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**Attitudes of Oklahoma Farmers
Toward the Oklahoma
Cotton Growers'
Association**

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INTRODUCTION

The Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association was the first of the fifteen statewide or regional cooperative cotton marketing associations in the United States (Fig. 1). The immediate cause for the organization of the association was mainly the decline in the price of cotton during the season of 1920-21 (Fig. 2). Cotton had been very low in price during the marketing season of 1914-15, and reached an extremely high price during the marketing season of 1919-20. During the first six months of 1920, the average spot price of cotton at New Orleans was 40.43 cents, and the average farm price in Oklahoma was 33.81 cents. During the last three months of that year when a large percentage of the cotton normally leaves the farmers' hands, the average spot price at New Orleans had dropped to 17.73 cents and the average Oklahoma farm price to 16.9 cents. The 1920 crop had been grown at great expense, and as a result of this sudden price decline, the cotton farmers in Oklahoma and other states faced disaster.

While the decline in the price of cotton was the immediate cause of the organization of the association, there were many early activities that had an important bearing on the movement. During the decade immediately preceding the organization of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association, the national government was taking much interest in legislation designed to improve cotton marketing. On August 18, 1914, Congress passed the United States Cotton Futures Act. Among other things, this act regulated dealing in cotton for future delivery and authorized the Secretary of Agriculture, from time to time, to establish and promulgate standards for cotton by which its quality and value may be judged or determined.

The United States Warehouse Act, passed August 11, 1916, and later amended, provides among other things for the storing of cotton

(*) U. S. D. A. Bulletin 36.

in licensed warehouses, and the issuance of receipts for such cotton. Provision is made for issuing licenses to competent persons to class this stored cotton according to United States standards.

During this period, there was also a great deal of work being done by the United States Department of Agriculture and various agricultural colleges in the south, which stimulated the formation of cooperative organizations. The United States Department of Agriculture published, in 1913, the results of some studies in cotton marketing which had been made in Oklahoma (¹). This study showed that the price paid for cotton in Oklahoma was often not based on grade, and that the price paid for the same grade of cotton in the same markets on the same day showed wide variations. A number of the state departments of agriculture and agricultural experiment stations were also taking an active interest in marketing problems at this time. The Farmers' Union did much during this period to stimulate attempts at market improvement, such as the establishment of cooperative warehouses, more uniform selling throughout the year, and the encouragement of local marketing associations.

METHOD OF ORGANIZATION

The American Cotton Association was formed in May, 1919. This was an organization composed of farmers, bankers, merchants, and others who were interested in improved conditions for the cotton farmer. At the first annual meeting of this association on April 13 and 14, 1920, at Montgomery, Alabama, there were 21 delegates from Oklahoma. These delegates returned home enthusiastic about the possibility of organizing a cotton cooperative association in Oklahoma. At a meeting on May 10 and 11, they appointed a special committee to draft a cooperative marketing plan.

The first plan submitted by the committee contemplated local organizations federated into county organizations, and these in turn into a state organization. As this plan did not meet with approval, the special committee then planned a statewide, centralized organization, which was approved on June 1, 1920. This plan was approved a little later at a meeting attended by delegates from 32 counties. The plan was endorsed and supported by such organizations in the state as the Grange, Farmers' Union, State Bankers' Association, and Extension Division of the A. and M. College. The plan of organization, as finally

adopted, called for a central committee, county committees, and organization teams in each community.

Much of the work of securing contracts was turned over to solicitors who worked on a commission basis. As a result, many impossible things were promised to those who would sign the contract. Membership numbers were also swelled by inducing many to sign who raised no cotton. Many business men signed the contract and paid the membership fee in order to show their interest in the movement.

The membership campaign began early in October, 1920, although the date set was December 1. By January 1, 1921, approximately 5,000 had signed the contract, and by April 1 there were 35,000 members. These contracts represented 400,000 bales on the basis of 1919 production, which was 100,000 bales above the minimum amount necessary for the contracts to become binding. The association was incorporated April 26, 1921; the first directors' meeting was held May 25-26, and the first bale of cotton was delivered August 18, 1921.

PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

As stated above, the centralized plan of organization was finally adopted. The central office is located at Oklahoma City, where all the business of the association is transacted, with the exception of selling. During the season of 1926-27, the sales offices were located at Houston where all the association cotton has been concentrated.

All members signed a seven year contract which expired with the delivery of the 1927 crop. A membership fee of ten dollars was charged each member. The contract contained no withdrawal clause, and provided for five cents per pound liquidated damages for all cotton not delivered by members.

The association is governed by a board of eleven directors, chosen annually. Ten directors are chosen from as many districts in the state, and the eleventh, called a public director, is chosen by the other ten, with the approval of the President of the State Board of Agriculture. The board of directors chooses the manager and department heads in the office, such as directors of publicity, accounting, and field service. There are no local business organizations of the association. Several counties have formed organizations whose primary purpose is to pro-

vide information and education about the association, but only a few of these organizations have been active.

In addition to the local county organizations, there have been two other means of keeping the members informed about the association. One method has been the publication, on the tenth and twenty-fifth of each month, of an association paper designed to give information about the association activities. This paper is sent to each member. The other method has been the placing of men in the field to work with the members, settle difficulties, and keep them informed about the association. The number of field men employed at any one time has varied from none to thirty. Each field man is usually assigned a definite territory in which to work.

Members deliver their cotton to the local shipping station, where they receive about 60 per cent of its value. This cotton is sent to the association where it is classed and put into pools. As the pooled cotton is sold, the balance, after all expenses are paid, is returned to the members.

AREAS STUDIED

Farmers in three sections of the cotton belt of Oklahoma were interviewed in this study (Fig. 3). The three areas were selected in order to eliminate the effect of local conditions on the attitudes of the farmers, and to include areas where different types of farming are found.

In the southwest district, the average size of farm is approximately 160 acres. About 80 acres of this are devoted to cotton, 20 to sorghum, 10 to wheat, and 35 to pasture.

In the south central and eastern districts, the average farm is about 80 acres. Approximately 30 acres are devoted to cotton, 20 to corn, 10 to oats, and 15 to pasture.

METHOD OF COLLECTING DATA

Two separate schedules were prepared, one for members of the association, and the other for non-members. (The farmers were carefully informed that the enumerator was not in the employ of the association, and that all answers to questions would be held strictly confidential). This method of procedure prepared the way for the farmer

to feel perfectly free in giving his answers, whether they were favorable or unfavorable, since he knew that it would not implicate him in any way.

Schedules were taken from 519 farmers who were members of the association, and from 336 farmers who were not members.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

An enlightened and loyal membership is one of the greatest assets any cooperative association can have. The past decade marks a greater development in cooperative marketing in the United States than has occurred in any other equal period. As a result, many farmers now have membership in cooperative marketing associations for the first time in their lives. Many others have never been members of such associations even though available to them, because of lack of understanding, experience, economic or social conditions, or other causes.

This study was undertaken to find the extent to which the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association was functioning to the satisfaction of the farmers, and to determine the causes for the attitudes of the members. An attempt has been made to analyze the strong and weak points in the functioning of the association from the members' viewpoint. Few attempts have been made to analyze cooperative marketing associations from the standpoint of the farmer. No cooperative association can function very long with its members dissatisfied. The management ought to know the reaction of the members toward its policies, because only by knowing what is in the member's mind can the association be conducted in the most satisfactory manner. The interests of the association and the members are identical, and the management should not lose sight of this fact.

The attitude of the member may be due to his economic or social condition, lack of understanding of the principles of cooperative marketing, or the influence of others who may be either favorable or unfavorable to the movement. It is important to know, not only the extent of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, but the causes. This understanding will make it possible for the management to correct its policies, if necessary, or to correct wrong attitudes on the part of the members. It should be remembered, however, that the attitudes of members toward their cooperative association is subject to continual change. Es-

pecially is this true where members have had but little experience in cooperative marketing, and are easily influenced.

CONSISTENCY OF MEMBERS' DELIVERIES

The consistency with which members deliver their products to a cooperative organization is very important. Some of the arrangements for handling products must be made in advance, and these arrangements usually cannot be made successfully if the volume to be handled is not fairly well known. This makes it very important for the officials to be able to depend on about the same performance from their members each year with respect to deliveries. If members use the organization only when the prospects for marketing outside are unfavorable, the volume of products handled will fluctuate a great deal, and may handicap the management.

A study of the consistency with which the members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association delivered to the association from the time of organization up to and including 1924, is very interesting. Taking the state as a whole, 44 per cent of the members eligible to deliver never delivered, while only 20 per cent of the members delivered cotton each season during this period. Taking the same period by counties, it was found that the percentage never delivering ranged all the way from 13 per cent in Greer county to 93 per cent in Adair county. (Figure 4). There were five counties in the state where more than 80 per cent of the members failed to deliver during this period, while there were only eight counties where 20 per cent or less of the members never delivered. The high percentage of members never delivering was found, in the main, in those counties where cotton is relatively of minor importance.

The per cent of the members delivering each season, for 1921-24 inclusive, ranged all the way from five per cent in Adair and Sequoyah counties to 51 per cent in Washita county. There were only two counties where more than 50 per cent of the members delivered each season during the above period. The per cent of members delivering each season was higher as a general rule in those counties where cotton production was heaviest, as reference to Figure 5 will show. There were 19 counties where 10 per cent or less of the members delivered each season during this period. Taking the state as a whole for those members who signed the contract previous to December 31, 1921, there were only 15 per cent who delivered cotton to the association each year up to and including 1924. There were only six counties where 25 per cent or more of the members delivered cotton to the association each season during this period. According to the data available, the highest per cent of signed members delivered cotton to the association the first year after signing the contract, and the per cent decreased more or less irregularly each year thereafter.

The per cent of the total cotton produced in Oklahoma, which

has been delivered to the association has varied from 94 per cent in 1924-25 to 19 per cent in 1921-22. In other words, since the first year of operation of the association, with gradually more members being signed each year, the per cent of deliveries for one year dropped to one-half of their original amount. This places an extreme burden on the association in its attempt to prepare to take care of deliveries in advance. When the per cent of deliveries from the separate counties are considered, there is even greater inconsistency in the deliveries. Taking only those counties whose production since the organization of the association has averaged more than 10,000 bales for each year, it was found that the percentage of cotton produced, which was delivered, has varied as follows in some of these counties: Beckham, 11 to 31 per cent; Caddo, 9 to 30 per cent; Carter, 4 to 26 per cent; Greer, 16 to 46 per cent; Jefferson, 8 to 22 per cent; McClain, 9 to 34 per cent; and McIntosh, 2 to 14 per cent. (Figure 6).

The above figures show quite conclusively that the members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association have not been consistent from year to year in their deliveries to the association. However, there are some inaccuracies in these figures as given, due especially to two causes. One is due to the fact that members, in a number of cases, deliver their product in the name of another member. Especially is this true for landlord and tenant: Both may have membership in the association, and ship all of their products in one name. Some fluctuations in delivery may also be accounted for by the fact that some of the members did not have cotton each year, and during such years would show as non-delivering members. But all of the fluctuations in deliveries could not be accounted for by the above conditions. The performance of these members makes it possible to better understand their attitudes as given in the following pages. Some of these members were, no doubt, using the association only as it suited their convenience, while others were using it consistently each year.

REASONS FOR JOINING

No doubt the primary motive which most farmers have in joining a cooperative marketing association is to get a better price for their products. If there were no possibilities for better prices, few farmers would be interested in bringing such organizations into existence. In order to determine the motive which prompted the cotton farmers in Oklahoma to join the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association, they were asked for their reasons for joining. The answers to this question were stated in various ways, but have been grouped according to meaning in Table 1.

Approximately 50 per cent of all farmers answered definitely that better prices were the reason for their joining the association. Forty-three per cent of the owners, and 55 per cent of the tenants gave this answer. Such answers as "to help farmers," "eliminate middleman and

speculation," and "better market conditions" can be interpreted as meaning better prices. When these answers are so interpreted, the result is that more than four-fifths of the farmers have joined the association to get better prices. The remainder gave as their reason the influence of some person such as a banker, landlord, neighbor, friends, or relatives, or they gave a miscellaneous answer, as the desire to sell according to grade.

When farmers see nothing else as a result of cooperation but possible improvement in the prices, it is hard to appeal to them in any other way. It is true that cooperatives will fail if they do not secure prices, or render services in the long run equal to prices or services which may be received from other agencies. But farmers should realize that there are some other advantages to cooperative marketing other than just mere increased prices for the products marketed. The answers to this question indicate that a great deal of education needs to be done along this line in Oklahoma, in order that farmers can properly judge the accomplishments of their cooperatives.

Table 1. Reasons given by farmers for joining the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association in three sections of Oklahoma, 1925-1926, number and per cent by owners and renters.

REASONS FOR JOINING	All Farmers		Owners		Renters	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Better Prices	251	48	106	42	145	55
To Help Farmers	111	22	55	22	56	21
Eliminate Middleman and Speculation	26	5	15	6	11	4
Better Market Conditions	33	6	19	8	14	5
Outside Influence, Landlord, Banker, Friends, Relatives	44	9	21	8	23	9
Miscellaneous	53	10	36	14	17	6
Total	518	100	252	100	266	100

COOPERATIVE MARKETING EXPERIENCE

The previous experience which a farmer has had in selling his products through cooperative marketing organizations may have much to do with the attitude taken toward his organization. A farmer who has had considerable experience may react differently from one who has had no experience. The attitude of a seasoned cooperator toward the various policies of his organization will, no doubt, be more consistent than that of one who has had no cooperative experience as a background. In studying the attitudes of the farmers in Oklahoma toward the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association, an attempt was made to secure data which would indicate the experience which they had had in cooperative marketing.

