

CORNELL READING COURSE FOR THE FARMERS' WIVES: SERIES I-IV

Title	Author(s)	Date	Series	Number	Pages
Saving Steps	MVR*	Nov. 1902**	Series I: Farmhouse and Garden	1	1-20
Decoration and the Farm Home	MVR	Dec. 1902	Series I: Farmhouse and Garden	2	21-40
Practical Housekeeping	MVR	Jan. 1903	Series I: Farmhouse and Garden	3	41-60
The Kitchen Garden	John Craig	Feb. 1903	Series I: Farmhouse and Garden	4	61-80
Flowers and the Flower Garden	MVR, L.H. Bailey, Wilhelm Miller	March 1903	Series I: Farmhouse and Garden	5	81-100
The Rural School and the Farm Home	MVR	Nov. 1903	Series II: The Farm Family	6	101-120
Boys and Girls on the Farm	MVR	Dec. 1903	Series II: The Farm Family	7	121-140
Reading in the Farm Home	MVR, John Craig	Jan. 1903	Series II: The Farm Family	8	141-160
Farm Home Industries	MVR	Feb. 1904	Series II: The Farm Family	9	161-184d
Insect Pests of House and Garden	M.V. Slingerland	March 1904	Series II: The Farm Family	10	185-200h
Suggestions on Home	MVR	Nov. 1904	Series III: Sanitation	11	201-220

* MVR = Martha Van Rensselaer

** An earlier version of this bulletin was published in January 1901. This first edition of "Saving Steps" can be found in the New York State College of Home Economics records, #23-2-749, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

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Sanitation			and Food		
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Germ Life in the Farm Home – A Second Talk on Sanitation	MVR	Dec. 1904	Series III: Sanitation and Food	12	221-236
Brief Discussion on Human Nutrition	MVR	Jan. 1905	Series III: Sanitation and Food	13	237-256
Food for the Farmer's Family	MVR	Feb. 1905	Series III: Sanitation and Food	14	257-272
Saving Strength	MVR	March 1905	Series III: Sanitation and Food	15	173-296
Programs for Evenings with Farmers Wives' Reading Clubs	MVR	Oct. 1905		16	297-235
Flour and Bread	Anna Barrows	Nov. 1905	Series IV: The Farm Table	17	335-358
Dust as Related to Food	MVR, S. Maria Elliott, Professor Pearson	Dec. 1905	Series IV: The Farm Table	18	359-378
The Selection of Food	Alice Peloubet Norton, Gertrude Sober Church	Jan. 1906	Series IV: The Farm Table	19	379-397
Canning and Preserving	Maria S. Parloa	Feb. 1906	Series IV: The Farm Table	20	399-418

Number	Summary
1	The first bulletin gives advice to farmers' wives on saving steps, time, and energy in their work, so that their labor will not feel like drudgery. The suggestions largely center on timesaving techniques, technologies, and arrangements for the kitchen.
2	The second bulletin discusses the importance of making one's home as beautiful as possible and making the farm home as attractive as the city home to children. The bulletin advocates principles of decoration, such as simplicity, and guides women in choosing furniture, displaying pictures, and using plants and flowers in decoration.
3	This bulletin lacks a coherent theme, rather it reads as an important overview for the entire Reading-Course project, describing how "housekeeping is never interesting unless it has a intellectual and spiritual side." The bulletin is largely composed of excerpts from reader's letters and their suggestions on how to set up convenient kitchens and the best ways to do common household tasks.
4	Craig first argues that the kitchen garden belongs to the housewife and that the fruit and vegetables produced are indispensable to proper nutrition and to the home. He then provides detailed and technical directions for setting up and maintaining the garden, with a mind to both feeding the family and serving as a source of revenue.
5	Begins with the argument that too much attention has been paid to the financial side of farming, and not enough to how to make the farm home a happier and more comfortable place. In order to create a happy, successful, attractive farm home, MVR suggests "brighten[ing] the place with flowers." To this end, the bulletin includes information on using flowers to decorate the yard.
6	Argues that since the child lives both in the home and in the school, it is mother's responsibility to get involved and to ensure the school's positive condition. Focuses mainly on the physical appearance and sanitary conditions of the schoolhouse. Also includes some suggestions from Cornell Bulletin No. 160 on school grounds, school instruction, and the consolidated rural school of the future.
7	How to keep young people on the farm is the driving question behind this bulletin, which begins with superior benefits children reap by growing up on a farm. The bulletin provides advice on teaching children about housekeeping and farm work and also suggests ways to increase children's enjoyment of farm life.
8	Begins with a meditation on the importance of reading in the farm home: to provide intellectual stimulus and culture and to make practical housework more enjoyable. Advises how housewives can develop the habit of reading, despite lack of time and how to interest children in reading books that will cultivate the mind. Ends with an

