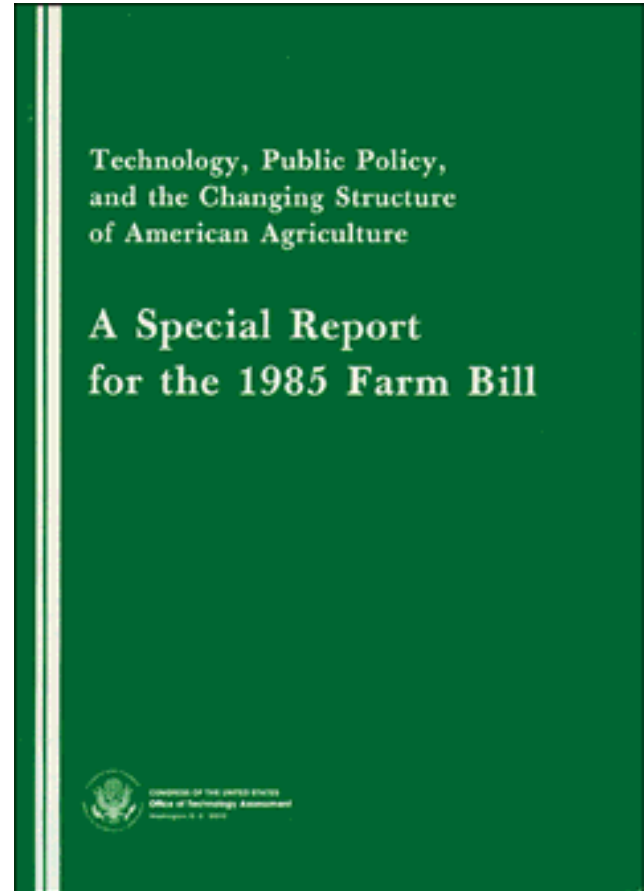


*Technology, Public Policy, and the
Changing Structure of American
Agriculture: A Special Report for the 1985
Farm Bill*

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Foreword

In July 1983 the Technology Assessment Board approved the requests of five congressional committees that OTA conduct a study that would project the most likely picture of U.S. agriculture in 2000 by analyzing the relationships between emerging agricultural technologies, public policy, and structural change in the farm sector. The major concern the committees expressed in requesting the study was the lack of knowledge about the nature and impacts of emerging technologies in combination with public policy specifically as they affect the future direction of agriculture. The committees that requested the study are: the Senate Committee on Agriculture, the Senate Small Business Committee (the Subcommittee on the Family Farm), the Joint Economic Committee, the House Committee on Science and Technology, and the House Committee on Agriculture (the Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry; the Subcommittee on Department Operations, Research, and Foreign Agriculture; and the Subcommittee on Forests, Family Farms, and Energy).

Although the study will not be completed until late 1985, some findings from the study, provided in this report, are relevant to specific legislation that will shortly be debated and acted upon in Congress (the reauthorization of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981). Like the legislation, the report focuses on three main policy areas: commodity, credit, and research and extension.

In the course of preparing this report, OTA drew on the experience of many individuals. In particular, we appreciate the assistance of our advisory panel and many workshop participants, as well as the efforts of the project's consultants and contractors. We would also like to acknowledge the help of the numerous reviewers who helped ensure the accuracy of our analysis. It should be understood, however, that OTA assumes full responsibility for this analysis and that the report does not necessarily represent the views of the individual members of the advisory panel.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John H. Gibbons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

JOHN H. GIBBONS
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*Through May 1984.

●● Through September 1984

*●*After September 1984.