

The meetings are continuing to have good attendance and there is a general and wide-spread interest being shown in Farm Bureau activities. Every indication points to the fact that the past two and a half years of the Farm Bureau is beginning to reap its reqr'd.

At Hilmar on Thursday evening a Hog auction committee meeting was held, which was one of the largest committee meetings ever held in this county, there being fifty-two people present. After discussing the matter of the packers' refusal to come to Tegner, they decided to do what improving they found necessary in order to satisfy the packers. If they will not remain satisfied they intend to form a Live Stock Shipping Association trying to combine Merced, Stanislaus, and San Joaquin Counties.

Livingston held a very nice Farm Center picnic on Saturday at which approximately two hundred people were present and a very enjoyable time was had by everyone. Plans are going forward in good shape for a big time at the Farm Bureau Picnic on October 18th.

NARRATIVE REPORT.

1. DEVELOPMENT OF FARM BUREAU ORGANIZATION DURING THE YEAR.

The Farm Bureau is practically the only farmers' organization in the county; the exceptions being a cooperative cannery at Hilmar started in 1919, a cooperative elevator started in 1918 and the Tegner Warehouse Company started in 1915.

The President of the Merced County Farm Bureau is E. R. Leedom, Turlock, and the Secretary is M.M. Reiman of Planada, California.

The biggest development in the Farm Bureau organization is the attitude of the people towards the work. The organization has taken the place in the county of the body through which all problems for the public good are being worked out. A year ago there were many who took an indifferent attitude to the work whereas now there are very few people in the county who have not a definite idea on how they stand in regard to the Farm Bureau work. A few are opposed to its policies which is natural. This change from indifference on the part of many has been brought about by getting results. When the work first started a series of short snappy projects were started which could bring immediate results. Meanwhile, the work on the most vital projects to the community were carefully gone into and a plan for completing these drawn up. As these showed development, more and more of the influential men fell in line until most everyone is now working on projects connected with the Farm Bureau.

The membership has increased from around 500 to about 1000. The question of membership is now solving itself as the people are inclined to come up and pay their membership at the Farm Center meetings.

The Agricultural Councils (Committees on Program of Work) are a great influence in getting people in each community interested and in guiding the policies of that community. The work is developing at such a rate that the County Agent and his Assistant are kept busy in keeping in touch with the different situations in this county.

2. PROGRAM OF WORK IN AGRICULTURE.

The situation in this county is different from most with regard to the program of work. Before this program of work plan was adopted, the Farm Bureau had already formulated what is called the "Agricultural Councils." The system calls for meetings by this committee every one, two or three months and in most centers this has worked out very satisfactory. When the community program of work idea was launched, the committees felt as though they could not lay out a whole year's work so have developed projects as they came along.

The county projects underway at that time were as follows:

1. Irrigation Districts.
2. Fire Protection.
3. Hog Auctions.
4. Wool Pool.

5. Permenant Pruning Demonstrations.
6. Permenant Vineyard Demonstrations.
7. Jackrabbit Control.
8. Better Roads.
9. Extension of Telephones.
10. Boys' Clubs.
11. Cowtesting.
12. Grazing Project.
13. Annual Meeting.
14. Bean Tariff.

3. MAJOR PROJECTS.

(a) MERCED IRRIGATION DISTRICT.

Work on the Merced Irrigation District was begun in October 1917. By December 1918 the work was properly organized and an outline submitted by the Department of Irrigation Investigation which was adopted by the Farm Bureau and was being followed.

ORGANIZATION

During the year a manager was hired and also a publicity manager. Officers from each Farm Center interested were appointed on the subcommittee to help carry this work forward and to keep the people in touch with the situation.

OPPOSITION.

Opposition arose and a "Protection League" formed. After this, the matter took on the form of a fight for five months. After losing out, on every move it made, the "Protection League" finally disbanded although several sources of opposition still showed up.

LEGISLATION.

The center of the fight in the spring was taken up before the state legislature where several bills were pending affecting this district. The one calling for a majority vote in organizing a district in place of two-thirds was the only one that got out on the floor and was finally passed and signed. However, a referendum petition held this up for two years.

OPPOSITION DISTRICTS.

The oppositions next move was to form a series of small districts so as to be eliminated from the big district. The State Engineer turned down these smaller districts. The Board of Supervisors finally passed on one with 5700 acres which was organized and excluded from the big district.

FINAL RESULTS.

