

FARM FORECASTER

CROP AND LIVE STOCK REPORT FOR NORTH CAROLINA



NORTH CAROLINA
Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Statistics
Crop Reporting Service

UNITED STATES
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Bureau of Agricultural Economics
Division of Crops and Livestock Estimates



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THE AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

So far as North Carolina is concerned, the agricultural situation is optimistic. From a poor beginning, crop prospects are now generally good and better than usual so far as production is concerned. Tobacco and peanuts are expected to bring unusually good prices. Most farm crops will probably reach or rise above the average in market prices except cotton which is so greatly influenced by the Cotton Belt States.

As outlined in the accompanying comments, the yields of crops are better than usual and the improved conditions are better than those existing in most other states.

Over the nation at large the weather which always dominates the crop situation has been peculiarly perverted this season. The season began with very dry weather which changed to entirely too much rain in the past month. This has resulted in considerable grains and hay being spoiled in the fields. Cotton prospects have fallen off with an increase in insect damages. These rains have tended to improve the corn and late potatoes.

The dry weather hurt the corn and the harvest is expected to be light even with late frosts. Both the hay crop and last year's stocks are short. Oats are expected to be cheap on account of the large available supply. Almost all fruit has been good this year. Western farmers are preparing their land for seeding about a 14 per cent increase acreage of wheat. This would result in an unusually large crop.

While the agricultural purchasing power has held up quite well, it has now turned. Its highest point was in April and came only to within 88 per cent of its pre-war parity in purchasing power. Fifteen months ago it reached 91 per cent which was the highest since 1918-19. The wholesale prices of non-agricultural commodities are more than 59 per cent higher than they were for the five-year pre-war period.

SEPTEMBER 1ST, 1926, CROP COMMENTS FOR NORTH CAROLINA

CORN

The corn crop in North Carolina, with an 83 per cent condition, indicates 47,981,000 bushels. This is appreciably more than was expected a month ago, but is less than the five year average. Corn has unaccountably withstood the adverse weather conditions this year. It is estimated that 90 per cent of the acreage has its leaves stripped off in the form of leaf fodder. This is a practice that outsiders cannot understand in a state as progressive as North Carolina claims to be. It has been proven for years that it does not pay to pull fodder. The labor cost and the damage to the grain is more than the value of the fodder.

WHEAT

The yield of wheat for the past two or three years has been unusually good. This year has averaged probably more than 12 bushels per acre, with many farmers reporting their individual yields at more than 30 bushels per acre. This will probably result in a considerable increase in acreage to be planted this fall similar to that in the Wheat Belt.

OATS, RYE AND BARLEY

Oats were generally poor in this state for the past two years. The acreage has consequently been decreased. Spring oats are largely cut in a semi-mature state for feeding whole, which practice is especially general in the eastern counties. Barley has grown in favor remarkably in the Western Piedmont Belt, as it gives quite as good a yield as oats and is a safer crop. The yield has been good for three years. Rye was generally satisfactory, especially to those growing the Abruzzi varieties. Rye acreage is increasing.

