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Harvesting Soybeans in North Carolina.

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North Carolina, once the country's largest producer of soy beans for seed is again turning to soy beans as a part in its program of permanent agriculture.

As in many crops, harvesting methods present the greatest problem in economical production so in soy bean growing, the efficiency of harvesting methods often determine the profit or loss. Until the combine was first used in soybeans the best the various harvesting devices could do was to get seventy percent of the beans and most harvesters failed to get over fifty percent. This tremendous loss is avoided, however, with the coming of the combine and its continued use in the soybean sections of this and adjoining states is assured. It also is destined to play a large part in our small grain harvest as more wheat, oats and rye are substituted for cotton.

An outstanding example of the combine's possibilities in soy bean production is found in the development of the Lake Mattamuskeet project in Hyde County. About five thousand acres of this drained lake bed were planted to soybeans this year, the three predominating varieties planned being Laredo, Mammoth Yellow and Bilczi. This area, necessarily cut into fields for efficient drainage, which must be maintained by pumping, as the lake bed is below sea-level, is laid out in blocks or tracts containing somewhat less than ten acres each.

This years crop will produce about one hundred thousand bushels of beans, approximately thirty five percent of which are to be sold for seed and the balance to oil mills. The harvesting of this enormous crop is being done with thirteen combines, of several different makes

with the help of eighteen tractors of medium size. It is predicted that future purchases of tractors will be of the larger models.

As is easily imagined the lake bed has presented some peculiar problems, one of the most perplexing being that the nature of soil necessitated larger supporting area for the machines than the wheels provided. This difficulty was over come by the use of a track laying wheel similar to those used on Cane Carts in the sugar plantations.

With all this equipment the harvesting of these beans will continue well into December as frequent rains interfere materially with rapid progress. Without the combine, this soybean project would never have been attempted as harvesting this large acreage of beans by any other method would be next to impossible.