

EGYPT

ADVANCED AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT TO BE PRODUCED LOCALLY

Cairo AL-AHRAM: AL-TAB'AH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic 19 Oct 86 p 9

[Article by 'Abd-al-Wahhab Hamid: "Egypt Produces, for the First Time, Advanced Agricultural Equipment; Advanced German Technology Reaches Egyptian Fields Within 2 Years"]

[Text] It has been decided that within the next 2 years, Egypt will become involved, for the first time, in the manufacture of advanced agricultural equipment through cooperation between experts from Egypt and West Germany. This is a new stage aiming to apply agricultural mechanization and transfer advanced agricultural technology from Germany to Egypt in preparation for joint production of agricultural equipment in Egypt within 2 years.

Representatives of the manufacturing companies that produce agricultural equipment in Germany emphasize that small-scale land ownership in Egypt is not an obstacle to modern mechanization on Egyptian farms and that the field trips made by representatives of these companies affirmed the need for Egyptian agriculture to catch up with the latest technology in mechanization and agriculture. Indeed Egypt's situation and capabilities as a leading country in the Middle East and one that has become involved in manufacturing will contribute enormously to producing the agricultural machinery necessary to mechanize in accordance with the type of soil found there.

The experiment is one of the results of a visit made to the Federal Republic of Germany by a delegation of senior officials of the Agricultural Credit Bank, led by Mr Najib 'Atiyah, who is head of the production and storage department of the agricultural bank.

From the first, the discussions, which included the largest agricultural equipment companies in West Germany, confirmed the possibility of initiating cooperation in order to apply mechanization and production of equipment in Egypt in preparation for their widespread use in Egyptian fields.

Dr Harald Niethmar, chairman of the board of a German company that produces agricultural machinery, announced that the next stage will see important steps that will begin with the preparation of studies to be carried out by both Egyptians and Germans to determine the kinds appropriate for use in Egypt in anticipation of joint capital production. Prior to this step, Egypt will be

given a group of machines to be used in Egyptian fields to make certain of their applicability before taking steps for domestic production. The Germans consider it very important to implement mechanization on new lands that are given to investors, university graduates, and young people, given that the Egyptian government gives special importance to this sector, since it represents the starting point for the expansion of agricultural production in Egypt.

Dr (Niethmar) added that it is not enough to set up joint manufacturing projects in Egypt or to start importing machinery. The Germans would emphasize training instead. In the last academic year, five students from the faculties of agriculture and engineering were trained in the production and use of agricultural equipment and it has been decided to increase the number to 10 in the current academic year. The aim is to create a cadre capable of implementing mechanization and agricultural technology in Egypt.

In addition to training, testing must also be given special attention. This also requires the establishment of maintenance centers for all the equipment that would be near the centers of production, serving all the farmers and a number of farms. Egypt has started on the right and natural path toward intensive agriculture. Investments in manufacturing must be encouraged, especially the production of agricultural equipment.

West Germany has the high technology in the area of agricultural manufacturing because of the connection between agriculture and equipment manufacture, so that this country has been able to be the world's sixth largest in agricultural production. It is recommended that the Egyptians give priority to choosing land suitable for mechanization and preparing the cadres needed for operation and maintenance. During my visit to Egypt, it became clear to me that all or most of the agricultural equipment being used there needs modification or the invention of new kinds to suit the Egyptian situation exactly.

The Egyptians stressed in the discussions that it should be known that Egypt wants the domestic component in the joint production to be large to allow participation in operating numerous factories and to provide more job opportunities.

The Germans recommended that production begin on a small, single-axle tractor and a hand tiller and that all the accessories be produced locally in order to take advantage of the capabilities of the Shubra Company, the Hulwan Company, and the rubber factories. The aim of all this is to raise the level of the Egyptian component over the foreign.

Mr Klein, an expert in the manufacture of agricultural equipment, stressed that the manufacturing sector that produces the agricultural machinery wants more cooperation with the Egyptians in order to transfer the expertise and technology in the area of agricultural equipment manufacture, using the appropriate equipment in the appropriate region, along with increased opportunities for implementation and increased maintenance and worker training. These are the fundamentals required for the success of any industry in the world.