

THE WORLD FOOD ECONOMY AT THE  
BEGINNING OF THE 1980s

Harold F. Breimyer

"When there are people dying from famine . . . [and] you do not issue the stores of your granaries for them . . . and you say, 'It is not owing to me; it is owing to the year,' in what does this differ from stabbing a man and killing him, and then saying, 'It was not I; it was the weapon?'"

-- Mencius (372-289 B.C.)  
to King Hui of Laing

"I support . . . establishing a national policy for protecting good agricultural land."

-- John R. Block, Secretary  
of Agriculture, 1981

". . . I believe the need for conservation of our natural resources and the preservation of prime agricultural land for agricultural use must take a high priority during the 1980s."

-- James B. Boillot, Director  
of Agriculture, State of  
Missouri, 1981

Most Americans entered the decade of the 1980s with an honest sense of reality. They knew our nation, and indeed the whole western world, was facing sterner times. They were ready to admit that hopes must sometimes be bridled and that horizons have limits, even ours.

The contrast with a decade before is incisive and instructive. In 1970 our citizens were preoccupied with the Vietnam quagmire but their unease did not extend to questioning national purpose or destiny. Still lying ahead, unforeseen, were the corn blight, devaluation of the U. S. dollar, the Soviets' raid on our grain stocks, OPEC's cartelizing of oil prices, and even our runaway inflation.

But those shocks and others came in the 1970s. They jolted our confidence. They shook us up. Nor are they any longer seen as isolated, temporary, quickly passing. On the contrary, we now know the scene has changed.

So, to repeat, we marched into the 1980s chastened and sobered. And that is good.

Paper opening discussion of "U. S. Agriculture and the World Food Economy,"  
Recognition of Excellence seminar, University of Missouri-Columbia, April 7, 1981.

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Whether we are prepared to take the next step and respond wisely is a different matter. It is also, as the line goes, "why we are here."

Surely accurate understanding precedes prudent action. To improve our understanding is the object of this paper and the three by distinguished UMC scientists that follow.<sup>1</sup>

#### The Danger of Attempted Withdrawal

Disturbing events of the last ten years have in common that they respect no national boundaries. Many are international in origin, such as the OPEC petroleum trade, or shared with trading neighbors, such as inflation.

Traditionally, Americans have withdrawn from problems having a foreign taint, as reflexively as from a hot stove. Anyone of my vintage can attest thereto. My education began just after World War I. All pupils learned first the Pledge of Allegiance and second President Washington's farewell admonition to the American people to stay out of entangling foreign alliances. In reality the teaching was inaccurate. The exact language was that we should "steer clear of permanent alliance with any portion of the foreign world." Somehow in our instruction the softer adjective "permanent" was lost and replaced by "entangling."

Presidents Harding and Coolidge governed by the precept of avoiding alliances, entangling or otherwise. Then came the isolation of the Depression years, when we sought to solve our internal problems by erecting external barriers. Trade was stifled. Secretary of State Cordell Hull got us to loosen trade a bit but it remained for the Japanese to instruct Americans that we are a part of the world. They did so December 7, 1941. Never since have we allowed ourselves the delusion of disinvolvement.

Nonetheless, old reflexes persist. Just now we are flirting with the impulse to run from trouble, even though the thinking lobes of our brains tell us there is no place to run to. American citizens in their frustration are begging to retrench, both domestically and internationally. They said so with their votes last fall. The officials they elected, more disposed to acquiesce than to importune, are pulling in U. S. horns. The national posture of the moment is to disengage, to withdraw.

The wish may be natural but the cause is futile. The United States cannot stay aloof. The option is not open. Apart from moral and political ties with the rest of the world, and apart too from obvious communication linkage as Borneo connects with Boston by satellite, the United States has joined in heightened interdependence among nations.

Much of the interdependence is coldly economic. An example is our dependence on imported minerals to keep not only our manufacturing industry going but our modern agriculture too. In addition to our advertised appetite for imported oil we draw on imports for 93 percent of our bauxite (for aluminum),

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<sup>1</sup> Papers by Douglas Ensminger, John Milton Poehlman, and Earnest R. Sears.

81 percent of our tin, 77 percent of the nickel we use, 50 percent of tungsten, 29 percent of iron ore, and 19 percent of copper. For agriculture we import from Canada a sizable part of the potash for fertilizer nutrients, and before long we will have to get more of our phosphate from Morocco.

