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RECENT HEMP PRODUCTION SITUATION IN CHINA

Hemps are abundant in China. Some of the hemps produced include ramie, hemp, jute, flax, Chinese jute, agave, plantain and rope hemp.

Jutes and ramies are grown in Yangtze River and Pearl River basins, hemps and Chinese jutes in plains of North China, flaxes in river basins of Sungari and Heilungkiang, agaves and plantains in tropical or sub-tropical regions such as in Kwantung Province and rope hemps in plateaus of northwest China.

China produces about 80% of the world supply of ramie, which is often referred to as the China grass. In recent years, China has expanded the cultivation of jutes,

Production Increase after Liberation

Hemp weaving industry of former China was quite inactive although there has been an abundant supply of hemp materials. However, a policy of developing natural and synthetic fibres was adopted after the liberation. An emphasis was placed on cultivation of hemps and the development of hemp fibre industry.

An increase in production of hemps has been carried out through greater acreage, reform in cultivation techniques, raising superior quality and producing greater yield per acreage. The production increased greatly. In 1956, jute increased 3.9 times, hemp 2.9 times, Chinese jute 3.06 times and flax 1.6 times over the best level attained prior to the liberation. The amount of jute produced in 1949 was 37,000 tons. In 1958, the amount increased to 310,000 tons or 8.37 times. Ramie and flax cloths increased from 10,190,000 meters in 1949 to 35,000,000 meters in 1957 and was planned to increase further to 45,550,000 meters by 1959. After the

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three successive years of calamity, an acreage in 1963 was increased: 6,667 ha for jute, 8,667 ha for ramie and 24,667 ha for hemp over the previous year. An yield for ramie and hemp increased by 20% and jute and others by 10% for the same period. It is quite evident that the further increase of hemp is being carried out although there has not been a statistic since to show it. It can be seen from the 40% increase in the hemp fibre products during 1965.

Chinese Ramie Holding World's No.1 Position

Ramie is an indigenous product of China, which produces about 80% of the world's supply. It is cultivated from Hai-nan-tao in the south to the southern part of Shensi Province to the north; however, 70% of the ramie is grown principally in Kiangsi, Hupeh, Hunan and Szechuan. Among these provinces, Hupeh produces the largest amount.

Growing of 8 superior brand including the Ta-yeh-lu have increased. Hupeh alone raised 17,000 ha of Ta-yeh-lu in 1957.

Most noteworthy in ramie growing are the successful ramie seed propagation experiment and the manufacture of "Chung-ma 63-1 ramie peeler" by the Hunan Hemp Research Institute. Ramie has been considered perennial and peeling was by hands. A mou of ramie from natural perennial roots produces 5- 10 mou but it is slower and more costly. Roots must be transplanted to a new planting area and the hand peeling requires skill but hard labor and the efficiency is very poor.

Ramie seed propagation method is well received in Hunan. For example in 1964, a test planting of 500 mou (35 ha) in Liu-yang wa s a complete success. There were more than enough young shoots when these were transplanted to 7,500 mou (500 ha) in

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summer. About 1/3 was ready for harvest in August. The yield was 6 - 7.5kg per mou. Second harvest was ready in October. A study showed that 500 g of seeds produces 1 mau of sheets, which can be transplanted to 30-40 mou. The cost of transplanting per mou is 2-3 yuan which is less than 1/5 of the amount required for roots planting (Kuang-ming Jih-pao, 7 Dec 1964).

Peeling of ramie requires skill but the amount peeled is small and consumes 1/3 of the production cost. The discovery of "Chung-ma 63-1 peeler" double or triple the efficiency and can be operated by an old person or by a child (Kuang-ming Jih-pao, 7 Dec 1964).

Some of ramie factories includes Kuang-chou Ramie Plant, considered to be the largest in Asia (20,000 spindles, produces over 20,000,000 meters annually), Chu-chou No.1 Ramie Plant and the Tu-yun Spinning Plant (Kweichow).

Expansion of Jute Growing Area

Jute is the most abundant of all hemps in China. It is grown mainly in Chekiang, Kwangtung, Kiangsi, Hunan and Kiangsu provinces located south of the Yangtze River. Over 50% of the total supply is grown in Chekiang but the National Hemp Special Work Conference designated Hunan, Kiangsi, Kwangtung and Kwangsi Chuang Autonomous Region as vital areas for increasing jute production. Hupeh and Anhwei have also started growing jute.

