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EXTENSION SERVICE JOINS
IN NEW WILDLIFE PROGRAM

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More and more farmers are asking how they can increase, manage, and make better use of wildlife as a farm crop. Particularly, they want plans that will make it possible for them to produce wildlife as a sideline to their ordinary farming operations.

As a result, the Bureau of Biological Survey is developing practical suggestions for wildlife management and restoration. Some ideas already developed are being applied on many farms. The Extension Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture has now arranged with the Survey to offer greater and more direct assistance to farmers and others in this field. I. T. Bode, formerly conservationist with the Survey, has been appointed the first wildlife specialist under the Extension Service. He will cooperate with the Survey and State Extension Services in working out ways and means for making available the information obtained by the Survey.

Texas and Iowa are the only States so far that have State extension specialists devoting full time to wildlife work. In many States, however, specialists in related fields have already devoted considerable time assisting county agricultural agents, club leaders, farmers, and others in carrying on activities in connection with some aspects of the Biological Survey's work.

For example, there have been 4-H rabbit clubs for some time in many States, and rabbit production has provided a supplementary meat supply and income from fur on many farms. Considerable activity along the lines of rodent and predatory-animal control also have had important economic bearing on farm operations. Wild birds have long been appreciated for their value in insect pest control and from the esthetic point of view. Probably of most recent importance is the request from farmers for assistance in plans for managing game birds and animals as a farm crop. The cooperative arrangement with the Extension Service will make it possible to do a better job of assisting farmers interested in wildlife management.

"Indicative of the importance of wildlife to farm income," says the Survey, "is the \$60,000,000 derived annually from fur-bearers in this country, and the fact that a large percentage of this return goes back to the lands on which the animals were trapped or raised. Of the total income, 15 percent is produced on the fur farms, which shows the possibility of raising certain fur animals in captivity on the farm. The total income from all fur animals could probably be doubled with better practices in trapping, raising, and handling of fur animals and pelts.

"The potential production of game and other wildlife on the farm," continues the Survey, "is immense, and the farmers are in a most favorable position to take part in any Nation-wide program for wildlife, for they are where wildlife is produced -- or not produced. Many of them value game as a source of meat for their families.

"Because of its direct and indirect economic benefits and its esthetic value to the farm, wildlife is important in any program that calls for efficient and complete land utilization. As such, wildlife management can very well become

a part of the farmer's agricultural practices, and thereby help round out his program for wise use of his land."

Mr. Bode has been actively engaged in the organization of the cooperative wildlife research, demonstration, and educational projects, under supervision of the Division of Wildlife Research of the Biological Survey, at 9 land-grant colleges. These research units, established during the last year, are in widely distributed representative regions so that the information developed will be applicable to areas as large as possible, not only in the States where the units are located, but also in adjacent States. Mr. Bode will continue to keep in close touch with these research units and other research of the Survey, so that he will be able to supply extension workers and others with information on new developments in wildlife management. He holds the B. S. and M. A. degrees from Iowa State College, and was Extension Forester in Iowa from 1921 to 1932. Before becoming conservationist for the Survey a year and a half ago, Mr. Bode was chief executive of the Iowa Fish and Game Commission.