Our agriculture also depends on the rest of the world for markets. And although we may rejoice in how burgeoning export demand benefits at least part of our agriculture, the associated cost is a heightened sensitivity to economic and political developments beyond our shores. In view of our national history this side effect is not welcomed. I stress that both economics and politics are involved.

At last fall's Agricultural Outlook Conference Carol Tucker Foreman, then Assistant USDA Secretary, warned of the vulnerability of export markets to world events:

We are fooling ourselves if we think it possible over the next several years to avoid the foreign policy implications of our food exports. Further, we must understand that we are not the only actors on the world scene. . . . We cannot make the blithe assumption that . . . statistical projections will be translated automatically into stable, dependable markets abroad. . . .

In the past, farmers only had to worry about weather, pests, and irate American consumers. They are now vulnerable to the even more capricious pressures of palace intrigue in unpronounceable foreign capitals. . . . It is clear that food export policy must go hand-in-hand with diplomacy.<sup>2</sup>

In March of this year Agriculture Secretary Block echoed the same theme. Applauding cooperative business-government "ventures" abroad he declared, "it is important to recognize that our agricultural trade development projects with other nations will be linked to our relations with those countries." By "relations" he meant "evidence of support for the goals and objectives of the United States;" in other words, political accord.<sup>3</sup>

Language such as that used by Mrs. Foreman and Secretary Block bring to mind the debate about using food as a weapon. The coinage is understandable yet unfortunate. It suggests that the political role of food is solely negative, even punitive. On balance our food resources serve better to woo friends than to spank enemies. During four days in Egypt last summer I learned a fact of international life, that our ally Anwar Sadat holds his strong position as President of Egypt partly by virtue of the P. L. 480 wheat we make available to him. Our wheat baked into cheap bread for Cairo's unemployed is essential to economic and political stability in the country. We want Mr. Sadat strong and on our side. U. S. wheat helps.

<sup>2</sup> Carol Tucker Foreman, "Food and Agriculture Policy in the 1980s," USDA, Nov. 20, 1980, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> John R. Block, remarks before the Joint Agricultural Consultative Committee, March 4, 1981.

Although we declare that our nation is deeply and irrevocably involved internationally, we also admit some loss of influence. That trend too is irreversible. Professor Tillema of our political science department commented at the UMC-Perry seminar last fall that even as our nation has become more internationally oriented it has lost some of its earlier "capacity to shape international events." We are still a great power, stronger than any other, but we can't make everyone dance to our tune. Therefore, "in order to protect our interests we must play the game of international politics," even as other nations do, and with "all the risks of costs and failures" that go with that game.<sup>4</sup>

#### Seeing through a Glass Darkly

My final opening note is a precautionary caveat. The analysis that follows relates primarily to the outlook for world trade in farm products and especially the grains, and our likely place in it. The best available information will be summarized. But knowledge is always an exercise in probabilities. The most likely prospect for the 1980s is that the world will compete for our grain and other farm products, that domestic consumers will insist on having their wants met (or will try to do so), and that the decade will be marked by more instances of relative scarcity than of burdensome surplus. To repeat, this is the most likely prospect.

But it is far from certain, assured. Not only can developments be affected by the palace intrigues Mrs. Foreman whimsically refers to. There can also be casualties in demand, or unexpected developments in production (positive or negative), or perhaps even international conflict. Events of these kinds can upset not only the best-laid plans of men but their prognostications. In statistical language, there is a sizable error term to all the observations that will be made henceforth.

On the other hand, it is not necessary to be precisely accurate to set forth how dramatically the overall outlook can affect the future course of events at home and abroad. Put succinctly, whether or not the actual situation will be one of comparative scarcity or of a return to surpluses is a matter of immense meaning. If surpluses were to recur we would go back to old debates about land retirement, export subsidies, and such. But if shortages persist we will face new issues.

Our past experience has prepared us better for surpluses than for shortages. To be sure, if shortages were mild and brief we could rely on business-as-usual. But persistent shortages would lead to a three-way tug-of-war among claimants for our food- and feedstuffs. One is the new export demand, amplified by the diplomatic overtones mentioned above. The second is U. S. consumers, who will clamor for secure access to food supply. Third is a new arrival on the scene, one that is welcome during surplus but potentially annoying during shortage, namely, diversion of feed grains to ethanol.

Data bearing on these possible panoramas will be presented below.

