

Proceedings
of the
Crop Planning Conference

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1934

CROP PLANNING CONFERENCE, JUNE, 1934.

(*List of representatives.*)

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

1. The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Mian Sir Fazl-i-Husain, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., Kt., Member in charge of the Department of Education, Health and Lands (Chairman).
2. The Hon'ble Sir Joseph Blore, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., C.B.E., I.C.S., Member in charge of Railway and Commerce Departments.
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4. The Hon'ble Sir James Grigg, K.C.B., Member in charge of the Finance Department.
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6. Mr. G. S. Bajpai, C.I.E., C.B.E., I.C.S., Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Education, Health and Lands.
7. Mr. M. S. A. Hydari, I.C.S., Joint Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Education, Health and Lands.
8. Mr. B. C. Burt, C.I.E., M.B.E., Agricultural Expert, Imperial Council of Agricultural Research.
9. Colonel A. Olver, C.B., C.M.G., Animal Husbandry Expert, Imperial Council of Agricultural Research.
10. Dr. D. B. Meek, C.I.E., O.B.E., Director-General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics.
11. Mr. N. D. Calder, Director of Traffic, Railway Department.
(Mr. G. T. Tait, Central Publicity Officer, Railway Board.)
12. Mr. A. M. Livingstone, Marketing Expert, Imperial Council of Agricultural Research.
13. Mr. M. Vaidyanathan, Statistician, Imperial Council of Agricultural Research.

MADRAS.

Officials.

14. M. R. Ry. Rao Bahadur D. Ananda Rao Garu, Acting Director of Agriculture.
15. Mr. H. M. Hood, I.C.S.

Non-official Advisers.

16. M. R. Ry. Rao Bahadur C. Tadulinga Mudaliar Avl.
17. M. R. Ry. Rao Bahadur C. V. S. Narasimha Raju Garu.
18. Dewan Bahadur T. Raghaviah, C.S.I.

BOMBAY.

Officials.

19. Dr. W. Burns, Director of Agriculture, Bombay.
20. Mr. W. J. Jenkins, Chief Agricultural Officer, Sind.
21. Mr. A. D. Gorwala, I.C.S., Revenue Officer, Lloyd Barrage and Canals Scheme.

Non-official Adviser.

22. Mr. B. S. Kamat, M.L.C.

BENGAL.

Officials.

23. Mr. K. McLean, Director of Agriculture.
24. Rai Bijay Bihari Mukharji Bahadur, Offg. Director of Land Records.

Non-official Adviser.

25. Mr. Saratkumar Roy.

UNITED PROVINCES.

Officials.

26. Mr. D. L. Drake-Brockman, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., Junior Member, Board of Revenue.
27. Mr. P. B. Richards, Director of Agriculture.

No non-official Adviser.

PUNJAB.

Officials.

28. The Hon'ble Sir Miles Irving, Kt., C.I.E., O.B.E., I.C.S., Revenue Member.
29. Mr. J. A. Ferguson, O.B.E., I.C.S., Financial Commissioner Development.
30. Khan Bahadur Maulvi Fateh-ud-Din, Offg. Director of Agriculture.

Non-official Advisers.

31. Khan Bahadur Sirdar Habibullah, M.L.C.
32. Sardar Sampuran Singh, M.L.C.

BIHAR AND ORISSA.

Officials.

33. Mr. S. Lall, I.C.S., Director of Industries.
34. Mr. D. R. Sethi, Director of Agriculture.

No non-official Adviser.

BURMA.

Official.

35. Mr. A. McKerral, C.I.E., Director of Agriculture.

Non-official Adviser.

36. Mr. C. G. Wodehouse, of Anglo-Burma Rice Company, Member
of Burma Chamber of Commerce.

CENTRAL PROVINCES.

Official.

37. Mr. J. H. Ritchie, Director of Agriculture.

No non-official Adviser.

ASSAM.

Officials.

