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1952 INSECTICIDE PROGRAM OF COOPERATIVES IN EAST CHINA

Chu Tse-min

Under the leadership of the party committee and the people's government, the cooperatives in East China are charged with the responsibility of making insecticides and agricultural equipment available to the farmers. Each hsien has organized groups to direct pest control activities. Hsien and ch'u committees supervise all phases of the agricultural and forestry programs and instill in the people an enthusiasm for their work.

Each province has developed training classes in the technique of using insecticide equipment. According to incomplete data from 21 hsien in Anhwei, Shantung, and northern Kiangsu, 770,000 men have enlisted in the war against pests. In addition, 18,500 model insect-control cadres have been trained.

It was estimated that 19,335,373 catties of agricultural insecticides were supplied for sales distribution during this preparatory phase. Federated cooperatives in East China supplied 3,918,841 catties, provincial cooperatives supplied 15,416,532 catties.

Of 150,233 items of agricultural equipment, East China federated cooperatives supplied 84,576 items, and individual provincial cooperatives supplied 65,657 items. The total value of the insecticides and the equipment was 104,368,560,000 yuan.

An advance supply was sent to the seven stricken areas covering 14 hsien, where 6 million mou of cotton had been damaged. It is estimated that from April to August, 96,935 items of agricultural equipment were actually distributed. Of this amount, 75,362 items, or 77.8 percent, were sold on credit.

It is also estimated that 3,576,296 catties of agricultural insecticides were supplied. Of this amount, 2,323,949 chin, or 62.5 percent, were sold on credit. The needs of the average farmer to combat the pests were met. Fifteen

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types of destructive pests were partially destroyed in the damaged areas. A pest-control law was passed that requires that all people be instructed in the scientific methods of pest control.

This year the increased use of insecticides and fertilizers has augmented cotton production as follows:

Shantung Province -- approximately 25 percent increase in 1952 production

Chekiang Province -- approximately 10 percent increase in 1952 production

Anhwei Province -- approximately 35 percent increase in 1952 production

Shanghai Province -- approximately 20 percent increase in 1952 production

Supply of Insecticide Equipment

During the development of and increase in the supply of agricultural insecticide equipment, the following program was undertaken to promote its acceptance by the people.

1. Proper instructions accompanied the equipment. This was necessary to enlist the enthusiastic support of cadres and activists who in turn had to instruct the farmers.
2. The program was examined for defects and education was extended by increased propaganda. Well-organized units were established to carry out the program in different regions. Good profits were made on insecticide sales.
3. Both cash and credit sales proved to be satisfactory. Credit sales were made to poor farmers without money and cash sales to wealthy farmers.
4. The provincial cooperatives have supplied the hsien cooperatives who, in turn, have distributed the equipment to the basic level cooperatives. This procedure has worked satisfactorily. In this manner, provincial cooperatives have maintained close supervision and in an emergency can distribute equipment rapidly. This has prevented an undersupply or oversupply in individual cooperatives.

To accommodate the needs of individual groups, the above four-point program, which is fairly flexible, will continue to govern our program.

Objective of Program

The agricultural insecticide program has had a twofold objective: (1) to develop economically productive areas and (2) to develop areas that heretofore have not been economically productive. This year, as in the past, pests have caused greater damage to cotton than to any other crop. More than 6 million mou were destroyed. The magnitude of this problem demands that we exert every effort to remedy this condition. Therefore, it is essential that our program be equal to the task.

Important obstacles that had to be resolved, included the following:

1. Problem of making the agricultural insecticide program a profitable enterprise, at the same time enlisting the support of the people. This problem was aggravated by the fact that all cooperatives increased their prices. Although this greatly increased the sales proceeds, the people objected to the high prices and there was an eventual decrease in both the sales and the production of equipment. Certain adjustments were then necessary to stop the resulting loss of capital. Later, much of the capital was regained when the "break-even point" was restored.

