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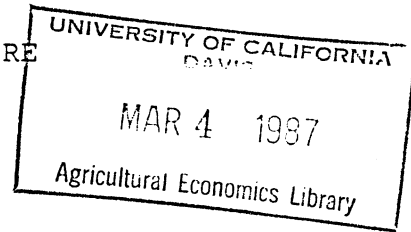
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THE FLORIDA WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE  
RESEARCH/EXTENSION PROGRAM

by

Christina H. Gladwin\*



1986  
Women in agriculture

Like their counterparts in Africa, Latin America, and Asia, Florida women farm. Some are full-time farmers who drive tractors and on their own raise major money crops such as beans, poultry, and even registered bulls. Some run agribusinesses such as fertilizer supply houses, citrus groves, and nurseries. Other women are part-time farmers who co-manage the family farm alongside their husbands, raising hay, chickens (both layers and broilers), tobacco, vegetables, bees, beef cattle, quarterhorses, and thoroughbred racing horses. In addition, there are young women who help out on their parents' farm by taking care of animals both big and small, by picking and hauling, and helping to load a tobacco barn. They all describe their role as one of "pitching in and helping, doing whatever needs to be done to keep the farm going and the family together."

Sometimes women contribute to production on the small farm, as do women on north Florida part-time farms who grow beans and tobacco, milk cows, and haul hogs to market. Others contribute to the revenues of large agribusiness firms, most of which are located in south Florida. These women serve as general managers of the office, operate microcomputers, and keep the general

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ledger and payroll accounts of the agribusiness. While they may be daughters or wives of the production managers of the firm, usually they are trained bookkeepers hired especially for the job of managing the office or operating the computer. Still other women have more direct contact with the produce of agribusinesses, as packers and sorters in packing houses, or as farm workers in the fields. Finally, many young agribusiness women are also farm wives who are juggling full- or part-time off-farm work with farm tasks like bookkeeping, accounting, and computer programming.

Why do they farm? Farming is a goal in itself for some families. As one woman put it, "When you live on a farm and enjoy it, you're already ahead of the game." Maintaining a rural residence, satisfying the desire to "stay where you are...", to live in the country, eat high quality fruits and vegetables, and raise one's children in a healthy environment, where the mores and values of neighbors are known and shared, are also reasons Florida women farm.

The active farm work of all these women exposes the myth that, "he's the farmer; she's the helper." To help Florida farm women be recognized and supported as farmers and not just helpers, I initiated a Florida Women in Agriculture research/extension (WIA R/E) program in 1981. The program has features that are similar to a farming systems research/extension (FSR/E) program; many features, however, are quite different from a FSR/E program. As the program is described, these similarities and differences will be highlighted.

The Research Component of the Florida WIA Program

The Florida WIA program, like a FSR/E program, has both a research and extension component to it. Like a FSR/E program, the WIA R/E program starts from where the farmer -- the woman farmer in this case -- is at, and tries to help her fulfill her farming goals, as she perceives them, through extension programs. A research component to the program is necessary, in order to discover each woman's farming goals, plans, and decision processes, to put her in the context of her farm or agribusiness, and understand her way of life.

Optimally, each farm woman is interviewed either on her farm or in her agribusiness office at the start of the program. This may be done using the sondeo methodology (Hildebrand, 1980), or a combination of sondeo and more formal survey instrument, as I prefer. With the latter technique, an interdisciplinary team (of state extension specialist/researcher and county extension agent) visits farms and agribusinesses for three to five days, and asks women a series of survey questions as well as more open-ended and spontaneous questions about their farming operation. Although these personal interviews are longer than the typical sondeo interview, and average one and one-half hours, they provide data which may be compared to a national average and/or subjected to a statistical test. In addition, these one-on-one visits provide invaluable information to the local extension agent who may be acquainted with the women but not knowledgeable about their farming needs and problems. The personal interviews also tell the agent whether (and when) farm women are interested in meeting

together to form a network, and what kinds of educational programs they want at their meetings.

To date, women farmers have been interviewed in six Florida counties: Baker County (with the help of Dr. Masuma Downie), Gilchrist County (with Janet Weston), Jefferson County (with David Zimet and Donna Sorenson), Levy County (with Mary Peters), Collier County (with Denise Coleman), and Hendry County (with Nancy Hendricks). Data have already been analyzed from two north Florida counties (Baker and Gilchrist). Because theory, methods, and results are described in detail elsewhere (Downie and Gladwin, 1981; Gladwin, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985a, 1985b, 1985c), only major results are repeated here.

Results show that on average, the north Florida farm woman is a part-time farmer and is now farming more than did her mother and grandmother. Data in Table 1 show men's and women's contributions on four work dimensions: farm work, off-farm work, garden work, and housework. The data were collected in an open-ended way by asking women to recall the major tasks they performed throughout the year and the time required to complete those tasks. Although north Florida men spend more time doing farm work (35 hours per week) and off-farm work (20 hours per week) than women, north Florida women on average spend 22 hours per week on farm tasks and 17 hours per week on off-farm work. In addition, women spend 26 hours per week on housework and during the spring-summer garden season, an additional 12 hours per week gardening and processing garden produce. In total, men work 62 hours per week, on average, during the main garden season; while women work 78 hours per week. Men, however, spend more time

farming than women; but women's farm hours are substantial and amount to, on average, a part-time job. When compared to previous national estimates of women's farm work of 11 hours per week, as reported by time-use diaries in the 1920s and 1930s (Vanek 1974), it appears that on average, the north Florida farm wife is farming more now.

