

# Colorado Agricultural College

EXTENSION SERVICE  
FORT COLLINS, COLO.

H. T. FRENCH,  
Director

Colorado Agricultural College  
and U. S. Department of  
Agriculture Co-operating

The  
Why  
What  
Where  
Who  
When  
of  
Boys' and Girls'  
Club Work



W. E. VAPLON,  
State Club Leader



THE FARMSTEAD



BOYS' & GIRLS' CLUBS



THE RURAL SCHOOL

# Colorado Agricultural College

FORT COLLINS, COLORADO

CHAS. A. LORY, President

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## EXTENSION SERVICE

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# **Organization and Plan of Boys' and Girls' Clubs**

By W. E. VAPLON

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Boys' and Girls' Club work in Colorado is supported by the United States Department of Agriculture and the Colorado Agricultural College co-operating. Some forms of club work have been carried on in the United States for the past twelve or fifteen years, and in Colorado since about 1913.

Not until August, 1914, was sufficient money available for the work to employ a State Leader. Since then, calls for help in organization and requests for information relative to club work have become so numerous that it has been found expedient to publish this bulletin, which it is hoped will give a fairly clear understanding of the purposes and organization of club work.

## **Boys' and Girls' Clubs**

### **Why**

After 25 years of investigational and experimental work by our experiment stations, of educational work carried on by the Department of Agriculture and state agricultural colleges, of the dissemination of millions of pages of agricultural information, the average yield of many leading agricultural products is still below a profitable figure.

The boy of today, who is the farmer of tomorrow, must employ more scientific methods in agriculture if he is to succeed, because free or low-priced land is rapidly disappearing; because hand labor cannot compete with machinery; because efficient labor is not only costly but hard to obtain; because all farm equipment is increasingly costly; in short, because more dollars, on which returns must be made, must be invested.

The demands for changes in the home are as imperative; the pump and pail, milk pan and hand-churn, wash-board and tin cooking utensils must follow the spinning-wheel and knitting needle; scientific methods in household arts must prevail if the housewife of tomorrow, who is the girl of today, is to fill the larger place created for her.

Thus it behooves us to make more of our conditions. We can do this best by education and training through information which permeates the lives of the rural population, rather than by forcing on them the unacceptable. By training our present generation of

boys and girls we shall have a future generation of substantial farmers, who will love their work and realize that the practice of agriculture offers as great an opportunity for scientific study, as much satisfaction and as substantial material rewards, as is offered by the so-called professional life.

Dean Russell, of Wisconsin, has said: "The hope of the future lies in the attitude of the young rather than in the transformation of the old. The gospel of better farming, like the gospel of the Nazarene, must depend upon individual conversion, and from the standpoint of results here on earth it is worth much more to get a boy or girl started right than it is to attempt to convert the crust-hardened sinner who has spent his early manhood in wearing out a farm by soil mining methods."



**Dairymen at the Colorado Home for Dependent Children**

To make the teaching of agriculture and home economics compulsory in schools without first training teachers and providing a system of supervision and proper equipment, would be worse than unwise. Hence the Boys' and Girls' Clubs have been formed by the co-operation of the United States Department of Agriculture and of the Colorado Agricultural College.

Club work is designed to make it possible for a teacher, or some other person in the community, to teach agriculture and home economics in a practical rather than a theoretical way.

### **What**

A club is a group of boys or girls, or both, organized for the promotion of a common object. The common object is the working out of a problem in agriculture or home economics.

The purposes of club work are: to demonstrate by actual practice the best methods of agriculture; to incite to greater pro-

ficiency in household arts; to promote the spirit of co-operation; to create a feeling of responsibility in the minds of the members; to provide a means of earning money while at school; to stimulate a feeling of friendly rivalry; to inspire love for the land; to foster the social activities of the community.



**A County Poultry Champion**

The club work is an added means for the child to learn practical lessons in thrift. One of the great necessities of the present generation of extravagant living is that our boys and girls should learn the lesson of thrift. Thrift should be the motto of Boys' and Girls' Clubs. Members are taught to conserve soil, moisture, time, material, money, strength and health. Thrift does not mean denial of the good things of life. In the words of a certain writer, thrift means "being industrious in whatever you undertake, spending money wisely, wasting nothing, whether time, money or materials."

