

Farm Demonstration Report For Year of 1915

INTRODUCTION

(By The Herald Editor)

The Box Butte County Farm Management Association was organized in February, 1915, by farmers of the county who realized the need of a farm demonstrator.

County agent work was started in Box Butte county as in most every other place. Many people had one idea of its nature and object, while others had other ideas.

The work of the county agent is always difficult, for he has on him the eyes of the federal department, the state college of agriculture, the county organization, the private individuals and opposition constantly watching for success or failure.

During the past year Mr. Seidell has made it his aim to do such work as was in line with the needs of the county and would tend toward general agricultural improvement.

The office of the county agent in the court house is always open to visitors, who are welcomed by Mr. Seidell in a way that makes them feel at home.

The following report shows not only what has been accomplished during the year 1915 but it gives an idea of the great agricultural future in store for Box Butte county.

County Agent's Report for Year 1915:

Work Done in Relation to the People

Directly by Agent or on his Suggestion

Table with 2 columns: Description of work and Number of occurrences. Includes items like 'Different farmers visited on their farms', 'Total number of farm visits made', 'Calls on agent at office relating to county agent work'.

Work Done in Relation to Crops

On suggestion of Agent or under his directions during 1915

Table with 2 columns: Description of crop work and Number of occurrences. Includes items like 'Farms selecting seed corn in fall', 'Farms treating seed oats for smut', 'Farms on which the agent knows that potatoes were grown following his suggestions'.

Work Done in Relation to Live Stock

On suggestion of Agent during 1915

Table with 2 columns: Description of live stock work and Number of occurrences. Includes items like 'Registered bulls which the agent knows were secured on his suggestion', 'Cows tested for milk production through associations'.

Work Done in Relation to Farm Business

On Advice of Agent or under his direction during 1915

Table with 2 columns: Description of farm business work and Number of occurrences. Includes items like 'Farm analysis records taken by county agent', 'Farmers induced by the agent to keep farm accounts, partial or complete'.

Report of Crop and Soil Demonstrations

Table with 3 columns: Demonstration Name, When begun, Number demonstrations, 1915. Includes items like 'Oat smut control', 'Miscellaneous', 'Potato scab control', 'Potato dry rot control', 'Farm Management Survey', 'Boys' and girls' club work', 'Forage Crop, alfalfa inoculation'.

(Signed) F. M. SEIDELL, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture. L. J. SCHILL, Pres. Box Butte Farmers' Assn. Date mailed to state leader: December 31, 1915.

Lines of Work in Which Box Butte Farmers' Association Have Been Active 1915

- Potato disease campaign. Oat Smut campaign. Bettering organization and fostering co-operative spirit. Cooperated in selection of agricultural displays. Cooperated in good-roads movement. Conducted a silo campaign. Cooperated in securing Burlington live stock special. Advocated field selection of seed corn. Conducted a farmers' exchange. Cooperated with farmers' clubs. Maintained an information bureau on markets and assisted in marketing and bettering market conditions. Conducted Junior agricultural observation tour. Boys' and Girls' Club work. County-wide farmers' institute. Farm management survey work.

Progress Report of Potato Disease Demonstrations and Marketing of Potatoes in Box Butte County

and adopted by the county association. By this the county association agreed to permit the county agent to give sufficient of his time to carry this work on to the best advantage during the potato growing season.

The first potato disease project was work in the potato dry rot and wilt control. The purpose of this demonstration from the county agent's view point was to answer the question that is many times asked: whether seed affected with dry rot can be planted, and what effect would it have upon the production, etc.

The second potato disease project was to show that the disease scab could be controlled by proper seed treatment, and to determine the relative efficiency of the different treatments. Five co-operators were secured in this work.

The dry rot project stated that observations should be made at regular intervals of two weeks; first, as to the number of tubers failing to produce plants, and the number showing wilt due to dry rot organisms.

The potatoes from the different potato plots were dug by hand, and weighed by the county agent with the assistance of the co-operators who can verify all figures secured in these demonstrations.

Under the dry rot project (difference in yield, that is an average between the seed affected with dry rot, and clean seed) the clean seed gave an average yield of 188.97 bushels per acre, while the seed affected with dry rot gave a yield of 112.09 bushels per acre, or a difference of 76.88 bushels in favor of the clean seed.

In the matter of treatment for scab in which the seed from rows A, B and C were identical with the exception that B and C were treated, it shows that the average yield from rows B and C was 162.70 bushels per acre, while the yield of row A, which was untreated and the same sort of seed, gave a yield of 132.73 bushels per acre.