Approximately 95 per cent of the members of the Oklahoma Cot-

ton Growers' Association interviewed stated that they had previously had no experience in cooperative marketing. Ninety-three per cent of the owners stated that they had never been members of other cooperative associations, while about 97 per cent of the renters indicated that they were getting their first experience in cooperative marketing as members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association. The per cent of members who had experience in cooperative marketing was greater in the western than in the eastern part of the state. Ninety-one per cent of the members in the southwest district of the state, 95 per cent in the south central district, and almost 99 per cent in the eastern district had no previous experience in cooperative marketing. These figures, relative to the cooperative marketing experience of the members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association, are very significant. Nineteen out of each 20 members were in a cooperative marketing association for the first time when they joined the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association. With no previous experience, and little or no knowledge about cooperation, these members could not be expected to act as seasoned cooperators. They were in an entirely new field of endeavor, where knowledge and experience count a great deal. It is well that we keep in mind these conditions in considering the attitudes which these members have taken toward their organization.

The results given in this bulletin portray conditions which existed during the winter and spring of 1925 and 1926, and do not necessarily reflect conditions on membership attitudes which existed at the time this bulletin was published.

Few of the members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association were also members of other cooperative marketing organizations at the time the survey was made. Approximately 90 per cent of all members were not members of any other cooperative organization. About 88 per cent of the owners and 92 per cent of the renters were members of no other cooperative. The only training and experience which they were receiving in cooperative marketing was that which they were getting with the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association. The largest membership in other organizations was again found in the southwest section of the state, where a number of the farmers were members of the Oklahoma Wheat Growers' Association, or a farmers elevator association. The membership in other cooperative associations for those farmers interviewed decreased from west to east. Approximately 22 per cent of the farmers in the southwest were members of other cooperatives, while three per cent in the south central, and less than two per cent in the eastern section were members.

The above figures indicate that one of the greatest handicaps to the progress of cooperative marketing in Oklahoma is the lack of experience on the part of the farmers. And this lack of experience by farmers suggests also a lack of understanding and appreciation on the part of business men and others concerned. It is interesting to com-

pare the experience of Oklahoma farmers with that of the farmers of a state where cooperative marketing has been practiced relatively long. A recent study in Minnesota⁽¹⁾ showed that only nine per cent of the farmers interviewed in that state had had no experience as compared to 95 per cent in Oklahoma. If experience in cooperative marketing means anything, it will take some time to develop the same understanding among the farmers of Oklahoma which exists in a number of other states. This understanding, however, may be greatly hastened by the proper system of education along cooperative marketing lines.

UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTRACT BEFORE SIGNING

It is very important for a farmer to have a clear understanding of a cooperative marketing contract at the time he signs it. This understanding may be obtained by reading the contract, by having it explained, or both. It is sometimes very difficult for farmers to know how to interpret a contract after reading it. The understanding which the farmer has of the contract at the time it is signed often determines the attitude which is later taken toward the provisions in the contract, and the organization as a whole. If statements are made about the contract which later prove to be false, the member may become distrustful of the whole organization, and hence dissatisfied. This means that much depends on the understanding which the farmer has of the contract when he signs it.

In an attempt to get a large membership, solicitors often become too enthusiastic about the members' privileges and obligations under the contract, with the result that the provisions in it may be overstated. The relatively brief period in which the membership of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association was secured, (Figure 2) the methods employed, and the lack of experience on the part of the farmers in relationships of this character, no doubt account for some of the lack of understanding of the contract at the time the members joined.

The members were asked if, in their opinion, the contract had been represented correctly to them at the time they signed. It should be remembered, however, that in answering this question there was a possibility that the member might confuse the by-laws, or articles of incorporation with the contract. Reference to Table 2 will show that a little over three-fifths of all the members said that the contract had been represented correctly to them, and a little less than one-third said that it had been misrepresented to them. Seven per cent stated that they did not know. Out of the total group of members interviewed in the state and in each district, a higher per cent of owners than of renters thought the contract had been correctly represented to them. For all members, 68 per cent of the owners and 60 per cent of the renters stated that the contract had been represented correctly to them when

⁽¹⁾The Marketing Attitudes of Minnesota Farmers, Minnesota Experiment Station Technical Bulletin 45.

they signed. Two-fifths of the farmers in the eastern section, slightly more than one-fourth in the southwest section, and slightly less than one-fourth in the south central section were of the opinion that the contract had not been represented correctly to them at the time they signed.

It is important for an association to know not only whether a member thinks the contract was misrepresented to him when he signed, but also to know in what way the member thinks it was misrepresented. This understanding gives the association a definite starting place for constructive work. Approximately one-fourth of the members who stated that the contract had been misrepresented to them said they did not know in what way it had been misrepresented. Slightly less than one-third stated that they had understood the contract to state that higher prices were guaranteed to them, and that they would get the street price at the time the cotton was delivered to the association. Approximately one-fifth were dissatisfied because they did not think the cotton was to be held so long in some cases, or that payments would be so slow. A small per cent thought handling costs had been higher than the contract allowed; others were dissatisfied because they had understood there were to be direct sales to mills, because no warehouses had been built, or because of the way the contract had been enforced.

Table 2. Replies to question: "Was contract represented correctly to you at the time you signed?" by members of Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association in three sections of Oklahoma, 1925-26.

Replies	ALL DISTRICTS						Southwest District		South Central District		East District	
	All		Owners		Renters		All		All		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	314	63	166	68	148	60	138	65	91	73	85	51
No	151	30	63	26	88	35	58	27	27	22	66	40
Don't Know	37	7	15	6	12	5	16	8	6	5	15	9
Total	502	100	244	100	248	100	212	100	124	100	166	100

Whether there was justification or not, it was unfortunate for the Association that almost one-third of the members were of the opinion that the contract had not been carried out as they thought it should have been. A great deal of responsibility rests on the Association to see that all members have a correct understanding of the contract when it is signed. This understanding would greatly reduce the membership problems of the Association, as a minimum of the members would have no false ideas about the provisions in the contract.

At least a partial explanation of the misunderstanding which members had of the contract may be attributed to the way they got their knowledge of it. Twenty-seven per cent of all the members had

read the contract, and also heard it explained. Twenty-eight per cent had obtained all their knowledge of the contract by reading it, and 38 per cent by hearing it explained. Seven per cent had neither read nor heard it explained.

Approximately three-fourths of the group that had heard the contract both read and explained, said it had been read and explained carefully. It was also found that approximately three-fourths of the group who had read the contract had read it carefully, but of those who had depended upon an explanation of the contract only one-third had heard it explained carefully, while two-thirds said it had been explained hurriedly.

It is interesting to compare the owners and renters with respect to their source of knowledge about the contract. Thirty-four per cent of the owners and only 20 per cent of the renters had read the contract and also heard it explained. Thirty-one per cent of the owners and 25 per cent of the renters had only read the contract, while 28 per cent of the owners, and 47 per cent of the renters had depended on an explanation of the contract for their knowledge of it.

These data indicate that a large number of the members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association did not carefully study the contract before signing it, but depended either on a hurried reading or an explanation. It is not good business to sign a contract before reading it, as a number of these members did. This lack of understanding, no doubt, explains why so many members were dissatisfied with the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association contract. A better understanding of cooperative marketing contracts by farmers would do much to reduce the difficulties of these organizations.

It is also important that the provisions of a cooperative marketing contract be brought to the attention of potential non-members in order that they may intelligently decide whether they want to sign the contract. Farmers often have erroneous ideas about a contract which they have never read nor heard explained. Approximately two-fifths of all farmers interviewed, who were not members of the association, stated that they had read the contract, while three-fifths stated that they had not read it. A somewhat higher per cent of the non-member owners than of the non-member renters in each district stated that they had read the contract. Approximately one-half of the non-member farmers stated that they had heard the contract explained. A slightly higher per cent of the non-member owners than of non-member renters had heard the contract explained.

The conditions as outlined in the above paragraph are rapidly improving as shown by the fact that at the time of publishing this bulletin more than 25,000 cotton farmers have signed the new five-year marketing agreement, over half of whom had previously been members and had delivered each year.

GENERAL SATISFACTION WITH ASSOCIATION

One of the best tests of the farmer's satisfaction with a cooperative marketing association is his willingness to sign another contract when the one under which he is operating expires. Without making any statements as to the kind of contract it might be, the members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association who were interviewed in this survey were asked if they would be willing to sign another contract.

The results of the replies to this question are shown in Table 3. Slightly more than one-half of all the members said they would be willing to sign another contract. Forty-two per cent said they would not be willing to sign another contract, while 6 per cent said they did not know. Fifty-nine per cent of the owners and only 46 per cent of the renters expressed their willingness to sign another contract. Thirty-six per cent of the owners, and 46 per cent of the renters said they would not sign another contract.

There was a considerable variation in the three districts as regards the attitudes of the members toward signing another contract. The largest per cent that expressed their willingness to sign another contract was in the south central district, while the lowest per cent was found in the eastern district. According to these data, at the time this survey was made there were some sections of the state where two-thirds of the farmers were willing to re-sign, while in others no more than two-fifths were willing. While these answers give a good indication of the general satisfaction of the member with the association, the number of farmers who will actually re-sign depend largely upon conditions at the time the new contract is presented, and also the nature of the contract.

To determine whether any changes were desired, the members were asked to state the conditions under which they would be willing to sign another contract. The most common reply received to this question was that they would be willing to sign another contract if more members signed. Sixty-six per cent of the farmers gave more members as a necessary condition to their signing another contract. The data set forth here indicate that many farmers think the association has been handicapped because more farmers were not members. Nine per cent said they would sign under conditions similar to those previously existing. Out of the remainder, 5 per cent said they would join if cotton could be sold faster, three per cent if officers were changed, three per cent if handling costs could be lowered, two per cent if they would sell when prices are high, two per cent if contract were more binding, two per cent under no conditions, two per cent did not know, and six per cent gave miscellaneous answers. A higher per cent of the owners than of the renters gave more members as a necessary condition under which they would sign.

Conditions as outlined in the above section probably have changed as shown by the fact that more than 12,000 old members have signed

the new marketing agreement, while approximately an equal number of new members have come in voluntarily.

Table 3. Replies to question, "Would you be willing to sign a new contract?" by members of Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association in three sections of Oklahoma. 1925-26.

Replies	ALL DISTRICTS						South Central District	East District	Southwest District			
	All		Owners		Renters		All		All			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Yes	262	52	141	59	121	46.4	75	65	67	40	120	55
No	207	42	86	36	121	46.4	30	26	82	49	95	44
Don't Know	30	6	11	5	19	7.2	10	9	18	11	2	1
Total	499	100	238	100	261	100	115	100	167	100	217	100

It is practically impossible for a cooperative marketing association to operate in such way as to please all of its members. Neither is it possible for a cooperative marketing association to operate without making mistakes. But it ought to be of great value to an association to know what mistakes the members think are being made.

The members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association interviewed in this survey were asked what mistakes they thought the Association had made. Forty-seven per cent of the farmers replied that they thought the Association had made no mistake. By far the greatest mistake which the Association had made, as the members saw it, was its method of payment. Twenty-six per cent, or one-half of those naming mistakes, gave slow payments as a mistake of the Association.

It ought to be rather gratifying to the association to know that almost one-half of its members considered that it had made no mistake. Outside of the criticism for slow payments, the criticisms are no more than would be expected from the members of most any cooperative in its first few years of operation.

The mistakes which an association makes, and the criticisms which the members might have of the association are quite different. In order to find what existed in the members' minds as being the principal source of dissatisfaction, they were asked for their most important criticism of the association.

Thirty-seven per cent of the farmers said they had no criticism to make. The greatest criticism of the association, as well as the greatest mistake of the association, was the fact that the payments for the cotton came too slowly. This criticism was given four times as often as any other. Some of the other important criticisms were as follows: too many high salaried employees, poor management, contract not enforced, association failed to do what it agreed to do, price for cotton

too low, not enough control with farmers. Approximately 44 per cent of the owners, and 32 per cent of the renters had no criticism to make of the association. About twice as many of the renters as of the owners criticised the association because of the slow payments. More of the owners than of the renters criticised the management of the association. The other criticisms were about the same for owners and renters. These are honest criticisms which farmers made of their own organization; hence they should be given a great deal of consideration by the management. If the criticisms are just, the association ought to try to correct the conditions. If not just, the association ought to be shown wherein they are wrong. Such criticisms, if taken in the proper way, should have a very wholesome effect on the association.

"The objections as outlined in the foregoing section evidently have been overcome to a great extent. At the time of this investigation there were approximately 12,000 delivering members in the association, whereas at the present writing there are more than twice that number of delivering members." It is believed that this increase in the number of members delivering can be accounted for, in part, by the change in the method of pooling. The new marketing agreement provides a daily pool which enables a member to receive complete payment for cotton delivered as soon as it can be weighed and classed.

