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INFORMATION MEMOThe pattern of farming in the Community

The EEC Commission has laid before the Council a proposal for the organization in 1965 of the first of a series of surveys on farming in the Community.

The aim is to elicit objective information on what Community farms produce, on farming conditions and on the location of agricultural undertakings. The statistics available to the Community for the elaboration of its common agricultural policy do not meet the requirements, because in many instances they are not comparable from country to country.

The statistics to be obtained on farm structure are not intended to supersede national statistics; the object is rather to align the methods used in accordance with Community directives.

The general survey is planned for 1965. It will assemble the most important basic information and will be followed by more specialized surveys as required for the purposes of common agricultural policy.

This survey will not replace the ten-year census recommended by FAO, since most of the six countries carried out their last census in 1960. But it will have four advantages:

- (a) It will make available in the near future information of use in carrying out tasks arising under the common agricultural policy;
- (b) The 1970 census will gain in usefulness in two ways, firstly by the adoption for this census of the principles on which the 1965 survey is based, and secondly by the comparison of the results of the two surveys;
- (c) It will bring out clearly the vigorous agricultural development that is taking place in the Community but has not so far been to much extent expressed in figures;

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- (d) Statistics obtained at relatively short intervals (five years) will measure the impact of the common policy on farm structures and enable allowance to be made for it.

The basic survey, to cost altogether about 14 million units of account*, will cover 1 750 000 farms (a quarter of the Community total). It will gather information under the following headings:

- a) Main features of the farm;
- b) Land utilization;
- c) Type of husbandry;
- d) Head of livestock;
- e) Labour employed;
- f) The farmer: his training, his work, succession on retirement;
- g) Accounting, agricultural advisory services;
- h) Use of tractors and other farm machinery;
- i) Membership of agricultural co-operatives;
- j) Contracts between grower and wholesaler;
- k) How produce is sold.

For the special surveys, the following timetable has been fixed:

- (a) 1966: Agricultural labour,
Financing and credit;
- (b) 1967: Land tenure;
Contractual relations;
- (c) 1968: Crop growing conditions,
Stock-raising conditions;
- (d) 1969: Mechanization;
Co-operatives.

* (1 unit of account = 1 dollar)