

West Germany. Nevertheless, the U.S.S.R. is second only to the United States in the total number of tractors in use.¹ Lenin's directive to mechanize agriculture would seem to have been fulfilled if Khrushchev's somewhat questionable claim that all major field operations are now mechanized is correct.

The Soviets have been industriously expanding their planted area. In 1950, about 92 million hectares were sown to cereal grains; in 1959, the area had expanded to 113 million hectares—an increase of almost 25 percent. (See appendix table A-7.) Furthermore, fertilizer output has been significantly increased over the past decade, although it still lags far behind the West. The weed and pest killers so widely used in the Western area are not generally used.

Despite continuing efforts, however, Soviet agriculture does not appear to progress at a rate which could be expected. Indeed, the agricultural population of about 10 million seems to have been marking time since the late 1930's, when the average annual output of the main cereals averaged about 87 million metric tons a year. In 1950, cereal output fell 16 percent below the prewar average, and much the same state of affairs persisted through 1955. In 1956, a very good year, output increased about 20 percent, but then declined again in the following years. (See appendix table A-8.)

The difference between the unprecedented advance in the West's productivity in both land and labor since 1940 and developments in the U.S.S.R. are highlighted in table 5.

TABLE 5.—Average yield per unit area of selected cereals

[Quintals per hectare]

Years	U.S.S.R.	Industrialized West	Years	U.S.S.R.	Industrialized West
1935-39.....	8.5	13.7	1956.....	9.1	20.7
1950.....	8.0	16.9	1959.....	8.6	22.0
1953.....	7.7	18.3	1960.....	8.6	23.4

Source: Appendix table A-9.

In a speech to the plenary session of the Party Central Committee on January 17, 1961, Khrushchev estimated that wheat actually procured in 1960 was 25 percent below the level needed to meet requirements in full, and in respect of corn, procurements were 75 percent below requirements. The climate in 1960, it should be noted, was poor.

In this same speech Khrushchev discussed a number of alleged abuses in Soviet agriculture. After reading a letter from Lipetsk Province complaining of "drunkenness among the workers" and asserting that "the moonshiners live like capitalists," he said:

Apparently stricter laws should be adopted in the republics against pilfering, homebrewing, and drunkenness.

Also:

Punishment should be imposed not only on those who brew moonshine but also upon its consumers * * *.

¹ FAO, Yearbook, op. cit., p. 101.