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REVIEWS IN BRIEF

Agricultural Co-operative Credit Movement in Baroda District 1949-1969 (A Critical Review), B. H. Elavia, The Baroda Central Co-operative Bank Ltd., Baroda, 1971. Pp. ix + 58.

This brochure attempts to study the nature and extent of changes in the structure and working of the agricultural co-operative credit movement in Baroda district (Gujarat) during the period of reorganization on the lines of the Integrated Scheme of Rural Credit. Specifically, it examines (*i*) as to how and to what extent the various provisions of the Scheme were implemented in the district and evaluates the procedures formulated to work the crop loan system, and (*ii*) the effects of the Scheme on the progress of the agricultural co-operative credit movement in the district, generally covering the period 1949-69. It presents the results of a sample study of 30 agricultural co-operative credit societies randomly selected from the district and weighted in favour of the large-sized societies to provide information on the working of the Integrated Scheme of Rural Credit. The postscript traces the growth of the movement upto the end of the Third Five-Year Plan and describes the working devices of the crop loan system which have been improved gradually.

The Integrated Scheme of Rural Credit was introduced in the Baroda district in 1949-50 at the initiative of the erstwhile Bombay State Co-operative Bank. The critical appraisal of the working of the Scheme highlighted the following problems which were confronted by the co-operative movement in the field of short and medium-term credit: (1) Fierce competition between the village credit societies and the primary marketing societies which jeopardized the existence of the former type of societies; (2) setback suffered by the large-sized societies owing to the reversal of policy decision at the national level in favour of the small-sized societies, (3) inadequate coverage of the programme of State partnership in agricultural co-operative credit societies, (4) disappointing performance of the primary credit societies in mobilizing local resources, (5) absence of co-operative marketing facilities for crops, etc. The co-operative movement has made good progress in the district by the end of the last decade, bringing within its fold all the villages and 60 per cent of the farmers. Besides a phenomenal increase in the quantum of co-operative credit, many qualitative improvements have been made to tackle the problems listed above.

Resource Allocation in Agricultural Research, Edited by Walter L. Fishel, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, U.S.A. and Oxford University Press, London and Bombay, 1971. Pp. xii + 391. $ 14.00.

This volume is the outcome of a symposium on resource allocation in agricultural research jointly sponsored by the Minnesota Agricultural Experi-

ment Station of the University of Minnesota and by the Co-operative States Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture and held in Minneapolis in February, 1969. The purpose of the symposium was to find out how much was known about research resource productivity and to more effectively take advantage of the progress that has been made in the development and application of formal allocation procedures in agricultural research. This volume is organized around five major topics examined in the symposium. An overview of the problems and issues in resource allocation for agricultural research with material drawn from the contributed papers and the discussions at the symposium is presented in Part I. Part II contains five papers which deal respectively with the search for a theory and methodology of research resource allocation, social returns to research and objectives of public research, the pricing of research output, the allocation of resources to research and welfare implications of agricultural research. Part III containing three papers examines the historical evidence of the productivity of agricultural research in the United States and the attempts to determine what factors are associated with more productive as contrasted with less productive research activities. Part IV composed of five papers considers how the allocation decisions are currently made in the principal public organizations concerned with agricultural research. The last part which contains six papers examines the attempts made to apply more formal procedures in the selection of research activities and the allocation of resources to research.

While varying points of view and different approaches to the problem of resource allocation in agricultural research were presented at the symposium, the participants generally shared the orientation of economic theory. There was a prevailing assumption that the allocation problem to a considerable extent should be approached within an economic framework. More specifically, it was generally agreed that research may be viewed as an economic activity as it requires scarce resources and produces something of value.

Students of agricultural economics in the developing countries like India will find it particularly useful to peruse the chapters on "The Allocation of Resources to Research" by T. W. Schultz, and "Welfare Implications of Agricultural Research" by Earl O. Heady.

Economic Models and Quantitative Methods for Decisions and Planning in Agriculture: Proceedings of an East-West Seminar, Edited by E. O. Heady, The Iowa State University Press, Ames, Iowa, U.S.A., 1971. Pp. xiii + 518. $ 10.50.

This is a collection of papers and proceedings of a seminar held in Hungary "to discuss the current use of economic models in agricultural planning." The volume consists of 26 papers grouped into six parts as follows: Part I—Foundation and Background in Planning Models (4 papers); Part II—

Problems and Potentials at the Micro Level (4 papers); Part III—Regional Models of Planning and Development (5 papers); Part IV—Experiments and Experiences with National Planning Models for Agriculture (6 papers); Part V—Formulation of National Models (3 papers); Part VI—Gaps between Plans and Realisation and Practical Possibilities for Improvement in Performance (4 papers). The papers are focused on techniques and models provided by "recent advances in economic and econometric methods (which) are not widely used" and, consequently, the volume would appear to be of use, primarily, to theoretical programmers concerned more with tool-making than with practical aspects of tool-using. A reader not belonging to this group is likely to feel that the word "agriculture" in the title of the volume is rather redundant, if not misleading.

Agricultural Development in Nepal, Y. P. Pant and S. C. Jain, Vora & Co., Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Bombay, 1969. Pp. xi + 248. Rs. 20.00.