Responsibility placed upon the shoulders of the boy or the girl is the only way to develop initiative in the child. Boys and girls do not want to be patronized and should be taught through club work that results come only from earnest effort. On the other hand,

boys and girls should be given full control of the results obtained from their work in the way of corn, pigs, poultry and garden products. Club members should learn the use of money by actually handling it; they are not likely to spend foolishly the money earned by hard work, and they have a right to resent being deprived of the fruits of their labor.

The accuracy required of club members in keeping records and the planning necessary to carry on the year's work, are good training in business management.



**A Club Exhibit at the School House**

### **When**

Clubs should be organized early in the school year if possible. This will make it possible for club work to be instrumental in promoting social activities; for the members to follow the best practices in agriculture, which in some instances call for fall preparation of the land; to give ample time for the study of the methods which will be practiced; to give members sufficient time to finish the club project and to prevent unfairness which might occur if sufficient time were not given for thoroughness. No clubs except sewing and cooking clubs should be organized after the first of March. Only in exceptional cases can good work be done by those enrolling after this date.

### **Where**

Provision is made for the carrying on of Boys' and Girls' Club work in any community interested in agriculture. Any rural com-

munity which will assure co-operation and support and will provide a leader, may secure the assistance of the county and state leaders who will help organize and foster the work.

### **Who**

Any boy or girl between the ages of 10 and 18 years may become a club member. Many children under 10 years could profitably join a club, and many older ones desire to do so, but an age limit is necessary. Generally those under 10 years find it difficult to successfully carry through a club project. Persons over 18 years may become members and will be entitled to all the privileges of regular membership except that of competing for prizes and awards.

Children should not be led to believe that club membership is an open door to a continuous picnic of play, social gatherings, prizes and trips, neither that club work does not furnish its own pleasures and rewards; rather should they understand that club membership is synonymous with entering a class in Arithmetic, or English or History, plus making the fire on cold winter mornings and sweeping out the schoolhouse, plus the play period during recess, and finally, the diploma signifying work well done.



**Club Camp at a County Fair**

### **Leaders**

State and county leadership is not sufficient to guarantee success in club work. Local leadership is essential to real achievement, especially in promoting social activities. The teacher, the pastor, a leader in the grange, farmers' union, or other community club, any man or woman interested in community welfare, who has faith in boys and girls, who believes in the country, and who will organize, interest, and guide the boys and girls, may act as a club leader.

Those who have a vision, who can see by faith, must realize the wonderful possibilities of developing manhood and womanhood along the lines of useful endeavor; these will consider it a privilege to engage in club work. Those who enlist from a sense of duty or because of urging must fail in accomplishing the real purpose of the work.

The leader does not need to have a technical knowledge of the subject matter of the club project; however, such knowledge would be very helpful. The bulletins and lessons sent by the Colorado Agricultural College to each member of the club are to be used as a text for the subject studied and are sufficient to help the leader make a success of the work.

For those teachers who will conduct a club through a school year and complete a course of reading as outlined by the Department of Rural and Industrial Education of the Colorado Agricultural College, the College will give, in recognition of this work, credits toward graduation in this institution. A bulletin outlining reading courses and showing what is required of those who expect to conduct club work with a view to earning credits, will be sent on request.

### **Organization**

Coaxing and wheedling should never be employed in organization. Those who fully understand the nature of the work they are to do, who realize its difficulties and rewards and who appreciate its opportunities, will probably accomplish something worth while; others not only fail to achieve results but their failure has a bad reaction on all club work in their community.

More than one project may be carried on in a community if each club has a competent leader. If only a few boys and girls wish to enter club work, they should be enrolled in the same project, as concentrated effort will accomplish more definite results. If only one child wishes to enjoy the benefits of club work, he should not be denied, but a few children should not be divided into a number of clubs.

When a group of children have been gathered together to be organized into a club, the procedure should be according to parliamentary usages. From the membership, the officers—president, vice president, secretary, and any other necessary officers—should be elected. Rules of order and a constitution will be found in the bulletin of each project.





**Garden Club Members Visiting the Colorado Agricultural College. Business Men Are Good Backers of Club Work**

### **Meetings**

Many county superintendents and school boards are advocating that a certain period of the week be devoted to club work, when this does not interfere with the regular studies. Children are usually so eager to have this meeting that they do superior work for the privilege. During the school year, meetings should be held as often as twice a month; during the summer months, once a month may be sufficient. These regular meetings should be for the purpose of discussing the work of the club and should take the form of a study club. Such meetings should be supplemented by community social gatherings held under the auspices of the Boys' and Girls' Clubs. There is a great necessity for such gatherings in rural communities and they will result in mutual benefit to the club members and to the general public.

