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FIRST YEAR OF GIEREK'S FARM ANIMAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Summary: The most striking effect of Gierek's agricultural policies and the Polish peasants' great efforts has been in the area of rebuilding the stocks of farm animals. Meat and animal product output, however, was disappointing, and apparently all of the improvements in per capita meat consumption can be attributed to imports. The effect of the expansion in the numbers of animals on meat production will only begin to be felt in 1972, but some of this improvement will probably be earmarked to repay the foreign debts incurred for meat imports during 1971, and to make up the anticipated reductions in meat purchases on foreign markets during 1972.

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Gierek's agricultural policies, (1) and primarily the efforts of millions of individual farmers during 1971, have combined to reverse the deterioration in the animal husbandry sector experienced during the last two years of Gomulka's rule. The most startling improvements were registered in the hog sector.

In the case of hogs (Table I), not only was the decline in stocks reversed, but hog inventories for June and December 1971

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- (1) For a discussion of these agricultural policies, see Harry Trend, "Polish Agricultural Problems and the Post-Gomulka Agricultural Policy," Polish Background Report/11, Radio Free Europe Research (EERA), 22 April 1971, and "April Changes in Polish Agricultural Policy," Polish BR/13, RFER (EERA), 30 April 1971.

were also increased to levels which were the highest ever attained in Polish agricultural history. In fact, the 16,954,000 hogs registered in December approach the 17,000,000 goal set for 1975 in the current five-year plan, and represent a 22.3 per cent increase over the disastrous year of 1970 (Table II). The June 1971 figures were 13.4 per cent higher than those attained in the last year of Gomulka's stewardship. The rebuilding of the hog herd is all the more remarkable in view of the low output of potatoes in 1971, an important feed element for pigs in Poland.

The stocks of cattle also increased, but the changes in the number of cows did not match that experienced for cattle as a whole. In fact, in June 1971, the number of cows fell by 6.3 per cent in comparison with 1970. However, a slight improvement for December 1971 of 1.3 per cent over the same month of 1970 was registered. Thus, while the number of cattle for both June and December were the highest ever reached in Poland, the stocks of cows were still below the peaks previously registered, falling more than 200,000 head short of the peak registered in June 1969, and about 150,000 head short of the December peak reached in 1968.

Meat procurements improved in 1971 by about 6.5 per cent over 1970 (Table IV), reaching a new peak of 1,530,000 metric tons. Pork procurements contributed considerably to the improvement in total meat procurements (9.1 per cent more pork than in 1970). Although poultry meat is only a very small part of total meat procurements, the improvement was 13.5 per cent over the previous procurement peak set in 1970. The total procurement of poultry reached 67,400 tons in 1971.

Milk procurements increased by a modest 2.7 per cent, reaching a new high of 5,453.3 million liters. On the other hand, egg procurements fell by 2.1 per cent in comparison with 1970.

When one compares milk and egg procurements with production, a number of observations can be made about developments during 1971. Milk production (Table III) grew more slowly than procurements. No doubt, the improvements in the number of collection points facilitated the collection of a larger proportion of milk production.

A different picture is seen in the case of eggs. Egg production reached a new peak during 1971, reaching 7,100 million

units and representing a 2 per cent improvement over 1970. Procurements not only did not keep pace, but also declined in physical terms, falling about 50,000,000 short of the number centrally purchased during 1970.

To return to meat production and procurement developments during 1971, one is struck by the fact that the picture here is far from satisfactory. While the stocks of farm animals improved, especially in the case of hogs, meat production, (2) in terms of live weight, increased by only 0.4 per cent in 1971 in comparison with the disastrous year of 1970. Even more striking are the initial figures given for meat production converted in terms of meat units. While the communiqué on plan fulfillment for 1971 cites an increase of about 1 per cent, the physical production figure, also provided in this report, was set at 2,048,000 tons. When compared with the 1970 figure of 2,207,000 tons, the 1971 meat production in meat units would represent a 7.1 per cent reduction, rather than the 1 per cent increase reported in the communiqué.

A breakdown for beef and pork is provided in the communiqué only on the basis of live weight. The 1971 figures for beef represent a continuation of the decline experienced in 1970, when 940,000 tons of beef were produced, or 1 per cent less than the year before. In 1971, the figure is only 910,000 tons, or 3 per cent less than in 1970. Most probably, the beef production figure in terms of meat conversion units, which was not given in the communiqué, would also have been lower than in 1970.

