

# "CIVILIZATION BEGINS AND ENDS WITH THE PLOW"

**THINGS TO PLAN TO THROUGHOUT COMING YEAR**  
The Farmers' Day at the test farm at Swannanoa on May 17, 1928.

- .....
- Poultry loading depot with facilities for grading eggs.
- .....
- An annual poultry show.
- .....
- Monthly livestock sales.
- .....
- Farmers' own line of delivery trucks.
- .....
- Purebred sires and seeds.
- .....
- Guernsey cattle association.
- .....
- A semi-annual seed exchange day.
- .....
- A Harvest Carnival one day of the bread and butter show.

## The Farmers' Position In the Business World

(By W. T. Dudgeon)

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Farmers' and Cattlemen's Luncheon Club: We who have sons and daughters may well pause to ask ourselves, "Can I say to my son, 'Son, stay on the farm. Here are to be found opportunities for successful business and the finest life. The future of the farmer is bright.' Or, 'Daughter, make your home on the farm. Here you will find the best conditions for a bright and happy life.'" Really, can we advise our sons and daughters to follow in our footsteps?

For several years past we have heard the cry from far and near that the farmer is not being treated fairly, that in some way the rest of the world has gotten him down, and is nearly choking the breath out of his business life. We have heard that cry principally through the loud speaker of some political issue. We have been promised relief by the passage of this law or the defeat of that measure. Others have urged us to unite and boost our prices so that our books would show a profit, and still others have urged this or that procedure until we have become confused and a bit muzzy for

ness? Is it upward as compared with other occupations? Have influences already been set to work to correct our situation? Really can't we just go ahead as we have been doing and hope that everything will turn out all right? We certainly may well pause to consider which way we are headed in the business world.

Let us consider for a moment some statistics based upon prices during the 17-year period from 1909 to 1926, inclusive. It is encouraging at first to see that in 1926 a farmer could sell the quantity of crops or stock for \$1.44 which brought only \$1.00 in 1909, a rise of 44 per cent in the average price of his products during the 17-year period. But we find that the cost of supplies which he must buy has risen from \$1.00 to \$1.60, a rise of 60 per cent in the same period, and the cost of labor which he must hire has risen from \$1.00 to \$1.71, a rise of 71 per cent, with fewer and fewer workmen available. Laborers are leaving the farm to find occupation in the cities for the very good reason that organized labor now draws \$2.50 for the same time for which they were paid \$1.00 in 1909, a rise of 250 per cent! Therefore, we find that the trend of prices during this 17-year period has been against the farmer in the proportion of 44-60-71-250. Another period like this would crush the farmer.

The world is organized, laborers, manufacturers, merchants, barbers, professional men, even the oil men, and more than "possibly," the lumber men, too. Our imported foreign melon and lettuce and cotton pickers are organized. The farmers are making less use and less efficient use of organization than any other class of people. In times of changing conditions like the 17-year period which we are considering, organized industries see to it that they shift up by shifting the unorganized bodies down. We contracted a great war debt which must be paid, and while we were in a reckless mood we just went ahead and contracted a legion of debts, county, state and

The farm pages of The Press are edited by the county agent in collaboration with the editor.

oldest countries, notably in China and in India where a bare, hopeless existence is the most that a farm born child can expect. Political organization is surely threatening to do here. We find that the trend of prices, of business organizations, of the farmers own handling of farm land, and the trend of modern business methods are all against the farmer.

One may well ask, "If the farmer is in such a poor business plight, and if the trend of conditions is against him, what hope has he? What can be done about it? AND WHO CAN BE EXPECTED TO DO IT?" If the American farmer is to be saved from abject economic slavery more hopeless than the personal slavery once experienced by the Negro, HE WILL HAVE TO SAVE HIMSELF. There are, here and there in other walks of life, big-hearted people who see their farm brother's danger and would like to save him, but few, if any, of them know, or can ever learn how, and even knowing how, would lack the power to help greatly. Ask a hundred farmers, "What are you trying to do? What do you expect to make of your business in ten years? Twenty years? In a life time? WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?" Few, if any of them, can give a definite answer. They have no plan, they are drifting. Occasionally a man will answer, "I am travelling the road which I hope will lead to a herd of 40 cows that produce 500 pounds of butter fat each, annually; a farm far more fertile than nature made it; seeds of high productive ability yielding crops of the best quality. Of course, the attaining of such a goal means that I can give my family the best that money can buy, can beautify my farm, and can live happily." The greatest need of farmers is an individual long distance plan, a definite goal to travel toward. Poor land must be made more fertile, good seeds must be planted,

merce commission and in many places.

