
THE McLOUD BLACKBERRY GROWERS ASSOCIATION

MARVIN R. EATON, Oklahoma A. & M. College, Stillwater

ABSTRACT

During the nineteen thirties, a farmer in the McLoud District of Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma, began large scale commercial production of blackberries. This crop had supplanted cotton locally by 1941.

Neighboring farmers found that the blackberry, which grows wild along the creek banks, would increase its production through domestic care. Also, they discovered that the bush quickly adapted itself to soil which was partially destroyed by many years of growing cotton. These adjustments resulted in considerable expansion of the total acreage of blackberries within the McLoud District.

By 1940 overproduction of berries had become acute and the immediate market area was saturated; thereby forcing a low return per farmer. Market-

ing, itself, also presented a difficult problem because most of the farmers were forced to employ trucking firms to distribute their blackberries. These conditions created an unfavorable situation which threatened to destroy the blackberry industry.

An organization, known as the McLoud Blackberry Grower's Association, was incorporated in 1940 as a non-profit concern to remedy conditions. The primary objectives were to improve the marketing and to regulate the production, transportation and sales of blackberries. The Association has made considerable progress over a decade to the profit of its members.

Because of economic, geographic and social factors, it appears that the blackberry industry is well established in this locality. The Association is developing into a social instrument for making the proper environmental and economic adjustments. Future growth of the blackberry industry here, it appears, will depend upon the efficiency of the producers and outside marketing developments of the Association.
