It’s Time for a Cookin’
A glimpse into the modern social symbolism of sorghum syrup in North-Eastern Georgia

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this research is to examine the social ideas that surround sorghum syrup in far North-East Georgia, from the cultivation of cane to its processing and distribution as refined syrup. Sorghum syrup represented a strong economic factor for a majority of the history of Georgia; as a major commodity in local markets.

INTRODUCTION
Throughout the past few years, I have started to better appreciate the ideas that represent the history of life in the South, most notably the production of sorghum syrup. My family has been involved with sorghum syrup production for generations.

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Until the last 50 years, processed sugar was too costly for most rural southerners to afford. Early in American history, before it was known as such, sweet sorghum cane (Figure 2) came to the south through contact with Central Africa. Due to the natural human urge for sweets, sorghum syrup became a staple in the diets of most Southerners as well as a major commodity in local markets.

In modern times sugar makes up a large percentage of the American diet, however many Southerners still see sorghum as a link to the past. These attitudes are what I hoped to better understand.

CONCLUSION
Sorghum syrup played a vital role in the lives of many people in the rural south for over two centuries. Although it no longer has the prominence it once held, sorghum still represents many things to many people in the South. Sorghum is community, it is history, and it still represents profit.

Sorghum is a symbol of the Southern past, be it sopped up by biscuits or baked in a batch of gingerbread cookies. If you haven't ever had sorghum syrup, or even heard of it, go out on a quest for a mason jar full of thin dark syrup, and after that go and bake up a batch of biscuits. I bet you will thoroughly enjoy this exquisite taste of the South!