



# *Objective and Purpose*

"For only the light which we have kindled in  
ourselves can illuminate others."  
--Schopenhauer.

## OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE, AND PLAN OF SYMPOSIUM

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As we meet here this afternoon in this Statewide Farm Woman's Symposium, the international meeting of The Associated Country Women of the World is convening their 9th Triennial Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland. North Carolina has 6 delegates to this conference. Mrs. George Apperson, of Davie County, past president of the North Carolina Home Demonstration Organization, is one of the 2nd Vice Presidents of A. C. W. W.

I suggest, Mrs. Laughinghouse, that a message of some type be sent to our delegates from this conference.

These questions have been asked some of us many times within the past few weeks: Why have you extension workers gone to all this trouble to have another Statewide program so soon after Farm Home Week and 4-H Club Week? Why do you work yourselves like you do? My answer was that we want to do it--no one has told us to do it--because we believe these four days together with you leaders is going to be a great and rewarding experience. A strange paradox perhaps, but I think it's true that women instinctively want to give. The more one gives, the more one has to give.

Archibald Rutledge said in his great book, Peace in the Heart.

"And women are more intent upon essentially great things, the greatest of which is love. Man loves the triumphs of today, women, the integrity of the souls of tomorrow." All through the year we have certainly been trying to improve ourselves and others as we have worked with rural and non-rural people in the 100 counties in the State.

We are constantly trying to improve home economics extension work and likewise the total extension program. We want to be good leaders. We want to lead in every sense of the word. We work with good leaders--no state can boast of better leaders than you who are here to share this first Symposium with us. But what we give we do not want "to go down the drain." Results we must have.

Home demonstration women have acquired a new stature and a different set of values since Extension Home Economics work began in North Carolina many years ago. We must not lose these values.

We are a proud organization; we are proud of you women and others-- we don't tell you that we are often enough.

We are proud of our Philosophy.

We are proud of our Ideals.

We are proud of our Heritage.

We are proud of our Progress. It's been steady growth and development of people all through the years.

We have nothing of which to be ashamed nor have we anything to apologize for. But this is no time for complacency. We must continue to move forward and accept the everyday challenges and changes that are inevitable with courage, faith and confidence.

PURPOSE OF THE SYMPOSIUM--There is always a purpose for doing things. This week we want to enlarge our thinking in old and new areas of Extension Home Economics work. You women are representing your county and its membership. You were selected because you are good leaders at home, in your club, and in your communities. You are dedicated, capable, talented leaders and we are glad you are here.

We are here to lift our thinking to a new plateau. We are facing many changes in our work. The type of program that you planned and completed in 1959 is not going to meet your needs nor will it be good enough for you in 1960. We've got to stop and take stock. Take a close look at ourselves and do this together.

We must take a fresh new look at yesterday's programs--where we are and where we want to go. What is your vision for tomorrow's program? Your desire? What about women going to work? What about the Home Demonstration book that you are going to have written? What about your Home Demonstration House? And the thousands and thousands of women not yet reached? I am concerned about where and how we want to go in 1960--65--70--

Your organization's program is based on the premise of EVER WIDENING CIRCLES.

Of reaching more people.

It involves not only complex family demands but complex community, county, state, national, and international demands.

Demands on organizations, institutions, and upon all good citizens.

The social pressures

economic pressures

cultural pressures, and the

endless drives--charitable appeals which call for much help and a colossal amount of time.

All of these pressures and demands are calling for serious thinking and study. Tomorrow will be too late. Our challenge is now--here--we must begin this week.

We in Extension Home Economics cannot do the job without you good women volunteer leaders. We just can't do it, but together we can do a very great deal toward solving many problems that have been troubling us.

We are here to THINK TOGETHER. Listen--learn--share--give--take and come out, we hope, with recommendations that you and we can use in developing 1960 plans of work and for years to come. I challenge you this week to take yourselves out of the realm of ordinary thinking.

We must have greater faith to do what we know we can achieve. We must live outside our ruts, not in them. We must stretch our VISION and seek more knowledge about our way of life--now and what the future holds for us.

We are moving at a headlong pace into an age of science and technology that will make our work and our present type programs old and premature. We've got to believe and at the same time develop the habit--to think more and work with the changes that we see being made all around us. The world of tomorrow, right where we are, will be quite different from the world today.

We must strive mightily to these ends. Believing, with great enthusiasm, that the passkey to realities is in your hands as leaders and as followers. I challenge you to THINK--this is the theme of our conference.

