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SPRING PLANTING AND AGRICULTURAL GOALS OF CHINA FOR 1951

A ten-point policy directive for spring planting was issued by the Central and South China Military and Administrative Committee to guide the spring planting activities of 1951 and to correct some situations that have hampered the government program. An article in the directive specifically forbids the use of coercion by peasant associations or government officials to obtain loans. To stimulate cotton production, the exchange rate for cotton and grain was set at one catty (one catty equals 1.1/3 pound) of cotton for 8.5 catties of rice. The agricultural production aim for 1951 is to increase the over-all production by 10 percent above that of 1950.

The Agriculture and Forestry Conference recently held in Kwangsi laid plans for the production of 100 million catties of foodstuffs during 1951, an increase of 3-5 percent over 1950.

Honan plans to increase its total foodstuff production by 15.38 percent in 1951.

The East China Agricultural and Forestry Department has sent teams to inspect spring planting, study local conditions, and solve some of the problems in the field.

Fukien Province farmers have over 12 million mou (one mou equals 1/6 acre) under cultivation; two third of this area has been planted in early rice.

The heavy rain south of the Yangtze River and drought conditions in North and Northeast China have adversely affected spring planting.

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources. 7

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A. Central and South China

1. Ten-Point Policy Directive for Spring Planting

The following ten-point policy directive for 1951 spring planting was issued by the Central and South China Military and Administrative Committee to guide the farmers in planting critical crops and to emphasize their rights and privileges under the land-reform program. The directive should be disseminated by various government agencies and people's organizations.

a. Protection of Farmers

All land acquired through the land-reform program, and property, grain, or funds received through rent reduction or refund of rent deposits by the farmers will be protected by the government. The peasant associations must endeavor to educate the masses to exert all-out efforts in agricultural production and to avoid any complacency and waste.

b. Reduction of Rent and Canceling of Rent Deposits

In accordance with the law, all farm rent should have been reduced or canceled in the old and new liberated areas after 1948 and 1949, respectively. Rent deposit payments made to the landlords must all be refunded. In hardship cases, the refund may be paid gradually. All unpaid rent, including interest, due to the landlords will become void. The payments of unpaid rent due rich farmers before the liberation will be governed as follows: (a) unpaid rent and interest shall be paid in installments if the accumulated interest is less than the principal; (b) unpaid rent alone shall be paid if the accumulated interest is equal to or slightly above the rent; and (c) no rent or interest shall be paid if the accumulated interest exceeds twice the unpaid rent.

c. Right of Cultivators Protected

All land whose ownership has not been settled before the spring planting shall be cultivated and harvested by the original owner. If the land is allotted to a new owner after the spring planting, the new owner is entitled to receive rent from the cultivator, the amount to be determined by negotiation between the parties. In case the cultivator chooses to transfer the crops to the new owner, the former shall be compensated for the seeds, fertilizer, human and animal labor, etc., involved in the spring planting.

d. Loan Responsibility and Freedom of Employment

Coercion must not be used in arranging for grain or monetary loans. Government officials or peasant associations must not interfere in the negotiations; loans should be negotiated and agreed upon only by the two parties concerned. All loans must be repaid. Laborers or farm hands are free to negotiate and work for any employer. Their wages, working hours, and conditions shall not be dictated by the authorities, labor unions, or peasant associations.

e. Free Trade and Flow of Native Products

The recent price drop of native products was due to the American imperialist blockade, but travel restrictions imposed on the merchants are partly responsible. Trade in native products is rising daily, with consequent price rises. It is essential to maintain the free flow of trade and ease of

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Travel to attract merchants from the cities to the country to buy produce. All restrictions on trade routes and regulation or inspection of travelers must be abolished. Under the land-reform program, such businesses and industries as oil pressing, flour milling, cotton-ginning, etc., must be protected. Confiscated plants should not be abandoned or destroyed. The slowing down in the output of native products and delays in trade flow will damage not only business, but also the farmers.

f. Planting of Cotton, Hemp, Tobacco, and Tung Oil Trees

Cotton, hemp, tobacco, and tung oil are essential raw materials for our industry. The various local governments must encourage the planting of such crops by cash or grain loans. Fair prices should be paid for those commodities by trading companies. The barter rate is set at one catty of unginned cotton for 8.5 catties of rice or 8 catties of wheat; one catty of tobacco leaves for 5.5 catties of grain. These commodities may be used for tax payment. The planting of other crops, such as tea and sugar cane, must be encouraged. The government should stress mutual assistance among the farmers in harvesting, transporting, and other work.

g. Work Animals

Work animals should be protected. It is illegal to slaughter any healthy oxen. Encouragement should be given to the raising of oxen.

h. Afforestation

Protection of forests and wooded areas and planned afforestation should be encouraged.

i. Cooperatives

The work of cooperatives should be organized and expanded to aid in achieving the agricultural goal.

j. Factors in Achieving Agricultural Goals

The aim of the agricultural plan for 1951 is to increase the over-all production 10 percent above that of 1950. Meticulous cultivation, increase in the use of labor and fertilizer, improved irrigation, insect control, and prevention of flood or drought damage are all factors which help production. Rewards and honors should be given to farmers who perform outstanding work. Tax grain should be calculated according to the production of an average year in that area. The yield above the average in the area should not be taxed.(1)

2. Kwangsi

The 8-day Agricultural and Forestry Conference, held in Kwangsi, adjourned on 24 March 1951 after reviewing the work of 1950 and announcing the 1951 agricultural plan.

