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THE AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM OF THE WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

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Place of Agriculture in the War Relocation Authority Program

Agriculture has a definite place in the program of the War Relocation Authority. That it was intended agriculture should be a definite part of the W.R.A. program, is indicated in the Executive Order 9106, issued March 18, 1942, Section 3-b. reads as follows: "Provide, in so far as feasible and desirable, for the employment of persons at useful work in industry, commerce, agriculture, or public projects . . ."

That it was intended in the Authority that the agricultural program should get underway at an early date is indicated by a memorandum issued by M. S. Eisenhower, Director of the Authority on May 29, 1942, setting forth the tentative policies of the Authority. The following statement is contained in this memorandum:

"Agricultural production should be started on each relocation area as early as possible. Emphasis should be placed on production of food for residents of the center."

In the Executive Order establishing the Authority, as quoted above, the Authority was responsible for the employment of the evacuees at useful work. Since approximately one-half of the evacuees previous to evacuation had been employed in agriculture, it was assumed that at least this proportion would be employed in agricultural pursuits in the relocation areas. This was definitely taken into consideration in the selection of sites for relocation areas. In addition to other considerations such as the availability of transportation, power, etc., it was agreed that approximately 10,000 acres of tillable land should be available at each relocation site. It is thus apparent that in the minds of the persons

who established the Authority, agriculture had a definite place in the program.

Objectives of Agricultural Production

The early objectives of agricultural production are set forth in the tentative policy statement issued by the Director on May 29, 1942. This statement is as follows:

"In every relocation project where suitable farm land is available or can be developed, evacuees with farm experience will be given an opportunity to produce foodstuffs and other agricultural products. The primary aim will be to make each relocation community as nearly self-sufficient as possible from an agricultural standpoint and to use the surplus products of the heavy producing centers as a supplement in those areas where food production is insufficient. Foods produced by the evacuees over and above the needs of all the projects together will be used in the national food-for-freedom program."

It is thus apparent that the first objective of agricultural production was to provide subsistence for the evacuees, while the second objective was to provide food needed in the food-for-freedom program. This is further emphasized in Administrative Instruction No. 14, issued June 23, 1942. Part of this Instruction reads as follows:

"The first objective of agricultural production in relocation areas is to supply as much as possible of the food required for an adequate diet for the evacuees. The production program for 1942 should be almost wholly directed to this end. . . .

"The second objective of the crop production program is to grow such products as are most urgently needed for supplying the armed forces and for

sale to or through the Office of Lend Lease Administration to provision the United Nations. Much of this production will need to be processed, probably by dehydration, in order to be of maximum value in the war effort. Every effort will be made to dispose of these products direct to the armed forces and the Lend Lease Administration.

"Other vitally needed crops, such as seeds and long-staple cotton, and possibly oil crops, will take third place in the production schedule. Crops which do not come into production for several years, such as guayule, will be grown only on land not suitable for other crops."

#### Extant and Type of Production for Subsistence

As stated above, it was the intent that first consideration should be given to the production of products needed in feeding the evacuees. It was intended that this should include livestock products as well as vegetables although here again vegetables were given first consideration. The kind and amount of production was based upon subsistence needs. It was expected that a wide variety of vegetables including leafy vegetables and root crops would be grown.

The production of livestock products, together with the feed needed in feeding the livestock, was definitely in the picture from the beginning. It was reasoned that pork production had a definite part in the program of all centers since large amounts of feed would be supplied by garbage and cull vegetables. It was also agreed that poultry should be raised to provide eggs as well as poultry meat. Since many of the evacuees were expert poultrymen it was thought that this enterprise had a definite place in the agricultural program. Grain needed in feeding the poultry could be raised on the areas while some of the feed needed could be supplied by cull vegetables.

