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SOURCE Ch'un-chung Jih-pao.

REPORT OF NORTHWEST CHINA AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY DEPARTMENT
ON PRODUCTION ACHIEVEMENTS, FIRST QUARTER 1951

Cotton growing has expanded noticeably in the Northwest during 1951. In four Special Administrative Districts the increase in acreage was 297,000 mou above that of 1950 and 125,000 mou above the original plans (one mou equals 1/6 acre).

Some 8 million trees have already been set out in 1951. In one local area in Shensi 180,000 trees were set out in 4 days. From 60 to 70 percent of this year's planting is surviving. Forest-fire control is being actively promoted.

Government loans totaling 22,000,000,000 yuan have been advanced to farmers this year to get the agricultural program well under way. Considerable quantities of relief grain have been issued on a loan basis to sufferers from the spring drought and floods.

Aggressive leadership has been displayed in the Northwest thus far in 1951 in preparing and carrying out agricultural production plans. Many conferences on all levels have been held to arouse enthusiasm and extend guidance in the spring planting program. Over 1,000 reassigned land-reform and especially recruited cadres have been busy leading the program.

Some of the usual defects have shown up, such as lack of thorough indoctrination, deviation in activities, formalism, and enthusiasm without sufficient knowledge. Continuous promotion of training programs is still essential. There are serious shortages of farm tools, implements, and work animals, since the increased purchasing power of the farmers has greatly stepped up the demand for them. Peasant patrols are being organized to prevent forest and field fires by saboteurs.

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Great progress has been made this spring in the agricultural production of Northwest China. This progress is largely due to: (1) the people's enthusiastic desire to produce, (2) sound leadership, and (3) early commencement of work. Spring crops have been planted on time. Even in deficient areas (such as Wei-yuan and Yu-shu hsiens in Ching-hai Province, Ho-lan and Ping-lo hsiens in Ningxia Province, Lin-hsia, Kao-t'ai, Yung-teng, and Wu-wei hsiens in Kansu Province), the problem of seed shortage has been solved with the assistance of the Central People's Government and loans freely and actively made among the people. The cultivated areas have maintained the level of 1950.

Generally, the winter wheat fields of this region have been carefully hoed at least once. Those in central and southern Shensi Province have been hoed twice and the weeds there have been pulled once. With the exception of a small area in southern Shensi which is suffering from insects and wheat diseases, most of the wheat fields in other areas are sprouting and are expected to yield 70-80 percent of the previous peak harvest.

As for cotton growing, because of the policies of price equalization and advance purchasing, the total area being planted is much larger than that of the previous year. According to data compiled by the Special Administrative Districts of Hang-yang, Wei-nan, Kao-chi, and Bao-tung, the total cultivated cotton area is 297,000 mou above that of 1950, constituting an increase of 125,000 mou or 73.2 percent above the total area originally planned to be cultivated. Besides this, most of the cotton fields are well watered. Many people are now planting cotton in fields which were formerly used for planting melons, vegetables, and those crops which were frozen last spring, such as barley, oats, vegetable seeds, winter peas, and green peas. Many people are clearing other land that has grown up in weeds in preparation for planting cotton.

With regard to new methods of cotton growing, the 20,000 piculs of fine cottonseed loaned this spring by the Shensi Provincial government have been used in experimentation and the germination ratio has been found to be well above 78 percent. As a result of these experiments, many cotton growers in central and southern Shensi are now following a program of seed selection. For example, under the personal guidance of District Administrator Hsieh Lang-fu of Yang Hsien, over 9,000 cotton-growing families in Tai-an-pai, Hsia-chia, Chi-li, and 13 other hsiens participated in a seed selection program. They selected more than 46,000 catties of seeds to be sown in an area of more than 15,000 mou or approximately one fifth of the cotton fields in the entire district. However, due to cold weather and spoilage, these seeds have been rather late in sprouting.

According to reports from the Bao-tai Special Administrative District and a few other districts, about 60 percent of the cottonseed sown have sprouted. In Wei-nan Special Administrative District sprouting was complete in about 20 percent of the cotton fields. Fields in other districts are now in the process of sprouting. Due to the fact that some farmers did not completely master the methods of cotton growing, insects have made their appearance in a few areas. Yet most of the farmers have been more careful in growing cotton this spring than they had been in the previous year, and more manure has been used in fertilizing the fields.

In addition to using more manure, many farmers demolished old earthen beds, old mud walls, and chimneys for the purpose of using the earth to scatter on the fields. Others dug mud from the bottom of ponds for the same purpose. Generally speaking, the wheat fields in Ningxia Province have been fertilized with two more cart loads of manure per mou than was used last year.

