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Reorganization of UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA'S AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

THE TITLE of this editorial sounds ominous, especially in today's climate of persistent efforts to increase controls on the use of chemicals and labor in agriculture, reorganization of state and federal governmental agencies that serve agriculture, and the widely held public view that producing agriculturists are "fat cats" subsidized by publicly appropriated money.

In contrast to these disturbing pressures, I want to use this editorial page in the months ahead to try to increase the understanding among the readers and friends of California Agriculture about what is going on in the University of California's vast and complex agricultural research and extension programs. The experience of the past six months in trying to explain the intent of an administrative study issued in draft form for review has shown vividly how easy it is to misunderstand intentions and statements.

Each of us has a different reference point from which we look at life and evaluate the future. To assume that these views will coalesce into a single unified opinion free of fears or supported by assurances, in the absence of extended discussion, is sheer folly. I hope these editorials will be one means to carry forward our discussion. (I invite you the reader to correspond with me or the Editor of California Agriculture concerning your views—we may even be able to get a lively "letters to the Editor" section underway).

Now what has happened at the University of California to the Agricultural Experiment Station? Nothing to the individual scientists and staff who produce the ideas, discoveries, and solutions to the problems, and who teach the students the subject matter of their profession. Administratively, however, the Regents

of the University of California at their June 1973 meeting combined the offices of the Vice President-Agricultural Sciences with the Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station to streamline the level of authority and clarify internal and external relationships as far as the administration of the Experiment Station is concerned. In so doing, President Hitch stated "... that the University is justly proud of the outstanding accomplishments and of the worldwide renown of its Agricultural Experiment Station, and that it reaffirms its intention to maintain this important research organization at this high level of distinction insofar as it has resources to do so."

I accept this charge enthusiastically and intend to administer this organization to increase our effectiveness, our sensitivity to needs, and our accountability to the public we serve. Existing and projected research programs of the Experiment Station will continue to recognize the importance of maintaining a constant supply of wholesome and economical food and fibers for all people.

This administrative "tightening up" at the top is intended to focus sharply in the Agricultural Experiment Station the responsibility for policy and goal setting, program development, review and evaluation of program progress, and allocation of the supporting budget and vacant positions. This realignment is also intended to create a more effective relationship between the Experiment Station's Statewide administration and the individual UC campuses. In the months to come I hope to explain how these responsibilities will be carried forward. I think there is a bright future for research in the agricultural sciences. If we all work toward that goal, it can be assured.