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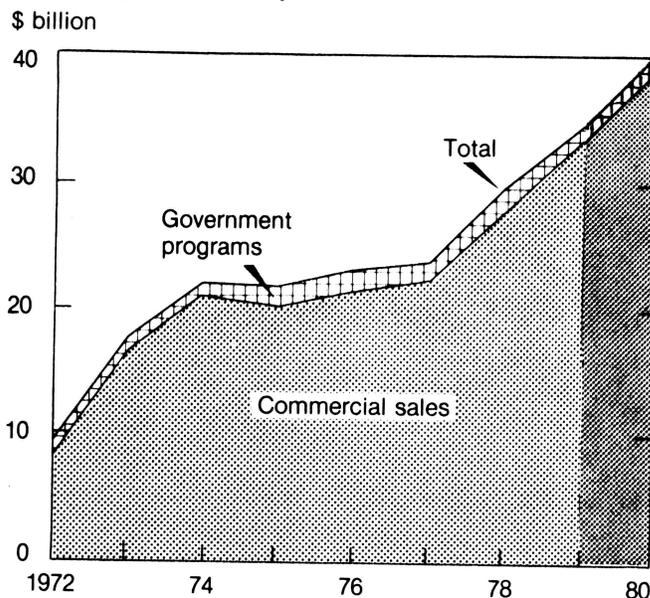
<sup>4</sup> Herbert K. Tillema, "America and the World, 1980," in International Affairs and U. S. Agriculture, Univ. of Missouri-Columbia, Agr. Exp. Station Special Report 259, 1980, p. 13.

### The Export Boom

A starting point is the boom during the 1970s in exports of U. S. farm products. The chart below tells the story. The export value in 1979-80 (year ending September 30) was \$40 billion. During the 1970s the value multiplied approximately five times. The increase is attributable about equally to larger volume and higher prices.

The great bulk of exports is commercial. Concessional sales, primarily made under P. L. 480, stayed at around five percent of the total.

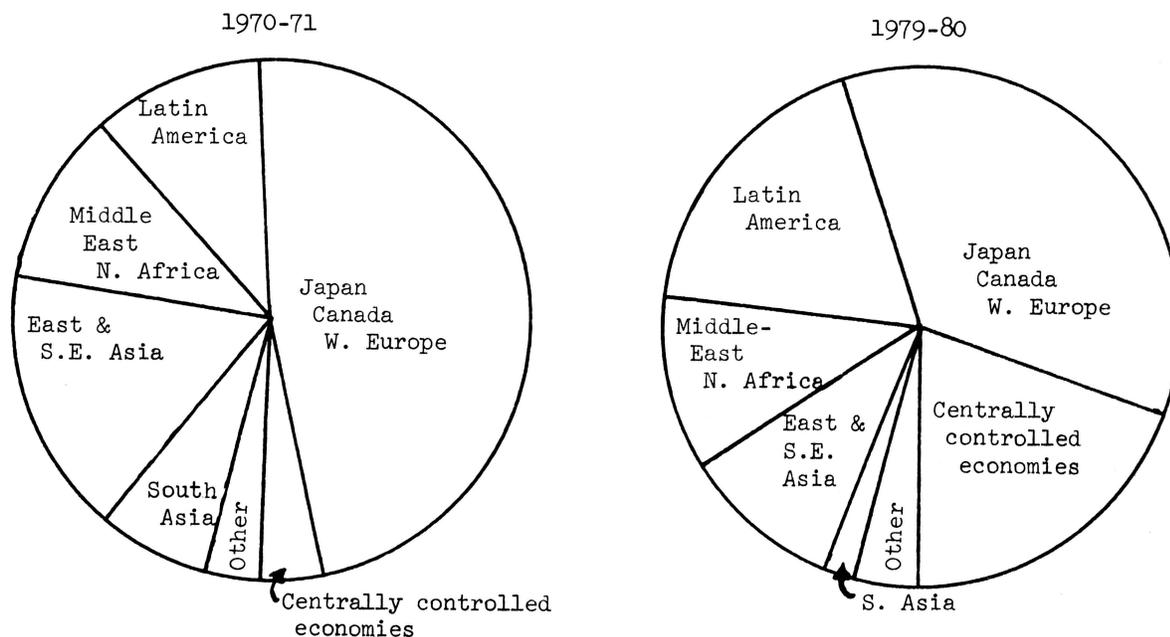
**Government Programs and Commercial Sales  
of U.S. Agricultural Exports**



All farm products joined in the gain in export values during the 1970s. But the food and feed grains and soybeans were in the lead and they now account for two-thirds the value of all farm products exported. These products will be at the center of future export policy.