The cotton fields in central Shensi Province have been spread with bean refuse, besides being plowed twice and fertilized with three to five cart loads of manure (making an increase of one half to two cart loads). At K'o-sheng-chang in Chang-an Hsien, the mutual assistance group has reduced the former

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dimensions of the village wall (197.4 inches high and 112.8 inches wide) to 98.7 and 70.5 inches, using the earth thus obtained to prepare more than 800 cart loads of manure. The farmers in San-yuan Hsien have bought 2,400 new iron hoes to plant cotton more deeply. The farmers of Ningsia and Tsinghai provinces are rapidly switching to row planting, since they have discovered that this helps save seed, makes it easier to hoe the grass, results in fewer insects and diseases, saves labor, produces a greater harvest, and improves the quality of the cotton.

In Kansu Province, for the purpose of eliminating insects and diseases, carbonate and copper carbonate have been used in conjunction with the planting of cottonseed over an area of 160,000 mou. This is an increase of 60 percent above the area specified in the original plan.

The Bureau of Agriculture in Shensi Province has established 14 model stations, covering an area of 48 mou, to experiment with new methods of growing cotton. The work is to be done by the Department of Agricultural Experimentation with the cooperation of worker herds.

To prevent floods and drought, waterways are being cleared and dams repaired throughout the entire region. The dam at Lo-hui in Shensi Province was opened on 16 April to irrigate the surrounding fields. As a result, the total irrigated area has been increased from 100,000 mou to 200,000 or 250,000 mou. In Ningsia Province, the provincial government has recruited more than 40,000 civilian workers to repair the dams. In Kansu and Sinking provinces, the work on dams is now being done by farmers and soldiers. In these areas, irrigation committees have been organized to insure economical and reasonable use of water and to mediate any disputes which might arise.

In central Shensi Province, the farmers are busy digging new wells, installing apparatus for lifting water, and repairing pulleys and shafts. In that province, 411 new wells have been dug by the farmers of Hsing-p'ing Hsien, Hsi-liu ch'ü, Cheng-an Hsien, Lo-yang, Hsü-chang Hsien, and two villages of Shao-ch'ü in Hu-Hsien. Also many old wells have been repaired. It is estimated that in 1951 the large irrigation canals will be able to irrigate an area of one million mou. In addition to the wells being dug by the individual farmers, the government is making loans for the digging of new wells which, when completed, will be able to irrigate another area of some 50,000 mou.

With respect to the organization of mutual assistance groups, steady improvement and progress have been made in the various areas. The large groups which have stressed forms and formalities are decreasing, while small groups which have better leadership are on the increase. Besides having solved many problems relating to the shortage of labor and draft animals, these organizations are also striving to improve farming methods, to plan diversified agriculture, and to discuss the ways of establishing supplementary occupations. There are already more than 400 mutual assistance groups competing with the group headed by Model Worker Li Shun-ta. Furthermore, competitions have been started between villages, groups, families, and other units. In these competitions, many women have participated in weeding, selecting seed, and similar types of work.

The Springtime Afforestation Movement is swinging into high gear. According to recent data, Chao-ch'ü Hsien and six other hsien have planted 1,260,000 trees, thus doubling the quota originally assigned to them. Also, according to the data, more than 760,000 trees are being planted by the three cities of Sian, Ian-chou, and Urunchi. Northern Shensi is planting 4,200,000 trees, thereby setting a new record which surpasses by 46½ times the record set during the same period of the previous year. The people say, "The KMT cut down trees but the Communists plant trees; we must awake and plant more trees." Farmer Jen Chin-wu of Hsing-p'ing Hsien has planted 3,110 trees.

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In Tsinghai Province, the mutual assistance group under the leadership of Li Teh-hsiang originally planned to plant trees covering an area of 2 mou; but due to the incentive created by the movement, the group finally planted trees covering an area of 20 mou. The Sha-wan Forestry Bureau in Shensi Province, with the assistance of the people, has planted 180,000 trees in only a 4-day period. Such an unprecedented record points the way for future large-scale afforestation.

As to the trees surviving after planting, about 60 percent of those planted this spring have lived. Those planted privately by the people seem to fare better. For instance, about 90 percent of the trees planted by the people in Hsing-p'ing Hsien and about 70 percent of those planted in Tung-kwan Hsien have survived; whereas those planted on highways and other public roads have not done so well.

