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THE AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE
AND NATURAL RESOURCES
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN
ROY G. ARNOLD, DIRECTOR

Agricultural Experiment Station

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SEP 11 1980 Vol. 14, No. 3, September 1980

Experiment Station

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Over the past several months, I have had numerous opportunities to discuss Agricultural Experiment Station programs with many Nebraskans. It is apparent that the word, "research", is not well understood. Questions asked and statements made about our research programs prompted me to assemble the following list of observations about research. These are general, simple statements about the nature of research. Several of the items on the list resulted from discussions with Station scientists. Undoubtedly, many other observations could be added to this list. Your comments and suggestions are invited. Particularly, specific examples to support any of these observations would be helpful. Perhaps this list of observations about the nature of the Experiment Station's mission of research will be useful in explaining our activities to others.

Some observations about research:

- 1) Research seeks answers to questions or problems.
- 2) Questions or problems which guide research come from a wide variety of sources.
- 3) The nature of answers sought ranges from fundamental knowledge to practical information.
- 4) Answers can't be predicted accurately in advance (or, if the answer is known, the research isn't needed).
- 5) Sometimes a research project doesn't provide an answer or result.
- 6) Sometimes surprises occur, which may lead research into new, exciting and productive directions.
- 7) Research takes time.
- 8) Research requires both ideas and effort, or work.
- 9) Research success requires creativity and initiative by the scientist.
- 10) No one has a corner on good ideas.
- 11) Research costs money.
- 12) Research can't be turned on and off at will.
- 13) Like other facets of human enterprise, time spent planning research pays big dividends.
- 14) Research is of no value to society if no one knows about it.
- 15) In biological systems, variation is a fact of life.
- 16) It follows that replication is necessary; or, a single observation does not establish a fact.
- 17) Variables which influence agriculture and other biological systems are numerous, and complex interrelationships exist among these variables (e.g., crop production).
- 18) Biological systems adapt and change; new problems emerge over time.
- 19) Increasingly, research problems require team effort and broad, integrated approaches.
- 20) The nature of urgent problems can't be predicted in advance; or, some flexibility in research programming is needed.
- 21) It is important to not lose sight of long range goals, and not divert effort totally to shorter range problems.
- 22) Accountability and creativity are somewhat in conflict.
- 23) Scientists are a lot like people!

Activities Update

Recent activities in which I have participated include:

- Agronomy Dept.--tour of Mead Field Lab research sites and Agronomy Field Day
- Dairy Expo at Mead Field Laboratory
- Northeast Station Field Day
- Agricultural Engineering--tour of Rogers Farm
- Nebraska/DeKalb Exchange at Hastings, Nebraska

Roy Arnold

Upcoming Events

USDA-SEA has been conducting a detailed study on "Organic Agriculture". The study has been completed, the report is available, and four meetings nationwide are being held to discuss the study and its implications.

USDA-SEA and the IANR are co-sponsoring an October 24 meeting, Student Union, East Campus. Attendance will be by invitation to Great Plains personnel; hopefully 200 will attend. Representatives from various agencies, both public and private, along with interested laymen and agribusiness sector are being invited.

Warren W. Sahs, Co-Chairman
John Burbank, Co-Chairman

The Animal Science Review will be October 6 - October 10

The Beatrice Foods Lecture will be October 10 at 3:00 pm in the Great Plains Room at the East Union given by Dean Rusk (former Secretary of State). Rusk is a Professor of International Law at the University of Georgia.

Sahs Sez

Corn silage operations are in full swing at the Field Laboratory. Recent rains have created a favorable environment for fall seedings. It appears a good crop of pheasants will be ready for the hunting season, November 1.

LB 309 Deferred Maintenance funding has contributed to a banner season of roof repair at the Field Laboratory. Approximately \$175,000 has been expended for roofing supplies, the majority of which will be applied by resident employees at the Laboratory. It has been a long, hot season but a great one for this effort. We express our appreciation to those employees who are carrying out this very important segment of Field Laboratory improvement.

Grants and Contracts

| | |
|--|--------|
| Farlin, S. D. - Animal Science - Nebr. Agr. Prod. Ind. Utilization Comm. | 10,000 |
| Leavitt, R. C. - Agronomy - Ciba Geigy Corporation | 10,000 |
| Witkowski, J. F. - Northeast Station - Shell | 850 |
| Wicks, Gail A. - North Platte - Shell | 1,500 |
| Shearman, R. C. - Horticulture - Miscellaneous Donors | 3,125 |
| Nielsen, M. K. - Animal Science - Miscellaneous Donors | 1,100 |
| Moomaw, R. S. - Northeast Station - Miscellaneous Donors | 1,750 |
| Omtvedt, I. T. - Animal Science - Elanco | 1,610 |
| Gast, R. G. - Agronomy - Institute of Intl. Education | 198 |
| Francis, C. A. - Agronomy - Anna Elliott via Foundation | 10,000 |
| Peters, Leroy L. - South Central Station - Miscellaneous Donors | 2,000 |
| Blad, Blaine - CAMAT - National Aeronautics & Space Admin. | 11,200 |
| Klopfenstein, T. - Animal Science - American Dehydrators Assn. | 5,000 |
| Burnside, O. C. - Agronomy - Miscellaneous Donors | 3,950 |
| Compton, W. A. - Agronomy - Illinois Foundation Seeds, Inc. | 1,000 |
| Schmidt, J. W. - Agronomy - Anna H. Elliott via Foundation | 2,000 |
| Danielson, D. M. - North Platte - American Hoechst Corporation | 10,000 |
| Mayo, Z. B. - Entomology - FMC Corporation | 1,000 |
| Ball, H. J. - Entomology - FMC Corporation | 1,200 |
| Lindgren, D. T. - North Platte Station - Jackson & Perkins | 2,328 |
| Wilson, R. G. - Panhandle Station - Miscellaneous Donors | 1,000 |
| Fitzgerald, Jay B. - Horticulture - Fred C. Gloeckner Foundation, Inc. | 2,570 |
| Wysong, D. S. - Plant Pathology - Miscellaneous Donors | 1,400 |
| Dickason, E. A. - Entomology - Mobay Chemical Corporation | 600 |
| Fischbach, P. E. - Ag Engineering - Stauffer Chemical Company | 1,000 |
| Froning, G. W. - Animal Science - Poultry Science Association | 150 |
| Hergert, G. W. - North Platte Station - Georgia-Pacific Corporation | 466 |
| Roeth, F. W. - South Central Station - Union Carbide | 500 |
| Steadman, J. R. - Plant Pathology - Diamond Shamrock | 1,000 |
| Steinegger, D. H. - Horticulture - Diamond Shamrock | 300 |
| Watkins, J. E. - Plant Pathology - Miscellaneous Donors | 900 |

Food for Thought

Trying times is not the time to quit trying