

# PROGRESSIVE FARMER

THE INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE PARAMOUNT TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY.

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## Agriculture.

### NORTH CAROLINA'S VIEW OF ORGANIZATION FOR COTTON GROWERS.

Paper Read Before the Southern Cotton Growers' Protective Association by Secretary J. P. Allison, of Concord, N. C.

Some time since, while riding in the smoking compartment of a fast train, several gentlemen of different professions sat with me. When the conductor called for the tickets the first gentleman said he was a lawyer who pleaded for all, therefore he must ride free, whereupon he produced a pass (being a railroad attorney); the second said he was a newspaper man who published for all, therefore he must travel free; then he presented a pass and was allowed to go; the next was a physician who said he cured all, and should travel without pay. He likewise displayed a pass (a railroad surgeon); the next was a manufacturer, who said he made goods for all, and he, too, had a pass as a big shipper over the railroad. A soldier was sitting near, who said he fought for all and was entitled to his ride, and forthwith produced a pass from the United States. Then a minister of the gospel, who said he prayed for all, but that only entitled him to a cheap rate ticket. The knight of the ticket-punch then turned to me and asked who I was. I had to say a farmer. "Well, you pay for all," said he. Whereupon I gave him my ticket, purchased at the station where I boarded the train.

Such an object lesson put me to thinking how to get even with the rest of the world. To deprive them of their privileges was not the right thing to do. What then? To gain for myself the same? But the conductor said I must make something to pay with. How to do that, is the object of the following suggestions. Many schemes have been suggested and different plans tried, some of them good if carried out, but that was the trouble. Almost every profession has its organization, and when called upon to protect their interests flock together as one man and accomplish their demands. Just recently the manufacturers of our State, fearing trouble in their business, assembled in large numbers on very short notice upon the call of one man. The result of that meeting was satisfactory to them.

Look at the action of the yarn men. They organized and made demands, but at first it was all resolutions. They were met by the commission merchants and told that it took more than resolutions to accomplish anything, and they must submit to their dictation in prices so long as the spinners used their (the merchants') money. That put them on their metal, and now they are combining their capital to protect their own products. They have just taken out papers of incorporation. This is the beginning. I glory in their undertaking, and wish them abundant success. I call attention to these facts only to show what others are doing.

Now we must adopt means for carrying into effect the object of this association. The one great object is to have a remunerative price for cotton and cotton seed throughout the entire cotton belt, and main ten it. I submitted a plan over a year ago at a meeting of farmers in Raleigh, N. C. They indorsed its principal features and sent me as a delegate to the different meetings in this State, that such an organization as this might be effected, and this plan submitted for more consideration. That plan is to form this organization into a joint stock company, after the plan of some large corporations now in existence, with capital sufficient to carry any surplus stock that might come upon the market. I will submit some statistics here to show what that surplus might be. The highest visible supply of American cotton that has ever been in round numbers 5,000,000 bales all at January 1, 1899, when we had just gathered the largest crop ever produced. Now you must know this is not all surplus. If you will but look at the cotton movement from day to day you will see a large

part of it is at railroad stations for shipment, on board cars, on docks and on board vessels for which drafts have already been given, and the money available at once. When the visible supply showed 5,000,000 bales, less than 2,000,000 of it was in the principal markets and ports of the United States, and much of that was the property of manufacturers, but suppose this system would stop competition and force us to carry more than now, it could not increase it much, as many of the mills only buy as they need it, and the transit cotton continue a large factor in the stocks.

Banks will be glad to cash our drafts and loan money on stored cotton, especially if we have a large capital of our own. The organization will need, besides the present officers, a treasurer, a statistician, graders, samplers, weighers, shippers, etc. These are matters of detail and will be determined hereafter.

The greatest problem is raising the money, but this can be done if subscriptions are taken in every county of the cotton district and shares made \$10 each. This would be the small planters' opportunity to unite in a strong combination to protect their interests. By paying ten cents for midding cotton and allowing that for every bale that takes a share of stock would pay for the stock and leave about as much as most planters are now getting for their cotton. This would reach more planters than we are aware of. I want the small farmer interested in this movement, for they need this protection more than any others. Men of means can take care of themselves. I do not mean they are not wanted, for they are. We want their money and good judgment both, but I make an especial appeal to the small farmers because they think their mites are so small they can do nothing, and often feel slighted in all business affairs. When all of these mites are gathered up it will surprise even the statistician, and when the corporation is formed they will have a voice in the price of their own products and a safe investment besides, and will enable them to school their children and get some of the comforts of life.