When farmers set up a marketing association to reduce the costs of marketing, they are very much interested in keeping costs of operation as low as possible. To get the member's reaction toward the expenses of the association, which they thought were unnecessary, they were asked what expenses, if any, they thought the association could profitably eliminate. Fifty-seven per cent of all the farmers stated that they knew of no expense the association could profitably eliminate (Table 4). Practically the only two methods given by which the association could reduce expenses profitably was by eliminating the field service, or reducing the number or salary of the employees. Twenty-two per cent of all members mentioned the field service, or in other words, one-half of the members who mentioned expenses which might be eliminated, mentioned the field service. Eighteen per cent

Table 4. Replies to question, "What, if any, expenses do you think the association could profitably eliminate?" by members in three sections of cotton belt of Oklahoma. 1925-1926.

REPLIES	All Members		Owners		Renters	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
None as far as known	270	57	126	56	144	57
Field Service	106	22	54	24	52	21
Reduce Number or Salary of Employees	86	18	36	16	50	20
Miscellaneous	15	3	10	4	5	2
Total	477	100	226	100	251	100

of all members mentioned reduction in number and salaries of employees as possible means of profitably reducing the expenses of the association. There was little difference in the ideas of owners and renters as to means of profitably reducing expenses.

The above answers indicate that a large number of the members were agreed that the best way to reduce the expenses of the association was by reducing the number and salary of employees. No mention was made of the various handling costs in reply to this question. However, it must not be inferred from this that the members were giving no thought to the other expenses of marketing through their organization. When asked for the cost per bale of marketing through the association, 33 per cent knew the correct amount, 35 per cent underestimated the cost, three per cent overestimated it, and 29 per cent said they did not know. The owners were a little better informed as to the costs of marketing than the tenants were. The members did not know the cost per bale of marketing their cotton as well as they might have known, considering the fact that these costs had been published from time to time in their official paper.

As has previously been mentioned in this bulletin, at the time of the organization of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association, a number of meetings were held in the state in order to explain the association to the farmers. To get their reaction to the talks delivered at these meetings, the members were asked for any criticism which they had of the speeches made at the time of the organization of the association. Sixty-nine per cent of all the members said they had no criticism to make of these speeches. Seventeen per cent said they thought the speeches had overdrawn and misrepresented the conditions regarding the association, and 10 per cent of the members stated they had heard no speeches. Owners and renters gave approximately the same reaction to this question.

The members were also asked for criticisms of any speeches they had heard made by association representatives since the organization of the association. Seventy-three per cent of the farmers said they had no criticism, 13 per cent said they had heard no speeches, nine per cent said the speeches they had heard were misrepresented and overdrawn, two per cent said the speakers had refused to give the desired information, and one per cent gave miscellaneous answers.

The data set forth here indicate that on the whole the members seemed to be satisfied with the various speeches they had heard about the association. This is rather remarkable since the association, in its initial stages, had to use men with little or no experience or training in cooperative marketing. A number of these men might be expected, in their enthusiasm, to overstate the case for the association. It is very important for the employees of an association to carefully guard their statements in order that the membership may not be misinformed.

If a cooperative organization is to appeal to the non-members, it

is essential that they know something about the reasons why these farmers have not joined the association. The non-members interviewed were asked to give the principal reasons why they had not joined the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association. A variety of answers were given to this question, as reference to Figure 7 will show. A number of these farmers said they were not interested in the association, because they were not growing cotton. Slow payments were the cause of keeping more farmers out of the association than any other reason. Next in importance was the fact that these farmers were of the opinion that farmers would not stick together. Eleven per cent gave debts as a cause for their not joining. A number of the non-members were out of the association because they did not understand it; others thought they would be giving up the right to manage their business if they became members.

The above answers indicate that there are a diversity of things keeping the non-members out of the association. It is interesting to note, however, that the answer "slow payments" is in the lead here, as well as in many other places, while a number also mentioned debts. The reason debts were keeping so many out of the association was probably due to the slow payments. Proper credit arrangements, either directly or indirectly, are no doubt the greatest factor of all which keeps non-members from becoming members. However, there are a number of things which must be done (in addition to credit improvement) to reach all of these non-members. This means a rather broad program along economic and social lines, as well as education in the principals of cooperative marketing.

The non-members were next asked to state the conditions under which they would be willing to become members. Some did not like the contract, others found justification for being outside because some of the members were dissatisfied, while a small per cent said their banker or landlord objected. Over one-fourth of all non-member farmers said they would join the association under no conditions. Twenty-two per cent did not know under just what conditions they would join. The remaining one-half of the non-members gave specific conditions under which they would join. Some were willing to join the association after its success was assured, others if it had a larger membership, or when they were financially able. Others said they would join when they understood the association better, others had not joined because they had not been asked, and a small per cent were outside because the contract had not been enforced. Twelve per cent gave miscellaneous reasons.

According to the available data, the conditions under which members were willing to join the association were by no means uniform. Over one-fourth of these non-members said they would join the association under no condition, which means their attitude will have to change before they are even potential members. The reason for this

positive attitude is a little hard to understand, but these non-members are probably not so determined to remain outside the association as their answers would indicate. Slightly less than one-fourth were undecided as to the conditions under which they would join; hence we have definite information on only one-half of the non-members as to what measures would induce them to become members. A study of these replies leads to the conclusion that a number of them are excuses and not reasons for these farmers being non-members.

Farmers, in most cases, cannot justify waiting to join an association until it has a larger membership, or until it proves to be a success. If all farmers would take this attitude, there would be no association. In cooperative marketing, it is necessary for farmers to consider what they can accomplish as a group instead of what they can do as individuals. It is the duty of the officials of an organization to remove, where possible, the causes for dissatisfaction among their members, and also to make conditions satisfactory for the non-members and induce them to join.

IDEAS OF ASSOCIATION POSSIBILITIES

When a large per cent of farmers go into cooperative associations with the primary object of getting higher prices for their products it is natural that they should give consideration to the extent their organization can control those factors which affect the prices of their products. It is very important that farmers get sound ideas about what their associations can accomplish in this respect. An organization may be accomplishing all that is possible, but if it is still falling short of what the members think it should do, they may be very unfavorable to it. When farmers expect the impossible from their association, they very likely will not be satisfied with the accomplishments of their association. Knowing what the farmer is expecting from his association will make it easier to construct a sound policy for education. In many cases too much is assumed in regard to what the farmers' attitudes are, with the result that many efforts to bring about the proper attitude toward the association may accomplish but little.

Members and non-members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association were asked the three following questions relative to possible price control by cooperatives: "Will cooperative associations ever be able to fix prices?" "Will they be able to control acreage?" "Will they be in a position to get cost of production for their members?" The farmers' ideas on the possibility of price fixing by cooperatives are shown in Table 5. Reference to this table will show that 54 per cent of all members and 48 per cent of all non-members were of the opinion that cooperatives could fix prices. Approximately one-third of both members and non-members were of the definite opinion that cooperatives could not fix prices, while about one-tenth of the members and one-sixth of the non-members stated that they did not know.

The replies to this question indicate that much needs to be done in Oklahoma to correct many farmers' ideas with respect to price fixing by their cooperative. An association is working with a serious handicap when one-half of its members and potential members are looking to price fixing as one of its possibilities. The officials of most cooperative organizations now realize that arbitrary price fixing means failure for the organization. Unless the ideas of these members can be changed, the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association stands a chance of being able to satisfy only one-half of its members with respect to the prices they receive over a period of years.

Table 5. Replies to question, "Will cooperative associations ever be able to fix prices?" by farmers in three sections of cotton belt of Oklahoma. 1925-26.

Replies	ALL				OWNERS				RENTERS			
	Mems.		N.-Mems.		Mems.		N.-Mems.		Mems.		N.-Mems.	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	264	54	154	48	131	55	39	50	133	52	115	48
No	164	33	113	36	85	35	25	32	79	31	88	37
Don't Know	65	13	51	16	23	10	14	18	42	17	37	15
Total	493	100	318	100	239	100	78	100	254	100	240	100

An idea that usually goes along with price fixing is that of getting cost of production. When members of the association were asked if they thought their association would ever be able to get cost of production, approximately three-fifths of the member owners answered in the affirmative, while the same question put to non-member owners got affirmative answers from slightly less than one-half. (Table 6). A smaller per cent of the non-members in both the owner and tenant groups thought the association would be able to get cost of production. It is interesting to note that a higher per cent of the owners than of renters in both member and non-member groups held this opinion. The reason more of the members had faith that the association would be able to get cost of production is probably accounted for by the fact that farmers who have exaggerated ideas of what such associations will be able to accomplish are sometimes more inclined to join in the initial stages. It might also be partly accounted for by what the members were told the association would be able to do at the time they joined.

A number of attempts have been made by farmers' organizations to exert an influence over prices by controlling acreage. The extent to which the farmers interviewed in this study thought this possible is shown in Table 7. There was no marked difference in the attitudes of members and non-members and owners and renters on the possibility

of acreage control. Slightly less than one-third of both members and non-members in each tenant group were of the opinion that they could control acreage through a cooperative organization, a little over one-half stated positively that they did not think such measure possible, and slightly less than one-sixth stated that they did not know. It will be observed that there were considerably smaller per cents of farmers who thought the association could control acreage than thought it could fix prices.

Table 6. Replies to question, "Will cooperative associations ever be able to get cost of production for their members?" by farmers in three sections of Oklahoma. 1925-26.

Replies	ALL				OWNERS				RENTERS			
	Mems.		N.-Mems.		Mems.		N.-Mems.		Mems.		N.-Mems.	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	255	53	129	41	140	59	36	47	115	47	93	39
No	147	30	121	39	70	30	23	30	77	31	98	41
Don't Know	80	17	64	20	25	11	18	23	55	22	46	20
Total	482	100	314	100	235	100	77	100	247	100	237	100

Table 7. Replies to question, "Will cooperative associations ever be able to control acreage?" by farmers in three sections of Oklahoma. 1925-26.

Replies	ALL				OWNERS				RENTERS			
	Mems.		N.-Mems.		Mems.		N.-Mems.		Mems.		N.-Mems.	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	150	30	89	29	76	32	21	28	74	28	68	29
No	274	54	173	57	127	52	41	56	147	56	132	57
Don't Know	79	16	43	14	38	16	12	16	41	16	31	14
Total	503	100	305	100	241	100	74	100	262	100	231	100

The idea that farmers should set prices on their products is not a new one, and is still very popular among many farmers. Two-thirds of the members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association interviewed in this survey stated that they thought farmers should set prices on their cotton. Seventy per cent of the tenants and 62 per cent of the owners held this view. Eighteen per cent of the members answered that it was not possible to set prices on their cotton. Nine per cent definitely were of the conviction that they should not set prices on their products while a small per cent stated that they did not know. More than three-fifths of the farmers in each district stated that they thought farmers should set prices on their products. These replies indicated that a large per cent of the farmers who were members of

the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association were convinced that they should set the prices at which their cotton was sold.

The answers to these questions regarding the possibilities of the association indicate that many of the cotton farmers of Oklahoma have erroneous ideas regarding the possibilities of cooperative marketing. Much needs to be done to get a correct understanding of what the association will be able to do, when approximately one-half of the members and potential members believe that the association will some day be able to fix prices and get cost of production for the members. Cooperative marketing organizations render their services at cost to the farmers, and the only deductions from the final selling price is the cost of these services. However, the final selling price must be based on conditions of demand and supply, and not arbitrarily fixed. Educational publicity through the official paper and the field service can do much to bring about a correct understanding of what the association can accomplish. This would go a long way toward reducing dissatisfaction with the association.

UNDERSTANDING OF METHOD OF PAYMENT AND POOLING

The procedure which cooperatives usually employ is to take the products of their members, sell these products for as much as possible, deduct necessary selling expenses, and return all the remainder to their members. In the cotton cooperatives, it is customary to make an original advance of only about 60 per cent of the value of the cotton to the member when he delivers it, and to wait until the cotton is sold and expenses are determined to pay the balance. The associations do not consider it a safe policy to advance a greater per cent, due to the fact that prices may decline, and costs of selling are rather uncertain.

The understanding which the members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association had of this method of procedure is shown in Table 8. Less than one-fifth of the members were of the opinion that the association could pay the full value of the product at delivery, while approximately two-thirds thought the association could not pay on this basis, and one-sixth stated that they did not know. The percentage of farmers by districts who stated that they thought the association could pay the total amount for the product when delivered, was 23 per cent in the south central district, 20 per cent in the east district, and 13 per cent in the southwest district. The owners were apparently much better informed on this question than the renters were. Thirteen per cent of the owners and 22 per cent of the renters thought the association could pay the full amount for the cotton at the time of delivery. A smaller per cent of the renters also definitely stated "no," and a larger per cent said they did not know, which makes a comparison of the answers between owners and renters even more significant. Twelve per cent of both owners and renters in the southwest district, 11 per

cent of owners and 37 per cent of the renters in the south central district, and 15 per cent of the owners, and 22 per cent of the renters in the east district were of the opinion that the association could pay the full value of the product at the time of delivery. The better understanding of the farmers in the southwest section on this question was, no doubt, due in part to their greater cooperative marketing experience.

These figures indicate that not only a large majority of the members realized that they cannot get the full value of their cotton when it is delivered to the association, but also that there are a large number in some sections of the state who do not understand why the association operates as it does with respect to payments. Since this method of payment is vitally different from the accustomed method, it is very important that the members understand the reason for it if they are to be entirely satisfied. When a member firmly believes that the association should pay the entire price for his products when they are delivered, he is not inclined to be satisfied with only a partial payment.