Chekiang has always been the largest jute growing province in China and yet continues to make spectacular gains. For example, Hsiao-shan Hsien, which produces 60% of the jute in Chekiang, made a remarkable gain through promoting mechanization of drainage and irrigation systems, electrification, selecting better grade plants,

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rational crop rotation and closer planting, improving sowing method and improving the field management. In 1963, this hsien cultivated 12,700 ha of jute. A total yield and an average yield per unit of area surpassed those of the previous year. An average yield was 400-500kg per mou or over three times that of the pre-liberation days. Production experiences gained here have been propagated throughout the province and to other parts of the country.

Kwangtung Province is also one of the principal jute growing provinces. An acreage in 1963 was 15,400 ha, which is 60% greater than the previous year. This province produces approximately 25% of the total and the growing area was further increased to 17,000 ha in 1965.

The Kwangtung Province Agricultural Science Institute developed two new strains of jutes called "Yueh-yuan No.4" and "Yueh-yuan No.5", which are resistant to anthracnose disease and give greater yield. These can be sown early but do not flower too soon. They are not only resistant to anthracnose but can withstand strong wind. They have thicker barks and firmer inside. An experimental growing showed that the average yield from these new plants was 15-20% greater than the existing types and, of course, these newer types made better quality fibres because of their resistance to anthracnose disease.

Warm climate of Kwangtung is suitable for growing jutes but the older types when sown early causes early flowering and fructifies before growing tall enough; therefore, the quantity of barks is small. However, an early sowing is necessary because a delay in harvest season would cause a delay in planting of late rice. Furthermore, the older types are susceptible to anthracnose which can hit as much as 41% of the crop. This disease develops when fertilizer is required and the use

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of nitrogen fertilizer increases the growth of this disease. The two new strains developed by the Kwangtung Province Agricultural Science Institute have a very low susceptability of only 1- 2%,and since they are stronger against winds, they are suitable for growing in sea shore regions (NCNA 21 Mar 1966).

Very little jute was produced in Hupeh Province in the past, but in 1965, about 900 ha was cultivated in 42 hsiens and 13 state operated farms along the rivers and lakes. Yield averaged 250kg per 1/15 ha. Some achieved an yield of 350 kg/mou.

Anhwei Province started on a large scale cultivation of 3,300 ha in 1965 and produced a good result. For example, Huai-yuan Hsien harvested an average of 250kg of jute per mou from 400 ha of land. An acreage has been doubled for 1966 in Anhwei.

About 1,000 ha of jute was grown along the shores of Tung-t'ing Lake in Hunan Province.

In line with the expansion of jute cultivation, Chekiang Hemp Spinning Plant was built in Chekiang Province followed by Nan-ch'ang No.1 and No.2 Hemp Spinning Plants in Kiangsi Province and the Chang-chou Hemp Spinning Plant in Fukien Province. The jute spinning facilities increased from 22,858 spindles and 966 weaving machines in 1949 to 33,468 spindles and 1,469 weaving machines in 1956. The production of jute bags increased from 9,730,000 in 1949 to 115,000,000 in 1958.

Growing of Other Hemps

Hemps are grown in northeast, north, southwest, southeast and east China. Shansi Province cultivated 11,200 ha in 1963. On 15 September 1963, 505 tons

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(3.4 times more than 1962) were purchased and about 70% of the products were rated grade 3 or better. Hemp production in Shantung Province in 1963 was doubled from the previous year and over 60% were rated either grade 1 or 2. Anhwei Province cultivated 5,300 ha during 1964. Hemps from Kansu Province are superior in quality. Fibres are long and white and have a lower "gluey" characteristic and are strong. An avergae yield per unit of area in 1965 was more than double that of 1964.

Flax is grown in colder climates of northeast, Inner Mongolia and northwest part of China. Flax growing area in Heilungkiang Province was increased by 3,300 ha in 1964. Flax weaving industry is considered one of the newer enterprises of the liberated China. Newly established plants included Harbin Flax Spinning Plant in northeastern district and A-ch'eng Flax Raw Material Plant and Hu-lun Flax Raw Material Engineering Plant in Heilungkiang Province.

In addition, a growing of agave and plantain is stressed in southern China. For example, an area for growing agave was increased by 2,300 ha (over 30%) in Fukien Province during 1965.

