

*Agricultural Postharvest Technology and
Marketing Economics Research*

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**AGRICULTURAL
POSTHARVEST
TECHNOLOGY AND
MARKETING ECONOMICS
RESEARCH**

A TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

APRIL 1983



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Foreword

The food and agricultural research establishment today is facing new problems that place severe strains on the research system. A previous OTA report, *An Assessment of the United States Food and Agricultural Research System*, documented these concerns and provided policy options to Congress.

Postharvest technology and marketing economics (PHTME) research is one area of agricultural research in which these problems and concerns are acute. The U.S. Government funds PHTME research, but public support of PHTME research is being questioned.

The Office of Management and Budget and the U.S. Department of Agriculture have argued that it is no longer necessary to increase investment in PHTME research, implying that private firms have sufficient resources to conduct their own research. The executive branch has made numerous attempts to decrease public support of PHTME research.

At the request of the House Agriculture Committee, OTA conducted an analysis of PHTME research as a follow-up to the OTA study on food and agricultural research. This memorandum presents OTA's findings and conclusions regarding the role of the public and private research participants in PHTME research, the benefits and burdens of PHTME research, trends in PHTME research funding, quality of PHTME research, and management of PHTME research in the public sector,

The author of this memorandum is Michael Phillips. OTA particularly wishes to acknowledge the panel members from the OTA study on food and agricultural research who contributed to this memorandum and the public and private sector PHTME research experts who participated in an OTA workshop and reviewed drafts of the final report.



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