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CAMEROON TRIP REPORT  
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My initial meeting on February 5, 1981 at 8:00am was with Mr. Gary W. Bittner, Project Manager for the Peanut Seed Multiplication Unit in north Cameroon; Ms. Ana R. Burgett who recently spent two years in north Cameroon as the extension advisor for the Seed Multiplication Unit and dealt primarily with peanuts; and Mr. Abdel Moustafa, Project Manager for a cereal research and extension project.

Peanut research is essentially nonexistent in Cameroon at the present time. Up to 1976 there was a French Peanut Breeder located at Maroua. He went to Ngaoundere to work on wheat.

USAID is now operating 2 seed multiplication fields in north Cameroon. They distribute new improved varieties of seed to farmers for their traditional seed production. There is good contact with the farmers through the extension service. Presently they do not have a good lab to check seed germination, and often poor seed is distributed to the farmers. Extremely high temperatures in the field during drying of seed after harvest apparently lowers seed germination.

The extension agents at the grass-roots level have an average of only three years of elementary school training. USAID has trained these agents in simple practices of how to rotate land, clean the land before planting, and proper land preparation for peanut production.

Peanuts in the Cameroons are grown primarily by subsistence farmers who market those peanuts that are produced over their food requirements. The average farmer produces about 2.5 hectares of peanuts. They are generally produced by hand labor. A few farmers have oxen and in some areas there are tractors for hire.

A production survey was run on 17 farms near Garoua. The average amount of crops produced on these farms were 1.5 hectares of cotton, 1/2 hectare of peanuts, .25 hectares of corn, .5 hectares of cassava and 1.25 of sorghum for a total of 4 hectares per farm.

One of the primary varieties grown in the north is the French variety 28-206 which is rosette resistant.

Rainfall in the north part of Cameroon around Garoua is 800-900 mm per year during a 3-4 month period. The rainfall tends to be regular during this time. The rainfall begins in May or June and end in October. The extreme north part of Cameroon has only about 500 mm of rain per year.

Most of the varieties grown in the north are of the Virginia type. Georgia hybrid 119 grows well but is not acceptable on the market because of its flavor.

There are about 25,000 hectares of peanuts grown in Cameroon. The major disease problems are rosette and Cercospera leafspot.

There has been a \$40,000,000 dollar World Bank project planned for cotton improvement, but not yet funded. This project may emphasize some food crop production.

At 0830 I had an appointment with the Deputy Director of the Mission, Mr. Bernie Wilder. Also present was Dick Goldman, Acting Agriculture Officer along with Mr. Bittner, Ms. Burgett and Mr. Moustafa.

We discussed the background and the purpose of the CRSP and the general requirements for a CRSP to be established. Mr. Wilder and Mr. Goldman pointed out that peanut research is essentially non-existent in Cameroon at this time, which may affect the establishment of a CRSP linkage here. AID would be interested if the CRSP could be connected to the Seed Multiplication Project in order to improve production practices. They are not interested in a program that would increase their responsibility and not supplement some of their existing programs.

AID has developed a job description for a peanut breeder to be placed in the north part of Cameroon with the Seed Multiplication Unit. They have budgeted \$140,000 annually to finance this breeder. These were the major areas of discussion with Mr. Wilder.

We then went to IRA (Institute for Agronomic Research) for a discussion with Dr. Jacques Paul Ekevil, Institute Director. According to Dr. Ekevil, peanuts are an important crop in the north, west and central-south regions of Cameroon. There is not an experiment station in the central-south region. IRA does not have a peanut breeder, but one is needed in the north region to link with the USAID Seed Multiplication Unit.

There are five station centers in Cameroon, some of which have branch units. The stations are located at (1) Maroua, which serves the north SAT area. The crops worked with there are sorghum, peanuts, maize and rice. (2) Loum, which works with fruit crops and maize on the higher elevations, and yams, coco yams and soybeans. (3) Buea - deals with rubber, palm trees, and soil science, (4) Yaounde - cocoa, coffee, soil science, and (5) Yauounda - Forestry Research Station which has several branch stations.

