

# C. B. LOFTIS — A BALANCED FARMER

Greenville County Man Typical of Success Resulting from Diversification Live at Home Practices

WITH several cash crops ranging from cotton through peaches and potatoes as sources of money income with a well balanced plan of producing food and feed to supply family and farm needs, C. B. Loftis in his farming at Taylors, Greenville County, South Carolina, illustrates the diversified and permanent farming which agricultural extension leaders seek constantly to promote.

Loftis follows intelligently and faithfully the leadership of County Farm Agent W. R. Gray. That he is really successful may be judged by the fact that his farm land, buildings, and equipment even after severe depression years show themselves to be well kept and the further fact that he is at present enlarging and improving the farm home.

**Tries New Ideas**

A running review of the Loftis farm-



ing ideas and practices made in a brief visit and discussion with Mr. Loftis reveals the basis of his success. He evidently reads for information and admittedly seeks advice from farm leaders. He doesn't hesitate to try out new ideas and practices

which promise better results than old ones.

Many other Greenville County farmers, it is fully realized, are finding success in following balanced farming ideas. This brief account of Loftis' farming is told as illustrating successful progressive farm practices.

Although Mr. Loftis' interesting and profitable specialty is a 35-acre peach orchard, he is first of all a general farmer, cotton, corn, sweet potatoes, and feed crops finding important places on his rounded program. Under present acreage control conditions he plants only five



Cover crops are used to help keep peach trees thrifty and productive.

acres of cotton but he averages a bale per acre of a good quality cotton—Coker's Farm Relief—which brings a premium price. His rule is to plant early, fertilize well, and get a crop made ahead of the boll weevil. The usual fertilization is 400 pounds per acre of a 10-4-4 mixture and a top dressing of 100 pounds of sulphate of ammonia.

**Peaches, Grapes Pay**

A corn crop of four to five acres yields 150 bushels, which with small grains and other feeds provides for the farm work stock, the family dairy cows and poultry.

Mr. Loftis' special interest is in 35 acres of peaches and 500 grape vines. The peach orchard is owned jointly by him and his father-in-law, W. H. McCauley. Starting eight years ago with a small orchard, he acquired interest in the larger orchard six years ago. The yield has run to eight to ten cars of peaches per season besides as much as 3,000 bushels of orchard run and culls sold to trucks.

The good yields result from a system of intelligent pruning, spraying, fertilization, and cultivation. Austrian peas are used for a winter crop fertilized with basic slag. A complete fertilizer is applied for a spring plant food for the trees with additional fall feeding for weak trees. Here as elsewhere in his farming, Mr. Loftis follows the best research and extension ideas. A big packing shed makes easy the proper grading and packing of peaches

**Plant Growing Sideline**

The grape plantation of 500 vines occupies only 1 1/2 acres, but that is proving to be profitable ground. This year, cash sales from grapes totaled \$102. The principal varieties are Niagara, Concord and Delaware, with some Wyoming Reds and others. Believing strongly in spraying, Mr. Loftis has a 200-gallon power sprayer for fighting grape and peach diseases and insects. Grapes are marketed easily by truck directly to Greenville and nearby markets. Mr. Loftis' experience with grapes convinces him that other Piedmont farmers might profitably grow an acre or so each of grapes, an opinion voiced also by County Agent Gray.

Important as a sideline in Mr. Loftis' farming is the production of potato, tomato and pepper plants, especially potato plants, including 500,000 to 600,000 of the latter each season. Using the fire-heated hotbed idea of the Clemson horticulturists, Loftis gets his plants started early and gets the better prices for early plants. For the past two seasons he says he has been unable to meet the demands for plants.

Three to four acres of sweet potatoes grown for the local markets add considerable cash to the farm income.

The seed potatoes properly treated against disease insure healthy plants and better yields of potatoes.

An interesting by-product of the peach orchard enterprise on the Loftis farm is honey. With 15 stands of bees, important as carriers of pollen in orchard and vineyard, Mr. Loftis yearly has several hundred pounds of honey for sale at a good price and no real cost.

