

# PEANUT INDUSTRY IN THE PHILIPPINES\*

## HISTORY

The peanut (*Arachis hypogaea*) commonly known as "mani" in the Philippines is grown practically in all parts of the country. It is quite possible that the Spanish missionaries and *conquistadores* introduced this crop into the Philippines during the latter period of their colonization.

While peanut has been in cultivation in the Islands as early as 1899, it was only in 1905 that initial impetus was given towards raising peanuts on a commercial scale to meet the needs of home consumption. In the ensuing years, when dietetics vouched for its remarkable nutritive merits as human food and as animal fodder, the Government drive towards the raising of peanut took on a more spirited swing.

Originally, the only type of peanut cultivated was the white-seeded Spanish variety which was used by the natives mainly for food. About twenty five years ago, however, the Government began introducing foreign varieties as a necessary prerequisite to its extensive program of agricultural research drives and experimental projects. From this period is reckoned the first rejuvenating influences destined to place the peanut industry of the Philippines on a plane of commercial consequence.

## STATISTICAL DATA

Although the peanut is generally cultivated in all parts of the Philippines, statistical records reveal that until recently, the country's import figures for this crop had reached alarming proportions. From 1921 to 1932 alone, our imports of peanut products averaged 2.5 million pesos annually. In 1933, because of the increased acreage and production, a sharp decline was noticed on the value of imported nuts and oil, even sinking to as low as P155,000. Since 1933 the total area cultivated has been on the increase. In 1935 there were 6,108 hectares under cultivation, yielding 3,341,410 kilograms of unshelled peanuts, valued at

P316,000. The total average area planted to peanuts for the years 1936 and 1937 was 6,266 hectares with a production of 3,674,360 kilograms of unshelled nuts, valued at P362,560. The average yield per hectare was 586 kilograms of unshelled nuts. The above figures clearly indicate that there is a considerable margin of increase in our annual peanut production. It is estimated that at present some 20,000 people are engaged in the field production, manufacture, and traffic of peanuts. The Provinces of Lanao, Leyte, Pangasinan, Cagayan, La Union, Isabela, Nueva Ecija, Ilocos Norte, Batangas, and Cebu are the ranking peanut-producing regions in the Philippines.

## COST OF PRODUCTION

The cost of production of peanuts varies from P66 to P101.01 per hectares according to regions and prevailing conditions in the locality. The above figures exclude interest on capital, storage expenses, and depreciation of farm implements, but include cost of seeds and shelling expenses. Twenty seven man-days and 18.5 animal-days are required in actual farm operations, consisting of plowing, harrowing, cultivating, planting, harvesting, and hauling.

## VARIETIES

At present, there are about 20 native and 15 foreign varieties of peanuts cultivated in the Philippines, grouped according to their respective habit of growth. Peanuts are further differentiated as to size of seeds. The bunchy type usually grows erect and forms clusters near the tap root, while the runner, or creeping, type has large spreading vines and bears pods along the lateral stems that touch the soil. The typical bunchy varieties are the Montalban, Spanish, Tirik, Vigan Lupog, Tennessee Red, Kinorales, Native Lemery, San Jose No. 1, African Bunch, Cagayan No. 3, Biit, Big Japan, San Mateo, and Bukalasa; and the creeping

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types include Virginia Jumbo, Tai Tan, North Carolina Runner, and Virginia Runner. The creeping types were introduced from China and the United States.

#### SOIL AND CLIMATIC REQUIREMENTS

Peanut grows well in well-drained, sandy loam, clay loam, and alluvial soils. Sandy loam with plenty of decayed vegetable matter is most favorable towards enhancing the luxuriance of the vine, and the presence of lime or wood ash in ample quantity is necessary to produce plumpy kernels. The most favorable weather for peanut is warm with moderate rainfall distributed evenly throughout the growing season. The amount of rainfall required by the dry season crop is 60 mm.

#### FERTILIZERS

Peanuts require fertilizers when planted in depleted soils. Green manure and ash are the cheapest fertilizers available for peanuts. Lime is essential although precautions should be taken to use it in slaked condition. The ash, burnt lime, farm yard manure, potash, and phosphatic fertilizers are more effective when plowed under early in May. They can, however, be spread in the furrow at the time the seed is planted, or applied as a top dressing immediately after planting. Complete fertilizer using the formula 2-8-4 applied at the rate of 300-500 kilos to the hectare has been found effective in increasing the productiveness of poor soils.

