

Ames, Iowa, June 3, 1908.

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Professor P G Holden

Ames Iowa

Dear Professor Holden

I beg to submit the following plan of work
for the Public School Division of the Department of
Agricultural Extension for the year beginning July
1, 1908 and ending June 30, 1909.

Sincerely yours

W. H. Storm

SUGGESTIONS FOR YEAR 1908-09.

The three great purposes that have animated the work in Public School Agriculture in the past must continue to animate it for the year to come; viz.

1. The developing of favorable public sentiment.
2. The preparation of material to be taught.
3. The preparation of the teachers.

DEVELOPING PUBLIC OPINION.

As indicated in my report, public opinion is already so favorable that a little larger proportion of time can be spent upon the other two purposes where much remains to be done. However, no opportunity should be lost to assist the public in coming to sound conclusions as to the need, the value and the character of the work in Public School Agriculture.

Public addresses should be made to patrons, pupils and others. Articles should be written for the press. Information should be printed and distributed and all available agencies should be used to develop and promote interest in agricultural education.

Collections of pictures, printed matter, charts, maps, etc, should be displayed at the State Fair, the State Teachers' Association, Short Courses and other suitable public gatherings.

Corn Contests and Corn Judging Contests for boys and girls should be encouraged throughout the State. Many County Superintendents have held such Contests in the past and more are planning to do so the coming school year.

Plans are now being made for interesting thousands of boys and girls through the State in exhibiting corn at the Corn Shows at Omaha and at Ames the coming winter.

This will be productive of interest in local corn contests and ultimately lead to the study of these things in the schools.

Another means of publicity for industrial education that should be utilized is to have the friends of this Institution in the various Counties of the State have an annual "Ames" Picnic to which all former students of the College, members of the Legislature for that region, and

other friends of the College and of education, should be welcomed. Whenever possible some member of the faculty should be present and address them.

As indicated in my report every opportunity to visit schools or teachers' gatherings should be utilized. College headquarters at the State Teachers' Association should be maintained without fail and more members of the faculty delegated to assist in meeting the friends.

SUBJECT MATTER TO BE TAUGHT.

The greatest danger connected with the subject matter is that teachers will try to teach Agriculture from a book alone. The greatest fault of public education today is its bookishness. One of the best and most signal services which the rational study of Agriculture will perform for education is to demonstrate the value of using the child's activities and environment in educating him. This can be successfully done only by having the pupil study things (aided incidentally by the printed page). But if Agriculture is to be taught and studied as other school subjects are taught and studied by reading a book, then the teaching and studying of Agriculture will be a failure. However, the distressing lack of knowledge of environment which distinguishes so many teachers make it imperative that some guide be placed in their hands showing them plainly what to do and how to do it.

There should be issued from this office some printed circulars or a regular monthly publication for teachers and pupils giving instruction for work to be done in each month of the year. I know of no other way to meet so well the present need. Many teachers are anxious to do some work in Agriculture but know nothing of what should be done or how it should be done. Many more schools will study Agriculture as soon as some such suggestive guide as this is available.

The Correspondence Course discussed below will be of incalculable value in providing and wisely distributing suitable subject matter.

The constantly increasing demand for printed matter in all Departments of College work makes it pertinent to suggest that the College install a printing plant of its own and establish a Course in printing as some other Colleges of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts have done.

Another method of improving our matter and methods will be to

have members of the Department try some of their work in a regular school.

The County Superintendent of Cherokee County has offered our Domestic Science Division an opportunity to give a week's instruction in one of the rural schools of that County, which will be accepted and the experiment made.

A High School has offered to follow our suggestions in the arrangement of the half year of agricultural work, and in the topics used and has asked us to give some model lessons.

I think valuable results may be attained by accepting this invitation.

PREPARING TEACHERS.

This problem is by far the most difficult one as will be seen from the following conditions:

1. The average life of a teacher (in teaching) is 3 years.
Since city teachers continue much longer than county teachers, the average teaching life of a teacher in the rural schools is about 2 years.
2. These teachers are very young, probably averaging less than 20 years.
3. They are almost unanimously girls.
4. They have been educated in schools where book subjects only are studied, and they have been taught by teachers similarly educated.
5. Many of them being town reared, have little knowledge of country conditions or sympathy with country life.
6. It is so much easier for a poor teacher to teach a text book about which parents and pupils are more or less uncertain than to teach the concrete world of things about which they all know something and wherein the soundness of the teaching can be readily verified.
7. Text books with definite lessons, answers and methods all printed in the book are available in other subjects, but successful teaching of Agriculture does not lend itself readily to that kind of treatment.

8. Superintendents and Principals are scarcely better informed than teachers so they can render little aid to their assistants.
9. Wages are too low for many teachers to attend colleges or Normal schools, where Public School Agriculture is taught.
10. There are no such schools in Iowa to attend for those who are able.
11. A knowledge of the subject is not necessary to procure a teacher's certificate.