Mrs. Loftis is important in the picture of the farm and home. She has a flock of 50 Rhode Island Red hens and grows 300 to 400 fryers each season which sell easily at the farm. She also handles the canning of 1,000 or more cans of vegetables each year and looks after the products of the family dairy cows.

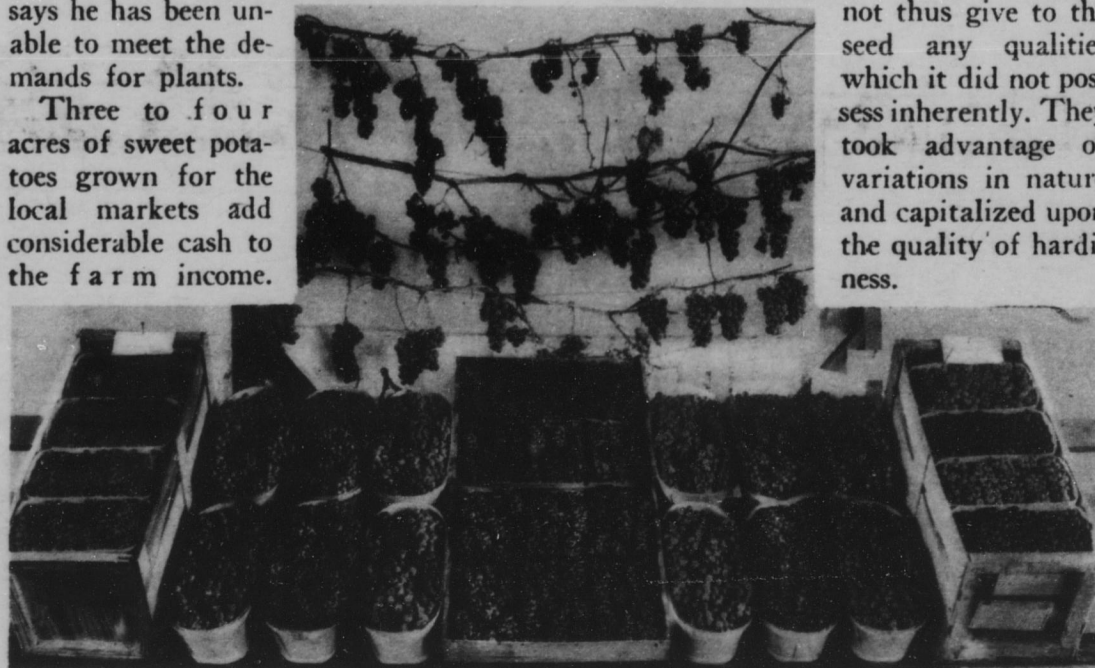
Not the least interesting and attractive spot on the Loftis farm is a two-acre fish pond fed by strong springs. Built at the height of the depression several years ago by the Loftis and McCauley families to provide work for the farm tenants, the little lake is not only a source of fish but is a real beauty spot with hundreds of water lilies to add to its attractiveness. A hydraulic ram at the base of the dam furnishes ample free water for the orchard spraying needs.

Seed strains are like human races in their inability to acquire hardiness or other new characteristics, believe scientists of the Ferry-Morse Seed Breeding Institute. Children of artificially mutilated savages are born with unblemished skins. Natives, the soles of whose feet are thick as shoe leather because of their tree-climbing habits, bear children whose feet are as tender as the feet of babies of parents who never climbed a tree.

Truly hardy or acclimated seed, they say, is seed from plants which are the survivors after many generations of selection in a climate in which only the inherently hardy plants can survive and yield a normal supply of seed for further propagation.

Under these scientists' method of growing acclimated seed in Michigan, crops are planted and carefully watched. Hardy individuals which show an ability to bear fruit at the end of a short season in which there has been both cool and hot weather, are selected. Seed from them is planted and the next seed crop selected on the same basis. This is repeated again and again. Ultimately there is established a strain of vegetable or flower resistant to the climatic conditions it will be called upon to experience in widely different climates.

But, it is explained, seed breeders do not thus give to the seed any qualities which it did not possess inherently. They took advantage of variations in nature and capitalized upon the quality of hardiness.



Grapes, well displayed such as these, always sell well

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