

Looking Back 50 years...

Editor's Note

From 1963 through 1965 a series of county stories, describing the agriculture and agricultural history of Arizona counties (14 counties – Yuma and LaPaz were still one county) was published in *Progressive Agriculture*. Each was written by the County Agent, or prepared under his direction. Below are a few excerpts from those stories. Complete stories can be found in the University of Arizona Campus Repository. Links directly to the stories can be found on the *Backyards and Beyond* website home page under other resources. <http://cals.arizona.edu/backyards>

▶▶▶ *Agriculture in Greenlee County*

From: *Progressive Agriculture: November-December, 1963, Volume 15, Number 6*



NEAL ROBERTS of Ducan inspects an ancient water wheel which once was used to lift water from the Gila River into an irrigation canal near Clifton. This old structure still stands, although not in operational condition.

- ▶ Of the approximately 1,199,360 acre area of Greenlee County, only about 6,000 are in cultivation.
- ▶ Production of beef cattle and short staple cotton are the two major agricultural enterprises in Greenlee County. Principal farm crops are cotton, alfalfa, grain sorghum, barley, and corn.
- ▶ The Duncan Basin is known as a natural structural trough that extends northwest from the vicinity of Lordsburg, New Mexico, to the vicinity of Guthrie, Arizona. The Gila River enters this trough about 10 miles east of the town of Duncan and flows northwest through the lower end of the trough.
- ▶ Water availability has apparently always been a limiting factor in agricultural progress.
- ▶ Today, however, modern irrigation wells with gasoline or electric motors have replaced most of the surface water irrigation which relied on the undependable Gila River.

▶▶▶ *High Mountains, Fertile Valleys Mark Graham County*

From: *Progressive Agriculture: January-February, 1964, Volume 16, Number 1*



ATTENDANCE AND INTEREST are high at Hay Day in Graham County. More than 200 farmers turned out to watch the new hay swathers in action. The demonstration was scheduled cooperatively, with the county agent's office and local farm machinery dealers participating. Two years after this demonstration, more than 95 percent of the hay Graham County was cut with these swathers.

- ▶ Just two days before the adjournment of the eleventh territorial legislature, an act to create the county of Graham was passed. The territory to form it was taken from Pima and Apache Counties, and Safford was made the county seat.
- ▶ Today Graham County covers 2,063,200 acres of territory, the third smallest county in the state. Its population is approximately 15,000.
- ▶ Graham County is a farming area and, thanks to the Gila, it has about 40,000 acres under cultivation. This produces such crops as alfalfa, cotton, grain, truck crops, pecans, and other products with a total worth of some eight to ten million dollars a year.
- ▶ Graham County is proud of its cotton products. All of the cotton is ginned by the Safford Valley Cotton Growers Co -op, owned by the farmers of Graham County.
- ▶ Graham County had one of the first 4 -H Clubs in the United States. There was a club in Pima, Arizona, in 1913.

▶▶▶ *Yavapai County, Mister, Is Great Cattle Country!*

From: *Progressive Agriculture*: March-April, 1964,
Volume 16, Number 2

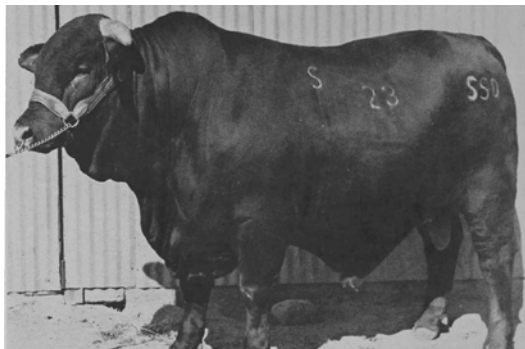


BRANDING SCENE at the O U Ranch, Yavapai, owned by Mrs. Orville Hazlewood and son Earl. This scene is typical of cattle country of Yavapai County. (Photo by Carter Camera Center, Prescott)

- ▶ We have no blanket recommendations for all of Yavapai County's farmers and ranchers. This is understandable when one considers that Yavapai County's terrain varies from an elevation of 1900 feet to just under 8,000 feet on its mountain peaks.
- ▶ The discovery of artesian water in Little Chino Valley in 1930, by John A. Hatch, led to the development of Little Chino Valley as an important section of the farm economy of Yavapai County.
- ▶ Yavapai County's principal source of agricultural income is from its approximately 5,000,000 acres of cattle rangeland.
- ▶ Some 200 commercial cattle ranches produce annually over \$6.25 million worth of beef cattle.
- ▶ There are about 1,200 head of dairy cattle in nine commercial herds in the county.
- ▶ There is only one commercial broiler producer in the county. This plant, located in Cornville, produces, processes, and markets about 60,000 broilers annually.
- ▶ Yavapai County is known as the Horse Capital of Arizona. It has some 3,300 head of horses and mules.