Table 8. Replies to question, "Do you think association can ever pay full value of cotton at the time of delivery?" by members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association in three sections of Oklahoma. 1925-26.

Replies	ALL DISTRICTS						Southwest District		South Central District		East District	
	All		Owners		Renters		All		All		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	85	18	31	13	54	22	26	13	28	23	31	20
No	324	66.	178	74	146	58	157	76	77	62	90	56
Don't Know	80	16.	30	13	50	20	23	11	18	15	39	24
Total	489	100	239	100	250	100	206	100	123	100	160	100

Probably no other feature of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association receives greater emphasis than the fact that the association cotton is pooled and sold according to grade and staple. In order to determine whether the members knew how their cotton was handled in pools, they were asked what they understood by the term "pooling." The answers which they gave are classified in Table 9, according to those who understood it, those who partially understood it, and those who knew nothing or practically nothing about it. More than three-fifths of all farmers gave evidence that they understood the method of pooling used by the association. Seventeen per cent had a partial understanding, and 20 per cent knew nothing about it. For the whole group of farmers, a somewhat larger per cent of the owners than of the renters understood pooling, while the per cent of renters who knew nothing about it was twice as great as the percent of owners. For each district, a higher per cent of the renters than of the owners did not understand pooling.

Table 9. Number and per cent of members of Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association by owners and renters who understood method of pooling as used by the association. 1925-1926.

Knowledge of Pooling	ALL DISTRICTS					
	All Farmers		Owners		Renters	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Understood Pooling	313	63	157	66	156	60
Partially Understood Pooling	88	17	50	21	38	14
Did Not Understand Pooling	100	20	32	13	68	26
Total	501	100	239	100	262	100

This lack of understanding of pooling on the part of a large number of members helps to explain the dissatisfaction which arises over the method of selling the cotton, and the time of payment for it. A number of the members do not yet understand why the cotton is not settled for in the order in which it is delivered to the association. Dissatisfaction often arises because a member who has delivered his cotton in September will receive his final settlement later than one who has not delivered to the association until November or December. The association can well afford to try to acquaint thoroughly all of its members with the method of pooling the cotton and making payments for it.

**BENEFITS FARMERS SECURE FROM
COOPERATIVE MARKETING**

Cooperative marketing associations are set up to improve the economic and social conditions of farmers. The real test of these organizations is the extent to which they accomplish these ends. It is true that farmers may get benefits from cooperative marketing which they do not realize, so one of the big tasks is to try to get farmers to recognize all of the benefits secured. The benefits which farmers say they are receiving from a cooperative is a very good measure of the extent to which the organization is functioning to their satisfaction. The farmers in this survey were asked several questions relative to the benefits of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association. Questions were asked of both members and non-members to find the relative advantages of membership and non-membership as considered by each group.

One of the advantages claimed by the association is that it sells its products on the basis of grade, so that the farmer receives pay according to the kind of product he delivers. All farmers (members and non-members) were asked whether they thought the association paid more nearly according to grade than the private buyers did when they bought the cotton. The members in each district seemed to be more thoroughly convinced than the non-members that the association did pay more nearly according to grade than private buyers. According to the results shown in Table 10, approximately three-fourths of the members,

both owners and renters, while slightly less than one-half of the non-member owners, and less than three-fifths of the non-member renters, were of the opinion that the association paid more nearly according to grade than do private buyers. The number of members that definitely answered "no" to this question was 13 per cent of the owners and 14 per cent of the renters, while the number of non-members who gave negative replies was 11 per cent of the owners and 10 per cent of the renters. As would be expected, a much higher per cent of non-members than of members answered "don't know" to this question.

Table 10. Replies to question, "Do you think the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association pays more nearly according to grade than private buyers?" by farmers in three sections of the cotton belt of Oklahoma in 1925-1926.

Replies	ALL				OWNERS				RENTERS			
	Mems.		N.-Mems.		Mems.		N.-Mems.		Mems.		N.-Mems.	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	381	76	178	55	188	78	38	46	193	75	140	57
No	68	14	34	10	32	13	9	11	36	14	25	10
Don't Know	52	10	115	35	23	9	35	43	29	11	80	33
Total	501	100	327	100	243	100	82	100	258	100	245	100

It is rather significant that a higher per cent of the members than of the non-members in all cases believed the association was paying more nearly according to grade than did private buyers. In other words, this conclusion must have been reached as a result of their experience in selling cotton through the association. This experience had evidently proven to a majority of them quite conclusively that they were getting more nearly the true value of their cotton when selling through the association than otherwise. It is also a compliment to the association that approximately three-fourths of all members interviewed were of this opinion, when it is considered that a number of these members were not always loyal to the association but yet were willing to admit its advantages.

A large number of farmers may believe that an association is helping them, and yet not become members of that organization. Farmers who were not members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association were asked several questions to get their ideas regarding the accomplishments of the association. When asked whether they believed the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association had helped farmers, four-fifths of them stated that they thought the association had helped farmers. Only 13 per cent said "no," and seven per cent said they did not know. Eighty-three per cent of the owners and 79 per cent of the renters answered "yes". (Table 11). There was very little variation in the answers to this question from the three districts. Eighty-seven

per cent in the southwest region, 84 per cent in the south central section, and 83 per cent in the east district answered "yes". These answers show that a large majority of the farmers who were not members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers Association at the time this survey was made were of the opinion that the association had been of much benefit to all farmers.

Table 11. Replies to question, "Do you believe the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association has helped farmers?" by farmers who were not members of the association in three sections of the cotton belt of Oklahoma. 1925-1926.

REPLIES	All Farmers		Owners		Renters	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	260	80	67	83	193	79
No	42	13	9	11	33	14
Don't Know	23	7	5	6	18	7
Total	325	100	81	100	244	100

Those farmers who stated that they thought the association had helped farmers were next asked in what way they thought it had helped. Ninety-four per cent stated that they thought the association had helped farmers in securing better prices for their cotton. The remaining six per cent gave "reduced speculation," and "better grading" as the way the association had helped. There was no difference in the answer to this question by owners and renters, and there was very little difference in the answers given by the farmers in the three districts.

The answers to the above questions indicate quite clearly that the thing that was keeping non-members out of the association was not its failure to get results. A large majority of these non-members were willing to admit the benefits of the association. It seems that these non-members would be willing to lend their support by becoming members, where possible, if they are thoroughly sold on its benefits. It does not seem fair to the members for four-fifths of the non-members to admit the advantages of the organization which these members are supporting and not offer to help them.

In order to further test the non-members' attitude toward the improvement in prices of cotton to the farmer as a result of the association, they were asked if they thought the association had helped the non-members get a better price. Approximately four-fifths of all the farmers who were not members of the association stated that they thought the association did help them get a better price. (Table 12). Fourteen per cent stated that they did not think it helped them get a better price, and five per cent said they did not know. Seventy-six per cent of the owners and 82 per cent of the renters thought the association had helped their prices. A larger per cent of the renters definitely answered "no" while more of the owners answered that they did not

know. The highest proportion of affirmative answers to this question was in the southwest district with 86 per cent, and the lowest in the east district with 77 per cent. The per cent in the south central section was 80.

Table 12. Replies to question, "Do you think the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association has helped non-members get a better price?" by farmers in three sections of cotton belt of Oklahoma who were not members of the association. 1925-1926.

REPLIES	All Farmers		Owners		Renters	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	268	81	65	76	203	82
No	46	14	10	12	36	.15
Don't Know	18	5	10	12	8	3
Total	332	100	85	100	247	100

When the question of better prices through the association was put to the non-members a large majority again admitted the advantages of the association in securing higher prices. All of these answers would lead one to believe that there was little doubt in the non-members' minds about the advantages of the association, and that the main advantage was in better prices. The foregoing answers lead one to believe there must have been some advantages to farmers who were not members of the Oklahoma cotton cooperative which members did not have. It would not be expected that all the advantages of a cooperative shall go to the members, nor would it be expected that there are no disadvantages to the members. In order to get the advantages and disadvantages which members and non-members each thought the others had, they were asked several questions to bring out these advantages and disadvantages.

When the members were asked for the advantages which they had which non-members did not have, more than one-half of them figured they had an advantage over the non-members, and one-half of those who figured they had an advantage figured their advantage to be in the better prices secured (Figure 8). Forty per cent of the members stated that they knew of no advantage which they had which the non-members did not have. Seven per cent stated that they "did not know" and the remainder gave miscellaneous answers such as "easier to market," "better classing," "more equal distribution of money." Thirty-four per cent of the owner members, and 47 per cent of the renter members stated that they had no advantages over the non-members, and 37 per cent of the owner members and 30 per cent of the renter members gave better prices as their advantage over non-members.

The attitudes of the members regarding the advantages which the non-members had over them are shown in Figure 9.

Approximately one-third of all the members figured that the non-

members had no advantage which they, as members, did not have, while the remaining two-thirds figured that the non-members had some advantages. It should be remembered, however, that simply because a member figures a non-member has some benefits, it does not mean that those benefits outweigh those of being a member. Seventeen per cent of the farmers in the association figured that the non-members had an advantage in higher prices, 29 per cent saw an advantage for the farmers outside in that they did not have to wait for their money, 13 per cent thought the non-members gained because they could sell when and how they pleased, five per cent gave miscellaneous reasons, and four per cent stated that they did not know.

Thirty-six per cent of the owners, and 28 per cent of the tenants who were members figured the non-members had no advantages which they did not have. The advantages which farmers outside the association had over members, as given by member owners and renters, were practically the same, except that 33 per cent of the renters, and 24 per cent of the owners who were members considered the non-members had an advantage in not having to wait for their money.

The above answers indicate that the members were not convinced that they had all of the advantages over the non-members. When two-fifths of the members were willing to admit that they had no advantages over the non-members and only one-third were willing to admit that the non-members had no advantages which the members did not have, it shows that the farmers in the association do not consider the advantages one-sided. It is probable, however, that the members had somewhat of an exaggerated opinion regarding the advantages of the non-members. Especially would this be true of those members who were not entirely satisfied with the association.

When non-members of the association were asked for the advantages which they had that members did not have, 27 per cent said "none," while approximately two-thirds gave an advantage (Figure 10). Thirty-three per cent said that the advantage which non-members had over members was that they did not have to wait for their money, while 29 per cent figured their advantage in selling as they desired and eight per cent stated that they did not know. There was very little difference in the answer to this question by owners and renters.

Approximately one-half of the non-members stated that they thought the members had no advantage over the non-members (Figure 11). One-fourth stated that they thought the members' advantage was in better prices, four per cent replied that it was less trouble for them to market their cotton, and 16 per cent gave miscellaneous advantages, such as "more equal distribution of money," "more stable market," and "better grade." Seven per cent stated that they did not know.

The non-members who stated that they had no advantages over the members constituted 42 per cent of those replying in the south central district, 27 per cent of those answering in the east district, and 15 per

cent in the southwest district. The non-members who stated that the members had no advantages over them were 56 per cent in the east district, 52 per cent in the southwest, and 31 per cent in the south central district.

The answers to the above questions present a rather peculiar situation. It will be recalled that four-fifths of the non-members said they thought the association had helped them get better prices. Then two-thirds of these same non-members said that they considered the members had no advantage over them. In other words, it might be concluded that the non-members considered that they were securing the principal advantages possible from the association without becoming members. This is a very peculiar dilemma in which many cooperatives find themselves. The non-members secure advantages from the organization without becoming members, and as a result, are willing to let other farmers carry the burden of the organization. One of the big problems of the officials of a cooperative is to convince all farmers to join who are sold on the merits of the organization.

ATTITUDE TOWARD CONTRACT, WITHDRAWALS, AND VIOLATIONS

As stated in the introduction to this bulletin; all members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association signed a seven year contract, which contained no withdrawal clause. A majority of these members signed the contract in time to be eligible to deliver their 1921 crop to the association (Figure 2). Since these schedules were taken during the fall of 1925 and the spring of 1926, most of the delivering members had their fifth crop of cotton in the association. This background of experience enabled them to form some definite ideas regarding the contract. The questions asked regarding the contract were formulated with the idea of determining in what ways that instrument was acceptable to the members, and what changes they would like to have made in it.

To get the members' attitude toward a withdrawal clause, they were asked if they thought dissatisfied members should be permitted to withdraw. Approximately three-fifths of all the farmers stated that they were in favor of permitting dissatisfied members to withdraw, while one-third were opposed, and the remainder said they did not know (Table 13). Fifty-seven per cent of the owners, and 67 per cent of the tenants said a member should be given an opportunity to withdraw if he so desired. There was very little difference in the answers to this question from the three districts. Sixty-four per cent in the eastern section, 63 per cent in the southwest region, and 60 per cent in the south central district were in favor of a provision for withdrawal in the contract. In each section a higher per cent of renters than of the owners were in favor of withdrawal privileges, except in the southwest where the percentage of owners favoring a withdrawal

clause was slightly higher than it was for tenants. These results indicate quite clearly that a majority of the members were in favor of allowing a dissatisfied member to withdraw from the association, but that the opinion on this matter was by no means uniform.^(*)

Table 13. Replies to question, "Should dissatisfied members be permitted to withdraw?" by farmers in three sections of cotton belt of Oklahoma, 1925-1926.

