

Diversified Farming

vs

Cotton Planting.

Mr Chairman and Brother Farmers:-

As one who spent his boyhood days among you and who has been an occasional sojourner with ^{you} ever since and who has so many ties of blood and friendship and some little pecuniary interest as well, I feel privileged to express my views freely upon the depressed condition of the Agricultural interest of your County and to suggest, which I think, may be a remedy: That is an abandonment of Cotton Planting as a sole market crop and a substitution of a more Diversified System of Farming - Especially the rearing and breeding of Cattle.

It is very evident ^{that under the} _{for the Cotton Crop} clean cultivation necessary, that your lands are greatly deteriorating and your condition ^{is} _{is} more deplorable from year to year. I wish you to understand that I am speaking of your County as a whole, not of individual success or failure, for there

are successful farmers here as elsewhere, but the aggregate result is what we are after. I have made it a point recently, during my brief visits to your town, to inquire of conservative farmers from different parts of the County as to the ^{average} amount of Cotton produced per plow, I got replies ranging from 1 1/2 to 4 Bales. Referring to the census of 1880 I find the latter figure readily corroborated. You are credited with 7,778 Bales Cotton and 2083 horses and mules, (enslaved bulls not included,) which will give you still the astonishing low scale of 3 3/4 Bales per plow. How do you exist?

Statistics are dry, scarcely so entertaining as *Fraser's North Carolina Almanac*, and comparisons are odious but some times healthful. So I shall have to ask your indulgence and tax your patience to follow me through the subjoined tables of comparative cotton production taking your County and Edgecombe and selecting two others at random from the true cotton belt - Washington Co. Mississippi and Fayette Co. Texas.

Counties	Pop.	Bales Cotton	Horses to Smiles	Acres in Cotton	Bales per Acre	Bales per Plot	Bales per Acre
Warren Co. NC	22,619	7,778	2,083	2,603	$\frac{1}{3}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$
Edgecombe "	26,181	26,250	4,433	51,880	1	$6\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{5}{4}$
Fayette " Texas	27,930	24,766			$\frac{25}{28}$		$\frac{5}{4}$
Washington " Miss	25,339	52,873	5,879			2	11

You will see from these figures that the population is nearly equal, yours being a little less, that production of Edgecombe and Fayette are more than three times as great ^{for plant} as Warren, and Washington Co. six times, that per capita Washington produces 2 Bales, Edgecombe and Fayette one (1) and Warren $\frac{1}{3}$. How can you afford to compete with them? Two of them only in the Free Cotton belt - You will answer, that "we have Cheaper Labor". Let us see how that is. We will allow, say \$18. per month and .75 per hundred for picking in Texas, paying for only 4 months, which is the extreme length of time for preparation and cultivating there, and here say \$7. per month, .30 for picking and \$4. for manure, paying for 6 months preparation and cultivation. This gives the Texan a profit of \$1³⁰ per acre in labor alone over and above the woman farmer. This calculation is based upon a cultivation of ten acres for hand

and the relative production for each of the two sections. You may urge again that "unless you plant cotton you can not get advances from the merchant". Now my friends you have treated that poor man badly enough already. Let me suppose you to desist. Let up on him a while or you will have him in the same condition our friend Mr Johnson, Jr. R. came so near getting ~~into~~ during the war. Mr Johnson was a wonderful popular book smother in those days and wherever a warren man was seen with a pair of those high top Cavalry boots on, it caused a demand for at least one or more pairs. He would contract to make a pair at \$50. but when he reached the job the calf skins of which they were to be ^{made} would cost him \$50. The next contract would be perfectly safe, he thought at \$60. - leave him a good wide margin, but so the leather alone cost him \$50. and so it continued, ~~the currency depreciating so rapidly the old gentleman could not keep up with it and the book~~ until he finally succeeded in getting

business which commenced about
 five years ago and had to say
 the least of it a specious origin.
 It has always been the custom in
 our country to get our winter butter
 from the north, thinking we could not
 make it
 (when just the reverse is the case
 we can make it better at that
 season and cheaper) I did not
 depart from the usual custom and
 was a patron of the northern market.
 One day I was approached by a
 gentleman in Toronto, ~~who was from~~
~~here,~~ saying "That he knew, I knew,
 a good thing when I sold it and
 could appreciate it, that his firm
 had just secured the agency of
 a most excellent article of butter and
 that in future I need have no
 fears of any bogus stuff." I went
 to his store and inspected ~~it~~
 it was just the nicest put up
 goods you ever saw. First ~~and~~
 was packed in an ~~unworn~~ orderless
 wooden shaving box, ~~the~~ and about
 fifty packages put in a tin of brine
 which came hermetically sealed. The
 large tin in its turn put in a nicely
 painted wood case. The niceness

P.S. Remember the great show man says every body
likes to be humbugged - That remark was made
before the days of Oleomargarine.