38. Mr. C. R. Pawsey, I.C.S., Offg. Director of Land Records.

39. Mr. J. N. Chakrabarti, Offg. Director of Agriculture.

Non-official Advisers.

40. Khan Bahadur Maulvi Mafizur Rahman, Retired Assistant
Director of Land Records.

41. Srijut Bepin Chandra Ghose, M.L.C.

CROP PLANNING CONFERENCE, JUNE, 1934.

AGENDA.

I.—RICE.

Consideration of the following questions :—

- (1) Keeping in view the world position, internal consumption, stocks carried over and decreased exports overseas, would it be correct to state that there is an over-production of rice (a) in rice producing provinces or other areas ; (b) in India as a whole.
- (2) If the answer to the first question is in the affirmative, what steps are desirable and practicable to deal with the problem—
 - A. By way of restriction of the area under rice.
 - (a) If restriction is recommended, what is the extent of the area to be reduced (if any) in the case of each rice producing province ?
 - (b) What are the alternative crops that are recommended in the case of each province or part of a province ? What are the difficulties in the way of the substitution ?
 - (c) In any such change-over, what would be the effects on the Government revenue, both in the shape of land assessment and water-rate, and what would be the effect on the land-owner and the cultivator ?
 - B. By way of development of markets (i) external and (ii) internal.

In considering (i) discuss any existing restrictions and the possibility of their removal ; also the question of improvements in the quality or milling of the rice.

Also consider in both cases the effect of railway and steamer freights.
- (3) In case of restriction of import of foreign rice into India.
 - (i) What would be the effect of such restriction on competition of foreign with Indian rice in outside markets ; and
 - (ii) What form is retaliation by the countries affected likely to take ?
- (4) Is the creation of some organisation necessary or desirable for the purpose of improving and developing the cultivation and marketing of rice ? If so, what should be its functions and composition and how should it be financed ? Should it be permanent ?

II.—WHEAT.

Consideration of the same questions as under rice.

III.—COTTON.

All that is contemplated is a general review of the position in order to have a complete picture of India's crops. No questions are set down as the subject is dealt with in detail by the Indian Central Cotton Committee.

IV.—JUTE.

It is suggested that a general review of the jute position would be sufficient as all the relevant issues have been set out in the Bengal Jute Inquiry Committee's Report which is now under consideration by the Bengal Government. The Secretary's note on jute summarises the position.

V.—OIL-SEEDS.

A. *Ground-nut and castor.*

(a) In view of the fall in exports of ground-nut and castor seed what measures are recommended by way of development of markets (i) external and (ii) internal.

In considering (i) discuss any existing restrictions and the possibility of their removal ; also the question of improvements in their quality and marketing.

Consider in both cases the effect of railway and steamer freights.

(b) In view of the increasing exports of ground-nut oil and castor oil, what steps should be taken to stimulate the oil crushing industry ?

B. *Linseed.*

In view of increasing exports, what steps, if any, should be taken to increase production and improve quality and marketing ?

Consider particularly the possibility of expansion in the Central Provinces, United Provinces and Bihar and Orissa.

C. *Rape and mustard, sesamum and cotton-seed.*

What measures are recommended by way of development of markets, external and internal ?

D. *Linseed, castor, ground-nut, rapeseed and sesamum oils.*

In view of the preference in the United Kingdom, are any steps recommended to stimulate the export trade in these oils ?

E. *Coconuts* are dealt with in a report by the Special Inquiry Officer which is under examination.

VI.—SUGARCANE.

Generally review the position. The matter is being dealt with in detail by the Sugar Committee.

VII.—TOBACCO.

Review the position (a) with regard to production of cigarette tobacco and (b) of improved varieties suitable for flue curing.

VIII.—FODDER CROPS.

IX.—FRUITS AND VEGETABLES (INCLUDING ROOTS).

X.—CEREALS OTHER THAN RICE AND WHEAT, SPECIALLY, BARLEY, JOWAR, BAJRA, MAIZE AND GRAM (INCLUDING PULSES).