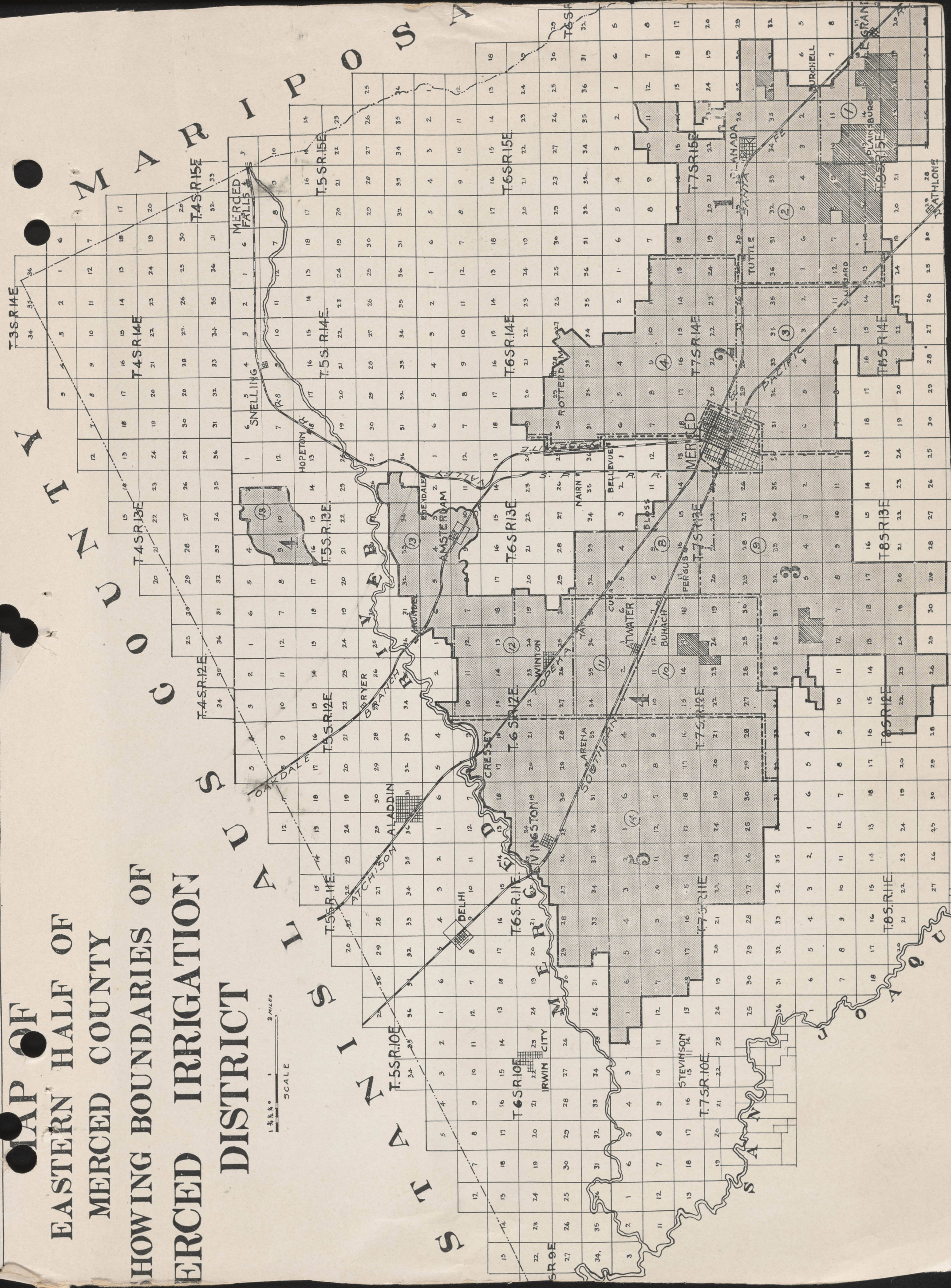
They then passed favorably on the Merced District and the election was called for Nov. 25th, 1919. This district at that time included 173,000 acres. At the time of the election on November 25th, the district was voted on favorably by a vote of 1967 to 922, giving 123 votes more than necessary. This carried the project as far as the Farm Bureau had planned and the matter now is placed in the hands of a Board of Directors of five who were elected at the same time the district was organized. The accompanying map shows the boundaries of the district.

PUBLICITY.

It was found necessary on starting this project to break down many old prejudices of the old timers and large landowners.

