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Rural Electrics Celebrate First Twenty-Five Years

Electrics Grow Rapidly-Face Never Ending Job

Average American Farmer Uses Four To Five Times More Electricity Than Expected

Some folks think the job of electrifying rural America is about done, now that more than 96% of all the farms, homes, schools, churches and businesses—outside the city limits—are being served with low-cost electric light and power.

Not so, says John Costen, manager of the Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation. Even more costly and difficult years lie ahead. "We must run, just to stand still," he insists, "because heavying-up our lines to meet ever increasing demands for more kilowatt hours is a never ending job."

Most folks back in '35, including the so-called experts, "guesstimated" that a farmer could possibly use as much as 90 to 100 kwh a month. That was when the average farm with central station electricity was using about 50 kwh per month. They figured he might install a few 25 watt bulbs, throw away the battery for his old radio, and buy his wife an electric iron. They didn't know Mrs. Farmer. They didn't realize that to her, good refrigeration is much more important than it is to city folks. So a freezer followed her refrigerator.

Then the electric water pump and heater brought a wave of washers and dryers. The automatic electric range replaced the old coal, wood, and oil stoves . . . and on, and on.

Meanwhile, Mr. Farmer found ways to milk his cows, feed and water his stock, move heavy crops into the silo and mow—cut hand labor drastically with electric power. This cost less, made him happier, and saved his back.

The result? Well, today, the average American farmer uses four to five times as much electricity as even the most optimistic "expert" guessed he would, back there in 1935.

Rural kwh Demand Up

And this growth continues. Rural Americans are increasing their demands for electricity much faster than their city neighbors. Within the next seven years demands will double again. And all of America's Rural Electric Systems are gearing up to meet this problem even before it happens.

This isn't all. Good roads, better telephone service—and low cow electricity — are causing more city folks to move to the country.

As farms grow in size ,and decrease in number, the proportion of non-farm consumers of the rural electric systems continues to increase.

From the start, America's Rural Electric Systems have been organized for service, not for profit. Their motto has been to "serve 'em all" in rural areas. They agree to provide this service to all, and at the lowest possible cost, when they borrow their capital funds from REA—at interest.

One thing sure, with our spiralling rural population, the new and better uses of electricity and the higher standards of living through the use of this modern necessity, demand for and use of electricity can move only upward in the years ahead.

Predict 5,600 kwh by 1963

Based on the past rate of increase, the Agricultural Research Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, prophesies that average annual electrical consumption per farm will reach 5,600 kilowatt hours by 1963.

By 1975, the average consumption per farm served by REA financed lines is expected to reach 10,800 kwh, more than 2½ times what it is today. Recent reports say the average yearly consumption by all consumers on lines financed by REA loans will hit 14,400 kilowatt hours by 1975. This is approximately 14 times the total capacity of earliest rural electric lines.

With prices of materials and labor up sharply, heavying-up and improving service with the latest modern equipment may well cost more than the original lines.

As one spokesman for the rural electric systems put it: "This spells out the need for continued loans from REA. America's Rural Electric Systems today own on the average only 18.2 percent of their systems. Because of this fact, there is little possibility that they can obtain the necessary funds for growth and expansion from private sources. It necessarily follows that needed funds must come from the Rural Electrification Administration, which already holds the first mortgage on all property of the borrowers."

FDR Signed Order That Electrified Rural America

Contrary to the way most Federal Government programs come about, rural electrification was not born in a smoke-filled room, in a Congressional cloakroom, or in a government office building in Washington.

Actual birthplace of this vast program, which has brought light and power to every nook and cranny of rural America, is said to have been a little cottage at Warm Springs, Georgia. And the plan evolved in the active brain of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Those who should know say the germ of this idea—low-cost electric light and power for all Americans, in or out of the city limits—came during F.D.R.'s first visit to Warm Springs in 1924.

At the end of his first month's stay, he couldn't understand the charge of 18c a kilowatt hour to light his cabin. This was about four times the rate he paid in his Hyde Park home in New York, and over six times the average cost of a kilowatt hour of electric power in rural America today.

F.D.R. felt that all America deserved the comforts and convenience of low-cost electricity. Fore than that, he decided to do something about it.

It wasn't until 1935, on May 11th to be exact, that this same man, then President of the United States, signed the Executive Order that brought the Rural Electrification Administration into being.

Program Changes Outlook

He visualized a program that was destined to change the whole outlook of rural people. The order created REA for the express purpose of starting and supervising a program of generation, transmission, and distribution of electrical energy to rural areas.

