

# Tobacco Still A Major Crop Throughout North Carolina

It Has Been Very Important Crop In This Country Ever Since It Was First Discovered By Europeans

## COAST LINE HELPED PROMOTE ITS GROWTH

Thirty Million Pounds Produced In The Early '90's As Result Of Promotional Work In North And South Carolina

BY GUY A. CARDWELL  
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Tobacco has been an important crop in this country almost from the time of its discovery by Europeans. Columbus, Drake, Sir Walter Raleigh and other early discoverers found it in use among the American Indians who smoked the leaves, not only socially and individually but in the ceremonial pipe of peace and around their council fires. The practice was introduced into Europe and became general in spite of determined opposition in high quarters. Pope Urban the VIII went to the length of excommunicating tobacco users, and no less a personage than King James I issued a "counterblase" against the weed.

Tobacco was the first crop to bring money to the settlers of the new world. The prospect of tobacco shipments played an important part in colonization. The principal business of Maryland and Virginia with the mother country from the purchase of a harpsichord or a wife to a roll of cloth or an implement was transacted in terms of tobacco and payment was made in tobacco.

I think I have stated before that in the early 90's the Atlantic Coast Line began the promotion of tobacco growing in Eastern and Southeastern North Carolina counties, among them Columbus. This promotion was done with the cooperation of the Southern Tobacco Journal, which journal engaged experienced tobacco growers to come into this territory, not only to grow tobacco but to encourage and show others how to grow and cure tobacco. One of the young men, E. L. Ring, who was afterwards employed by the Southern Railway

System as a tobacco specialist, located at Whiteville, and claims to have been the first farmer to grow tobacco in that section. Mr. Ring informed me some years ago that the Court House at that time was the only brick building in Columbus county; that there was not a bank in the county and there was not a farmer in the county who had a two horse wagon. Mr. Ring said, "Flour was cheap but we did not get any biscuits except on Sunday mornings when the preacher happened to visit us."

The result of tobacco promotional work started in the early 90's brought about within three years the production of 30,000,000 pounds of tobacco over a territory extending from Weldon, on the north to Sumter, S. C., on the South. Columbus county alone in 1939 produced nearly 30,000,000 pounds of tobacco, and total sales on Whiteville warehouse that year were almost 29,000,000 pounds. I do not have before me the production figures for the county for 1940, but they were very much reduced because of world market conditions. Total sales on the Whiteville market in 1940 was reduced from 28,704,379 pounds in 1939 to 16,864,478 pounds in 1940.

The Government is endeavoring to protect the tobacco growing farmer, that is, those farmers cooperating with the plans of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. In spite of the support given this crop by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, the wise farmer will steadfastly farm for a living first, for a surplus of food and feed next in order to care for his own needs and the needs of his improvident neighbors, and then get what money income he can in addition from the sale of tobacco and other cash crops.

Livestock, of necessity, must have a prominent place in Southern farming. I think this is now generally understood, although thousands of farmers have not yet gotten around to the adoption of a well balanced system-crops and livestock—but this change must be brought about if Southern agriculture as a profitable business is to survive.

## Big 3 Proprietor



A HARD WORKER is B. Alton Garrell, proprietor and operator of the Big 3 Warehouse in Tabor City. Mr. Garrell has almost doubled the floor space of the Big 3 this summer and has just closed one of the most successful produce seasons Tabor City has ever known. Mr. Garrell buys from farmers at Tabor City almost 12 months out of the year.

to cotton farmers by J. O. Rowell, Extension entomologist of N. C. State College. He reports that large numbers of weevils survived the comparatively mild winter of 1940-41 and emerged from hibernation this spring.

There are indications that weevils will be more numerous this year than during any recent year, Rowell says. The Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine of the U. S. Department of Agriculture keeps a fairly close check on weevils through the use of hibernation traps.

