Definitions starting with A

Agriculture

The plantation system of the Caribbean proper and the American South was never successful in the Bahamas because of the thin soil and uncertain rainfall. The loyalists' cotton plantations failed, as did later attempts at large-scale export of pineapples, sisal, and tomatoes, further thwarted by the great distance to markets, the quality of the produce, and high foreign tariffs. Moreover, the occupation of KEEPING FIELD is looked down upon, so while individual Bahamians might keep a small FARM in their yard for their family's own needs, most food must be imported.

However, some people do live by farming. These CULTIVATORS usually have their PLANTATIONS or PROVISION GROUNDS away from the settlement in the BACK LAND. While WHITE LAND is sufficient for GROUND VEGETABLES, also called GROUND FRUIT, the richer BLACK LAND, also called PROVISION LAND, is needed for other crops. Iron-rich RED LAND, also called PINEAPPLE LAND, is best for growing PINES; the PINE-SLIPS are planted in POT-HOLES, the entire PIECE forming an ORCHARD. Bananas and sugar cane are also grown in such cavities, also called BANANA HOLES.

Traditionally, new areas of LOW BUSH LAND are cultivated every few years since the soil quickly becomes exhausted and insect-infested. To CUT DOWN a field, the BUSH is CHOPPED with a MACHET and trees are LAPPED and left to dry. A BUSH FENCE may be left (or grown) in order to separate SQUARES. Finally the ground is BURNED OUT to rid it of insects and any remaining undergrowth. Tradition dictates that planting take place during a YOUNG or COMING MOON; if the moon is WASTING, the crop might WASTE, too—corn might BLAST and cane might BORE. A PLANTING STICK is used to make holes for the seeds, and in the rainy CROP SEASON the young plants soon BUMP UP. A BUGGY may be needed to bring in CAVE-EARTH as FERTILIZE; the PIECE may have to be cleaned several times of SPROUT-WEEDS or STOCK-WEEDS, and stumps may have to be BRUISED. As CROP TIME approaches, the farmer may sleep in a CAMP by his field to protect it, or have an OBEAH MAN FIX it against THIEFING with a GUARD. In former times the produce might have been collected in a CATACOO and transported in CHIRONES or CROOKS on the back of a donkey; today it is usually BUSHELED OFF into CROP BASKETS or CROCUS SACKS, also called STRAW BAGS.

As for animals, many yards have a few FOWL and their BIDDIES, some PIGS being fattened into HOGS, and a goat tethered nearby for milk and MUTTON.

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