Changes in export destinations are noteworthy. For the grains the charts below compare destinations in 1979-80 with those of 1970-71. Although all markets increased their buying, the traditional markets of Japan, Canada, and Western Europe lost ground relatively. Latin America took a larger share in 1979-80, as did Southeast Asia; but the really big gain was in sales to centrally controlled economies, principally the Soviet Union and Peoples Republic of China.

## DESTINATIONS OF U. S. GRAIN EXPORTS



Many factors underlay the uptrend in exports of U. S. farm products. At our 1980 UMC-Perry seminar Professors Womack and Bredahl listed several contributing causes and they took particular note of increased trade with Eastern Europe. They specifically cited "decisions in centrally planned economies to increase meat supplies to consumers; . . . [a new] U. S. policy that encouraged exports to [those] economies beginning in the early seventies; . . . and the current U. S. farm program based on a managed buffer stock policy."<sup>5</sup>

Devaluation of the U. S. dollar early in the 1970s definitely added to trade with countries whose currencies remained relatively strong. Consumer demand for meat increased also in Western Europe and some other developed countries, contributing to growing exports of feed grains and soybeans.

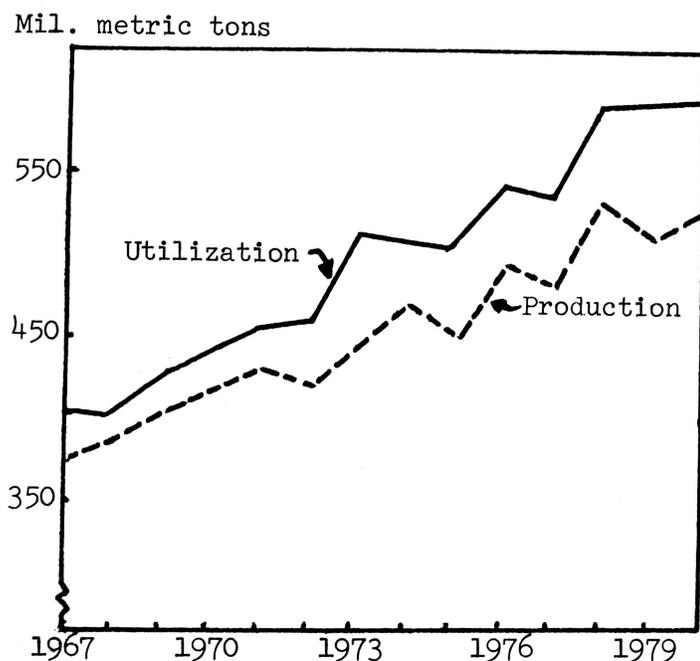
In developing nations of the Third World, which are major markets for our wheat and rice, rising export trade is explained more by an urgent need for food. There the cereals are consumed directly. Those nations buy approximately half our exports of the two grains; and, contrary to popular impression, they pay hard dollars for the largest part of their purchases. (Some get their dollars by borrowing from private banks and international lending agencies, however; and their pyramiding debt structure is a disturbing element in the trade outlook.)

<sup>5</sup> Abner W. Womack and Maury Bredahl, "The World Dimension to U. S. Agricultural Trade," in International Affairs and U. S. Agriculture, Univ. of Missouri-Columbia, Agr. Exp. Station Special Report 259, 1980, p. 19.

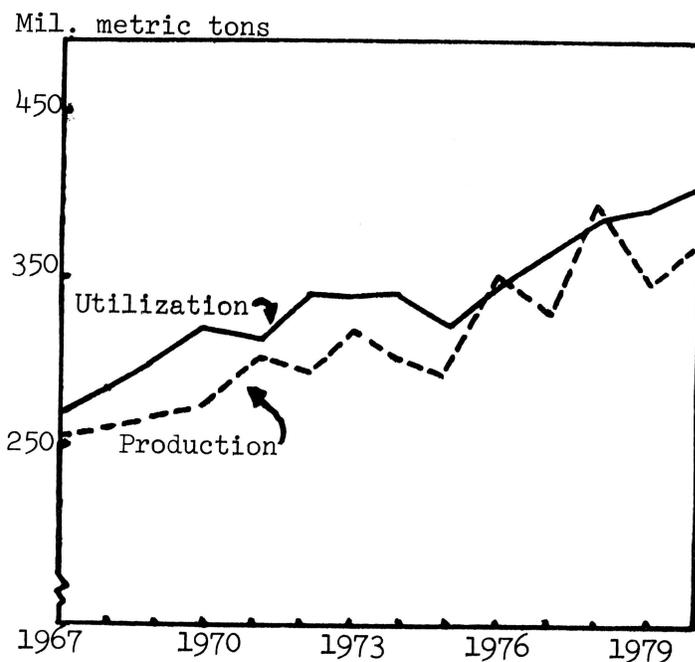
Not least among factors involved in our exports are shortfalls in agricultural production worldwide. It is not that agricultural economies stagnate; all show continued gains in output. But yields do not keep up with need.

