

The study is limited to the sampling survey method and to the most important farming areas for the following reasons:

(1) Our past experience has shown that the most accurate and extensive data can be obtained from localities where we already have special contacts through our own faculty members and students or through Christian churches, friends, or organizations. We have used this method in our past studies and it has proved very successful. (2) The obtaining of field information for all districts for the whole country is unwise at the present time because

(a) The number of persons in China with any training in this type of work is too few.

(b) The financial outlay would be too great to incur before established methods of procedure can be worked out by means of a preliminary study.

(c) It seems better to plan for it in connection with the World Agricultural Census in 1930-31. The cooperation of most countries has been already obtained by the International Institute of Agriculture at Rome and China's prestige will be greatly strengthened if she can send in reliable statistics even if they are only very careful estimates based upon a sample survey method.

(d) At the present time unsettled conditions make it difficult to be certain of obtaining data from all districts of the country.

(e) The sampling method will reveal the chief kinds of land utilization in different parts of the country.

A. Units of study - The farming area

1. Main project.

Eighty to one hundred farming areas will be chosen from the major natural regions. The information obtained from each of these areas as a unit will be collected from observations of the investigator and from individuals who have a wide knowledge of local conditions, such as, township or village heads. Information from these persons will be largely of a qualitative nature but will also contain quantitative estimates.

Experience has taught us that for certain types of information such estimates are very useful when properly verified by estimates of several individuals or by actual quantitative data. The extent to which either qualitative data from individuals knowing local conditions, or quantitative data from individual farms, or both, to be used will be determined by conditions as found in the various localities. It may be that both methods will be used in all areas studied, but that each method will be largely confined to certain types of information.

(a) Information collected by the investigator's observations. This includes (1) topography, (2) soil conditions, (3) geological formation of bed rock, and (4) other important general descriptive information about the region which can only be obtained by personal observation.

(b) Information collected by interview with experienced individuals of several villages or townships in the farming area, or by quantitative data from twenty-five or more farms in each farming area, or both. This includes information on the agricultural aspect pertaining to (1) areas devoted to each crop