

John A. Widtsoe, *In a Sunlit Land: The autobiography of John A. Widtsoe* (SLC: Desert News Press, 1952), 78-79.

Carrying the principles of modern agriculture to the farmers always seemed important to me. Unused truth has little value. Farmers' institute work, now known as agricultural extension work, was therefore begun and carried on with much vigor. As time permitted, with specialists from the Station staff, I travelled over the State discussing with groups of farmers their problems. While we taught them something, they in turn set our faces towards problems to be solved.

Frankly, it must be said that much prejudice had to be overcome. Farmers are "set" people. In those days especially, they were doubtful about "book farmers." Up in Heber, the leading citizen, examining my hands, looked heavenward and remarked, "Oh Lord, that the time should come that a man with such hands should teach us how to farm." Down in Richfield one of the farmers arose in the institute meeting to remark that he had helped build the bridges and kill the snakes in Sevier County, and that he knew more about farming in the county than I would ever know. He concluded his oration by inviting me to return to my hotel and take the first train out of Richfield and never to return. Five years later he was one of our most enthusiastic supporters. Dr. E.D. Ball and I held the well advertised first farmers' institute in Springville. Only two men came out. Nevertheless we practiced on them. After the meeting we discovered that one of the two was stone-deaf, who passed time by attending meetings, and the other was the janitor who had to be present. Eight years later when our agricultural train reached Springville, we were met by the mayor, city council with a brass band, and the meeting hall was crowded to capacity. It did not take long to convert the people of Utah. They needed only to be convinced that we came as bearers of truth and that "book-farmers" so-called had much to teach the pioneer who had to learn only through hard experience. Then, the old prejudices vanished.