Continued on Page 2



1925 and 1926 Wheat Stacks—Guilford County



The New Growth of Dewberries—Moore County

SEPTEMBER 1, 1926, CROP REPORT FOR NORTH CAROLINA

CROPS	Unit	DISTRICT SUMMARY								STATE AVERAGE	UNITED STATES AVERAGE
		MOUNTAIN COUNTIES		PIEDMONT COUNTIES			COASTAL COUNTIES				
		Northern Mountain	Western Mountain	Northern Piedmont	Central Piedmont	Southern Piedmont	Northern Coastal	Central Coastal	Southern Coastal		
		1	4	2	5	8	3	6	9		
Condition (per cent of normal)—											
Corn.....	%	88	92	83	90	90	71	80	75	83	73.8
Potatoes (Irish) late crop.....	%	74	73	59	69	67	46	53	63	64	77.5
Sweet potatoes (yams).....	%	83	76	81	84	81	72	80	76	78	78.5
Tobacco.....	%	89	84	81	82	85	71	76	74	79	81.0
Hay (all tame or cultivated).....	%	74	78	73	84	80	69	74	79	77	75.5
Hay (wild, salt or prairie).....	%	80	85	86	83	82	63	67	77	84	-----
Clover (for hay).....	%	62	76	63	64	64	73	-----	90	68	-----
Alfalfa.....	%	70	78	79	75	78	72	-----	60	75	-----
Pasture.....	%	88	89	74	86	80	63	74	76	82	78.2
Peanuts.....	%	79	50	74	74	80	75	75	78	73	74.9
Soy beans.....	%	88	88	82	86	84	74	85	88	80	-----
Cowpeas.....	%	90	88	82	84	84	69	77	83	82	-----
Velvet beans.....	%	78	81	87	89	83	65	74	77	78	-----
Apples (per cent of full crop).....	%	81	81	72	72	76	84	78	68	79	77.4
Peaches (per cent of full crop).....	%	72	66	68	57	82	70	55	52	67	77.9
Peaches (quality per cent normal).....	%	82	75	79	87	88	78	70	75	83	-----
Pears.....	%	68	75	62	66	75	68	70	67	67	78.6
Grapes.....	%	86	92	80	84	86	95	67	83	85	78.1
Sorghum cane (for sirup).....	%	86	88	79	85	88	72	70	83	83	81.5
Tame Hay (per cent of acreage in each variety)											
Cowpeas, alone.....	%	12.0	9.0	28.1	21.0	42.0	15.1	30.5	45.4	23.0	-----
Cowpeas and sorghum mixed.....	%	.5	5.0	4.2	7.0	17.0	4.6	4.0	4.6	7.0	-----
Peanuts (only acreage from which vines saved).....	%	.5	0	2.4	.5	0	26.4	2.4	2.2	13.0	-----
Soy beans.....	%	25.0	20.0	27.5	28.0	14.0	29.4	47.2	31.7	29.0	-----
Clovers (all kinds).....	%	43.0	43.0	23.0	17.0	9.0	9.4	.1	0	15.0	-----
Alfalfa.....	%	0	4.0	1.9	3.0	2.0	1.3	.2	.3	1.0	-----
Millet or sudan grass.....	%	1.0	2.0	6.8	6.0	3.0	4.8	4.4	1.5	1.8	-----
Johnson grass.....	%	.5	0	.5	.5	1.0	0	0	.1	.2	-----
Grain cut green for hay.....	%	1.5	4.0	3.4	5.0	8.0	4.7	3.4	3.9	4.0	-----
Other tame hay.....	%	16.0	13.0	2.2	12.0	4.0	4.3	7.8	10.3	6.0	-----
Farm Labor—											
Supply compared normal.....	%	87	89	85	86	97	91	94	86	89	-----
Demand compared normal.....	%	89	84	88	90	88	91	95	94	90	-----
SEPTEMBER 1, COTTON REPORT											
Condition (per cent of normal).....	%	-----	61.2	70.7	70.4	69.6	70.4	75.7	79.1	69	59.6
Number bolls safe per plant to Sept. 1.....	No.	-----	3.5	5.5	5.3	5.2	6.1	7.3	6.5	5.6	-----
Average date picking will begin.....	Sept.	-----	19	19	23	15	19	8	3	16	-----
Per cent of total acreage a failure.....	%	-----	0	.5	1.0	.9	.6	.6	.9	1.0	3.5

CROP FORECASTS—NORTH CAROLINA

CROPS	Unit	5 Year Average Crop 1921-1925	1925 Production	1926 Production Forecasted September 1
Corn.....	bu.	48,616,000	42,014,000	47,981,000
Potatoes (sweet).....	bu.	9,526,000	7,040,000	7,995,000
Tobacco.....	lbs.	314,252,000	378,490,000	360,264,000
Cotton.....	bales	915,072	1,102,000	1,137,000
Potatoes (Irish).....	bu.	4,684,600	4,524,000	4,868,500
Apples—				
Total crop.....	bu.	3,767,000	3,192,000	5,458,000
Commercial crop.....	bbls.	166,000	160,000	273,000
Peaches (total crop).....	bu.	1,183,000	1,500,000	1,910,000
Peanuts.....	lbs.	165,646,000	223,400,000	208,780,000

The Agricultural Situation

Continued from Page 1

IRISH AND SWEET POTATOES

While the early or truck crop of Irish Potatoes yielded well after a very poor start, the late or fall crop has suffered considerably from the adverse weather conditions. The sweet potato crop, on the other hand, looks good and shows an increased acreage. The

present outlook is for almost 1,000,000 bushels more than a year ago although the condition reported is 4 per cent below the ten-year average.

