

**TRUCK-FARMING AT THE
SOUTH: A GUIDE TO THE
RAISING OF VEGETABLES FOR
NORTHERN MARKETS. [1903]**

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Truck-Farming at the South: A Guide to the Raising of Vegetables for Northern Markets. [1903]
by Dr. A. Oemler

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DR. A. OEMLER

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TRUCK-FARMING
AT THE
SOUTH.

A Guide to the Raising of Vegetables for
Northern Markets.

BY
DR. A. OEMLER,
PRESIDENT OF THE CHATHAM CO., GEORGIA, FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROWERS
ASSOCIATION.

NEW AND REVISED EDITION.

ILLUSTRATED.



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P R E F A C E .

THIS work is written in the hope that it may be useful to my fellow farmers who are engaged in growing vegetables for the Northern markets. The instructions given, and facts presented, are mainly such as are not to be found in the few works extant on Southern gardening, and are those resulting from a long experience. When I commenced to produce vegetables for shipment, about twenty-six years ago, there were few or none following the pursuit as an exclusive business on a large scale. The consignments at that time consisted mainly of the mere surplus crops of the local market gardeners. The business has gradually developed to astonishing proportions, principally in the vicinity of the larger seaport cities of the South. One of the results has been that land within three miles of Savannah, for instance, has risen in value one hundred and fifty per cent. within the last twelve years. While the crops of the whole area tributary to Savannah, were by no means satisfactory during the past season, the aggregate quantity of produce was large. The following statement shows the produce forwarded to the Northern markets direct from the port of Savannah by the steamships alone.

EXPORTS (BY STEAMERS) OF VEGETABLES (AND ORANGES FROM FLORIDA),
FOR THE SEASON ENDING AUGUST 31st, 1882.

PORT.	VEGETABLES.		ORANGES.		TOTAL OF PACKAGES.
	Crate.	Barrel.	Box.	Barrel.	
New York.....	105,739	37,573	69,379	3,519	205,209
Baltimore	50,787	12,696	2,728	907	67,118
Philadelphia.....	34,473	7,366	13,063	445	45,900
Boston.....	4,133	630	9,537	174	14,773
	188,130	48,854	94,973	4,045	333,001

The season's shipment of melons to New York aggregated 175,000.

Of course, failures will occur in this, as in every other pursuit; but where favorable conditions of soil, situation, etc., exist, sober, economical, industrious, and intelligent farmers who attend closely to their business, can make this a most profitable branch of agriculture. As an instance of successful truck-farming, I may cite a case within my knowledge. Among the prosperous gardeners near Savannah, are three brothers, plain farmers from Effingham County, Georgia. They were without any special advantages as educated horticulturists, but under favorable contingencies, and possessing in themselves the above named desirable characteristics, they commenced to farm on their own account seven years ago. They had a borrowed capital of one thousand dollars wherewith to operate their first small crop, and make a payment on account of their purchase of land. They were not only able to pay for the land in full, from the proceeds of their crops, but have acquired in the aggregate two hundred and seventy-five acres, making at various intervals cash payments ranging from one thousand five hundred dollars to nine thousand one hundred dollars. Besides this, they have expended various amounts in buildings, and other improvements, and have cash on hand and a bank account. One of the brothers has also invested in railroad stock, and the older of them has lately purchased a house and lot in town, for four thousand five hundred dollars, while there is not a mortgage, or lien, of any kind, on any of the property of the brothers.

A. O.

TRUCK-FARMING AT THE SOUTH.

CHAPTER I.

LABOR.

Owing to the perishable nature of the products, the areas at the South devoted to truck-farming must remain confined to certain limits. These will be near the larger cities and along the routes of railroads, by which products can be safely and expeditiously dispatched to market. Although truck-farming can employ but a comparatively small proportion of the labor of the South, it must be followed according to the same principles and system that govern general agriculture.

The negro must be accepted as the only practical solution of the labor question, and, notwithstanding his instability, he is the best for many reasons. It would be impolitic, even were it possible, to trust to more intelligent and energetic laborers from abroad, and mix the two races as field laborers. No dependence could be placed upon retaining the foreign help, as his greater energy and a praiseworthy desire for self-elevation would soon prompt the emigrant, or white laborer, to change his status and better his condition.

Accepting the negro as the God-given instrument for the development of the agricultural resources of the South, while profiting by his general wastefulness and improvidence for his own good and our own, it should be the constant aim of every employer, who has the welfare of southern agriculture at heart, to elevate the laborer. The employer can, by strict justice, fairness and