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A CASE OF LAND REFORM IN GRENADA

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Records of crop production and revenue from 4 acres of formerly scrub lands in Grenada over the past 15 years show great promise for a properly planned land reform programme.

Land Reform holds great potential for the development of agriculture and the overall improvement in the economy, and subsequently an improved standard of living among the middle and lower income bracket community of the Caribbean. To quote a statement as included in farm management for ECFT 1957:

“A factor which is partly responsible for so much poverty in the Caribbean is *the uneven distribution of the Lands*. The following is a broad outline of the possible essentials for a properly planned land reform programme.”

1. Good arable land preferably flat or gentle sloping and located in areas with a good annual rainfall.
2. Adequate Capital, a minimum of \$1,000 per acre for the first and second years, reducing progressively to \$300 on the fifth year.
3. Properly laid out roads.
4. Adequate water supply for irrigation, if necessary.
5. A careful selection of participants who will benefit from the project through their initiative, willingness to shoulder hard work, and to treat farming as a business.
6. Available labour force to supplement family labour, when necessary.
7. The project should be large enough to warrant the full-time supervision of a special team of extension officers.
8. A set target for production yields of every crop.
9. Organised marketing for the disposal of all crops produced.
10. Strict adherence to the keeping of detailed farm records.
11. The land tenure system should be leasehold.
12. The minimum size of a holding should be 5 acres.
13. A well organised cooperative for the purchase of all farm requirements and the disposal of crops.
14. A well-planned diversification of crops.
15. An implicit faith in the potential of the project and the cooperation of everyone involved so that it would not fall by the way.

How the 5 Acres Should be Utilised - Projection

For a farm of 5 acres the land may be utilised as follows:

½ acre for dwelling house, flower garden, vegetable garden and farm buildings.

2½ acres with 2 crops cocoa and nutmeg interplanted.

½ acre in pure-stand bananas after the fourth year of the project.

½ acre to be used for the dual purpose of growing coconuts and grass. a section of this area can also be used for growing pineapples.

½ acre to be used for orchard crops, all types of fruit trees such as mangoes, citrus, etc.

½ acre to be used permanently for food crops after the fifth year.

Programme for Utilisation of the Whole Area within the First 5 Years

1st Year - 2 acres should be cleared and used as follows:-

- ½ acre for dwelling house, etc.
- 1½ acres to be planted in nurse crops - preparation for planting permanent crops the following year.

2nd Year - 1½ acres of cocoa and nutmeg to be planted, plus the clearing of another acre

- planting ½ into nurse crops - for cocoa and nutmegs the following year
- ½ acre in coconuts and grass, pineapple

3rd Year - One acre should be cleared and planted with nurse crops

- ½ to be planted with cocoa and nutmeg
- ½ to be planted with orchard crops

4th Year - Establish ½ acre pure-stand bananas from newly cleared area

5th Year - Clear remaining ½ acre for permanent food crop garden.

Summary

1st Year - Clear 2 acres for: ½ buildings, flower garden, etc.; nurse crop

2nd Year - 1 acre

- ½ for nurse crop
- ½ for coconuts, grass, pineapple

3rd Year - 1 acre

- ½ for cocoa and nutmeg
- ½ for orchard crops

4th Year - ½ acre for pure-stand bananas

5th Year - ½ acre for food crop permanently

Total = 5 acres

Stages of Development

During the period after the first year to the fifth year of the project, the farmer will have to depend mainly on bananas and food crops as his main source of revenue although the rearing of livestock should serve as an additional source of revenue. By the end of the fifth year, the first batch of clonal cocoa planted will be four years old and will just start bearing a few pods per tree.

During this time, the nurse crop which is likely to be bananas should be thinned out, since it has been proved that while bananas have been used as a nurse crop for cocoa, a firm decision must be taken at the end of the fourth year as to which of the crops is preferred, since the growth of the clonal cocoa will be severely retarded under the heaving shade of the bananas.

Permanent shade trees where this is necessary, should be planted to take the place of the bananas which should be completely removed by the end of the sixth year.

By the end of the tenth year, at least 2 of the 2½ acres cocoa should be in full bearing.

The coconuts will have started bearing, the orchard crops should also start producing.

Estimated Gross Revenue from the Holding at the End of the Tenth Year

Bananas	-	About 1 acre	=	\$1,500.00
Cocoa	-	About 2 acres, 4 bags per acre (800 lbs.)	=	720.00
Nutmegs	-	½ acre (100 lbs.)	=	40.00
Orchard crops, citrus, mangoes, etc.			=	200.00
Food crops	-	¾ acre	=	800.00
Livestock	-		=	150.00
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		Total	=	\$3,410.00

The above figure does not include what was consumed by the farmer and his family.

Assuming that 50 per cent of his gross earnings are used to defray expenses, repayment of loans, etc., the farmer's net earning at the end of the 10th year could be \$1,700.