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**Tobacco Outlook For Coming Year**

By JULIAN MANN  
N. C. State College

North Carolina farmers received over 318 million dollars for their 1943 fine-cured tobacco crop. This crop brought almost as much as all other crops and livestock combined.

Indications point to a North Carolina crop in 1944 of about the same size as in 1943. With a 14 per cent larger fine-cured acreage in 1944, production is estimated at 654,600,000 pounds in 1944 as compared with 542,200,000 pounds in 1943, a 21 per cent increase. Yields per acre are lower this year due to adverse weather conditions over most of the North Carolina belt. Better growing conditions from here on out may bring much larger yields.

However, the North Carolina Border Belt is expected to harvest 15 million pounds or 26 per cent more tobacco in 1944 than in 1943, with yields per acre better than last year.

With increased acreages, the Eastern North Carolina Belt, the Middle Belt, and the Old Belt are expected to pull about the same pounds this year as last. Opportune rains will serve to raise this estimate.

Total fine-cured production in the United States in 1944 is expected to be 639,655,000 pounds. This production is only 4 per cent larger than last year, on an average 17 per cent larger.

The domestic consumption and exports for the year ending June 30, 1943, were 698 million pounds, the largest disappearance on record. Under consumption and export conditions existing in the first part of this year, disappearance probably reached 970 million pounds for the year ending June 30, 1944, an all time record.

Most fine-cured tobacco goes into the manufacture of cigarettes. Tax-paid withdrawals for cigarettes indicated a consumption of 345 billion cigarettes in the United States for the first year of 1944. The fiscal year ending June 30, 1944, probably reached 367 billion, a per cent increase over 1943. This is not an accurate indication of total cigarette consumption since many go tax-free to the armed forces abroad.

Per capita consumption of cigarettes in the United States was 1,202.8 in 1943. This record is more than 88 times the per capita consumption of cigarettes in 1900, and over five times the number consumed per person during World War I. Indications are that the consumption will continue to increase.

The following figures by belt show acreage and production of fine-cured tobacco in North Carolina as estimated July 1, 1944 by the Crop Reporting Board of the United States Department of Agriculture:

Border Belt: Acreage in 1944, 79,000; in 1943, 65,000. Production in 1944, 77,025,000 pounds; in 1943, 61,100,000 pounds.  
Eastern North Carolina Belt (Type 12): acreage in 1944, 331,000; in 1943, 235,000. Production in 1944, 281,350,000 pounds; in 1943, 229,150,000 pounds.  
Middle and Old Belts (Type 11): acreage in 1944, 253,000; in 1943, 240,000. Production in 1944, 196,975,000 pounds; in 1943, 198,950,000 pounds.

**Heat Control Gives Much Finer Tobacco**

North Carolina tobacco growers can save many thousands of dollars by installing simple curing aids that improve the quality of the cured leaf, lower fuel costs, and reduce the amount of labor involved in curing, says N. C. Teter, agricultural engineer for the Experiment Station at State College.

The engineer has been working with E. O. Moss, director of the Tobacco Experiment Station at Oxford, and their tests show that simple changes in curing methods pay big dividends. A barn of tobacco ruined is a large loss. The usual damage incurred through improper curing during the season amounts to much more than the cost of making the improvements.

Teter points out that the large losses in curing are caused by unequal heat distribution. An even system of heating and controlled distribution of the heat, giving heat when it is wanted and where it is wanted, enables the skilled operator to obtain the maximum quality from his leaf.

Even heat may be supplied economically by a coal stoker. Better heat distribution results when the cold, ventilating air is introduced into a jacket surrounding the first joint of the flue pipe. Hot air may be distributed to any desired part of the barn by pipes from the jacket. More detailed plans for heat control may be obtained from the Agricultural Engineering Department at State College.

"The simplicity of plan for stoker firing and heat distribution make it available to every grower," Teter says.

According to the engineer, one of the most vital parts of the stoker installation is the furnace. Combustion space must be adequate. The furnace should have 36 inch clearance above the retort, and should be wider than the usual wood furnace.

The concentrated heat requires that the arch of the furnace be built of fire brick, and the mouth should have a door. The furnace need not be over four feet long. Care in its construction will save worry in the middle of the season, according to Teter.

Humidity control must accompany temperature control, he points out. "This year much of the tobacco will sun yellow instead of ripening properly. This fact, along with dry atmospheric conditions, will join to produce green, poor quality leaf unless care is exercised."

"Wet sacks hung from the lower tier poles and tacked to the walls will aid farmers in yellowing their tobacco in barns which are not air tight. As a safeguard, the sack should be put in place when the tobacco is housed and it should be dampened as necessary. Avoid putting water directly on the flues because mold may result."

Tobacco will withstand adverse weather conditions much better on stalks where a reasonable amount of moisture is turned under in a rotation with other crops.

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