

Tobacco Tax Could Cripple Industry In State And South

B. C. Mangum, president of the N. C. Farm Bureau, lashed out today at those who would impose a tax on tobacco products as "penny wise and pound foolish."

"It is time," Mangum bristled, "for citizens of North Carolina to do some serious thinking about the consequences a tobacco tax would have — not only on our farm economy, but industry as well. Moreover, if tobacco is taxed, the door would be opened for any one of a number of commodities to come under the scrutiny of biannual revenue hunters."

The farm leader pointed out that the state is now getting \$31 million in direct taxes from tobacco manufacturing and processing operations. "This," he said, "amounts to about six cents per package. Tobacco represents 42 percent of our total \$40 million farm income. North Carolina produces more tobacco and tobacco products than any other state. Taxing tobacco would cripple the industry in the state — and eventually in the South."

"Tobacco consumption is decreasing — and much of the decrease is attributed to excessive taxes and anti-smoking attacks. If our own legislature uses it as a supposedly 'lush' tax source — what can we expect from other states?" Mangum reasoned.

"You can now buy a package of cigarettes in Raleigh for less than the tax alone in New York City," Mangum reported. "Neighboring states are waiting to see what we will do. If we apply a tax, they will raise theirs. There are 47 legislatures

"The economic structure of no other state is so dependent upon a single product. It is time allied industries — many of whom owe their very existence to the tobacco economy of the state — realize which side of their 'bread is buttered' and lend the farmer a helping hand," Mangum cautioned.

Restrictions On Agricultural Jobs

Yancey County farmers, who employ children 15 years old or younger for jobs that are officially classified as hazardous should be familiar with certain restrictions.

Certain occupations in agriculture have been declared particularly hazardous by the U. S. Department of Labor for the employment of children under 16, according to Patrick R. Guyer, Asst. Agricultural Extension Agent.

Such jobs as operating a tractor with over 20 belt horsepower, and operating a combine, baler, corn picker and forage harvester, are among those listed, Guyer says.

Some other tasks are prohibited — such as handling or applying anhydrous ammonia and several types of herbicides, insecticides and fungicides; working from a ladder or scaffold more than 20 feet high; and

working in gas-tight grain or forage enclosures.

Guyer says the law does not apply when the child is employed by his parent or a person standing in the place of a parent on a farm owned or operated by the parent or person.

Qualified youth can be exempted from some parts of the hazardous occupations in agriculture declaration which became effective Jan. 1, 1969, the agent points out. "Fourteen and 15-year-olds can be employed in certain of these hazardous occupations when they have completed a formal training program in the safe use of tractors and farm machinery."

The training programs are designed to make sure workers pass four requirements: (1) become familiar with the normal working hazards in agriculture; (2) study safety sections of the

4-H tractor program manuals; (3) pass a written exam on safe tractor and machinery operation, and (4) demonstrate their ability to operate a tractor safely.

The agent says the boy or girl will be issued a certificate after he completes one of the safety programs. The young worker should then present his employer a copy of the certificate.

The employer has several responsibilities. He should: (1) instruct the boy or girl in the safe operation of the machine, (2) provide adequate supervision, (3) examine the certificate and become familiar with the occupations the youth is qualified to perform, and (4) keep the certificate on file during the youth's employment.

Guyer points out that 14 and 15-year-old youth who wish to be employed in hazardous agricultural occupations and employers can secure additional information at the County Extension Office in Burnsville.

Mallonee Making Visits To County Seats

Asheville — Tom L. Mallonee, 11th Congressional District Assistant to Congressman Roy A. Taylor, is now making scheduled visits to the county seats and other sections of the counties.

On Tuesday, February 18, he will be at the Madison County Courthouse, Marshall from 9:30 to 10:30; at the Yancey County Courthouse, Burnsville from 1:00 to 2:00; and at the Town Hall, Spruce Pine from 3:00 to 4:00.

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