Also in an open-ended way, the same women were asked about their perceptions of themselves, in order to test the strength of the belief, "He's the farmer; she's the helper." Results showed that 42 percent of the women considered themselves to be farmers; while 14 percent thought of themselves as part-time farmers. Eight percent said they were retired from farming, and 36 percent thought of themselves as farmers' wives. In this sample at least, more women considered themselves to be farmers than farmers' wives. As women participate more in farming, they will tend to think of themselves as farmers rather than just helpers.

#### Evidence From National Time Series Data

These results are collaborated by recent data from national surveys. This is necessary because it is impossible to distinguish regional variation from change over time with these data, because the 1930s data are national rather than Florida-specific data. Fortunately, data from the 1980 USDA phone survey of 2,500 farm women and the 1984 Ford Tractor survey of 3,300 farm women fill the gap, because these data are directly comparable. Trying to verify the results of the earlier USDA phone survey, Ford Tractor Operations in 1984 launched its own mail-out survey of 9,300 U.S. and Canadian farm women, and received 3,300

responses (Ford Tractor 1985). Questions were asked about the type and location of the farm, the type of work the farm woman did on a regular and occasional basis, the kinds of decisions made jointly or separately by farm husband and wife, and the informational, service, and dealership needs of the farm family regarding tractors. Because the series of questions on the farm woman's involvement in farm tasks were directly comparable to the same questions on the earlier 1980 USDA national survey, the time series data in Table 2 allow us to see if U.S. farm women are farming more now.

In the rows of Table 2 are listed the tasks on a farm that a woman may perform on a regular basis (column 2), an occasional basis (column 3), or never. (Because "never" is a residual category, the percentage of women who never perform the task is omitted from the table, for brevity.) The columns of Table 2 report the 1980 USDA results on the left hand side, and the 1984 Ford Tractor results on the right hand side.

The results of both surveys show that farm women regularly take care of the garden, do the bookkeeping and financial work, act as chauffeur and gofer and run for spare parts, and take care of farm animals. A comparison of the survey results, moreover, show that more women are regularly doing these tasks in 1984 than in 1980. In addition, both surveys show that occasionally, women supervise farm work, harvest crops, make major purchases of equipment, and do field work without machinery. Only one-third of the women, however, occasionally do the plowing or discing, and market their products. In 1984, more women are doing all these tasks on an occasional basis. Clearly, women are very

involved in farm work, and that involvement is increasing!

This is partly due to the fact that, more and more, they are substituting for their spouses who must subsidize depressed farm incomes with off-farm incomes in this time of farm crisis. It may also be partly due to technological change in domestic work within the home. Because of modern home appliances, time spent doing housework has decreased from 50 to 26 hours per week during the last 50 years (Vanek 1974). This released time has allowed modern farm women to increase either their farm work or their off-farm work. Although some women choose to spend that time off the farm, in the north Florida sample an equal proportion of them choose to farm (Gladwin, 1982). As a result, more and more farm women think of themselves as "farmers" rather than "farmers' wives."

What do these results imply? The survival of the U.S. family farm, even if only as a part-time farm, requires that women farmers be recognized and supported as farmers and not just helpers or farmers' wives. While every woman wants to build a home, the average woman's contribution of 22 hours per week of farm work should be recognized at least as much as her 26 hours per week of housework. The entire agricultural community (the land grant university, the extension service, financial institutions, input suppliers like Ford Tractor, local churches, and extended family members) should recognize the growing role and contribution of the farm wife as agricultural producer on the family farm, and should give her access to information about inputs and markets, training from the extension service, credit



from financial institutions, land, and new technology necessary to co-manage the farm.

The Extension Component of Florida WIA

These are the goals of the Florida WIA Extension Program:

- to recognize the expanded farming role of farm women today, as well as their multiple roles in the family, and
- to help women gain access to information, training, credit, land, and new technology necessary to co-manage the farm.

Starting in 1982, with the help of Dr. Katie Walker and Ms. Evelyn Rooks (both home economists), and Dr. Jon Van Blokland (an agricultural economist), the state WIA program was initiated for women actively engaged in Florida agriculture.

At the start, the strategy followed was to put on educational programs for farm women in the counties, hold agent training workshops for extension agricultural and home economic agents, and publish reports in the popular press and extension circulars. Educational programs were designed to cover a wide range of topics. The typical day-long workshop included a slide-tape module on the farming contributions of women by myself, a 2-hour session on financial management tools and coordinated financial statements (balance sheets, income statements, cash flow statements) by Dr. P.J. van Blokland, a demonstration of computer software with financial applications by Rom Alderman of the Food and Resource Economics FarmLab, a talk on stress management by Evelyn Rooks, and possibly another talk on money or time management by Dr. Katie Walker. Occasionally, a local lawyer and a banker would discuss estate planning and credit-use problems,

respectively. Other state specialists were willing to discuss developing leadership skills (Beaulieu), and understanding farm policy (Carriker).

