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Vol XXIII
No. 1

ISSN 0019-5014

JANUARY-
MARCH
1968

INDIAN JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS



INDIAN SOCIETY OF
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS,
BOMBAY

REVIEWS IN BRIEF

Report of the Study Group on Distribution of Land between Foodgrains and Cotton under the Fourth Plan, Department of Agriculture, Government of India, New Delhi, 1967. Pp. 27. Rs. 1.40.

This report prepared by a Study Group appointed by the Government of India in March, 1967 makes a careful examination of the various issues concerning the distribution of land between foodgrains and cotton under the Fourth Five-Year Plan. The terms of reference of the Study Group are (i) to examine the trend of land use for foodgrains and cotton in recent years; (ii) to examine the formulation of the Fourth Plan in regard to the distribution of land, both irrigated and unirrigated, between foodgrains and cotton; and (iii) to examine the feasibility of reducing the acreage of cotton in favour of foodgrains, keeping in view the agronomic practices, crop rotations and their economic implications and the need for achieving the foodgrains target postulated in the Fourth Plan. The main conclusions of the report are as follows :

In recent years, the area under foodgrains and groundnut has shown an increase while that under cotton has remained generally steady. The increase in area under foodgrains or cotton in several States has been the direct result of extension of irrigation facilities and increase in the intensity of cropping on existing irrigated lands. Production of almost all the foodgrains, cotton and groundnut has registered an increase in recent years. The rise in production is due mainly to an increase in the area in the case of groundnut, increase in productivity in the case of cotton, wheat, jowar and bajra, and increase in area as well as productivity in the case of rice and maize. Between 1966-67 and 1970-71, production of both foodgrains and cotton is planned to be increased mainly through intensive methods of cultivation rather than through inter-crop shifts in area. Considering the likely increase in total irrigated area and the rotational practices and multiple cropping systems adopted by cultivators, it is observed that the acreage under foodgrains and cotton envisaged for the Fourth Plan appeared to be realistic. From a study of the agronomic practices and the alternative crop rotations and their economic implications, it is revealed that there is little scope for reducing the area under cotton in favour of foodgrains. Examining the effectiveness of the two measures, viz., crop regulation and provision of economic incentives for securing a shift in area in favour of foodgrains, it is observed that it would be extremely difficult to bring about a compulsory reduction in the area under cotton. Economic incentive would provide for either a necessary adjustment in the relative price structure or grant of subsidy to cultivators on the transfer of land from cotton to foodgrains. Adjustment in the relative price structure involving a considerable increase in the foodgrains prices or substantial reduction in the prices of cotton and groundnut does not at present seem feasible. The implementation of a scheme of subsidy will present insurmountable administrative problems in view of the preponderance of small holdings. The conclusion emerging from the study is that the diversion of area from cotton to foodgrains is neither essential nor feasible for the fulfilment of the target of foodgrains production as set under the Fourth Plan. It is suggested that production of both foodgrains and cotton can and should be stepped up through the adoption of intensive cultivation measures and provision of fertilizers, improved seeds, particularly of high-yielding varieties and other inputs in adequate quantities and at the appropriate time.

Study on the Use of Fertilizers and Manures in Agricultural Production, Programme Evaluation Organisation, Planning Commission, Government of India, New Delhi, 1967. Pp. 109 + 103.

This report presents the results of an evaluation study on the use of fertilizers and manures in agricultural production conducted by the Programme Evaluation Organisation in 1962-63. It is based on a comprehensive field study covering 38 districts, 75 development blocks, 375 sample villages and 4,373 cultivators and tenants selected from 15 States and one union territory. The study attempts (i) to analyse the growth of fertilizer and manure inputs of specific crops; (ii) to examine the problems involved in stepping up the distribution and consumption of different types of fertilizers and local manurial resources; and (iii) to understand the attitudes and responses of cultivators for this programme. Problems relating to production of local manurial resources have been studied in detail. The study draws attention to the administrative hurdles and organizational limitations connected with the implementation of the programme, the inadequacy of the soil testing apparatus, the unrealistic approach to fixing up of targets for distribution and allocation of fertilizers, lack of a comprehensive and co-ordinated working programme for supply arrangements and credit facilities, the limited involvement of local institutions, lack of any definite farm planning and inadequate supervision and follow-up of the demonstration programme by the extension agency. Remedial measures are suggested in the report for streamlining the extension of fertilizer use and augmenting the local manurial production in the overall schemes of agricultural production. These include (i) adoption of an integrated approach as conceived under the package of recommendations in intensive development areas, (ii) streamlining the existing facilities for soil testing, (iii) strengthening the administrative machinery and the specialist staff for the execution of fertilizer programmes, (iv) fixation of targets for fertilizer distribution on a scientific basis, (v) association of village and other local institutions in the formulation of fertilizer schemes, (vi) extension of farm planning to other areas where farm planning has not been introduced, and (vii) channelising short and medium term loans through a single agency, making such loans production-oriented and advancing these loans as far as possible in kind only.

Statistical Outline of Indian Economy, V. G. Kulkarni assisted by D. D. Deshpande, Vora & Co., Publishers Private Ltd., Bombay, 1968. Pp. xii + 293. Rs. 30.00.

This publication presents data relating to the various aspects of the Indian economy from 1947 to 1965-66. The aspects covered include national income, population, agricultural, industrial and mineral production, share and commodity prices, labour and employment, corporate business, life and general insurance, currency and banking, public finance, external assistance, income-tax, transport and communication, foreign trade, plan statistics and international statistics. Each section contains an introduction which outlines the method used for the computation of data and the contents of the relevant tables. The index number series relating to prices, production and profits are adjusted to the latest year and derived comparable series are provided for the previous years. The appendix provides latest data for the years 1965-67 on many aspects covered in this publication. The author's efforts in compiling these data for publication are praiseworthy.

