



National Archives and Records Administration

8601 Adelphi Road
College Park, Maryland 20740-6001

RG 166: RECORDS OF THE FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE Narrative Reports, 1904-1994

Introduction

The United States Government has long been interested in foreign agricultural activities. In 1894, that interest was institutionalized when the Department of Agriculture established the Section of Foreign Markets to formalize the collection of information on the production, consumption, and prices of foreign farm products. For the next 25 years, a number of offices within the department handled statistical functions: the Section of Foreign Markets (1894-1902), the Division of Foreign Markets (1902-1903), the Bureau of Statistics (1903-1914), and the Bureau of Crop Estimates (1914-1921). In 1913, the Department established a new organization to handle marketing functions. Over the next 8 years, that function was handled by three offices: the Office of Markets (1913-1915), the Office of Markets and Rural Organization (1915-1917), and the Bureau of Markets (1917-1921).

In 1921, the statistical and marketing functions were merged to form the Bureau of Markets and Crop Estimates. That organization merged with the Office of Farm Management and Farm Economics in 1922 to form the Bureau of Agricultural Economics/Division of Statistical and Historical Research. In 1930, responsibility was transferred to the newly formed Foreign Agricultural Service Division of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics which was created to administer the Foreign Agricultural Service.

The Foreign Agricultural Service remained part of the Department of Agriculture until 1939, when Federal Reorganization Plan II transferred it to the Department of State in an effort to consolidate like functions of government. Some of the Service's personnel and functions, primarily those relating to economic research, remained with the Department of Agriculture where they were concentrated in the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations, a separate unit within the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture. In March 1953, the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations was redesignated as the Foreign Agricultural Service.

The primary function of the Foreign Agricultural Service has been to develop foreign markets for U.S. farm products and to report on agricultural activities overseas. Through the network of agricultural attaches stationed around the world and agricultural marketing specialists making investigations abroad, the Service collected information on world agricultural production, foreign agrarian policies, and trade competition. It also made available to American farm and business interests published information concerning agricultural commodities in world trade. While the duties changed somewhat over time, agricultural attaches were responsible for agricultural reporting and analysis, trade promotion and market development, participating in negotiations with foreign government, advising the local U.S. ambassador, assisting official visitors, and explaining U.S. agricultural policies and programs to the host government and local population.

The Records

The records consist of reports prepared by Agricultural Attaches and other officials at U.S. posts overseas. In general, the reports document agricultural production, technology in the agricultural sector, agricultural labor, and national agricultural policies. The files are arranged by former classification level and thereunder in a number of chronological segments, thereunder by country, colony, or other geographic unit, and thereunder by subject. A list of the chronological segments and of the major subject headings are found below. The 1960s saw changes to the recordkeeping system. Several new headings, most notably "Fairs," "Utilization Reports," and "Attaché Services," were added. In addition, a significant number of files documenting international organizations such as the EEC, the ECE, the OECD, and the FAO, were added under "Europe" or "Special Index" at the geographic organization level (some "Special Index" records are found in Entry A1-4a: Attaché Reports Relating to International Agricultural Conferences and Congresses, 1931-1958). The most significant change occurred in 1968 when the Service began requiring certain standard, or "DR" reports. Those reports are filed at the beginning of each geographic area and contain information about all aspects of the agrarian sector; they are arranged chronologically and not by topic.

In addition to the reports sent to the Department of Agriculture by agricultural attaches, the files contain significant numbers of related reports prepared by U.S. diplomatic and consular officers that also will be found among the files of the Department of State. Arrangement of these Narrative Reports might make research easier and more effective than use of Department of State records. The files might also contain reports missing from Department of State files. Beginning with the 1971 files the documents are almost exclusively of Department of Agriculture origin.

Chronological Segments

There are box lists for the "A1" entries to assist you with indentifying and requesting records pertinent to a specific topic. As the records covered by the "UD" entries are processed, they will be accreted to one of the "A1" entries and box lists created.