▶▶▶ *Santa Cruz County*

From: *Progressive Agriculture*: May-June, 1964,
Volume 16, Number 3



WINNING BULL at the Arizona National Livestock Show in Phoenix was this big Santa Gertrudis from San Cayetano Ranch. Brand numbers indicate certification by the breed association, which does not certify animals until after they are grown.

Santa Cruz County has, roughly, 795,000 acres of semi-desert rangeland.

- ▶ The county has 7,000 acres of irrigated farmland, chiefly in the Santa Cruz river valley.
- ▶ Santa Cruz County has some of the best Santa Gertrudis cattle in the country. These rugged big cherry-red cattle, genetically three-eighths Brahman and five-eighths Shorthorn, were started as a distinct breed 40 years ago on the famed King Ranch in Texas.
- ▶ The county also has one of the best Charolais herds in the nation, owned by famed movie star Stewart Granger.
- ▶ The County Extension Office in Santa Cruz County was established in 1959, although previously it had been served by Pima County Extension personnel.
- ▶ It is a county where 4-H work is actively and enthusiastically pursued, with 4-H exhibits at the county fair in Sonoita being excellent in both quality and quantity.

▶▶▶ *Here's Gila County: Copper in the Grounds, Cattle in the Hills*

From: *Progressive Agriculture*: July-August, 1964,
Volume 16, Number 4



PUREBRED HEREFORD cattle on the Bixby ranch in Gila County. This county has some of the best Herefords, and some of the most able cattlemen, in the nation.

- ▶ For many years the Globe-Miami area has been one of the most important copper producing sections of the United States.
- ▶ Gila County has pressed its political influence into the history of the state. George W. P. Hunt of Globe served in the territorial legislature, was elected the first president of the Arizona Constitutional Convention, was the first governor of Arizona, and was subsequently reelected for seven terms.
- ▶ The quality of the cattlemen in the county can best be illustrated by looking at the list of past presidents of the Arizona Cattle Growers' Association. Gila County boasts more past presidents than any other county.
- ▶ Approximately 20,000 stocker and feeder cattle are marketed annually.
- ▶ Modern advances in technology and the rapidly changing economy have resulted in requests for assistance from the Extension Service in family economics, home management, human relations, health and safety, conservation and problems of low income.

▶▶▶ *Maricopa County Agriculture*

From: *Progressive Agriculture: March-April, 1965, Volume 18, Number 2*



TABLE GRAPES ARE increasing in importance as a cash crop in Maricopa County. Here, Charlie Condos of Arrowhead Ranch admires a cluster of Cardinal grapes.

- ▶ Here, over the last hundred years, industrious farmers and ranchers have carved out an agricultural wonderland that each year pumps more than \$200 million into the economic veins of the state.
- ▶ Maricopa County is one of the nation's most important agricultural areas. According to the last census, approximately 500,000 acres or roughly 10 percent of the land in Maricopa County is under cultivation.
- ▶ Cotton, cattle, and fresh vegetables head the list of money earners. Other important crops include alfalfa – up to seven cuttings per year – barley, grain sorghum, wheat, seed crops, and last but not least, citrus fruit and dairying.
- ▶ Upwards to 90 percent of all the milk consumed in the state also is produced in Maricopa County.
- ▶ Maricopa County's poultrymen, vying with other agriculturists in efficiency, own a third of the state's laying hens and produce a third of the eggs produced for market in Arizona.
- ▶ Land values in some sections of the valley have appreciated to the point to where a farmer no longer can afford not to sell.

▶▶▶ *Averaging 50 Miles Wide and Stretching 250 Miles Down the New Mexico State Line, From the Northeast Corner is Apache County*

From: *Progressive Agriculture: January-February, 1965, Volume 17, Number 1*



COLE CROPS GROW big in Apache County, as demonstrated by the prize winning cabbage which Cecil Naegle of Vernon exhibited at the Apache County Fair.

- ▶ Apache County is a gracious host to many visitors who come to the county to fish, hunt and enjoy the scenery.
- ▶ Beef and wool production rank as the chief sources of agricultural income in the county. Cattle numbers are estimated at around 40,000 head. Sheep, mostly on the Navajo Reservation, total about 108,000.
- ▶ The most valuable resource of Apache County is its people, there being an estimated 32,000. About two - thirds of these make their homes on the Navajo and Apache Reservations in Apache County and were here many generations ago to greet the remaining third on their arrival.
- ▶ Apache County cattlemen believe in helping themselves and each other. With this in mind, a representative "Apache County Cattle Committee" was organized to help toward solving cattle problems.
- ▶ One of the more unusual events in Apache County 4-H has been the "camp-tour."
- ▶ "Concho Beautifiers" 4-H club landscaped their school and church grounds, using native evergreens from the White Mountains together with donated and purchased plants.