### Successes

As a result, the following day-long workshops were held and newspaper stories filed:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>
Oct. 31, '81	More than one hundred farm women attend a two-hour workshop by Dr. Masuma Downie and myself at the Governor's Conference on the Future of Small Farms, Ocala, FL. We present results of a monograph, <u>Florida Farm Wives: They Help the Family Farm Survive</u> . At the end of the program, one farm woman reports, "This is like going to a revival meeting; I'm going back home and encourage my neighbors to keep farming!" The program is subsequently reviewed by <u>Gainesville Sun</u> .
Fall, '82	Story on woman farmer program by Ann Sides, IFAS Editorial, is published by more than ten Florida newspapers. Numerous radio appearances follow.
Jan. 20, '83	A day-long workshop in Santa Rosa County is held entitled, "For Today's Farm Woman -- Time, Money, Computers, Estate Planning, and Stress Management," with L. Bowman, home economics agent, a local lawyer, extension specialists E. Rooks, M. Eason, and myself. Twenty-five farm women attend.
Mar. 18, '83	A program is held on "The Role of Farm Women in Saving the Family Farm" in a "Know Your Beef Shortcourse," organized by the Florida Cowbelle Ass'n, Ramada Inn, Ocala, FL. Fifty women attend.
Dec. 1, '83	A day-long agent-training workshop is held in Macclenny, Fl., on the woman farmer program with talks on time management (Dr. K. Walker), computers, farming systems (M. Swisher), Florida farm women and coordinated financial statements (myself). Four agents attend.
Dec. 2, '83	A program is held on "Partners in Progress: Women in the Pork Industry," a symposium at the 1983 International Pig Trade Show, Atlantic Civic Center, Atlanta, GA, with talks on financial tools by myself, the hog confinement business by the first woman "Pork All American," and ways to promote pork consumption by a President of the

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>
	Porkettes. One hundred couples attend.
Jan., '84	Copy of the slide-tape presentation on "How Florida Women Help the Farm and Agribusiness Firm Survive" is requested for use at a National Rural Women's Committee meeting by Christina Mosher Wilson and Shirley Traxler, Secretary's Office of Public Liaison, USDA, Wash., D.C.
Jan. 11,12, 1984	Two programs on the Florida WIA program are held during a Home '84 Economics agent-training workshop organized by Drs. K. Walker and V. Mitchell. Sixty agents attend.
June 21, '84	Program on "Florida Women as Agricultural Producers" is held in the Homemakers Mini-College organized by Dr. E. Bolton, Gainesville. Forty farm women attend.
Feb., '84	Write-up of the program appears in article by Laura Lane entitled, "Networks of Farm Women: Why They Are Springing Up and What They Do" ( <u>Farm Journal</u> , 1984). The program is also the subject of articles in March 83's and Feb. 84's <u>Successful Farming</u> by Cheryl Tevis. Although the impact of these articles is hard to measure, it is clear that our message is spreading through the major farm magazines that farm women are playing an increasingly vital role on the family farm and agribusiness and deserve recognition and support for their contributions.
June 26-28, '84	I am invited to be a member of Ford Tractor's Women's Council, which is a group of women from the major farm organizations who advise Ford Tractor on their policies which affect farm women. I attend a three-day meeting and evaluate tractors and advertisements. The impact of this council should not be measured by attendance (30 women), but by changes in Ford Tractor's advertisements, in which women now appear as active farmers rather than background scenery, and changes in the training of their dealers, who now deal more and more with women.
Nov.1, '84	A day-long agent-training workshop is held with talks on the role of farm and agribusiness women, enterprise budgeting (myself), coordinated financial statements (P.J. van Blokland), Computer Software (R. Alderman), Stress Management (E. Rocks), and Florida Inheritance Law (P. Stern, a lawyer). The number of agents attending this year has increased to ten.

In 1985, the Florida women in agriculture (WIA) program suddenly took off and expanded to more than 10 counties with 16 county agents or organizers including: Denise Coleman, Collier Co.; Mary Lamberts, Dade Co.; Lisa Abrams, Palm Beach Co; Phyllis Gilreath and Brenda Bennett, Manatee Co.; Joy Satcher, Brevard Co.; Mary Peters, Levy Co.; Muriel Gravely, Hamilton Co.; Pat Barber, Baker Co.; Mickey Swisher and Debbie Watts, Suwannee & Columbia Cos.; Nancy Hendricks (replaced by Carol Roberts), Hendry Co.; and Janet Drake, DeSoto Co. Organizational meetings were also held with the following people: Bee Etinger, Valencia Community College, Orlando; Karen Spooner, President of WIFE (Women Involved in Farm Economics); Anne Dickinson, Florida Citrus Women; the state committee of Farm Bureau women and Kevin Morgan, state coordinator, Dorothy Shipes, President of Lake County Farm Bureau and Member of Florida Citrus Commission, and Kathy Shipes, President of Region V Farm Bureau Women.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>
Feb. 19, '85	Met with Lowell Loadholtz, Joy Satcher, Doris Davis, and Linda Lovejoy of Brevard Co. and we planned the Brevard Women in Agriculture program. We then had a meeting of an advisory board on March 18, when I gave a slide show on the contributions of Florida farm women to agriculture. The first meeting of the WIA group was subsequently held on Sept. 13, 1985, with Dr. Karl Kepner on "Management, Marketing, and Merchandising", 28 women attending. The second meeting was Jan. 21, 1986 on estate planning, and the third meeting will be March 20, 1986 with my talk on Survival Tools in a Farm Crisis. P.J. Van Blokland will follow in May, 1986, with financial management.
March 21, '85	Met with Pat Smith Barber of Baker Co. to plan a WIA program in Baker County.
April 16, '85	Met with Mary Peters in Levy Co. to plan a WIA program in Levy County. I subsequently started interviewing farm women in Levy County in Sept., Oct., Nov., and Dec. of 1985.
April 18, '85	Presented a slide show on "The Contributions of Florida Farm Women to Farming" to the Farm Bureau women of Arcadia, De Soto County, Janet Drake, agent.
June 5, '85	Went to Hamilton Co. to plan a WIA program with Muriel Gravely, extension director. On Nov. 19, I again went to Hamilton Co. to present a slide show on the WIA program.
June 13, '85	Gave a slide show and presentation to the Farm Bureau Women's State Committee and Kevin Morgan, women's liason, at the Farm Bureau Building.