This was what people out in the country were waiting for. Backed up by long years of wait-

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Above-Rural Electrification is born as President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs executive order creating REA, May 11, 1935. Champions for rural people, Congressman Sam Rayburn (left above) and Senator George W. Norris sparked REA Act of 1936, making Rural Electrification a long range program.

Let's Face It. "It Just Ain't REA"

If you are one of those who calls everything connected with rural electrification "REA"—read on You will be surprised to learn that "REA" is the abbreviated name of a division in the U. S. Department of Agriculture—far removed from the local Rural Electric System that provides electrical service to rural Americans.

Actually, a number of organizations, and groups of organizations are actively engaged in making the nationwide rural electrification go and grow! As a help in understanding this program, here are a few basic facts about the various groups directly involved in rural electrification.

Rural Electric Systems are local organizations that actually do the work of providing electrical service to people who need and use the electricity. Individual electric systems, incorporated under state law, borrow money from the government through the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) to build electric lines and facilities.

These systems bill their members for the electricity they use. A portion of each bill is set aside for interest and principal payments on the REA loan. Rural Electric Systems are an outstanding example of private enterprise. They are owned, controlled, and operated by the local people who use the service they provide.

Since the start of the rural electrification program 25 years ago, over 1,000 rural electric

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PROCLAMATION

IN THE NAME AND BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF EDENTON

WHEREAS the continued well-being and economoic progress of our rural families are vital to the strength and welfare of our Community and our Nation, and

WHEREAS Rural Electrification has lighted the way, lightened the burdens, and brought a goodly measure of the luxuries of city living to all rural America, and

WHEREAS Rural Electrification has enabled farmers to produce efficiently and abundantly, and provide sanitary and high-grade food for city tables, and

WHEREAS billions of dollars spent for electric appliances and equipment in rural areas have meant sales and jobs in every segment of our economy, and

WHEREAS Rural Electrification has proved to be a sound investment and loans are being repaid with interest on or ahead of schedule, and

WHEREAS 1960 marks the 25th birthday, and the Silver Jubilee of the Rural Elertrification Program;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, John Mitchener, Jr., Mayor of the City of Edenton, do hereby proclaim the period from May 8 to May 14 to be Rural Electrification Week. Furthermore, I call upon my fellow citizens, whether rural or urban, to support and participate in the Silver Jubilee Celebration of Rural Electrificatiton.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and cause the seal of Edenton to be affixed.

DONE at the city of Edenton this 11th day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and sixty.

JOHN A. MITCHENER, JR., Mayor.

Rural Electricity Makes Jobs And Business Boom

Mention Rural Electrification and we usually think of light and power, heat and refrigeration. We think of the hundreds of ways electricity lends a helping hand in work, in play, and daily living.

We think of greatly improved standards of rural living, health and sanitation, throngs of city people moving to the country, and of a new and undreamed-of efficiency in farm production.

Twenty-five years of rural electrification have brought tremendous changes to the face of rural America, but that's not all. The Nation's REA loan program has generated billions of dollars of busines for people who do not live in rural areas. This includes the billions of dollars invested in electric lines and facilities ,as well as the endless list of appliances and equipment for farms and homes.

Jobs for Millions

These purchases and the labor required to build the lines and do the wiring have made jobs for millions, and profits for merchants up and down every main street in America. Back of every kilowatt hour of electricity distributed by America's Rural Electric Systems lie huge investments in electrical equipment, and the companion appliances, and equipment that go with rural electrification.

Rural customers, receiving electricity for the first time in their lives, have not been able to buy all the electrical equipment they needed or wanted. Spending more than a billion dollars a year, they have become the best customers electric appliance dealers ever had, and the market's still far from saturated.

Today, America's Rural Electric Systems are spending between $200 and $300 million annually on lines and facilities. At the same time, a new survey shows that rural electric consumers will buy over a billion dollars worth of appliances in 1960. That's good busines for all—means more and better jobs in cities and towns, too!

Everything's Electric

Looking ahead, the experts see an ever growing demand for things electrical on the farm or in country homes. In the 20 years just ahead rural people will spend more than $25 billion for absolutely necessary electrical goods such as lights, wiring, cilities, as well as the endless TV's, air conditioners, freezers, stoves, and other equipment required in modern farming and rural living.

One thing sure, REA loans not only enable rural people to serve themselves with electricity, but they are helping miners, factory workers, office personnel, stockholders, salesman, small businessmen, corporations, banks and tax divisions of local, state, and federal government.