# TRENDS IN NORTH CAROLINA'S AGRICULTURE AFFECTING FARM FAMILIES

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It is indeed nice to see so many Home Demonstration Club members interested in the trends of the times. By studying trends we can with some accuracy predict the future and prepare for it. This I am sure is the over-all objective of this week's symposium. It is my understanding that this is the first of its kind in the nation and I commend our Extension leaders for preparing it.

My subject is "Trends in North Carolina's Agriculture Affecting Farm Families" and I can do no better than to quote freely from a fine little publication prepared by our Rural Sociology Department entitled, What's Happening to N. C. Farms and Farmers. If you have not seen this bulletin, I suggest you secure a copy and study it. In the short period allotted me, I can only hit the high spots.

One of the most significant trends in our nation has been the tremendous shift from the farm to the urban areas. Originally, of course, the state and the nation were predominantly rural but now both are predominantly urban and industrial. For the nation, this trend began more than a century ago and was proceeding rapidly at the beginning of the century. By 1920, a majority of the nation's population resided in cities and towns of 2500 or more in population.

In the South, in general, and in North Carolina, in particular, the trend got underway very slowly. It was not until the turn of the century that the shift away from an almost exclusively agricultural economy began to take place in the South; both mechanization and industrialization came slowly at first. Both processes were speeded up greatly by the two world wars. However, even as late as 1930, half of the people in North Carolina still lived on farms.

Industry of the sort that provides employment for a large number of workers in urban centers has been very slow to become established in North Carolina. The mechanization and large-scale farming operations which tend to push the labor force off the farm and into the cities seems to be taking effect more slowly here than in either the South or the nation as a whole. Despite movements in the opposite direction, North Carolina still remains predominantly rural in character and still has strong agricultural influences.

Even though in 1950 North Carolina had more people living on farms than any other state, there were fewer people on farms in this state at that

time than at any time since 1920. Projections to 1955 and 1960 indicate further sharp declines in the State's population. Since 1920, with the exception of the depression years, there has been a steady decline in the farm population of the nation. After 1940, except for a short period immediately following World War II, this drop in farm population increased sharply. The trend in the Southern Region has been very similar to that of the nation. In North Carolina, however, the decline in farm population did not begin until 1940 and even after World War II, there was a turn upward for a few years due to people returning to the farms.

Although the full explanation cannot be ascertained, it would seem that these differences between the farm population trends in North Carolina and the Southern Region and the nation, particularly between 1920, 1930, 1945 and 1950 lie primarily in the pattern of industrial expansion in this State. During the earlier period, industrial expansion in North Carolina was relatively rapid, but the major development was in the textile industry which was widely dispersed throughout certain rural areas. This industry depends heavily on a female labor force so that a wife or a daughter could work in textiles while the father or husband continued to farm. The excellent road system which was developed during this time allowed for relatively easy access to the towns and their textile plants. The result was that much of the industrial labor force continued to live on farms.

As the number of agricultural workers declines and as productivity increases, the relative importance of each agricultural worker in our economy increases. The output per agricultural worker can be expected to continue to increase at a greater rate than the increase in the demand for agricultural products. The tremendous stockpile of agricultural surpluses today is evidence of this trend. New processes for utilizing agricultural products, such as utilizing parts of the tobacco plant not previously used in cigarettes can be expected to curtail further the need for much of the agricultural labor force of today.

The further development and expansion of industry in North Carolina and elsewhere in the South probably will attract more young people from the farm. It has been estimated that less than 10 per cent of North Carolina's labor force and less than 5 per cent of the nation's labor force will be required for agricultural production in 1975.

Population pressure is felt most effectively among farm youth about the time they are ready to enter upon their working career. They must either migrate to non-agricultural jobs or remain in agriculture at the risk of getting low incomes and levels of living. This is one of the reasons why our educational system is falling down in properly equipping these young people for life's work. We have never faced up to this fact and have continued as in the past assuming that they would be absorbed into agriculture. This is absolutely not the case.

The picture in the South has changed drastically because of at least six factors: (1) Soil exhaustion and erosion, especially in the upland areas devoted to cotton; (2) the invasion of the boll weevil; (3) agricultural mechanization and the opening up of competing cotton-producing areas of the west; (4) urbanization which opened up markets for new agricultural products; (5) the increased use of technology developed by research which resulted in more efficient and intensive methods of production; (6) the development of soil conservation and production control programs.

In North Carolina, the trend in number and size of farms is influenced by some of the same factors that affect the nation and the South, but in addition there are some unique factors. The continuing importance of tobacco, the development of rural industries, and the growth of part-time farming have caused trends in North Carolina to be somewhat different and distinctive. For example, there has not been as great an increase in the average size of farms in North Carolina as in the South or the rest of the nation.