REPLIES	All Farmers		Owners		Renters	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	318	62	140	57	178	67
No	163	32	88	36	75	28
Don't Know	29	6	16	7	13	5
Total	510	100	244	100	266	100

When the members were asked if they would withdraw if the contract permitted, approximately three-fifths said they would withdraw, one-third said they would not withdraw, while 6 per cent were undecided. Twenty-four per cent of the owners, and 39 per cent of the renters said they would withdraw. The proportion of the members desiring to withdraw in each district was approximately as follows: one-fifth in the south central section, one-third in the southwest section, and two-fifths in the east section.

A comparison of the answers to the above two questions are very interesting. Sixty-two per cent of the members were in favor of allowing dissatisfied members to withdraw, while only 32 per cent said they would withdraw if given the opportunity. Only forty-six per cent of the group who were in favor of a withdrawal clause said they would withdraw if the contract permitted, while 48 per cent said they would not, and 6 per cent said they did not know. This indicates that approximately one-half of the members favored a withdrawal clause, not because they wanted to withdraw, but for the good of the association.

Even though the members had signed a contract to deliver all of their cotton each year to the association, some of them failed to live up to their contract each year, and sold a part or all of their cotton on the outside. The writer attempted to determine whether the members considered that they would be justified, under any circumstances, in selling outside. Slightly over one-half of the members said they thought a member was sometimes justified in selling outside. This attitude was taken by slightly less than one-half of the owners, and by three-fifths of the renters. There was considerable diversity in the character of the replies to this question from the three districts. The largest proportion answering "yes" was in the southwest section with 62 per cent, and the lowest per cent was in the south central region

^(*)The association, in their new contract which is now being presented to the farmers, provides an annual withdrawal clause.

with 46 per cent. In the eastern district, 50 per cent stated that they thought a member was sometimes justified in selling outside.

Table 14. Replies to question, "If contract permitted, would you withdraw?" by members of Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association in three sections of the cotton belt of Oklahoma. 1925-1926.

Replies	ALL DISTRICTS						Southwest District		South Central District		East District	
	All		Owners		Renters		All		All		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	158	32	57	24	101	39	65	30	25	21	68	42
No	309	62	171	73	138	53	139	64	89	76	81	49
Don't Know	30	6	8	3	22	8	12	6	3	3	15	9
Total	497	100	236	100	261	100	216	100	117	100	164	100

Even though the members had signed a so-called "iron-clad" contract, approximately one-half of them were of the opinion that a member is sometimes justified in selling outside. A large number of these members, no doubt, made such answers because cases had been brought to their attention where it was necessary for farmers to violate their contract. Under such conditions, it is much better for a member to be able to get out of an association by withdrawing, instead of being forced to break his contract.

Those farmers who stated that they thought a member was sometimes justified in selling outside were next asked on what grounds they thought such a procedure was justified. Over three-fourths of the total group said that a member was justified in selling outside to meet financial obligations. Seven per cent said a member was justified in selling outside when he could get more for his cotton, five per cent justified outside selling in case of breach of contract by the association, and 11 per cent justified it for miscellaneous reasons, such as sickness, death, and contract misrepresentation. (Table 15). Seventy-two per cent of the owners, and 80 per cent of the renters thought a member was justified in selling outside to meet financial obligations. The fact that more than three-fourths of these members thought that financial obligations justified selling outside indicates that a number of members had probably been forced to sell outside for that reason, or had found their financial conditions a serious handicap to them in selling through the association. These replies indicate that credit conditions are a very serious handicap to many members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association. Any improvements in the credit facilities of the Oklahoma farmers will be a benefit to the association.

There have been many different views regarding the enforcement of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association contract. A number have held one or the other of the two extreme positions that all violators

of the contract should be punished, or that none of them should be made to pay the penalty. Many have taken a position somewhere between these two extremes, holding that each violation of the contract was a case to be dealt with separately. During the seasons of 1923, 1924, and 1925, the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association brought a number of suits against farmers for liquidated damages for non-delivery of cotton. A number of loyal members were demanding that the disloyal members be made to pay for their disloyalty. No attempt was made to bring suit against all violators, but an attempt was made to bring suit against at least one member in each local territory as an example, with the hope that this would bring other members into line. During the winter and spring of 1924, the farmers who had violated their contracts were offered a discount if they would settle. Otherwise, suit was to be brought against them to collect the full amount of the liquidated damage. A number of farmers settled on this basis while others refused to make settlement.

Table 15. Replies to question, "Upon what grounds do you think a member is justified in selling outside?" by members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association in three sections of the cotton belt of Oklahoma. 1925-1926.

REPLIES	All Farmers		Owners		Renters	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
To Meet Financial Obligations	208	77	83	72	125	80
When Association Breaks Contract	15	5	7	6	8	5
When Can Get More for Cotton	19	7	10	9	9	6
Miscellaneous*	29	11	15	13	14	9
Total	271	100	115	100	156	100

*Sickness, death, contract misrepresented, etc.

In the meantime, the association was delayed in this program due to a case against one of its members for non-delivery, which had been appealed to the state Supreme Court. The association lost this case on the grounds that the 1919 cooperative marketing law, in effect at the time the contract was signed, provided that the enforcement of a contract must be based upon the condition that a member be granted an opportunity to withdraw. This law was followed in 1923 by a new cooperative marketing law which did not require a withdrawal clause. Following this decision, it was generally conceded that the association could not enforce the contracts signed previous to the 1923 act; hence most of the suits that were pending were dropped.

In order to determine the reaction of the members toward this plan of violation settlement used by the association, the members were asked whether they thought the plan had benefited or damaged the association. One-fourth of all farmers said they thought it had benefited the association, one-half affirmed that it had damaged the asso-

ciation, one-fifth said they did not know, and a small per cent thought it had done as much good as harm. There was very little difference in the answer to this question by owners and renters.

These replies are very significant because after this method of violation settlement had been given considerable trial, this survey shows it was meeting with the approval of only one-fourth of the members, while one-half of them were definitely opposed to it. In other words, only one-fourth of the members were willing to subscribe to this method of settlement with the violators.

Non-members of the association were asked two questions on the contract in order to get an idea of the kind of contract which might appeal to them. These two questions were: "Do you think a member should be required to sign a binding contract?" "How long do you think the contract should run?" Approximately three-fourths of all the non-members who answered the first question thought that a member should be required to sign a binding contract to deliver his products. One-fifth thought a member should not be required to sign a binding contract, and 7 per cent did not know. Seventy-nine per cent of the owners and 71 per cent of the renters thought a member should sign such a contract.

A substantial majority of these non-members were in favor of having a member sign a contract which would attempt to guarantee the delivery of his product to the association. It might have been true, however, that these non-members were refusing to join the association on these very grounds. They probably thought such a contract was necessary for the welfare of the association, but they were not willing to be bound by it.

There was a great variation in the length of time non-members thought a contract should run. The most popular length of time for a contract was five years. Almost one-fourth of the farmers were in favor of this period for a contract. The other periods chosen in order of importance were one year, two years, seven years, three years, over ten years, four years, ten years, six years, and eight years. Approximately two-fifths of the non-members were in favor of a contract for three years or less. Two-thirds were in favor of a contract for five years or less, while four-fifths were in favor of seven years or less.

The length of contract favored by owners and renters was quite different. Thirty-one per cent of the owners, and 42 per cent of the renters were in favor of a contract for three years or less. Thirty-eight per cent of the owners and 24 per cent of the renters favored a contract of either four or five years, and 18 per cent of the owners, and 25 per cent of the renters were in favor of a contract of six years or over.

**OUTSIDE INFLUENCES AFFECTING THE
FARMER'S ATTITUDE**

A farmer's attitude toward a cooperative marketing association is often determined largely by the influence of someone outside the organization. Especially is this true where the members in a community are in the minority, and many of them are only lukewarm toward the association. In such cases, the members are often easily influenced either for or against the association by the statements of those outside. A remark from an influential person in a community may often determine whether a farmer becomes a member of an association or not.

Although the husband may be the one that signs the contract, the attitude which the wife takes is usually very important. Too little attention has been given to the attitudes of the wives of cooperators. Very often farmers are opposed or favorable to an association because of the attitude of their wives. It is to be expected that few farmers would remain loyal to their association if their wives continually oppose it.

The members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association interviewed in this survey were asked if their wives were in favor of their joining the association. Slightly less than three-fifths of the members said that their wives were in favor of their joining the association, while one-fourth gave negative replies, and the remainder said that they did not know. Twenty per cent of the owners' wives, and 29 per cent of the renters' wives were opposed to their husbands joining the association. Seventy-one per cent of the members in the southwest district, 69 per cent in the south central region, and only 35 per cent in the east section said that their wives were in favor of their joining the association. Nineteen per cent of the wives in the southwest district, 20 per cent in the south central district, and 36 per cent in the east district were opposed to their husbands joining the association.

The farmers were also asked for the attitudes of their wives at the time the schedules were taken. Forty-four per cent of all the farmers stated that their wives were in favor of the association, 34 per cent

Table 16. Attitudes of wives of members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association in three sections of the cotton belt of Oklahoma. 1925-1926.

ATTITUDES	All Farmers		Owners		Renters	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Neutral	48	10	20	9	28	11
In Favor	211	44	107	48	104	41
Opposed	159	34	67	30	92	37
Don't Know	57	12	29	13	28	11
Total	475	100	223	100	252	100

said that they were opposed to it, 10 per cent characterized them as neutral, and 12 per cent said that they did not know their attitudes. A higher percentage of the owners' wives than of those of the tenants were favorable to the association, and a greater proportion of the tenants' wives than those of the owners were opposed to the association. (Table 16).

The attitudes of the wives became less favorable from the western to the eastern district. Fifty-seven per cent of the members' wives were favorable in the southwest district, 40 per cent in the south central district, and 32 per cent in the east district.

The answers to the above questions indicate that many farmers joined the association in cases where their wives were opposed to it. Fifty-eight per cent of the farmers had the support of their wives at the time they joined, but only 44 per cent stated that their wives were favorable at the time this survey was made. Only one-fourth of the members stated that their wives were opposed at the time they joined, while 34 per cent were opposed when the survey was made. These answers also indicate that a smaller per cent of the wives were favorable to the association at the time this survey was made than at the time the farmers joined. Very much emphasis should be attached to this information. It has often been said that success in farming is handicapped where husband and wife do not work in close cooperation. The same is true of cooperative marketing. All efforts to bring about a greater understanding of cooperative marketing should include the wives as well as the husbands. Cooperative marketing is often a family affair with the farmer and should be so regarded.

The farmers were also asked for the attitudes toward the association of a number of business men in the community with whom they came in contact. This list included ginners, cotton buyers, dry goods merchants, grocers, hardware dealers, lawyers, and teachers. The attitudes of each of these groups, as given by the farmer is briefly discussed.

Twenty-four per cent of the 474 farmers answering had heard opposition to the association expressed by their ginners while only 18 per cent had heard favorable comments by their ginners. Fifty-six per cent of the farmers said they had heard the ginners say nothing about the association. Out of the 44 per cent of ginners who had expressed themselves, 55 per cent were opposed to the association, and 41 per cent had expressed themselves as being favorable. Four per cent had taken a neutral attitude. There was practically no difference in the expression of ginners to owners and renters.

The opposition of ginners toward the association seemed to increase from the western to the eastern section of the state. Thirty-three per cent of those who had expressed themselves about the association in the southwest section were opposed, 52 per cent in the south central region, and 85 per cent in the eastern district. Of all the farm-

ers interviewed, 16 per cent in the southwest, 14 per cent in the south central, and 46 per cent in the eastern district had had opposition expressed to them about the association.

A larger per cent of cotton buyers than of ginner had expressed themselves to farmers about the association. Almost two-fifths of the farmers said they had heard no cotton buyers express themselves about the association, but approximately all of the remaining farmers had heard the buyers say something in opposition to the association. Of those buyers who expressed themselves, 94 per cent were opposed to the association, and only four per cent were favorable. There was not so much difference in the buyers in the three sections of the state as there was in the ginner. Fifty-four per cent of all farmers in the southwest, 58 per cent in the south central, and 66 per cent in the east district had heard unfavorable expressions about the association from cotton buyers. Of the buyers who had expressed themselves, 95 per cent were unfavorable both in the southwest and east districts, and 92 per cent in the south central. These figures would indicate that many of the cotton buyers were opposed to the association.

Many merchants have taken an active stand either for or against the association, principally because of the effect the method of payment by the association might have on their collections. Thirty-seven per cent of all farmers had heard expressions about the association from grocers, so that the farmers knew the attitude of these grocers. Eighteen per cent of all farmers had opposition to the association expressed to them by their grocers, while 17 per cent had heard favorable comments from their grocers. Of the total grocers expressions to farmers, 48 per cent were opposed, 47 per cent were favorable, and five per cent were neutral. Twelve per cent of eastern farmers in the southwest, 11 per cent in the south central, and 30 per cent in the eastern district patronized grocers who were unfavorable to the association. Of those grocers who had expressed themselves, 34 per cent were unfavorable in the southwest, 38 per cent in the south central, and 71 per cent in the east district. The higher percentage in the east district is no doubt due to the fact that more merchants' credit is used in this area. Forty-one per cent of the grocers expressions to owners were opposed and 51 per cent were favorable, while of those expressions to tenants, 55 per cent were opposed, and 43 per cent were favorable.