I do not believe in pessimistic ideas, nor in croaking because our business is not as prosperous as others, nor in trying to check the progress of the other lawful industries, but let us profit by their example and adopt all honorable methods used by them to advance the prices of our products. High prices for cotton does not injure other industries, but is a blessing to all.

Two short crops in succession has caused better prices, but have not yet compensated the planter for the loss, if the receipts are an indication of the amount raised. It is said they are holding it, yet the merchants report good collections. How is this unless the cotton is being marketed? The fact of the planters paying up is no evidence of having received remunerative prices, but shows the privations they undergo. Not many people live poor from choice, but from necessity. Some are forced to deny themselves from lack of credit, others from an honest desire to meet their obligations, knowing they cannot pay large accounts with the usual prices for cotton.

We are urged to build more factories, to create a better demand. I do not oppose that, the mills ought to be in the South. The climate and raw material are both here, but will this enhance the value of cotton to any appreciable extent? The spinners have already combined to increase the price of yarns. I have not yet seen where they say anything of paying more for cotton. I say they have a right to ask a profit for their products. No business can prosper without a profit, and they have a right to combine to maintain prices, and now I say we have the same right and should do so. Is this too large an undertaking for the cotton planters, when they are reputed to have one of the most important industries in the world? Look at what is going on around us every

day, the Pullman Car Company has increased its capital as much as is required for us, the New York Central increased nearly as much, and already had more than we require. Corporations organized recently in one month alone, with ten times as much capital as we ask, and all of them combined are not of half the importance of the cotton crop.

A better system of credit is suggested by some, longer time, etc. That reminds me of a reply a friend of mine gave to a commercial agency when he was asked to make a statement of his efforts to give him better credit. He said his credit was too good now, what he wanted was not credit, but something to pay with. That is exactly the planters' position. They want better prices for their products to keep out of debt.

Some ask for laws to protect them. That is like the old darkey, who said as long as he prayed to the Lord to bring him turkey he did not eat turkey, but when he prayed for the Lord to send him for the turkey he got it.

Now let us stop putting our trust in other people working out our troubles and go to work ourselves, on a basis, as all other great organizations are formed, then will we have the respect of our fellowmen and be a happy and prosperous people.

### TEST YOUR SEED CORN.

Now that corn planting time is near at hand, we commend to our readers the following extracts from an article by Mr. I. N. Cowdry, recently published in the Country Gentleman:

I always test my seed before planting, waiting till a few days before time to plant, so as to have the conditions as nearly alike as may be. I level a small place on the ground, put 100 grains of corn on it, cover it with a cloth, put a couple of inches of earth over the cloth, then pour on water enough to dampen. In four or five days I raise the cloth, and the corn can be easily examined. After being in the crates last winter, the test showed that 99 kernels of the 100 had good healthy sprouts. The other kernel had been injured in some way or it would have grown. I set the planter to drop three or four grains, and had a good stand all over the field, except where it was drowned out afterwards.

Some years ago there was trouble all over the country with corn. Our test showed that only 45 per cent. would grow. The planters were set to drop 8 or 9 grains to the hill. The result was very unsatisfactory. Some hills had just enough, some too many, some no enough, and some not any. Ever since that time I have been very careful and look after the seed myself. The same will hold good in saving seed of any kind; too much care cannot be given. Good seed is one of the foundations of a good crop.

### NITRATE OF SODA.

It is nitrate that makes growth of plants. It must be in the form of a nitrate before plants can use it. Nitrogen gets into this form in the soil in hot weather. That is the reason corn and oats cannot make rapid growth at first. They do not get the food they need. But if the oats wait much they get too much heat later, when they do not need it. In a cold, dry spring a little nitrogen in the form of a nitrate does a lot of good—it provides the needed element in a form immediately available. In such a spring it would pay many farmers to use a light dressing of nitrate of soda on oats and on meadows. It should be applied at the time needed—not at the time of seeding, because it is too soluble and may be leached away before there are roots to take it up. This is a suggestion for experiments on a small scale, when cold, dry weather is stopping all growth.—David, in Farm and Fireside.

If you receive more than one copy of The Progressive Farmer, hand to a neighbor and ask for his subscription.

### MIX YOUR OWN FERTILIZERS.

Secretary Parker Gives Progressive Farmer Readers the Benefit of His Experience With the Guano Problem.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

This being the season of the year when our farmers use most fertilizer, I will add my experience to those already published in recent issues of The Progressive Farmer.