	extended list of book suggestions.
9	Gives women instructions for developing home industries that will provide both pleasure and monetary profit, including poultry rearing, squab raising, home dairy, bee keeping, gardening, fruit growing, and weaving. MVR attempts to add interest to farm life by emphasizing the spiritual and intellectual benefits that this work can provide. Directs readers to the Cornell Farmers' Reading Course, the Farmers' Bulletins from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and other Farmers Wives' bulletins for more information on developing these industries.
10	Provides information on the life-stories, breeding habits, and best methods of protection against many common household pests.
11	This bulletin takes up the topic of keeping the farm home sanitary and details common sources of contamination. Ends with a letter from MVR to the Farmer's Wife, urging her to patiently seek the conditions that supply pure water, pure air, and healthful soil, since "the safety and health of the family falls heavily on them."
12	Continuation of the previous bulletin, focusing on why it is so important to maintain sanitary conditions (such as proper ventilation, proper drainage, and no dust), by exploring bacteria and other dangerous "germs." Includes scientific background on what bacteria are, how they are disseminated, and how to destroy and prevent the growth of disease causing microorganisms. Ends on a note of high praise for the housewife's "blessed mission" and her "crusade" against germs, bacteria, and dirt.
13	The goal of this bulletin is to make the reader aware of "rational practice" in human nutrition and to encourage her to pursue this topic further. Describes the four components of food (protein, fats, carbohydrates, and ash/mineral substances) and encourages a balanced diet that includes all the necessary nutrients. Includes a table that displays the composition and value of common foods.
14	Expands on the previous bulletin by discussing the preparation of food, as opposed to its chemical composition. Champions milk as a very nutritious and economical food and provides specific instructions for cooking meat. Instructs women to replace "elaborate meals" and "unnecessary dishes" with simple and intelligent cooking.
15	This bulletin provides women with suggestions for "physical culture," meant to help them use their bodies "more economically" and to lessen their fatigue. Describes exercises and stretches that will provide rest from work, keep the body young, and promote strength. Details the interconnections between physical states and mental states.
16	MVR encourages women to form clubs and to forge a strong relationship between these clubs and the reading course and the College of Agriculture. Provides a sample constitution and sample programs to assist women in organizing clubs. The programs all follow

	the same general outline: a) introductory exercises based on a literary, historical, or nature-related theme b) main section based on a Farmers' Wives' Reading Course bulletin c) concluding program focused on current events and relevant political questions.
17	Begins with reflections on the importance of grains and breads to human culture and a history of bread's development. Describes the chemical composition of bread and grain. Provides suggestions for baking bread, some based on experience and some based on scientific principles.
18	Begins with a short introduction by MVR, followed by "The Dust-Garden" by S. Maria Elliott and "The Contamination of Milk by Means of Dust" by R.A. Pearson, and "Further Notes on Food Care" by MVR. Elliott describes the pervasiveness and danger of dust, molds, and bacteria and how invisible germs can attach to dust and begin a colony. Professor Pearson focuses specifically on protecting milk from dust and summarizes his scientific experiments on milk contamination, done with Walter E. King of the State Veterinary College. MVR's note at the end encourages thoughtfulness instead of carelessness, but also warns against becoming to "finicky" or fearful.
19	Using the fable of King Palate and his prime minister Knowledge who together battle the enemies of Indigestion and Dyspepsia, Norton enumerates the new areas of knowledge – in relation to food selection and preparation – which modern housewives need to master. Provides tools for women to be able to calculate a healthy diet and choose the best food for their families. Church provides further information on the composition of common foods and how to select the most nutritious and economical foods.
20	Provides a step-by-step guide to canning and directions for making preserves, jams, and jellies. Reviews background on yeast, molds, and bacteria and details methods of sterilization.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL FOR FARMERS WIVES' READING COURSE SERIES I-IV

