

# CROP OUTLOOK BRIGHT IN OKEECHOBEE AREA

### Most Favorable Conditions In Decade Reported In Fertile Farming Region.

By C. CLINTON PAGE, Staff Writer for The Herald.

OKEECHOBEE, Fla., Dec. 14.—Lake Okeechobee—the largest inland body of water, wholly within a single state of the union—and particularly the vast muck land region bordering it on the west, east and south, generally known as the Florida Everglades, has continued to grow in national as well as state and individual interest as they have become more widely known and the singular agricultural potentialities of this vast area have developed and are better understood.

Special interest attaches to the lake region because of its recognition in recent years as an outstanding winter vegetable section from whence comes an immense volume of snap beans and other vegetables for Northern consumption during the winter months when the balance of the country is either frozen up or covered with snow and suffering temperatures entirely foreign to vegetable growth. Exceptional if not phenomenal yields of beans, peppers, eggplant and most other staple vegetables from the muck lands around Lake Okeechobee in the minimum of time, and the high prices that have been received for these crops have naturally lured many farmers to this favored section and continues to attract them from nearly every farming area of the continent.

Okeechobee City, at the north end of the lake, county seat of Okeechobee county of the same name, and one of the early settlements of the lake region, formerly devoted largely to cattle raising, has in recent years come to be a shipping center of one of the important vegetable producing areas as well. Hog raising and dairying also are developing while diversified vegetable production continues to expand.

Through J. C. Fulford, county agricultural agent of Okeechobee county, was out of the city at the time of our visit during the past week, we were assured by J. W. Jennings, who has up to the present been one of the extensive vegetable growers of the county, that the present outlook for agriculture in the upper lake region was the most encouraging at this time he had seen during the past decade, from the standpoint of seasonal growing conditions, good yield and better prices.

He stated that the Eagle Bay Drainage district, about five miles southwest of Okeechobee and embracing some 2,700 acres of reclaimed muck land, was the major area of the Okeechobee county farming district. It was Mr. Jennings' opinion that approximately 2,000 acres of the area would be cropped this season. He estimated that from 600 to 800 acres in Okeechobee county outside of this Eagle Bay district would be planted to vegetables during the winter and spring season.

