



Cotton white for the harvest.

Forward to Better Cotton

Quality Lint and Economic Yields Result from Palmetto State Cotton Improvement Contest

By A Staff Writer

A N N O U N C E M E N T that the South Carolina five-acre cotton improvement contest will be conducted again in 1936 arouses new interest in the cumulative beneficial results of the contest. The Cotton Manufacturers' Association

of South Carolina has again for the eighth year offered \$2,000 in prizes.

During the years of the cotton contests approximately 6,300 South Carolina farmers have entered five-acre plots, and 95 per cent of these have used pedigreed or improved seed of such varieties as would give a staple of 15-16 inch or longer. Each contestant has become a source of good planting seed for other farmers.

The cotton contest was first conducted in 1926. In 1925 a survey of cotton mills of the state showed that South Carolina farmers generally were not producing cotton of the staple length desired. The cotton contest was instituted to remedy this situation and to stress more economic production per acre, the state's five-year average 1921-25 having fallen to 152 pounds of lint per acre.

Improvement in Quality

In the first year, 54.6 per cent of lint produced on contest plots was 7-8 inch or less. In 1935 less than two per cent was of such undesirable lengths. The production of lint of more desirable lengths—15-16 inch or longer—increased steadily from 40.8 per cent in 1926 to 98.1 per cent in 1935.

Reports by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with experiment stations in the cotton belt, show that South Carolina is producing a higher percentage of crop with lint 15-16 inch or longer than any other southeastern state. The state's percentage of such cotton has risen from 36.7 per cent in 1926 to 81.4 per cent in 1935.

Practical Lessons

Keeping in mind that not only longer staple is needed to meet spinners' requirements, but that better, more economic yields are needed for profitable cotton production, the Extension Service has stressed improved practices in the contest.

Optimum number of plants per acre means highest yields. Close spacing of rows and of plants on the row result in higher yields, but other important factors in this connection are high germination, safe placement of fertilizer, and seed treatment against seed-borne diseases.

The most economical and profitable fertilizing calls for—in terms of plant food per acre—20 to 48 pounds of phosphoric acid, 18 to 20 pounds of ammonia, and 12 to 24 pounds of potash.

J. O. Taylor, right, and his farm superintendent in the five-acre field which won the first state prize in 1931, producing 5,970 pounds of lint, or 1,194 pounds per acre 2 2-5 bales.



H. H. Bennett, chief of the Soil Conservation Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

North Carolina Farm Boy Makes Good

A S CHIEF of the Soil Conservation Service, H. H. Bennett fights soil erosion on all agricultural lands of the country; as plain Mr. Bennett he fights erosion on his own 500-acre farm in his native North Carolina.

Born in badly eroded Anson County, North Carolina, in 1881, he literally grew up with the problem of soil wastage. After taking a B. S. from the University of North Carolina in 1903 he went to work with the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils, U. S. Department of Agriculture. He has been with the Department ever since, except for a short period in 1933-34 when Soil Erosion Service was part of the Department of Interior.

As soils expert, he has accompanied expeditions to Alaska, South America, Central America, and other foreign lands.

Author of articles and papers dealing with soil erosion, as well as two books on soils, he is regarded as an international authority on soil erosion and soil conservation.

Tobacco Control Necessary



Commenting on plans for tobacco crop control, Dean I. O. Schaub of State College, North Carolina, points to the fact that the early consumption of flue-cured tobacco is only 650,000,000 pounds.

"Without production control," says Dean Schaub, "a crop of 950,000 pounds or more can be thrown on the market. The growers in North Carolina alone can produce more flue-cured tobacco than is consumed in the course of a normal year."

Last year on an 80 per cent of the

base acreage, North Carolina planters grew a crop in excess of 550,000,000 pounds.

The Dean does not believe that the new soil improvement program, by itself, will be enough to hold the tobacco crop within reasonable bounds. He feels that a definite control plan is necessary.

If North Carolina tobacco growers can hold their 1936 crop within 70 per cent of their base acreage production, huge price-ruining surpluses will be avoided.

Seed bed destruction and terrific rains in April are serving as a retarding influence.

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