

COTTON CULTURE IN NEW COTTON AREAS OF THE STATE

(By R. Y. Winters and M. F. Page)

The information given here is for growers in the North Carolina Piedmont counties where very little cotton has been grown in the past. Three counties are: Forsyth, Guilford, Caswell, Northern Alamance, and Orange, Vance Person and Warren. This area represents the old tobacco belt of the state. The information which comes from local and extension workers in this section indicates a growing interest in the production of cotton in some communities of this section. Cotton is already being successfully produced. On account of the shorter season and cooler summer nights of this section growers should take up cotton culture with caution. You are equipped for tobacco and understand its culture and production better than cotton. For this reason growers of this section should not drop tobacco entirely and plant a large acreage of cotton. A large acreage of cotton planted by any grower of this district is certain to be a great risk on account of the boll weevil and short season. We have no guarantee that cotton will remain as high in price, in fact the chances are very much against this. For the above reason it is important that the change from tobacco to cotton be taken very cautiously. As a rule, the production of better tobacco on a smaller acreage and an increase in the production of home supplies will be more profitable than plunging into cotton. If cotton is to be grown the following suggestions should be followed:

Soil For Cotton Cotton will require very much the same type of soil as has been previously used for tobacco. The light gray or gravelly soils will be best. The heavy clay soils and all soils that are poorly drained should be avoided.

Preparation Of Soil For Cotton The land that is to be planted to cotton should be thoroughly broken as early as possible during the winter or early spring. In early April before the rush of spring work, lay off the rows three to three and one-half feet apart. On poorer lighter soils three feet will be better and on the heavier and richer soils three and one-half feet will be better. The turning of soil and distributing of fertilizers may be done at one operation if a bull tongue or scotcher is attached to the fertilizer distributor. After the fertilizer is distributed throw dirt to this furrow from each side with a turn plow or lister. The lister is so constructed as to throw dirt from both sides of the furrow at one operation. A good deep bed should be formed and allowed to stand until planting time. This gives the seed bed time to settle. The well settled seed bed will allow soil moisture to rise if the season is dry and will furnish good drainage if the season is wet. One of the most frequent causes of poor stands in cotton is excess of moisture and low temperature. The well settled seed bed will not hold as much moisture as the deep loose seed bed.

Fertilization The soils in this part of the state are deficient in plant food. In growing cotton on these soils it will be found necessary to use liberal quantities of fertilizers in order to secure large yields. As a rule large yields pay better than small yields. For the average soils in this section it is advisable to use a fertilizer mixture analyzing 10 to 12 percent phosphoric acid, 4 per cent ammonia and about 2 per cent potash. With the use of from 500 to 800 pounds of this mixture to the acre under cotton and a good growing season, a good yield may be expected. At least half if not more of the ammonia in the fertilizer should be obtained from Nitrate of Soda, Sulphate of Ammonia or other soluble compounds. This is necessary in order for the crop, not only to grow rapidly, but also to keep on growing, setting as much fruit early as possible.

Cotton Varieties and Seed The varieties recommended are based upon variety tests in Rowan, Iredell, Davie and Caswell counties. In these tests the King 29, bred at the Piedmont Branch Station farm, Statesville, North Carolina, has been earliest but Cleveland and Mexican Big Boll have yielded highest. Cleveland led all other varieties in Iredell and Caswell counties with Mexican Big Boll but all other varieties in yield of lint per acre in Davie and Rowan counties. When arranged in order of their maturity King 29, comes first, Mexican Big Boll second and Cleveland third. Write the Division of Agronomy, State College Station, Raleigh, North Carolina, for the best source of seed.

Time and Method of Planting Do not plant cotton until the soil is warm. Sow the cotton in rows

young cotton plants can live in a cold wet soil. Cold wet soils at the time of planting or immediately afterwards are the principal cause of poor stands. The time of planting will vary somewhat with the seasons but as a rule the planting of this section will be done after the first of May. In securing seed one should allow at least six pecks of seed per acre, though it will not usually require more than four to five pecks. Wait for a good season. If the beds have been thrown up in advance it will be easier to take advantage of the season for planting if the beds are too hard to plant, just run a harrow or shallow cultivator over them just ahead of the planter. Watch the planter and see that it is distributing evenly of seed. When the cotton is planted the seed bed should be only a few inches above the middles allowing slight drainage. If a hard crust forms on the surface before the cotton comes up, run a cultivator down the middles and as close to the seed beds as possible.

Chopping Chopping cotton consists of cutting out some of the young plants with a hoe and leaving the remainder in hills. Delay the chopping until all danger of cool weather is over. If chopped too early some of the plants may die after chopping, thus reducing the stand. The chopping is usually done three or four weeks after planting. The results of spacing tests show that eight inches between the hills and with two to three plants left in the hill is best. This closer spacing will stimulate earlier fruiting and increase the yield.

