

## CROP REPORT OF MARCH 1st SHOWS SWING TO CASH CROPS

The total acreage to be planted to crops in North Carolina in 1937 shows very little change from that harvested in 1936, according to reports received from growers by the Federal and State Cooperative Crop Reporting Service as of March 1st.

However, there is a decided shift in intentions from certain cash and feed crops to the major cash crops, if farmers' early intentions are carried out. With substantial decreases in the corn and sweet potato acreage, no change in hays and oats, there is a considerable increase in tobacco, peanuts, Irish potatoes, cowpeas and soy beans. Obviously, the favorable prices received for certain crops last year are showing effects on planting intentions for 1937.

The first three months of 1937 were generally unfavorable for farm work in North Carolina, due to continued rainfall preventing field work. While the winter was the warmest on record—in contrast to one of the coldest on record a year ago—the mild conditions had their unfavorable influences. Unusually early blooming of plants and the germination of seed (like lespedeza, tobacco, etc.) encountered later damages from freezes. As of March 1st, the conditions were appreciably ahead of the usual so far as plant development was concerned, but farm work was necessarily delayed, although not quite as much as a month ago.

Corn is the principal crop in North Carolina, occupying about one-third of the total crop land. Farmers report 3 per cent less acreage intended this year, which

evidently reflects a shift in acreage to more attractive cash crops. For the United States as a whole, however, a 2 per cent increase is shown. This is quite natural in view of last year's drought conditions in the Middle West which seriously shortened the corn crop.

Next in importance is tobacco, which brought unusually favorable prices in North Carolina last year. The flue-cured planting intentions are for an 8 per cent increase in this state, as compared with a 10 per cent increase for the Nation's flue-cured belt. The Old Belt shows a 7 per cent increase, and the eastern New Belt something over 8 per cent. It is understood that considerable trouble is being experienced in the plant beds. The first difficulty encountered was the too rapid development of plants in the bed; the second was continued rains and cold snaps. Present reported damages of blue mold, especially in Type 13, are receiving considerable notice. Insect or larvae damages to plant beds have often been reported. Very probably all of these are exaggerated, in as much as most of these are complained of each year. The area of plant beds is probably the largest in the history of the state, partially on the theory that too many plants are better than having a shortage. The weather factors at this date will mean far more than the preceding conditions. The acreage of tobacco for all states shows a 15 per cent increase from last year's harvested acreage.

## Warm Days Bring Farming Activity

### Farmers Have Turned Now In Earnest To Production Of Their Crops For The Year 1937

Warm spring days give North Carolina farmers the go-ahead signal for their annual task of getting crops started.

Cotton and tobacco, the State's two largest cash crops, are beginning to receive a great deal of attention as growers have begun to plant their tobacco plants and set out their tobacco plants.

Then, too, gardeners and truck growers are planting vegetables in preparation for family needs and commercial markets.

In practically every phase of farm activity, a multitude of new work has been added to the farmer's and farm wife's daily chores.

Realizing that this flurry of spring activity calls for timely advice, specialists at State College are preparing to offer suggestions and aids on the Carolina Farm Features radio program, heard over a number of North Carolina stations.

The schedule in full for the week of March 29-April 3 follows: Monday, Dr. C. D. Grinnells, "Spring Care of Cattle"; Tuesday, L. W. Whitford, "Pond Scums"; Wednesday, H. R. Tolley, "The 1937 Agricultural Conservation Program" (WPTF); Thursday, Miss Sue Koon, "Home Demonstration Progress in Chatham County"; Friday, H. C. Gauger, "Let's Raise Chickens Right"; and Saturday, Harnett County 4-H Program.

## Hog Outlook In State Is Bright

### Extension Swine Specialist Forecasts Better Hog Prices During Coming Months; Demand Holds Up

Better prices for hogs this summer are forecast by H. W. Taylor, extension swine specialist at State College.

Although large stocks of pork and lard are now in cold storage, he said, the number of hogs being slaughtered is diminishing, while the demand is holding up well.

Most of the Nation's market hogs are produced in the western corn belt and in the north central states.

The supply of corn in the western corn belt is approximately 40 per cent less than it was two years ago, and the number of hogs there on January 1, was estimated at 14,525,000 head, the lowest in years.

The 26,473,000 head of hogs in the north central states is about the same number produced in 1935, according to a report from the federal bureau of agricultural economics.

Any increase in hog production in these regions will depend upon a return of corn production to something like a normal level, and that cannot affect hog prices this spring and early summer, Taylor pointed out.

The outlook, then, is that there will be a good market for North Carolina hogs, he continued. Prices are expected to hold up well through the spring, and rise in the summer.

However, the question of whether an individual farmer should hold his hogs for summer marketing will depend upon the amount and type of feed he has on hand.

Do not wait until small grain is in the boot, or until the heads are showing, Rankin said, as top-dressing at this time is too late to do the heads of grain any good even though it may make the leaves greener.

He also urged growers to buy only good fertilizer of a mixture suited to their soil requirements, and to remember that the cheaper are not always the least expensive.

"It is the amount of plant food you get for your money that counts," he said, "and not the number of pounds of filler that may be in the bag."

## Nitrogen Increases Small Grain Yields

The acreage of small grain in North Carolina this season is the biggest in years, said W. H. Rankin, State College agronomist.

The unusually large crop being grown means that growers should give serious consideration to the condition of their small grain fields, he continued.

A good top-dressing applied as soon as the weather permits will help develop large, healthy, full-bodied heads of grain, he stated.

