

1970 - 1971

PROGRESS REPORT - TOBACCO MECHANIZATION

Educational efforts in mechanical harvesting and bulk curing tobacco which included innovative farm tests of harvesting tobacco with tobacco combines and marketing this tobacco without aligning the leaves are proving fruitful.

In 1970 approximately one thousand bulk barns were placed on North Carolina farms. Operational instructions on curing and ordering tobacco in these new facilities have been successful to the point that marketplace discrimination against bulk cured tobacco has all but disappeared. Farm success with these labor saving bulk barns has been such that a greater number of purchases are expected for 1971.

Six acres of machine harvested tobacco sold for 73.7 cents per pound, and six acres of comparable tobacco harvested by hand sold for 75.1 cents per pound.

Extension's farm tests of mechanically harvesting tobacco and marketing unaligned leaf have convinced many farmers of the feasibility of mechanical harvesting. Three machinery manufacturers are marketing tobacco "combines" for 1971, and several sales of machines to farmers have been reported.