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Agricultural Experiment Station News February 1979

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Recently a member of California Legal Assistance discussed in Lincoln a lawsuit which that organization has filed against the University of California, alleging that its research program favors corporate farmers. A specific focus of the suit is research to develop high technology machinery, e.g., the mechanical tomato harvester. The media coverage on this matter stimulated some random thoughts about our Nebraska research program.

I believe that the Experiment Station program should serve the public interest, within the scope of our role and mission. The orientation of Experiment Station research to contribute to the establishment and maintenance of the agricultural industry, to the solving of the problems of agriculture, toward the development and improvement of the rural home and rural life, and toward a maximum contribution of agriculture to the welfare of the consumer was clear in initial Experiment Station legislation, and has been reaffirmed many times since then.

Agricultural research is problem-oriented; obviously the problems which surface as significant will be important to one or more segment of the broad spectrum of people included in the above mission statement as our clientele. We cannot, and do not, serve the interest of any narrow group.

In contemplating our research program I do not identify projects which are peculiarly biased toward a particular size of farm. Whether we are talking about crop breeding, fertility investigations, livestock nutrition, irrigation efficiency, or disease control, the results of our work should be useful to farmers of any scale operation.

Efficiency is not the only criterion we apply in defining research priorities. For example, much of our work is concerned with environmental impacts, with quality of living, safety, or consumer related problems. But efficiency has to be a most important criterion of much of our research. Efficiency is concerned with keeping Nebraska agriculture competitive with that of other areas. It has to do with resources needed for production. Producing the 1978 U.S. agricultural output with 1950 technologies would have required twice the resources - land, labor, and capital - actually used. Efficiency is basic to world trade; agricultural exports are the brightest spot in the U.S. export picture.

Concerning size of farm, I must admit, by upbringing, to a bias toward the family farm. Personally I think that the family farm is economically viable; it has been getting larger in physical size, and the financial resources used, but the dominant enterprise on the Nebraska rural scene is the family farm.

In the media coverage on agricultural research was the accusation that agribusiness can persuade a University to develop research programs to solve the problems of agribusiness by providing five percent of the costs; or put in another way, "buy $100,000 of research with a $5,000 grant". In the Nebraska Station our research program is carefully defined in our peer-reviewed projects, with defined objectives. We encourage our staff to secure grants, where they contribute to the objectives we have previously defined for our research. On the other hand, the recent publicity reminds us that we must not let grants influence our research priorities.
PERSONNEL ACTIONS
Scholl, Philip J. - Asst. Professor - Entomology - Courtesy Appointment
Smith, Gerald M. - An. Sci. (MARC) - Asst. Prof. - Resig. from Courtesy Appt.

GRANTS AND CONTRACTS
Anderson, F.N. - Agron. (PH Sta.) - Grower - G.W. Joint Research Committee $12,000
Fox, H.M., C.V. Kies - Human Nutr. & Food Serv. Mgmt. - Syntex, Inc. 34,890
Moser, B.D. - Animal Science - Nebr. Pork Producers Assoc. 2,500
Nelson, L.A. - Agron. (PH Sta.) - Anna H. Elliott via Univ. of Nebr. Fdtn. 8,000
Omtvedt, I.T. - An Sci - Clyde McClymont & Sons, Inc. via Univ of Nebr Fdtn. 5,000
Shearman, R.C. - Horticulture - O.J. Noer Research Fdtn., Inc. 2,000
Stubbendieck, J.L. - Agron. - Anna H. Elliott Fund via Univ. of Nebr. Fdtn. 6,000
Underdahl, N.R. - Vet. Science - Salsbury Laboratories 10,000
Weiss, A. - Agr. Engineering (PH Sta.) - Anna H. Elliott Fund 500
Wilson, R.G., Jr. - Agron (PH Sta) - Anna H Elliott Fund via Univ of Nebr Fdtn 1,200
Wilson, R.G., Jr. - Agron (PH Sta) - Grower-G.W. Joint Research Committee 3,750

GENERAL NOTES
1. You are invited to a Station faculty seminar to hear Dr. Arnold Schaeffer of the Swanson Center for Nutrition, Omaha, to be held Wednesday, March 14 at 3:00 in the Nebraska East Union. Dr. Schaeffer will discuss the "Relationship Between Nutrition and Health in Man". Dr. Schaeffer has had much experience in this field, particularly as related to developing countries.
2. You, the AES Staff responded very well to the several recent opportunities to seek new grant support for your program. We appreciate the extensive effort involved and the stress of uncertainty of criteria and approval. But, grant support is becoming an increasingly important component of program support.
   Nine competitive grant proposals were submitted to USDA-SEA in the categories of Biological Stress (plants), Nitrogen Fixation and Food Habits.
   Four competitive grant proposals were submitted to USDA-SEA in the categories of Plant Genetics, Photosynthesis and Human Nutrition.
   Seventeen proposals were submitted to USDA-SEA under the several special categories of PL89-106.
   Ten proposals were submitted to the Nebraska Wheat Commission.
3. The moves into the new Plant Sciences building is essentially completed for Agronomy units, Plant Pathology, and Horticulture. Entomology is developing the vacated third floor of Plant Industry for expansion of their second floor base. Forestry, will occupy the first floor of Plant Industry and some of the basement. This vacates some space in Miller Hall for Southeast District Station and Biometrics Center space relief. Thus, seven major units of the IANR have improved space situations as a result of the addition of the fine Plant Sciences building.
4. President Carter's proposed 1980 budget provides for the same dollars as in 1979 for Experiment Stations (Hatch funding). This represents a "real terms" cut of about 8% following a similar dip in 1979. The 1980 proposed budget would drop rural development (Title V) and reduce by 2/3 the newly established animal health research program. It does increase competitive grant funds. There is much current activity toward causing congressional improvement of the SEA budget.
5. IANR Department Heads visited the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center, Clay Center, February 2, 1979. New facilities visited were the Agricultural Engineering building, the Abattoir, and the South Central Experiment Station headquarters. After a tour of the general research animal facilities the group discussed major research objectives and plans with MARC scientists.
6. In the game of life, you can pick the winners as those who aren't complaining about the officiating.

R. W. Kleis
Journal Articles - Submitted for Publication (contact authors for more information)


5631. Accidental Organophosphate Toxicosis in Cattle (Case Study). Clair M. Higgs. Veterinary and Human Toxicology.


(over)
Journal Abstracts - Submitted for Publication (contact authors for more information)


78-1138. Vitamin B6 Nutritional Status of Several Strains of Mice and Rats as Affected by Pantothenic Acid Deficiency. Larry Huang, C. Kies and H. M. Fox. Institute of Food Technology.