The top-dressing supplies nitrogen that is essential to growth and development. Rankin recommended 25 to 100 pounds of nitrate of soda or sulphate of ammonia to the acre.

It should be applied in March, or as soon as early spring growth starts, the exact time depending upon the geographical loca-

## Good Corn Story

(By Guy A. Cardwell)

One of the best stories that has come to me in a long time was circulated by the Agricultural Extension Service of the North Carolina College of Agriculture. It is so good that it bears retelling, although it was circulated as recently as January of this year.

### Thompson Wins Negro Corn Growing Contest

"The State corn-growing contest for Negro farmers this year was won by A. G. Thompson, of Robeson County, who produced 101.9 bushels on a measured acre of land.

In producing this high yield, Thompson used methods recommended by the State College extension service, said C. R. Hudson, who has charge of extension work with Negro farmers.

Last January, Thompson broke his land by plowing to a depth of eight inches. He gave the field a light application of one ton of stable manure.

Hudson explained that more manure would have increased the yield still further, but Thompson had only a small amount available at the time.

On April 25, Thompson planted his seed, Latham's Double-Eared variety, and applied 400 pounds of 3-8-3 fertilizer. His land is a light sandy loam.

When the stalks were about two feet high, he applied another 400 pounds of the same fertilizer. Just before the corn bunched for tassels, he gave it a side dressing of 200 pounds of nitrate of soda. While growing, the crop was cultivated three times.

At \$1 a bushel, the corn was valued at \$101.90. The stover produced was worth \$17, and the soybeans grown with the corn were valued at \$8.00. This made a total return of \$126.90 from the acre.

It cost Thompson \$21.60 to produce the crop. His net profit was \$105.30.

As state winner, he will be given a free trip to Washington, with expenses paid by a commercial firm.

Edward Ballard, of Northampton county, who produced 100.3 bushels of corn to the acre, won second place in the contest.

Like it or not, low average corn yields in this section have been a serious drawback to farm prosperity. With yields half as good as those mentioned above, and with ample pasture, we could successfully compete with the corn belt states or with any other country in livestock production. And if we would only support cotton farming, peanut farming and truck crops, farm-

## Feed Grain Supply Low In Corn Belt

The total feed grain supply in relation to livestock numbers on farms probably is no larger than two years ago following the 1934 drought, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics said on March 6th in a special livestock-feed situation report.

Though the feed situation early this winter was described as "appreciably better than two years earlier," higher livestock prices and more severe weather conditions this winter have encouraged heavier feeding than in 1934-35.

The Bureau reported small supplies of feed grains on farms in the Western Corn Belt, where the corn shortage is "serious." Increased corn production from the low drought levels is needed in this area, said the report, "to make possible a desirable increase in hog numbers and livestock feeding and to maintain farm income in line with increased farm income elsewhere."

"An average production of corn and other feed grains in the Corn Belt in 1937 is likely to result in a total supply of feed grains per animal in 1937-37 somewhat larger than average," a larger-than-average portion of the crop will be used to build up drought-depleted stock.

Fairly large importations of corn and concentrated feeds are expected in the next few months, but a record small carry-over of feed grains on July 1 is in prospect.

The market supply of hogs and grain-finished cattle for the remainder of 1937 is expected to be smaller than in 1936, but larger than in 1935.

The situation in the Corn Belt states should inspire farmers in the South to carefully look after their feed needs. This section sends so many of its dollars away to pay for supplies that we must have that we should take advantage of our productive opportunities and conserve our wealth whenever this can be done to advantage. And surely it is our advantage to pay ourselves and our own labor for producing feed rather than to pay laborers in other sections.

I am not opposed to fair trade exchange between different sections of this country, nor between this and other Nations. This would be suicidal in my line of business-transportation-and the ing with ample livestock and poultry to give us a balanced operation, this would bring perpetual good times to the great agricultural South.

## Moisture In Brooder House Cause Diseases

Excessive moisture in brooder house contributes to development of coccidiosis and Coccidiosis germs propagate rapidly in a warm moist environment, explained C. F. Parrish, State College extension poultry specialist.

And dampness lowers chicks' resistance to diseases affecting the respiratory tract, breathing passages, he added.

One cause of dampness in many brooder houses is the roof supported by a few boards nailed to the rafters. The tin sheets moisture or "sweats."

This trouble may be corrected by providing a solid roof between the tin and the rafters. Parrish stated. If the roof has already been built, tin sheets may be slipped in the space left between the tin and the rafters.

Another frequent cause of excessive dampness is improper construction of the brooder house, especially when the floor is on a poorly drained site.

Parrish pointed out that if all the site should be protected from excess moisture, necessary, a small ditch may be dug around the house to take off the excess.

Several inches of cinders or coarse gravel should be put inside the house to provide drainage. Then cover them with tar paper and pour the concrete over the tar paper.

## High Quality Seed Best For Potatoes

Sweet potato seed bedded early in April will produce plants for setting out the first part of June, said Robert Schmidt, horticulturist at the N. C. Agricultural Experiment Station.

Select smooth, well shaped potatoes with good color and free from disease, he said. Plant only the best seed, as only the best potatoes will bring a good price next fall and winter.

A number of farmers make the mistake of selling the best potatoes and using the scrubs for seed, Schmidt added.

The very best from this year's crop should be saved for seed, he said.

If a good crop is raised this year, he went on, it should provide sufficient good seed, with plenty of high quality potatoes for marketing.

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