Rural electrification is making jobs for millions, business boom, and profits directly or indirectly for everyone. Truly, rural electrification is good for all Americans!

More Than 1000 Locally Owned Electric Systems Now Serve 16,000,000 Rural Americans

This year, rural people everywhere are celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Rural Electrification Program, a social and economic "miracle" that has brought electric light and power to more than 16,000,000 Americans who were, almost literally, living in the dark—only a quarter century ago.

It was May 11, 1935, that President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Executive Order that created the Rural Electrification Administration. It seems laughable now, with $3½ billion having been invested to bring electricity to rural people, that Roosevelt's original appropriation was for only $75,000.

But the Nation's farms needed power, and the nation's workers desperately needed work. So rural electrification began as an arm of the Works Progress Administration in that depression year.

In 1936, Congress passed the Rural Electrification Act, setting up a long-term program under the Rural Electrification Administration—widely known as REA—which made it possible for groups of rural people to work together to serve themselves with electricity.

Almost from the beginning, use of electricity had been confined to town and city areas because the experts thought it would cost too much to bring it to the country.

Power companies said it was impractical, if not unprofitable, to extend electric lines to most people living outside of the city limits. They thought rural folks couldn't afford, or wouldn't pay the cost involved in getting electricity to them.

Few Farms Had Electricity

Consequently, only 3 percent of American farms were electrified by 1925; 10 percent by 1931, and barely 11 percent had central station electricity when REA came to life in 1935.

The picture has changed rapidly since the first REA loan was approved in July, 1935 Gone are the days of drab drudgery and back-breaking toil of pitching hay with a fork, carrying water by the pail, and firewood by the armful.

Lest We Forget

Kerosene lamps, lanterns, pump handles, and sadirons have lost their meaning to youngsters still in high school. The day is long-gone when farm folks seem to age overnight, and young people were forced to leave the farm for the city's bright lights, better jobs, and easier living.

The Rural Electrification Act of 1935 authorizes REA to lend funds to "persons, corporations, cities, districts, states, and cooperatives" for the construction of rural electric systems. The Act specifically prohibits use of loan funds to extend electrical service into the more profitable areas of towns and villages of over 1,500 population, or to anyone already being served.

Rural Electrics Serve Everyone

At the same time, rural electric borrowers agree to serve all who are without electricity in their area, regardless of whether the service is profitable or not. These restrictive handicaps leave America's Rural Electric Systems operating in many marginal and uneconomical areas.

Although from the start, opportunity for government loans have been available to all, it was the rural people themselves who took the ball and ran with it to build the lines.

Mainly as the result of this consumer cooperation ,and this "do-it-yourself" approach, today more than 96% of the farms, homes, rural churches, and businesses have low-cost electric power.

All along, rural people knew of the comforts and uses of electricity. Farmers, especially, were determined to have electrical service in their homes or on their farms. By the tens and hundreds, these people organized into cooperatives under the laws of their state and applied for an REA loan.

By working together, and with REA loans to finance construction, farmers and people in small towns were supplying themselves with dependable and economical electric power, a service they could get in no other way.

Cooperative leadership is shown by the fact that of the 1,085 electric systems who have borrowed Federal funds through REA, 984 have been cooperatives, 50 were public power districts, and 27 were other types of public bodies. Only 24 were private power companies.

1.5 Million Miles of Line

In the short span of 25 years, the locally-owned and managed rural electrics have built 1.5 million miles of electric distribution lines in rural America, and are serving more than 16 million people—nearly one-tenth of the total population of the Nation.

They furnish electricity to nearly 5 million meters!

That Rural Electrification is one of the best investments our government has ever made is shown by the loan repayment record of borrowers. From the start of REA in 1935, until January 1 1960 loans totaling nearly $3½ billion had been made for generation, transmission, distribution, and consumer facilities.

During the same period, borrowers had made payments to the Federal Government of over a billion dollars in principal and interest—a credit record envied by bankers everywhere. Much of this was paid ahead of due date!

Record of achievement in miles of line constructed and number

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450 Ways To Use Electricity On The Farm And In The Home

Who would have guessed 25 years ago that we would ever find as many as 200 uses for electricity on the farm? Those were the days when seasoned electric company executives laughed as REA engineers predicted some day U. S. farmers might use an average of 90 to 100 kilowatt hours of electricity a month!

Use of electricity today has passed the wildest dreams of 1935. Researchers in the United States Department of Agriculture now point to more than 450 different applications of electricity on the farm and in the farm home.

