

Table 3.13. Characteristics of Agricultural Performance, China 1933–95

	Gross Value Added in Farming, Forestry Fishery & Sidelines (million yuan)	Gross Value Added Per Head of Population	Gross Value Added Per Person Engaged in FFPS (1987 yuan)	Gross Value Added Per Cultivated Hectare	Agriculture's Share of Total Employment	Agriculture's Share of GDP
1933	138 497	277	789	1 353	85	63
1952	127 891	225	748	1 185	83	59
1957	153 649	241	812	1 374	80	53
1958	154 548	237	812	1 434	68	48
1961	110 181	167	600	n.a.	71	43
1978	225 079	235	781	2 265	72	33
1995	528 339	439	1 591	5 563	53	23

Source: Gross value added from Table C.4 except for 1933 which is from Table A.3. Population from Table D.1, persons engaged from Table D.3. Cultivated area from Table A.10. For 1933 I used the Liu and Yeh (1965), p. 129, estimate of cultivated area, which was 28 per cent higher than the total for 22 provinces covered by the official National Agricultural Research Bureau's estimate. It seems likely that the official estimates for postwar years may be too low, as peasants and local authorities can reduce their tax burden by underreporting. JEC (1996), p. 129, suggests that the official figures may now underreport cultivated area by 44 per cent, and has a graph which suggests that the importance of underreporting has not changed much since 1979. World Bank (1997b, p. 18) states that "satellite imagery indicates cultivated area of some 132 million hectares". This is 39 per cent higher than the official figure which I used. The World Bank gives no indication of whether the degree of undercounting has changed over time. This means that column 4 of this table on movement of yields per hectare should be treated with caution. Nguyen and Wu (1993, pp. 18–21) suggested that the underreporting of land occurs mainly in hilly and mountainous areas where yields are low, and concluded that the possibility of substantial underreporting of this marginal land does not imply significant mismeasurement of output.