In the case of pork live weight production, the communiqué reported a 2 per cent larger output than in 1970, but one still 5,000 tons below the 1969 production high. However, with the very large increase in the stock of hogs at the end of 1971, pork production and procurement should rise steeply during 1972. Beef production and procurement should also rise, at least modestly. The increase in cattle stocks was in part stimulated by delays in deliveries by farmers, who waited for the higher cattle prices going into effect at the beginning of January 1972.

With production, in terms of meat units, falling in 1971 the government was faced with difficulties in its efforts to

(2) Figures on meat production include estimates of consumption on farms and animals slaughtered without veterinary supervision.

maintain supplies on the consumer markets. A report on the conference of deputy chairmen of the presidiums of provincial councils, attended by Kazimierz Barcikowski, PUPP Central Committee secretary; Eugeniusz Szyr, deputy premier; and Longin Cegielski, deputy chairman of the State Planning Committee, stated that meat supplies increased to an extent where they permitted an improvement in per capita consumption of meat and meat products by 3.4 kilograms, in comparison with 1970. (3) This is 0.4 kilograms more than was envisioned in the revised 1971 plan. Since total domestic production appears to have declined during 1971, one must conclude that the increase in per capita consumption of 3.4 kilograms is entirely attributable to the large imports of meat and meat products. Perhaps a considerable part of the increase in meat production anticipated during 1972 will have to be earmarked for export, in order to repay the foreign debts incurred as a result of the higher meat imports in 1971 and to make up for the anticipated reduction in foreign meat purchases.

Harry Trend

(3) PAP in English and Radio Warsaw (1430 and 1900), 19 January 1972.

APPENDIX

Table I

Farm Animal Stocks, 1968-1971
(thousands)

Type	J u n e				D e c e m b e r			
	1968	1969	1970	1971	1968	1969	1970	1971 ^b
Cattle	10,940	11,049	10,844	11,100 (11,072) ^a	10,530	10,285	10,220	10,657
of which:								
cows	6,194	6,250	6,082	(6,039) ^a	6,057	6,045	5,829	5,905
Hogs	13,911	14,356	13,446	15,400	14,677	14,755	13,863	16,954

a = Calculated on the basis of the index in Table II.
b = Calculated on the basis of indexes provided in the article entitled "Situation of Animal Herds and Procurement," Trybuna Ludu, 24 January 1972, p. 5.

Sources: Polish Statistical Yearbook 1971, p. 284, and the communiqué on the fulfillment of the national economic plan, Trybuna Ludu, 2 February 1972, p. 4.

Table II

Index of Farm Animal Stocks, 1968-1971
(previous year = 100)

Type	J u n e				D e c e m b e r			
	1968	1969	1970	1971	1968	1969	1970	1971*
Cattle	101.6	101.0	98.1	102.1	104.0	97.7	99.4	103.3
of which:								
cows	100.8	100.9	97.3	99.3	104.4	99.4	96.4	101.3
Hogs	97.7	103.2	93.7	113.4	102.0	100.5	94.0	122.3

* "Situation of Animal Herds and Procurement," Trybuna Ludu, 24 January 1972, p. 5.

Sources: Calculated on the basis of the animal census figures provided in Polish Statistical Yearbook 1971, p. 284, and in the communiqué on the fulfillment of the 1971 national economic plan, Trybuna Ludu, 2 February 1972, p. 4.

Table IV
Procurement of Animal Products, 1968-1971

Farm Product	Unit	Physical Amount				Index (previous year=100)			
		1968	1969	1970	1971	1968	1969	1970	1971
Meat (converted into meat)	Thousand tons	1,386.8	1,461.7	1,439.5	1,530.0	96.9	105.7	98.8	106.5
of which:									
Beef	do	411.9	434.5	420.0	416.0	110.1	105.9	97.0	99.3
Pork	do	866.1	900.9	874.3	952.3	94.0	104.3	97.4	109.1
Poultry	do	na	(51)*	59.4	67.4	na	na	116.4	113.5
Milk	Million liters	5,067.3	5,040.8	5,307.0	5,453.3	104.9	99.4	105.3	102.7
Eggs	Million units	2,156.3	2,269.7	2,497.1	2,457.2	97.1	104.9	109.6	97.9

* Calculated on the basis of the index.

Sources: Communiqués on plan fulfillment for 1968, 1969, and 1971, Trybuna Ludu, 6 February 1969, p. 5; 31 January 1970, p. 4; and 2 February 1972, p. 4; and communiqué on 1970 plan fulfillment, Supplement to Biuletyn Statystyczny No. 2, February 1971, p. 3.