Orchard Improvement- Major Project.

Orchard improvement in Kewaunee county began with pruning and spraying of the farm orchards. Only a very few farmers had sprayed their trees prior to 1926 and none had sprayed in a co-operative spray ring. The first pruning demonstration was held near Algoma. At first it was difficult to interest farmers in the pruning and spraying program. Men were afraid they could not dispose of their fruit after they had produced it. Many men had been pruning the wrong way—pruning from the bottom up, instead of from the top down. One of the big problems in this county is to get men to open up the tops of the tall trees and get them in a shape to spray and to pick the fruit after it is produced.

In the spring of 1926 a long series of pruning demonstrations were held. An unusual interest was shown and men were pruning as late as the trees could stand. This was repeated in the spring of 1927. More than 400 men turned out to these demonstrations in 1927. These men made up an orchard improvement list and letters showing and explaining the spraying program and orchard management in general were sent out to these 400 men. Many men started spraying when the time was right. History in spray ring work started at Luxemburg when 10 farmers got together in a co-operative spray ring and purchased a power sprayer. About 1100 trees were sprayed with the complete spray program. Soon another group was organized in Carlton town but these men did not purchase an outfit, but hired a private party to do the spraying. The co-operative plan seems to have worked out most satisfactorily and is the cheapest. The cost of spraying has been reduced to about 25 cents to 35 cents per tree for the complete spray program. This year the spray cost was only about 1 peck of apples per tree.

Many of the Luxemburg spray ring members have already sold enough fruit to pay for their share in the rig. Many barns have been whitewashed with the same rig. The men are satisfied and even better work will be done next year. A large number of the farmers in the county have built orchard ladders on wheels to make pruning and spraying and picking more easy. These ladders can be seen on dozens of Kewaunee county farms.

In the fall of 1927 a series of 8 pruning demonstrations were held in the orchard centers of the county. One hundred and sixty three men attended. It is a fact that when the first pruning demonstration was held in Kewaunee county there were not enough pruning tools to be had in the county to give each of 5 men a saw or shear. Today these tools can be purchased at any hardware store in the county at a reasonable price. One store has sold over 100 saws. When men have the proper equipment and know how to prune, then pruning will start in earnest in Kewaunee county.

In the fall of 1927 three spray ring groups have been organized and there are good prospects of two or three more groups uniting which will make a possible total of eight spray rings in the county. An apple show was put on at Luxemburg and Algoma with fine success during 1927.