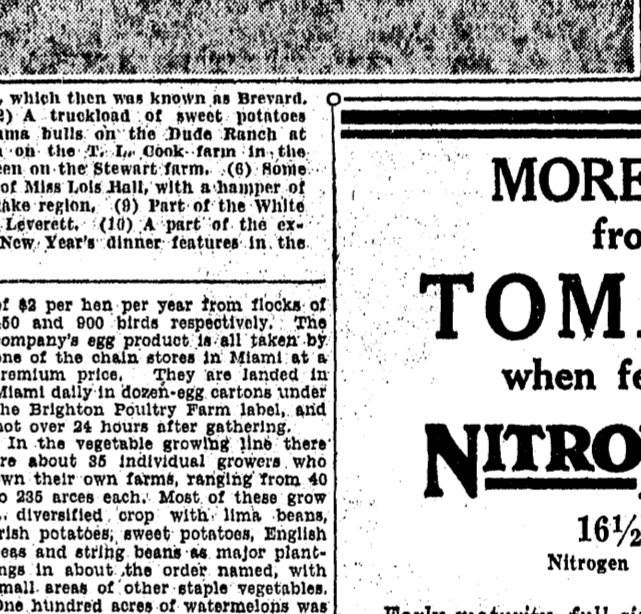
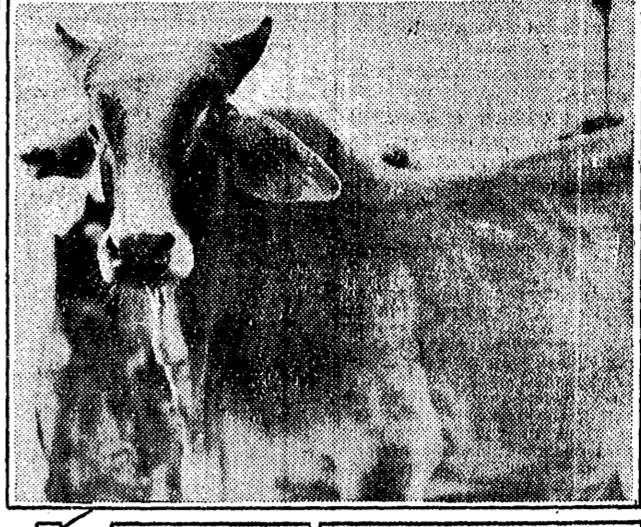
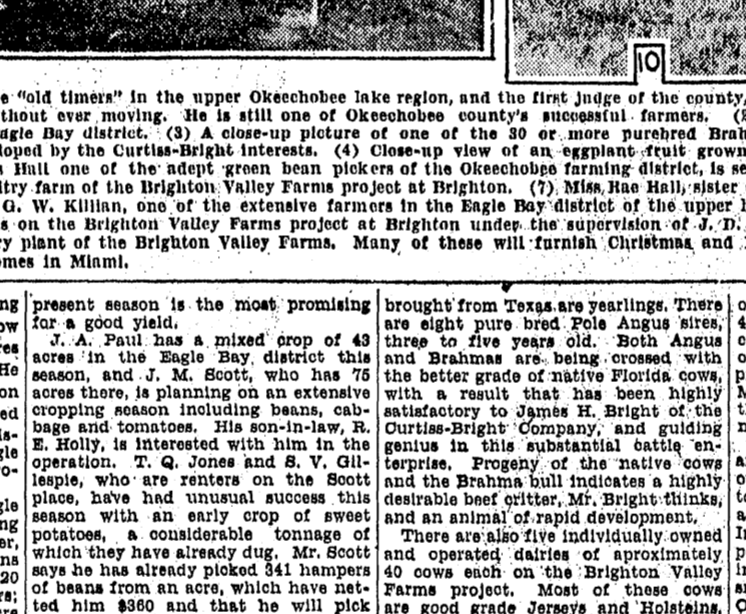
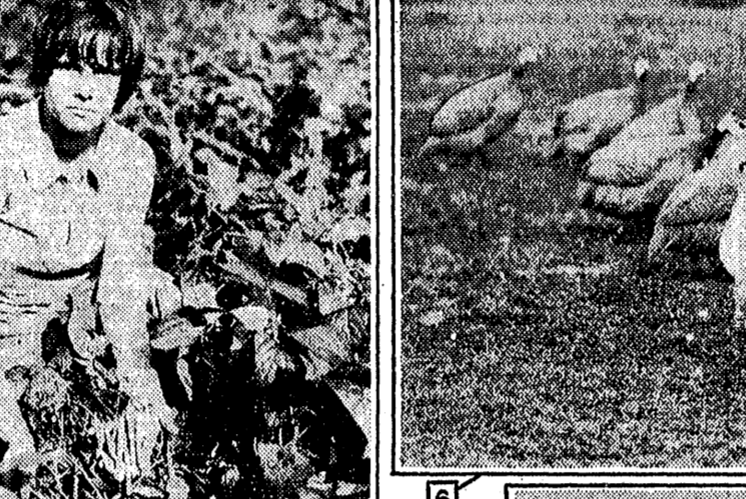
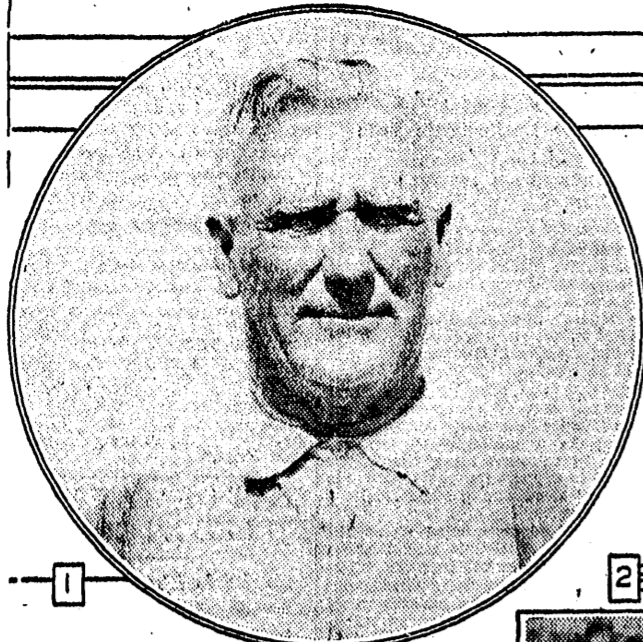
One of the first farms visited was that of former County Judge H. H. Hancock, who with his son-in-law, Lon Stewart, chief of police of Okeechobee, have 40 acres a mile southeast of town devoted to miscellaneous vegetables. They had just picked and marketed 224 hampers of Black Valentine Beans from 14 1/2 acres. Judge Hancock said had sold in Chicago at \$5 per hamper. He estimated the yield from this field not less than 500 hampers per acre.

