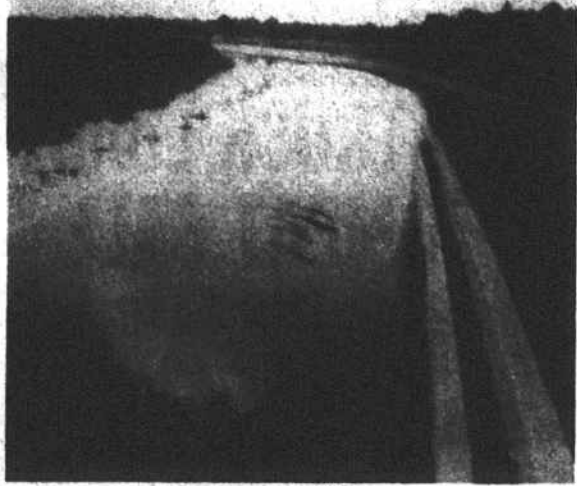


Garden/Farm

Hoke Soil & Water Conservation District



Hoke County flood area

Accent on Agriculture

A large city newspaper recently ran a story supplied to them by the Gallup Poll. The article's headline proclaimed, "Families fare badly with food bill."

The Gallup Poll has been taking an audit of weekly food expenditures spent by a representative non-farm U.S. household since 1937.

The figures are based on what these families spend on food, including milk, each week. In 1937, the representative family spent \$11 per week.

In 1981, this had risen to \$62. Anyone reading this article would shake their head and agree that food prices were certainly excessive.

However, a little checking reveals that even the highest union wages in those early years were about 40 cents per hour for factory labor.

If the people who were making the 40 cents per hour back in 1937 received raises in their wages at the same 464% increase as the raise in food prices, they would only be making \$2.26 per hour today.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the average factory wage in the United States, as of June 1982, was \$8.51 per hour.

It is not fair to say a product is more expensive simply because we have to pay more money for it, because our income might have gone up many more percentage points than the cost of the item.

So, the real cost of food is the lowest it has ever been. Despite the increased variety and "maid service" added to many foods, an hour of factory labor today buys more food than even in the "good old days."

Some people wouldn't dream of investing in a house constructed by a fly-by-night builder, yet they will place their life-savings in a house built on a floodplain.

Building in floodplains has been costly. Billions of dollars -- an average of \$3.4 billion -- are lost each year to floods. This costly error affects all of us with higher insurance, building costs, and relief programs to flood victims. The adverse publicity can also give the community a bad image.

Worse still, is the loss of human lives. Since 1925, floods in the United States have killed over 4,000 people.

Most of the loss and damage could have been avoided had citizens, landuse planners and America's real estate community heeded the advice and warnings of several public institutions.

For almost half a century, conservationists and planners have urged leaving floodplains (fairly level lands that border rivers, creeks, and coastal waters) to less intensive uses than houses and shopping centers.

Several agencies and organizations have floodplain information available for the asking.

The USDA's Soil Conservation Service has people in or assigned to almost every county in the United States. They provide assistance including information about floodplains free of charge.

The Corp of Engineers also has floodplain data available. Local planning agencies, regional governmental bodies and zoning officials may also have useful material. Some have maps and flood-prone areas clearly delineated.

All floodplains vary in size, shape, origin, and description, but

they share one simple characteristic -- from time to time they are covered by water.

Desirable homesites are purchased every year with flooding being the last possible thing on the minds of the buyers. The problem is, there are no guarantees. The big rain could come tomorrow, next week, or maybe 100 years from now, but it will come. Flooding can also be repetitive. Damaging storms often occur back-to-back during the same season.

Another contributing factor is changing conditions on the land. Upstream construction of houses, supermarkets, streets, and parking lots can drastically alter natural drainage patterns.

The sealed surfaces absorb no rainfall, so runoff is greater and takes place faster. If the drainage system of a downstream subdivision is not adequate, a torrent of runoff water can create a flood, sometimes after only moderately heavy rains.

