

# JIM GARDNER'S OPPONENT SAYS HE KNOWS FARM PROBLEMS BECAUSE HE IS A FARMER

## JIM GARDNER OFFERS SOLUTIONS TO FARM PROBLEMS

"Due to excessive government regulations and misdirected federal and state assistance, the farmers of North Carolina have one of the lowest incomes in the nation. A recent national survey showed that the per capita disposable income of the farmer averages only \$1,692 per year - less than two-thirds the annual income of other Americans. In 1967, the American farmer was hit by a \$1.5 billion farm-price drop. Only a few decades ago, one of every two North Carolinians was a farmer; today less than 20% of the state's population lives on a farm.

"Our state is a top producer of tobacco, cotton, sweet potatoes and other crops as well as poultry and hogs. Yet farm income is at an unbelievable and unwarranted low. Realized net income per farm is \$3,691 as against the U.S. average of \$5,049 (in 1966). Something must be done, and I intend to do it.

"At present the Federal Tobacco grader lists the piles of tobacco by grade. This is unfair to the tobacco farmer because the tobacco warehouses and buyers already know the support price which has been placed on the tobacco.

"Our farmers are entitled to get different opinions as to the worth of their tobacco and the present Federal grading practice prevents them from receiving top dollar.

"I am going to suggest to the new administration that the Federal grader only list the pile of tobacco by number rather than by grade. These numbers would be listed on a warehouse ticket and would represent the number of piles of tobacco to be sold.

"The Federal grader would list the pile numbers on a sheet of paper and opposite this his grade. After the tobacco is sold, this paper would be given to the warehouseman book carrier. The price tags would then be picked up and compared with the Federal prices, and which ever amount is higher, that would be the price the farmer receives.

"Our farmers would then have several different opinions as to the worth of their tobacco as it would be illegal for the Federal grader to reveal this information to the warehouseman or buyer until after the tobacco is sold.

"We must protect our farmers by insuring that competitive bidding practices are followed to guarantee maximum income.

"As Governor, I will carry out the following programs:

1. Meet with farmers throughout the state to receive first-hand their ideas on how to improve transportation, distribution and marketing.
2. Undertake to build an East-West Highway.
3. Improve rural, secondary roads to facilitate crop transportation.
4. Promote research and experimentation programs to keep our farmers abreast of changing times.
5. Investigate the possibility of encouraging the establishment of privately-owned market centers around the state similar to the state-owned Farmer's Market in Raleigh. The Farmer's Market to date has always operated in the black. It has two sections: (a) one section is operated the year around by wholesale companies who rent warehouse facilities; (b) a second section is operated by individual farmers who sell their produce. The Farmer's Market is a thriving concern. In fact, a number of wholesale companies want to rent space, but none is available. Although there appears to be no strong demand for additional state-owned wholesale markets, the Market's success is such that farmers' associations should investigate the possibility of privately-run regional markets in selected parts of the state.

"We have some of the richest farmland in the nation. We are within easy distance of the heart of America's greatest marketing area - the northeast. We have some of the finest experts in agriculture. All that is lacking is a state administration that is truly sympathetic and dedicated to helping the farmers of North Carolina realize their great potential and fair share of the nation's prosperity."