The charts below present the world picture dramatically. In the left hand chart annual consumption and production of feed grains are shown for all countries of the world outside the United States. Manifestly, the gap between consumption and production has widened steadily. Professor Womack estimates that the deficit increases by more than two million metric tons each year, or almost 100 million bushels. The United States has filled that gap. Translated into acreage, a million more acres of corn, sorghums, and other feed grains are required each year to supply that quantity of grain for export -- assuming only slow trends in per-acre yields.

PRODUCTION AND UTILIZATION OF FEED  
GRAINS, WORLD OUTSIDE U. S.



PRODUCTION AND UTILIZATION OF  
WHEAT, WORLD OUTSIDE U. S.



For wheat the situation is less critical. However, the two good-harvest years of 1976 and 1978 obscure the slow worsening of the wheat supply-demand balance in the world outside the United States. According to Professor Womack, longer trends indicate that on the average the world will draw on the United States for about 35 million more bushels of wheat each year.

The story for soybeans is similar to that for feed grains. If anything, the United States position is even more strategic for soybeans than for the grains, as we are by far the largest supplier of beans and their products into foreign trade.

#### Feedback Effect on the U. S. Food Economy

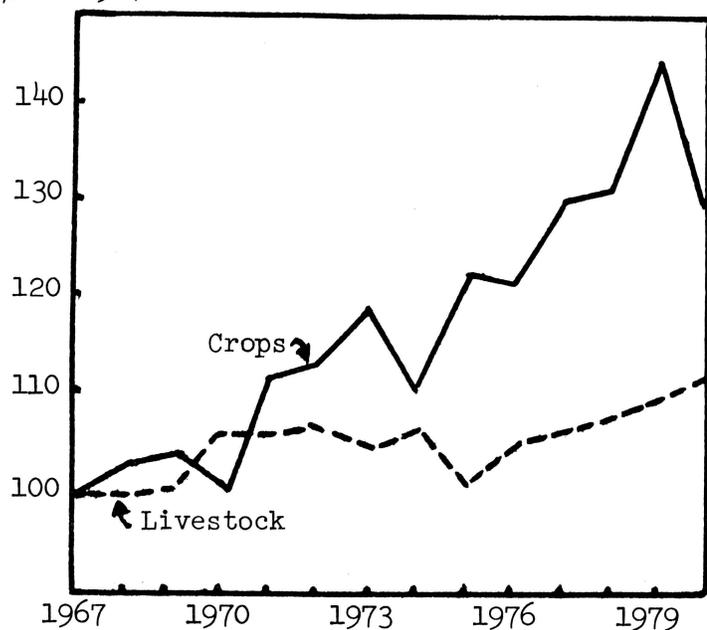
It has been politically popular to rejoice in the big growth in agricultural exports. Grain and soybean farmers have seen it as underpinning the price structure

for their products. The dollar exchange earned by those exports has helped to bolster the U. S. dollar in the face of rising costs of petroleum imports.

But there are negative factors too. Clearly, every increase in price received by feed grain and soybean farmers has constituted a matching increase in cost to livestock and poultry producers. Animal agriculture, heralded after World War II as savior to farmers and blessing to consumers, has lapsed into comparative shadows. We have been loath to admit how much the growing export trade has detracted from our livestock and poultry operations. The statistical fact of the matter is that very nearly all the increase in production of grains and soybeans the last 10 years has moved into export channels. The two charts below show clearly the uptrend in crop production but near-stability in livestock output, and the very slow growth in quantity of feed concentrates fed. More feed has not been fed at home because export demand has bid it away.

