

This office has strived to cooperate with the various clubs and the Center groups from time to time. It is rather difficult for us to give much constructive help because of our other duties and because of our lack of aptitude in this work.

INSECT PEST CONTROL

The grasshopper plague which was so evident in 1938 did practically no damage in 1939. We had a small infestation this year and it was encouraging to know that farmers are on the watch for grasshoppers and reported them as soon as they showed up. Only a small amount of poison was used this year in the county.

POULTRY IMPROVEMENT

Recognizing the fact that there is room for 150 to 250 laying hens on every farm in the county, we have given considerable attention to poultry flocks and their management. Much of the work done on the poultry has been done through individual contacts discussing the facts with individual farmers. We have had an especially good season for chronic diseases in poultry. Our flocks, however, are going into the fall in very good shape and promise to be a good source of revenue for the coming season.

COOPERATIVE MARKETING

This office has always promoted the cooperative movements. This past season we have had our usual contributions toward the encouragement of cooperative marketing and also cooperative purchasing of farm materials. Successful farm cooperatives can and do succeed when properly managed. An earnest and interested Board of Directors is essential to the success of any Cooperative. This interest must be carried on through the years if continued success is to be had. I have always felt that a Cooperative organized as a result of a definite need by farmers who are willing to give much of their time in organizing has a better chance to succeed than one which comes as a result of organizing merely to have another Cooperative. When the going gets tough, those same farmers will come back and battle for the Cooperative and they will see that the Cooperative succeeds because they are just selfish enough to not want to see their previous efforts lost. Farmers in this county and elsewhere can well afford to partake of the benefits of a sound Cooperative.

SHEEP

A sheep meeting last spring, at which time Prof. Lacey of the College of Agriculture pointed out sound management factors, was instrumental in bringing to the attention of sheep men in the county the fact that cooperative marketing of wool was a paying proposition.

Farmers last year who marketed their wool through the Cooperative Wool Growers Association received on the average of six to seven cents per pound more than those who sold through the local buyers. This increase in wool prices was made possible through the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation loaning program. An advance which averages about eighteen cents per pound of wool was made at the time the wool was delivered to the local cooperative assembling point for wool, which in this county was at Baldwin. When the wool was graded an additional payment was made on grade, and when all the 1938 wool crop was sold, the farmer received his 3% payment which was his bonus in addition to the advance and the grading payment. This year all indications are that the payment per pound over local buyers will be much in excess of 1938 because a large part of the wool was sold after the war boom early in September and commanded top prices.

We had a series of sheep dipping demonstrations and also did considerable work on docking and castrating lambs. This fall the Wisconsin State Ram Truck brought 35 fine purebred rams into the county from old established sheep breeders in the state. These rams were offered for sale and 12 of them were bought by farmers in the county. The sale of rams is not the only object of this ram truck. This is a fine opportunity for farmers to see choice rams, to compare them with what they already have, and to see what is being used as a guide in selecting good rams.

SWINE

A number of requests have come in from time to time for information regarding sicknesses in hogs. In hogs, as well as in other livestock, we have no intention of replacing the licensed veterinarian. It has been our aim to work in cooperation with the local veterinarians in the county in bringing about an understanding of diseases and their control.

We have discussed with various swine breeders the problem of marketing their product and they too, as well as dairymen, are becoming aware of the fact there if there is going to be a continued market for pork as well as for lard, we are going to have to put on a strenuous advertising program to again convince people that lard is a by-product of the swine industry that cannot be substituted successfully.

HORSES

Much lively discussion has come up from time to time regarding the merits of the horse versus tractors. We have seen sufficient cases where tractors on small farms are a detriment in that they do not come near to paying their own way so that, as a result of this, many times we are encouraged to say that unless there is sufficient need for a tractor it is questionable whether it is advisable on the average small farm. In support of this statement we usually ask the farmer if the use of the tractor increased his income. We do not answer this question. His answer will satisfy anyone.