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Cotton Culture in Southwest Texas

A Few Sample Instances of Unusual
Success in the Production of the
Great White Staple, the Money Crop
of the South.



WHEN the Texas Coast Country, and particularly that portion of it between the Nueces River and the Rio Grande, was opened to settlement two years ago, it was not generally believed that it was a good cotton country. There was no good reason for this opinion other than that all interest was centered upon the great possibilities of truck growing. It was a well known fact that by the assistance of a marvelous climate, all markets could be reached with truck products ahead of all competing sections. This important advantage naturally blinded, for the time being, all interest in other branches of agricultural activity.

But now the sober second thought has prevailed, and the Texas Coast Country is today not only the early vegetable garden of the continent, but it is also the best cotton country in the South. The achievements of truck growers last spring, when they made at least five new national records in early vegetable shipments, firmly established the first fact. A few weeks later, when the cotton crop had been harvested, the second fact was as convincingly demonstrated.

By way of confirming and illuminating this last assertion, the self-explanatory signed statements of three Kingsville farmers are given herewith:

Kingsville, Texas, Nov. 14, 1906.

Dear Sir:—In reply to yours of the 12th inst., will say I have ten acres in cotton and have picked ten bales and have another nearly out now. There will be some over eleven bales in all.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed) E. W. THOMAS.

Kingsville, Texas, Nov. 17, 1906.

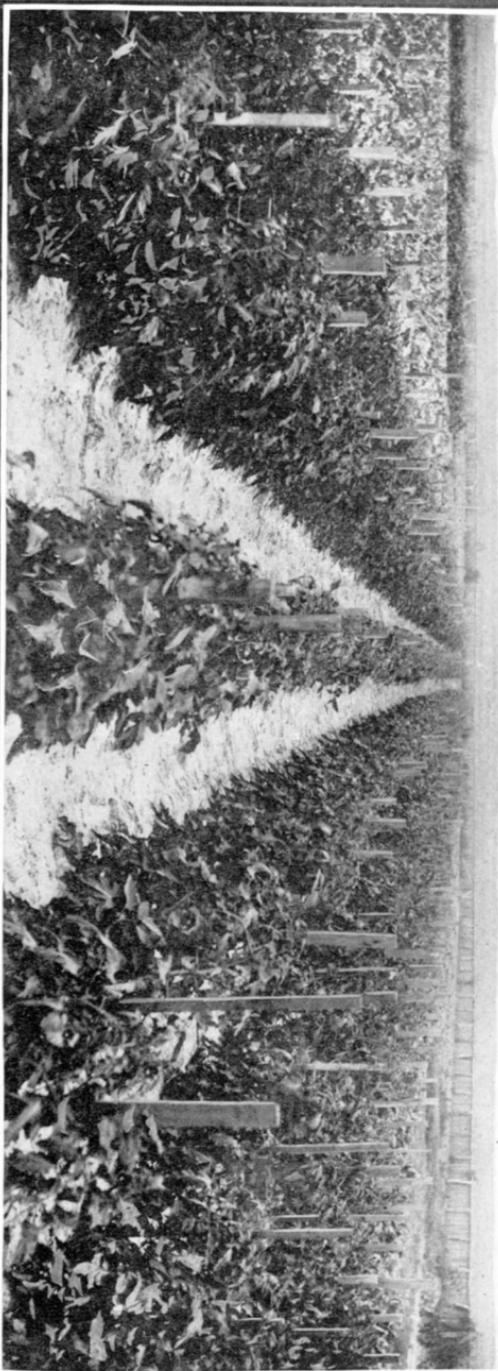
Dear Sir:—Referring to yours of the 14th inst., relative to the cotton crop, I beg to say that I had eight acres in cotton and have picked eight 500-pound bales.

Yours truly,

(Signed) JNO. D. HARVEY.

Kingsville, Texas, Nov. 16, 1906.

Dear Sir:—Yours attached: in reply will state I planted about March 1st seven acres of cotton and about the 15th of March planted five acres more, making twelve acres in all. Up to date, I have picked



A Brownsville Country Tomato Patch in December.

sixteen bales and have good prospects for two more bales before I plow under the crop.

Yours respectfully,
(Signed) R. T. PENN.

At Kingsville this season there were 640 acres in cotton and the total number of bales realized from that acreage exceeded the number of acres.

Kingsville has been cited merely as an example. The returns for the entire region were uniformly as good. For instance, near Brownsville, Mr. J. R. Copeland made an average of one and one-fourth bales per acre from a large acreage.

Illustrative of the growing popularity of cotton culture in the section south of the Nueces, the following figures are interesting: For the season of 1904-05, the total production was 703 bales; in 1905-06, the total reached 3,549 bales. While the returns for the present season, 1906-07, are not yet complete, the production will doubtless approximate 10,000 bales.

The purport of this discussion is not to show that the Texas Coast Country is more efficient in the production of cotton than anything else. On the contrary, it is merely to emphasize its attractiveness as a diversification proposition. Truck should not be raised to the exclusion of cotton, nor should cotton be given precedence over truck; they should be combined, and they are combined by that farmer who wants to get the best and most profitable results. A winter crop of truck and a summer crop of cotton do not conflict in the Texas Coast Country. The same thing is true of an almost endless array of crops.



In this connection it may not be out of place to call attention to the wonderful success of those same Kingsville farmers, in truck growing last spring. Early in the season, the growers—twenty-three in all—wisely organized for the purpose of concerted action in the handling and marketing of their crops. At the end of the season, the secretary of the organization distributed \$17,500 in the good coin of the realm among those twenty-three growers. Then the growers immediately got busy, as the saying is, and planted cotton on the same land which had yielded such abundant returns in truck. The average production of this crop, as we have already said, was better than a bale per acre.