

## A Culture Productive of Infinite Wretchedness



*Thomas Jefferson described the system of growing tobacco that prevailed in Tidewater Virginia and Maryland as "a culture of infinite wretchedness." What do you know about tobacco and the tobacco farming of his time?*

1. The first English colonists who landed in Jamestown learned about tobacco from the Native Americans in the area, who taught them to grow it. The colonists, in turn, sent some of their harvest back to England, introducing it as a novelty there.

- True
- False

2. If a tobacco plantation was a thousand acres, how much of it might typically be under tobacco cultivation at any one time?

- 30 acres.
- 100 acres.
- 300 acres.
- 600 acres.

3. How large an acreage of tobacco plants could each laborer tend?

- A half an acre.
- 1 acre.
- 2-3 acres.
- 10 acres.

4. A Tidewater tobacco plantation owner in 1725 might typically have what percentage of his total wealth in the value of his slaves (as opposed to his land, livestock, tools, buildings, and household possessions)?

- 10 %
- 30 %
- 50%
- 75%

5. By 1750, what percentage of the Chesapeake region's population were slaves?

- 2 %
- 7 %
- 15 %
- 35%

6. In 1619, the first ship arrived in Jamestown carrying women who intended to marry some of the colonists and embark on new lives. The men had to pay the passage of their brides-to-be, and payment was assessed in tobacco, rather than in gold or silver. How much did each man pay for his chosen woman?

- 10 pounds of tobacco and 2 hams.
- 120 pounds of tobacco.
- 500 pounds (one hogshead) of tobacco.
- 1000 pounds (two hogsheads) of tobacco and three cheers for His Majesty.

Sources:

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