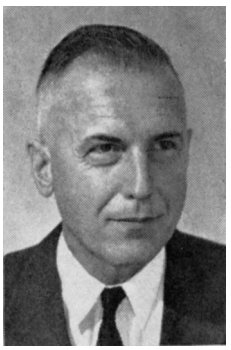
Editorial views by members of the University of California Division of Agricultural Sciences



Director, University of California Agricultural Experiment Station

RESEARCH IS PEOPLE

THE STRENGTH of an agricultural research organization is in its staff. The staff of the California Agricultural Experiment Station puts it in the world's top rank. Scientists selected as superior in their fields are encouraged to develop their individual talents. They become unique authorities in their specialties. Problems of agriculture, however, can rarely be solved by one person or even one discipline. Specialized knowledge and specialized talents of many individual staff members must be combined to solve today's complex problems.

The Agricultural Experiment Station is the statewide research arm of the University's Division of Agricultural Sciences. Through scientific experiment in the laboratories, greenhouses, fields, and orchards of the University (and cooperating farmers), basic problems of agriculture are solved. Scientists on four campuses—at Berkeley, Davis, Riverside, and Los Angeles—work on problems of agriculture—the primary industry of this state. Because geography—soil, climate, and elevation—contributes to agriculture's problems, researchers also conduct experiments at nine outlying field stations strategically situated throughout the state, according to special agricultural needs.

Authorship of our progress reports in CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE (which is the annual report of the Experiment Station) reflects the combination of talents and facilities being used in solving our agricultural problems. Few articles have only one author. One, or several of the authors, may be from the Agricultural Extension Service. Important parts of our applied research are done in the field by Extension specialists and farm advisors. Participants may also include specialists with USDA or other governmental agencies—or researchers from farm commodity groups or private agribusinesses.

We work through problem-solving teams—intra- and interdepartmental teams, intra- and intercampus teams, and Experiment Station-Extension teams. The organizational pattern may vary. But problem solving finally depends on the willingness of scientists to cooperate. In the University of California, the spirit of staff cooperation has been developed to the highest degree. The combination of specialized talent and cooperative spirit gives California the greatest agricultural research organization in the world.

With the inauguration of these pages of editorial comment, readers will share in a sounding board of agricultural opinion and thought provoking ideas—aside from the bare facts of research—and will have the opportunity to become better acquainted with the outstanding scientists who operate this research facility for the people of California.