Dairying was recommended by many agriculturists who early advised with the Authority on the agricultural program. The agricultural personnel of the Authority, however, reasoned that dairy enterprises should be started only where supplies of fluid milk could not otherwise be obtained. This was set forth in the Administrative Instruction, referred to above, in the following language:

"Dairies will ordinarily not be established on relocation areas, because of the indefinite period of occupation of a Center, State and local sanitary requirements and other regulations, and the lack of experience in dairying on the part of evacuees. However, if it is found that supplies of fluid milk cannot be secured within satisfactory shipping distance to meet the minimum requirements of the Center, and without seriously interfering with supply required to meet other local demands, dairies may be established after securing approval by the Washington Office."

Beef cattle were not given serious consideration during the first two or three months of the program. However, it was agreed at a later date that it would be well to establish beef enterprises on areas where pasture and hay were available for feed.

Extent and Type of Production for Outside Use

While as set forth above, the production of the agricultural produce for use off the areas was secondary to that for use on the areas. It was early anticipated that the quantities of products produced for use off the areas would far exceed those for use on the areas. This is indicated in a letter from Director Myer to the Secretary of Agriculture under date of June 23, 1942. Part of this letter is as follows:

"Agricultural production will be for two purposes: (1) subsistence, that is, producing the food crops needed in feeding the evacuees, and (2) production of crops needed in furthering the war effort. It is our thought that the

production for war needs would consist of such food crops, oil crops, fiber crops, and farm and vegetable seeds as are most urgently needed.

For the crop year 1942, we will be able to produce only a small amount above our subsistence needs. However, we estimate that for the crop year 1943, we will have approximately 60,000 acres available for commercial production, and a still larger acreage for 1944 and succeeding years. . ."

The thinking of the Agricultural Division of the Authority as to the extent and type of crops which might be grown is further set forth in a letter under date of August 18, 1942 written by Donald R. Sabin of the Agricultural Division to Mr. J. M. Thompson of the Western Division of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. In this letter, Mr. Sabin points out that we would probably plant at least 1500 acres and maybe as much as 3,000 acres of SxP cotton at the Gila River areas and that we were also contemplating the production of vegetable seed, sugar beet seed, and possibly flax on that area. It was also pointed out that the production of SxP cotton was contemplated at the Colorado River area. The production possibilities of other areas were indicated. For example, it was stated that while it was uncertain at that time as to just how much land might be available at Tule Lake there might be as much as 14,000 acres of irrigated land suitable for crop production and that in addition to growing subsistence vegetables and feed crops for livestock, the Authority contemplated the production of large amounts of vegetable seeds, legume seeds, vegetables for dehydration, and possible sugar beets.

It is therefore evident that in the summer of 1942 the Authority had in mind a very extensive agricultural program, most of the production from which would find use off the areas.

Assistance of the Department of Agriculture was requested in determining the kinds and amounts of crops which should be produced and the form and manner in which these products should be marketed. It was expected that considerable quantities of fresh vegetables might be produced for consumption by the civilian population. However, it was thought that since large amounts would be produced for the armed forces and for Lend Lease purposes, it would be desirable that many of the products such as potatoes, and other vegetables should be dehydrated. In marketing these vegetables, it was the wish of the Authority to compete as little as possible with established farmers. This was to a large extent the reason for the plan of the Authority that many of the vegetables should be dehydrated and sold directly to Lend Lease or the armed forces. The advice of the Department of Agriculture was solicited in this regard.

The letter of the Director to the Secretary of Agriculture referred to above included the following statement:

"In planning our production program, we want to produce those crops which will make the greatest contribution to the war effort. We hope to be able to enter into some kind of marketing agreements whereby these products can be sold direct to Lend Lease, the Army or Navy, rather than marketing through the regular marketing channels, thereby competing directly with established farmers. We anticipate that it may be desirable to dehydrate some of the potatoes and other vegetables, and are therefore interested in facilities for dehydration.

"I would appreciate it very much if you could outline for each of the areas a list of such crops as are needed particularly in the war effort, in the order of their priority, and also give some indication of the relative amounts of the different crops that we should attempt to produce. Since we will probably have adequate labor available, we can go rather heavy on those

crops that have a high labor requirement, rather than on the extensive type of crops.

