

Annual, Narrative, Report of County Agent.

State Washington, County Kitsap.

County Agent Claude B. Sprague

From May 1st, to December 1st, 1917.

The organization of my work and classification of projects is far from what I would wish to have at this time. In fact, a mere beginning seems to be result when it comes to making up a report. Reported by Projects as follows:

1- Boys and Girls Club Work:- No clubs have been organized but considerable work has been given along this project to get an interest aroused and before very long, we hope to have a real live Pig Club working. A cashier of one of the Banks within the County has become interested and is willing to finance the boys in their start with this work. Several other people have expressed themselves as anxious to do something along the Garden Club work for another season. I have always put the matter of Club work before the people in such a manner as to demonstrate the good that could be accomplished by such work and offered my services as willing to help them all I could but have not taken the initiative to go ahead and organize the Club movement on my own responsibility, feeling that I would not have time to follow up the work of too many clubs and so I have gone rather slowly on this Project. When I arrived here for work, there was a feeling in opposition to the Club Work movement by some people of influential bearing but that has been entirely overcome, and I believe Club Work will prosper here.

2- Crop Pests and Diseases:- The Strawberry Root Weevil has caused a considerable damage to the Strawberry Growers of this County and I was called upon at various times to explain its work and what to do to check its ravages. It has been present in the Strawberry fields here for several years before, but was not known until this season and its life history was a new thing to the growers. Considerable time was spent in the infested district studying the nature of its work and explaining to the Growers but no control measures were given a trial; A long crop rotation was recommended for the land and destructive measures urged on the fields, where the crop was not worth picking, to hinder the reproduction and spread of the pest.

The Cabbage Maggot has given considerable trouble in this County and I have been repeatedly called on for help along this line.

Potato diseases and Apple tree diseases are numerous and much time has been demanded for their identification and the recommending of various treatments for prevention and cure.

### 3- Dairy:-

No special Silo building campaign was put on but at every opportunity, presenting itself, the merits of the silo were mentioned, and their use for the storage of a cheap and succulent feed, was explained. Several new Silos have been built during the season. The wooden hoop Silos lead in favor, just at present time, and several farmers are contemplating building this type next season.

There is no Cow Testing Association in the County, but I have been working along a line to get something started. The herds are all small and scattered about with considerable distances between which would make it hard to employ a Tester. Some other plan must be worked out.

Better Sires and better Cows are being brought into the County and the people are generally awakening to the merits of good stock. In all, about thirty cows and heifers and three good bulls have found their way into the county since the first of last May.

Feeding rations have been dreadfully butchered. Many Farmers giving no heed to them at all. I have planned a great many some are followed, others that I know of have not been.

In the matter of crops especially suited for Dairy purposes I am advocating the growing of more clover. Clover does well on most any of our land here. The seeding of vetch, in combination with oats, wheat or rye. Many farmers reported wheat and vetch making their best crop for the early filling of their silos, later to be refilled with corn. Corn grows well here and makes a good silage crop. A greater acreage needs to be planted. The matter of seed selection is one of importance, to get a good crop, and thus far only two farmers have I met, that are selecting their corn for their own seed purposes.

### Poultry:-

Poultry one of the leading lines of agricultural industry for this County, has met with a very severe culling of the flocks this Fall, owing to the advanced prices for feeds. Some Farmers have gone out of the business entirely, others holding their stock at about one half, in numbers, of former years. The large flocks have not been materially reduced, in numbers, and reports gathered from these, are to the effect that they are getting along very well. The main line of the Poultry industry, is egg production, and the white Leghorn breed easily predominates.

### Farm Crops and Soils:-

The treatment of soil and care of manure has given cause for a great deal advising and planning with various Farmers. The general tendency is not to work the ground enough to get it in the proper tilth. The proper use and care of the barn manure has been very

neglected, and more so, because all of the soils need fertilizers before they will produce properly.

Commercial fertilizers have been used to some extent, but this last season the price made their use almost prohibitive.

#### Marketing Project:-

A marketing problem was under way, when I came here, to establish a "Direct Marketing System" where by the Farmer could sell direct to the Consumer through an association. The Grange started the issue and I helped them work out a plan for presentation to the people. When presented for adoption, the Farmers had least interest in the matter. They were receiving a good round price for any and all the things they had to sell and were reluctant to tie themselves up to any new proposition, although they believed it would work to their advantage, in the long run. Work along this project has not been dismissed, however, and an effort will be made to perfect a more efficient system than for every man to come to market, with his own produce.

The Poultrymen have a buying and selling Co-operative Association which is proving to be very satisfactory in saving for them.

#### Organization:-

The County is very well organized by the Grange. A movement is under way to perfect a County Agricultural Council but not as yet complete.