Note by Vice-Chairman, Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, on the Proceedings of the Crop Planning Sub-Committee of the Advisory Board of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research.

In the following note I have attempted to summarise the conclusions arrived at by the Sub-Committee of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research that has been considering the subject of Crop Planning. The full proceedings are available to members that want them.

The items are dealt with according to the order in the Agenda paper.

I.—RICE.

(1) On behalf of Madras it was pointed out that there has been a change in the position of rice. Ten years ago it was thought that 40 per cent. of the population of Madras ate rice and on the assumption that an adult ate 1.25 lbs. per day it was supposed that there was a surplus in rice but that was not the position to-day. There had been a small increase in area but the population had increased by over 11 per cent. and many more people were now eating rice than was the case ten years ago. Consequently the assumed surpluses of ten years ago do not now exist. Madras consumed practically all the rice it produced and there were regular imports from Burma and there was therefore no case of over-production.

Bombay had to supplement its production of rice by imports from Burma and there was therefore no question of surplus. In Sind the production of rice was just equal to consumption.

Bengal's production was short of its needs by $1\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs of tons annually and that was supplemented from Burma.

The United Provinces were a deficit province in the matter of rice and had to supplement its production from the Central Provinces and Bengal. The question of rice was not important to the Punjab.

Bihar and Orissa, in spite of its large area under rice did not produce enough for its consumption and had to supplement its production from the Central Provinces and Bengal, the latter probably importing from Burma through Calcutta.

Central Provinces.—As regards the Central Provinces when the crop was a 11 annas crop, it was just sufficient for internal consumption. When the crop exceeded 11 annas it easily exported the surplus to the adjoining provinces.

In Assam the production and consumption were equal.

As regards Burma it had normally an exportable surplus of 3 million tons per annum but all the surplus passed at once into India proper, Ceylon, Malaya and the Far East. There was a very definite demand for Burma rice and there was no question of over-production.

It was agreed by the Sub-Committee that there was no over-production of rice either in India as a whole or in any part of it.

In view however of the fact that the countries of the east which were taking Indian rice, namely Ceylon, Malaya and Japan, were attempting to be self-sufficient in the matter of their rice production and that the last country had succeeded in becoming self-sufficient, and also of the competition that Indian rice was meeting with in foreign markets from Siam and

Indo-China in the East and Italy and Spain in the West it was urged that it would be wise to call a halt to a further expansion of the rice area in India. The following proposition was moved and carried by 7 votes against 5 :—

“ That in view of the present world conditions in the matter of rice production, no Provincial Government should ordinarily offer any stimulus to an increase in the present area under rice.”

The representatives from Bengal, Burma, the United Provinces, Sind and the Central Provinces constituted the minority.

(2) In view of the answer under (1) above no restriction is recommended and the questions under (2) A do not arise.

(2) B. As regards internal markets it was agreed that the development of internal markets was of great importance and that this development could best be pursued by means of the marketing scheme now under the separate consideration of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research. As regards external markets the Sub-Committee made the following recommendations :—

- (i) that negotiations should be opened with Ceylon and British Malaya with a view to obtain preference for Indian rice,
- (ii) that as soon as financial circumstances permit the export duty on rice should be removed,
- (iii) that the specific duty imposed by the Ottawa Agreement on imports of rice from foreign countries to the United Kingdom should be extended on paddy to the extent of three farthings per lb. At present import of rice into the United Kingdom is subject to a specific duty of a penny per lb. while foreign paddy is taxed at 10 per cent. *ad valorem*. It was pointed out that Spain was increasing her exports of rice in the form of paddy to England in order to get the benefit of this differentiation, and
- (iv) that Burma and Bengal which produced rices suitable for English and Continental markets should continue their experiments in the matter of improving the quality of such rices.

As regards railway freights the Sub-Committee was informed by Mr. Calder of the Railway Board that a general reduction in the freights on agricultural commodities was not practicable but that where special rates were required to facilitate particular movements of special crops the question would always receive sympathetic consideration. The Railway Board would always consult agricultural officers and the new marketing staff in connection with such proposals.