Cultivation The cultivation should be frequent and shallow. In sections having short seasons and cool nights it is very important to use frequent cultivation keeping a shallow mulch of soil

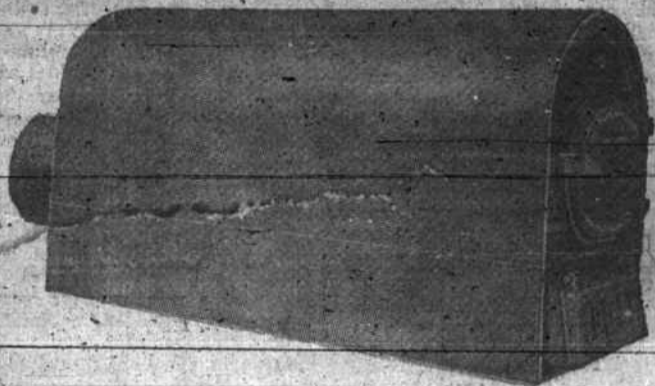
throughout the growing season. Do not stop the cultivation too soon.

Rotation The following are some of the best rotations for cotton: 1.—First year: Corn with soybeans or cowpeas. Second year: Cotton with Crimson clover. 2.—First year: Corn. Second year: Oats and Vetch followed by soybeans or cowpeas. Third year: Cotton with Crimson clover. 3.—First year: Corn with soybeans or cowpeas. Second year: Cotton followed by wheat or oats. Lospediza planted in wheat or oats in February. Third year: Lospediza from spring planting turned in the fall. It will be best not to have cotton follow a legume turned under except on the lightest and poorest soils.

Harvesting It pays to keep cotton picked clean as it opens, trashy, weather stained cotton brings from five to ten dollars per bale less than good white cotton. It will be best to keep the late pickings separate from the first pickings for a small amount of trashy discolored may spoil the sale of the entire bale. If you do not have enough clean cotton to make a bale combine with a neighbor who has the same kind of cotton.

Marketing As a rule it does not pay to sell seed cotton. The price usually offered is much below the value of lint and seed after it is ginned. December 1923.

Tom Tarheel says he is going to plan his crops this next season with the idea that the boll weevil will hurt his cotton. If the season is favorable to the pest then the other crops will produce food, feed and some money.



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USE THE HOTBED AND HAVE AN EARLY GARDEN

Raleigh, N. C., Jan. 1.—The climate of North Carolina makes it possible to have an all-year garden in most sections of the state. To secure the most satisfactory results, however, free use must be made of hotbeds and coldframes. Says Robert Schmidt, assistant horticulturist for the State College and Department of Agriculture, "January is the month for preparing hotbeds. They should be located in a sheltered place with a southern exposure where they will be protected from north and west winds, and will receive the maximum amount of sunlight. The frames should be handy to both the house and garden so that they can be given constant attention. The soil in and about the frames should be well drained. A hot bed 6 feet by 6 feet in size will be large enough for the average garden and can be constructed rather cheaply. Sturdy glass hotbed sash are 8 feet by 6 feet and ten bought or made at home. Fresh stable manure will furnish

the material for the hotbed. It should be turned two or three times before planting in the bed. In order to get a uniform, compact and well-aerated soil, an excavation about 18 inches deep is made for the bed and about 16 inches of manure is placed in it and well packed. A wooden frame is built over the manure about twelve or fourteen inches high on the north side with the south side about four inches lower to give sufficient slope to the sash. Four or five inches of good garden loam is placed on top of the manure and the frame is covered with the glass sash or sometimes with heavy canvas or muslin. The manure will heat rapidly for the first few days and the beds must be ventilated frequently. The seeds must be planted until the temperature has gone down to 50 or 55 degrees F. After planting close attention should be given to the watering and ventilation of the bed. Moisture is necessary for germination and growth but an excess of moisture must be avoided as it is apt to cause damping-off. The cold frame is constructed in

such the same way except that no manure is used for heating purposes. It is used by hardy plants grown in hot beds and also to grow certain crops to maturity when some protection is needed on cold nights. Heavy manure or grass is commonly used for cold frames.

DR. S. RAPPORT

AT DAVIS' DRUG STORE BEGINNING DECEMBER 5th, Dr. S. RAPPORT of Durham will be at DAVIS' DRUG STORE instead of the Hotel, every first Wednesday in each month, to examine eyes and fit glasses. My next visit will be Wednesday FEBRUARY 6th 1924. TO SEE BETTER, SEE ME. MY DURHAM OFFICE IS MAIN ST. OPPOSITE POST OFFICE.



Questions for You

- Were you once a child? Are you now a parent of a child or children? Did you go to Sunday School? Do you send your child or children to Sunday School? Why did you go to Sunday School? Why do you send your children to Sunday School? Do you think a Sunday School ever harmed any child? Don't you think that men and women are "only children" grown up? Do you know any man or woman who is so good or so smart that they cannot learn more for their own happiness? Aren't Sunday Church Services simply another form of Sunday School for "children" grown up? Then why don't you go to Church THIS Sunday?



So They Voted for "TH"

The question in the Graham home was whether it was to be TH-rift or a D-rift. The vote was for TH-rift after Mrs. G. presented it thusly: "Are we content to drift along with no preparation for the future?" "Or, are we thriftily going to save money for the future?" "A bank account will help us meet possible misfortune without a qualm." "And when opportunity knocks it will make it possible for us to take full advantage." "Now, what do you say, shall it be thrift or drift?" This bank helps people save by paying 4 per cent interest on saving accounts. Start yours this week.

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