#### CULTURE

The surface soil is pulverized down to 5 to 8 inches in which to plant and germinate the seeds. Peanuts sprout readily, when husked, in the presence of sufficient moisture. The pulverizing is done by plowing and harrowing which starts early in May or October depending upon the season. The rainy season planting begins in the early part of May and ends in the middle of June, while the dry-season planting commences in the early part of November and winds off at the close of December. The field is plowed and harrowed at least three times. After the first operations all stubbles, dry grass,

etc., are either removed or burnt in heaps. The distance of planting in vogue varies according to the variety planted as well as the fertility of the soil. Generally a distance of 65 cm. between the rows and 35 cm. between hills in the rows is desirable for the bunchy type; while 85 cm. between the rows and 50 cm. between hills in the rows is preferable for the runner type.

Like many other crops, peanuts require cultivation after planting in order to insure proper growth. The usual implements employed for cultivation are the plow, the harrow, and the hoe. Where the peanuts are planted in furrows, the wooden plow is used. Hoe cultivation is seldom used as it is expensive. A practical method of weed elimination, as practiced widely among the planters, is to turn the plow first toward the middle of the furrow; then in the last stages of cultivation, the work is done in reverse order to cover the base of the young plants in the form of a ridge.

#### HARVESTING

There are several methods of harvesting peanuts. The pods are dug by spading fork, hoe, or plow, where peanuts are grown in heavy clay soils. Hand pulling is also practised where the soil is sandy. The usual maturation period for most varieties of the bunchy type is from 105 to 125 days, while it takes 165 to 185 days for the runner type to reach maturity.

Seed selection is of paramount importance in peanut culture. The seeds are carefully selected before planting. In selecting, necessary precaution is taken so that the skin of the kernel is not impaired, while the immature, shrivelled, or musty seeds are discarded.

#### YIELD

The bunchy type yields an average of about 1,700 kilograms of unshelled nuts per hectare. The creeping type is slightly inferior in yielding capacities. Of the former type, the American leads in production, followed by San Mateo, Montalban, Big Japan, Kinorales, Native Lemery, and Spanish. Among the creeping varieties, the Virginia Jumbo, Tai Tan, Virginia Runner, and North Carolina Runner are high yielders. Of the hybrids, Bit ×

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW

**Our Local . . .**  
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MANUEL H. P. DE LA SERNA  
*Municipal Treasurer of Mainit, Surigao*

**Peanut . . .**  
(Continued from preceding page)  
Virginia Jumbo Strains 1 and 2 are particularly good.

**PESTS AND DISEASES**

Leaf spot, plant lice, and June beetle are the common enemies of peanuts, but these are easily controlled by the application of calcium arsenate, Bordeaux mixture, and soap with derris powder solution, respectively. Hand picking is employed for the white grub, while for the slug, an application of powdered lime fairly scattered on the ground is most effective.

**ECONOMIC VALUE**

Unlike most agricultural crops the products manufactured out of peanuts in this country are partly produced locally, while a good majority are imported from Japan, China, and the United States. The oil is supplied by France and the United States.

Among the manufactured products processed from peanuts are peanut butter, oil, flour meal, candies, and chocolate. Peanut for human food has been found to be remarkably rich in protein, fat, and carbohydrates. For animal feed, peanut is as valuable as alfalfa, clover, cowpea, and soy bean.

The main problem facing the peanut  
AUGUST, 1949

MANUEL H. P. DE LA SERNA  
*Municipal Treasurer, Mainit, Surigao*  
and *President, Surigao Municipal*  
*Treasurers' League*

*Personal Circumstances.* — Born in Opon, Cebu, on July 3, 1906, and married to Leonore Ancheta Low of Butuan, Agusan with whom he has two children.

*Educational Attainment.* — High school graduate.

*Experience.* — Public school teacher, 1924-1929; principal clerk in different municipalities of Cebu, 1929-'31 deputy assessor of Cebu, 1931-'35; and deputy provincial and municipal treasurer, 1935—.

*Activities.* — Member, Open Jolly Circle; President, Surigao Municipal Treasurers' League, 1946-'47; Chairman, Surigao Municipal Treasurers' Chapter of the PGEA

*Hobbies.* — Reading and movies.

*Motto.* — Live simply and be contented.

industry is inadequate supply and high cost of production. These factors may be remedied by:

(1) Extending the area planted to peanut in the regions where soil and climate conditions lend to its successful cultivation and in marginal lands formerly devoted to sugar cane;

(2) Ameliorating worn-out soils with green manures and commercial fertilizers; and

(3) Mechanizing the cultivation of peanuts and the preparation of products for the market.

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**BEST QUOTATIONS**

*We always love those who admire us and we do not always love those whom we admire.*

—La Rochefoucauld

*God brings men into deep waters, not to drown them, but to cleanse them.*

—Aughey

*When business is good it pays to advertise; when business is bad, you've got to advertise.*—Anonymous

*Never advise anyone to go to war or to marry.*—Spanish Proverb