

**DEVELOPMENT OF COTTON IN
KUMTA-DHARWAR TRACT**

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AN OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The plains of North Mysore, stretching into the central and north-eastern parts of Dharwar, south-eastern part of Belgaum, and central and south-eastern parts of Bijapur districts, have deep black soil and congenial climatic conditions for growing quality cotton. The tract grows both Deshi and American varieties of cotton. The Deshi cotton grown in this tract is known as Kumta (G. herbaceum) cotton. It has probably derived its name from the Kumta port in North Kanara district from which it was shipped to Bombay until the railway line, linking the cotton growing areas of the tract with Bombay was established at the end of the nineteenth century. As traditionally Kumta variety of cotton was grown in this area, it was known as Kumta-Dharwar tract and it is still recognized by the same name. The name of Dharwar is probably associated with it because the plains of the district are well known for growing the best cotton in the whole of the tract.

Motivated by the trade interest in growing long-staple cotton within the Empire, the East India Company Government introduced in 1842 two American varieties of G. hirsutum type, namely, Upland Georgian and New Orleans in this tract. The experiments were highly successful on the plains of Dharwar. It is significant to note that, among the several efforts made by the Government in different parts of the country to

grow American cottons during the last century, it was only in Dharwar that the experiments were successful at the field level.

The development of a crop in a region may be conceived in respect of increase in the total area under the crop, increase in the area under improved variety vis-a-vis the total area, improvement in technology of production resulting in increase in the productivity and change in the production organization so that the new technology is adopted on a mass scale. This study has two objectives which can be best stated in the form of two direct questions such as "What were the general conditions under which the area under improved variety of cotton in the Kumta-Dharwar tract developed during different periods and what were the growth-promoting agents?" and, "What is the functional relationship between the improved production techniques and per acre yield; and what is the type of farm organization which adopts better techniques and why?" The study is divided into two parts accordingly and Part I contains the first four chapters and Part II contains the rest five chapters. An outline of the contents of different chapters is given below.

Chapter I presents a descriptive picture of the soil-climate complex of the cotton growing area in Mysore. The data are drawn partly from a brochure prepared by the Cotton Specialist at Dharwar, and partly from the district gazetteers. How the American variety of cotton was introduced

in the tract and how it developed during the period from 1829 to 1882 is described in Chapter II, for which the district gazetteers mainly provided the data. The other sources of information for this chapter are the papers in the possession of the East India Company, showing what measures have been taken since 1836 to promote the cultivation of cotton in India and the works on cotton in India by Royle, Leacock and Mandelbaum, Tata and Cassels. Development of cotton research and administration during the period from 1918 to 1962 are traced in Chapter III, depending upon the information gathered from the Annual Reports of the Indian Central Cotton Committee. Chapter IV presents the standard production techniques, based on the results of the agricultural experiment stations and evolved for different cotton zones having different soil-climate complexes. In this case, again, the Cotton Specialist at Dharwar provided the data.

Chapters V to VIII deal with the organizational problems of cotton cultivation, based on the data collected through making case studies of 67 farmers in a cotton growing village in Dharwar. The characteristics of the selected farmers and their farms are described in Chapter V. In Chapter VI, a systematic technique-adoption index is developed for the cotton growing plots in the sample. It is done in the way the American rural sociologists have done it but is confined to only some major improvements to suit the purpose of the study. In Chapter VII, the relationship between rate of

technique-adoption and productivity of cotton is established by employing multiple regression analysis and Cobb-Douglas production function. Chapter VIII attempts to bring to light the most ideal and feasible characteristics of the farm organization adopting the standard cotton production techniques. The concluding chapter synthesizes the results of Part I and Part II and adds that the mass-acceptance of the standard techniques is a new condition of growth. It advocates for introducing necessary institutional arrangement to promote that condition.