U. S. CROP AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

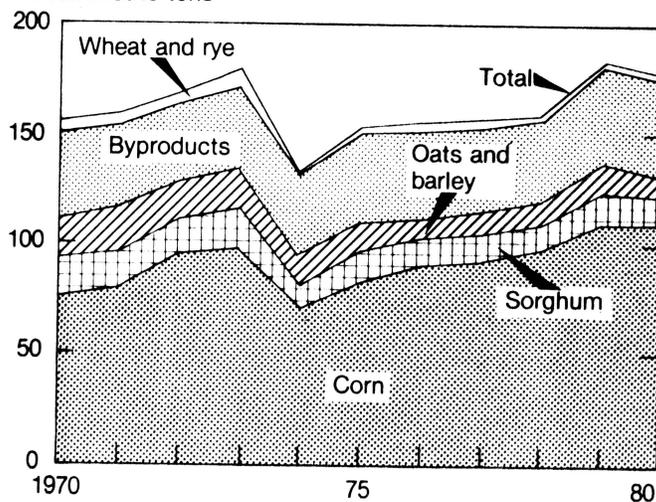
% of 1967



1980 data are preliminary

Feed Concentrates Fed

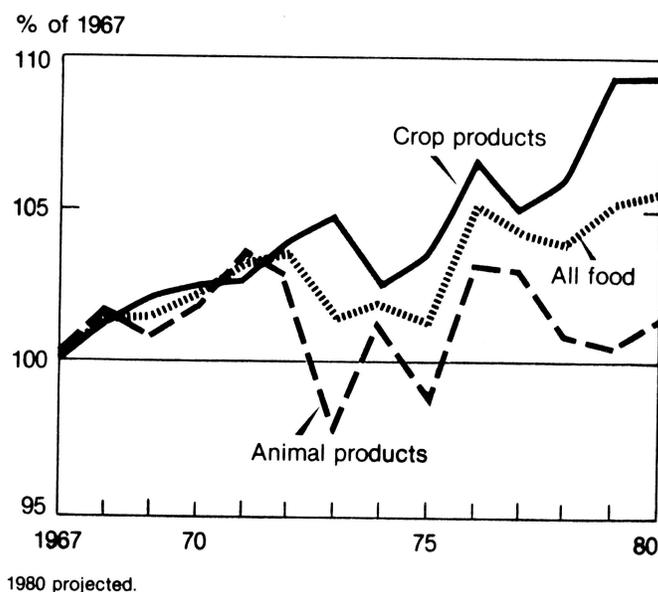
Million metric tons



Feed fed to livestock and poultry. Year beginning October 1, 1979 preliminary. 1980 projected.

The chart on the next page reveals that as a consequence the average consumption of animal products has stayed about level for more than 10 years. Even as Eastern and Western Europeans have moved toward more animal foods in their diets, we have eaten more crop products.

### Per Capita Consumption of Food



Whether U. S. consumers have changed their dietary habits because of changing preferences -- witness the aversion to breakfast eggs -- or have reluctantly responded to price signals is a moot question. Probably both factors have been at work. However, the protests raised occasionally against high prices of beef suggest that not all dietary changes have been voluntary and welcome. And in a nation that formerly regarded foods of animal origin as superior and mark of a good life, the retrenchment carries a meaning -- and perhaps a portent.

### Grain for Fuel

Something relatively new under the farm-policy sun is the increasing diversion of feed grains into ethanol and the grand ambitions sometimes expressed. A year ago the farm community felt high excitement. There was enthusiasm about home distillation as hedge against scarce motor fuels. Following the embargo on shipping over-quota grain to the Soviet Union, many farmers endorsed commercial production of ethanol from grain (for gasohol) for its market-strengthening effect.

Ardors have since cooled a bit. Stills have not worked too well. Ethanol remains non-competitive with even higher priced gasoline, and its production still rests on subsidy. But the soberest reflections on potential use of grain for fuel reveal the piercing contrast between how much even a modest ethanol program could disturb the present market equilibrium in agriculture, and how little even a large program would contribute to the energy supply.

Bluntly put, grain is not an economically sound alternate source of motor fuel. Other biological materials that are not themselves foodstuffs are a more promising alternative energy source. In 1980 some 80-100 million bushels of

corn went into manufacture of ethanol. The product of about one million acres, that quantity provided about 200 million gallons of ethanol. But we use more than 100 billion gallons of gasoline each year, not to mention diesel as a second fuel. Hence the million acres of corn contributed one fifth of one percent of the motor gasoline supply of last year.

Former President Carter advocated building capacity to produce 10 billion gallons of ethanol. A yearly output of that scale would require half the U. S. corn crop. Granted, distillers' grains would be recovered as a byproduct, but even so the consequence to both our corn export trade and our livestock/poultry industry would be devastating. And that big a program would supply less than a tenth of all motor fuel needs and would amount to only two percent of the total energy supply.

It is possible that many U. S. citizens, pressed to get fuel for their automobiles, boats, and lawnmowers, will opt to put corn-alcohol into those motors and bread and rice (instead of meat) into their own stomachs. Rarely, though, will the issue be expressed in those terms. The easy assumption is that we can have both ethanol and meat, not to mention continuing to export farm products. The chances of such a felicitous outcome are very small.