A Report on the Seminar on the Population Problems on the Economic Development of Pakistan, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Karachi, Pakistan, 1967. Pp. x + 29. Rs. 5.00.

This report contains the proceedings of the seminar on population problems in the economic development of Pakistan, organized by the Institute of Development Economics, Karachi, in June, 1967. The proceedings of the seminar panels deal with (i) fertility as a factor in population growth and (ii) demographic aspects of manpower planning. The fertility level in Pakistan is reported to be high. A consequence of the high fertility level is the very young population, leading to a high proportion of dependents which was reported to be 44.5 per cent in Pakistan. The seminar discussed in particular the question of effectively measuring fertility and the question of how the rate of growth of population which is over 3 per cent per annum in Pakistan could be arrested and reduced. The seminar stressed the need for a widespread family planning programme. Discussing the relationship between population growth and the labour force, attention was focussed on the question whether the economy could grow rapidly enough to provide employment for the growing supply of manpower and on the need for further manpower planning studies. The report contains a summary of the major conclusions of the seminar. Summaries of nine background papers presented to the seminar are given in one of the appendices to the report.

World Crop Statistics—Area, Production and Yield 1948-64, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome, Italy, 1966. Pp. 458. \$ 7.00.

This publication contains long-term series data on area, production and yield of 80 agricultural crops, which are published annually in the F.A.O. Production Yearbook, covering the period 1948-64. These data are presented separately for all the countries of the world and by continent. The data for any particular crop in a country generally refer to the calendar year in which the entire or the bulk of the crop was harvested. The reference period for sugar, sugar beets and sugarcane relates to the period from March to February of the following year, and for the cocoa crop from October to September, though Brazil follows a different crop year.

Land Policy in the Near East, compiled by Mohamad Riad El-Ghonemy, National Agricultural Settlement Authority, Government of Libya, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome, Italy, 1967. Pp. vii + 417.

This volume embodies the proceedings of the Development Center on Land Policy and Settlement for the Near East, organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations at Tripoli, Libya in October, 1965. It contains ten papers prepared for this Center by the F.A.O. consultants and specialists, country project statements presented by the participants from 13 countries in the region and reports of the panels and discussion groups which dealt with specific problems and policy issues related to agrarian reform and agricultural land settlement. Among the papers, the following deserve particular mention: (1) "The strategy of land problems and policies in the economy of the Near East" by Professor Charles Issawi, (2) "Problems in the planning of land settlement programs and their integration in the overall development plan of a country" by Dr. Atlatf Hussain, (3) "Research evaluation of land reform and land settlement programs" by Professor Kenneth Parsons and (4) "The Role of land policy in agricultural production and income distribution in the Near East" by Dr. M. Riad El-Ghonemy.

The major issues discussed in the reports of the five panels deal with (1) how oil, industrialization and urbanization affect land settlements and agrarian reforms; (2) alternative land tenure systems and farm organization in planning land settlements and agrarian reform programs; (3) the economic and social development of nomadic populations before and after settlement; (4) the development of well-integrated rural communities in land settlements and agrarian reform areas; and (5) institutional services as supporting measures for land settlements and agrarian reform programs. The reports of the six discussion groups are respectively concerned with (1) Criteria for determining the size of new holdings and measures for improving existing small-scale units; (2) Dispersed farmstead settlements *versus* village settlements and related farming and infra-structural problems; (3) Special problems in the settlement of bedouins and other nomadic or semi-nomadic populations; (4) Problems in water resources development in land settlement and agrarian reform programs; (5) Administrative problems in operating agrarian reform and land settlement programs; and (6) The need for and problems of preparing maps, land cadastral surveys and title registration. The volume contains a succinct summary of the proceedings prepared by Dr. El-Ghonomy.

It is observed that the oil boom in some countries of the Near East, and the boom in phosphates in Morocco have their favourable and unfavourable effects on agriculture in general and land policy measures in particular. Given an appropriate government policy, the benefits of oil production and other mineral resources could outweigh the less favourable aspects. Although the old and outdated agrarian structure in the region, characterized by concentration of landownership and income, has been reformed, it is reported that the enactment of land policy legislation with all the political difficulties involved proved to be comparatively easier than the actual implementation. There has been discontent among the beneficiaries of land policy measures because of the lack of sound farm planning, the failure to provide them with production requisites coupled with training and guidance, and the deficiency in technical and management personnel. It is, therefore, stressed that these measures must be accompanied by adequate credit arrangements, co-operative organizations, sound extension and educational services and community development measures. In areas planned for development, it is suggested that high priority should be given to the quantitative and qualitative study of water resources, particularly ground water. Various measures to overcome the shortage of trained personnel which affects the planning and implementation of the land policy programmes have been suggested in detail. In the settlement of nomadic and semi-nomadic populations, stress has been laid on a re-orientation of the social structure of this group to meet the new pattern of living with particular attention to the understanding of their social behaviour and needs as well as the change in livestock production and grazing requirements. Discussing the subject of dispersed farmstead settlements *versus* village settlements, it is noted that there is no one clear-cut answer to this question, and the best solution must be searched for in each case in the light of local and practical circumstances. In the process of agrarian reform and land settlement, the need for flexibility in organization as well as management arrangements has been stressed. It is urged that adequate provisions should be made for creating administrative machinery for the successful implementation of agrarian reform and land settlement programmes. The need for undertaking research in agrarian reform, land settlement programmes and related problems is highlighted in the study.