



## **From Forest to Field: Agriculture in Bonner County**

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This document provides a detailed look at the history of agriculture as one of the cornerstones of industry in the Bonner County region. Research was compiled over the course of 2014 and 2015 via the archives at the Bonner County History Museum, the East Bonner County Library, and the University of Idaho, as well as interviews with local residents, a variety of texts on agriculture, and various other local sources. In addition to research, the staff of the Museum also completed a full inventory of the artifacts in the current collection that relate to agriculture in Bonner County, this includes objects, archive materials, oral histories and photographs. Where we have found holes in the collection, we have reached out to members of the community for donations. Additionally, the museum has collected 18 oral histories relating to agriculture, and will continue to add to this collection. All of the oral histories are catalogued and available to listen to in the museum, both in complete form, and as segments via our Oral History Listening Station exhibit. As the collection continues to grow we will update our digital catalogue so that interested individuals might access this information. This document, and its attachments, is available for research purposes in the archives of the museum. It will also be archived with the Idaho Transportation Department and the State of Idaho Historic Preservation Office.

This text was produced in conjunction with a permanent exhibit, of the same title, installed at the Bonner County History Museum. The exhibit is comprised of artifacts from the collection of the museum, as well as objects on long term loan from local residents, and images and documents from our archives.

A full listing of all photographs, objects and archival materials in the museum collection is included with this document on the form titled "Museum Agriculture Collection." The spreadsheet includes the following three categories: "Description", which is a short description of the object; "Object ID", which is our internal numbering system; and "Object Name" which indicates the type of object. The list is sorted by Object ID number. Additionally, all of the photographs used in the exhibit have been included with this report.

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# History of the Area – From Forest to Field

Glacial ice once covered much of the Panhandle of Idaho. Over time, the glacier formed what is now known as the Purcell Trench. The trench ran north from Sandpoint into British Columbia and filled the basin where Lake Pend Oreille is now located. Markings in the bedrock show the direction the ice moved, shaping such current landmarks as the valley at the mouth of the Pack River and rounding the low hills at Sunnyside, while the cliffs of the Green Monarchs show the power the ice had when it met a large mountain head on. The glacier moved on down the lake before a warming trend finally stopped its advance.

As the ice melted a large ice dam in the Clark Fork River Valley, near what is now the Idaho-Montana Stateline, formed Glacial Lake Missoula and impounding much of the water, in some areas to depths of over 3,000 feet. The lake extended east to the Continental Divide near Helena, MT, and north into Glacier National Park and Canada.

As the weather warmed, the pressure of the water finally caused the ice dam to float, resulting in a series of 70-100 floods occurring somewhere between 12,000 and 15,000 years ago. These enormous walls of water loaded with glacial debris raced southwest through the Clark Fork, Pend Oreille and Spokane Valleys and eventually entered the Columbia Basin, scouring the soil from the bedrock and leaving in their wake the scablands of Eastern Washington and depositing the top soil from three states in the Willamette Valley in Oregon. A sampling of well driller reports throughout the Hoodoo Valley show glacial wash material for the first 75 to 100 feet, underlain by clay and silt to about 200 feet. Below the clay and silt lie alternating layers of gravels and decomposed or fractured granite.<sup>1</sup> After the waters receded, vegetation took hold and grew in the areas savaged by the floodwaters.

Ten thousand years of warming allowed plant succession to colonize the Panhandle of Idaho, covering the area with dense coniferous forests, from the water's edge of the lakes and rivers to the high rocky ridges of the mountains. These dense forests resulted from the moist warm air from the Pacific Ocean coming in contact with the mountains, where the air loses some of the moisture as precipitation, much of it as snow during the winter months.

The valleys, benches and wetter sites were ideal for cedar, hemlock and grand fir that grew 150 feet tall and from four to 12 feet in diameter. Douglas fir, larch and ponderosa pine thrived on the drier ridges in the valleys and south facing slopes of the mountains, while spruce and alpine fir took over in the higher elevations. The majestic white pine thrived wherever there was sufficient moisture and soil available. The forest eventually became so dense that the only natural openings in the forest were between the high and low water levels of Lake Pend Oreille and Pend Oreille River.

The large mature trees that covered the land were of no use to the Native Americans who started occupying the area about 5,000 years ago, thousands of years before the Europeans arrived. The forests actually presented a barrier to travel. Trails were restricted to natural openings in large mature timber stands and ridges with soil too thin to support the large trees. This is evident in an

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<sup>1</sup> Hoodoo Valley History

Annual Report by the Department of the Interior in 1898, “The Priest River Reserve is a forest region. Its natural peculiarities are such that it can never become an agricultural section, and all efforts to make it such should be discontinued. Its chief value lies in the immense forest growth it is capable of maintaining, and in whatever mineral deposits time may disclose.”

When the fur traders arrived in 1809, they brought iron axes that were capable of falling trees and working them into planks. These planks were used for building boats and the logs were used to create dwellings and shelters. Axes helped clear windfalls from trails, but they were not capable of working the larger trees. David Thompson, a representative of the Northwest Fur Company which was later absorbed by the Hudson Bay Company, established Idaho’s first trading post in 1809 on the shores of Lake Pend Oreille about 4 ½ miles from the present site of the town of Hope. This trading post, which he called Kullyspell House, consisted of two buildings, one for living in and one for storing furs. These were the first houses erected by white men in Idaho. In one of them, David Thompson enacted the first commercial transaction in the State when he exchanged more than one hundred skins brought in by the Indians of that vicinity. Kullyspell House was used as trading post until it was abandoned for a more favorable location on the Clark Fork River near the present location of Woodland, Montana. None of these cabins survived, although there is a record of the sites on which they were built.<sup>2</sup>

Having explored Lake Pend Oreille and the Columbia River from its source to its mouth, David Thompson, a skilled mapmaker, made the first accurate charts of the area, the Clark Fork River, the Columbia River, and the first account of what is now Bonner County.

As early as 1840, Father DeSmet was a frequent visitor to this part of the state. And as early as 1860, the Hudson Bay Company operated a trading post at Seneacquoteen on the Pend Oreille River about 14 miles from the mouth of Lake Pend Oreille. This post was located near the present town of Laclede. Seneacquoteen is a crossing situated on a comparatively narrow place on the river where Indians were accustomed to crossing, a stop along the Wild Horse Trail. It was this place that was first designated as a county seat for Kootenai County. Before the county was formally organized, however, the designation was changed to Rathdrum and Seneacquoteen never actually became the county seat.

The discovery of gold near Helena, Montana, was largely influential in the establishment of mail and freight routes across Northern Idaho and Lake Pend Oreille. The northern outlet stretched from California to the Columbia River, overland to Lake Pend Oreille, across Lake Pend Oreille, and overland again to Thompson, Montana.

The mail freight route provided transportation from San Francisco and Portland, up the Columbia River to Walla Walla. From Walla Walla, they used pack trains to avoid the rapids and went overland to Lake Pend Oreille. They then went across the lake by boat from the present site of Bayview to Woodland, Montana. From there they again went overland by pack train to Helena.

In 1864, the steamer “Mary Moody” and two other boats were built at Seneacquoteen to pick up mail at the steamboat landings and transport it across the lake to a settlement about where Sandpoint now stands. From there, the mail was taken on horseback through the mountains to

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<sup>2</sup> Extension office annual report

Missoula. The first post office in the area was established in a little village called Ventnor about 1880. Ventnor was approximately 3 ½ miles across the lake from Sandpoint.

In 1869 surveyors with the Northern Pacific Railroad traversed North Idaho while doing reconnaissance to see if a route were feasible for construction of the railroad through the Idaho Panhandle. The surveyors could not help but take notice of the available timber, with trees measuring twenty-five feet around and stretching well over two hundred feet into the sky. By 1881 trees began falling as the right-of-way men cleared a fifty-foot swath through the forest and logs were taken to sawmills established along the line to be made into ties, bridge timbers, and lumber for railroad stations and other buildings. Small Brothers, later Small & Ellis, ran one such mill at Dry Lake, north of today's town of Athol, and later moved their mill farther east to Ellisport, just past Hope. The graders, bridge carpenters, and track layers followed in succession as the railroad approached Lake Pend Oreille.<sup>3</sup> The 1890s saw the arrival of the Great Northern Railway which signaled the start of a period of steady growth and expansion for the area. Eventually, the area attracted three transcontinental railroads (the Northern Pacific, Great Northern and the Canadian Pacific) on their way west. With three transcontinental railroads crossing the area, many felt that what was to become Bonner County was destined to be a center for business and manufacturing.

The first big business came in the form of the lumber industry, with the first sawmill opening in 1880 by Robert Weeks (who also owned a general store, dealing primarily in furs, a hotel and a bar). The mill eventually failed financially. Other small mills sprang up, including O.A. Dodge at Fish Lake and Frederick Post in Rathdrum, both built in 1882. By the early 1900s, the scene had grown dramatically with 20 large mills in operation from Harrison to Bonners Ferry.

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<sup>3</sup> [Nancy Foster Renk], "JA Glorious Field For Sawmills,"

# Description of Bonner County

Bonner County is located in the northern part of Idaho. As of the 2010 census, the population was 40,877. Bonner County was created in February, 1907, when Governor Gooding approved an act of legislature, cutting out the northern half of Kootenai County to form a new county, called Bonner in honor of E. L. Bonner who established the first ferry across the Kootenai River at the present site of Bonners Ferry. The seat of government was Sandpoint, the principal city of Bonner County today.

Bonner County has an area of 17,428 square miles, extends 45 miles east to west and is surrounded by Boundary County to the north, State of Montana to the east, Kootenai County to the south and State of Washington to the west. The county was named after Edwin L. Bonner who established a ferry on the Kootenai River in 1864 near present day Bonners Ferry, ID (now a part of Boundary County, which separated from Bonner County on January 23, 1915).

In land area, Bonner County has 1,109,248 acres with total area in farms at 166,080 acres. National Forest Land occupies 429,791 acres; the Bureau of Land Management, 76,616; and State Land, 149,848.

Bonner County is predominantly a cut-over section of northern Idaho, made up of broken forested foothills, interspersed with fertile valleys contiguous to lakes and streams. The valleys have an altitude of about 2,100 feet above sea level while some of the hills rise 4,000 feet higher. Climate conditions vary considerably from area to area. Rainfall difference and air drainage are the most variable. Temperatures at any one time differ only slightly from area to area due to the modified, continental type climate and are fairly moderate. The lowest normal temperature usually occurs in January with an average of 15.5<sup>0</sup> F. The warmest temperature occurs during the summer months with July and August the hottest of the year. July usually averages about 83<sup>0</sup> F., with August a few degrees cooler.

The average length of the growing season in the lower valley is 115-121 frost free days and 90-100 in higher altitudes. Air drainage has a greater bearing on the length of the growing season than altitude. The mean annual rainfall averages 28 inches. Seasonal distribution is uneven, with less than a one-inch monthly average occurring during the growing season of June, July and August. Precipitation is greatest during months of November, December, January and February and is usually in the form of snow.

Evaporation rate in most areas of Bonner County is lower than much of the State of Idaho with heavy dews most nights of the year. The run-off in Bonner County does not create any serious erosion problems, in spite of the fact of the very heavy rainfall and snow depths that occur in the county. There are adequate supplies of water for most purposes; however, in a few areas it is necessary for community water systems to pipe in water from either the lake or mountain streams for domestic use. The large supplies of water in Pend Oreille and Priest Lakes and in the Pend Oreille and Clark Fork rivers are used mostly for recreational purposes and power usage.

Vegetative zones, climactic conditions and terrain are somewhat similar of those of the British Columbia Province in Canada. The county has within its boundaries a large system of lakes,

including Lake Pend Oreille which has an extensive shore line of several hundred miles. Sandpoint is located on the western shore of this large body of water. In the northwestern part of the county, upper and lower Priest Lakes afford a mecca to the fisherman, hunter and the lover of the outdoors.

A valley traverses the county from north to south near the junction of Pend Oreille Lake and river, widening into a large, solid farming area north of the lake. The northeastern part of the county includes the Selle, Grouse Creek, Colburn, and Pack River farming areas, all cleared out of original timber stands of white pine, tamarack and other forest species. South of Sandpoint a long, north-south valley contains many small farm units hewed out of original wilderness forest areas. Cocolalla Lake is another rather large body of water lying in the Purcell glaciated trench along the highway from Sandpoint to Coeur d'Alene. The lake is noted for its bass and trout fishing, and has many farms and one small hamlet dotting its shoreline.

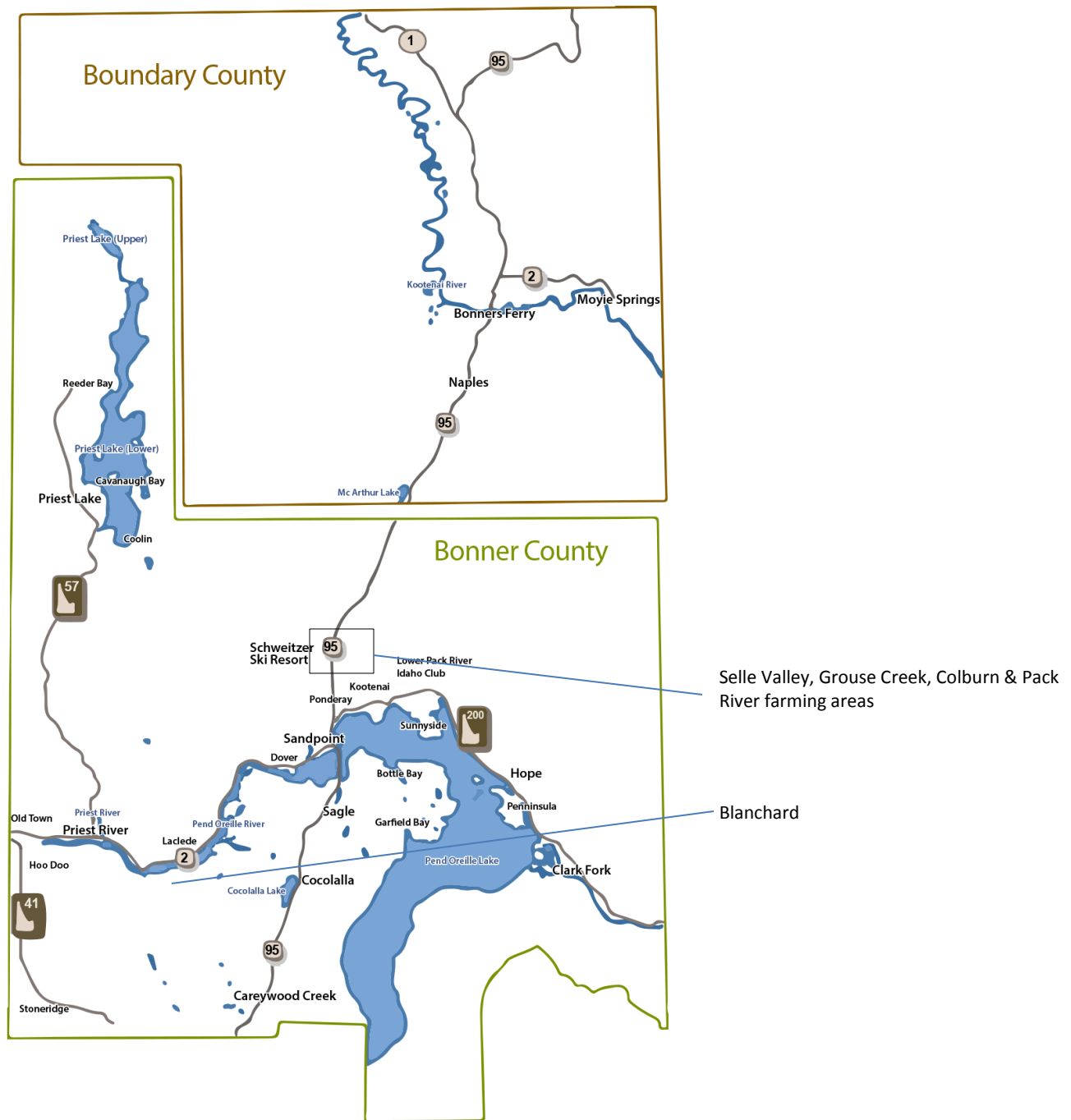
In the eastern portion of Bonner County lies a rich agricultural area starting at the towns of Cabinet and Clark Fork and extending along the northern shorelines of the Clark Fork River (which enters Bonner County from Montana near Cabinet Gorge) and Lake Pend Oreille. This lake empties into the Pend Oreille River at Sandpoint and flows out of the county into Washington, west of Priest River, eventually emptying into the Columbia River. A similar rich agricultural area lies to the west of Sandpoint and extends along both banks of the Pend Oreille River to the Washington State Line. The towns of LaCleve, Morton, Priest River and Newport lie in this agricultural belt. The Pend Oreille River drains Hoodoo Valley from the south and the Priest Lake to Priest River area from the north. The extreme northern portion of the county above Priest Lake lies eleven miles south of the Canadian boundary. The Blanchard Valley lies in the extreme southwestern corner of the county and is partly irrigated.

The Blanchard district is an area of western yellow pine growing on a rather sparse soil in the lowlands. A wide variance is noted between the moss covered rocks, thick timber and undergrowth of the Priest Lakes area a comparatively few miles to the north of this section. These marked variations in climates, soils and vegetative zones all over Bonner County makes an analysis of its soil types and farming possibilities a fascinating study.

For centuries the forested areas dropped their needles to the forest floor, decaying trees contributed humus to the soils, and resinous products of the former timbered woodlands infiltrated into the earth's surface. These conditions make for soils quite rich in some substances but lacking in others necessary to a rich agricultural area. The muck-peat soils found along rivers and in ancient lake beds are rich in nitrogenous substances but are sometimes lacking in potash and phosphorous so necessary for plant growth. Much of the soil is technically a loose soil, having in part been carried ages ago by high winds that swept over the Columbia Basin and deposited on hill and valley to a depth of approximately a foot. Because of this fact, certain soil types of the county need much fertilizing before high agricultural productivity is attained. Extreme variation in soil types (approximately 42 different soil types and series are found in the county), moisture and temperature provide a wide range of farm problems throughout the county.

As is true in most sections of the western United States, the best farming areas lie in the ancient valleys along lakes, streams and rivers, where the silt loam and sandy loam soils are to be found, along with the organic peat and muck types of highly impregnated organic residue.

The western yellow pine areas of the southwestern portion of Bonner County are very dry and carry a thin top soil of gravels, sands and very little decayed vegetation. These areas are generally used for grazing purposes just as the higher mountainous areas included within the Kaniksu National Forest. More than ½ of the area of the county is in National Forest Reserve which assures grazing facilities, perpetual timber resources and watershed control.





# Staking a Claim: The Homestead Act & the Beginnings of Agriculture in Bonner County, 1862-1910

The Homestead Act of 1862 declared that any citizen or intended citizen could claim a quarter section (160 acres) of surveyed public domain land. The claimant "proved up" on the homestead by making improvements on the land including building a dwelling and clearing the land and planting crops. After five years the original filer could obtain a patent for the land free and clear. In subsequent land laws, Congress intended to encourage, assist and reward ordinary Americans for opening the frontier lands and settling the West. Two of the most important laws to western states included the Desert Land Act of 1877 and Timber and Stone Act of 1878. However, Congress, reacting to all sorts of public requests and political pressures, enacted a bewildering 3,500 additional land laws by 1880.<sup>4</sup>

By 1890, it was clear that the supply of public land was not inexhaustible, and the original land laws were found to be fraught with problems. As a result, two laws were created, and these laws in turn formed the basis of the Forest Service today. These laws included the General Revision Act of 1891 and the Organic Act of 1897. These acts authorized the establishment and management of Forest Reserves (later National Forests) out of the remaining public domain.

Many in the west clearly opposed the establishment of the Forest Reserves. In February 1909, Idaho Senator Heyburn expressed<sup>5</sup> what many of his constituents were saying at the time. "The system [Forest Reserves] as now executed is paralyzing the growth of the State of Idaho. Businessmen and mining investors will not invest money within a forest reserve. They will not place themselves in a position where they must ask permission to do that which they in other parts of the country may do without permission of officers. American citizens prefer to have their legal rights established by law and not by consent. The Priest River Reserve was created on February 22, 1897, and contains 645,120 acres. This reservation contains a vast amount of land fit for home making and settlement."

In response, Congress passed the Forest Homestead Act of 1906, authorizing the opening of the Forest Reserves to free settlement. More specifically, it opened agricultural lands within Forest Reserves not needed for public purposes. Local newspapers were reserved in their response to this information. An article in the Bonners Ferry Herald, May 19, 1906, stated "Congress has passed a bill enabling settlers to locate lands in forest reserves, under the homestead laws. We understand that the land may be located by metes and bounds. The law has merit. We understand that the president has approved the bill. This will permit the selection of many good ranches adjacent to Bonners Ferry."

At the same time that the government was rethinking its original land laws, the population of northern Idaho [the original Kootenai and Shoshone Counties] swelled from 970 people in 1880 to 9,490 people in 1890<sup>6</sup>. The state as a whole saw dramatic economic growth at this time in both agriculture and forestry, as well as a population increase from 88,548 in 1890 to 161,772 in 1900

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<sup>4</sup> Szucs and Luebking 1997: 248

<sup>5</sup> USDA, Forest Service 1905: 7

<sup>6</sup> 4,108 in Kootenai and 5,382 in Shoshone

and to 325,594 in 1910. Considering that approximately 80% of the population was rural as late as 1910 suggests the continuing preeminence of agriculture. Moreover, agricultural expansion took place all over the state. Idaho's largest industry was, and still is, agriculture, and much of the state's activity is geared to agricultural production and related service industries.<sup>7</sup>

While early visitors to North Idaho noticed its potential for lumber and agriculture, difficult access prevented many from pursuing its potential. Instead, this growth can be attributed to the opening of mines in the Coeur d'Alene Mining District. Until reliable transportation arrived, Livingston-Little<sup>8</sup> observed that, "About the only deterrent to the rapid settlement of the undeveloped agricultural lands of North Idaho was its remoteness. In this regard, the difficulty of access and the fear of Indian dangers were outweighed by the purely economic considerations; there simply were no really sizable markets for the large crop potential of the region, and since most of their clothing and implements had to be imported, it was imperative that their crops be sold in an outside market. The development of large-scale agriculture, therefore, was dependent upon transportation facilities capable of getting the crops to a distant market at a reasonable cost."

The history of agriculture in northern Bonner County would not be complete without mentioning the hardships; financial stress and lifestyle the farmer and rancher endured and thrived on. Those arriving in the late 1800s found themselves in a total wilderness. A virgin forest dominated the entire county. Their challenge was to provide a living for themselves from this wilderness. The only clearings were stream bottoms where a few natural meadows existed.

A dwelling of some sort was the first order of business. The house and the buildings that followed were made out of what nature provided. This of course was logs. Cedar trees hundreds of years old supplied split planks for floors, doors and shakes for the roofs.

A garden also was of prime importance as this is what the family survived on. Enough deer and bear were in the country to supply most of the meat. Every creek had brook and cutthroat trout. What paying jobs there were was mostly related to the vast stands of timber in some way. Small sawmills were sprouting up to supply the railroads' demand for trees, timber and piling. New settlements needed lumber. Pole companies were soon established in Sandpoint opening a market for some of the settlers' timber.

Clearing the land was slow and labor intensive. The first land clearing was a matter of falling the trees, burning the slash and farming around the stumps. As time and means permitted the stumps would be blasted with dynamite and grubbed out with the help of horses and axes. Dynamite was shipped into Sandpoint in carload lots each spring by the Farmers General Supply Company and farmers bought it by the tons.

The open meadows of the Hoodoo Valley were some of the first to be homesteaded. In selecting 160 acres, the homesteader first determined which sections were owned by the Northern Pacific Railroad in the checkerboard pattern of ownership throughout the valley. However, surveys of Bonner County townships were not complete until 1896, and some of the earliest pioneers of the valley, those who came during the 1880s, found they had settled on railroad land. In 1896 Charles Selle homesteaded 160 acres in what is now the Selle community. He logged the trees

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<sup>7</sup> History Of Idaho: The Amazing Growth of Idaho's Agriculture and Forest Industries, 1890-1914

<sup>8</sup> (1965: 53)

from his land and while others logged their land and moved on, he and his family stayed and farmed their “stump ranch.” Railroad stations, schools, post offices, and geographic areas of the County were often named after some of these early settlers.

With the arrival of the Iron Horse (Northern Pacific in 1883, the Great Northern in 1893 and the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul in 1909) settlement and access issues were quickly resolved. Lured by the availability of inexpensive Northern Pacific land grants (the railroad had a total of 1,256,615.76 acres in Idaho within 60 miles of their right-of-way), scores of settlers arrived in the area. This is evident in the 1900 census figures of 10,216 people in Kootenai County.<sup>9</sup> Slow at first, railroad land sales reached 16,041 acres in 1897, 48,799 acres in 1898, 35,986 acres in 1899, and 104,672 acres in 1900.<sup>10</sup> Yet relationships with the railroad companies were not always cordial. In an article dated April 29, 1904 in the Northern Idaho News, it was stated that “the farmers along the line of the Great Northern have it in for the railroad was evidenced at Priest River this week when Henry Bicknell was arrested on complaint of the company and brought before Justice Hydorn charged with breaking insulators on the telegraph poles. The grievance of the farmers is said to have arisen over dissatisfaction with the alleged small amounts allowed them by the claim department for cattle killed from time to time by the railroad company.”

Around the turn of the century the lumbering industry arrived on the scene. The development of the timber resources in the area indirectly resulted from the depletion of the stands of white pine in the Midwest (e.g., Maybee 1959) and the improvement of the railroad transportation in North Idaho. As news of the timber resources spread, the industry grew. In December of 1900, the Humbird Lumber Co. bought the Sandpoint Lumber Co. Their operation grew to include their Sandpoint mill (located on 120 acres along Lake Pend Oreille, north of the present-day Edgewater Lodge on the east side of Sand Creek) and a sawmill in Kootenai (opened in 1903). The two mills were connected by railroad.

In Laclede Albert C. White arrived in 1909 from Saginaw, Mich., and opened the A.C. White Lumber Co. Priest River was also a booming timber town. The White Pine Lumber Co. operated until it burned in 1905. The Jurgen Bros. Lumber Co. rebuilt it and operated it until 1912, when it was sold to C.W. Beardmore.

But the largest operation remained the Humbird Lumber Co., which possessed a vast 200,000 acres of prime timberland across Bonner County and in parts of Kootenai County. Humbird acquired 18,000 acres from the Northern Pacific Railroad and the remaining timberland from private individuals. They started cutting the valley floors first. When that was depleted, they moved into the mountains. When the Weyerhaeuser Syndicate invested in Humbird Lumber Co., it was estimated that it would require 30 to 40 years to saw the visible supply of timber. Within a 30-mile radius, there were 500 million board feet of timber, most of it cedar, white pine, yellow pine, fir and tamarack. Sandpoint was known as the largest shipper of cedar poles and pilings in the Northwest for a time.

But the forests could not sustain the logging operations forever, and most lumber companies did not plan to hold onto the land long enough for the forests to regenerate. “We do not expect our timber resource to last forever,” wrote the editor of the local newspaper in 1901, “but just long enough to give us a start in other directions.” One of those new directions would be agriculture.

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<sup>9</sup> This includes the first and second indemnity lands

<sup>10</sup> Livingston-Little 1965: 64

After a decade of logging in the area, timber companies like Humbird were now proud owners of some 200,000 acres of stumps. Their best option was to dispose of these assets, which helped to reduce their tax obligation as well as generate much welcome income. Timber sales for Humbird Lumber Company's sales ran from 1910-1944.<sup>11</sup>

In 1910, the average land prices varied from \$2.50 to \$10 per acre. Humbird, in an effort to help boost sales, offered easy terms and allowed buyers to put only 10 percent down, with the rest payable over ten years at 6 percent interest.<sup>12</sup>

Humbird opened its first sale of cutover lands on June 11, 1910, preceded by a local advertising campaign that generated favorable press. Thousands of acres, "some of the richest agricultural and fruit lands of the county," would now be available, claimed the newspaper, with prices starting as low as fifty cents per acre. In reality, prices were much higher and averaged well over \$35 per acre that year, resulting in a paltry 3,350 sold, most of which were in a prime location close to Sandpoint and the nearby Selle Valley. The average price dropped to just under \$30 the next year and then plunged to \$16 in 1912. Three years later, an ad for Humbird lands admitted that prices had been set too high, and with recent reductions, "choice valley land" near the Pack River was being offered at just \$15 per acre. This downward trend in pricing continued for the remainder of the land sales, ending in 1944 at \$1.56 per acre for the remaining marginal lands. Over the thirty-five years of sales, prices averaged \$7.37 per acre. One reason for this downward trend was the high failure rate among the early buyers. Some may have thought they could turn a quick profit on the land but more than likely most left when confronted with the reality of dealing with fields full of stumps. During the first two years, more than 40 percent of the sales were cancelled.<sup>13</sup>

The jump in the population of the Kootenai/Bonner county area in 1910 to 36,335 reflects both the influx of settlers and the beginnings of the lumber industry. By 1920 this same area contained a population of 42,286.<sup>14</sup>

The first wave of settlers claimed the land most suitable for farms, leaving the marginal lands for later immigrants. Many were under the misapprehension that the rich forested lands could easily be turned into rich agricultural lands simply by being logged off. But successful homesteading required more than free land and a bit of hard work and determination. It also required money. But a lack of money and misleading promotional activities by landholders induced many to settle on lands that were unsuited for agriculture.

In 1917, Decamp recorded that "The agricultural exploitation of the region has turned the attention of many unable to purchase the privately-owned lands, to the homestead areas within

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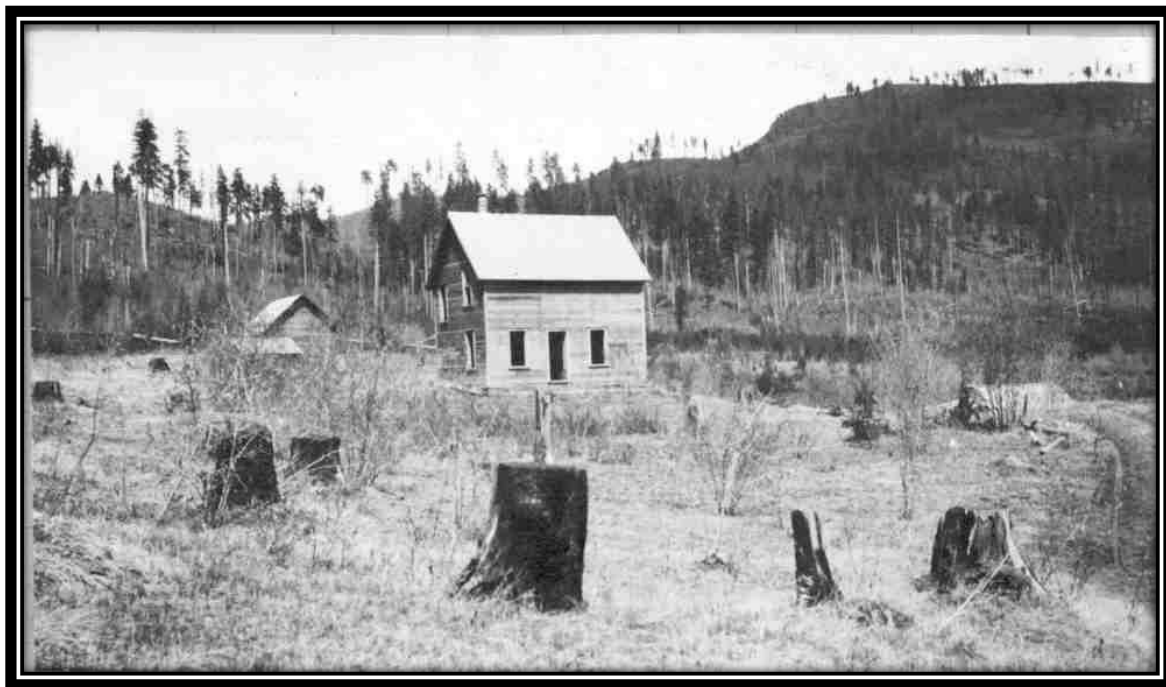
11 Humbird, "Humbird Lumber Company," 54-56.

12 Humbird, "Humbird Lumber Company," 54; Petersen, Company Town, 101-103; T. J. Humbird to J. P. Weyerhaeuser, 31 May 1910:1, folder 43 Humbird Lumber Company 1910-1918, box 28, file 7, P930 Weyerhaeuser Family Papers, MHS.

13 Ad, Northern Idaho News, 7 June 1910, 4:4-6; "Humbird Lands On Market June 11th," Northern Idaho News, 7 June 1910, 8:1-2; "The Story of the Humbird Lands," Northern Idaho News, Development Edition, February 1914, Part II, 2:1-6, 7:5-6; "Have You A Good Home?" Northern Idaho News, 14 December 1915, Part I, 4:1-3; "Humbird Lumber Company, Land Department," 31 December 1919, file 6, box 48, MC 80 A. M. Holter Papers, MHSA; Humbird, "Humbird Lumber Company," 55-56.

14 Idaho Department of Commerce and Development 1963: 231

the Forest. Due to the fact that the valuable white pine timber thrives best on the agricultural soils, the more accessible of the arable areas were alienated prior to the creation of the Forest, in timber claims. What remained was rapidly taken up under the homestead laws, until now there is very little land of value for agriculture remaining. What remained are mainly isolated strips along the creeks or the dry upper bench soils, formerly passed up as non-agricultural. The demand for homestead lands within the Forest has been so heavy that in instance after instance lands were filed on, partially cleared, and then abandoned because the agricultural value would not justify even the small amount of cultivation required under the Homestead law. Especially is this true of lands in the vicinity of Lake Pend Oreille, where the homesteader, blinded by the wonderfully beautiful scenery, in too many cases undertook to wrest a living from poor soils, and failed: his abandoned claim standing as a sad monument of lack of foresightedness, both on the part of the settler in demanding such lands, and on the part of the Forest Service in granting them.”<sup>15</sup>

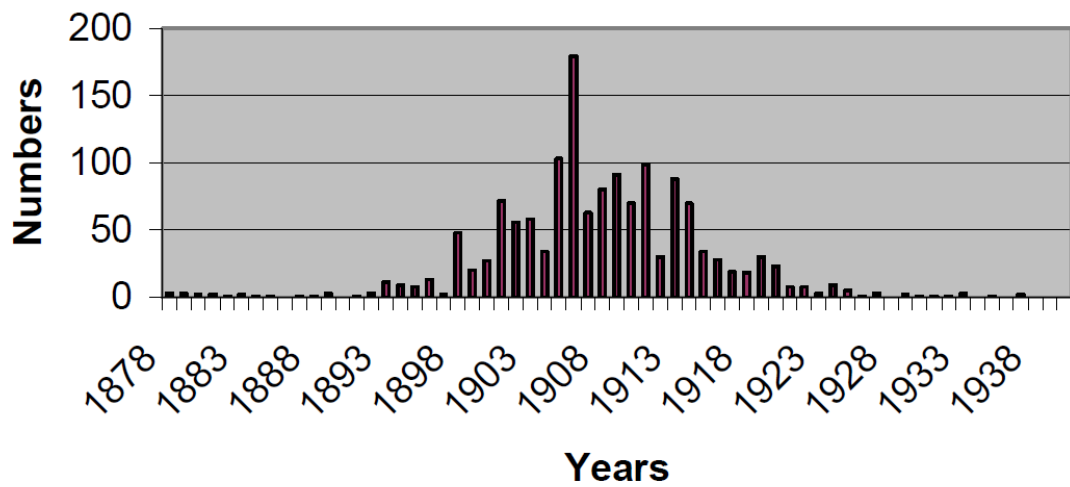


Abandoned homestead near Cocolalla, Idaho.

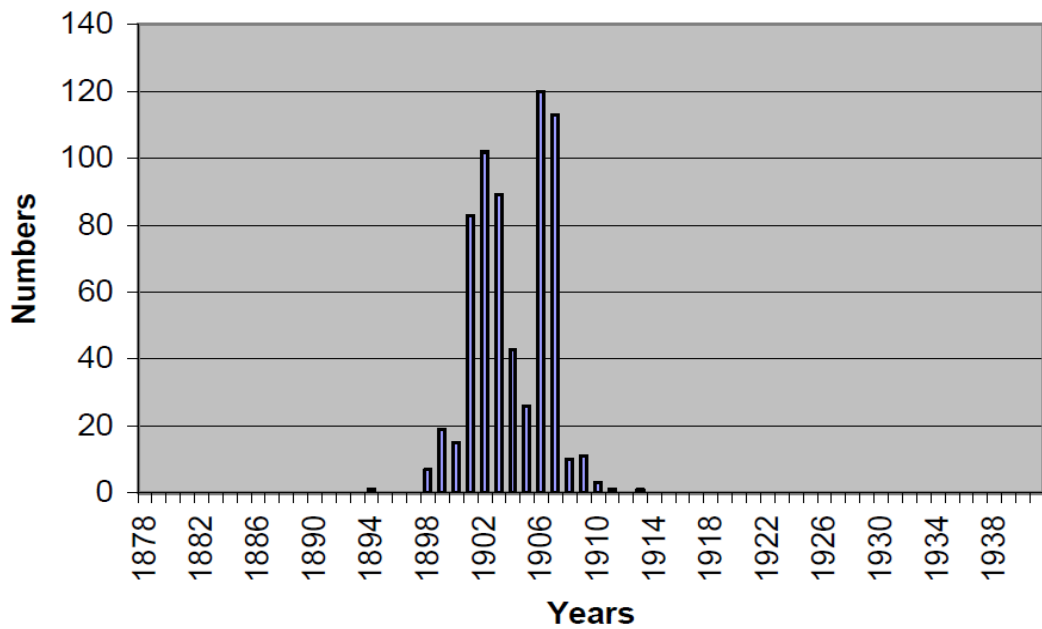
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<sup>15</sup> 1917: 7

## Homestead Entries in the National Forest of Northern Idaho



## Timber and Stone Entries in Northern Idaho Forests



“A promising young town, located in the heart of the timber belt and a rich agricultural section” was how the new town of Elmira was described by the Northern Idaho News in December of 1905. Between 1900 and 1925 farmers, and would-be farmers, came in from areas such as Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado as well as many other states, where they had heard of the cheap cut-over land in Northern Idaho. The first farms north of Sandpoint were mostly in the Selle Valley and extended to Oden, Hope and Clark Fork and later Colburn, Samuels, Elmira, Grouse Creek and Gold Creek. These families were willing to take on the task of clearing the land of stumps and logging debris.

Yet, the reality of life, preserved in oral and written history from the homesteaders themselves, tells a more accurate picture of the variety of ways that the Homestead Act and the Timber and Stone Act functioned in the forests of northern Idaho. The homesteader's stories also illustrate the diversity of life styles on a timber homestead in northern Idaho.

Gordon Needham (1971) presents this picture of homesteading as it took place on the west side of Lake Pend Oreille north of Lakeview.

Charley had a sister at Dayton, Wash. who was a widow with three children, she came to Lakeview to visit Charley and during this visit met Jack Needham, after a courtship of a few months they were married at Hope, Idaho on Nov. 4, 1897, Zora T. Magee Martindale became Mrs. Needham and moved with her three children to the homestead at Cedar Creek. The children were Viola Mae 12, Alma Ellen 7, and Franklin Wesley 5, this called for a school as another homesteader had 4 children, a site was selected about 3/4 of a mile from the Needham homestead and a log cabin was built on public land, the logs were cut in heavy timber near the site of the building, it was near a good spring and there was plenty of wood for the cutting. At this time the Needhams had a five room log house, a barn and other out buildings, a good bearing orchard, a horse, two cows, a dog, a cat and 20 hives of bees . . .

On Sept. 8, 1898, I Gordon Alvin Needham, joined the family, as there were no Doctors handy, my Mother was attended by two neighbor women, Mrs. Crisp and Mrs. Schroeder from Granite Creek.

In October of that year it was time to get the year's supply of groceries so my father rowed his boat to Steamboat Landing (Button Hook Bay now) walked the wagon road to Rathdrum, 22 miles, purchased the supplies which consisted of 8 barrels of flour, which was 32 49 lb. Sacks, 100 lbs of white sugar and 100 pounds of brown sugar and 25 pounds of coffee and the many other small items that are needed for a home. A team and wagon was hired to take the load to the lake and then to transport it by row boat to Cedar Creek, most of the supplies were stored in a building at the landing and many trips with 350 lbs in the boat was made to Cedar Creek, then old Billie was hitched to the go devil and the supplies was hauled to the house and stored under the stair way, it took about two weeks to get the trip for groceries completed. Just a few weeks later on Dec. 22, the house caught fire in the upstairs and completely destroyed the house with everything in it, only a few items could be saved among them a sewing machine and a few dishes. The family moved in with Christian Jones a bachelor who was our next-door neighbor. When the steamboat came in, the captain was told that Jack Needham had burned out, he told this at every stop on the lake and stated he should be back. At 1 o'clock the next morning the whistle of the boat was heard and my father and Jones went to the lake, the boat had made the trip stopped at each landing on the lake and picked up food clothing bedding and dishes and everything needed to start housekeeping again.

The following day the workshop was cleaned out, partitions were made from burlap gunnysacks, and the Needhams lived in it for more than a year. My father started cutting timber for the new house, it is built of logs standing on end and all hewn with a broad ax, there are more than 600 hewed pieces in this house, the original house consisted of six rooms, three bedrooms were added later and were made of sawed lumber. The living room was 18 x 20 feet with a big bay window which Mother had filled with flowers, they were often removed and a three piece orchestra moved in, we really had good dances there, at one of them we had 103 people . . .

There was always plenty of work to be done, wood to cut, garden to plant, weed and harvest, fruit trees to prune and spray then to pick the fruit when ready. Between times we could always clear more land for cultivation. All told we had about 60 acres [out of the 160 acres on the Needham homestead] in cultivation.

Or this story, from the Priest Lake area (Simpson and Simpson 1981: 40-2) farther north.

In 1919, Alva and Myrtle Allen filed on a 90-acre homestead in Sec. 32 T 63, N, R 4W, along the south shore of Upper Priest Lake. They built a log cabin approximately 200 yards south of what is now called Plowboy Camp Ground, along the Beaver Creek-Navigation Trail #302. Substantial remains of the cabin are still standing.

At the time the Allens selected the building site, the view up the lake extended to the mouth of Upper Priest River and the Hughes Meadow valley. By the late 1930s, the trees and underbrush had all but hidden the cabin from the casual sightseers who hiked along the trail.

Over the years, the couple completed the cabin with their own hands, using native timber. They split the shakes for the roof and hand-hewed the boards used for the floor, the trim, and front porch. Mr. Allen built all the furniture from birch limbs and cedar shakes. A spring south of the cabin was walled with rock. The water was machine tub and the main boiler from an old still. The two tubs had holes punched in the bottom and were installed in the sand which produced filtered water of excellent quality . . .

The Allens had no living relatives and rather than sell their homestead to developers, they deeded it back to the people of the United States, on October 25, 1934. They granted the deed with the proviso that they would have life tenancy.

Even though the first settlers tended to claim the best lands first, once in a while they overlooked a parcel. The Northern Idaho News in Sandpoint, Idaho (September 1, 1909) reported just such a case as front-page news.

Locates Homestead Just West of City

Jack Eamon Files On quarter section and Will Move Family There last week John Eamon located on a homestead of 160 acres less than four miles west of this city on section 18 of this town and range. There is nothing out of the ordinary about such a transaction, but to think that a piece of land with between two and three million feet of saw timber to say nothing of the thousands of ties on it, was lying so near the city without an entry being made long ago, as such is the case.

Sam Perry well known to nearly all the residents of Sandpoint was in Coeur d'Alene not long since at which time he looked the matter up in the land office in that city and discovered the fact that a part of section 18, township 57, range west was unoccupied and open to entry for homestead. He immediately told discovery and they at once located and now many old timers as well as some of the newer ones are wondering how the land happened to remain unsettled on for so long a time and so close to the city.

The land in question is about three and one half miles from the center of the city and joins the Woodward claim. A fairly good wagon road is already built to the claim, which makes access comparatively easy. Jack says a good creek runs on the property and can be converted to irrigation purposes with a small amount of work as well as piped into the house.

Last week lumber was hauled to the place and Mr. Eamon started the erection of a house on the newly acquired property. By the late part of this week the family will move to the ranch and will make their home there in the future. A cow and the necessary chickens have already been taken to their new home. Needless to say all of Jack's friends which are many are extending congratulations for this good fortune.

Nelle Portrey Davis (1942: 44ff) moved with her family from the dust bowl of eastern Colorado to a "stump ranch" just south of Bonners Ferry, Idaho, in 1937. A writer, she recorded her experiences in detail.

Knowing we had but little capital, Mr. Chambers directed us to a small tract only a mile away. We were so delighted with it that we looked no farther. It was a forty-acre place. The previous autumn a young couple from Wyoming had purchased it. The husband had cut logs and hauled them to mill, and erected an 18-by-27-foot house. Before completing it he had been killed by a falling tree, and the young widow had gone back to her home state.

Little and plain and box-like, the house stood bravely unpainted under the towering evergreens crowding all around it. The interior was roughly partitioned into four rooms: two small bedrooms, without closets, across one end; the other end divided into two oblong rooms, one of which served as a combination kitchen and dining room, and the other as living room . . .

The growth of timber included only a little jack pine or bull pine, and the ground cover had little thyanosis, or "buck brush," as it is called here. But these facts were not significant to us then. Now we know how



fortunate we were not to have put our tiny capital and our efforts into land containing an abundance of these growths, for their profuseness signifies too much sand for cropland.

In another respect, too, we seem to were just plain lucky. Within a mile of our place there is land, which is frost-free only one month in the year. Anyone foolish enough to plant a garden on such land will find it frosted down in June. If he has sufficient faith to cause him to plant again, he will find the growth cut short by an August frost. The disadvantages of "frost spots", or inferior soil would not be apparent to prairie-accustomed eyes, and have frustrated the hopes of many a stump rancher. These drawbacks make the land unfit for anything but meadow or pasture, and doom to disappointment a homemaker who wishes to grow a substantial share of his living on the soil.

The reality of owning logged-off lands, and the challenge of making it useful for agriculture, would dominate the scene over the next two/three decades.

In areas such as the Hoodoo Valley there were thousands of acres of meadowland which provided pasture for livestock, and a reliable source of hay that was cut late in the summer if the land drained sufficiently. The quality of the meadow hay varied, depending on the percentage of palatable native grasses.

Hay brought a good price no matter the quality. Because of the long winter season hay was always in short supply, and when large numbers of logging horses were brought to the valley, the price of hay went as high as \$100 per ton delivered by the Spokane International to the small towns of the valley.

Farmers soon began ditching their land to bring more of the meadows under cultivation. The lower meadowland was made up entirely of peat to a depth of 20 feet in some areas. Farming this kind of ground was a real challenge and required some labor; however it was much easier than clearing the higher ground of the huge stumps of virgin forest.

The large-scale promotion of ditching and draining (reclamation) began about 1906 with Paul Clagstone on his ranch at the upper end of the Hoodoo valley. Clagstone hired men to clear his meadows, some of the land covered with thick stands of small alder. He demonstrated how

**The Hoodoo Valley** received a lot of publicity in the early 1900's as a result of both Paul Clagstone's drainage projects and Bonner County's first University of Idaho Experiment Station at Clagstone.

Once the Clagstone experiment station land was cleared it produced excellent crops. Paul Clagstone's Kootenai Ranch had a large livestock operation, bringing in blooded Hereford cattle, as well as experimenting with a large hog farm. The June 20, 1909 edition of the Gem State Rural of Caldwell contains a letter written by Paul Clagstone: "I am writing to call attention to the great advantages of northern Idaho for certain forms of stock raising. Bonner County, in particular, with its many rich natural meadows and bottomlands, cool, shady groves of alder and poplar, innumerable springs, streams, and lakes, and a bracing mountain air which gives extraordinary vigor to all animals, offers fine opportunities to the stockman. Dairying, the raising of fine sheep and beef cattle on small farms, and especially the growing and finishing of hogs are bound to succeed."

It was 1909 when Clagstone wrote that Bonner County was to have its first real county fair at Sandpoint. He was planning to take some purebred Berkshire hogs and a collection of grasses and clovers as well as samples of field peas, artichokes, and carrots. Clagstone's hogs were raised in pastures, the largest being 80 acres surrounded by a heavy pole fence with barbed wire at the top which "stopped any predatory animals, which are common in this country."

the clearing and draining could be done. He also attempted to construct a dam across the valley east of Clagstone Junction, intending for the dam to hold water back from his fields while a pumping system would lower the water table on the other side. The project failed, however.

It appeared that the best solution was to drain the swamp lakes between Clagstone Junction and Edgemere with an excavated channel all the way to the Pend Oreille River. It would require engineering help, however. This was 15 miles of wetlands with very little difference in elevation between the head of the drainage at Kelso Lake and the foot where it flows into the river at Seneacquotteen. The organization and financing of the project required more time than Paul Clagstone had left in his own ranching enterprise. He was forced to declare bankruptcy in 1914 and leave his property to his creditors.<sup>16</sup>

But before he did so, he presented 200 acres to the University of Idaho in 1909 to be used as a demonstration farm. The Clagstone Demonstration Farm was located at the Clagstone Junction, Bonner County, on the Spokane International Railway, 25 miles southwest of Sandpoint. According to the 1914 Experiment Station director, W.H. Olin, the farm was accepted on that date by Professor E.E. Elliott, then Acting Director of the Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station. The purpose of this early farm was to “make this demonstration farm helpful to the man of small means by making the practical demonstration of most effective and efficient methods of clearing the land and putting into forage, feed and seed crops” writes Olin.

In addition to this 200 acre farm, reference was made in the Regents’ minutes that a block of land within the village of Clagstone and about 45 acres of land adjacent to the farm was also available to the University for demonstration.<sup>17</sup>

Because considerable interest had been shown by farmers in the cut-over areas, it was extremely beneficial to have the University establish such

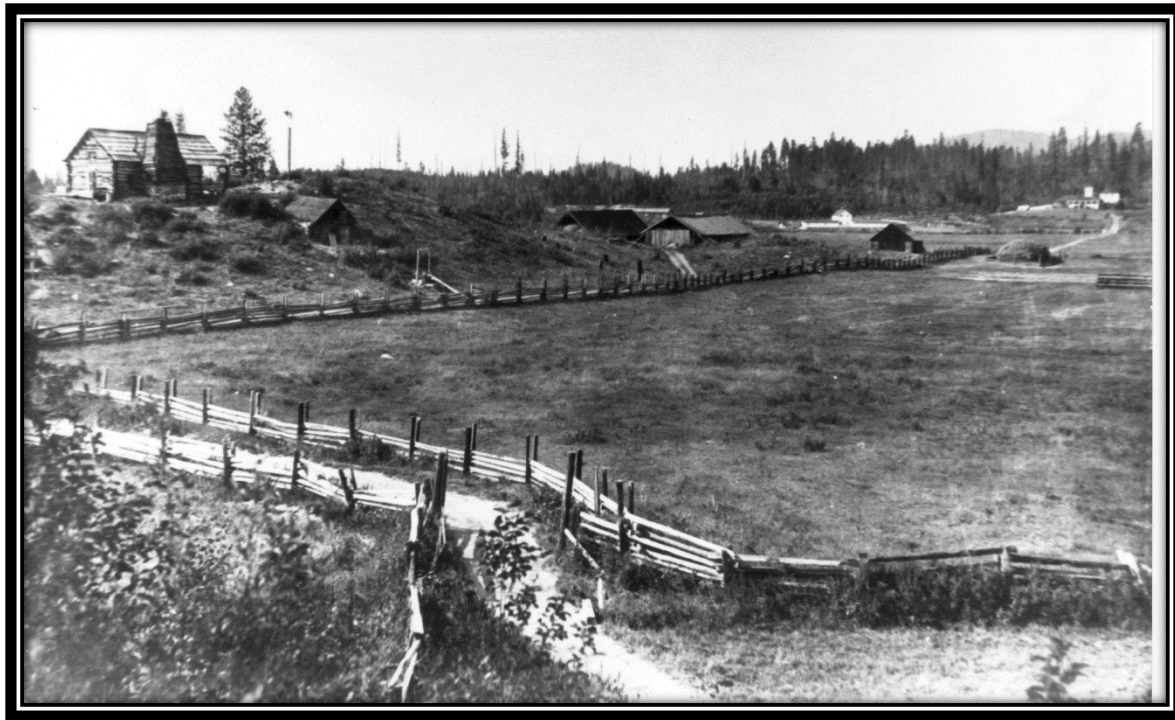
demonstration farms to show the best ways to develop the land and to determine the best crop and cropping sequence. The university bulletin No. 8, a 1907-08 Report of the Director to the board of Regents mentions this interest of farmers especially in the Rathdrum, Sandpoint and Bonners Ferry communities.



Hoodoo Valley construction work for Clagstone drainage project.

<sup>16</sup> Hoodoo Valley History

<sup>17</sup> From the unpublished manuscript written in 1914 by W.H. Olin, who was then directory of the Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station.



Paul Clagstone's main ranch house and buildings, 1909. Main house, paddocks and barns in background. Workmen's cabin in foreground. Cabin on left is original family home built in 1900 - big house built in 1902.

For the first year or more, the work on the Clagstone Station involved clearing the tract of dense undergrowth, second growth, timber and “40 to 100 stumps per acre.” This was done under the direction of R.A. Hunting. The early report gives considerable detail data on the equipment and costs of removing stumps and clearing land. Mr. N.H. Heidman was foreman of this demonstration farm and conducted crop research from April 1910 to about January 1914. This work was under the general supervision of Director Olin.

Early research on this demonstration farm involved soils research conducted by Professor J. Shirley Jones, Agricultural Chemist, who in 1912 established rotation plots. These plots were established concurrently and were compared with similar tests at Gooding and Caldwell Stations to determine the influence of soil and climatic factors upon the gluten content of three strains of Turkey Red wheat from Nebraska, Kansas and Idaho. Peas and pearl vetch, barley and oats were used in the rotation. At Clagstone the soils were slightly acid and the demonstrations showed good response from barnyard manure and applications of 750 to 1000 pounds of lime per acre.

Early work also consisted of tests with various legumes. Mammoth red clover, alsike and alfalfa were compared in 1911. The early problems consisted of proper inoculation and records indicated poor growth and the necessity to reseed alfalfa and other legumes. Various nutrient treatments were applied including top dressing of nitrate of soda, lime, and dried blood. The reports indicated that treated plots yielded newly double the untreated plots. Early tests in 1912 by J.M. Westgate of the United States Department of Agriculture included various strains of clover. Those listed were common red, alsike, orrel, perm, mammoth, Italian and giant white. Also two strains of hardy alfalfa-Baltic and Grimm were compared with spring vetches. Forage yields of 2.65 tons of alfalfa and 2.17 tons of red clover were reported on plots fertilized the previous year. Pasture plots were also established in 1911 on this farm. The grasses included

Kentucky slender wheat fall meadow, oat grass, and timothy. Oil reported that of several combinations of the slender wheat, a native grass, red clover and alsike, gave the best results. Clovers in general always produce better than alfalfa.

In addition to these cereal and forage crop trials there were also trials with root crops of mangels, stock beets and carrots for livestock feed purposes. Trails with slender wheat grasses also indicated promise of producing grass seed in the area. Flax was evaluated as being a suitable cash crop on newly cleared stump land. Director Olin in summarizing the Clagstone demonstrations from 1909 to 1914 said “when a given area can be put into crop on a cleared timber farm, make feed crops for livestock your first concern. The soils in the area are low in organic matter. A crop rotation with some legumes as a base is desirable to start on the cut-over lands as soon as possible. Feed up the bulk of the crop and then the cow, hog, and hen will grow the dividends for the farm.”

There seems to be no official Regent’s records of disposing of the Clagstone Farm although it is believed that this land as well as a block of land in the village of Clagstone, 40 acres of reclaimed land and 5 acres of submerged land adjacent to the Clagstone Farm was returned to Mr. Clagstone about 1915, shortly after the University took possession of the land now known as the Sandpoint Branch Experiment Station.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Early Historical Development of the Sandpoint Branch Agricultural Experiment Station, by R.D. Ensign, August 1965

# Let the Land Sales Begin, 1910-1919

**A Naturally Timbered Country is the Best One for the Farmer**

It provides shelter, tempers both heat and cold, gives him both cheap fuel and building material, favors the growth of natural grasses and clovers, and the soil is enriched by deposits from forest growth. Such a country is Northern Idaho. When a man buys land in this country he buys both comfort and prosperity. Note well this fact.

Avoid the blizzard-swept prairie and hot winds.

**Come to Northern Idaho**

Enjoy life in a timbered country, where water is plentiful and pure, soil strong and quick, climate mild and equable—where you can buy of us close to good markets, in any size tract in rich, alluvial, protected valleys along the railroad.

**at \$10 per acre up, one-tenth cash, balance, nine yearly payments at six per cent.**

For booklet and further information write

**Humbird Lumber Co.**  
Land Department  
Sandpoint, Idaho T. L. Greer, Mgr.

Lumber companies were also interested in seeing agricultural tract development on their lands after the timber was harvested. They recruited civic groups, chambers of commerce, local governments, and even the railroad companies to support their efforts to sell their logged-off lands. Standing to benefit from the transformation of such useless lands into productive farms, locals such as Byron S. Defenbach, a well-known Sandpoint merchant, actively promoted the possibilities for cutover lands as early as 1910. Others jumped on board and the following year the Spokane Chamber of Commerce and the Sandpoint Commercial Club began encouraging a strong advertising program to make potential settlers aware of the region's affordable land and agricultural potential.<sup>19</sup>

Two great ways to promote the land was through exhibits and personal contact. George Hipke, a Humbird representative, traveled to St. Paul, Minnesota, in December 1911, for a land exhibition, taking with him samples of apples and other foods grown on some of Humbird's cutover land. At the same time, the newly formed Bonner County Development League, which included farmers' organizations as well as the Sandpoint Commercial Club, vowed to publicize the area's resources "on a scale never before taken" and followed Hipke's example of taking exhibits to

various fairs. Grand must were his sales pitch, for in 1912 Mr. Hipke, resigned his position with the Humbird land department after purchasing nearly one thousand acres of cutover land and embarking on a new career as an orchardist. He was replaced by Thomas L. Greer who remained with the Humbird land department until the last sales in 1944.<sup>20</sup>

Humbird also saw the benefit in local, national and international print campaigns via press releases and printed brochures. Initial brochures included basic information regarding location, weather, and rainfall. Later brochures also discussed the types of crops and farm animals that could be raised on such lands and gave more complete information on schools, churches, and industries. By the mid-1920s, when land was going for \$10 per acre and up, the Humbird brochure noted that the typical buyers were "good, intelligent" people who were, however, "poor in worldly goods." It went on to say that the cutover lands offered such people a chance to acquire property, improve it with their labor, and "eventually contribute to the wealth of the

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<sup>19</sup> "Activity in Lumbering and Logging Operations in the Inland Empire," *The Timberman*, April 1910:20; "Little Change in the Inland Empire - Interest Shown in Logged-Off Lands," *The Timberman*, April 1911:37; "How Dispose Of Logged Off Land," *Northern Idaho News*, 18 April 1911, 1:4-5; "Resolution Asks New R. R. Depots," *Northern Idaho News*, 2 May 1911, 5:3.