A modest ethanol program could be accepted rather readily but grandiose schemes would pose a major policy problem. They would do so because they would almost certainly put agriculture into a shortage milieu and claimants on farm output into contention. As stated above, we are experienced in dealing with surpluses but chronic shortage can throw us into a tailspin.

#### Prospects for More Production

Before elaborating on policy issues for the future I will touch briefly on prospects for increased agricultural production.

Wonderful achievements in increasing food production in nearly all countries have been a heartening experience of the last generation or two. They have made it possible for a steadily growing world population to be fed without recurring or widespread famines. Admittedly, many hundreds of millions continue to live on a diet of minimum adequacy. But the overall record is not bad.

In developing nations a third of the increase in agricultural output is attributed to expansion of cultivated area. In developed nations virtually all the increase has come from a combination of new technology and new resources -- mainly motor fuel, fertilizer, other chemicals. Most of these newer resources are derived from fossil fuels. As fossil fuel sources become scarcer and more costly, grave dilemmas are posed.

Already in the United States, one recourse has been to add to cultivated acreage. Yet most surveys show that we have only a small reserve of land that can be cultivated without severe problems of conservation, while at the same time good farmland is steadily lost to nonfarm uses. In its 1977 Potential Cropland Study the Soil Conservation Service estimated that only 127 million acres have a high or medium potential for addition to cropland. Of this only 36 million acres could be converted readily. The SCS also believes that three million acres of

rural land are lost to non-agricultural uses each year and that almost a third is prime agricultural land.<sup>6</sup>

Whether another round of explosive new technology can somehow be induced or invented, sparing mankind the perils of inadequate food supply, is a question better left to the two agronomists honored at this seminar, Dr. Poehlman and Dr. Sears. For my part I am impressed by the statistic that of the solar energy falling on a corn field only one percent is constituted in the harvested grain. Somehow it should be possible to do better.

There is yet another facet to estimates of potential production. The new technology and new nonfarm inputs that have revolutionized farming in the United States and many other places have a distinctive cultural pattern: they are capital-intensive. So-called modern technology rests on and glorifies intensive use of capital inputs ranging from steel in machines to electric power to petroleum in its many forms.

This kind of agriculture is labor-extensive. It is also somewhat land-extensive. Its goal and highest achievement has been to lift output per man to impressive levels. It has not maximized output per acre or in total.

An agriculture of such a make-up was long appropriate to the United States, where industrial materials could be made available at unbelievably low cost. It was economic to use machines that burned fuel by the barrel. Also, in a nation with immense land resources, and one where annual output tended to outrun markets, it was defensible to confine the land in cultivation to flat or gently sloping expanses where those big machines could turn a long furrow, and where costs of protecting soil from surface damage could be kept small.

In short, the United States has been under no pressure to maximize utilization of its land or farm labor, or its total output.

Pressures of the future will force a turn-about. Although we will not revert to horse and mule farming or human drudgery, the imperious trend will be toward a somewhat more land-intensive and labor-intensive agriculture. This means bringing into cultivation tracts of land that do not accommodate huge machines, or that require soil conserving practices to protect them. It also means servicing smaller and diversified farms, thus slowing the trend toward ever larger monoculture units.

Intensification of our agriculture could add significantly to total output. I have said often, only half facetiously, that Japanese farmers could feed Columbia by farming the median of Interstate 70. The image is not too far fetched.

The same moral about cultural practices can be applied to our teaching of farmers in other nations, particularly those of the Third World. In past years much of our technical aid has featured transfer of our variety of technology. Highlight has been the techniques of the Green Revolution. But the majority of the world's farmers are small operators for whom expensive nonfarm inputs

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<sup>6</sup> Potential Cropland Study, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, Statistical Bulletin No. 578, 1977.

are uneconomic, especially at rising prices. They need help with ordinary techniques, not more capital-intensification.

### Implications for Policy

If the future should bring back a surplus situation in agriculture, policy issues will not be absent but the territory will be familiar.

Not so if the future truly will be one of relative shortages. The terrain will be unfamiliar indeed. Although it is tempting to suggest that the "market" will do all allocating of resources and distributing of product, sparing us the travail of policy decisions, the grim reality is not so reassuring. Policy decisions already are deeply involved in our agriculture and agricultural trade. New policy contentions are inescapable. I touch on a few.

