

As we turn to an examination of the food supplies and needs in the three areas of the world—the industrialized West and Japan, the Communist countries, and the free world underdeveloped countries—a number of reservations must be made. In summing up the situation in each area for the purpose of a three-way comparison, the usual distortions incident to averages arise. No two countries in the less developed nations are directly comparable in detail; in statistical aggregates, important differences are made to disappear. Yet it is necessary to simplify if broad judgments are to be made; it is necessary to simplify if the sheer complexity of the economic affairs of more than 100 countries is to be reduced to understandable terms and treated with reasonable brevity.

TABLE 1.—*Agriculture in the tripartite world, 1959*

Area	Percent world popu- lation (1960)	Percent world arable land	Percent starch food output	Kilograms of grain per capita
Industrialized West.....	18	26	32	529
Sino-Soviet bloc.....	35	28	37	281
Less developed countries.....	47	46	31	169

Source: Data in appendix tables and in Food and Agriculture Organization, Production Yearbook, 1959.

The diet composition is only one of the many contrasting factors between the West and the rest of the world. The West also has a much higher daily caloric intake than other populations—about 3,000 calories per day as compared to 2,400 in the Communist countries and 2,300 in the less developed countries. (See appendix table A-6.) These differences are more pronounced, furthermore, when differences in the output of muscular effort between the West and other areas are considered.

A third dramatic contrast is found in the share of the population engaged in agriculture. In the West, only about 110 million people are associated with agriculture; in the Soviet area, about 615 million; in the less developed area, about 1 billion.⁴ In the West, there are 3 acres of cereal grain for every member of the farm population; in the Communist area, about 0.9 of an acre; and in the less developed area about 0.5 of an acre per capital of rural population.⁴ (Derived from appendix table A-7).

The typical farmer in the less developed countries is rarely able to produce more than his family needs—sometimes not enough. In the late 1930's, the less developed area as a whole was a major net exporter of food products. At that time, the area's cereal grain exports amounted to an average of 12 million tons a year. At the beginning of the 1960's, it had net imports of more than 3 million tons of cereal grains annually.

The West has a preponderately urban population; the other two areas are preponderantly rural. In the less developed area, the 400 million persons in urban areas are unable to live on the declining surpluses provided by the countries' billion farmers.

In the West, acreage of cultivated land is declining while production and yields are rising. Technology in agriculture has advanced to a point where one U.S. farmworker can grow enough food and fiber

⁴ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); Production Yearbook, 1959 (Rome, 1960), p. 16 ff.