There is probably no one thing that the farmers of the State spend more money for than fertilizers, and probably not many things which we use that we actually know less about. About the only way that we get information about them is from newspaper articles, bulletins from the Agricultural Department, and books written on the subject, which as a rule are not read by the masses of the farmers. For the intelligent use of fertilizers, and especially for mixing the materials at home, we need to know something of their composition, action on crops, soil, etc., something that the best of farmers know too little about.

Authorities agree that, for best results, there should be more than one source of the different elements entering into the mixture, but, as a rule, farmers have to be content with the simplest mixtures and use the materials most easily obtained, which is acid phosphate, usually 13 per cent. or 14 per cent. goods, cotton seed meal and kainit, with possibly the addition of nitrate of soda and muriate of potash.

Let us remember that "per cent." in fertilizers bear the same relation to 100 pounds of fertilizers, that "per cent." in money transactions do to a dollar. That is: 13 per cent. phosphoric acid contains 13 pounds of phosphoric acid to the 100 pounds, and so on. Table I given herewith will be of service in mixing ingredients.

100 lbs. 13 % acid phosphate contains	100 lbs. kainit seed meal	100 lbs. nitrate of soda	100 lbs. muriate of potash
295 lbs. cotton seed meal	137 lbs. kainit	58 lbs. filler	
570 lbs. 13 % acid phos.			

Lbs. Ammonia	Lbs. Phos. acid	Lbs. Potash
20	13	2%
80	74	8%
20		1%
		50

By the use of this table we will have but little trouble in mixing a fertilizer analyzing about what we would like to have it.

Suppose that we want a mixture analyzing 2 per cent. ammonia, 8 per cent. phosphoric acid, 2 per cent. potash. A half ton, 1,000 pounds, of this mixture would contain 20 pounds ammonia, 80 pounds phosphoric acid, and 20 pounds potash. To get 20 pounds ammonia out of cotton seed meal, we would want as many hundred pounds of meal as 8% is contained in 20—235 pounds. The 235 pounds meal will contain, in addition to the ammonia, nearly 6 pounds of phosphoric acid, and about 2% pounds of potash. In the above mixture we want 80 pounds phosphoric acid, but the meal furnishes 6 pounds of it, so we need to get only 74 pounds of it from the acid phosphate. To get this we will need as many hundred pounds of 13 per cent. acid phosphate as 13 is contained in 74—570 pounds. We will also want 20 pounds of potash, but as the meal furnishes 3% pounds of potash, we need to get only 16 1/2 pounds from kainit, or muriate of potash, which would require 33 pounds of muriate, or 137 pounds of kainit.

Table II shown herewith will assist in making it clear:

Better leave the filler out and consider that you have 1,000 pounds of the mixture and use it as that much.

By observing the above tables, and suggestions, a farmer can make any kind of mixture that he needs for his crops and often at quite a saving. The things necessary are, a tight floor, a pair of scales, a sieve 6 feet long and 2 1/2 feet wide, which is easily made by getting two yards of wire cloth, with 1/2 inch meshes and tacking to a frame of 2x3 scantling and set at an angle of 45 degrees. The fine particles will pass through the sieve and the lumps roll down so that they can be crushed. Mix thoroughly and it will be ready for use.

My experience has been more with the light soils of the eastern part of the State than in the clay soil of Orange county, though I practice doing my own mixing here. For a corn or cotton fertilizer, I have found that a mixture of equal parts, by weight, of acid phosphate, cotton seed meal and kainit has given me good results.

As an experiment I shall try the following mixture for corn this year: 600 pounds cotton seed meal, 400 pounds acid phosphate, 200 pounds kainit, using about 200 or 250 pounds of the mixture to the acre.

For truck or quick-growing crops I get part of the ammonia from nitrate of soda, and if the mixture has a high percentage of potash, I like to have part of that from muriate of potash.

I have just made the following mixture for vegetables, berries, &c., from which I expect to get good results and at quite a saving in cost over the ready mixed goods:

Acid phosphate 14 %	1,000 lbs.
Cotton seed meal	600 "
Nitrate of soda	300 "
Kainit	600 "
Muriate of potash	100 "

This makes a mixture that will analyze about as follows: Ammonia 4 per cent., phosphoric acid 6 per cent., potash 5 per cent.

