

TR-53

An Evaluation of OBERS Projections of Texas Agricultural Production in 1980, 2000 and 2020

J. P. Warren, W. L. Griffin, W. L. Trock

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It seems possible, perhaps even likely, that some errors of fact and/or judgment may have been made in the process of allocation of national requirements among states. There may be instances where data are inadequate for the correct expression of a region's or state's productive capacity with respect to a commodity. Perhaps the history of production is too short; maybe droughts, freezes or excess moisture situations have biased the data; perhaps there are peculiar growth characteristics of a crop that make yields erratic. There might also be very recent or prospective technological developments that would significantly affect yields of a crop in a state or region. Such developments would change the region's competitive position, but this would not show up in the history of crop production. Land and water developments affecting the productivity of an area, the crops that can be grown and the yields that can be realized, are not revealed in historic data. With changing demands for some foods and fibers such developments may be feasible, may be planned for the near future or even underway at the present time.

In this project we have searched for errors of fact and judgment as they have affected projections of Texas' shares of national food and fiber requirements. We have examined the data used in the determination of trends and the projections of yield and output. We have inquired about technology in agriculture that could make Texas producers more competitive. We have considered the prospects for land and water developments that would make these resources more productive. We have tried to discover and evaluate those factors and circumstances that are pertinent to the competitive positions of Texas producers of foods and fibers and which have not been revealed in the projection of trends.

1500 Research Parkway A110
2260 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-2260

Phone:
979.845.1851
Fax: 979.845.0662

Email:
twri@tamu.edu

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