

Ag Society

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Spending it for agricultural assistance abroad is especially unpopular nowadays with U.S. farmers and many agricultural organizations. Their view is that more foreign agricultural development is simply another threat to our dismal farm export markets. The argument is that we teach them how to grow commodities that we are good at producing ourselves. Then they do it and replace our exports, leaving American farmers holding the bag. These aid opponenets are loudly critical of agricultural assistance dispenseh by government agencies like USAID, by Land Grant schools like the University of Minnesota, Penn State University and by U.S.-supported international organizations like The World Bank.

Houck's research on the subject "Foreign Agricultural Assistance: Ally or Adversary" was conducted to see if the argument against agricultural assistance especially technical assistance was valid. So he related the increased agricultural productivity in countries receiving assistance with these countries average incomes per capita. When ag

productivity, as measured by value added per farm worker increased, 10% the average increase of income for everyone in the country increased 10 to 12%. In addition, when people in these less developed countries achieved this increased income, their per capita cereal imports (wheat, rice, rye and course grains) increased 7-15%. The stronger the economics performance of low income nations the more cereals they tend to import.

Thus Professor Houck concludes that a strong case can be made for the idea that advances in agricultural productivity are associated with increases in imports of cereals and other agricultural products. Especially for low-income nations.

The connection comes via the positive income effect of general economic development. For these countries, investments in agricultural development through successful technical assistance and education are not detrimental to U.S. farm export interests. They are generally beneficial.

For middle-income nations, the case is not so clear and probably more controversial. What can be said is that nothing in the aggregate data leads one to con-

clude that improvements in farm productivity among middle-income nations is generally or systematically threatening to U.S. farm exports across a broad international spectrum.

Naturally, specific episodes of U.S. trade displacement in some products by some countires can be identified and perhaps associated with agricultural assistance. However, wider evidence shows that the burden of proof clearly rests with those who insist that agricultural assistance for poor nations is usually a bad thing for American farmers. On the contrary, it is mostly a good thing.

This Forum sponsored by the Philadelphia Society of Promoting Agriculture is a part of the Society's continuing effort to provide its members and friends an opportunity to learn in greater depth about issues that are

currently important to U.S. agriculture.

The Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture was founded in 1785 by a small group of influential farmers, merchants and professional people for the purpose of exchanging crop and

animal production information among its members and with other regional agricultural societies. The Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture is the oldest, continuously active agricultural organization in the United States.

Farmland Preserve Dinner Scheduled

LANCASTER — The annual dinner meeting of Friends of Agricultural Land Preservation will be held this coming Thursday, Nov. 13, at Miller's Smorgasbord Restaurant, seven miles east of Lancaster on Route 30 at Ronks. The dinner begins at 7 p.m.

The dinner will honor those who have made commitments to the preservation of farmland in Lancaster County.

This year's dinner will feature a smorgasbord of Pennsylvania

Dutch favorites, including five entrees, appetizers and numerous desserts.

The public is invited. Miller's has reduced their normal price from \$12.95 per person to \$10, and plans to donate a portion of the proceeds to Friends of Agricultural Land Preservation. For ticket information call Stephanie Snowman Sunday between 1 and 5 p.m. at 464-0344, or weekdays at 299-8355 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.



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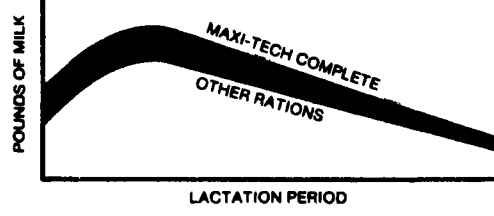
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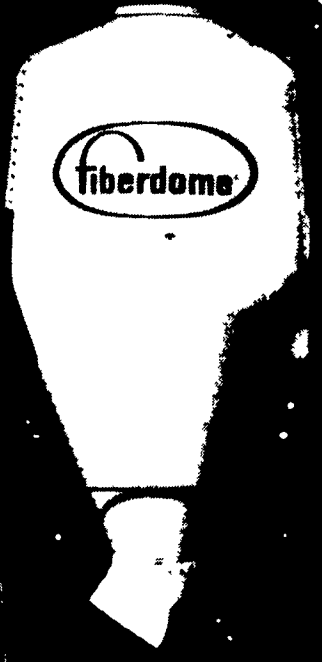


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