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# A DEVELOPING WORLD...



## ...AND USDA'S CONTRIBUTIONS IN 1971

Foreign Economic Development Service • U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Cooperating with U.S. Agency for International Development  
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Last fall, Clifford M. Hardin, former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, headed an Agricultural Study Mission to Turkey to help that country find profitable alternatives to growing the opium poppy. Opium poppy production had been providing more than \$3 million in export earnings for Turkey and about one-fourth the income for some 50,000 to 90,000 Turkish farmers.

This was among 145 technical assistance projects in the low-income nations on which some 400 USDA specialists worked last year. In addition, the Department provided U.S. training for more than 3,100 foreign agriculturists. These activities were carried out in cooperation with the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Peace Corps, the Organization of American States, development banks, U.S. universities, foundations, private industry, and others.

The Foreign Economic Development Service coordinates these international development programs for the Department, working closely with all USDA agencies to provide the expertise needed to help improve agriculture and rural life in the low-income areas of Asia, Latin America, and Africa. USDA international development activities center around recommendations made in a February 1970 report to President Nixon from former Secretary Hardin and AID Administrator John Hannah on ways to adapt and extend our agricultural experience and capabilities to improving food production and distribution in the low-income countries. The report called for:

- Increased support of an international agricultural research network.
- More soil and water assistance.
- Increased and more relevant agricultural training for agriculturists from developing countries.
- Emphasis on development of institutional competence of central governments to plan and manage agricultural programs.

As these recommendations are implemented, the nature of USDA's participation in development activities is shifting toward fewer overseas resident staff and more short-term consultant assignments. In 1967, short-term consultants numbered 187 out of a total 374 USDA specialists overseas; last year they accounted for 269 out of a total 399.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF 1971 USDA DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

### Executive Seminars

Two executive level seminars in administration and management were completed in 1971 as part of a

series of seminars which will eventually give training to as many as 75 Turkish Government agricultural administrators. This brings to 43 the number trained. These administrators in turn will supply the leadership for an extensive and continuing middle management training program in Turkey.

### **Ministers of Agriculture Visit USDA**

Ministers of Agriculture from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (now Republic of Zaire), Liberia, Botswana, Dahomey, and Burma studied American agriculture and conferred with USDA officials in visits here during 1971. The Congo and Liberian ministers visited here as a result of personal invitations issued by Mr. Hardin during his summer visit to Africa. Mr. Hardin was the first U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to visit Sub-Sahara Africa.

### **USDA/Peace Corps Work Begins**

Work began under a Peace Corps/USDA agreement signed late in 1970 to bring capabilities of both agencies together for cooperative efforts on food production and marketing in the low-income nations. First activities included technical training for 19 Peace Corps volunteers, and backstopping by USDA specialists in Mali, Niger, Liberia, Upper Volta, and Dahomey.

### **Ag Policy Seminar**

A month-long, USDA-arranged agricultural policy seminar here drew 32 key officials from 16 developing countries, including seven who were second in command in their agriculture ministries. The seminar was conducted in various languages so the language barrier would not prevent any of the developing country policy makers from attending.

### **Demand Study**

USDA's Economic Research Service this year concluded a study which gives development planners a realistic assessment of the varying export markets low-income countries might have for individual agricultural products by 1980. Commodities covered in this study are those which account for 80 percent of the world's agricultural exports. Reports on bananas, oilseeds, cotton, rice, and total grains were released this year, making a total of 16 reports from the study.

### **Nutrition Improvement**

USDA helped establish a program in the Philippines for evaluating the use of a CSM mix (corn, soya, milk) as one approach to alleviating malnutrition. A

similar USDA-assisted program for testing blended foods is underway in India. USDA also helped in planning an AID field test in Brazil to improve the nutritive quality of cassava by adding soy protein during the milling process. These are part of a much broader nutrition improvement effort by USDA in cooperation with AID, private companies, U.S. universities, and foundations to find methods for increasing the supply of protein and other nutrients in the low-income nations. Several methods are being used, including the creation of entirely new protein foods, breeding cereal grains for higher protein content, and fortifying existing food supplies with essential amino acids or protein concentrates which upgrade the protein quality of the food.