<sup>20</sup> "Spokane," *The Timberman*, December 1911:64A; "To Advertise County," *Pend d'Oreille Review*, 28 June 1912, 10:5; "Here And Around About," *Pend d'Oreille Review*, 12 July 1912, 5:3; "Bumper Crops Prevail in the Inland Empire," *The Timberman*, September 1912:51.

community."<sup>21</sup> Humbird even saw the benefit in promoting to immigrants or members of religious groups who wanted to buy land close to each other. For instance, the local newspaper reported in May 1913 that twenty-five families of Swiss farmers were negotiating to buy eight hundred acres just west of town where they planned to establish a large dairy. A year later, Rev. A. N. Skindlov of the Norwegian Lutheran Church arranged to buy land for Norwegian settlers about three miles north of Kootenai. Many German immigrants clustered near Charles Selle's ranch. And by 1914, several Austrian families bought land near Culver, about seven miles east of Sandpoint.<sup>22</sup>



Charles Selle homestead at Selle, Idaho, 1903.

The sales pitches often referred to the cut-over lands as being “dotted with stumps” that would eventually “rot out”. Unfortunately, for many who believed the sales pitch and bought land in Bonner County, the reality was far from the hype. However, there were those who believed that “land that grew stumps would grow good crops”, as stated by William Carlyle, dean of the College of Agriculture at the University of Idaho. In an attempt to prove his point, Dean Carlyle managed to persuade T.J. Humbird to donate approximately 170 acres to the University for use as a demonstration farm. Such a gift would not only help improve the chance that local farmers could succeed but also would boost sales of cutover land. Humbird gave the land to the university in 1913 and also agreed to donate the lumber needed to build the farm buildings. In addition, he convinced both the Northern Pacific and Great Northern each to give \$1,000 toward the development of the new facilities. Area residents then chipped in another \$2,750 to help with the clearing.<sup>23</sup> Citizens of Sandpoint and vicinity also donated labor and materials including a 44’ X 46’ bungalow-type house and a 30’ X 60’ barn with 16’ lean-to. The costs of these two structures, labor and materials were \$2,929.60 and \$1,310.40 respectively. Also constructed by

<sup>21</sup> [Humbird Lumber Company], untitled brochure, ca. 1918-1920, part of Humbird, "Humbird Lumber Company," after 56; Humbird Lumber Co. Land Department, "A Naturally Timbered Country is the Best One for the Farmer," ca. 1925, part of Humbird, "Humbird Lumber Company," after 56.

<sup>22</sup> "Swiss Colony Here," *Pend d'Oreille Review*, 2 May 1913, 1:3; "The Story of the Humbird Lands," *Northern Idaho News*, Development Edition, February 1914, Part II, 2:7:5-6; "What Our 1914 Settlers Are Doing," *Northern Idaho News*, 26 May 1914, 6:1-3.

<sup>23</sup> A Glorious Field for Sawmills



1915 were a chicken house from an abandoned dynamite magazine and 200 rods of fencing, sixty of which were hog-tight<sup>24</sup>

### **The Sandpoint Experiment**

**Station** is located about three-quarters of a mile from the center of Sandpoint on Boyer Avenue. The elevation is 2100 feet; latitude 48° 18' and longitude 116° 35'. The soil on the Sandpoint Station is of glacial origin and is a fine silt mission loam. Surface soil is yellow, overlaid with alternate strata of clay and fine sand of varying thicknesses to a depth of about 75 inches. The land is generally flat and drainage is poor. The soil is slightly acid, low in organic matter, nitrogen and sulfur, requiring legumes, supplemental nitrogen, and/or manure, and applications of gypsum.

Of the 170 acres, approximately 100 acres were suitable for cultivation after being cleared and the balance, in the Sand Creek drainage and along the railroad rights-of-way, were suitable only for pasture. Ten acres on the north end were first cleared in the fall of 1913 and planted to several varieties of clovers and alfalfa. "The alfalfa made good growth during the summer but winter killed" reported F. H. Lafrenz, Superintendent, in the 1915 Annual Report, Bulletin 84, Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station. Later more land was cleared and various crops planted. Early tests indicated a lack of nitrogen in these soils and the need for liberal quantities of lime. Because of the considerable quantities of pasture, much bordering Sand Creek, a dairy herd was soon established. The herd was selected from the foundation animals at the University of Moscow.

Although the first years of the Sandpoint Station activities involved clearing land, there was also considerable experimentation with various crops, including varieties of clovers, alfalfa, cereals, field peas

and root crops. The soils staff from Moscow was involved with rotation and fertilizer tests from the beginning. In addition to crop studies, livestock, including dairy, sheep, and swine were maintained on the Station. The original barn was designated to accommodate several dairy cows. Accurate production records were maintained and various feeding experiments were conducted using local forages. The swine and sheep were used to consume local feeds and some records were maintained. A team of horses was used for Station work and small domestic flock of poultry was maintained by the personnel on the Station.

Strategic in their gift, the tract of land given by Humbird had all once been heavily timbered. With the issue of how to clear logged off lands being at the forefront of every Bonner County farmer's mind, using the Experiment Station as a guinea pig was a stroke of genius. Local publications featured story after story about the latest and greatest idea for clearing the land. Newspapers were peppered with headlines such as



<sup>24</sup> Annual Report, Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station 1916, Bulletin 92, pp. 58.

“Clearing Stump Lands with the Dairy Cow” (NIN 12/2/13), “Suggestions for the New Settler: Angora goats will clear underbrush and make money for owner” (NIN 12/2/13), “Making a Home on Logged off Land” (NIN 10/21/13), “If You Buy Your Land Right You Have A Safe Investment”, (NIN 10/21/13), “The Stump Land Problem” (NIN 191), “How A Woman Made Good on Logged-off Lands...” (NIN 10/7/12), “Professor Shattuck Sees Stump Burner” (NIN 9/30/13), and “Dynamite Stumps: Newport Man Blows Them Out at \$27 an acre” (NIN 1911). According to the last article, “A man near Newport...has made a good record for cost in blowing out stumps. He says: I have recently blown out the stumps on nine acres of land, on which there were 1,350 stumps, or an average of 150 to the acre, the stumps being of about average size. To do this work I used 1,560 pounds of powder, being one and one-sixth pounds to the stump. The cost of the powder, caps and fuse would not exceed 18 cents per stump, or \$27 per acre.” Evidently, the stump land problem resolved itself down to a problem of finance with the sale of dynamite becoming a big part of this business. The Humbird company store was selling dynamite to its customers at least by 1913, right along with groceries and chicken feed. Dynamite sales also helped keep companies like the Co-Op in business through the Depression.

Families moving onto cutover lands in Bonner County were given all kinds of information through their University of Idaho Experiment Station. Bulletin #91 dated December 1916 reported how homesteaders were getting their land into production. One method advanced by the Station and used by just about everyone was as follows: “Burn everything but the stumps; burn the logs and duff during the driest part of the summer—the harder the burn the better. Then seed on the ashes in the fall and again in the spring.” This was called the pasturage method, and the bulletin reported that some of the larger operators in North Idaho, including some in the yellow pine regions were having excellent results. Livestock growers especially benefited when their cows and sheep



Cutting of hay amid stumps and burned snags, probably with a scythe.

provide constant pasturing which fertilizes the land and keeps down new growth. Somewhat optimistically, the bulletin states that “the stumps continue to decay...each year a few of the smaller ones may be pried out. The larger ones could be cracked, bored, or sawed and then fired or pulled out. In a few years so many stumps will have disappeared that the land may be mowed or broken out for grain.”



While using dynamite to blow out stumps was relatively inexpensive, farmers with more resources decided to try some of the various mechanical devices coming onto the market, including a horse-powered stump puller and a small steam donkey engine with a winch and cable. Newspapers boasted that such stump pullers “will diminish the cost of clearing land”<sup>25</sup>, “the machine is an eastern invention. It is estimated that two men with a team of horses can clean out about 70 stumps a day at a cost of about \$25 per acre.” The Great Northern Railway sent a land-clearing demonstration train to the region in the spring of 1917, with a number of stops planned so that farmers could watch demonstrations of various methods to get rid of the stumps.<sup>26</sup>

Amid the challenges were the success stories. The Oliver Ruen family came to the Clark Fork Valley in 1911, bought 229 acres and in 1914 started raising certified Russet seed potatoes. They also had a herd of purebred Holstein milk cows, 3,000 laying hens and in later years raised beef cattle. Over the years they acquired more land and their operation included timber harvest and production.

Henry Samuels came to northern Bonner County in 1912 and purchased 8,000 acres from Humbird and later another 5,000 from homesteaders, making the biggest farm in Bonner County. Twelve hundred acres were cleared and 25 miles of fence built.

Two of the first cattlemen in northern Bonner County were the Albertson brothers (W.T. , aka Bill, and Charles) of Montana, who came to the area in 1916. Evidently they liked what they saw and purchased a section of land on Gold Creek. In 1925 they returned by railroad bringing five car loads of cattle, one car load of horses, and a carload of machinery. They leased land from adjoining land owners Bill Stevensen and Henry Samuels on which they ran 400 to 500 head. Bill’s son Don, Don’s children and grandchildren still live and raise cattle on the Gold Creek property.<sup>27</sup>

Early on there were also those who saw value in dairy farms. In 1910 it was listed that an approximate 11,800 cattle were in Bonner County. As early as 1914 attempts were made to form a local association of businessmen for the purpose of financing the purchase of dairy cows for the ranchers of this area. One local gentleman, Mr. Helphrey, was part of spearheading these efforts. “If we can get the county stocked with good dairy cows it means more in prosperity to this community than anything that can be done for it,” he declared, “I have names of ranchers now who are anxious to buy dairy cows and that two carloads of dairy cows could be sold to ranchers within two weeks.”<sup>28</sup> By June of the same year the group was unofficially referred to as the “cow committee”. Cattle were ordered from areas such as Oregon and were offered on relatively easy terms, 29% of the purchase price down and accepting bankable notes on the remainder at 6% interest, to the ranchers of Bonner County. According to the Pend Oreille

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<sup>25</sup> Northern Idaho News, November 7, 1911

<sup>26</sup> Humbird Lumber Co. Land Department, "A Naturally Timbered Country is the Best One for the Farmer," ca. 1925, part of Humbird, "Humbird Lumber Company," after 56; Ad, *Pend d'Oreille Review*, 11 April 1913, 5:4-6; "War!! Reduces Prices of Land," *Northern Idaho News*, 1 June 1915, 6:1-3; C. J. Zintheo, "Problem Of The Logged-Off Lands," *Northern Idaho News*, 30 November 1909, 6:1-3; "The Inland Empire," *The Timberman*, February 1917:57-58.

<sup>27</sup> Beautiful Bonner

<sup>28</sup> POR 4/21/1914

Review, "The cattle ...will nearly all be of the Jersey breed, though it is expected there was a few Holsteins in the shipment. C. W. Edwards of the Corvallis agricultural school is acting as the purchasing agent for the Sandpoint committee."<sup>29</sup>

At the same time, efforts were being made towards establishing Bonner County as center for fruit production. The Northern Idaho News contained a weekly section titled "Fruit Growing in Northern Idaho" written by C.W. H. Heidemen of Bonners Ferry. Newspaper headlines boasted "Bonner Is Great Fruit Country: Apples Be Best Crop" and cited that over the next two years thousands of acres of Bonner County land would be devoted to apples and other profitable fruits. "Within the next few years Bonner County was one of the largest fruit countries in the northwest," said a prominent citizen of Sandpoint who had just returned from a trip through the northern part of the county. "It was one large orchard from here to Bonners Ferry and so on in up to the Kootenai valley. At the present time there are several large projects underway and several proposed projects."<sup>30</sup>

Local and national advertisements listed the area as having a great fruit growing climate, especially apples and pears, and describing the climate as "delightful, neither too hot in summer or too cold in winter. The soil of these valleys and foothills being sub-irrigated it is particularly suited to the growing of clover and other grasses. As soon as the timber is cleared white clover grows nearly everywhere and the logged off and burnt



Orchard on Schmitt farm at Sunnyside October, 1924.

over lands furnish an abundance of fine pasture for stock. Red clover, which is now recognized by scientific agriculturalists as the great soil rejuvenator grows to perfection. Timothy also yields heavy crops."<sup>31</sup> The real estate section of the newspaper featured articles such as this one from a 1911 Pend Oreille Review,

"From Four Acres: Interviewed about the agricultural possibilities of this area, Mr. Schmitt, who owns a farm which he partly cleared on Oden Bay, six miles northeast of Sandpoint. "I raised \$500 worth of potatoes (600 sacks) on four acres of ground which were set out to apple trees. The potatoes were grown between the trees, one acre of which was bearing. The one acre bearing orchard yielded 110 boxes of apples valued at

<sup>29</sup> POR 6/26/1914

<sup>30</sup> NIN 10/14/11

<sup>31</sup> Resources of Bonner County – NIN 1911

\$1.25 per box. In 1906 I cleared 12 acres of ground. In 1907 that ground yielded three tons of hay to the acre which I was able to sell on the ground for \$18 a ton. In 1907 I got 300 bushels of carrots from  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an acre. The same year I cleared 12 acres, a part of which was planted to potatoes. My crop of potatoes was large enough to pay for the clearing and a fair price on the land besides.

Excellent for Fruit Growing: Andrew Christensen, County Treasurer, came to what is now Bonner County in 1888 and has remained here ever since. He recommends Bonner County as a place to anyone wanting to make a life for himself as the possibilities are endless. ...”As a fruit growing section it cannot be excelled. Fruits on all kinds do exceptionally well and grow to enormous size.”

In September of 1911, a Sandpoint resident named G.H. Martin, representing T.J. Easter and F.H. McWilliams, both of Pittsburg, took a 90-day option on 1,100 acres of land laying 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of Naples with the intention of turning the property into one of the largest fruit orchards in Bonner County.<sup>32</sup> Bonner County was not alone in their efforts. The state as a whole was putting efforts towards fruit production with over 120,000 acres devoted to orchards in 1911.

In other areas of the county, farmers were looking for ways to make their land usable, such as the swamplands of the Hoodoo Valley. The excavating of the Hoodoo Valley swamplands began in 1916 after several years of planning. Paul Clagstone had promoted the draining of the Hoodoo swamp lake, and it is believed that he raised funds to get the whole project started by mortgaging his ranch. No doubt, there were additional financial problems that forced his bankruptcy in 1914. The Clagstone family left the Hoodoo Valley two years before the dredging began at the north end of the lake.

Willard Kier, whose family lived in the valley at this time, describes the meadows as follows: “The Hoodoo Valley was somewhat irrigated by a large creek flowing through it. The soil was mostly peat moss, and would not produce until it was burned. The procedure was to use a 10” blade, very sharp, attached to the plow. It would cut the peat about two feet deep, leaving it standing on edge. When the wind would blow through and dry it out, it was then set on fire to smolder burn. The lower portion would remain moist and did not burn. In some areas there were several feet of silicon dioxide. The burned peat was re-plowed, partially mixing with the other soil which yielded good productive soil.”

Burning of the peat meadows during the summer was the source of many destructive fires. The Andrew Merritt house (later the Parr place) was lost in this way. The fire smoldered for many months and crept out to the edges of the meadow where brush and trees grew at the meadow’s edge. Earl Chapin, who attended Edgemere School, remembers that he and several other boys were let out of school to help fight a peat fire near the school yard. It is also remembered that peat fires would leave tunnels which broke through with livestock or machinery.

George Price, another former resident of the valley, remembers burning the peat meadows. He wrote that late in September—after the peat had been plowed and was pretty dry—they would go down a furrow, dump a little kerosene and then torch it. The small fires would smolder and join

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<sup>32</sup> NIN 9/26/11

until the whole meadow was smoking. In November the snow and rain were supposed to extinguish the fire.

The continual burning of the peat meadows made the flooding worse by reducing the elevation of the meadow. Also the ashes were not as fertile as expected. George concluded, "The soil looked black and beautiful but was a poor producer, and it still flooded often in the spring. Later we planted canary grass in some of the swamp land." The Price family owned enough good land to "cut 120 tons of hay mostly timothy and clover and occasionally we used a binder to harvest oats for feed." They owned two farms that extended from the Doleman place above Edgemere to the McMillian place downstream.

Farming the peat meadows was not the only challenge. There were the sinkholes or sumps to maintain. Gail Martin, whose family lived on the Golden Gate Ranch, remembered the big sinkholes in their meadow. "They had to be drained or the whole meadow would get so wet you couldn't farm it," he wrote. His father would dynamite the holes, and the water would go right out. They didn't know where, but it quickly drained.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Hoodoo Valley History

### **Hoodoo Valley History Begins - The Wetlands**

Drainage District #7 was organized March 6, 1916 with twenty landholders signing the Petition to the District Court of the Eighth Judicial District of Bonner County with the stated purpose of “draining what is known as Hoodoo Lake.” The newspaper, Newport Miner, reported on March 16th that residents of Hoodoo Valley had petitioned the court to form a drainage district for the improvement of 1400 acres of land. A year later a news item on March 29, 1917 reported that contractors were at work digging a fifteen-mile ditch to drain the Hoodoo Valley, and they expected to have the work done by June 1.

Once started, the digging of the ditch proceeded at a relentless pace. A large ditching machine, nicknamed “Leaping Louie” by those who watched its progress, came from the Panama Canal project which had been completed in 1914. It worked night and day, and there are many memories of its operation.

As a small boy, Jim Bews remembers the sight and sounds of the machine. In 1916 his family moved to a farm on a terrace west of the meadow. One day his mother took him to where they could look down into the meadow and see the machine working. She said, “This is history being made—now remember everything you see and hear.”

Walter Parr remembers that the ditch was a 20-foot-wide channel that was four to five feet deep where it crossed the Parr meadow. At the time, the Parrs were optimistic about the outcome of the project, and they expected better pasture for livestock and more meadow that could be cut for hay. Keith Merritt remembered that the dredge had large flood lights so they could work at night. It sat at the side of the ditch with a big crane to swing out over the ditch. It had revolving feet (not wheels), and when it needed to move forward, it would jump about four feet with one revolution of the long foot. Hence the Leaping Louie name. Keith remembered listening to the squeaking, groaning, and clanging of the monstrous machine all through the night.

The Doleman place was the first farm below the big swamp lake (Hoodoo Lake on old maps), and it was here that the first dredging began. The lake could be viewed from the Doleman house, and a son, Frank Doleman, remembered how the lake used to lay in the bottom of the Hoodoo Valley. “There was a dock projecting out into the lake from the bank, and there was a small boat tied alongside. Cattails and rushes grew along the bank, creating a haven for water birds and small animals.” The Doleman family did not want the lake drained, but they couldn’t stop progress. They had a good opportunity to provide board and room for the men who worked on the project— which they did.

## Continuing On, 1920-1929

Stump ranching was still an issue in the 1920s. Clearing the land of the huge stumps by horse power and dynamite was a very difficult job, and only the promise of a bright future for agricultural land could have kept these early settlers at the task. When the land was at last ready for that first crop, however, they found that heavily timbered land did not mean fertile soil. In fact, the opposite seemed to be true. Hay and grain crops were especially disappointing. By 1922, the University of Idaho was conducting experiments to find out why soils seemed to be "toxic" for five to seven years after being cleared. They concluded that "slow decomposition of forest residue hinders the biological processes and prohibits the proper ammonification and nitrification so essential to all crops."

Options for blasting improved after World War I when the federal government began making stumping powder from leftover war materiel and selling it at a reduced cost for farmers. Both the Humbird store and Farmers General Supply Company in Sandpoint handled the powder, selling both sodatol and pyrotol by the ton, and by 1923 over 50,000 pounds had been purchased



by area farmers. Sales further increased in 1924 to 60,000 pounds, and order limits of 1,000 pounds per farm annually were imposed. As the blasting continued, farmers perfected their techniques of getting stubborn stumps out of the ground.

One of the more popular crops to be planted on the newly cleared lands was potatoes. At a time when southern Idaho was having serious disease problems in

Wagon and workers on the Sherwood potato farm.

their potato crops, this newly cleared ground in northern Idaho was raising clean, disease-free potatoes. A great demand for North Idaho seed potatoes brought a few years of prosperity to the farmers of the Morton Valley. The February 20, 1920 issue of the Pend d' Oreille Review told of Andrew Peterson receiving an order for a carload of Idaho Rural seed potatoes from a Canyon County grower after he had seen samples of Peterson's potatoes. "This is the first carload of Bonner County seed potatoes to be ordered from abroad, though about a carload of seed spuds were sold locally through the county this winter." Other Morton farmers were quick to secure contracts from south Idaho growers. In November of the same year, the Review states, "Bonner County Seed spuds Bring Top Market Price: Four Morton ranchers this week sold two carloads of Netted Gem and Idaho Rural seed potatoes to a south Idaho grower at a price 100 percent above the quotations on the local consumers' market and 50 cents a sack higher than the buyer had set as his limit . . . . The four Morton ranchers are Carl Mozer, Russell Fraser, M.G. Hanson,

and James Campbell. The price was \$2.50 per sack and the total shipment will reach 800 sacks, making the price for the two carloads \$2,000."

Enthusiasm for North Idaho seed potatoes was even carried into the schools. This same issue of the Review tells of an essay contest conducted in the elementary schools: 'How I Would Grow Certified Seed Potatoes Should I Win the Prize.' Each of the prize winners, both first and second, will receive . . . an apple box of seed potatoes so that each contestant may have the same opportunity to raise good potatoes." Winners were listed, and, as expected, our schools had winners: Dawson School had Elbert Hanson and Earl Cook; Fern (Morton) had Birdeen Brown and Georgia Schmalhorst; and Long School had Earl Jones and Jessie Marie Long." Indeed, the future for agriculture in the Morton Valley looked promising.

In 1920 local potato growers banded together to form the Bonner County Seed Potato Growers' Association. That same year it is recorded that there were more than 400 acres of growing potatoes in Bonner County planted for the purpose of raising seed potatoes. Seed potato growers were greatly aided at the time by such men as Edgar L. Ludwick, county agent, and H.C. Schedler, potato project leader of the farm bureau and S.B. Bennett, potato specialist from the University extension department. Proud of their crops, a number of area farmers entered their potatoes in the Spokane Growers Show and Conference and won 15 out of 60 of the prizes. By February of 1921, the Seed Growers' Association had plans to build a warehouse in Sandpoint and they laid out a plan to divide the county into 10 districts where seed potato growing had been carried on in a truly progressive manner, with each district to have a sub-organization. "The seed potato movement has aroused unlimited enthusiasm among the farmers and ranchers of the county" cited the Pend Oreille Review, "and the progress already being made in outlining the organization is far ahead of all anticipation."<sup>34</sup>



Sheep grazing in Bonner County

county acreage devoted to growing potatoes increased by 200 acres. In October of 1922 the first annual Bonner County Seed Potato show was held in Sandpoint, with the market potato judged by a housewife, a storekeeper and a restaurant keeper. 2,200 people visited the show, 50 exhibits were sent onto the State Seed Show, and exhibits were also sent to the Nebraska Seed Show.

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<sup>34</sup> POR 2/11/1921

“Seventy-three fields in Bonner County passed the second field inspection this year,” said county Agent Fortner, “which is about the same number as last year although, there were more growers of seed potatoes this year than last. Last year seed potato producers got from \$3 to \$3.25 a hundred.”<sup>35</sup>

Other agricultural interests were explored at the same time. A number of Bonner County farmers, including Frank and Earl Rusho of Blanchard; J.C. Boylen and B. H. Boyington, Colburn; W.A. Perry, Odin; T.L. Godfrey Pack River; W.T. Lovejoy, Sandpoint and Elmer Stone of Priest River, took an interest in sheep. E. F. Rhinehart, whose part in university extension work was sheep and wool and the stimulating of these industries, was a visitor to Sandpoint and met a number of these Bonner county farmers. Around 1920, large sheep operations in Washington began bringing in bands of sheep to summer on National Forest lands. Each band would consist of about one thousand sheep. They were mostly brought in on the Northern Pacific Railroad and unloaded at the Kootenai stock yards.

**Farm Bureau Stages Successful Campaign: Swat Flies in Connection with the Sanitation Project**

North Idaho News, 5/11/20

At the Glengary School, 6,177 flies were killed in eight days through a competitive fly swatters club, which was organized by the teacher, Miss Case, under the supervision of Mary Lucille Lee, home demonstration agent. Such keen interest was aroused in the contest that some of the boys dug up maggots, hatched them by the fire, counted them and then drowned them in order to make their scores the highest. Twenty-two students entered the contest, each providing themselves with the necessary weapons in the form of swatters and flytraps. Records show that the largest number killed by any one member was 1,267 by Dillard Sulyers.

Not only was this work effective in killing a large number of early flies, but in teaching the children the seriousness of the fly menace and instilling a desire to swat the early fly.

This work is being done in connection with the sanitation project and 11 similar fly swatter clubs are organized in the county.

In other agricultural arenas, the Bill McNall family came from eastern Washington in 1922, bringing their herd of Jersey milk cows and their future Shorthorn herd sire and settled in the Grouse Creek area. Bill's son Francis and family still own and operate the ranch and are still raising Shorthorn beef cattle.

Other farmers also explored the benefits of fox farms and poultry. Orchardists such as Coleman, Elsasser, Riffle, Black, Carter and Russell were still developing their crops. In 1922, 10 to 12 carloads of apples shipped from Sandpoint, including varieties such as wagoner, spitzenbergs, jonathans, wealthys, macintosh reds and winter bananas. In February of 1922 eighteen fruit growers from Hope, Clark Fork, Sandpoint and Morton met to discuss organization of a fruit growers association. A number of plans of operation were discussed but the group decided to do nothing definite toward immediate organization but rather to further investigate the field and its possibilities before acting. Those appointed to the research committee were T.D. Hussey of Clark Fork, F.H. Rundell, I.F. Carter, J.B. Reis, E.G. Coleman, Carl Moser, and County Farm Agent P.T. Fortner. Dairy farms still maintained a

<sup>35</sup> POR 10/27/1922



strong presence in the county. Oliver Ruen's registered Holstein Maid on his Clark Fork ranch, exceeded previous records in 1921 when she produced 1,557 pounds of milk and 62.54 pounds of butterfat. A registered Jersey owned by H. J. Kelsey was second high with 978 pounds of milk and 54.78 pounds of butterfat.

Even with all the success and interest seen in potato and other agricultural crops, as well as continued improvements to stump blasting, land sales began to slump in the early 1920s when the economic recession following World War I hit farmers especially hard. Hoping to stimulate sales once again, Humbird attempted a big land auction in June of 1923. Widespread marketing was not enough to help and the auction was a flop, with only twenty-five people showing up and just two tracts of land sold. Later that same year, however, the railroads unveiled a successful \$1 million advertising campaign and sales began to pick up. Sales in 1924 were slightly more successful, likely due to the fact that some of the land was incredibly cheap, selling for little more than \$1 per acre to not only a number of new settlers, but also a number of existing farmers who increased their land holdings. Sales continued to pick up during the later 1920s, stimulated in part by farm tours sponsored by the Northern Pacific Agricultural Development Department. In September 1928, for instance, seventeen people from Iowa and Nebraska came to see the region. They spent a day in the Sandpoint area and stayed overnight with rural families. They went to several farms, including Oliver and Tillie Ruen's property east of Clark Fork, where they saw the types of crops and animals that could be raised on cutover lands. Similar tours during the next two years brought more prospective buyers.<sup>36</sup>

In 1921, 201 Farm Bureau members were women as part of the Home Demonstration Agent division. This division, established in 1920 at the request of the Farm Bureau, was divided into 3 county project leaders, and 43 community project leaders which were divided as follows: 1 community leader; 16 clothing project leaders; 14 poultry project leaders; 9 hot lunch project leaders; 2 nutrition project leaders; and 1 project leader in home conveniences. "That the farm home can be made as efficient, as attractive and as satisfying to the whole family as the farm is to the farmer," stated the Home Demonstration Agent, Mary Lucille Lee Ralph, "home demonstration work has been introduced in the rural sections." Between November 20, 1920 and June 1, 1921, seven specialists for the University of Idaho Extension Division, at Boise and Moscow, spent a total of 78 days in the county assisting the project leaders in carrying out their program of work.

Down in the Hoodoo Valley, Earl Chapin wrote that the meadows would sometimes flood because the underground outlet on the Golden Gate Ranch would silt over. It was about 1920 when three sump holes were dug on the ranch. They were about 40 feet square and 20 feet deep and are still visible. Earl believes that the water from the sumps goes underground to the north, running behind the Edgemere Grange hall and crossing at the old Otis Merritt place. It then drains into Hoodoo Creek just northwest of Otis Merritt's homestead (Lloyd Bennett place—Curtis at present). All of the streams and lakes in the Spirit Lake, Blanchard, and Edgemere area have a silt bottom that keeps the water from draining into the gravel underneath.

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36 "Landseekers Well Pleased With Country," Northern Idaho News, 4 September 1928, 10:1; "Iowa Farmers To Look Over Land," Northern Idaho News, 16 July 1929, 1:3; "Iowa Homeseekers To Visit Here This Fall," Northern Idaho News, 17 June 1930, 7:5.

For those landowners who had no wetland, their first work was to begin clearing their cut-over land. Typical of those families was the William Whittum family, who came to Hoodoo Valley in 1927. For several years they lived at the J. Kay Merritt (Rademacher farm) west of the Edgemere Grange hall. In the spring of 1929 the Whittums purchased on contract from Humbird Lumber Company all of Section 17 and half of Section 20 (Township 55N, Range 4W). Some of the land on Section 20 had been burned over by the fire of 1926 which left charred stumps. They cleared land for hay and a garden while building a house and the necessary farm buildings. They bought a few dairy cows and raised some hogs and chickens. The Whittum farm was typical of the first agriculture on the cutover Humbird land.<sup>37</sup>

Support for county farmers was provided by the Sandpoint Farm Bureau. Growing from 66 members in 1918 to 220 in 1919 and 654 members (540 men and 114 women) in 1920, the Bonner County Farm Bureau was one of the largest of similar organizations in the state. Specialists from the University of Idaho, the Extension Division at Boise and the Salt Lake Office of the Bureau of animal Industry; U. S. Department of Agriculture, assisted local farm Bureau leaders on their projects a total of 215 days this year, and local project leaders spent a total of 360 days in carrying out the work on the projects assigned them in their local communities. The total sum expended by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Extension Division for carrying on Farm Bureau work in Bonner County totaled approximate \$6,500 that year.

Farm Bureau Projects for 1920 included:

- Rodent Control - 454 ounces of strychnine were used by the farmers in the county on Rodent Control project this year, a 50% increase over last year. 442 farmers used this poison. 173 farmers reported using 3160 pounds of poisoned bait on 11,875 acres, the cost of same being \$760.50.
- Dairying - The Cow Testing Association was organized. Six months was spent by the project leaders and county agent, assisted by Specialists in dairying, in preaching the gospel of "testing for production" and "feed and feeding" throughout the county. When it was deemed the time was right, a specialist was brought in and working 9 days with the county and community project leaders and the county agent the necessary 25 members of the Association were obtained.
- Potatoes - The Bonner County Farm Bureau made an effort to standardize the potato production in the County to two varieties, the Idaho Rural and Netted Gem, both of which found ready sale, both as market potatoes and as seed potatoes.
- Land Clearing - 5 carloads of stumping powder consisting of 45 tones was distributed to Bonner County farmers at a new saving of \$4500. 85 of the farmers who used this powder reported 343 acres cleared and put to crop, the average amount of powder being used per farmer was 228. Taking these figures as an average, 1,660 acres of land were cleared in Bonner County through the efforts of the Farm Bureau.  
The value of cut over land was \$15 per acre while the average value of cleared land was \$60 per acre, making a total increase valuation of the County of \$83,000.  
The assessed valuation for cut over land was \$7.27 per acre and the assessed valuation of cultivated land was \$25.75 per acre, the tax levy was approximately 18 mills, making a

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<sup>37</sup> Hoodoo Valley History

net income to the county due to the Farm Bureau work on the Land Clearing Project of \$545.

- Beef Cattle - Four farmers in the county were assisted in securing six registered Shorthorn cows as foundation stock for their herds. Two of these cows were bred to Gainford Perfection, Champion at the Chicago International Livestock Exposition in 1918. Ten co-operative community shipments of cattle were shipped to the Spokane Union Stock Yards. These shipments were handled under the direction of the community project leaders, a net profit to the farmers of \$1,500 resulted.

- Soils & Crops - Twelve definite crop rotations were being carried on in as many fields in various sections in Bonner County. The purpose of these crop rotations was to find out what rotation was best suited to the needs of this county.

The community committeeman and the county project leader spent a total of eleven days checking up this work and specialists spent a total of seventeen days on the project. The rotation had not yet been carried thru the complete cycle so no definite information was yet available.

- Poultry – 2,416 hens were eliminated from 180 flocks aggregating 10,300 fowls in the culling operation carried on under the Farm Bureau Project for the elimination of non-productive hens from the farm flocks and a net savings of \$4,832 to the farmers resulted.
- Horticulture – Six demonstrations were given on the pruning of fruit trees and spraying for insects and fungus diseases that affect the orchard industry in the county. The project leader spent eight days and the specialist four days on this work.
- Sheep - Two farm flocks totaling 100 sheep were placed on Bonner County Farms through the efforts of the Farm Bureau.
- Farmers Market - 115 loads of meat and 125 loads of produce were sold at the Farmers Market this year for a net profit to the farmers of \$1,424.

Records show that the value of the loads of produce range for \$10 to \$30 and that the values of loads of meat range for \$20 to \$65. Assuming an average of \$20 per load for the produce and \$40 per load for the meat there was a net volume of business of \$7,120. The farmers reported that they were able to make on an average of 20% more for their product handling it this way than in other manners giving them a net profit of \$1,424.

## 1930-1940

Census records taken in 1931 indicate that there were 1,010 farms in Bonner County, comprising 156,782 acres of all kinds of land, at the end of 1930. Crops were harvested from 27,093 acres with crop failure on 1,860 acres, and another 5,149 were fallow. There were 4,641 acres of plowable pasture land, and 84,125 woodland acres included in the survey. The Priest River district is listed as having 72 farms, Algoma precinct 70 farms and Oden had 47 farms. Even with these numbers the Idaho State Chamber of Commerce was still seeking to secure additional settlers on Idaho farm lands. In August of 1930 word was sent to the Daily Bulletin and the Pend Oreille Review by L. F. Parsons, secretary of the Idaho state chamber of commerce, asking farmers to report crop yields of all kinds to the newspaper, which forwarded the information onto the state chamber of commerce for compilation and use in out-of-state publicity. At the same time, Humbird and the railroads continued to push land sales through publicity tours and print ads. Sales continued steadily through the 1930s. Humbird sold more than 10,000 acres in 1932, at an average price of \$3.97. That same year, the company let almost all of its remaining cutover land in Kootenai County go for back taxes, and officials looked for ways to sell the remaining lands quickly to cut the company's tax obligation. Sales rose to nearly 18,000 acres in 1937 when the average price had dropped to \$2.31. In 1936, local papers reported getting weekly letters from people in Iowa, Nebraska, North and South Dakota, Kansas and other states asking for copies of the paper so "we can get some ideas of what the country is like because we were thinking of coming to Sandpoint."<sup>38</sup> Land clearing is still an issue in Bonner County. In 1936 the Resettlement Administration was looking to create a permanent organization to have as its objective a long time land clearing cooperative program, providing powder made available at a reasonable price.

With the establishment of the Farmers Home Administration in the mid-30s, long term, low interest loans were available for the purchase of land, livestock and equipment. This was of major importance to the settlers. When it began in 1935, the agency's original function was to make loans and grants to Depression-stricken families and help them regain self-sufficiency in making their living on family farms.

Dairying continued to be an ideal industry for Bonner County and residents of the smaller farms throughout the area were quickly realizing this. It was clear that money invested in cattle gave a quick turnover because the product was sold daily and the waste from keeping the animal is restored to the soil, making dairying an industry where not a particle of waste is present. With the move towards more dairy farms, enterprising individuals realized the need for creameries. One of the first such companies was the Dairy Products Company (adjacent to the Sandpoint Ice and Fuel Company on Fifth Ave.), operated by F. Willford. Within a few months of opening it became one of the major milk distributing concerns in Sandpoint because it was the only one producing pasteurized milk for general distribution. In November of 1930, the Farmers Union started planning for a new cooperative creamery. The services of the creamery were to be open to all persons who kept and milked cows for the sale of milk or cream, regardless of whether or not they were members of the union.

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<sup>38</sup> Daily Bulletin 8/28/1936



Herd of dairy cattle, Morton, Idaho, circa 1930

In addition to Bonner County, Idaho as a whole was seeing great success in dairying. In 1932, Idaho's dairy industry was reported to contribute approximately \$17,000,000 a year, about 14% of the state's gross annual farm income, according to a bulletin published by the University Of Idaho College Of Agriculture Extension Division. All of this dairy success was not without challenges. Early 1930 saw a low return on butterfat, forcing at least one farmer out of the dairy business. J.W. Ramsey of Oden was forced to sell his herd

to the butcher and other dairy farms. 1931 saw the threat of blackleg, a highly contagious disease of cattle.

In 1930, farm forestry was considered a new and undeveloped branch of scientific agriculture in Bonner County. That same year, F.R. McDole, a soils specialist with the Extension Division of the University Of Idaho College Of Agriculture, encouraged area farmers not to overlook the value of alfalfa as a profitable cash crop, especially on cut-over lands. In 1931 at an annual meeting of the Bonner County Farm Loan Association, which was started in Bonner County in 1917 and as of 1931 had 131 members, the subject of taxation received attention and it was decided to appoint a committee consisting of Compton I. White, R.H. McMillian and Edward Dunnigan to look into the discriminations being made and see if there could not be an equalization.

Most of the stumping during this decade was done by a combination of blasting and pulling, using enough powder to split the stump and loosen the roots and then pulling with a team. Costs depended upon the size of the stumps and the number per acre. One record shows a cost of \$20.32 per acre for powder, fuses and caps in clearing an acre of 112 stumps. Other sections have reported good success in using some powder and doing the follow up work with a bulldozer, and this system appears to offer good possibilities.<sup>39</sup>

With about three-fourths of the cropland being utilized for hay crops, livestock farming was the chief industry. The smaller farms followed dairying and diversified farming while some of the larger farms with abundant outside range grew beef cattle. Sheep were used by some to help clear land by killing brush and keeping down second growth. Hogs were raised in limited

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<sup>39</sup> Agriculture in Bonner County, Compiled and Written for The Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce, By: Walter F. Thomas, County Agent, and Ralph E. Knight, Superintendent of the Experiment Station, Sandpoint, c 1935-1940

numbers where waste food was available. Poultry production was a paying industry whose part or all of the food was produced at home. A large quantity of food grains were imported from nearby grain producing areas.

The Sandpoint Packing Company plant furnished a home market for meat animals while some animals were trucked into the larger markets in Spokane. Potatoes, fruits, and vegetables



Field day at the Experiment Farm, July 7, 1928.

furnished local markets and camps with supplies. A few cars of certified seed potatoes and apples were sold to other districts. Some berries were being shipped to Montana points. Eggs were sold locally, through the Pacific Co-op at Spokane., Washington or to the other Montana and Idaho points.

There were eleven subordinate grange organizations active in the county in 1935, with a Pomona or county organization made up of these subordinate granges.

The Sandpoint Experiment Station furnished first-hand information on crop production or the area. The extension service, through its county agent, fostered a 4-H club organization throughout the county and furnished information to farmers. A district home demonstration agent spent one week each month in the country working with farm women's organizations.

Annual Reports provided by the Sandpoint Agricultural Extension Office sum up the agricultural outlook best:

#### 1935 Annual Report

- The climatological conditions in the Sandpoint area were somewhat abnormal in several respects. The total precipitation was 23.4 inches, or 5.27 inches below normal. During January, 6.9 inches were recorded, this being the second highest amount for that month. Nine months showed a rainfall deficiency, several of the fall and summer months being especially dry. The snowfall of 72.5 inches was slightly under normal. Temperatures went to extremes in several instances. A new early date for zero weather was recorded on November 3, when the temperature fell to one degree below zero. The frost-free period was only 73 days, extending from June 3 to August 13. On both of these dates a reading of 30 degrees was recorded. The highest temperature of the year was 97 degrees on July 14, while the lowest was -25 degrees on January 20. There were only nine days when the temperature was 90 or above.
- The 1935 census recorded 1,450 farms in the county, 80% of which were operated by owners. The farms averaged 137.9 acres with a little over 31 acres of cleared cropland per farm. While many farms had more cleared acres there were many with insufficient cropland to return a satisfactory income. It was the thought of the Bonner County Agricultural Planning board that the average should be raised to 45 acres or more per farm and that clearing of good land should be encouraged.
- Yields from the winter wheat varieties were nearly normal in spite of the general poor stands. The latter condition apparently resulted from the fact that the soil was exceedingly dry when seeding was done and for some time after, and the plants did not become established before cold weather set in. The average estimated stands ranged from 40% in Rosen rye to as high as 87% in some of the wheat varieties. In the case of rye only was the yield appreciably below normal. Jones Fife and Hybrid 128 were the highest yielding varieties, each making 32.3 bushels per acre. Over a period of seven years Mosida ranked first in yield with an average of 35.7 bushels per acre, followed by triplet with 34.2 bushels. During the two years that it had been grown, Oro 0535 averaged 36.3 bushels.
- All of the nursery varieties showed at least a slight amount of injury from "snow scald." Jenkin was injured the most, the estimated loss being 90%. In the uniform winter nursery, C.I.11605, C.I.12606, and C.I.11607 made the best yields. The first two were crosses of Hybrid 126 x white Odessa. Of the Jenkin hybrid selections, numbers 9406, 9347, and 0059 made the highest yields. All of these out yielded any of the varieties in the uniform nursery, and two of them were being increased in order to make larger plantings next year.
- The spring wheat plats produced yields somewhat above normal, while the nursery yields were in most cases appreciably lower than average. The leading varieties in the plats were Onas, Dicklow, and Federation, and in the nursery Defiance, Federation 15, and Jenkin 42. The leading barleys of the varietal test were Hannchen, Union, and C.A.C.71, while Beldi, Odessa, and Ottawa 7 were high in the nursery. No heavy infections were obtained in the barley smut nursery, but the data obtained indicate that any of the treatments used are effective in smut control. The bald two-row barley hybrids gave, in general, very poor yields. A series of F-10 hybrids which were tried here for the first time showed little or no promise on this particular soil type.
- Leading varieties in the oat varietal test were Markton, Victory, and Idamine. All of the plats produced yields considerably above normal. White Tarter, Banner, and Idamine were the leading varieties in the nursery.

- Root Crop Investigations - The varietal test and fertilizer experiments constituted the work with potatoes this year. All yields were extremely light, due to the early frost and dry weather. No response of any significance was obtained from any of the commercial fertilizers that were used. An experiment dealing with the residual effect of fertilizers gave negative results, in that two check plots out yielded a series of plots that had been fertilized in 1934. The Chippewa variety out yielded all others by a very substantial amount and in addition showed remarkably little disease and excellent frost recovery. These desirable features indicate that this variety was worthy of more intensive study, and the seed supply was increased as rapidly as possible. An increase lot of Idaho Rural gave a very poor yield and were badly infested with mosaic. The Katahdin variety, which found considerable favor in some localities, particularly on the drier soils, showed considerable disease resistance but gave rather poor yields.
  - Forage Crop Investigations - Alfalfa yielded exceptionally well, slightly over ninety tons from 23 acres in two cuttings. Yields secured from a series of fertilized plots indicated that none of the commercial fertilizers were superior to gypsum for increasing yields in this section. In a series of plots seeded to alfalfa-grass combinations, none of the plots gave any higher yield than alfalfa alone. It was probable that the various grasses would prove hardier during severe winters. The introduction nursery contained a large number of grasses, various varieties of alfalfa, vetch, peas, clover, and related crops. Any of the grasses which were adapted to this region produced very abundantly, either for forage or for seed. Some of the grasses which had shown special promise for seed production on a commercial scale were orchard grass, tall meadow oat, meadow fescue, chewings fescue, crested wheat, brome grass, and reed canary grass. Fairly extensive plantings of some of these were made this spring and were harvested for seed next year.
  - Spring farming operations were begun the first week of April and seeding of spring cereals started the third week of April. Little potato planting was done until after the middle of May. The soil was very slow in warming up, and emergence was slow. The first cutting of hay started during the last week of June and continued through the first week of July. Intermittent rains made curing difficult, and in some cases it was necessary to turn the shocks two or three times. Winter wheat began ripening August 1, and oats and barley about ten days later. Spring wheat ripened the last week of August, and potato harvesting started the latter part of September.
- The annual mean maximum, mean minimum, and mean temperatures were nearly normal, but there were several extreme variations. The first on August 16, which was quite general, is the earliest ever recorded here. An unusually early cold spell came on October 29 and extended to November 4. The ground was frozen to a depth of several inches at this time, and very little plowing was done afterward. Some potatoes were still in the ground, and additional losses occurred on potatoes that had been harvested but had not yet been placed in winter storage. There was also considerable cabbage still standing in gardens, and many of the townspeople had not yet dug their gladiolus. The temperature of 4 degrees on October 31 was the lowest ever recorded for that month, and the reading of -1 degree also set a new record for early zero weather. There were nine days during the year when the thermometer reached 90 or above, and only four days when the temperature was zero or below. The highest temperature was 97 degrees on July 14, and the lowest was -26 on January 20. The frost-free period extended from June 3 to August 16, a total of 73 days.



Livestock were put on pasture the latter part of April and remained until October 28. Hay yields, particularly from the first cutting, were exceptionally good. Spring grains gave normal to slightly below normal yields, while the winter wheat yields were generally above average. Potato yields were extremely light with a high percentage of small tubers.

### 1936 Annual Report

- According to the preliminary report of the 1935 farm census there were 1,451 farms in Bonner County, 80% of which were operated by full owners. There were 84 part owners, 5 managers, and 200 tenants. The farming population increased by 441 since the 1930 census, many new settlers were coming from drought areas. There were 200,028 acres of farms in this county, an increase of 44,246 acres since the 1930 census and an additional 5,543 acres of crops harvested since that time. The average farm was 137.9 acres with 30 acres per farm of cleared land plowable, 87 acres of woodland pasture and other pasture, and approximately 19 acres of woodland not pastured and other land. About  $\frac{3}{4}$  of all harvested crop was hay, including alfalfa, clover and mixed grasses and legumes. The alfalfa acreage continued to increase although considerably less of alfalfa and clover was experienced due to adverse winter conditions. Many fruit trees were also winter killed.

February was the coldest on record, 10 days of that month being subzero weather, the coldest being 27 below on February 15. The growing season was longer than usual being 153 days and extended from April 16 to September 15 inclusive. The rainfall from September 1935 to August 1936 was nearly 4" below normal. September and October were 1.57" below normal while November precipitation was only .45". The wells on many farms were dry while others were low making a difficult situation in many localities.

A survey of 45 of the more substantial farms in the various part of the county showed the average farm to contain 195.4 acres, 55 of which were cleared. On these farms there were an average of 2.3 horses, 8.37 cows, 9 other cattle, 5 hogs, and 64 chickens.

- Dairy Improvement – the production of winter feed for dairy cattle, their improvement through the use of better sires and elimination of diseases through T.B. and abortion tests had been a long time program in Bonner County. Dairy cattle continued to increase slowly as winter feed increased. About  $\frac{3}{4}$  of cleared acreage was in hay crops which were consumed by livestock. A few farmers reported a surplus of hay but that was taken up by those that were short of this crop. Some whole milk was shipped to Spokane from the territory south of Sandpoint. Creameries at Sandpoint and Newport as well as cream buying stations within the county provided an adequate market for dairy products. The dairy project for this year included the testing of 1,500 cattle on 250 farms for T.B., the testing of 2,640 cattle on 226 farms for abortion, securing breeding stock, exchange of bulls, the holding of a Jersey field day at which time Ted Warren, Jersey field representative spoke, the holding of a dairy show at the Bonner County Fair and the carrying on of dairy calf clubs with boys and girls enrolled in 4-H dairy clubs.
- Bonner County Fair – the 1936 Bonner County Fair held September 17, 18 and 19<sup>th</sup> was again a successful event. This was an educational, free fair paid for by the county by a tax levy for that purpose and directed by a fair board of fifteen members, elected from districts. No carnival activities were allowed on the grounds and the only concessions

were eating stands operated by local church organizations. Judges were secured from the University of Idaho and carried out the educational idea by giving reasons on classes placed.

- Beef Cattle – advancement in the breeding of purebred beef cattle took place over the previous few years. The leading breed had been shorthorn, with some Red Pollard, Aberdeen Angus and a few Herefords being bred. Stockmen having abundant range and plenty of winter feed were well situated to grow beef cattle while the smaller acreages were more adapted to the production of dairy cattle.
- Sheep Husbandry – the sheep industry in Bonner County had not been as constant as other livestock with more people going into and out of this type of livestock than with other meat animals. The men who had experience in handling sheep were making a success of this enterprise while others without experience suffered losses in lambing, from predatory animals and other causes.
- Crops – during the previous few years, Reed's Canary grass had been introduced into Bonner County as a desirable crop for overflow land along lakes and rivers and for poorly drained peat bogs and swampy land. The Sandpoint Substation was conducting seed production experiments with this crop, producing 150 pounds per acre in field trials.
- The scouring of disease free seed potatoes over the previous few years had been a problem. Netted gems grown by Oliver Ruen of Clark Fork remained clean and high yielding while other varieties had come and gone. Netted gems were practical in a few localities where the moisture could be controlled by irrigation or where seepage of moisture kept the moisture constant. More seed of this variety could be grown in the Clark Fork valley and in other favored localities. A late rural called Northern Idaho Rural had been a standard potato for upland soil but they gradually became infected with mosaic disease until a limited number were being grown. Gold Coin from Ponderay County was introduced as a substitute for Rurals four years ago but did not hold up, although some were still being grown. The last introduction had been the Katahdin variety tested out at the Moscow and Sandpoint Experiment stations. In 1934 this seed was distributed to a few farmers and 4-H club members. In 1935, 4,250 pounds of Katahdin seed potatoes were placed in the hands of 40 adult potato growers and fourteen 4-H club members through the Sandpoint Substation. 1936 showed a still greater spread of the variety through these growers and 4-H club members.
- Cooperated in W.P.A. weed control, and the forming a weed control district. Held meetings in ten communities to familiarize farmers with weeds and weed programs. 52 acres on 92 farms were treated with 25,000 pounds of sodium chlorate under this program.
- AAA wheat and corn-hog programs were completed. 160 farms measured where applications for grants were made under soil conservation programs.
- 125 farmers were advised on soil and cropping problems. New settlers were given land classifications from the soil survey map. General information was given on use of fertilizers on peat and mineral soils.
- Dr. H.A. White, Veterinarian, assisted in testing program for abortion and T.B. 2,640 cattle were tested for abortion on 226 farms. Bonner County was reaccredited as T.B. free area. 29 farmers assisted in vaccinating 170 head of young cattle against blackleg.
- 97oz strychnine distributed from county agent's office. Cooperated with W.P.A. workers who distributed 2,000 pounds poisoned oats and 159 coyotes were taken. Sportsmen's

Predatory Animal contest netted 12,589 squirrels, 1,182 pocket gophers, 2 magpies, 12 crows and 2 coyotes.

- One caponizing demonstration was held. 50 farmers assisted with individual poultry problems. 70 chickens were shown at the Bonner County Fair.
- Horticultural demonstrations were held at Clark Fork, Hope, Priest River, Morton and Sandpoint, cooperating with Horticultural inspector C.W. Neider of Coeur d'Alene.
- Cooperated with Resettlement Administration and local dealers in shipping car lots of powder. 40,800 of powder purchased which was enough to clear approximately 235 acres.
- Seven demonstrations were held for the control of grasshoppers and cut worms.
- 150 girls enrolled in twenty 4-H sewing, canning, baking and room improvement clubs. 57 sewing club members and leaders attend Junior Shortcourse. Exhibits were made at Sandpoint achievement day program and Bonner County Fair. The Home Economics class was carried on by Miss Fern Spencer in 15 communities.

### 1937 Annual Report

- This year the precipitation for the first eleven months was 31.60 inches for the period or 2.93" above normal for the entire year. The period between killing frosts extended from June 4<sup>th</sup> to September 22<sup>nd</sup>, a period of 110 days or 7 days shorter than the average and 43 days shorter than the 1936 season. Deep snows during the past winter coupled with summer moisture at the right time produced the largest crops for several years. Wells, which were short of water last season, were in excellent shape this year.
- About three fourths of the land was devoted to production of hay crops. Potatoes were the chief cash crop, although some acreage was devoted to small fruits and vegetables. Hardy varieties of fruit, such as apples, pears, prunes and sour cherries could be grown in most parts of the county. Although there were some grain crops grown, the county imported large quantities of concentrates to feed dairy cattle and poultry. The largest return came from dairy products. Beef cattle were grown where abundant hay could be produced and where there was adjacent outside range for larger numbers of cattle. Grass seed production had recently been introduced as an additional cash crop.
- Bonner County was divided into nine communities with a committee of three in each community to carry on a national agricultural soil conservation program. 523 farms, covering 53% of cropland entered into the program. 363 farms were mapped this year. 76 days were spent on this project.
- Soil Conservation - In 1936, 160 farmers in Bonner County applied for grants under the AAA program. 182 worksheets were turned in but 22 had no basis for payment. The program did not seem to fit conditions very well since about three fourths of the crop land was already in conserving crops. At the first range practice meeting, 40 farmers indicated that they wished to qualify for payment but only eight received payment from the source.
- Dairy Improvement - Previous projects were dependent upon the production of winter feed. There had been a steady increase in the production of feed crops, especially alfalfa and clover until there was a small surplus of hay this year. In 1926 Bonner County imported over \$100,00.00 worth of hay. Large quantities of concentrates for dairy and poultry feeds were still being imported but more grain was being produced as additional

land was cleared. Creameries at Sandpoint, Clark Fork and Newport provided an adequate outlet for dairy products.

- Bonner County Fair - The Bonner County fair was held September 16, 17, and 18 and was the eleventh annual event. 54 youngsters carried on calf club work in seven 4-H clubs. Large crowds witnessed judging of 75 head of dairy cattle including 37 4-H club calves and heifers. 70 beef cattle, 38 head of sheep and 14 hogs were shown at the Bonner County Fair. 362 different people won \$1,231.10 in cash prizes in all departments. Robert Meserve, Lewis and Donald Williams represented Bonner County in livestock judging at Spokane Fat Stock Show. Robert Meserve, Paul Hart and Leigh Shadel judged livestock at Pacific International at Portland.
- Beef Cattle - Beef cattle was gaining in importance in Bonner County. A few purebred herds of Shorthorn, Red Polled and Aberdeen Angus cattle were furnishing bulls and foundation cattle for other farmers in the county. 60 head of purebred beef cattle were shown at the Bonner county fair, the largest number ever exhibited at this show. Breeders who exhibited were Brown Brothers, Colburn; Frank H. Anselmo, Priest River; J.F. McNall, Samuels and R. W. Haag, route #1, Sandpoint with Shorthorns and Scott J. Armour, R#1, Sandpoint; Ben Ewen, Careywood and Jerry Wilford, Sagle with Red Polled and Dr. O. F. Page and Dr. W. F. Tyler of Sandpoint with Aberdeen Angus cattle.
- Poultry - Pren Moore, Poultry specialist, held nine poultry demonstrations in Bonner County. Egg grading was demonstrated at six meetings. 97 birds were shown at the Bonner County Fair.
- Reed's Canary Grass - Reed Canary Grass production for hay on wet boggy and overflow land was increasing steadily in acreage. Most of the overflow land along Pend d' Oreille lake and along Pend d' Oreille river was adapted to this crop. Owners of this land were slow to break up overflow land because of difficulty of getting stand of grass when the native grass is plowed under. It was especially difficult to get stands where the land was clay or where there was considerable washing during high water.
- Alfalfa - Alfalfa was fast becoming the most important hay crop on land adapted to its production. The success of this project depended on several practices which were accepted almost entirely throughout the county. These practices were given publicity through the press, through letters, bulletins, meetings and personal contact. New settlers were advised as to these practices which were usually different from those used in other localities. Alfalfa could be made more valuable as a soil builder by plowing under a succulent second crop every five or six years. Alfalfa on poor land might be stimulated by the application of ammonium sulphate until the plants become established. Approximately eight cars of gypsum were used on legumes last fall and this spring to provide sulphate for 1937 legume crops.
- Potato Improvement - Potatoes were grown in small acreages in the more frost free areas of Bonner County. For several years a late growing rural, called north Idaho rural, produced a fine yield of white potatoes. Finally mosaic cut the yield so badly that Gold Coin potatoes were introduced from Ponderay County, Washington to take their place. Gold Coin became diseased and was replaced by the Katahdin, a mosaic resistant variety. This variety was introduced in 1934 through a few growers and 4-H club members until they spread throughout the county. Five acres of Katahdin and 15 acres of Netted gem potatoes were certified on two farms. Katahdin potatoes became generally distributed. Two 4-H clubs with 25 members carried on potato club work.