Over three-fourths of the farmers said they had heard no expression from their hardware merchants about the association. Thirteen per cent of the farmers had heard opposition expressed by their hardware merchants, and 9 per cent had heard favorable comments. Of the total expressions from hardware dealers, 57 per cent were opposed, and 39 per cent were favorable to the association. Eight per cent of all farmers in the southwest, 6 per cent in the south central, and 25 per cent in the east district had heard hardware dealers express

themselves as being unfavorable to the association. Of the total expressions from hardware dealers, 40 per cent in the southwest, 37 per cent in the south central, and 81 per cent in the east district were unfavorable to the association. Out of the group of hardware men who had expressed themselves to owners, 53 per cent of the expressions of expressions to tenants 61 per cent were opposed, and 36 per cent favorable.

Three-fourths of the farmers had heard no expressions from dry goods merchants about the association. Fourteen per cent had heard opposition expressed, and 10 per cent had heard favorable comments. Fifty-five per cent of the expressions from dry goods merchants were opposed, while 40 per cent were favorable. Fifty-two per cent of the owners, and 58 per cent of the tenants had heard unfavorable comments from their dry goods merchants.

Ten per cent of the farmers in the southwest, eight per cent in the south central, and 25 per cent in the eastern district had heard their dry goods merchants express opposition to the association. Of those expressions from dry goods merchants, 39 per cent in the southwest 53 per cent in the south central, and 70 per cent in the east district were opposed to the association.

A number of lawyers had come in contact with the association through the cases handled for the members. Eighty-five per cent of the farmers stated they had heard lawyers say nothing about the association, five per cent said that they had heard lawyers say something in opposition to the association, and 10 per cent that they had heard lawyers speak favorably of the association. Thirty-four per cent of the expressions from lawyers were opposed to the association, and 64 per cent were favorable. There was considerable difference in the replies to this question by owners and renters. Nineteen per cent of the owners, and 63 per cent of the renters said that their lawyers had expressed themselves as being unfavorable, while 81 per cent of the owners and 30 per cent of the tenants had heard favorable comments by lawyers.

The percentage of lawyers having adverse attitudes toward the association became greater from the western to the eastern side of the state. Twenty-six per cent of the lawyers expressions to farmers in the southwest, 50 per cent in the south central, and 67 per cent in the east district were unfavorable to the association.

School teachers had made no expressions about the association to seventy-one per cent of the farmers, while five per cent of the farmers had heard opposition expressed from teachers, and 24 per cent had heard favorable comments. Out of the total group of school teachers from whom the farmers had heard expressions, 16 per cent were opposed while 83 per cent were favorable to the association. The largest per cent of teachers who had expressed themselves about the association were in the southwest, where 52 per cent of the farmers had definite

received impressions from the school teachers as to how the latter stood. Forty-eight per cent of the farmers in the southwest, 93 per cent in the south central, and 85 per cent in the east district did not know how teachers stood regarding the association.

Eighty-four per cent of the farmers had heard preachers say nothing about the association, while one per cent had heard unfavorable remarks from preachers, and 15 per cent had heard favorable remarks. Seven per cent of the total expressions from preachers were adverse, while 93 per cent were favorable to the association. Ninety-three per cent of the farmers in the southwest, 95 per cent in the east district, and only 52 per cent in the south central district had heard preachers express themselves about the association. Of the total expressions from preachers there were 88 per cent in the southwest, 95 per cent in the south central, and 89 per cent in the east district that were favorable to the association.

The above figures furnish some very interesting data regarding the attitudes of various business and professional men toward the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association. No definite causes for these attitudes were obtained. A few suggestions might be ventured, however. The ginner and cotton buyers were no doubt influenced very largely by the competition which the association had given them in the purchase of cotton. The dry goods merchant, grocer, and hardware man no doubt thought of the association as it affected the payment for their goods. Many lawyers had probably formed their ideas of the association in connection with the cases they had been asked to take, or contemplated being asked to take.

The lawyers were the highest in per cent of those who had made no expressions about the association, followed in order by the others: preachers, 84 per cent; hardware merchants, 77 per cent; dry goods merchants, 74 per cent; teachers, 71 per cent; grocers, 63 per cent; ginner, 56 per cent; and cotton buyers, 38 per cent. From the total expressions of each group, the highest per cent of opposition had come from the cotton buyers with 94 per cent, followed by the hardware merchants with 57 per cent, ginner and dry goods merchants with 55 per cent each, grocers with 48 per cent, lawyers with 34 per cent, teachers with 16 per cent, and preachers with seven per cent.

The above figures suggest the need for better cooperation between farmers, cooperative marketing organizations, and men engaged in businesses which are closely associated with these organizations. Farmers' organizations cannot accomplish their desired results with so much opposition from these sources. Cooperatives cannot be expected to operate without opposition, but it is to their interest to keep this opposition to the minimum.

OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

MEMBERS' SATISFACTION WITH OFFICERS IN GENERAL

It is very important for the members of a cooperative association to have officers in whom they have confidence, because otherwise members are usually not willing to put their product through an association. In order to determine the extent to which the members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association had confidence in their officers, several questions were asked regarding their attitude toward the officers. They were first asked if they were satisfied with the officers of the association without making reference to any particular officer.

Three-fourths of the farmers said they were satisfied with the officers, 17 per cent said they were not satisfied, and eight per cent were undecided. Seventy-two per cent of the owners, and 78 per cent of the renters said they were satisfied. The greatest dissatisfaction with the officers was in the southwest district, where 28 per cent of the members said they were not satisfied with the officers as compared to 10 per cent in the east district, and six per cent in the south central district. (Table 17).

Table 17. Replies to question, "Are you satisfied with the officers of the association?" by members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association in three sections of the cotton belt of Oklahoma. 1925-1926.

Replies	ALL DISTRICTS						Southwest District		South Central District		East District	
	All		Owners		Renters		All		All		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	389	75	179	72	210	78	143	65	112	88	134	79
No	86	17	50	21	36	14	63	28	7	6	16	10
Don't Know	40	8	18	7	22	8	15	7	7	6	18	11
Total	515	100	247	100	268	100	221	100	126	100	168	100

Members sometimes get the impression that the officers of a cooperative organization may be withholding from them information about the association. When members get such an impression, they usually become dissatisfied. To determine whether the members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association thought information was being withheld they were asked if the officers of the association were willing to give them all facts about the organization (Table 18). Slightly more than two-thirds of the farmers said that the officers were willing to give them all the facts about the association, one-sixth said that the officers were not willing to give all facts, and one-sixth of the members said that they did not know. There was no material difference in the answers to this question by owners and renters. There was considerable variation in the character of replies to this question received from the three districts, however. Again, the greatest dissatis-

faction with the officers was found in the southwest district, where 22 per cent of the members said the officers were not willing to give them all the facts about the association. Fifteen per cent of the members in the east, and five per cent in the south central district expressed dissatisfaction with the officers on this point.

The key man among the officers of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association for the member is the director from his district. The director acts in a business way regarding association matters for all the members from his district. This often means that the farmer's confidence in the association may be largely determined by the confidence he has in the honesty and business ability of his director.

Three-fifths of the members stated that they were acquainted with the director from their district, and two-fifths said that they were not acquainted with their director. A larger per cent of owners than of renters in each district were acquainted with their director. Seventy-three per cent of all member owners, and only 53 per cent of all member renters were acquainted with the director of their district. The acquaintance of the members with the directors decreased from the western to the eastern side of the state. Eighty-one per cent of the members in the southwest, 62 per cent in the south central, and only 38 per cent in the east district were acquainted with the director of their district. Eighty-five per cent of the owner members, and 76 per cent of the renter members in the southwest, 70 per cent of the owner members, and 54 per cent of the renter members in the south central, and 54 per cent of the owner members, and 29 per cent of the renter members in the east district said they were acquainted with the director from their district. This may be accounted for by the fact that the directors in the eastern part of the state had larger territories, and their members were more scattered.

Table 18. Replies to question, "Are officers of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association willing to give the members all the facts about the association?" by members in three sections of the cotton belt of Oklahoma, 1925-1926.

Replies	ALL DISTRICTS						Southwest District		South Central District		East District	
	All		Owners		Renters		All		All		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	343	68	165	69	178	69	129	60	109	91	105	65
No	78	16	39	16	39	15	47	22	6	5	25	15
Don't Know	78	16	36	15	42	16	40	18	5	4	33	20
Total	499	100	240	100	259	100	216	100	120	100	163	100

Those members of each district who were acquainted with their director were asked what they thought of his ability. Three-fourths of all the members said they thought their director was well qualified,

seven per cent said they thought he was not the man for the place, five per cent said his ability was questionable or that he was not capable, three per cent said that their director, in their opinion, had average ability, and ten per cent stated that they did not know. For all farmers a slightly lower per cent of the renters than of the owners considered their directors well qualified. In the southwest district, 67 per cent of the owners and 78 per cent of the renters thought the directors well qualified. There was very little difference in the answers from owners and renters in the other two districts.

When asked about the integrity and honesty of their director, eighty-one per cent of the members said they considered their director honest. Eleven per cent said they did not know, four per cent said their honesty was questionable, and four per cent said they were not honest. The highest per cent of farmers (93 per cent) considering their directors honest was found in the south central district, the next highest (79 per cent) in the east district, and the lowest per cent in the southwest with 76 per cent. There was a slightly higher per cent of renters than owners among the total group of farmers who considered their directors honest. This held true for each district except the east, where a higher per cent of owners considered the director honest.

Farmers often get mistaken ideas about the salaries being paid the officers in a cooperative organization. Many times, farmers get the notion that the salaries of their employees are much higher than they really are. In order to check up on the ideas, the members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association had regarding the salary their manager was getting, they were asked what salary he was being paid. More than two-thirds of the members said they did not know what salary their manager was getting. Of those who attempted to name his salary, 55 per cent were correct and 45 per cent were incorrect. Of the incorrect answers, 23 per cent were too low and 22 per cent were too high. The attempt at naming the manager's salary ranged all the way from \$2,000 to \$50,000. Twenty-three per cent of the owners and 13 per cent of the renters knew what salary was being paid their manager. The lowest per cent of members knowing the salary of their manager was in the east district, with 7 per cent. Fifteen per cent of the members in the south central, and 34 per cent in the southwest district knew what salary their manager was getting.

When the members were asked what salary the association was justified in paying a capable manager, over one-half of the members refused to venture an answer, saying they did not know. Of those who answered, one-fourth gave an amount equal to what the manager was then receiving, 12 per cent an amount higher, and 64 per cent an amount lower.

MEMBERS' ATTITUDE TOWARD FIELD SERVICE

The number of field men employed by the Oklahoma Cotton

Growers' Association has varied a great deal since its organization. Figure 15 shows how the state was divided into districts for field service work at the time this survey was started. This was the largest field force the association has ever had at any one time. This number of men had been on the field service staff for several months. Before this survey was completed, the number of field men had been reduced to 12.

The field service work was established in order to bring the members and the organization in closer contact. Since there were no locals to which the members might go to secure information, the field man was to be the principal connecting link between the farmer and the central office. The field man was supposed to keep the farmer informed regarding the association activities, and to keep the association headquarters informed regarding the attitudes of the farmers. When the association started its campaign of contract enforcement, it was the duty of the field service to check up on contract violations, and collect liquidated damages where possible. This part of the work of the field service gave many farmers a perverted idea of its purpose. It also caused many field men to lose sight of the real educational and informational phases of their work.

The first question asked the members regarding the field service was to determine if they knew whether there was a field service staff in the employ of the association. A few who answered this question may not have known this work by the name of "field service," but since it had carried this name from its beginning, there were few who did not know it by that name if they knew of it at all.

Eighty-two per cent of the farmers said there was a field service staff. Twelve per cent said there was not such a service, and six per cent said they did not know. A larger per cent of the owners than of the renters in each of the districts were aware that there was a field service staff. For all the districts combined, 90 per cent of the owners and 75 per cent of the renters said the association had a field service staff. More of the farmers in the eastern district knew nothing about the field service than in the other two districts, which was probably due to the fact that the members in the district were farther apart and the field men had to cover more territory. Ninety-one per cent of the farmers in the southwest and south central districts knew that there was a field service staff, while only 64 per cent of them in the eastern district knew the association had a field service staff. Twenty-six per cent of them in the east district said there was not a field service staff, as compared to eight per cent in the southwest, and seven per cent in the south central districts.

To get an idea of the impressions which the members had obtained regarding the purpose of the field service from their own observation, they were asked the purpose of the field service. A large per cent of the members thought the purpose of the field service was to get

violators of the contract than for any other one thing. (Table 19). Almost one-half of the members thought this was the purpose of the field service. One-fifth said the purpose was to get new members, while 15 per cent felt that its function was to give information about the association. Sixteen per cent were not acquainted with the purpose which it served, and three per cent said it had no purpose. The difference in the character of the answers to this question by owners and renters was not marked. A slightly higher per cent of the owners than of the renters gave the purpose of the field service to get violators and new members, while a higher per cent of the tenants than of the owners stated that they did not know the purpose or that it had no purpose. Fifty-three per cent of the members in the southwest district, 47 per cent in the south central, and 33 per cent in the east district thought the purpose of the field service was to get violators of the contract. Twenty per cent in the southwest district, 29 per cent in the south central district, and 14 per cent in the east district said the purpose of the field service was to get new members. The highest per cent of the members who thought the field service was to give information was in the east district with 22 per cent, and the lowest per cent was in the south central district, with 18 per cent. In the southwest district 14 per cent said the purpose of the field service was to give information. These differences in attitudes regarding the purposes of the field service can no doubt be explained quite largely by the activities of the field men in these districts. It should not be forgotten that this survey was made just following the intensive violation settlement campaign by the association, and that the members had not forgotten the activities of the field men in this respect. This attitude toward the field service is no doubt rapidly changing, but it will take some time to build up the proper attitude toward a field service. The association needs to build a sentiment among the members that the field men are not doing "police work" but "service work." Until the members are thus educated, the field men will not be able to accomplish for the association what they should.