- Nov. 1, '85 Doyle Conner's Florida Market Bulletin 28(21) cited study of the values and goals of Florida farm women published in Agriculture and Human Values. Doyle Conner also decided to create a new program, Woman of the Year in Agriculture, to honor women who have made outstanding contributions to agriculture in the state.
- Nov. '85 "On Line", Vol. 2, No. 12, cites the FRED newsletter on the increase of women farmers.
- Sept. 10, '85 P.J. Van Blokland and myself present a 2 hour program on financial management and computer software to the Florida Citrus Women in Barteau, Polk County, with Anne Dickinson, President.
- Nov. 21, '85 Gave my yearly program on "How Florida Farm Women Help the Farm and Agribusiness Firm Survive" in the Women's Studies Program's seminar on Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Women with Dr. Irene Thompson, Nov. 21, 1985 (25 students).
- Sept. 17-19, '85 Again served as a member of Ford Tractor's Women's Council, which is a group of women from the major farm organizations who advise Ford Tractor on their policies which affect farm women. Attended a two-day meeting in Detroit, evaluated tractors and advertisements, and had a tour of the Ford Tractor factory assembly line. The impact of this council should not be measured by attendance (30 women), but by changes in Ford Tractor's advertisements (women now appear as active farmers rather than background scenery) and changes in the training of their dealers (who now deal more and more with women.) This is my last year on Ford Tractor's Women's Council.
- Oct. 28, '85 The Florida Business Journal 3(9) reprints article on "The Increase in Women's Farming: A Response to Structural Change," Florida Food and Resource Economics 66.
- Oct. 31, '85 Organized and ran an agent training workshop in Gainesville, October 31, 1985, on the "Florida Women in Agriculture" program, with talks on the role of farm and agribusiness women, enterprise budgeting (myself), coordinated financial statements (Van Blokland), Computer Software (R. Alderman), Stress Management (E. Rooks). The number of agents attending this year was 5.
- Dec., '85 Dr. Mary Lamberts of Dade Co. gives a talk to the Univ. of Florida WIA seminar on her Dade County Women in Agriculture Group of 58 women.

Dec., 85

Helped organize 3 symposia at the Feb. '86 Florida Women in Agriculture conference on "Gender Issues in Farming Systems Research", held at Univ. Florida. The conference had \$48,000 of funding from the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations and 300 registrants. The symposia included: a roundtable discussion of all Florida extension agents starting a WIA program in Florida, a plenary session by Rick Kinder of Ford Tractor Co. on the Ford Tractor Women's Council, and an extension plenary session on Feb. 28, '86.

Problems

Although the statewide program received publicity and seemed to be getting off the ground by the end of 1984, it also had problems:

1. County agents didn't seem interested in the WIA program.

The male agricultural agents weren't at all interested in the program, in spite of numerous letters and extension articles sent out to them. In addition, the women agricultural agents in Florida are few: 17 of 67 counties have a woman agent in agriculture, horticulture, water, livestock, or farm management. Many older home economics agents located near family farms in north Florida, where the program should have taken off, also weren't interested in a agricultural program about which they knew little. Finally, I was not in the home economics department and didn't meet the younger, innovative home economics agents who might start a WIA program.

This lack of connection with the right agents was a problem because extension programs in Florida are the responsibility of the local extension agent, who is virtually autonomous of the state extension specialist in the Florida cooperative extension service but directly responsible to both her county commission and district extension director in IFAS. My role as state specialist was merely to motivate the agents to initiate the program, and organize other state specialists to use their particular expertise at the workshop. Fortunately, organizing the state specialists was not hard to do, as they are rated by how many programs they put on, and are prima donnas always looking for audiences. Unfortunately, finding the right extension agent and then motivating her to start a WIA program

was (and still is) difficult.

2. Women didn't come out to the day-long workshops. Why?

Although research showed that women were farming more, and needed access to agricultural information, especially about financial management, it also showed that they were on average working 66 to 78 hours/week. This heavy work load means that farm women have trouble finding the time and energy to go out to meetings.

