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**The Relation of the County Superintendent  
of Education to the Boys' Corn Club Work.  
How to Organize a Club.**

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BY

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## INTRODUCTORY.

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The Boys' Corn Club work was started in Alabama in the Counties of Calhoun and Tuscaloosa by the United States Department of Agriculture, Farmers' Co-operative Demonstration Work.

Mr. O. B. Martin, of this Department, came to Alabama in the fall of 1908 and began the work with Supt. H. T. Persons of Anniston, and Supt. Perry B. Hughes of Tuscaloosa

Further plans were inaugurated to aid the promotion of this work in the fall of 1909. At this time the Department of School Agriculture in the Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Auburn, Alabama, was created by the United States Department of Agriculture, Farmers' Co-operative Demonstration Work in co-operation with the College of Agriculture, Auburn, Ala. This department is still maintained by co-operation between the Alabama Polytechnic Institute and the Farmers' Co-operative Demonstration work, and will be enlarged during the present year of 1911, so as to be in position to give more efficient aid to the work.

## OBJECTS OF THE CORN CLUB MOVEMENT.

The objects of organizing the boys, under twenty-one years old, in Alabama into Corn Clubs are to increase the production of corn, to improve the seed, to aid the young farmers in better methods of cultivation and a more intelligent use of fertilizers, to increase the interest of the farm boys in agriculture, and to encourage them to get an education along agricultural lines and remain on the farm. Of course arousing interest in one crop will lead to similar lines of work with other crops and will ultimately result in a more careful study of methods with all lines of farming. This will lead to increased production on the farm and will lay the foundations for better schools, better roads, better churches, improvement of the social life in the rural districts and a more contented and happy people.

## HOW THE WORK IS ORGANIZED.

In the organization of the work, the County should be the main unit and the County Superintendent of Education the leader and the central figure.

In some cases where there is a large school and several boys who wish to enter the club, a local club may be organized. Where this is done a simple Constitution and By-Laws may be adopted, officers elected, and meetings held, as often as the teacher may deem best, in the evenings after school or at nights. A local club may be organized and conducted about as a debating society is organized and conducted. The debates and discussions should be confined, largely, to agricultural questions. Boys joining such a local club would also become members of the main county club.

When the County Superintendent enters upon the work he should interest all of his teachers in the movement. He may interest them as follows:

(1) Have the subject placed on the program at the teachers' institutes and either discuss it himself or appoint some one to discuss it.

(2) By writing each teacher a letter explaining the work and asking his or her active co-operation.

(3) Upon his regular visits to the schools, the County Superintendent could use a little of his time in explaining the work to the teacher in the presence of the pupils. In

such cases the County Superintendent should enroll all the boys who wish to join.

In carrying forward the work in any county it is important to reach the boys in all sections of the county. The teachers should be requested to explain the work to the boys in the school and community, and secure the names and addresses of all the boys who are willing to enter the club and grow a prize acre of corn. This list should be forwarded, at once, to the County Superintendent.

This preliminary work should be done in the fall and winter. As soon as the teachers have sent in the list of boys the County Superintendent should call a county meeting for the purpose of perfecting the organization. This meeting should be held as early as possible so that the boys would have plenty of time to make thorough preparation of the soil. At this meeting, a Constitution and By-Laws should be adopted and a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer elected.

Suggested program for a county organization meeting.

1. Call to order by the County Superintendent.
2. Invocation by local minister.
3. Objects and purposes of the Corn Club work by the County Superintendent.
4. Adoption of Constitution and By-Laws.
5. Election of officers.
6. Discussion of various phases of better methods of corn growing by the county Demonstration Agent.
7. General questions and discussions.
8. Adjournment.

## SUGGESTED CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS.

### CONSTITUTION

Article 1. This organization shall be known as the  
 .....County Boys' Corn Club of Alabama.

Article 2. Any boy of school age shall be eligible to membership.

Article 3. The purpose of the Club shall be to make farm life more attractive and farming more profitable, to assist the public schools in teaching the fundamental principles of agriculture in a more practical way, and to assist the State College of Agriculture and the United States Department of Agriculture in carrying information directly to the farm.

