It is a well known fact that efforts to increase agricultural production have been impeded in many areas by the incidence of malaria. Much potentially productive agricultural land has gone to waste on account of uninhabitability due to malaria. Therefore, this disease not only causes extensive human suffering but is also a formidable obstacle to economic development, especially in areas in the Far East where population has already overcrowded limited land resources. It is gratifying to note that WHO/UNICEF is now carrying out a number of Malaria Control Demonstration projects in several countries in the Far East. FAO stands ready to render whatever assistance and cooperation it can to Member Governments and to WHO in this worthwhile undertaking.

It is essential to determine the actual improvements achieved by malaria control on the economic side as well as on the side of physical well-being. In order to establish a basis for future comparison as a result of control, and to arrive at a well conceived progressive plan for the development of the economy, FAO will assist in planning agricultural Economic Surveys in areas where Malaria Control projects are now under way or being contemplated. The Regional Office for Asia and the Far East has now made available the services of its Regional Economist to plan and to supervise such agricultural Economic Surveys. It must be made perfectly clear, however, that FAO simply does not have the staff to carry out such surveys itself. It can plan them, and it can supervise them; in other words, provide the "know how", but the Governments themselves must provide the field personnel and facilities if the surveys are to be successful. During the first season before or after the spraying for malaria has begun, an economic survey should be carried out to determine the status of agriculture in the demonstration area and the nature and extent of economic obstacles to expansion and improvements as a basis for making
subsequent comparisons of agricultural conditions during the various stages of progress in malaria control.

Another factor which should be surveyed is the number of man-hours lost through malaria before and after control measures are undertaken. Subsequent economic surveys should be made after control measures have been in effect for a few years. They should include:

1. An analysis of changes in the social and economic structures of the farm organization.
2. An appraisal of the economic and social benefits being realised from changes in systems of farming and other improvements.
3. Determination of desirable changes in methods of financing agriculture in the area and in the utilization and marketing of farm products.
4. Planning for any land settlement that may occur.
5. Formulation of proposals for continuance of the programme in the area after the demonstration has been completed.

The agricultural improvement programme should aim primarily at increased production. Consideration should be given to establishing an Experiment Centre. Extensive use should be made of field demonstration. The nutritional status of the population should also be studied; and methods of increasing food production, specifically geared toward nutritional requirements, should be adopted.

Preliminary arrangements have already been made with the Thai Government to carry out an agricultural economic survey in Saraphee district in Northern Thailand in the very near future. The Thai Government is co-operating fully by making available qualified personnel to serve as the field staff for the survey. It will probably take a period of two to three months to complete the work. FAO is looking forward to co-operating with other Governments and International Agencies on malaria control demonstration projects throughout the Region.