HOWING BOUNDARIES OF EXERCISED IRRIGATION DISTRICT

SCALE



Besides this, it was necessary to overcome the suspicions of the people against the Crocker-Huffman Land and Water Co. which in the past had treated the users of water in a very unsatisfactory manner. These things combined with the false statements put out by the opposition and the large foreign element made it a difficult proposition to put across. It required many times the ordinary amount of publicity and education. These campaigns were carried on through the local newspapers, committees in the various farm centers doing individual talking, farm center meetings, Farm Bureau Monthly, and pamphlets mailed out to individual voters.

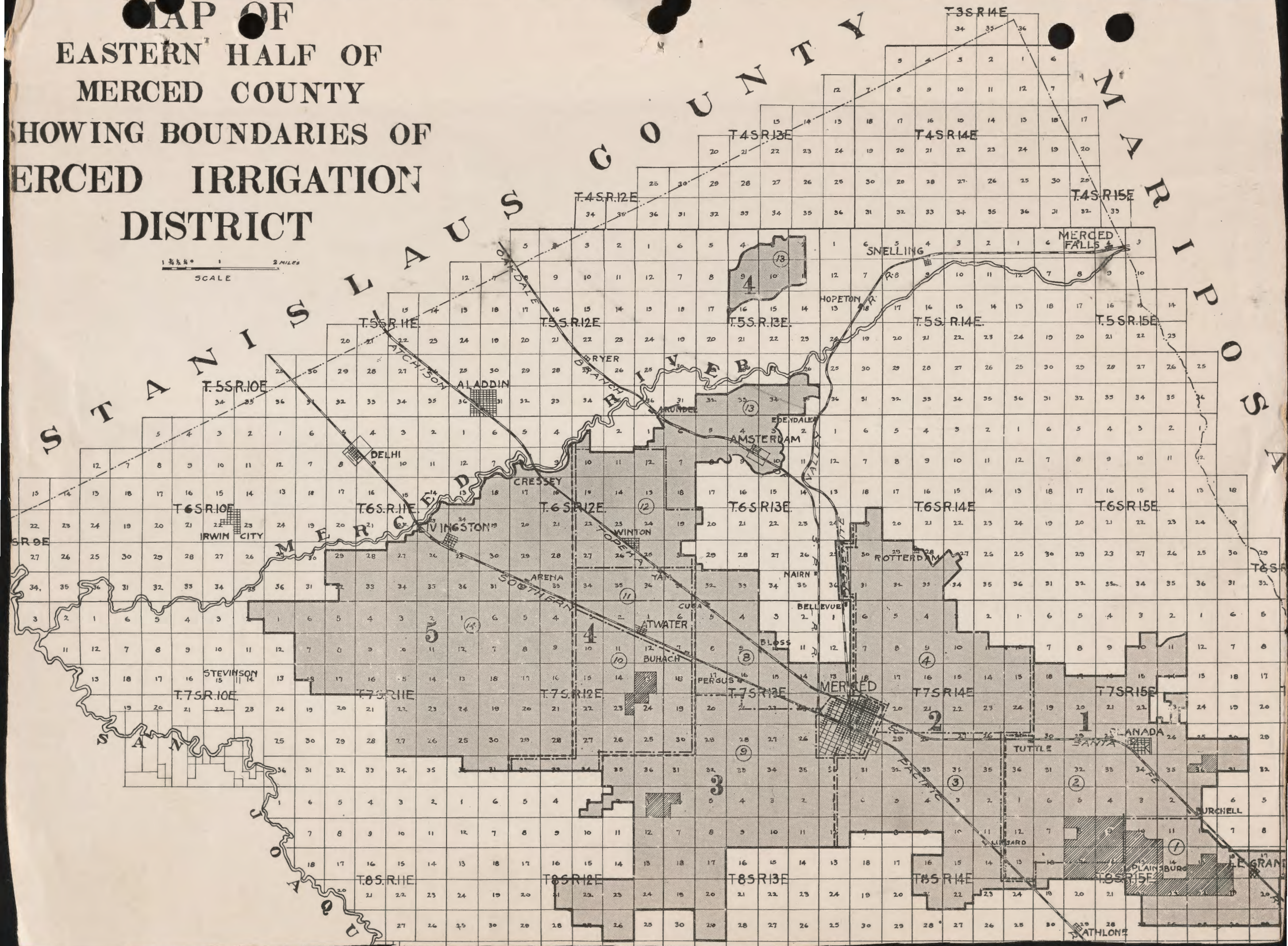
EFFECT.

The effect of all this work has been to give the people of this locality a broader viewpoint on public matters. It has made the farmers look to the Farm Bureau as the one big organization in the county planning to better their condition. It has educated the people on all agricultural questions in any way related to the water problem to a point which would have required years of hard work by other means.

