

## Suburban Gardener

# Cotton Can Grow In Michigan

By BETTY FRANKEL

Can cotton be grown in Overland? Undoubtedly it will never be an important crop in this area, but John Archer has proved that it can be grown here. For the past two years he has raised some cotton in the vegetable garden behind his home on Randall Street in Farmington.

He readily admits, however, that the summers here are not long enough or warm enough to really suit this southern plant. Archer, who has been a resident of Farmington for 21 years, grew up in Memphis, Tenn., in the heart of the cotton country. A bit of nostalgia prompted him to have a Memphis relative send him some cotton seeds.

He planted the seeds in his garden in late May. They grew into sturdy plants three to four feet tall with large leaves. In September they were studded with large bell-shaped flowers, some pink and some white.

The shape of the flowers was much like those on hollyhocks or hibiscus which are relatives of the cotton plants.

AFTER THE flowers faded the seed pods developed and in a few weeks those "bolls" began to split open and the cottony white fibers puffed out. The seeds are entangled in this fluffy mass.

Archer explained that in the South the bolls are picked and sent to a "gin" where machines separate the seeds from the fibers. The fibers are then made into thread and other cotton products.

The seeds are pressed to extract the oil which is used for salad and cooking oil and in margarine and other shortening. The crushed seeds are compressed into cakes which are used as food for cattle.

Archer merely grows his cotton as a curiosity, but his wife uses the stalks of cotton with the fibers puffing out of the seed pods as a dried arrangement in her living room. She finds it makes an unusual but attractive and long lasting bouquet.

In addition to cotton, John Archer has experimented with growing peanuts. He finds that these do well in this climate, although rabbits and squirrels eat much of his crop before he can harvest the nuts.

The seeds he plants are raw, unroasted peanuts. The roasted ones will not sprout.



JOHN ARCHER displays the snowy cotton bolls on the plants he raised in his garden. (Evert photo)



HOME office adjacent to kitchen built onto cabinets with frame of 2x2-inch western wood keeps phone, note pad, menus handy.

## Mobile Families Need Flexible Furnishings

"Potluck" is a great idea for community suppers but a poor approach to home furnishings for mobile families.

"Since the average American family moves five times during the husband's working years and once more at retirement, they must often choose adaptable furnishings," says Margaret Boschetti, extension home furnishings specialist at Michigan State University. "With careful shopping, you can find furniture and accessories to fit many different types of homes," she says. Following is a buying plan for the mobile family: Avoid oversized pieces,

Miss Boschetti suggests. If you've ever made special arrangements for transporting a grand piano, a wall-to-wall carpet or a super-size mirror, you'll think twice before burdening yourself with bulky possessions.

Transitional styles — that are neither period pieces nor way-out modern — can be the backbone of an exciting room. These are sturdy, practical basics that are attractive in combination with many furniture styles.

MODULAR units also offer decorating flexibility, the specialist says. Usually available as standard-sized forms, they are designed for

"stacking" (vertically) or "bunching" (horizontally) in any room to serve any need. Free-standing storage systems are a movable answer to book shelf and cabinet needs. They range from budget types (metal ceiling to floor tension poles which hold brackets for shelves) to deluxe models (made of fine cabinet woods or contemporary — clear or colorful plastics).

Budget conscious Americans — on-the-move want storage pieces which can be packed for shipping, and used later as furniture. Antique trunks and footlockers are a real find at auctions and

house sales. Wicker, "Hong Kong trunks," cedar chests, fiberboard storage chests and cardboard file cabinets are also good traveling companions. Less-than-snappy versions of these can be covered with attractive, self-stick vinyl.

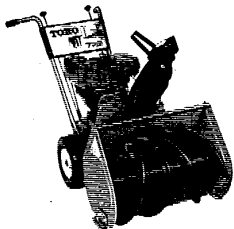
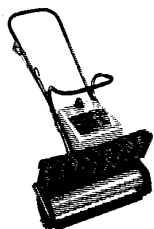
Because so many Americans lead transient lives, companies from coast to coast offer furniture rental plans. Renting is a good idea for an especially short stay, Miss Boschetti believes. Peppered with personal accessories, an apartment of rented furniture can be handy and friendly.



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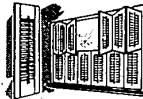
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