

WATAUGA GROWS FINEST CABBAGE

Fred G. Mahler of Raleigh, Sees Possibilities for Fruit and Produce Crops in County; Co-operation in Marketing is Big Need.

"There are no finer cabbages grown anywhere in the country than in Watauga," is the opinion of Fred G. Mahler of Raleigh, who went through the county last week, says The Lenoir News-Topic. "The great difficulty, of course, is bringing out the crop. But it looks like the farmers of that county who raise cabbage and other vegetables ought to organize themselves so as to market their vegetables more effectively. The largest city in the state is only some hundred miles away, and the next largest about the same distance. If the growers could pool their crops together and make bulk shipments to the points promising the best returns, it looks like the effort would be a paying one."

"Watauga is naturally a fruit, vegetable and grass country. It would be hard to find any land that repays better the application of fertilizer than there. Then there is a fine flavor to the vegetables grown there. Probably the difference in the elevation from the rest of the state has something to do with this. At any rate they are of a superior quality. If they could be placed on sale in the markets of Winston-Salem, Greensboro, Charlotte and other large towns it would seem but reasonable to expect that they would find a ready sale to discriminating people. A knaut factory is in operation some portion of the year, but the disposal of but a portion of the cabbage crop. Certainly the farmers of Watauga should form themselves into a close alliance for the marketing of their products, which are markedly different from those of the rest of the state."

The most distinctive and unique crop grown in the county—buckwheat—seems to be sensibly losing ground. A ride of many miles revealed only two or three fields, and these were small ones. It is claimed that buckwheat has a harmful effect on the land, and, coupled with the fact that there is but little market for it, has served to discourage its growth. In this hurrying time people want to lose no time in preparing food, and the fact that Watauga buckwheat batter has to be made up a day before using in contrast to the self-rising quickly available flour that is to be found in all stores, naturally puts a crimp in the Watauga product. It is a pity that this crop is languishing, for it has served to give Watauga a considerable reputation. However, there is no reason why the self-rising qualities could not be imparted to the buckwheat flour ground here as in that of New York or Ontario. If this were realized it would be reasonable to believe that many among the hundreds of visitors in the summer to the county would make it a point to purchase some.

A few years ago the Valley Cruise school began the making of cheese, and this attracted much attention in the state. It seemed to promise success for a time, but has been discontinued there. Nevertheless the making of cheese goes on in the county, there being at last one if not more factories in the county now. On account of the naturally fine dairy facilities in the county available for the making of cheese it would appear that good returns could be made if this product were pushed on the market. There is no question that just as fine cheese is made here as in Illinois or Wisconsin, but of course attention will have to be given to the attractiveness of the packing and other details. All of this entails expense and trouble but the results in the end would justify this.

The extensive groves on Sugar mountain bring to mind the possibilities that exist in the county for the making of maple sugar and syrup. It is a little strange that this field of enterprise has not been utilized more in Watauga. The climatic conditions bear a strong resemblance to those of Vermont, and if attention had been more concentrated on this in former years there might be a thriving industry in the much-sought-for syrup today. It is never too late to begin, though, and if a systematic effort could be started to make use of the crude sap now available for syrup it would be possible to make some profits right away. Real maple syrup is a difficult product to find on the market today. Even the most expensive kinds are known to be adulterated. In the near future there could be placed on the market pure maple syrup in glass or tin containers, appropriately labeled from Watauga, the public, particularly in North Carolina, would be anxious to buy it. The maple sugar and syrup possibilities in Watauga ought to be looked into by the farmers there without delay. Years will have to eventuate before the industry could be in going shape, but once established it would be firmly grounded.

"It is always a delight to see the fine stock of cattle and sheep that are ever to be found in Watauga. Rev. Hugh A. Dobbin has some two dozen head on his Bald mountain

farm that could hardly be surpassed anywhere at their age. Cattle, tho, are noticeably scarce than in former years, and are bringing a good price. Here again it would appear that if the growers would pay more attention to the marketing they would make a better return. It would seem to be wise to frequently buy, if necessary, their stock in large markets, even though it means that to depend too much on buyers who come to the county to purchase stock at the lowest figure. Watauga beef cattle will hold their own with cattle of any other section of the country.

"All in all, there are many, many possibilities for enterprise that suggest themselves in Watauga outside of scenery and natural beauty. Occupying a high plateau, with the climate of central Pennsylvania, it is in every way one of the most unique and valuable parts of North Carolina. Like the famous state of Mexico, which is a mile and a half above the level of the Gulf, Watauga is a distinctive part of the state, and one of its finest vineyards."

CATTLE ONLY CROP PAYING YEARLY PROFIT

Raleigh, Oct. 5.—A farm herd of beef cattle is the only crop on Cotton Valley farm in Edgecombe county that has paid a profit each year. "Thirty head of purebred Aberdeen-Angus beef cattle have paid a solid profit each year to the owners of the Cotton Valley farm," despite the fact that there has been a light demand for breeding stock and most of the surplus was sold at beef prices," says K. S. Curtis, animal husbandman at State College. "The manager of this farm, Mr. L. W. Stone, states that his cash crops, such as cotton, tobacco, and peanuts have made over total money than the cattle per the cattle have paid in some profit consistently each year."

Stock states that there are few men in eastern Carolina who should go into the beef cattle business as a large scale, yet there are hundreds of farms where cattle would pay well if handled as they are on his place. But the sector of the cattle country is more fitted to cattle raising than in western North Carolina.

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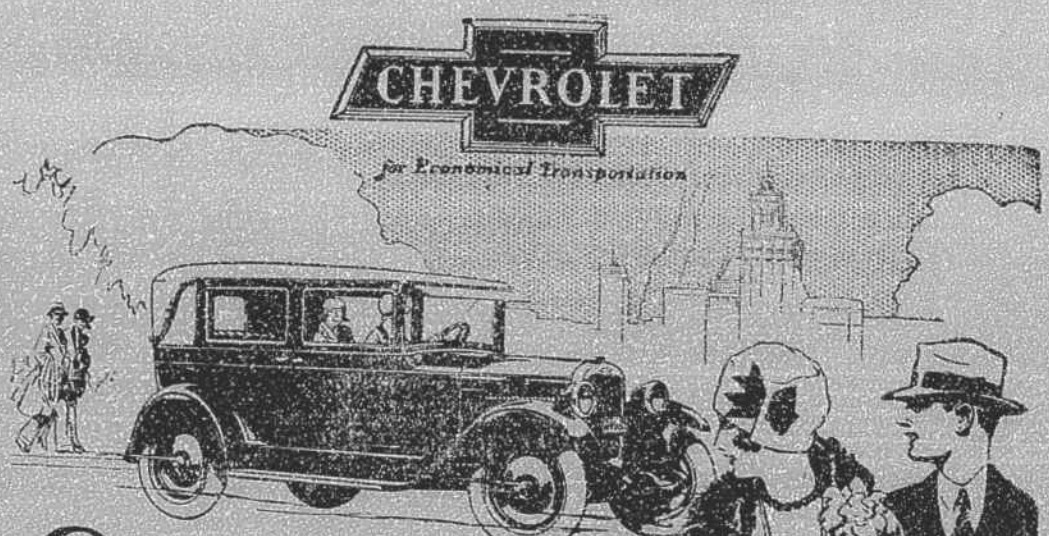
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