"Also I would like your recommendation as to the processing and marketing of the crops to be grown. Is there definite need for additional production and dehydration of potatoes and other vegetables? Tule Lake, California, and Minidoka, Idaho, are examples of relocation areas particularly well adapted to the growing of potatoes and other root crops, and should produce an excellent product for dehydration. We would also like to know if we can contract with any governmental agency for the disposition of the crops we might produce."

In reply to this letter of the Director to the Secretary of Agriculture, Mr. Samuel B. Bledsoe, Director of the Office of Agricultural War Relations, made a number of suggestions as to the type of crops which might be produced but gave no indication as to the quantities which might be desirable. Vegetable seeds were recommended as first priority on four of the areas, namely, Manzanar, Tule Lake, Gila River and Colorado River. Sugar beets or sugar beet seeds were recommended as first priority on three centers and second priority on three additional areas. Long staple cotton was recommended for the Arizona projects with the longer staple Upland cotton being recommended for the Arkansas areas.

As the result of conferences with members of the Department of Agriculture and others, a wide variety of crops and enterprises were suggested. For example, the Southern Division of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration objected to Mr. Bledsoe's recommendation for the production of longer staple Upland cotton in the Arkansas areas, but recommended the production of sea-island cotton in those areas. Guayule, pyrethrum, castor beans, hemp, ramie, cryptospegia, etc., were also recommended by various individuals. It was also recommended that we produce angora rabbit wool and that we also go into silk production. These and other suggestions were

given consideration by the Agricultural Division and investigations were made as to the need for such product and the place of such production in the "War Crop" program of the Authority. In such investigations, consideration was given to, first, the need for these products in the war effort, and second, adaptability of these crops to the several areas. Upon investigation it was decided that many of the enterprises suggested were not adapted to the program of the Authority either because they were not especially needed in the war effort or that climatic or soil conditions on the areas were not favorable to successful production.

Serious consideration was given, however, to the production of vegetable seeds, and at the suggestion of Mr. W. A. Wheeler, Seed Specialist of the Department of Agriculture, correspondence was carried on with fourteen commercial vegetable seed companies. Eight of these fourteen companies expressed definite interest in entering into agreement with the Authority for the production of vegetable seeds. A contract was entered into with the Waldo Rohnert Company of Modesto, California, for the planting of some vegetables for seed in the fall of 1942 at Tule Lake and larger amounts in the spring of 1943. The Waldo Rohnert Company was the only company that was interested in the planting of crops for seed in the fall of 1942. However, others expressed a desire to enter into agreement in 1943. As will be explained later, however, before the date came for entering into such contracts for 1943 production, it was determined that sufficient labor would not be available. Therefore these offers for agreement were declined.

It was also proposed that we grow sugar beet seed since additional seed was needed for use in the country as well as laying up stock pile of seed for possible use in European countries. The Authority entered into agreement with the West Coast Beet Seed Company for the planting of 66 acres of sugar beets for seed at Tule Lake.

Experimental plantings of guayule were made at the Manzanar and Colorado River areas in cooperation with Dr. Robert Emerson of the California Institute of Technology. The Bureau of Plant Industry of the Department of Agriculture requested that the Authority produce pyrethrum which was needed by the Army and Navy. It was first suggested that we might produce as much as 15,000 acres. It was later determined, however, that seed would be available in 1943 for the production of only 1,000 acres. Dr. D. M. Crooks of the Bureau of Plant Industry inspected several of the areas and recommended that we attempt to grow pyrethrum on the Granada, Central Utah, and Tule Lake areas. This was given serious consideration by the Authority. However, before definite plans were made for the production of this crop, it was determined that the supply of agricultural labor on the areas would be rather limited due to the leave policy which had been formulated. Therefore, the production of pyrethrum was not entered into.

Modification of Original Plans for Production for Outside Use

As was stated above, the Authority originally planned to dehydrate large amounts of vegetables for sale to Lend Lease or to the armed forces. Upon investigation of the possibilities of obtaining dehydration equipment it was learned that it would be necessary to obtain priorities from the War Production Board ~~in granting priorities~~ for the purchase of dehydration equipment. It was also learned that the War Production Board in granting priorities would give first consideration to canneries who desired to convert their canning plants to dehydration plants and that the establishment of entirely new dehydration plants was being discouraged. It therefore seemed that the Authority would be unable to use this outlet in disposing of its products.