Title	Author(s)	Date	Series	Number	Pages
Suggestions to Readers	MVR	Nov. 1906	Series V	21	419-430
Suggestions on Former Reading-Course Bulletins	MVR, Charles DeGarmo	Dec. 1906	Series V	22	431-442
A Supplement to Bulletins Nos. 2 and 3	MVR, Charles DeGarmo	Jan. 1907	Series V	23	443-446
Supplement to Bulletin No. 2	MVR, Charles DeGarmo	Feb. 1907	Series V	24	447-450
Supplement to Bulletins Nos. 2 and 3	MVR, W.C. Baker	March 1907	Series V	25	451-454
Untitled	MVR	Nov. 1907	Series VI	26	455-458
A Month of Education Discussion	MVR	Jan. 1908	Series VI	27	459-466
Another Study on Household Equipment	MVR	March 1908	Series VI	28	467-468

Number	Summary
21	After four years of formal bulletins, this bulletin announces a new phase of the reading course. Provides information on the College of Agriculture's extension work directed at homemakers and reports on institutes, events, clubs and courses of potential interest to members of the reading course. Also reports on the progress of the course and the Cornell study clubs.
22	Includes an assortment of suggestions for readers, covering both "practical household affairs" and reading. The central section introduces a new area of study – art appreciation – and presents a picture of Psyche looking at her reflection. Charles DeGarmo, in a section entitled "What Makes a Picture Beautiful," analyzes the picture and ruminates on the nature of art.

23	Begins with an explanation of Series V: providing supplementary material for the core course bulletins (Series I-IV). This bulletin supplements bulletins number 2 and 3. For Bulletin 2, DeGarmo again performs his art analysis, this time writing about the importance of variety and unity in art. The supplementary material for bulletin 3 deals with kitchen fires and cookers.
24	More supplementary material on bulletin 2: emphasizes the importance of simplicity and speaks of the artistic temperament possessed by all. Another art interlude by DeGarmo studies a piece of Greek sculpture to illustrate some "principles of art and good taste." Ends with various readers' responses to a question from bulletin 2's discussion paper.
25	This bulletin applies the principles of art explored in the previous three bulletins to natural landscapes. W.C. Baker applies the principle of unity (or oneness) to a picture of beech trees, in the same way DeGarmo applied them to Greek statues and classical pictures. Since spring is approaching, MVR reminds her readers of bulletin 5, urging them to plant gardens for aesthetic enjoyment.
26	Course evaluation and general announcements on the College of Home Economics' extension work.

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NEW SERIES

Title	Author	Date	Series	Number
Saving Strength	Emily M. Bishop and MVR	Nov. 1908	New Series I: Sanitation	1
Insect Pests of House and Garden	M.V. Slingerland	Dec. 1908	New Series I: Sanitation	2
The Laundry	Flora Rose	Jan. 1909	New Series I: Sanitation	3
Bacteriology of the Household	MVR	Feb. 1909	New Series I: Sanitation	4
Human Nutrition, Part I	Flora Rose	Nov. 1909	New Series II: Food	5
Human Nutrition, Part II	Flora Rose	Dec. 1909	New Series II: Food	6
The Care of Feeding of Children, Part I	Flora Rose	Jan. 1910	New Series II: Food	7

