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To Alan Curbishley, whose job is more difficult than mine

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Preface

This book seeks to offer a comprehensive review of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) taking account of both the perspectives of member states and the development of policies at the EU level. Care is taken to place the CAP within the broader context of the political economy of global agriculture and to take account of agriculture's links with the food processing industry. A central theme of the book is the need for further reform of the CAP and an analysis of the prospects of achieving such reform.

This book draws on a long-standing interest in the politics of agricultural policy which I have pursued for over twenty years. As a native of south-east London who remains an essentially urban person, there is no reason why I should have a particular interest in agriculture. My interest does, however, stem from a more general interest in political economy, broadly understood as the interaction between states and markets. The task of a social scientist is to understand and interpret complexity and there are few more complex policies than the CAP. It is hoped that a student taking a European Integration course who reads this book would then have a good understanding of the principal features of the CAP and its place within the policies of the European Union. I have not sought to use the analysis of the CAP to test competing theories of European integration, although the implicit influence of a liberal intergovernmentalist perspective will be apparent.

I am grateful to Carsten Daugbjerg of Aarhus University, and Michael Winter of Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education for reading the manuscript and offering the benefit of their expertise. Portions of the manuscript have also been read by Peter Burnell, Graham Cox, Philip Lowe, Charles Jones and Tim Stocker, and I am grateful to them for their comments.

This book makes use of interviews and other materials collected as part of an ESRC-funded study on the politics of agricultural credit policy (R000 23 4553). My collaboration with William Coleman of

McMaster University on that study has been a continuing source of inspiration and intellectual insights.

I would like to thank my wife, Maggie, for her continuing support and tolerance; Sophia, Ros and Milly, who have the good sense not to become academics; and Charlton Athletic football club for providing an absorbing, if sometimes frustrating, distraction from academic work.

Students are invited to update their knowledge of the CAP through my web page:

<http://members.tripod.com~WynGrant/WynGrantCAPpage.html>.

Please note the WynGrant is one word and case sensitive. In the event of problems, E-mail me at W.P.Grant@Warwick.ac.uk.

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