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A Salute to Hopland

The agricultural technology which enables fewer and fewer farmers to feed more and more people begins in the research laboratory. The next vital link in the test-tube-to-table process of technological advancement is the testing of new concepts under actual production conditions. The nine agricultural field stations operated by the University's Division of Agricultural Sciences serve this function and play an important role in bridging the gap between the campus laboratory and the development and use of our agricultural resources.

The nine multipurpose stations are strategically located in the various major production areas so that research and extension personnel can work out research problems under the climate, soil, and terrain conditions appropriate to the project in hand. The stations vary in elevation from below sea level to high timber country. Some are in frost-free areas, others may have frost any time of the year. Average rainfall varies from 2 to 60 inches.

The research and public service activities of the stations are equally varied and wide ranging. As an example, the Hopland Field Station—to which this issue of *California Agriculture* is devoted—has made significant contributions in developing and refining knowledge in the fields of domesticated livestock management and production, rangeland agronomy, wildlife biology and management, watershed management, and grassland ecology.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Hopland Field Station, and this special edition is a part of our observance of that milestone. And as we enter the last quarter of this century more sharply aware of the finite nature of our resources and of society's expanding needs, we can congratulate the Hopland station, and ourselves, for these past 25 years of accomplishment. The history of those years is briefly summarized in the first article in this issue.

As the demand for food, fiber, water, and recreation increases, the resource potential of our huge rangeland areas (30 million acres in California alone) will grow in importance. Our prospects for dealing with the complex problems of land and resource management have been measurably enhanced by Hopland's fundamental contribution to this important area. That contribution illustrates and underlines the important role of the University's agricultural field station complex in applying science to serve society.