



LOWELL N. LEWIS

Director —
Agricultural
Experiment Station

A classic model of successful research

Recognition of 75 years of citrus research in California provides an opportunity to recognize at the same time the overall importance of state agricultural experiment stations in solving the problems limiting the production of food and fiber. The work done on citrus at Riverside is a classic model of the state agricultural experiment station: new knowledge has been developed through basic research, that knowledge converted to an applied technology and to applied research and development, user groups educated through Cooperative Extension, and these new ideas incorporated into existing management systems. In turn, the needs and problems of the user groups have been identified and fed back through Cooperative Extension to the applied and basic sciences. Elimination or diminution of any of these components would severely limit the dynamic system.

The Citrus Experiment Station at Riverside was begun, as were so many of our successful programs, because growers saw that only through research could they solve the increasing problems facing their industry. Industry representatives have never lost their enthusiasm for research and extension activities. They have provided assistance through their advice and criticism, their dollars, the use of their facilities, and their political support. The University has sustained the program through the construction of facilities, the hiring, evaluation, and support of excellent faculty, the dissemination of information, and the constant evaluation of research direction and priorities.

It is important to realize that the resulting program is not one dictated by either side, but generally represents a compromise. Some needs of the industry are not realistic, because the science does not exist to solve the problem or because the issue is really legal or political and not one that requires research. On the other hand, the interaction with growers, packers, and shippers often gives the researcher a better understanding of the problems that need

to be solved and improves the choice of projects.

As a result, we have had 75 years of successful research at Riverside; the citrus industry has continued to be productive and profitable; innumerable new management techniques have been added to the production, packaging, and marketing of citrus; fruit quality has improved; and detrimental effects of crop production on the environment have decreased. In addition, knowledge has been developed on soils and water, pest management, plant sciences, and statistics that has benefited the production of other agricultural commodities in California and throughout the world.

The future of citrus research and state agricultural experiment stations will require greater efforts than anything we have experienced in the past.

The science of agriculture will need the best scientific minds, the best research facilities, and greater financial and political support. Too often today, lobbying by agricultural interests deals only with today's problems of federally insured loans, market controls, subsidies, environmental regulations, pesticide registration, immigration, and the like. Tough and critical issues, every one, but the result is becoming a "mañana" attitude toward research support.

Few would argue that the citrus industry would not be in business in California today had it not been for the diligence of the research scientists, the extension specialists, industry and regulatory people, and the financial support of the state and federal government. That's what a state agricultural experiment station is all about.

Correction

In the September-October issue, page 2, paragraph 1, the Joint Council on *Food* and Agricultural Sciences was incorrectly identified as the Joint Council on Trade and Agricultural Sciences. We regret the error.