▶▶▶ *Cochise County: Cotton, Cattle, Copper*

From: *Progressive Agriculture: July-August, 1965, Volume 18, Number 4*



SOME OF THE BEST sorghum in the world is grown in Cochise County. This vast field, watered by sprinkler irrigation, is on the L.D. Small farm.

- ▶ Cochise County is truly unique and its development is full of irony. Today it ranks only fourth in total population by counties in Arizona and its people are proud of its "wide open spaces." Yet, in 1910 it was the state's most populous county.
- ▶ Some of the modern ranches here date back to original Spanish Land Grants. Beef cattle production continues to be the largest single agricultural enterprise in the county.
- ▶ Now, with modern irrigation practices in force, the same area has become a top lettuce producing area.
- ▶ Among the important vegetable crops grown in Cochise County are chili peppers. This is the only place in the state where chili peppers are grown commercially. Three hundred to four hundred acres supply both local and interstate markets.
- ▶ Girls as well as boys are active livestock raisers. And, as expected, boys are beginning to turn their talents to the foods field.
- ▶ Some 15 organized homemaker groups meet monthly for lessons on family nutrition, consumer buying and home management.
- ▶ A 4-H Leaders Council and its special committees help in policy making and planning and conducting of county events.
- ▶ A seven-man County Extension Board meets to approve each year's plan and the budget.

▶▶▶ *"Big Red" Makes Yuma County*

From: *Progressive Agriculture: March-April, 1965, Volume 17, Number 2*



MUCH MANPOWER and modern machinery combine to speed cantaloupe harvesting, since time is so important. Photo taken in 1964 on McLaren Produce Company acreage in the Yuma Valley.

- ▶ From barren sand to productive land - compliments of "Big Red." That is the biography of Yuma County. "Big Red," being the Colorado River, is responsible for the founding of the city of Yuma and for most of the \$77 million crop income produced in the county.
- ▶ Present day agriculture of Yuma County consists of approximately 200,000 acres.
- ▶ It wasn't too long ago that this land was considered worthless. It was, until the Colorado River water made it bloom.
- ▶ One of the world's outstanding Brangus herds is that maintained by the Yuvalle Cattle Company in Yuma County.
- ▶ Yuma Valley is the most productive area in the county, with an average value of crops produced of \$735 per acre. What grows in Yuma Valley? You name it, it's there. The major crops are alfalfa, wheat, barley, sorghum, cotton, lettuce, cantaloupes and flax. In addition are such delicacies as pecans, tomatoes, onions, cabbage, carrots, sweet corn and watermelons. Also citrus.

▶▶▶ *Rangeland Country Invaded – Mohave County Attracts Elderly, Sportsmen with Climate, Water and Sun*

From: *Progressive Agriculture: May-June, 1965, Volume 17, Number 3*



EXTENSION SPECIALISTS from The University of Arizona help with the local program occasionally in Mohave county. Here is Mrs. Carol Doty, home economics specialist, explains the life cycle of the typical American housewife. Left to right above, Mrs. Clifford Touchette, Mrs W. J. Bailey, Mrs. Doty, Home Agent Mrs. Audrey Davies, Mrs. K. B. Johnson and Mrs. William Duncan.

- ▶ Mohave County is cattle country besieged by fishermen. In other words, it is range country where the population- pushed sportsman has discovered new fields to conquer. Mohave is fifth largest county in the United States 8,486,400 acres.
- ▶ It is a land of rugged mountains - yet it has more than 1,000 miles of shoreline on lakes and rivers.
- ▶ But mostly it is cattle country. The mother cow herds produce the fat yearlings which are sold to many areas.
- ▶ The county agent's efforts on behalf of cattlemen have been largely in the areas of feeding, marketing and disease control.
- ▶ Youngsters learn adult lessons early in a vigorous 4-H program in Mohave County. Some 180 boys and girls are enrolled in the program, and the fat beef sale of 4-H calves at Kingman has received national recognition, evidenced by prices paid by businessmen for the 4-H animals.
- ▶ There are five homemakers' clubs in the county. Topics of club discussion and activity, chosen by the members themselves, range from the importance of wills and estate planning to a Christmas workshop. The selection of furniture, color harmonizing for the home, making over used clothing, an upholstery workshop, foods and meal planning, all are included.

▶▶▶ *Through Cooperation, Cotton and Cattle Pinal County Thrives*

From: *Progressive Agriculture: September-October, 1964, Volume 17, Number 5*



A TREMENDOUS INVESTMENT in the feedlot business is the feed processing mill. This one, at the Benedict feedlot, is the very latest thing in efficiency. Through its huge metal maws go over 35,000 tons of grains per year, as well as vast quantities of alfalfa.