Main Series

Dates	RG 166 Entry #	Box #s	Access
1904-39	A1-2A	1-502	Declassified/Unclassified
1920-41	A1-2A	1-207	Declassified/Unclassified
1942-45	A1-2A	1-450	Declassified/Unclassified
1946-49	A1-2A	451-1022	Declassified/Unclassified
1950-54	A1-2A	1-502	Declassified/Unclassified
1955-61*	A1-2B	1-942	Declassified/Unclassified
1962-65	A1-2A	1-368	Declassified/Unclassified
1966	A1-2A	1-73	Declassified/Unclassified
1967	A1-2A	1-71	Declassified/Unclassified
1968	A1-2A	1-56	Declassified/Unclassified

1969-70	A1-2A	1-98	Declassified/Unclassified
1971-73	A1-16	1-35	Declassified/Unclassified
1974	A1-16	36-45	Declassified/Unclassified
1975	A1-16	46-55	Declassified/Unclassified
1976	A1-16	56-63	Declassified/Unclassified
1977	A1-16	64-71	Declassified/Unclassified
1978-79	A1-16	72-87	Declassified/Unclassified
1980	A1-16	88-96	Declassified/Unclassified
1981	A1-16	97-104	Declassified/Unclassified
1982	A1-16	105-112	Declassified/Unclassified
1983	A1-16	113-119	Declassified/Unclassified
1984	A1-16	120-127	Declassified/Unclassified
1985	UD-WW-8	1-9	Declassified/Unclassified
1986	UD-WW-14	1-9	Declassified/Unclassified
1987	UD-WW-10	1-10	Declassified/Unclassified
1988	UD-WW-12	1-11	Declassified/Unclassified
1989	UD-04W-2	1-11	Declassified/Unclassified
1990	UD-WW-5	1-12	Declassified/Unclassified
1991	UD-UP-9	1-12	Declassified/Unclassified
1992	UD-UP-22	1-14	Declassified/Unclassified
1993	UD-04W-5	1-12	Declassified/Unclassified
1994	UD-05W-4	1-12	Declassified/Unclassified

*includes Formerly Confidential Reports

Formerly Confidential Reports

Dates	RG 166 Entry #	Box #s	Access
1940-54	A1-2C	1-70	Declassified/Unclassified
1955-61	[See above]		
1962-65	A1-3	1-147	Declassified/Unclassified
1966	A1-3	1-46	Declassified/Unclassified
1967	A1-3	1-41	Declassified/Unclassified
1968	A1-3	1-19	Declassified/Unclassified
1969-70	A1-3	1-34	Declassified/Unclassified

Major Subject Headings

The following list of subjects indicates the topics generally covered by the Narrative Reports. The files for a given country do not necessarily include reports under every subject heading.

Agriculture Agricultural Policy Beverages Breadstuffs	Finance Food Processing & Canning Foodstuffs Foreign Trade	Olives & Olive Oil Packing Methods Poultry & Eggs Prices
--	---	---

Cacao	Forest Products	Publications
Chemistry	Fruits	Pulse Crops
Coffee	General Information	Rubber
Cooperatives	Grades & Standards	Seeds
Cotton	Grains and Feeds*	Soil
Crop conditions	Hides, Skins, & Leather	Requests
Crop Estimating	Honey, Bees, & Beeswax	Rice
Dairy Industry	Hops & Malt	Spices
Diseases, Animal	Import Policies	Starches
Diseases, Plant	Insects, Plants	Storage Facilities
Drugs	Insecticides	Sugar
Economic Conditions	International Agreements	Tea
Essential Oils	Labor	Textiles
Extension Service	Land Policies	Tobacco
Export Policies	Livestock Industry	Transportation
Farm Management	Marine Products	Vegetables
Fats & Oils	Marketing Agreements	Weather Conditions
Feed Stuffs*	Mechanization	Wildlife
Fertilizers	Naval Stores	Wool & Other Animal
Fibers	Nuts	Fibers

* In the 1960s, the subject heading "Grains and Feeds" replaced "Feed Stuffs."

Other Records

In addition to the Narrative Reports, RG 166 contains other records of interest to the foreign affairs researcher.

Textual Archives Services Division
November 2013