

Writing Task Unit 7

Puerto Rican inventor



Fermín Tangüis (1851–1930) was a Puerto Rican businessman, agriculturist and scientist who in 1901 developed the seed that would eventually produce the Tanguis cotton in Peru when that nation's cotton industry suffered because of a fungus plague caused by a plant disease known some places as "cotton wilt" and in others as "Fusarium wilt" (*Fusarium vasinfectum*) saving that nation's cotton industry.

Tangüis began to study some species of the plant that were affected by the disease to a lesser extent and experimented in germination with the seeds of various cotton plants. In 1911, after 10 years of experimenting and failures, Tangüis was able to develop a seed, which produced a superior cotton plant resistant to the disease. The seeds produced a plant that had a 40% longer (between 29 mm and 33 mm) and thicker fiber that did not break easily and required little water. The cotton grown in Peru (Egyptian cotton) before the fungus plague grew only once a year; the Tangüis cotton grows six times a year. This type of fiber showed a better resistance and performance than other fibers.

Tangüis cotton grows in Canete's valley (south of Lima) and in the Central Coast of Peru. The success of the Tangüis cotton, which is also known in Peru as "Oro Blanco" (White Gold), saved the cotton industry of that nation.