- Grass Seed Production – Ever since the Sandpoint sub-station produced grass seed successfully, farmers were advised to plant grass for seed as a cash crop in addition to grain and potatoes and in localities where climatic conditions prohibited the growing of potatoes and more tender crops. Twenty test plots of crested wheat grass and several plots of tall meadow oat grass were scattered over the county from seed furnished by the sub-station at Sandpoint. Those producing crested wheat grass seed in marketable amounts were: the Sandpoint sub-station, Oscar Evanson on the George Haye place at Priest River, H. Bergdorf at Priest River and H. A. Lunn near Wrenco. H. A. Lunn produced 348 pounds of re-cleaned seed on 1.2 acres of crested wheat grass planted in the spring of 1936. The Sandpoint sub-station produced 532 pounds of re-cleaned seed per acre on old seeding. Both lots of seed sold for \$.30 cents per pound returning \$87.00 and \$159.00 per acre on the two farms.
- Land Clearing - Land clearing had its biggest boom during the period following the war when left over war material for stump blasting sold at very reasonable prices. This lasted until 1926, after which higher prices prevailed. Many farmers purchased a supply to last three or four years. During this time an educational program was conducted where stump blasting demonstrations and contests were held. During the Depression lack of finance slowed up land clearing which was limited to completely clearing partly cleared fields. For the previous two years there had been an increase in land clearing. The Resettlement Administration financed powder purchases by making powder loans to farmers. By pooling orders to get car lot prices in 1936, approximately \$1,300 was saved on 40,000 pounds of powder by 90 farmers participating.
- 823 head of cattle were tested for abortion on 81 farms showed 7 reactors.
- 679 head of cattle were tested for T.B. on 78 farms produced on reactors.
- 131 farmers cleared approximately 400 acres with 33,200 pounds of blasting powder, purchased in cooperative shipment. Stump blasting demonstrations held at Sagle, Selle, Vay and Priest River.
- 4,255 pounds of poisoned oats and 168.5 ounces of trychnine were used by Bonner County farmers in a squirrel and pocket gopher campaign. A predatory animal contest, sponsored by the sportsmen's association, destroyed 9,756 squirrels, 752 pocket gophers, 30 crows, 7 magpies and 26 coyotes.
- 42,003 pounds of Chlorate was applied to 15,596 sq. rods of weeds on 75 farms by W.P. A.
- 31 applications were made for emergency seed loans.
- 155 4-H club members carried on work in sewing, cooking and canning clubs. Two achievement meetings were held. 31 club members attended the Junior Short Course at University of Idaho. 57 girls displayed work at Bonner County Fair, 63 took part in a style show and dress revue, 8 teams entered the demonstration contest.
- District Home Demonstration Agent carried on projects in home improvement, clothing, kitchen improvement, and nutrition in nine communities. 58 meetings were held, attended by 865 women.

#### 1938 Annual Report

- The precipitation for the first eleven months was 21.78 inches or 2.64 inches below normal. The period between killing frosts extended from May 6 to Oct. 14 or 161 days.

This was the longest on record as compared with 153 days in 1936 and 110 days in 1937. Due to subnormal rainfall some wells were low in water.

- A.A.A. - \$46,196.95 was distributed to 275 farmers qualifying for payment under the 1937 AAA program. 692 farms checked for compliance under the 1933 program. The county was divided into 8 communities under AAA program.
- Dairy Cattle – A general breed association meeting was held at community hall and attended by 160 people. A Holstein Association tour was held, attended by Glenn H. Householder, Director of Extension Division of National Association. R.N. McMillan completed a fifth year of official testing. 1,210 head of cattle were tested for abortion with 15 reactors.

4-H club members entered club work with 52 head of dairy animals. Ten calf club members attended the Junior Shortcourse at University of Idaho, two livestock judging tours were held, a livestock and one demonstration team were trained. Livestock judging team and agricultural demonstration team competed at the Pacific International at Portland.

- Beef Cattle - Outstanding sires were imported into the county by Frank H. Anselmo of Priest River, the Brown Brothers of Sandpoint, E. W. Haag, Sandpoint, Cal Huff, Priest River and Scott Armour of Sandpoint. An Inland Empire Shorthorn tour was attended by 50 people. They visited Anselmo and Brown herds at Priest River and Colburn. 70 beef animals were shown at the Bonner County Fair. Ellsworth Broadsword, Charles Rathbun and Lois McNall of Grouse Creek, judged livestock at the Spokane Fat Stock Show.
- Poultry - Egg grading demonstrations were held at Sandpoint, Priest River and Mountain View. Egg quality was explained. Egg grading and egg quality displays were made at the Bonner County Fair by C.W. Neider. Pren Moore visited poultry farms in the county and conducted a poultry school at Sandpoint. Two caponizing demonstrations were held.
- Crops - 50 pounds of Michaels grass was sold to ten farmers in five pound lots to test the grass and produce seed for distribution. Timothy seed was a paying crop on the Oliver Ruen farm at Clark Fork. Eight bushels of flax per acre was produced on eight acres of new land at \$1.70 per bushel by Clyde Cox of Selle. Crested Wheat grass acreage was increased.
- Potatoes - 36 acres of certified netted Gems and Katahdin seed potatoes was produced on the farms of Oliver Ruen, Clark Fork, H.L. Sherwood and Son, Route #2 Sandpoint, and C.W. Gresham, Midas. 1,739 sacks of 1937 seed potatoes were tagged and sealed for certification on Ruen and Gresham farms. Two potato clubs were organized. Fourteen members exhibited at Bonner County Fair, nine participated in a judging contest. Faith Sorenson, Priest River potato club member, won a trip to the National 4-H Club Congress at Chicago.
- Soils - H.W.E. Larson, Soils Specialist and county agent held meetings and visited plots in 14 districts of the county. Green manure crops provided the fastest and best method of building mineral soils. The Experiment station increased winter wheat yield by nearly 20 bushels per acre, using alfalfa as a green manure crop. Red clover was used as green manure in short rotation.
- Land Clearing - 115,000 pounds of powder was purchased cooperatively during the previous three years. The Farm Security Administration financed 99 farmers with 49,300 pounds of powder. 218 farmers reported an average of 26 acres cleared with an average of 40 of good acres to clear. They planned on clearing 4.5 acres per farm in 1939.

- Rodent Control – 4,000 pounds of poisoned oats and 100 ounces of pocket gopher poison were distributed.
- Weeds - The W.P.W. weed program used 20,793 pounds of sodium chlorate to treat 5,2097 sq. rods of Canada Thistle, 90 sq. rods Quack Grass, 892 sq. rods Yellow Toad Flax, 32 sq. rods White Top, 33 sq. rods Wild Morning Glory and 333 sq. rods of miscellaneous weeds.
- Insect Control - 50 gallons of sodium arsenite were received to mix 4,444 pounds of grasshopper bait used on 34 farms. Dr. Harris, Department of Entomology, introduced rotenone dust into Bonner County for the control of garden insects.
- Seed Loans - Six emergency seed loans, amounting to \$590.00 were written.
- Girl's 4-H Work - 125 girls enrolled in sewing, 13 in cooking, five in canning and six in baking projects. Achievement meetings were held in Sandpoint community hall and attended by 150 members, leaders and friends. 41 club members and leaders attended the Junior Shortcourse at University of Idaho. 100 members, leaders and friends attended a county wide picnic. Seven 4-H clubs prepared booths at the Bonner County Fair. 30 girls took part in a judging contest and four teams competed in a demonstration contest. 27 girls entered a style show and dress revue, Lenora Schwin was selected as county champion in the style show. Janette Haag, club member and leader, won a trip to the National 4-H club congress at Chicago for outstanding achievement.
- Home Economics - Home Economics work, conducted by Miss Leona Curtis, District Home Demonstration agent in ten communities, included projects in kitchen, home and surroundings, nutrition, home furnishings and clothing. 16 extension women competed in the style show at Bonner County Fair.

#### 1939 Annual Report

- Winter was unusually mild so that winter wheat and hay crops came through in fine shape. January, February and June were the only months showing an excess of precipitation. The total for the first ten months reported by the Sandpoint Experiment Station was 16.78 inches, 3.8 inches short of the normal for that period. Summer temperatures were above average except June. The period between killing frosts was 146 days at Sandpoint from April 14 to September 7. A light frost on July 17 did some damage to tender crops and shortened the hay crop in more frosty localities.
- Under the AAA program, 775 mapped farms averaged 32 acres of cropland per farm.
- Fertility and drainage problems on peat land were dealt with through the years and generally speaking a mixture of nitrogen, phosphate and potash (2-20-20), 2% nitrogen to start the plants when the soil is cold, 20% phosphate to promote filling and maturity of grain and 20% potash to increase the strength of straw is pretty well standardized, A growing percentage of farmers found the use of this material profitable on peat soils.
- The value of plowing under green manure on most upland soils naturally low in nitrogen humus was becoming established but had not been put into general practice due to limited cropland. Other specific soil problems were dealt with through experimental plots.
- A gradual improvement in livestock had been made due to use of purebred sires and the gradual establishment of purebred herds from which to secure foundation stock. A dairy herd improvement association, operating from September 1, 1928 to August 1, 1932, established the value and standing of dairy cattle in this county from which breeding

stock had been increased. There had been a gradual increase in good poultry flocks and an improvement in management.

- The first commercial hatchery in the county was started this year on the Frank Cochrane farm with electric equipment and should prove an asset to the industry here.
- Standardization of grain crops recommended by the Sandpoint substation introduced the highest yielding varieties. Certification of potatoes had not only helped the certified seed grower but had indicated a source of good seed. Grass seed production had been introduced and became an important cash crop. Lack of proper threshing equipment was a problem not yet solved.
- Other long time projects included rodent control, predatory animal control, insect pest control weed control and livestock disease control. Testing for Bangs disease had been carried on for several years following preliminary un-official blood sampling by the County Agent of 251 head of cattle on 45 farms during 1930, 1931, and 1932. Since that time work had been carried on in cooperation with the Bureau of Animal Industry and testing for county accreditation was in prospect.
- 4-H Club Work started in Bonner County, following the continuation of Extension work in 1925 beginning with one member, Claudia Jones of Kootenai. From this start, membership increased to approximately 300 where it should remain fairly constant. Bonner County 4-H club youngsters carried out agricultural projects in dairying, beef cattle, swine, potatoes and forestry; and home economic projects in sewing, baking, canning, cooking, and room improvement. In all, since 1925, 2,865 projects were carried out. Mrs. Eunice Antisdell, the mother of 4-H club work in Bonner County devoted her time continually since 1928 to leading clubs and superintending the 4-H home economics department at the county fair.
- Bonner County Fair - This annual event managed by the county agent and participated in by a large number of organizations and individuals within the county had the continued support of the Extension service, the college of agriculture and its experiment station to make it truly an educational institution. This fair helped to develop the agricultural industries of the county and had shown the progress made in livestock, field crops, improved methods in the home and on the farm, and provided a place for 4-H boys and girls to exhibit their work to the public.
- With the coordinated efforts of organizations within the U.S.D.A., there should be a more rapid development of Bonner county farms in the future as the area emerged from the pioneer state to a permanent agriculture.
- Bonner County Agricultural conservation assisted 29.5 days with agricultural program, covering 765 farms, with 500 compliance farms and 77 wheat farms receiving payment.
- Farm Security Administration made 137 loans in Bonner County, covering land clearing and standard loans.
- Soil conservation service made experimental plantings on the Blanchard and Spirit Lake fire area.
- Electricity was supplied to 353 farms in Bonner County.
- The second cutting of medium red clover plowed under a second crop year increased the yield of oats on the Frank Rusho farm from 16.6 bushel to 85.2 bushels per acre. The same crop increased the yield of Mosida wheat on the Matt Schmidt farm from 35 to 48 bushels.



- Alfalfa plowed under as green manure crop in the spring increased the yield of markton oats to 21.1 bushels, Mosida wheat 15.2 bushels and Union barley 22.3 bushels.
- None fertilizer plots were established on eight farms to determine fertilizer requirement on mineral and peat soils cropped with oats, timothy and clover, alfalfa and potatoes.
- An educational, free Bonner County fair was held with many thousands becoming acquainted with better methods of agriculture, home economics and improvement of varieties of farm crops and breeds of livestock. One new building was constructed.
- A revised pamphlet giving varieties of crops and improved practices in agriculture in Bonner County was supplied to farmers and new settlers.
- Ladak alfalfa produced a large cutting on one crop land.
- Michaels grass was distributed to ten farmers and made a good seed yield on two fall seeded plots.
- 4,000 sacks of certified Netted Gem seed potatoes were grown on 29 acres of peat soil on Oliver Ruen's farm in Clark Fork , 900 sacks of Gems by H.L. Sherwood and son of Sandpoint on 8 ½ acres, and 199 sacks of gems by C.W. Gresham of Midas on 2 acres all from Ruen stock. C.W. Groshem produced 430 sacks of certified Katahdin seed on 5 ½ acres.
- Nine 4-H calf clubs conducted three excursions, sent four teams to the Spokane Fat Stock Show, and exhibited 59 head of livestock at the Bonner County Fair. Billy Whittum, Lawrence Kelley and Ted Capend of Edgemere placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the stock judging contest at Pacific International. Wm. Shaw and Ruth McArthur attended the National Club Congress at Chicago.
- Farms of Leon Hudon, R.H. McMillan, N.A. Roberts, Robt. Henderson, Earl Graves, Oliver Ruen, and Paul Neal were visited in tour of purebred Holstein herds.
- The Bonner County Cattlemen organization was organized to promote and protect raising of cattle.
- One 4-H pig club was organized at Priest River.
- A hatchery with electric incubators was started by Frank Cochrane of Kootenai on the American Poultry Improvement plan. Pullorium testing was started.
- 5,500 pounds of poisoned oats and 100 ounces of strychnine were distributed for squirrel and pocket gopher control.
- 1,455 pounds of grasshopper bait was used by nine farmers.
- 10 meetings were held to study the control of insect pests.
- 70 head of young cattle were vaccinated for blackleg.
- 101 4-H club members enrolled in sewing, 27 in cooking, and 20 in canning projects.
- Land clearing had been a long time program. After pyrotol, made from left over war material and handled through the Farmers Supply Company, ran out, it became a practice to pool cars through local concerns on a car lot cost plus handling charge basis. This activity helped to reduce the cost of clearing. Stump blasting demonstrations and county wide contests helped familiarize farmers with the use of powder. The advent of the bulldozer and land clearing blade with teeth in 1939 allowed for quicker, economical land clearing. Crop land increased from 31,000 acres in 1925 to 39,000 in 1935.

One of the early clearings was made by Pete Christenson at Laclede in 1910 on 25 acres, using powder, costing \$17.00 per hundred and a Swenson grubber (a cable drum and

horse drawn sweep) cost \$85.00 per acre. Records kept by the Sandpoint Substation at a period about ten years later placed a cost of \$75.00 per acre to put the land under cultivation.

Besides being expensive, this method of land clearing was slow. Many farmers were occupied for ten to twenty years with only 6 to 20 acres cleared. The average crop land per farm for the county was 31 acres. It was agreed by most farmers that this average should be raised to from 40 to 50 acres per farm, to make economic units so that the farm family has a satisfactory income.

In December of 1938, Mr. George Klein, Frank Cochrane, local grange representative, and the County Agent, together with Mr. Reuben Bauer, County Agent of Benewah county and Mr. Chas. Daufan of Boundary County visited the Agnew land clearing project, financed by the Farm Security Administration near Port Angeles, Washington. Mr. Geo. Klein, then district F.F.A. supervisor, located at Coeur d' Alene arranged for the trip and financed transportation. The party was conducted over the project from Port Angeles by Lemual Ross, F.S.A. Supervisor. The project included the Sequim area east of Port Angeles to an area 12 miles west of this city. The Sequim area was a region of light rainfall, about 13 inches, while the area west of the city had precipitation as high as 41 inches. Stumps and forest growth varied from small stumps on the one area to large fir and cedar from 4 to 5 feet in diameter, much larger than in Bonner County. Clearing costs ran from \$25.00 to \$100.00 per acre.

In this project 79 farmers signed 5,000 hours of work in a cooperative. The F.S.A. loaned money to five signers who took the responsibility for the management of the enterprise. The loan was \$6,000.00 or for the purchase of a 40 H.F. diesel bulldozer and operator. Clearing started March 12, 1938. By December 1<sup>st</sup> a repayment of \$1,000.00 had been made.

On one particular farm, 8.85 acres were cleared on which there were 65 large fir stumps and 110 large stumps.

The following is an itemized account of the work done:

Non-cash work:

Mr. Hanson, the owner	Labor, 4 months
Owner's team	Labor, 2 months
Two extra men 118 $\frac{3}{4}$ hrs. each	Exchange labor

Cash Outlay:

One man for 3 months	\$50.00
Powder for blasting, fuse and caps	\$50.00
Bulldozer work 118 $\frac{3}{4}$ hrs. @ 3.50	<u>\$413.00</u>
Total cash outlay for 8.85 area	\$513.00

Cash investment in land per acre:

Average cost of clearing per acre	57.96
Cost of land per acre	<u>10.00</u>
Total cash investment in land per acre	\$67.96

Facts and figures secured from this visit to Port Angeles were presented to Bonner County Farmers through the press and to grange organizations by personal contract. Twelve farmers offered their farms for demonstrations and agreed to pay for the bulldozer at \$4.00 per hour.

A survey of powder requirements was made and results turned over to powder dealers who were handling this material on the car lot basis. The price this year was \$11.00 for 20%, \$11.50 for 30% and \$11.75 for 40%; caps, \$1.40 per box and fuse 70¢ per roll. This office also advised farmers regarding F.S.A. loans for land clearing.

The following data was taken from 108 questionnaires returned to this office by interested farmers:

Number of Farms	108
Average acres in the farm	173.5
Average acres of cropland per farm	29.6
Average food acres yet to clear	67.2
Crop acres per farm if all good acres were cleared	96.8

In April, members of the Bonner County Pomona Grange land clearing committee, Frank Cochrane, H.L. Sherwood, Eugene Ralph, together with Ralph Knight of the Sandpoint Experiment Station, Lee White of the U.S. Forest Service in charge of Blister Rust work and the county agent visited farms offered for demonstration to select typical locations.

The first demonstrations were held on the C. G. Cox farm near Selle and the Sherwood and Son farm near Dover, using a 64 horse Allis Chalmers gas tractor with dirt moving blade without teeth.

This equipment cleared five acres of the Cox farm in 20 hours at a cost of \$22.00 per acre covering bulldozer hire at \$4.00 per hour and powder, caps and fuse. This machine did good work but was criticized for putting too much dirt in the windrow and scalping too much surface soil and sod. This was heavy clearing with down logs, large stumps and some brush.

On the Sherwood farm a little over an acre was cleared in eight hours of heavy clearing on an alder bottom where nearly all of the soil had to be worked to get blind stumps and roots. This land was prepared for irrigation which accounts in part for the large yield of potatoes grown.

Cost of machine labor to clear and level:

8 hours at \$4.00/hr	\$32.00
Man hours labor piling & burning 3 ½ days at \$3.00 per day	\$10.50
Horse labor – 1 day at \$1.50	\$1.50
Labor shooting stumps – ½ day	\$2.00
25# powder, caps and fuse	<u>\$ 3.60</u>
	\$49.60

The Sherwoods, who were certified Netted Gem seed growers, planted this acre to Netted Gems and produced 185 sacks of potatoes eligible for certification and valued at least at \$1.50 per hundred pounds. This acre returned above the cost of clearing, \$227.90 to compensate for the cost of growing the crop. This land was not only returning a profit clearing costs but was a permanent asset for the future.

Demonstrations on July 6, 7, and 8 were held on the Sloan Crawford farm, five miles north of Sandpoint and a second demonstration took place on the C. G. Cox farm, using a Caterpillar R. D. – 7, equipped with an Isaacson blade with teeth. This land clearing blade with teeth was a big improvement over the dirt moving blade previously used as it could remove stumps and roots without moving so much top soil and take out roots and blind stumps to a better advantage.

Land clearing demonstration was held on the Sloan Crawford farm with Caterpillar R.D. -7 Diesel. There were 150 stumps per acre, 90% of which were large cedar. The remainder was pine and tamarack. 2 acres were cleared and piled with the bulldozer and an additional 5 acres cleared but not piled.

Acres Cleared - 7

Material Used

Powder 180# at \$11.50 per cwt	\$20.70
Caps	\$1.50
Fuss.....3 rolls at 80¢ per roll	<u>\$2.40</u>
Total cost of material	\$24.60
Bulldozer hire at \$4.50 per hour, 15 hours	<u>\$60.00</u>
Total cost of clearing the 7 acres	\$84.60

Total cost per acre	\$12.09
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Note: extra labor of spotter and labor for piling and burning not included.

On August 16 a demonstration was held on the Paul Neal farm near Oden, using a T.D. - 18 Diesel International Tractor with Bucyrus-Epic land clearing equipment with teeth. Complete record was kept on a 25 acre field with the following results.

Land Clearing Demonstration – Paul Neal Farm, August 18, 1939

Acres cleared	25
Approximate stumps	120
No. Stumps blasted	300
No stumps blasted per acre	12

Material Used

Powder 550# at \$13.00 per cwt	\$71.50
Caps 300 at \$1.50 per 100	\$4.50
Fuses 500 ft. at 75¢ per 100 ft.	<u>\$3.75</u>
Total cost of material	\$79.75
Labor blasting stumps 120 hrs. @ 38¢	45.60
Bulldozer hire at \$4.50 per Hour,	
42 hrs. and 45 minutes pushing out stumps	\$192.38
12 hrs. piling stumps	<u>\$54.00</u>
Total machine labor	\$246.38

Land owner's labor as spotter for the machine	<u>\$18.00</u>
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Per Acre Clearing Cost	\$369.73
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Avg. cost powder, caps and fuss	\$3.19
Avg. Labor cost blasting stumps	\$1.82
Avg. bulldozer cost pushing out and piling stumps	\$9.86
Avg. bulldozer cost pushing out stumps	\$7.70
Avg. bulldozer cost piling stumps	<u>\$2.16</u>
Farm labor as spotter for bulldozer	<u>\$.72</u>

Complete cost of clearing except picking up small piece of

Mr. Neal had previously cleared approximately 100 acres of land on his farm by the old method at an average cost of \$40.00 per acre, covering many years of hard labor. Under this old method it would take from five to twenty-five years to clear this land.

The land clearing committee entered into an agreement with G.L. Arnett of Sandpoint to help secure clearing with the T.D. International at \$4.00 per hour under a contract satisfactory to both parties. Under this agreement the board of county commissioners and county agent selected a land clearing committee to settle disputes. The committee selected was Paul Neal, H. L. Sherwood and C. D. Tuthill who inspected the first 190 hours of work and made recommendations to those requesting land clearing and to the bulldozer owner. The machine worked three shifts and so far as possible did the piling at night.

The bulldozer blade underwent several changes and was finally rebuilt to the satisfaction of the owner. This machine has been operated in actually clearing land about 1064 ½ hours since it started on August 16, clearing an estimated 435 acres at \$4.00 per hour. This machine has worked in the area north of Sandpoint and west as far as the Wrencoe loop.

Mr. Arnett also placed a new Caterpillar H.D.7 with laterne blade with curved teeth in the Cocolalla district clearing land in that locality and in Sagle, Morton, Clark Fork and Laclede areas. It has operated on two shift basis for 962.5 actual working hours at \$4.50 per hour, clearing an estimated 347.5 acres.

Mr. Fred Forcythe, after conferring with the committee and upon the consent of Mr. Arnett placed an R. D. -7 caterpillar with Isaacson land clearing blade with teeth in the Priest River district at the same rate of \$4.50 per hour. To date his machine working on the Priest River Peninsula has cleared 251 estimated acres in 569 hours.

The total land cleared since clearing operations started in earnest on August 16, including previous demonstrations were approximately 1,049 acres in 2,511 hours costing \$10,949.00 for bulldozer work with the three machines.

As Bonner County looked towards the end of the decade the cash income of American farmers was improving from the Depression low marks and the outlook for 1939 appeared reasonably bright to agriculture Department experts. However, the world would change forever before 1939 ended, as Germany's invasion of Poland spread into World War II. At the moment, however, farmers had more money to spend, and USDA economists were watching where it went.

Higher cash income from farm marketing in 1939 was anticipated by the USDA experts, who also noted that "government payments probably will exceed 1938 payments" and that income from non-farm sources could rise a bit too. "As incomes rose, farm families started to spend part of the increase for living expenses, but the bulk went towards paying off debts and making improvements on the farm," said a USDA outlook report from December 1938.

During the 1930s there was a trend toward broadening social contacts for farm families through improved transportation and communication, better roads, more widespread ownership and greater use of automobiles, and an increased number of radios contributed to this development.

Television was still a science fiction dream for most Americans in 1939, and it was radio that brought news and entertainment to remote areas of the country, with battery sets and the gradual spread of electric power lines. At the end of the decade, about 3/5 of all farm families had radios, and there was a likelihood of a further increase in 1939.

Further, there was evidence that a larger proportion of farm families owned automobiles than their city cousins. Trends toward more comfortable living were evidenced by electrification and other improvements of farm homes and by purchases of household equipment that lightened labor, electricity was not used on 18% of all farms as compared with 13% in 1930. During the Great Depression, daily life was a struggle for many farm families. However, near the end of this dark and difficult decade there came – quite literally – light. On May 11, 1935, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt issued Executive Order 7037 establishing the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) whose task was to bring electricity to rural areas. This act would dramatically change daily life in farmhouses, chores in the barn, and work in the fields.

At the time the Rural Electrification Act was passed in 1936, electricity was commonplace in cities but largely unavailable in farms, ranches, and other rural areas where experts felt it would cost far too much to bring in service. As such, in 1925 only 3% of American farms were electrified, 10% in 1931, and barely 11% when REA came to life in 1935. The coming of electricity meant that families could replace kerosene lanterns in homes and barns, bringing power for lights, refrigeration, appliances, and farm equipment, making life better and more efficient.

The Rural Electrification Act authorized the REA to lend funds to “persons, corporations, cities, districts, states, and cooperatives” for the construction of rural electric systems. Much of the funding for the REA was channeled through newly established cooperative electric power companies, most of which still exist today. These member-owned cooperatives purchased power on a wholesale basis and distributed it using their own network of transmission and distribution lines. REA crews travelled through the American countryside, bringing teams of electricians along with them. The electricians added wiring to houses and barns to utilize the newly available power provided by the line crews.

For the first year of its existence (May 11, 1935 to May 20, 1936) the REA operated under authority of the Federal Emergency Relief Appropriations Act. This relief agency relationship may explain Northern Light, Inc.’s original name: the Northern Idaho Rural Electrification Rehabilitation Association.

In 1935, many Bonner County residents doubted anything would come of a group of local farmers, hailing from Bonners Ferry to Sandpoint, who wanted to form an electrical cooperative to bring electricity out to their farms. And yet the group, known as the Northern Idaho Rural Electrification Rehabilitation Association, did just that. Incorporated on September 16, 1935, the cooperative appointed H.E. Bassford of Naples, ID President of the group. In the late summer of 1935, Bassford traveled to Washington, D.C. where he met several times with President Roosevelt himself, and came home with a loan designated *Idaho 4* – the fourth loan the REA granted its first year of operation, and the first loan west of the Mississippi.

Another original member, Floyd Smith, and his wife Winona, were equally committed to building the new rural electric system in northern Idaho. Just 21 years old at the time, Floyd

traveled from farm to farm, signing people up. “We needed to get three to four people per mile; and sometimes we didn’t have that many. There were folks who didn’t have the \$1 membership fee that we charged, so I had to loan them a dollar so they could sign up. Our first residential rate on October 16, 1935, was \$3 for the first 40 kwh or less,” he said.

Early Northern Lights records indicate that the first REA-financed line was placed in operation on July 6, 1936. It took a lot of hands to build those power lines through some pretty rough and rugged country. The first feeder station was situated on North Boyer Avenue on the W.C. Racicot place with lines running north along U.S. Highway 2 and 95 to Naples. There were a few side taps in the Selle district, but the whole system served less than 100 customers. This first REA line is still in operation today.

## 1940-1950

By the beginning of 1940, most families had electricity in rural North Idaho. In the northern part of the Hoodoo Valley residents were asked to join the association and pay membership dues in the amount of \$5.00, as well as \$3.00 per month for a base usage of 30 kilowatts. The power line ran through the valley, very nearly following the S.I.R.R. right-of-way. Each land owner was required to grant to the N.I.R.E.R.A. a right-of-way strip through his land, and these were all duly recorded in abstract records.

At the start of this new decade the effects of the situation in Europe had not yet trickled down to affect the rural farmers. Just a year later World War II was in full swing, and the construction of Farragut Naval Training Base provided badly needed jobs for just about any man who would leave what he had been doing and car pool to the construction site. The young men of communities such as the Hoodoo Valley nearly all joined a branch of the service, and even some of the young women. The base also created a great demand for locally grown food, especially fresh dairy products. Farmers who had been selling cream—and that were just about everyone—could now send their milk out in ten-gallon cans to be picked up by a Broadview Dairy truck.

The price they received was far more than they could get by separating the milk and selling the cream. Hand milking was allowed, but the milk had to be cooled quickly, which was difficult during the summer months. And each producer's milk had to pass a bacteria test which must remain below a certain level or he would be "cut off." Farragut pumped money into the economy in many ways, and when it was dismantled in the 1950's, many more jobs were created. The salvaged building materials were sold at a very reasonable cost, and there was hardly a home or farm building that did not have Farragut lumber, plumbing, insulation, or some other material added to it.

Land clearing was still going strong in Bonner County in the 1940s. One farmer, Les Abbott, boasted of completing 600 hours of work in the Gold Creek area clearing more than 1,000 acres in four months. Aided by more modern methods such as bulldozers, other farmers were able to clear 1,049 acres before winter at a cost of approximately \$10 per acre for bulldozer hire at \$4.50 an hour. The dairy industry continued to grow, with Idaho milk producers making a larger income in 1940, with an average price of 29.9 cents a pound, than they did in 1926 with an average price of 4.3 cents a pound.<sup>40</sup> In October, the Farm Security Administration opened an office in Sandpoint in the courthouse, run by E.G. Iddings, Rural Resettlement Supervisor, and Mrs. Frances Redding, Home Management Supervisor. The Panhandle Grain and Milling Co purchased a power spray outfit to assist in carrying out the objectives of the insect control program for the fruit and shade trees as well as certain shrubs.

In 1941 family-type farmers and small operators, cooperating in the Bonner Farm Security Administration program, were urged to increase production of milk, chickens, eggs and pork to increase their incomes and share in the expanding market for these products resulting from the Department of Agriculture's "Food For Defense" program. Prices of these commodities were supported through department purchases at the following levels (Chicago Market): Hogs, \$9/

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<sup>40</sup> Annual report of S. C. Perry, state director of dairying.



hundred; butter, .21/pound; eggs, .22/dozen, and chickens, .15/pound. Supplies acquired by the department were then used for lease-lend food aid to Britain and other countries, Red Cross shipments, distribution to needy and destitute families through state welfare agencies, free school lunches, and release on the market in case of unwarranted speculative price rises.<sup>41</sup>

The 1942 farm producing campaign was no different, calling for the participation of every farmer in Bonner County in “adjusting farm production to U.S. needs for defense and the needs of nations abroad resisting aggression,” local defense board officials said.<sup>42</sup> To acquaint farmers with the 1942 AAA and farm defense program and to assist them in preparing their 1942 farm defense plans, authorities held a series of social and business meetings. These efforts continued over the next few years, yet each year meeting the quotas became increasingly more difficult due to the shortage of manpower on the farms. A 1945 agricultural conservation program designed to help Bonner County farmers and ranchers continue record wartime food production, and at the same time undertake more long-range conservation practices so they could continue to help feed war ravaged countries in the following years. In 1946, Bonner County farmers were asked to participate in one of the most practical plans for reconstruction of Europe, the contribution to the Heifers for Relief fund. A goal of five heifers was met for Bonner County, according to James S. Merlin, chairman of the local heifer project committee, stating that the program would support “reconstruction and child welfare.”<sup>43</sup> Additional programs rewarded farmers for their participation in getting product to market and sent abroad to war torn countries. In 1946 AAA Chairman W.N. Sherwood appealed to farmers to make every effort to move their



Sandpoint Creamery

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<sup>41</sup> Sandpoint Bulletin 7/3/1941

<sup>42</sup> SNB 9/18/41

<sup>43</sup> SNB 2/12/46

### **Pit and Upright Silos Prove worth In Increasing Dairy Herd Production**

Sandpoint News Bulletin, 9/1/1949

Just as dairy farmers throughout the area are improving the quality of their herds and modernizing their farmsteads for increased grade A fluid milk production, so are they becoming more cognizant of the type and quality of the feed their animals should get.

Several farmers here have pioneered the use of silos in the past few years and a steady growth in the number of installations throughout the county has been noted. Out of the necessity some of the larger dairy operators have learned that they must do something to save their valuable first crops of alfalfa and clover and the only method to do this is to turn it into ensilage. Ensilage of a crop not only avoids losses in the field from leaching and shattering leaves, but better preserves some of the vitamins that are essential in winter rations of farm animals.

Northern Idaho is particularly well suited to growing large crops of legumes and grasses. On most farms hay crops grow better than grain. In addition hay crops tend to build up the soil, whereas grain crops are considered soil depleting.

Where terrain is suitable pit silos are the most economical to build. Several have been constructed in the county the largest of which, a 500 ton unit built by Fielden Poirier in the Blanchard district.

Another pit which has proved its worth without question is an 80 ton unit built by Clark and Dawson on their dairy farm in the Woodfair district. Hardin Dockins experimented with a 30 ton pit silo on his ranch west of the Great Northern depot and it proved to be so successful that he increased the size to 125 tons this spring and was able to harvest his hay crop during mid-June when the hay was at its very best. Ward Blair, who ranches in the Algoma district, this year erected an upright 100 ton silo, constructed of galvanized iron.

J. Rothschiller, who farms near Cocolalla, last year put up grass ensilage in two 30 ton above the ground made of snow fencing lined with heavy building paper.

wheat to market early, offering a bonus of 30 cents per bushel.

Land sales still continued in the early part of the decade, although by 1944 the Humbird Lumber Company was dumping land, selling more than 26,000 acres for an average price of \$1.56. Much of this went to Long Lake Lumber Company in a sale that included thousands of acres of timber lands as well.<sup>44</sup> Despite these cheap prices, Humbird stockholders profited from the sales of cutover lands. By 1944, after deducting expenses, the company netted \$1,196,641.78 from its land sales.

Dairies flourished during the 1940s when Farragut Naval Base on Lake Pend Oreille purchased all the milk farmers could produce. In 1946 butter sales were slightly less than 1945 but milk sales were more than double 1945 figures. Cream sales were far beyond 1945 sales. Ice cream sales showed a marginal increase despite the fact that sugar was very limited. Buttermilk, including powder, was another product that enjoyed a 10-fold increase over 1945, while cottage cheese sales doubled over 1945. The delivery and installation of new equipment at the Farmers Union Cooperative Creamery in 1947 helped increase capacity, allowing the processing of up to 7,000 pounds of milk per hour. This came just in

time for a sharp increase in production and the arrival of a new receiving plant for the Carnation Company. At a meeting of the Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce in May of 1946, a Carnation official said that at the time about \$500,000 a year was being paid to dairy farmers in the Sandpoint area and he predicted that he would be "disappointed if this figure is not doubled or

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<sup>44</sup> Humbird, "Humbird Lumber Company," 54-56; Humbird Lumber Company, Annual Report, 1932, attached statement dated 28 January 1933:2, box 3, P913 Humbird Lumber Company Records, MHS.

**Ruen's Seed Potato Crop is Moving to Growers in Central Washington**

Sandpoint News Bulletin,  
3/10/1949

The harvest grower of seed potatoes in Bonner County, Mr. Ruen had 70 acres of netted Gems this past summer which averaged 100 sacks per acre of the tubers, which found a ready market in central Washington area among commercial growers.

An interesting thing is the fact that despite last year's record high water in Lake Pend Oreille, the highest since 1894. Mr. Ruen went ahead and planted 30 acres in the lower Clark Fork valley on land which had been submerged by several feet of water and harvested a fine crop of seed potatoes.

trebled with three years. 1947 marked the first time grade "A" milk was made available to the people of Bonner County when the Farmers Union Cooperative Creamery company began to deliver and distribute Darigold grade "A" milk to customers. Delivery service was maintained to householders in Sandpoint and Priest River as well as various Bonner County stores.

In 1945 a push was put on by a Spokane distributor to convert the area dairies to Grade A. This increased the value of the producer's milk, but did require considerable investment in milk handling facilities.

By 1949 the Carnation Milk Company projected an increased annual income to dairy farmers of this area of approximately one and one-quarter million dollars within the next three years is. The company planned to start construction of a \$25,000 milk receiving plant on Highway 2 at the city limits. The primary aim of Carnation's program was to develop a larger Grade A milk supply in the Sandpoint territory to meet the shortage which existed in the Spokane area. The Farmers Co-op Creamery, which was established in 1930, saw its sales grow from \$50,000 to nearly \$750,000 in 1949. All of this farm success translated to additional stimulus in the economy. Farm

improvements meant the sale of cement blocks, lumber, nails, roofing and various other building materials. Dairy farms listed as Grade A required a considerable amount of equipment. One local dealer alone estimated his firm sold more than \$10,000 worth of electric milk coolers in 1949, a year when the investment required for a milking parlor and Grade A equipment averaged from \$2,500 to \$200 per farmer. Farmers were banding together in an effort to continue production goals and forming such groups as the Bonner County Herd Improvement Association. As of 1949, it was estimated that there were about 1,200 farmers in the county engaged in dairying to some degree and that they were receiving annually more than a million dollars for their products.

The 1945 Farm Census showed the number of farms in Bonner County as 1,411, compared with 1,551 in 1940, 1,451 in 1935. The total land in farms in Bonner County was 278,748 compared with 25,068 in 1940 and 200,028 in 1935. Average size of farms in 1945 was 198, compared to 158 acres in 1940, and 138 acres in 1935. 1946 also witnessed the launch of the Bonner County Soil Conservation District and soil conservation practices became increasingly more popular with growth from one application for a soil conservation plan the first year, to 185 applications in 1949. That same year, the farm of Oliver Ruen and sons near Clark Fork was selected as winner in the Bonner County division of the statewide contest to select a master conservation

farm. Honorable mention was given the farms of Glen Reed, Sagle; Ardley Burt, Route 1 Sandpoint, and Les Eddy and M.A. Roberts, Blanchard.<sup>45</sup>

An increased interest in farm forestry encouraged the opening of a new farm forestry office in Sandpoint. A marketing Co-op was set up to help facilitate the organizing and operation of the cooperative marketing association. At the end of the decade, U.S. census reports indicated that the county farms more than doubled their annual gross income in comparison with 1940, producing crops and livestock with the record value of more than \$1,949,000. The increase in income also led to an increase in general farm improvements and home remodeling. From 1940 to 1949, the number of farms reporting electric lights increased from 600 to 843, and 260 more tractors than in 1940.

The first successful livestock auction in Sandpoint was started by John Schell, known as the OK Sales Yard, in 1945. The average number of cattle sold each week was between 75 and 80 head. In 1950 the sale yard was sold to Art Sphar of the Gold Creek area and in the late 1950's the business was sold to Art's son Dale and Floyd McGhee. The name was changed to Sandpoint Livestock Auction and a new yard was built on Kootenai Cut-Off Road.

#### 1940 Annual Report

Agent: Walter F. Thomas

- During the previous winter 38.8" of snowfall was 32.5" less than the average. There was no snow during October and November and only 3.7" in December. Rainfall was 5.5" over normal with a total of 25.93". The period between frosts at the station extended from May 1 to November 3, inclusive of a total of 187 days, the longest growing season on record and 70 days longer than the average of 117 days from 1911 to 1930.
- The Farm Security Administration - In 1939 they had 137 loans in effect in Bonner County. A large proportion of these loans were for powder and land clearing. Since one of the big problems was financing for land clearing to raise the crop acreage per farm to a point where it was an economic unit. This organization could be of great service. Active F.C.A. loans in force Bonner County were as follows:

<u>Kind of Loan</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Purpose for which used</u>
Powder	43	Advance made for purchase of powder, caps and fuss.
Powder and Standard	6	Advance made for both powder as well as livestock and equipment
Powder and Land clearing	21	Advance for both powder and later for land clearing by bulldozer
Land Clearing	19	Advance made for clearing by bulldozer only
Standard	46	Advance for regular loan only
Standard and Land clearing	6	Advance made for land clearing by bulldozer and standard

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<sup>45</sup> SNB 8/25/1949

Up until the Farm Security placed an office in Sandpoint under the direction of E. G. Iddings, Administrators met their clients every Friday in the County agent's office. This office cooperated in advising many farmers concerning government lending agencies and met with advisory F.S.A. conditions when recommending loans for approval.

One meeting was conducted at Selle to present the water facilities progress which was participated in by the Soil Conservation Service and the Farm Security Administration officials.

Cooperative powder loans were made in 1936 and 1937 and to the Kootenai Bull Association this year. Several loans were pending on bulls and machinery.

- Rural Electrification Administration - The Northern Idaho Rural Electrification Rehabilitation Association, organized under the R.E.A. with headquarters at Sandpoint made a steady growth until it had 130.65 miles of line in Bonner County, used by 380 farmers. This association included lines in both Bonner and Boundary counties. Plans were being made to develop a power site on Priest River to supply power for the line.
- Land Use Planning - Bonner County was designated for a Land Use Planning program for 1940. Through this program, community and county committees were set up and meetings held to coordinate the activities of Federal programs under the Department of Agriculture and to permit farmers to determine what agricultural programs shall be worked out within the county. This program was under the supervision of the Bureau of Agriculture Economics.

The first series of Land Use planning meetings were held January 31, February 1 and 2. The county was divided into the six following districts for this purpose.

1. Eastern part of the county, including Hope, Clark Fork and Cabinet
  2. All area north of Sandpoint to county line, east to Trestle creek and west to Wrenco
  3. Priest River area including Laclede, area north of Priest River, west to state line and trade area south of the river and Newport
  4. Sagle-Glengary, Peninsula, Morton with south line at Westmond and North line Pend Oreille River. Extends to point across the River from Laclede
  5. Cocolalla-Careywood-Granite-Lakeview-Cedar Creek
  6. Hoodoo Valley, Blanchard and Spirit Lake
- Land Clearing - Land clearing in Bonner County with bulldozers equipped with teeth began in earnest the previous year about the middle of August after a series of demonstrations had been conducted during the summer with several kinds of machines. Approximately 1,049 acres were bulldozed in 2,511 hours, costing \$10,949.00 with three machines by December 1, 1939. Rapid, less expensive clearing was necessary to convert farms with few cleared acres into larger, economic farming units where the type of soil warrants the expense of clearing. 1935 census figures showed an average of 31 cleared acres per farm. The 1940 census should show an increase although the farm population increased from 1,451 to 1,553, according to a preliminary report. Land use planning committees suggested that the acreage of cleared land per farm should be increased to supply a more satisfactory farm income.

In January a meeting of the land clearing committee was called to plan the 1940 program. Besides this committee, three bulldozer operators, the Farm Security Administration and county agent were in attendance.

A survey made in March listed names and addresses of those who wished to buy powder for land clearing and those who expected to clear land with bulldozer equipment. Names of those who used powder were turned over to local powder dealers and those wishing bulldozer work to bulldozer owners in their respective operating areas.

A one day tour of farms where land clearing with bulldozers was done the previous year was held in April and attended by Northern Pacific Railway officials interested in this development.

Land clearing did not progress as rapidly as expected. Due to a late wet spring, very little was done early in the season. Many farmers who had cleared the previous year finished piling and burning. In many instances partly burned piles were replied with bulldozers to complete the job and several parties hired these machines to remove blind stumps and scattered stumps in fields being cropped. Bulldozer owners were forced to do other work to fill in their time. Besides land clearing, some of the machines were making fills, levelling land, excavating, making ditches and building roads.

Machines operating in the county, some on part time basis, included G.L. Arnett with caterpillar R.D. 7, clearing from Elmira to Granite in the Sandpoint area; A. D. Jones with 40 horse Cle-Trac operating in the Grouse Creek-Pack River and Sandpoint area; Oliver Ruen with a caterpillar R.D. 6, clearing in the Gold Creek and Clark Fork area; J.F. Forsythe with a caterpillar R.D. 7 in the Priest River Area and Clark Larson clearing a few acres in Vay district. The larger machines cleared at \$4.50 per hour and the smaller bulldozers at \$3.50, except Mr. Larson who operated at \$3.00 per hour. According to farmers having work done, the amount of work done per dollar spent was comparable. These five machines cleared 8,683.5 estimated acres on 104 farms, costing \$9,552.63 or an average of approximately \$11.00 per acre for bulldozer work alone. An additional 163 hours of bulldozer time, costing \$570.50 were spent on cleanup work, taking out isolated stumps, blind stumps and re-piling unburnt piles resulting from clearing in 1939. All bulldozer work cost \$10,123.13 or about \$800.00 less than work done in 1939.

One operator observed that tamarack was the most difficult to remove, then cottonwood, white pine, hemlock, yellow pine, fir, cedar, birch, and alder followed suit. On the Bart Engle, J. f. Gunby and Carl Meserve farms the stumps were windrowed and ground combed between, dragging two rails behind the machine to level and pulverize the soil. One farm followed this process combing five acres in six hours at \$3.50 per hour, another scarified five acres in four hours, and still another scarified five acres in three hours at the same rate per hour.

Further study of land clearing by those having had some work done may bring about further improvement in this type of clearing.

- Soils - A limited supply of soil survey maps and bulletins of Bonner County issued December 1939 by the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils was received. The wide range of soils within the county was indicated by 76 soil types and sub-phases. Principal types included were:

Light colored soils with clay subsoil

Light colored soils with sandy subsoil

Light colored soils with gravelly and stony subsoils  
Dark colored soils  
Miscellaneous types

These light colored soils with clay subsoil including Mission, Clayton and Cabinet series were the best upland light colored soils and could be depended upon to produce satisfactory crops if correct farming practices were followed. Some of the light colored soils with sandy subsoil made satisfactory farm land for deep rooted crops or if situated where seepage of heavier rainfall helps the moisture situation. Only a small acreage of light colored soils with gravelly and stony subsoils was being farmed as there were more droughty soils.

The light colored soils are low in nitrogen and humus which can be supplied in limited quantities by barnyard manure, the supply of which was too small to cover the acreage in need of this material. The most practical method of improving this soil was by growing legumes and the turning under the legume for green manure. Medium red clover, alfalfa, winter vetch and sweet clover appear best crops for this purpose. Legumes usually require artificial inoculation and sulphur in the form of gypsum to make a satisfactory crop. Boron also appears to be beneficial in some cases after that element has been depleted through cropping.

- A program stressing the use of green manures was started the previous year. Data gathered from the Sandpoint Experiment Station and farmers' following this practice was given wide publicity. It will take time to make this a common practice due to the fact that crop acreage per farm was small and land was needed to produce feed for livestock. The previous year a 12 inch growth of second cutting red clover turned under on the second crop year increased the yield of oats on the Frank and Stanley Rusho farm at Blanchard from 16.6 bushels to 85.2 bushels per acre and almost doubled the yield of winter wheat on the Matt Schmdtt farm in Oden. Satisfactory yields of Netted Gem potatoes were being produced on the Ernest Archer farm near Algoma, following the plowing under of sweet clover on land that would produce a poor crop without it. One of the most striking examples of soil improvement by the use of alfalfa as a green manure crop was shown on the Sandpoint Experiment station this year. This field was seeded to alfalfa in the spring of 1933 by Ralph Knight, station superintendent. The seed was inoculated, the field treated with 200# of gypsum per acre and rolled after seeding according to recommended practice. A 30 inch growth was turned under in June 1939 followed by summer fallowing and planted to winter wheat varieties the same year. The highest yielding variety Elgin, a white club wheat, produced 78.8 bushels per acre and the average of all varieties yielded 69.5 bushels per acre. Winter wheat following a green manure crop of Rosen rye and an application of 100 pounds of ammonium sulphate to supply additional nitrogen yielded 62.7 bushels per acre. The same variety, Mosida, produced 30.2 bushels where no green manure or commercial fertilizer was used, indicating that yields may be increased as much as 100% by the use of green manure crops.
- Fertilizer demonstration plots, established in 1939 and 1942 by cooperative effort of H.W.E. Larson, Extension Soils Specialist, R.E. Knight, Experiment Station Superintendent and the county agent with farmers throughout the county showed results of the same cases. A series including gypsum, lime, nitrogen, borax and in some cases

phosphate, potash and some rater elements were used on alfalfa. Nitrogen phosphate and potash were used on potato plots. Borax was tried in one orchard and one strawberry patch.

- Bonner County Fair - The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Bonner County educational free fair was the largest on record from the standpoint of attendance, exhibits and general interest. The fair showed a marked improvement in quality in all departments, showing that its educational value is being felt throughout the county. 210 head of cattle in addition to sheep, hogs, horses, poultry and rabbits filled the building to overflowing and made it necessary to put up a temporary shelter for about 20 head of cattle. Horses were tied to trees in the day time and put in the arena at night because of limited space.
- Grass Seeding on Blanchard Spirit Lake Burn - Following the large burn in the Blanchard-Spirit Lake fire in the fall of 1939, grass plots were established near Spirit Lake by the Soil Conservation Service and the Sandpoint Experiment Station. County funds, amounting to \$264.23 were secured by the county AAA committee, composed of Eugene Ralph, of Clark Fork , Grant Prichard of Sagle and Frank Rusho of Blanchard to purchase seed for farmers in the Blanchard area. The seed was distributed to farmers by Frank Rusho. The mixtures used were composed of the following varieties.

Crested Wheat Grass	566 pounds
Yellow Blossomed Sweet Clover	250 pounds
Tall Meadow Oat Grass	190 pounds
Orchard Grass	<u>40 pounds</u>
Total	1,046 pounds
Moist land and slopes	
Timothy and Alsice Clover	704 pounds
Orchard Grass	100 pounds
Yellow Blossomed Sweet Clover	50 pounds
Tall Meadow Oat Grass	<u>200 pounds</u>
Total	1,054 pounds

- Potato Improvement - Ordinarily Bonner County produced enough market potatoes for home consumption and some to be trucked to Coeur d'Alene, Spokane, and Montana points. Due to the longest season a record and favorable fall moisture conditions there was a considerable surplus to market elsewhere. The principal varieties grown were Kathdin, Bliss Triumph, Rurals and Chipewa on the lighter upland soils and Netted Gems on the darker moister soils where the season was long enough to mature them.
- Dairy Improvement - A large part of the farm income in this county was derived from dairy products. Markets in the county owned creamery in Sandpoint and cream buying stations in Clark Fork, Priest River and Sandpoint. The Newport Washington creamery received some of the cream and some whole milk was being shipped from the Cocolalla district into Spokane. The average number of milk cows was maintained but more crop land per farm could permit a larger income from more cattle. Although there are several purebred herds in the county, some areas needed service from good purebred sires.
- 22 educational AAA meetings were held. 1,214 soil building practices were carried out by 600 farmers on 8,565 acres.
- Bonner County was approved by the Land Use Planning committee for water facilities under Soil Conservation Service. Geologist made a survey of water shortage in Selle, Center Valley, Oden, Cocolalla Creek and Morton areas.



- Bonner County was accredited a Bangs free area. 8,409 cattle were tested in 1,375 herds with 47 reactors and 12 suspects.
- Two series of Land Use Planning meetings were held to plan agricultural programs and coordinate activities of Federal agencies.
- 318 farmers followed recommendations, planting 1,139 acres of alfalfa. 183 farmers renovated 1,432 acres of alfalfa and 313 farmers applied 733,185 pounds of gypsum to legumes.
- 1,000 acres seeded to adapted grasses on Blanchard burn produced excellent stand. Experiment Station and Soil Conservation Service grass plots on poor, drouthy soil near Spirit Lake showed promising grasses.
- Certified seed growers grew 45 acres if Betted Gem, Katahdia and Chippewa potatoes.
- 400 pounds per acre 2-20-20 fertilizer trebles yielded seed potatoes on Oliver Ruen farm at Clark Fork.
- Alfalfa plowed under as green manure on Experiment Station increased yield of potatoes from 6,096 to 16,027 pounds per acre.
- 120 farmers attended s dairy school at community hall. 40 purebred dairy bulls were in service in Bonner County.
- 1,269 herds were tested on 10 farms for poultry breeding pens, 957 accepted, 313 rejected and 46 reactors slaughtered. Cochrans at Kootenai establish a hatchery under the national Poultry Improvement Plan.
- 450 farmers used 4,750 pounds of poisoned oats and 53.5 ounces of strychnine to control rodents.
- Local W.P.A. trapper trapped 147 coyotes, 3 cats and 1 bear.
- Local dealers cooperated by carrying recommended insect poisons.
- 70 home owners used 700 pounds of earwig bait in Priest River, Sandpoint and Hope.
- W.P.A. weed project spread 5,837 pounds of sodium chlorate and 65 gallons of carbon bisulfide on 20 properties. 32 spread 4,000 pounds of chlorate costing \$192.40 on weed patches.
- Spray equipment provided for Sandpoint, Bureau of plant quarantine sprayed 742 pear trees to eliminate pear Psylla. Local Inspection provided under Pear Psylla quarantine.
- Dr. Earl C. Blodgett made insect survey in Bonner County.
- Bee inspection given to 29 owners of bees.

### 1941 Annual Report

- The frost free period between killing frosts at Sandpoint was 161 days, extending from April 19 to September 28. Due to warm March weather, spring planting was unusually early this year and crops started early. Heavy rains during May caused seed potatoes to rot in the ground, resulting in poor stands in some places. Although the hay crop was unusually large, this was offset by considerable spoilage and loss in quality due to wet weather during haying. Considerable loss of grain was experienced also due to a wet harvest.

Days between killing frost at Sandpoint for the past six years  
 1936.....153

1937.....	110
1938.....	161
1939.....	146
1940.....	186
1941.....	161
Average from 1941 to 1935, 115 days	

- Over 80% of the 1,553 farms in Bonner County were operated by owners. About three fourths of the land was in hay crops producing feed for livestock. There was a tendency to increase grain crops as more land was cleared and crops were rotated. More feed grain crops would place farmers in a better position to be self-supporting since much grain was imported from adjacent grain growing districts. Dairying and beef cattle production were the principal enterprises with potatoes, fruit and small fruits of lesser importance.
- F.S.A. - In 1939, the Farm Security Administration serviced Bonner County from Coeur d' Alene with about 137 loans in effect in the county. During 1940 an office was established in the Post Office building in Sandpoint under the direction of E.G. Iddings, R.R. Supervisor. About 147 standard and land clearing loans were in force in 1940. In 1941 approximately 125 loans were in force for land clearing, livestock, machinery, cooperatives and water facilities. The Farm Security Supervisor and Extension Agent cooperated in Land Use Planning meetings, in determining value of land, family sized farms and water facilities program. The County Agent attended the F.S.A. county council meeting at Coeur d' Alene and Sandpoint and conferred with the F.S.A. on numerous occasions.
- The Bonner County Fair Board was re-organized in April this year with seven directors appointed by the Board of County Commissioners, including R. E. Knight, Sandpoint, President; Alex Russell, Sandpoint , Vice president; Eugene Ralph, Clark Fork ; Frank Rusho, Blanchard; C.W. Gresham, Midas; F.H. Anselmo, Priest River and Frank Cochrane, Kootenai. The board met and appointed Walter F. Thomas, County Agent, Secretary-Treasurer.
- The fair board authorized the construction of a new livestock shed 28 x 96 feet, one side to be used for cattle and one side for hogs. This project was carried out by N.Y.A. boys under the direction of Roy Porter. Other improvements made by them included re-arrangement of poultry, rabbit and 4-H livestock buildings to accommodate more exhibits. Repairs were also made on the roof of the buildings. A temporary location was prepared for foxes and mink and 20 pens were constructed for foxes. Sometime was spent in July and August preparing a premium list following recommendations of the board. Copy was submitted to the Sandpoint Kiwanis club who printed the premium book, paying for it through advertising.
- Livestock in Bonner County showed a gradual improvement each year through the use of good bulls on grade cows. There was an increased interest in purebreds brought about partly by showing food animals at the Bonner County fair, through 4-H clubs and increased value of good livestock.
- A survey of registered cattle was made within the county to assist farmers in locating good foundation females, good bulls and in the exchange of sires so they may have longer use. A list of sires for sale or exchange was also made and sent to purebred owners. No record was made of purebred animals unless they were registered.

- The following is a summary of registered animals in Bonner County in 1941:

<u>Breed</u>	<u>Reg. Females</u>	<u>Reg. Males in Service</u>
Holstein	100	12
Jersey	16	7
Guernsey	61	12
Brown Swiss	10	3
Red Polled	42	11
Shorthorn	252	47
Hereford	26	14
Aberdeen Angus	<u>62</u>	<u>7</u>
Total	569	113

- Dairying was one of the more important industries in the County. According to AAA reports on 1,056 farms, 2,733,989 gallons of milk were produced in 1941 and farmers intended to produce about 3,436,415 gallons in 1942. Farmers were increasing their herds to keep pace with increases in food production.
- The interest in poultry production increased during the year with the rise in egg prices. A good many poultry plants in the county were either idle or not filled to capacity due to economic factors such as egg prices and cost of feed which is largely imported from surrounding grain growing districts. A survey of 1,056 farms made by AAA in November indicated that there were 269,496 dozen eggs produced on these farms in 1941 and intentions were to increase to 442,446 in 1942.
- Bonner County soils were low in nitrogen and humus. Records kept in the past indicated that the soils could be made productive by plowing under green manure. Crops following this practice increased yield from 75 to 500%. This practice not only added nitrogen to the soil but provided food for bacteria and increased the water holding capacity of the soil. This practice was stressed at 28 meetings held this year. There was an increased planting of red clover for this purpose during the past season. A practice which seemed successful on the better soils was to plant red clover early in the spring in fields seeded to winter wheat the previous fall. During the first crop year an early cutting of hay was taken and the second crop allowed to go to seed. On the second crop year the first cutting was taken for hay and the second turned under for green manure when it was still succulent and green. This crop usually got 12 to 14 inches tall before turning under. In most cases gypsum promoted the growth of the clover.
- Tony Delay who lived near Granite made a fine record producing over 48 tons of cabbage on about 3 ½ acres of land. In preparing the soil, Mr. Delay applied about 20 spreader loads of manure to the acre. He grew his own plants in a hot bed from \$8.00 worth of Danish Ballhead seed and sold enough plants to pay for the seed. It took five people six days to set between 35,000 to 36,000 plants in the rows, 30 inches apart and 18 inches between plants in the row. The field was given two cultivations with a horse cultivator and hoed between plants. The grower had duster and material on hand to fight insects but fortunately the field was free of cabbage worms and aphids so no treatment was necessary. Harvesting began about the middle of October and ended November 5<sup>th</sup>. Two men in the field cut five tons per day. Hauling was done by the operator when necessary.

39.1 tons of cabbage were sold to Spokane pickling companies at \$12.00 per ton; two tons were sold to peddlers at \$20.00 per ton; 50 crates averaging about 80 pounds per crate were marketed at stores for \$1.00 per crate while some was sold to neighbors making a cash income of over \$560.00 for 43 ¼ ton. About 5 tons of cabbage was still on hand, the poorer end of which was used for stock feed.

Mr. Delay was well satisfied with this project and expected to continue to grow cabbage. He tried out a small plot of Copen Hagen market but found the Danish Ballhead had a more compact head and produced more tonnage. He planted the cabbage about May 10 but thought a little earlier planting would be better if the season permitted.

