

I. BASIC OUTLINES OF THE RESEARCH POLICY

1. Research intended as a support to the highly commercial crops, such as rice, oilpalm, bananas and sugarcane. This type of research is focussed on the reduction of the costs of production through an efficient crop-protection by means of control of pests and diseases.

On the other hand the research is also concentrated on the selection of high-yielding varieties of those commercial crops.

2. Research based on the policy of reduction of the import of food products. This type of research is especially focussed on the economic feasibility of the crop-cultivation. The following items could be mentioned in this respect:

- a. Substitution of approximately 1,000 ton imported peanut per annum. Research on mechanized peanut-farming has been started four years ago. It is expected that within three years the area of mechanized peanut-farming - at the moment 50 ha - will be extended to 500 ha, being sufficient to supply the local demand, while the import of this product can be fully stopped at that time.

- b. Research of fodder crops intended to substitute approximately 33,000 ton imported maize annually, being the raw material for cattle-feeder.

The cultivation of maize in the coastal area resulted into rather attractive yields, but, unfortunately, the harvesting of this crop proves to be quite impossible on clay soils. Harvesting on the light, sandy soils in the interior - the so-called Zanderij-formation - is mechanically attractive, but the production proves to be too low, at least below the required economic standard.

At present a research-programme is being implemented with sorghum of these sandy soils; the production varies from 800 - 1.500 kg per ha. The research on higher yielding and fungus-resistant varieties is being continued.

- c. Research on pulses, especially in the field of mechanization possibilities has recently been started.

3. Research focussed on export promotion of certain crops, such as:

a. Citrus

Experiments in the field of crafting, being resistant against pests and diseases and which at the same time could flower later than the traditional varieties, in order to contribute to a better spreading of the harvest.

b. Fruits and vegetables

- * Research on the farming systems with regard to pepper, eggplant etc, aiming at a better spreading of the production throughout the year, and which could provide a better and more attractive economic position at the European Common Market.
- * Research in the field of the impact of varying humidity degree on the production of the West-Indian cherry, papaya and markoesa.
- * Post-harvest technological research of fruits and vegetables to be exported.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESEARCH PROGRAMME

Suriname is in urgent need of closer cooperation with the countries of our region in the field of agricultural research. Because of our relatively small population of about 350.000 people, mechanized farming is highly propagated.

It should be mentioned that since 1983 the oilpalm-research, in the field of pests - and disease control, there is a close and fruitful cooperation with IICA.

Next year the FAO will support the implementation of the research programme of Suriname in the field of post-harvest technological research.

Finally, it may be stated that in 1983 bilateral cooperation has been started in the agricultural field with Brasil and some other countries of our region.

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