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Agricultural Field
Stations

AGRICULTURAL FIELD STATIONS

—Laboratories of the University

THE UNIVERSITY of California's Division of Agricultural Sciences maintains and operates nine statewide agricultural field stations, and 11 departmental research areas; in addition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture maintains and operates eight field stations at which the University staff cooperates in research. The nine statewide agricultural field stations are multi-purpose stations located in the various major production areas of California so the research staff can test laboratory and greenhouse results under actual production conditions. The stations also offer producers and Agricultural Extension staff the opportunity to cooperate on research problems which cannot be worked on effectively on campus.

The field stations vary in elevation from below sea level to high in the timber country. Some stations are in areas free of frost, while others may have frost any time of the year. Soils vary from acid to saline, from peat to sands and heavy clays; average rainfall varies from 2 to 60 inches. Quality of irrigation water varies from very pure to very high in mineral content. Water infiltration rates vary from very low (0.1 inch per hour) to very high (7 to 15 inches per hour). Research is conducted over a whole realm of crops and includes study of insects, diseases, and weed pests. Problems associated with water quality, methods of irrigation, soil fertility, and toxic elements all come under study.

The two range stations (Hopland and Sierra) devote their efforts to the improvement of feed resources in wildland areas, to livestock production under range conditions, to diseases and parasites of cattle and sheep and wildlife, and to the possible interchange of parasites and diseases between domestic livestock and wildlife. Nutrition, feed utili-

zation, and environmental influences are studied at the feed lot at the Imperial Valley Field Station.

The statewide field stations operate as part of the statewide Agricultural Experiment Station. The physical facilities are administered by a Director, but the research projects are directed by the department chairmen and by the Associate Directors of the Experiment Station, who are located at Berkeley, Davis, and Riverside. Some research staff members are located at the field stations as members of research departments, but much of the program is under the direction of individual research and teaching staff of the agricultural campuses. In this manner the program at each field station is coordinated and directed by the department responsible for the statewide effort in teaching and research in each subject area.

The research program at each station is coordinated by an internal research committee appointed by the Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station. Industry contacts are maintained by station Industry Advisory Committees, statewide Commodity Committees, and by individual local Agricultural Extension staff members who are responsible for extending the information developed. Numerous field days are held at the stations in cooperation with Agricultural Extension staff at which research results are passed on to producers, agribusinesses, and the general public. Many classes of the University of California, state colleges, junior colleges, and public schools; and many out-of-state and foreign agricultural scientists visit the station each year.

Field stations have served and will continue to serve an important part in bridging the gap between the laboratory on campus and the application of this research in the field.