### **Train-the-Trainer**

The chief of Vietnam's planning board and two agency administrators studied development economics and planning here for the first of a three-phased development planning training program recommended by a USDA specialist during an assignment in Vietnam. These administrators then passed the information on to some 45 other senior Ministry of Agriculture officials and staffs of the national agricultural college and the National Institute of Administration in a train-the-trainer seminar. Participants in this seminar in turn conducted similar seminars for their staff members.

### **Senegal Project Phased Out**

Senegal agriculturists were this year able to take over the Casamance rice production project as USDA advisors completed their tours there. This project



demonstrated techniques for producing rice, corn, and peanut yields three or four times higher than traditional yields.

### **Statistics Consultation**

USDA specialists in commodities, sampling, data processing, cartography, computer hardware, and surveys continued to make periodic, 3- to 4-week trips to Colombia during the year to work as consultants to the National Department of Statistics. Through this consultant program, USDA has helped develop and train a staff for this Colombian department, create a historic series of estimates, establish a regular series of current agricultural data, and begin forecasting production. Such a statistics gathering and analysis system is vital to agricultural development planning. A similar program is also underway in Panama.

### **Marketing Seminars**

Three seminars were held for USDA, AID, and multilateral organization personnel to discuss ways to identify key marketing problems in low-income countries and to set priorities for external assistance. These were part of an agreement between USDA and AID to improve technical assistance and research in food marketing. Two publications were also produced, one a bibliography of marketing topics and the other a discussion of research needed on food marketing.

### **Ag Economist Joins Vietnam Team**

Shelby Robert, General Product Manager of the Musselman Division, Pet, Inc., joined the USDA/AID agricultural economics team in Vietnam as a marketing economist. He is working with Ernest Nesius, senior USDA agricultural official in the Saigon AID Mission, advising the Government of Vietnam on improving marketing facilities, transportation, food processing, and other areas which will lead to improved farm income and better nutrition for the Vietnamese. Nesius is on leave as Vice President of West Virginia University.

### **New Graduate Program Established for Spanish Speakers**

USDA, AID, and New Mexico State University established a new graduate program to ease the language problem of Spanish speakers wishing U.S. graduate training in agriculture. Plans call for classes conducted in Spanish the first year at NMSU plus intensive English instruction. The second-year work would then be in English.

## **El Salvador Strengthens Marketing Systems**

An 18-man Ministry of Agriculture marketing department, established after USDA/AID advisors began work in El Salvador in 1963, has played a major role in several marketing developments during the past year:

- Work has begun on ten new market facilities.
- A cattle slaughtering plant was renovated to meet U.S. inspection requirements and four veterinarians were trained in the United States in meat inspection.
- The chief of grain storage, who received U.S. training in a USDA-arranged program, changed sampling procedures so they can now handle 50 trucks a day instead of 20, thus eliminating a serious bottleneck.

## **Projects Developed in Lesotho, Swaziland**

Two pilot training projects in livestock and crop production as well as extension methods were held in Botswana and Swaziland to help determine the feasibility of USDA conducting regional training centers overseas. Participants in these two pilot projects were from Botswana, Swaziland, Lesotho, and Malawi. The first course had 47 participants; the second, 33. These projects support President Nixon's foreign policy statement that "we have sought to provide assistance and encouragement to Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland in their efforts to prove the viability of multi-racial societies in the heart of southern Africa."

## **Nigerian Agricultural Policy Conference**

A USDA economist helped Nigerian Government officials prepare for a national agricultural policy conference intended to guide Nigerian agricultural policy through 1985. Topics covered in the conference included required investments, price incentives, and institutional barriers to development.