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For example, it cost 196,605 yuan to manufacture seven sprayers, but the cooperative sales receipts amounted to 267,000 yuan for a profit of 70,395 yuan. At the end of July, the sales price for these items was reduced to 220,000 yuan for a profit of 12 percent. The cotton farmers of the Hui-min Special Administrative District in Shantung Province are very pleased with these sprayers.

The same situation prevailed in the field of insecticides. On a 25-percent DDT solution, there was a net profit of 25.49 percent. This greatly reduced the farmers purchasing power and had to be adjusted.

2. Experience indicates that the best marketing method is to permit both cash and credit sales. However, inadequate and poorly timed sales campaigns resulted in overstocked inventories in some cooperatives while other areas had an insufficient supply and customers had to wait for their equipment. For example at Su-shan in Chekiang Province, there were few sales of insecticides and much pest damage which produced a serious situation. There was a similar situation in southern Kiangsu Province in T'ai-ts'ang Hsien.

It is important that there be closer liaison between the areas concerned, and that a program be developed that will be both practical and dependable.

3. In some areas, too much pressure was put on the farmers by the cooperatives. At Yu-yang in Chekiang Province the cadres told the farmers, "If you do not buy agricultural items and insecticides, then you do not love the country." The result was that the farmers sold their cotton clothing in order to make the purchases. Also at Su-shan in Chekiang Province, land assessment was applied to the wealthy farmers who made purchases on credit. These stringent regulations and assessments indicate a faulty policy. Each cooperative must examine its program and remedy such mistakes.

4. This year, 75,000 agricultural items were sold on credit. This represents 77.8 percent of the total amount sold. Credit sales of insecticides amounted to 2,320,000 catties. This represents 62.5 percent of the total amount sold. However, it has been a difficult and complicated task to make collections on schedule. It is necessary that the youth corps, village units, agricultural associations, and propagandists work closely with each level cooperative to help them make their collections.

Special consideration should be given widows, widowers, orphans, and the handicapped. Compulsory collection methods should not be used, but a mutual agreement should be arrived at to enable scheduled collection. To restore bank funds on schedule, we must prevent an irresponsible attitude that is wholly partial to the people.

Guide for 1953

From the experience gained this year, the following guide is offered for the 1953 program.

1. We must accurately determine the quantity of agricultural items and insecticides that were sold in 1952, and how much is still on hand.

2. Individual cooperatives should accurately determine their needs to prevent an oversupply that would cause an inefficient distribution and damage because of inadequate storage facilities. Such mismanagement would be at the expense of the country's welfare and would have an adverse effect on next year's pest-control program.

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3. Because of the limited supply of agricultural items and insecticides, we should select those areas that are the most productive and give them adequate attention.

4. With regard to the division of administrative work - the federated cooperatives in East China should not assume the duties that belong to the provinces. This will reduce administrative costs and will effect a better distribution of capital. Provincial cooperatives plan the requirements of subordinate units. Hsien cooperatives market the goods and the basic level cooperatives should make the sales.

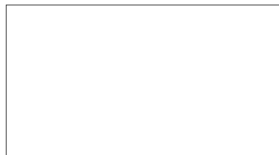
Since the provincial cooperatives control and distribute the insecticide equipment, they are able to channel their efforts directly to those areas that are worst effected during season for pests. They should do this by establishing agricultural equipment and insecticide supply stations and graneries to accommodate those areas that are the most productive. The hsien cooperatives should select centrally located areas; it should make a greater number of sales and should be prepared to wage war on pests.

5. This year a comparison was made between the three marketing methods used: cash sales, credit sales, and rentals. Cash and credit sales have been the best. Next year we will adopt a cash and credit sales program that will be geared to the economic position of the farmers and should result in a fair and equitable method of supply.

6. A fair price must also be determined for agricultural items and insecticides. All cooperatives should make public their cost of operation and should demand that the factories do likewise. The interests of one economic group should not be unduly favored. Sales prices should be reported to superior levels for their reference.

7. Technical machinery must also be produced to improve the supply of insecticides and agricultural equipment and to give better service.

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