

“Back in the Day”

1918

As of January 1, 1918, the Eastern Shore experimental work moved from Tasley to Onley. The old buildings were repaired and a new barn erected so that the farm is fairly well equipped for experimental station purposes. Potato , sweet potato, and strawberry experiments are present projects.

In January, a fire at the sweet potato storage house at Onancock where 800 bushels of sweet potatoes intended for seed purposes were destroyed. Fortunately, 15 bushels of the best-selected stock were in storage at the Norfolk station (now Virginia Beach).

Work is being pushed on the control of fusarium wilt of tomatoes and cucumbers in the greenhouse, including several methods of soil sterilization and testing supposedly wilt resistant strains. Eggplant and tomato cultural experiments are searching for methods to control insects and plant diseases of these crops. Life history of the green pea aphid, flea beetles, potato aphid, and the role of insects in transmission of spinach blight are under investigation.

Under the existing wartime conditions, it is impossible for Station men to rent houses in Norfolk, and having new houses erected has not been possible on account of the abnormal conditions incident to the war activities. Great difficulty in hiring a suitable man for Pathological work as so many available candidates are performing war work or military service.

Two varieties of sweet potatoes, the Cuban Yam and the Porto Rico Yam are worthy of special mention. The demand for work on sweet potato culture especially in the production of disease free plants for the counties on the Eastern Shore.

Since the signing of the Armistice, a number of men have become available. Promising candidates are asking for salaries ranging from \$1800-\$2400 per year. A successful candidate will secure an appointment as a collaborator with the USDA adding \$300 to his salary. A need for an assistant Horticulturist at a salary of \$1000-1500 is requested to address the needs of the trucking regions around Norfolk and the Eastern Shore counties.

On motion of John Thompson Brown, Dr. T.C. Johnson, Director, was requested to attend a meeting to be held in the Governor's office December 12 relative to a new budget system, the Station's work, and its financial transactions. The Director was authorized to enter into negotiations with the Southern Produce Company relative to leasing a tract of land recently acquired by said company, for Station purposes.

1928

Blight resistant spinach cultivars, Virginia Savoy and Old Dominion, developed at the Station saved the spinach industry of the region.

1943

Eight staff members were called into military service; however, temporary vacancies were filled except for the Soils Department which will have to curtail its diagnoses for nutritional deficiencies.

Research projects that enabled farmers to produce more food during the present emergency are given prime consideration; those long term problems with soil fertility and nitrogen utilization are being continued. The rate of pay for day laborers was raised to \$2.50 per day.

Six acres of Scotch Kale are being grown for seed multiplication. The variety has tolerance and remains green to 10°F, thus the growers will have a quality product throughout the winter. Breeding on lima beans, tomatoes, and peas continues as they are essential to the war effort. Restrictions by the War Production Board made it impossible to purchase any new farm equipment except for a 500 gal per min pump pumping unit. Research on controlling insects pests with rotenone and pyrethrum are being conducted on peas, kale, beans, and collards.

Governor requested that the war effort should have priority in budget preparation, thus no requests for funds for new buildings were made. Given that food production is vital to our total war effort, funds to maintain experimental work with vegetable crops and their growth with as greatest efficiency as possible with available personnel and equipment were requested. A budget request for \$600 to purchase 2 carloads of coal to heat the station was approved.

1993

Development of an aesthetic injury threshold for orangestriped oakworm results in a model street tree IPM program for municipalities. Environmentally sound, cost effective weed control strategies for nurseries and landscapes were developed. The cold tolerant 'Chuck Hayes' gardenia was developed and released to the industry.