

INTRODUCTION.

The food crop survey was undertaken by a team of eight post-graduate students of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture under the supervision of Dr. Jolly and Mr. Hodnett, mainly as an exercise in the application of statistical sampling methods to survey work.

All aspects of the work involved in planning the survey were carried out by the team, each member having certain sections of the work as his particular responsibility. The responsibilities of the writer were to investigate the nature of the Agricultural Survey of Trinidad conducted in 1956, to determine standards for counting plants in the field, to investigate the possibilities of including food crops grown under tree crops in the food crop survey and to determine the type and size of sample to be taken in the field.

The field work was undertaken by the team during December 1956, each member being responsible for the supervision of enumeration of a particular area.

The design for the statistical analysis of results was prepared by Meredith and Mr. Hodnett.

The tabulation of data and statistical calculations were carried out by the team, each member being responsible for the material concerning one size group of farms in a particular zone and county.

Previously, all estimates were based on information obtained during the infrequent population censuses, except in the case of rice which was surveyed separately in 1953 (1) and peasant sugar cane, the production figures for which can be obtained annually from the sugar estates and factories. The last population census in Trinidad was undertaken in 1946 and the production estimates obtained have been reproduced annually (1) with only slight changes since this date. Trends in the production of the more important crops have been indicated as far as possible, but on the whole the figures given, especially for the predominantly home consumed crops such as ground provisions and vegetables, are hopelessly out of date. The only up-to-date figures which are available for these crops are the total export tonnages (2) which obviously cannot be taken as a measure of the total production.

The possible production of food crops for export has considerable local interest in Trinidad. It is a popular belief that large amounts of these crops are produced in the island, and it is felt that the export trade would therefore be substantially increased. It was mainly due to this local interest that the food crop survey was

undertaken ...