PEANUTS

With the peanuts planted under variable weather conditions in North Carolina, the resulting stands were poor and the present outlook is for only 73 per cent of a full or normal crop. This is 5 per cent below the ten-year average, but in consideration of the increased acreage this year, the resulting crop will probably be considerably above the five-year average, although less than last year. The national crop shows 75 per cent, with a production slightly less than last year and appreciably below the five-year average.

FRUIT

This State has one of the best fruit crop prospects for many years. Apples are generally good throughout the State and especially in the commercial orchards of Western Carolina. In fact, the indicated production is 70 per cent more than last year, while the commercial crop which is not of great importance, excepting in about four counties, shows the same per cent of increase. Haywood, Surry, Buncombe and Wilkes counties have the most commercial orchards. The mountain area of Caldwell and Alexander counties also have many large orchards. It is generally expected

that more than 1,000,000 bushels of good apples will go to waste in the mountain counties this fall.

The peach crop showed 2100 solid cars shipped from the Sand Hills, while express shipments and Western counties showed 200 cars more. There was an unusually large sale made locally that were trucked out. It is conservatively estimated that 2700 cars were sold and that more than 3000 were produced of commercial peaches this year. The farm peach crop was quite variable but above the average this year. The production in the Sand Hills is supposed to be over 4000 cars next year on account of large number of young orchards that will come into bearing.

NOTE ON COMMENTS

These comments should be read in relation to the summary of crops shown on page 2 where the various data to which they relate are given in a comparative form.

1926 COTTON CROP REPORT—SEPTEMBER 1

What is one to do when he is criticized for overestimating the cotton crop, by the same parties who furnish information indicating more than he estimates? This is the situation in North Carolina now when 1,137,000 bales or the largest crop on record is estimated from the 69 per cent of a normal or full crop condition reported.

With the acreage increased 1 per cent, which the abandonment of 1 per cent brings back to last year's acreage and with a yield of 267 pounds in prospect September 1st, we had a situation justifying a large production. The boll weevil, cotton flea and caterpillar are evidently not doing as much damage as the Department of Agriculture first thought. With the crop as late as it is, ten to twenty days, there is a chance yet of heavy damage from weevils. Almost all of the farmers we talk with say that weevils are prevalent but that they were not doing material damage until late in August and early in September.

The only way to determine the damage to cotton by any and all agencies is to visit the field and examine a large number of squares, young and half-grown bolls. Each boll should be carefully cut open at the points where damage appear, such as boll weevil punctures, boll worm holes and anthracnose. Weevil damage has been heavy across the southeastern part of the State and is rapidly affecting the border counties where the cotton is still young and offers opportunity for heavy damage.

The cotton averages probably 20 per cent shortage in stand, leaving 2,036,000 acres for harvest. Ginnings to September 1st were appreciably behind those of a year ago. Reliable forecasts of production are not probable before November 1st. The date of killing frost and boll weevil damage prior to that time will largely be the determining factors.

NORTH CAROLINA COTTON FACTS

Cotton has deteriorated in prospective production since August 12th.

The weevil damage is increasing *daily* in degree and extent.

The crop is late in growth and opening (10 to 20 days).

The boll worm and cotton flea are worse than usual.

The cotton caterpillar is at work in three counties.

The acreage is only slightly more than last year.

Cultivation, fertilization and growth of plants has been good.

Fruitfulness—squares, blooms and bolling were generally good.

Production 1925—1,102,000 bales.

Reported condition (by farmers) better than a year ago.

Indicated production 1,120,000 bales.

CAUTION

It isn't wise to draw conclusions from the above too soon.

The cotton statisticians have studied the yearly trends and have a greater desire to estimate the final production closer than credited with. Remember that the Government on the average

more closely estimates the crop than the private agencies. Their reputation and function is dependent on closely approximating the crop.