- The common varieties of potatoes grown in Bonner County were Netted Gem, Katahdin, Chippewa and Bliss Triumph. As a general rule Netted Gems were more adapted to the lowlands where steady moisture was available while Katahdin and Chippewa produced good yields on the drier upland soils. Certified seed was produced on four farms last year, totaling 4,522 sacks, including 4,273 Netted Gem, 222 Katahdin and 28 Chippewa sealed and tagged. Prior to marketing, C.W. Neider and the county agent visited growers to assist in grading this seed. Inspections were made through this office since the nearest state inspector resides at Coeur d'Alene.
- New land clearing methods with bulldozer equipment began in August of 1939 after demonstrations with different equipment was held. About 1,049 acres costing \$10,949.00 were cleared in 2,500 hours, at about \$10.43 per acre. In 1940 five machines cleared approximately 868 acres on 104 farms costing \$9,552 or average of \$11.00 per acre for bulldozer work alone. An additional 163 hours costing \$570.00 were spent on cleanup work.

This year due to excessive moisture, bulldozers could not be operated as continuously as desired. Five operators were in the field this year, including a Cle-Trac diesel 40, owned by Arthur James of Sandpoint; An Allis Chalmers gasoline machine with Carco blade, owned by H.J. Westfall of Grouse Creek; International 40, owned by Clarke Larson of Edgemere; An R.D. 6 Caterpillar with Isaacson blade, owned by Oliver Ruen of Clark Fork and a McCormick Deering 40, owned by Fielden Poirier of Blanchard. The first two named carried on land clearing continuously when weather permitted.

The Fields were cleared on the Albertson Brothers farm near Pack River which were typical of a certain type of expensive clearing being done in the county.

Following recommendations of the Bonner County Land Use Planning Committee made December 18, 1940, the board of county commissioners increased the rodent control budget of \$200.00 in 1940 to \$1,050.00 in 1941 in an effort to cut down serious infestations of ground squirrels. During 1940 approximately 3,600 pounds of bait had been used cooperatively between the Division of Predator and Rodent Control and the U.S. Forest Service in an area north of Priest River. During that year 5,000 pounds of whole oats mixed 1-10 in 10 pound bags was sold through the county agent's office.

- Agricultural planning committees outlined extensive progress for rodent and weed control and recommended test wells and water development in deficient areas.
- Better farm practices were presented to 184 farmers at 16 meetings in cooperation with AAA programs. Food defense program presented to 546 rural people at 12 meetings.
- County agricultural defense committee made surveys of poultry and hog increases, wheat storage facilities, material for grain storage construction, farm machinery needed for 1942 and available equipment for repairs.

- 36 farmers plowed under 194.37 acres of green manure to improve the soil. 2-20-20 produced profits on peat soil, phosphate on potatoes on mineral soil.
- 20 farmers produced 10,236 pounds of red clover seed on 84.75 acres.
- 4,522 sacks of certified potatoes sold by growers. Priest Fiver 4-H potato club exhibited at fair.
- 6,596 pounds of poisoned oats sold to treat 25,000 acres for rodent control. 232 farm operators treat 45,750 acres of land with 10,140 pounds of cooperative bait in new rodent control program.
- Trappers take 139 coyotes in Bonner County during the year.
- 1,080 head of young cattle immunized against Blackleg.

### 1942 Annual Report

The winter of 1941 and 1942 marked the third consecutive year of very moderate temperatures and low snowfall. The lowest daily reading two degrees below zero on January 1, the first sub-zero temperature in almost three years. November and December were unusually mild, with the balance of the winter varying only slightly from normal. Summer temperatures were likewise moderate. There were nine days with a maximum of 90 or above was observed, with a summer high of 94 in mid-August. Total snowfall amounted to only 21.9", the lowest in 32 years and less than 1/3 normal. A light snow covered the ground for a brief time in December and about ½ of January; otherwise, the ground remained bare throughout winter.

Precipitation varied widely from the average during several months. Appreciable deficiencies occurred during January, February, March, August and September. May and June, on the contrary, were exceptionally wet with 4.66" and 5.16", respectively, recorded for the two months. September and October were clear and sunny, making it possible to complete all harvesting operations with practically no interruption from rain.

The period between killing frosts extended from April 28 to September 18, making a frost-free growing season of 143 days.

- Agricultural Planning – minimal in 1942. Agricultural deferment and assistance rendered Selective Service Boards in making these determinations.
- Bonner County Agricultural Defense Committee – organized to carry out the following requests of the State Agricultural Defense Committee:

- F.S.A. Loans
- Farm Machinery Repair
- Scrap Iron Collection
- Defense Bonds Sales
- Farm Labor
- Priority Ratings for farm machinery, building, etc.
- Tire Rationing
- Fuel Shortage
- Transportation Facilities Program
- Ceiling Prices

R.G. Prichard, chairman, representing the AAA, Oliver Ruen, Farm Credit, Bernard A. Anderson, U.S. Forest Service, B.H. Kennington, F.S.A., Glenn Smothers, R.E.A., and Earl Geisinger, U.S. Employment Office and County Service Office.

- Bonner County Fair – Fair Board decided to call off the 1942 fair due to uncertainty of holding a successful fair on account of tires and gas and more particularly following the request of Defense Transportation Director. Suggestion was made that buildings and equipment should be kept in repair and that funds be provided so that the county would be in readiness to continue the fair when conditions again justified its being held.
- Livestock – showed a gradual improvement each year through the use of good bulls on grade cows. There was an increased interest in purebred stock brought about partly by showing good animals at the Bonner county fairs in the past and through 4-H clubs and increased market value of good livestock.
- Dairy Improvement – Dairying was one of the important industries in the County. According to AAA reports on 1,056 farms, 2,733,989 gallons of milk were produced in 1941 and it was estimated that there was a decrease in milk production for 1942 due to farmers leaving their farms for defense work in all parts of the Nation.
- Soil Correction – Bonner County soils were low in nitrogen and humus. Records kept in the past indicated that area soils could be made productive by plowing under green manure. Crops following this practice increased yield from 75 to 500%.
- Crop Improvement – The highly variable season proved to be favorable for some crops and unfavorable for others. Winter wheat and potatoes had lower yields. Oats and barley produced the highest yields on record.
- Land Clearing – new land clearing methods with bulldozer equipment began in August of 1939 after demonstrations with different equipment were held. About 1,049 acres costing \$10,949.00 were cleared in 2,511 hours, at about \$10.13 per acres, that year. This year due to excessive moisture, bulldozers could not be operated as continuously as desired.
- Defense and War Time Activities – Nutrition Defense, Farm Labor, Rural Fire Prevention & Control, Farm Transportation Conservation, Salvage Program, Neighborhood Leader Organization, War Garden Campaign, War Bond Activities, War Stamps and Bonds, Machinery Repair and Scrap Iron.

#### 1943 Annual Report

- Rainfall was approximately 3" above normal in 1943. A long hard winter and general rain and snow fall through the fall and winter months of 1942 and 1943 made late planting of many farm crops necessary. From the highest altitudes over 6,000 feet in Bonner County to the 2,000 foot levels in the valley and stream regions of the county, winter crops were covered by a blanket of snow this season. Then the rains and late spring weather alternately froze and thawed the various soil types. Thus the crops were planted late in the spring to mature that much later in the fall. Winter grains and legume crops luckily did not suffer with the excessive heaving of the soils.
- Compared with 1940 and 1942 inclusively, temperatures were low and deep snows covered the ground in December 1942 through March in 1943. Much rain accompanied these heavy snows and most county roads were more or less impassable throughout the winter season. Following the heavy snows and rains in the winter of 1942 and the spring of 1943 came a very dry summer. Soils were so dry and hard that it was exceptionally hard to get ground broken up and prepared for winter wheat.
- Fortunately for the agricultural interests of the county, crops were generally harvested without loss in the summer of 1943. Potato picking was completed mostly in October.

Yields were not too good for the Irish potato (so much was needed for the War effort this year) as the late season impeded planting a month late in some instances. In many cases spring crops were not planted until June and killing frosts were encountered early in September.

- Approximately 85% of the 1,550 farms in Bonner County were still operated by their owners.
- In 1943 farmers of Bonner County met their wartime production goals in livestock and crops very satisfactorily. Dry peas in most cases however did not turn out as well as expected. Two factors contributed to an unsatisfactory yield of peas: namely late planting and lack of sufficient harvesting machinery to take care of the peas when they were ready to thresh.
- Yields of potatoes were rather low mainly due to late plantings. Complete fertilizers needed to be used on potato grounds in Bonner County. The outlook for increased 1944 fertilizer allocations to farmers seemed brighter than in 1943.
- Farmers as a whole recognized their duty on the home front and stayed on the farms to maintain peak production. Because of high wages, some left for defense industries for the war period and a few were working at Farragut and still living on and operating their farms.
- The services of a good, licensed, accredited veterinarian were badly needed in the county. Dairy herd improvement was needed in Bonner County. Too many breeds were represented which resulted in too much cross breeding, inbreeding and inferior dairy animals with low milk production records.
- Beef cattle and swine growers were on a better financial footing than milk producers, even at the comparatively good prices now being received for butterfat. 4-H club work was given more consideration and a better enrollment was hoped for in 1944. The all 4-H Club Fair held at Sandpoint in 1943 for the first time was encouraged and continued until such time as the educationally free Bonner County fair could again be revived in the post-war period.

#### 1944 Annual Report

- Due to heavier marketing of cattle than in 1943, a better grade of livestock was in evidence in Bonner County farms in 1945. Because of the shortage of feed supplies many farmers' marketed inferior cattle, thus bettering their farm herds. On this basis the Extension Service was in a better position to advocate the use of higher quality sires on farms. Swine herds were at a minimum in this area. However these were soon replaced with the advent of lower feed prices. Swine prices were high but present housing conditions were not adequate and feed prices were high. The abundance of coyotes caused many farmers to disperse their small farm flocks of sheep because of the lack of any coordinated effort on trapping these predators. When trappers were again available sheep numbers increased. Swine population was brought back to normal with a change in conditions. Beef cattle were taking an upturn in the county with the advent of better herds and more cattle to draw upon for replacements. Wartime goals in commercial potato and milk production were met by farmers in spite of low yields of potatoes and the marketing of many inferior cattle. Grain crops were increased and native hay yields were equal to those of 1943.

- Competition was evidenced in the baby chick business by the advent of a new firm handling feeds and chicks. The increase in egg prices ranging around 60 cents per dozen stimulated the poultry business the following year. The Extension Service could then advocate more general culling of non-laying hens. Pullorum testing of contract flocks was finished in December and the quality of baby chicks was better than ever before.
- 4-H Club members took some good baby chicks from the local hatchery for their already organized poultry clubs to function in 1945. In this way better poultry was raised by members and the educational program in raising better poultry was thereby extended to adults.
- Swine growers in Northern Idaho organized and through annual sales promoted more interest in better swine and gave a wider outlet to breeders of purebred swine.
- The Angus cattle breeders of Bonner County affiliated with the Pacific Coast Aberdeen Angus Breeders Association and were in a better position to dispose of their surplus stock through breed auction sales. The registration of purebred Angus was increased from year to year in Bonner County because of the new interest in this breed. Shorthorn breeders were improving the quality of their herds and found a ready market for their exceptionally fine offerings to outside buyers. Many more local farmers were purchasing bulls of both beef and dairy breeds from leading breeders of this county. The Extension Service was in a better position to promote good quality cattle than ever before because of the excellent cattle raised locally. The cattle of 4-H Club members showed better quality than ever before.
- Many farmers bought dairy calves from the Tillamook area in Oregon because of their financial condition. These heifer calves from high producing cows increased milk production in Bonner County. The County Extension Agent was able to promote the purchase of these good dairy calves in 1945 because of the interest in better cattle, the local war-time demand for more milk production, and increased demand on the part of 4-H Club members for high quality dairy calves for use in their projects. Already five club members have made inquiry of the Extension Service for purchase of better calves than they exhibited in the 1944 4-H Club Fair.
- Farmers were enjoying relatively high farm incomes; some were still drawing good wages from Farragut and work in the timber. They had some money to spend in land clearing, the improvement of livestock and the betterment of their own living conditions. These factors aided and assisted the Extension work for the coming year.
- Outstanding problems to cope with in this section of Idaho were the improvement of livestock, the betterment of living conditions, a substantial development in rural youth training through a further increase in 4-H Club enrollment, and more land clearing to enlarge farm units which are at present too small. More plowing under of green manure crops should be practiced to increase fertility of soils. This was one of the real needs of agriculture in this county because of the low fertility of many soil types found in this region. With the increase in fertility, better yields were noted with more home grown feeds produced for utilization by livestock. Too little feed was produced by the farmers and too much had to be purchased from feed stores at high prices.
- An increase in Certified Seed Potato acreage was promoted in Bonner County in 1944 and it was the plan of the Agent to further increase this in 1945 because of the demand and good prices for this type of seed. The Agent worked on standardization of these potato varieties which was successfully marketed at a profit. Building of more potato



storage cellars was advocated because commercial growers did not have sufficient nor proper storage space to hold potatoes until the following spring when prices would be better. Weed control was stressed in 1945 through the organization of a County Weed Control Committee. Need for more chemicals to be use in weed control was urged upon the Board of County Commissioners.

- Grain seed certification for Bonner County farmers was the next major problem for the Agent's office to cope with, and steps toward this program were made with the promised co-operation of the Sandpoint Experimental Station and the Extension Agronomist of the University of Idaho.
- Rehabilitation of returning Service veterans was given consideration by the County Agent's office in Bonner County. All Federal agencies here were contacted and had promised to co-operate by aiding and assisting World War II veterans to return to agricultural pursuits when the ultimate victory was won.
- The County Agent's office in Sandpoint felt that Federal Agencies located here had all worked together in a remarkably good camaraderie for the ultimate good of agriculture in Bonner County.

#### 1945 Annual Report

- Important facts brought out in the 1495 census of Bonner County was a decrease in the number of farms from 1,551 to 1,405 since the 1940 census. All land in farms increased from 245,068 to 278,127 acres with an average size farm being 198 acres in 1945 compared to 158 in 1940.
- Due to dairy cattle subsidies during a portion of the World War II years, and the relatively high price of dairy products, quality of dairy cattle was improved. Beef cattle in the average farm herd had not shown as much improvement.
- Swine prices were high since the war but due to a lack of sufficient grain production and general lack of suitable housing conditions this type of animal production was probably at an all-time low. When more land was cleared and more acreage planted to grains and hog pasture, swine growing would again come into its own.
- Farm flocks of sheep increased in the previous three years due to increase in experienced sheep growers and a few local farms increased their flock size. However, sheep raising was not practiced much here. Too many farms had too great an acreage of woodlands compared to cultivated acres which mitigated against any great expansion in the sheep industry.
- Farm poultry flocks remained on most of the farms in the county as meat and eggs for the farmer were always a reasonably cheap source of food.
- More 4-H club members brought more dairy calves from Tillamook, Oregon section than ever before.
- The return of service men who gained experience as bulldozer operators added experienced operators and increased land clearing machinery in this area. Since more land clearing was needed to increase tillable acreage, this phase of farming received a great impetus in 1946 and farmers were in a better financial shape than ever before.
- An increase in certified potato acreage was noted.
- Weed control continued in the county in 1946. Grain seed certification did not come until 1947, as no foundation stock was yet available.

- Many returning service men followed farming as a livelihood. This gave an added impetus to agriculture.
- Good farm buildings were a necessary adjunct to a well-operated farm. A few milk houses and chicken houses were constructed in 1945. Some new barns were built using poles for timbers, stalls, rafters and plates. Farm sanitation was also improved on many farms in 1945 with the installation of septic tanks and home water supply systems. More farmers modernized their houses in 1945 than at any period during the four years of WWII.
- It was estimated by the County Agent's office from information furnished by good sources that some 25,000 Christmas trees of all sizes were shipped out of Bonner County to Midwestern, eastern and Utah points. Approximately 75 farmers were harvesting Christmas trees.
- Rural fire prevention work was delegated to rural fire chiefs and volunteer firemen crews by Lee White, Fire Control Officer of the Kaniksu National Forest.
- Commodity marketing of livestock, potatoes and grain was accomplished by rail and trucking services, as in the past years.
- Farm management problems in Bonner County included production of cash crops, feed for dairy, beef and other livestock, and the highest utilization of varied existing soil types.

#### 1946 Annual Report

- Dairy cattle were improved in Bonner County during the past few years. Due to the dairy cattle subsidies during the war years and up to June 1946, farmers received relatively high prices for dairy commodities, which promoted the culling of inferior stock and the securing of high-grade bulls.
- Beef cattle on the average farm herd had not shown as much improvement as had dairy cattle. The better herds had gone ahead in their breeding program so that cattle owned by such breeders were of better quality than ever before, while a few more purebred beef cattle herds may come into existence in the next few years the outlook pointed to only a small increase in numbers of such herds as the local market did not warrant too heavy an expansion here.
- Swine prices were high since the war but due to lack of sufficient grain production and general lack of suitable housing conditions this type of animal production was probably at an all-time low. When more land was cleared and more acreage planted to rains and hog pasture, swine growing will again come into its own in this section.
- Farm flocks of sheep increased in the past three years in Bonner County, due to two facts: first, that a half dozen experienced sheep growers came into the county from sections where this type of animal husbandry had been a major project, and secondly, some few local farmers had increased small farm flocks already in existence. However, for the most part sheep raising was not practiced to an extent on the average farm here. Coyotes were numerous and very few had sheep-tight fences around the farm. Too many farms had too great an acreage of woodlands compared to cultivated acres which mitigated against any great expansion in the sheep industry. Not many high ranges are suitable for sheep grazing in this county because of the brushiness of ranges and the thick timber.
- Another factor which prevented too extensive grazing of farm flocks is the wet damp winters in this locality. However, as more land was cleared and better lambing facilities

were made available this factor was offset to some extent because of the real usefulness which a farm flock could serve on most of these small units in Bonner County.

- Farm poultry flocks remained on most farms of the County as meat and eggs for the farmer were always a reasonably cheap source of food and small income. Most of the farmers kept enough chickens to furnish eggs for their own table besides selling their surpluses to apply on grocery accounts. One hatchery man supplied baby chicks locally.
- An increase of certified potato acreage was noted.
- Due to the comparative scarcity of chemicals used in weed eradication, weed control work on an organized basis was at a low ebb. With the probability of a county weed committee formed by the county commissioners and the County Agent in 1947, weed control was handled through the cooperation of all agencies interested in this program.
- Grain seed certification did not come until about 1947, as no foundation stock was yet available in Bonner County. The Experiment Farm in Sandpoint started to work in earnest on this program in 1948 and with the cooperation of the Agent's office was able to release recommended varieties sometime the following year.
- Recommendations by the County Agent's office in Sandpoint included the following programs to be stressed in the next few years.
  - The improvement and quality of cattle.
  - The more general use of good beef breed bulls on farms where beef cattle raising was the main phase of farming.
  - An increase in farm flocks of sheep and a wider distribution of such animals on more farms of the county.
  - Increasing of certified seed potato acreages in farms having suitable soils out of frost belts and where farmers will practice up-to-date cultural methods.
  - Grain certification among a few good growers who will use recommended varieties of cereals.
  - More adequate house for all types of farm animals.
  - Land clearing on small farm units to increase tillable acreage to point where farmers may become self-sustaining procurers on their farms.
  - Added 4-H Club enrollment in all types of farm and home economics products.
  - Better orchard practice including pruning and spraying of fruit trees on famers.
  - Organization of a County Agricultural Committee to advise with the County Agent on farm and home economics problems. It is the opinion of the writer that through the selection of such a Committee, which would include prominent farmers, businessmen, 4-H leaders and a representative from the Board of County Commissioners, more Extension activities and good will could be thus fostered and promoted for the ultimate good of agriculture in Bonner County.

#### 1947 Annual Report

- Until recent years the Bonner County farmer was somewhat isolated because of lack of good surface roads. With the advent of rural electrification and the telephone, the modern conveniences of the farmer have greatly improved within this period of only a few years. In 1947 most of the districts of Bonner County were accessible by fair county roads.

- The problems of more land clearing, vegetable growing, fruit raising, growing grains, improvement of livestock, and production of hay to feed the livestock remained the pressing need of the county. The bulk of farms in Bonner County were classified only as subsistence farms where the farmer was able to live quite well with his family, but was unable to build up much of a cash reserve.
- Among the objectives to be attained in Bonner County were land clearing, the improvement of beef and dairy cattle, standardizing poultry breeds through flock selection practices and visual culling methods, the growing of more grains for livestock raised on individual farms, the planting of more legumes for hay, pasture and green manure practices, and use of fertilizers.
- The Extension program worked closely with the farmers, bulldozer operators and A.C.A. on land clearing practices. Through subsidies of \$10.00 per acre granted by the A.C.A. office, an added incentive was given to land clearing practices. Cooperation with A.C.A. office and farmers on surveys of land clearing was carried on. Much information on land clearing practices was furnished the farmers of Bonner County through the Extension Program.
- Dairying was the most important farm enterprise in Bonner County, as it had been since the first farm was cleared out of the timbered wilderness area over 50 years prior. Better breed improvement of dairy cattle and the elimination of poor producers and inferior cattle was a broad objective of the Extension program. Too many breeds of dairy cattle and mixture of breeds were noted in Northern Idaho for economical production of milk products. The Dairy herd Improvement Association, which was organized in May, 1945, had done much in the elimination of poor producers and inferior cattle in the dairy herds of Bonner County. 4-H Club members enrolled in dairy projects contributed a great deal in the improvement of dairy stock in Bonner County. Many of these Club members purchased high grade registered animals for their project. Later on, these animals were introduced into the dairy herds and increased the quality of these herds to a great extent.
- Although there were several excellent herds of beef cattle in Bonner County the majority of beef cattle were of the medium grade. Constant work was carried on in advocating better bulls to be used by the cattlemen of this county. Feeding problems were discussed with the beef men and information made available to them through the press, personal contact and literature from the extension service. In 1945 the Lower East Branch Hereford Stock Association was organized. Plans were perfected for a grading Association. This association carried on under the guidance of the Extension Service in herd sire selection, feeding problems and grading problems, much improvement was made as a result of the organization of the Association.
- Poultry Improvement was a constant objective and was carried on intensively by the poultry men of Bonner County. Through the efforts of the Idaho Poultrymen's Association and the Extension Services, much advancement was made in the improvement of the poultry flocks. The advocating of standardizing poultry breeds through flock selection practices and visual culling methods was a constant objective. The findings of the Experiment Stations, along with other information, were passed on to the flock owners so they could improve their flocks in order to get maximum production.
- Dairy cattle improved in Bonner County the last few years. The farmer received high prices for his dairy products and the rigid regulations of Grade A production caused him

to cull his herd and use good bulls to increase his production and keep his cost to a minimum. Much more improvement was anticipated on dairy cattle in the next year.

- Beef cattle on the average farm herd had not shown as much improvement as the dairy cattle. The better herds went ahead in their breeding programs so that cattle owned by such breeders were of better quality.
- Swine prices were high since the war but due to lack of sufficient grain production and general lack of suitable housing conditions this type of animal production was at an all-time low. When more land is cleared and more acreage planted to grains and hog pasture, swine growing will again come into its own in this section. This will happen even though market prices on hogs will no doubt drop from the present high price levels and now experienced.
- An increase of certified potato acreage was not noted in Bonner County in 1947.
- Weed control will go ahead in Bonner County in 1948.
- Grain seed certification will probably not come until about 1948, as very little foundation stock was yet available in Bonner County.

## 1950-1959

With the impact of WWII diminished, the effects of the Korean War were starting to be felt. Many predicted that the farm outlook would be completely changed by the Korean War, the agricultural surpluses that seemed such a burden were starting to look like valuable stockpiles. Even with such a positive outlook, not all farmers were able to hang onto their farms. In early 1950, the Cocolalla Creek ranch of John A. Rothenhiller and Fred W. Williams sold to a Minnesota family. The ranch, which consisted of 176 acres, of which 110 were cleared, and an additional 400 acres of leased land adjacent to the place, was sold completely equipped with as Grade A dairy setup and 45 head of Guernsey dairy cattle which produced a monthly income approximating \$900. At the same time, a Careywood ranch belonging to Mr. and Mrs. Jess Kateron was sold to Mr. Kyle, a stock buyer of Coeur d Alene, Mr. Kateron first came to Idaho in 1910 and then was away in the service during the first world war. Farm sales continued on into 1952 with newcomers finding the county and people of the county to their liking. Coming from Wiithrow, Washington, George Okland, purchased the Lee Buck farm six miles north of Priest River. 90 acres of the 100 acre property was cleared at the time. Across the county, E.E. Johnson of Boise purchased 152 ½ acres on unimproved land on the Samuels road. Mr. and Mrs. James Strandy sold their 160-acre farm, located one mile west on the farm-to-market road in the Pack River area to Mr. and Mrs. W.L. Martin. Mr. and Mrs. Jess Hattell and children arrived from Hattisburg, Neb, taking possession of their new home, the Grover Harris ranch of 160 acres in the Westmond district. Additional sales included:

- The Stanley Going family who moved here from Moreland, Idaho, took possession of the Carl Larsen stock ranch on the east branch of Priest Lake about 15 miles from Priest River. The 240 acre ranch was improved. Mr. Going brought in 40 head of stock and had plans to add more.
- Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Delcont came from Hooper, Utah, to buy the 120 acre improved farm of Mr. and Mrs. C.W. Bond at Cocolalla. The new Bonner county residents also purchased the farm stock and machinery.
- Eighty acres in the Selle district were bought by Mr. and Mrs. Wesley, who came here from Roy, Utah. The farm was sold by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Roos.
- By a strange coincidence in names the 160 acre improved farm two miles south of Sagle which was owned by the A.J. Andersons was sold to the Rex Andersons. Same name but no relation.
- Virgil and Dale Haws, father and son, who operated a radiator shop on the Dover highway bought the Scott W. Spragg partially improved 120 acre farm five miles east of Sagle. The men planned to establish a sheep ranch.
- Mr. and Mrs. L. Reed, who come here from Great Falls, Montana took possession of the Fred Harley Tourist camp on highway 95 about two miles north of the city.
- Mrs. Sarah Waggoner, who resided in the Cocolalla district for some years, sold her 160 acre farm there and purchased the modern home formerly owned by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Sanders at the corner of Larch and Ella.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Report of real estate sales by the Mark Hunt Real Estate Agency

- In August of 1954, Mrs. Ore B. Phillips, Sagle route 1 near Morton, sold her 18-cow dairy herd, all machinery and equipment, feed and growing crops and leased her 80 acre highly improved dairy farm to Mr. and Mrs. Archie Clark of Sagle. Mrs. Phillips purchased this property from Kyle Fink in 1946. Since that time Mr. Phillips and her son, Harry Phillips of Laclede, developed it into a high producing unit. Mr. and Mrs. Archie Clark came to Bonner County in 1953 and operated a dairy on the V. A. Verhei farm at Sagle. They were native residents of Latah County and lived in and around Moscow all their lives.

Soil conservation practices continued to be popular. Bonner County farmers were quickly learning that soil conservation practices paid dividends. Increased yields, increased farm values, ease of farming and the satisfaction of maintaining a permanent type of agriculture were some of the benefits derived by the conservation farmer.

The erection of the Albeni Falls Dam in 1955 had a ripple effect in Bonner County. Farmers owning land along Lake Pend Oreille and River faced new erosion problems in 1951 because the dam, according to M.A. Roberts, chairman of the Bonner soil conservation district. The Clark Fork & Hoodoo valleys were significantly affected by the dam. The farms along Cocolalla Creek were also very much involved. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was buying land to be flooded by a reservoir which would be used during the winter to generate electricity. Meetings were held at the Morton School, and a committee was appointed to learn the facts. Large meetings were held in Sandpoint at the high school where irate farmers could vent their frustration. In spite of all protests, the dam construction moved swiftly, and by 1952 all of the meadows were flooded. Some of the farmers had to leave their homes. One such was the Magnus Overland family who had purchased the Ruby Smith (Radan) place in 1946. They lost 55 acres of meadowland, the remainder being chosen for public access to the lake. Their settlement was \$11,000 plus moving and relocating expense. Farmers on Cocolalla Creek received from \$50 to \$74 per acre for their lost land. Many of the farmers requested reappraisal of their land, and many had not yet settled by the fall of 1952, months after the reservoir had been filled.

The F.H.A. reported in 1951 that the 15 families working in the Bonner County Farm Loan Program had spent an average of \$1,414.80 per family for living expenses in 1950. The state average at the time was \$1,508, which indicated that living expenses in this county were a little less than elsewhere. Land clearing was given a boost with new equipment that same year with

### **Eight Acres of Crowell Stump Ranch Strawberries about Ready to Bear**

Sandpoint News Bulletin,  
6/5/1952

In the foothills of Mt. Baldy in view of the Great Northern depot, is the farm home of the Crowell family. Thirty three years ago Mr. Crowell brought his family to Bonner County from Wyoming, bought cutover land and became a stump rancher. He called the farm the "Crowell Stump Ranch."

Today the Crowell Stump Ranch means strawberries to several hundred persons who come to pick.

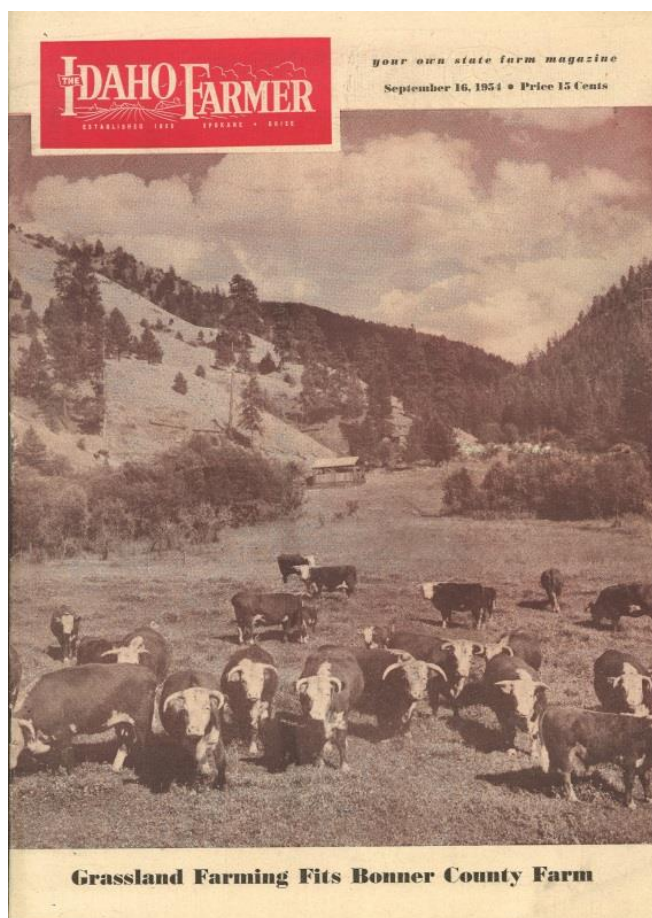
There are four generations of Crowells on the stump ranch, which in 33 years has been improved to a number of acres of cleared fields, including great-granddad Eldred Crowell, who will be 95 years old in October.

the establishment of the Freesh Construction Co. by Charles Freesh, formerly of Bakersfield CA. The new firm had some of the heaviest equipment available for clearing operations.

The region continued to support several creameries during the 1950s. In early 1952 the Sandpoint Dairy Products Company took over operation of the Farmers Union Cooperative Creamery plant. Heading up the Sandpoint Dairy Products Company at the time were Royal Shields, president; J. W. Beck vice president, and Areid Johnson Secretary/treasurer.

Established dairy farms continued to be in demand in 1952. Jack M. Popplewell purchased the 80-acre farm of Clyde Mitchell in the Grouse Creek area. Charles Sommerfeld sold his farm one mile east of Samuels post office to Laten Puckett of Ordinance, Ore. There was a section of land in the Sommerfeld farm which was set up as a grade A dairy. Max Pribnow purchased both the Ad Copley farm as well as the 65 acres adjoining his place. The farm belonged to C. R. Ostland and was a grade A dairy. Pribnow's farm was a mile east of the Pack River School. Witalis E. Berg sold his 38-acre farm on the Selle farm-to-market road to Robert W. Green in a dispersal sale of a fine grade dairy herd at the R.N. Olson farm on the Dufort road, a 178-acre farm known as the "old Waggoner place". In 1952 Olson was not a newcomer in the dairy farm business in Bonner county. He had been operating as early as 1930 but quit to join the Seabees during World War II. He returned in 1946, and starting with only two cows, built up the herd.

In the 1950's some of the dairymen started building upright silos for silage storage. Silage is made from the same grass legume mix as hay except it is chopped green and blown into the silo through a pipe leading to the top of the silo. The hay was mowed, raked with a side delivery rake then chopped with a silage chopper which blew it into a self-unloading wagon. The wagon was towed to the silo and unloaded into a blower that blew it up the pipe to the top of the silo. The silos were mostly 14 to 18 feet in diameter and from 30 to 45 feet tall. Many of these silos can still be seen throughout the County in old barn lots. Though unused for many years they bore witness to years gone by. The biggest advantage of silage is that it can be harvested in all but the wettest weather and is much higher in food value than the average dried and baled hay. Two ranches north of Sandpoint, McNall's and Wood's V-X, still use the silage method on part of their hay production, but the process is much more efficient with bigger machinery, trucks and pit silos. Each ranch put up several thousand tons of silage for their winter feed needs. Excess hay production is baled in the conventional way.





Sandpoint became a grain shipping center for the first time in 1952 when the Co-Op Gas and Supply began shipping grain from the elevators on the Spokane International railroad tracks as a service to the community. The Northern Pacific Grain Growers, a Spokane cooperative, agreed to buy Sandpoint shipped grain on contract, based on terminal weight and grade. Prices were subject to the coast markets.<sup>47</sup> The first annual Farm Appreciation day held was held in April of 1953. Sponsored by the Sandpoint chamber of Commerce and assisted by the Kiwanis Club, the day was declared a real success with an estimated 375 persons attending the all-day “party.” Ross hall, master of ceremonies, extended an official welcome for the city as a member of the city council. In 1956, one Grange and two dairy organizations adopted resolutions requesting the state to give recognition to the dairy industry on its license plate the following year. The resolution pointed out that the dairy industry was the single largest farm industry in the state at the time and that its trucks traveled more miles, paid more license fees and gasoline tax than any other agriculture industry. In 1956 the dairy industry produced more than \$44,000 worth of products annually in Idaho, compared to the potato industry’s \$26,000,000 operation. In Bonner County the dairy industry accounted for approximately 25% of total farm income. “Gem State Dairyland” was the suggested slogan to replace the potato on the Idaho license plate.

In the 1950s, sprinkler irrigation in the Hoodooo valley, mainly from Hoodoo Creek, was being promoted by Northern Lights, Inc. A 1952 publication by the utility company lists the farms under irrigation as those of Robert Bandy, P.D. Long, Pat Kenny, William Rhinehart, Ernest Bauer, William Bailey, Lloyd Bennett, Roy McClure, R.J. Garvin, Ralph Larson, Gale Jolley, and J. Wright Baylor.

By the middle of the decade, timber as a farm crop was being recognized by more farmers in Bonner County as a way to supplement their livestock income by cutting pulpwood, firewood, logs for lumber or short logs for stud mills. At the time, economists felt that timber was one of the very few agricultural products that promised to be as profitable or even more profitable in 1956 as in 1955. Farm income as a whole was up 5% in 1956, ending the year with a gross farm income of \$2,510,000. With more mechanization than in the past and with better efficiency of operation, area farmers managed to sustain the values of their farms at a good level. Census records indicate that the average value of land and buildings on the farms in Bonner County in 1955 was \$64.86 an acre, an increase over the \$41.11 per acre valuation set in 1950 when the previous census was taken. The total dollar value of land plus buildings on county farms, exclusive of machinery and equipment, was given as \$14,881 per farm. It had been \$9,792 five years earlier. Additionally, farms in Bonner County reported 141 balers, compared with 35 previously, and 1,040 tractors compared with 718 in 1950. In 1957, Bonner County farmers had a gross income of \$2,664,000, 7.1% higher than in the prior year.

Overall, the county saw increased production and award winning crops during this decade.

- Dairy herds continued to show good production in 1952. Total milk production was 2,091,750 pounds from 243 cows. Total butterfat was 87,516 pounds. The average milk production per cow was 8,610 pounds and the average test 4.18 percent. Average butterfat was 360 pounds per cow. Total value of the milk produced was \$110,595. Total cost of feed amounted to \$52,483 and net income was \$58,112. This figured out on a basis of \$239 per cow, compared to \$250 per cow the previous year. Cost of feed per

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<sup>47</sup> SNB 8/7/1952

100 pounds of milk was \$2.51, an increase over the previous year's \$2.32. Some attributed this success to the feeding of grass silage to their herds. Glen Judge, Bonner County's 1953 Grassman of the Year, once again swept the field for prizes in the potato division. On his farm near Morton, Judge raised certified seed potatoes using sprinkler irrigation to bring water from the Pend Oreille River.

- In 1954 the herd of M.A. and Don Roberts of Blanchard averaged 1,243 pounds of milk and 42.1 pounds of butterfat. C. R. Agars herd averaged 901 pounds of milk and 40.7 pounds of butterfat. Pat Graves, Laclede, averaged 1,046 pounds of milk and 38.2 pounds of butterfat. Ivan Smith's herd averaged 974 pounds of milk and 37.5 pounds of butterfat.
- George Anderson's registered Holstein, Ellen, topped the Bonner County Dairy Herd Improvement Association's September record in 1954. She produced 2,030 pounds of milk and 79 pounds of butterfat, according to E.P. Still Jr., D.H.I.A. tester. In second place was Don Robert's, Lunn, with 2,220 pounds of milk and 78 pounds of butterfat. The third highest cow was F. T. Bond's Holstein, Cry Baby, with 2,100 pounds of milk and 74 pounds of butterfat. Smokey Taylor's registered Guernsey, Patsy, produced 1,040 pounds of milk and 73 pounds of butterfat to place fourth. Smokey went on to win the Grassman of the Year award in 1958.
- Ward Blair, Sagle, had the high testing D.H.I.A. for August, 1955, averaging 1,214 lbs. of milk and 44.9 lbs. of fat. George Zimmer, Newport was 2<sup>nd</sup> with 879 lbs. milk and 41.1 lbs. of fat. Elton Clyde and son, Selle, were 3<sup>rd</sup> with 950 lbs. of milk and 38.4 lbs. fat. M.A. and Don Roberts, Blanchard was 4<sup>th</sup> with 1,062 lbs. milk and 37.6 pounds of fat. Carl Barden of Edgemere was 5<sup>th</sup> with 996 pounds of milk and 37.3 pounds of fat.
- Glen Judge, Morton, owned the highest testing herd in the Bonner County Dairy Herd Improvement association for the month of March, 1957. His grade Holsteins produced an average of 1,058 lbs. of milk and 41.8 of butterfat. Charles Agar, Kootenai, owned the second place herd. His herd average of 870 lbs. of milk and 41.1 lbs. of butterfat. T.W. Hunt had the third place herd with an average of 983 lbs. of milk and 37.8 lbs. of butterfat. Norris Schwin, was fourth place herd with 897 lbs. milk and 33 lbs. of butterfat.
- Harley Gunter, Sagle, owned the highest testing herd for the month of May, 1958. His mixed herd averaged 46.9 lbs. of butterfat and 1,077 lbs. of milk. Charles Agar's herd, Kootenai, was second with an average of 44.7 lbs. of butterfat and 926 lbs. of milk. Ed Hamshar, Priest River third herd, averaged 39.9 lbs. of butterfat and 817 lbs. of milk. George Zimmer, Newport, fourth averaged 39.6 lbs. of butterfat and 860 lbs. of milk.

### 1951 Annual Report

- Livestock industry was the main agricultural enterprise of the county. This was due to adaptation of soils and climate to the production or forage crops. These crops could be most economically utilized by marketing in the form of meat and dairy products. Dairy was the leading livestock enterprise followed by beef production. Nearly all farms had small poultry flocks for home consumption. There were only a limited number of commercial poultry men. Sheep were few in number and confined to small farm flocks. Swine was produced almost entirely for home consumption.

- Crops produced in the area were alfalfa, clover, grass, legume hay, grass hay, small grains, some legume seed, berries and potatoes.
- Transportation facilities were adequate. The county was served by four railroads; three transcontinental U.S. Highways—U.S. No. 10, 2 and 95; and 600 miles of auxiliary county roads. Cities of Sandpoint and Priest River had community airports.
- Telephone service was in all parts of the county, but most rural homes did not have this service. Over 90% of the farms were equipped with electrical power, R.E.A. and Mountain States Power Company supplied the area. Bonneville Power Administration was building transmission lines.
- The organization in the county for farm families were the Home Demonstration groups, grange, church groups, P.T. A., civic groups, Federated Women's Club, Farmer's Coop and 4-H organizations. Community life was very evident in many areas.
- There were three high schools in the county located at Clark Fork, Sandpoint and Priest River. Curricula in these schools were not completely adequate. Vocational agriculture was not offered. A shortage of qualified instructors retarded this field. Bonner County was in the process of establishing a school reorganization and consolidation plan.
- The health facilities in both rural and urban areas were inadequate. Water supplies were not properly protected on many farms. Sewage and refuse deposition offered problems. Many residences would not meet the specifications for a decent, safe, adequate family dwelling. Approximately 40% of all farm homes were equipped with running water, but this did not necessarily indicate that modern plumbing was being used. Water supplies were low or lacking in mineral elements necessary for good health, especially in preventing tooth decay. Twelve resident doctors provided good medical service. A new Community Hospital was completed in Sandpoint.
- The 4-H club program was active in 17 of the 27 communities of the county. Approximately 285 young people were active in the program in 1951. Shortage of adult leadership was the restricting factor in expansion of this program.
- Generally, the factors that had the greatest adverse influence on the physical and economic conditions of the people and situations in the county were; farms with insufficient arable land, high land clearing costs, scarcity of low rate, long term investment capital, low fertility soil, lack of quality production and breeding stock, and small homes poorly constructed and arranged.
- Dairy production was carried on by a portion of farmers of Bonner County – dairying being the main form of enterprise. Other farm enterprises were supplemental and complementary to the dairy operation.

Soil and climate were well adapted to the production of forage crops and pastures which could be most economically marketed through dairy products.

The advent of expanding markets for fluid Grade A and Grade C milk was doing much toward stimulating the dairy industry. The primary problems facing expansion of the dairy industry in this area were:

- Shortage of production bred stock.
- Low cost dairy structures that will meet the increasingly stringent sanitary regulations and climatic conditions.
- Need for long term low interest rate investment capital.
- Need for greater utilization of grass-legume seeded pastured.
- Low quality forage due to unfavorable weather during haying season.

- According to the 1950 Agricultural census the dairy cattle population in Bonner County was 7,930 cows and heifers being milked. This number of cows showed a production of 4,440,800 gallons with an average of 550 gallons of milk per cow.
- The establishment of a milk processing plant at Sandpoint by the Carnation Milk Company did a great deal to stimulate interest in dairying. This plant opened a new large fluid milk market to the dairymen of the area. With such a ready market available, many farmers became interested either in increasing the size of their present herd, or in obtaining a new herd of higher producing animals. Due to the lack of replacement stock in Northern Idaho and Eastern Washington, many of these people were forced to buy from areas further away. The Agent worked with a number of such farmers in obtaining dairy cows from the Boise Valley area and regions in Western Washington.
- Beef production ranked next in importance to dairy as a livestock enterprise. The availability of large areas of public domain for low cost grazing and a forage type of crop production stimulate this enterprise. Long winter feeding period, low quality stock and need of range improvement were the main problems of the beef producer. Markets were readily available.

The beef producer labored under a disadvantage in this area because of the long costly winter feeding period. This problem was accentuated by the lack of top quality hay due to local showers during the haying season. Consequently cattle were not able to maintain condition and were of lower quality when marketed the next fall. Many operators maintained cross bred herds or dual purpose cattle. Breed improvement was carried on to some extent, but quality of herd sires was low and there was little effort beyond that of individuals to select bulls according to desirable type and conformation. There was definite need for more diseases control and insect control methods.

- The agent assisted 36 ranchers in selecting pasture mixtures and land preparation and fertilization in extensive meadow land needed pastures. Other means and methods used for furthering and improving the beef feeding program were 84 community meetings, 3 news stories, 200 circular letters, 32 farm visits and 45 office calls.
- In 1949 the old Bonner County Cattlemen's Protective Association was reorganized. During 1951 the agent met with this group three times. This group had as its primary objective stopping the loss of cattle through illegal channels.
- In 1951, 25 boys and 23 girls were enrolled in 4-H beef projects. 19 boys and 16 girls completed for a 72% completion rate. These members exhibited 41 animals at the Bonner County Fair. Five Bonner County 4-H members exhibited steers at the Spokane Junior Livestock Show.
- The annual Bonner County Fair was held September 6, 7, 8, and 9. The fair was extended from 3 day event to a 4 day event this year. This extension of time was a trial basis to study whether a better schedule of events and judging program could be accomplished.
- In 1951 there were 9 certified potato growers in Bonner County having a total acreage of approximately 125 acres. Netted Gem was the leading variety grown followed by Chippewa. Growers were having a difficult problem keeping their potatoes disease free, especially for leaf roll. The climate was such as to inhibit the appearance of leaf fall so that it could be successfully rogued. The bulk of certified seed raised in the county was shipped to commercial potato producing areas in Washington. Some of the smaller growers marketed their crop through local channels for use in planting home gardens.

Price of certified seed in 1951 was somewhat lower than the previous year. Blue tag seed sold from \$2.50 to \$3.00 per hundred weight in February and March, with a gradual price decline through April and May. Red tag seed sold for 50¢ to \$1.00 lower and Yellow tag, which is the single drop seed sold for 50¢ per hundred below the Red tag prices. Approximately 20 carloads of certified seed potatoes were shipped in 1951. The biggest shipper was Oliver Ruen of Clark Fork who shipped 16 car loads of Netted Gems, mostly to the Yakima market area. Carload and truck shipments were inspected by J.D. Duncan, Deputy State Horticulturist with assistance from the agent. Tags and seals were furnished the growers by the agent's office.

- Interest in poultry production decreased in Bonner County the past two years. This was due primarily to low prices of poultry products in 1950. Poultry production was strictly a supplemental enterprise. Hatcheries of the area sold approximately 27% less chicks than in 1950. There were only a limited number of specialized producers, but nearly every farm had a small farm flock. The size of the flocks was dependent upon the past year's performance of egg prices. The poultryman's big problems were proper housing, disease control and feeding.
- The swine industry in Bonner County along with sheep was practiced on a smaller scale than the other animal industry enterprises. There were, however, a few farmers who maintained small herds of hogs.
- There were only a few sheep in Bonner County. The reason for this comparative absence of sheep on farms was the cold, damp, winter weather, the late springs, lack of proper housing, and difficulty at lambing time. Other reasons causing the lack of interest in farm sheep flocks were the scarcity of suitable pasturing areas, summer range, the general heavy brush and the denseness of woodland stands and the great number of predatory animals such as coyotes. Although Government trappers were continually operating in this area, it is almost impossible to materially affect the population of coyotes because of the excellent natural cover for their existence.
- The Bonner County Soil Conservation District, which was organized in the fall of 1946, continued to operate and render farmers valuable assistance. The supervisors consisted of Mr. Al Derr, Clark Fork; Lloyd Hatcher, Westmond; A.A. Roberts, Blanchard; Jack Hickey, Sandpoint; Edward Hamshar, Priest River; and the agent as secretary continued to serve as administrators for the district.
- Garden insects, pear slugs, and aphids were again in evidence in 1951. A general deal of literature on the control of insect was distributed by the County Agent's office. Bulletin 252 entitled "Idaho Recommendations for Insect Control" by the Extension Entomologist of the University of Idaho was the most used and popular bulletin in insect control.
- During the 1951 club year there were 35 4-H clubs operating in Bonner County. Boys and girls from nearly every community in the county were in club work. Members carried out projects in clothing, nutrition, food preservation, frozen foods, rural arts and crafts, garden, potatoes, crop, weed, forestry, health, rabbits, poultry, sheep, swine, dairy, beef, farm and home electrification. A total of 581 different boys and girls took part in the 4-H club program. The 281 enrolled members had a completion record at 220 members for a 78% completion rate.

## 1952 Annual Report

- There was not an organized Extension Advisory Committee in Bonner County this year. The Extension staff planned to organize an Advisory committee in 1953. The Home Demonstration Council, 4-H Leaders' Council, directors of various groups and commodity committee acted in the capacity of an informal advisory committee.
- A large number of farmers were given assistance with farm building. Requests for building help came for barns, loafing sheds, granaries, milking parlors, trench silos, etc. Several plans were obtained and a large number of the bulletins, "Plans for Idaho Farm Builders" were distributed.
- 25 boys and nine girls carried out 4-H beef projects and 17 boys and eight girls completed these projects, for a completion rate of 74%. These 4-H members exhibited 27 animals at the fair. Six 4-H club members exhibited fat steers at the Spokane Junior Livestock show. A preview of these steers was held in Sandpoint, May 1, with many interested people attending.
- Many small farmers who had a few beef cattle, but could not afford to buy a good bull, were encouraged to use artificial insemination to obtain better breeding. Hereford semen from good quality bulls was obtainable through the Bonner County Breeders Association. There was a need to promote more good type bulls, as entirely too many inferior quality beef bulls were being used in Bonner County.
- Of primary interest to cattlemen was the problem of goat weed control. With the cooperation of Clarence Seeley, Agronomist, University of Idaho, the colonic of goat weed beetles were planted in 1952 with the hope of controlling this weed. Two different species were planted in Bonner County with the Pend Oreille River as the dividing line. The problem was finding which species would stand the winter with heavy snow the best and which would multiply more rapidly to effectively control the weed. A large number of acres of good grassing land in Bonner County were taken over by the weed. Colonies were planted in the following areas: Careywood, Cocolalla, Priest River, Thama, Gold Creek, Lightening Creek, Clark Fork, Lignite, Blanchard and Hope.
- Emphasis was placed on pasture improvement during 1952. There was great need for more improved pastures in Bonner County. Many farmers were assisted with pasture and hay seeding, fertilization and management. Another need was for farmers to use good seedbed preparation in establishment of pasture and hay seeding. Clark and Dawson, Morton, cooperated on pasture fertilization and result demonstrations. Glen Judge, Morton, had a complete set of pasture mixture plots established.
- Many farmers were assisted with varieties of wheat, oats and barley to seed. Bonner County needed more sources of good clean seed.
- Assistance was given in this line of work with five meetings, 30 office calls, 42 farm visits, 2 news articles, and 50 circular letters.
- Assistance was given to many farmers in weed control and the use of 2-4-D. The agent's office acted as a distributor for Sodium Chlorate. Much of this chemical was used for the control of a Canadian Thistle infestation.
- There was a campaign to control Columbian ground squirrels and also pocket gophers. A large amount of poisoned oats were distributed and in the Blanchard area and a community poisoning program was carried out. Many farmers were given assistance in poisoning squirrels with individual farm visits.

- The Dairy Herd Improvement Association work was successful in Bonner County this year. In June, when the annual membership meeting was held and the DHIA report was made for the year, the records gave an average production per cow of 375 lbs. of fat. This is an increase of 67 lbs. of fat per cow over figures from 1948 when Panhandle Unit No. 3 was first organized. There was a steady improvement in total production. Much emphasis was placed on culling and boarder cows and low producers. There were 22 active members in the association. The agent and directors of the association made a steady campaign to encourage more dairymen to test their herds.
- The use of silage in the feeding program was emphasized. Ten new silos were constructed in Bonner County. Six of these were concrete stave construction and the others were trench silos. Clark and Dawson and Clarence Crabb used trench silos with very good results, but some other farmers in the county used them and were not satisfied. The agent assisted in planning some trench silos, stressing good location and drainage and proper construction. Assistance was given to many farmers in putting up silage at the proper stage and moisture content. With many heavy rains in June spoiling much of the hay crop, there was an excellent selling point for the silage program.
- The Bonner County Breeders Association Artificial Insemination Program was very successful. Some of the heifers that were produced from dams serviced by artificial insemination were just coming into production and were looking very good and producing well. This program should raise the general quality of dairy cattle in Bonner County. Many farmers were encouraged to use artificial insemination when it fit into their program of obtaining better quality sires and replace the cost of keeping a bull.
- A great deal of land clearing was done in Bonner County. Modern equipment and large bulldozers greatly reduced the cost and labor involved in clearing land.
- Tags and seals for certified potato seed growers in Bonner and Kootenai Counties were handled by the County Agent's office in cooperation with the Idaho Crop Improvement Association. Tags and seals for 2,830 sacks of seed were issued. The biggest shipper of certified seed potatoes was Oliver Ruen of Clark Fork. The shipments of seed potatoes were inspected by J.D. Duncan, Deputy State Horticulturist, with assistance from the agent.
- Vic Schultz, Granite, constructed a new 30 x 50 foot modern poultry house this year. He followed the plans in the Extension Circular No. 114, very closely and did a fine job on the construction. The agent assisted with several construction problems on this building and on management of his flock. This building was properly insulated, well lit and fan ventilated. Along with another one constructed by Frank Cochrane in 1951 they served as good result demonstrations.
- The annual Bonner County Fair was held September 11, 12, 13, with a Horse Show on Sunday. Due to a large number of objections to a Sunday fair, it was scheduled as a three day fair instead of four. The only actual change that was made was to allow optional removal of exhibits on Saturday evening after 10:00 p.m.  
In April, the county board of commissioners appointed a seven member fair board. They were: C.W. Gresham, Sandpoint; Don Engelan, Sandpoint; Oliver Ruen, Clark Fork ; Mrs. Alice Hunt, Bronx; M. E. Griffith, Priest River; Frank Cochrane, Kootenai; and Mr. G. N. Hawkins, Sagle. At the first meeting held, C. W. Gresham was elected chairman; Don Engelan, vice chairman; Alice Hunt, treasurer and the agent, secretary. The fair board was quite active and did a fine job of managing the fair business.

The annual Bonner County Fair was a free, educational fair, financed by a special county levy. Premiums were limited to bona-fide Bonner county residents. Departments included: Community and Educational booths, livestock, poultry, rabbits, flowers, needlework, art photography, hobbies, fruits, vegetables, field crops, potatoes and youth and 4-H club exhibits in livestock, clothing, cooking, canning, garden, poultry, rabbits, forestry, health weeds and farm electrification.

- There were 31 different 4-H Clubs organized in Bonner County in 1952. Boys and girls from most of the communities in the county were in 4-H club work. 4-H club members carried projects in clothing, food preservation, nutrition, rural arts and crafts, garden, forestry, health, rabbits, horses, wildlife, poultry, sheep, swing, dairy, beef and rural electrification. 227 different members enrolled in 4-H club projects and 186 completed for a completion rate of 82%.

### 1953 Annual Report

- Agriculture Engineering: Many farmers were given assistance with farm building. Many requests for building assistance came for barns, loafing sheds, granaries, milking parlors, trench silos, etc. Several plans were ordered through the Extension Engineer, and a large number of bulletins "Plan for Idaho Farm Buildings," were distributed in addition to many other engineering bulletins. Assistance was given on the planning of several pole sheds and several of the bulletins "Pole Frame Construction" were distributed.
- A sprinkler irrigation tour was held in the Edgemere district on Thursday, August 13<sup>th</sup> with good attendance of sprinkler operations. The tour started at the John Nunn ranch where pressures were measured and the soil moisture was checked. This system was short of water and was not doing an adequate job of sprinkling.

The next stop was at the Duane Silva farm at Vay. Here again, pressures were checked and distributed and cans were set out to check the pattern of the sprinklers. Owen Brown, Extension Engineer, had placed these cans earlier in the day. He also had established two tubes to check soil percolation. He discussed other phases of irrigation which were very interesting and educational. Lennon Bell, Engineering Specialist with S.C.S. from Coeur d'Alene, assisted with the tour, checking pressures and other phases. Duane Silva demonstrated to the group how he applied fertilizer through his system on irrigated pastures.

The next stop of the afternoon was at the Glen Judge farm at Morton. This was on heavier type soil where soil moisture was again checked. The pressure and output of his system and of the others were measured during the afternoon.

- Assistance was given in the field with 111 individual or group contacts, three radio broadcasts and seven news stories.
- Seventeen 4-H club members enrolled in tractor maintenance projects and fourteen completed for a completion rate of 83%.
- Thirty 4-H club members enrolled in electrification, with fourteen completing for a completion rate of 47%.
- A dairy tour in August included silo construction and milking parlors.
- Beef Improvement:



- The Bonner County Cattlemen's Association reorganized during the winter. In an April meeting, new officers were elected and the group voted to affiliate with the state association. The officers listed under program planning, Leon Weeks, Secretary of the Idaho Cattlemen's Association, talked to the group on the veterinary, spoke on Bang's disease.
- Many small farmers who had a few beef cattle, but could afford to buy a good bull, were encouraged to use artificial insemination to obtain better breeding. Hereford semen from good quality bulls was obtainable through the Bonner County Breeder's Association. There was a need to promote more good type bulls, as entirely too many inferior quality beef bulls were being used in Bonner County.
- A beef tour, sponsored by the Cattlemens' Association was held Thursday, August 20. The tour started at the University of Idaho Sandpoint Branch Experiment Station to observe the trial study on irrigation and dry land pastures. Dr. Carl Seirk, Head of Animal Husbandry, U. of I., gave the official placing on two classes of feeder steers and in the afternoon, discussed improved pastures, cattle marketing, and bull grading. Lunch was served by the Mountain View Extension Club. Afternoon stops included the Fielden Poirier ranch at Blanchard where the group observed a trench silo, irrigated pastures, a tractor move sprinkler system, a loading chute, squeeze chute and other facilities. The group also observed chopping pasture and hauling the clippings to the cows for feeding. Next stop was at the Bob Bandy ranch at Edgemere, where the group observed steers on irrigated pastures and ranch facilities. There was a good attendance at this tour.
- A practice judging day was held at the Bonner County Fair Grounds in Sandpoint, Sunday, August 2. Two classes of beef and two classes of dairy animals, one of sheep and one of swine, were judged during the day. Most of the livestock 4-H clubs in the county were represented at this practice judging day. In the afternoon, a picnic was held for the 4-H club numbers, leaders, and parents.
- In 1953, forty 4-H club members enrolled in beef projects and thirty-eight completed for a completion rate of 95%. Forty beef cattle were exhibited at the fair by 4-H club members. Dick Gooby exhibited a fat steer at the Spokane Jr. Livestock Show in Spokane. A practice judging day and contest were held in April. The Bonner County Judging team members were: Sharon Crawford, Nove Jo Judy and Lyle Lovec.
- The Agriculture Committee of the Chamber of Commerce contacted buyers and assisted with the Junior Livestock Sale at the Bonner County Fair. Thirteen steers were sold at the sale for an average price of \$30.00 and three lambs averaged in price, \$37.625.
- The livestock judging team made of the three high scoring 4-H members in the livestock judging contest at the Fair, participated in the livestock judging contest at the F.I.L.E. at Portland, October 22. The team members were: Pete Dockins, Mountain View; Linda Height, Selle; and Stella Robinson, Mountain View.
- Of primary interest to cattlemen was the problem of goatweed control. With the cooperation of Clarence Seely, Agronomist, University of Idaho, ten new colonies of goatweed beetles were planted in the county. A large area of grazing land of

the colonies multiplied very rapidly, but they did not know how effective they would be in controlling the weed.

