

The Producer Co-operatives

County council officials dealing with co-operative policy matters held a meeting at the Ministry of Agriculture on 22nd July. László Dögei, Minister of Agriculture, was present.

The Present Position

Antal Marozis, Head of the Co-operative Policy Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, said there were now 2,584 producer co-operatives. Between mid-January and the beginning of the spring seasonal work 1,100 were re-formed or newly established. In the last few months the increase in numbers had practically stopped. The main task now was to strengthen the existing co-operatives politically, economically and organisationally. Great attention should be devoted to the co-operatives weakened by withdrawal of members and to those which had been re-established. According to the data of the annual plan and of the budget, 1,250 producer co-operatives were functioning well, but the rest only on a medium or poor level. At present nearly 700 co-operatives were in a position to offer their members a standard of living superior to that of medium peasants.

Marozis stressed the need for a numerical increase, but said that it must not happen again that anyone should be forced to join the co-operative movement, or that brigades of urban people's educators or persons ignorant of co-operative affairs should carry out work of enlightenment in the villages to develop the co-operative movement. It must be realised that the numerical increase in the producer co-operative movement was in the first place a task for the co-operative membership. (Budapest 18.00, and MTI 22.7.57)

Assessment of the Co-operatives' Plans

An assessment by the Co-operative Policy Department of the Ministry of Agriculture of the co-operatives' plans shows that the proportion of land sown under bread grains has dropped by more than three per cent compared with last year, while the proportion sown under fodder and papilionaceous crops has increased. This is the first year that there has been virtually no fodder shortage. Most producer co-operatives have planned higher wheat crop yields per hold than last year, but the threshing results indicate even higher average yields than envisaged. According to the plans, herds will be nearly up to last year's level by the end of this year. Credit demands have been considerably lower than in previous years and investment out of the co-operatives' own resources is on the increase. Members' incomes will greatly increase compared with last year's figures. The results of the first half of the year already show an increase. In about three-quarters of the producer co-operatives the share per work unit stands at over 30 forints. On the national average the income of each producer co-operative family will be well above 20,000 forints. In co-operatives where the livestock was not taken away during the counter-revolution and where there has been no organisational relaxation, a share of 50 to 60 forints per work unit in the profits is quite frequent. (Budapest 02.30, 19.7.57)

Success of Farmers' (Trade) Co-operatives

An article in 'Gazdasági Életpéldék' indicates that the Farmers' (Trade) Co-operatives are becoming more and more lucrative. Their earnings rose from 41,000,000 forints in 1952 to 363,000,000 forints in 1956; 1,400 of these co-operatives are now functioning. (MTI 19.7.57)