A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF CZECHOSLOVAK AGRICULTURE

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Interwar Period

The typical Czechoslovak farm before World War II was a privately-owned "family" farm of less than five hectares. In 1930, there were 1,530,000 such units, accounting for 71 percent of all farms. Most farmers in this group could not derive sufficient income from farming alone, however, and often supplemented their farm income with income from other activities. Owners of medium-sized farms--5-20 hectares--usually had enough work and income to support their family throughout the entire year. These farms made up 25 percent of all farms, using 42 percent of all agricultural land. Farms of more than 20 hectares accounted for only 4.3 percent of the total farms, but they occupied 35 percent of the total agricultural land (Lazarcik 4).

Farmers had complete freedom in making decisions about what to produce, how much to produce, and what to do with the products. In 1934, however, the government introduced fixed prices for most crops, protecting the large-landholders who marketed mostly grains. The small farmers, who depended primarily on the sale of livestock products, were subject to sharp price fluctuations.

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