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Standardization and Cooperation Essential in Profitable Marketing

LAST fall, in many parts of the lower South, velvet beans in the hull were sold at \$8, \$10 and \$12 a ton. At the same time Northern and Western corn was selling in the same sections for \$30 to \$40 a ton, despite the fact that the best feeding authorities agree that velvet beans have a feeding value almost equal, pound for pound, to that of corn. We knew of cotton seed, last year, selling at \$30 a ton at the gin, yet before the season was over as high as \$66 a ton was paid. Nearly every fall there are parts of the South where corn is sold at much lower prices than those prevailing in nearby sections depending on the North and West for their supplies.

As we see it, the two measures that will do most to remedy such bad marketing conditions are *standardization and cooperation*—standardization in production, so that the trade may know what to expect from any given community; cooperation in bringing about this standardization and cooperation in selling in lots large enough to attract distant buyers.

One of the reasons why cotton has been and is such a popular crop is because it is probably the easiest of all crops to market. The bale is "standard" in size, weight and shape, and grades are uniform. Now our first lesson is to learn that other commodities, if they are to be sold for the best possible prices, must be similarly standardized. A buyer might pay little attention to a mixed lot of corn, some in the ear and some shelled, some white, some yellow and some



mixed; but offer the trade a uniform grade of sound, dry, white or yellow corn, sacked in clean sacks of uniform size, and bids will be plentiful. Similarly, there will probably be a poor sale for a thousand gallons of syrup made by Tom, Dick and Harry, every man's syrup put up in a different kind of container, with maybe a dozen grades of syrup in the lot; but put up every gallon in cans of the same kind and standardize the product so that syrup from every can is alike in consistency and flavor, and a sale is certain.

And so it is all down the line, whether it be peas, beans, potatoes, livestock or what not, the standardized product brings the best prices.

The second essential we would emphasize is *cooperation* to sell in quantity. The large buyer in Savannah, New Orleans or Houston will pay no attention to an offer of a single bale of cotton, but offer 100 or 1,000 bales, and he is ready to bid. Likewise, a wagon load of cotton seed may not interest the big oil mill, but offer a carload or two and top-of-the-market bids are almost certain. And the same is true of every other crop, perishable or otherwise, that we sell; big lots bring the big prices. It follows, of course, since not one farmer in one hundred is big enough grower to ship in carlots, that neighbors must pool their offerings if the best prices are to be obtained.

High quality and large quantity, to be secured by standardization and cooperation—these are of first importance to the small farmer who would get the highest prices. And now before the actual marketing season is on us, is the time to plan for these.

From Cauliflowers to Cotton, the Marketing Problem will Never be Solved Except Through Cooperative Selling

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