## BY-LAWS.

1. The members of the club must agree to read all instructions on Demonstration Work.

2. Each boy must plan his crop and do most of his own work. If necessary, he may have assistance in breaking and bedding his land.

3. No boy in a county will be allowed to contest for a prize unless he is a member of the county Corn Club.

4. The amount of yield, by weight and measurement of land, must be certified to by each boy and attested by at least one disinterested witness.

5. Gather all the corn on your acre and weigh it in the shuck. Weight of corn in shuck.....pounds.  
Weigh out 100 pounds in the shuck, shuck and shell it and take weight of shelled corn. Weight of this shelled corn .....pounds.

6. No boy shall be allowed to receive more than two prizes.

7. Every member of the club must make an exhibit at the annual county contest.

8. In estimating profits, \$5 per acre shall be charged as rent of land. The work of each boy shall be estimated at 10 cents per hour, and the work of each horse at 5 cents per hour. Manure shall be charged at the rate of \$1.00 for each one-horse wagon loads, and \$2.00 for each two-horse wagon loads.

9. The judge, or committee of judges, for the annual contest shall be selected by the manager of the club.

10. Prize winning corn may be sent from the county to the state contest by the club manager.

11. In awarding prizes the following basis shall be used:

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| (a) Greatest yield per acre .....        | 30 points |
| (b) Best exhibit of ten ears.....        | 20 points |
| (c) Best written account of crop .....   | 20 points |
| (d) Best showing of profit on investment | 30 points |

Total .....	100 points
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## WHO MAY BECOME MEMBERS.

It is our desire to have every boy, not over twenty-one years old and large enough to work on the farm, become a member of the Corn Club in the county where this work is started. We wish especially to have boys who live on the

farm engage in this work, or if a man owns a farm and lives in town his son may also become a member, or if a boy has no land and has enough interest in the work to rent the land and enter the club, we shall be glad to have him also.

### PRIZES.

As a matter of stimulation and encouragement to the boys, prizes and premiums should be offered for the boys getting the best results on their acres. Where local clubs are organized, the teacher in charge may offer prizes for the boys in the local club. These same boys, of course, would also have a chance at the county prizes.

If the County Superintendent will make a little canvas among the business men of his community before this organization meeting is held in the early spring, he will have a fine list of prizes to announce to the boys.

#### SOME PRIZES THAT WERE OFFERED IN 1910.

A free trip to Washington, D. C.; \$100 in gold; \$50.00; \$25.00; \$15.00; \$10.00; \$5.00; a buggy; a bicycle; a two-horse plow; a gun; a suit of clothes; a corn planter; a pair of registered pigs; a pair of chickens; and other valuable articles. Interest has been greatly added to the work at times by the business men giving the members of the club a banquet.

The 1911 session of the Alabama Legislature passed a law under which it will be legal for the Court of County Commissioners or Boards of Revenue or other bodies having similar jurisdiction in any county to appropriate money for prizes in the Boys' Corn Club work.

If the Boys' Corn Club work is carefully explained to the Commissioners' Court and other bodies having supervision of the county funds, I believe that money would be appropriated in all cases for prizes for the boys' work.

Below is given a copy of this law.

No. 62.

AN ACT.

H-198

To authorize Courts of County Commissioners or Boards of Revenue of any County in which the State or Federal authorities shall take or have taken up the work of farm

demonstration or the organization of farm life clubs to appropriate funds for aiding in such work.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Alabama:

Section 1. That from and after the approval of this Act by the Governor, the County Commissioners or Boards of Revenue, or other bodies having similar jurisdiction, of any county in which the State or Federal authorities shall or have taken up the work of farm demonstration or the organization of farm life clubs for the promotion of agriculture, are hereby authorized to appropriate for aiding in such work such sum or sums as the county commissioners or Boards of Revenue or bodies having similar jurisdiction may deem adequate and necessary. Provided, however, that the sum or sums thus appropriated shall not in any one year exceed one thousand dollars, **and provided, further that nothing herein shall prohibit the use of part or parts of such appropriation for premiums or prizes to be offered for excellence in crop production.**

Section 2. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are hereby repealed.

Approved February 28, 1911.

