

Roy Bennett Gives Latest Quality Tobacco Growing Information

(Editor's note: the quality of American fine-cured tobacco has been the topic of much debate in recent years and especially since the 1962 crop hit the market. How can growers produce the best possible crop in 1963? This question was asked of a veteran tobacco specialist at State College. The answers he gives are based on the latest research and farmer experiences.)

By Roy Bennett
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The first step in a tobacco quality program for 1963 is to plant a variety that is expected to produce desirable quality tobacco.

Fertilize according to soil test, soil texture, depth of topsoil and rainfall.

Use a tobacco fertilizer containing at least 35 per cent nitrate nitrogen. Tobacco which absorbs a high amount of ammonium nitrogen from ammonium or organic sources has tended to be toady, dull in color, and poor in texture.

Two methods may be used to figure proper spacing and height of topping. A grower may space and top his crop to give him from 110,000 to 140,000 leaves per acre. Or he may prefer to gauge the spacing and height of topping to give 5,500 to 7,500 plants per acre topped at 17 to 20 leaves.

The closer the spacing the lower a grower should top. And not every grower should try to space and top the same. Such things as soil, variety and weather should be considered.

Avoid excessive irrigation. Tobacco that is irrigated too often and with too much water tends to be pale; slick; and low in nicotine, oil, aroma, flavor and filling power.

If hand suckering is used, top in the early flower stage. Pull the suckers when they are about six to eight inches long, before they get too tough.

If growers use MH-30, they have an obligation to use the best principles of application known. Three methods of treatment can be used: (1) Top in the full to late flower stage, clean out all suckers and treat immediately; or (2) treat in the full flower stage, wait two to

four days, remove all tops and suckers; or (3) top in the early flower stage, wait seven to ten days, treat and clean out all suckers.

Research information shows that if tobacco is allowed to mature and develop to medium or late bloom stage it is less likely to suffer adversely from MH-30 than if an overdosage of the chemical were used.

Here are some more things to remember about using MH-30:

—Treat during early morning after excessive dew is gone.

—Do not treat tobacco plant with MH-30 when they are wilted from hot, dry weather or from too much water.

—Do not use more than the four to six pints of MH-30 when they are wilted from hot, dry weather or from too much water.

—Do not use more than the four to six pints of MH-30 per acre as suggested by the manufacturer. Mix the MH-30 in at least 20 to 50 gallons of water and apply in a fine spray, covering as much of the plant as possible. If the dosage is to be put on in two applications, split the above rate; do not double it.

—Allow the leaves to become fully ripe before harvesting. This will do much to reduce adverse effects from MH-30. It frequently takes MH-30 treated tobacco one to two weeks longer to ripen than non-treated tobacco, especially up-stalk leaves.

Harvest only mature and ripe tobacco. Buyers seem to agree that ripe, grainy tobacco is desired. Immature tobacco tends to be light in color; slick; low in filling power; and low in oil, flavor and aroma.

Follow a relatively slow curing schedule. Give sufficient time in the yellowing stage for the desirable chemical changes — starch conversion to sugar—to take place. The tobacco will have more of an orange, ripe, grainy, mellow appearance.

One of the most immediate problems growers face is getting a good, uniform stand.

Plants should be hardened off before they are transplanted. This helps them to live better.

Water the beds just before and after pulling. They pull easier with less bruising and danger of soft rot.

Sort or grade plants. If you must use plants that are not good, strong and sturdy set them in a separate area in the field. Don't mix medium stock or sturdy plants in the same row with small, tender or spindly plants. The poorer plants can't compete with the better plants, and this reduces yield and quality.

Treat the soil for wireworms and nematodes where these pests are known to be a problem.

Set plants at the proper depth. Do not set below the bud, and do not leave too much of the stalk on spindly plants exposed. They will flop on the ground, grow crooked, sun scald and develop soft rot.

Use the right amount of fertilizer and place it properly to avoid injury. Fertilizer injury causes loss of stand, and slow and irregular growth. Use enough preplant fertilizer under the tobacco to insure early growth. But do not use enough to cause serious fertilizer injury.

Replant early and often to get a stand established and to insure early and uniform growth.

Other Editors

WILLIAMSTON ENTERPRISE

Not All Bad, To Be Sure

It is estimated that 328,000 persons left North Carolina during the 1950s. Included in that number were possibly many thousands of young men and women who found it necessary to look for jobs and positions in greener fields. That's a bad situation. The State is literally driving out thousands who'll become the leading citizens in other areas.

But the migration is not really as bad as the figure would seem to indicate it to be at first sight. For instance, here are quite a few thousands who migrate to some areas to reap larger welfare payments. All those who go to Washington, (D. C.), Philadelphia, New York and Chicago do not go there really in search of jobs. It is the fat welfare check many are looking for. Some are restless and seem to enjoy living in the jungles teeming with populations in the millions.

Then there are those who enjoy

training and advantages at lower costs in their formative years moving later to greener fields.

Blame them? No. Let them go. If it were only possible to thin out those who are bent on working less and receiving more and keep those who place a value on challenge, those who recognize responsibilities and who have a promising potential, then we would be getting somewhere.

During the meantime there is some consolation in the fact that when we lose the good, we also lose some of the bad.

EMBEZZLEMENT ALLEGED

Last week B. L. Mizzelle of 700 Williams Street was arrested on a warrant issued by officers of the Carolina Home Supply Company of Goldsboro, which alleged that he had embezzled \$98.70 from the company in the year between March '61 and March '62.

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