

HISTORIK

Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund (LRF)

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IFAP is, at one and the same time, the meeting-place and the international spokesman for the world's farmers. As the farmers' international representative IFAP benefits from the highest consultative status - only granted to very few organizations - with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC).

IFAP is a federation of farm and agricultural co-operative organizations. Only organizations which are "substantially and nationally representative of the agricultural primary producers within a country" can become members. However, it is possible for more than one organization from the same country to join.

The aims of IFAP, as defined in its Constitution, are to "secure the fullest co-operation between organizations of agricultural primary producers in meeting the optimum nutritional and consumptive requirements of the peoples of the world and in improving the economic and social status of all who live by and on the land". By promoting a better understanding of the problems faced by farmers, by encouraging the exchange of ideas, by seeking out common interest of constituent organizations, and by formulating from time to time unanimous opinion of farmers and the problems and challenges of agriculture, IFAP has an unrivalled competence for analysing and understanding farm problems and for representing them at international level.

The General Conference of IFAP, the supreme body, is held at approximately eighteen-month intervals. During those Conferences the policy of the Federation is defined after frank and open discussion, and the final report is adopted on the basis of one vote for each member country. IFAP's General Conference gather together the national farm leaders from all over the world. An Executive Committee composed of fifteen elected persons, including the President and three Vice-Presidents, sits between Conferences to conduct the business of IFAP.

General Conferences have been held on the five continents. The most recent (the Twenty-Second) was in Helsinki, Finland; the Twenty-Third will be held in Turkey in 1979. Official reports of the General Conferences can be obtained on request.

IFAP also holds regional meetings (chiefly in Europe and North America) and some commodity meetings, either regularly or on ad hoc basis. Moreover; IFAP publishes IFAP News (monthly), World Agriculture (quarterly), and Farming for Development (quarterly). It also publishes Commodity Memoranda from time to time.

Being financed exclusively by its member organizations, IFAP runs no assistance program of its own in favour of its developing country members. It does, however, facilitate bilateral contacts between members, and with organizations which can offer assistance to farm organizations. IFAP also collaborate with FAO, ILO, ICA, and many other organizations to back up their efforts in this direction.

IFAP's influence is exerted through member organizations who place the coordinated viewpoint of farmers before their national authorities, and through its representatives in international meetings.