Literature relating to the agricultural development of the Kingdoms in the Himalayan region is scanty. This book fills up a gap in information relating to the different aspects of agricultural development in Nepal. Divided into eight chapters, the first chapter deals with the agricultural resources in Nepal. The major problems confronting Nepal's agriculture are discussed in Chapter II. A good descriptive account of the progress of land reforms and administration of land reform programme is given in Chapter III. Chapters IV and V deal with the institutional problems of agricultural credit, co-operative development and compulsory savings and agricultural marketing and price policy respectively. Both these chapters lack in analytical rigour and content. Chapter IV does not provide any information relating to the extent of indebtedness among the farmers, the quantum of credit requirements of the agriculturists and that met by the different agencies, the number of co-operative credit societies and their financial operations. Dealing with private credit agencies, it is observed that "Even now a major part of the credit requirements of agriculture are met by this particular agency." (p. 91.) In the absence of relevant data, one is at a loss to know the quantum of credit advanced by private credit agencies. The problems of agricultural planning, the objectives and targets of agricultural plans, and the planning strategy are reviewed in Chapter VI. The review focuses attention on the progress of developmental programmes in agriculture, points out the shortcomings in the existing agricultural plans and indicates broadly the directions towards which agricultural development should now be oriented. Chapter VII reviews the functions performed by the various institutions of agricultural development in Nepal. In the last chapter an attempt has been made to formulate a new strategy for agricultural growth.

Agriculture occupies a key place in the Nepalese economy, contributing more than 65 per cent (in 1964-65) of the national income. About 93 per

cent of the total population depended on agriculture for their livelihood. Of the total cultivated area of 1.92 million hectares, the Tarai region accounted for 60 per cent and the rest is shared between the hills and the valleys. Food crops alone occupied 97 per cent of the total cultivated area. The rate of yield of rice, maize and wheat in Nepal has been much lower than that of other countries of the world, except India and Pakistan. Some of the main factors responsible for the low productivity are the inadequate supply of various essential farm inputs, *viz.*, fertilizer, improved varieties of seeds, lack of adequate irrigation facilities, insecticides and lack of knowledge on the part of the cultivators of improved techniques of cultivation. Other factors conditioning the slow growth of agricultural output are the poor farming techniques, insufficient incentive to augment production under the traditional systems of land tenure, defective distribution of land ownership, uneconomic size of holdings, insecurity of tenure, high rents, lack of adequate agricultural credit and marketing, wide fluctuations in prices and poor transport facilities.

One of the main problems of Nepalese agriculture is the existence of surplus labour in agriculture. Out of an estimated 3.4 million labour force in agriculture, 1.6 million or 48 per cent of the total is surplus labour. Though the figure of surplus agricultural labour appears to be an overestimate, it reveals the magnitude of the problem of disguised unemployment and under-employment in agriculture. The problem of surplus labour has given rise to low income per capita and low or almost no savings for any type of agricultural improvement.

For raising agricultural productivity and incomes, stress is laid on tackling all the important problems simultaneously and in an integrated manner. It is suggested that the productivity of land could be improved by effecting changes in the existing agricultural techniques and techniques of agricultural planning. This is sought to be achieved by the new strategy for agricultural development. The main emphasis in the new strategy is on planning of resources for gradual expansion of output. It is estimated that 24 per cent of the cultivating families operating 43 per cent of the cultivated area is responsive to improved practices. With the spread of agricultural extension efforts, another 37 per cent of the cultivating families operating 35 per cent of the cultivated area could be made responsive to improved practices.

Farming Systems in the Tropics, Hans Ruthenberg, Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, London and Bombay, 1971. Pp. xxv + 313. £5.50.

This textbook is mainly concerned with the main types of farming in the tropical countries and the farm management problems that arise in each particular case. The introductory chapter defines the geographical region, the farming systems and the meaning of the word farm or holding. The

second chapter considers the more important characteristics of farming in the tropical environment and their implications for farm management. Chapters 3 to 9 identify seven basically distinct farming systems in the tropics and highlight the economic implications of the three major problems of soil fertility, uncertainty, and labour productivity in each type of farming. It also examines the ways in which technological and farm management changes can be made to overcome these problems. The case studies are mainly drawn from Africa and Asia and very few from Latin America. The last chapter outlines some general tendencies in the development of tropical small holder farming systems.

Following distinct systems of farming are identified in the tropics: (1) shifting cultivation, (2) semi-permanent cultivation, (3) regulated ley farming, (4) permanent cultivation on rain-fed land, (5) arable irrigation farming, (6) perennial crop cultivation, and (7) grazing. This method of treatment should not be taken to imply that very clear differences are to be found between farms that are classified under the various types. The range and balance of enterprise combinations that are reflected in any actual farming system is limited by a number of constraining factors such as ecological factors, infra-structural features, external economic constraints, internal operational factors and personal acceptance of the adopted system. Within the framework of successive limitations of this kind, development paths are observed for different major types of tropical ecological situation. These indicate the directions along which farmers may adapt their systems of operations as circumstances change to alter one or other of the limiting factors. These changes may arise either within the farm or outside it, and may be caused by new technical innovations and possibilities like new seed, pest control, irrigation, etc. An important role is played by changes in human aspirations. Changes in government policy designed to modify agricultural production are very important factors influencing the development and evaluation of farming systems.

This textbook is a good introduction to the study of different farming systems in the tropical countries and their improvement through policy action of different kinds. The bibliography and index enhance its utility.