The size of farms in North Carolina is unusual. It is the only state in which the size of farms is not increasing. When you consider the size of farms operated by owners in the nation as well as the South and in North Carolina, you will find they are considerably larger than and have increased in size more than have farms operated by tenants. In 1940, North Carolina owner farms have increased from 75 acres to 80 acres in 1954, while during the same period, tenant farms decreased from 56 acres to 41 acres.

Owner farms in the South and in the nation are not only much larger than those in North Carolina, but also have increased much more. From 1940 to 1954, the South's average owner farm increase from 142 acres to 181 acres as compared with 185 acres to 241 acres for the nation.

One of the most significant trends in American agriculture is the increasing tendency for farmers and members of their families to work either full or part-time off their farms. Closely related to this trend is the increasing practice by non-agriculturally employed people living in the country and operating small farms. Statistically the net result of these two trends shows up in the number of days worked off the farm and in the percentage of farm families who have non-agricultural income. For example, in 1954, 56 per cent of North Carolina farm families had some off-farm income and 27% had more off-farm income than the value of farm products sold. A USDA report shows that in 1956, 33% of the net income of American farm families came from non-agricultural sources. The more important reasons for the increase in off-farm employment are: (1) Increased urbanization and industrialization creating more opportunities for off-farm employment; (2) increased efficiency has decreased the need for farm labor; (3) farm people are seeking new sources of income as a means of maintaining and raising their standard of living; (4) the high cost of land and of living in cities causes many families mainly dependent on non-agricultural jobs

either to move to or to remain in the country and operate a small farm as a place of residence and possibly as a means of providing a partial food supply.

In the case of low-income farm families, working off the farm while continuing to live in the country is a desirable and profitable social adjustment. We see no reason why the trend will not continue and believe that it should be encouraged. This can be done by locating more industries in rural areas where we have a large low income farm population. It seems to me that this part-time farming is excellent in many respects, particularly as it serves as a transition device from true commercial farming to complete off-farm employment. It is inevitable that this change will take place sooner or later.

Probably the worst feature of so-called part-time farming is the tendency to neglect the protection of the land from erosion. Land is a non-replaceable resource and it is a national as well as an individual responsibility that it be protected at all times. Part-time farming is not conducive to the best conservation practices.

In America, we have a tendency to reduce everything to the common denominator represented by the dollar sign. Some say this is wrong and that we emphasize material things well beyond their true importance. Be that as it may, if we are to be able to make reasonable comparisons they have to be made on a common basis. As long as comparative income statistics have been available, it has been known that per capita farm incomes were considerably lower than per capita non-farm incomes. Farm incomes in the South are lower than in other regions of the United States. Some of these differences can be easily explained, but there remains the stubborn sobering fact that farmers, especially those in the South, have low incomes by comparison. Not only do Southern farmers have low average incomes, but incomes have been unstable. That is, because of weather and market conditions, farm incomes have fluctuated from high to low, and from low to high. Good weather and bumper crops usually result in an over-supply of farm products which in turn causes a disproportionate drop in farm prices. Other causes of farm income instability are major disturbances in the total economy brought on by population changes, depressions, recovery, inflation and wars.

During a period of high income, farm land values rise, farmers go into debt for both land and equipment, and generally over-expand their operations--then when prices drop farmers suffer more losses than those related to current operating expense -- that is, they have land and equipment for which they cannot pay and which frequently they must sell at a loss. Because of the peculiar conditions under which the farmer must operate and because of the political aspects of the problem, we have developed at the national level some policies and programs designed to keep the farmer from

suffering all the consequences of unstable economic conditions. Other groups than agriculture also have developed policies and programs to help them with their own particular economic problems.

Recently, through the interest in the so-called Rural Development program, the attention of the nation has been drawn to the problems of the low-income farmer, a large percentage of whom are in the Southern States. Out of 1209 counties designated as low-income areas, more than three-fourths were in the South, and 70 of North Carolina's counties fell in the low-income classification.

The term "level of living" has become common in our conversation and it is no idle boast that Americans have many of the material possessions which make up this so-called level of living. It should be recognized, however, that there is not one level of living in America -- there are several "levels of living." There is great variation from farm to farm, from city to farm, and from region to region. Although the urban areas of North Carolina compare favorably with the urban areas in other parts of the nation, the rural and farm sections of the State and region have lagged far behind other areas in the availability of those material things associated with the high living level.

Many factors account for the relatively lower living status of the farm family in North Carolina. Over-population, small size of farm, single crop agriculture, a high proportion of tenancy, a slower adoption of mechanization and technical improvement, fewer and poorer off-farm employment opportunities -- all are factors which contribute along with others to the situation. One of the most important factors which is related to this is the relatively poor level of education in the rural farm areas of the South.