(3) The Sub-Committee felt that it would not be wise to impose any restrictions on import of foreign rice into India by means of either an absolute prohibition or an unreasonably heavy tariff. It considered however that a reasonable and moderate rate of duty was unlikely to lead to retaliatory measures on the part of foreign governments affected and passed the following resolution :—

“ That an import duty at the rate of Rs. 1-4-0 per maund of rice and 15 annas per maund of paddy be imposed on imports of rice and paddy from foreign countries.”

(4) The Sub-Committee unanimously recommended that it was desirable to have a standing committee of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research on rice. The functions of such a Committee which should be constituted under the Rules and Regulations of the Council, should be advisory and its constitution should be on the lines of the other standing committees of the Council. It should be financed from the funds of the Council.

The Director of Agriculture, Madras, under instructions from his Government asked that a quota should be fixed for rice which Burma was importing to Madras ports. The Sub-Committee was of the view that it was wrong in principle to suggest any restrictions on any inter-provincial trade within the Indian Empire. The proposal was not therefore approved.

II.—WHEAT.

(1) On behalf of the Punjab it was pointed out that in the last ten years the area under wheat had increased by 6 per cent. while the population had increased by 10 per cent. As regards the yield roughly half the area depended on rain and considering the not infrequent occurrence of bad monsoons, the production could not be termed excessive. The surpluses of normal years were easily disposed of by export to adjoining provinces and Calcutta. The real danger would arise when Sind increased its wheat area to the maximum limit of two million acres. The representative from Sind considered that with the normal growth in Indian population, the increasing consumption of wheat in preference to inferior grains and the risks to which food crops were exposed by vicissitudes of season, it would be unwise to limit the growing acreage under wheat in Sind. In any case, if the Sub-Committee decided that restriction was necessary, it should impose the restriction on an old province like the Punjab and not on Sind. For the United Provinces it was stated that with the increase in population the surplus of wheat in that province was nothing serious and was easily absorbed by the deficit provinces in India. In the Central Provinces the surplus was about 50,000 tons and there was no difficulty in exporting it to other parts of India. As regards Bihar and Orissa it was a deficit province in the matter of wheat and imported wheat for its own consumption from other areas of India. Bombay was hardly self-sufficient in the matter of wheat production and there was no question of over-production. The conclusion of the Sub-Committee was that there was no over-production at present. It was, however, pointed out by one of the members of the Sub-Committee that the internal requirements of India in the matter of wheat amounted to about $9\frac{1}{2}$ million tons annually, that no export market seemed possible for several years to come, and that in the current year but for unexpected seasonal damage the sown area of over 35 million acres of wheat in India should have produced a crop of about 11 million tons. He therefore proposed that something should be done to limit the production to the figure of $9\frac{1}{2}$ million tons. He suggested that the area under wheat in India as a whole should be reduced by 2 million acres and thought that on this area liuseed and barley could be substituted for wheat with advantage. Finally he moved the following resolution :—

“That keeping in view the world position in production and the trade in wheat it is undesirable that the area under wheat in India as a whole should exceed 33 million acres.”

This resolution was lost by 6 votes against 4. Then the following resolution was moved :—

“ In view of the world position in wheat and the possible danger of over-production this Sub-Committee recommends that no fresh stimulus should be given to the expansion of wheat cultivation in India and every effort should be made for the substitution of other crops for wheat.”

This resolution was agreed to unanimously.

(2) A. In view of the answer under (1) none of the three questions under A arise.

B. As regards external markets, in view of the fact that the carry over of wheat stocks outside India amount to more than a year's requirements of consuming countries, it was agreed that there was not much chance of India being in a position to export any wheat during the next few years. The following answer was returned unanimously :—

“ So long as world prices remained at the present level and the wheat import duty remained at the present level and the wheat import duty remains, there is no immediate prospect of developing external markets for Indian wheat.”