These new uses and big step-up in the consumption of electricity on farms is part of American agriculture's move to mechanize and substitute power and machinery for human labor both on the farm and in the home.

There have been real changes made from the early days when home use of electricity was limited almost entirely to lighting, powering the washing machine, and pumping water. From air conditioning to automatic water systems, rural electrification has made it possible for farm people, too, to live better electrically.

Radio, TV, clocks, refrigerators, freezers, stoves, washing machines, dryers, vacuum cleaners, water pumps, water and space heaters, dishwashers, mixers, and lawn mowers are common everyday uses of electricity around the home.

In fact, there's little today that can't be done easier, quicker, and better electrically. USDA's list of uses for electricity in the farm home includes just about every conceivable household gadget under the sun.

There are burglar and fire alarms, fish bowl heaters, bed warmers, biscuit bakers, can openers, Christmas tree turners, cigar lighters, communication systems, deodorizers, dumb waiters, dust precipitators, fish scalers, flour sifters, fly traps, and

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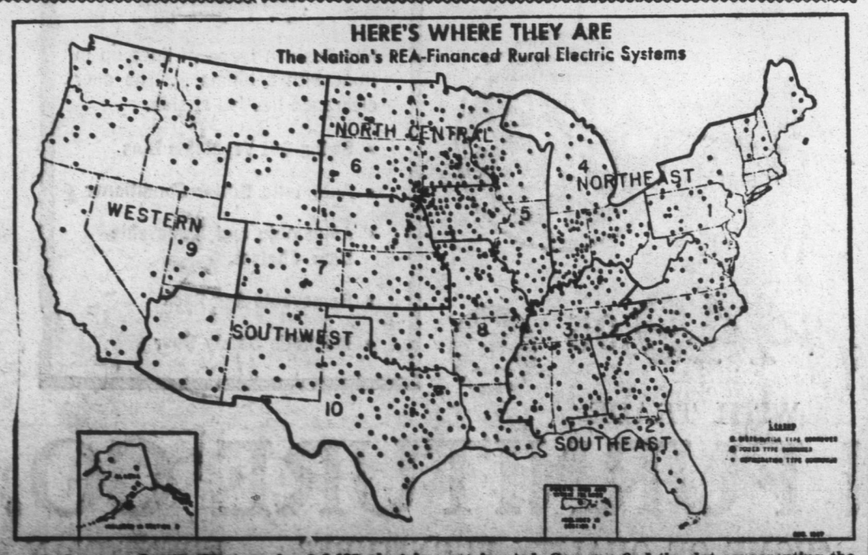

U. S. map shows where each of 3,085 electric systems borrowing money at interest from REA, are located. Can you find the dot representing the system which serves the area in which you live?

How Electric Power Has Changed The Face Of All Rural America

While no would-be expert has yet attempted to measure the complete impact of electrification on American agriculture, the influence of rural electrification on farming and farm life has been tremendous.

For years, farming has been undergoing a peaceful, yet rapid, revolution in technology, living standards, and working conditions. Everywhere, the magic power of electricity has played a leading role in the dramatic changes in both farming and life in rural areas.

96% Farms Electrified

With 96 percent of all farms in the United States electrified today, central station electricity has become so commonplace that farmers themselves seldom stop to figure just how much they depend upon it—until the power goes off.

The lights go out, the pump stops, and jobs that were mechanized yesterday suddenly must be done by hand.

Anyone who ever used the old sadiron for an hour, turned the corn sheller, pumped water, or pailed a dozen cows, knows how electricity is helping get the work done. Things are easier on the farm, today, everyone agrees.

Availability of dependable low-cost electric power is one of the important factors in modern farm efficiency. It is a major reason why farmers have stepped ahead of production increases in our factories. Believe it or not, output per farm worker today is double what it was 15 years ago, and three times what it was at the start of rural electrification in 1935.

While electricity has been cutting farm production and processing costs, it also has been raising standards of rural living, improving health conditions both in town and country, and helping provide quality food in abundance for city tables. Never have so many been fed so well by so few.

In 1930 one farm worker produced on the average, enough food and fiber for nearly ten people. Today each farm worker produces for 25 people, and American farmers are making plans to handle twice that number of people much before the turn of the century.

Wonderful Changes

Not only has rural electrification removed drudgery, and brought city living and city ways to rural areas, it also is credited with changing the entire outlook of rural people. Whether you live in the country or in town today, schools, churches, clubs, recreation and civic interests are often the same.