Because many are working at off-farm jobs during the day and farming and keeping house at night, they cannot attend a night-time meeting, never mind a day-long workshop. In addition, an analysis of their values and goals showed that most farm women are more family-oriented than feminist; this value system might affect their joining a woman's organization (Gladwin, 1985b).

3. For the agents who were interested in WIA, there was no follow-up to the one-day workshops. The workshop was held, I offered to do research, of which many extension agents are skeptical, and that was it!

The Networking Solution

Fortunately, these problems were interrelated and have possible solutions. According to home economist Rooks (personal communication), the key to solving the problem of uninterested agents is one-on-one program-planning visits with an agent in her office after the agent-training workshop. Another helpful strategy is to have a friendly discussion with a sympathetic district extension director who can influence agents to start a program. A solution to the problem of women too busy to come out to meetings, according to home economist Mary Peters of Levy



County, is to let county agents send out WIA newsletters composed of short articles written by state extension specialists on a quarterly basis.

The best solution, suggested by home economist Denise Coleman of Collier County and reiterated by Laura Lane of Farm Journal, is to form networks of farm women or facilitate networks already formed, such as WIFE (Women Involved in Farm Economics), Farm Bureau Women, Florida Women in Citrus, the Cowbelles, the Porkettes, American Agri-women, etc. According to Lane, "A network is an informal cluster of people who share information and give each other psychological support." (Farm Journal, 1984). It requires members with a common cause or goals; resources from the outside to work with, and a core of six or less leaders who will organize the larger group. If such a group is formed, it is then acceptable for a male agricultural agent to work with the group; examples are given by Leonard Cobb and the Jackson County chapter of WIFE and Bill Boudarak and the Lake County group of women horticulturalists. By networking, women can get access to special extension training, influence public policies related to agriculture, promote agricultural products in an urban environment, and receive mutual support from others like themselves.

In January, 1983, after reading about north Florida farm women, Denise Coleman approached me with a suggestion that we work together to form a network of agribusiness women in Collier County, south Florida. But she insisted, "South Florida is not like north Florida; these are not farm women. They're agribusiness women; they don't live on farms." I suggested that I

come and see for myself, and together we did a sondeo of agribusinesses and women office managers in Collier County. In the following March, 1983, Coleman organized a day-long workshop entitled "An Agribusiness Women's Network," with talks on woman's contributions to agribusiness, finances, accounting problems, and national farm women's movements. Because this network is on-going, sequential "lunch-n-learn" seminars have covered topics of time management, estate planning, coordinated financial statements, strengthening family ties, and labor management. There has also been an open house whereby farmers could drop in to try out new computer software, an annual family style bar-b-que designed to kick off the year in September, and a luncheon of local produce for county commissioners and the media which coincides with National Agriculture Day in March. In all, more than 110 women form the network.

Since then, more networks of farm women have been independently started in south Florida: in Dade County by horticulture agent Mary Lamberts, in Manatee County by agriculture agent Phyllis Gilreath and home economist Brenda Bennett, and in Brevard County by home economist Joy Satcher. In addition, home economist Lisa Abrams of Palm Beach County is working with Karen Spooner, state president of WIFE, in a Belle Glade chapter of WIFE. In north Florida, home economists Mary Peters of Levy County, Muriel Gravely of Hamilton County, and Pat S. Barber of Baker County are now trying to start WIA networks. In Suwannee and Columbia Counties where the Florida FSR/E program

is operating, agriculture agent Mickie Swisher and farm management agent Debby Watts are carrying on a coordinated production and financial management program for farm women. And finally in Central Florida, horticulture agent Catherine Neal is organizing agents from five other central counties to put on a regional WIA workshop with existing women's citrus organizations (Florida Women for Citrus, Women in Citrus) and Bee Etinger of the Adult Education Program of Valencia Community College.

#### Conclusion

In order to encourage more women to farm and actively participate in agribusiness management, networks of farm and agribusiness women are developed at the county level by the Florida WIA extension program. Research is also conducted in order to understand the farm or agribusiness woman's goals, plans, and decision processes, and to understand her in the context of her farm family life. The objectives of the Florida WIA groups formed by county extension agents are to:

- be a support and networking group for women in agriculture,
- share information and bring in speakers to address problems or issues of concern to women in agriculture,
- promote local agricultural products and increase positive media visibility for agriculture, and
- encourage women to become involved in and pursue careers in agriculture.

Because of these objectives, the Florida WIA research/extension program has some features that are similar to, and some features that are different from, a farming systems research/extension

(FSR/E) program. Similar features include: necessary linkages between the research and extension components of the program, an emphasis on accepting the (woman) farmer as she is, not as she should be, and a focus on a needs assessment of local women farmers at the start of the extension program.

Two features of the Florida WIA R/E program, however, distinguish it from a FSR/E program. Unlike a FSR/E program, the Florida WIA extension program does not necessarily aim to increase the yields or gross sales of women farmers, as would a FSR/E project in the Third World, for two reasons. First, over-production rather than under-production is the problem in U.S. agriculture. With supply exceeding demand for most farm products, U.S. farmers face problems of declining prices and farm incomes in the absence of an "export boom." In this economic environment of farm crises and bankruptcies due to low exports and therefore low farm incomes (USDA, 1985; Gladwin and Zabawa, 1984), the Florida WIA program focuses more on financial management than production management problems.