The nitrate of soda acting quickly will hurry the plants at first, and the cotton seed meal will act later. In this connection, I wish to suggest that every farmer who does not get the "Bulletin" send to Commissioner S. L. Patterson, Raleigh, and ask that it be sent him. This publication is free to the farmers of the State for the asking, and Mr. Patterson will be glad to send them to all who ask for them. They contain information invaluable to every farmer who uses fertilizers.

T. B. PARKER.

### FERTILIZERS FOR BRIGHT TOBACCO.

A question of interest to all tobacco growers at this time was that asked by Mr. R. H. Ricks, of Rocky Mount, N. C., at the meeting of Commissioners of Agriculture in Raleigh last summer: "What is the best fertilizer to produce the best type of bright tobacco?"

To this inquiry Dr. B. W. Kilgore, State Chemist, replied as follows:

"I am a little afraid to take that up right here. We have expressed ourselves in regard to this question in the January Bulletin of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture. Several formulas are given there. We prefer a fertilizer that contains more potash and in the form of sulphate than is usually found in tobacco fertilizers. We also prefer, in the case of nitrogen, that some of it should be in the form of nitrate of soda, which acts very rapidly. Then we want something in the shape of cotton seed meal or dried blood, which acts more slowly, to feed the tobacco when the nitrate is exhausted; it does not make any difference about the source of the phosphoric acid, provided it is a good available material; as to quantities, that is a different question. For tobacco, I recommended a mixture of nitrate of soda, cotton seed meal, or dried blood, acid phosphate, and sulphate of potash, which will contain about 6 per cent. available phosphoric acid, 6 per cent. potash and 4 per cent. nitrogen."

### HARRY FARMER'S TALKS.

#### XIX.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

Cats are kept for the purpose of destroying rats and mice. If they are fed all the meat they want they will not attempt to destroy any rats. Feed cats bread and nothing else and they will hunt for their own meat.

The government seeds are being sent out. We get a great many every year and have found in the past 10 or 12 years only 2 or 3 varieties that had any merit. We received some sugar corn that proved to be an excellent variety. It would be a good plan to distribute new plants and seeds according to the original idea adopted by the United States Government. The seeds, etc., should be sent to the experiment stations throughout the entire United States and let them distribute to such farmers as apply for the seed. If a farmer does not care enough to write for new seeds he will not take any extra care of a lot of seeds that he never heard of before. If the government required a report from seeds distributed, like the experiment station in our own State did of farmers who applied for crimson clover seeds a few years ago, some benefit might be derived. Sending cabbage or other seeds to a farmer in Florida or some other Southern State in March or April when the season for sowing is past and forgotten is another way which the free seeds benefit(?) our Southern farmers.

The Legislature has now adjourned or has ceased to make laws. How much benefit has it been to the farmers? There is one thing that the State should not do, and that is to raise money crops like cotton and peanuts to compete in the open markets with the crops of farmers. If it is necessary, hire the convicts to large farmers and let them pay the State a certain price for their work and let the money go into the funds to support the State prison. The best work for convicts to do, by which no one would be injured but all benefited, is work on public roads. The State needs thousands of miles of good roads which will benefit every citizen in it. That would come nearer benefiting everybody than any other plan. It is wrong to make the country boy do three years' public duty which his city cousin is exempt from. A boy should not be compelled to work public roads before he is 21 years of age.

HARRY FARMER.

Columbus Co., N. C.

### FERTILIZER FOR FRUITS.

A fertilizer mixture that will generally prove satisfactory for fruits is one containing about 3 per cent. nitrogen, 7 per cent. phosphoric acid and 8 or 9 per cent. potash applied at the rate of 1/2 to 1 ton per acre, according to the growth of the crop and previous fertilization. This would be best made by nitrate of soda 150 to 300 pounds, South Carolina rock or acid phosphate 500 to 1,000 pounds, sulphate of potash 150 to 300 pounds. In place of the potash 1 to 2 pounds of good wood ashes might be used with good results for a single application once in 4 to 6 years, and especially on rather light land. It is doubtful if equally good results would be obtained if ashes were used every year on the same land. If less quickly soluble materials like fine bone, fish, tankage or stable manure are used for the supply of nitrogen, they should be applied in the fall or winter that they may be abundantly available in the early part of the growing season.—Prof. S. T. Maynard, Massachusetts Experiment Station.

Please explain why it is that farmers attach so much importance to the breeds they handle of horses, cattle, hogs, sheep and poultry, and so little to the breeds of crops they grow? Improvement in plants is controlled by the same laws, and these laws are as easily observed in one case as the other, and both are similarly profitable.—Farm and Ranch.

Another strike in the Pennsylvania coal region is expected.