- Other work in this field was two radio broadcasts, four news stories, and 877 group and individual contacts.
- Assistance was given to many farmers on pasture and hay seeding and fertilizers. Many were helped with problems of feeding and balancing rations.
- Crop Improvement
  - A meeting for the seed dealers, U. of I. Experiment Station superintendent, P.M.A. secretary, F.M.A. and S.C.S. representatives was held to discuss and present a revised sheet of recommended pasture and hay mixtures to use in Bonner County. This sheet of recommended varieties to use in mixture was enclosed in a P.M.A. mailing and distributed to many farmers.
  - Assistance was given in this field with 559 group and individual contacts, two radio broadcasts and six news stories.
  - Improved pastures and recommended hay seeding steps and discussion were included on fertilizer, beef, and dairy tours in the county. A complete pasture study at the U. of I. Sandpoint Branch Experiment Station was included on the beef tour held in August. This pasture study compared the carrying capacity of irrigated and dry land pastures and the various pasture mixtures used. Tom Brackney, superintendent, also pointed out many features of good pasture management.
  - Emphasis was placed on pasture improvement in 1953. There was a great need for more improved pastures in Bonner County. Many farmers were assisted with pasture and hay seeding, fertilization and management. Another need was for farmers to use good seed bed preparation on establishment of pasture and hay seeding. Clark and Dawson, Morton, cooperated on pasture fertilization and results demonstration. Glen Judge, Morton, had a complete set of pasture mixture plots established.
  - Many farmers were assisted with varieties of wheat, oats, and barley to seed. Bonner County needed more sources of good clean seed and improved varieties.
  - Assistance was given to many farmers in weed control and the use of 2-4-D. The agent's office acted as a distributor for Sodium Chlorate. Much of this chemical was used for the control of a Canadian Thistle infestation.
  - There was a campaign to control Columbian ground squirrels and also pocket gophers. A large amount of poisoned oats were distributed, and in the Blanchard area a community poisoning program was carried out. Many farmers were given assistance in poisoning squirrels with individual farm visits.
- Dairy Improvement
  - The use of silage in the feeding program was emphasized. Ten new silos were constructed in Bonner County. Six of these were concrete stave construction and the others were trench silos. Clark and Dawson and Clarence Crabb, Morton, had been using trench silos with very good results, but some other farmers used them and were not satisfied. The agent assisted in planning some trench silos, stressing good location and drainage and proper construction. Assistance was given to many farmers in putting up silage at the proper stage and moisture content. With

many heavy rains in June spoiling much of the hay crop, there was an excellent selling point for the silage program.

- The Bonner County Breeder's Association Artificial Insemination Program was successful. Some of the heifers that produced from dams serviced by artificial insemination were just coming into production and were looking very good and producing well. This program should raise the general quality of dairy cattle in Bonner County. Many farmers were encouraged to use artificial insemination when it fit into their program of obtaining better quality herd sires and replace the cost of keeping a bull.
- Gaylord Pierce, Sagle, was the inseminator for the association. There were 130 members in the association with about 1,100 cows. There were 1,359 cows first service, 561 cows second service, 109 cows third service, 31 cows fourth service, 10 cows fifth service, 3 cows sixth service, and 1 cow seventh service.

E. R. Still, Jr. was the association tester since its organization and was doing a very good job.

There were 26 active members in the association. The agent and directors of the association have made a steady campaign to encourage more dairymen to test their herds.

- The board of directors was given valuable assistance in advising for the farm program in general and for the dairy tour. Assistance was given to D.H.I.A. members and other dairymen in securing replacement stock of high quality.

- Dairy

- Assistance was given to several farmers in planning new milking parlors and dairy barns. Several farmers were constructing pole loafing sheds. A good example was the shed of Elton and Ken Clyde, Selle. The agent cooperated with milk sanitarians in helping farmers construct new milking parlors that complied with Grade A. regulations.
- Fifty-one 4-H club members enrolled in dairy projects and 44 completed for a completion rate of 90%. The 4-H club members exhibited 45 dairy animals at the fair.
- A dairy tour was held in August and was well attended. The tour started at the Hatcher Brow Farm at Westmond where the group reviewed a newly constructed walk-through milk parlor, an upright silo and irrigated pastures. Professor D. L. Fourt, Dairy Husbandry, U. of I., discussed the value of feeding silage and methods of putting up good quality silage. He also officially placed a class of brown swiss cows, a class of brown swiss heifers and discussed the importance of irrigated pastures in dairy production. The Westmond Grange ladies served the noon lunch.

In the afternoon, the group traveled to the Bair Bros. farm at Westmond to observe a new type upright 2 x 4 silo of 80 ton capacity which cost about \$143.00 for materials. Several excellent pieces of home constructed machinery was also on display. The next stop included a new type universal walk-through milking parlor with sliding manger door, at the Art Evans farm.

- Pete Dockins, Mountain View, won the Sayer's Livestock Judging Trophy at the fair.

- The Milk Producer's Association was very active, holding four meetings during the year as well as several directors meetings. The directors and officers were listed under program planning. The group passed a resolution at their September meeting that cream shippers should be required to clean up similar to Grade A requirements. Virgil Kennedy, Farm Management Specialist, spoke on the outlook for market milk and what organizations could do, and Fred Merrill, Manager of the Carnation Receiving Station, spoke on the market milk surplus and outlook. Education Dairy films were shown at all meetings.
- D. L. Fourt spoke to the farmers at the Farm Institute on "Feeding Dairy Cows for Economical Production." The talk developed the importance of high quality roughage, pasture and silage for economical milk production.
- The agent assisted in several 4-H meetings and tours on dairy projects, subject matter and judging. Also several fitting and showing demonstration were given, Kenneth Pursley, Mountain View, won the dairy trophy sponsored by Eclipse Printery.
- Emphasis was placed on the essential need of good pastures in the dairy program. The agent assisted 12 farmers with pasture mixtures and many others with pasture management problems.
- Farm Forestry
  - Russell Slade, Woodland Forester for the State Forestry Department, was helpful in working out farm forestry problems. Assistance was given to Mr. Slade in setting up two Christmas tree cutting demonstrations which were well attended. The demonstrations pointed out the importance of selective cutting and thinning and how to grade Christmas trees into bundles and the type to cut for market. Mr. Slade was also assisted with organizing a forestry advisory committee. This group was active and helpful in guiding the forestry program.
  - A sawmill school was held in cooperation with the State Forestry Department on February 18. The visits included stops at four small sawmills, the Balch Lumber Co., Sandpoint, Turner's Mill, Kootenai, McNearney Mill, Trestle Creek, and the Butler Mill at Hope. This was a very successful sawmill school with 50 people in attendance. Vernon Burlison, Extension Forester, acted as moderator for the school and made previous arrangements with several companies to have representatives available to discuss various mill operation problems.
  - Eight farmers ordered trees from the Clark-McNary nursery at Moscow. These plantings were ordered for windbreaks or establishment of permanent hedges. These farmers were assisted with the planting of their trees.
  - A great deal of land clearing was done in Bonner County Modern equipment and large bulldozers greatly reduced the cost and labor involved in clearing land.
  - Assistance was given in this field with five meetings and 233 group and individual contacts.
- Insect Control
  - One of the largest insect problems was tent caterpillars. Many recommendations were made to control these infestations. Many people were troubled with aphids and other insect infestations as well.
  - Legume crops and pasture seeding were damaged in some areas by cutworms in 1953. Assistance was given to many farmers in controlling this infestation.

- Assistance was given in insect control problems with three meetings, 114 group and individual contacts.
- A large number of Extension Bulletin No. 279, entitled, "Idaho Recommendations for Insect Control" were distributed. This was an excellent bulletin and helped considerably for the education on insect control.
- Potato Department
  - Tags and seeds for certified potato seed growers in Bonner and Kootenai Counties were handled by the County Agent's office in cooperation with the Idaho Crop Improvement Association. Tags and seeds for 2,830 sacks of seed were issued. The biggest shipper of certified seed potatoes was Oliver Ruen of Clark Fork. The shipments of seed potatoes were inspected by J.D. Duncan, Deputy State Horticulturist, with assistance for the agent.
  - A field meeting of certified potato growers was held in July to identify the various types of potato diseases. J.K. Reeder, Plant Pathology Department, assisted at the meeting and pointed out the various diseases in the commercial field.
  - Another joint meeting of Bonner and Boundary certified potato seed growers was held in November, Jim Gregory, Extension Specialist on potatoes and T.G. Blackburn were present. Mr. Blackburn gave a complete report of the 1953 potato seed crop and the results of the inspection. Jim Gregory discussed the control of ring rot, leaf roll and mosaic in potatoes.
  - Oliver Ruen was re-elected as representative from this area on the potato committee of the Idaho Crop Improvement Association.
  - The agent assisted in this line of work with four news articles, three meetings, 54 office and individual contacts.
- Poultry
  - Vic Schatz, Granite, constructed a new 30 x 60 modern poultry house. He followed the plans in the Extension Circular No. 114, very closely and did a fine job on the construction. The agent assisted with several construction problems on this building and on management of his flock. This building was properly insulated, well lit and fan ventilated. Along with another one constructed by Frank Cochrane, they served as good result demonstrations. George Johnson, Sagle, constructed one of the farm flock laying houses of the same size from these plans.
  - Flock selection and pullcrum testing of contract flocks was carried on by the local hatchery in cooperation with Reid Merrill Extension poultry specialist.
  - Nine 4-H club members enrolled in poultry and seven completed for a completion rate of 77%.
  - Rei Merrill, Extension Poultry Specialist, gave an excellent talk and showed slides and poultry management at the farm institute. He also gave a demonstration on how to cut up and package poultry.
  - Many farm visits and office calls were made on poultry management, disease control, and poultry housing.
  - In this line of work the agent made one radio broadcast, three news stories, 170 group or individual contacts.
  - A 4-H poultry judging contest was held at the fair. Lloyd Falk, Sagle, won the Cochrane judging cup for 1953.

- Sheep
  - Ten 4-H club members enrolled in sheep projects and nine completed for a completion rate of 92%. Three fat lambs were sold at the junior Fat Stock Sale at the fair for an average price of \$37.62.
  - Two demonstrations on fitting and showing were given at 4-H club meetings.
  - Assistance was given in this line of work with 15 individual contacts.
- Soil and Water
  - Many farmers in Bonner County had difficulty establishing stands of alfalfa. To help solve this problem, two sets of alfalfa establishment fertilizer trials were put out last year in cooperation with the Agronomy Department of the University of Idaho. These two sets were established on the Bill Baily farm in Edgemere and the Day Robinson farm on the Dufort Road.
  - A series of fertilizer tours were held in July in the following areas: Blanchard, Priest River, Edgemere, and north of Sandpoint. Fertilizer plots which had been established in cooperation with the Experiment Station and S.C.S. were covered in all of the tours in addition to several plots farmers had established. In some areas, grass and pasture seeding were also observed. G.C. Baker was present on all the tours and Vance Smith participated in the tour north of Sandpoint. Some interesting results were observed on the tour but probably the most outstanding was the gypsum and borax response. On some sick alfalfa fields, extra nitrogen seemed to help them greatly. There was also a response in some areas from phosphate, particularly on Midias clover. Also, considerable potash response was observed in the Four Corners district at Priest River. Several days were spent during July making large signs for each of the plots. This was a very effective way of letting many farmers observe the plots, who could not attend some of the tours.
  - Fifty soil samples were run for analysis in 1953. Soil testing was a very good method on which to base fertilizer recommendations. The farmers who brought in soil samples were very interested in the methods used and what the recommendations were based on the local soil type as well as the crops grown.
  - A meeting was held for all fertilizer dealers and farm agency personnel to review fertilizer recommendations. The Agent's office in cooperation with the U. of I. branch experiment station and SCS printed a leaflet on general fertilizer recommendations for Bonner County. These recommendations were widely distributed to individuals and through a PMA mailing.
  - The Bonner County Soil Conservation District gave valuable service to the farmers through farm plans, engineering help, etc. The supervisors of the district were: Lloyd Hatcher, Westmond; Homer Smith, Vay; Sloan Crawford, Colburn; and M.A. Roberts, Blanchard. The agent met with the board and gave assistance when needed.
  - Twelve sets of fertilizer plots were established in Bonner County in cooperation with the Experiment Station and the SCS. All but one of these plots was on hay seeding. The other on oats in peat soil was on the Fieldon Poiter ranch at Blanchard. Other plots were established on the farms of: Stan Rusho, Blanchard; Ralph Larson, Edgemere; V.T. Harris, Dufort; Doc Storey, G. T. McAlexander, Four Corners, Priest River; Cal Huff, Priest River; Eugene Ralph, Clark Fork ;

Fredolph Nelson, Colburn; John Macki, Oden; and Chet Bachman, Samuels. The results from these tests indicated response from gypsum in boras in most areas. Nitrogen response in most of the plots and variations to the response from phosphate and potash alone or as a complete fertilizer.

- Assistance was given in this field of work with 12 news stories, two radio broadcasts and 233 group or individual contacts.
- Swine
  - Assistance was given several 4-H club members in securing weaner pigs for 4-H projects. There were three fat hogs sold at the Jr. Fat Stock sale at the fair. Those hogs averaged \$30.00. Seven 4-H club members enrolled in swine projects and six completed, for a completion percentage of 88%.
  - Louis Johnson of Dufort had a nice herd of registered Spotted Poland China and was assisted with several problems.
  - In this line of work, two news articles were issued and 43 individual contacts were made.

### 1954 Annual Report

- Agriculture Engineering: Many requests for building assistance came for barns, loafing sheds, granaries, milking parlors, trench silos, etc. Several plans were ordered through the Extension Engineer, and a large number of bulletins, "Plans for Idaho Farm Builders," were distributed in addition to many other engineering bulletins.
  - Assistance was given on the planning of several pole sheds and several of the bulletins "Pole Frame Construction" were distributed.
  - Assistance was given in the field with 109 individual or group contacts, three radio broadcasts and five news stories.
  - Thirty-two 4-H club members enrolled in Tractor Maintenance projects and 28 completed for a completion rate of 88%.
  - Forty-one 4-H club members enrolled in electrification, with 39 completing for a completion rate of 96%.
  - A dairy tour in August included silo construction and milking parlors.
- Crop Improvement: Assistance was given in this field with 559 group and individual contacts, two radio broadcasts and six news stories.
  - Emphasis was placed on pasture improvement in 1954. There was a great need for improved pastures in Bonner County.
- Dairy Improvement: The use of silage in the feeding program was emphasized. Twelve new silos were constructed in Bonner County this year. Six of these were concrete stave construction and the others were trench silos. The agent assisted in planning some trench silos, stressing good location and drainage and proper construction. Assistance was given to many farmers in putting up silage at the proper stage and moisture content.
  - Gaylord Pierce, Sagle, was the inseminator for the association. There were 130 members in the association with about 1,100 cows. There were 1,050 cows first service.
- Potato Improvement: Tags and seals for certified potato seed growers in Bonner and Kootenai Counties were handled by the County Agent's office in cooperation with the

Idaho Crop Improvement Association. Tags and seals for 10,093 sacks of seed were issued. The biggest shipper of certified seed potatoes was Oliver Ruen of Clark Fork. The shipments of seed potatoes were inspected by J. D. Duncan, Deputy State horticulturist, with assistance from the agent.

- Farm facilities and improvements were included in both dairy and beef tours held during the year. These facilities included milking barns and parlors, pole shed construction, silos, feeding bunks, cattle handling facilities, and one new type of farm flock poultry house construction was included in a poultry tour including the results of fan ventilation.
- A safety campaign was planned for July. Talks were given at Grange and 4-H clubs were encouraged to carry out safety projects.
- Many farm visits were made and assistance given in building construction, sprinkler systems, silos, and other agriculture engineering problems.
- Bulletins were distributed, radio broadcasts, and news stories were published.
- Beef: Improved feeding to lower production costs were stressed in 1954. Improved hay and pasture seeding was stressed on a beef tour as well as a discussion of the importance of high quality of hay and silage to be fed.
- Controlling of insect pests was emphasized at Cattlemen's Association meetings and tours. Other educational projects the extension advisory committee suggested are bloat control, comparison of green feeding and pasture, and herd and bull grading. These projects were covered in meetings and a tour.
- Two meetings and a tour were planned with the Bonner County Cattlemen's Association.
- 4-H Club members were encouraged to carry out beef projects for the fair. At least ten 4-H club members carry out some beef projects. A tour of projects was held with each of the 4-H clubs with beef projects. Steer progress report cards were sent to all 4-H club members with fat steer projects.
- The Agriculture Committee of the Chamber of was asked to contact buyers for the fat stock sale at the fair.
- A livestock judging contest was held at the fair to select a livestock judging team for the Pacific International Livestock Exposition at Portland.
- A 4-H leader training was held on keeping livestock record books.
- In addition to meetings and tours, several news stories was published and several radio broadcasts and many farm visits on varied problems was made.
- Crops:
  - Forage Crops and Pasture
    - A new leaflet on the recommended varieties of grasses and legumes to be used in hay pasture mixtures in Bonner County was distributed. Several farmers were assisted with a silage program. Silage quality was stressed on beef and dairy tours. Stops were made on crop and fertilizer tours to observe pasture and hay seeding. A stop was made at the grass-legume nursery on the University of Idaho Branch Experiment Station. Two more grass-legume nurseries were established in the county in 1954.
    - Hay and silage samples were collected and sent to the Idaho State Department of Agriculture for analysis.
  - Cereal grains:



- A leaflet was prepared on the recommended grain varieties to use in Bonner County. The use of clean, weed free and treated seed was stressed. Good crop rotations and fertilizer use were stressed.
    - Cereal grains were included on a crops and fertilizer tour.
  - Potatoes:
    - Certified seed potato growers were encouraged. Farmers were assisted with problems in potato production through farm visits. The agent cooperated with the Idaho Crop Improvement Association in conducting field inspections, releasing information, collecting test plot samples, and providing growers tag samples, assistance was given the State Horticultures on grading, tagging and shipping inspections.
    - A joint potato growers meeting was held for the certified seed potato growers from Bonner, Boundary and Kootenai counties. Carl Blackburn, manager of the Idaho Crop Improvement Association, reported on inspection and the extension potato specialist discussed disease marketing and disease control.
  - Soil Improvement Crops: The use of soil improving crops and green manure crops was encouraged and stressed in an effort to build up organic matters in the soil in which they were low.
    - The use of sawdust was encouraged for soil improvement.
    - In all phases of crop work, many farm visits were made on various problems, news stories and radio broadcast were released when needed.
- Dairy:
  - A dairy tour was held in July and included a stop at irrigated and dryland pastures on the University of Idaho Sandpoint Branch Experiment Station. Results were compared on the sprinkler irrigated and dry land pastures. Carrying capacities, costs and gain per acre were compared. The value of silage, with and without preservatives, was discussed at a winter barn tour.
  - A talk and discussion on feeding dairy cows was given at the Farm Institute.
  - More farmers were encouraged to use artificial insemination. The site of the unit will be increased to 1,500 cows if possible. The board of directors met to handle business for the unit. The dairy tour included observing several artificial heifers.
  - One general membership meeting was held to acquaint members with the progress of the unit and important phases of artificial breeding.
  - A winter dairy tour was held to observe milking barns and loafing sheds under winter conditions and look at dairy improvements.
  - The Milk Producer's Association will hold four meetings at which educational movies and a guest speaker will speak on some dairy subjects.
  - The D.H.I.A. unit was worked with to keep up its membership. More dairymen were encouraged to put their herd on tests.
  - Assistance was given to many dairymen on remodeling and construction problems in milking parlors, barns, and loafing sheds.
  - The Priest River Chamber of Commerce was assisted with necessary information on the possibility of establishing a cheese factory.

- Twelve 4-H clubs were organized to carry dairy projects. Tours of projects were held with the clubs which included judging training, demonstrations, fitting and showing, and proper feeding.
  - Many farm visits were made on various dairy problems and news stories, radio broadcasts and circular letters were sent out when needed.
- Forestry: In cooperation with the Farm Forester and the Extension Forester, two forestry demonstration plantings were established.
  - Two Christmas tree culture and grading schools were conducted in October in cooperation with the Farm Forester to promote better Christmas tree production practices.
  - Orders for tree plantings on farms were handled through the agent's office.
  - Emphasis was placed on the "Penta" cold soak wood preservation for posts, poles and timbers.
  - A sawmill school was held and assistance given in setting up this school.
  - An effort was made to organize one or two forestry 4-H clubs. One identification tour was held with the assistance of the local Farm Forester. 4-H club members were urged to participate in the "Keep Idaho Green" program during 1954.
  - Several farm visits were made and news stories and radio broadcasts were released when needed.
- Insect control: Many farm and home visits were made on insect control. News stories and radio broadcasts were released when needed.
- Poultry:
  - A poultry tour was held during the spring. This tour stressed food management, brooding and rearing of pullets, and modern poultry housing, featuring deep litter, insulation, and fan ventilation.
  - 4-H club members were encouraged to carry out poultry projects. The clubs which carry out these projects were given special help. Good breeding, management, and feeding were stressed with these club members.
  - Many farm visits were made on various problems and radio broadcasts and news stories released when appropriate.
- Sheep:
  - Several 4-H club members were encouraged to carry sheep projects. Several fitting and showing demonstrations were given on 4-H club project tours.
  - General farm visits were made on various problems. News stories and radio broadcasts were made when the occasion arose.
- Soil Fertilization
  - Several result demonstrations and experimental fertilizer plots were established in the spring. These were put out in cooperation with Tom Brackney, Superintendent of the University of Idaho Branch Experiment Station.
  - Soil testing was carried on a larger scale this year. Soil testing is the best method of basis for fertilizer recommendations. Results of field trials were correlated with the soil test results.
  - Results of some of the plots were shown on fertilizer and crop tours.
  - A meeting was held with the fertilizer dealers and farm agency personnel to make up a leaflet on fertilizer recommendations for 1954 for Bonner County.

- Many farm visits were made on fertilizing problems and news stories and radio broad casts were released as needed.
- Swine:
  - Several 4-H club members were encouraged to carry swine as 4-H projects. Assistance was given to 4-H members in securing good quality pits.
  - Several farm visits were made on swine problems. News stories or radio broadcasts were made when needed.
- Weeds: Sodium Chlorate was sold for weed control purposes through this office. Recommendations were made for the application of all chlorate sold.
- 4-H club members were encouraged to carry out weed projects. Many farm visits were made on weed control. Several news stories and radio broadcasts were released.

### 1955 Annual Report

- Agriculture Engineering: Many requests for building assistance came for barns, loafing sheds, granaries, milking parlors, trench silos, etc. Several plans were ordered through the Extension Engineer, and a large number of bulletins. "Plans for Idaho Farm Buildings," were distributed in addition to many other engineering bulletins.
- Assistance was given on the planning of several pole sheds and several of the bulletins "Pole Frame Construction" were distributed.
- Assistance was given in the field with 441 individual or group contacts, two radio broadcasts and six news stories.
- Beef Improvement: Many small farmers who had a few beef cattle, but could not afford to buy a good bull, were encouraged to use artificial insemination to obtain better breeding.
- Insect Control: One of the largest insect problems in 1955 was tent caterpillars. Many recommendations were made to control these infestations. Many people were troubled with aphids and other insect infestations.
- Legume crops and pasture seeding were damaged in some areas by cutworms in 1955. Assistance was given to many farmers in controlling this infestation
- Grassman: Jack Hickey of Oden was named as the 1955 Bonner County "Grassman of the Year" and received honorable mention in the state contest.
- Pasture Improvement: More farmers became aware of the importance of good pasture management. Many of them were using commercial fertilizers to supplement the barn yard manure available and several farmers were doing a good job on rotational grazing. Very few farmers realized the importance of leaving food stubble height on range pasture in the fall of the year.
- The Blaine Marks farm was selected by a committee of the Pacific Northwest Plant Food Association as a farm with low production history and representing the largest soil type in the county. Some grain yields were down to eight bushels per acre Blaine's first year on the farm. The association also wanted an irrigated farm to show more rapid results.

## 1956 Annual Report

- There were 1,150 farms in Bonner County and 55,000 acres of cultivated land. The main agricultural enterprises were beef and dairy. Poultry ranked third in total agriculture income. Agricultural products sold brought in \$2,000,000 annually. Dairy income totaled \$1,000,000 of annual income.
- Grain farming was primarily oats and barley. These were used in rotational farming to prepare good seed beds for hay or pasture. Some of the deep peat soils produced good continuous oat crops when properly fertilized. There was a growing interest in poultry, potatoes, and farm flocks of sheep, truck crops, strawberries and other farm enterprises.
- Silage was a good method of putting up good quality forage. An increasing number of dairy and beef farmers used silage each year. June is a rainy month in average years and many farmers found it extremely difficult to put up good quality first-cutting hay. The first cutting was usually being put up as silage about June 15 or 20. This gets the crop early while legumes and grasses in the hay mixture had a high protein content and excellent palatability.
- Upright silos were the most popular type in Bonner County. An increasing number of trench and bunker silos were being constructed. Trench silos are excellent where there is good drainage and a satisfactory location available. Bunker silos can be used in an area of poor drainage or where a suitable trench location is not available. Most grass legume silage was put up without any preservative and seemed to be of excellent quality. An increasing number of farmers were using direct-cut field choppers.
- Fielden Poirier and son, Blanchard; and Walt Eldred, Sagle, built tilt-up wall concrete trench silos. This method of construction greatly reduced the amount of forms required and saved time and cost in construction. Keith Stockdale and Troy Hull, in the Glengary area, put up successful long silage in a trench silo. Their only additional cost for handling silage long was the cost of digging the trench. The silage was removed by chopping off layers with a broad ax. Chain saws were used. Long silage offered an opportunity for farmers who did not have choppers to get into the silage program in wet years.
- Grade A dairying was the most profitable dairy enterprise. The total number of Grade A shippers decreased from the previous year but several new Grade A shippers started and others increased their herd size to keep the total grade A milk out-put at a high level. Two dairy tours were held during the year that included dairy cattle judging, loafing sheds, milking parlors, milk houses, green chop feeding, silage and other items that might help dairymen increase their efficiency.
- Dairymen had a fine display of dairy cows which filled the dairy barn at the 1956 Bonner County fair. T. W. Hunt exhibited the 1956 Bonner County Dairy Queen, "Jillilah" a registered Aryshire.
- The Annual Dairy Herd Improvement Association report showed an increase of 23 pounds of butterfat per cow over 1955. Ed Still is the D.H.I.A. tester. Charles Agar had the highest herd average with 9,810 pounds of milk and 486 pounds of butterfat. The association average was 8,910 pounds of milk and 376 pounds of butterfat.
- D.H.I.A. Average
  - 1956 Butterfat - 376 lbs.
  - 1955 Butterfat - 353 lbs.

- D.H.I.A. testing was the most effective program for cow culling in dairy herds.
- Artificial-insemination of dairy cows was helping to improve the quality of dairy cows, milk and Butterfat production in Bonner County. About 1,300 cows were serviced in 1956. Artificial-insemination heifers that came into production showed an increase over their dams, and general improvement in type in most herds.
- Beef cattle provided the second highest agricultural income in the county. Cattle were increasing and were improving in type. Bull-grading tours sponsored by the Bonner County Cattlemen were held for two years and were helping cattlemen select better quality bulls for improving their beef herds. Other activities of the Bonner County Cattlemen were cooperation with the state brand department and a reward for the capture of cattle rustlers.
- Bonner county certified seed growers produced 13,000 sacks of high quality certified Netted Gem seed potatoes in 1956. An important problem in growing certified seed was disease. All fields were carefully rogued for potato disease and had to pass rigid inspection by the Idaho Crop Improvement Association.
- No certified grains or grasses were grown in Bonner County. There was an opportunity to grow certified grain. Raising certified grass seed was extremely difficult due to the infestation of quack grass on many farms.
- Bonner County had one of the finest and largest county fairs in northern Idaho and eastern Washington. Superintendents, 4-H leaders, exhibitors and all others who participated all worked together to make it a success.  
The 1956 fair, September 20-22, established a record for number of exhibits. The largest number of displays in vegetables, fruit, field crops, potatoes and flowers in 10 years were exhibited. Open class exhibits made up the largest total number of entries at the fair. Community and extension club booths were of fine quality.  
4-H club exhibits made up a very important part of the fair. Improvement in quality was noticeable in most projects.
- The annual farm and home institute was held February 24 with approximately 150 farmers and homemakers present. A well rounded program featuring University personnel, Charlie Peterson, Poultry Department, who discussed poultry feeding and Dr. R. H. Ross, Dairy Science Department, who talked on minerals and vitamins for livestock. Also on the program was Ladd Mitchell, International Youth Exchange Student to Pakistan.

### 1957 Annual Report

- Grain farming was primarily oats and barley. These were used in rotational farming to prepare good seed beds for hay or pasture. Some of the deep peat soils produced good continuous oat crops when properly fertilized. There was a growing interest in poultry, potatoes, and farm flocks of sheep, truck crops, strawberries and other farm enterprises.
- Grassman of the year - Millard Clark and Lester Dawson, farming partners in the Morton area were selected as the Bonner County Grassmen of the year.
- Several more farmers built trench or bunker silos to save their hay crop during another typical rainy June.

- Grassland Demonstration farm showed increased forage production. Run down soil can be built up with improved grass seeding, fertilizer and green manure crops. This was demonstrated on the Bonner County Grassland demonstration farm in the previous three years. The farm is owned and operated by Blaine Marks, Kootenai.  
The most outstanding feature of the grassland demonstration farm was improved irrigated pastures. In 1954 the year before the project started, it took twenty-five acres of old native pasture to carry fifteen cows. In 1956 and 1957 the carrying capacity averaged approximately two and half cows per acre on new improved pastures that were fertilized. This was a 400% increase in carrying capacity. These pastures were sprinkled before the project was conducted and continued to be sprinkled in succeeding years.
- Soil testing was one of the best methods of determining what fertilizers to apply to fields. Farmers who used testing determined the level of plant nutrients in their soil and used them as a guide for fertilizer applications on their crops. Crop yields were greatly increased with these fertilizer applications.
- Soil testing service is available from the University of Idaho on a year-round basis. Farmers were encouraged to bring the samples in early to allow two or three weeks for them to return from the university.
- A weed control program was proposed as noxious weeds were increasing. A few farmers were doing a good job of spraying with 2-4-D or cutting them to prevent them making seeds. A group of farmers headed by B.C. Jones, Kootenai, expressed an interest in establishing a weed control program in Bonner County. Goat-weed Beetles were
- Imported from Australia several years prior and have controlled this serious range weed in several areas in Idaho and Nez Perce counties. The first colony was planted in Bonner County in 1948. Clarence Seely, weed man from the University of Idaho was in charge of distribution and planted over thirty colonies since that time. The forest service planted many colonies on their range land over the summer.
- Two patches of Dalmatian toadflax were found in the county. This was a very objectionable noxious weed and every effort was being made to control these patches and every new one that was discovered to prevent the spread throughout the county.
- The chemical 1080 is a very effective form of poison in oats distributed under the direction of Andy Eaton of the Fish and wildlife Service to control Columbian ground squirrels. This was the fourth year for this program in the Blanchard area and the third year in the Careywood area. Farmers who purchased up to 200 pounds of bait the first year of the program were using only five or ten pounds to clean up a few scattered areas.
- A new cattle grub control method was being demonstrated in the county on the L.V. Haight farm. The purpose of the demonstration was to test three new insecticides and methods of treatment for cattle grub control. "Up to now the only attack on the cattle grub problem, which causes estimated losses of \$4,000,000 throughout the United States each year, has been rotenone dusting or spraying during a comparatively short period of time after the grubs emerge." Fortman explained. "The new products promise a much longer period of control in fall and early winter. Animals can be treated with the new materials, which are absorbed by the system in time so the control was effective before the grubs ruin the loins and the hide."
- The annual Dairy Herd Improvement Association report showed an increase in production over 1956. Milk averages for 1957 were 9,000 pounds and butterfat was 382 lbs.

- An increasing number of farmers ordered trees for windbreaks and Christmas tree plantings. Fifteen-thousand trees were ordered from the University of Idaho Clark-McNary Nursery.

### 1958 Annual Report

- Dairymen switched to Bulk Milk Tanks. A revolutionary change in the Grade “A” milk market developed this year. Most of the “A” Grade dairymen in Bonner County who shipped to milk plants in Spokane converted to bulk milk tanks. Several dairymen sold their cows and what dairy equipment they could rather than convert to bulk milk tanks. Most of the herds were purchased by other dairymen within the county. The general trend for fewer and larger dairies continued.
- The average production per cow in the herds in Dairy Herd Improvement association test continued to increase during 1958. Average butter fat produced was 388 lbs. and the average milk was 9,210 lbs.
- Cattle grubs were controlled by new chemicals. The best time for treatment was in the month of December. The treated steers did not show the increased weight gains that other states reported. Roland Portman, University of Idaho Extension Entomologist stated that this may have been due to the total low infestation of cattle grubs in Idaho compared to Eastern states. Portman did not recommend treatment of cattle in Idaho unless the cattle grub infestations were severe.
- A large number of Bonner County farmers worked on controlling pocket gophers. Community demonstrations were held in the following communities: Careywood, Blanchard, Sagle, Pack River and Clark Fork. Ground squirrels were controlled in these communities also in the county program in the spring.
- The 1958 Bonner County Fair, held September 11, 12, and 13 was the largest fair in the history of Bonner County to date. A record number of entries were entered in most departments and a record number of premiums were paid to exhibitors. The vegetable, flower, 4-H club work, potatoes and open class livestock entries were large and outstanding. The main repair project was the pouring of concrete floors and the remodeling of booths in the main exhibit building.
- Bonner County carried out a weed control program for the first time this year. The program was a voluntary one for farmers and landowners. All known areas of noxious weed infestation were sprayed along county road right-of-ways and the state highway. The state highway department reimbursed the county for part of the expense incurred spraying the highways. The primary weeds controlled were Canadian Thistle, tansy, goat weed, (North of the Pend Oreille River) and Dalmatian toadflax. Approximately 500 miles of road right-of-way were covered by the program. Some areas were only spot-sprayed to cover small patches of weeds.
- Ellis (Smokey) Taylor, Laclede, was the selected winner of the 1958 Grassman contest sponsored by the agricultural committee of the Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce. Taylor was sponsored in the county contest by the Bonner County Herd Improvement Association.
- Several more silos were constructed. Most of them were the trench or bunker type. Many dairymen and cattlemen were finding that these silos saved a great deal of labor

and put up high quality forage for their livestock feeding programs. Each year rain spoiled a good percentage of the first cutting of hay in the county. Farmers using silos were able to put up high quality forage and save the nutrients in the first cutting. Rainy weather did not stop their silage operation.

- Goat weed Beetles suffered a set-back. Adverse weather conditions the previous year resulted in a serious drop in the goat weed beetle population. Goat weed beetles were the only hope of controlling this weed in the large infestation south of the Pend Oreille river. The weed control program was controlling scattered patches along road sides in areas north of the river.
- The future market for forest products looked much more promising than for other agricultural products. Demand from special orders of veneer and Christmas trees as well as general lumber and poles was expected to continue to rise, barring national economic adjustment.
- Over 36,000 trees were planted in Bonner County in 1958 from the stock at the University of Idaho nursery. The trees were purchased by farmers at cost for Christmas trees, soil bank, windbreaks and re-forestation. The young trees planted at a rate of 1,000 trees per acre would be ready for market in eight to ten years. Cultivation was recommended the first two years. The tree nurseries were not been able to collect enough cones in the previous few years to supply the young trees on order. School children and their parents could supplement the family income by gathering seed cones in late summer.

### 1959 Annual Report

- Bonner County participated in a long range planning program called Program Projection. Approximately 250 people participated on many committees in taking a long range look at what was ahead in agriculture, homemaking, and youth programs for Bonner County.
  - The Bonner County Commissioners appointed an extension advisory committee. The Commissioners reviewed the lists suggested by Advisory Committee members and officially appointed all of the folks that participated in the committees in long range planning. A special effort was made to see that committees included members from all communities in all parts of Bonner County.
  - The Rural Development Committee was considered the most important problem in Bonner County as low farm income. Another high priority item was adequate financing for farmers and small businessmen. The main objectives of the committee were to establish additional industry or enterprises to provide jobs for part time farmers, to seek additional lending facilities and to provide education to develop skills for farmers who would like develop larger economic units, and to promote the general economic development of the area.
  - Improving the quality of beef cattle was one of the main problems mentioned by the Beef Committee. Another important consideration was improving pastures and range conditions. Other problems mentioned were the smallness of many farms, the feed required to winter a cow, foot rot, brucellosis control, and that bulls should be graded and performance tested. Marketing cattle was another



very important problem and they recommended more cattle sheds and better facilities and spraying for lice and other parasites control. The objectives of the committee were to improve the income of Bonner County cattlemen; to improve bull and herd quality and to improve the management and feeding systems of cattlemen.

- Marketing of eggs and poultry and low income was the most important problem stressed by county poultrymen. Other problems mentioned and considered were low quality and ungraded eggs sold, small flocks, inadequate housing, low production per bird, and improved management.
- The main problem considered by the forestry committee was finding new markets for cull wood products and improving the prices of timber. Selective cutting and woodland management needed, brush disposal funds not returned by the timber buyers in many cases, replanting trees, improved tax structure for forestry lands, getting additional seed cones for the nurseries, and improving the marketing conditions for Christmas trees were also covered.
- Over 10,000 trees were planted in Bonner County in 1959 from stock supplied from the University of Idaho Clark-McNary Nursery.
- One of the main problems considered by the dairy committee was improving milk prices for the dairymen and marketing conditions. Other problems considered were a market for the many small dairies, improving the quality of dairy cows and improving general conditions such as low quality hay and muddy corrals. Disease problems mentioned were the control mastitis, foot rot, and brucellosis. An important recommendation was to obtain a relief man who would be available to give dairymen an opportunity to take a vacation.
- The swine committee sought additional grain supply and financing. The problems considered by the Swine Committee were financing, grain supply, sanitation, housing, parasite control, and marketing. The objectives of the committee were to improve income from swine production, to encourage farmers to consider the hog enterprise.
- Problems considered by the sheep committee were parasites, marketing, coyotes, foot rot, pastures, quality improvement, fencing, and imports of lamb and wool. The objectives were to increase the income from farmers and improve the management of small farm flocks.
- Dairy herds that were under test in the Bonner County Dairy Herd Improvement Association were continuing high production. In 1959 the herds produced an average of 376 pounds of butterfat and 8,930 pounds of milk.
- The Breeders' Association provided a service for dairymen. Pierce reported at the annual meeting that 1,138 cows were serviced during the year. Inseminators had a conception rate of 73.5% which was above the national average. Service was available for the Holstein, Guernsey, Brown Swill, Milking Shorthorn, Jersey, Hereford and Angus breeds of cattle.
- Duane Silva, Sagle, was selected as the winner of the 1959 Grassman of the Year Contest. Silva was sponsored in the county contest by the Farmers' Union.
- The Bonner County Weed Control Program covered about twice the total road mileage in 1959. The objective of the Bonner County Weed Control Program was for the county

weed control to spray all the county road right of ways where noxious weeds are present, and spray for the State Highway Department under a cooperative program.

Brush control along county road right of ways was another important side effect of the Weed Control Program. Large areas of roadside brush were killed again and resulted in a good savings to the county in future years. A substantial saving could be made by spraying brush with the weed control pickup rather than slashing it in five years.

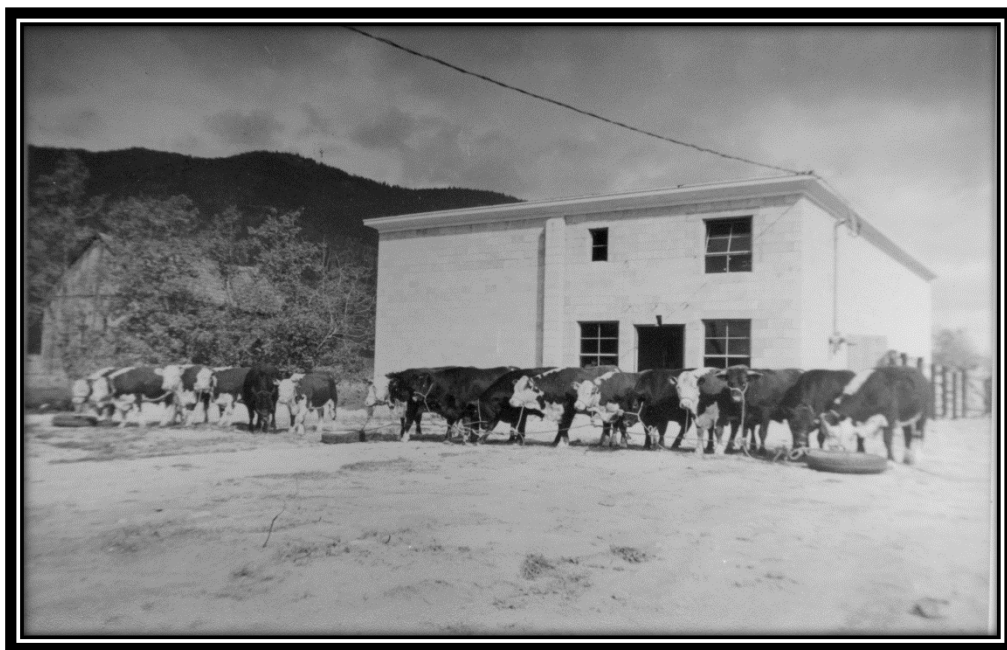
- The county agent assisted several farmers in setting up new spray rigs over the summer. These farmers were assisted with the selection of a sprayer, the type of spray to use, and rates of 2-4-D to use on the weeds they were trying to kill. The extension office had good bulletins available on weed sprayers and weed spraying programs and the type of chemical to use for weed control.
- Twelve new patches of Dalmation Toadflax were discovered by Roger Chichester, weed man, and the county agents. Spotted Knapweed was another comparatively new weed moving rapidly into Bonner County.
- Ground squirrel and pocket gopher control programs continued.

## 1960-1969

Starting in the late 1960's the old time farmers wanted to retire and land values had increased to as much as \$75.00 per acre. Consequently many of the old farms were put up for sale. At the same time out of-staters began migrating to North Idaho in an effort to escape the crush of big city life. "Beautiful Bonner" was their Utopia. The combination of land sales and immigrants attracted developers who bought up large blocks of land and sub-divided it into 5 to 20 acre parcels. This was the beginning of the end of many family farms.

Listed in the preliminary reports of the 1960 federal census were 846 farms in Bonner County averaging 215 acres. This drop in the number of farms from the 1945 census (1,400) was attributed to two principal factors. First was the trend for farmers to buy out their neighbors in order to bring their places up to a size that was economically feasible. The other was the change from agricultural to suburban classification on many places on the out skirts of towns in the county.

However, agriculture was still a significant contributor to the local economy in the 1960s, accounting for \$3 million in gross annual income. A number of factors contributed to this success, including the establishment of a successful cheese factory, livestock auction yards and the Gooby Meat Packing Plant. More than a half million dollars of "new money" was pumped into the economy of Sandpoint and its trade area by the Pend Oreille Cheese Company alone



4-H steers in front of Gooby Meat Packing Plant on Baldy Road in Sandpoint.

during the first two years of its operation, providing a good market for many small dairymen. In 1962 the plant handled 5,398,650 pounds of milk from which it made 602,610 pounds of cheese, or about 300 tons.<sup>48</sup> In 1964, 7,328 head of cattle moved through the auction ring of the Sandpoint Livestock

Auction Company, together with 192 hogs and 117 horses, sheep and goats. These figures represent an increase of 25% from its first year in operation (1961)

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<sup>48</sup> SNB 8/8/1963

The dairy & beef industries, as well as woodland products, also remained a substantial part of the agricultural equation in the 1960s, with each contributing nearly \$1 million annually to the county's 845 farms.<sup>49</sup> Walt McPherson, Bonner County Agricultural Agent in 1964, noted that 80% of the cropland harvested in Bonner County was in hay production and 80% of agricultural income was from dairy and beef cattle.<sup>50</sup> Of the 846 farms reporting in the 1960 census, 500 reported running some dairy cattle, with 50 grade A dairies in the county and 3,300 cows totally producing milk. In 1962, the county was the third largest supplier of grade A milk in the Spokane milkshed, with 66 producers furnishing 10.4% of the entire volume.<sup>51</sup> McPherson further noted that timber had seen a tremendous growth of interest among farmers in tree farm operations in the early 1960s. At the time, Bonner County's average farm had 245 acres, but the average acreage being cultivated was only 75. That meant approximately 60,000 acres in the county were applicable as timber crops, and many farmers or woodland owners could supplement their income by thinning out wood lands. At the time, they were eligible for crop sharing under the agricultural conservation program.

Ranchers started expanding their herds to include several new breeds of beef cattle, including: Highlander, Charolais, Galloway and Santa Gertrudis, in addition to the historical herds of Angus, Hereford, Shorthorn, Brown Swiss, and Jersey bulls. The mid-60s saw the market flooded with an unprecedented number of imports of Australian and New Zealand meat. The Forest Service provided much needed summer range for local ranchers. In 1961 the Kaniksu National Forest provided summer range for over 2,100 head of cattle and 900 head of sheep. In 1966, the first Scotch Highland herd was introduced to the region on a ranch near Albeni Falls.

### **New \$50,000 Sandpoint Auction Ring Sets Opening on October 5**

Sandpoint News Bulletin  
9/28/1961

Livestock sellers and buyers of the Pacific Northwest will have their first look at the new sales ring of the Sandpoint Livestock Auction Company next Thursday.

Located on 12 acres north of the road between highway 95 and highway 10A adjacent to the Spokane International railway near Ponderay, the new plant is according to men familiar with the livestock auction business is the finest such facility in the northwest.

The company is owned by Dale Sparr and Floyd N. McGhee who have operated it since January 1, 1960, when they bought it from Art Sparr, Dale's father.

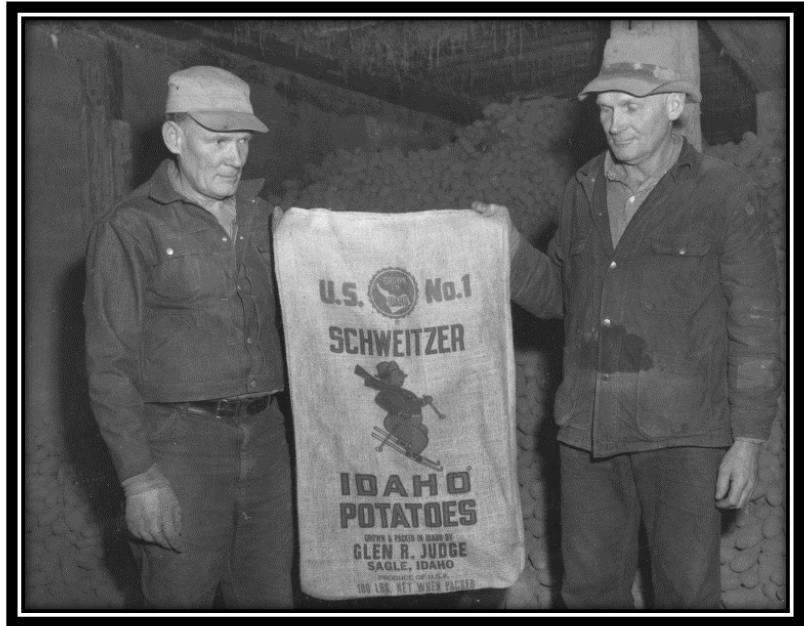
During 1960 about 11,000 head of livestock were sold through the local auction company at its old ring at Oak and Division streets making one of the major markets in the northwest.

<sup>49</sup> Bonner County Industrial Survey, Prepared by Industrial Development Department, 1964

<sup>50</sup> SNB 3/12/1964

<sup>51</sup> Fifteen years prior there were 250 grade A dairies in the county, however the volume of milk production is considerably higher in the 1960s than at that time.

In addition to these larger operations, excellent quality seed potatoes and strawberries had long been grown in the area and the acreage in these crops could be profitably expanded. There were also opportunities in Bonner County for raising and processing other berries, fresh fruits and vegetables. To Glen and Jim Judge, brothers who farmed in the Morton area about 16 miles south and east of Sandpoint, potatoes were becoming a highly specialized crop, handled scientifically from start to finish. As part of the crop rotation on diversified farms, approximately 12 acres of Idaho Gems were grown by each of the men. The Judge brothers also branded their potatoes to with an area appropriate design - a skier, with the name "Schweitzer" just above, printed in red on burlap sacks.



Many factors affected the dairy industry in the 1960s. There were strict new regulations on raw milk sales in the early 1960s and the passing of the omnibus farm bill (1965) which included a new dairy section designed to reduce milk surpluses and protect producers' incomes in Federal marketing areas by removing the necessity for dairymen to maintain maximum production to preserve their place in the fluid milk market. And the high price of land on the Coast forced western Washington dairy herds inland. But despite these obstacles, the Dairy industry continued to top itself with accolades in all directions.

- Ardley Burt, Samuels, owned the highest producing herd in the Bonner County Dairy Herd Improvement association for the months of October and November, 1962. His registered Holsteins produced an average of 39.6 pounds of butterfat and 1,062 pounds of milk. Elton and Kenneth Clyde's mixed Holstein and Brown Swiss herd from Selle were in second place producing an average of 37.4 pounds of butterfat and 896 pounds of milk. The registered Brown Swiss herd owned by Ivan E, Smith of Oden was in third place producing an average of 36 pounds of butterfat and 876 pounds of milk. Bert Higley, Selle, owned the fourth place herd. His Holsteins produced an average of 36 pounds of butterfat and 823 pounds of milk.
- George Anerson, Selle, had the highest producing herd in the Bonner County dairy Herd Improvement association for January, 1963, his Holsteins producing an average of 47 pounds of butterfat and 1154 pounds of milk. D.E. Roberts's herd of registered and grade Holsteins from Blanchard was second place herd with an average of 45.3npounds of butterfat and 1210 pounds of milk. Ardley Burt of Samuels placed third producing an average of 44.4 pounds of butterfat and

128 pounds of milk. Elton and Kenneth Clyde of Selle had the fourth place herd producing an average 43.1 pounds of butterfat and 1152 pounds of milk.

- Overall, nine dairy herds in Bonner County produced over 490 pounds of butterfat in 1963. These were Ardley Burt and Fredolf Nelson, Colburn; George Anderson and Elton Clyde, Selle; Dale Abbott, Colburn; Burt Higley and William Hall, Oden and Glen Judge, Sagle.
- Elton and Kenneth Clyde's dairy herd at Selle was the highest producing group for April and December, 1964. Their Holstein and Brown Swiss herd produced 45.9 pounds of butterfat and 1,170 pounds of milk. Don Roberts Holstein herd at Blanchard was second place with an average of 45.3 pounds of butterfat and 1,186 pounds of milk. Earl Sears of Post Falls, owned the third highest producing herd, his Holstein cows producing an average of 45.3 pounds of butterfat and 1175 pounds of milk. Jim Judge's Holstein herd from Sagle was in fourth place. His herd produced an average of 44.4 pounds of butterfat and 1090 pounds of milk.
- Jim Self, Post Falls, owned the highest producing herd for November, 1964 in the Emerald Empire Dairy Herd Improvement association. His Holsteins produced an average of 44.3 pounds of butterfat and 1055 pounds of milk. Second highest herd was that of Curtis Howell, Morton. His Guernseys produced an average of 43.4 pounds of butterfat and 806 pounds of milk.
- Glen Judge, Sagle, had the overall highest producing herd in the Emerald Empire Dairy Herd Association in 1964.
- In 1966, area dairy herds set an all-time producing record in the Emerald Empire Dairy Herd Improvement Association. The high producing herd of the year was owned by Don Roberts, Blanchard, whose cattle produced an average of 563 pounds of butterfat and 14,710 pounds of milk. Second place herd was owned by Charles Fristoe, Ross Point, Fristoe's herd produced an average of 534 pounds of butterfat and 14,040 pounds of milk. Jim Self's herd of Post Falls came in third producing 510 pounds of butterfat and 13,085 pounds of milk. Fourth highest producer was Kenneth Clyde's herd from Selle, with an average of 510 pounds of butterfat and 13,085 pounds of milk. Archie Hendrick's herd from Blanchard was fifth highest with 502 pounds of butterfat and 13,085 pounds of milk. In sixth place was George Anderson's herd from Selle, producing an average of 495 pounds of butterfat and 12,149 pounds of milk.
- Archie Herrick, Blanchard, had the highest production herd in March, 1967 with an average of 571 lbs. butterfat. Other high testing herds were those of Doug Yergens and Don Roberts, Blanchard 547 lbs. butterfat; C.G. Fristoe, Coeur d'Alene, 533 lbs. butterfat; K.H. Paisley, Blanchard, 532 lbs. butterfat, Stan Bleckwenn, Careywood, 516 lbs., butterfat; Kenneth Clyde, Sell, 509 lb. butterfat, and Frank Wagner, Sagle, 503 lbs., butterfat.

In 1966 the Bonner County Farm Bureau was formed. That same year the Sandpoint Agricultural Experiment Station made preparations for its relocation and expansion after they accepted an offer from the Great Northern Railway Co. to purchase 20 acres of the station land, including all present buildings. The railway, which offered \$75,000 for the land and facilities, planned to build a high-speed interchange track on the land. Jim Benson, the new manager of the University of Idaho's Sandpoint and Bonner's Ferry experiment farms, oversaw the moving

of machinery, tools, supplies, and equipment from the old buildings into the new cement block structure built this in the summer of 1967.

Other developments in the county had an effect on the agricultural scene. For example, success of what was then known as Schweitzer Basin provided a very direct benefit to the stockmen and other farmers of Bonner County. Sam Wormington, manager of the Schweitzer operation in 1964, told the Bonner County Cattlemen's association at their annual banquet that many thousands of persons from outside the county were being drawn here every week and that this was reflected in a greatly increased volume of business by restaurants of the area. This, of course, meant the development of a substantial new market for Bonner County meat and other farm products.

### 1960 Annual Report

- Bob Bandy, Edgemere, won the County Grassman of the Year contest and was selected as the north Idaho district winner in the state contest. He was close in competition for first place in the state contest.
- Fifty soil samples were sent to the University of Idaho for analysis. Recommendations were made on the basis of plant nutrients available and those required by the growing crop. Fertilizer applications increased growing production for those farmers.
- The Union Pacific Agriculture Car visited Bonner County for the first time since the Union Pacific purchased the Spokane International in 1960. Another service provided by Union Pacific was the sponsorship of a 4-H and Future Farmers' scholarship to a university. Last year's 4-H winner was Don Burnett who was attending the University of Idaho.
  - The program for the day featured dairy subjects. Cal Crandall, agricultural agent traveling with the car, introduced the program and reported on waferizing and pelleting of hay. Bill Wisbeck discussed Federal grading of hay and samples of several grades were provided for those attending to see. Protein analyses were run on most of the samples. Don Ingle discussed feed values.
- Planning by the beef and dairy advisory committees brought leptospirosis under control. Through cooperation and quick action of cattlemen and dairymen, the planning for control was effective. Vaccination of all beef and dairy carrel was a method used for controlling this disease.
- Herds on Dairy Herd Improvement Association test increased production. The average pounds of butter fat produced per cow in the association reached a new high of 392 pounds of butter fat. Pounds of milk increased to 9,820. The average number of cows in the herd has increased to 25.
- The inseminators reported that 1,200 cows were serviced during the year. Service was available to Holstein, Brown Swiss, Ayrshire, Guernsey, Milking Shorthorn, Jersey, Hereford, and Angus breeds of cattle.
- Jay Mount, Kootenai, grew 25 acres of field corn for silage. This was a new hybrid type field corn and produced five tons per acre. Weather conditions did not permit Jay to plant until June. The corn might have produced more with a longer growing season. Field corn silage was a new development in the county and had possibilities for the more frost free growing areas in the county.

- Severe infestations of Canadian thistle on Bonner County roadsides were disappearing, and indication of progress being made in weed control. The infestations of many other weeds were also reduced. Included in these were wormwood, spotted knapweed, morning glory, Dalmation toadflax and goatweed. Tansy continued to be a plant that was fairly resistant to the 2-4-D sprays that the county program was using and had been extremely difficult to show much progress.
- Long range planning by the Bonner County Fair Board and County Commissioners determined the need for a new fairground. Forty acres of ground was purchased on North Boyer providing adequate facilities for parking, good distribution of buildings, and a small park area. The Fair board planned to hold public meetings to give all organizations who were interested in future use of the fairgrounds or buildings an opportunity to make suggestions for the new facilities. The purchase of a new site for the fairgrounds was determined necessary because the City Council would not grant the Fair board a new lease on the present site. Limited parking and crowded building arrangements were other important factors in the Fair board and Commissioners' decision. Tentative plans indicate it was five to ten years before the fairgrounds would be moved to the new sight.
- The 1960 fair was again successful and included:

4-H clubs	54
4-H leaders	105
Members enrolled	485
Boys	190
Girls	295
Members completed	375
Boys	147
Girls	228
Projects enrolled	1349
Completed	946
Completion	77%

#### 1961 Annual Report

- The Sandpoint Livestock Auction Company developed a new sales yard this year. This new yard was an excellent marketing facility for Bonner County farmers. The auction yard had 52 concrete floored pens all underneath one roof. Overhead boardwalks provided an excellent opportunity for buyers and sellers to view the cattle in the pens before the sale. The scales, auction ring, and sales ring were all underneath the same roof with the pens. A small restaurant was also provided for the convenience of those attending the sale. The owners of the yard were Dale Sphar and Floyd MGhee.
- The Pend Oreille Cheese Company started operations in July of 1961 and provided a good market outlet for milk produced by many small dairy farmers in Bonner County. Bill Beyers and sons, Bill Jr. and Jim, were the owners of the cheese company.
- Bonner County dairymen experienced a tremendous change in the last 15-year period. The number of Grade A dairymen decreased from 275 to 50 shipping milk. The total volume of milk shipped in the county was approximately the same as it was 15 years ago.



Many of the small farms had idle milking parlors and barns on their place. These milking facilities, although not up to Grade A milking standards with bulk milk tanks and equipment, were good facilities for shipping clean manufacturing milk. Many part time farmers on these small places had an opportunity to ship a few cans of milk from eight to ten cows and bring some additional income in for family living and year round employment by shipping milk to the cheese factory.