Second, national and state data show that U.S. farm women tend to be financial managers more than production managers on their family farm: 69% of U.S. farm women regularly keep the books and financial records (Ford Tractor, 1985); whereas only 49% of the women occasionally harvest crops and only 37% of the women occasionally do the plowing. Only a minority (5.4 percent) of women are farm household heads. For these reasons, improving the financial skills of farm women is an important aim of many county WIA extension programs. Keeping the farm in business

often means keeping the farm woman up on the latest financial management tool, be they balance sheets or income statements or user-friendly computer software.

The second feature of the Florida WIA R/E program that is different from a FSR/E program is the former's emphasis on organizing or facilitating networks of farm women. A FSR/E program in the Third World may work with farmer cooperatives, but does not typically put time or money into organizing them. Given the problems faced by the Florida WIA extension program (lack of interested agents, women too busy to come to meetings, and no follow-up procedures), there was no choice but to organize or facilitate networks of women in agriculture at the county level. These networks could then meet regularly; alternatively, they could meet annually or bi-annually and communicate mainly through a WIA newsletter. In either case, the Florida WIA R/E program serves the needs of farm and agribusiness women at the county level.

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Table 1. Average hours/week of farm work, off-farm work, housework and garden work of men and women.

<u>Baker and Gilchrist Counties</u>		
(n=48)		
	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
Average hours/week of farm work	34.7	21.8
Average hours/week of off-farm work	<u>20.2</u>	<u>17.4</u>
Sub-total:	54.9	39.2
Average hours/week of housework	<u>1.9</u>	<u>26.52</u>
Year-round total:	56.8	65.72
Average hours/week of spring- summer garden work*	<u>5.1</u>	<u>12.35</u>
Garden-season total	61.9	78.07

\*Applies only in the 8 to 10 weeks of the spring-summer gardening season.

Table 2. Farm Women's Involvement in Farm Tasks.

	1980 USDA Survey N = 2500		1984 Ford Tractor Survey N = 3300	
	Percentage Responding		Percentage Responding	
	Regular Duty	Occasionally	Regular Duty	Occasionally
Taking Care of Garden	74%	14%	76%	18%
Bookkeeping, Maintaining Records, etc.	61	17	69	21
Running Farm Errands	47	38	51	45
Taking Care of Farm Animals	37	29	44	41
Supervising Farm Work of Other Family Members	24	26	25	46
Harvesting Crops	22	29	22	49
Making Major Purchases of Farm Equipment and Supplies	14	23	14	36
Supervising Work of Hired Labor	11	25	13	43
Doing Field Work without Machinery	17	25	13	48
Plowing, Discing, Cultivating, or Planting	11	26	10	37
Marketing Products	15	18	12	30

# WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

## POSSIBLE PROGRAMS

- ✓ CONTRIBUTIONS OF FARM WOMEN
- ✓ FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT TOOLS
- ✓ COMPUTER SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS
- ✓ MONEY AND TIME MANAGEMENT
- ✓ STRESS MANAGEMENT
- ✓ PROBLEMS OF CREDIT USE
- ✓ ESTATE PLANNING
- ✓ DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP SKILLS
- ✓ NETWORKING WITH OTHER FARM WOMEN



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#### WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE--WHO ARE THEY?

Women in agriculture are a growing group. A recent survey conducted by Dr. Christina Gladwin, Associate Professor of Food and Resource Economics at the University of Florida, found that women's roles on the farm have changed. While she has always pitched in to help wherever she was needed, fifty years ago the farm woman's role was centered on care of the home and family. Today, with less time needed to do housework (26 hours per week rather than 50 hours per week), and with more economic problems on the farm or in the agribusiness, many women are becoming full partners or even primary farm operators. Men who have had to take off-farm jobs to supplement the farm income are leaving the day-to-day tasks involved in running the farm to their wives. And they are doing the job well!

More young women are choosing careers in agriculture nowadays, too, although they are more apt to be in agribusiness sales, service, or research than in actual crop production. In certain commodities such as ornamental horticulture, however, women have already been completely integrated at every level of production, from laborer to nursery owner. College enrollments in agriculture are on a downward trend overall, but women now make up at least half of the students in such fields as animal science, agronomy, agricultural economics, and horticulture.

Women may feel isolated and not in-touch with production and marketing information which often circulates through the "old-boy" network. A statewide effort is underway to provide women in agriculture with information to help them do their jobs better. A day-long workshop to be held on October 14, 1986 will focus on improving skills in marketing, communication, investments and stress management. The program, called "Pioneering the Future", is being conducted by the Florida Cooperative Extension Service and Valencia Community College's Center for Continuing Education for Women at the College's East Campus in Orlando. It is co-sponsored by commodity groups including Farm Bureau, Florida Cattlemen, Florida Citrus Women, Women in Farm Economics, Florida Nurserymen and Growers Association and Florida Foliage Association. Registration information can be obtained from CCEW (305/423-4813) or any Cooperative Extension office in Brevard, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole or Volusia County. All Extension programs are open to everyone regardless of race, color, sex or national origin.