The central part of the country is devoted to cattle production.

The French peanut variety 28-206 from Senegal is the major variety grown in the north region of Cameroon. A breeder is needed to further select and improve the peanut varieties grown in Cameroon. Cercospera is a major problem and often reduces yields up to 50%. The French had a peanut breeder stationed in the north up to 1971 - his name was Barraeult. His work was primarily with agronomic practices and variety testing and line selections. If they are successful in obtaining a peanut breeder from USAID funds, he can feed improved material into the Seed Multiplication

Project. Some food crop production may be included in the large World Bank supported project on cotton. Presently there is very little or no work done with peanuts.

He was very desirous for a peanut CRSP linkage in the Cameroons to help them develop a peanut research program since peanuts are an important food crop in the country.

Our next meeting was back at AID with Mr. Martin Schulman, Project Director of the Higher Education for Development Project. The primary goal of this project is to link the research of IRA and ENSA (National Superior School for Agriculture) to increase their responsiveness to the needs of farmers. They want to better coordinate the extension program which is in the Ministry of Agriculture, which is in the Research Ministry and the Education Program which is in the Ministry of Education. Presently there is not much relationship between these three groups. ENSA offers a degree which is essentially a BA or BS level, but are also mandated to do research for food production. They have a small staff and teaching occupies most of their time. They are interested in research but do not have many funds for this. They do some semi-government cooperation contract research with such groups as cotton coffee cooperatives. As I recall, AID has a contract with Florida to help in this project. Their goal is to involve each faculty member in research on practical problems and to improve their extension program.

I discussed the seed multiplication with Gary Bittner. The original facilities at the two seed multiplications units were built by the French. The facilities are run down but adequate land is available. The intention of the project is to remodel the buildings to improve the seed warehouse, and to build a cold storage unit for the safe storage of special seeds. Electricity will be extended to these units. They have a fair amount of equipment and their production process is essentially mechanized. They intend to buy a Lillitian combine to further mechanize their production process. This project should greatly improve the amount of seed to the farmers in the north region.

In a brief discussion with Mr. Moustafa he pointed out three things which he feels would help the peanut program in Cameroon:

1. They need a peanut agronomist or peanut breeder, which is being requested from USAID.
2. They need to send a student from Cameroon to be trained in the U. S. that would replace the USAID breeder.
3. Collaboration with a peanut CRSP to improve the capability of local researchers to conduct their research program.

I had another discussion with Ms. Burgett to get her ideas on constraints for peanut production in the north. She provided me with a copy of a report which she had prepared which summarizes a lot of peanut production statistics and research needs for Cameroon. This report should be very helpful in the development of the SOTA report. She listed the following constraints to production:

1. They do not know the soil fertility requirements for peanuts in Cameroon. Very little research has been done on soil fertility and the extension workers do not have the answers for the farmers.

2. Poor seeds often result in low stands and low production. The proposed seed production program should aid in this area.

3. Plant density should be studied to see if the present 50x20 spacing is adequate .

4. Intercropping is often used in this area and optimum intercropping practices need to be developed.

5. Land preparation is usually inadequate and often consists of only digging a hole for the seed to be placed in. Research needs to be conducted to see how much yield increase can be obtained from proper land preparation.

6. The effect of ground cover or mulch on production in this dry region should be evaluated.

7. Aphids, rosette and leafspot are the primary pest problems.

8. Weeding is often inadequate.

9. They need some shorter cycle varieties to use when a delay in the onset of the rainy season shortens the growing season.

10. They need to know how to improve soil fertility in the absence of fertilizers, such as returning the peanut plants to the land rather than take them off for feed.

11. They need to determine if fallowing the land will improve the production and if so, how long to fallow.

12. The peanuts are often left in the field too long after digging prior to removal from the field. Often they are left for 1 month, resulting in insect and heat damage.

