

11-16-2016

Agriculture significant to Clark County

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Recommended Citation

Richter, Wendy Bradley, "Agriculture significant to Clark County" (2016). *Articles*. 175.
<https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/articles/175>

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Agriculture significant to Clark County

By Wendy Richter

For the Siftings

The Clark County Historical Association has just released the 2016 edition of the Clark County Historical Journal. Published since 1973, the Journal is one of the Association's major projects each year. The 2016 Clark County Historical Journal includes an article featuring news items extracted from front pages of Arkadelphia's Southern Standard weekly newspaper of 100 years ago, 1916. The articles illustrate the variety of news published by the paper, and offer a glimpse into life in early twentieth-century Clark County. Agriculture remained important, automobiles began to appear on area roads, and long-distance telephones offered new communication capabilities. As always,

politics, economic developments, and disasters made headlines as well.

With agriculture's significance to the economy, a number of farm-related stories made the front page. For example, the March 30, 1916, paper reported on Clark County's cotton crop for 1915: "The amount of cotton ginned in Arkansas from the 1915 crop amounted to 789,430 bales, as compared to 999,237 bales from the crop of 1914, says the U.S. Department of Commerce. Of that amount Clark County furnished last year 8,950 bales against 11,405 bales for 1914."

On April 6, a headline read, "Pig Clubs Growing": "That interest is beginning to awake over the county about Pig Clubs is shown by the following: During the past week Arthur Vestal shipped a

fine Poland-China pig to W.T. Ewing, of Curtis. Mr. Ewing intends to give this pig to his boy as his part in one of the Pig Clubs. Thus the movement is steadily moving on."

In June, the Southern Standard said, "Peaches are Ripe in Big Orchard: Large Returns Expected from Banner Crop." "The Red Bird peaches are beginning to ripen in the big Cardinal orchard two miles west of town, and within the next few days a large force of men and boys will be at work there picking and packing the fruit for shipment. The crop is said to be very fine this year, not having been damaged by frost or anything, and since the peaches will be put into the eastern markets ahead of anything, being two weeks earlier than the company marketed their crop last year, the price

they will bring will reach the top notch. Many of the boys began picking in earnest out there this morning."

As August came to a close, the paper reported the "First Bale of Cotton." "Elijah Wright of Manchester Township brought in the first bale of new crop cotton Tuesday and sold the bale to Smoker Merchandise Company. The cotton and seed brought Elijah \$113.75."

For information about how to get your copy of the Journal or to inquire about other Clark County history matters, visit or contact the Clark County Historical Museum (www.clarkcountyhistory.org or 230.1360) or the Clark County Historical Association's Archives at the Ouachita Baptist University Library (www.obu.edu/archives or 245.5332).