It's The Season To Harvest Cane

By ROBIE WEST

Vapors rise from the juice in the large kettles over the gas flames as the cane is crushed; then, after a morning of sheer labor, the finished products — syrup and Hot sauce — are ready for the local market.

Mary and Virginia Frank finish off the pepper

Juice runs to the right as the cane is crushed

"None Cid"

"Nonic Cid" explained Nonic Cid, "That's not my brother."

"Yeah, I'm Ortego by birth," laughed Allen. "Descended from the first one who came over here."

"That was Joaquin Ortego who married a St. Denis from Natchitoches and they go way back."

NOTE TO GENEALOGY TRACERS: The Joaquins Ortego refer to here is probably the one who married Marie Monceaux de St. Denis and granddaughter of Charles Juchereau de St. Denis and his wife Marie Emmanuela Nelges Juchereau de St. Denis and her husband Joseph Bernard de Soto and Marie de Bermudei de Soto, whose daughter was the first Commandant of Natchitoches. They were the one who married Marie Juchereau de St. Denis de Soto, founder and first Commandant of Natchitoches.

"Allen's Momma is my sister." explained Nonic Cid. "That's not my brother."

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The corn grinder may be over 100 years old, stones inside grind course meal for good cornbread

Allen, who owns an auto supply company in Vieux Platte and has numerous other interests in the area, doesn't stop at raising cane, but has numerous other interests as well. Among other vegetables he grows peppers and makes some of the tastiest hot sauce in Louisiana.

"I can't tell you how much we've been told to get out and grow peppers," he said. "There are a number of restaurants here and there and they're very into the hot sauce business."

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"We usually do our whole crop in one day but the cane was cut earlier this year and we decided to get started about a week earlier."

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