- The Bonner County Commissioners appointed a large committee to work on a Bonner County Development program. The main objective of this development program was to speed up the economic growth in Bonner County and improve the welfare of the people, to develop community resources, and to expand employment opportunities. This project sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture and Department of Commerce was a coordinated and cooperative effort whereby a local group with the assistance from state and federal agencies and organizations planned for stimulating balanced economic growth, improvement of the economic well-being of our rural people, development of local leadership and community facilities, and provided better opportunities for rural youth. Norm Bauer was chairman of the committee; Lee White, vice-chairman; and Walt McPherson, Secretary.
- Projects considered in agriculture were the establishment of a potato sorting warehouse and distributor shed, expansion of the potato growing industry, and certified seed growing. Establishment of a small freezing plant and commercial and custom cannery was being considered to process strawberries, fresh fruits, & vegetables.
- Officers of the Bonner County Cattlemen's Association

President- Bob Wood, Gold Creek

Vice-President- Don Allen, Priest River

Treasurer-Bob Bandy, Edgemere

Secretary-Walt McPherson, Sandpoint

Directors-Henry Bergdorf, Priest River;

A.J. Storey, Priest River

Vernon Ruen, Clark Fork

Denny Shields, Oden

Walt Roos, Oden

Officers of Cow Belles Auxiliary

President- Mrs. Bob wood, Gold Creek

Vice-President-Mrs. Don Allen, Priest River

Secretary-treasurer- Mrs. L.G. Moon, Bottle Bay

The Bonner County Cattlemen's Association succeeded in getting the spotlighting bill passed in the Idaho Legislature. Senator Don Samuelson of Bonner County, did an excellent job of steering the bill through the Senate and House. Henry Bergdorf of Priest River and other cattlemen in the Association, pushed for passage of the bill for several years.

The bill gives the conservation officers a real opportunity to catch spotlighters. The basic provisions of the bill made it prima facie evidence of spotlighting to have a loaded gun and a spotlight in possession in a game area after sundown.

At the State Cattlemen's Association meeting, Mrs. Bob Bandy of Edgemere was elected as president of the Idaho State Cow Belles. Mrs. Bob Wood, Gold Creek, was elected secretary of the Cow Belles. The Cow Belles displayed a fine booth at the Bonner county Fair again this year promoting beef.

- Dairy Herd Improvement Association averaged over 400 pounds of butterfat
- Herds in the Bonner County Dairy Herd Improvement Association increased production again. The average pounds of butter fat produced per cow in the Association reached a new high of 418 pounds of butterfat. The average pounds of milk produced per cow was increased to 10,750 pounds. The average size of cow herds increased to 27 cows.
- Artificial Insemination service was available for Holstein, Brown Swiss, Ayrshire, Guernsey, Milking shorthorn, Jersey, Hereford, and Angus breeds of cattle. Directors for the association were George Anderson, Selle, chairman; Ardley Burt, Samuels, Bill Hall, Oden; Elton Clyde, Selle; Burt Higley, Pack River; and Walt McPherson, secretary.
- The 1961 Bonner County Fair established a new record for total number of entry exhibits. The open class livestock, 4-H and FFA projects, women's department, open class clothing, and fruits and vegetables all showed a large increase in total number of exhibits.
- Harold Anselmo, Priest River, was awarded first place in the Grassman of the Year contest. He was selected by the judges as doing an outstanding job in grassland farming. Harold was sponsored in the contest by the Bonner County Cattlemen's Association.
- The United States Department of Agriculture set up a County Defense Board to function in Bonner County. The purpose of this board was to provide some of the basic needs for defense of our food supplies in an atomic attack. The County Defense Board was made up of members of each Department of Agriculture agency represented in Bonner County. Members of the board are Harold Kiebert, ASC office manager, chairman; Tom Wilson, Soil conservation Service, vice-chairman; Ted Navratil, United States Forest Service; Walt McPherson, County Extension Agent; and Walt Klundt, Farmer's Home Administration.
- There was a great increase in Civil Defense interest in Bonner County in 1961. The County Agents' office was in charge of supply and rationing on the county Civil Defense Committee. Every family in Bonner County was encouraged to have basic food and water in their home to take care of their complete family for a two week period in event of atomic attack or other emergency. All food supplies in stores were frozen for a period of time until a rationing plan was set into operation.
- Demonstration fertilizer plots were place on the following farms: John Nobel, Oden; Pat Adley, Squaw Valley; George Anderson, Selle; amd Clarence Schmidt, Dufort.

#### Bonner County Round-Up Tallies

4-H Cubs	39
4-H Leaders	111
Members enrolled	
Girls	279
Boys	190
Members completed	
Girls	224

Boys	139
Projects Enrolled	1076
Completed	837
Completion	77%

### 1962 Annual Report

- The Bonner County Cattlemen's Association purchased a mechanical bait placer from the Blackwelder Corporation to aid in controlling pocket gophers in Bonner County. The bait placer was rented through the county agents office to those in Bonner County who would like to control the gophers on their home farms. The pocket gophers were controlled by the placing of 1080 bait into the soil in artificial burrows that intersect the natural burrow of the gopher. These artificial burrows were placed approximately 6 inches deep and approximately 15 feet apart throughout the field. This machine was designed to mount on any standard three point hitch tractor. Bait was available through the County Agent's Office in Sandpoint under the supervision of the State Fish and Game Department.
- Herds in Bonner County Dairy Herd Improvement Association increased production again. A new average record of 10,910 pounds of milk was reached by dairy herds. The average production of 414 pounds of butter fat was also produced. There were 397 cows in Bonner County on Dairy Herd Improvement Association tests at the time.
- The Spokane Milk Producers grew from a \$10,000 a month business to over a \$200,000 a month business. Spokane Milk Producers had supplies and parts of most makes of dairy equipment. Members could purchase other farm equipment through the Milk Producers Association. Millard Clark, Sagle, was president of the whole Spokane Milk Shed Producers Association. Chet Davidson, manager of the Milk Producers Association, reported a change in the pricing formula for the year.

#### Bonner County Milk Producers Association

President - George Anderson, Selle

Secretary – Millard Clark, Sagle

Directors - Glen Edgar, Priest River; Jim James, Sagle; Elton Clyde, Selle; and Ardley Burt, Samuels

- Lloyd and Wayne Hatcher, Westmond, were awarded first place in the Grassman of the Year Contest for Bonner County. They were sponsored by the Bonner Soil Conservation District. Other contestants with excellent grassland programs were Don Roberts, Blanchard; Chet Van Stone, Hope; Vernon Ruen, Clark Fork; and Bert Higley, Northside.

### 1964 Annual Report

- Registered Beef Sale was held on the 29<sup>th</sup> of February. For the first time a bull sale catalog was printed with the certification being photographed and appearing in the catalog. Harold Tibbs of Mountain View was chairman of the bull sale committee.

Auctioneers for this sale were Howard Razer and Johnny Ray from the Missoula Livestock Auction Company.

- A set of Murphy Scales were purchased jointly by the Cattlemen's Association, the Bonner County Fair Board and the County Extension Office. These scaled were to be used for performance testing of purebred and grade herds in Bonner County.
- The printing of the brand book, having all the brands registered in the county, was one activity undertaken by the Cowbelles. The book was for sale by contacting members of the Cowbelles and also through the County Extension Office.
- Chet Van Stone of Hope was selected as the 1964 Grassman of the Year. Van Stone was presented with a plaque, an Idaho desk set and a picture at the annual Chamber of Commerce Banquet.
- Herds in the Emerald Empire Dairy Herd Improvement Association increased production to a new high. The average production of butterfat per cow reached 444 pounds. The average pounds of milk per cow produced was 11,750. The average size of dairy herds increased to 33 cows.

### 1965 Annual Report

- Three days of calf grading demonstrations were given with Morris Hempstrom, Extension Livestock Specialist from the University. The first day of the demonstrations was at the Bob Woods farm on Gold Creek and Walt Roos' farm at Sunnyside. The second day was at Doc Storeys farm in Snow Valley. The third day of the demonstration of calf grading was held at Bob Bandy's at Edgemere in the morning and at the Jaynebee Ranch in the afternoon. There were three purebred and seven grade herds in Bonner County on the production testing program.
- Several farmers were assisted by the County Agents Office in cooperation with Rex Johnson on the Christmas tree plantations. There had been increasing interest in the growing of Christmas trees. An organization of Christmas tree growers has been organized.

A Christmas tree grading school was held at the fairgrounds in September. This school gave growers an opportunity to place a grade on trees and assist them in selecting quality trees. Vern Burlison, University of Idaho Extension Forester brought a pickup load of trees with him, of commercial grades, to illustrate the differences in grade and give an opportunity to those attending to grade these trees. Mr. Mularkey the District Horticulture Inspector for the State of Idaho Department of Agriculture discussed the grades with those attending. In Bonner County there were very few native trees that are suitable for the commercial market, which wants a thick, well branched tree. Large Plantations of Scotch Pine Christmas trees were visible on the Fish Hatchery Road. The trees were owned by A.E. Welch and the Hofert Tree Company.

The University of Idaho Clark McNary Nursery made trees available to all Idaho farmers and land owners. These small trees were ready to be transplanted and were furnished at cost to Idaho farmers. The nursery was a cooperative project between the U. S. Forest Service, the University of Idaho and the State of Idaho. Trees ordered could be used for Christmas tree production, wind break plantings, reforestation and other farm purposes.

- The County Agents Office arranged several community ground squirrel and pocket gopher control meetings. Bait was distributed to many farmers in the Careywood, Blanchard, Edgemere, Westmond, Priest River and Clark Fork areas. The bait was distributed in cooperation with Leo Black of the Idaho Fish and Wildlife service. A new method of controlling pocket gophers was the mechanical bait placer. The Bonner County Cattlemen's Association owned a bait placer and arrangements for renting this bait placer and obtaining bait could be made through the County Agents Office.
- Don Roberts, Blanchard was selected as the 1965 Grassman of the Year. Roberts was presented with a desk pen set and picture at the annual Chamber of Commerce meeting in November. Roberts was also a Northern Idaho District winner and received a trip to Boise to compete in the state contest. He was the third Bonner County farmer to win the Northern Idaho District Title. Other previous winners were Bob Bandy, Edgemere and Glen Judge, Morton.
- Herds in the Emerald Empire Dairy Herd Improvement Association maintained their high productions of an average of 444 pounds of butterfat per cow in 1965. The average production of milk was 11,460. The average herd size was 33.5 cows.
- One of the newest housing developments for dairy cattle was free stall housing. Several dairy farmers were using free stall housing or modified free stall housing. Some of the dairymen who had converted to this type of system were Elton and Kenneth Clyde, Selle; Horace Wenger, Kootenai; Perry Larkin, Oden; Curtis Howell. Morton; Archie Herrick, Blanchard; Burton Turner, Vay; and Stanley Bleckwyn, Carreywood.

#### 1966 Annual Report

- Beef production in Bonner County was made up of two phases. The largest percentage was the cow-calf operation which approximately 75% of the cattlemen were engaged in. The second was the feeder operation. The two largest operators in this were Ken Reed and Harp Turnbull, Sagle. There were a number of other ranches feeding out 20-40 head each year.
- Three days of calf grading demonstrations were given this year with Morris Hemstrom, Extension Livestock Specialist from the University, and County Extension staff being present. The first day of the demonstrations were at the Bob Wood and Jim Wood farms at Gold Creek. The second day was at Doc Storey's at Snow Valley. Third day was at Barney Blasko's at Samuels and Bob Bandy's at Edgemere.
- The Bonner County Fair Board continued their plans for developing the new Bonner County Fairgrounds on North Boyer. A target date for construction of buildings was set for 1970.
- Rainfall was very short during the summer months in 1966. This shortage pointed out the critical need of many farms and rural residences for improved water facilities. Groups of farmers in an area that were interested in developing water could obtain loans for water development. These low-cost, long-term loans were available through the Farmers' Home Administration.
- Archie Herrick was selected as the 1966 Grassman of the Year. Herrick was presented with a desk pen set and a Ross Hall scenic picture at a Chamber of Commerce meeting.

Other contestants in Bonner County were Bob Wood of Gold Creek; Bill Ogden, Grouse Creek; Ardley Burt, Colburn; and Wayne Grandeau, Blanchard.

Herrick operated a Grade A Dairy in the Blanchard area and his herd was producing over 550 lbs. of butterfat and 14,500 lbs. of milk. His herd was on the Dairy Herd Improvement Association test. He had excellent irrigated pastures that were fertilized with ammonium sulfate. He grew alfalfa and brome grass and fertilized it with borated gypsum or ammonium sulfate.

### 1966 Annual Report

- 1966 Fair theme – Our Younger Years
- Walt Mc Phearson – Extension Agricultural Agent
- Iva Burnstad – Extension Home Economics Agent
- Ray Davis - Extension Agricultural Agent
- Burl Langston – Extension Office Secretary

### 1967 Annual Report

- 4-H - 15 separate programs were held throughout the county with approximately 1,400 members, leaders, parents and guests.
- In 1960 a new fairgrounds consisting of 40 acres was purchased on North Boyer. Since 1961 a Fair Building Fund was levied to accumulate money to build the new fairgrounds. In addition to the Fair Building Fund, money was saved on the Fair Operation Levy and was accumulated toward the Fair Building fund. The Fair Board felt the general public was most interested in a pay-as-you-go program. When the new buildings were constructed the Fair Board would have enough money accumulated to build most of the basic essential needed for moving to the new fairgrounds. The target date for opening the new fairgrounds was set for 1970. The Fair Board was tentatively planning some construction in 1968 and 1969.

A new road was planned for access on the west side of the new fairgrounds. This road was purchased by the Bonner County Commissioners at the time of the new fairgrounds purchase. Considerable development work was done for the wooded areas on the site. A large area of lodge pole pine was not suitable for shade trees and was cleared for a new cattle and horse show ring. The ring was planned for a size of 200 x 300. Thad Hunt told the Fair board that this would accommodate any of the O-Mok-See and other horse events that might be held. A small crew of boys, provided by the probate Court, pruned and thinned a large part of the wooded area that was developed into a park area and another area provided shade for the show ring and for the 4-H members holding their cattle and preparing to show them in the show ring.

The Fair Board held a public meeting to obtain ideas and requests for facilities and space to be provided by the new fairgrounds. The Fair Board was using their basic plans to make the fairgrounds and fair buildings available for several public events to make better use of the facilities. The Board was planning to meet with representatives of the food booths to plan a new set of kitchens to provide the important church food facility that was a big attraction at the fair in the past years.

- Dick Ohms, University of Idaho Potato Specialist, conducted a few potato rogueing demonstrations for Bonner County potato growers last summer. Certified seed potato growers rogue their fields to remove all diseased plants that may develop during the summer growing season. The rogueing requires skill in spotting the select plants and a good knowledge of the potato diseases.
- Ruen Farms, Inc. at Clark Fork was the largest Certified seed potato growers in the county and also one of the largest and oldest producers of foundation certified Netted Gem seed in the state. Other certified seed growers this year were Glen Judge, Sagle and Leonard Brackenbush, Samuels.
- The most important tool of the cattleman was the performance testing program which consisted of weighing and grading the calves at weaning time and weighing and grading the heifers again as yearlings. Culling in the herd was based on these records. In order to work in this program, the cows had to be numbered and the calves tagged and records kept on which calf belonged to which cow. By adjusting the weight at weaning time to a 205 day basis the calves were all on an equal footing for this type of evaluation. Three new herds were added to the program in Bonner County.
- The freeze branding was permanent and as it shows up white against a dark background, it is easily readable.
- The Registered beef Sale made good quality breeding stock available locally to the beef producers, and provided a local market for the purebred breeders to sell their produce thereby proving a savings to both the buyer and seller.
- There were several active horse groups in Bonner County, the leading being the Sandpoint Saddle Club and the Bonner County Horsemen's Assoc., as well as the 4-H Horse Clubs. This year, for the first time, a three day Horse Show was held Friday, Saturday and Sunday preceding the Bonner County Fair. This was started because of the large horse population and of the many interested horsemen in the county.
- There were quite a large group of small sheep flocks in Bonner County as in the past and seemed to be increasing each year. However, there were very few larger flocks. 250 to 300 head was probably the largest in the county.
- The Bonner County Breeders Association offered the service of outstanding bulls through the All West Breeders Association. These Outstanding bulls helped improve the production and type of most Bonner County dairy cows using the service.
- The Curtis Candy Co. offered artificial insemination in Bonner County. Their inseminator was Bob Murray.
- Dairy herds on the Bonner County Dairy Herd Improvement Association program produced a new all-time high average again. The new average was 492 lbs. of butterfat with an average milk production of 12,670 lbs. per cow.
- A new local custom spreader was developed for lime spreading in Bonner County. Werner Paulet was using the sand spreading truck owned by Russell Oliver, a director at Schweitzer Basin, to spread the lime. The sand spreading truck did a good job of spreading the sugar lime on the Duane Kellogg, Al Krebs, Werner Paulet and John Mason farms.
- Lime continued to give good response for the alfalfa fields in Bonner County. Lime and phosphorus have corrected the sick alfalfa.

- The soil testing service was available through the University of Idaho. The soil tests were run at cost at the University. Soil testing was an excellent guide for a farm fertilizer program.
- Tree Pruning demonstration was held: County Agents Ray Davis and Walt McPherson gave a demonstration on tree pruning and grafting at the Experiment Station. They were assisted by Andy Turinsky, a local pruner. Information on tree pruning, spraying for insect control and fertilization were available at the County Agent's Office.
- Bob Wood was selected as the 1967 Grassman of the Year. Bob was sponsored in the contest by the 4-H leaders' council and was selected by the judges for having an outstanding grassland program. Bob operates a 2,000 acre cattle ranch and leases another 3,000 acres. He ran 400 head of cattle on his ranch. He was using a program of ammonium sulfate fertilization on his mountain meadows for hay production.

### 1969 Annual Report

- 1969 saw the largest number of 4-H boys and girls exhibiting at the fair with the largest total of exhibits in the history of the Bonner County Fair.
- The Bonner County Fair Board continued with their plans for developing the new fairgrounds on North Boyer.
- Fat Stock Sale – The 1969 Fat Stock Sale included 27 lambs. The high selling price was \$.50 with an average of 48.40 per pound. There were sixteen swine in the sale. The high selling was 44 and the average was 38.80 per pound. There were 31 steers in the sale. High selling was 41 and the average was 33.48 per pound.
- Beef cattle production in Bonner County was made up of three different phases. The first, which comprised the largest majority of the producers, was the cow-calf operation which included approximately 80% of the business in Bonner County. These were made up of groups varying from 20 head on up to several hundred head with one group having over a thousand head. They were not all in the county at one time.  
The purebred operator made up another good sized group with most of these running between 20 and 50 head of cows and of course the smallest group of those of feeding cattle. The cost of feeding cattle in the county was done by two feeders, Harp Turnbull and Ken Reed of Sagle. There were several fellows however who were feeding out their own calves, but this did not encompass many producers.
- Sixteen herds in Bonner County were on the performance testing program. Performance testing program was the Cattlemen's answer to the DHIA and dairy. In this program the calves were identified with the cows and weighed and graded at weaning time and culling was based on the results of this. The calf weights were all adjusted to a 205 day period to make them all equal. Morris Hemstrom from the University of Idaho worked in Bonner County for several days this year assisting with this program.
- Jim Wood of Gold Creek cooperated with the Extension Service in holding another freeze branding demonstration. This was the third year that Jim freeze branded his heifers with good results.
- The Panhandle Beef Sale was held again to give local stockman an opportunity to buy top quality bulls for their herds. Prices were a little lower than in the past but this seemed to be the story of all the bull sales in the Pacific Northwest this past spring.



- The Cattlemen were still sponsoring the \$600 reward to help control cattle theft in the area. \$500 of this came from the state and \$150 from the local association.
- The bait placer was maintained again this year by the association for pocket gopher control in Bonner County. The machine was originally purchased as an educational program to create interest in this new method of pocket gopher control. The success was so great that approximately 18 gopher machines were in private ownership in Bonner County and approximately two tons of bait had been used in the county through the machines in the past year.
- The horse program in Bonner County had been growing by leaps and bounds, both in 4-H and in adult work. Three horse shows were operating in our county. One put on by the Bonner County Horsemen Association, Priest River Saddle Club and the Sandpoint Saddle Club. Each club was considering adding more days to their program the coming year.
- There were relatively few sheep raised in Bonner County. Most of the ones that were here were quite small farm flocks, 50 head or less. Swine numbers were also quite limited in Bonner.
- The dairy program in Bonner County was following the way of most business, both agriculture and other wise, getting fewer in number and larger in individual dairies. Most of the dairies were numbering forty head and up milking. The largest herd milking over a hundred.
- Ed Still reported that six producers in Bonner County were on the Dairy Herd Improvement association with approximately 230 cows enrolled. This was a drop in numbers over last year.
- Ponderay Cheese Plant in Sandpoint reported they could sell more cheese than they could get the milk to make it. The cheese industry in Sandpoint seemed to have a very bright future, limited only by the production of cheese milk that was available to the plant.
- Farm Forestry in the county was broken up in two main areas one, production for lumber and the second Christmas tree production. The largest acreage in the county of course was in forest production.
- A major enterprise in Bonner County was the forage program. A heavy winter saw some severe shortages of hay in the county with a large amount having to be imported at a high cost the past winter and spring. Forages were made up basically of grass, clover and alfalfa. Clover and grass all grew quite readily in Bonner County.
- Bonner County was honored in 1968 with a local cattlemen being selected state grassman of the year. The state tour was held in the spring of 1969 at the Jim Wood farm at Gold Creek. Governor Don Samuelson was present to congratulate Jim for his winning of the State Grassman of the Year Award.  
Bonner County Grassman Contest was again held in 1969. Participants were Ray Delay, Bill Woolsey, and Ken Clyde, with Ray Delay being chosen as Bonner County winner.
- County Development took great strides in the past several years through the work of the County Planning Commission. This group, working in conjunction with the County Commissioners, was looking into possibilities and setting up plans for a way that Bonner County could reach its greatest development
- The rural areas of Bonner County took great strides forward in the past year through the help of development loans from the Farm Home Administration. New water districts operating in the County were the Oden Water District, Northside Water Users

Association, Syringa Heights Association, and under development was Kootenai-Ponderay water-sewer District.

- The United States Department of Agriculture set up a county committee to assist in county development. This group was made up of the various U.S.D.A. agencies in the county.

## 1970-1980

1970 census figures showed 151 farms in Bonner County with a total of 1,968 head of cattle. Fifty-two of these farms had over 10 head of dairy cows, or a total of 1,749 head of dairy cows between them. Fifty-eight farms were shown as selling dairy products, including bottling as well as cheese, milk and any cream sold. At the time, the county was serviced by a number of artificial insemination associations, and reports revealed that most of the larger dairymen were starting to purchase their own semen. Census figures also indicated that 377 farms had 16,071 head of stock cattle, cows, and calves. The most numerous of these were the cow-calf operations, with cows numbering from several dozen to 300 or so head. The smallest percentage of the cattle business at the time fell into the feed-lot operations. There were a number of farmers feeding on a warm-up type of operation, but very few were finishing out cattle, these being the operations of Harp Turnbull, Bob Brandy, and Gooby & Sons. With all this success in cattle, The Bonner County Cattlemen's Association started reactivating night patrols throughout rural areas of the county in the early 1970s to combat cattle stealing and spotlighting.

Interestingly enough, horses were the fastest growing industry in the county in the early 1970s with 14 horse shows or programs held in the county that summer. These included such things as the 3-day Bonner County Fair Horse show, the 4-H Horse Show, the 2-day horse show by the Sandpoint Saddle Club, a number of one day shows put on by the Bonner county horsemen's Association and the Priest River Saddle club, a show by the Panhandle Quarter Horse Association, and a one day halter show in the spring by the Sandpoint Saddle Club.



Mounted riders at the horse show during Bonner County Fair in 1960.

There was also an increase in the number of farms planting trees in Bonner County in the early 1970s. Approximately 1/3 of the trees planted by private individuals went to windbreaks and forest production, with 2/3 of the trees planted for Christmas tree production. In 1971 alone there were over 88,000 trees planted in Bonner County for Christmas tree production and approximately 10,000 to 12,000 trees were planted by individuals for private woodlots and windbreaks. This figure, of course, does not include the large amount of trees planted by the Forest Service and logging companies. In 1971 the Forest Service planted a total of 128,000 trees. Pack River Lumber Co. planted 5,000 trees in Bonner County, including spruce, douglas fir, and ponderosa pine.

Nearly half of the farms in Bonner County had developed conservation plans for their land according to the 1970 annual report released by the Soil Conservation District board of supervisors. In 1971, conservation plans in the district covered 232 farmers on 116,671 acres of farm and timber lands, according to Jim Wood of Samuels, chairman of the board.<sup>52</sup>

The dairy industry continued to thrive in the first half of the decade. Dairying was important to the state as a whole. Agriculture, including dairying, was and still is the cornerstone of Idaho's economy. About half or more of the jobs in the state are dependent upon agriculture.<sup>53</sup> The Idaho Dairy Wives association continued to push their marketing slogans, which in 1972 included: For Milk, "There's A New You Coming—Everyday"; for butter, "When It Comes to Flavor—Butter is What Margarine Would Like To Be," ; and for cheese, "Add A Smile With Cheese" and "Cheese—It Gives You Ideas."<sup>54</sup> The dairy wives also promoted Dairy Month (June of each year), a nationwide tradition that dates back to 1937. The Idaho Dairy Wives (IDW) organization served as an auxiliary arm of the Idaho Dairymen's Association in helping to promote the dairy industry in Idaho. Through various IDW events, in cooperation with schools and fairs, Idaho residents had the opportunity to become more aware of the value in consuming dairy products in their diets. In the early 1970s, the organization was over 4,000 strong. In 1978, they developed a state-wide program to promote the use of

#### **North Idaho Sports Some of Best Dairy Operations - Daily Bee 11/21/1975**

Quantity and quality are the keys to success in dairy farming in the Northern Panhandle. The Hollett's ought to know, they have run one of the largest and most productive dairy in the Panhandle at Vay near Priest River.

"I had been in the beef cattle business," he said, "but there just wasn't much of a way to make a buck in beef at that time." Hollett said that he and his wife purchased their first nine cows and slowly increased the size of the herd over the years "until this spring when I bought another 40 head from William Gornick."

That purchase put the Holletts in the big league but problems as well. Their operation had outgrown their facilities. Hollett came face to face with the growth problems that have plagued large dairy farms since the early 1970s. "I need a new barn to meet regulations," he explained. "A new centralized milk collection system, a waste products disposal system, holding and cooling tanks and a lot more." Each animal consumes about 24 pounds of expensive fresh grain each day in addition to half a bale of hay.

"We have quite a few things going for us in Bonner and Boundary Counties" Shelton continued. "Land prices are somewhat cheaper than elsewhere, the tax structure is more reasonable, grain and forage is readily available in large quantities and the environment and pollution problems that easily affect cows are not in evidence."

It is not all roses though. "Most of us are at least 100 miles from the nearest market which makes our hauling cost enormous." Bonner has about 26 dairies, also up several from last year. "It takes a mint to get started." He said, "and it takes a long time before you get it back. It also takes some real work and a lot of staying power. And don't count on any days off. The cows don't care if it is Christmas, and you want to sleep in, they want and need to be milked."

Dairy farming in the Panhandle is carving out an increasingly important niche for itself but it is still no life for slackers.

<sup>52</sup> The local district comprises all of Bonner County. About 454,785 acres are in privately owned farms, ranches and woodland. SNB 1/14/1971

<sup>53</sup> Daily Bee, 6/11/1975

<sup>54</sup> SNB 10/1972

dairy products in recipes. In 1970 several North Idaho dairy farmers received blue ribbon awards from the Spokane County Health District, including Everett H. Johnstone, Naples; H.K. Paisley, Spirit Lake; Chester E. VanStone, Hope; Horace W. Wenger, Kootenai; and Douglas Yergens, Blanchard. That same year, after serving for 15 years as manager of the Carnation Co. distributive plant in Sandpoint, Fred D. Merrill became part owner of the plant in partnership with Art Surby. Surby, also an employee of the Carnation Co., joined with Merrill in purchasing the local unit as of January 1. The new firm operated under the name Emerald Distributors, Inc.

By the end of the decade, many farmers were continuing to catch on that agriculture, especially in Idaho, was not limited to edible or food related crops. New tree farming programs were attracting many growers, and providing much needed tax incentives. From 1976 – 1979, the agricultural industry witnessed a sure growth among land owners to farm trees as well as crops as an efficient management tool for utilizing land resources. Additionally, a few area farmers were experimenting with new, and old, methods on the farm in the 1970s. At the end of the decade, John and Eleanor Fitzmorris of Edgemere turned their ranch into a beefalo business by the name of the North Wind Beefalo Ranch. The previous year, a local family turned their gardening hobby into a business. The Gissels, who lived on Lignite Road south of Sandpoint, started a hydroponics tomato garden the summer of 1978. In a full growing season, hydroponically grown tomato plants could produce 25 to 30 pounds of fruit per plant. The tomato plants generally gave growers 270 days of picking. And for some small farmers, progress meant a return to old-fashioned horse power instead of the International Harvester version.

At the beginning of the decade, agriculture product in the U.S. held a billion dollar valuation, with the price of cattle and calves up, as well as potatoes and wheat up by one-third. Yet all of the success could not hold up and by the end of the decade U.S. dairies began to decline and local newspapers were filled with headlines presenting a bleak look at the future. “Farm Cash Receipts Down, Income Lowest Since 1964” reported the Daily Bee on 10/25/1978, and “Farmer’s Share of Food Dollar May Decline to Record Level” on 1/12/1977. However, this headline, “Nationwide Ag Protest Begins: Farmers to Dump Wheat, Milk” which ran on 12/14/1977, was a true predictor of the years to come.

According to figures assembled by Dr. Floyd Lasley, research economist for the United States Department of Agriculture, the number of U.S. dairy farms dropped from 1.5 million in 1954 to 220,000. That meant that 1,280,000 dairymen went out of business in 25 years. Some of this can be attributed to the fact that in 1979, the average dairy cow produced about 2 ½ times more milk than the average dairy cow in 1954, in part due to better breeding and feeding practices. As a result, many dairy farms were pushed out of business by the small margin of profit and many were forced to enlarge their operation in order to stay in business. This nationwide trend was evident in Bonner County as well, with a 1979 count of 23 dairies in the county.<sup>55</sup>

In 1977, the boom years of mid-70s came back to earth and produced the first rumblings of the 1980s farm crisis. Grain prices returned to normal after spiking in '73, '74 and '75. The export market for grain returned to pre-boom levels. By 1977, famers were producing record crops, but

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<sup>55</sup> Daily Bee 5/9/1979 by Loyce Sheffler

prices bottomed out that year and the cost of fuel, seed, pesticides and other farm costs continued to rise. Net farm income in the U.S. dropped to \$20 billion from a high of \$33 billion. In addition, the value of farmland – the "equity" or value that farmers use to secure loans to operate each year – had dropped. Banks were no longer willing to loan to smaller farmers and many borrowers were in danger of losing their farms.

Farmers on the plains, particularly, were so desperate that they decided to strike if the government wouldn't guarantee high enough prices for their commodities to cover the cost of production and a reasonable profit. The '77 Strike effort began in Springfield, Colorado, where a group of farmers got together and developed the strike idea. They called on farmers across the country to stop buying or selling anything on December 14, 1977, unless their demands were met. Within a week, the group had a name – the American Agriculture Movement (AAM) – and the strike had gathered enough attention that the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland met with farmers in Pueblo, Colorado. He did little to placate the anger of the movement.

Strike plans proceeded. The core demand of the group was for "parity." Parity is a statistical model that looks at what it costs farmers to buy the materials they need to farm and the prices they get for their crops. The designers of the model decided that in the period between 1910-14 an average farmer's income and expenses were in rough balance. He or she made enough money in selling farm commodities to support a reasonable standard of living. The economists then factored in inflation rates and current prices for commodities in a given year to come up with parity levels. In 1977, the "parity level" was estimated at roughly 66 percent. In other words, some economists said that the buying power of farm commodities had dropped by a third.

Signs were everywhere, and many got the attention of reporters and observers. They were known as "Deere John letters," creating a pun with the name of the tractor manufacturer.

- "Crime Doesn't Pay... Neither Does Farming."
- "Corn is in the barn, but it's not worth a darn."
- "Parity Not Government Charity."
- "All we want for Christmas is 100 percent parity."
- "If you eat, you have a stake in the farmer's plight."

While the rallies created a lot of attention, the strike did not go as planned. The *Omaha World-Herald* conducted a poll in Nebraska to see what Nebraskans thought about the proposed national farm strike. A majority of Nebraskans interviewed said they approved of a farm strike. However, a similar majority of farmers interviewed said they did not plan to participate in the strike.

Nationally, U.S. Department of Agriculture statistics showed continued increased production from 1977 to 1978. In short, the strike had absolutely no effect on food and fiber production. While the strike failed in actuality, the movement did dramatize the hard times that farmers were facing – and times would get harder in the 80s.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> [http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe70s/money\\_04.html](http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe70s/money_04.html)

## 1970 Annual Report

- More than 250 Bonner county families were helped by the Expanded Nutrition Program since it was started in 1969. Expanded Nutrition was intended to assist low income families to acquire the knowledge, skill, and motivation to improve the quality and adequacy of their diets. Bonner County began as one of six counties in the State to pilot the ENP program. In 1970 there were eighteen counties and two Indian Reservations in Idaho on the ENP program.

A youth phase of the Expanded Nutrition Program was begun in Bonner County during the summer of 1970. As with the Expanded Nutrition Program, the youth phase was directed by the Federal Extension Service and conducted through the Bonner County Cooperative Extension Service. Its objective was basically the same as that of the adult program – to teach how to plan, buy, and prepare foods that will provide nutritionally adequate diet at minimum cost. The youth phase was operated through 4-H type programs.

- Crops: Forage type crops were the major cropping enterprise in Bonner County. The area was well suited for the growing of clover and grass forages. In spite of this, however, quite a large tonnage of hay was imported to the county each year from Boundary County and from the Columbia basin. Cereal grains were not an important economic factor to this county. Cereals were raised only in the rotation program and the production per acre was not as great as it was in the surrounding areas.
- Certified seed potatoes were an important factor in a few areas of the county, with the largest seed producer being Ruen Farms, Inc. of Clark Fork. Other producers are Glen Judge and Jim Judge of Sagle. There are a number of other farms raising commercial potatoes but not certified seed.
- The berry business was an important factor to a few small farms in the area. The marketing of strawberries and raspberries had not been a problem in that there were not enough raised to take care of the local market.
- Soil Testing: Area farmers were becoming more aware of the importance of the proper fertilization. This was shown by the fact of the increased number of soil tests. Forty different soil tests were brought into the office this past year. The soil was sent to the University at Moscow. Elements found to be lacking in the soil tests included the following: nitrogen, phosphorus, potash, sulphar and boran and some lime in extremely acid soils. All soils were not lacking in these elements but practically each soil tested was lacking in two or more of the list.
- Beef: In livestock production beef was of the greatest economic importance, second in dollar value were horses followed by swine and then sheep.
- The beef cattle industry in Bonner County was made up of three phases. The first and most numerous were the cow-calf operations. The second were the purebred operations and third was feeder cattle. Comparing on a nationwide average the cow-calf operation in Bonner County was rather small. They varied from approximately twenty-five head to several hundred head of cows. The purebred operations were on the small to average size. Feed lot operations were very small comparing with the huge operations in other sections of the country.

- Production testing was the weighing and grading of calves at weaning time and by means of identification through tagging or breeding relating the individuals back to the dam and sire. This information was used for the culling of the herd. Fifteen cattlemen were involved in the testing program in 1970.
- The Panhandle Registered Beef sale was held again giving local stockmen the opportunity to buy top quality bulls for their herd. Prices were up considerably; in fact we received the highest prices in 1970 that have ever been paid at a Panhandle Registered Beef sale during the nine years of its operation.
- Horses: Each year the number of horses and people interested in buying horses in the county grew. In the previous year three horse shows were put on in Bonner County by horse and saddle groups plus a four day horse show held in conjunction with the fair. Due to an outbreak of equine influenza and some suspected distemper the four day horse show had to be delayed until October.
- Swine: Swine numbers were growing quite steadily the previous five years. The growth, however, was limited by the fact that practically all the cereal grain had to be imported to Bonner County. There were a few purebred swine herds in the county.
- Sheep: In the past there were relatively few sheep raised in Bonner County. There was some interest, however, in setting up some dry lot operations. This was where the ewes would be purchased and lambs fed out all on dry feed, they would never be on grass.
- Grassman of the Year: Laverne Coon was chosen as the county grassman winner. Laverne operated a beef ranch with both a commercial cow-calf operation and a purebred Hereford herd. LaVerne had been managing his forest service grazing to get the greatest utilization by use of electric fences to control the grazing from area to area.
- Dairy: The dairy industry in Bonner County was of great economic importance to the farmers of the area. Many programs were available to help the dairy farmer. The Dairy Herd Improvement Association was an extremely important tool to help the dairymen cull and select the cows and the proper bulls.
- Artificial Insemination: The County was serviced by three associations, All-West Breeders, Curtis Candy Company and American Breeds. All=West and Curtis have technicians operating in the county. An A. I. school was presented in Sandpoint the previous fall by All-West Breeders.
- Cheese Making: The Pend Oreille Cheese plant in Sandpoint was another outlet for the dairyman's products as well as processing surplus milk from the Spokane Milk Shed.
- Milk Producers: The Spokane Milk Producers operated tank trucks and bought milk from the dairyman and in turn sold it to manufacturing and bottling companies.
- Fair: The 1970 Bonner County fair was the largest in history. The greatest increases being in swine, sheep and goats, however cattle entries were also up. Another temporary building had to be put up to house additional cattle entries and many additional pens were built outside to house the sheep and goats.
- Farm Forestry: The farm forestry enterprise in the county was divided between Christmas tree producers and those who had tree farms and woodlots of lumber production.



## 1971 Annual Report

- One of the most dramatic factors affecting the livestock industry in Bonner County in 1971 was the closure of the Sandpoint Livestock Auction Yards in late November of 1970. The closing of these yards made it necessary for producers in Bonner County, both large and small, to either move their animals to Bonners Ferry or to Coeur d' Alene or Spokane, which was the direction most of them took. This created a particular hardship on the small operator, who was not able to gather a truckload of animals to take in at any particular time to one of the markets. Plans were underway whereby the Sandpoint Auction Yards could be opened for business sometime this winter. The re-opening of the yards was a great boon, both to cattlemen and dairymen, and those people raising a few sheep or swine.
- Beef - The livestock operation in Bonner County was made up of beef, horses, swine and sheep. The most important operation was beef, followed by horses, swine, and sheep. The last census figures showed an increase in the number of cattle and farms having cattle. The 1964 census showed 258 farms with 11,923 head of cattle, and the latest census showed 221 farms reporting 13,923 head of cattle.  
The first and most numerous was the cow-calf operation with cattle numbers varying from half a dozen upwards to 300 head of cows. Next was the purebred operation with sizes again very greatly from half a dozen to 200 head.
- Beef Sale - The Panhandle Registered Beef Sale was held again with 18 bulls and eight heifers selling. The top bull brought \$800.00 and an average selling price for the bulls was \$584.00. The heifers sold for an average of \$357.00. The largest buyer at the sale was Kootenai Cattle Grazing Association.
- Dairy Cattle - The latest census showed 151 farms having dairy cattle in Bonner County with a total of 1,968 head of dairy cattle. The census showed, however, that only 58 farms sold dairy products. This included milk going into bottling as well as the cheese milk and any cream that was sold.  
The dairy industry in Bonner County was very important economically as it gave an opportunity for the person with the smaller ranches – ranches that keep 50-60 head of cows – to have a good income from their property.
- 1971 also saw a Health code drawn up by the Panhandle Health District in Idaho which covered the buildings and location of buildings of many farms in Bonner County. Anyone undertaking farming of livestock was encouraged to take a close look at what problems were involved in preventing pollution from streams, or air in some locations, from this operation.
- Weed Control - The Bonner County Weed Control unit operated over the summer with Robert Moore as the operator. Most of the work was done on highway right-of-ways with a little being done on county roads before the budget was expended. It was, however, a rather difficult year for weed control when practically all the month of June was either rainy or had quite strong winds blowing.
- Tree Planting - There were an increased number of farms that were planting trees each year in Bonner County. Approximately half of these were for forest production and the other half for Christmas trees. A total of 50,000 trees were planted to these two activities during the past year. The trees were obtained from both private nurseries and through

Clark-McNary Nursery at the University of Idaho. Along with this, the Forest Service and the State Forestry also planted trees.

According to research data from the University of Idaho, a person on a good improved, cultivated Christmas tree plantation could expect to make approximately \$190 to \$200 per acre per year from the trees, if they were under good management practices.

- Forage type crops remained the main enterprise in Bonner County. It was well suited for the growing of clover and grass forages. In spite of this however, quite a large tonnage of hay was imported each year from both Boundary County and the Columbia Basin.
- 1971 Bonner County Fair - A great deal of extension personnel time was taken up in moving the Bonner County fair from the old fairgrounds to the new fairgrounds and in readying the buildings and area to hold the 1971 Bonner County Fair. According to Forest Service count, over 16,000 people attended the 1971 Bonner County Fair.

### 1972 Annual Report

This report covers a brief overview of the existing conditions in Bonner County. The report was prepared by the County Extension Office with the cooperation of:

Bonner County Commissioners  
Bonner County Auditor  
Bonner County Assessor  
U.S. Forest Service (Kaniksu National Forest)  
United States Post Office  
Panhandle Health District  
Bonner County School District  
Ministerial Association  
Bonner County Board of Realtors  
Northern Lights, Inc.  
Pacific Power and Light Company General Telephone Company  
Idaho Department of Public Lands  
Bonner County Planning and Zoning Commission  
Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce.  
Joanne Mill, Extension Home Economist  
Raynold D. Davis, Extension Agricultural Agent  
Sandi Dahl, Office Secretary

- The scenic and recreation industry was the newest and fastest growing in the county. With the advent of Schweitzer Ski Basin and the development of snowmobiles, winter sports grew at a fantastic rate over the previous ten years. Summer recreation had always been plentiful in the form of boating, swimming, water skiing, and fishing. Hunting was popular in the fall. Transportation facilities were quite good in the county, with one transcontinental railroad and one international railroad plus a major north/south highway running through the center of the county. Most industrial development was along the forest or forest products line.

- Crops - There were 166,000 acres of agricultural land in the county, of which 46,754 were crop land. This made up approximately 15% of the total land area in the county. In the previous 10 years, Bonner County had lost over 60,000 acres to developments and subdivisions.

Bonner County is a forage crop producing area. There were less than 500 acres of wheat grown in the entire county each year. Forage crops were made up of a mixture of clover, grass, and alfalfa. The county was a large feed importing area with most of the feed coming from Boundary County and the Columbia Basin.

- Livestock - The last census showed 502 farms with livestock broken down as follows:

Beef cattle	16,071
Dairy Cattle	1,958
Hogs	2,996
Sheep	506
Chickens	5,869

The average size of the farm in the county was 330 acres.

- Other Factors - The size of the farms in the future will probably get smaller due to the fact some of the development companies were breaking up the larger farms and selling 20 and 40 tracks of land. Old farm homes that had not been used for years were being renovated and used by families coming from urban areas in the East and from California.
- The People - The total population of Bonner County was 15,560 in a total land area of 17,420 square miles. Of this figure males numbered 7,719 and females 7,084. Age of the population in Bonner County stood at 34% under 18; 33% median age; and 13% at 65 and other. Age-wise, the population was 3,010 male and 3,016 female under 21; and 4,709 male and 4,825 female over 21.
  - Bonner County people had a choice of over 22 church affiliations. Included in this number were churches of Lutheran, Episcopal, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Church of God, Mennonite, United Methodist, Presbyterian, Catholic, Seven Day Adventist, Calvary Baptist, Conservative Baptist, Assembly of God, Christian Science, Nazarene, Jehovah Witness, Congregational, Lighthouse Pentecostal, First Christian, Reorganized Church of Latter Day Saints, First Church of Christ, and many community type churches.
  - There were a total of 5,685 males and 5,861 females over 14 years of age in Bonner County. Of these, 1,341 males and 1,032 females who were single; 3,954 males and 3,987 females who were married; 169 widowed men and 648 widowed women; 215 divorced men and 194 divorced women. There were 53 separated men and 54 separated women.
  - Birth rate for the county, as of December, 1972, was 229. That was up from the 1971 birth rate of 205. Death rate as of December, 1972, was 119, which was down from the 1971 rate of 121.
  - Average educational level of adults over 21 was high school. Five percent of children of high school age were not attending school.
- The Family - The average family in Bonner County consisted of 3.5 members. It was estimated that 60% of the population was affiliated with some church. However, of these

only about 30% regularly attended services. About 20% of the families belonged to clubs and about 15% were involved with lodges.

- Home and Family Living - Around 60% of the homes in Bonner County were owned and the remaining 40% rented or leased. Average number of rooms per house ranged from 4 ½ to 5 ½. Average number of rooms per person ran about 1.75.
- Weed Control - The new Idaho Weed Law shifted the responsibility for maintaining and operating a county weed control unit to the Board of County Commissioners. They were charged with the responsibility of controlling all noxious weeds within the county, whether it was on private land or on public land. The Commissioners could, if they saw fit, come on your land if you weren't controlling your weeds, control them for you, and add the cost to your tax notices.

### 1973 Annual Report

- Hay and Feed Shortage - Bonner County was faced with a severe hay and feed shortage the previous year. The process responsible for this shortage started the previous December when the county had a severe freeze with no snow cover, followed by rain and another severe freeze, which killed out approximately 90% of the alfalfa and clover in the county. The freeze also killed out much of the orchard grass at the same time as it did the alfalfa. The severity of the problem increased with the cold spring, followed by the driest summer on record.  
According to a county survey taken by the Extension Office and the ASCS Office, county-wide there was a 33% hay crop. The pastures followed approximately the same percentage in the shortage. With this information on hand, the Extension Office, in cooperation with the ASCS office and County ASCS Committee, started in June to get the area declared a disaster area for livestock feed. On August 9, the area was finally declared such by the State ASCS Committee.
- Having the area declared a disaster area opened the county up to 3 possible assistance programs:
  - A 30% reduction in railroad freight rates from the mid-west, which really didn't mean much because even with the reduction, freight would still have run \$42.60 per ton.
  - Commodity Credit oats became available to Bonner County livestock producers. This program made commodity credit oats available at \$28.00 per ton to those people suffering a feed shortage and who would have had to borrow money to purchase livestock feed.
  - The third program which was included for livestock producers was a truck freight reduction or assistance program which could have saved the farmers up to \$20 per ton freight on hay. This program, however, was not passed on from the State ASCS Committee to the President, and therefore, we did not become eligible for it.
- Hay was shipped into Bonner County from many outside areas during the summer, with prices ranging all the way from \$65 to \$85 per ton. Hay came from as far away as Peace River area in Alberta to the north and Utah and Oregon to the south; as well as many areas in Idaho and Columbia Basin.

Over 400 ton was brought into the county from the Mud Lake area by Idaho Falls. Another 350 tons from the area just north of Gooding was also shipped in. Smaller amounts came from the Preston area in southern Idaho and Utah. A small amount of hay was delivered from North Dakota. Over 100 ton was brought into the county through the Extension Office and divided up at the county fairgrounds to people who wanted 1 or 2 ton to feed a horse or cow or two for the winter.

- Forage Crops - Production of forage crops was still the leading crop enterprise in the county. In the coming year, however, many fields would have to be replanted to grass and legume and emergency forage crops such as oats and peas. In order to do this, area producers would need legume and grass seed in larger amounts than ever needed before. Along with the critical shortage of these commodities, area farmers faced many more problems.
- Fertilizer was also a problem. Statistics showed there was not more than 75-80 percent of the fertilizers available that was available last year throughout the nation.
- Soil Testing - As usual, the soil test results showed an extreme shortage of nitrogen. About 75% showed a shortage of phosphorus and probably 20% showed a shortage of pot ash. Most of the pot ash shortages appeared on low, natural meadow type land. Other elements found to be deficient included sulphur and boron.
- Small Fruits and Hops - The small fruit industry in Bonner County, particularly in berries, received a shot in the arm. The RC&D project was working to try to get a berry processing plant in Bonner County. At least one local businessman had shown some interest in putting in a quick freeze processing plant. Both strawberries and raspberries grow quite well in the county, and tests for sugar content were found to be satisfactory for quick freezing.

However, most of the soils, before planting to berries, should be fertilized very heavily with either loads of manure or green manure crops. These would be worked into the soil before planting in order to receive commercial type production.

Blueberries also were doing quite well in Bonner County at the Experiment Station, and might possibly be another crop to look for.

Hops were planted at both the Experiment Station and the Glen Judge farm at Dufort. So far, not enough material was available to see if they can have a commercial value for the county.

- Weed Control - The Weed Control program in the county was shifted upon recommendation of the Extension Crops Advisory Committee to try to develop a more concentrated spray program and work on certain weeds in specific areas rather than to try to cover the whole county.
- Dairy - The dairy industry in Bonner County suffered a severe setback in their growth rate this year with the feed shortage. Several dairymen sold out completely rather than buy the extremely high priced hay and feed grains. The county was down to about 30 Grade A dairies. Twenty years prior, they numbered about 250.
- Livestock - The livestock operation in Bonner County was made up of beef, horses, swine, and sheep –in that order of importance. 1973 had seen the highest prices paid per pound of beef cattle in history. However, due to the shortage and increased cost of feed, the margin of profit was not as large as might be expected.
- Cow-calf operations made up the largest percentage in the cattle numbers in the county, with herds varying from a dozen to 300 or more head. This year, however, many

producers were selling down their cattle numbers to try to meet their existing feed supply. Some are selling as many as 40-50 percent of their herds. A number of producers had kept their calves over until spring on a warm-up type operation. But most were forced to sell their calves in the fall because of the feed shortage.

- Sheep - Sheep production in Bonner County was limited to a few herds of 40-50 and one of a couple hundred. But most had 5-10 head of ewes. Due to the limited numbers, there were no marketing centers for either wool or lamb in this area.
- Swine - Swine numbers were shrinking due to the high feed costs and the low profit per animal unit in raising them.
- There was one producer that was feeding out approximately 700 weaner pigs per year and a few producers that had up to 5 sows per operation. There were no swine confinement operations in the county, though some were being contemplated.
- Tree Planting – There was a dramatic increase this year in the number of farmers planting trees in Bonner County. Approximately one-half of the trees planted on private lands were for forest products and wind breaks and the other half planted for Christmas tree production.

There were over 150,000 trees planted in Bonner County. The largest individual planter was Pack River Lumber Company. Species planted included Douglas fir, Ponderosa pine, some spruce, and Scotch pine. Scotch pine still made up the largest percentage of trees planted for Christmas tree production due to the hardiness and ease with which they could be cultured. There were, however, beginning to be more and more white fir planted, but these had to be on selected sites.

- Grassman of the Year - Even though the Grassman of the Year Contest was discontinued on the State level this year, Bonner County carried on the program with Ray Delay as chairman. Bill Woolsey, Northside, was selected as this year's county winner. Runners up included Kenneth Clyde and Mel Spraker.

### 1974 Annual Report

- Cost price Squeeze: Agriculture in Bonner County was predominately forage crop production. The marketing of the product was either through milk and milk products sold or meat from livestock.
- Due to the high cost of concentrate type feeds and the low prices received for milk and meat, the agricultural community of Bonner County was facing severe hardships.
- Swine: Swine numbers declined in the county again because of the high grain costs and the low prices offered for pork. There were, however, several new producers who went into the swine business and were building some-confinement type housing.
- Sheep: sheep production in Bonner County stayed about the same, with very little growth except to 4-H projects. Most of the herds in the county were less than 100 head, with one producer having a couple hundred. There were no marketing centers for either wool or lambs in the Sandpoint area.
- Certified Seed Production: Seed production in Bonner County was limited to potatoes, with Ruen Farms at Clark Fork being the largest producer. The Ruen Farms were also the oldest foundation raising certified seed stock in the state of Idaho. Other seed potato producers were Glen and Jim Judge in the Dufort area. These producers, as well as a

number of others, raised commercial potatoes. There was also a very limited production of a few cereal grains on a certified basis in the county.

- **Weed Control:** Weed control in Bonner County ran up against the same problem most everyone else in the nation had. The inflated costs of material, equipment, and increased labor costs brought the program to a virtual stand-still in past couple of years.
- **Small Fruits:** The small fruit industry, particularly berries, offered a real opportunity for a good income from small acreages. Both strawberries and raspberries did quite well in the county. Blue berries had shown promise in the last few years at the Experiment Station.
- **Soil Testing:** The number of soil tests increased again. The \$3.00 for the cost of the soil test was probably one of the best investments a farmer could make. This was especially true due to the high cost of fertilizers. On the average, fertilizer costs were double in 1974 of what they were in 1973.

The average Bonner County soil was low in organic matter, low in phosphorus, and short of both sulphur and boron. Many of the low, natural meadows and peat type lands were low in pot ash.

- **Grassman of the Year** - Even though the State did not hold the Grassman contest, Bonner County continued with the program again. Floyd Irish, Dufort, was selected as Bonner County Grassman of the year.
- **Rabbits:** There was a successful large scale rabbit enterprise in Bonner County this year. Whites Wabbit Wanch, Kootenai, had a fairly large confinement type rabbit producing plant, along with a newly constructed rabbit processing plant that met all government regulations. So far, they had not been able to fill the market they had generated for rabbit producers. They wanted to have at least another 250 per week to slaughter to fill the present demand.

This business was opening up a whole new field for people on small acreages to earn a good income. Due to the newly opened rabbit processing plant, the county could have a good local market. With proper management, a good income could be made from rabbits on areas as small as 2-5 acres. About 100 seemed to be the minimum amount for a profitable enterprise.

- **Tree Planting:** A large number of trees were planted in the county again on private lands. About 54,000 were purchased through the University and about 70,000 purchased from private nurseries.
- **Dairy:** The dairy industry in Bonner County had still not completely recovered from the severe set-back of 1973, due to winter kill and drought. Many dairymen had extremely high winter feed bills to pay off this year. Many existing dairymen were also doing very heavy culling on their herds.
- **Beef:** Livestock production in Bonner County was centered on beef and beef production. Cow-calf operations made up the largest share of the cattle numbers in the county. On the average, about 60% of the producers sold their calves at weaning time. About 40% keep the calves through spring on a warm-up program. However, due to the depressed beef market, a much larger percentage of producers were keeping their calves over and wintering them with the hope of good gains and possibly a better spring market.
- **Bonner County** was the second most important in the livestock area. However, horse numbers were depleted to some extent during the past year, due to the high cost of feed – both hay and grain. Most people culled out their low quality horses.

- Fair: The Bonner county grounds improvement program received a real boost this year with a grant of matching money from the Economic Development Administration. The total improvement project grant came to \$178,000. A total of \$35,600 was the Bonner county share, with \$142,400 from the EDA.
  - Improvements: 1) Indoor arena finished seating along one side of the building 2) Horse barn a 20 box stall stallion barn with a walkway through the center 3) Food Service building a new food service building was built near the outdoor arena for use during horse shows and rodeos. The building also has 4) Lighting lights were installed around the outdoor arena. Lights were also installed in the front parking lot. 5) Main exhibit building six large natural gas furnaces were installed, making it practical for this building to be used year around. 6) Paving the road leading to the barns and arena was built up with 6 inches of gravel and paved to a width of 24 feet, the area around the cattle barn and food service building was also built up with crushed rock to a depth of 4-6 inches.
  - Other improvements from county funds not connected with the grant included the building of a permanent loading ramp. Area landscaping was also worked on again this year and fencing was necessary due to vandalism.
- Expanded Nutrition Program was dropped from Bonner County early this spring. Reasons for dropping the program were given as needs weren't large enough to cover the cost of maintain the materials and personnel. The State Office felt this money could be put to better use in an area of greater need.

### 1975 Annual Report

- 4-H Club numbers: 250 boys, 554 girls, 34 clubs, 251 leaders, and 1,677 projects.
- Fair:
  - Building Program: The Bonner County fairgrounds received a grant again this year through the E.D.A. on the Title I program. The grant was for \$147,000 with the county share being \$29,000 and the government \$117,000.
  - The building at the fairgrounds under this program included a covered grandstand; ties stall horse barn; wash racks' and improvements in the water system. Not completed due to weather conditions.
  - Another addition was a counter and sinks in the main exhibit building for use of flower arranging and display sections of the fair.
- Extension Agriculture: Agriculture in Bonner County was based on forage production with very little grain being grown in the county. The high feed costs and extreme low prices for beef and dairy had a depressing effect in agriculture in the past year.
- Sheep: Sheep production had been on a rather limited basis in the county for the past number of years with most of the herds being less than 100 head.
- Swine: The greatest boost to the swine enterprise in Bonner County was the recently organized Panhandle Swine Growers Organization, representing Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai and Benewah counties. There was one swine confinement operation in existence and another being planned. There was one swine fattening operation in the county and several producers raising hogs.



- **Bees:** The bee industry in Bonner County received a big boost from the appointment by the State Department of Agriculture of a Bee Inspector in the area. Gus Metz, Bee Inspector, inspected over 50 owners' colonies of bees this summer. A very few were found to be contaminated with foul brood.
- **Rabbits:** Commercial rabbit production became an important factor in the economy of small land owners in Bonner County. White's Wabbitt Wanch, Kootenai, had proven that the production of rabbits on a business basis was a paying enterprise.
- **Soil Testing:** With the high cost of fertilizers in the previous year, soil testing had become extremely important to agriculture.
- **Weed control:** The weed control program in Bonner County was seeing vast change. By law, property owners, which included railroads, highways, cities, Forest Service, Department of Lands, Fish and Game Department and Corps of engineers, were responsible for controlling noxious weeds growing on their property. Weeds considered noxious in Bonner County were Tansy, Knapweed, Dalmation toadflax, Canadian Thistle, and Skeleton weed.
- **Certified Seed:** Certified seed production in Bonner County was limited mainly to potatoes; very little cereals, and a very small amount of grass seed.
- **Small Fruits:** The small fruit industry, particularly strawberries, offered a good cash crop for small acreages where supplemental income was needed. Both strawberries and raspberries did quite well in the county. Blueberries had shown some promise in the test plots at the Research and Extension Center in Sandpoint during recent years. The raising of grapes, however, was rather impractical in Bonner County and there had been little success in this venture.
- **Grassman of the Year:** Art Burnett, a cattleman in the Oden area, was chosen as the 1975 Grassman. Art, who raised registered Angus cattle, won the contest with his excellent forage production. Art's forage was mainly grass, with some clover and a small amount of alfalfa.
- **Tree farming:** Tree production, both for Christmas trees and lumber, was an important economic industry for Bonner County. Over 17,000 trees were purchased from the University of Idaho for this purpose in 1975. Trees were also purchased from private sources and planted.  
Tree farming for lumber production had become an important factor to the lumber industry. Lumber prices and the declining amount of timber available from federal property were the reasons.
- **Beef:** Livestock production in Bonner County was basically cow-calf operations and small purebred herds. Over 70% of the operators held their calves over in a warm-up feeding operation and sold them late in the winter or early spring.
- **Cattlemen in the county** had a difficult year due to the extremely low prices for weaning calves, feeder cattle, and cull cows. This coupled with the extremely high operating costs of both feed and equipment placed a severe stress on most of the cattle operations in the county. Some of the producers of good quality beef cattle received as little as \$.18 for some of their calves. Calves selling for this price would not even pay for the feed bill for the winter months for a cow. A fair number of producers culled quite heavily in cow numbers, in spite of low prices received for their animals.
- **Dairy:** The dairymen in Bonner County had seen improved pricing in the latter half of 1975. The industry, in general, however, had still been rather depressing with high costs

of feeds, both hay and concentrates (the concentrate price to dairymen had only dropped to somewhere between \$4 - \$6 per ton.). In spite of the market situation, there were three new dairymen in Bonner County in the past year. Some older dairymen reduced cow numbers, so the total number of producing dairy animals had changed very little during the past year.