When the enrollment cards are filled out and filed with the County Leader and the State Leader, and when all arrangements as to leadership, time and place of meetings are made, then the club is duly organized and the club will be presented with a charter.

### **Projects**

The club projects should be suited to the economic problems of the community, so that they may be profitable, practical, and pro-

gressive. There are ten projects now carried on in Colorado, viz.: Cooking, Sewing, Gardening and Canning, Mother-Daughter Canning, Poultry, Pig, Corn, Potato, Bean, and Tree Clubs.



**A Canning Team in Action at a County Fair. A Most Wholesome Form of Contest**

The plan of the work is progressive, being arranged in three-year courses. It is necessary for a child to satisfactorily complete one year's course before being promoted to advanced work. Thus, when a child has completed a project, he will have finished a three-year course of study in that subject.

### **Requirements**

The required work shall be done by the club member so that he shall feel when the work is completed that the accomplished product is really his own. Each child must study, under the direction of the leader, the lessons sent from the college. He must keep accurate records of all steps of the work, of time and money spent, and embody these in a monthly report to the local leader. Finally an exhibit must be made at a local or county fair and a story of the complete year's work shall be written by the member. These requirements will vary according to the project undertaken and will be explained in full in the bulletins containing the course of study. The report blanks, etc., will be sent to each member by the State Leader.

### **Prizes**

The leader should arrange for a local exhibit as a culmination of the year's work. A time and place should be set and the entire

community should be invited to exhibit with the boys and girls.

Club work will stimulate the competitive spirit and this should be encouraged especially between schools and between communities. The grange, the farmers' union, the parent-teachers' association, school boards, and other organizations may offer such prizes as they see fit, to spur on friendly rivalry. If possible, club should compete against club, community against community. This will develop a community spirit. In such competition the prizes may be school playground apparatus, books for school libraries, silver cups, pennants, etc.

If possible the children should exhibit their products at the county fair and at the state fair. The fair associations are very liberal and have always responded to requests for prizes.

### **Round-Ups**

Trips and camps have proven more popular than merchandise prizes in Colorado. The individual prize recognizes the achievement of one member, which achievement is often accidental, while the trip or camp is open to all who complete the work. The county commissioners and fair associations have been and will be eager to work with club leaders to make trips to the hills and to various points of interest, and camps at the county fairs, possible.



**A County Round-up. Cultivate the gang—the get-together spirit**

Last year 29 club champions were sent to the Colorado Agricultural College by ten counties as a recognition of superior work. It is hoped that county champions in the various projects may be rewarded by their respective counties with such a trip each year.

### **What A Club In Your Community Will Do**

#### *For the School*

1. Links class work with outside activities and vitalizes all schoolroom work.
2. Gives the teacher a means of approach to the home and gains for her the co-operation of the parents.
3. Gives the teacher a better insight into the life of the child.
4. Develops school pride and school loyalty.
5. Develops the teacher's industrial education and gives her an opportunity to work for a collegiate diploma.

#### *For the Child*

1. Affords an industrial education and thus gives the child the education which applies to his everyday life.
2. Directs the mind toward higher education.
3. Teaches the elementary principles of co-operation.
4. Provides a most efficient means of training in thrift and industry.
5. Trains the child in self-reliance and responsibility.
6. Makes the home life of vital interest to the boy and the girl.
7. Provides the child a means of earning money.
8. Develops business management, leadership, and initiative in the child.
9. Fosters the social instinct.

#### *For the Community*

1. Fosters community spirit and elevates its social life.
2. Promotes the love of rural life.
3. Furthers more scientific methods in agriculture and promotes a keener interest in household arts.
4. Through inter-school contests it furthers community patriotism.

Since the day of the "boarding around" teacher, the rural school and rural home have drifted farther and farther apart. The rural teacher too often knows little about rural home life and the rural home is equally ignorant of the work of the school. Can the idea represented on our cover page be made real? Is club work the third link of the chain of good fellowship and mutual confidence?

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*Does the work appeal to you? Do you want further information? Write to the Colorado Agricultural College, Fort Collins, Colorado.*

