Foreign Visitors, Trainees Receive Warm Welcome Here

By James F. Armstrong

A year ago readers of this publication were introduced to the liaison officer, International Programs Personnel, who was filling a newly created position in the College of Agriculture. This position was created primarily to function as "contact officer" between the College of Agriculture and the Foreign Training Division, International Agricultural Development Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

The Foreign Training Division (FTD) is charged with the responsibility of arranging training programs in agriculture with land-grant colleges and universities, private colleges and universities, federal government agencies and private concerns and individuals. A particular program may combine coordinated training from any combination, or all, of these sources.

In general, FTD arranges programs for International participants sponsored by Agency for International Development (AID), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and other similar sponsoring agencies. Assistance in arranging and coordinating training programs for privately financed participants is also provided by FTD.

It Is An Involved Job

Primary duty of the "contact" is to accept, reject or recommend changes in proposed training programs, as submitted by FTD to the College of Agriculture on behalf of sponsored international participants. This function is done with cooperation of department heads and their staff and/or with administration personnel in the area of interest. Once the primary duty is completed, and assuming program approval is granted by FTD, the "contact officer" prepares for the arrival of trainees and participates in the activities of the program.

Foreign visitors arriving at the Port of Miami are met by representatives of the State University of New York at Fort Lauderdale, who function as "contact officer" between the University and the foreign participants. After the visitors arrive, the "contact officer" makes arrangements for their transportation and housing during their stay in the state, and organizes the program of events for them.

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...land is owned and operated by "Fazendeiros". In 1960, over 28 percent of the farm units had less than 10 hectares and retained less than 1.5 percent of the land area.

Establishments with 100 hectares or more had over 75 percent of the agricultural land area, but had less than 55 percent of the cultivated land. In 1960 only 316 tractors and 1305 plows were recorded in the whole state. These numbers are increasing and the state is starting to establish rental stations, but most producers still do not even have mule power.

Problems in agriculture are not only those of increasing productivity. The lack of storage programs for either animal or human food supplies increases the severity of the problems in dry periods. There are seasonal shortages yearly which create real problems, in addition to severe shortages during periods of drought.

The practice of harvesting and maintaining stocks of forage or other feeds is almost non-existent. As a result of this and other factors, it takes approximately four to six years for beef animals to be prepared for market. Thus, even though there are relatively large numbers of cattle in the Northeast, meat supplies are low. Furthermore, if dry periods are extended, the basic herd tends to be reduced because of the lack of feed to meet the needs.

Not Heavy Meat Animals

It is difficult to obtain comparable estimates of productivity especially on a state basis. However, estimates for 1962 indicate that 79 million head of cattle in Brazil produced less than 3 billion pounds of beef carcass, while a U.S. inventory of 99.8 million head produced over 15 billion pounds of beef. Estimated inventories of hogs in Brazil in 1962 were more than 90 percent as large as those for the U.S., yet production of pork in Brazil was shown to be less than 10 percent of U.S. production. Indications are that productivity in Ceará is somewhat lower than the Brazilian averages.

Lack of storage of human foods creates problems for both producers and consumers. Items on the food list become intermittently unavailable, and if droughts occur even basic foods must be imported. Producers lose since they are forced to accept going market prices for their products when they are harvested and are unable to take advantage of higher prices when supplies are short. Transportation is also a major problem. Some areas lack access to markets because roads, railroads and transportation equipment are inadequate.

Estimates have been made that from 25 to 50 percent of the product is lost between harvest and consumption. This is due to the lack of storage, refrigeration and other factors such as inadequate facilities for transportation and handling. For example, perishable products may stand for long periods exposed to the hot sun or rain and movement of fruits and vegetables is almost entirely a bulk operation with numerous handlings of the product.

Future Looks Bright

The problems seem endless but an effort is being made by the people of Ceará to cope with them. New power sources, highways, schools, and projects for improvements in both agriculture and industry are evidence of progress in the struggle for economic development. Like Brazilians elsewhere, the Cearense is optimistic about the future in spite of the problems, and believes that his country is the land of tomorrow.

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program acceptance, many other functions become necessary. Coordination of the training program then becomes a major concern of the contact officer.

Training programs for foreign nationals are basically of two types, academic or visitor. Academic refers to programs in which the participant enrolls for one or more semesters of classroom study with definite training objectives. Typical training objectives are: (1) pursuit of B.S. degree in agriculture, majoring in a specific field, (2) special course work relating to a particular subject or area of study, or (3) pursuit of an advanced degree in some specific phase of agriculture.

Visitor programs have reference to in-service, on-the-job training and observation. Such programs vary in length from one day to three or four weeks — even longer in some instances. They may differ in number of trainees from one person to groups of 30 or more.

Each of the visitor programs is designed to fit the specific needs and desires of the individual or group. Representative examples of visitor programs are: (1) participate in Soils and Fertility short course for one week on this campus, (2) enroll in Western Regional Extension Winter School for a three-week period, (3) observe and study operation of an experiment station (3 days), or (4) discuss latest developments in irrigation practices with an irrigation specialist (1 day).

They’re All Different

No two visitor programs are the same, although their training objective may be quite similar. Differences in length of training, program emphasis and personal interest tend to make similar programs dissimilar.

In most cases the trainee is an official representative of his own government and receives training through agreement between the U.S. government and the home country.

When academic participants have been accepted at the university, the liaison officer assumes the function that the title implies — that of serving as liaison between the student and the university, and between the student and his Washington program specialist in FTD. Responsibility of this position involves periodic grade reports, progress reports, arranging field trips, making travel arrangements, counseling, recommending program changes and securing program and visa extensions for worthy students.

For a Day or a Week

Service provided the visitor includes arranging and coordinating the desired specialized training. This may involve only a campus visit for one day or, at the other extreme, may involve visits and training throughout the state for a period of one week or more.

The liaison office receives and distributes official mail for all participants and is the official contact for all international agricultural trainees programmed and serviced by the Foreign Training Division, IADS, USDA.

Ultimate objective of these training programs is to provide academic and/or in-service training that will be useful in improving agricultural conditions in developing countries of the world. Basically, developing countries are highly dependent on an agricultural economy. Training supplied by The University of Arizona represents a significant contribution towards the improvement of living standards and common understanding throughout the world.

Stull, Brown Report
Their Dairy Research

University of Arizona research was reported upon in June at the annual meeting of the American Dairy Science Assn. at Lexington, Ky.

Dr. J. Warren Stull and Dr. W. H. Brown are co-authors of two papers presented at those meetings.

One dealt with the variations in fatty acids of milk at various stages of lactation, while the other paper described an improved technique for blood lipid analysis.

LEARNING BY OBSERVING actual soil type at The U of A Campbell Ave. farm are Ahmed Naguib, left, and Atef Hafer, right. Man standing between the two is Jim Armstrong. The two visitors are UAR trainees, Naguib sponsored by AID and Hafer by FAO.

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