of the poeclage and the glib tongue did
the work. I was his patron for 18
months - The fact is I got as I did not
care whether the scrub cows come
home even in the summer - We thrive
immensely on it. After using it for
the period above stated another
gentleman came to me and asked
"where I had been getting my butter?"
I told him. He said "you have been
eating Oleomargarine!" Oh! what
a gouner I had! I went home and
before night too, but on my way
I had determined that in future I
would take no chances - I would eat
my own butter or none at all. This
determination I imparted to my
butter half who oh first took hold
very reluctantly and ^{with} ~~she first was~~
indifferent success, but when the
profits from the dairy began to come
in she became enthused. Of course the
gross proceeds go to her and she calls
it "her" - any thing made she gets it
any thing lost I have the bag to hold -
From this is what I have done in 5
years - First I killed off my old stock
as fast as I could spare them, got
two good heifers ^{every} and a Jersey bull,

retaining three heifers only of my
 old stock. Total outlay \$50. I have
 no cultivated grass but a good
 pasture with small patches of clover
 about the lot. Nothing has been bought
 in the way of feed and over the
 field space they have eaten nothing
~~has been~~ ^{that} would be missed. The herd
 has increased to 27. ~~Have averaged~~
~~besides, a beautiful home consumption~~
 100^{lb} butter for month since ~~the~~ ^{the} January
~~and feeding 22 pigs a 40[¢] for pound~~
 besides a beautiful supply for home
 consumption, ~~and~~ ^{and} feeding 22 pigs on
 skim milk alone, which should give me
 at least 3000 ^{or more}. Herd housed every night
 in a well littered stable, the measure
 alone paying the expense of milking
 and attention. I think it safe to put
 the profit for the present year, ~~at~~
 including the increase of \$500. I don't
 want you to understand ^{the milk cow} get nothing but pasture
 in summer. they are fed night and morning
 the year thro on cotton seed and either
 pea or corn meal mixed. Now had
 it been feeding on ensilage for the year
 5 years instead of just commencing I
 feel satisfied my profit would have
 been doubled. I am comparatively a

a recent convert to ensilage but I am now an enthusiast, ^{not} from my own experience, for I, ^{have} just finished yielding my first silo, but from what I have read and seen. It will be far more appreciated here, than with us in bridging over that summer drought. No such discovery in Agriculture has ^{ever yet been} recorded, not even the invention of the cotton gin. It is going to be the salvation of the wasted farms of the Atlantic slope and put them ^{on an equality} with the great north-west. ~~1866~~

It is what farmers are disposed to class among the insignificant products of the ^{farm} that is sometimes the salvation of it. I am creditably informed that the profits of the farmers of East Tennessee may be reckoned in the eggs and chickens shipped. We who are accustomed to see only a basket of chickens are not prepared to believe that the poultry products of the United States amount to four fifths the value of the cotton crop and that the dairy (milk butter & cheese) exceeds it by \$120,000,000. Yet these

are figures from the tenth census.
 Your grape crop too seems to be
 remunerative and deserves to be
 pushed. The proceeds come ⁱⁿ at an
 opportune time. Peanuts I am
 sure can be grown profitably on
 your gray lands with a liberal
 use of lime. I have been growing
 them to some extent for several
 years and every year more
 profitably than cotton, notwithstanding
 the low price at which they have
 ruled of late. Besides the forage
 is quite as valuable as the very
 best clove hay. And another re-
 commendation. In bad weather your
 hands can and are glad to work
 in them. It keeps them at home and
 contented and when the weather breaks
 they are on the place ready for the
 cotton field. Your geographical
 situation should be taken into con-
 sideration too. being the nearest hill
 country to the malarial section of
 North Carolina and that portion of
 Virginia lying along our border.
 You are too within 20 hours by
 rail of an urban population
 of not less than 4,000,000 ^{people} who

would gladly consume any thing you might send them, of superior quality, from a grape to a job beef.

You have so many advantages for this diversity that I can not enumerate them - You have the best uplands naturally - I know ^{of} ~~of~~ ^{of} the red lands - ~~of~~ - much superior to those of western New York when they have this diversified system down to a fine point with every farm looking like a garden and a ^{more} rigorous climate to contend with. You can produce fine clover and I should say the best of the cultivated grasses. The water is good through out the County and a climate unsurpassed save the malaria from the cotton plank. Your people are kind and hospitable and your labor both field and house is or was abundant and ^{work} efficient.

In conclusion, I would recapitulate: Quick cotton as soon as you can unless you can make a bale per acre, continue tobacco where it has been a success, grow grapes, strawberries and raspberries, the proceeds come or are

opportune time, Seed largely of oats,
put every available spot of meadow
in grow, improve your lands with
clover, grow corn only on good
land and last but not least
build the silo and fill it to the
brim, increase your herd of cattle
as rapidly as it is practicable
take care of the manure, applying
it judiciously and I feel sure
success will eventually be your
~~reward~~ crown your effort -