Community leaders often fear that denying intense development on a convenient floodplain will give their locality a reputation of slowing down normal economic growth and discouraging new industry and business.

But undeveloped floodplains are not lost to the community. They can provide long-term benefits and perform natural functions in water management and landuse that cannot be duplicated by man, no matter the cost. For example, agriculture is a basic use of floodplains.

Most farmers have long known the value and limitations of floodplains for pastures on growing crops. Parks, field sports areas, hiking paths, and other recreational facilities necessary to an

all-round attractive community are acceptable on flood-prone land.


Floodplains provide greenbelts, open space, and natural areas. In urban areas, they are often all that remain of the natural world. Undeveloped floodplains also benefit wildlife by offering refuge to various species of fish, birds, and mammals. Using floodplains for

parks and greenbelts adds to the attractiveness of a community and actually helps contribute to a stable tax base.

For the sake of investment, the future of the community and human safety, floodplains are always questionable sites for building.



Assistant Agent Banks Wannamaker, in charge of crops work for the Hoke County Agricultural Extension Service, getting a soil sample from a farm near Dundarrach.



Farm Focus

by Richard Melton
Extension Livestock Agent
Banks Wannamaker
Extension Field Crops Agent

SHOULD I PARTICIPATE?

The agricultural agents with the Hoke County Extension staff have a program or type of management "up their sleeves" that they believe will be worthwhile for tobacco and soybean farmers to give notice. It is called Integrated Pest Management, but it is not a new concept by any means.

IPM basically involves getting farmers to manage pests (insects, weeds, diseases, etc.) year round with cultural, biological, and chemical practices. Trained scouts, supervised by extension agents, are involved in checking fields for thresholds counts of pests: thus saving the farmer time needed for management practices. For example, tobacco farmers who also have soybeans, tend to "forget" to scout their beans because this necessity occurs at the same time their tobacco is coming off.

IPM is not a program for every farm operation. However, there are situations in Hoke County where an IPM program would benefit the farmers.

There will be a program introducing the IPM concept this Thursday night, October 7th, at 7:30 p.m. at the Agricultural Extension office. Let's take advantage of this opportunity to become exposed to an idea that is soon to gain wide acceptance throughout the agricultural world.

HOW MUCH FERTILIZER?

That question can be answered by two words - soil test. The smart

farmer and gardener, for that matter, uses this service to increase his productivity and profits. Over fertilization can be harmful to plants. So before applying lime and fertilizer in the spring, you should check your soil fertility during the fall. It's that simple. With a little bit of planning and some help on procedures from your agricultural extension office, you can avoid killing your favorite plant, bush, or crop by using an incorrect fertility plan.

ON-FARM TESTS

Now is the time to talk to your extension agent if you'd like to have an on-farm test for next year. Extension specialists from N.C. State University have research in tobacco, cotton, corn, soybeans, small grains, forages, etc. - and need farmers interested in cooperating. As most of you know, you'll benefit in more ways than one. Contact us now so we can begin making plans.

Bee Meeting

The Hoke County Beekeepers Association will meet Thursday at 8 p.m. in the Hoke County Public Library in Raeford.


SOCIALS 875-2121

Long Distance Isn't What It Used To Be... It's Better, Faster And 81% Cheaper!

Most prices have been going up, up and away. But the cost of long distance has glided downward over the years. For instance, in 1927, a three minute call to the West Coast cost \$9.00. Today, that call is just \$1.72 dialed direct. That's an 81% cost decrease. And the cost of long distance gets even lower when you dial direct during discount rate periods (after 5 PM on weekdays and all day Saturday and Sunday).

No, long distance isn't what it used to be. It's better, faster and cheaper. So plot a course on the map next time you need to make a long distance connection. And take advantage of one of today's best bargains.





ELECT

J.H. (Buddy) Blue Hoke County Board of Education

Nov. 2, 1982

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