

May 1908

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U n o f f i c i a l .

PROPOSAL SUBMITTED TO THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE WITH REFERENCE TO
THE ORGANIZATION OF THE SERVICES ENTRUSTED TO THE INTERNATIONAL
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE.

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The Permanent Committee should declare that the most important of the services entrusted to it by article 9 of the Convention of 7th. June 1905, is : "The organization of an information service on the production, yield, price and commerce in the principle staples of agriculture."

This service properly performed can be of the greatest use to the economic life of the nations.

All the other services provided for in the program are of secondary importance as compared with this one; and they should for the present, be organized with a view to the collection of scientific statistical material and the elaboration of said material for international scientific purposes or for legislative measures. (Perhaps an exception should be made to this rule in the case of cooperation).

The information service should also absorb the greater part of the funds at the disposal of the Institute, and the Permanent Committee should take care that it be made possible to materialize the information service immediately after the first General Assembly has been held.

30/2

II - MAIN OUTLINES OF A PLAN FOR THE INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION SERVICES ON THE STAPLES OF AGRICULTURE;

A - FUNDAMENTAL POINTS OF THE SERVICE.

The Permanent Committee should declare :

1) That the Information Service should begin by dealing with a limited number of the principal products, to wit : cereals, (wheat, rye, barley, oats, indian corn, rice) and cotton.

The extension of the service to other products should proceed little by little as the organization of the service is consolidated and experience in its methods of working is acquired.

The object of the Institute is to embrace ultimately all products which are subjects to international trade.

2) Indispensable requisites for the Information Service are:

The widest possible geographical extension. (The only lands which can be left out are those which can neither be considered as export nor as import countries for the special staples under consideration).

Punctuality, Rapidity, Regularity. (Fixed terms and periods must be settled on for each kind of publication and must be strictly adhered to).

Reliability; Guarantees against abusive use. (Besides the criticism and the valuation by the Institute of the data sup-

plied to it, no data should be used for publication which are not guaranteed reliable by the competent authorities in the governments which supply them.

The organization of the information service must be so ordered and controlled that abusive use for private purposes of the data obtained is impossible.

3) The information service, as far as the collection of data is concerned, is partly indirect, and partly direct.

Indirect in so ~~xx~~ much as the data must be obtained through the central statistical bureaus of each country for all those matters for which there exist regular official statistical services.

Direct, in so much as it has to deal with questions which are not objects of regular official statistical enquiries, and which the Institute will have to ascertain by direct information obtained from the Exchanges (bourses) Chambers of Commerce, Agricultural Societies, Shipping Companies, Insurance Companies, and by means of ~~/~~ special correspondents in the employ of its Bureau, as also through the agency of the consular service of the several countries.

The Permanent Committee should declare that the Institute has no intention of exercising control over of of influencing the manner of obtaining the data for official agricultural and commercial statistics in each country.

30/4

B - MATTERS DEALT WITH BY THE INFORMATION SERVICE.

The Permanent Committee should declare the following to be the subjects on which it is desirable that information be supplied for each staple :

- 1) Extent of area under cultivation;
- 2) Growth and condition of the crops at regular periods, along with information on the weather conditions, on damage caused by weather, and on damages due to parasitic diseases of plants.
- 3) Harvest prospects at special times expressed as a percentage of the average yield of the special territory under consideration;
- 4) Approximate results of harvests to be immediately ascertained;
- 5) Final figures for harvest yields;
- 6) Total harvest yield for each area under cultivation, amount of stocks on hand at time of new harvest, and calculation of the surplus ~~of~~ of the ~~the~~ deficit in view of the known requirements of each population;
- 7) Price of products for each standardized quality,
(~~type~~ ^{grade});
- 8) Freightage and insurance rates;
- 9) Verification of transportation facilities;
- 10) Quantities shipped, floating stocks, arrivals, visible supplies, etc.

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The data mentioned under 7, 8, 9, and 10 to be given for all the principal export and import centres.

C - DISSEMINATION OF THE INFORMATION

- 1) Daily service for prices, freight, insurance and exchange rates, etc.
- 2) Weekly service for movement of prices, charters, arrivals.
- 3) Periodical service for areas under cultivation, condition of growing crops, crop prospects, harvest yields.
- 4) Periodical service for publishing calculations of total harvest yields, stocks on hand, and estimated surplus and deficit.

It is absolutely essential that the ^{periods} ~~prices~~ of publication be fixed and regular.

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