Yields of Dreams: Marching West and the Politics of Scientific Knowledge in the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa)

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The Brazilian Model

Welcome To Mato Grosso, The Giant Swath Of Land That's Feeding The Entire World

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Since World War II, the U.S. has been hailed as the world’s breadbasket, pumping grains and meat from its fertile heartland out to the world.

But another country is snatching that mantle away: Brazil.

In 2001, Brazilian agricultural exports totaled $16 billion, according to USDA analyst Oliver Flake. By 2010 exports had climbed to a record $62 billion and reached

Brazilian agriculture

The miracle of the cerrado

Brazil has revolutionised its own farms. Can it do the same for others?

Yield Progression, Corn and Soybeans in Brazil (1991-2012)

Source: FAOSTAT (2013)
Geographical Expansion of Soybeans in Brazil 1960-1999

Source: Embrapa
Building Brasília and Marching West

Source: Cornell University Archives (Reeshon Feuer files)
Nelson Rockefeller’s IBEC Research Institute (IRI)

Source: Jerome Harrington Files
Embrapa’s 47 Units

- Headquarters
- National Thematic Centers
- National Product Centers
- Eco-regional and Agroforestry Centers
- Services

Source: Embrapa
Embrapa Labex

Source: Agropolis
Returning Yields

As trade deficit statistics indicate, Brazil is by no means self-sufficient in the chemical sector. Imports have been increasing significantly. Since 1991, chemical imports grew more than 1,180%.

Source: exports.gov
What EMBRAPA sows, the WORLD harvests.