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Department of Agriculture, Western Australia

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NEW F.A.O. ASSIGNMENT FOR DR. SNOOK

FORMER Department of Agriculture Animal Nutrition Officer Dr. L. C. Snook, now an officer of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, has been transferred to British Honduras after a successful assignment in Burma.

Dr. Snook resigned from the West Australian Department of Agriculture after accepting an extended appointment with F.A.O.

He first joined the Department as a cadet in 1927. In 1937 he resigned to take up a Hackett Research Studentship at the Rowett Research Institute in Scotland. Here his work on sheep nutrition earned him the degree of Doctor of Science from the University of Aberdeen.

An important result of his research in Scotland was the demonstration of the need for ample energy-producing feed in the late stages of pregnancy of sheep. This indicated the importance of significant body weight gains during the last six weeks of pregnancy, which proved to be of great practical significance to sheep husbandry in Western Australia.

In 1946, after war service, Dr. Snook was appointed the Department of Agriculture's Animal Nutrition Officer, and in the years that followed he became well known to stock raisers all over Western Australia for his down-to-earth advice on animal nutrition.

His work on phosphate supplements for dairy cows and demonstrations of the value of ground Christmas Island rock phosphate as a supplement, his advocacy of mown-and-left pasture for fodder conservation and his sound advice on mineral supplements for sheep and cattle are some of the many things for which he is well known to W.A. farmers.

Less successful were his efforts to have tree lucerne widely adopted as a browse shrub on W.A. farms. But he left the State convinced that this plant has a place in our sheep husbandry—and we may yet hear more about it from him!

Dr. Snook's wide general experience and remarkable combination of science and practice in farming helped make his work as Animal Production Adviser to the Government of Burma a success.

There he found that the first need was to supply livestock with more food of better quality, so he turned his attention towards work with fertilisers and plant introduction as well as livestock management.

His extended F.A.O. appointment and eventual posting to a second problem area testify to his success in a new and difficult field of work.

It is worth noting that Dr. Snook's efforts have added to the already fine reputation of West Australian agriculturists for services to underdeveloped countries. His work led to two other appointments of West Australians in Burma—Department of Agriculture Poultry Adviser Peter Smetana to an F.A.O. poultry assignment and farmer Bruce Halbert for sheep improvement work (initiated by Dr. Snook) under the Colombo Plan.