

# THE PRESENT COTTON SITUATION

## A Suggested Program For Dealing With It.

(By B. W. Kilgore, Director, N. C. Exp. Station and Extension Service, Treasurer N. C. Cotton Association.)

The South, and North Carolina particularly, wrought wonderfully well during the war period. Large crops, except cotton, have been made, particularly food crops. The cotton crops of the country for the four years of the war—1915 to 1918—were 11,700,000 bales, 11,302,000, 11,450,000 and 11,192,000, or an average of 11,411,000 bales, against the four pre-war crops of 1911-14 of 16,135,000, 14,156,000, 13,703,000, 15,693,000, or an average of 14,922,000 bales, which is an average of 3,511,000 bales more annually prior to, than during the war period.

The acreage of last year was but 942,000 less than for 1914 when the bumper crop of 16,135,000 bales was produced. The low production for the past four years has been due mainly to bad seasonal conditions in Texas and Oklahoma. Good winter rains already have been had in these States, and with the same acreage as in 1918, near 36,000,000—and good seasons, a crop well nigh as large as our largest can and likely would be made, which is far beyond what there are any reasons to think the world will consume.

**Big Crop, Low Price.**  
Our bumper cotton crop of 16,000,000 bales in 1914 brought \$300,000,000 and our 11,500,000 bale crop of 1917 brought the South \$1,500,000,000, or twice as much as the bumper crop. We know what this means—"big crop, low price." Cotton at present prices is at, if not below, the cost of production, and not an inconsiderable number of North Carolina farmers have cotton of two years on hand.

It would seem that the world needs and will consume at cost of production, plus a fair profit, the small crop of 1918, especially as this is one of four small crops in succession, the average for the four years being 11,411,000 bales, or 14,000,000 less for the four year war period than for the four year pre-war period.

**To Make This Effective.**  
What can be done to make this effective?  
1. A well-defined co-operative program on the part of the banker, the merchant and the farmer for holding and selling should bring results.

2. Along with the movement to enable the farmer, the merchant and the banker, or whoever has cotton, to hold it till the right time to sell, must go a program to house the staple.

3. What is perhaps more important when measured in terms of its effect upon the future of our farming industry, is a plan for preventing the production of a cotton crop this year greater than the world will require. A reduction in acreage of from one-fifth to one-third has been suggested as the method of doing this. This would mean for North Carolina in round numbers, a million acres instead of a million and a half of cotton. This would leave a half million acres heretofore devoted to cotton available for food, feed and soil-improving crops.

**Better Land for Cotton.**  
Cotton should likely, in most cases, be put on the better land, including some at least of the land planted to soil improving crops during the past year. It should be fertilized with the view of economy so as to meet the needs of the land thus used and the crop, and increasing the acreage production and reducing the cost so as to meet the almost certain lower price for cotton next fall.

4. Another matter of serious concern is the price of fertilizers. The prices of fertilizers are the highest we have ever known, and while the cotton grower cannot afford, if possible, to allow his acreage yields to decline, fertilizers must be used, as to quantity and kind to best meet the needs of the soil and the crop.

**Food and Feed Crops.**  
5. It will be easily agreed that all reduction in cotton should go into food and feed crops and pasture in an effort to make all the food and feed for the State on the farms of the State, so as to save transportation charges and intervening profits, to make easy the holding of cotton, tobacco, peanuts and other money crops, and to encourage and support our growing livestock industry—beef cattle, hogs, poultry, sheep and dairy cows for the family cow, our dairies and creameries and for our new cheese industry—these, together with our farm and townspeople and our animals, make a practically sure market at remunerative prices, for all the food and feed crops and roughage that can be grown.

**Entitled to Better Living Conditions.**  
6. Finally, we must have in mind as a whole people a readjustment of our wage and living scale. We should not want to go back to the old conditions as regards these. Cotton, peanuts, tobacco and other money and general crops in the whole South have been produced with low-priced labor—with much child labor, unpaid or underpaid. These crops have been sold to the world on a basis of this kind of labor and we have bought products from other parts of the country on basis of a higher labor and a higher living scale than our own, greatly to the detriment of our own standard of living as a section.

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The line is now complete. Come before the choice is gone.

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- \* are inserted in the run of the paper at the rate of
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February 3rd, 1919.  
M. E. DAVIS,  
S. W. SCOTT,  
Executors.

Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27, M. 6, 13.



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Following is the menu: Pie Crust, Lemon Meringue Pie, Lemon Filling, Cream Puffs, Chocolate Eclairs, Penny Puffs, Neckties, Queen Victoria afternoon tea rolls, Cream Rings, Yellow Macaroons.

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Bakes all kinds of dainty pastries, mixing everything before your eyes and explaining each ingredient as he goes along.

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