

Panel 2: Economic Evaluation of Agricultural Research – Can it be Disaggregated?

Experience of the International Potato Center

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Research prioritization and evaluation process

1. Define “projects”

all scientific components necessary to address a productivity constraint (multidisciplinary)

2. Ex ante analysis of research portfolio

based on scientists' judgments of likely research outcomes plus economic models

3. Ex post case studies (selective)

Success stories

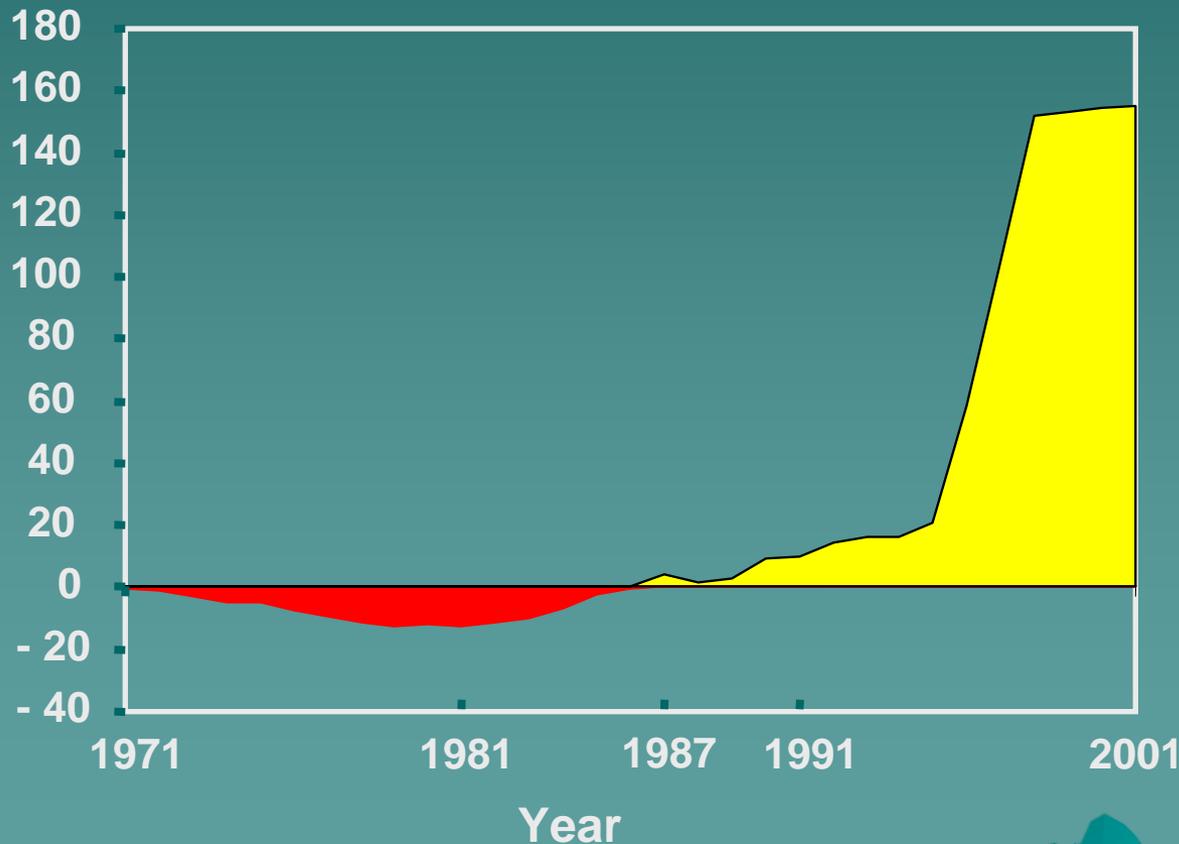
Outcomes and influence of process

- ◆ 1st round of ex ante assessment (1995-1996) identified priorities for crop improvement

Major global priorities	
Potato	Sweetpotato
Late blight	Viruses
Viruses	Low dry matter yield
Bacterial wilt	Insect pests
Insect pests	Germplasm conservation
Rapid seed multiplication	Small-scale processing
Ambient storage	New product development
Natural resource management in mountain production systems	
Minor/local priorities	
Nematodes	Nematodes
Abiotic stresses	Bacterial & fungal disease

- ◆ Ex post analysis: aggregate impact from success stories justified donor investment in Center

Millions of US\$ per year (1996 prices)



- ◆ Re-evaluation of under-performing projects (low adoption)
 - True Potato Seed: high cost & narrow environmental adaptability
 - Ambient potato storage: high fixed cost
 - Sweetpotato processing & product development: high raw material cost & low market adaptability
- ◆ Devolution (eventually)

- ◆ 2st round of ex ante assessment (2005-2006)
 - Reassessment of old and new constraints
 - Expanded methodology to emphasize potential impact on poverty alleviation

 - ◆ Imbalances in Center research portfolio
 - Dilution of research agenda
 - Under-investment in sweetpotato
 - Over-emphasis on Andes region

 - ◆ Reduced flexibility to realign program
 - Declining real resources
 - Donor-driven restricted funding disconnected from beneficiary needs
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