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Distortions to Agricultural Incentives in Europe's Transition Economies. Edited by K. Anderson and J. Swinnen.
Washington DC: World Bank (2009), pp. 379, US\$39.95. ISBN 978-0-8213-7419-1.

'Europe' in this book extends east from the new EU member states (excluding Cyprus and Malta), Ukraine and Turkey to Russia, Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic. For the 18 countries of this region, the subject matter – in eight chapters written by several leading experts in the field – is the nature and effect of agricultural protection and taxation policies since the 1990s. These measures include not only direct taxes, subsidies and quantitative restrictions on food production, consumption, imports and exports, but also non-agricultural policies such as foreign-exchange restrictions. Any of these may affect farmers' incentives in terms of returns or costs, and impose on society an economic cost, whose extent is measured in this book via estimated 'rates of assistance' – essentially, price differences – for a wide range of farm commodities.

In addition to producing useful country-by-country summaries of the relevant policy developments, the authors find that over the past two decades agricultural incentive distortions have generally been reduced, though 'rent extraction' for government revenue remains, e.g. from cotton in some Central Asian countries, along with problems such as land market restrictions, oligopsonistic processing, poor price transmission and information, inadequate infrastructure, crisis interventions and, sometimes, sheer corruption. Further policy improvements often face major barriers of domestic politics, but EU membership (or possible accession), and international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, may well help. Extensive notes and references to each chapter make this book a good basis for those investigating these less-than-familiar and sometimes unstable countries.

K. J. Thomson

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Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook. The World Bank, Food and Agricultural Organization, and International Fund for Agricultural Development. Washington DC: The World Bank (2009), pp. 727 + 36pp. index, US\$34.95. ISBN 978-0-8213-7587-7.

It has been well known for decades that women produce the majority of food as well as some speciality crops in many parts of the world. Nonetheless, agricultural programmes, projects and policies continue to be directed towards men or include ineffective efforts to include women. The *Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook* provides well-organized, easy to use and clearly written information on why including women is important and how to do it effectively. Separate modules address 16 topics (e.g. crop agriculture, agricultural markets, agricultural water management, land policy, rural finance and livestock). Each module contains an overview, specialized thematic notes (e.g. gender in policy-making processes, gender-responsive titling, gender and soil productivity management, family-based systems for aquaculture development in Asia and rural financial products), and innovative activity profiles from successful projects (e.g. Honduras: A Pilot Project Protects Women's Rights to Productive Resources; Tanzania: Conservation Agriculture for Sustainable Development, and Malaysia: Community E Centers) with lessons learned and what is innovative in the project clearly identified. The peer-reviewed overviews and thematic notes are written by gender and topic experts (both scholars and practitioners), and provide suggestions for further readings representing a good selection of the gender and agricultural literature. While intended for practitioners and policy makers, the *Sourcebook* would also be suitable for undergraduate and beginning postgraduate classes. The most important take home message in this volume is that 'gender neutral' projects and policies are not gender neutral at all. To the contrary, gender neutral almost always means women will be forgotten, excluded by default. Agricultural development and creating food security requires the active participation of all manner of women farmers. The *Sourcebook* is an excellent tool to help achieve this. A well-used copy should be on the desk of everyone concerned about agricultural production and natural resource management, including experimental researchers.

Louise Fortmann