



Growing American Rubber: Strategic Plants and the Politics of National Security (Studies in Modern Science, Technology, and the Environment)

Mark R Finlay

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Growing American Rubber explores America's quest during tense decades of the twentieth century to identify a viable source of domestic rubber. Straddling international revolutions and world wars, this unique and well-researched history chronicles efforts of leaders in business, science, and government to sever American dependence on foreign suppliers. Mark Finlay plots out intersecting networks of actors including Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, prominent botanists, interned Japanese Americans, Haitian peasants, and ordinary citizens—all of whom contributed to this search for economic self-sufficiency. Challenging once-familiar boundaries between agriculture and industry and field and laboratory, Finlay also identifies an era in which perceived boundaries between natural and synthetic came under review.

Although synthetic rubber emerged from World War II as one solution, the issue of ever-diminishing natural resources and the question of how to meet twenty-first-century consumer, military, and business demands lingers today.

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