- Horses: The horse industry in Bonner County was surpassed only by beef and dairy in numbers. The horses, in general, were strictly for recreation and many were entered in the various horse shows which were held in the county.

### 1976 Annual Report

- Fair: The 1976 fair theme "Gold Years in Bonner County," more than adequately fit, as this was the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday of the first county fair held in Bonner County.
  - Building Program: Construction was completed on the Bonner County Fairgrounds building project with E.D.A. A pump house was constructed and a 100 horse power diesel pump was installed, along with one new fire hydrant to give better fire protection at the fairgrounds.
  - Also completed this year was leveling of the roadway and grass seeding for the camping area.
  - Some additional trees were also planted to screen off the sewage lagoon area from the camping area.
- Agriculture: Bonner County agriculture had a forage production base with two main enterprises of beef and dairy cattle. However, due to the depressed markets and high feed costs, both of these enterprises were severely depressed in the past year.
- Tree Farming: Tree farming, both Christmas trees and timber growing, were important industries to agriculture in the county. It was possible, with good cultural practices, to take in \$700 per acre per year raising Christmas trees in Bonner County. This made it one of the highest cash income crops that could be grown in the county. The only crop that could be higher would possibly be small fruits, such as berries. Timber growing in the county was also becoming a cash agricultural crop of increasing importance.
- Small Fruits: The small fruit industry, particularly strawberries, offered a good cash crop for small acreages where supplemental income was needed. Both strawberries and raspberries did quite well. Blue berries had shown some promise. Grapes, however, were rather impractical.
- Swine: There was one swine feeding operation owned by Leonard Brackenbush of Samuels; and two semi-confinement systems: Bob Ramko, Samuels and Frank Travers, Kootenai. There were a number of other operators raising weaner pigs.
- Sheep: Sheep production was still on a somewhat limited basis.
- Rabbits: Jerry White of Whites Wabbitt Wanch, had the most successful venture in rabbits in the county.
- Weed Control: The Weed Control Program in Bonner County was helped out greatly by the purchase of two slide-in units that the county road crews were using for approximately 1 month. One was used in Priest River and the other in the Sagle area. These units slide in the back of a pickup and could be readily moved from one pickup to another. Weeds considered noxious are Tansy, Knapweed, Dalmation, Toadflax,

Canadian thistle, and Skelton weed. A weed farmers were encouraged to be on the lookout for was Yellow Star Thistle, which had been moving into the county from some Washington counties.

- Dairy: The cow numbers dropped approximately 600 from the 1969 census.
- Beef: Most producers in the county had to cut their herd numbers by selling off part of the cows to pay production costs.
- Horses: The horse industry in Bonner County had become increasingly important in the last several years due to the many recreational uses of horses in an area such as ours. With this in mind, many shows and clinics were held throughout the year to better acquaint owners with the care and training of horses.
- 4-H summary: 279 boys, 529 girls, 38 clubs, 262 leaders, 2,283 projects.

### 1977 Annual Report

- Agriculture: Agriculture in Bonner County was based for the most part on forage production, which was in turn used to support the beef and dairy cattle industries. Due to the drought in the winter and spring of 1977, some hay yields produced as low as 30% of normal production. However, many of the ranchers that had irrigation available had a better than normal crop.
- Swine: There was one swine feeding operation and two semi-confinement systems. There were number of other operators raising weaner pigs.
- Sheep: Sheep production was on a limited basis.
- Rabbits: White's Wabbit Wanch had turned into a very successful rabbit operation. The business not only raised rabbits to sell for research purposes, but also raised fryer rabbits. The rabbit processing facility constructed by the business hired four persons beside the family to operate it.
- Certified Seed production: Production of certified seed in Bonner County was limited to three locations: The Poitier farms in Blancher that raised cereal seed; the Ruen Farms and Glen Judge farm both raised certified potatoes.
- Dairy: The dairy industry in Bonner County was becoming more important to the agricultural income of the county each year. In spite of the fact that cow numbers had dropped approximately 600 in the last seven years, total milk production in the county had changed very little and was, in fact, up somewhat.
- Beef: Beef operations were, for the most part, cow-calf operations. There was however, one feed lot operating where animals were purchased, fed, and sold as finished cattle on the rail. A half dozen or so cattlemen were feeding out their own animals and selling them. Approximately 70% of the producers in the county held their calf crop through the winter. County cattlemen for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row had to put up with high feed costs and high costs of production and extremely low calf prices. This was an extreme hardship on many producers and the costs of production were higher per pound than what market prices were for the animals.
- 4-H summary: 305 boys, 471 girls, 34 clubs, 249 Leaders, 1993 projects.

## 1978 Annual Report

- The majority of agriculture in Bonner was tied up in forage production for a beef and dairy cattle. This year had shown a complete turnaround from a year ago when hay was in short supply. 1978 showed a surplus of hay and hay prices being the lowest since 1972. In many instances, the hay prices were 50% less of what they were in 1977.
- An active association covering the four northern Idaho counties, the Panhandle Swine Growers Association, continued to have many educational programs covering marketing, diseases, and management.
- There was one rather large swine feeding operation owned by Leonard Brackenbush, Samuels, and two semi-confinement operations: Bob Ranco, Samuels and Frank Travers, Kootenai. Other swine growers were Pat Graves, Laclede and Dwain Valez, Bear Paw area. There were a number of other operations raising smaller numbers of swine.
- Sheep numbers were still rather limited in the county. However, with increased prices for lambs, wool, and ewes, there was a growing interest in the program. There were only four or five producers raising 100 head or more.
- White's Wabbit Wanch continued its successful rabbit raising and processing operations. The business not only raised rabbits to sell for research purposes, but also raised fryer rabbits.
- Bonner County had the largest number of tree farmers in any county in the state of Idaho, according to figures put out by the State Department of Public Lands. Tree farming, both Christmas trees and trees for lumber, was an important industry to agriculture in the county.
- As well as nursery stock, there was a considerable interest in berries – strawberries, raspberries, and blueberries. All of these seemed to do rather well. A special early grape had been tried in several locations in Sandpoint this past year.
- The production of certified seed, both for cereals and potatoes, was carried out quite successfully by a few farmers in the county. The Poirier Ranch, Blanchard, produced certified cereal seed. Certified potatoes were raised by the Ruen Farm, Clark Fork; and Glen Judge, Dufort.
- Soil testing continued.
- Weed control on county roads continued. Weeds considered noxious were Tansy, knapweed, Canadian Thistle; Dalmation Toadflax, and Skelton weed. Test plots were set up on the Bob Wood property in the Selle area and on State and county land just opposite the Dufort Road in the Sagle area. The plots that were set out in 1978 showed Tordon 2-12 to be the most effective in controlling Tansy and Skelton weed.
- The dairy industry in the county was just holding its own in numbers, with approximately 26 herds. One new dairy started in the Blanchard area this past summer and one went out of business in the Southside area. The dairymen should face a good year with milk prices up slightly and hay costs have about been holding their own.
- Artificial insemination, with its proven sires, had become an excellent management tool for the dairyman with today's high costs and low prices. The majority of the producers in the county had taken the a.i. course and did their own insemination. Many were obtaining their semen from three or four different sources. For the most part, All West, American Breeders, and Curtis were the main suppliers.

- The increase in beef prices made it possible for beef raising to become a profitable business again. This, coupled with the low hay prices in 1978, caused even more people to feed out their calves and purchase additional animals to use up their surplus hay.
- Performance testing program was still one of the most important tools the beef producer could use to improve their efficiency and income. There were ten producers on the program in the county.
- The second annual Idaho State International Draft Horse Show was held at the Bonner County Fairgrounds.
- 4-H summary
  - 1629 projects
  - 187 leaders
  - 36 clubs
  - 437 girls
  - 220 boys

### 1979 Annual Report

- The beef industry was a large and important segment of Bonner County agriculture. Beef cattle fit in well with the grass and clover hay produced in the area, and did an excellent job of utilizing the lush growth of pasture and partially cleared ground in the county, The beef operations in the county were limited, for the most part, to cow-calf programs. There were several small feedlot operations, but most of these were feeding out their own animals. Most producers in the county kept their calves over the winter and sold in the spring.  
The increase in beef prices had once again made beef operations a profitable venture and several new small producers were getting into the business. However, the higher hay and feed prices, along with slightly lower cattle prices, narrowed the profit margin some over the last year's record levels.
- Programs benefiting cattlemen include
  - Performance Testing: This program of weighing and grading calves at weaning time and being able to trace the calf back to the dam and the sire was one of the most important and useful management tools available to the producer. The Cattlemen's Association, working with the extension service, purchased a set of portable scales that were inspected yearly. The scales were used to weigh calves on the farm. While a number of producers purchase their own scales on the farm, more than 50% were still using the portable scale. Twelve producers were on the program in 1979
- Schools for Producers: Each year a number of educational programs were presented to the producers. Programs for 1979 included: Diseases of beef cattle, Partnerships; Corporations and estate planning; Weed control; Forage programs and fertilizers. Programs scheduled for 1980 are: E\Feb. 12- Tax Management for Farmers; Feb. 20. – Cutting Up a Beef Animal.
- Beef Family of the Year: Bob and Leora Bandy and Louise Trost were named the 1979 Beef Family of the year. They operated a beef cattle ranch in the Edgemere area, running several hundred cows and calves.

- Agriculture in Bonner County was based, to a great extent on the production of forage crops for beef and dairy cattle. Very little cereal grain was grown. There were less than 500 acres of wheat in the entire county, and corresponding small areas of barley and oats. There were not enough heat units in the growing season to be able to produce field corn on an economical basis in the county. Yields of the cereal grain were not high enough to be able to compete with surrounding producing areas. Crops were, in general, poorer in 1979 than average due to the drought in the county and the irrigated crops fared better than normal.
- The majority of the crop land in the county was taken up with forage production. The major forage crops were grass, timothy, brome and orchard, grown in conjunction with clover or, in a few instances alfalfa. Very little grain was grown and most of that was used locally for livestock feed. Oats made up the largest acreage, followed by barley and wheat. Due to the acid nature of the soil and poor drainage characteristics of the soil, alfalfa did poorly in most areas of the county. In many areas, it was necessary to lime heavily, up to two tons per acre, to establish a satisfactory stand. However, clover and grasses grew very well and were almost native to this area.
- The limited acreage farm was dealt a severe blow during the year by the closing of the Sandpoint Branch Research and Extension Center. This station was closed because of financial problems in the State the past year for the University of Idaho. The organization of the Idaho Nurserymen's Association in north Idaho gave a boost to horticulture as an industry.
- The production of certified seed, including cereals, potatoes and grass seed, was successful in Bonner County. Potatoes were grown by Ruen Farms of Clark Fork and Glen Judge of Dufort. Cereals and grass seed were grown by the Poirer Ranch at Blanchard. Clover seed also had been grown successfully in Bonner County. Various grasses were grown for seed from time to time.
- Tree farming was a natural in Bonner County, with the native forests and forestry type soils. The county had the largest number of tree farmers of any county in the State according to figures released by the State Department of Public Lands. Both tree farming for lumber production and for Christmas trees was important in the county. Christmas tree plantations varied in size from only a few acres to 300 acres. Marketing of the trees was helped by the Idaho Christmas Trees Growers Association of which Ann Tomlinson Edgemere was state vice-president. The Bonner County Woodland Council was made up of Christmas tree growers, mill operators, woodland owners, loggers, and agency personnel from the Extension Service, Soil Conservation Service, Department of Public Lands, and Forest Service. The Council worked with the Cooperative Extension Service to carry out many education and promotional programs throughout the year. Programs for 1979 included Tree Farmer of the Year selection and tour, scaling school; helicopter logging tour; sessions on selecting, cutting, and marketing poles; Christmas tree short course; and Wood energy fair. Programs planned for 1980 included: March 5 – Chain saw safety; April – Registration of woodland following logging; July 26 – Wood energy fair; September – Farm woodland tour; November – Insects and diseases.

- The Yancy Brothers of the Bottle Bay area were selected as 1979 Tree Farmers of the Year. Their land was managed by Cliff Wylie, consultant forester, in Sandpoint.
- Ann Tomlinson, Christmas tree plantation owner at Edgemere, was chosen as the Outstanding Agriculture Enterprise in Bonner County for 1979.
- Dan Robinson, Sagle, was the county weed supervisor. One truck was operated plus two extra units, one tractor mounted trailer, and a three-point hitch for a tractor. Weeds considered noxious and a serious problem in the county were tansy, knapweed, Canada thistle, dalmation toadflax and skelton weed. Other nuisance weeds were daisy, bull thistle, mullen, and quack grass.
- The third Annual Idaho State International Draft Horse Show was held at the Bonner County Fairgrounds. The sale that was held in conjunction with the show saw more than 150 horses sold, as well as many items of tack and equipment. Interest in horses of all kinds continued to grow. In the last 20 years, there had been a dramatic improvement in the quality of horses in Bonner County. This had been brought about to a large extent by the many horse activities in the county.
- 4-H summary - In Bonner County, there were 266 boys and 555 girls for a total of 821. There were 242 adult leaders involved with the 4-H program. There were 32 clubs across the county, completing 1,928 projects. A total of 67 different projects were available.
- Sheep numbers were still rather limited in Bonner County, although increased prices for lands, wood, and ewes stimulated a growing interest in sheep production. Also, the growing number of small farms was adding to the sheep numbers. Sheep were excellent at utilizing forage and helped keep down the growth of shrubs and weed much better than other forage eating animals.  
Most of the wool produced in the county was marketed through the Montana Wool Pool in Ronan, Montana where much better prices were received than locally. The Bonner County Sheep Producers, a newly organized group, cooperated with the extension office in producing many educational programs to benefit the producers in the county. Programs included: Housing and how to convert existing buildings to sheep; diseases; handling the ewe at lambing and helping deliver the lamb, carcass grading and sheep marketing; tour of surrounding counties' sheep operation.
- The swine industry was growing with the addition of many new small farms. Most operations were on a small semi-confinement basis, with less than 30 sows. The Panhandle Pork Producers was an active group covering the four northern Idaho counties and had many educational programs in cooperation with the extension service. Programs covered such areas as marketing, diseases and management. One of the outstanding service programs of this organization in 1979 was the Swine Feeder Sale for both 4-H and FFA. Each of the members of the association brought animals to Sandpoint for the weigh in and sale. Weaner pigs were sold to the members at a fair market price and every member in the three counties who wanted animals was able to purchase them. In the past, it had been very difficult, if not impossible, for youth to purchase animals for their projects. The program also included a presentation on fitting and showing, feeding, housing, breeding, etc.
- Because very few cereal grains were grown in the county virtually all the feed had to be imported.
- The dairy industry in the county was just about holding its own in numbers with approximately 24 herds. Two new milking barns and housing set-ups were opening in

Bonner County at the Vern Hollet dairy at Vay and the Stephen Landrus dairy in Blanchard.

The dairymen faced a good year with milk prices up. However, feed costs were up as well. Both hay and grain were considerably more expensive. Most of the dairy quality hay was imported from the Columbia Basin or Bonners Ferry areas.

- Mr. Ray Ruggies of Newport replaced Ed Still of Priest River as tester for the Bonner County program. There were seven herds on test in the county, plus one herd with the Spokane County unit.
- Artificial insemination, with its proven sires, had become an excellent management tool for the dairymen with the high costs and low prices.  
The majority of the producers in the county had taken the artificial insemination course and did their own insemination. Many were obtaining their semen from three or four different sources. For the most part All West, American Breeders, and Curtis were the main suppliers.
- The Jim Saunders family was chosen as the Dairy Family of the Year for 1979. The family operated a dairy in the Blanchard area, milking 150 and 175 cows. Jim was also active in other agricultural areas. He was chairman of the State Brand Board, and director in the Washington DHIA Board. Board Mr. and Mrs. Ken Shreffler supplied the Dairy Family of the Year sign.



# 1980-1989

The boom of the 70s became the bust of the 80s due to a rise in surplus production, land prices rising, too many farmers were carrying too much debt, problems in the economy which forced interest rates to historic highs, and a new administration tried to cut back on government support. As a result, marginal farmers were forced off their land. Many did not go quietly as farm protest movements heated up during the 80s. The number of farmers shrank, and the average farm got bigger.

The factors that produced the bust were powerful and varied:

- Many farmers took Earl Butz seriously when he told them to "get big or get out." They increased production so much that there were record harvests between 1974 and '79. Much of that increase in production was financed with borrowed money. In 1962, total farm debt was \$60 billion; by 1983, farm debt had skyrocketed to \$216 billion.
- Inflation was running rampant through the general U.S. economy in the 70s. In 1979, the Federal Reserve Board tried to slow the rate of inflation by increasing interest rates. That increased the cost of doing business for all businesses, including farming.
- Land is the first requirement for growing a crop, and land prices reached new highs in the production rush of the 70s. Urban speculators also moved in to the land market bidding prices up even higher. Then in the 80s, land prices fell back down to earth. Farmers who had borrowed money with high land prices as their collateral often couldn't find new loans, even for operating expenses.
- Export markets were bolstered during the 70s to absorb all that increased grain production. Exports in 1960 totaled \$6 billion and quintupled to over \$32 billion in 1979. That year, a quarter of all crops in the U.S. were grown for export. But exports stopped growing during the 80s, in part because of the perceived effect of the 1980 Russian grain embargo.
- Ronald Reagan defeated Jimmy Carter in the 1980 election in part because of Carter's unpopular Russian grain embargo. Reagan was really no friend to the farmer admitting that he didn't understand the concept of "parity prices." When the administration began working on the 1981 farm bill, Reagan attempted to set an overall limit on the amount of farm spending in the bill. Different farm organizations ended up fighting each other to get their piece of the pie. The administration also required that most farmers had to reduce their production acres by 10 percent to qualify for support payments. Farmers did what they had in the past – take their worst acres out of production and increase production on the rest. Surpluses continued to be produced and government payments rose even higher.<sup>57</sup>

The core of the agricultural community in Sandpoint had long been the Extension Station. Closed briefly in 1979 for budgetary reasons, the Station resumed operations on July 1, 1980 with a broader emphasis, especially on the development of cultural guidelines for horticultural crops. Management systems for the traditional grain and forage crops of the region continued to receive attention; however, a nationwide population trend back to the land, also witnessed in the

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<sup>57</sup> [http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe70s/money\\_05.html](http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe70s/money_05.html)

Idaho Panhandle, caused a need to explore income prospects from higher value, horticultural crops that could be grown on small acreages. Nursery and ornamental crops, fruits, vegetables, and Christmas trees were valuable commodities that could be grown on small farms for home use or direct marketing. Conversion to intensively managed cropping systems would improve the feasibility of farming small units and add to the economic base of a region that had become depressed because of poor demand for timber products. Horticultural crops could also serve to diversify agricultural operations on the traditional grain, livestock and dairy farms of the region. The long range objective of the Sandpoint Station was to develop and distribute technology for the production of horticultural crops in Northern Idaho.

Cold temperatures, both excessive and deficient soil moisture, volcanic ash soils, minimal winter lighting and vigorous weed competition were recognized as major factors limiting the production of horticultural crops in northern Idaho. All of these conditions occurred at the Sandpoint Station. A need existed to determine crops adapted to the diverse environments of the region. Soils at the Sandpoint Station consisted mostly of fine silt situation on a level terrace above Sand Creek, a tributary of Lake Pend Oreille. These soils were reddish brown to a depth of 8 to 10 inches where they changed abruptly to a buff or yellowish color. An impervious layer or "pan" occurred at the color transition, and the soil became sandier below this level. These soils belong to the Mission Series classification and occupy about 30,000 acres in Bonner County. Towards the end of 1980, the last acre of ground in the county was sampled. This comprised a three year monumental task of surveying the soils of 595,920 acres in Bonner County. Studying Bonner County soil offered farmers and scientists a glimpse into the area's history dating back many thousands of years. The dusting of volcanic ash Bonner County received in the summer of 1980 as a result of the volcanic eruption at Mt. St. Helens was not a first. The Sandpoint Extension agent estimated that most of the county's soil had 65% volcanic ash in the first two feet of earth. Volcanic eruptions from the Cascade Mountain Range had repeatedly covered the county with ash, he noted. The ash made good soil, he said, adding that volcanic ash creates a friable, or easily pulverized soil, which resulted in an estimated additional \$42.1 million in the value of crops in North Idaho in 1981. In studying the county's soil makeup, the team found 33 major soil series.

In 1980, the value of Bonner County farms swelled to \$5.1 million. During the 1980s, agriculture in Bonner County was still based to a great extent upon the production of forage crops for beef and dairy cattle, with very little cereal grain being grown. At the time, there were less than 500 acres of wheat in the entire county, and corresponding small acres of barley and oats. This was partially due to the environment, as there were not enough heat units in the growing season to be able to produce field corn on an economical basis. The major forage crops continued to be grass, timothy, brome, and orchard, grown in conjunction with clover or, in a few instances, alfalfa. Most of the grain that was grown locally was used for livestock feed.

Due to the acid nature of the soil and poor drainage characteristics of the soil, alfalfa continued to do poorly in most areas of the county, and in many areas, it was necessary to lime heavily, up to two tons per acre, to establish a satisfactory stand.

The organization of the Idaho Nurserymen's Association in north Idaho gave a boost to horticulture as an industry. The production of certified seed, including cereals, potatoes and grass seed, continued to be successful in Bonner County. Potatoes were grown by Ruen Farms of

Clark Fork and Glen Judge of Dufort. Cereals and grass seed were grown by Poirier Ranch at Blanchard. Clover seed was grown successfully in Bonner County, and various grasses were grown for seed from time to time.

The county had the largest number of tree farmers of any county in the state in 1981, according to figures released by the State Department of Public Lands. Christmas tree plantations varied in size from only a few acres to 300 acres. The Bonner County Woodland Council was made up of Christmas tree growers, mill operators, woodland owners, loggers and agency personnel from the Extension Service, Soil Conservation Service, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Department of Public Lands, and Forest Service.

The number of dairies in Bonner County continued to decline in the 1980s.<sup>58</sup> By the end of 1983, the county was down to just 18 dairies producing fluid milk in the county. However, the number of cows being milked increased as the dairy facilities was improved and milking processes streamlined. This led to an overproduction of milk which flooded the market and drove prices down. By the mid-1980s the government began a dairy buyout program. For example, local dairyman Newman agreed to the program in late 1986. Under the program, Newman received \$188,814 from the U.S. Agriculture Department for taking his 111 producing dairy cow out of production by August 1987. Under the program, he could also sell the cattle for butcher or export them to Canada. The program was designed to reduce a dairy cattle glut that was depressing milk prices, but USDA was criticized for creating a beef glut by implementing much of the five-year program in the first year.

A number of Bonner County dairymen continued their trade, and even garnered a few rewards. In 1984, Doug and June Yergens, managed to have each cow produce an average of 21,679 pounds of milk during the last year with an average fat production of 789 pounds. The husband and wife team, who were also named the 1983 top producing dairymen in the Inland Empire, and

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<sup>58</sup> During the late 1970's and early 1980's, the U.S. dairy market grew seriously out of equilibrium. As farmers responded to the higher milk prices with larger herds and consumers responded with lower purchases, the market moved quickly out of equilibrium. By 1980, the dairy market had large quantities of surplus production and the federal budgetary costs of the dairy programs began to increase rapidly. By 1980 and 1981, the situation had reached a point where the Class 3 support price was above a competitive market-equilibrium level, and net USDA expenditures united for nearly 75 percent of the total annual production of that product in 1981.

In response, the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 departed from the traditional parity basis for supporting milk prices, and set the support price at the nominal level of \$13.10 per hundred pounds (cwt) of milk sold as of September 1981. But the large surpluses continued and the Budget Reconciliation Act of 1982 froze support prices at \$13.10 for two years and provided for a \$0.50 per cwt assessment from milk producers' marketing receipts to partially offset the rapidly rising USDA outlays. The 1983 Dairy and Tobacco Adjustment Act lowered the support price to \$12.60 in December of 1983, and provided for further reductions to \$12.10 on April 1, 1985 and \$11.60 on July 1, 1985. The 1983 Dairy and Tobacco Adjustment Act also provided for a milk diversion program. However, participation by dairy producers was very low and milk production in 1984 declined only 4 percent from the record level of 140 billion pounds produced in 1983. As a result, one component of the 1985 omnibus farm bill was a milk production termination program, in which dairy farmers bid competitively to be paid on a per cwt basis to voluntarily cease milk production for 5 years, and slaughter or sell overseas their entire dairy herds. The goal of this "whole herd buyout" was to reduce the U.S. dairy herd by 10 percent, with an associated reduction in milk production. Successful bids ranged from just over \$10.00 to \$22.50 per cwt and roughly 10 percent of the existing dairy herd was removed from the market over the period from April 1, 1986 to October 31, 1987. However, between 1980 and 1985, the number of replacement heifers in the aggregate U.S. dairy herd increased from just over 25 heifers per 100 producing milk cows to just under 50 heifers per 100 cows.

who garnered the “Bonner County Dairyman of the Year” award that year joked “We think about selling the herd every day, at about 5 a.m.”. That same year, the Hall family, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Neely and the Poelstra family, all of Sandpoint, and the Vernon and Gary Hallett families of Priest River were honored by the Northwest Dairymen’s Association with that organization’s top Quality Award. The previous year, the Hickey family received recognition as dairy farmers of the year. At the age of 71 in 1982, Jack Hickey had been selling milk, produced on his 360 acre farm in the Oden area, for 40 years. Jack had lived on the farm since June, 1923, when his parents moved there from Phillipsburg, Montana. Today, the Hickeys have 200 acres under cultivation to raise hay and oats to be fed to young cattle. Their mixed grass pastures include alfalfa, timothy and orchard grass.

At the start of the decade, sheep numbers were still rather limited in Bonner County, although increased prices for lamb, wool, and ewes had stimulated a growing interest in sheep production. However, the growing number of small farms was slowly adding to the sheep numbers. With wool prices on the rise and lamb prices holding stable, many of North Idaho’s small farmers were recognizing sheep as their best livestock investment. From 1974 to 1978 the number of sheep in Bonner County nearly doubled. In 1980, Bonner County Extension Agent Ray Davis estimated the number of sheep in the county at about 1,500, a considerable increase over the 1974 census of about 600. “We have more people with small acreages,” he said. “Goats and sheep fit in very well on a small farm. You can keep about five sheep where you keep one cow.” Davis said there were only two or three farms in the county with flocks as large as 250 or 300. Orville Heath of Algoma was a typical size operation with 15 ewes and one ram pastured on 10 acres. At the time, Heath was the only farmer in North Idaho with Angora goats.<sup>59</sup> The Bonner County Sheep Producers, a newly organized group in 1980, cooperated with the extension office in producing many educational programs to benefit the producers in the county. In 1981, a unique telephone auction opened new lines of profit for Bonner and Boundary County lamb producers, who shipped half a truckload of lambs to Denver Sunday. The auction was arranged through the Pacific Northwest Telephone Auction, held at Caldwell, according to Raynold Davis.<sup>60</sup> However, by 1983, sheep numbers began to stall out again. The growth that was experienced in numbers during the late ‘70’s began reversing itself due to the exceedingly large drop in both lamb and wool prices in 1981 and 1982. Prices received for wool in 1982 were less than half that received in 1979-1980. Most wool produced in the county at the time was marketed through the Ronan, Montana Wool Pool.

The swine industry also saw some expansion in 1980 with the addition of many new small farms. Most operations were on a small semi-confinement basis, with less than 30 sows. The Panhandle Pork Producers was an active group covering the four northern Idaho counties and had many educational programs in cooperation with the extension service. However, by the end of the decade, the Bonner County swine industry declined considerably as high costs and low hog prices putting many producers out of the market. In 1989 there were one confinement sow operation and one feeder pig operation going in the county. A few farmers had two or three sows in the county, also. The Panhandle Swine Producers—comprised of producers in Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai and Benewah counties in Idaho and some members in Montana – had been less active as well.

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<sup>59</sup> DB 11/26/1980

<sup>60</sup> DB 7/20/1981

By the end of the decade, many were looking towards alternatives to agriculture. “Adapting in Idaho Agriculture,” a two day workshop on agricultural alternatives, was offered at Schweitzer Ski Area Oct. 28 and 29, 1988. “Making a living growing llamas, mushrooms or mink is feasible in the area and nine different organizations are joining to show creative growers how it’s done,” said Bernie Knapp, North Idaho College. “In addition to discussing alternative crops like herbs, wild rice, and berry-growing, the seminar will focus on marketing techniques, business plans and certification requirements for organic produce,” said Knapp.<sup>61</sup> The successful seminar series was continued into the late 1990s. Many farmers were also demonstrating that blueberries were an alternative agricultural cash crop for North Idaho farmers by 1989. For example, Pogue’s Blueberry Farm harvested 2,000 pounds of blueberries in 1988 and they anticipated an increase in 1989 of about 500 to 1,000 pounds of berries. At seven to 10 years of age, the plants will start to produce 10,000 pounds per acre.

As with the rest of the country, Bonner County experienced the downward trend of medium sized farms during the 1980s, being replaced by both small farms and large. Small farms of 50 acres or less grew a surprising 17% between 1978 and 1982. The average size of an American farm, 449 acres in 1978, dropped to 439 acres in 1984. On the flip side, the mainstay of agriculture was pointing towards fewer, larger farms. With increasing capital costs and operating expenses for farmers, it became necessary for the acreage limitation under the 1902 Reclamation Act to be increased to 1,600 acres.

In 1983, April 30 was designated as Farm-City Festival Day. Organized in Bonner County by the Bonner County Farm Bureau, Farm-City Day was dedicated to the production and distribution of foods and fibers in our country. The Bonner County Cowbells held their fourth annual Beef Bowl in 1984. The Beef Bowl, patterned after the television series High School Bowl, was formed to encourage 4-H and FFA beef members to become more knowledgeable of the beef industry and to provide a beef promotion tool for the Cowbells.

#### 1981 Annual Report

- Small fruits studies were in progress to determine the best economic cultural practices for strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, grapes and blackberries. Vegetables for home gardens and commercial production were grown at Sandpoint in 1981 for yield and adaptation. A potato variety experiment, conducted during 1976 was repeated in 1981 by using most of the varieties tested earlier.
- Sheep numbers were still rather small in Bonner County. The growth that was experienced in numbers during the late ‘70’s was reversing itself. This was due to the exceedingly large drop in both lamb and wool prices in 1981 and 1982. Prices received for wool in 1982 were less than half that received in 1979-80. Another factor affecting the prices was the season of the year. The lambs were generally not ready for market until July and lamb prices were dropping 10-15 cents per pound from June 10-30. There was another 10 cent drop in July and August. Most producers did not have good enough facilities to lamb in December and January for the average year. Most wool produced in the county was marketed through the Ronan, Montana Wool Pool. Much better prices

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<sup>61</sup> DB 9/6/1988

were received there than were offered locally in Idaho and Washington pools. Lambs were marketed either through the Spokane Lamb Pool or the tele-auction program.

The Bonner County Sheep Producers met monthly during the winter months at the Cooperative Extension Office on North Boyer. Programs on management, lambing, breeding, nutrition, worming, and facilities were all been given.

- The dairy industry in the county was down slightly in number of dairymen to 19 grade A dairies. The number of cows being milked was up over last year. The dairy facilities were continually being improved and even though there were fewer dairies in the county, the amount of milk produced showed a slight increase over last year. With the cost-price squeeze getting tighter each year, dairymen had to increase their herd size to meet their financial obligations. The effect of the low prices in the industry and high feed costs put two dairymen in Bonner County out of business during 1982. Most dairy quality hay was imported either from Bonners Ferry or from the Columbia Basin.
- The DHIA program was not working out in the county. With so few herds, it was not practical to keep up the testing equipment as necessary. In December 1982, discussions were started to combine Bonner County DHIA with the Inland Empire DHIA that covered Spokane, Stevens, and Ponderay County in Washington. Joining of the two units was finalized in January, 1983. The DHIA program was the most effective tool dairymen had to increase production in a herd. The program printed and gave the production per cow, butterfat test, and feed cost for each cow in the herd.
- Artificial insemination, with its proven sires, had become an excellent management tool for the dairyman with the high costs and low prices. The majority of the producers in the county had taken the artificial insemination course and did their own insemination. Many were obtaining their semen from three or four different sources. For the most part All West, American Breeders, and Curtis were the main suppliers.
- The Jack Hickey family of Oden was selected as the winner in the program for 1982, Jack and his son operated a dairy in the Oden area. Virtually all of the feed for the herd was grown on the home farm. The herd was made of high quality Holsteins.
- Bonner County had an active dairy goat association and an active dairy goat DHIS program. Testing on the program was worked on a round-robin testing basis. The dairy goat association also cooperated with the Bonner County Fair Board to put on an American Dairy Goat Association Show during the fair. The Association also put out a newsletter to its members. The Dairy goat association held a two day open goat show during June, with a large number in attendance.
- The beef cattle enterprise made up the largest segment of the livestock industry in Bonner County. Beef cattle fit well into the clover grass type of forage produced in the county and did an excellent job of utilizing this resource.

The majority of the beef operations in the county were cow-calf and most calves were sold in the late winter or early spring. Several producers were finishing their own animals and selling locally for slaughter. There were two local meat processing facilities in the county that sold meat wholesale and one that did only custom slaughtering.

Cattle prices were still depressed in 1982. This was making it extremely hard for the cattle industry as a whole to stay healthy economically. Feeder cattle prices were very little, if any, above the cost of production. There was some hope for a "small" improvement in the cattle prices over the next year.

- The program of weighing and grading calves at weaning time and being able to trace the calf back to the dam and sire was one of the most importance and useful management tools available to the producer. The Bonner County Cattlemen's Association, along with the Cooperative Extension Service, purchased a set of portable scales that were inspected yearly. The scales were used to weigh calves on the farm. While a number of producers purchased their own scales on the farm, more than 52% were still using the portable scales. Twelve Producers were on the program in 1982.
- Bob and Bert Wood of Oden were selected as the Beef family of the year for 1982. They oversaw a cow-calf operation, plus selling surplus hay.
- The swine industry was going down with the depressed prices producers were receiving. The addition of many new small farms with herds of less than 10 sows gave a boost to the total program.
  - The Panhandle Pork Producers, which included in the four northern counties of Idaho and one county in Montana, was a very active group in the promotion of the industry.
- There were 198 adult 4-H leaders 37 teen leaders providing the youth of county with teaching, advising, and leading the 27 regular organized clubs in Bonner County in 1982. A total of 723 youth were involved in 1988 projects.
- Agriculture in Bonner County was based, to a great extent, upon the production of forage crops for beef and dairy cattle. Very little cereal grain was grown.
- Livestock production made up the largest segment of Bonner county agriculture. The majority of the county's 41,000 acres of crop land was devoted to the production of forage for livestock use. Beef and dairy made up the largest share of the livestock industry in the area.
- Yields of cereal grain, in general, were not high enough to be able to compete with surrounding grain producing areas. Less than 500 acres of wheat were grown in the entire county. This compared to approximately 35,000 acres of hay and improved pastures that are grown. This included the approximately 3,000 acres of irrigated land.
- Hay production in general ran about 75-80 percent of normal during 1982. Some of this was in the form of reduced yields and some because of the wet weather during haying season when some was spoiled in the field.
- The major crops grown in the county included hay and pasture, using alfalfa, clover, orchard grass, brome grass, timothy, and some acreage of oats and peas grown for hay. Cereal production had 4,000 acres of oats, 800 acres of barley and under 500 acres of wheat.
- Silages were becoming more important to the industry each year as more and more forage was harvested in this form. The silage program worked very well as a method of harvesting forage.
- Corn silage trials were planted again this year. But due to weather, seed and insects, the trials were a complete failure. Plans were being made to continue trials in some areas of the county in 1983.
- More small farmers were becoming interested in horticulture type crops each year. The most interest was in berries, hardy fruit trees and nursery crops.
- The re-opening of the Sandpoint Research and Extension Center with small fruits, vegetables, and nursery crops as a major emphasis gave a great boost to the horticulture industry in the area.

- The production of certified seed, including cereals, potatoes and grass seed, was successful in Bonner County. There was room for considerable expansion in some form of the above industries.
- Tree farming was a natural in Bonner County, with all of the native forests and forest type soils. The county had the largest number of tree farmers of any county in the State.
- Jerry Chittick, Glengarry, was chosen as the 1982 Woodsman of the year. The management of the land included selective cutting and sawing the logs into lumber on his own portable sawmill, plus planting of new selected species.
- Carl Jenkins of Elmira with his Christmas tree plantation was selected as the Ag Enterprise of the year for 1982. Carl's enterprise covered over 100 acres of trees, plus some land still managed as a tree farm.
- Soils in Bonner County are forest type soils, acid in reaction with a pH ranging generally low from 4.5 to 6.3. Soils are generally low in organic matter, low in nitrogen, phosphorus, sulphur and boron. Approximately 50 percent are low in potash.
- The ERF Control Program in Bonner County received another reduction in funds for 1982, due to the lowered amount of funds the county has to operate with.

#### 1984 Annual Report

- Dairy production had been one of the brightest pictures in Bonner County agriculture but the cost-price squeeze was making it more difficult for dairymen to produce milk profitably. About 15% of the dairymen participated in the government PIK program during the year. The reduced price for milk and high feed costs placed a severe burden on the county's dairy industry. In some instances, dairymen were not able to pay all their operation expenses and were selling out and going into other businesses. Older dairymen who were well established and with very little debt load could still show some profit. The young producer with a heavy debt load was finding it most difficult to stay in the dairy business. Most dairy quality hay was imported from the Columbia Basin or from the Bonners Ferry area. Bonner County dairymen belonged to the Inland Empire Dairy Herd Improvement Association program. This group covered dairymen in Idaho's Bonner and Kootenai counties and Washington's Spokane, Pend Oreille and Stevens counties.  
Doug Yergen's Holstein herd in Blanchard was the highest producing in Bonner County in 1984, and the second highest producing in the Inland Empire Association, with a production of 20,500 pounds of milk and 740 pounds of butterfat. Yergen's herd also had the highest level in pounds of milk.
- Poelstra and Son Dairy of Selle was chosen as the Dairy Family of the Year. The Poelstras (Cornelius, and sons Randy and Tony) farmed 160 acres and milk 67 Holstein cows. They had 70 head of young stock, including replacement heifers. They raised all their replacements and approximately 70 percent of all the hay they feed and buy all the grain. The Poelstras bought the place in 1948 and since then built all new buildings except the main milking barn. They operated a dairy supply store and sold Purina feeds, Surge milking equipment and baby chicks.
- Sheep numbers remained about the same in 1984 as in 1983. During the year the county lost several producers, but others who were increasing their herd size bought all of the



animals. Prices received in 1984 were considerably above those in 1983. Lamb prices, in general were about 15 to 20 cents higher and wool prices were 20 to 25 cents higher than 1983. These price increases raised the interest in Bonner County sheep production.

- The Bonner County swine industry declined considerably over the past year. High feed costs and low hog prices put many producers out of the market. There was one confinement sow operation and one feeder pig operation going in the county now. A few farmers had two or three sows in the county, also.
- The largest part of Bonner County agriculture was focused on livestock forage production. Farmers devoted very little acreage to producing cereal grains.
- Most of the county's 41,000 acres of crop land produced forage for livestock. Beef and dairy comprised the largest share of the area's livestock industry. Yields of cereal grains, in general, were not high enough to compete with surrounding grain producing areas. Less than 500 acres of wheat were grown in the county. This compared to about 35,000 acres of hay and improved pasture grown in the county, which included about 3,000 acres of irrigated land.
- For harvesting hay crops, 1984 was probably the best year in the last 20 years. Warm, dry weather enabled farmers to dry, bale and store hay, with few problems.
- The major crops farmers grew in the county included hay and pasture, alfalfa, clover, orchard grass, brome grass timothy, and some acreage of oats and peas grown for hay. Farmers also cut for hay some straight oats that were too late to mature. Due to the low pH and poor drainage characteristics of many of the soils, alfalfa could be grown in all county areas. Cereal production had 4,000 acres of oats, 800 acres of barley and under 500 acres of wheat.
- Silages were becoming more important in the industry each year as farmers harvest more and more forage in this form.
- More small farmers were becoming interested in horticulture-type crops each year. Most interest was in the berries, hardy tree fruits and nursery crops.
- The Sandpoint Research and Extension Center continued with the major emphasis on small fruits, vegetables and nursery crops, which had given a great boost to the area's horticulture industry.
- The production of certified seed, including cereals, potatoes and grass seed, was successful in Bonner County. There was room for considerable expansion for the above industries.
- Potato seed was grown by the Ruen Farms in Clark Fork and Jim Jasman on the Dufort Road.
- The Poirier Farm in Blanchard grew the largest amount of grass and cereal seed in Bonner County. Other county farmers occasionally grew various grasses, legumes and cereals.
- Tree farming was a natural in Bonner County, with all the native forests and forest type soils. The county has the most tree farmers of any county in Idaho.
- Fielden Poirier Jr., Blanchard was selected Woodsman of the Year. The Poirier ranch comprised 3,000 acres including 2,000 in timber, 600, in cultivation and about 400 acres in lake, buildings and miscellaneous uses. Fielden raised barley and wheat, with a food share of the land in the PIK program. His grandfather settled the land in 1883 and it has been in the family ever since.

- Beef cattle were the largest single enterprise in the Bonner County livestock industry. Beef production fit well into the legume-grass forage raised in the county. Beef cattle do an excellent job of utilizing this type of forage. Whether by hay, silage or grazing the cutover land type of pastures available in the county.  
The beef industry was still working with depressed prices in 1984. With increasing cost of equipment and supplies, the small price increase did little to improve industry profitability.
- Wood's V-X Ranch was selected Beef Family of the Year, with Jim Wood and his sons Steve and Leonard and their families. The ranch has locations at Colburn and Gold Creek. There are 1,340 acres at Colburn, with about 800 acres cultivated. The Gold Creek location has 1,180 acres with 250 acres cultivated. The Woods calved out 420 cows this spring. Calves were sold as yearlings and they run about 50 percent of calves through the meat processing plant. There were 80 replacement heifers and 75 yearling heifers on feed to go through the plant. The Woods also rented 320 acres of cropland and 220 acres of pasture.
- During 1984, 183 adult leaders provided county youth with teaching, advising and leading the 29 organized clubs. Some 482 youth were involved in 1961 projects.
- In 1981 the Idaho National Guard began clearing brush and stumps from a season waterway that separated the north and south portions of the University of Idaho's Agricultural Research & Extension Center located on Boyer Ave. just north of Sandpoint
- Nursery stock growers in Bonner County included the Dahlin Nursery at Vay and Gooby's Nursery in the Mountain View area. Some Christmas Tree Growers also sold trees for landscaping.

### 1985 Annual Report

- Beef cattle was the largest single enterprise in the Bonner County livestock industry. Beef production fit well into the legume-grass forage raised in the county. Beef cattle did an excellent job of utilizing this type of forage, whether by hay, silage, or grazing the cutover land type of pastures available in the county. Most of the county's beef enterprises were cow-calf.
- Werner and June Paulet were named Beef Family of the Year. Their ranch consisted of 133 acres of irrigated land. They raised 65 registered Angus cattle.
- The Bonner County swine industry declined considerably over the past year. High feed costs and low hog prices put many producers out of the market. There was one confinement sow operation and one feeder pig operation going on in the county now. A few farmers had two or three sows in the county also.
- The Rocky Top Tree Farm, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bullacker, was the Woodsman of the Year for 1985.
- The Weed Control program was moving ahead again with John Baker hired as County Weed Supervisor. Roadside weed control program was carried out in 1985 with good success, the only problem being much of the time in the spring when the best control can be had, either it was raining or the wind was blowing.
- Sheep did well on the forested cut over lands in Bonner County. Sheep were excellent at keeping down brush. Sheep also utilized good pasture for growing and fattening.

Sheep numbers dropped in 1985. Several of the larger producers sold out. Both lamb and wool prices were fairly strong during the year, running about where they were in 1984. However, rising cost of production put many producers in a somewhat strained financial situation. Most producers used a Suffolk ram on whiteface ewes. Most lambing was done in January, February and March.

- Dairy production had been the most productive of any livestock venture in the county for several years, but the large government surpluses and the resulting deduction from milk checks to help cover the cost of dairy programs took a deep bite into the profitability of dairying. Feed cost and other cost of production rose at the same time. The dairyman who was well established with little or no debt load could still show some profit. The new producers with the heavy debt load were having a difficult time in the business. Two dairymen in the county went out of business in 1985.
- Ernest and Irene Neely were named the Dairy Family of the year. They were milking 44 cows. The cows were fed in dry lot and fed hay year around. They raised hay on 180 acres and bought all of the grain. This dairy was a husband and wife operation.
- During 1985, 150 adult and 14 teen leaders provided county youth with teaching, advising and leading the 27 organized clubs. Some 507 youth were involved in 1,264 projects.

#### 1987 Annual Report

- Beef Cattle made up the largest single enterprise in Bonner County. According to the 1987 Idaho Statistical Report, there were 13,500 head of cattle in Bonner County, of which 900 head were dairy cattle. This was down from 17,000 in 1986 of which 1,000 were dairy. Total value of all cattle in the county was listed as \$5,308,000. This was greater than any other county in North Idaho except Idaho County.
- Floyd and Leona Irish were chosen as the Beef Family of the year of 1987. The Irish ranch was on Dufort road and consisted of 620 acres with 150 of that crop land plus 25 acres of irrigated pastures. The ranch ran 40 head of beef cow. All of the feed was raised on the ranch.
- Ray and Fairy Delay, owners of the Delay Farm at Careywood, were chosen as the Woodsman of the year for 1987. The Delay Farm consisted of 1,365 acres of land. Timberland made up the largest acreage with 1,145 acres and there are 230 cultivated acres.
- There was a great deal of interest in growing raspberries in the county at this time. All indications were that it can become a profitable enterprise. Raspberries grew well in Bonner County and the production here seemed to compare favorably with that on the Pacific Coast. There were several producers of blueberries in the county with one person having several acres. There were also some producers of U-pick strawberries in the county, with the largest of these being in Hope.
- The Weed Control program was moving ahead again. Roadside weed control program was carried out in 1987 with good success.
- Dairy cattle were the most profitable livestock production venture in Bonner County on a per head basis in the past. However, the large government surplus and the balance of trade had, along with the cost of government dairy programs, made it very difficult for

the average dairy operator to show a profit. The above average dairyman with a very small debt load or none at all had been able to still show a profit in the dairy business.

- Three producers sold out of the business on the government buy-out program. One of the three was the largest dairyman in the county and the other two were about average size. The county was down to 12 dairies producing grade A milk.
- Sheep numbers were down somewhat over 1980, but better prices for both lambs and wool created more interest in sheep as a livestock enterprise. Statistics showed less than 1,000 sheep in the county.
- The number of Bonner County swine producers continued to decline in the past 10 years. There were three producers operating in the county. There were a number of farms, however, that had one to three sows.
- There were 181 adult volunteers and 11 teen volunteers working with 470 youths. There were 20 active traditional clubs.
- The Extension Home Economics program provided consumers with information for better family living in a variety of ways. Home Economics covered five subjects: food and nutrition, clothing and textiles, family relations and child development, housing and home furnishings, and family economics. County residents could receive information through classes, hands on workshops, phone calls, publications, media releases, office visits, and occasionally home visits.
- The chamber of commerce agriculture committee was active again in 1987.
- Ponderay Ranch, owned by Dan Deshon, Jr. and operated by John and Sandy Deshon, was chosen for Horseman of the Year honors.
- Bonner County won the District Horse Bowl Contest again in 1987.

### 1988 Annual Report

- Mike Phillips, Dufort Road, was chosen as the Woodsman of the Year for 1988. Mike was chosen because of silviculture methods, which include thinning, stand conversion, and overstory removal. Mike was also thinning out some areas for grass growth for livestock grazing.
- 1988 was a year of renewed growth in the 4-H program. The traditional program remained fairly stable with only two more enrolled in this year's program. There were 472 regular 4-Hers, 214 H-ers and 9 teen leaders. A group of 379 additional youth were reached through school enrichment classes for a total of 851 youth.
- Glen and Mary McFarland of Clark Fork were chosen as the Beef family of the year for 1988. The McFarland Ranch consisted of 640 acres. Of this, 170 acres were farmland, 160 acres pasture; and the rest was wooded. The McFarlands operated a cow/calf program on their ranch with over a 100 head of cows calving. Breeding of the cow herd was mostly Herford and some crossing with Limousin. Outstanding features of the operation were the excellent management of hay fields and pastures.
- "It's the Berries" was the theme of North Idaho Berry Association. Commercial growers in Bonner County planted 32 acres of raspberries. The first production was in 1989 with approximately 10 to 12 ton of berries marketed from a planting made in 1987. Production in 1990 should reach 40 tons and 1981 production projects to over 100 tons of raspberries to be harvested. There were approximately four acres of blue berries planted

and several acres of “U-Pick” strawberries. Irrigation is a must for commercial production of berries. Drip irrigation was the type most recommended. Raspberry plants seem to produce better in the lighter soils.

- Beef cattle production was the largest livestock enterprise in Bonner County. The 13,500 head of cattle and 900 head of dairy cattle comprised a total value of over \$5.5 million. There was one inspected slaughter facility in the county and three portable slaughter units.
- The IRM committee in the three northern counties in Idaho decided the most serious problem facing cattlemen was the invasion of spotted knapweed on pasture and ranges. Uncontrolled, knapweed can take over a pasture at the rate of 25% a year.
- The forest cut-over type lands and wooded pastures made an excellent environment in which to raise sheep. The animals not only did well, but also browsing controlled the growth of brush. Sheep utilized good pasture well and made impressive gains on quality forage.
- The chamber was active again in 1988, working with the extension office to sponsor several programs.
- Renovation of the Sandpoint Research & Extension Center continued in 1989. All old ornamental and all but one old small fruit blocks were removed in order to begin weed and pest control programs. Approximately 40 acres of fields, which were previously in alfalfa, were summer fallowed and then planted to winter wheat as part of a program to eradicate weeds and gophers. Douglas fir Christmas trees which did not show resistance to Rhabdocline needle cast were uprooted and burned.

Demonstration plots were established for Christmas trees and small fruits. The purposes of these plots were to introduce and evaluate new varieties and cultivators of fruit and trees, and to demonstrate various cultural practices during Cooperative Extension training programs. The foundations of trickle irrigation and trellis systems were established, and were finished during the summer of 1990. Because of a very late spring, nursery digging operations were disrupted, and many of the Christmas trees ordered for spring planting in 1989 could not be delivered.

The laboratory and office facilities at the center were substantially upgraded during the past year. Laboratory facilities designed to study freezing injury and cold hardiness in woody plants are nearly complete. A computerized system was completed which allowed the controlled freezing of plant materials to -112 degrees Fahrenheit and monitoring of ice formation in those materials by means of differential thermal analysis. Freezing injury was evaluated by microscopy, electrical conductivity and regrowth.

#### 1989 Annual Report

- A total of 584 youth were involved in the 4-H program in 1989 in Bonner County. Volunteers numbering 307 were involved in the program.
- The climate and soils of Bonner County were better suited to forage production than cereal crops. The largest share of the 41,000 acres of crop land was devoted to forage production for beef, sheep, and dairy production. Small amounts were utilized in horse production.

- As the cost of fertilizer rises, it was becoming increasingly important to apply only those elements needed for plant growth. The only practical way to accomplish this was by the use of soil test results.
- Another important crop in Bonner County was Christmas trees, with over 1,200 acres planted. At a 6 x 6 ft. spacing, this made over 1,440,000 trees in the ground.
- Sidney Rayfield was selected as the 1989 Woodsman of the year. Sidney and his wife Kathy resided on their 120 acre place on Fish Creek Road, Cocolalla, since 1977.
- The first commercial production from NIBA members started this year. Phil Jenson picked the first crop from 5 of 10 acres this year. The berries did well and produced excellent berries for the fresh market. The berries were all air freighted from Spokane to markets in the eastern and southern United States.
- The biggest problem this year was getting pickers. High temperatures during the harvest accelerated the ripening process and more pickers were needed to harvest the crop. The production in pounds per acre lived up to expectation.
- Producers are looking forward to even better crops in 1990. There was a first crop harvest on an additional 10 acres in 1990 and another additional 20 acres in 1991. This was with an expected harvest of 8,000 pounds per acre.
- Certified seed, weed control, sheep, dairy, same as 1988.
- Beef Cattle production was the largest livestock enterprise in Bonner County. The 13,500 head of cattle and 900 head of dairy cattle comprised a total value of over \$5.5 million.
- George and Virginia Lee, 1989 Beef Family of the Year, moved from Oregon to their ranch in East River in 1965.

# 1990-1999

National Agriculture Day, first observed in 1973, was an annual celebration officially recognized by the Congress of the United States. At the start of the decade, there were 516 farms in Bonner County. That translated into 135,833 acres devoted to farm crops. There were 109 farms with gross income of over \$10,000 per year. The major crop was still forage to be fed to livestock as pasture, hay or silage. Beef alone contributed over \$5,000,000 and total agriculture over \$7,000,000 per year. And raspberries and other small fruits were starting to be grown on a commercial basis.

## **Christmas Comes Early on this Farm**

Daily Bee, 11/13/1995

It's shaping up to be a very merry Christmas at Jenkins & Son Tree Farm—and it's not even Thanksgiving yet.

The local Christmas tree farm has harvested 20,000 trees in the past nine days in preparation for the coming holidays. And when the sawdust settles, a total of 25,000 trees will have been harvested from the farm's property here and at Highland Flats.

Jenkins & Son has nearly doubled its harvest for the past two seasons to meet consumer demands here and abroad. Meany of the trees will wind up in regional markets where trees are scarce, such as Utah and Northeast Oregon, in addition to the tri-state area. Around 10,000 will be sent north and sold at Home Depot stores in western Canada. The farm also operates retail lots in Pocatello and Chubbuck.

The North Idaho Berry Association, created in 1987, continued to pull regional growers together as a way to improve both the quality and quantity of locally produced harvests. Farmers such as Phil and Louise Jenison contributed to the 60,000 pounds of berries shipped to market in 1990. By 1991, that rose to over 100,000 pounds of berries bound for the fresh market. Berry by-products also landed on the market in the 1990s. Gem Berry Products, founded by Harry Menser, was named the grand prize winner of the 1995 "Finest New Red Raspberry Product in America" award.

The Sandpoint Extension Office witnessed changes in 1996 after personality conflicts and budget cutbacks left Bonner County without an extension agent for a number of years.

One challenge to the future of agriculture was the lack of a next generation of farmers. Some interest still remained in the early 1990s. Students at Sandpoint High School reorganized a chapter of Future Farmers of America at the school in 1993. Academically, more Idaho students were majoring in agriculture in the 90s, but few were taking that knowledge back to the family farm. Increased enrollment in the agriculture production majors was noted also. However, many students in the agriculture production program were taking jobs with large companies like Cargill, a Minneapolis-based international marketer, processor and distributor of agriculture food products. The farming population will continue to age without a younger generation to pick up where the veteran crop growers leave off. The

consequence was fewer farmers tending to larger tracks of land.

Alternative farming continued to grow in Bonner County as well. In the late 1990s a few local farmers were experimenting with growing St. John's Wort (*Hypericum*). Others, such as Karl

Offenstein and Karen Osoki who ran Spring Creek Organic Farm, featuring a herd of Romney sheep, began to offer organic and lamb and fleece. Or the Priest River ranch of Randy and Lana Peterson who raised llamas. Their operation was the first organic livestock operation registered with the Idaho Department of Agriculture. This became a time then the notion of the “agri-business” was on everyone’s lips. The notion of “agri-business” started to include llamas, greenhouses and agri-forestry. “Agriculture is a dynamic, innovative and ever-changing resource to the citizens of Bonner County”, according to then Idaho Extension education agent, Kevin Laughlin, “It is an important underpinning of local public and private economies for rural suburban and recreations zones of our community.” With an inflow of new residents which doubled the county’s population since 1970, the reallocation of land resources started to shift to retirement, recreation and aesthetics during this decade more than any of the previous decades.

In actuality, agriculture started to decline in Bonner County in the early 1960s. While it started to stabilize in the 1990s, it moved from the traditional image of agriculture to a more broad based view. Bonner County’s agriculture shifted from a focus on dairies, cattle and forage crops to exotic livestock crops (such as Clark’s Exotic Animal Farm, south of Sandpoint) and other products. A demand for subdivision of agricultural property into smaller units for recreation, residential and commercial use also changed the face of the county’s agricultural businesses.

While the look of agriculture changed, it was still a foundation stone in the Bonner County economic underpinning. Though, like timber, the agricultural output of the county was not what it once was, it was still significant in the overall economic picture. In 1995, area farmers and ranchers, of both old and new agricultural concerns, brought \$17.2 million into the county.

At the end of the decade there were approximately 501 farms in Bonner County. 78 of those farms had an annual income of less than \$10,000, 317 farms had an annual income under \$50,000, and the average income per farm was \$14,509. Obviously, no one was getting rich off of agriculture, however the market value of the agricultural products sold in 1999, however, was not to be considered “small potatoes,” totaling \$7,269,000. Considering that those dollars turned over again and again, they eventually produced an impact of \$50 to \$75 million each year.

### **Love of Herb Gardening Leads to a Kingdom**

Daily Bee, 5/8/1993

They laughed when Lois Wythe set out to forage tansy in North Idaho.

“I let them laugh at me and then I tell them I got \$6 a pound for it. There are very few farms crops that sell for \$6 a pound.”

The Peaceable Kingdom herb gardens settle in comfortably at the confluence of Rapid Lightening Creek and the Pack River. Of the 35 acres that make up the Wythe’s Unicorn Farm.

Lois Wythe first opened the Peaceable Kingdom in 1982, her herb harvests were used for teas, blends, vinegars and dip mixes she sold in her shop at the entrance to the Cedar Street Bridge, the Mole Hole.

