

The girls' tomato clubs had similar impacts on adults in improving gardening, poultry growing, butter and bread making, and other homemaking practices.

"After the agent came to our home and actually gave a demonstration in making a hotbed and it proved successful, Papa was convinced there was something to demonstration work. Now, instead of only collards and cockleburs in our winter garden, we have turnips, cabbage, lettuce, spinach and beets," one girl reported.

Demonstration work received a big boost when the Smith Lever Act of 1914 created the Cooperative Extension Service. Farm and home demonstration work, boys' corn and girls' canning clubs were reorganized under the new Extension Service and formally tied to the state land-grant college at Auburn.

As agriculture practices improved across the state, the basic purpose of 4-H club began to shift. Originally intended to convey new agriculture techniques, the Club now focused on helping young people develop self-confidence and a sense of community responsibility.

During the 1920s, the 4-H program became more uniformly structured across the state. L.M. Duncan became director of the Cooperative Extension Service and T.A. "Dad" Sims took his place as 4-H leader.

Alabama sent small groups to the International Livestock Exposition and to the Boys' and Girls' Club Congress in Chicago. In 1927, Alabama participated in the first National 4-H Club Conference in Washington, D.C.

Two state events were established -- the Girls' Short Course and the Boys' State Encampment, both held at Alabama Polytechnic Institute at Auburn.

The 30s and 40s were growth years as project offerings in 4-H were expanded to meet interests of a variety of youth. No long was 4-H just for farm youth.

In 1956, the Alabama 4-H Club Foundation was chartered and raised \$1 million to provide financial support for the 4-H program.

"Dad" Sims retired and was followed by Hanchey Logue as State 4-H Leader. When Logue retired, Cecil Mayfield became the fourth person to be State 4-H Leader. With Mayfield's retirement in 1989, Dr. Tony Dozier was named interim State 4-H Leader. Greg Hutchins was appointed in 1992. Wilma Ruffin was appointed in 1965. Warren McCord was appointed in 1999 and served until retirement. Lamar Nichols was appointed Assisted Director for 4-H and Youth Programs in 2003.

The 60s brought expansion of 4-H into nutrition education for disadvantaged youth and programs for inner city youth. During the 1970's, community resource

development was added. Citizenship Washington Focus trips became annual opportunities for older youth to visit the nation's capital.

In 1980, the Alabama 4-H Youth Development Center opened in Shelby County. The Center continued to expand to accommodate the needs of 4-H and other groups. In 2007 the Environmental Science Education Center was dedicated

In 2004, The Alabama 4-H Program began the transition to regional based staff, a change throughout the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. School-based programming by county staff continues to provide awareness and opportunities for Alabama youth. Volunteer led community clubs establish in-depth project work and service opportunities.

Alabama 4-H continues "To Make the Best Better" for youth and their families for 100 years.