THE CORNELL READING-COURSES: LESSONS FOR THE FARM HOME

Title	Author	Date	No.	Series
The Care and Feeding of Children – Part I	Flora Rose	Oct. 1911	I.1	Food Series
The Care and Feeding of Children – Part II	Flora Rose	Nov. 1911	I.3	Food Series
Household Decoration	MVR (Introduction) and Helen Binkerd Young (Household Decoration)	Dec. 1911	I.5	Farm House Series
Household Furnishings	Helen Binkerd Young	Jan. 1912	I.7	Farm House Series
Reading in the Farm Home	MVR and Caroline Webster	Feb. 1912	I.9	Rural Life Series
The Laundry	Flora Rose	Mar. 1912	I.11	Farm House Series
Cornell Study Clubs	MVR, Elizabeth H. Spalding (A Neighborhood Travel Club), Ada E. Georgia (Programs on the Out-of-Doors), Mary F. Lewis (How to Form a Club or Other Society).	Apr. 1912	I.13	Rural Life Series
Principles of Jelly-Making	N.E. Goldthwaite	May 1912	I.15	Food Series
The Preservation of Food in the Home – Part I	Flora Rose	Jun. 1912	I.17	Food Series
The Preservation of Food in the Home – Part II	Flora Rose	Jul. 1912	I.19	Food Series
The Preservation of Food in the Home – Part III	Flora Rose, Earl W. Benjamin, Charles S. Wilson, Paul Work, Andrew Boss, W.A. Stocking	Aug. 1912	I.21	Food Series
Rules for Cleaning	Mary Urie Watson	Sept. 1912	I.23	Farm House Series
Saving Strength	Emily Bishop and MVR	Oct. 1912	II.25	Sanitation Series
Choice and Care of Utensils	Ida S. Harrington	Nov. 1912	II.27	Farm House Series
Cost of Food	Flora Rose	Dec. 1912	II.29	Food Series
Household Bacteriology	MVR	Jan. 1913	II.31	Sanitation Series

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Vegetable-Gardening	Liberty Hyde Bailey (Introduction), Albert E. Wilkinson	Feb. 1913	II.33	Garden Series
The Flower Garden	Liberty Hyde Bailey (Introduction), Albert E. Wilkinson	Mar. 1913	II.35	Garden Series
Home Economics at the New York State College of Agriculture	MVR	Apr. 1913	II.37	Rural Life Series
The Farmhouse	Helen Binkerd Young	May 1913	II.39	Farm House Series
Rules for Planning the Family Dietary	Flora Rose	Jun. 1913	II.41	Food Series
The Box Luncheon	Clara W. Browning	Jul. 1913	II.43	Food Series
Hints on Choosing Textiles	Bertha E. Titsworth	Aug. 1913	II.45	Household Textile Series
A Canning Business for Farm Home	Claribel Nye and Bessie Earll Austin	Sept. 1913	II.47	Rural Life Series
Household Insects and Methods of Control	Glenn W. Herrick	Oct. 1913	III.49	Sanitation Series
A Story of Certain Table Furnishings	Clara W. Browning and Edith J. Munsell	Nov. 1913	III.51	Rural Life Series
A Story of Certain Table Furnishings	Clara W. Browning and Edith J. Munsell	Nov. 1913	III.51	Rural Life Series
The Christmas Festival	Bertha Betts	Dec. 1913	III.53	Rural Life Series
Rice and Rice Cookery	Miriam Birdseye	Jan. 1914	III.55	Food Series
A Syllabus of Lessons for Extension Schools in Home Economics.	MVR (Introduction), Miriam Birdseye	Feb. 1914	III.57	Food Series
Sewage Disposal for Country Homes	Howard W. Riley	Mar. 1914	III.59	Sanitation Series
Attic Dust and Treasures	Blanche Evans Hazard	Apr. 1914	III.61	Rural Life Series
The Young Woman on the Farm	MVR (Introduction), Martha Foote Crow	May 1914	III.63	Rural Life Series
Farmhouse Amusements for Boys and Girls	Blanche Evans Hazard	Jun. 1914	III.65	Rural Life Series
Canning Clubs in New York State – Part I. Organization	MVR	July 1914	III.67	Canning Club Series
Canning Clubs in New York State – Part II. Principles and Methods of Canning	Flora Rose and O.H. Benson	Aug. 1914	III.69	Canning Club Series
Canning Clubs in New	Flora Rose and O.H.	Sept. 1914	III.71	Canning Club