In order to get an idea of the extent to which the field men were reaching the members of the association, each member was asked how many times the field man had discussed the association with him. The replies to this question revealed that almost three-fifths of the members interviewed in the three districts said that the field man had never discussed the association with them (Table 20). Of the remainder, 16 per cent had discussed the association once with the field men, 11 per cent twice, six per cent three times, and nine per cent four or more times. Fifty per cent of the owner members, and 64 per cent of the renter members had never discussed the association with the field men. Fifty-five per cent of the members of the south central, and east districts, and 60 per cent in the southwest district said they had never discussed the association with the field men.

Table 19. Replies to question, "What is the purpose of the Field Service?" by members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association in three sections of the cotton belt of Oklahoma. 1925-1926.

Replies	ALL DISTRICTS						Southwest District		South Central District		East District	
	All		Owners		Renters		All		All		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Nothing	13	3	4	2	9	5	2	1	2	2	9	8
New Mem.	86	20	49	22	37	18	41	20	29	29	16	14
Get Viol.	196	46	109	48	87	43	112	53	46	47	38	33
Don't Know	67	16	28	13	39	19	26	12	14	14	27	23
Give Infor.	64	15	34	15	30	15	30	14	8	8	26	22
Total	426	100	224	100	202	100	211	100	99	100	116	100

Table 20. Replies to question, "How many times have field men discussed the association with you?" by members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association in three sections of the cotton belt of Oklahoma. 1925-26.

Replies	ALL DISTRICTS						Southwest District		South Central District		East District	
	All		Owners		Renters		All		All		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
None	215	58	90	50	125	64	109	60	43	55	63	55
One	60	16	34	19	26	14	26	14	12	16	22	19
Two	41	11	25	14	16	8	21	12	8	10	12	10.5
Three	22	6	8	5	14	7	12	7	4	5	6	5
4 or More	36	9	21	12	15	7	13	7	11	14	12	10.5
Total	374	100	178	100	196	100	181	100	78	100	115	100

Reference to Figure 12 will explain in part at least why so many of the members had never discussed the association with the field men. During the period when the association had about 30 men on their field force, many of the field men had from 2500 to 3000 members in their districts. This would mean that the field man would have to see at least from 9 to 10 members each working day of the year. This, of course, was practically impossible. And when one considers that most of the time the field force consisted of less than half this number of men, it is easy to see why the members did not have closer personal contact with the field men. Keeping in contact with several thousand men, scattered over from one to six or eight counties, is next to impossible.

The field man in a cooperative association holds a very important position. He is often able to turn the sentiment of the members either

in favor of or against the association. An attempt was made to find the reaction of members to the field men which the association had employed by asking the members what they thought of the type of field man the association had employed. According to these answers, 64 per cent of the members considered the field men as good men for the place. Seventeen per cent considered the field men were poor, 11 per cent said a part of them were good, and eight per cent said they were not as good as they ought to be. There was not much difference in the answers to this question by owners and renters. Sixty-one per cent of the owner members, and 67 per cent of the renter members considered the field men efficient, and 16 per cent of the owner members and 19 per cent of the renter members considered them inefficient.

There was not much difference in the attitude toward the type of field men in the southwest and east districts, where 56 and 57 per cent respectively considered the field men qualified for the place. However, in the south central district, 83 per cent considered the field men qualified, and only nine per cent considered that they were not qualified.

To determine whether the members considered the field service justified, they were asked if it should be continued. Of the total group of farmers interviewed, 48 per cent were in favor of continuing the field service, 44 per cent said it should not be continued, and eight per cent were undecided. Thirty-five per cent of the members in the southwest, 51 per cent in the east, and 71 per cent in the south central districts were in favor of continuing the field service.

It seems safe to say that the field service has not yet found its proper place in the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association. It has not completely sold itself to the members, partly because of conditions which exist within the staff itself, and partly because of conditions it can overcome only by a slow process of education.

CONCLUSIONS

This study reveals the attitudes of farmers in Oklahoma toward the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association at the time the data were taken. Such a study should be valuable to present and future cooperative marketing organizations in helping them to maintain more satisfactory relations with their members and in helping the members to better judge the results of their cooperative association.

One of the greatest handicaps to cooperative marketing in Oklahoma at the time this study was made was the inexperience of the farmers in cooperative endeavors. Ninety per cent of the members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association were getting their first experience in cooperative marketing. It takes some time for farmers to gain adequate experience to give them the proper attitude toward their cooperative organizations.

Many farmers joined the association with erroneous ideas about what they thought the association would be able to accomplish. This was no doubt due in many cases to the type of information given out during the campaign for membership. Many of the leaders in the movement were over enthusiastic about what the association would be able to do for the farmers. As a result many members were dissatisfied not necessarily because the association had not functioned properly but because the results which were promised were not accomplished. This means that an association should select its employees very carefully and censure very severely the type of information which is given out to the farmers. Farmers ought to have the truth about cooperative marketing and not be induced to join because of exaggerated statements of possibilities. Farmers are interested in results. If the results come, promises are not needed, and if the results do not come, promises are useless.

Lack of understanding of the contract on the part of the members and an appreciation of their obligations under the contract caused much trouble for the officials of the organization. By bitter experience the lesson seems to have been learned that cooperation is not to be forced but must be voluntary. After several years experience three-fifths of the members stated that they were in favor of a withdrawal clause in the contract. Instead of placing so much emphasis on the contract the association might do well to carefully select their members and admit none into the organization who do not have some conception of the duties of cooperative membership.

This study also revealed that much needs to be done by the association in securing the cooperation of various groups in the community. This is quite necessary since the business of a cooperative is a matter of concern to the whole community and should be so considered. This cooperation can no doubt be accomplished by acquainting outside groups with what the association is trying to accomplish and by showing a willingness to work with others to this end.

Data from this study also indicated that certain members did not have complete confidence in the management. This lack of confidence in the management caused many difficulties which otherwise might have been eliminated. Officers will help to inspire confidence in the members by always being willing to give them complete information about their business and by giving evidence by their acts and deeds that they have the interest of the association at heart.

One great difficulty with an organization like the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association is that it is too far from the members to the central organization. The members need to be brought in closer contact with their business organization in order to make them feel they are a part of the organization. This condition can be greatly improved by three methods: By sending well qualified representatives into the field to work with the farmers, to give talks, illustrated lectures, etc. A second method to be used is that of printed material such as house organs,

special news items, radio, interviews, etc. Another very important means is that of building up local business units, such as cooperative gins which can function as a part of the organization. Each of these methods should be taken advantage of to the fullest possible extent.

This study also revealed the fact that more consideration needs to be given the social and economic conditions of the farmers with respect to their cooperative marketing attitudes. Many farmers are forced to take an adverse attitude because of their financial circumstances. Under such conditions cooperatives will do well to adjust their business so far as possible to the needs of the farmers.

The future success of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association, as indicated by this study, will depend largely upon two conditions: The extent to which the officials can correct some of the erroneous ideas and attitudes of the Oklahoma farmers toward the association and the extent to which they more nearly conduct their business to meet the economic and social conditions of the farmers.

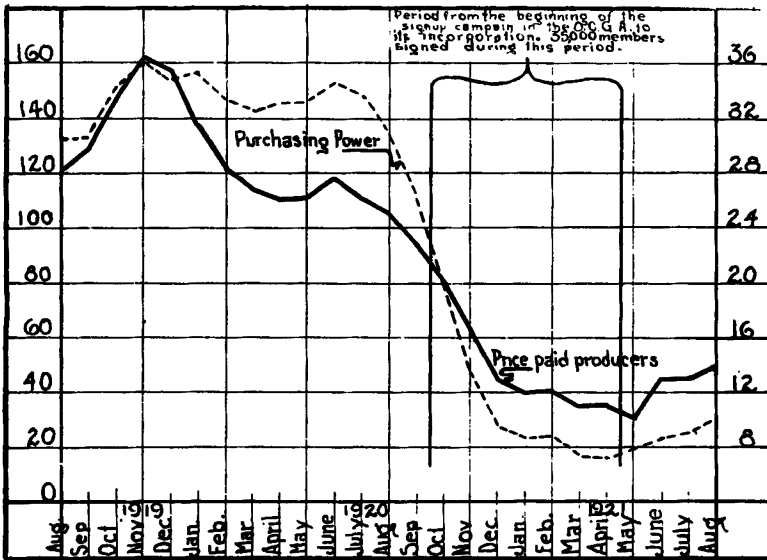


Figure 2. Prices paid producers and purchasing power of Oklahoma cotton, August, 1919, to September, 1921. Note the trend of prices and purchasing power during the period of sign-up in the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association.

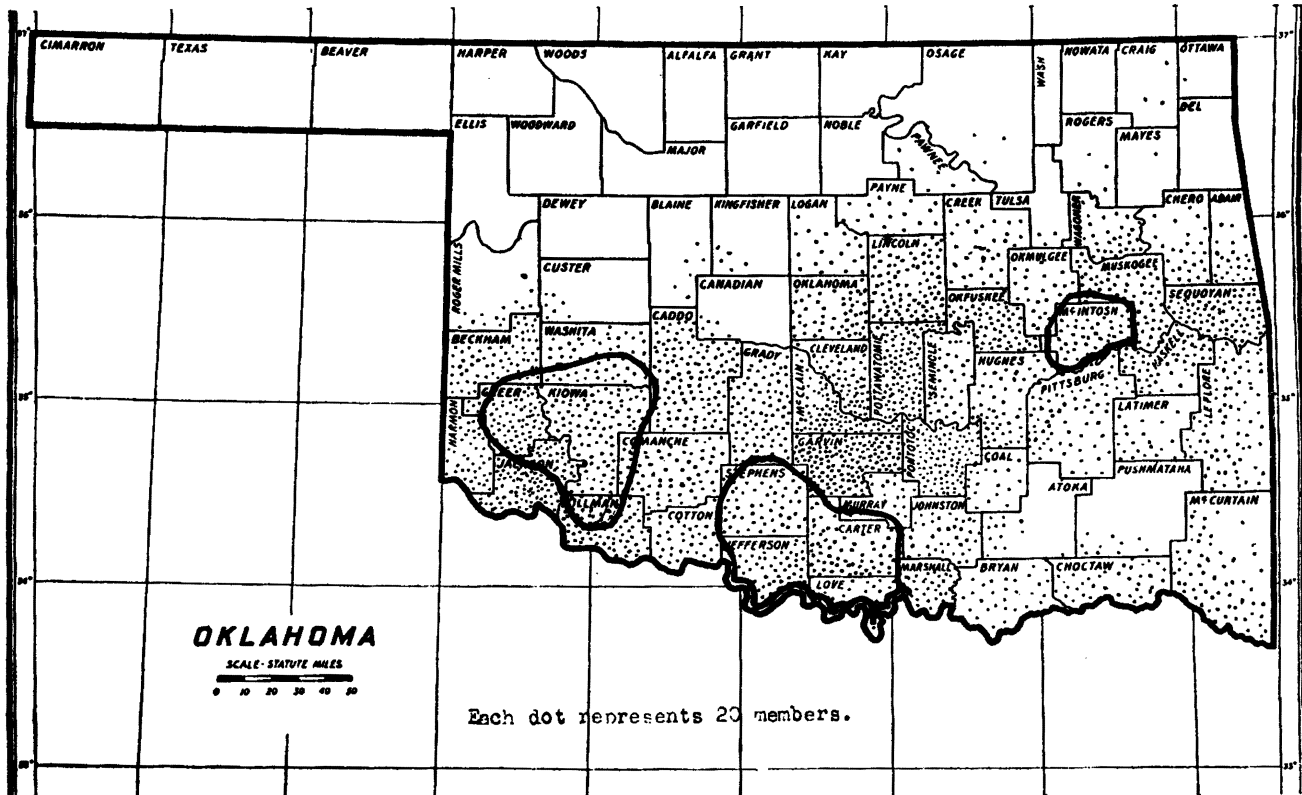


Figure 3. Membership of Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association to May, 1920. Enclosed areas show where schedules were taken for this study.