- ▶ Pinal County's 300,000 irrigated acres and its cattle ranches put \$75,000,000 into the economy annually.
- ▶ The county's 130,000 acres of upland cotton is two-fifths of the state's total, its 9,800 acres of long staple American-Egyptian cotton a fifth of the Arizona total.
- ▶ Translated for the layman, Pinal County's cotton could put a new shirt on every man in America in 1964, plus enough yardage left over for shifts for every suburban housewife. And the beef produced in Pinal County feedlots and ranches would furnish steak, hamburger or roast beef for every person in the city of Tucson—300,000 people—once a day for an entire year.
- ▶ The many activities of 4-H are valuable training experiences for both young and old.
- ▶ Great pride is taken in discipline and etiquette. Leave a clean camp; leave a good impression. Cleanliness is next to Godliness. Make the Best Better.

▶▶▶ *Pima County: Changed by Urban Growth*

From: *Progressive Agriculture: July-August, 1964, Volume 17, Number 4*



MRS. JAMES LARSEN, A 4-H leader in Pima County, instructs her daughters, Cindy and Jody that you must determine best buys by figuring cost per egg.

- ▶ Climate Is Nearly Ideal: With marked changes in other areas, the climate of Pima County remains ideal. Sunshine is abundant with 85 percent possible sunshine in the Tucson area. There is an average rainfall of 10.9 inches.
- ▶ Increases in population have brought corresponding demands for services.
- ▶ Changes in livestock emphasis on quality rather than quantity is producing more beef per cow unit in Pima County. There has been little change in the number of cattle on the range. The change is to better cattle and better ranges.
- ▶ Competition between fibers for consumer and industrial use has forced cotton producers to utilize every resource for economical and efficient production methods.
- ▶ Over 60 percent of my phone calls and 50 percent of my time is spent in providing information to help urban and suburban people solve their home - plant -care problems.
- ▶ Accepting the Challenge - Fitting 4-H into urban and suburban situations means new projects, more area clubs that demand more and better trained leaders.
- ▶ Homemaker club programs are directed mainly toward consumer education. While they continue to give opportunity for developing homemaking skills, they include "buymanship" for family needs. Decision making is an educational process and increasingly important.

▶▶▶ *Vast, Cool, Beautiful – That's Coconino County*

From: *Progressive Agriculture: January-February, 1965, Volume 17, Number 1*



BILL TODD, Oak Creek orchardist, shows a nice crop of Red Delicious apples. Note lower branches stripped of leaves by deer.

- ▶ Coconino County, 18,238 square miles, largest county in Arizona and second largest in the continental U. S. That's a fair piece of land in anybody's language.
- ▶ Timber isn't the only product produced in the county. Coconino County is one of the largest cattle producing areas in the Southwest, has both irrigated and dry farming, raises all kinds of deciduous fruits and berries, and has more National Parks, Monuments and scenic points than any other county in the U.S.
- ▶ Small grains are a source of winter hay in Coconino County.
- ▶ The County 4-H program is an active one. There are about 400 members in the county, with clubs in all parts of the county. Quality, rather than quantity is stressed by the county agents.
- ▶ The county homemaker program is also an active one. It consists of several clubs throughout the county.

▶▶▶ *Heritage of Three Races United in Historic Navajo County*

From: *Progressive Agriculture: September-October, 1964, Volume 16, Number 5*



A CROP MOST ARIZONA counties do not have, but Navajo County has, is pulp wood, shown in the photo. At the Snowflake is located one of the most modern paper mills in the U. S., built in 1962.

- ▶ One of the largest cattle empires in the west was developed in Navajo County with headquarters near Holbrook. This was known as the Hashknife Outfit.
- ▶ Spanish Conquistadores, the first white men in the area, found the Apache Indians occupying the land. The Conquistadores traversed the Southwest in search of gold and glory.
- ▶ Today Navajo County has about 42,000 people. Half of these are on three Indian reservations the Apache to the south, the Hopi and Navajo reservations to the north.
- ▶ Service trades along Highway 66 and Highway 60 add greatly to the income of the county by attracting the many tourists who come through the county.
- ▶ Irrigation companies in Navajo County have cooperated with the Extension Service in tests on control of weeds along ditchbanks and in irrigation ditches.
- ▶ The Navajo County development council serves as an advisory group to the Extension Service and the other agricultural agencies in the county.
- ▶ One of the most popular programs the last three years was Operation Windbreak.
- ▶ Mrs. Ward, the home agent, has worked with low income groups in Winslow, showing how to use surplus foods.
- ▶ Navajo County has 1400 boys and girls enrolled in the 4-H Club program.