At about the same time, the Authority began to experience difficulty in obtaining machinery and equipment for the subjugation of land

and it was learned that approval for the purchase of land subjugation and construction equipment and materials must be obtained from the W.P.B. Agricultural labor also was a problem. It was originally believed that the supply of agricultural labor was practically unlimited. In fact, in the early plans, one of the problems was to find profitable employment for labor. After the centers had been in operation for a few weeks, it was learned that the number of laborers required in the "housekeeping" activities such as cooks, waiters, community government, internal security personnel, firemen, etc., was much larger than originally anticipated. The indefinite leave policy which was announced late in September of 1942 was "the straw which broke the camel's back" as far as the labor situation was concerned.

Under this leave policy, it was expected that a large proportion of the agricultural laborers would obtain employment outside the areas. This, coupled with the difficulty in obtaining equipment, caused the Authority to reconsider its plans for production for outside use. By early October, it was therefore decided that during the year 1943 agricultural production would probably be limited primarily to the production of commodities needed for subsistence. This therefore was a radical departure from the agricultural production plans which had been under consideration for the previous few months.

#### Method of Planning the Agricultural Subsistence Program

The Tule Lake and Gila areas were the only areas on which any large amounts of crops were planted in 1942. Smaller acreages of "Victory gardens" were planted primarily around the barracks and in the fire breaks on the Poston and Manzanar centers, with some field plantings being made at Manzanar. These programs, of necessity, were rather hastily planned without adequate knowledge of subsistence needs. While considerable amounts of vegetables were produced which materially reduced the amount of food which

otherwise would have had to be purchased, some of the production was not in proportion to needs. For example, at Tule Lake, the amount of rutabagas and turnips produced was larger than was required and as a consequence some of these products were sold.

More careful preparation was made in formulating the 1943 production program. The Washington office requested the Committee on Food Habits of the National Research Council to make a study of the American-Japanese diet. A report on the study made by Rhoda Metraux, of that Committee, afforded considerable information on the likes and dislikes of Japanese-Americans of certain foods. A study was also made of the kinds and amounts of food which had been purchased for use on the several relocation centers during the past several months. Conferences were also held with Nutrition Specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

On the basis of the information thus obtained it was learned that the Japanese-Americans were very fond of fresh vegetables. On the other hand, they consumed comparatively small amounts of such products as hominy, beans, and other carbonatious foods which are relished by the average American.

With this information at hand, conferences were then held by members of the Washington Agricultural Division with the Agricultural staffs, stewards, and a few evacuees on each relocation center. Further study was thus made of likes and dislikes for food as well as further information obtained on the experience on the different centers in feeding the evacuees during the past few months. At these same conferences, the production possibilities of the several centers as effected by the kind and amount of land available and the climatic conditions were investigated. On the basis of this information, tentative production programs for the crop year 1943 were then formulated. Each center was asked to make further study of their conditions and to

formulate a suggested agricultural production program. This program was to consist of a listing of the kinds and amounts of vegetables which they planned to produce, the total production expected, the months when this production might be expected, the amounts which would be consumed during the harvest period, and the kinds and amounts of produce which would be stored for future use. The stewards were also asked to submit a list showing the kinds and amounts, by months, of produce which they would need in addition to that produced on the area. Production on certain centers is to be used to supplement that produced on other centers. For example, many leafy green and yellow vegetables can be harvested at the Gila center during the late fall, winter, and early spring months when climatic conditions prohibit production on most of the other centers. On the other hand, Gila is not well adapted to the production of potatoes, while the Tule Lake center is admirably suited for potato production. It is thus planned to produce many vegetables at Gila during the winter and spring months for shipment to other centers while Tule Lake will produce large quantities of potatoes and smaller amounts of other vegetables for shipment to other centers. On the basis of requests made by the stewards, the Agricultural Division of the Washington Office requested certain centers to produce vegetables for shipment to other centers. In determining the shipping program, consideration was given to the recommendations of the Department of Agriculture, and the Office of Defense Transportation. The Department of Agriculture has classed certain vegetables such as canteloupe, cucumbers, watermelons, etc., as "less essential" vegetables and is discouraging farmers in the production and shipment of these vegetables. These recommendations are being adhered to and in formulating the shipping program, only the "more essential" vegetables such as cabbage, carrots, potatoes, and some of the leafy vegetables needed in the diet are being shipped.

