

BOB  
SIX FOR TWENTY? THEN GROW YOUR OWN

A Devon farmer has harvested a very good crop of tobacco, and with the threat <sup>of seed</sup> Six shillings for Twenty Cigarettes hanging over us it might be a good idea to follow his example. Back in May he planted seeds in a greenhouse, while the shock of the last Budget was fresh in mind. From just a pinch <sup>of seed</sup> you can plant a whole acre. Being a weed the <sup>tobacco</sup> ~~plant~~ needs very little encouragement. In three weeks the seedlings have to be thinned out. The original seed for this experiment came from Virginia, and best Virginian quality, says farmer Ronald Duncan, can be achieved in Britain. Each plant in the field requires about two feet of room.

This year, for the fifth harvest running, there was a good crop. Given a Southern aspect any soil that will grow tomatoes will grow tobacco. ~~which will yield nearly ten thousand ounces of smokeable leaf.~~ Any gardener or allotment-holder who can afford a plot of ground twelve yards square can raise twenty two pounds of tobacco a year, nearly seven ounces a week.

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In the curing lies the real art of producing tobacco. The leaf has to be dried at a temperature of ninety degrees and then kept for four days with the thermometer rising to a hundred and sixty. Then the honest amateur ~~collects his crop and~~ notifies the Excise authorities, who in due course collect the tax. If, after all that trouble, it just makes you sick, go back to tomatoes next yr.