## Enthusiastic for Kudzu

Editor of The Daily News:

I was much interested in your editorial on the 26th, on Kudzu—glad particularly to note that this plant, which I feel has wonderful value to the southern farmer, is beginning to attract some attention.

I planted half an acre of kudzu in the early spring of 1924, securing roots from Florida and planting them eight feet apart in 10-foot rows. Most of the plants lived and grew rapidly in spite of the dry weather. The dry weather during the summers of '24 and '25, however, did prevent the vines from taking root between the plants and it was not until '26 and '27 that the chop became firmly established on the land. By the end of last summer the vines had taken root at joints so that the stand was quite thick, there being plants on practically every square foot of the half-acre tract. The growth was very vigorous, there being a solid mass of growth from two to four feet high all over the patch.

I purposely planted this test patch of kudzu on just about the poorest spot on my farm but I believe that the kudzu from this patch this year, used as pasture or hay, will be worth more than any other crop from a similar area on my place.

Mr. H. G. Marsh, of this county, planted two acres of kudzu several years ago and has planted several additional acres during the last year or two, since realizing, as he says, that his two acres of established kudzu was the most valuable land and the most valuable crop he had.

Mr. Eugene Ashcraft, farmer and editor of The Monroe Enquirer, has planted a considerable acreage of kudzu during the past spring. He had tried it out and was so thoroughly pleased with it that he was planning to plant as much as 25 acres. I don't know whether he got this entire additional acreage in or not.

**THINGS TO PLAN FOR RIGHT NOW**

- .....
- That cream check every two weeks.
- .....
- That cannery check every time you come to town.
- .....
- Fat hog sale in June.
- .....
- Bread and Butter Show next fall.
- .....
- Encourage the 4-H Clubbers.
- .....
- Big Farmers' day next fall.
- .....
- Local Curb Market.
- .....
- Breed sows so that the pigs will go on the market in March, April, August and September.

per gallon at your home, or at some designated station near your home. Cash will be paid on collection of the berries. Please arrange direct with your county farm agent for collection of these berries.

JONATHAN CASE,  
Cannery Superintendent.

Dear Friend:

You have read the above notice from the Superintendent of the Cannery. I just want to add that I will arrange collection days and stations, but will have to have your assistance in doing so. And the only way I know this can be accomplished is for your community to get together and ascertain, first, whether or not you are going to pick berries for the cannery and, second, the approximate amount you will try to get together every week. This is absolutely imperative if you are to have the service you desire. After studying on these two points, please notify me at once, that is not later than July 18th, and I will then arrange routes and days for collecting, and advise you.

I would just like to add that I have arranged this plan for you, but cannot put it into effect properly without your reasonable co-operation, and as it is solely for your benefit, it

anything really is wrong or wrong-shrewd politicians are merely petting us to get our votes.

Therefore, when asked to speak on this occasion, I began to question whether the business opportunities on the farm really are not equal to the opportunities in the city. What sort of life is the farmer living? Does his family live as well as the family living in the city? How about recreation? Clothes? Leisure? Money to spend? With a feeling akin to resentment, I recalled seeing the groceryman's children going freely to the cash drawer, the confectioner's children helping themselves to the contents of this or that show case, the crowds of nicely dressed children trooping to the picture shows, the smart cars loaded with the city's young people whisking past me and out to the swimming pool, from whence the echoes of their play floated across the fields to plant seeds of discontent in the hearts of the farm children busily engaged hoeing weeds and milking cows. I could only decide that from my observation, surely city people have better opportunities than country people. But I wondered, what does the city man think? Would he say the farmer has equal opportunities with himself for making money and living a pleasant life? I asked a commission merchant, a hardware man, a lawyer, and others, "Has the farmer of today a fair chance in the business world?" They all replied without hesitation, "No." I feel sure that if the city woman were asked if she would like to trade places with the farm woman, the reply would usually be, "No, not I!"

