



NEWSLETTER - November, 1958. As the year (and graduation) begins to roll around, we often stop to muse why it is, if graduates are given a choice of occupation, Animal Husbandry comes first, Horticulture second, and Agronomy way down at the very bottom of the list!

We feel that a greater percentage should look towards agronomy as their forte in life. After all, is not the standard of living of most countries closely dependent on major grain and forage crops production? When the price of these basic foods is high the majority of the population must expend a greater percentage of their earnings for these staples, and consequently will have less left over to buy those 'extras' which the economists use to judge a country's standard of living.

When the price of these crops is high, it is usually because of an excessively high unit production cost plus a low yield per area cultivated. And our teaching here at the school is aimed directly at solving these problems!

Thus, we feel all the more deeply the unfortunate fact that so many of our graduates do not express a desire to continue working in field crops in their respective countries.

In searching for the reason for this, we have come to the conclusion that our second year work (Agronomy) generally lacks the VARIETY, found in Horticulture and Animal Husbandry, which is so stimulating for maintaining interest in the subject.

With this in mind, we have begun a number of new and expanded activities in field crops production which should result in a broader and more comprehensive training as well as one which is more interesting to the student. Some of these activities may be of interest to you.

We have just finished harvesting our first hybrid corn, and the yields of about 42 bushels per acre for the 24 acres seem quite promising (though admittedly still very low in comparison to U.S. corn belt corn). We feel that the fertilization of 10 pounds of nitrogen per acre greatly stimulated the production.

We are now harvesting our first sizeable, flooded paddy rice which apparently will give very good yields this year as well as a second crop. We have rice planted in 20 acres of land under four different methods. This year we will certainly be able to meet the school's rice needs.

We are just assembling our new overhead sprinkler irrigation system, specially designed by the Ames company for teaching irrigation by the flooding, furrow, or sprinkler methods. We can now give a shot of water to several plantings which, due to the lack of rains lately, are about to run out of soil moisture. Previously we could not have remedied this problem of insufficient moisture, but now we can add applications to a nearly full grown crop and so increase yield and quality. The river bottom-lands are also being prepared in order to plant corn, beans, rice and sorghum for seed production. We will also plant alfalfa, clover, sesame, castor bean, wheat, and potato, crops with which the school has previously done very little.

The increase in the number of crops agronomy is now working with--as well, of course, as the increase in the number of months we can now plant (12 instead of 6) with our irrigation equipment--should give the variety our students need for more of them to look toward agronomy for their future.