#### Farm Management:-

One Farm Loan Association was made for the County and is in very good working shape.

#### Drainage:

Farm drainage systems were planned and levels run for three farmsteads and considerable time has been given to trying to establish a small drainage system in the southern part of the County.

#### Orchard and Garden:-

Quite a complete study was made of the Strawberry culture in the county with Prof. R. J. Barnett, Associate Professor of Pomology, from the Washington State College.

The Pruning of fruit trees has been explained to several private parties, but no demonstrational meetings have been held as yet. I have two such meetings scheduled for next January.

Comics:-

A series of Home Canning Demonstrational Meetings were held within the County at various places and results from such meetings, by follow up work, seems to have been very gratifying, and did much to keep the Home Canning of fruits and vegetables up to the very high mark. I look for atleast one Canning Club to be formed, another season, from the above meetings.

Co-operative work with the Emergency Home Food Demonstrator is now in progress and a series of meetings with the various Ladies organizations is being planned for.

Miscellaneous:-

A great part of my time has been spent in trying to get acquainted with the County conditions and to organize my work so as to become more efficient. The work of this office is new to the people of the County and has had to be explained over and over again.

Two little Community Fairs were held in the County this fall and they did much to help organize the work in those communities. We got together in a manner such as has not been possible in some of the other sections, and I believe good constructive work will be the outcome. One Community has gotten together and formed a Fair Association and elected a set of Directors for another year and are formulating plans for the holding of another Fair next year.

Signed *C.B. Sprague*  
County Agent Kitsap County

Washington.

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT, 1917.

(War work of County Agricultural Agents.)

1.- At the outbreak of the War this County was in the process of signing for a County Agricultural Agent but actual work was not begun until May 1st. However, at the request of Ernest Lister, Governor of the State of Washington, the citizens of the County held a mass meeting in the Bremerton Commercial Club rooms, on April 21, 1917 for the purpose of urging the people of this County to feel the necessity of increasing the production of food products in order to help meet certain conditions that might arise, caused by the war in which this nation is now engaged.

A Chairman and Secretary were elected and six other members of which the County Agricultural Agent was one, were appointed, to assist the above officers in making what is known as a Central Committee. The duties of this committee were to be ready to extend moral and statistical aid where required if consistent with good business methods.

A local Committee consisting of the School board and Master of each Local Grange, if there be one in that district, was appointed to work in conjunction with the Central Committee and to give whatever aid they could to the producers of their particular district by vouching for the character of any responsible person to the Kitsap County Banks, which have assured the Central Committee of their full co-operation and assistance.

Upon arrival for work here as County Agricultural Agent, I was made acquainted with the above plans and assisted what I could.

- 2.- No expansion of plans were hardly deemed advisable at this time.
- 3.- No census or surveys were made except where I happened to learn of some seed stocks being for sale, as I traveled about getting acquainted, and then I listed same and reported to Farmers who asked for seed.
- 4.- The labor situation was not dealt with. No occasion presenting itself for action.
- 5.- No measures were taken to hold farm seeds or fertilizers within the County.
- 6.- Nothing was done in supplying or utilizing farm power.
- 7.- No special food campaigns were undertaken except to always talk of the matter whenever called upon.
- 8.- A food conservation campaign was put on in the form of a Canning Demonstration during July 17th to 21st. Results very gratifying by <sup>repute</sup> reports from follow up visits made.

- 9.- Several loans were attested by the Central Committee and Banks willingly co-operated. Two applications had to be turned down by Committee upon investigation.
- 10.- Complied with two requests from the Office of Markets U. S. Dept. of Agri., one for data on Fairs and the other, sources of available seed. The Bureau of Plant Industry on diseases of trees, Biological Survey U. S. D. A. on rodents. War Dept. relative to Army horses and mules, Bureau of Markets for data as to amounts of various crops. State Dept of Agri. relative to Chinese Pheasants. State Agricultural College on War Food Work, and many minor associations of a private nature regarding such crops as hay potatoes etc.,
- 11.- Employment of help on the farms was rather a difficult task, at haying and Silo filling times, but Farmers exchanged help within their neighborhood and got along as best they could.
- 12.- Gave some time and assistance in helping Red Cross stage a County Fair funds. For 2nd Liberty Loan campaign gave greater part of one weeks time.
- 13.- The Poultry and Dairy lines of agriculture appear to be most affected by the war, due to the high prices asked for feeds. Plan for next year to grow more of these feeds and advocate more silos. Heretofore Farmers have been buying practically all their feeds. This year they have begun to see that such planning is not for the best and many have made a very material change in their work and put up more feeds. Next year I look for a much greater increase in the raising of their own feeds for this stock.

Signed

*Claude B. Sprague*

County Agent, Kitsap County,

Washington.