From the oldest farming district of Texas, the report comes, "Cotton and other crops do not seem to yield a profit any more. I sold out, taking a big loss on my farm." From the region about Chicago, I have recently heard, "We would like to sell out and leave, but can't get half the price for our land that was once offered us." And from another old farming region near a good market, a friend writes, "Farming is in a bad way here. There have been several lawsuits recently, each fellow trying to make the other take over parcels of land with the indebtedness." And from New England, our oldest farming district, we hear, "Half the farms are deserted."

Each succeeding census shows a smaller percentage of our population in the country, and statistics give the reason tersely. "In 1926, the average farm owner labored nearly ten hours a day and earned \$219.00 for the entire year plus a very low rate of interest on his investment!" He not only labored ten hours a day but also directed his laborers and did many odd jobs before and after the usual day's labor. The family also labored and reaped no financial reward. We need not wonder that farm children leave the farm, and that farmers have no sympathy for the "Back to the Farm" slogan.

But what is the trend of farm busi-

ness? Is it upward as compared with other occupations? Have influences already been set to work to correct our situation? Really can't we just go ahead as we have been doing and hope that everything will turn out all right? We certainly may well pause to consider which way we are headed in the business world.

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The trend of prices and organization are against the farmer, but the trend of his own manner of handling the farm is even more seriously against him. Our grandfathers went into the wilderness, took possession by right of discovery, cleared farms, and opened up markets, turning their farms over to our fathers for a small price, cleared and full of fertility. Our fathers mined the fertility from the soils and exchanged it for a living, neither realizing the full trend of such practice nor intending to be selfish, and when they were ready to retire they sold us the farms for a high price, reduced in fertility and encumbered with high taxes. Therefore, we find that the greatest distress is among the farmers of the older farming regions.

Adam farmed with a sharp steel, no doubt. Prices did not trouble him. Farming departed very slowly from Adams manner of doing business for several thousand years. Comparatively recently wool was grown on the farm and made there into clothes. Almost everything else needed by the farm family was produced on the farm. But in the last one hundred years the farmer has rapidly become a merchant in the sense that he buys and sells much and his margin of profit is small. Often he can buy everything he needs cheaper than he can produce it, excepting the one or two products which he does produce. For instance, a dairyman selling grade "A" raw cream might easily produce his own butter, but that butter would cost him a good deal more than the price he pays for it at the store. This means that the farmer has become as a manufacturer whose margin of profit is so small that a slight variation downward in his selling price or upward in the price of his supplies may wipe out all his profits. In modern times other kinds of business have found organization absolutely essential for the maintaining of prices at a level that will insure a profit for the average person in the organization, but only the exceptional farmer now makes a profit. The tendency of economic conditions in America is towards making hopeless slaves of its farm people such as are found in many of the

perfect, better livestock must be reared. Organized business will no longer pay a profit to farmers who produce half crops, whether the cause of low production be poor land, poor seeds, or poor methods, or poor livestock; neither can farmers justly ask a profit under such conditions.

All about us we see land regularly producing half a crop because it is infested with Johnson grass; time and again I have seen a half crop resulting from seed bought haphazard. All about me is land producing less than a half crop of corn or small grain because of low fertility, when if sowed in alfalfa it would yield large crops of the best hay and would soon be renewed in fertility. The average dairy cow produces less than one-fifth as much as the 175 best cows on record, yet nothing is surer than the improvement of dairy cows if inexpensive records are kept and culling done. It has often been proven that the average production of land in many communities can easily be doubled. There is more net profit in one productive acre than in several poor acres, and from one good cow than from several poor cows. I dare say that is no such spread in other manufacturing lines between what is and what ought to be. Other business has used its organized ability so vigorously in reducing the cost of production that quite often there was no need to raise the price in order to preserve a margin of profit for the average manufacturer. I maintain that if the American farmer were producing crops from as fertile soil, by as good methods, with as good seeds, keeping as good livestock, as lies easily within his power to do, under right organization, present prices would yield him a good profit. The farmer must have a long distance plan based on fertile soil, good methods of tillage, good seeds, and good livestock.