Twelve of the leading farmers of Box Butte county who treated either the greater part or all of their potatoes have made the personal report to the county agent that they felt in placing their estimates very low that they had received an increase of at least ten bushels more of good marketable potatoes besides increasing the quality of all the others through these methods of proper seed selection and seed treatment.

Practically all of their neighbors have seen the difference in yields with their own eyes, and many have told these men that they will practice the same methods next year.

Marketing—Publicity was given Box Butte county potatoes through the different state papers, produce journals, etc., telling of the efforts that were being made in Box Butte county to eradicate potato diseases, and to increase and better the quality of her potatoes.

To show further that the proper seed treatment and selection of potatoes not only increase the yield which also increases the profits, but that in addition our local buyers have offered these men who have cooperated in seed selection, and seed treatment, prices ranging from two to ten cents per bushel higher, depending upon the quality, more than they were able to pay others, and to take the risk of handling potatoes of uncertain and unknown quality.

The directors of the association in their last meeting held November 30, agreed that the association had done good work through their organized effort to eradicate potato diseases, to better the quality of potatoes, and through publicity secured an increased price of five cents per bushel on approximately 600,000 bushels of potatoes, or a gain of \$30,000 to Box Butte potato growers.

Farm Management Survey work was first introduced into Box Butte county at a meeting on May 8, 1915. H. F. Williams, in charge of Farm Management Extension work in Nebraska, presented the work. There were a small number of the directors present at this time, and it was decided to not vote on the adoption of the Farm Management Survey work as one of the projects for 1915, but that a later meeting should be held and this question come up at that time.

On May 31, R. R. Spafford, assistant in charge of Farm Management Extension work, presented the subject of Farm Management Survey Work to a meeting of the directors who adopted this line of work as one of the projects for this year.

During part of the following week Mr. Spafford and the county agent spent some time in going over the principals of taking farm records and taking of several records in the field. At a later date Mr. Williams returned, and he and the county agent spent some time in going over the ideas of Farm Management demonstrations, and some field records were taken at this time.

On June 30, twenty-six farm records had been taken in Box Butte county; thirteen of which were taken by county agent, and thirteen by Mr. Williams returned, and he and the county agent spent some time in going over

Officers Box Butte County Farmers' Association

- L. J. SCHILL, Alliance, President. A. S. ENYEART, Hemingford, Vice President. A. H. GROVE, Alliance, Secretary. W. F. PATTERSON, Alliance, Treasurer.

Directors

- F. A. TRABERT, Alliance, Boyd Precinct. WM. DAVIDSON, Alliance, Lake precinct. F. H. NASON, Alliance, Box Butt eprecinct. JOHN JELINEK, Hemingford, Running Water precinct. ANTON UHRIG, Hemingford, Dorsey precinct. E. F. ABLEY, Hemingford, Nonpareil precinct. F. McCOY, Alliance, Wright precinct. F. CRAWFORD, Alliance, Snake precinct. NEILS PETERSON, Canton, Liberty precinct. No director in Lawn precinct.

County Agent work was started in Box Butte county March 1, 1915. Box Butte county lies in the western part of Nebraska and is comprised chiefly of level table land. The rainfall is limited, amounting to about seventeen inches of rainfall per year.

As in any district where a special line of farming is carried on such as the potato industry, disease gradually creeps in, and with no efforts being made to suppress the diseases, the losses have grown greater every year. The county as a result was fast losing its reputation as a producer of good potatoes, due to the poor quality, lack of grading, scab, and losses of dry rot in storage.

The local organization and the Extension department, Nebraska College of Agriculture, realized that this was a very important line of work in which to start and carry on demonstrations. As a consequence a great deal of the county agents' time has been devoted to this line of work with the ultimate aim of chiefly securing figures that would be a force in making the growers of this county realize the importance of proper seed selection, proper seed treatment and standardization, thereby hoping to make all these a common practice.

Active work in the stamping out of potato diseases in Box Butte county started on April 5, by a circular letter and posters announcing the potato disease meetings to be held throughout the county during the week of April 12-17 inclusive. Seven meetings were held with an attendance of eighty-five farmers. This was the first time that any meetings of this special nature were ever held in the county.

Following these meetings personal visits were made by the county agent to the farmer members of the association where proper seed selection, and seed treatment, was discussed. In addition to this all members who were not reached by meetings and personal visits received directions for the treatment of the different diseases both through the local press, and by means of letters sent out by the county agent.

In line with the policy that is followed in county agent work in Nebraska a project agreement was drawn up for the potato demonstration work.

FARM MANAGEMENT SURVEY WORK IN BOX BUTTE COUNTY

Progress Report to December 31, 1915

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