Take the matter of seasons (rains), frosts, insect and disease agencies. These may vary in extent and degree over night. Only God himself can know what tomorrow will bring forth. This means:

(1) That the estimates are only PRESENT indications as based on the *present* condition and acreage. (The trend.)

(2) That variations from report to report are expected—in-avoidable.

(3) That it is humanly impossible to forecast the FINAL production.

A purpose of the government reports is to establish an unbiased trend as based on the month to month development of the crops, so that the private trades may have a minimum advantage by their privately collected information. That this has been realized is well known to the "Trades."

If the government varies unjustly *away from* the farmers estimates, discredit and ruination of the service will be inevitable. It is best to present the FACTS, and let supply and demand then run its course—since the growers themselves will not use business methods in planting and marketing the crop.

Remember Senator Heffin's annual criticisms of the government reports and his ridiculous underestimates. It would not do for the Government to consistently underestimate the crop.

Take the situation in North Carolina: When the farmers reported a condition of 70.9 per cent and the statistician recommended 69 per cent—he is going the limit, even though he is confident that the condition is worse than the farmers evidently appreciated.

It should be remembered that the *average* cotton report is prepared prior to the date to which it relates (one or two days) and that it is a week later before the data can be assembled from all the states, and different sources, carefully tabulated, analyzed and issued by the Crop Reporting Board.

Every private statistician observing the Crop Reporting Board has been amazed and has realized his unjust opinion of the methods used, for they go far more deeply into every phase and influential factor than any private agency can do.

Then, too, underestimates usually result in a worse situation than the same degree of overestimation, because of the contrast with the many private reports, the resulting loss of confidence and (excess) cotton that becomes available.

That cotton is bringing too low a price is all too true. Until the farmers get some FACTS on cost of production by actual farm records and until we market our cotton crop in a more business-like way, it will be best not to hunt for the needle in the hay stack of the Government Crop Reports.

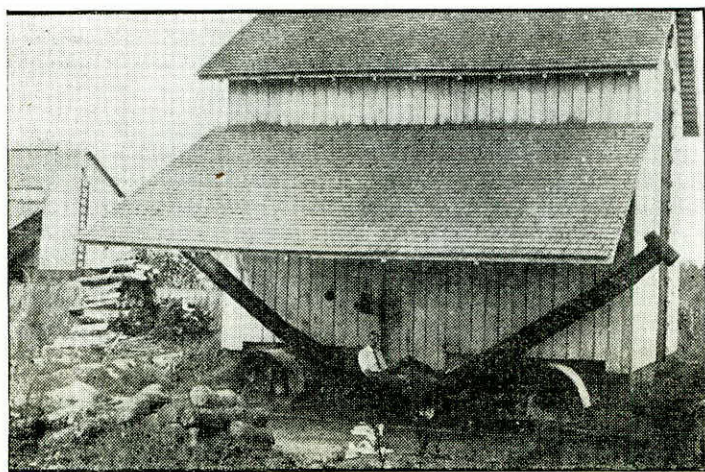
The condition of other states and related data, together with that for the United States, is indicated below:

STATE	Abandonment since June 25, 1926	CONDITION		YIELD PER ACRE		PRODUCTION (In thousands of bales)	
		Sept. 1, 1926	Aug. 16, 1926	Sept. 1, 1926	Final 1925	Sept. 1, 1926	Final 1925
	%	%	%	lbs.	lbs.		
Virginia.....	2.5	66	65	234	250	45	53
North Carolina.....	1.0	69	73	267	261	1,137	1,102
South Carolina.....	4.0	54	53	176	160	983	889
Georgia.....	2.5	53	56	138	155	1,132	1,164
Alabama.....	1.5	61	65	139	185	1,085	1,357
Mississippi.....	1.5	62	67	169	275	1,319	1,991
Louisiana.....	3.2	57	64	156	232	624	910
Texas.....	5.0	57	61	133	113	5,000	4,165
Oklahoma.....	4.0	63	66	151	155	1,561	1,691
Arkansas.....	2.0	63	67	163	205	1,327	1,605
UNITED STATES.....	3.5	59.6	63.5	153.6	167.2	15,166	16,104

