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AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE - UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA •

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(612) 373-0710

consumer radio briefs

Cheap Food Policies

(0:50)

World food problems will never be solved unless developing nations discard their "cheap food" policies, says a University of Minnesota agricultural economist. Willis Peterson adds that policies of holding food prices artificially low for political reasons actually retard economic growth and are detrimental to consumers in the long run.

Many developing nations impose ceiling prices or stiff farm output and export taxes. At the same time, the price of farm inputs such as fertilizer are often kept artificially high by embargoes or high import taxes.

Because such policies hold food production and economic growth down, they also hold consumer income down and mean that food cheap in dollars is expensive in terms of the portion of consumer income it takes.

Discarding these cheap food policies may cost the consumer more in dollars, Peterson says, but in the long run it will cost less percentage of income.

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Farm Family: A Model

(0:28)

In the early days of farming, the farm family was the national model, says Agricultural Experiment Station Director Keith Huston.

In our early agrarian society, farm life and its family life were idealized as being a highly desirable national way of life. Needs of women as homemakers and family leaders created many demands, including those for new and better methods of food preservation, cooking, sewing, clothing design, gardening and rearing families.

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