With respect to forest conservation, besides prohibiting indiscriminate felling, measures are being taken to prevent forest fires. For instance, the fires at Ch'i-san, Wei-nan, Chi'ang-an and Wang-ch'ui in Shensi Province, and the fires in the forests of Sinkiang Province have all been brought under control. Furthermore, measures are also being taken to organize the people to prevent and watch for forest fires, establishing a system whereby forest fires can be quickly reported to the forestry department of the provincial governments in the respective areas.

The enthusiasm of the people to produce has been much higher this year than last, and the movement for spreading knowledge and techniques of farming to the people has made progress. These are the accomplishments of the movement for patriotic production. In future, it is our hope that production leadership will be still further strengthened to insure even greater achievements in agricultural and forestry production.

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Owing to the good harvest of last year and the fact that the people have enjoyed the fruits of land reform and rural reconstruction, production conditions this year have been generally more favorable than last year. However, in the partially deficient areas and in areas where lands have been recently allotted to poor farmers who formerly had practically nothing, shortages of food, seeds for sowing, draft animals, and farm tools are still being felt, and these problems have yet to be solved. The effects of the spring flood, with varying degrees of severity, still persist in the various areas. It is estimated that approximately 193,000 persons are severely affected, while approximately 200,000 are less severely affected.

To overcome these deficiencies quickly so as to proceed with spring production work, agricultural loans totaling 22,000,000,000 yuan have been issued by the Central People's Government. Of this allotted sum, 72 percent is to be used to take care of shortages in seeds and draft animals. This sum of money is to be distributed at key points in deficient areas, land reform areas, and cotton-growing areas. Besides this loan, 11,483 shih [one shih equals 103.5 liters] of grain and 900 million yuan have been appropriated for relief purposes. In Shensi and Ningsia provinces, 483,081 shih shih [one shih shih equals 100 liters] of grain have been loaned from various sources for relief. In addition, many methods, such as advance purchasing of cotton, supplementary occupations, interest-free loans, purchases of domestic products, etc., are being followed to give relief to the needy and to expedite spring production work.

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The most important task is to initiate voluntary private lending and borrowing among the farmers themselves to liquidate old debts and to eliminate reliance on government relief and philanthropy. Up to mid-April, over 14,225 shih shih of grain have been loaned and borrowed through this method of mutual assistance in some 28 ch'us in Tsinghai Province. In Ningsia Province, 40-60 percent (about 25,000 to 30,000 shih shih) of the spring-wheat seed shortage was supplied by mutual assistance, thus insuring the timely sowing of all fields.

In view of the present conditions and in order to follow to a satisfactory conclusion the simultaneous work of relief and production, better inspection and leadership are needed to make full use of government loans and issuance of relief grain. Also, more publicity is needed to encourage the people to render mutual assistance in order to make full use of all potential abilities and opportunities, and to overcome the difficulties of the spring deficiency.

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With regard to leadership, the responsible agencies on the various levels of the people's government have, since spring, fulfilled the requirements set forth by the proclamation of the Government Administration Council in its "Decisions Regarding 1951 Agricultural Production." They have succeeded in focusing attention on and marshalling the efforts of the people toward the work of spring planting and sowing as the chief method, as well as the main task, in overcoming all difficulties.

In the first half of March, complete and well-planned directives for production were issued by each province and each large administrative district. To guide the people, conferences were held in preparation for production mobilization, and staff meetings of model workers accompanied by agricultural exhibits were held in the various areas. Production meetings were held in many ch'us to exchange experiences, formulate methods of publicizing the production plans, and coordinate the Resist America, Aid Korea campaign, thereby spreading and popularizing all plans and policies among the patriotic working masses. After attending model workers meeting, the participants urged the people to strive for greater production. The records show that where there are model workers to set an example, the people's enthusiasm for production is higher and their achievements are greater.

The staff of 600 workers originally assigned to work on rent reduction and land reform in Kansu Province have been reassigned to coordinate their work with spring production. Besides this group, more than 560 persons have been recruited from the staffs of the provincial governments and administrative districts to supervise, inspect, and participate in spring planting and sowing in the villages. Many hsien are now absorbing the experiences gained from the model ch'us, model villages, and the assistance groups.

For example, District Magistrate Chang Ch'ing-shan of Hsing-p'ing Hsien, in Shensi Province personally made nine visits to the villages during the spring. He trained seven persons to supervise the work in two key ch'us and three key villages. He also trained one mutual assistance group. He installed a telephone at San-ho village for the specific purpose of directing and promoting the production work of the entire hsien.

