

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE SEED SITUATION IN TENNESSEE¹

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Until a short while ago, Tennessee has been used as a dumping ground for all of the illegal seeds which other states forbade to enter. This state of affairs was caused by the absence "of . . . an experienced seed analyst as a separate unit in the State Department." The state chemist had this work to do besides his own and, of course, could not do all well.

Two years ago, a seed analyst was requested by the state chemist and was later employed. Lot after lot of seeds were condemned and merchants prosecuted. An educational campaign was conducted among the dealers at first, and later among the farmers.

The average farmer is the hardest person in the world to convince regarding seed. The State has a seed bulletin that will be sent free of charge to any person in the state. An advertisement was inserted in every newspaper in Tennessee telling about this bulletin. There were just exactly twenty farmers who wrote requesting a copy. Two county agents and one superintendent of a school teaching Smith-Hughes Agriculture, requested a number for delivery among farmers. The rest of the six hundred and three were sent to dealers whether they wanted them or not, because their names appeared once or many times in our records, according to the number of times that they had broken the law. We had two thousand and five hundred to start with. Figure out for yourself how much the farmer cares whether he ruins his land.

Dealers have told the seed analyst time and again that they wouldn't plant the seed that they sell, on their own farms. The situation, however, has decidedly improved in one way during the past season. The dealer is buying his seed from the wholesaler with the distinct guarantee that it passes the law as regards illegal weed seed. Ten weeds are named as illegal in our law.

Since our own wholesalers are falling into line and refusing to sell illegal seed to the dealers, some of the small dealers think that they can buy this trash from an outside firm and "get by" with it. How sadly disappointed these boys are going to be just as soon as this office "gets a line" on them. This State is going to be cleaned up as regards the promiscuous peddling of illegal seeds.

¹Abstract of paper presented before the Tennessee Academy of Science, April 26, 1929.

Here is an example of seed from a bag of condemned seed labeled *Red Clover*:

Red Clover Seed	53.43%
Other Seed	44.57%
Inert Matter	2.00%
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Total	100.00%

Among the other seeds were 37.10% weed seed. The bag was marked "Standard," which means that it should contain 94% of Red Clover seed.