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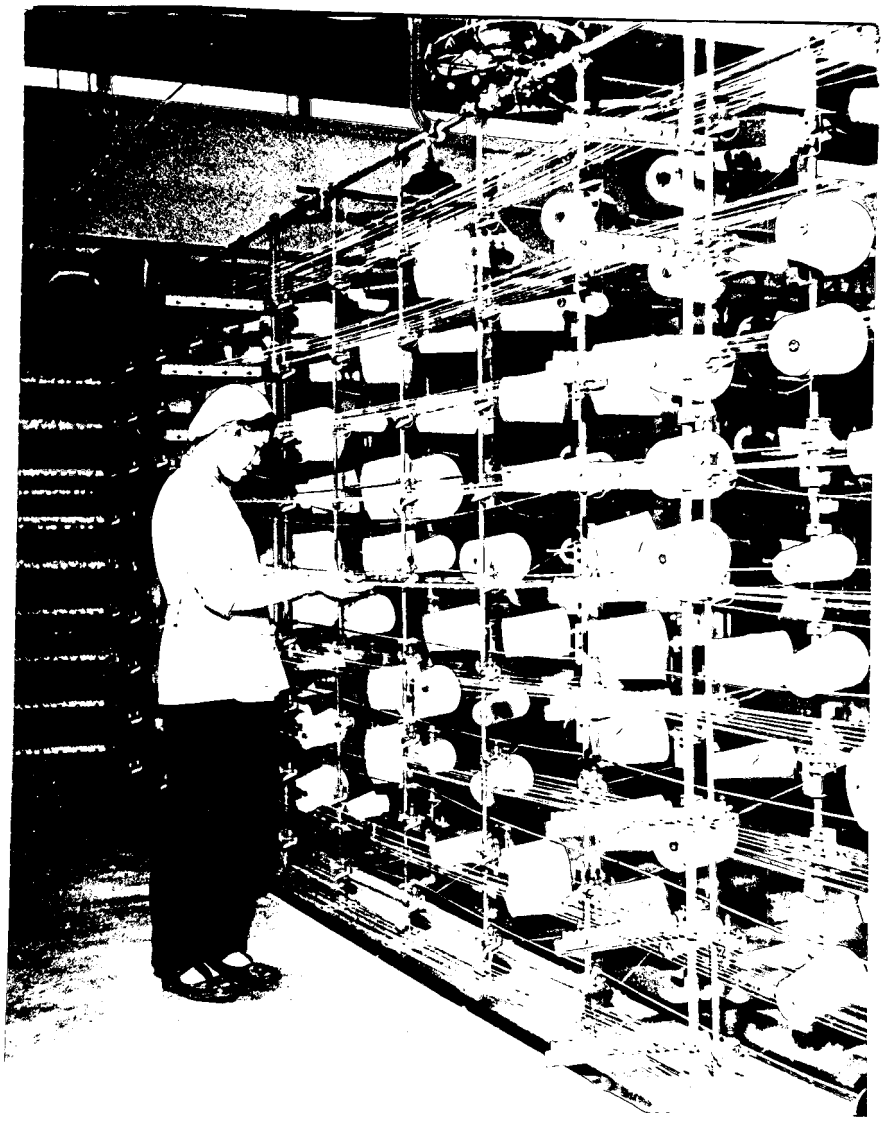

Weaving preparation shop at Kwangchow Ramie Plant

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Part of Chu-ch[illegible] Ramie Plant

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Yang-hsin Hsien (29°0N/115°0E)

Harvesting rapeseed at Chih-mei

People's Commune

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CHINA A 0492 HSIU SHAN 30 10 N 122 10 E
Spraying hemp plants at Kua-li People's Commune.
Confidential (8-10-15-24) CIA 1133991

25X1

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25X1 CHINA [redacted] TU-SHAN 25 50 N 107 32 E
Checking results of close-planting ramie. [redacted] 25X1
Confidential (8-24) CIA 1133994

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CHINA B 0495 TA-CHU HSIEN 30 48 N 107 15 E
Agricultural high school students on Tung-liu People's Commune study
25X1 ramie-growing techniques. [redacted]
Confidential (8-10-24) CIA 1133995

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CHINA D 0493 YANG-HSIN HSIEN 29 50 N 115 10 E
Workers of Pai-sha People's Commune fertilizing ramie plants. [redacted]

25X1 [redacted] Confidential (8-10-24) CIA 1133997

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