Another example was provided by District Magistrate Chai Chen-hsiang of Ch'eng-ch'eng Hsien, who led his staff in participating in the work of hoeing wheat fields, rallying the people to hoe during dry days instead of just sitting and waiting for rain. By his action of personally supervising the work of production throughout the entire district, he was able to correct many of the mistakes of its cadre staffs.

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To strengthen the leadership of agricultural administration and to improve farming methods, 110 farms, 15 farm-tool stations, 11 agricultural promotion stations, 2 special production stations, and 19 forestry agencies have been established in the region. These organizations and agencies, under the centralized leadership of the Northwest Bureau of Finance, have achieved improved coordination between agricultural departments and other related organizations. Thus, there was developed a system for the division of labor, on the one hand, and an interchange of assistance between the various departments, on the other. For example, when affairs relating to fertilizers are assigned to a special department, the agricultural department itself can concentrate on giving guidance in technical matters. This method of a centralized leadership with organic coordination between the various departments should be promoted and further strengthened in the future.

The defects in production leadership and the more urgent problems at present are as follows: Certain aspects of production policies have not been fully made known to the cadre staffs and the people and in certain cases there is dissatisfaction and deviation in the method of carrying out those policies. For example, in many areas where the practice of lending and borrowing has been adopted, the malpractice of the so-called "demand borrowing" has often occurred. In the program of mutual assistance and in the program of alternating work, too much stress has been placed on forms and formalities. In the forest areas of Hrumchi, indiscriminate felling of trees has continually occurred.

The most obvious defect is that many of the staff workers are full of enthusiasm but lack sound ideas and methods. Often they find it easier to rally the people than to give them good leadership. In a number of areas, staff workers have not coordinated all aspects of work, such as production, relief, land reform, and the Resist America, Aid Korea campaign. Moreover, others still do not know how to use model workers as examples for the people. Therefore, leadership often lags behind the people.

For example, in Hu Hsien, Shensi Province, the position of the head of the Fourth Section was left vacant for over 3 months, during which time the work of inspection was left undone. In Ching-yang and Mei Hsiens, no great attention has been given to production. In many areas, an enthusiastic desire to produce has yet to be stimulated and the production activities of the people lack organization and planning. Therefore, much work remains to be done in the training of good staff workers, giving them the opportunity to learn through actual participation to increase their ability to work among the people. The worthy ideas and valuable experiences of the people relating to production should be studied, encouraged, and advanced.

With increased purchasing power, the people are avid to buy livestock, farm tools, new plows, and apparatus for lifting water, and to improve farming methods. There are farm-tool shortages everywhere. For example, the farmers in central Shensi are so eager for the new plows that whenever a shipment arrives at a farm-tool station they are all sold immediately. Model Worker Yang Hsi-ching of Ching-yang Hsien, Shensi Province, alone has sold more than 410 of these plows.

The supply of farm tools is now far behind the demand because the facilities and equipment available in the Northwest for manufacturing them are somewhat limited. Therefore, it is necessary to organize all blacksmiths, stovemakers, and plumbers to repair old tools and to make new ones. In addition, more investment capital is needed to enlarge the toolmaking facilities in coordination and cooperation with the Ministry of Industry. In such a manner, not only will the need for farm tools be met but the flow of goods between the cities and the country will be stimulated. Furthermore, agricultural production will thereby be increased.

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The shortage of draft animals is also quite grave. At present, each draft animal has to till twice as much ground as it should. For example, at Feng-chia-ying village in Ta-li Hsien, Shensi Province, there are only 14 animals to till 1,456 mou of land. At Ko-t'a village in Chang-an Hsien, the 88 families there originally had some 50 draft animals. Last winter, some 40 of those died from exhaustion. In Kansu, Ningsia, and Tsinghai provinces there are also shortages of draft animals. To solve this problem, besides giving attention to animal husbandry and to the protection of animals, plans are being made to encourage the herding areas to sell more animals to the farming areas.

The main tasks of the immediate future are to strive for a greater production of barley, vegetable seeds, and oats, and to prepare to plant cotton after the above crops are harvested. When that time comes, there will be much work to be done, such as hoeing cotton fields, protecting cotton plants by preventing flood and drought, eliminating insects and diseases, reaping the summer harvest, selecting wheat seeds, and preparing for spring planting and sowing.

Attention should also be given to organizing farmers into field patrols for the prevention of fire and sabotage, thereby insuring a good summer harvest. Short-period training schools should be established to train patrols and to teach farming methods so that model workers, staff workers, and other positive elements in the region may master the necessary knowledge and techniques for enlarging the area of cultivation and improving agricultural production.

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