The material effect has already shown itself by the increased inquiry for land in this locality. As soon as the water is obtained it will just about double the production of those lands that are at present working under a system that gives water till July 1st. To those lands that are under dry farming conditions at present production should be increased four and five fold.

MAP OF
EASTERN HALF OF
MERCED COUNTY
SHOWING BOUNDARIES OF
MERCED IRRIGATION
DISTRICT

1 1/2 MILES
SCALE



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Besides this monetary gain the whole attitude of the people of this section has changed. They look to the Farm Bureau for the bettering of conditions surrounding rural life. They are also looking ahead with prospects instead of looking back with bitterness toward the people who placed many of them under unfortunate conditions.

(b) WEST SIDE DISTRICT.

HISTORY

After the Westside people had tried to put over a district in 1918, they came to the Farm Bureau during the dry spell in July 1919 and asked for help.

ORGANIZATION

The first work done on this proposition was therefore to get a properly organized body. Committees from each farm center were appointed. They met at Los Banos and elected a Chairman and Secretary. They also hired an attorney and are now following the plan of the Merced District in most of their matters. The Department of Irrigation Investigations has been called in to help out.

OPPOSITION.

Miller and Lux are countering by forming an irrigation district of their own.

(c) FIRE PROTECTION.

HISTORY

Merced County was the first county to adopt a systematic fire protection plan as a ^{way} ~~work~~ measure. With the help of the

Forestry Service, a plan of rural districts and companies was planned and carried out in 1917. In 1918 this was developed further but the great need proved to be sufficient equipment.

IMPROVEMENTS.

At a meeting in 1919 the various captains from the companies obtained \$2,000 from the Supervisors. This was used to purchase extinguishers, forks, shovels, etc. These were placed in various districts in charge of competent deputies.

RESULTS.

As a result it is estimated that \$30,000 was saved this year. Seventeen fires started doing a damage of \$11,000.

(a) JACKRABBIT CONTROL.

HISTORY.

In the summer of 1917, jackrabbits were such a pest that farmers were unable to grow crops without losing a considerable portion of them through this pest. A campaign was put on in the winter of 1917-1918 which aided in ridding the county of a major portion of this pest. This was done by "shoots" carried on by ten "Farm Bureau Shooting Squads." As a result about 35,000 jackrabbits were killed in the 191⁷~~6~~-191⁸~~9~~ campaign. In the winter of 1918-19 the campaign was continued with the idea of finishing the job. It was found after each squad went out once or twice that the rabbits were so scarce that the interest could not be maintained in "Farm Center Shoots". A series of four combined drives were planned and carried out.

RESULTS

The total results from this winters campaign was that about 5000 rabbits were killed. The results of the Jackrabbit Control Work was (1) It practically eliminated the jackrabbit from the county as a pest. (2) It furnished sport for large community gatherings. (3) It furnished considerable meat for markets during the war period. (4) It paid its own way and (5) It furnished the people with a new and friendly view towards the Farm Bureau.

(e) HOG AUCTIONS.

HISTORY.

Auction sales of hogs were started in Merced County at Tegner on May 29, 1918. The plan adopted was the same as followed in Kern County. It was started in sections where the community had been shipping hogs but at that time was just about giving up the work. The object mainly was to revive two farm centers, which was accomplished immediately.

MARKETING ASSOCIATION.

In January 1919, the sales at Tegner were doing very well, and shipping hogs once a month. In May 1919, several counties in the southern portion of the San Joaquin Valley combined and made a schedule of sales and called it the California Farm Bureau Marketing Association. Due to the fact that buyers followed the schedule of sales dates, it was necessary for Merced County to join the Association which was done in June, 1919. Since then this work has been conducted under the California

Farm Bureau Marketing Association. The sales at Tegner continued regularly once a month with about three carloads of hogs for each sale. In August 1919, sales began in the area of the county near Merced City. Since that time a regular monthly sale has been held in the southern part of the county either at Le Grand or Merced with from two to five carloads of hogs per sale.

RESULTS.

The total of the sales has resulted in a saving of about \$15,000 to the farmers. Besides this, a better class of hog is being produced and it has awakened more men to breeding more and better livestock.

(f). COWTESTING.

HISTORY.

A cowtesting department was organized in 1918 but due to the enlistment of the tester, it became necessary to discontinue the work after six months testing had been completed. This procedure left an unpleasant feeling in the minds of many farmers toward the work.

ORGANIZATION.