13. Storage is often a problem and low cost methods of storage need to be developed. Farmers now line their storage with Nimm tree leaves for insect control. The fruit of the Nimm tree is also an insect repellent.

14. Seed treatments are often lacking. The farmers need treatments and simple techniques for their use. The farmers will often eat the treated seed while planting them.

15. There is a need for a small sheller for on farm use.

There is an FAO report on small farm storage which includes work with peanuts. This project was done in the northern province of Cameroon. The report was prepared by a Mr. Lonchi of FAO. We may want to try to obtain this report.

At the end of my discussion with Ms. Burgett, Mr. Ambella Jean Myemba came in. He is a lecturer in the Department of Rural Education, Division of Agriculture Extension and Rural Sociology, ENSA. He at one time worked with ITTA in Nigeria. There is another Professor of Sociology on the staff, Dr. Tchala Francois who has a Ph.D. from Cornell.

ENSA provides student training in six major areas.

1. Crop production.
2. Animal husbandry.
3. Forestry.
4. Ag. Economics
5. Extension
6. Crop protection.

They have 22 native Camerooneans and 20 non-Camerooneans on the staff. There are only 32 students in the University. ENSA gives a high level of training to the students and requires each student to spend two months in the field to do a research project in his major area.

ITA is a lower level institution than ENSA. ITA has two sections. (1) Upper ITA which provides a three year technical program and (2) lower ITA which provides training in mechanical repair. Lower ITA is located in the northwest province and is run by the Russians.

He commented that the AID project to be managed by Martin Schulman is designed to put ENSA and ITA together in order to improve their educational system.

February 6, 1981.

Discussion with Gary Bittner, Project Officer at the AID office in Yaounde, Cameroon. We discussed some of the problems that CRSP may have in being established in Cameroon and some of the things that CRSP could do for this country should a linkage be developed. One major problem that CRSP will have is the lack of a research base to link with. On the other hand, the CRSP could support the breeder that AID will finance. This could be a Ph.D. student who has experience in peanut research and in breeding. He could help develop a varietal test program and assist a breeder in setting up his plots. He would need a proficiency in the French language. The idea came up for an African Peanut Newsletter that would give researchers a place to report preliminary or more complete research data that they have no other outlet for. Presently there is no outlet for this type of information other than technical journals. The Newsletter would increase exchange of research information among scientists, and also foster contact between scientists.

We summarized the constraints that had come out in the discussions yesterday as follows:

1. There needs to be an improved supply of good quality seed of known varieties. There needs to be release of new varieties and to clean up present varieties that have been mixed by the farmers in the government program of contract seed production. This is especially needed in the northern region and is where the proposed breeder will be located.

2. There is a lack of distribution of good seed which is the goal of phase 2 of the Seed Multiplication Project that is proposed by AID. Seed farms will be located at Mokola and Garoua. There will be a test lab developed at Garoua for germination and other seed quality tests. These farms will both produce and distribute high quality, pure line varieties to the farmers.

3. There is a need to develop a total production package of directions on how to utilize inputs; fertilizer, insecticides, fungicides, etc.

4. There is a shortage of trained Cameroonians to supervise seed production and transfer of technology to farmers as well as to assist in other research programs. This problem is evident from the Ph. D. level down to technicians. There are only 32 students coming from the University each year in six speciality areas. The Higher Education for Development Project has a goal of remedying this situation.

5. There needs to be development of short season, drought tolerant varieties for planting when rains come late, shortening the growing season.

6. There is need for information on insect control. Aphids and harvest time beetles are a major problem. This package could include both biological control, control by crop rotation, and by the use of chemicals.

7. The extension system is ineffective in being able to distribute research information to the farmers.

8. There needs to be more linkages or better working relationship between research, extension and teaching. Again, the Higher Education for Development Project seeks to remedy this situation. Under a Title XII project the University of Florida is doing a design phase for this program. Also they hope to be the implementing University.

9. This point may be redundant from above, but there is a shortage of trained researchers, research facilities, and supplies to carry on research. These are completely absent in many areas.