

WHAT IT REALLY COSTS

The Country Gentleman's Article on the Exact Costs and Profits of a Peach Orchard Near Pinehurst

An Authoritative Story of Agriculture in the Sandhills from the Audited Books of the Carolina Fruit Company



AN ARTICLE appeared in the November 20th issue of the *Country Gentleman* giving in accurate and detailed figures the financial history of Mr. Bruhn's peach orchard above Samareand. We have so often heard the question asked whether anyone made any money farming hereabout, and if so who, and how, that we venture to print the bulk of this report. THE OUTLOOK will vouch for the literal truth of every statement in it, and with slight provocation will carry any doubting soul to see the manager and even the books. The article goes on to say:

"With the object in view of devising some accounting system, a few strong men from various parts of the earth who found themselves neighbors in Moore County, North Carolina, called together the community for forty miles round and established an organization that bears the commonplace name of The Sandhill Board of Trade. The object of this body is, as far as I can discover, unique. It is not to boost and hurrah, to eulogize and admire. It is not to promote and add to the myriad of fairy stories in circulation. It is to determine the exact truth about all matters of public interest in that great Southern region, and to apply one hard test of figures to all conditions of life. * * * They have made every man's business public business. They pay an agricultural evangelist, who is also an analytical mathematician, to ascertain the exact facts and conditions and profits and losses on all the farms and crops in the territory—the exact gain or loss to Bill Jones from the mud hole in the road; the exact distance to and from school of each individual, and the effect upon the marriage chances of his daughter. Facts, that is all. Every man, woman and child in the district gets these facts. And you would be surprised to see how quickly they take action once they become definitely aware of their purport. No further propaganda is required. * * * I venture to say that the carefully tabulated information gained by this society is of real and practical value to the whole country. It may reflect either credit or discredit upon that vicinity—probably it does both—but it will provide at least one sound balance sheet as an example upon which others may be made.

I shall take a single case. Let us suppose that a resident of this section, reading the illustrated pamphlet of a nursery, should desire to plant a peach orchard. Instead of reading an article that concludes with the "safe assumption" that one can get a crate of peaches to a tree in the fourth year, worth at least

one dollar a crate net, or \$140 an acre a year, he puts on his hat and goes to Roger Derby, president, and demands to know every single fact and figure, good or bad, about an orchard now with its place in the sun and its notes in the bank.

Because it may be of interest to someone actually contemplating this thing. I shall put down here exactly what he would receive. It would be the audited report of the Carolina Fruit Company, a little ninety-acre orchard in the neighborhood whose career is typical, neither good nor bad.

This orchard is planted on good peach ground, but land in nowise remarkable. Equally good land can be obtained almost anywhere in the district, and in most districts from Georgia to Connecticut. It is fairly well on top of a hill, but not so high as is generally considered desirable. It was planted eight years ago, in 1907, and was badly mismanaged for three years. The San Jose scale was allowed to make some progress, and the trees were not properly sprayed or pruned during that period.

It has been since that time under very able and skillful management. It can be considered an average orchard, and with ordinary care and skill anyone could expect to obtain the same results. It will be observed that anyone can readily point out unnecessary expense in this statement and figure larger returns. But this is a question of exactly what has been done, not what anyone thinks he can do.

The orchard was planted about January, 1907, and the entire plant was made from wild land covered with scrub oak and pine stumps. The expenses of the company from its beginning until September 1, 1910, which included one small crop of peaches, are exactly as follows, according to the books as audited by Edward C. Patterson, certified public accountant:

RECEIPTS: 1907 TO SEPTEMBER 1, 1910	
Capital stock:	
Issued for cash	\$12,620.00
Issued to promoter	1,250.00
	<hr/>
	\$13,870.00
Cotton grown on an acre, 1909	53.82
Cowpeas grown between trees.	176.00
Corn sold	3.30
Interest on idle money invested	40.28
Owed open account	161.23
Peaches sold, 1910	2,403.26
	<hr/>
	\$16,707.89
DISBURSEMENTS: 1907 TO SEPT. 1, 1910	
140 acres of wild land.....	\$ 845.00
Buildings: 7-room house, 4-mule barn, shed and tenant house	1,214.96
19,000 peach trees	844.85
Fence	66.45

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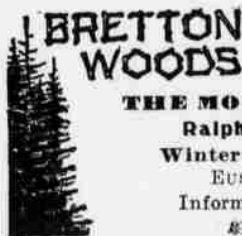


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