\*TITLE

Major Program Title (Include State Name in Title)

 New Plan Amendment

CONTROL NO.

FL126

FLORIDA WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

\*TEXT

**SITUATION:** The contributions of farm and agribusiness women to the survival of the family farm and agribusiness in the U.S. and Florida have been ignored until recently. However, their role is assuming a new importance as the financial crisis in agriculture forces more male farmers on small, medium, and even large-sized farms to seek off-farm work to support the family and subsidize the farm. Farm women's involvement on the farms which survive the shake-out of the 1980s should therefore increase, as more farm women substitute for their men who are absent due to off-farm work. To encourage more women to farm and actively participate in agribusiness management, networks of farm and agribusiness women will be developed at the county level. A network is an informal cluster of people who share information and give each other support.

**OBJECTIVES:** Each "women in agriculture" group will

- be a support and networking group for women in agriculture;
- share information and bring in speakers to address problems or issues of concern to women in agriculture;
- promote local agricultural products and increase positive media visibility for agriculture; and
- encourage women to become involved in and pursue careers in agriculture.

**PLAN OF ACTION:**

(State level) Develop programs to help agribusiness women use tools of financial management, stress management, money and time management. Conduct workshops and seminars to train agents and help agribusiness women further develop their leadership skills. Encourage networking of farm and agribusiness women in the state as a whole. Facilitate networking in individual counties. Assist county staff as requested.

(County level) Form a local network of farm and agribusiness women. Share information and provide support, bring in speakers to address local problems, increase positive media visibility for agriculture, and encourage local women to become involved in and pursue careers in agriculture.

**PLANS FOR EVALUATION:** Numbers of, and data from, agribusiness women networking in the different counties will be collected. Results will be tabulated at the state level.

\*CONTACT

• Name and title • Address (include Zip code) • Telephone (include area code & extension) • Electronic mail ID (when appropriate)  
 Christina H. Gladwin  
 G-155 McCarty Hall, FRED, Univ. of Florida  
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The name may be new, if not the idea

# Networks of farm women

*Why they are springing up  
and what they do*

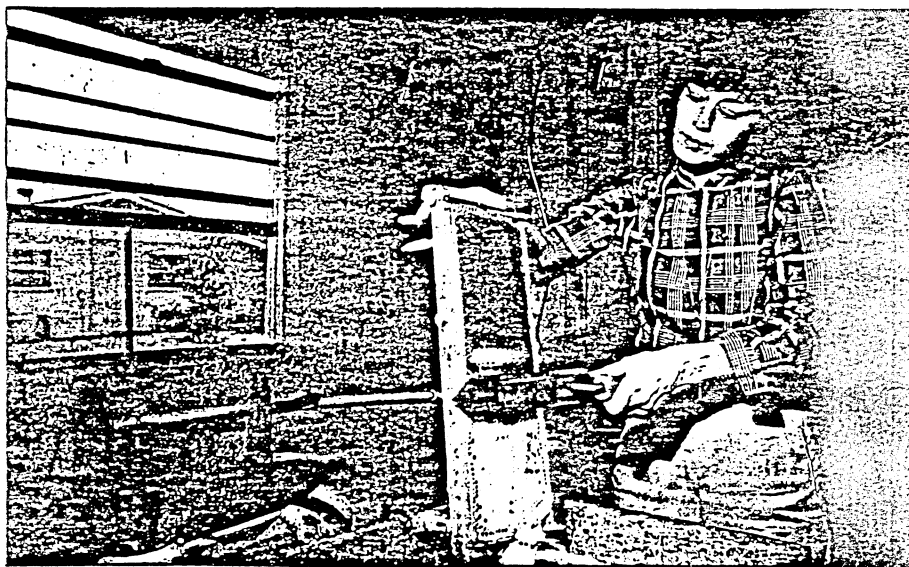
By LAURA LANE

■ A network is an informal cluster of people who share information and give each other psychological support. The idea is catching on among women who farm, and work off the farm, too. The network I know best is in Florida.

Why Florida? That's the home base of Christina H. Gladwin, anthropologist turned ag economist at the University of Florida, who has been researching farm women's work and worries since 1979. In the process she has become a champion and friend of women on farms and in agribusiness, and a catalyst for self-help groups.

Networks exist because of a blind spot in agriculture, Gladwin says. "Farm women often have been excluded from training, new technology, land purchases and credit, but when they band together they can get what they need."

Women are forthright about their needs when interested people inquire. I learned that from a network in the formative stage in Collier County. We had coffee first, then each woman introduced herself. Said one: "I'm a rancher's wife, a 'gofer,'



Photos: Steinmetz-Wands Photography

**DIANE ANGE IS A PART-TIME FARMER.** Year-round her farm work averages more than 22 hours a week. She and her husband Fulton have 200 acres of staked tomatoes and sell honey wholesale. In the spring, Diane often works all night, emptying frames from 600 hives into an extractor which separates honey from combs. Diane, who can do almost everything on the farm, has had a full-time job for four years as appraiser of real property for Hendry County, Fla. (photo upper right). She has crisscrossed the country taking courses. "Learning for its own sake turns me on," she says, "and knowing your subject increases self-confidence."

