

FARM AND RANCH BULLETIN

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SELLING ABROAD

Faced with increasingly strong competition in world agricultural markets, U. S. farm product exporters are having to gear their products more and more to meet the different needs and desires of the foreign trade, according to the Foreign Agricultural Service. The successful exporter spends an extensive amount of time in research in countries where he hopes to sell his products and then develops marketing plans. Only after becoming familiar with all of the problems and possible avenues of approach is he ready to engage in the full-fledged selling operation.

As part of this preliminary planning, the exporter must take into consideration a country's diverse marketing situation. The exporter must also become familiar with (1) the country's tastes, habits, and prejudices; (2) its labeling requirements and weights and measures; (3) its food health laws; and (4) its currency.

Tastes, habits, and prejudices in food and clothing differ from country to country. For example, consumers in Thailand favor highly spiced foods and, like consumers elsewhere, are generally suspicious of foods with which they are not familiar. Orange must not be used on a package in that country because the color is associated with the saffron robes of Buddhist priests. Customs and tastes are often deeply rooted. In Italy, consumers prefer yellow-pigmented chicken, while people in the Netherlands want a white-fleshed bird.

Pounds and pints mean little to persons who think in terms of the kilograms and liters of

the metric system, which is used in continental Europe, much of Latin America, and several Asian countries. Japan insists that only the metric system be used for items that are imported; therefore, U. S. exporters have to print a special label or overprint the unit measurements in the metric system.

In the United Kingdom and Commonwealth countries, the names of the measures are the same as those of the United States, but the amounts are different. The English bushel is 3 percent larger than the American bushel, and the English gallon is 20 percent larger.

Other aspects of labeling also cause U. S. exporters difficulty. Some countries require that the label show the date canned goods were packed; in the United States, the date is stamped on the can. Our laws permit the marking of the country of origin any place on the package as long as it is legible, while France insists that it be embossed on the end of the can. This requirement results in additional expense and a separate group of cans.

Packaging, package size, and adaptation to climate are also important factors. For example, crackers and cookies packed in the typical U. S. paper containers would soon become soggy in the high humidity of the tropics. The exporter also faces such problems as size and fill of containers, as well as damage to cans. U. S. cake mixes make bigger cakes than consumers in some countries want, and many of our turkeys are too large for European ovens.

Recognizing the unfavorable effect which these problems have on foreign trade, U. S. exporters are attempting to correct their packaging techniques. They are trying to reduce breakage and bruises to food packaged in fiber containers by reducing the number of times the containers are handled. The piggy-back refrigerated trailer system, which is designed for domestic truck and train combination hauls, is being used as part of this effort.

The FAS says that a growing hindrance to U. S. trade has been the rise in overseas legislation concerning the use of additives to food and feed and preharvest and postharvest chemical treatments. In addition, the need for a common language of price quotations must be met when a U. S. firm begins export-selling. The foreign buyer usually pays with his own currency and wants the price quoted in that currency.

Selling abroad is more complex than selling at home, and in some aspects (notably food health laws) this complexity is increasing. Consequently, many export firms — especially those interested in several markets — may need outside help. Assistance may be obtained from the combination export manager, who handles a variety of products. One or more of these special advisors is represented in most port towns. A considerable amount of information is available from the U. S. Departments of Agriculture and Commerce. Overseas, the agricultural and commercial attachés of U. S. embassies can be helpful. In addition, steamship lines and U. S. banks operating abroad are happy to discuss export problems with customers.

Large-Fruited Pecan Variety

Budwood of a new pecan variety that produces large, attractive, high-quality nuts is being made available to pecan growers and nurserymen, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The new variety, named Mohawk, was developed by L. D. Romberg, Plant Breeder of the USDA's Agricultural Research Service. Information on sources of Mohawk budwood may be obtained from Mr. Romberg at the U. S. Pecan Field Station, P. O. Box 588, Brownwood, Texas.

The specialist says that the Mohawk pecan is exceptionally early-maturing for a variety that produces large nuts. At Brownwood, the Mohawk shucks begin to open about October 1. The nuts appear to be particularly desirable for retail marketing in the shell — as a premium product before other varieties of large pecans have matured. When grown under favorable conditions, Mohawk produces nuts that may average 35 or fewer per pound, and the kernels may comprise more than 60 percent of the weight of the whole nuts.

Mohawk is recommended for trial throughout the southern pecan-producing region. The trees are vigorous, and their growth habit is intermediate between erect and spreading. The large leaves appear to be disease-resistant and are held on the trees late in the autumn.

The nuts of the Mohawk pecan variety are about the same size as those of the Mahan type but are more blocky in shape — similar to the nuts of the Stuart variety. Shell color and markings resemble those of the Success variety. The flinty shell is thin, and there is relatively little soft inner shell. The kernel surface of the Mohawk pecan is fairly smooth, and the parallel kernel grooves are shallow and open.

Land Clearing Cost Varies

“What does it cost to clear an acre of brushland and establish a good pasture cover?” This question is frequently asked by Texas farmers who need to clear more land for pasture but are not sure of the cost involved or even certain that the clearing cost will pay for itself, according to Texas A&M University.

On the H. J. Andrews farm near Mount Vernon, Texas, 26 acres were cleared, and accurate cost records were kept. According to Charlie Brown, Franklin County Agricultural Agent, the total cost of the land clearance was \$65.50 per acre. Of this amount, \$52 was spent for pushing and burning brush, \$11 was used for fertilizer, and \$2.50 was invested in seed.

Clearing costs vary according to density of brush and location and may run as high as

\$100 per acre. The Andrews land was thick with brush and trees, which were pushed off by a bulldozer with an A-type blade that slides flat along the ground and cuts the tree trunks and brush. Mr. Brown says that a large bulldozer with this type of blade can cut trees that are up to 42 inches across.

