

cured thereafter is pea green and of grade A for color. Broomcorn harvested when the seed is in the dough stage, about one week or 10 days later than the milk stage, shows some red "boot," or reddish discoloration toward the base of the brush. The tips also may be bleached or slightly red, and the grade for color probably will be only B. The brush harvested when the seed is ripe will show much red discoloration throughout the length of the brush and the basic color will be straw yellow instead of pea green.

Samples Appraised in Five Years

To determine the value of the brush from the three different stages of development, a sample from each was submitted for appraisal during each of the last five years. In Table 2 are given the comparative appraisal values in dollars per ton for each year and also the average value for the 5-year period.

TABLE 2.—*Appraised value (per ton) of samples of broomcorn brush*

Stage of seed development when harvested	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	Average
Milk.....	\$95.00	\$90.00	\$175	\$100	\$140	\$120.00
Dough.....	70.00	67.50	125	70	120	90.50
Ripe.....	47.50	45.00	90	50	100	68.50

Broomcorn producers can determine the best stage at which to harvest the crop by looking at the color of the brush. In this experiment the development of seed was used, as it gives a definite stage of maturity.

No increase in weight of brush is obtained by letting the brush develop beyond the time the seed is in the milk stage or when the straws immediately above the knuckle are green. Brush of good color can not be produced if harvesting is delayed. The difference in price of brush harvested at the right time and that harvested later varies from \$30 to \$60 a ton, which often means the difference between profit and loss on the crop.

J. B. SIEGLINGER.

BULLETINS From U. S. and State Agencies Valued By Farmers
 Hundreds of bulletins and circulars covering a wide range of subjects are published each year by the United States Department of Agriculture and the State agricultural colleges and experiment stations. Do farmers read these bulletins and make practical use of the information in their farm operations? This is a question farmers can best answer for themselves.

Answers have been given by 1,676 nonselected farmers in representative areas of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Ohio who were interviewed during 1927 by representatives of the Federal or State extension services.

Bulletins had been received from the United States Department of Agriculture or the State college of agriculture by 61.8 per cent of all the farmers interviewed. That one or more of the bulletins had been read was reported by 86.1 per cent of the farmers receiving them.

Information in the bulletins was found to be practical as indicated by the fact that 61.8 per cent of the farmers obtaining bulletins mentioned specific instances where use had been made of the bulletin information in connection with the operation of the farm or the management of the home. Of all the farmers interviewed, nearly 38 per cent were making practical use of information from Department of Agriculture or college and experiment station bulletins.

Information from Other Areas

It is interesting to compare the replies of these 1,676 farmers in three North Central States with similar information obtained from nearly 3,700 farmers in four sections of the country in 1912, or two years prior to the beginning of the nation-wide system of cooperative extension work as provided by the Smith-Lever Act. Of the 3,698 farmers interviewed in 1912, 43.3 per cent had received bulletins, as compared to 62 per cent of the farmers interviewed in 1927.



FIGURE 33.—Bulletin rack in the office of a county agricultural agent from which farmers select publications in which they are interested

Of those receiving bulletins in 1912, 84.2 per cent read them, as compared to the 86 per cent reading them in 1927. But 48 per cent of the farmers who had obtained bulletins in 1912 reported practical use of the information in contrast to nearly 62 per cent in 1927. The wider distribution of bulletins and their more extended use in 1927 as compared to 1912 is doubtless largely due to the development of the nation-wide system of cooperative extension work and the use of bulletins to supplement the other activities of extension workers such as meetings, result demonstrations, circular letters, and farm calls.

In order to understand better the value of bulletins from the farmers' point of view information was obtained in 1927 regarding other

forms of printed information on agriculture and home economics available to the farm families included in the study. Approximately 93 per cent of the farm families took farm papers. More than 58 per cent of the farm homes received women's magazines regularly. Daily newspapers came to 79 per cent of the homes, and local weekly newspapers to 50 per cent of them.

