The Way To Peace
And Plenty
By Wheeler McMillen
President, American Chemical Society

The chronic hunger of millions of the earth’s people is a neediest hunger. Through the use of land, the farmers of the world could grow enough food to feed every man. All that is necessary is to lay the foundation for better world understanding.

There are some people who believe that man cannot increase the food supply quickly enough to supply an expanding world population. We do not agree with them. There are many instances of the limitations of agricultural research and the tremendous possibilities of agricultural research and development. These limitations are often overlooked because of a lack of resources and lack of information. The people who make these statements are often wrong about the future. I believe that caution and agricultural progress could appear in the United States. There are too many people who believe that man cannot increase the food supply quickly enough to supply an expanding world population.

Eighty years ago, the average yield of potatoes rose from 60 bushels per acre (45 metric tons per hectare) to 300 bushels per acre (13.9 metric tons per hectare). During the same period cotton yields were nearly doubled. This has helped to bring about a world of peace. There is room for plenty and with inexhaustible profits for the ways of peace.

U.S. Marketing Research Helps Farmers

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The marketing system for farm products in the United States is one that “has helped to bring about the highest level of agricultural and industrial productivity the world has ever seen”, according to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Charles F. Brannon. “It has helped to raise the Nation’s useful employment, and in so doing has helped to raise the Nation’s standard of living to its present position and pace of progress,” he adds.

In 1944 the U.S. Congress passed the Research and Marketing Act which directed the U.S. Department of Agriculture to undertake “a scientific approach to the problems of marketing, transportation, and distribution of agricultural products, so that such products capable of being produced in abundance may be marketed in an orderly manner and efficiently distributed.”

One of the market research projects already carried out by the Department of Agriculture is a study of the packaging of fresh fruits and vegetables. As a result, the packaging of corn, tomatoes, spinach, kale, celery, and various types of salad mix has developed into a sizable industry at terminal markets. For example, a study of the packaging of sweet corn grown in Florida showed that one third of the corn sold for use in northern states has been sold in new market Northern buyers report they like the package and have found it reasonable in cost. The study also revealed that corn boxes and tie strings could be used to feed livestock at the packing plant and thus be avoided.

To harvest profits with the latest developments in the merchandising of fresh fruits and vegetables, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is working closely with the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association and the U.S. ripeners and their employees; with a training course in merchandising methods.

The courses include instruction in produce handling, colour contrast, building of store displays, utilising night displays, day and night care of produce, and other practices contributive to less waste and greater sales.

The courses, starting in November 1947, within two years, 30,000 growers and 39 States had taken the training.

Many grower cooperatives have already done this in their marketing departments.

Another part of the research programme is directed toward improving packing and marketing techniques. More than 60 different cities in packing areas of the United States have requested studies of their market facilities. For many of these cities the Department of Agriculture has made recommendations that reduce operating costs and deliver the products in better condition to the consumers.

New wholesale market facilities have been built or are being built in 12 places as a result of recommendations. One of the largest of these is in Puerto Rico, where a study of the Island’s wholesale markets was begun in 1940. The principal aim here is to help the farmers and distributors of commodities grown on the Island to increase and stabilize prices so that production can be increased and living standards of the people raised.

Work has been begun on this project. In 1950 the Puerto Rico legislature appropriated $250,000 to develop port facilities and legislators have recommended that more money be given for further development.

Private research agencies, State agricultural colleges, State departments of Agriculture, and others are working in the research programme to improve marketing practices and facilities, so a local, State, and regional basis.

BARBADOS CO-OP COTTON FACTORY LTD.