



Familiar scene to Kentucky tobacco growers is this one. It is an auction sale at Lexington. Any of you growers recognize yourself in this photograph?

300 Years of Tobacco Growing

By S. E. WRATHER
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Beginning in 1612, on a commercial basis, tobacco production in America has increased until the present time it is a leading commodity in our agricultural industry and our foreign trade. Rapid development of the industry in the American colonies was attributable to the following factors:

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First, England through her mercantilistic policy, emphasized the necessity of a favorable balance of trade to prevent too much bullion from flowing out of the country. The expansion of the tobacco industry was a means of developing her colonial resources, and at the same time create markets for home manufacturers.

Second, the English government sold monopoly privileges to tobacco dealers and since the value of these privileges varied directly with the extent of business done, it was to the government's interest to encourage the tobacco trade. When it was learned that tobacco could be grown in the American colonies, Parliament prohibited the importation of tobacco from other countries.

Despite these favorable influences, tobacco growers experienced many difficulties during the colonial period, many of which seem rather modern in light of recent developments. The first General Assembly of Virginia met in 1619, and the first law passed was one "fixing" the price of tobacco. Later, in 1631, an attempt was made to limit production to 1500 plants per poll.

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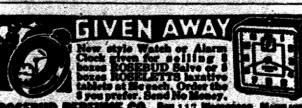
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The way to cut seed potatoes as illustrated in a Kentucky College of Agriculture photograph.

The March Farm Calendar

Put in the tobacco plant bed.

Finish sowing clovers and grasses.

If not finished, complete the winter spray program for fruit trees, and prune both fruit and shade trees.

Sow oats.

Plant first crop of potatoes.

Begin plowing for corn.

Sow early peas, beets, carrots, parsnips and other early vegetables.

Start cold frames for cabbage, tomato and other garden plants.

Complete sale and delivery of tobacco.

Finish hauling and spreading of winter manure accumulation.

Breed brood mares.

Inspect farm machinery and order needed parts.

Repair fences.

Recommended seeding dates in Tennessee—garden crops: Asparagus seeds March 1-15. Bush beans, May 1-30. Pole beans, April 24-July 4. Beets, March 1-30. Cabbage, Feb. 15-Mar. 15 (slips in field). Cantaloupes, May 1-July 1. Carrots, Mar. 1-20 (spring use). Cucumber, May 1-July 1. Egg plant, Feb. 1-28. Kale, Aug. 20-Sept.

Establishment of local hogshead markets made it possible for farmers to get returns from their tobacco sooner, but it necessitated prizing tobacco into hogsheads. Thus the place of marketing had been changed, but no material change had been made in the method of marketing.

Because of inconveniences involved in each farmer prizing and shipping his own tobacco, local buyers or speculators began operations. This was a distinct change in the method of marketing. Farmers sold their tobacco loose, passing on to the local dealer the responsibility of prizing and shipping to central markets. Previous to this arrangement, the farmers had dealt directly with the manufacturer's representative at the central markets. Under the new setup, tobacco was sold to local dealers who in turn sold it to buyers at the central markets. For awhile, all parties concerned seemed to be pleased with this method of marketing. Farmers were getting returns from their tobacco immediately and the manufacturers were still making their purchases at the central markets, thereby making it possible for local dealers to buy and ship to these markets.

Local Dealers Hit

Eventually changes pointing toward a different marketing arrangement began. Manufacturers instead of making their purchases at the hogshead market as formerly, began buying direct from the farmer. From the farmer's standpoint this caused no disruption in the marketing procedure, they continued to sell

20. Lettuce, Mar. 1-15 (garden). Okra, Apr. 15-May 10. Onions, Jan. 15-Mar. 15 (seed). Parsnips, Mar. 1-15. Peas, Jan. 15-Mar. 15 (round). Peas, Mar. 1-Apr. 1 (wrinkled). Pepper, Feb. 1-28 (seed). Pepper, May 1-10 (plants).

Potatoes, Jan. 1-Mar. 15. Potatoes (second crop), July 15-Aug. 5. Sweet potatoes, Mar. 15-Apr. 1 (in hotbed). Sweet potatoes, Apr. 20-May 15 (transplanted). Pumpkin, May 1-15. Radishes, Mar. 1-15 (spring). Spinach, Mar. 1. Squash, Apr. 15-30 (bush). Squash, May 1-15 (running). Strawberry plants. Mar. 1-30 (earlier if weather permits). Tomatoes, Jan. 15-Feb. 15 (seed in beds). Tomatoes, May 1-June 15 (transplanted). Turnips, Aug. 1-10. Watermelons, May 1-June 10.

Recommended seeding dates in Tennessee—general crops: Corn, April 15-May 7 to June 15. Cotton, May 1-10. Alfalfa, Aug. 15-Sept. 7. Barley, Sept. 15-Oct. 7. Broom corn, May 15-30. Buckwheat, July 15-30. Cowpeas, May 20-June 20. Bermuda, May 1-30. Red Top, Mar. 1-15, also Aug. 1-30.

Timothy, Mar. 1-15. Japan clover, Mar. 1-30. Millet, Apr. 20-July 15. Oats—Spring, Feb. 20-Mar. 15. Peanuts, Apr. 20-May 20. Sorghum, May 15-June 15. Soy beans, May 1-June 10. Tobacco, Feb. 1-Mar. 1 (in beds). Tobacco, May 15-June 10 (in fields).

their tobacco as before even though they were selling to different interests. The parties that felt the immediate effect of this change were the large corps of local dealers who were accustomed to buying tobacco and shipping it to central markets for sale. Since manufacturers were making their purchases direct from farmers, the independent dealers were without buyers at the central market and were therefore forced out of business, leaving the manufacturer the direct purchaser of the farmer's tobacco.

Two reasons have been advanced for this latter change. Perhaps both have merit. The manufacturers maintain that the practice of "nesting," or hiding inferior tobacco in the hogshead, had reached such proportions and threatened to continue on such a large scale that they were forced to abandon the hogshead method of buying tobacco. Farmers and independent dealers maintain that they buyers were working in unison and that the move was to get control of the market.

For the most part these changes in methods and places of marketing have been a natural sequence brought about by increased production and improved methods of transportation. In each instance the popularity of the new market has caused the abandonment of the older one. Each change brought the market nearer the producing area, resulting in our present system, where the manufacturers have buying and storing facilities throughout the producing area.