

AGRICULTURAL WORK IN CLINTON COUNTY, IOWA.

It is the privilege of the County Agricultural Worker to carry new methods and new ideas to many people who are not reached by farm papers or institute or short course workers. In Clinton County during the month of September, ninety-five meetings were held in country school houses and town halls. At these meetings the need of good seed corn was pointed out and the reasons why early freezing kills or weakens seed were explained. The need of the early gathering was emphasized and demonstrations of good methods of gathering and hanging the ears were made.

These meetings were attended by about 1500 school children and 1000 farmers. Men who know the county well tell us that never before in one year has so much seed corn been properly gathered and dried in this community. One man who has formerly had a good trade in seed corn hangers said that his business had been ruined. He said that when he tried to sell a farmer the hangers he was laughed at and told that the boys and girls had come home from school and showed how to tie up the seed with only a few cents worth of binder twine.

Nearly every one within reach attends a good county fair. Headquarters were established in a tent at the county fair at DeWitt during the second week of September and doubtless there were many among those talked with who would rarely if ever be found reading farm papers or attending institutes. Bottles of preserved corn roots containing corn root worms, a bale of alfalfa hay and several strings of seed corn attracted much attention and the County Adviser was kept busy explaining how to get rid of various insects and weeds, how to grow alfalfa and how to care for the seed corn.

It was interesting to note what the farmers problems are as indicated by the questions asked at the school house meetings and at the County Fair. More questions were asked regarding hog cholera and bad weeds than along other lines. Cholera has been prevalent in many parts of the county during the Fall. In order to give the interested people an opportunity to know the truth regarding the nature of the disease and the remedy for it, arrangements were made for four meetings in different parts of the county the last Friday in October. D. W. R. Niles of the Bureau of Animal Industry of the United States Department of Agriculture, who had charge of the experiments and investigations leading to the perfection of the serum treatment for hog cholera spoke at the four meeting. The trip of Ninety-six miles around the county was made in an Auto.

About three hundred and fifteen men attended the four meetings. Since that time there have been increased demands on the veterinarians of the county for vaccinating herds of hogs in neighborhoods where the disease is prevalent. The greatest difficulty in connection with the treatment is the securing of good serum. Owing to the inadequacy of the Iowa Laws providing for the production of serum at a state plant, serum must be secured from private companies. This makes the expense of vaccination heavy and leads to the use of some poor serum put out by unscrupulous concerns. At the close of one of the larger meetings a movement was started by the farmers present to urge the legislature during the coming winter to arrange for the manufacture at the state plant of sufficient serum for use in Iowa and for its sale at cost.

During the winter two short course schools will be conducted and several meetings will be held in townships not in reach of the short course schools. These short course schools and meetings will in most

cases be held under the auspices of the Township Units of the County Association. In one corner of the county, the established Farmer's Institute will provide the meeting and in another corner an organization of farmers of four townships, which has been doing good work for two or three years past, will have charge.

The perfection of the organization of the Township Units of the County Association will occupy the first half of the winter. When the local organizations are perfected, it will give Clinton County a very strong working organization. These local organizations are being made up of men who subscribed to the County fund. In each township association, one director is elected for each ten dollars subscribed. Since the county association is united with the Clinton Commercial Club, as one of its committees, each of these local directors becomes an ex-officio member of the Clinton Commercial Club. The Chairman of the local boards of directors, together with a few city members, make up the County Agricultural Committee under whose management the County work is being conducted.

The directors of the local associations are being selected from different parts of their townships, the purpose being that they will take the lead in their respective neighborhoods. Some are already planning to organize neighborhood clubs to which all of each family will belong. The directors of each local organization will act as an advisory board for the County Agricultural Adviser in that community.

It is the purpose of the County Committee to work along three definite lines during the coming year, namely, the securing of suitable seed corn for local conditions and its general introduction over the county, the introduction of alfalfa and the eradication of hog cholera.

In co-operation with the County Board of Supervisors, comparative tests of about one hundred of the best types of corn now being grown

on the county will be made on the county farm. This seed now being raised by different men will be selected at the meetings held during the winter. At the end of the season the ones producing the most corn of good quality will be selected for further testing the second year and during the third year seed from the best will be grown for general distribution.

The plan for the introduction of alfalfa is the same as is being followed by several experiment stations, that is, the seeding of alfalfa at different times and in different ways in small areas on the farms of those interested. Many have already signified their wish to co-operate in this work.

The plans for eradicating cholera will depend some what on the nature of the laws passed at the coming session of the Legislative. If state prepared serum can be secured at cost or possibly free for use in vaccinating herds surrounding centers of infection, the work will be greatly facilitated. With a complete series of advisory boards in all parts of the county, the county adviser can be notified of any outbreaks of cholera and steps taken to stamp it out before it spreads from the center of infection.

While the work the first year will be centered on the three things mentioned above, the larger problems of maintaining the soil fertility, building and maintaining permanent roads, improvement of the school system, providing adequate social life, etc., will not be overlooked and will be led up to for more definite work in the future.

The great purpose of all the work is to make Clinton County as good a place to live, divest money and bring up a family as can be found any place. The union of the people of the country and the people of the city, which the plan of organization provides, into one close organization

will it is hoped, greatly help in making this final purpose a reality.