Barley Culture in Japan

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BARLEY is one of the most important crops grown in Japan, being produced both for food and forage. During the period from 1936 to 1940, the cultivated area devoted to the crop was about 14% of the arable land area. When the covered and naked types are included together, barley ranks second in acreage among all cultivated crops, being exceeded only by rice which occupies 53% of the cultivated area. About 60% of the crop is naked barley and 40% covered. The comparative acreage and production of rice, wheat, and barley in Japan and in the United States for the periods from 1936 to 1940 and from 1941 to 1945 are given in Table 1.

The acreage and production of barley in Japan were gradually increased after the Meiji Restoration in 1868 to meet the food demands of the growing population but declined in acreage after World War I (1914-18) because of less emphasis on barley for food. Some of the decrease can be attributed to the increased production of wheat that took place after 1933 as a result of the 5-year program inaugurated by the Japanese Government to make the country self-sufficient in wheat. There was a slight increase in barley production from 1937 to 1942, but thereafter a decrease largely because of the fertilizer and labor shortages brought on by World War II (1941-45).

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3Naked barley threshes free of the glumes as in common wheat.