**Where  
you can  
get help**

Women who feel ill-prepared for their changed roles—off-farm or on—have numerous opportunities for both professional help and mutual support from other farm women during 1984:

- If you want training in farm marketing, ag finance, new technology and activism, you can enroll in a workshop for women in agriculture planned by the Center for Women's Services, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Mich. 49008. Cost will be \$50 for registration and all meals, but this fee does not cover

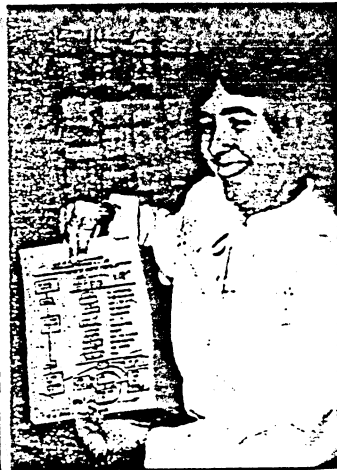
lodging at the Kalamazoo Center Hilton. For further information, call the Center: 616-383-6097.

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture will offer its 1984 Farm Women's Forum in Washington, D.C. April 11-13. The program will focus on Speaking Out in Behalf of Agriculture. Attendance will be limited to 150. Write Shirley Traxler, Secretary's Office of Public Liaison, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call 202-447-2798.

- All farm and ranch women are invited to a marketing conference in



**MANY WOMEN ARE FARMERS**—not just helpers of their husbands—and the ag community ought to recognize that, believes Christina H. Gladwin (below) of the University of Florida. She researches how women pitch in (see other photos) and helps them set up networks.



a cowboy at roundup time, book-keeper, microcomputer operator, substitute mail carrier, and I'm in real estate."

Such a variety of crops and responsibilities flowed out that I was amazed how easily these 15 women could reach a consensus on help they wanted:

computer operation at home or in a business  marketing profitably what we produce  debt refinancing, cash flow and budgets  how to cope with family stress  basic estate planning  managing time "so we're not so tired"  how to have more clout with OSHA and other agencies that "regulate us."

Even before the meeting broke up, the women heard an accountant discuss computer capability, and since

then there has been another session for learning about computers. They are getting what they asked for . . . programs such as When Your Husband Dies, Managing Your Time, Coordinated Financial Statements, Building Family Strengths.

"Sometime our network needs experts, but it's easy to underestimate how much women help each other," says Denise Coleman, county Extension home economist, whose Immo-kalee office is both meeting place and point of contact for the 126 women who comprise the agribusiness network. "Whatever the problem, someone in the group likely has faced it and can offer guidance."

Adds Gladwin: "Specialists can offer advice on enterprise budgets, as I did today, but we must not over-

look family tensions, women continually remind us. A woman admitted today she feels guilty because she wants credit for farm work she's doing—work her husband traditionally has done but can't do because he has an off-farm job. Another feels guilty about leaving children with a babysitter while she works as a bookkeeper in a packing plant. Talking about this to professionals or to other women in the same boat is good therapy."

A woman in a pink dress spoke for many when she asked for help with time management because "I'm chronically tired." Gladwin's research explains why: On the average, a Florida farm woman logs 22 hours a week of farm work, 18 hours of off-farm employment, 26 hours of housework . . . 66 hours in all. During gardening season increase those hours to 78 a week. Why do this? For survival of the farm, they tell Gladwin and her associates.

**Ingredients of a network** are few: (1) farm women with shared interests; ask around and you'll find a cluster to begin with; (2) a meeting place; start with somebody's home or a central spot where there's no charge; (3) resource people; consider professionals from Extension, your community college, a women's study center, vocational schools, branches of universities.

If networks spread and grow, it will be because no one likes to feel alone. Mutual support can be one women-tested answer. ◀

Chicago Feb. 26-28 at the Hyatt Regency, O'Hare Airport. Registration fee is \$150. For further information, write FWN Marketing Conference, Box 643, Milwaukee, Wis. 53201, or phone Bernice Rogers at 414-423-0100.

• Two seminars for rural women in business are being planned at the University of Minnesota—Morris Campus, during February or March. For exact dates and other details, call Gail Nelson at 612-589-2211. This is continuing education for the network named Rural Women Mean Busi-

ness. Themes for 1984 will be "The Many Faces of Business" and "Business is Taxing."

• An educational conference for young farm and ranch couples including classes on accounting, marketing and bargaining is scheduled at the Tan-Tar-A Lodge on Lake of the Ozarks, Osage Beach, Mo., Feb. 26-28 by the Missouri Farm Bureau. In charge is Leroy Deles Dernier, Box 658, Jefferson City, Mo. 65101, phone 314-893-1400.

• A statewide seminar on farm marketing for farm women will be

held July 10-12 at the Holiday Inn, Decatur, Ill. For details write Ellen Culver, Illinois Farm Bureau, P.O. Box 2901, Bloomington, Ill. 61701, or call 309-557-2537.

• A seminar on finance, "The Cash-Flow Crisis," will be offered by Ford Tractor Operations of Troy, Mich., several times during 1984: at the Kalamazoo conference mentioned earlier; for women of the American Soybean Association meeting in Tulsa, Okla., Aug. 3-7; and for American Agri-Women, meeting in Peoria, Ill., Nov. 13-15.