There are other events, too. The Victorian Afternoon finds ladies wearing long dresses and playing croquet on the lawn. Later, they sit together for high tea. The Flabbergastronomical Astrological Herbal Event treats every participant to a horoscope and lunch with an accent on herbal dishes.



That same year, there were 98,662 acres of land invested in farms in Bonner County, with 36,975 total acres in harvested crop lands. The average farm was 197 acres in size. 235 farms in the county raised cattle and calves. The total number of cattle was 9,270, or 4,828 beef cattle, 343 dairy cows and 4,099 of all other types. There were 131 hogs, 581 chickens, and 3,285 sheep. Livestock sales in 1998 amounted to \$3,243,000 which translated into an additional \$21 million or more churning in the local economy.

### **Sandpoint Wholesale Greenhouse Deals with Flourishing Business**

Daily Bee, 4/7/1991

If the growing seasons in North Idaho is short, the sales season for Arcadia Greenhouses is even shorter.

Allison O'Flynn runs the show in the complex that looks strikingly similar to the set "M.A.S.H."

Super markets, hardware stores and nurseries depend on Arcadia Greenhouse to provide their annual stock of spring greenery. Sales rely heavily on consumer fancy according to the owner.

O'Flynn and her husband, Steve, opened the growing operation in 1985 with two houses. They now have 16 buildings, totaling about 30,000 square feet of growing space with another now under construction.

Arcadia meets the changing demand with nearly 120 varieties of geraniums, pansies, marigolds, and petunias. The greenhouse also supplies its distributors with 25 different kinds of perennials and "a total array of vegetable plants."

Arcadia Greenhouse is situated about 10 miles northeast of Sandpoint, off the beaten path and out of the public eye.

Forage, small grains, nursery and green house crops added yet another element to the economic picture. There was \$642,000 in forage sales, \$41,000 in small grain crop sales, \$3,275,000 in nursery and green house sales, and \$68,000 in specialty crop sales last year. That's another \$4 million turning over six or seven times in the economic mix.

The agricultural impact on the region may have been less than it once was, but it still amounted to \$14.5 million that circulated repeatedly, generating an overall consequence in the range of more than \$100 million each year.

In 1999 The Spokane Livestock Auction moved their operation to Davenport, Washington. During the early years cow traders canvassed the area offering to buy whatever livestock a farm or ranch may have to sell. Some of the larger cattle operations sold their cattle on their places and cattle were shipped directly to a feedlot. A few ranchers raise registered cattle and sold bulls and replacement heifers at special sales throughout the Northwest.

# A New Century

In November of 2000, the Idaho State Department of Agriculture and the Idaho State Historical Society announced the revival of the Idaho Century Farm Program. The program was designed to honor those farm and ranch families who persevered through physical hardships, natural disasters, and economic hard times to settle this great state. Farmers such as George Bailey of Priest River. Baily, who was 96 in 2006, had lived in Priest River almost all his life and farmed his family property on Sandborn Creek since he was 14-years old. Some of his family still lives on the same property while working the land that has a rich Baily history.

Once a thriving dairy center, Bonner County entered a new century with just one. The Poelstra family had been dairying since 1944 when Cornie and Fran Poelstra moved here and bought 160 acres on Shingle Mill Road. Now their son, Randy and wife Carla, and their son Garrett, carry the torch in what has become a vanishing way of life, the family-run dairy farm.

The University of Idaho extension station continues to serve the agricultural community in Bonner County, led by Agent Gene Gibson. Statistics compiled by the extension show Bonner County's agriculture industry was relatively stable in 2000. Of the 501 farms in the county, 78 were bringing in \$10,000 and 317 farms were bringing in approximately \$50,000. "One of our major changes is we're now helping more people in the agriculture community with smaller farm enterprises. Farms are on a much smaller scale than in the past. We're beginning see a move into more tree nurseries," he said, "Other people have expressed interest in berry farming as well." Livestock also continues to play a major role in agriculture with almost half of the farms in the country raising cattle, hogs, poultry and sheep. To support the livestock, more than 5,300 acres of forage are harvested in the county annually amounting to \$642,000 in sales.

Other farmers continue to experiment with crops and process. Growing and picking strawberries during winter time in North Idaho sounded crazy to some, but Steve Holmes and his wife Alison attempted just that. Their hydroponics project, set 30 x 90 foot greenhouse was producing strawberries in the mid-90s. Nearby, Jerry and Susan Petrina planted 1,800 tomato seeds in the propagation room next to their new, high-tech greenhouse, thus digging into one of the fastest growing consumer segments in the country at the time. When the couple decided to go into business as Deerfield Farms in 2006, they first considered ornamental flowers, lettuces or herbs as crops of choice. Others started experimenting with plating wild huckleberries as a crop. The owners of Prancing Pony Farms, Brandon and Fosha Mimbs, chose to use their two, three-quarter Belgian horses to turn a heavily wooded two acres on Cold Springs trail off Pine Street Loop into an organic garden in 2005. It took Brandon Mimbs two years to prepare a field for produce with horses, and in 2007 they started selling their produce at the Farmer's Market.

While they may not look like the farms of the past, many are still working to grow their own family legacy. The Omodt family of Shingle Mill Blueberry Farm has worked to do just that producing eight different varieties of blueberries-one in honor of each of the Omodt children.

Consumer Supported Agriculture (CSA) landed on the scene in 2007. The organization attempts to partner the growers with the very people who would eventually purchase their goods anyway.

**Dairy Farming Poelstra Style**, by Gina Harvey, The Co-op Country Round-Up, 3/5/2005

The Poelstra farm began in 1964 when Cornier and his wife moved from Belgrade Montana to the Sandpoint area. They purchased 160 acres of land which had been homesteaded by Charles Selle. The farm is located at the end of E. Shingle Mill Rd. Of the 160 purchased, only 50 acres had been cleared. The remaining 110 acres was 3-5 foot tall stumps. The whole area near and surrounding Sandpoint had been clear cut in 1910 bringing about the saying “stump farming.” Along with the land, there was an old house, some out buildings, and a big old red barn built in 1910, which still standing to this day.

The dairy started out with a herd of Brown Swiss cows purchased from a farmer near Belgrade Montana, and things took off from there. Now the dairy is run and operated by Cornier’s son Randy, his wife Carla, and their sons, Garrett and Glen. All the cows on the farm are currently Holsteins. There are 70 cows now being milked and many replacement heifers from very young calves to bread heifers waiting to freshen. The milking parlor presently has 4 milking machines and the cows come through every morning and evening. The milk is picked up every other day and taken to Spokane for processing.

In the very near future, there are some changes that will be seen at the dairy. A double 6 herringbone parlor will replace the old equipment and it will be able to accommodate 12 cows at a time and speed up the milking process considerably.

Also, the Holstein’s familiar appearance at the dairy will be changing. Randy will be cross breeding his Holsteins with quality milking shorthorns by the usual, artificial insemination (AI), to better produce a more hardy milk cow, one that is calmer, easier to handle and can better utilize pasture.

The Poelstra Dairy is a great asset to the community and a strong handhold for small farms.

Their goal is to help growers and purchasers make a connection, rekindle interest in family farms and encourage buying food you know has been taken care of. Growers such as Bonner County’s ‘Spud Queen’, also known as Pat Van Volkinbrg with Bountiful Organics Farm, and Diane Green with Greentree Naturals Organic Farm offered their products through the CSA. Right alongside the CSA’s are the local farmers markets. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the number of such markets grew by an estimated 25% from 2004 to 2007, with nearly 5,000 locations doing business across the country.

Today’s farmers and ranchers are not only farmers and ranchers, as such, but they must be Businessmen, Environmentalists, Veterinarians, Scientists, Mechanics and much more to meet the demands of a highly technical industry.

Agriculture in Bonner County today is a far cry from what it once was, but it is safe to say that our community could not get along without its varied contributions, and our lives would certainly be poorer if agriculture were lost in Bonner County. We can all be thankful for those hearty folks who say on the farm and keep the agricultural traditions of America alive. In fact, we should all bless them every time we sit down at the family table.

# Hoodoo Valley History – The Wetlands & Financing the Ditch

The cost of dredging, as well as the ditch maintenance, had to be paid by all of the landholders of the District in the form of drainage tax. Each year the three District commissioners would set the levy for the following year. The levy varied, depending on maintenance and the finances of the landholders. By February of 1929 the levy was 14% of the assessed value of those lands that were “heretofore levied and approved by the Court”. There were four separate funds within the 14% levy: 4% to be used for interest on bonds and warrants; 1% to retire outstanding warrants; 5% for outstanding bonds and the sinking fund; and 4% for the maintenance fund.

The District’s financial statement in February 1929 showed a balance of \$3,104 in the sinking fund, which had been collected to pay off the 15-year bonds as they matured. The 15-year, 6% bonds were nearing maturity, and the Great Depression was on the horizon. The report notes that the landholders were already delinquent in their Drainage Ditch taxes in the amount of \$2068, and the last half of the 1928 taxes (\$924) were due.

The Drainage Ditch levy became an increasingly heavy burden during the years of the Depression. Even when the rates were cut in half, it became a liability that affected the sale of these homesteads. Some family stories state that the land became nearly worthless but could not be separated from its adjoining ownership to be abandoned or let go for taxes. When there was so little opportunity to earn money families had no choice but to let their homesteads go to the county. Some Hoodoo Valley families blame the Drainage Ditch taxes for the loss of their farms in the 1930’s.

To cope with the 15-year bonds that had matured by 1933, the Drainage District commissioners passed a motion requesting, “That all landowners be permitted to pay up in full and get full release upon the payment of 25% of the assessment as confirmed by the Court and all delinquencies to date.” Landowners met at the Edgemere School on September 1, 1933. Minutes of the meeting record the results, “It was disclosed that a large percentage would have to borrow to pay up. Some objected to paying until their land was drained to their satisfaction. The majority were willing to pay if they could get a loan with which to pay.” There is a roll call list of thirty landowners and their responses.

Apparently, some of the delinquent bonds were disposed of in this manner. However, serious financial problems were still evident in Drainage District records dated six years later in January of 1939. The minutes state, “Attorney Allen P. Asher presented to the commissioners the possibility of suit being brought against the Drainage District and the commissioners...by the holders of eleven of the District’s delinquent bonds, at \$500 each. Discussion was then had as to the possible liability of the District, the commissioners and their bondsmen in such In spite of all the evidence presented and the arguments made against aspects of the various homestead acts, the intent of the government to open up and to settle the public lands always won out and the homesteading continued until recently. During the early history of the country—before 1862, there was even fear that the giving of free land would make “dependent lackeys” of the people involved. There has since been a general consensus that the Homestead Act of 1862 and the 3-

year Homestead Act of 1912 were an overall benefit to the people of the United States and were certainly a benefit to many of the early settlers of North Idaho.

The Experiment Farm at Sandpoint even provided stump land for some of these demonstrations. An article in The Daily Bulletin of October 2, 1933 announced that O.C. Beadle of the Coeur d'Alene Powder company was putting on demonstrations, one to be held at 10 a.m. at the C.W. Taylor place at Dufort and the other at 1:30 p.m. at the Olaf Gjelde ranch north of Kootenai.

The Bergdorf brothers, Charles and Henry Esmond, used many boxes of dynamite to clear their land—about 2500 pounds per year on the average. Large orders of dynamite were delivered from Spokane to the farm and stacked wherever convenient for the farmer. Smaller amounts could be bought at most hardware stores. Bergdorfs bought from the Co-op in Sandpoint and from Paul Mears in Priest River. Dynamite sticks, caps, and fuse were all available inside the stores. Henry Esmond remembers several times (when the Co-op didn't have enough on hand in the store) he would be given the key to their storehouse. The Co-op storehouse was a small cement block building out on Highway 2 near the sand pit. The stumping dynamite was only 30 to 35 percent nitro, not the 60 percent used for blasting rock. The handling of dynamite or the caps was not considered hazardous—until a fuse was lit, but if dropped on a hard surface, they could explode.

Henry Esmond remembers their land clearing well, especially the dynamiting part of it, and writes, "Clearing land back in the early 1930's was a pretty slow process. No heavy equipment like the bull dozers used a few years later. Most of the land was cleared using.

After a tremendous effort to realize their dream of owning a profitable farm, many of the small farm owners in the Hoodoo Valley let their land title go to the Bonner County Tax Collector. Much of the upland soil was gravelly and droughty, and even the newly cleared soils in the valley were strongly acidic from the pine and tamarack forests. Heavy applications of gypsum were recommended for legume crops of clover and alfalfa. The cost for gypsum was \$25 to \$30 per ton. Many of the farmers applied this powdery fertilizer by hand.

If a farmer's Humbird land included some meadowland beside Hoodoo Creek, there were better opportunities. The peat meadows were ready for hay and pasture, without the big stumps of pine and tamarack. Some cedars grew along the meadows, along with cottonwoods and birch, but removing their stumps was not so difficult as the long, tap-rooted pines of the uplands. Also the owner would have irrigation on a small scale with a gasoline pump or a ram set up in the creek. Flooding was always a problem, however, and often the land did not dry out enough to work the ground and get a crop in the short growing season.

How did families survive the often terrible winters? Winter woods work was usually available for the men of the family. During the 1920's and early 1930's the logging camps contained whole families who lived on nothing but the money coming from their men's labor in the camps. At least the owner of a piece of Humbird land had his own house, his own horses, and a few cows, pigs, and chickens. And, if lucky, he would have some of his small salable trees left that could be cut for poles and cordwood.

The 1930's, however, brought brutally hard times for families trying to live off their land. WPA projects were of some help, but in Bonner County by April of 1933, there were no more funds

available. A Pend Oreille Review article warned that "Relief work is about to end, people must help selves. Red Cross flour will soon be exhausted, and no more was forthcoming. The county relief funds are almost exhausted. The fact that taxes are not being paid has resulted in the issuance of county warrants for which there is no market. Banks have refused to take any more warrants and merchants are refusing to accept them. Relief funds from private sources are no longer available. In view of these facts, the Bonner County Welfare Association recommends that every family make arrangements to raise a garden and that every family make provision during the coming months for a year's supply of wood."

For those living in towns, there were vacant lots available for gardens and there was county land where wood could be cut. It was asked that any private individuals, having odd jobs or needing work done, provide additional employment to the needy. No welfare was extended to persons operating automobiles for pleasure purposes. With no prospect of providing any more relief funds from any source, it was up to everyone to make preparations during the spring and summer for next winter.

This was the reality of surviving in Bonner County in 1933. No wonder that people lost hope and had no choice but to let their land go for taxes. Eventually, many acres of these tax deed lands were turned over to the State of Idaho, and they make up much of the present large acreage of Idaho State Land in the Hoodoo Valley.

Seventy years later, however, there is another "pioneer." Dirt roads crisscross the jackpine flats with "homestead" dwellings every ½ mile or so that are surrounded by a dense young forest. No attempt at farming is evident. The small trees grow thickly, perhaps on land once cleared with dynamite by a hard-working family. The Hoodoo Valley is becoming a wooded residential area. Hardly what the Humbird Lumber Company had envisioned for the buyers of their cutover lands in the 1920s and 1930s.

From memories of Henry E. Bergdorf and documents of the Bonner County Historical Society.  
Compiled by Virginia Judge Overland, June 2003.

# Bonner County Cattlemen's Association

The earliest records of a cattlemen's organization in Bonner County show that it was organized on March 4, 1939, and was called the Bonner County Protective Association. Its main purpose was to offer rewards to help stop the theft of cattle and put a curb on illegal "black market meat operators". Cal Huff was president and Walter Thomas was secretary. The rate of assessment to members was 25 cents for each head of livestock owned. This money was deposited in the Bonner County National Bank in a trust fund. The next records found were minutes from a meeting held January 13, 1940 at the County Agent's office with 40 cattlemen in attendance. The chief purpose of this meeting was to select committeemen to recommend deputy brand inspectors to carry on brand inspections under the Idaho laws. It was decided that inspection stations be established at Clark Fork, Granite, Priest River, Sandpoint, Blanchard, and Newport. After this, the organization apparently became inactive for a few years.

Leonard Brooks, county agent, wrote in the next record that a meeting was held at the Community Hall on July 21, 1949, to discuss reorganizing. All present agreed and dues were set at \$1 for membership and \$.05 per head, per year for taxable cattle. At the following meeting they set their meeting dates to be the last Saturday afternoon of each month. The name was changed to Bonner County Cattlemen's Association. Election of officers was held: Francis McNall, president; Howard Thomason, vice president; Cal Huff, treasurer; and Leonard Brooks, secretary. In addition, the board of directors included: Jim White, chairman, Art Sphar and H.E. Bergdorf.

At the February meeting in 1950 at the courthouse, there were 103 in attendance. Speakers were C.W. Hodgson, University of Idaho (cattlemen's management problems); P.R. Gladhart (marketing and price outlook); and Victor Morris, deputy brand inspector (brand application). March of 1950 it was decided to start a bull grading program. The first committee consisted of Howard Thomason, Lennox Fullerton and Granville Connett.

The next records available were dated February, 1953, at the Community Hall. New officers were elected: Bob Bandy president; Lloyd Bennett, vice president; Cal Huff, treasurer; Walt McPherson, secretary; Francis McNall, Henry Bergdorf, and John Nunn, directors. They voted to affiliate with the Idaho State Association. Due to the large number of cattle being stolen, a reward for information leading to the arrest of anyone stealing or killing cattle was set at \$150.

February 24, 1955, dues were increased to cover assessment for the National Meat and Livestock Boards on cattle sold through public markets. These funds would be used for beef promotion. The first annual banquet was served by the Southside PTA in 1956. The 1957 banquet was held at Northside School with PTA serving dinner for \$1.25 per plate and the Sunshine Boys provided music for dancing.

At the January 13, 1958 meeting, President Henry Bergdorf introduced Harry Judd, who read the proposed program from the Idaho State Cattlemen's Association for sponsorship of a 4-Hbeef program. This program was approved and the following committee was appointed: Olaf Olsen, John Nohel and Bob Bandy. The association sponsored a 4-H trophy for beef fitting and

showing. The first feeder calf sale in cooperation with the Sandpoint Livestock Company was held October 23, 1958.

Mr. and Mrs. Stanton Becker from Genesee were present at a dinner meeting on April 24, 1959 to assist in organizing a Cowbelles Auxillary. Election of officers at this meeting resulted with Walt Roos, President; M.E. Griffith, vice president; Bob Bandy, treasurer; O. Hollingsworth, new director; Walt McPherson, secretary. One of the highest banquets was held in Priest River with its PTA providing the meal to 181 people for \$1.75 per plate.

April 23, 1960 the Board of Directors was increased to five members. Newly elected officers were: Bob Wood, president; Denny Shields, vice president; Bob Bandy, treasurer; Walt McPherson, secretary; Henry Bergdorf, Doc Storey and Leland Foster, directors. The first of many annual picnics was held at Pike Moon's place on Bottle Bay in August.

The first production testing-grading demonstration was held November 17, 1961 at Bob and Jim Wood ranches on Gold Creek. Morris Hemstrom, University of Idaho, assisted with the program. In December, plans were made for the Panhandle Registered Beef sale with a committee to screen and grade the bulls. A minimum standard of "B" was set up for all bulls to be sold and the bulls must be 16 month old or over at the time of sale. The first sale was held at the Sandpoint Livestock Auction on February 24, 1962. Of the 33 bulls sold, the average price was \$367. A pocket gopher bait-placing machine was purchased on December 4, 1962, to be rented to members for \$4 a day – non-members would pay \$6 per day. 1963 officers remained the same, except for Ray Davis became the new secretary. A set of portable scales was purchased jointly with the County Agent's office, the Fair Board and the Cattlemen's Association with each party paying 1/3 of the purchase price.

The 1965 records show that new officers were Vernon Ruen, president; Doc Storey, vice president; Raynold Davis, secretary/treasurer; Art Burnett, Bill Woolsey, Denny Shields, Bob Bandy and Harold Anselmo, directors. In 1966 a new bait placer was purchased for \$290. The cattlemen would provide a committee for grading and counseling the 4-H and FFA stock at the weigh-in held in the spring. 1969 officers: Denny Shields, president; Art Burnett, vice president; Raynold Davis, secretary/treasurer. The first trail ride was June 14, 1969 on the peninsula by Hope. That summer pens for beef cattle were erected and cattle were displayed at Farragut for the Boy Scout World Jamboree.

In 1970, new reward signs were up to \$1,000. Dues increased to \$5 minimum or \$.05 a head. The organization would sponsor a trophy for the top carcass from the 4-H and FFA market sale.

In 1971, the members were asked to work at the new fairgrounds putting in stalls. This year the winter beef schools were started. Members took a trip to Banff, Lake Louise and Jasper parks. The cattlemen continued to help the Cowbelles to provide lunch for the Chamber of Commerce Farm Tour. Bull sales were discontinued in 1977 after being held annually for 16 years.

December 20, 1980, dues increased to \$10 per year. Several members participated in a special feeder calf sale sponsored by the Cattlemen's Association and the Coeur d'Alene Auction yard on October 31, 1981.



Starting in 1979, the Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce and the Cattlemen's Association honored a beef family every year. Those honored include:

Bob & Leora Bandy and Louise Trost (1979)	Wood's V-X (1984)
McNall Shorthorns (1980)	Werner Paulet (1985)
Kaniksu Stock Ranch (1981)	Vern Coon (1986)
Bob & Bert Wood (1982)	Floyd Irish (1987)
Art Burnett (1983)	Glen McFarland (1988)
	George Lee (1989).

In 1985, the association participated in the IRM (Integrated Reproductive Manager) project. They built and placed benches at Bonner Mall for people to sit on. Benches are engraved "Courtesy of Bonner County Cattlemen's Association". Several members have served as directors of the state association, including: Bob Bandy, Jim McNall, Vernon Ruen, Merle Olsen, Jim Wood and Harold Anselmo. The Cattlemen's Association is still one of the most active farm organizations in the county. The Cattlemen's Association, in cooperation with the University of Idaho Cooperative Extension office, is active in program planning and carrying out a wide variety of educational programs.

The Bonner county Cattlemen's Association merged with Boundary County in 1997 to form the Bonner- Boundary Cattle Association, and is still one of the most active farm organizations in the County.

Officers from 1970 – 1990 were as follows:

1970-71	President, Vern Coon
President, Art Burnett	Vice President, Doyle Crandell
Vice President, Bill Woolsey	
1972	1978
President, Bill Woolsey	President, Doyle Crandell
Vice President, Art Jasman	Vice President, Jim Wood
1973-74	1979-80
President, Art Jasman	President, Jim Wood
Vice President – Bob Wood	Vice President, Steve Wood
1975	1981
President – Bob Wood	President, Steve Wood
Vice President, Glen Judge	Vice President, Gary Bristow
1976	1982
President, Glen Judge	President, Steve Wood
Vice President, Vern Coon	Vice President, Jim McLaughlin
1977	1983-84
	President, Jim McLaughlin

Vice President, Floyd Irish

1985-86

President, Floyd Irish

Vice President, Bert Wood

1978-88

President, Bert Wood

Vice President, Don Albertson

1989

President, Bert Wood

Vice President, Don Albertson

1990

President, Jim Wood

Vice President, Floyd Irish

Raynold Davis served as Secretary/treasurer from 1963-1990 – a total of 27 years.

# Bonner County Cowbelles

The Cowbelles of Bonner County are wives of the members of the Cattlemen's Association who work actively to support and promote the beef industry and its products. The auxiliary was organized in April 1959 at a roast beef dinner and potluck dinner served by the Cattlemen at the Sandpoint Community Hall. Mr. & Mrs. Stanton Becker of Genesee were present, and Mrs. Becker met with the wives to explain the activities of the Cowbells Auxiliary. The ladies present at the meeting decided to organize a Bonner County Auxiliary.

Mrs. Bob (Leora) Bandy was chosen president; Mrs. Walt (Blanche) Roos, vice president; Mrs. Bob (Bernice) Wood, secretary/treasurer; Mrs. LaVern Coon, hospitality chairman; Mrs. Walt (Lucille) McPherson, publicity chairman; Mrs. Dennty (Aletha) Shields, beef promotion chairman and Mrs. John (Anna) Nohel, historian. It was voted to have the meetings held at the same time the Cattlemen's Association met. Dues were \$1.00.

The group has continued to be very active since its organization. In 1961 members made a Bonner County brand quilt to be taken to the state convention. They served the Cowboy Breakfast at rodeo time. Starting in 1962, they sold lunch at several pure bread sales at the auction yards. They put together the Bonner County brand books for 1964 to 1973.

In 1962 Leora Bandy was elected state president and Bernice Wood was the state secretary. In 1974 Leotoi Ruen held office of state president, and Myrtle Burnett was state secretary.

On February 15, 1968, a Beef-a-Rama was held at Community Hall. Miss Sime of the Iowa State University came to give a class on how better to prepare and serve beef to increase the pleasure associated with the meal, not just to release hunger, but also for the sheer pleasure of enjoying the distinctive taste of beef. Over 110 ladies attended the meeting. Dorr prizes of beef were given.

For the past several years the group has given demonstrations in stores, educational programs in schools, maintained a \$300 scholarship for Bonner County students in the agricultural field, had booths at the county fair and sponsored trophies and scholarships for top 4-H beef exhibits, among other activities related to the promotion of beef.

They observe National Agriculture Week, and make a special event of Father's Day. They serve lunch at the Farm Tour each year. Their only money project is to sell BBQ beef sandwiches and homemade pies at the annual draft horse show.

Fun activities for the group are having potluck dinners, Christmas and card parties, participating in the annual North Idaho Cattlemen's Association, and getting together with the Cattlemen for dinner on the town.

# Farm Subsidies – 1995-2012 (farm.ewg.org)

Recipients of TOTAL USDA subsidies from farms in Bonner County totals 2,332,000 from 1995-2012.

Chad Moore, Sagle, ID	\$182,709
McFarland Family Limited Partners	\$159,470
John Kemp, Amboy, WA	\$131,211
James E. White, Clark Fork, ID	\$117,100
Daryl Murray, Priest river, ID	\$109,212
Ducks Unlimited, Rancho Cordova, CA	\$107,856
Fielden L. Poirier, Blanchard, ID	\$86,989
Gloy M. White, Spokane, WA	\$79,925
Wilderness Ranch Ministries, Spirit Lake, ID	\$74,880
Poirier Family, LLC, Blanchard, ID	\$73,570
Poelstra and Sons Dairy, Sandpoint, ID	\$61,262
Gary C. Hoaglund, Clark Fork, ID	\$52,080
Moriha M. Yetter, Sagle, ID	\$48,926
McFarland Family Trust, Clark Fork, ID	\$44,600
Delay Farms, Inc, Sandpoint, ID	\$43,169
David A. Landry, Culbertson, MT	\$40,713
Phil Mack, Moscow, ID	\$39,955
Robert John Olmo Jr., Priest River, ID	\$39,164
Walter E. Eldred, Sagle, ID	\$38,261
Leonard Wood, Sandpoint, ID	\$36,517

# Experiment Station

## Deed of Gift

On July 12, 1913 the Humbird Lumber Company of Bonner County prepared a deed between that company and the State Board of Education and the Board of Regents of the University of Idaho denoting approximately 170 acres of land for the experimental farm. The indenture as recorded in Book 26 of Deeds, page 547, County Record Bonner County, Idaho reads as follows:

No. 27713

THIS INDENTURE, made this 12<sup>th</sup> day of July, in the year of our Lord One thousand nine hundred and thirteen, between the Humbird Lumber Company of the County of Bonner and State of Idaho, Party of the first part; and the State Board of Education and Board of Regents of the University of Idaho, party pf the second part:

WITNESSETH: That the said party of the first part, for and in consideration of the benefits to be derived by the Community from the work carried on by an experimental farm, has donated, given, remised, released, alienated and confirmed unto the said party of the second part all of the following described real estate, situated in the County of Bonner and State of Idaho, to wit:

All of the East half of section Fifteen, Township Fifty Seven North, Range Two West B.M. lying west of Sand Creek, and north of the present wye or railroad track connecting the Northern Pacific, the Spokane International and the Great Northern Railways, less rights of way or record and county roads; containing approximately one hundred seventy acres.

TOGETHER WITH all and singular the tenements, hereditaments and appurtenances thereunto belonging or in anywise appertaining, the reversion and reversions, remainder and remainders, rents, issues and profits thereof, and all estate, right, title and interest in and to the said property, as well in law as in equity, of the said party of the first part, so long as it be used as an experimental farm for demonstration purposes by the State of Idaho, but in case it is not so used for a period of time exceeding two years at any one interval, the said property is to revert to the party of the first part.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, all and singular, the above mentioned and described premises together with the appurtenances, unto the party of the second part, to their successors. And the said party of the first part, and its successors and assigns, the said premises in the quiet and peacable possession of the said party of second part, its successors, against the said party of the first part, its successors and assigns, and against all and every person and persons whosoever, lawfully claiming or to claim the same shall and will WAARRANT and these presents forever DEFEND.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the said party of the first part has caused these presents to be executed in its name and its corporate seal hereunto affixed the day and year first above written.

Witnesses as to T. J. Humbird: HUMBIRD LUMBER COMPANY

J. A. Humbird by T. J. Humbird, President  
T.L. Greer

Witnesses as to W. H. Farnham  
W. D. Vincent, Assistant Secretary  
W.J. Smithson

### **Legal Ownership Status of the Sandpoint Branch Experiment Station**

As previously indicated the land of the Sandpoint Station was deeded to the University in 1913 by the Humbird Lumber Company 'so long as it be used as an experimental farm for demonstration purposes by the State of Idaho, but in case it is not so used for a period of time exceeding two years at any one interval, then said property is to revert to the party of the first part." Since this deed was prepared and in view of possible negotiations by the University to provide easement to some property the legal status of this land was clarified at the request of the University in 1954.

A quit claim deed from the Board of Directors and Statutory Trustees of the Humbird Lumber Company was granted the University. This document 48451 as filed in Book 87 of Deed P. 520 Bonner County, Idaho reads as follows:

This Quit Claim Deed, made, executed and delivered by and from G.F. Jewett, T.J. Humbird, N.B. Holter, W.F. Larrabee and F.W. Reimers being the last Board of Directors and Statutory Trustees of the Humbird Lumber Company, a default Washington corporation which forfeited its right to do business in the State of Idaho on December 1, 1947, hereinafter call the Grantors, and the Regents of the University of Idaho, a corporation organized and existing under and by virtue of the Constitution of the State of Idaho hereinafter called Grantees, Witnesseth:

That the Grantor above named, and in their capacity as Statutory Trustees for the Humbird Lumber Company, a corporation which no longer exists, have and by these presents herby do remise, release and forever quit claim unto the Regents of the University of Idaho all their right, title, estate and interest in and to the following described real property situated in Bonner County, Idaho:

All of the East half of Section Fifteen (15), Township Fifty-seven (57) North, Range Two (2) West Boise Meridian, lying west of Sand Creek and North of the present Wye or railroad track connecting the Northern Pacific, the Spokane International and the Great Northern Railways, less rights-of-way of record and county roads; containing approximately 170 acres.

This instrument is executed for the purpose of relinquishing and releasing unto the Regents of the University of Idaho the rights of reversion reserved unto the Humbird Lumber Company in that certain Warranty Deed in favor of the University dated July 12, 1913 and recorded November 8, 1913 in Book 26 Deed at page 547 of the Records of Bonner County, State of Idaho, wherein and whereby it was provided that in event said real property should at any time cease to be used as an experimental station, that title to the same should revert to the Grantor: which said contingent remainder is by this instrument void and forever released unto the Grantee above named.

Witness our hands and seals the day and year first above written.

G.F. Jewett

T.F. Humbird

N.B. Holter  
W.F. Larrabee

F.W. Reimers

Being all of the Last Board of Directors and Statutory Trustees for the Humbird Lumber Company, a defunct corporation.

**Early Historical Development of the Sandpoint Branch Agricultural Experiment Station,  
by R.D. Ensign, August 1965**

In the 1915 Annual Report (Bulletin 84) of the Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station, Director J.S. Jones indicated that the development of the farm at Clagstone was not satisfactory because of no specific appropriation for its management. Private interest had also allocated to the University 170 acres of land near Sandpoint for similar demonstration and experimentation. Unlike at Clagstone the legislature specifically appropriated \$4,800 for the 1913-15 biennium Sandpoint Station operation. Since there were little or no funds for the Clagstone operation, this farm apparently reverted to its owners and the Sandpoint farm was used to its owners and the Sandpoint farm was used to serve the farmers of the northern Idaho counties. As with most outlying stations the citizens in the area had much influence in determining the locations and the operations of these farms. This support not only came through the legislature but local private citizens and firms contributed funds and materials to build buildings and fences, provide water, clear land and other necessary prerequisites for experimentation. Where there was strong support interest from local citizenry the field stations carried on with the demonstrations and research.

As previously indicated in the early 1900s there was much interest in agricultural developments on cut-over lands in northern Idaho. Much interest existed by private lumber companies who were also holders of much of the land and who were promoters in seeing that the land was developed and intensively cultivated. From these companies and also from the farmers and businessmen were pleas for the University Of Idaho College Of Agriculture to establish demonstration and research stations in the area. Through their good works it was envisioned that these cut-over areas could be brought into efficient agricultural productivity.

Detail records and accounts of various kinds of experimentation were recorded in a series of annual reports dating from the beginning of the Station. Accompanying this report was a summarization of past and present research as written by Mr. Brackney. In general, however, one can say that research at the Sandpoint Station has been directed toward practical agriculture in the north Idaho area. Various kinds of crops were evaluated under various planting rates and soil with various fertility levels. From the beginning research has been conducted with forages because of their productivity in the area and uses for livestock feeds. Because of the availability of tillable, fertile land, water requirement of crops and restricted growing conditions, the area is considered more of a crop-livestock enterprise rather than a cash-crop enterprise. Thus much of the past research at Sandpoint has been directed toward agronomic and soils investigations attempting to find more adaptable crops for the climate and unique soil characteristics. Although dairying received major emphasis in the 20's this kind of research has been curtailed and currently all such research is done at Moscow. Although the three north Idaho counties are a major part of the Spokane milkshed there are some economic problems in dairy production. Many small herds are closing out and being absorbed by fewer owners. Summer forage is

considered very adequate for a dairy operation especially where irrigation is practiced. The winter feeding periods are usually quite long, sometimes starting in October and extending to the middle of May. Thus this feeding period requires much forage under adequate cover. Promising beef cattle and cultivated pastures plots were established in 1953 but after three or four years these were discontinued because representative stands of the various legumes was difficult to maintain due to ice sheets in the spring.

#### Administration of the Station

From the beginning the Sandpoint Station has been operated under the supervision of a Station Superintendent. The Superintendent, who has also been a person trained in research or demonstration, has been responsible for the general upkeep of the Station, the research program carried out on the Station, and the budgeting of available funds for Station operation. This Station Superintendent is in turn responsible to the Administration of the College of Agriculture of Moscow, and since 1949 this has been the Associate Director of the Experiment Station.

Also from the beginning of the Sandpoint Station research work has been carried on at the Station by staff of the Campus at Moscow. This has included the soils, plant and animal research. In recent years a considerable portion of Mr. Clarence Seely's research on weeds has been conducted at the Sandpoint Station. Also the fertility studies were conducted in consultation with the soil staff at Moscow.

Superintendents since 1912: (As reported in Progress Report 36, April 1960, Hungerford.)

W.H. Heidemen	1912-16
F.H. Lafrenz	1916-20
Chase Raney	1920-21
J.H. Christ	1921-35
Ralph Knight	1935-46
Ralph Sampson	1946-49
Merle Sampson	1949-50
C.T. Brackney	1951-to date (1969)

Mr. Charles D. Johnston has been resident teamster and farm foreman since April 1929. He will retire on or before June 30, 1966.

#### Transfer of Land

The original east boundary of the Sandpoint Station was marked by Sand Creek. The east boundary has been changed due to the Albeni Falls Dam project (about 1950) whereby the water level of Lake Pend Oreille was regulated by the removal of a rock in the river channel and the



construction of a dam. An easement in perpetuity was granted the U.S. Army Engineer Corps for 15.60 acres of this land which heretofore was pasture and wasteland. Three railroad tracks, the Great Northern, the Spokane International, and the Northern Pacific all converge at the north boundary and have rights-of-way through the east boundary of the Station. In addition U. S. Highway 2 and 95 and 10A parallel the railroad tracks and pass through to Sandpoint. In October 1958 the Regents of the University of Idaho provided the State of Idaho Department of Highways a quit claim deed for 4.51 acres of property enabling them to widen the highway approach to north Sandpoint. Some of the land transferred had been that previously provided the U.S. Army Engineer Corps. Thus of the original 170 acres approximately 20.11 acres were deeded to the Engineer Corps and State Highway.

# The Bonner County Fair

The Bonner County Fair had its official beginning in 1927, when the Sandpoint Kiwanis club decided to support the agriculture of Bonner County by sponsoring a fair. The finance committee raised approximately \$900.00 among the business firms of Sandpoint to pay premiums and expenses. The original fairgrounds were located in the vicinity of the present Bonner County Historical Museum. In 1930 one hundred and six head of cattle were exhibited, including a few head of beef and 35 4-H calves.

Fair committees were organized in several communities to prepare farm products displays. Arrangements for the women's and junior departments were turned over to a committee of the Sandpoint Civic Club, composed of Mrs. Earl Farmin, Mrs. J.B. Rowland, Mrs. J.W. Thompson, Mrs. Isaac Thompson, with Mrs. Guy Helphrey as chairman. The department included sewing, baking, canning, art work and flowers.

The Methodist community hall was secured for an exhibit building and there was considerable discussion as to how exhibits should be arranged. A lot was secured across the street where a few exhibits of cattle, sheep, hogs, poultry and rabbits were shown. Special features of this fair included an educational exhibit by J. H. Christ, showing grains and grasses, Mosida wheat, and results of applying gypsum to legumes. W.H. Wicks, Horticultural inspector, showed grades of potatoes and gave a grading demonstration. The arts and crafts department of the Civic club made a fine exhibit of their works. A special booth showing uses of rabbit fur was set up. The Kootenai Bull Association showed the results of their breeding program, using purebred sires for several years. R. L. Goolsbey, the Pend d' Oreille creamery and Al Bower served bread, butter and honey to the crowd and the Sandpoint Kiwanis club served a free lunch to those who visited the fair.

After the fair a dinner was held for Bonner County people to perfect plans for a permanent organization. As a result of this meeting an association was formed and articles drawn by Allen P. Asher, were adopted. A committee presented the permanent fair plan to the board of county commissioners, who approved the outlay and made appropriations for it.

Association membership was open to any Bonner County citizen who became a member by paying \$1 for life membership per family. The election of directors is held annually during the fair. All members are eligible to vote and any one become a member by paying the \$1 membership fee.

The city of Sandpoint granted the Bonner County fair a long-term lease on the west end of the city park for fair purposes. A plan was drawn by the directors to cover a development program to house the fair as it grew. In 1928 three stock sheds 28 X 96 feet were constructed. One was used for livestock, one for poultry and rabbits and one for agricultural displays. Livestock was shown in an area, roped off in front of these buildings. Many of the events were held in the open. In 1929 an agricultural hall, 60 x126 feet was constructed to join the north end of the stock sheds to house agricultural and home economics and commercial displays. The original stock sheds were then filled by livestock. A fourth stock shed was also added to take care of the increasing demand for livestock space. The arena, one of the most important buildings, was

constructed in 1930. This building was designed to provide space for the proper showing of livestock and to provide a place for evening entertainment. The arena proper is 35 X 60 feet with 15 feet of bleachers all the way around will seat nearly a thousand people when crowded as it has been at many fairs. Pens under the bleachers and facing the outside provide space for sheep and calves. A much needed women's building, 60 X 80 feet was added in 1931 to house home economics and girls' 4-H Club work. In 1936 another 28 X 96 feet stock shed was constructed south of the women's building. For a time, half of this building had been used for 4-H club livestock and half partitioned off for eating concessions operated by four different churches organizations. Within a few years there was a demand for more room for 4-H girls displays and for the woman's department. In 1938 the entire roof was given a treatment of asbestos roof coating to preserve it from weathering, using NYA labor.

Over the next few years the park and fair grounds were improved by W.P.A. labor, trees were thinned, ground leveled, grass planted and sanitary toilets installed. In 1938 a caretaker mowed and watered the park adjacent to the fairgrounds making it a more desirable place to picnic and hold public gatherings. The arena was often used for speaking programs when the weather turned bad.

The board of directors worked hard to keep this event an educational free fair, inviting all Bonner County residents to participate. A continuous judging program went on for the three days conducted by judges for the most part secured without cost from the University of Idaho and its extension division. Superintendents of departments and their helpers serve without pay. The paid help consisted of watchmen, parking officials and one man to do odd jobs necessary during the fair.

Granges, community organizations, extension clubs, Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, civic organizations and individual farmers and business men have contributed to the success of this thriving fair.

The agricultural committee of the Kiwanis club secured advertising which paid for the premium list and supplies men needed to help enter exhibits on the first day of the fair and to see that exhibits were properly returned to exhibitors at the end of the fair.

Four local church organizations provided food during the three days of the fair and anyone desiring to do so was allowed to picnic in the adjacent park.

The fair is operated by a board of directors. At the time, the county agent was general superintendent of the fair. The directors for 1938 fair were:

Ardley Burt, Samuels  
J.W. Ramsey, Sunnyside  
M.F. Yakley, Hope  
Oliver Ruen, Clark Fork  
R.H. McMillan, Edgemere  
Frank Rusho, Blanchard  
Ralph Knight, Sandpoint  
Walter F. Thomas, Sandpoint

C. W. Gresham, Midas  
Frank Culver, Sandpoint  
L.P. Summers, Sagle  
Ben Ewen, Careywood  
Homer Smith, Laclede  
F. H. Anselmo, Priest River  
Frank Cochrane, Kootenai

In 1938, 373 Bonner County residents received approximately \$1,550 in premiums which were divided among communities and people of all ages. Nine community and two farm displays competed. A fine display of grains and grasses, vegetable and fruit were entered in open classes. Seventy-seven dairy cattle and seventy beef animals were on display also twenty-one sheep and nineteen hogs. Forty exhibitors displayed poultry and fourteen people exhibited rabbits. The exhibits of sewing, baking, art work in the women's departments were especially good but the canning department fell behind in number of entries. Seven girls' 4-H home economics clubs exhibited in individual booths. Thirteen girls entered the 4-H Home economics judging contest and 4 teams competed in demonstrations. Twenty-seven girls participated in the style show Saturday night and 16 women took part in the ladies extension club style show. 22 boys and girls took part in the livestock judging contest and 9 participated in the potato judging contest. Some of the special features of the fair included a fine department for amateurs, sponsored by the Sandpoint camera club, a display of grades of eggs and demonstrations on candling eggs, given by C.W. Neider, Horticultural Inspector, and a fine display of grains and exhibits showing value of green manures, displayed by Mr. Ralph Knight, Superintendent of the Sandpoint Experiment Station.

A new Fairgrounds was built in 1972 on North Boyer Avenue and the Fair has increased to a five day event. At the 1999 Fair, the 4-H Fat Stock sale included 106 swine, 61 Sheep and 32 Steers. A number of 4-H beef breeding stock was also exhibited, along with a few dairy, pigs, sheep and goats. Also exhibited was a nice display of open class Beef including Jack Filopowski's Poled Hereford; Leonard Wood's, Red Angus; Bert Wood's, Shorthorn; Alan McNall's, Shorthorn; Billie Anderson's, Black Angus; Merle Olsen's, Simmental; Lola Balison's, Simmental; and Jim Hickey's, Simmental Cross.

# Extension Work in Bonner County

According to record, the first County Extension Agent in Bonner County was R.A. McCulley who took office February 28, 1918 and left October 22 of the same year. Very little information is available as to his program or accomplishments.

Mr. McCulley was replaced by E. L. Ludwig, who held office from October 23, 1918 to February 1, 1921. Extension work was organized in cooperation with the Farm Bureau with 68 members in 1918, 220 in 1919 and 654 in 1920. Mr. Ludwig was an organizer, organizing the first cow testing association in Northern Idaho in 1920, which operated at record cost of 8.80 per cow for the 200 cows tested.

Other projects carried on in 1920 included rodent control, the testing of 700 cows for Tuberculosis, conducting a two day potato show, distribution of 5 cars of stumping powder, assisting in organizing a farmers' market which handled \$7120.00 worth of meat and produce and promotion of a seed potato industry, using Netted Gems and Northern Idaho Rurals.

It was during his administration that home economics work was introduced. Miss Mary Lucile Lee, now Mrs. Eugene Ralph who resides at Clark Fork, came to Bonner County as a specialist in home economics, January 12, 1920 and after six month's trial remained as a Home Demonstration Agent until July 1, 1921. Her work included the establishment of health clubs for underweight youngsters, food clubs, work in clothing, remodeling clothing, millinery, canning of fish and meat, poultry improvement and sanitation. Mrs. Ralph introduced hot lunches in schools, many of which continue to this day. 184 flocks of poultry were culled under her direction in 1920.

Mr. P. T. Fortner, entered the service as County Agent in Bonner County on February 16, 1921 and remained here until the work was discontinued on March 1, 1923.

Mr. Fortner continued the seed potato work, started by his predecessor, conducting seed potato shows in 1921 and 1922. In 1922, 140 growers planted 350 acres for certification out of which 73 farmers with 220 acres passed inspection made by E. R. Bennett, on Netted Gem, Idaho Rural and White Early Ohio varieties. Sometime during this period a county seed growers association was organized but because of marketing difficulties broke up after extension work was discontinued in the county.

Sunflowers for silage were introduced in 1921 when five men built stave silos. In 1922 six men grew sunflowers for silage on 20 acres, averaging 10 ton per acre. The Kootenai Guernsey Bull Association which is still in operation was organized in 1921. Three Jersey bull clubs were organized, using one local animal and two donated by the Waikiki farm of Spokane.

Some experimental work was started on peat soils in cooperation with B.R. McDols, Soil Technologist, to determine their fertilizer requirements. Preliminary work in the control of perennial weeds was begun.

32,000 pounds of pieric acid was shipped into Bonner County for land clearing at the cost of \$12.15 per hundred pounds.

The present county agent arrived in the county on March 23, 1926 after having served in the same capacity in Bingham County. The Sandpoint Experiment station, under the direction of J. E. Christ, had learned through experimenting how to grow alfalfa hay which information was available in 1925. As the basis for agriculture in this county was production of desirable winter feed for livestock, it was the county agent's job to put over an alfalfa program. This developed into a long time program and included the use of grimm seed, gypsum, inoculation and rolling equipment. The acreage of this crop has grown from 198 acres in 1919 to 2,786 in 1929 and 4,272 in 1934, according to census. The 1940 census will show a large increase over this figure. A survey made by this office showed that dealers imported over \$100,000.00 worth of hay in 1928 to feed Bonner County livestock.

1926-1935 showed an increase from 1107 farms to 1451 due to influx of farmers from the Middle West who needed assistance in becoming established in a new country.

# Reference to Farm Bills and Provisions Since 1933

Year	Name of Farm Bill	Tools/Programs
1933	Agriculture Adjustment Act of 1933	Price support, Supply Controls, Set Parity as Price Goals set aside plow down marketing certificates
1934	Jones-Costegau Act	Add sugar cane and sugar beets to supported crop Rental and benefit payments in regard to diverted acreage
1934	Ken Smith Tobacco Control Act	Mandatory tax on sale of all tobacco
1934	Corn-hog program	No corn plowed down Removal of 4 million pigs and 1 million sows about to farrow 1.4 million head and 92 million pounds of pork bought by Federal Surplus Rel Corp.
1935	Agricultural Adjustment Act Amendments	Authorized presidents to impose import quotas on supported crops
1936	Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act	Voluntary shifting of acreage out of production Introduced parity as goal for farm income Introduced conservation as a goal Benefit payments with conditions
1937	Ag Marketing Agreement Act of 1937	Marketing Orders - classification of prices according to use - minimum price to producers
1938	Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938	Price supports with nonrecourse loans Marketing quotas for several crops Acreage allotments Nonrecourse loans All risk crop insurance (early MPCI)
1941	War Time Legislation	Loan rates increased to 85% of parity*
1942	Steagall Amendment	90% parity for basic commodities corn, cotton, peanuts, rice, tobacco and wheat for “duration plus 2 years”
1944	Surplus Property Act	Cotton price support at 95% of parity
1948	Agricultural Adjustment Act	Mandatory price supports at 90% for 1949

		crops if producers approved marketing quotas Failed to get 2/3 approval of quotas
1949	Agricultural Act	Continued 80-90% parity target through 1951 75 to 90% parity support price through 1952 if approved marketing quotas Became fundamental or permanent legislation without expiration date (Important to today's ag program debate)
1952	Agricultural Act	More of the same: Parity supports and marketing quotas
1954	Agricultural Act	Established flexible price supports at range of 82.5 - 90% of parity in 1955 and 75 - 90% thereafter
1954	Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act (PL 480)	Mechanism for disposal of surplus ag commodities through: sales, barter, and credit
1956	Agricultural Act	Established the Soil Bank with fixed payment to retire land for 10 years Conservation Reserve of up to 29 million acre
1958	Agricultural Act	Corn growers given two options: - high supports and effective supply controls - no supply controls and low price support - massive stocks built up as a result of no supply controls
1961	Emergency Feedgrain Act	Voluntary program to divert corn and sorghum acres in return for 50% of support rate payment. First use of payment in kind (PIK) Feedgrain support price was 74% of parity
1961	Food and Agricultural Bill	Cochran's mandatory supply controls Introduced wide spread supply controls for grains; to use quotas in a referendum Passed the Senate but defeated in the House
1962	Food and Agricultural Act	As finally passed was an extension of 1961 Act Two tier feedgrain supports in addition to price supports Offered wheat farmers \$1.82 support price if complied with 55 million acre allotments but voted down marketing quotas



		Abolished 55 million acre wheat allotment in 1964
1963	National Wheat Referendum	Failed to win 2/3 approval of wheat farmers
1964	Cotton and Wheat Act	<p>Paid domestic handlers a subsidy to bring prices of cotton and wheat down to the export price</p> <p>Continued support for farmers planting within allotments</p> <p>Scale of support prices based on level of plantings in their allotments</p> <p>Began a PIK program for cotton</p>
1955	Food and Agriculture Act (First 5 year program)	<p>Extended wheat and feedgrain programs to 1969, later extended to 1970</p> <p>Minimum cotton set aside 12.5% to reduce surpluses</p> <p>Cropland Adjustment Program 5-10 year contracts to retire land; lack of funding prevented use</p>
1970	Agricultural Act of 1970	<p>Eliminated allotments and marketing quotas for wheat, feedgrain and cotton</p> <p>Set aside required for access to price supports: 25% cotton</p> <p>\$55K payment limit per crop</p> <p>Deficiency payments equal to difference between X% of parity and market price</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cotton 65% parity (35 cents/lb.)</li> <li>- corn 70% parity (\$1.35/bu.)</li> </ul> <p>Forced to plant eligible allotment to continue receiving payments</p>
1973	Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973	<p>Continued set aside authority but emphasized expanded production to replace price supports to increase farm income</p> <p>Introduced Target Prices and deficiency payment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cotton 0.38/lb</li> <li>- wheat 2.05/bushel</li> <li>- corn 1.38/bushel</li> </ul> <p>Target prices increased in '76 and '77 for inflation on cost of production</p> <p>Secretary raised loan rates due to anticipated higher demands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1.37 to 2.25 per bushel wheat</li> <li>- 1.10 to 1.50 per bushel corn</li> </ul> <p>\$20,000 payment limit per crop</p>

		Disaster payments introduced Milk support price 75 to 90% of parity: 80% in practice
1977	Food and Agriculture Act of 1977	Raised price supports and target prices (but not related to cost of production) Continued supply controls as set asides Introduced Farmer Owned Reserve for grains Set up new two tier peanut program
1980	Crop Insurance Act of 1980	Made multi-peril crop insurance (MPCI) available for “all” crops in all regions MPCI was viewed as a replacement for disaster programs End of low yield disaster programs
1981	Agriculture and Food Act of 1981	Set specific target prices for 4 years Rice allotments and marketing quotas eliminated Dairy support prices lowered
1982	Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1982	Froze dairy price supports
1983	Payment-in-Kind (PIK) Program Act of 1983	Voluntary, massive acreage reduction by adding PIK payments for grain, cotton and rice Instituted by Executive Action
1983	Dairy and Tobacco Adjustment Act of 1983	Started a voluntary dairy diversion program
1984	Agricultural Programs Adjustment Act of 1984	Wheat PIK continued for 1 year Froze target prices in 1981 Act Paid diversion program for feedgrains, cotton and rice
1985	Food Security Act of 1985 (FSA)	CCC loans continued Target Price decreased 10% by 1990 Formula to set loan rates with Secretary discretion to decrease loan another 20% below the formula to encourage trade Marketing loan for cotton and rice introduced Findley payments for grains introduced Secretary given the option for a marketing loan for grains 50/92 program introduced Acreage reduction program continued with the annual levels set at discretion of Secretary Farm program yield frozen at 1985 levels Payment limit \$50,000/ “person” as

		<p>defined by ASCS (now FSA)</p> <p>Farmer Owned Reserve extended</p> <p>Bid based CRP, Sodbuster, Swampbuster introduced with maximum of 45 million acres of CRP and minimum of 40 million acres by 1990</p> <p>Dairy continued price supports</p> <p>Dairy termination-whole herd buy-out introduced</p> <p>Export market development and expansion</p> <p>Conservation Compliance on highly erodible land introduced</p> <p>Export Enhancement Program (EEP)</p>
1990	Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 and The 1990 Budget Reconciliation Act (FACT)	<p>CCC loans and target prices were continued</p> <p>Dairy herd buy-outs were prohibited</p> <p>0/92 program continued for grain</p> <p>50/92 program continued for cotton and rice</p> <p>Marketing loan mandated for cotton and rice</p> <p>Marketing loan optional for grains and oilseeds</p> <p>Findley loan eliminated</p> <p>CAT (catastrophic yield coverage) introduced</p> <p>Introduced Planting Flexibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Normal flex acres (NFA of 15%) and</li> <li>Optimal flex acres (OFA of 10%)</li> </ul> <p>Payment limits per “person”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- \$50,000 for deficiency payments</li> <li>- \$75,000 for marketing loan gains</li> <li>- \$250,000 over all payments</li> </ul> <p>Wool and mohair payment limit decreased from 200K to 125K per person over 5 years</p> <p>Target prices lowered and then frozen at \$4.00/bu, 2.75/bu, 0.729/lb, and \$10.71/cwt for wheat, corn, cotton and rice, respectively</p> <p>Minimum loan rate on cotton and rice 0.50/lb and 6.50/cwt, respectively</p> <p>ARP follow stocks/use schedule</p> <p>Authorized FOR at Secretary discretion</p> <p>CRP extended; WRP established with 1 million acres</p>

		Ag Water Quality Protection Program with 10 million acres authorized Reauthorized PL480, EEP, export market development
1993	Amendments to the National Wood Act	Wool and mohair program phased down and terminated by 1995
1996	Federal Agricultural Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (FAIR)	Eliminated target prices for income supports Nonrecourse (CCC) loans and marketing loans continued Minimum loan rates at 85% of 5 year average, except cotton and rice. Maximum loan rates capped at 1995 levels. Introduced decoupled AMTA payments Complete planting flexibility (except for fruits and vegetables) Eliminated set asides, ARP's and diversion Payment limits of \$40K for AMTA payments and \$75K for loan deficiency payments, maintained 3 entity rule and generic certificates Forced marketing loan for all program crops except ELS cotton Dairy reduce milk support price to \$9.90 by 1999 Discontinue current dairy price support in 2000 CRP and WRP extended Producers allowed to re-bid CRP contracts that were maturing. Cap on CRP acres lowered to 36.4 million acres Initiated EQIP program
1998	Emergency Farm Financial Relief Act of 1998	Early release of AMTA payment 49.7 percent additional AMTA subsidy Disaster assistance MPCI additional premium subsidy Livestock and dairy disaster assistance
1999	Consolidated and Emergency Appropriation Act of 1999	100 percent additional AMTA subsidy Disaster assistance MPCI additional premium subsidy Livestock and dairy assistance
2000	Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2000	100 percent additional AMTA
2001	Agricultural Economic Assistance Act	100 percent additional AMTA

2002	The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	<p>Target prices enacted with counter-cyclical payments (CCP)</p> <p>Initiated direct payments that function exactly like AMTA payments and added eligible commodities</p> <p>Marketing loan program continued</p> <p>Marketing loan program enacted for wool, mohair, honey, pulse crops</p> <p>Peanut quota eliminated. Initiated marketing loan, direct payment, and target price. Quota bought out at 11 cents per pound annually for 5 years or lump sum.</p> <p>Maintained dairy price support.</p> <p>Established 3 ½ year Milk</p> <p>Income Loss Contract Program with direct payments made on up to 2.4 million pounds of production annually.</p> <p>Re-institutes base acres. Producers allowed choice to update base acres to average of 1998-2001 planted and considered planted acres or keep old base acres.</p> <p>Allows producers choice to update farm program yields (used in CCP calculation only) using 1998-2001 yields.</p> <p>Add oilseed base acres. Soybeans and minor oilseeds given target price, CCP, and direct payments.</p> <p>CCPs and fixed payments remain decoupled.</p> <p>Direct payment limited to \$40,000, CCPs limited to \$65,000 and LDPs and MLGs limited to \$75,000. Three entity rule and generic certificates maintained. Peanuts and wool &amp; mohair given separate payment limit.</p> <p>County-of-origin labeling for mandatory in two years for meat, fruits, vegetables, fish, and peanuts. For USA product label it must be born, raised, and processed in U.S.</p> <p>Conservation Security Program to provide incentives to producers for maintaining and enhancing environmental quality.</p> <p>EQIP funding increased six-fold.</p>
2003	Agricultural Assistance Act of	Crop Disaster Program (CDP) provides

	2003	<p>payments for commodity losses for 2001 or 2002 due to weather-related disasters.</p> <p>Livestock Assistance Program (LAP) provides assistance to producers for grazing losses.</p>
2004	Florida Hurricane Agricultural Disaster Assistance Program	<p>Florida Citrus Disaster Program reimburses producers on a per acre basis for each eligible grove using a four tier payment system.</p> <p>Florida Nursery Crop Disaster Program provides cleanup assistance for nursery or fernery acres requiring a minimum of \$250 per acre to restore the area. Florida Vegetable, Fruit, and Tropical Fruit Disaster Program provides payments to producers with a minimum of 50% loss in production or plant population.</p>
2004	Emergency Programs for Disaster Assistance 2003-2005	<p>Provides more than \$3 billion in financial relief to farmers, ranchers, foresters, and other agricultural producers who incurred losses due to weather conditions in 2003, 2004, or 2005.</p>