In the early days Mr. Hancock brought in 1,000 head of native cattle from Polk county. He also established the first dairy herd in the section, consisting of Jerseys and Holsteins, brought in some hogs and established a 10-acre grove of grapefruit, from which for a number of years before the wild storm of 1928 he gathered a crop of 2,000 and more boxes of fruit.

Samuel and Walter Gray, brothers and former New Yorkers, who married two of Judge Hancock's daughters, are also farming in the district. The former has half an acre of Irish potatoes now ready to dig. Their brother Albert is a resident of Miami, where he now has extensive realty holdings.

Mr. Jennings' operations this year are confined to about 60 acres, as compared to 200 to 300 acres in former years. While Mr. Jennings is a lawyer by profession he can't seem to get away from the soil, he says. He recalled as one of his outstanding seasons, that of 1919-20, when he had out 55 acres of peppers, 55 acres of eggplant and 60 acres of cabbage. He is now preparing the ground for 40 acres of tomatoes. B. L. Jennings, sr., his

# GROWING OF VEGETABLES, POULTRY, CATTLE AND LIVESTOCK IS MAKING GREAT STRIDES IN OKEECHOBEE LAKE REGION



(1) H. H. Hancock, one of the "old timers" in the upper Okeechobee lake region, and the first judge of the county, which then was known as Brevard. He has lived in three counties without ever moving. He is still one of Okeechobee county's successful farmers. (2) A truckload of sweet potatoes raised on the Scott farm in the Eagle Bay district. (3) A close-up picture of one of the 30 or more purebred Brahmas bulls on the Dude Ranch at Brighton Valley Farms, being developed by the Curtis-Bright interests. (4) Close-up view of an eggplant fruit grown on the T. L. Cook farm in the Eagle Bay district. (5) Miss Lois Hill one of the adept green bean pickers of the Okeechobee farming district, is seen on the Stewart farm. (6) Some of the 100 guinea hens on the poultry farm of the Brighton Valley Farms project at Brighton. (7) Miss Hae Hall, sister of Miss Lois Hill, with a hamper of beans on the Stewart farm. (8) G. W. Killian, one of the extensive farmers in the Eagle Bay district of the upper lake region. (9) Part of the White Leghorn laying flock of 6,000 hens on the Brighton Valley Farms project at Brighton under the supervision of J. D. Leverett. (10) A part of the extensive turkey flock on the poultry plant of the Brighton Valley Farms. Many of these will furnish Christmas and New Year's dinner features in the hotels, restaurants and private homes in Miami.

father, is preparing to put out a spring crop of 60 acres. His operations now include five acres of peppers, five acres of beans and five acres of squash. He has farmed in the Okeechobee section for the past 14 years and is counted one of the leading farmers of the district. W. B. Jennings is another Eagle Bay farmer, with a spring crop program of 60 acres.

Other extensive farmers in the Eagle Bay area are Thomas Jones, planting 40 acres; James and William Walker, 100 acres, including 30 acres of beans now being harvested; D. G. Cox, 20 acres including five acres of cucumbers; T. L. Cook, 25 acres, including an acre of the best eggplant in the district on the J. T. Hutto place; E. J. Wilson, 25 acres; and G. W. Killian. Mr. Killian usually farms on a large scale of 150 or more acres per year and notes that he has harvested as much as \$1,000 worth of peppers and as high as \$1,000 worth of beans per acre on small areas in past years. He usually raises a crop of tomatoes and corn on the same land at the same time, the corn maturing after the tomatoes are harvested. He says he usually realizes \$1 per bushel for corn. He said he lost a 5,000-bushel crop of corn during the 1928 wild storm. Mr. Killian notes also that of the seven years he has been here the

present season is the most promising for a good yield. J. A. Paul has a mixed crop of 43 acres in the Eagle Bay district this season, and J. M. Scott, who has 75 acres there, is planning on an extensive cropping season including beans, cabbage and tomatoes. His son-in-law, R. E. Holly, is interested with him in the operation. T. Q. Jones and S. V. Gillespie, who are renters on the Scott place, have had unusual success this season with an early crop of sweet potatoes, a considerable tonnage of which they have already dug. Mr. Scott says he has already picked 341 hampers now being harvested; D. G. Cox, 20 acres including five acres of cucumbers; T. L. Cook, 25 acres, including an acre of the best eggplant in the district on the J. T. Hutto place; E. J. Wilson, 25 acres; and G. W. Killian. Mr. Killian usually farms on a large scale of 150 or more acres per year and notes that he has harvested as much as \$1,000 worth of peppers and as high as \$1,000 worth of beans per acre on small areas in past years. He usually raises a crop of tomatoes and corn on the same land at the same time, the corn maturing after the tomatoes are harvested. He says he usually realizes \$1 per bushel for corn. He said he lost a 5,000-bushel crop of corn during the 1928 wild storm. Mr. Killian notes also that of the seven years he has been here the

