

Mention has already been made of the strong export market for the high-quality rice that now accounts for about 15 percent of West Pakistan's rice crop. This market shows no signs of saturation. Another 15 percent of the rice crop goes to East Pakistan, and thereby contributes to making land available for production of jute, Pakistan's principal export. An increase in West Pakistan rice production could lead to expansion of these inter-Wing rice shipments and thus indirectly to a rise in export earnings through increased jute production.

Sugar production has risen rapidly in West Pakistan during the last 15 years. About one percent of the sugar crop is now exported to East Pakistan, but if sugar consumption per capita in the East Wing approached that of West Pakistan, a 60 percent increase in sugar production could be easily absorbed today.

About a third of the crop of rape and mustard seeds is taken by the East Pakistanis, who enjoy the strong taste of the oils pressed from these seeds. Half the West Pakistan tobacco crop also goes to East Pakistan. With continued population growth, hopefully accompanied by economic growth, the markets for these commodities should become much larger. Promising possibilities for speciality fruits and vegetables are discussed in Chapter 6.

Comparison of Crop Yields with Those of Other Countries

The low values of output per capita in West Pakistan, whether measured in terms of value or of nutritional content, reflect the fact that agricultural yields in the Indian Subcontinent are among the lowest of all countries where agriculture is practiced on a large scale. A comparison of the yields of major crops for countries and regions in different stages of agricultural development and practicing different intensities of land use is given in Tables 1.17 and 1.18. In general, the average productivity of land in Pakistan is somewhat higher than in India. But in countries such as Egypt, Japan, and Western Europe, where agriculture is highly developed and land must be used intensively, yields per acre of food grains and cotton are from two to three-and-a-half times larger than those in Pakistan. Even in the United States, where land is abundant and labor is short, average yields for the country as a whole are, in almost all cases, two to four times the Pakistani yields. In the southwestern United States, which is comparable in climate and nature of water supply to West Pakistan, the yield of cotton is more than five times the yield in the Former Punjab or Former Sind. The yield of sugar in the Hawaiian Islands is seven-and-a-half times the West Pakistan yield.