Preferred Sources of Information

When asked to indicate the source of printed information preferred, one-third of the farmers mentioned farm papers and home magazines. Nearly one-sixth stated that bulletins from the agricultural college and the United States Department of Agriculture were most relied upon. Only a negligible number placed other forms of the printed

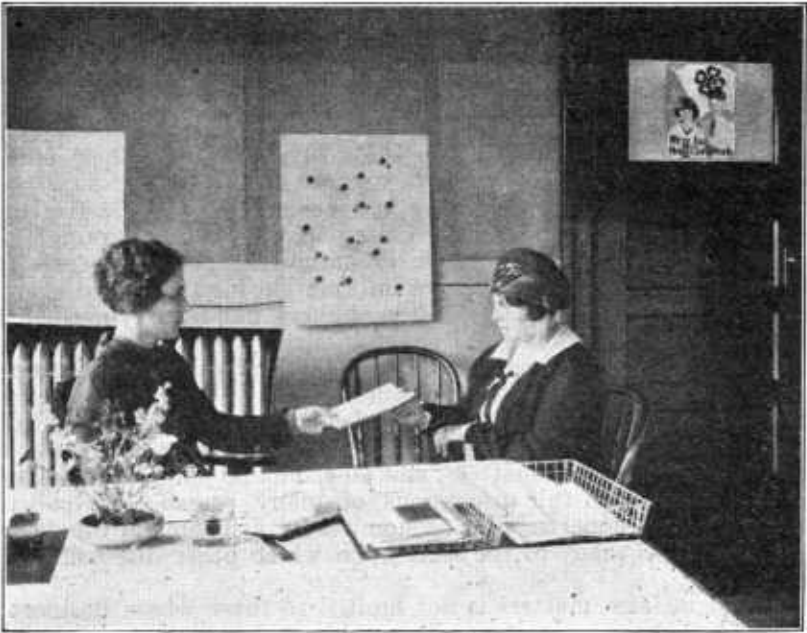


FIGURE 34.—Farm woman receiving from her county home demonstration agent a farmers' bulletin which contains information that will help her to solve some of her home problems

page first. That bulletins should yield first place in importance to farm papers and women's magazines in the farmers' estimation would seem but natural. The farm papers and women's magazines arrive in the home regularly each week or each month. Each issue contains a wide range of subject matter, and much of the material presented relates to the research and extension activities of the State colleges and of the United States Department of Agriculture. Much space is also devoted to the experiences of practical farmers and farm women in handling problems of current importance.

An effort was made to obtain suggestions from the farmers interviewed for improvements in bulletins, but those engaged in the study were impressed with the fact that farmers are little interested in the style of the cover page, character of the illustrations, exact length,

and similar editorial refinements. They do desire a straightforward, interesting presentation of the subject matter published in a reasonably attractive and easily readable form.

According to their own statements farmers do obtain and make extensive use of the bulletins published by the United States Department of Agriculture and the State agricultural colleges.

M. C. WILSON.

BUSINESS Men Demand and Get Increasing Fund of Agricultural Information

With the growing realization of the interrelation between agriculture and business there has been in recent years an unprecedented demand from business men and economists for agricultural information. The postwar depression quickened a realization that had been more or less dormant before, but the interest has not abated as agriculture has climbed slowly back toward recovery.

The business man is not contented with theories and discussions; he wants authoritative facts. For these the industries have turned to the Department of Agriculture. The department is now placing the facts before the leaders of these industries through their official organs and trade papers.

The interrelation of agriculture and business is well illustrated in the case of bankers. Taking country bankers as an example, as agricultural conditions in their communities became acute the bankers called for more and more information for their farm clients; then as distressed farms came on the bankers' hands, they needed the information for themselves. Bankers' journals the country over are now meeting these needs and have been supplied with useful information by the Department of Agriculture.

Certain economists formerly contended that there was no such thing as agricultural economics. Now economists generally are vitally interested in agricultural matters, and all economic journals are reflecting this interest in full discussions of many pressing agricultural problems. The department's economists furnish some of the discussions as well as many of the facts upon which other discussions are based.

Interest in farm matters is not limited to those whose business is affected by agriculture. Scarcely any class of reader is uninterested. The best literary magazines are publishing essays and sketches on agricultural subjects, as are the best educational, historical, sociological, professional, and religious magazines. The Department of Agriculture has aided in supplying authors with many of the facts on which these articles are built and has helped the magazines in finding the authors and the articles.

Foreign magazines are now applying to the department in much the same way. An increasing number of requests is being received from them for agricultural material or for contacts with authors. These requests come largely from journals that are not strictly agricultural.

C. B. SHERMAN.