

A Disgrace for Cotton Lands to Wear Out.

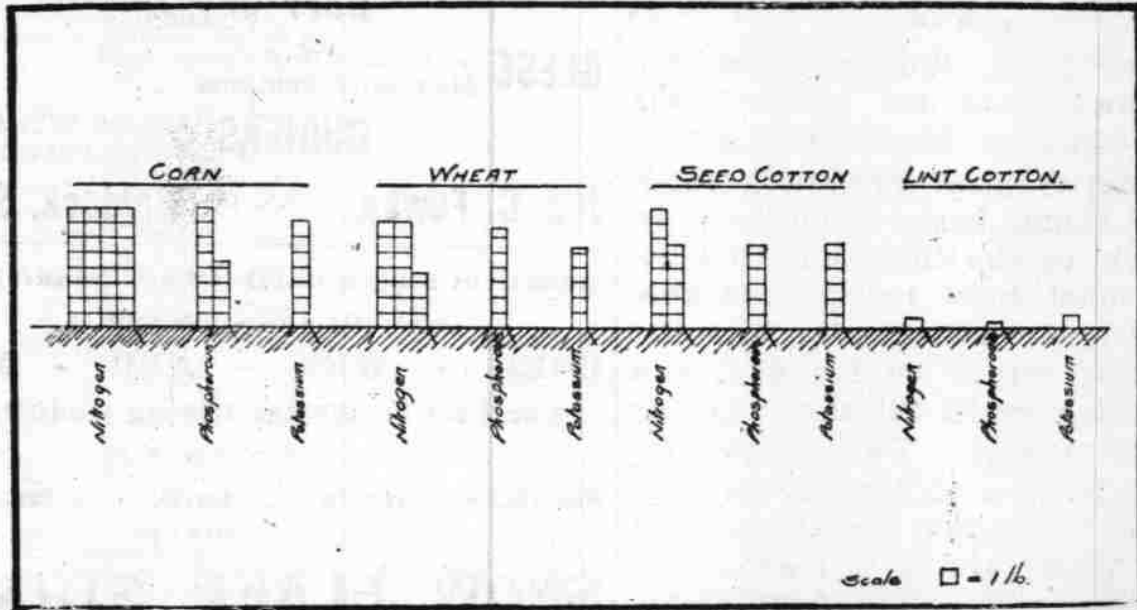
When the Seed or Their Equivalent are Returned to the Soil, Cotton is the Least Exhaustive Crop That Men Grow—Wheat 19 Times as Exhaustive and Corn 30 Times.

HERE is no excuse under heaven for cotton lands "wearing out." With proper rotation, cover crops on the land in winter, and barnyard manures applied to the land together with sufficient fertilizer to supply the ingredients lacking in the land, our cotton fields would grow richer and richer each succeeding year. According to the best statistics, the average cotton crop of 190 pounds of lint draws from the soil 40 pounds of nitrogen, 16 pounds of phosphorus, and 25 pounds of potassium. But stems, roots, leaves, and bolls are returned to the soil, and are therefore not really taken from the land at all. Lint and seed are taken away and are removed from the land. Now what draft is made on the soil? Let

us see, and at the same time compare with corn and wheat on the basis of the average yield of each crop per acre in the United States. We have the following facts:

Crops.	Nitro.	Phos.	Potas.	Totals.
COTTON:				
190 lbs. lint....	.65	.19	.87	
414 lbs. seed ..	12.92	5.26	4.84	
Total..	13.57	5.45	5.71	24.73
CORN:				
29.4 bu. grain..	32.14	12.36	7.06	
4,000 lbs. stov'r	41.61	11.60	56.00	
Total..	73.74	23.96	63.06	160.71
WHEAT:				
13.95 bu. grain	19.75	7.44	5.1	
2,300 lbs. straw	13.57	2.76	11.73	
Total..	33.32	10.20	16.83	60.35

This table shows several interest-



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ing things. The most striking fact brought to our attention is this: Of the three great staple crops of America, cotton is by far the least exhaustive. Wheat requires more than twice and corn nearly seven times as much plant food as does cotton. Nor is this all. We will suppose that cotton seed, corn stover and wheat straw are used on the farm, and in the end find their way back to the soil. The plant food they contain will be returned to the land from whence it was taken. We will now find a still greater difference in

reference to the demands on the soil made by each crop, as is shown in the table below, and more clearly indicated by the diagram:

Crop.	Nitro.	Phos.	Potas.	Total.
190 lbs. lint....	.65	.19	.87	1.71
29.4 bu. corn....	32.14	12.36	7.06	51.56
13.95 bu. wheat	19.75	7.44	5.10	32.29

In respect then to the amounts of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium required for average acre yields of cotton, wheat and corn in the United States, wheat calls for 19 times as much of these elements as cotton, and corn calls for 30 times as much as cotton.

The greatest demand on the soil by the cotton plant is for seed production. For the average yield, 13 pounds of nitrogen, 5 pounds of phosphorus, and 6 pounds of potassium are used. If we apply to the soil manure or fertilizer containing the same fertilizing value as the seed, cotton becomes at once the least exhaustive crop that men grow. But

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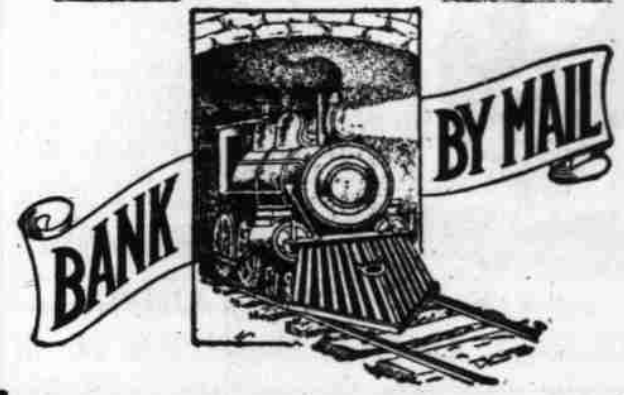
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of course we should not apply the seed themselves. We should first feed them to stock and so get both feeding and fertilizing values, besides the needed humus that the barnyard manure alone will supply.



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