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HISTORICAL SKETCH OF NEGRO 4-H CLUB WORK  
IN THE EXTENSION SERVICE

A radio talk by T. M. Campbell, Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama, delivered in the National 4-H club radio program, May 2, 1936, and broadcast by a network of 58 associate NBC radio stations.

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In 1868 General Samuel Chapman Armstrong established Hampton Institute in Virginia for the education of negro ex-slaves in agriculture, trades, and industries. Four years later there came to this institution a negro boy from West Virginia named Booker T. Washington.

He completed the course of study and in 1881 was designated by General Armstrong to go into the deep South to Tuskegee, Alabama to establish a school for negroes patterned after Hampton Institute. Today this school is known throughout the civilized world as "The Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute."

From the very beginning the founders of Hampton and Tuskegee laid much stress on the dissemination of information among the negro farmers of adjacent communities who because of their lack of opportunity could not avail themselves of formal schooling. This reaching out consisted largely of farmers conferences, agricultural exhibits and home visits.

In 1906, Dr. Seaman A. Knapp, the originator of Farmers' Cooperative Demonstration Work of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, met with leaders of negro education in the South and a little later appointed a few key negro demonstration agents to travel over the South and through them organized "Boys' Corn Clubs" and Girls' Tomato Clubs."

With the establishment of the Cooperative Extension Service in 1914 this work with boys and girls having proved its value, the Government provided for its expansion and made it a regular part of the extension system.

Today all of the Negro Land-Grant Colleges in the South are fostering 4-H clubs as a part of their extension programs and are doing excellent work in the States of Arkansas, Kentucky, Maryland, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma and Texas. Of these states, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi and West Virginia have full time State 4-H club agents employed. In the other States the work is projected on a part-time basis by the negro county agents and the State Supervisory Forces.

Much credit is due the philanthropic boards, business concerns, banks, newspapers, church organizations, schools, state health departments, and public spirited individuals for the support they have given and are now giving negro 4-H club work all over the South.

Fellowships have been granted by Education foundations to ex-club members to further their training in agriculture and home economics; business concerns offer liberal prizes annually to stimulate 4-H club work; banks lend

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money to negro boys and girls to finance their projects; daily and county newspapers give much space in their columns; publicizing outstanding achievements of negro 4-H club members and religious and educational institutions make their resources available to county and state 4-H club groups.

Splendid relationships are being developed and maintained between the races through the 4-H club work. In one state the Department of Education now makes its school busses available for transporting 4-H club delegates to the negro state land-grant college for their annual short course. In another the county government charters a commercial bus and sends its quota of negro 4-H club members to Farmers' Week at the college.

For promoting an effective 4-H club program in the South for negroes, we have the following assets: 223 farm demonstration agents; 156 home demonstration agents; 6 state 4-H club supervisors and 30 state adult supervisors; a total of 415. There is an encouraging increase in enrollment of 4-H club members each year. The major projects carried on by negro 4-H club boys are demonstrations in soil improvement, cotton, corn, sweet potatoes, peanuts, poultry, dairying, beef cattle and swine. The major projects for girls are foods and nutrition, poultry, clothing, home improvement, gardening and handicrafts. Recreation is provided for both groups. One of the most encouraging features of this service among our young people is that it has developed capable leadership.

It is hoped that this work will continue to grow until every boy and girl now living on the farm may enjoy its benefits.

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