

Recognizing that convenience, comfort, and beauty in the home, well-kept grounds, appropriate clothing, and wholesome recreation are essential, agents encouraged farm families to strive to attain these ends in practical and economical ways. More farm women in Texas enrolled as demonstrators to improve their living rooms in 1931 than in 1930 and greater interest was shown by the club girls in improving their bedrooms. Some of the women have exchanged quilts for rugs, canned goods for furniture, and so on. Often keen family interest in home improvement has led to the exchange of field labor for labor in painting the house, in paper hanging, or in installing plumbing.

Much resourcefulness and ability are shown in the use of shrubbery in beautifying home grounds. Satisfying improvements have been accomplished by work involving little or no cash outlay.

There has been more organized group activity in community improvement, road and highway beautification, and wholesome recreation.

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HOME-DEMONSTRATION Work Influences Farm Women, Survey Shows

Approximately 1,200 counties in the United States now have county home-demonstration agents who work with the farm women on problems closely associated with the home. In a large proportion of the remaining counties considerable work with farm women is done by the county agricultural agents with the assistance of the home-economics specialists from the State colleges.

During 1930 extension agents reached 646,000 women through formal groups organized for study purposes. In addition, many women were reached individually by extension workers, and much information was passed on to neighbors by local leaders and others affiliated with the various home-demonstration clubs or home-bureau groups, as they are variously called in the different sections of the country.

In order to obtain reliable information on whether extension teaching actually is causing farm women to take up improved methods of home making, personal interviews with all the farm women in representative areas of 16 States have been held. In 12 of the States home-demonstration agents have been employed in the counties involved in the studies for an average of six years. In two of the States the counties studied had had the services of a district home-demonstration agent serving from three to four counties, while in the remaining States the only home-economics extension conducted outside of emergency work, during the war period, was handled by the agricultural agents, with the assistance of State home-economics specialists.

According to the information supplied by the women themselves, new or better practices have been accepted as part of the regular home procedure in 32 per cent of all the farm homes in the areas studied. The percentages of homes reporting changes due to extension teaching ranged from 7 per cent to 65 per cent. The number of changed practices reported varied from 12 to 177 per 100 homes. The changes most frequently reported related to clothing and to food preservation. Other changes reported with great frequency dealt with food preparation and the nutritional technic of feeding the family.

As these four lines of work are equally applicable to homes of owners and tenants, it was not surprising to find that approximately the same percentages of each have been influenced by extension.

Size of the Farm a Factor

The size of the farm apparently has some bearing upon the adoption of better home practices, the percentages of homes influenced being a little higher on the larger farms.

The distance from the county extension office, and whether the home was situated on an improved or an unimproved road, had little if any bearing upon the adoption of home-economics practices.

In six areas where information on educational training of farm women was obtained it was found that a definite relationship existed between the amount of formal schooling received and the extent to which home-economics practices were changed.

On the other hand, age of farm women seemed to have little bearing upon the adoption of new or better practices, the older women reporting practices changed about as frequently as the younger women.

By far the most important factor affecting the adoption of practices was contact with extension workers. Where farm women had attended home-demonstration meetings or had otherwise come into personal contact with the home-demonstration agent or State specialist, six times as high a percentage reported practices adopted as was true among women making no such contact. More than twelve times as many changes per 100 homes were also reported for the contact group as for the noncontact group.

In order to get the most out of extension work farm women should belong to the local home-demonstration club, attend extension meetings, and in other ways inform the extension workers of their interest and individual problems.

Home-demonstration workers must assume the responsibility of stimulating interest and influencing the women outside of home-demonstration clubs, by means of bulletins, circular letters, personal visits, news stories, and similar means and agencies.

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In the United States there are found honeys of many distinct flavors, each flavor determined by the variety of flower from which the bees gathered the nectar. In certain regions where farms are large it is not uncommon to find hundreds of acres of a single variety of nectar-producing forage plant. The white-clover belt in the central northern part of the United States produces white-clover honey in large quantities. In the Intermountain States, Nebraska, and the Dakotas, alfalfa and sweetclover furnish enormous crops of honey. The honey in the Pacific Coast States comes largely from alfalfa, orange, sage, star thistle, and fireweed, whereas in the South tupelo, sourwood, gallberry, and cotton are the principal sources. Buckwheat honey in commercial quantities is furnished chiefly by New York and Pennsylvania.