### SOME RESULTS OF THE WORK.

This movement has been eminently successful wherever it has been undertaken with energy, and determination. In the great agricultural states of the central west, the Boys' Corn Club work is looked to as the prime factor in stimulating interest in better farming and in arousing the boys on the farm to the possibilities of agriculture as a profession.

In Alabama the work is well under way. At present there are about 3,800 boys listed in the work in about 52 of the counties. Last year there were about 2,000 boys in the work in about 17 counties.

In these 17 counties the boys were entered for the State prizes where they competed directly with the men. In this contest the boys won 13 out of the 17 prizes. The average yield of these boys being 86.9 bushels per acre, and the average of the men 83.5 bushels per acre.

At a meeting of a corn club, in one of the best corn club communities last fall, the boys reporting showed a total yield of over 2,000 bushels of corn. The yields in this case were from 40 to 110.5 bushels per acre and the average yield was

over 70 bushels per acre. The average ordinary yield in this section was about 15 bushels per acre.

Below is given a summary report of ten boys whose corn was sent to the national corn exposition, Columbus, Ohio.

NAME	Bushels per acre	Cost per acre (1)	Value per acre (2)	Profit per acre (3)
Arthur Acton, Birmingham, R. 4	105	\$31.45	\$78.75	\$47.30
Lloyd Barron, Notasulga, R. 1	99.44	19.00	74.58	55.58
Lofton Brock, Cuba	102	51.25	76.50	25.25
Jas. L. Elliot, Ramsey	153	(not given)	---	---
Hughey Harden, Banks, R. 1	120	35.65	90.00	54.35
J. J. Phillips, Jacksonville, R. 3	80	20.00	60.00	40.00
Mack Sawyer, Jones Mill	110.5	(not given)	---	---
H. H. Scott, Fort Payne, R. 3	76.5	17.21	57.38	40.17
Grover Shamblin, Dewdrop	80	21.15	60.00	38.85
B. C. Smith, Evergreen	109.5	30.25	82.13	51.88
Averages	103.5	28.25	72.42	44.17

In getting the cost per acre under column (1) rent of land was charged at \$5.00 per acre, labor of the boy at 10 cents per hour, labor of horse at 5 cents per hour, fertilizers, manures and other items at actual cost. In estimating the value of the crop under column (2), 75 cents per bushel was allowed for the corn. Column (3) is the difference between column (1) and column (2).

The average cost per bushel of this corn was slightly more than 27 cents. While this crop was being made the farmers of Alabama were paying about \$1.00 per bushel for corn. It certainly pays the farmer to raise his own corn.

The most important lesson to learn from this table, however, is the wonderful possibilities of our soils. If these acres will produce such large crops at such a splendid profit it can be done on a large scale all over Alabama.

"Many of the boys in the clubs who begin to study agriculture in this way will continue the study in the agricultural colleges; others will continue such efforts on their farms, and all of them will make more useful and more efficient citizens. From the pleasant and profitable experience of owning and managing their small plants they will develop into independent, intelligent farmers. The country needs a citizenship, and such a life offers, and will offer, great opportunities for the future. The professions are crowded, and the wage earners must pay high prices for the necessities of life. The wise and judicious producer can enjoy health, wealth, and contentment. Success in this work is good training for usefulness in any line. The question is,

How many boys can be reached and influenced thus to succeed?"

To have better methods of farming adopted by the whole farming people and to secure larger yields from our lands, at the lowest possible cost without exhausting the soil, are the most serious educational problems confronting us today. With the active lead of the County Superintendents, and the co-operation of the teachers and the schools, these problems may soon be solved.

This work offers an opportunity for the county superintendent to take the lead in the greatest movement yet projected where real patriotic service is needed. It offers the rural teachers a chance to make the school of real service in helping to solve the many difficult problems of the farm. It will give new life to the school and make the school the center of interest in the community.

In conclusion, I desire to express my very great appreciation for the active support and co-operation of those demonstration agents, county superintendents and teachers who have shown an interest in this great work. If the proper impression could be given to the public, the impression which I would have go abroad, it would be that the county superintendents, demonstration agents and teachers are doing this work and I am merely helping them as best I can.