising agency representatives pay the bills, and, to a great extent, chart the course of farm television. We are wise to become familiar with their problems and their attitudes toward the general content of a farm show.

"Helpful Answers to Difficult Problems," pp. 8-10, are viewpoints relating to specific questions posed by clinic participants. These may be problems you are struggling with in the production of your own television program.

Before going to the next section, ask yourself these questions:

(1) How closely have I been following the basic philosophy suggested here? Does the subject of each of my shows fit more closely the pattern of an academic discipline on the campus or the problem area being faced by the farmer? Have I restricted myself to how-to-do-it shows, or have I made an effort to interpret farm problems to farmers and consumers as well?

(2) What would my reaction be if I were challenged to make my show "entertaining" as well as "educational?"

(3) How much of the information presented on pages 9 and 10 relate to my problems? Do I go along with the answers to these problems presented by the Clinic discussion groups?

Programs, pp. 11-20 - Ben Park, the creator and producer of many successful television shows, says there is nothing in his opinion that calls itself, "agricultural television." Television is television, he says. Park makes other interesting observations about farm programming as he explains how he "builds a show." The story of "Out on the Farm" tells how a particular farm show was conceived, planned, and produced.

George Heinemann supplements what Park has to say about program development as he relates his own experiences producing television programs.

This section of the book closes with "Poole's Program Pointers," a 10-point guide to effective programming presented by a master television showman.

Before you read further, relate this material about programs to your own show.

(1) See if Ben Park has presented any ideas in his talk and in his narrative about the "Out on the Farm" show that you can use in your own program. Would your city viewers be as interested in your farm show as Chicago-area viewers were in Park's show?

(2) Check George Heinemann's material for suggestions that would help you produce your own show.

(3) See how many of Poole's program pointers you have adopted. Use these pointers as a check list as you plan your next show.

Visuals, pp. 21-26 - Most discussions of visualization talk about "what," "why," and "when." This section of the text tells "how" to visualize using the principles of . . . simplicity, clarity, depth and dimension, design, scope and size, movement, and drama. Note Suchmann's point that visuals for television need not be elaborate or expensive to be effective. As he says, "it's a matter of making your imagination work overtime."

Suchmann gives us a broader scope of the use of visuals than we may have had before. Do you see how much more can be done to visualize your subject than just make a chart, or show a slide, or have a stalk of corn on hand to illustrate your point?

And does Suchmann suggest to you how many "props" you might find in your own office? When you are faced with your next visualization problem, check through Suchmann's six points (pp. 24-25) for suggestions.

New Ideas, pp. 27-36 - The imagination required for effective visualization, and for new ideas in television programming, comes from the creative thinking discussed in this section.

This is the concept of "Creativity," the "science" of creating ideas. Herbert True first explains the approach to "Creativity" and then spells out the creative process. "Brainstorming," pp. 32-36, is a specific technique for creating ideas.

Take each of the steps in the Creative Process in turn. You'll hit the "fatigue and frustration" stage, but if you don't give up, your subconscious takes over and soon the idea itself comes to mind. If you are working with others on the production of your television show, try "brainstorming." But if you are working alone, follow the suggestions for "lone wolves" on page 36.

The television shows that survive are constantly recharged with creative ideas. The shows that follow the same routine week after week eventually disappear. This lesson will prove worthwhile once you find yourself creating the fresh, new ideas your show needs to compete with other programs for the eyes of the audience.

Audiences, pp. 37-44 - In the turmoil of doing programs, don't neglect to find out how you're doing. That's the essence of this section. Our concern with the media seems to end when the news story is written and the broadcast and telecast is over. We seldom go a step further to find out who, if anyone, received our message and if the message was helpful to them.

This section discusses audiences and gives you an insight into audience research. It also gives you two simple proceedures for finding out more about your own audience (pp. 40 and 44).

Ask the Networks, pp. 45-50.- This section is a digest of answers from representatives of the major networks to seven specific questions relating to television. You'll find this section interesting and

thought-provoking. How many of these questions have you been asking? Note, particularly, Disney's elements of a good television show. If you have some misgivings about "brainstorming" discussed above, note (page 47) that CBS uses this technique to create new ideas for programs.

If you have had some experience by now in producing a television show for your county extension service, how would you answer question 4 (page 48)? And how do you answer question 5?

Test Pattern, pp. 51-55 - You'll enjoy matching your opinions with those who attended the Clinic. If you wish, you may check your opinions on pages 52 and 53 after your first reading of the text, but don't look at pages 54 and 55. Then check your own answers again after you have reread the text and reflected some on its contents. Then check your opinions with the majority of the Clinic participants on pages 54 and 55.

RELATING THIS LESSON TO YOUR JOB

Suggestions for relating this lesson to your job have been made after a discussion of each section of the text. Here are two more suggestions:

1. Use one of the audience polling procedures suggested by the text (pp. 40 and 44) to test your own television audience. Or you may test your radio audience if you prefer. Talk over the results of your poll with your fellow staff members and your district supervisor.

2. Be prepared to discuss with your staff and your supervisor specific recommendations you would make for improving your television program on the basis of suggestions and ideas derived from this lesson.

Date Due

JAN [illegible]			
MAY 20 1960			
ROOM USE ONLY			