As regards internal markets and railway freights the same answer was returned as under rice.

(3) In view of the existence of the wheat import duty the questions under 3 do not arise.

(4) The Sub-Committee unanimously recommended the creation of a Standing Committee on wheat of the Advisory Board of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research on the same terms as those suggested for the Committee on rice.

III.—COTTON.

The two questions to be considered in connection with cotton, *viz.*, the scope for an increase in the total area and the selection of varieties to be cultivated, were being dealt with carefully by a special Sub-Committee of the Indian Central Cotton Committee. It was not therefore necessary for this Sub-Committee to go into the matter.

IV.—JUTE.

All the questions in connection with Jute were, as explained in the printed note circulated to the Sub-Committee, under the consideration of the Bengal Government on the report of their Special Enquiry Committee and the Sub-Committee considered that no action at this stage was necessary.

V.—OIL-SEEDS.

A.—*Ground-nut and castor.*

(a) As regards ground-nut, the Sub-Committee came to the conclusion that there was no need for placing any restrictions on its cultivation, but that there might be room for cautious expansion. With reference to

external markets, in view of the growing competition in the United Kingdom market from foreign Soya Beans and other oil-seeds and from foreign fats and oils, the Sub-Committee passed the following resolution :—

“ That this Sub-Committee recommends that the Government of the United Kingdom be approached with a proposal to impose an import duty on all foreign fats, oils and oil-seeds which compete with oil-seeds produced in the Empire.”

As regards castor seed, the Sub-Committee considered that its position was satisfactory and that there was room for its development rather than for its restriction. The Indian Oil Crushing Industry Committee of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research was dealing comprehensively with the questions of the improvements in the quality and marketing of all oil-seeds and these questions may safely be left to that body.

(b) It was pointed out that there had been great increases in the export of groundnut oil, especially to the United Kingdom, after the grant of the Ottawa Preferences and that the question of stimulating the industry might be left to the Indian Oil Crushing Industry Committee of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research.

B.—*Linseed.*

The large increases in the exports of linseed to the United Kingdom since the grant of Ottawa Preferences were pointed out and the Sub-Committee emphasized the need for extending the cultivation of linseed in India, especially of the improved rust resistant varieties. It was also agreed that the favourable position in regard to linseed should be made widely known amongst cultivators and merchants.

C.—*Rape and mustard, sesamum and cotton-seed.*

So far as foreign exports were concerned the resolution referred to under A (a)—Groundnut—would cover the case of these oil-seeds. The question of developing internal markets should be left to the Indian Oil Crushing Industry Committee of the Council.

D.—*Linseed, castor, ground-nut, rapeseed and sesamum oils.*

Complaints had been made by merchants in Bombay that facilities for tank wagons on railways and tank accommodation on steamers and facilities for storage of these oils at the Indian sea ports were lacking. The Sub-Committee resolved that action should be taken to improve the position in these respects.

VI.—SUGARCANE.

The following resolution was adopted :—

“ From the point of view of general crop-planning the sugarcane area in India is not so large as to affect the general question. There is insufficient knowledge of the production and consumption of *gur* to enable the Sub-Committee to make any specific recommendation regarding the maximum sugarcane area.”

VII.—TOBACCO.

The Sub-Committee considered that there was ample scope for an expansion of area under tobacco provided it was of the right type. The bulk of tobacco produced in India was consumed in India itself ; this was the heavy type of tobacco. What India required to develop was the light bright tobacco which was suitable for cigarettes. The Committee noted with satisfaction the progress made in this direction and considered that this crop could be adequately dealt with by the Tobacco Committee which was shortly to be formed by the Council.

VIII.—FODDER CROPS.

It was considered that there was great scope in India for an increase of fodder crops but that propaganda for this purpose would be ineffective unless an incentive was given to the ryot to grow fodder where it was not now grown. The Committee was of opinion that this could best be done by a stimulus to the indigenous dairy industry. The following resolution was passed :—

“ In order to develop and organise the Indian dairy industry this Sub-Committee recommends that a protective duty be levied upon all imports of dairy products which are or can be produced in this country.”

