This material has been taken from "The Tobacco Industry for Kentucky" published 1938 by the NYA in Kentucky, and "The Tobacco Industry in North Carolina" published in 1939 by the NYA of North Carolina.

For employment information or vocational guidance assistance, consult your local school counselor and the local office of your state employment service.

TOBACCO EXHIBITS IN THE WORLD'S FAIR

At the American Tobacco Company Building, located on the Avenue of Pioneers, there is a complete cigarette making installation which reproduces in detail the operations in cigarette manufacture after the tobacco has been prepared and blended. The intricacy of the cigarette machinery, the hospital-like cleanliness which surrounds every operation, and the ingenious mechanisms which are brought into play to pack the cigarettes are all intensely interesting and well illustrate the magnitude of the tobacco industry and the manufacturing resources which it commands.

Another unique example of tobacco machinery will be seen in the building of the General Cigar Company which is also on the Avenue of Pioneers at the intersection of Jefferson Place. Within the rotunda a mural executed in mosaic depicts the story of tobacco production and shipping and the use of cigars. Here also may be seen the cigar smoking machinery which represents the result of years of patient design and experimentation and which actually performs the same operations that have for so long had been done by the deft fingers of the hand cigar maker. One has only to visualize the movements of one's own hand in rolling a sheet of cellophane, for example, to realize how complex was the engineering problem faced by those who successfully substituted fingers of steel for the human hand in the making and packing of cigars.

It will be observed that three machines are in operation. The first, by the use of vacuum suction, holds the wrapper of the cigar flat as the operator applies it in successive layers, and then trims the tobacco leaf wrapper to size. In the next

unit of the machine the tobacco leaf wrapper is applied around the filler and the exterior shape of the cigar is formed and it is trimmed to the correct size. Finally the completed cigars are wrapped individually in cellophane and the cigar band applied and they are inserted in packages of five.

The various steps in tobacco planting, growing, curing, and marketing are also shown in six dioramas displayed in the American Tobacco Company Building and the cigarette exhibit also presents special conditioning and ultra-violet ray processes. In all of this display of ultra-modern manufacturing methods it is interesting to recall that in spite of its present perfection and refinement, the tobacco industry is probably one of the oldest in America and is distinctly American in its origin, as tobacco was first grown and used in the New World long before the days of our first colonists.

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THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY

NATIONAL YOUTH ADMINISTRATION

NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR . 1939

The Tobacco Industry

THE UNITED STATES, India, Cuba, Russia, and Dutch colonies in the east, especially Sumatra, are the chief tobacco-producing countries of the world today, raising nearly seven-ninths of the world's supply. The total production annually is approximately one million tons; the United States produces two-thirds of the world's supply. Today, with all nationalities using tobacco products, the demand is so great that only specialized, large scale producers can supply the consumers, and we find the tobacco industry highly mechanized.

Specialization exists in rehandling, as well as in manufacturing, for before any tobacco reaches the factory, it is sent through several rehandling processes including ordering, stemming, sorting, pricing, and aging. The best cigarette tobaccos today are aged for three years or longer before being manufactured.

Formerly the rehandling establishment sent buyers to the farmer to buy his crop at round figures. Now the modern farmer cures the tobacco himself and brings it to loose leaf warehouse floors, where it is stored until going on sale at auction. At the auction sale, representative buyers for rehandlers, manufacturers and exporters bid for the various crops offered, buying by the pound. These buyers are expert judges of tobacco as to its weight, texture, size, grade, and price, and are paid handsomely for their knowledge.

Rehandling establishments prepare leaf tobacco for manufacturers and shippers by stemming, sorting it into grades, and placing it in order.

Stemming until the last few years was done by hand entirely, but since the perfection of the stemming machines, the hand process is fast being eliminated. Nevertheless, large quantities of tobacco are hand stemmed in order to provide more employment.

When tobacco reaches the rehandler it is in leaf form, having been stripped from the stalk by the farmer. The farmer also grades his tobacco crop, but, of course, it is re-sorted by the rehandler who steams and re-dries the leaf and has it put in order for bulking and packing in hogsheads. The re-drying is a highly skilled function of the rehandler, for tobacco remains in wood hogsheads for aging, which makes the weed more mellow, and consequently in better condition for consumption. Most rehandling operations require semi-skilled workers, though some require unusual skill, and others call for physical labor. All workers, even unskilled laborers, must possess knowledge of the different types and grades of tobacco.

Tobacco rehandling is highly seasonal as most of the work is done during December, January, February and March, the months in which the loose leaf auction sales are held. Both men and women are employed in rehandling occupations with men in the majority of jobs.

CIGARETTES

Cigarettes, when first produced on a commercial basis, were rolled by hand, but now most of the operations are performed by machinery operated by semi-skilled workers.

Tobacco is sent through a stemming machine, then to a blending and flavoring machine, and then to the cutting machines. After being blended and cut the tobacco is conveyed to the making machines, some of which will turn out 1,400 plain cigarettes, or 1,000 cork-tipped cigarettes per minute. The conveyors then carry the cigarettes to the packing machine, which at one operation, puts on foil wrappers, outside labeled casings, union labels and government stamps. These machines will turn out 125 packages of 20 cigarettes each per minute. An adjacent machine wraps the packages in cellophane.

The placing of finished packages in cartons is one of the few operations performed entirely by hand. Female workers usually are engaged in this work. The next process, the wrapping of cartons with waxed paper, is performed by machine. Another hand operation is the packing of cartons in cases, each containing one thousand, five thousand, or ten thousand cigarettes. Nearly all employees in cigarette manufacturing are paid on the wage basis rather than by piece work.

OTHER PRODUCTS

Plug tobacco is prepared and shaped by machine, then wrapped by hand in a leaf of tobacco which acts as a binder. Tags and labels are affixed by hand. Many plug tobacco workers are paid on a piece-work basis, and men predominate in this phase of the work.

The preparation of scrap tobacco is entirely mechanical, with machines turning out an average of fifty packages a minute. All workers are semiskilled machine operators. Smoking tobacco is prepared and packed in cotton sacks, paper cartons or tins by machinery. A conveyer moves the filled sacks to girls who pull the draw strings and tie the opening. These employees are paid on a piecework basis, but all other workers engaged in the preparation of smoking tobacco are paid on the wage basis. Tobacco twist remains a hand-made product. Machines are used in preparing the tobacco, but the actual making of the twist is a hand process requiring considerable skill. Twist-makers are paid on a piece-work basis. Men are in the majority in this occupation.

The perfection of machinery has caused many changes in cigar manufacturing. All cigars formerly were made by hand in small factories located throughout the tobacco producing sections. Today it is estimated that ninety percent of the total cigar output is manufactured through the use of machinery.

In tobacco manufacturing the rate of pay depends upon the type of work, but all employees of the large concerns receive comparatively generous wages. Employees paid on the hourly basis receive from thirty to fifty cents per hour, women being paid slightly less than the male workers. Those on a piece work basis usually earn slightly more than the average wage.

Men and women between eighteen and twenty-five years of age are most desirable as beginners in tobacco factories. While machines are replacing men and women, it is obvious that the present demand for cigarettes could not be filled by man alone. The machines need operators, and there still are many processes which can be done only by hand.