Despite the fact that in recent years rapid strides have been made in the improvement of these conditions, the simple fact is that the region still lags although we are closing the gap. The increasingly high proportion of farms in North Carolina with tractors and the overwhelmingly large proportion of farms with electricity are examples which are fundamental and point out our opportunity for future improvement. Nearly all farms in North Carolina as well as the nation have electricity available. In 1935, less than 4 per cent and today practically 95 per cent can enjoy the benefits coming from the use of this most versatile form of power.

Although it is hard to believe, North Carolina farmers do not have as many automobiles as do the farmers of the nation. In 1954, three out of every five farms in the State had at least one car. It is predicted that 75 per cent will have automobiles by 1960.

There has been a decided upturn in the number of telephones on farms since 1940. It is more noticeable in both the nation and in the South than it is

in North Carolina, although since 1950 North Carolina has made a great deal of progress. The widespread use of REA assistance for telephone service has been effective in North Carolina. In the nation, about 50 per cent of all farms have telephones, but only one out of six North Carolina farms enjoy this useful device.

To me, one of the modern mysteries of progress has been the failure of the efforts of all agencies to secure running water for the majority of our farm homes. In spite of all other industries indicating progress, the use of running water which is so closely connected with modern life has lagged behind in the farms and the farm homes of North Carolina. Of all the modern facilities now available to farm people, none can contribute any more to profitable farming and good living than running water with its associated facilities such as electric water pumps, water storage tanks, automatic watering devices for livestock and poultry, kitchen sinks and dishwashers, automatic laundry machines, hot water heaters, laboratories, bath tubs, showers, and sewage disposal facilities.

Perhaps the availability of running water is more highly correlated statistically with the level of family living in the country than is any other single convenience. The availability of running water is highly correlated with other conveniences because it either depends on other facilities such as electricity or other facilities such as the modern bathroom depends upon running water. Sanitation, hence good health, obviously are dependent upon running water. It is interesting to note that the adoption and use of running water by farm people has lagged far behind the adoption of electricity, radio and automobile. Even today in North Carolina, the percentage of North Carolina farms with running water still lags about five years behind the nation and less than 50 per cent of our farms enjoy this relatively inexpensive necessity and convenience.

Two other facilities -- home freezers and television sets -- which were almost non-existent 10 years ago -- can be found in a rapidly growing portion of farm homes. Over one-fifth of North Carolina farms have frozen food units for preserving the family food supply. While this is slightly behind the figure for the southern region, it is considerably behind the nation where one-third of the farms have this facility.

The growth and the use of the television in the farm home is even more striking with over one-fourth of the farms of North Carolina reporting this new communication facility by 1954 as compared to practically none in 1950. On the other hand, over one-third of the nation's farms had television sets. We should not overlook the widespread use of the radio as a means of mass communications and the spread of new technology and new ideas which broaden the social horizons of farm people.

Perhaps to sum up the facts which I have tried to present above, the following summary will help focus our thinking on the present situation. Despite the remarkable strides made in the past 30 years, North Carolina continues to lag well behind the South and far behind the nation in many of the important criteria which are basic to a high level of living. There is no single item that can adequately represent the over-all picture of change that has been taking place in the level of living of farm people. In an attempt to meet the need for such a yardstick, several items have been combined into a single index which will allow for comparison of the progress being made by farm families. This index is composed of four items: (1) Percentage of farms with electricity; (2) percentage of farms with telephones; (3) percentage of farms with automobiles; and (4) the average value of farm products sold.

Using this combined index, North Carolina lags both behind the region and the nation. As a matter of fact, in 1954, North Carolina just passed the baseline used for the nation 10 years earlier. However, percentage-wise North Carolina farm families have increased their level of living index by over one-fourth since 1950, and while this is a greater increase than either the region or the nation, the relative rank or position of the State remains about the same.

If appreciable gains are to be made in the level of living of North Carolina farm families, so as to be reflected in the reduction of the gap that now exists between North Carolina and the rest of the nation, there must be improvements in a number of related areas. Very important among these areas are (1) the greatly increased use of agricultural resources and technological improvements of agricultural production; (2) improvement in the general level of education, including technical and vocational training; and (3) further expansion of industry, particularly in the manufacture of products of the heavy, durable type. There are indications now appearing that we will move ahead in these areas and that we can raise the level of living of our farm people in the next decade.

As leaders in your counties and communities your influence is needed to help all the people see these trends and interpret them properly, to the end that North Carolina's agricultural areas will become prosperous and progressive.