In February 1943, Administrative Instruction No. 14 was revised and reissued. This sets forth in greater detail than did the original Administrative Instruction No. 14, the method of determining the agricultural production and distribution program, including the purpose of Agricultural production, the basis for selection of crop and livestock enterprises, the procedures for determining the production program, and procedure for determining shipments to other centers.

The crop and livestock production programs which were formulated for the several centers for the fiscal year 1944 are set forth in the attached tables. It will be noted that according to these plans a total of 7,632 acres of vegetables were to be produced with an estimated production of 62,000,000 pounds. The acreage by centers ranges from 308 acres which were planned at Manzanar to 1653 acres at Gila. It will also be noted that plans called for shipment of 13,000,000 pounds of vegetables from five centers to supplement production on other centers. If these plans are put into effect it will provide an average of 688 pounds of vegetables per person per year, or an average of 1.8 pound of vegetables per person per day. The seasonal spread of production of vegetables, coupled with the shipments from the other centers should provide a fairly even distribution of vegetables throughout the year. The period of greatest shortage of available vegetables will probably be during the months of June and July, since this is too early for the production of most vegetables in the northern centers, while it is the low period of production at the Gila center. It is recognized, however, that unfavorable weather conditions, insects, and diseases may interfere with the planned program of vegetable

production and therefore that the amount produced may be somewhat less than that planned for. By June 1, however, it appeared that there was a probability that the planned program would be accomplished on most of the centers.

The livestock production plans, if realized, would provide an average of about 55 pounds of meat and 11 dozen of eggs per person per year. The amounts, however, vary somewhat from center to center. By June 1, 1943, it appeared that several of the centers would not be able to reach their goals on production of livestock and livestock products. This was due to a combination of circumstances, chief of which was the delay in obtaining approval from the War Production Board for the construction of livestock facilities, the difficulty in obtaining building materials and equipment once approval for such purchases was obtained, and the further difficulty of obtaining baby chicks and feeder hogs. It appeared, however, that some centers might be able to exceed their 1944 goals.

If the vegetable and livestock production goals are reached, products valued at approximately \$5,000,000 would be produced during the fiscal year 1944, thereby reducing by that amount the purchases of food needed in feeding the evacuees.

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VEGETABLE, ACREAGE PRODUCTION, SHIPMENTS, TOTAL AMOUNTS AVAILABLE  
AND AMOUNTS AVAILABLE PER PERSON  
Fiscal Year 1944

CENTER	ACRES	PRODUCED AND USED ON CENTER	SHIPPED TO OTHER CENTERS	REC'D FROM OTHER CENTERS	TOTAL AVAILABLE	ESTI# MATED POP.	AMT. PER PERSON	VAL. OF VEG. PROD ON CENT
	No.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	no.	lbs.	dol.
Central Utah	801	4,985,000		789,400	5,774,400	7,500	770	249,250
Colorado River	368	4,654,000		2,762,800	7,416,800	15,000	496	232,700
Gila River	1,653	8,605,600	7,018,000	1,969,600	10,575,200	11,000	961	781,180
Granada	469	3,376,000		579,000	3,955,000	6,000	659	168,800
Heart Mountain	1,063	4,932,000	650,000	1,035,000	5,967,000	9,000	663	279,100
Jerome	630	3,555,600	374,400	625,000	4,180,600	7,500	570	196,500
Manzanar	308	4,016,500		2,419,000	6,435,500	7,500	858	200,825
Minidoka	420	2,420,000		1,162,600	3,582,600	7,500	477	121,000
Rohwer	610	3,639,000	134,000	846,000	4,485,000	7,500	598	188,650
Tule Lake	1,110	8,547,400	5,349,000	1,337,000	9,884,400	12,000	823	694,820
<u>Total or Av.</u>	<u>7,632</u>	<u>48,731,100</u>	<u>13,525,400</u>	<u>13,525,400</u>	<u>62,256,500</u>	<u>90,500</u>	<u>688</u>	<u>3,112,825</u>