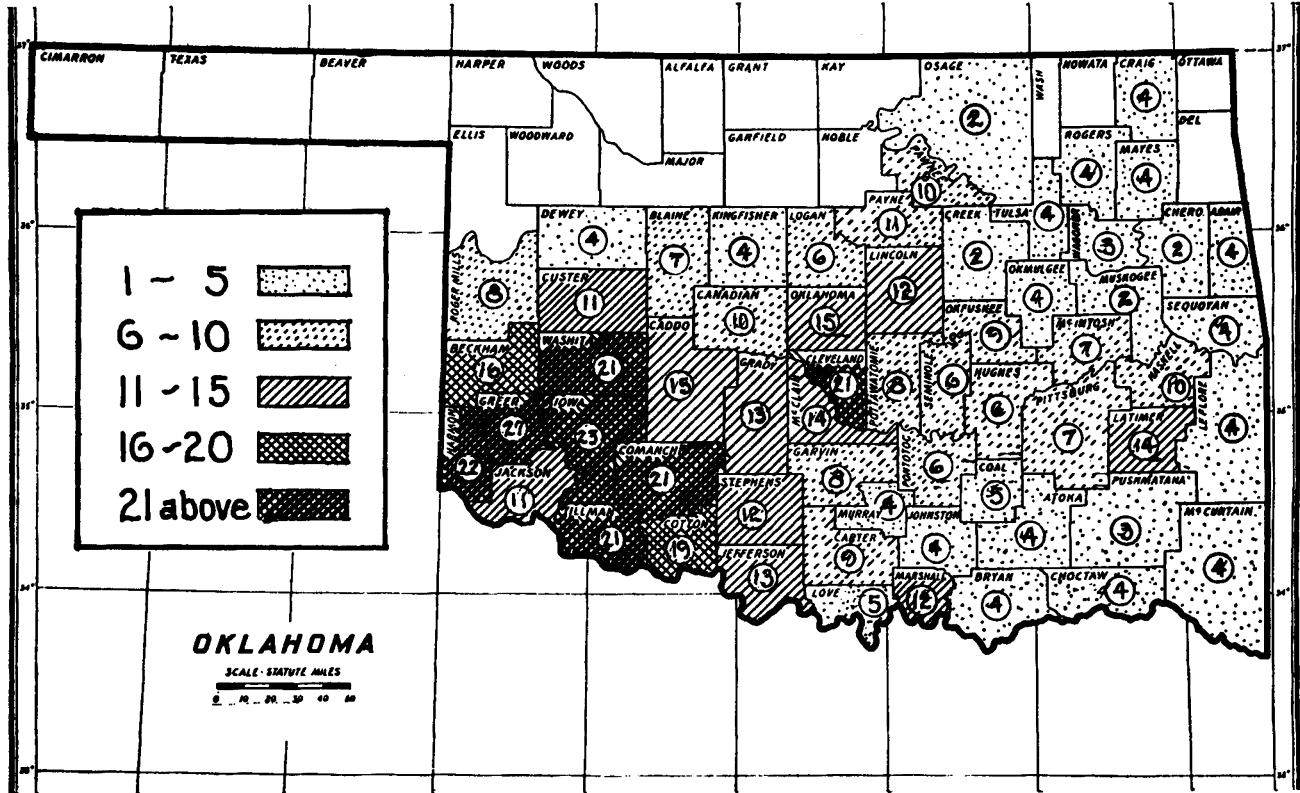


Figure 6. Per cent of cotton produced which was delivered to Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association, average for seven years, 1921-1927.

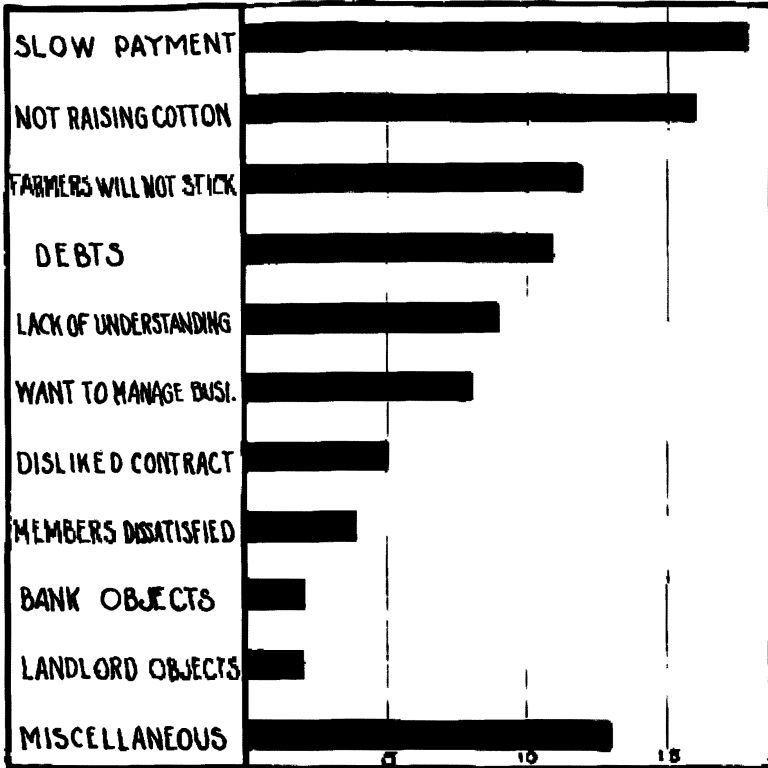


Figure 7. Reasons given by farmers in three sections of the cotton belt of Oklahoma for not joining the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association. 1925-1926.

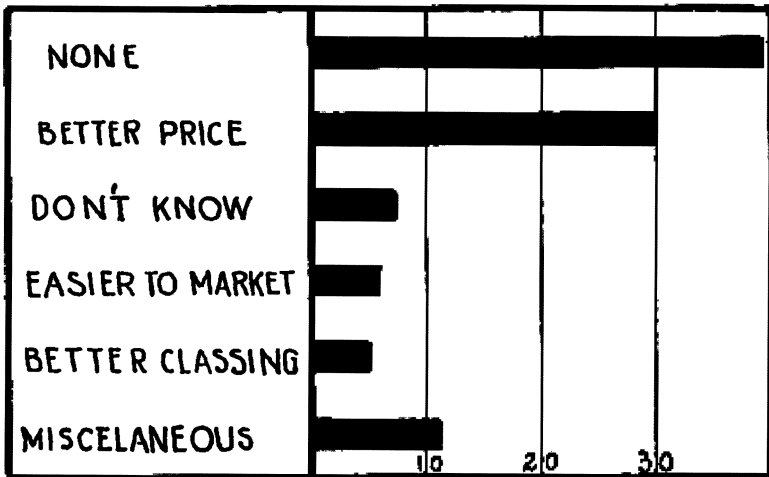


Figure 8. Advantages which the members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association figured they had which the non-members did not have.

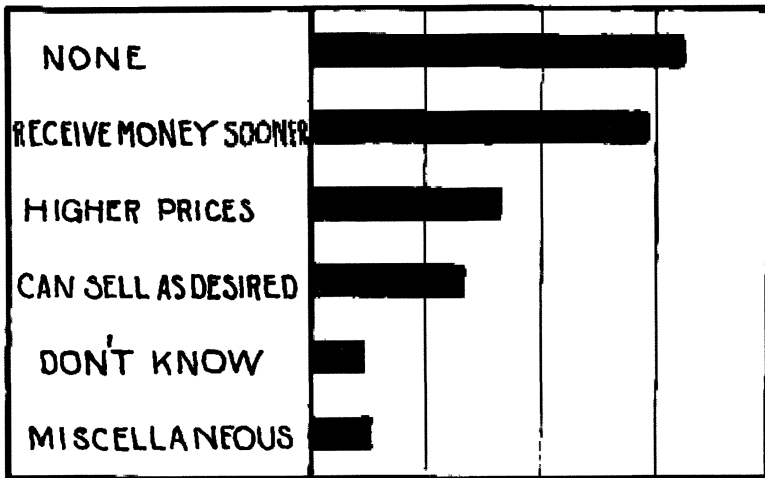


Figure 9. Advantages which the members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association figured the non-members had which they as members did not have.

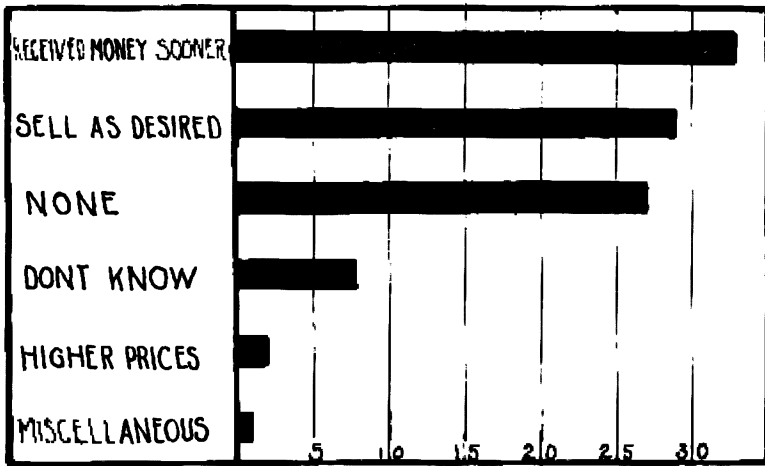


Figure 10. Advantages which non-members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association figured non-members had which members did not have. 1925-1926.

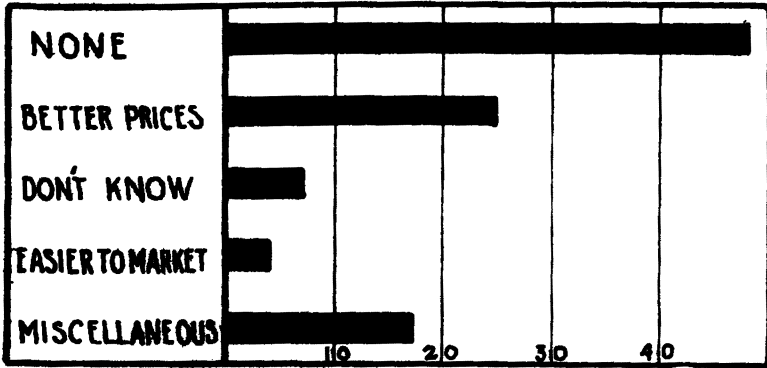


Figure 11. Advantages which the non-members of the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association figured the members had which non-members did not have. 1925-1926.

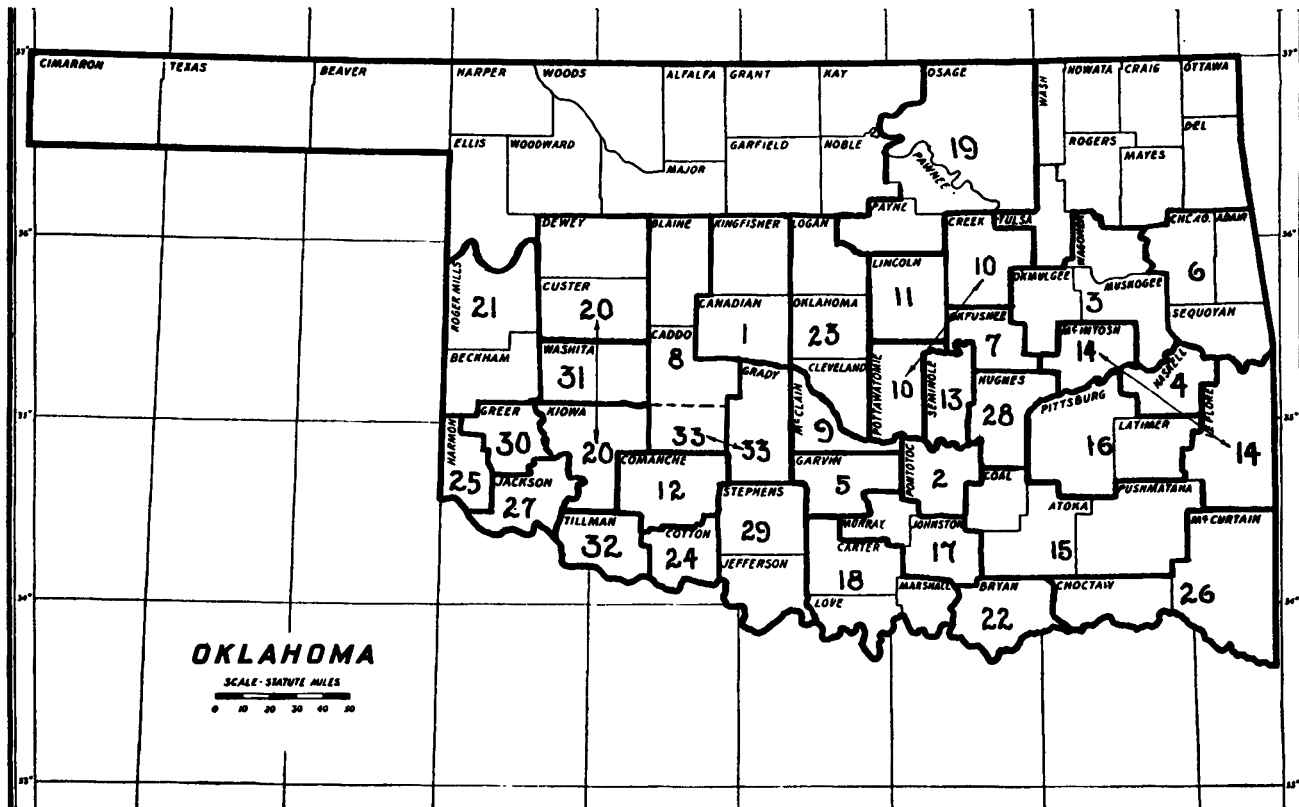


Figure 12. Field service districts of Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association at time of survey.