

COTTON PLANTING

The Use or Non-Use of Commercial Fertilizers

H. T. BRIDGES MAKES 41 BALES OF COTTON WITH ONE MULE, WHILE WINKLE BROS. MAKE SEVEN BALES TO THE MULE

By G. F. Hunnicutt, Editor Southern Cultivator.

Owing to the low price of cotton and the large amount of money our farmers have to pay for fertilizers, much discussion has been going on as to the advisability of not using any next year, or at least of greatly reducing the amount. We are rather staggered by the enormous rapidity with which the fertilizer business is extending, and we decided that we would make some investigations as to the results the liberal use of fertilizers was giving. While we were debating this question in our minds, we heard of two striking examples that would shed much light upon it. The first was that Winkle Brothers in Coweta county had not used any fertilizer on their crop, while down in Terrell county Mr. Bridges had made 40 bales of cotton with one plow. We went to visit each party, so we give as clearly as we can a true statement of conditions and results, and the conclusions you can draw for yourself.

Down in the upper edge of Coweta, near the line of Campbell county, live two brothers known as the Winkle Brothers. They started out poor, but by hard work and close economy have bought and paid for a good farm, getting every dollar out of the soil, besides making their living as they went along. They have built two homes, some 500 yards apart, and run all their business together in the name of "Winkle Brothers." We like this spirit and these two men deserve credit for their good work and their success. They are men of strong convictions and when there was an effort to raise the price of fertilizers last fall, they decided that they would not use any. They have a farm better than the average, sandy soil with clay subsoil and well watered. These men do better work than the average farmer, but with some twenty-three acres to the mule they only gathered seven bales of cotton to the plow. They had formerly been getting from 12 to 14 bales; so according to their own admission, they were off one-half. By the use of four tons of guano this crop would have been doubled, then we would have a statement like this:

7 B. C. \$43.75	\$306.25
14 B. C. 43.75	612.50
A difference of	\$306.25
4 tons of guano at \$21	84.00
Leaving a loss of	\$222.25

1. One negro tenant who did not work his land well, is not making half a crop. We asked them if they were satisfied to farm without fertilizers and one of them quickly replied, "No, I'll not shoot at the marble in the ring next year without putting some guano on my law."

As this fall was unusually favorable, their cotton opened very well, but we could see that tendency for the top crop not to open; and where the tenant had not worked his cotton well, many green bolls were left which if they opened at all will be badly stained. We could plainly see, as they were willing to admit, that they had made a mistake. It seems hard to work and have to pay out such a large amount for fertilizers, but it is better so, than to work and miss the yield.

The next week we sent down to Dawson in Terrell county to see the ground and get full particulars concerning the record-breaking yield made by Mr H T Bridges. We have

often heard of the good farming done in Terrell. There are many good farms in this county and many good farmers who vie with one another in seeing who can make the largest crops. Formerly the clay lands were held in highest esteem and those red and mulatto lands are as fine and fertile as the plains of the West; but now the pine or sandy soil is giving the best results. Mr. Bridges lives in one of these sandy sections, six miles east of Dawson. This year he ran five plows, had 160 acres in cotton and made 151 bales, besides oats, corn, peanuts and hay. He used 72 tons of guano, buying the cotton seed meal, acid and kainit, and doing his own mixing. Some say this great yield could only have been made with fine seasons. Not so, he had a nine weeks drouth; one of the most severe ones they have experienced in years. Mr Bridges ran his farm on halves, but he stayed right with the tenants and saw that all work was done exactly right. The negro that made the banner yield was named Will Shingles. This land was sandy soil, 14 acres was fresh land and the rest free from stumps. He tilled 40 acres in all; had 37 in cotton and three in corn. The land was broken deep with two horse plow in the fall. But he did all preparing, planting and cultivating with one mule and two women were all the help he had until picking time. Then he had all he could get, gathering as much as seven bales a week for several weeks. Here is a tabulated statement that we figured from the cotton receipts:

41 B C 20703 lbs at 8¢	\$1811.47
41 bales seed at \$7. per bale	287.00
Gross returns from one plow	2098.47
Less 16 tons guano	232.00
Net Returns	\$1866.47

Mr Bridges keeps all the seed and gives the negro help half the lint, so the negro got \$905.73—\$116.00 or \$789.73 for all the work.

Down in the sandy lands we can cultivate 40 acres with one mule as easily as we can 30 up in the clay hills, but cutting the area down to the same as the Winkle Brothers and we have \$408.33 as against \$1866.47, which was not all due to difference in soil or work, but largely due to the 600 pounds guano used per acre. Mr Bridges has a fine system and we wish to give it to all who appreciate a good thing and he will use it.

He says either put your guano broad-cast or put it on as a side application. As he has not the plow force or hands to put in a side application in June, he has bought a grain drill and is going to drill sixty pounds per acre broad-cast over his cotton land for next year during the month of March. He is breaking this land with a four mule gang-plow now, using two large turners and cutting about eight to nine inches deep. He believes in fall turning of his land, so much so that he is plowing in all scattering cotton rather than wait to pick it, says it will pay better to plow now.

2. He plants his cotton seed in the water furrow. He takes a middle buster and lays off his rows five feet apart. Then drills one or two hundred pounds of guano and lists on this with two furrows made with a small scooter. This gives him a narrow list and he runs his planter, putting seed in this. He has his cotton to come up as we have our corn down below the level.

3. He runs around this cotton and chops it out, then he gradually works the dirt to it from this wide middle. He gains two things—the cotton roots are down where they get more moisture, and in plowing he never breaks the roots. He pulled up several stalks and we saw that all the roots he had put out were some six inches beneath the top surface of the soil. His rows are about level when he lays by. For cultivating large area to the mule and for producing a large yield per plow, Mr Bridges' system can hardly be excelled. He is going to cultivate 100 acres with two plows and two standing wages hands this year and is going to try to make 50 bales of cotton to the plow. It can be done all right, for he lost three acres this year on account of the drouth. He made 37 bales with the same plow last year. There is no telling what good work and liberal use of fertilizers will do. While Mr Bridges regrets the low price, as all others do, yet he freely admits that he made money on this year's crop, with existing conditions. That is where good work and good management come in.

Realizing the value of this article by the Editor of The Southern Cultivator we have paid THE COUNTY RECORD to publish it here, that it might reach all the planters of this county. We manufacture every grade of Fertilizers and supply our ammonia from COTTON SEED MEAL. When you buy our Fertilizers you are buying from HOME manufacturers and are standing by HOME products made from the Cotton Seed we buy from you. This is the way to keep up the price of seed. Let's work together.

SOUTHERN COTTON OIL CO.

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