History of Food Production in Mexico

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1934

Lázaro Cárdenas is elected president.

Starting of ejidos system, which gives peasants access to land, not ownership. This means that peasants to credit.

There 400% increase in land distribution with record production since 1910.
VP Henry A. Wallace

Toured Mexico in 1940, and found that it took a Mexican farmer 200h to produce a bushel, when it took a Kansas farmer 10h.
1940

• Start of the Mexican Agricultural Program as a joint initiative between the Mexican government and the Rockefeller Foundation.
• Shift from import to export between 1943 and 1958.
The Green Revolution in-depth

Purpose:

• Genetic improvement of plant varieties
• Soil
• Control of insect pests and plant diseases
• Agricultural practices of farmers
Mexican agriculture became more integrated with the North-American food complex

→ export of luxury fruits and vegetables

→ import of corn, beans, and wheat from the U.S

Mexico farmers: Modern, Semi-commercial and Subsistence

The rapid increase of agricultural production → the efforts of the modern sector

Differences between the categories:

• average farm size

• percent of cropland under irrigation

• capital investment
Limited and irregular supply of water:

- Distribution of the water resources ≠ distribution of the good cropland.
- Irrigated areas are more productive and produce a wide range of crops
- Rain-fed agriculture limited to corn, beans and grains but is not productive enough.

End of the 16 year “Green Revolution” project → preventing the spread of modern technology and proper training

Environmental effect

Surprise decrease in the late 1960’s.
Agriculture: NAFTA

- Subsistence farms grow stable crops and commercial farms provide export goods
- Ejidos granted freedom to transition to more profitable expenditures
- NAFTA: Elimination of tariffs and quota barriers -> opening up free-market investment and commerce

Effects of a competitive market-based:
- Mexican farmers compete with U.S producers
- Decreased local production
- Excess in imports over exports -> country-wide deficit
- Unable to supply enough with population growth and increased food demands
Procampo program

• The Mexican Government founded the Procampo program to alleviate the negative effects NAFTA.

• Procampo program gives cash transfers to farmers that planted one of the basic crops.

• Household income of farmers increased by 14.2% between 1994-1997.

• Cash transfers are mostly used to increase the use of current inputs of their farms, resulting in no technological developments in those farms.
Conclusion

• Progression will come from education of all classes and incorporation of technology

• Need for a more self sufficient market
  • local production
  • greater crop diversity

• Development of highly profitable technological production techniques which suit the diverse ecology of the country
http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/INDC/Published%20Documents/Mexico/1/MEXICO%20INDC%2003.30.2015.pdf

http://www.pecad.fas.usda.gov/highlights/2012/08/Mexico_corn/


http://countrystudies.us/mexico/


A History of Latin America, Keen & Haynes, p. 301: Cardenas and the Populist Interlude