

HOME MANAGEMENT NARRATIVE REPORT - 1931

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I. Changes in Extension policy.

One change in state Extension policy affected the specialist's program for 1931 rather materially. This change was the Economic Outlook Conferences in which both home and farm agencies cooperated. Three weeks in January 1931 were given over to county meetings. The chief topic discussed in the home part of these conferences was "Home production of food supply to meet health requirements". In December a series of two day district outlook conferences were held. One half day was given to joint session to hear the general outlook report. In the afternoon committee groups met. There were four groups relating to the home: Foods; Clothing; and two divisions of Home Management, one on Economic and Housing Aspects, and one on Family Relationships. On the second day reports from each committee were read at a joint session.

In the home committees the women in each meeting wrote the recommendations as they saw the needs, resulting in nine different sets of recommendations. The organization of this material for printed reports was done by the editor without consulting the specialists so that not in all cases did the printed report represent the best judgment of the groups as a whole. One report was published for eastern and one for the western section of the State. This work took three weeks in December making six weeks during the year devoted to this type of work.

II. Program of Work.

Developing the program of work for the State Home Management

Specialist is a matter of correlating the assistance desired by the counties in such a way that one person may serve each one to the best advantage. For 1931 the county programs were selected by the representatives of the county clubs to meet felt county needs. An effort was made to guide this selection so that each county program was motivated by one big central idea, as Saving Time and Energy; Better Business Methods in the Home; Improving Housing Conditions; or Home Furnishings. Results seem to have justified this grouping of meetings both in increased interest and in an added 20 percent of the homes reached adopting improved practices suggested. The program called for meetings on 30 phases of Home Management and House Furnishing projects.

III. Methods of Work.

The number of leader training schools held in 1931 was decreased about 40 percent over 1930. This decrease was partially due to the economic considerations involved in calling a county group together, but more particularly because of the request on the part of the county agents for more individual assistance and for the specialist to make a larger number of home visits. Days spent in assisting the county home agents directly were increased 300 percent, while home visits to community key demonstration homes were increased 50 percent.

Other assistance consuming much of the specialist's time was that of sending out loan kits of illustrative material to the home agents and preparing mimeographed outlines of subject matter for distribution to the homemakers at each meeting. Special amplified outlines are also prepared to go to the agents only.

IV. Results.

The outstanding results for 1931 seem to be an increase of

about 500 percent in record keeping in each of the five counties working on that project and the same percentage increase in planned time expenditure for each of the 11 major counties emphasizing time management. A schedule of home activities is reported for 1623 homes; account keeping for 607 homes; and budgeting for 419 homes.

Club instruction combined with a small amount of individual assistance from specialist and home agent netted good results in one county. Two hundred club women requested account books and 44, or approximately one out of every four continued through the year. In another county, club girls account records were kept with 199 finishing.

Time practices adopted included few complete written time plans, most of the improvements consisting of establishing systematic rest periods, decreasing the number of working hours, and a better division and adjustment of household tasks among the members of the family, especially the children.

Seven hundred seventy-four kitchens were improved as regards each heights of working surfaces, arrangement of work centers to save steps, and arrangement of small equipment at work centers. Nine hundred forty-nine other kitchens were improved in one or more ways. One hundred twenty-four kitchens have been completely improved and used as key demonstrations in ninety-five communities.

Laundry practices adopted show a 300-400 percent increase in those counties devoting club meetings to a discussion of these practices.

The feeler put out in consumer buying problems brought such satisfactory response even from some very backward counties that the work will

be developed more next year.

A correlated food and home management project as attached was given in two counties by foods and home management Specialists. Comparing results in counties having time and kitchen studies, not flavored with foods, this project netted an increase in the number of improved time practices and the equipment added; and a decrease in the number of heights, arrangement, and equipment placing practices adopted. This unit seems to be most satisfactory for counties interested in food and kitchen improvement but not desiring to follow through a second year of home management.

V. Outlook.

Conferences have been held with the agents in district groups to develop plans for 1932 as shown in plan of work for 1932 and with each home agent, and, in the majority of cases, the county council to plan in detail the 1932 program for each individual county.

The same methods used in past years will be continued: Leaders Schools, club meeting and leader school combined, and home visiting to meet the programs of the major counties.

Increased attention and emphasis is to be put on Key Demonstration Homes.

Special county groups to keep home accounts will be conducted in 10 counties. These groups will meet three times during the year.

A special study is being made in the type and quality of consumer purchases as well as purchasing habits, as a basis for preparing lesson material along this line.