But if the farmers were suddenly to attain all the things just mentioned, the tendency would be for the price at home to drop below the profit line quickly. He would still be in position to ship his products to foreign markets provided he were sufficiently organized to do so. With improved methods of communication and transportation now common we are in direct competition with farmers of the world. Ships loaded with butter bound from Australia to London are said to be in daily communication by radio with the markets of the world, and may turn their course in mid-ocean to New York if market changes justify that course. The farmers of the nation must have a strong centralized organization, capable of advising where to sell and at what price or else the middleman and the speculator will reap all the rewards of the farmers' cheaper production. Fair laws must be secured and unfair measures defeated. The collective farmers case must be presented in court, before the com-

ways. The most common way is to where the roots can be secured at a low price and planted when they are freshly taken from the soil, is to plant well established roots. The other way is to plant the kudzu beans. The kudzu bean is very small, very little larger than crimson clover seed, and the entire supply of seed is secured from Japan. The germination of kudzu seed is very low, it being estimated that 15 or 20 per cent germination is good. However, while the seed are very expensive and the germination is quite low probably the best and cheapest means of getting a start with kudzu is to purchase these seed, plant them in drills on good land, and then replant with one or two-year-old plants on the land which one desires to put in kudzu. I have a few acres of rough hillsides and thin rocky land which I hope to get established in kudzu next year. I have planted kudzu seed on an acre of land and with even moderate success should have sufficient plants to cover several acres. It cost me approximately \$40 to seed my original test patch of half an acre. I should be able to seed several acres next spring at a cost not exceeding a few dollars per acre.

It doesn't pay to till poor land. Labor costs too much. Kudzu, once established on poor land, level or hillside, will not only reclaim such land but, even during dry weather, if it is established, will give a good yield of highly nutritious hay or pasture. A fuller appreciation of the value of this plant should mean much to the development of our livestock industry in the Carolinas—and anything that will encourage or promote any branch of the livestock industry will not only help the farmer but will help the community in general.

In my opinion kudzu would already have been a widely grown crop but for the high cost of the kudzu roots and the consequent high cost of getting the crop established. Until the past two or three years the seed have not been used in this country. If the use of the kudzu seed does enable a farmer to get the crop established at a cost of only a few dollars per acre of cash outlay and anything like an ample supply of seed can be secured I believe that this crop will become a real factor in our agriculture within the next few years.

A MECKLENBURG FARMER,  
Charlotte.

—Greensboro Daily News.

## TO ALL THE BLACKBERRY PICKERS:

We have decided to pay twenty cents per gallon, delivered at the Cannery the same day the berries are picked, not later than three o'clock in the afternoon. And in order that you may get your berries delivered the County Farm Agent will arrange to take the berries up and deliver them to the Cannery himself. In this case we will pay fifteen cents

reasonable request to ask you to give it your immediate attention and treat the matter with due business promptness. For among other things, I feel that if you are not willing to help yourselves, it is not incumbent upon me to give any effort to help you.

Any suggestions or advice you should care to give, individually or collectively, will be given full consideration.

LYLES HARRIS, County Agent.  
Yours truly,

## HOW BANKERS HELPED

A majority of Kansas bankers desiring to help gain an equitable solution for the major problems of agriculture, and attain the rightful position for the industry among the other industries of the nation, asked themselves these questions:

Can we not help to apply to good advantage the result of the scientific study and research of the College of Agriculture to the individual farmer? What about reducing the cost of production? What about the efficiency of the overhead costs? What about a higher standard of products?

The resulting activity in Wilson county demonstrates what bankers can do when they get to thinking. A meeting was held to which bankers invited several progressive farmers of his community. There in conference with college representatives the story of the county's agriculture was unfolded. Pertinent farm problems were discussed. The LIME and LEGUME project seemed the most pressing.

Every bank in the county had at least one progressive farmer co-operator. Each bank was requested to have his co-operators present at the bank at a designated time when the chairman of the county agricultural committee, and the county farm agent would be there. Each bank in the county was visited in this way by the chairman and county agent.

It was when making these stops at the bank that instructions were given as to just how to proceed; how five plots of ground were to be selected; one plot to be left untreated, the second treated with lime, another with lime and manure, another with lime and acid phosphate, and the last with lime, acid phosphate, and manure.

The participants were told not to expect the most striking results the first year, yet the effects were so extremely marked and gratifying that a tour of bankers, farmers, and merchants was organized. Over seven hundred people spent the day reviewing the good work done.

This is only one of many such county activities in our state. I am a strong believer in the county key banker, the contact agency between the technician and the tiller of the soil.

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The Indiana Bankers Agricultural Committee is carrying the banker-  
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