

Summary of Possibilities for Diversification

Livestock, poultry, fresh-water fish, forest products, fruits and vegetables are economic alternatives that warrant more careful investigation. For example, bananas apparently yield a net return of greater than Rs 2,000 per acre, potatoes give a gross return of approximately Rs 1,000 per acre, and the marginal increment from otherwise unused range is about three pounds of milk per cow per day. Poultry is capable of earning modest returns if, and only if, there are adequate provisions for disease control, a supply of high producing chicks and fortified feeds, and a stable market. Increased fresh-water fish production from excavated ponds, may be viable alternative if excavation costs can be kept sufficiently low. Surface fish ponds are another means for increasing the supply of annual proteins during the process of reclaiming sodium-damaged lands. Increased forage production is important as a base for an expanded livestock industry and also as an important cash crop near urban centers where there are large populations of city livestock. There are potentially productive range lands stocked with native range grasses that withstand heavy punishment. With some control of grazing, their productivity could be enhanced greatly.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly, however, that these recommendations apply to specific and carefully defined areas and farm operators. Particularly important for specialty crops such as fruits and vegetables are transport, storage facilities, market organization, and measures for quality and disease control.

The key to diversification is the proper selection of the correct combination of physical, economic and human resources. Because of the great diversity with which these factors are distributed in Former Sind, the Former North West Frontier and the Former Punjab, it is essential that recommendations be adapted to those specific areas where the correct combination of necessary resources can be made available to farmers.