

AGRICULTURE

Coffee Production Grows

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► PRODUCTION OF coffee outside Brazil has increased by more than a third since the war, while Brazil's production has dropped nearly one-quarter.

A considerable part of this coffee production increase, however, has been in the areas that grow varieties of coffee acceptable in Europe but generally unacceptable in the U. S..

Even with the increased production in Africa and Asia, world demand has steadily outstripped production. Only surpluses carried over from earlier years kept the shortage from becoming apparent to the marketing housewife before this year.

The Latin American coffee that is favored by the average U. S. consumer comes from the tree, *Coffea arabica*. This tree is extremely sensitive to a rust disease, *Hemileia vastatrix*. In every coffee producing area of the world except Latin America, this rust disease has forced planters to abandon the high flavor coffee in favor of rust-resistant varieties that yield an inferior brew.

According to U. S. Department of Agriculture reports, western Europe has largely been converted to drinking coffee from the rust-resistant trees grown in Africa and Asia. This frees a part of the Latin American production for the U. S. market.

Production estimates for this year are for 6,715,000 bags from Central America, Mexico and Cuba, 5,378,000 bags from Africa, 2,242,000 bags from Asia and Oceania, and 25,976,000 from South America. Each bag weighs slightly more than 132 pounds.

Of the South American production, Brazil will supply about 18,100,000 bags, or nearly half of the world production total of 40,311,000.

Additional factors restricting the extension of coffee growing are the necessity for a tropical climate, and processing methods that depend on large supplies of hand labor.

It is estimated that coffee grown and processed in the United States would cost about \$6 a pound. It takes a tree five to eight years to begin production, and each tree yields enough beans for about one and a half pounds of roasted coffee.

Science News Letter, March 27, 1954

FORESTRY

Southern States Led Tree Planting

► FOREST TREES were planted on a record 715,548 acres last year, with Louisiana, Florida, Mississippi and Georgia leading the nation, Forest Service officials said.

The expansion of the Kraft paper industry and naval stores is credited with the great growth of pine plantings in the southern states. Before 1941, they usually trailed the states around the Great Lakes in tree planting.

Michigan with 40,000 acres, New York with 38,000 and Oregon with 34,000 acres also made significant gains in fiscal 1953. The southern totals were Louisiana, 78,619 acres; Florida, 68,000; Mississippi, 63,000; and Georgia, 62,000.

Only 77,612 acres were planted on federal lands, 63,791 on lands owned by other public agencies and 574,145 acres on privately owned lands, the Forest Service reported.

Science News Letter, March 27, 1954

HORTICULTURE

Growth Chemical Helps Antibiotics Fight Blight

► THE SAME chemical that promotes the rooting of cuttings from plants promises to be an aid to antibiotics in fighting plant diseases, such as the hitherto uncontrolled fireblight.

Drs. R. N. Goodman and D. D. Hemphill of the University of Missouri's department of horticulture report in *Science* (March 12) that indole-3-acetic acid increases the effectiveness of mixtures of streptomycin and Terramycin in protecting apple trees against infection with the bacteria of fireblight disease.

The scientists foresee that this helping effect of the plant growth regulator can be used practically in preventing disease in orchards.

Science News Letter, March 27, 1954

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