## **Vietnam 5-Year Plan**

USDA specialists conducted agricultural studies in Vietnam which aided in preparation of a 5-year Rural Economic Development Plan. USDA economists then assisted the Ministry of Agriculture in an analysis of this 3,600 page plan, which outlines expansion in production of some 25 agricultural products between 1971 and 1975.

## **Development Reports Published**

A number of significant studies were completed by FEDS during the year. "Indexes of Agricultural

Development" uses a series of economic indicators to provide an insight into the state of agricultural development in the lower income nations. "The Marketing Challenge" discusses problems of distributing increased production in the low-income countries and alternatives for assistance in this area. "Imports and Plantings of High-Yielding Varieties of Wheat and Rice in the Less Developed Nations" updates statistics on these green revolution components. "Multilateral Assistance for Agricultural Development" surveys programs of various multilateral organizations. "Economics of Protein Improvement Programs in the Lower Income Countries" gives an economic perspective to nutrition improvement activities. "Survey of Multiple Cropping in Less Developed Nations" is the first comprehensive study of this important component of the green revolution.

### **Former USDA Trainees Receive High Honors**

An Indonesian agronomist trained in a USDA-arranged program, Hadrian Siregar, received an award equivalent to \$5,200 from Indonesian President Soeharto for "outstanding success in applying advanced research techniques to the solution of Indonesian agricultural production problems." Siregar helped develop a variety of rice which is not only high-yielding but palatable to the Indonesian taste.

A thesis prepared by Solomon Bekure, an Ethiopian who this year completed his doctorate at Oklahoma State University in a USDA-arranged training program, was judged one of the three outstanding papers of the year 1970 by the American Agricultural Economics Association. The paper dealt with demand for underground water, a subject especially pertinent to Ethiopia where expanded farming operations in remote areas are creating new demands for water.

### **WORK REMAINS**

The need for these types of development projects grows stronger as the agricultural problems of the low-income nations mount. Rapid population growth, for example, is cutting heavily into the production increases stemming from the green revolution. Only in the Far East, where the green revolution is concentrated, has there been a steady rise in per capita food supply. African food production has lost ground in relation to population. Overall, the per capita food production in the lower income countries is only about 1 to 2 percent above the levels of the early 1960's.

How to organize agricultural development in a society characterized by many small farmers with limited resources so that more people can have more

income is one of the basic problems remaining. Most of the benefits of the increased production are going to farmers with irrigated land, the wealthier farmers, and those with more management experience.

Unemployment is another concern just beginning to receive its deserved attention. In many low-income nations, unemployment now approaches 20 to 25 percent.

New nutrition problems are also surfacing, often the result of these problems of unemployment and inequitable distribution of the benefits of the green revolution. Large numbers of people in the low-income countries simply do not have the financial resources to demand the food which would give them the nutrients they need. Studies on India, for example, indicate that between 40 and 50 percent of that country's population currently have incomes below a poverty line nationally established in terms of basic nutritional needs.

Even if national averages show economic growth, sometimes the lower income people are worse off. For instance, the increased plantings of high-yielding wheats and rices may cause a reduction in the supply of food legumes, one of the lowest cost sources of good quality protein. Also, as people's incomes rise, they desire more animal products, thus indirectly bidding grain away from the bowls of the poor for use as livestock feed. These prospective developments suggest the need for continued attention to programs which provide food to vulnerable income groups.

Development, then, is obviously more than exporting growth technology. The development process must also come to grips with income distribution problems, employment questions, and other priorities which are following in the wake of the green revolution. USDA, in cooperation with the Agency for International Development and other international agencies, will continue its work in the low-income nations following the recent call to action by President Nixon:

*"What we have learned in America and the knowledge that we are able to share with other people may make a difference these next 10, 15, 25 years . . . a difference as to whether millions of people all over the world will grow up without enough to eat at all, or whether they may have a better chance."*

*Richard M. Nixon  
speaking at National  
Agricultural Research  
Center, Beltsville,  
Maryland, December 1970.*

