

7 BRAZIL Rubber and sugar

The South American countries are basically agricultural. The products grown reflect the diversity of the continent in geography, climate, heritage and state of development. Although only a limited number of products are exported in sufficient quantities to be important in world markets, agricultural exports are extremely important to the economies of the individual countries. A large part of the agricultural commodities are consumed locally. Subsistence crops are grown both on large commercial plantations or farms, and on small holdings where the crops supply the needs of the farm family. Large scale farming and stock raising has developed to some degree in a number of countries. However, such farms have not usually been mechanized as have the large farms of the Plains region of the United States. Lack of industrialization and the consequent need to import all farm machinery have contributed to slow mechanization. Inadequate transportation has likewise retarded the development of a large world export and of a greater inter-American trade in agricultural commodities.

The chief agricultural exports of South America include coffee, cereals, sugar, fruits, cacao, tobacco, drugs, and livestock products, including meat, hides, wool and so forth.

7A Manequira. Rubber seedlings at the Cooperative Brazil American Farm. Hevea braziliensis, considered the best source of natural rubber, is a tree native to Brazil. Up until the latter part of the 19th Century the Amazon basin supplied the world with rubber from the wild trees which grew in that area. Rubber seedlings were then transplanted to plantations in the Far East. Cultivated on plantations the Far Eastern rubber could be produced more economically than that from the wild growth in the Amazon region. The importance of Amazonian rubber exports decreased. In the last decade a number of attempts have been made to introduce rubber plantations in the Amazon region.

7B Manequira. Another view of the Experimental Cooperative Brazilian American Farm. Latest attempts to promote rubber plantations have come as a result of the second World War. These CBA Farms are the result of the

cooperative efforts of the United States and Brazil to increase rubber production in the Amazon area.

- 7C Manaus. These seed beds are at the CBA headquarters at Manaus. Part of the program includes the improvement of working conditions over those of the rubber worker who gathers latex from the wild trees in the jungle. Disease control and the improvement of health conditions generally have received attention.
- 7D Santarem. Modern American machinery is being used on the CBA farms.
- 7E Itaquere. This is the home of the owner of a large fazenda (plantation) in São Paulo State. Large fazendas of this sort are quite common in many parts of Brazil. They are generally almost self-sufficient communities employing 3,000 or more people. In addition to a chief "money" crop they produce practically everything consumed by the persons who work on the fazenda. This fazenda specializes in sugar. Sugar is an important crop in Brazil, Argentina and Peru.
- 7F Itaquere, São Paulo State. Many fazendas have their own private railroad spurs which link up with the main railroads. Here cane is being loaded on the fazenda railroad.
- 7G Another view of the fazenda railroad. One of the advantages enjoyed by the fazendas located in São Paulo State is the proximity to the city of São Paulo and the good railroads which lead into this city.
- 7H Girl picking coffee. The rolling hills of the states of São Paulo and Minas Gerais in Brazil are some of the best coffee lands in the world. Here conditions of soil and climate meet all the requirements for this crop. The number of acres given over to coffee production is only a small fraction of the cultivated land in Brazil, yet coffee is Brazil's largest export and Brazil is the world's largest producer of coffee.
- 7I The coffee tree starts bearing when it is about five years old. Seedlings are grown in nurseries and transplanted when about a foot high. The full grown trees may be anywhere from six to thirty feet high according to the variety cultivated and the region in

which they are grown. The trees bear fruit for approximately thirty years. When grown in more tropical areas the trees are often planted with banana trees which afford shade and protection from the great heat of the sun. In the coffee producing areas of Brazil this is not necessary.

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Close view of coffee drying. The coffee beans are exposed to the sun all day but are covered at night. The drying process takes from two to three weeks. After drying, an additional covering is removed from the seeds. The larger fazendas have the facilities to handle all of these processes. Smaller coffee growers generally take the berries to a central plant for processing.