SUMMARY OF WAREHOUSE SALES FOR AUGUST, 1926

MARKETS	Number Houses	Producers' Sales	Dealers' Resales	Warehouse Resales	Total Sales	AVERAGE PRICE	
						1926	1925
Chadbourn.....	3	1,010,126	99,374	221,492	1,330,992	\$ 24.48	\$ 15.70
Clarkton.....	2	560,955	13,030	75,350	649,335	24.74	16.21
Fair Bluff.....	3	860,003	36,519	75,534	972,056	24.61	16.35
Fairmont.....	4	2,907,544	130,454	222,728	3,260,726	25.68	19.72
Lumberton.....	3	1,720,375	55,006	38,629	1,814,010	23.65	16.97
Tabor.....	3	666,518	41,588	91,518	799,624	22.39	17.85
Whiteville.....	3	2,257,998	113,054	232,128	2,603,180	25.40	18.76
STATE TOTAL.....	21	9,983,519	489,025	957,379	11,429,923	\$ 24.78	\$ 18.23
Last year—Aug., 1925.....	17	11,812,188	582,342	1,104,771	13,499,301	-----	-----

TOBACCO



Flue Curing Tobacco Barn—Pitt County—New Bright Belt

The tobacco growers in North Carolina are well pleased with the \$24.78 per hundred pounds average received for the August sales on the South Carolina Belt. The Eastern Bright Belt which opened September 7th is averaging higher than this. Farmers are rushing their crops to the market, seeming to prefer the larger markets under the assumption that better prices are being paid there. The Robeson, Columbus and Bladen county August sales showed 36 per cent higher than the \$18.23 average received a year ago. Due to the late crop, the quantity marketed this year was not equal to last year, but the total crop in this belt may be more after the September sales are completed.

The September 1st outlook, with a condition of 79 per cent, indicates a crop of 5 per cent less than a year ago, but appreciably above the five-year average. The prices are averaging from 30 to 50 per cent more than a year ago, due to the probable shortage in production and shortage of stocks for smoking tobacco. Consumption during the past year has been unusually heavy. Kentucky continues to lead in the pounds produced, while North Carolina leads in the acreage and value of the tobacco crop. The North Carolina production is about 28 per cent of the national

crop. The State grows by far the larger part of the bright leaf tobacco used for making cigarettes, which type is so greatly in demand now.

Tobacco specialists think the acreage is slightly increased but that the yield in pounds will be 15 to 20 per cent less than last year. The color is good. The Chadbourn and Clarkton markets averaged 50 per cent better prices than a year ago. The central and Old Bright Belt markets are opening during the latter part of the month.

The summary of market sales for August is given above.

WORTH THINKING ABOUT

If seventy-five per cent of the merchants in the United States failed to make the profits last year that they should have with all of the records they used, then surely our farmers can hardly be blamed for the failure of over ninety per cent of them succeeding in profitable crops. Recognized authorities have frequently stated that no present day business can succeed without well-organized systems of accounting, as well as economic production methods.

It is recognized that 5 per cent of our people have upstanding minds, while 95 per cent are by-standers. Are you one of the 5 per cent group? Farmers should be prospectors rather than retrospectors. The costliest thing in farming is the failure to think and plan rightly. Until we as a class get more business in our farming and more of manufacturers' methods into use, we may expect to find it an unprofitable enterprise.

WHERE THE FARMER FALLS DOWN

A farmer at the Willard Test Farm annual picnic last week said that the speeches covered everything excepting the most important and most neglected feature of farm work. "What is that?" we asked. "Keeping accounts of income and outgo expenses."

He soon had a nice group of farmers listening and three of the group seemed to be the only ones who made any records of expenses. This was done carelessly. This farmer said that he just couldn't any longer do without this part of his farming. In fact, all of his other work depended on his records. His farm had been changed from a money losing to a money making machine. At the present time he has been enabled to eliminate the unprofitable and to intensify on the profitable crops and livestock. He was unable to know where the leaks and profits were until his daily records of outgo and income expenses were available.

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