IX.—FRUITS AND VEGETABLES (INCLUDING ROOTS).

The Sub-Committee noted that at the present moment all the provinces were making special efforts to extend and improve these crops and considered that their efforts should be co-ordinated more than they were now.

X.—CEREALS OTHER THAN RICE AND WHEAT, SPECIALLY BARLEY, JOWAR, BAJRA, MAIZE AND GRAM (INCLUDING PULSES).

It was considered that statistics in respect of these crops were extremely insufficient and the Sub-Committee commended to the Government of India the possibility of including the crops mentioned under this subject in the all-India Forecasts.

General.

In view of the Sub-Committee's decision not to recommend any restrictions on the present areas under rice and wheat, the question of suggesting substitutes for these crops did not arise. The Sub-Committee however considered that in the interest of sound crop planning the question of alternative crops should be discussed. It was pointed out by one of the Local Governments' representatives that there was no possibility of taking any steps in this direction during the coming year. It was a matter not for one year or two but at the lowest for ten years. The following suggestions were made :—

- (i) *Madras*.—Madras could increase its area under cambodia cotton by 50,000 acres. It could put in another 50,000 acres under sugarcane in the next three or four years by which time Madras considered it would be self-supporting in the matter of sugarcane. In the last five years it had increased the area under plantains by 14 per cent. It could increase its area still further if the railways would agree to

grant concessional rates for fruits and facilities for their transport.

- (ii) *Bombay*.—Bombay considered that the area under sugarcane, mangoes, plantains and pine apples could be increased.
- (iii) *Bengal*.—Bengal had recently increased its sugarcane area but there was scope for some more increase. It could also increase its area under fodder crops as a ready market for milk and milk products existed in Calcutta. What was required was a stimulus to the Indian dairy industry.
- (iv) *United Provinces*.—In the United Provinces there was room for a high quality of barley suitable for malting. It could increase the area under linseed with proper rust resisting varieties and also under san hemp.
- (v) *Punjab*.—In the Punjab there was no information available about substitute crops except in respect of Soya Bean in the case of which prices were however very low. The Sub-Committee suggested that an experimental consignment of suitable soya beans of uniform variety should be sent to England.
- (vi) *Burma*.—As regards Burma it was pointed out that the only alternative crop possible is sugarcane and the maximum limit to which this could be increased was 100,000 acres even under favourable conditions.
- (vii) *Bihar and Orissa*.—Bihar and Orissa was hoping to show a further increase under sugarcane. Its autumn rice in unprotected areas in Bihar proper was precarious and it was quite prepared to replace it by more remunerative crops. If protection is afforded to the Indian dairy industry, the Province would gladly go in for fodder crops for which there is a great need. It could also increase its area under linseed with efficient marketing.
- (viii) The Central Provinces are already taking steps to increase the area under linseed but there were difficulties chiefly connected with the price in this connection. It could also increase the acreage under groundnut and sesamum.
- (ix) Assam thought that there was scope for the expansion of area under linseed and sugarcane.

The Sub-Committee was of the opinion that one great obstacle in the way of alternative crops was the absence of inducement to the ryot to grow them. It thought that some security should be afforded against competition from foreign countries and passed the following resolution :—

“ That in order to promote the more efficient production and marketing of Indian agricultural produce, this Sub-Committee recommends that the Government of India should consider the advisability of imposing protective duties on the imports of animal and agricultural produce which compete with home-grown produce.”

In order to improve agricultural statistics the Sub-Committee also made the following recommendations :—

- (i) that in the monthly railborne trade returns figures should be given by trade blocks instead of by provinces only ; also that the value of commodities should be given if practicable, and
 - (ii) that the railway freights for agricultural commodities from and to representative centres should be published in the weekly Indian Trade Journal. The Railway Board's representative thought that there would be no difficulty in accepting this recommendation.
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