The difficulty seems insurmountable in the face of these adverse conditions; but Agriculture should be taught and teachers must be prepared. We must discover the ways and means. For the purpose of providing means of preparation, the teachers should be considered in two great classes. In one class place Superintendents, Principals, High School teachers, Grade and Rural teachers who contemplate teaching for some considerable time. In the other class include the great mass of young girls who expect to teach for a short period only, and who do not expect to attend higher institutions of learning.

For the former this College should maintain a Summer School here on the Campus, offering courses in the various Departments of Agriculture, in Manual Training, Domestic Science, and in all subjects required for a teacher's certificate. General Culture studies not included in the above could be offered if a sufficient number of students desired.

The College will not be fulfilling its purposes, meeting the needs of the times, nor occupying its legitimate position in the field of education until it makes it possible, through the teachers, for each district in the State to study in a sane, successful manner the fundamental principles of improved agriculture. I sincerely hope such a school will be established in 1909.

For the latter class of teachers efforts must be directed toward carrying the message to them. Gatherings of such teachers should be met whenever possible and definite and detailed instruction given them.

A few of the most proficient of them should be gathered together by the County Superintendent and instructed fully in some particular work to be taken up in that County.

Each County in Iowa holds a Teachers' Normal Institute of six or more days each year. From the number of requests to lecture to them and to teach in them, which I have been compelled to decline for lack of time, it is plain that some plans must be formulated to meet this need or the Superintendents will look elsewhere for help in Agriculture, or else the work will not be done at all. As the preparation of the teacher is the most vital work of the future and because of conditions must go forward rather slowly, we ought to be in a position to accept all opportunities to instruct teachers that are offered to us.

The needs really justify employing an assistant in this work for the whole year, but if that is not feasible, I would urge that it be made possible to procure additional help during some of the busy seasons, if suitable help is available.

As I have indicated in my report, this office should issue a regular publication for the guidance of teachers and pupils. This would be one of the very efficient means of preparing the teacher and ought not to be neglected.

We have already had many demands for charts, collections of weeds, weed seeds, insects, grain products, etc., to be used in schools for the study of Agriculture. Collections of such illustrative material and suitable cases for carrying and displaying them should be made by this Department and furnished to schools and teachers.

SUMMER SCHOOL.

The success of the Short Course in rendering valuable aid to the farmer and his wife, together with the need of carrying the message of Public School Agriculture and Domestic Science to the teachers, prompted us to try the experiment of holding a Short Course for teachers during the summer season.

Several localities were considered and Sheldon, O'Brien County was finally decided upon as the most desirable place, and July 13th to 28th as the most desirable time.

It is intended to give work in Agronomy, Animal Husbandry, Soils, Domestic Economy, Farm Botany and Farm Arithmetic, of such a nature that it will not only improve the teacher's knowledge, but will put her in more sympathetic relation to rural life and will give her a body

of matter and methods which she can use in her own school.

The County Superintendent is cooperating with us by holding her Institute in connection with it, where the branches required for a teacher's certificate will be offered.

The Board of education, the City Superintendent and the Commercial Club, are also cooperating with us, the latter agreeing to guarantee the the payment of any deficit that may occur.

With a fee of \$2.00 and the County Institute fund of several hundred dollars, the expenses will probably be met without resorting to the guarantee.

CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL.

All of the measures mentioned will be of great value in promoting the work, but owing to the conditions enumerated regarding subject matter and preparing teachers, the most efficient and far-reaching means remains to be mentioned. It is the Correspondence School.

There are hundreds of teachers that would gladly pursue a course in Agriculture and Domestic Science by correspondence if it were available, but they cannot go away from home to attend school. Hundreds of schools throughout the state would be studying Agriculture if the teachers were taking a course. Most of such schools will not take up the work for years, if they must wait for us to reach the teachers face to face. All our other labor of addresses, conferences, etc, will then become more permanent for those interested could go right on with their work by correspondence. Thousands of people in Iowa have been started in the the study of Agriculture only to be left more or less helpless on the departure of our representative from the locality.

If we could have offered a correspondence course to such persons during the past year, we would have had several thousand students enrolled with no additional effort on our part, for farmers, housekeepers, and teachers would hail with delight such an opportunity.

I know of no means half so effective in reaching all classes of people and making them self-helpful. This is particularly true of the teachers, some of whom have no access to any other present influence.

One Correspondence Institution that has enrolled 28,000 students from Iowa is now preparing a Correspondence Course in Agriculture. Why

should not our College avail itself of this great modern means of Extension education?

A Correspondence Course will promote Public School Agriculture in Iowa by leaps and bounds and if Ames does not occupy the field, some other college will and Ames should certainly be in a position to determine the character of the Agricultural instruction given in the schools of the State.

From indications the Legislature of 1909 will enact a law regarding the teaching of Agriculture in the public schools. Such laws are usually brief statements to the effect that Agriculture (and Domestic Science) shall be taught in all the schools of the State and each teacher shall be required to pass an examination in it before receiving a certificate to teach. The usual effect of such Legislature is to embarrass the real progress of education by forcing failure through inefficiency due to lack of time for the natural development of the work.

It is sincerely hoped that our Legislature will consider the matter more carefully and make provision for the gradual introduction of Agriculture into the public schools, introducing it only as rapidly as the teachers can be prepared and the subject matter developed.