

Special Deputy for Refugee Affairs  
Chief, Agriculture & Natural Resources Div.  
Agricultural Tools and Seeds

*Supplies*  
23 Sep 1954

For the past two or more years we have had a project designed to facilitate the "remise en culture des terres abandonnes" (III-SVP-20, as amended) which has substantial unexpended balances available for immediate expenditure. Accordingly, this office verbally instructed Mr. Khue, Chief of the Agricultural Service for South Vietnam, to implement the authority therein contained with particular reference to the purchase of hand tools, simple implements, and agricultural seeds which would be useful to a program of aid and assistance to the refugees coming from the North.

In accordance with our directions, and in order to insure immediate action in the field before too many bidders and would-be buyers would be in the market for the limited supplies, Mr. Khue has commissioned two people on his staff to round up available sources of hand tools and seeds - one in each field of activity.

As of last night, several thousand (something over 6,000, if memory serves me correctly) imported field hoes, several hundred locally made hoes, numerous hatchets, axes, adzes, saws, sawblades, spades, etc. had been purchased and received from local merchants and importers. In addition to these the Agricultural Service has at hand a small quantity of imported American Aid hoes, hand sickles, jute sacks, etc. which have been employed in the above-mentioned STEM project.

First distribution has already been accomplished to one of the nearby provinces - probably only a token quantity, but within the next several days distribution will get underway in a substantial manner.

Beyond these measures, the hand tool man is surveying local foundries and blacksmiths, to determine their ability to make a number of the hand tools not available from imported sources. This should be completed in another few days. The big problem is that of credit to enable these inadequately financed artisans to buy a quantity of iron and steel to keep their facilities and manpower engaged while waiting for the wheels of Government to turn out reimbursement for the tools made and delivered. This will be the matter of later discussions and resolution.

We are also assembling information and specifications for additional hand tool requirements which we propose to import from Japan or other convenient sources against the \$100,000 emergency procurement authority recently received. Additional quantities will be handled in the usual procurement procedure.

Mr. Stelly will follow up regularly on this subject and will have up-to-date information on the exact current status in a matter of a few days.

cc: Stelly  
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