Preface

At the heart of most food policies is the question of pricing. In national programs designed to promote growth, improve the distribution of income, raise nutritional levels, and increase national food security, food pricing is both an explicit and an implicit actor. Pricing assumes this role because it links food production, consumption, marketing, and processing; agriculture, industry, and services; government and private sectors; and the domestic and international economies. For this reason a focus on food pricing provides a useful framework for assessing how countries address their food problems and rank various food-related policy objectives.

The aim of this book is to understand food pricing, and through it broader food policy choices in a variety of country settings. Chapters examine food price policy in six Asian countries—Indonesia, the People's Republic of China, the Philippines, Nepal, the Republic of Korea, and Thailand. Each is written by a scholar who has devoted substantial time to the study of that country's agricultural economy. Each chapter presents an informed analysis of food price policy and outcomes in a particular country. At the same time, the chapters have been written to a common outline and share a common perspective. As a group, then, they provide a broad comparative picture of the motivations behind and consequences of differing approaches to food policy.

The common perspective underlying the chapters of this book borrows heavily from the ideas Peter Timmer, Walter Falcon, and Scott Pearson expressed so lucidly in their book *Food Policy Analysis*. In particular, we follow their view that food policy includes not just measures narrowly aimed at the food system but also macroeconomic and trade policies whose impact can be as strong as, if not stronger than, more direct measures. Food price policy, therefore, is defined to include both explicit price interventions and macroeconomic, exchange-rate, and trade policies that significantly affect the structure of food prices.

This book is the product of a three-year project on Asian food price policy supported by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. We owe gratitude to the Rockefeller Brothers Fund not only for its support of the research and writing of this volume but also for providing the resources that made

possible an authors' workshop at Stanford University in March 1986 and a conference at the International Rice Research Institute in Los Baños in January 1987. These gatherings spurred our work and provided essential forums for feedback and discussion.

Two other institutions deserve special mention. The Food Research Institute at Stanford University supplied generous institutional support throughout this project. In addition, the International Rice Research Institute kindly provided logistical and financial support for the Los Baños conference.

We owe gratitude to the many individuals whose thoughtful reading and critical comments have added to the quality of this volume. Some of these individuals have aided authors in their work, and their names are mentioned in the separate chapters. Here I thank those whose help has been pervasive. The many participants in the Los Baños conference, too numerous to name individually, supplied insightful discussion and comments that are reflected throughout the volume. Graham Donaldson, Robert Herdt, Robert Bates, and Raymond Hopkins read through broad sections of the volume, joined in the authors' workshop, and provided critical perspective. Peter Timmer read and supplied thoughtful comments on several chapters. Anne Hoddinott's administrative and organizational contributions to the project aided immeasurably. To them I express my gratitude.

The following individuals, publishers, and institutions have kindly granted nonexclusive world rights to reprint tables or figures from copyrighted works as part of this book in all languages and for all editions: The Asian Development Bank and the Philippine Institute for Development Studies for figure 7 in chapter 2; Cornell University Press for figures 2, 4, 5, and 10 in chapter 2; Dr. Paul Dorosh for figures 1 and 3 in chapter 2; the Institute of Developing Economies (Tokyo) for table 4 in chapter 3; the *Journal of Rural Development* (Korea Rural Economics Institute) for table 14 in chapter 4; and the World Bank for tables 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 10, and figures 1 and 2 in chapter 3, and for table 10 in chapter 4.

Lastly, I express special thanks to Wally Falcon, who has so generously given time, counsel, and support to this endeavor.

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