It was announced that the agricultural activities for the province basically fulfilled the original plan for 1950. During 1950, over 228,000 mou of farm lands were rid of crop pests; over 209,000 head of livestock were immunized; 212 engineering or repair jobs were accomplished on irrigation projects, benefiting over 367,500 mou of farm land; 352,000 catties of selected paddy rice seeds were distributed, and 2,400,000 mou were put under winter cultivation.

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In the field of forestry, 270 mou of land were devoted to the planting of tree seeds which will yield over 4 million trees for transplanting next year; 2,770 mou of land were afforested during the past year. Great progress was made in setting up agricultural experimental stations and training cadres.

The 1951 production plan calls for an increase of 100 million catties of foodstuffs. It is expected that land-reform areas will increase their production by 3-5 percent over that of last year, while the areas not yet under the land-reform program are to maintain the same rate of production as last year. The production of sugar cane and hemp are to be increased; for other products, last year's levels of production are to be maintained.

The forestry department was asked to give primary concern to the protection of the existing wooded and forested areas.(2)

3. Honan

The third session of the Agricultural and Forestry Production Conference of Honan Province adjourned on 4 March 1951. A broad plan of agricultural production for 1951 was set forth at this conference. Production of foodstuffs is to be increased 15.38 percent above that of last year and the cotton acreage 15.13 percent. The prospective yield of cotton is estimated at 26.46 catties per mou instead of the 18 catties per mou produced last year.

In 1951, a minimum of 833,000 mou is scheduled for tobacco cultivation to produce 104,575,000 catties of tobacco. It is hoped that acreage and production will exceed the minimum.(2)

B. East China

On 26 March, to gain a better understanding of the existing conditions and progress made during spring planting, the two vice-chairmen of the East China Agricultural and Forestry Department, Ho and K'ang, and 32 others began an inspection tour of Shantung, Kiangsu, and Anhwei. Hui-min Hsien in Shantung Province, Nan-t'ung Hsien in Kiangsu Province, and Fou-yang Hsien in Anhwei Province are the special areas to be visited by the teams. The group, divided into three teams, will pay special attention to the organization and preparation made for spring planting work. The trip will take approximately 40 days.

The aims of this inspection are: to obtain first-hand information on the agricultural plans adopted by the various local governments and the ways such plans are being implemented, the needs and hardships of various classes of farmers, and the problems and experiences of agricultural production. Three types of districts are high on the list. They are: (a) high yield areas whose experiences may be applied elsewhere; (b) cotton-producing areas where problems must be solved immediately to meet the current quota of this important crop; and (c) the drought and flood-stricken areas where study will be given to the difficulties and problems of cultivation under such conditions.(3)

Farmers in Shantung and Kiangsu are in the midst of spring cultivation. In areas where spring wheat was planted, farmers are already active in hoeing and adding fertilizer. In northern Kiangsu, many farmers are working in river improvement projects as well as helping the families of army men who are at the front. To aid spring planting, the governments in these provinces are organizing cadres' and farmers' meetings to discuss various agricultural problems.

In Fukier Province over 12 million mou are under cultivation this year. Two third of this acreage is devoted to early rice crops. Supplementary crops of sweet potatoes, peanuts, soybeans, etc., are also being raised.

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In the Ch'u-shou Special Administrative District of Chekiang, farmers started their spring planting half a month ahead of the usual date.(4)

The East China Agricultural and Forestry Department and East China People's Broadcasting Network are sponsoring a program of agricultural education entitled the "Agricultural Production Forum," with speakers from the Agricultural and Forestry Department. The April program included such subjects as: "Planting and Protection of Forests," "Cultivation of Cotton," "Agricultural Pests and Their Prevention," and "The Hatching and Raising of Spring Silkworms." The speakers are top experts in the department. Agricultural organizations and radio stations are urged to monitor and relay the broadcasts.(3)

C. Southwest China

In southern Szechwan, over a million mou have been sowed in early rice. Kaoliang and corn in that area are 2 inches high. In eastern Szechwan and Yunnan, many farmers are engaging in irrigation and flood-control work.(4)

D. Northeast China

In the Northeast, the spring wheat acreage has been increased 22.5 percent above that of last year.

The nation-wide spring planting task has been completed. Spring planting and winter cultivation were greatly affected by the heavy rain south of the Yangtze River and drought conditions in North China. However, strong efforts by the people themselves have eased the situation considerably. The cotton and rice farmers are now busily replanting and cultivating the young plants.(5)

SOURCES

1. Hankow, Ch'ang-chiang Jih-pao, 11 Mar 51
2. Hankow, Ch'ang-chiang Jih-pao, 16 Mar 51
3. Shanghai, Hsin-wen Jih-pao, 29 Mar 51
4. Shanghai, Hsin-wen Jih-pao, 31 Mar 51
5. New York, Hua-ch'iao Jih-pao, 29 May 51

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