Terms of international trading are surely a candidate for controversy. Will trade henceforth be essentially multilateral or bilateral? We subscribe to the former but in the last five years have entered into three bilateral agreements for grain trade. Each agreement is justified on grounds of being unique and not precedent-setting. A new Soviet agreement might be signed in 1981.

If grain proves to be abundant we can live with part-multilateral, part-bilateral trade policy. If grain is scarce, my prediction is that we cannot. During a period of scarcity our old reliable (and politically friendly) export buyers will clamor for bilateral protection of their access to our stores. It will not be strategically possible to deny them.

Moreover, multilateral trading is a policy but bilateral involves agreements. If we bilaterally commit ourselves to export specified volumes of grain a problem arises of holding reserve stocks to ensure fulfillment. The present farmers' reserve program, although well designed in some respects, could readily prove incapable of meeting heavy demands on it. One proposal is to set up a separate export-contract reserve.

At this point I offer a personal interpretation that presses ever harder on my mental retina. It seems to me that old tradition and new paradigm in international trade are in conflict. Traditionally, world buyers of farm products have looked on imports as residual supplements to domestic food sources, and sellers have regarded exports as residual disposal of domestic surplus. Year by year/paradigm emerges wherein buyers seek dependable if not pre-schedulable sources, and sellers want equally reliable outlets. The contrast between the old tradition and new paradigm is obvious. In the newer setting nations grope to modify their institutions of trade.

Policy topic two is non-commercial trade relations. These may be no more facile than the commercial. For a quarter century concessionary trade and technical aid have been extended for the multiple purposes of helping people, winning or keeping friends, and strengthening our markets. When grain is plentiful programs are readily, even enthusiastically, supported. When grain is scarce, the impulse is to retrench. But pervasive world tensions give cause to preserve these instruments of our world role.

### Priority to Our Consumers?

A third policy topic is the consideration to be shown our own citizens in the event of relative shortages and competitive grasping for available supply. Do we first provide for "our own"? An attractive feature of an export-reserve program, mentioned above, is that it would facilitate a two-price policy -- a different price for exports than for domestic use. During the 1950s and 1960s when surpluses were our burden export buyers often bought at discount. We subsidized exports. During a future shortage it is conceivable that export buyers will be charged a premium.

Fourthly I turn to the touchy issue of use of energy -- the so-called biomass debate. Ethanol is as much a product of subsidy as of corn. As energy becomes scarcer and more costly pressure will intensify to convert farm products to the alcohols. But resistance will be thrown up as food supplies diminish. There is no way to avoid a confrontation.

Fifth and sixth on my list are policy issues bearing on capacity to produce. How much and what kind of support will we <sup>give</sup> to research and accompanying education? Some scientists allege a tight connection between level of research in production technology and level of gross farm output. The claim may be a bit smug. Even so, I have previously sounded an alarm regarding not just the downward drift in research funding but the gradual shift to a contractual system of funding. Does contractual funding promise continuity in a combined basic-and-applied research program? I doubt it does.

The final policy area is soul searching indeed. It relates to protection of our resource of productive land. In the United States we still hold to a pioneer philosophy of land. According to it, land is abundant, and once occupied it is eligible for protection or plundering as the title-holder sees fit. The philosophy is outdated and cannot survive; for if its worst features survive, human beings will not. Protection of our good farmland from every threat is an undeniable injunction for our national future. This applies to potential damage from water and wind, chemical saturation, loss to non-farm uses, and even inappropriate cropping patterns.

A retinue of policy issues such as those just sketched with their many international complications invites our old reflex of denial and disengagement. We may dream that energy will again be plentiful and cheap. We may imagine that open prairies still await the pioneer's plow. We might even suppose that George Washington's injunction against alliances, entangling or otherwise, can be adhered to.

A few years ago a librettist for light opera pled, "Stop the world: I want to get off." The wish may be natural but gravity prevents its fulfillment. A pull akin to gravity surrounds the place of the United States in the world food trade. We can't pull loose from it, however great be our desire.

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<sup>7</sup> Harold F. Breimyer, "Education in Public Policy: Eight Years of the UMC-Perry Foundation Seminar," in International Affairs and U. S. Agriculture, Univ. of Missouri-Columbia, Agr. Exp. Station Special Report 259, 1980, p. 57.

We can't detach ourselves because we are human beings possessed of sympathy, and we can't do so for the further reason that our security is interconnected with that of peoples from Greenland to Singapore. But lest this be too grim an ending to this paper, let's rejoice that food is our resource in relation to both our own and other populations. It touches humanity deeply, and our food-producing capacity is a source of strength at home and in world affairs.