ANTICIPATED KINDS, AMOUNTS AND VALUE OF LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION  
Fiscal Year 1944

Center and Kind	Number	P r o d u c t i o n		Value
		Total	Per Person	
<b>Central Utah</b>				
Hogs	2,080	375,000 lb.	50	\$ 93,750
Meat Birds	18,570	75,000 lb.	10	22,500
Laying Hens	6,030	84,375 doz.	11.2	34,500
Beef Cattle	420	168,750 lb.	22.5	50,525
Total Value				<u>\$210,275</u>
<b>Colorado River</b>				
Hogs	2,080	375,000 lb.	25	93,750
Meat Birds	30,000	120,000 lb.	8	36,000
Laying Hens	11,200	157,500 doz.	10.5	63,000
Milk Cows	200	576,000 qt.	38.4	57,600
Total Value				<u>\$250,350</u>
<b>Gila River</b>				
Hogs	2,444	440,000 lb.	40	110,000
Meat Birds	27,500	110,000 lb.	10	33,000
Laying Hens	8,840	123,750 doz.	11.2	49,500
Beef Cattle	610	264,000 lb.	24	79,200
Milk Cows	200	576,000 qt.	52.4	57,600
Total Value				<u>\$329,300</u>
<b>Granada</b>				
Hogs	1,666	300,000 lb.	50	75,000
Meat Birds	15,000	60,000 lb.	10	18,000
Laying Hens	4,820	67,500 doz.	11.2	27,000
Beef Cattle	338	135,000 lb.	22.5	40,500
Total Value				<u>\$160,500</u>
<b>Heart Mountain</b>				
Hogs	1,850	337,500 lb.	37.5	84,375
Meat Birds	22,500	90,000 lb.	10	27,000
Laying Hens	7,230	101,250 doz.	11.2	40,500
Total Value				<u>\$151,875</u>
<b>Jerome</b>				
Hogs	1,666	300,000 lb.	40	75,000
Meat Birds	18,750	75,000 lb.	10	22,500
Laying Hens	6,025	84,375 doz.	11.2	34,500
Total Value				<u>\$132,000</u>
<b>Manzanar</b>				
Hogs	1,354	243,750 lb.	32.5	90,937
Meat Birds	18,750	75,000 lb.	10	22,500
Laying Hens	6,025	84,375 doz.	11.2	34,500
Total Value				<u>\$147,937</u>

Center and Kind	Number	P r o d u c t i o n		Value
		Total	Per Person	
Minidoka				
Hogs	1,666	300,000 lb.	40	\$75,000
Meat Birds	18,750	75,000 lb.	10	22,500
Laying Hens	6,025	84,375 doz.	11.2	34,500
Total Value				<u>\$132,000</u>
Rohwer				
Hogs	1,666	300,000 lb.	40	75,000
Meat Birds	18,750	75,000 lb.	10	22,500
Laying Hens	6,025	84,375 doz.	11.2	34,500
Total Value				<u>\$132,000</u>
Tule Lake				
Hogs	3,334	600,000 lb.	50	150,000
Meat Birds	30,000	120,000 lb.	10	36,000
Laying Hens	11,444	162,000 doz.	13.5	64,800
Total Value				<u>\$250,000</u>
GRAND TOTAL VALUE				<u>\$1,888,037</u>

Hogs dressing 180 lb. - value 25 cents per lb.  
 Meat Birds dressing 4 lb. - value 30 cents per lb.  
 Beef Cattle dressing 400 lb. - value 30 cents per lb.  
 Laying Hens laying 14 doz. - value 40 cents per doz.

Average Meat Per Person, 55.4 lb.  
 Average Eggs Per Person, 11.2 doz.