Examining hibernation traps at Florence, S. C., the Federal agency found survival of weevils at the rate of 1,960 per acre, nearly 12 times the number found in 1940. At Tallulah, La., 81 per cent of the weevils placed in traps last fall were alive this spring.

Where the cotton grower intends to follow a complete control program, Rowell recommends early or pre-square poisoning with a liquid mixture which is applied with mops. He urges, however, that the first application of the poison be delayed until weevils occur in the field at the rate of 30 or more per acre, or one weevil to 500 plants.

## Quality Tobacco Starts With Bed

A Well Constructed Plant Bed Will Protect Young Plants From Disease And Help Develop Them

A well constructed seed bed will protect young tobacco plants from disease and enable them to develop into hardy, thrifty specimens that will grow well in the field.

Dr. Luther Shaw, plant pathologist at State College, gives the following suggestions for tobacco plant beds:

Locate the bed in a warm, sunny place with a southern or southwestern exposure. The soil should be loamy and well drained. Do not place the bed on a site where a bed has been within the past four years.

Box the bed with planks extending six inches above the surface of the soil. Stretch wire across the bed. Place forked sticks in the ground, to keep the canvas from touching the earth.

Or the bed may be covered with a thin layer of oat or wheat straw, with the canvas resting on the straw. When the weather will permit, roll back the cover for a while during the day to give the plants fresh air and sunlight.

It is better to have several small beds than one large bed, as this lessens the possibility of all plants becoming infected with disease. A hundred square yards of bed will produce 10,000 to 15,000 plants. One ounce of seed will sow 300 square yards of bed.

Two hundred pounds of a 4-8-3 fertilizer mixture is enough for each 100 yards of bed. Thoroughly mix it with the upper three or four inches of soil.

Be especially careful to keep the beds free from blue mold or tobacco mosaic infections. This is important.

Extension specialist said. "This is usually when the plants are five to six inches high, and before the squares are large enough for the weevils to puncture. When the squares have developed to a size large enough for the weevils to feed on and lay eggs in, pre-square poison applications should cease."

Rowell says pre-square poisoning alone should not be relied upon to entirely control boll weevils. Many weevils reach the field after the pre-square poisoning period has passed. Post-square dusting with calcium arsenate is necessary to control late weevils.

## Insurance Man



HARVEY N. RADCLIFFE

## Insurance Co. Makes Report

Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company Report Shows Assets Of More Than 100 Million

H. N. Radcliff, special local representative of the Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company, Greensboro, North Carolina, received the semi-annual report today from the Home Office which was presented to the board of directors of the company at the semi-annual meeting held on July 28.

Some very interesting figures were released by President Julian Price at the meeting. The company now has more than \$435,000,000 life insurance in force. Assets increased during the past six months at the rate of \$900,000 per month, and now exceed \$100,000,000.

Going further, the company's chief executive explained that the paid-for business for the first six months of the year amounted to \$28,667,404, the largest total since 1928.

"Comparing this increase with the average increase of 4 percent for all companies shows the exceptional progress of our company," he declared. "Our increase in business in force is \$13,505,379, which is the largest increase for the first six months in over 20 years. The total business in force is \$435,824,570."

## Two Columbus Farmers Are Planning To Sell Milk

W. J. Bussey, Of Hallsboro, And H. C. Hunt, Of Clarendon, Both Planning To Ship To Fayetteville

## NO MILK SURPLUS FOR COUNTY IN SIGHT

Milk Route Already Serving Several Producers In Bladen County Will Extend Into Columbus

By J. P. Quinerly, Ass't. County Agent

W. J. Bussey, Hallsboro, and H. C. Hunt, Clarendon, are preparing to produce milk for market. Model milk house and barn plans have been supplied them by J. P. Quinerly, Assistant County Agent, who will assist in every way with this project. Messrs. Bussey and Hunt plan to start with ten to fifteen cows each and probably increase the number of milkers as fast as they can produce feed and pasture, the idea being to provide a year round income from their farms by selling milk.

