



ESCUELA AGRICOLA PANAMERICANA
TEGUCIGALPA HONDURAS

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

DECEMBER 1955.- A recent issue of "Esso Agrícola," a magazine published in Spanish by the Esso Standard Oil Company of Cuba, carried an editorial entitled "Dos Ejemplos Magníficos". We summarize in English the tenor of this editorial: "The farmer should have a book in his left hand and a shovel or hoe in his right. This accounts for the extraordinary success which is being achieved by institutions which combine theoretical and practical training. There are many of these, but we shall mention only two, both of which are splendid examples, models of their kind. One is the Massey-Harris-Ferguson School of Mechanized Agriculture in England; the other the Escuela Agrícola Panamericana, founded in 1943 by the United Fruit Company in Honduras."

Early this month, two members of the Centro Nacional de Agronomía in El Salvador (both of them graduates of this school) came here to offer good positions to members of our Class of 1956, who will terminate their studies on 3 March next. Officials in Guatemala, Honduras and Ecuador are also interested in securing the services of members of this class. Undoubtedly, we could place twice as many as will be available.

In our last News Letter we mentioned two interesting projects which are being started at the school by officials of FAO. We now have a third: Dr. Shu Yen Lin, of the same organization, has stocked with carp a large pond which we have prepared for the purpose. Similar projects which are under way elsewhere in Honduras and neighboring countries seem very promising.

We finished harvesting our rice crop of about 200 quintales (hundredweight); we attempted to compare the yields of upland rice with a plot established last spring by Dr. Dijkman, using the Asiatic technique of flooding. Upland rice, which is the only kind commonly grown here, yielded at the rate of 3300 lbs. of rough rice per hectare; the flooded plot at the rate of 7700; but the figures are not truly comparable because a much larger quantity of seed was used in the flooded plot. In connection with this year's plantings of upland rice, Professor Eduardo Jiménez, in collaboration with Professor Roberto García, carried out some preliminary fertilizer tests, which showed a remarkable increase in yield where nitrogen and phosphorous were applied, but no significant increase where nitrogen only was used. It is proposed to expand such experiments next year.

Several members of our staff were called upon to judge livestock at agricultural fairs in Danlí and Choluteca. They took with them a number of students. During Christmas week, our class in horticulture was taken to our small orchard of temperate zone fruit trees on Uyuca for demonstrations in pruning and other cultural practices. There is still a lot to be learned about pruning temperate zone fruits in the tropics; for example, to produce American grapes satisfactorily, we have to prune twice a year, which, of course, results in two crops of fruit, but may shorten the life of the vines. To us, it has always been a matter of interest that American grapes (really the *labrusca* x *vinifera* hybrids) are much more successful in the tropics generally than European or *vinifera* grapes, though the former come from colder climates than the latter. The answer, of course, is superior resistance to various diseases.

We wish to compliment, once more, the people responsible for the attractive and readable Monthly News Letter issued by the Servicio Técnico Agrícola de Nicaragua. Its attractiveness is considerably enhanced by the clever little sketches.