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York State – Part III. Canning Equipment	Benson			Series
Making Cake – Part I	Katherine H. Mills	Oct. 1914	IV.73	Food Series
Making Cake – Part II	Katherine H. Mills	Nov. 1914	IV.75	Food Series
Songs that Live	Rose Morgan	Dec. 1914	IV.77	Rural Life Series
Programs for Use in Study Clubs	Miriam Birdseye	Jan. 1915	IV.79	Food Series
Potatoes in the Dietary	Helen Canon	Feb. 1915	IV.81	Food Series
Raising Vegetables for Canning	Albert E. Wilkinson	Mar. 1915	IV.83	Garden Series
The Arrangement of Household Furnishings	Helen Binkerd Young	Apr. 1915	IV.85	Farmhouse Series
The Decorative Use of Flowers	Annette J. Warner	May 1915	IV.87	Farmhouse Series
Beans and Similar Vegetables as Food	Lucile Brewer and Helen Canon	Jun. 1915	IV.89	Food Series
The Life of Primitive Women	Blanche Evans Hazard and Mabel L. Flumerfelt	July 1915	IV.91	Rural Life Series
Farm Home Demonstration Schools	MVR	Aug. 1915	IV.93	Rural Life Series
The Fireless Cooker and its Uses	Helen Canon and Lucile Brewer	Sept. 1915	IV.95	Farmhouse Series

Notes on the Cornell Reading Course for Farmers' Wives: Series I-IV:

General format of most bulletins: Van Rensselaer begins with a philosophical introduction to the topic at hand and why it is important, then goes on to more specific and practical information. The bulletins often include guides to club study, information about the travelling library available to rural women, and suggestions for further reading. Another important feature of these bulletins is the appended discussion paper, which Van Rensselaer wanted her readers to fill out and send back to the College. Many of the bulletins include excerpts from readers' responses and correspondence.

In addition to relaying practical advice and scientific advice to homemakers, the bulletins also communicated values Van Rensselaer was trying to impart. The major themes prevalent in the bulletins include:

1. The importance of adding interest and zest to farm life to combat drudgery. To this end, encourages reading, appreciating nature, and adding a spiritual and intellectual side to housekeeping.
2. Making the farm home and farm life attractive to children and encouraging children to stay on the farm.
3. Glorifying the work of the homemaker and making the case that women's work on the farm home is at least as important as men's work on the farm and deserves equal attention and equal monetary appropriation.

Notes on Series V and VI and New Series

The first four series function as a self-contained and complete course from which, in Van Rensselaer's words, women could graduate. Series V and VI are meant to provide supplementary material for the first four series and to provide a way for Van Rensselaer to keep in touch with the farmers' wives. By including Charles DeGarmo's art analysis, these bulletins also add an interesting new element not found in the core bulletins.

The New Series serves as a kind of transition period between the Farmers Wives' Reading Course and the next stage of the project: The Cornell Reading Courses - Lessons for the Farm Home." The New Series bulletins include adaptations of earlier bulletins (for example, number 1), exact replicas of earlier bulletins (for example, number 2), and entirely new bulletins, which would be used later in Lessons for the Farm Home (for example, number 3).

Notes on the Cornell Reading-Courses: Lessons for the Farm Home

Described as "an enlargement and revision of the Farmers' Reading-Courses and the Farmers' Wives' Reading-Course that have been published by the College for ten years" (The Cornell Reading-Courses: Lesson for the Farm, Nov. 1911), the Cornell Reading-Courses streamlined the farmers' reading course and the farmers' wives'

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reading course into a more integrated project. The lessons on the Farm Home were given odd numbers and were issued on the first of each month. The Lessons on the Farm were given even numbers and were issued on the fifteenth of each month. Van Rensselaer remained the editor of the Lessons for the Farm Home, with Flora Rose joining her as co-supervisor starting November 1914. However, Van Rensselaer's voice became much less prominent, as the bulletins were published year round and many more authors contributed. The Lessons for the Farm Home continued after September 1916, changing formats and titles as time went on. (see <http://hearth.library.cornell.edu/h/hearth/browse/title/4732784.html#1915>).

***Note on Sources: For the Farmers Wives' Reading Course bulletins my source was a bound compilation of the bulletins in a book held by Mann library. However, I can no longer find the listing or citation in the Cornell library catalogue. The Cornell Reading-Courses: Lessons for the Farm Home can all be found on the Home Economics Archive: Research, Tradition and History (HEARTH), Ithaca, NY: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University, <http://hearth.library.cornell.edu>.