By April 1919, sufficient men had returned from the army to again think about taking up this work. As the Farm Advisors office was so busy, the Board of Directors went before the Supervisors and asked for a special appropriation to get this work started. The Supervisors gave \$200 and T. R. Leedom former tester was employed. Following six weeks work the organization was sufficiently advanced to hire a man. After

canvassing the several applicants, L. B. Gale a returned soldier was hired.

THE ASSOCIATION.

Mr. Gale started to work in May 1919 and has continued to give good satisfaction. The first month of testing there was only about 1000 cows tested. However, since then additional cows have been added to make up 1400 tests per month.

MADERA COUNTY.

The tester still felt he could test more cows. A survey showed that sufficient cows could not be obtained in the county. As a result a conference was called with Madera County Farm Bureau, at which conference it was found that Madera County had about 500 cows signed up for the association but was not getting many additions. As this was the amount needed to fill out the testers time a cooperative agreement was drawn up between the two counties and the tester is carrying on the work of both counties.

RESULTS.

Already many cows appearing to be boarders have been discarded. Many dairymen are feeding better and are asking for information on feeding; several dairymen have entered cows in the state competition; the bad feeling left by discontinuing the work last year has been overcome.

4. MINOR PROJECTS.

(a) BOYS CLUBS.

One successful club out of three started in 1918 gave a poor start for 1919. Therefore, one club was carried on to a successful

conclusion at Hilmar in 1919. The fall of 1919 shows two high school pig clubs organized and three farm center pig clubs in process of formation.

(b) EXTENSION OF TELEPHONE LINES.

One farmers telephone line has been established at Delhi with 16 subscribers. Three other farm centers have started projects to obtain lines. The work of these latter centers have merely included investigations.

(c) GOOD ROADS.

Repairing good roads has been undertaken by several farm centers through the Supervisors. The Farm Bureau was actively engaged in the campaign for the recent bond issue of \$1,250,000 which carried in July 1919. The Farm Bureau didnot promote this campaign but merely assisted the efforts of the committees.

(d) PRUNING PROJECTS.

Permenant pruning projects have been adopted for both vineyard and deciduous fruits. These projects call for supervision by the various divisions of the University over a period of five to six years, the demonstrator agreeing to carry on the plot as outlined by the person sent out by the Division.

(e) WOOL POOL.

In conjunction with Stanislaus county a wool pool was formed and a carload of wool shipped to Boston. The returns on this wool showed an increase of from 15 to 25cents a pound more than was offered by local buyers, making a saving of over \$1000 to the farmers. This project combined with the hog auctions have been the strongest factors in leading the farm bureau to undertake a marketing department. This Department is now in process of formation.

(f) BEAN TARIFF.

Several centers combined to remedy the slump in the bean market. The excessive importation of beans from the orient brought out the point that a protection was needed. A publicity campaign was started and various bean organizations were asked to cooperate. A bill is now pending in Congress calling for a 2 cent tariff.

5. WORK OF ASSISTANT.

In February 1919 a new assistant was assigned to this county. The new man was unacquainted with the work at the time. Therefore, for two months his main work consisted in bringing up details which the Farm Adviser was unable to take care of.

By the end of this two months period, the assistant had become well enough acquainted with the work so that definite projects such as Boy Clubs, Hog Auctions, etc. were turned over to him with some supervision by the Farm Adviser.

After trying both methods, that is, (1) giving the assistant definite projects (2) Assisting the farm advisor on all projects; a combination of the two was found most satisfactory. The Assistant undertakes to handle one or two projects exclusively and works with the Farm Adviser on a portion of the others.

The meetings are handled by the Farm Adviser and the Assistant each one taking half the meetings. Many of the meetings, however,

in both cases handle themselves without any assistance.

6. SUMMARY.

During the year, the number of Farm Centers have remained the same. The membership however, has just about doubled. The interest in the work during the year has more than doubled. There have been a few changes in officers but more offices created. The number of executive committees and other committees have increased. The present condition of the farm bureau is exceedingly healthy and prospects are bright for the coming year.

Difficulties as usual have been many. The Farm Bureau is doing things and as a result is meeting with opposition from people who do not understand this new way of doing things and feel that their rights are being encroached upon. Difficulty was met by recommending the Departments treatment for Smut Control. Other difficulties are the community quarrels which are bound to result where selfish people try to beat out those people that are working from an unselfish standpoint. This same holds true with respect to projects where men with selfish interests try to push themselves forward even to the detriment of the project. These two latter difficulties will continue to appear more and more as results of the farm bureau grow bigger.

One other difficulty which has arisen and will probably be found more in the future is the appearance of radical elements trying to get their radical ideas through. These radicals