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COUNTRY China  
SUBJECT Agricultural and Livestock Economy of the  
Central Shensi Plain



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FOOD CROPS

- 2. Wheat. The soil of Kwanchung is very fertile, the rainfall moderate, and the major food crop is wheat. The average wheat yield per hectare is two thousand catties. There is normally a wheat surplus in Kwanchung, part of which is shipped to Shen-pei (Northern Shensi Province) and part to Honan Province. During World War II when

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there were a half million soldiers in the area, Kwanchung wheat production was sufficient to feed them all, plus the civilian population, but there was no surplus for shipment elsewhere. Locusts are a continuing minor threat to the wheat crop but the only heavy loss from locusts in recent years occurred in 1929 when a locust pestilence combined with drouth to destroy more than half the Kwanchung wheat crop. A serious famine resulted. There have been slight losses from locusts in other years

Wheat rust is the only disease which affects the Kwanchung crop and the losses from rust average about ten percent each year. During the late 1940s research was being conducted at the College of Agriculture in Wukung, Shensi, on increasing the rust-resistance of Kwanchung wheat

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3. Corn. Corn is grown in Kwanchung mainly for livestock feed but some of the crop is sent to Shen-pei for human food. Kwanchung people eat corn only during the occasional poor wheat years and sometimes just before the wheat harvest when household food stocks are running low. There is not exactly a corn belt in Kwanchung, but there is something rather like it in the upland region north of the Wei River. The corn yield per hectare averaged a little more than two thousand catties. the Kwanchung corn crop suffers negligibly from disease and pestilence and was not the subject of any research at the Agricultural College in Wukung.

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4. Rice. The only rice grown in Kwanchung is grown in the outskirts of Sian for purely local consumption. The average yield is 2500 catties per hectare. There was no evidence that the agricultural researchers in Wukung were interested in rice.

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5. Garden crops. The favorite garden crops in Kwanchung are soybeans, potatoes, and millet. A farmer with ten hectare will usually plant one or one and a half hectare to garden crops. Nowhere in Kwanchung is there any commerce in these crops.

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COTTON

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6. Kwanchung cotton, the only fibre crop of the area, is regarded by many people as the best in China. The area along the Wei River between Sian and T'ungkuan, especially Weinan Hsien and Huayin Hsien, produces most of it

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Before World War II most of the Kwanchung cotton was exported to Hankow and Shanghai and, during the war years, to the larger cities. sixty percent of the cotton was being consumed locally and the remainder was being sent to Szechuan Province by truck and wagon, and to Shanghai by airplane. There were four large mills in Kwanchung and four or five smaller ones having a combined total of about fifty thousand operating spindles. Two of the large mills were in Sian and two in Paochi. The smaller mills were divided between Sian and Kuayching, near Paochi. The cotton fields are irrigated from the Wei River and the only serious losses to the crop from any cause in recent years occurred during several dry years in the 1930s before the irrigation system had been developed to its present excellence. the College of Agriculture in Wukung was doing some research on cotton

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LIVESTOCK

- 7. Hogs. [redacted] there were more hogs in Kwanchung than either cattle or sheep [redacted] 50X1-HUM

The hogs were raised only for pork. The only infectious disease with which the hogs were troubled was something known locally as "swine fever", a minor ailment which caused loss of appetite for two or three days. The spread of infectious disease among the livestock of Kwanchung was difficult because of the distribution of animals in groups of two or three among individual farmers.

- 8. Cattle. [redacted] there were less cattle than hogs in Kwanchung but more cattle than sheep. The cattle were raised mainly for draft animals but were occasionally slaughtered for locally consumed beef. There was no milk or dairy production. Kwanchung cattle were valuable properties of their owners and received excellent care. [redacted] 50X1-HUM

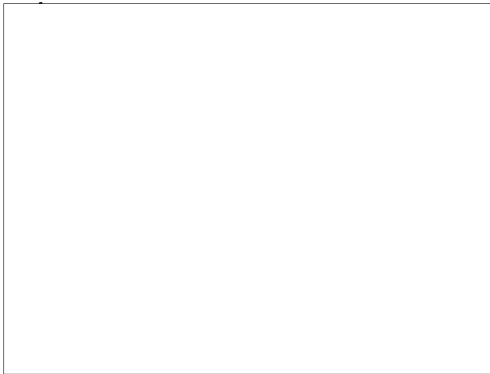
- 9. Sheep. Sheep were raised only in the northern part of Kwanchung, partly for mutton and partly for the skins. Prior to World War II there had been some wool production for export, but exports were stopped during the war and never resumed after the war. [redacted] there was very little wool production in Kwanchung. 50X1-HUM

SHEN-FEI

- 10. [redacted] 50X1-HUM

[redacted] The major crops were millet and potatoes and millet porridge was the basic food of most of the people. No cotton was being grown and the clothing shortage was serious. The Communists had forced the farmers to plant opium, especially in the area around Yen-an. There was very little livestock and the only sheep were in the north near Yulin. Corn was being brought in from Kwanchung, Suiyuan Province, and Shansi Province to supplement the local food production. The land redistribution had decreased the size of farms to the point where they could not support a family, and there was no fertilizer.

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