

replacing molasses and sugar on many farms. Sherman's troops reported large quantities of the product "at nearly every plantation" on their march to the sea and some admitted to even developing a liking for it.

The naval blockade during the War, along with the impoverished conditions that followed, helped establish a permanent foothold for the sorghum industry in Georgia. Prices for sorghum are reported to have soared to \$20 a gallon immediately after the War.

During the late 1800's, many middle and south Georgia farmers attempted to develop the sorghum and sugar cane industry to replace cotton. Sugar cane became the more successful of the two. Acreage tripled from 1870 to 1900 and production finally surpassed that of Georgia's standby, sorghum.

Today, sorghum syrup often falls into the category with other old-fashioned foods such as country

cured hams, red eye gravy and "cathead" biscuits. Many folks are not exactly sure what it is and often confuse molasses with sorghum. There is a big difference. Molasses is the strong residue left when sugar is extracted from sugar cane while sorghum syrup is derived solely from sorghum cane.

North Georgia continues to be the center for the state's sorghum syrup capitol of Georgia. The sorghum syrup festival, held each year in Blairsville, is scheduled to coincide with the making of syrup by Union County farmers. It features an old time horse-powered cane mill and competition for champion syrup sopper among its activities.

North Georgia mountain farmers have always taken certain pride in making their syrup. While electricity and tractors have replaced the old mule grinding cane mills, nothing can take the place of good, old-fashioned sorghum syrup.