This milk will be sent to Fayetteville on the truck now operating on a milk route serving several producers in Bladen County. Before long, however, it is believed that other Columbus County farmers will be attracted by it.

The company, which next month celebrates its 34th anniversary, has had satisfactory earnings during the first half of the year, President Price said. The Jefferson Standard has increased its surplus \$370,000, added \$100,000 to its contingency reserve and \$25,000 to funds for a pension plan.

Mr. Radcliffe has been special representative for the company in Whiteville for the past five years. He says that his company's volume of business in this county amounts to around three million dollars in life insurance and that for the past four years this county has led in volume for Jefferson Standard in Eastern Carolina.

Mr. Radcliffe has specialized in life insurance; he has just completed a study course in programming life insurance—an important matter to the investor. He maintains an office in the Guiton Drug Store building in Whiteville for his company.

this new source of income and enough milk will be produced to extend the route through our county or have one of our own. Mr. Quinerly states that his investigations disclose the fact that Columbus County farmers are within easy reach of two of the best milk markets in the State—Fayetteville and Wilmington. Because of the big increases in both civilian and army population, these cities have a big milk shortage and are having to import it from long distances. High quality milk is bringing an average of about 30c per gallon delivered in Fayetteville. This, according to A. C. Kimrey, State College Dairy Specialist, is a very profitable price and from 20 percent to 50 percent above standard prices in many sections. Furthermore, Mr. Kimrey says that there is no indication of a possible overproduction of milk in this area for many years to come, if ever.

Messrs. Bussey and Hunt are not making this venture blindly. They have visited farmers in Bladen County who are producing market milk with satisfaction and profit and feel that they can do as well or better. Like many other Columbus farmers, they are confronted with the problem of finding other sources of farm income than the old standbys of tobacco, strawberries, etc. Cows will consume large quantities of feed stuffs that are easily grown and at the same time rapidly increase the fertility of the farm as a result of manure produced.

All Columbus County farmers interested in producing milk for home or market—a family cow or milking herd, feed production, breeding bulls, etc., are urged to avail themselves of the services available at the County Agents Office.

Much of the 1941 wool clip has been marketed and is now moving from producing centers, with prices received by farmers this spring about 30 percent higher than a year ago.

A new process for making cotton and other fabrics mildew resistant has been developed by scientists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Rafts with sails are being used by fishermen off the coast of Peru.

## Properly Graded Leaf Important

"Pin-Hooker" Profits Tobacco Farmer's Take To Grade Properly; Adequate In Grading Room Sary

A little time spent in grading tobacco carefully has been shown to earn a farmer more than all the work he does in the field growing and curing it.

In the warehouse it's a common sight to see a "pin-hooker" buy a few baskets of tobacco from the growers, grade it fully, and sell it to the farmer for considerably more than he paid the farmer for the tobacco, says E. Y. State College.

The farmer who grades weed could get just as much as the "pin-hooker" brings it to the warehouse, fully sorted and packed, and he would not be so tied to the pin-hooker. Buyers don't like baskets mixed leaf, and they pay very much for them. But it has been re-sorted and into lots according to leaf type, color, and size of the particular leaf in each basket.

Adequate light is essential, shorting rooms so the leaf is seen clearly and graded accordingly. Tie the same kind of tobacco into bundles or hanks, and enough different lots to cover the full range of quality, leaf and color of the crop.

Tobacco of low grade when ten bring a fair price when properly prepared, but even best grade on the market bring top prices if it is with inferior leaf.

Growers who have more than they can sell tax-free find it pays to sell the leaf first, and pay tax on the lower priced tobacco, and higher the price, the higher tax will be. However, some growers with excess tobacco are willing to buy extra market quota cards from growers who not have enough tobacco to ship the full amount of their crop.

Sweet potatoes grown for starch have yielded high as 2,500 pounds of starch to the acre, compared with 1,000 pounds from corn.

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