

## THE PLACE OF THE COUNTY AGENT IN THE HOME DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

Where there is no Home Demonstration Agent

by

J. O. Hembre, County Agricultural  
Agent, Baker (Fallon Co.) Montana

The topic assigned to me perhaps does not call for arguments as to the desirability of carrying on Home Demonstration work in counties where there is no Home Demonstration Agent. I wish to say a few words, however, in this connection in order that the agents who are not very keen about spending a portion of their time on this work, if there are any such, may know how I justify the time so spent.

If Extension work in Home Improvement is to be carried on in counties where there is no Home Demonstration Agent then it is necessary for the County Agricultural Agent to give his cooperation to this phase of Extension work. In my mind there is no question as to whether or not this should be done.

4-H Club work, it is generally agreed, should be carried on in every county where Extension work is done. This is desirable because Club work is important as such. That is, its effect upon the boys and girls themselves is important in training the farmers of the next generation. Club work is also important because it is often our most effective means of improving the general agricultural practices among adults. These are two chief reasons why County Agents should and do give a portion of their time to 4-H Clubs. I think we will all admit that 4-H Clubs should form a part of the County Agent's program.

Exactly the same reasoning and the same arguments apply to Home Demonstration work.

The main objectives of Extension work in a county is the improvement of the farm homes. That is, to make living on the farm more satisfying.

I am so fortunate as to have a good wife and three children and a

-2-

and you therefore appreciate the very great need for having at least a few of the modern comforts in the home in order to make it satisfying.

I am glad, too, that I was brought up on a farm where there was not an abundance of this world's goods, so that I know from experience as well as from observation, the real need for improvement in the rural homes.

I have been in homes, and so have you, where there were two rooms. A homemade cupboard, a kitchen stove, a table, a few chairs -- none too safe to sit upon -- perhaps a wash stand or a box to serve the purpose and a folding cot furnished the kitchen. In the second room there is a bed, a dresser and a lignite stove. I am not saying this is not a good home. Many of these houses are good homes, but they could be made so much better and they hardly begin to satisfy the good mothers that work in them.

There are no rugs on the bare floors -- and the floors are so hard to keep clean --, there are no pictures, nothing but calendars, on the walls, scarcely any books, magazines, or papers. Now these good women have the same emotions, the same longings for the better things of life as your wife and mine -- they are just as much entitled to them -- and this problem constitutes a part of our job.

The chief objective of this Extension work is the improvement of these farm homes. That is the chief reason for the existence of this organization. That applies equally to every department of this organization: agronomy, poultry, livestock, clothing, nutrition -- every one of them.

The County Agricultural Agent through his program for economical production is doing a great deal for the improvement of farm homes. We should not overlook the fact that the improvement of the home is in itself an important factor in economical production.

The County Agricultural Agent can by giving his cooperation to other organizations and agencies do a great deal of direct home improvement work. Since