Brighton Valley Farms, a 28,000-acre cattle and farm project, west of Lake Okeechobee on state road 8, owned by the Curtis-Bright interests, is one of the most extensive and interesting agricultural developments in the state, and of which beef cattle is the major feature. The beef herd of 800 head includes some of the finest Poie Angus cattle in the state, while another outstanding feature is between 30 and 40 acre of imported pure bred Brahmas bulls. Twelve of these Brahmas are five to six years old, while 81 recently

brought from Texas are yearlings. There are eight pure bred Poie Angus sires, three to five years old. Both Angus and Brahmas are being crossed with the better grade of native Florida cows, with a result that has been highly satisfactory to James H. Bright of the Curtis-Bright Company, and guiding genius in this substantial cattle enterprise. Progeny of the native cows and the Brahmas bull indicates a highly desirable beef cutter. Mr. Bright thinks, and an animal of rapid development. There are also five individually owned and operated dairies of approximately 40 cows each on the Brighton Valley Farms project. Most of these cows are good grade Jerseys and Holsteins, with the exception of one herd of registered Jerseys, owned by John Kautz, formerly of Baird, Neb. All these dairy herds are headed by pure bred sires. The bulk of the milk products of this dairy colony, averaging near three gallons per cow, a day, is sold to Miami distributors at around 50 cents per gallon, wholesale.

Hogs are another feature of the Brighton Valley Farms project and embrace a herd of near 100 head, including the spotted Poland Chins, and the white belted Hampshire. There are also about the same number of hogs on the privately owned farms of the district. Rape, rye, plinters, chufas, cabbage, and corn, abundantly raised here besides grasses, afford excellent feed for these hogs. The Brighton Valley Farms enterprise maintains an abattoir and cold storage plant for the slaughter and care of both the beef and pork products of the entire valley and its operations include the slaughter of about 100 hogs per week, which is marketed in the Ridge section and in Miami.

Poultry, including chickens, turkeys, ducks and guinea hens, has been another very profitable feature of the Brighton district. The company's poultry plant embraces a 5,000 hen flock of Standard White Leghorns, about 600 turkeys, 100 ducks, and around 100 guinea hens. Besides this plant, two individual growers have shown profits

# COURT ORDER STAYS FLOOD CONTROL WORK

### United States Operations Halted Because of Dispute In Louisiana.

(BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS.) NEW ORLEANS, La., Dec. 14.—Flood control work in the Boeuf basin under the Jadwin plan was brought to a halt today by an injunction issued by Judge Ben C. Dawkins in United States District court in a test suit instigated by property owners.

In an opinion in the case of R. Foster Kincaid against the United States, Judge Dawkins held that operations should cease until Kincaid was assured by the government that he would be reimbursed for any damage to his land by construction of a spillway in the Boeuf river basin of north-east Louisiana.

The decision was the first to be handed down in several test suits and affects more than a million acres of alluvial lands in northeast Louisiana and southeast Arkansas and indirectly affects all claims of property owners for compensation for overflow of lands as a result of the Jadwin plan.

Philip H. Mecon, United States district attorney, said he would forward the records of the case to the attorney general and would be guided in future course in the case by instructions from Washington.

"When the government departed from the policy of building levees and other public works for the purpose of commerce and navigation along and expressly entered the field of controlling floods for the protection and reclamation of private lands, then it became engaged in activities which make it responsible for the invasion of private rights," Judge Dawkins said in his opinion.

"It will not be assumed," the opinion continued, "that congress intended to violate the fifth amendment to the constitution by taking private property for public purposes without just compensation."

"There is a universally recognized principle that the owner of property subject to overflow waters of either navigable, or non-navigable streams is entitled to have them continue in their natural state without burden or hindrance imposed by artificial means, and no public easement beyond the natural one can arise without grant or dedication save by condemnation with appropriate compensation for the private right."

# IRAQ DATE CULTURE IS SHOWN IN FILM

WASHINGTON, Dec. 14.—Date growing and harvesting in Mesopotamia is shown in a new department of agriculture film entitled "Date Culture in Iraq," now available for use. This picture, made by Roy W. Nixon, a department man engaged in plant introduction work, portrays the primitive and picturesque methods followed by the date growers in the Mesopotamian valley. It is designed to show the growers of our own Southwest how the groves are handled from which planting stock for our own date industry is derived. This film, which is in two reels, may be borrowed without cost by other than transportation charges, by application to the office of motion pictures, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

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