The only dividing line between town and country anymore is the city limit sign showing where the city streets begin. So—rural electrification, as no other single force, has transformed America's rural areas into a highly desirable place to live.

Three-fourths of the electricity used on the farm today is consumed in the home for lighting, cooking, washing, drying, pumping, water heating, space heating, cooling or freezing.

Automatic Hired Man

Use of electricity about the farmstead still is limited largely to chores that were time-consuming when done by hand. It powers the motor that turns, lifts, pumps, heats, freezes, grinds and sharpens.

Electricity powers clocks, solenoids and automatic controls to operate the lights, feeders and waterers so much a part of farming today.

On many a farm, electricity has replaced the hired man and at the same time permitted a big increase in the amount of productive livestock carried on the farm.

For instance, a single one horsepower motor can do as much work in one hour as the average man can do in an entire day, and the cost per unit of production is almost negligible.

For four or five cents, a farmer can pump 1,000 gallons of water, milk 30 cows, heat five gallons of water, cool 10 gallons of milk, shell 30 bushels of corn, cut a ton of silage and blow it into the silo

According to USDA findings, the average dairyman spends 119 man-hours a year on each cow in the herd. With modern buildings and the latest electrified equipment, he can cut his labor requirements to 67 man-hours or less.

Ups Production Per Man

Under the old system of hand milking one man had his hands full with 10 or 12 cows. Today, he lets electricity do the chores with silo unloader, barn cleaner and pipeline milker and he handles 30 to 40 cows with ease.

Everywhere farmers have cut their costs, solved their labor problems and greatly increased the size of their farming operations by putting this new electric hand to work.

For instance, barn cleaning for a 40-cow herd in New Jersey required 1½ man-hours daily when the fork and scoop were used. An electric-powered cleaner now does the job for four cents a day. Michigan State College reports 300 tons of manure can be moved mechanically from gutter to the spreaders for only one cent a ton. At that rate,

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How Our Own Rural Electric System Has Grown

By JOHN COSTEN, Manager AEMC

We appreciate this opportunity to present the business of rural electrification to the people living in the non-rural areas and the business people of the community. Rural electrification is a business, and a big one. Our Cooperative alone is a $1,437,000 business. Nationally, the rural electrification program is a business with assets of well over three billion.

During the last 25 years, rural electrification has contributed greatly to the economic well being of farmers and to you people right here on Main Street. Farmers increased their efficiency through the use of electricity in diversified farming. Then with their increased incomes, they bought more items from you.

The members served along the 640 miles of rural lines of the Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation have spent over $6,000,000 for equipment requiring electricity for its operation. This includes appliances in the home and equipment on the farm. This amount livided into the trade areas of the Albemarle would indicate the trade areas of Hertford and Edenton would have purchased $3,500,000 of the total. We feel the aggressive merchants in Hertford and Edenton have had their share of the business.

On January 26, 1945, the Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation was organized for the purpose of providing electric service to the rural area of the Albemarle. The original organization work was started by Mr. Louis Anderson, Perquimans County Farm Agent, with the assistance of the County Agents of the other counties. They were assisted by J. Wilson Jones, J. A. Whitehurst from Camden County, Walter Lowry and E. L. Brothers from Pasquotank, A. T. Lane and John Q. Hurdle of Perquimans and J. A. Higgins, George C. Wood and L. E. Francis of Chowan, and many others from the towns of Elizabeth City, Edenton, Hertford and the rural areas. Surely, no group so varied in interest have found a more common cause and worked so hard to accomplish their aim.

REA approved a loan of $685,000 for Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation on May 24, 1945. During 1945 contract was let for the construction of 47.5 miles of line in the South Mills area for the cost of $65,000, which was completed and put in service in August, 1946. By the end of the year the average monthly use per member was 53 KWH. This same area now is using over 300 KWH per member. The Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation has constructed 640 miles of lines serving 4.4 consumers per mile. They have borrowed from REA for this construction $1,437,000 and returned to REA $464,000, of which $206,000 was interest and $258,000 on principal. They also have $85,000 paid in advance.

The Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation employs an average of 16 employees with an annual pay roll of above $50,000.

The Cooperative is under the control of nine directors elected for a one-year term by the members.

A. T. Lane is president; J. A. Wiggins is vice president; Floyd Mathews, secretary; Charles E. White, Sr., treasurer. Tommie Temple and W. R. Lowry are directors from Pasquotank County; J. A. Whitehurst and J. W. Hastings, Camden; and John N. Bunch from Chowan.