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REVIEWS IN BRIEF

Principles of Agricultural Economics, B. N. Pal, Kitab Mahal, Allahabad, 1959.
Pp. 751. Rs. 18.00.

The need for a book devoted to the theoretical aspects of Agricultural Economics in an under-developed country like that of India is being increasingly felt, thanks to the introduction by several Indian Universities in India of specialised courses in agricultural economics. The present publication attempts to fill up the gap in Indian economic literature.

The book is divided into 28 chapters running into 751 pages. In the introductory chapter, the importance of agriculture in man's every day life is stressed. The next four chapters deal with the preliminaries such as the definition and scope of agricultural economics as also some elementary principles of general economic theory. Chapters 6 and 7 discuss the importance of agriculture both in its national and international setting and Chapter 8 gives a brief description of rural enterprises. The nature and character of agricultural operations such as the principle of choice and the adjustment of cost-price relationships and their types are dealt with in Chapter 9. It also gives a description of the various farming systems. The next chapter discusses the different systems in agriculture grouping them under three main headings, viz., inter-farm organisation, group management and unit cultivation. Chapter 11 briefly deals with the place of agricultural organisation in rural life, studies the several types of village organisations, and attempts to discover the inter-relations between the village types and the farming systems as also points out the essentials of the rural society, its farming aspects and framework. Chapter 12 deals with the economics of farm management and the factors making for success in the business of farming. Conditions governing the location of agriculture and the distinctions in this respect between agriculture and industry are discussed in Chapter 13. It also analyses the theories about the location of agriculture. The various aspects of production and output and the functions of natural resources including land are discussed in the next two chapters. The problems concerning land usage, the output-input relations and the optimum utilisation of land are covered in Chapter 16. Chapters 17 and 18 discuss respectively the role played by the human agents of production in the process of farming and the various aspects of agricultural and rural labour and their place in national agriculture, while Chapter 19 describes the role of capital and equipment in agricultural production. The problem of achieving maximum production with the least cost, the factors responsible for productivity and the principles underlying combination of productive factors are discussed in Chapter 20. Problems relating to the size of the unit of agricultural productions are examined in the next chapter.

Problems of land ownership and tenancy, agricultural marketing, the problem of pricing in the light of the operations of free, open, controlled and regulated markets are also reviewed in the book. A chapter is devoted to explain the nature and causes of fluctuations in agriculture and another to the financial aspect of farming. The concluding chapter presents a preview of the situation and the setting in which the peasant finds himself, deals with State intervention in agriculture, agricultural policy, agricultural protection and the role of co-operative movement

in agricultural development as also discusses the problems affecting the future of the peasantry. Suggestions are made for reducing the inequalities of wealth and improving living standards of the villager.

Though no originality is claimed for the subject-matter, the author's efforts in presenting the material in a systematic way and lucidly are commendable. It would prove useful to the students of agricultural economics at the under-graduate level and to the general reader. There are a few printing errors which could be avoided.

Agricultural Problems of India, Third Edition, C. B. Mamoria, Kitab Mahal, Allahabad, 1960. Pp. xxiv + 752. Rs. 17.50.

This is a third edition of the book which presents up-to-date information on all aspects of agricultural economy of India, revealing all its manifold problems. The volume has been divided into four parts (books). The first part gives a factual account of the different aspects connected with agricultural production. The low productivity of Indian agriculture can be attributed to the interaction of a variety of factors. From natural environments to the problem of landless labourers — each of these factors has its own contribution to make to the prevailing sordid state of affairs. This perhaps is the justification for the inclusion in this section of as many as seventeen chapters dealing with problems of soil, irrigation, cattle-population, size of holdings, etc. The author has at several places offered his own suggestions for improvement.

The second part deals with rural finance, co-operation and marketing. The extent of indebtedness of the agriculturist, a brief survey of the legislation in the various States to fight this evil and other aspects of rural finance are discussed in this section. The author has also attempted an evaluation of the co-operative movement in India. Marketing of agricultural produce including co-operative marketing and the agricultural price structure are the other important topics discussed in this section.

It is in the third part entitled "Land Reforms and Policies" that the author comes to discuss some of the issues concerning the reorganisation of the agricultural sector. The different systems of land tenure prevailing in the country and the issues connected with land revenue are discussed in the first two chapters. Progress of land reforms is dealt with in the next chapter. After examining the pros and cons, under Indian conditions, of the different systems of land pattern, namely State farming, capitalist farming, collective farming, peasant proprietorship and co-operative farming, and through a process of elimination, the author comes to the conclusion that "the only method suitable for adoption in the existing circumstances in India is one which combines the preservation of proprietary rights of the cultivators with co-operative farming." An examination of the agricultural policy of the Central Government in recent years is made in the last chapter of this section.

The last part deals with miscellaneous rural problems like rural unemployment, cottage and small-scale industries, transport, etc. The objective and scope