The brush on the Andrews farm was pushed into windrows and aligned with the prevailing winds (southeast to northwest). It was burned 2 weeks after cutting. The county agent says that it is advisable to burn brush from 10 to 18 days after cutting, since more of it will burn at that time than at any other.

The Andrews land was then seeded with 5 pounds of common Bermuda grass per acre and now has a good cover. Cattle are stocked on the pasture at the rate of one cow to every 2 acres.

Cotton Defoliation

Poor defoliation of cotton results in losses of large sums of money each year to Texas producers, points out Fred Elliott, Extension Cotton Specialist with Texas A&M University. Mr. Elliott says that many growers can improve their cotton grades by following a few simple procedures when defoliating plants.

The selection of the correct chemical is the first step in a cotton defoliation program. Cotton harvest-aid chemicals are divided into two classes — defoliant and desiccant. Defoliants cause mature leaves to shed in about 7 to 9 days and should be used on cotton that is to be picked mechanically. If cotton is to be stripped, a desiccant (which causes the leaves to dry and become crumbly) should be used.

Defoliation should not be started until the cotton reaches the proper stage of maturity. Defoliants can be applied safely when 60 percent or more of the cotton bolls are open. Desiccants should not be applied unless 75 percent of the bolls are open under dryland conditions and 80 percent are open on irrigated cotton. Plants are considered to be suitably mature if the youngest bolls cannot be dented by pressure between the thumb and

forefinger or cut through easily with a sharp knife.

Thorough coverage of all of the leaves is necessary for a good cotton defoliation program. Consequently, spray tanks, pumps, lines, and nozzles should be cleaned in order to remove sticky residues left by liquid insecticides. Extreme caution should be taken to make sure that each nozzle on the boom or plane is releasing the proper amount of spray.

The specialist says that only enough acreage should be defoliated at one time to stay ahead of the harvesting operation. If a second application is required for unusually rank cotton, a chemical with a different active ingredient should be used in order to stay within a safe residue tolerance.

Cotton growers should avoid using any defoliant that is not labeled as to exact chemical content. Weather information — such as dew and humidity forecasts, temperature, wind velocity, and rainfall — should be considered carefully when defoliating cotton.

The specialist advises producers to consult their local county agricultural agents before defoliating cotton. Single copies of the release L-145, which contains a guide for use of defoliants and desiccants, may be obtained, without charge, from the county agents.

Don't Save Grain Sorghum for Seed!



A quick look at a plot of grain sorghum at Texas A&M University's Livestock and Forage Research Center at McGregor will convince producers that saving grain sorghum for seed is an undesirable practice. The plot at the research center was planted with seed from the previous year's crop. Some grain sorghum stalks in the field measured from 4 to 5 feet in height, while others were barely 2 feet high. Consequently, more foliage had to be run through the combine in order to harvest the grain.

There were also numerous white heads in the field. This condition is caused by the genetic

makeup of seed saved from the product of first-cross grain sorghum harvest. Mixed grain results in a dock (price reduction) at the elevator, and many times it is difficult to find a buyer at any price.

In the McGregor tests, many of the grain sorghum heads were ready to be harvested, while others were immature and could not be harvested or, at best, raised the total moisture content of the grain when tested. This condition also results in a dock at the elevator.

Henry O. Hill, Superintendent of the McGregor Research Center, says that planting of grain sorghum seed saved from the farmer's own harvest will result in the following:

- Some of the grain sorghum will have white or different color heads.
- There will be a marked difference in height and maturity of the heads.
- The yield will be less than it would be if new hybrid seed had been planted.

Family Bankruptcies Increasing

The excessive use of credit is causing greater numbers of American families to file bankruptcy proceedings, according to Mrs. Elsie P. Short, Extension Home Management Specialist with Texas A&M University. These bankruptcies frequently result from poor management.

Mrs. Short says that people are often impatient to possess the same prestige items and status symbols that their neighbors have. They are unwilling to wait a few months to accumulate the necessary funds; consequently, credit is used. According to the specialist, some bankruptcies result from the flagrant misuse of credit. The short-term debts of American families rose from \$8 billion in 1945 to \$70 billion in 1964.

Families may avoid the loss of available credit by establishing a clear plan or purpose for the use of their money. This plan should be based on the family's income. A family's security depends upon spending within the bounds of its income, and certain priorities

and limitations may need to be set up, emphasizes Mrs. Short.

Almost 140,000 families filed bankruptcy proceedings in 1963, the latest year for which data are available. Additional planning, better money management, and more training in the use of credit could have averted many of these bankruptcies.



Publications

New Mexico Agricultural Experiment Station, University Park:

Pump Irrigation Costs, Roosevelt County, New Mexico, Research Report 101, by Roger B. Long.

Fertilization of Dryland Winter Wheat on the High Plains of New Mexico, Research Report 95, by D. B. Ferguson.

Costs of Owning and Operating Farm Machines, Bulletin 493, by George R. Dawson.

Comparisons of Cotton Harvesting Methods, Bulletin 496, by George H. Abernathy.

Effects of Crop Residues on the Pinto Bean Root Rot Complex, Bulletin 491, by C. R. Maier.

Blackhull Disease of Valencia Peanuts, Research Report 110.

New Mexico Extension Service, University Park:

Blossom-end Rot in Chile as affected by Calcium and Soil Moisture, Bulletin 495, by Mohsen Nour.

Comparisons of Cotton Harvesting Methods, Bulletin 496, by George H. Abernathy.

New Mexico Range Plants, Circular 374, by Charles W. Gay, Jr., and Don D. Dwyer.

Copies of these releases may be obtained by request to the respective publishers.