Technical Collaboration in Agriculture in the Western Hemisphere

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THE work being done today in international collaboration in agricultural technology is to some degree a modern parallel of the dissemination of agricultural knowledge in ancient times when plant and animal materials, skills, and practices spread over wide geographic areas as a result of the migration of aboriginal populations of the world. In early history, as centers of civilization developed, various motives urged many of the world's people to move to new territories. As they moved, they carried with them their own useful plants, animals, skills, and practices. The new resources found were gradually assimilated by these migrating peoples and added to their strength and progress.

As the world's population increases, and its land areas available for development become more limited, there are fewer new and easily accessible natural resources to draw upon. The more complex organization of living under the pattern of population pressure creates serious problems which individuals or groups are less capable to resolve. In this age national governments, which are the result of higher organization of society, undertake the responsibility of resolving the complex problems of agriculture in an orderly and planned manner to provide a better way of life.

As the organization of society has reached higher levels, people have become more demanding in their desires and requirements for better food, clothing, shelter, tools, and other facilities with which to live more comfortably. This situation, in turn, has created a greater burden and responsibility upon governments in meeting the ever-increasing needs of their people. The present high level of attainment in the world's natural sciences is largely the result of public pressure and support for greater accomplishment in solving problems pertaining to more and better food, clothing, shelter, and the complementary facilities for adequate distribution and storage to insure a more uniform supply at reasonable prices.

The day-to-day analysis of national and world problems which require constant vigilance, continues to emphasize the importance of agricultural considerations. The ever-growing world population demands constant adjustment in the consumption levels and production goals to satisfy national and world needs. Production levels of agricultural commodities which created the aggravating problems a few years ago of over-production in some countries, in many instances will not meet leaders are greatly concerned about these many problems and have joined with leaders of other countries in establishing the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations in order to permit a better treatment of the problems on a world-wide basis.

JUSTIFICATION FOR TECHNICAL COLLABORATION IN AGRICULTURE

An approach to the basic agricultural problems of conditions of world peace and mutual benefits among other things, greater freedom in the exchange of plant and animal material for improvement. At the same time, better understanding and action is urgently needed in protecting existing resources from the introduction of plant diseases and pests. Further accomplishments can be enhanced by an exchange of scientific information pertaining to agriculture, more extensive exchange of technical personnel, the provision of added facilities for technical assistance, and training of young men and women of foreign countries in the United States.

During the early development of our country we depended greatly upon Europe's agricultural research and education, which could not assist in the research required to cope with the agricultural problems. We also depended to some extent upon European educational institutions to prepare men and women for scientific work in this field. Though we continue to study the results of the European countries today, it can be said that a period of transition is complete and Europe, and the rest of the world, is looking more and more to leadership in this country for basic agricultural education, research, and extension. Without doubt one of the greatest national resources which we have today is agricultural technology, skill in handling of problems pertaining to the production, use, distribution, and storage of agricultural commodities.

In view of the needs of other countries, this knowledge is an exportable commodity possessing ample supply, adaptable to transfer at low cost to us and to the recipients of the technology. In the transfer it is not lost to us; it is not consumed by use, nor does it deteriorate. Rather, it is extending its application whereby each application of this technique becomes a building-stone with which our children scientifically construct nations.