CE advisor Norma Wightman to retire after 24 years with UCCE

By Donna Duddy

Norma Wightman, nutrition, family and consumer sciences advisor in San Luis Obispo County, is retiring Aug. 16 after a 24-year career with UC Cooperative Extension.

An “Independence Day (Retirement) Party” will be held in her honor at Oceano County Park in San Luis Obispo County on Saturday, July 4, beginning at noon. Contact Cheryl Christner (805/781-5940) for more information.

Wightman is nationally known for providing collaborative and innovative educational programs to consumers, families and youth. Her programs have helped thousands of clientele throughout the state improve their decision-making skills, leadership abilities and nutritional well-being.

Her accomplishments have been recognized by colleagues in California as well as regionally and nationally. She is the recipient of the 1994 Distinguished Service Award from the National Association of Extension Home Economists. In 1996 she was selected for the Marjorie Michaels Award by the California Association of Extension Home Economists. She has also received awards for 4-H teaching, affirmative action, communications, community nutrition education and program excellence through research.

“With Norma’s retirement this summer, Cooperative Extension will lose an outstanding academic staff member,” says Regional Director Allyn Smith. “Norma brings program excellence, teamwork, enthusiasm, innovation and drive to every project. Norma’s leadership, contributions and sense of...”

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George Alcorn, third director of state Cooperative Extension System, dies at age 88

By Jill Goetz

George Bennett Alcorn, director emeritus of the University of California Cooperative Extension and one of its most influential leaders, died May 17 at the age of 88.

Alcorn was the third director of the California Cooperative Extension System (known as the Agricultural Extension Service until 1974). His tenure as director, from 1956 through 1975, was marked by rapid growth and change in California agriculture.

Born in Colorado and raised in Berkeley, Alcorn earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in agricultural economics from UC Berkeley in 1936 and 1937, respectively. During the only sabbatical of his career, he went to Harvard to receive a doctorate in public administration in 1955. There, his mentor was renowned Harvard economist (and fellow Cal grad) John Kenneth Galbraith.

Alcorn joined the California Agricultural Extension Service as a marketing specialist in 1937, a position he held for 19 years. He quickly developed a national reputation as an authority on marketing orders. Another thrust of his work was to assist hundreds of agricultural groups around the state in organizing cooperatives.

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How to send comments to the Transition Team

The Transition Team has set up an electronic suggestion box to get ideas and comments to them quickly.

Send email to: transition.team@ucop.edu

Or, you may fax correspondence in care of Kay Harrison Taber (510/451-2317).

The mailing address is: Kay Harrison Taber, 1111 Franklin Street, 6th Floor, Oakland CA 94607-5200. All comments (signed or unsigned) will be reviewed.
As director of Extension, Alcorn felt strongly that it had to change with the times. He stressed this theme in a 1964 address on the 50th anniversary of the Smith-Lever Act:

“Our record of past performance is enviable. In the future, we must be in the forefront in adapting our educational services to meet the needs of a complex and rapidly changing state. The history we write must include a record of superlative service to the citizens of California.”

In his first decade as director, Alcorn established 15 new specialist subject areas, including biometrics, forest products, soil and water salinity, wildlife management, pesticide safety and public affairs. He also expanded the 4-H Program, particularly to reach youth in urban, low-income areas as well as in the rural communities that 4-H long had served.

Alcorn helped Extension personnel keep pace with changes in their counties and their disciplines. For example, he introduced cross-county assignments for specialists; encouraged them to take up applied research; and stressed their professional development. He believed that competent specialists and county directors could best identify and pursue agricultural challenges in their areas.

One of those specialists is UCB Extension specialist Jerry Siebert, who later served as Alcorn’s associate director of administration and is himself a former CE director. “Dr. Alcorn provided leadership by being visible and accessible to staff and those in clientele groups,” Siebert recalls.

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Alcorn was known nationally and internationally as well as in California. During World War II, he advised the War Food Board on price-regulation decisions. In the 1950s he served on key USDA committees under two agricultural secretaries. He also was a member of the national Farm Foundation Committee, which explored new ways of involving Extension in public policy.

Internationally, he was a consultant to the U.S. government and the World Bank. Alcorn’s honors included being named a Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary International and receiving the 1993 Outstanding Service Award from the Walnut Marketing Board, of which he served as chairman for more than two decades.

Siebert sums up Alcorn’s professional legacy this way: “George Alcorn successfully guided an organization through growth, contraction and change to fit a changing society. He established a base from which we could launch many of the successful programs we have today in Cooperative Extension. He also was instrumental in the hiring of many highly qualified specialists and advisors who collectively contributed to CE’s international reputation.”

Botanist Daniel Axelrod dies

Daniel Isaac Axelrod, a UC Davis professor emeritus of botany, died June 2 in his Davis home at the age of 87.

Axelrod was a renowned paleobotanist who studied the evolution of plant life, particularly the ancient forests of North America, as chronicled through the fossil record.

He earned a bachelor’s degree in botany and master’s and doctoral degrees in botany and paleontology, all from UC Berkeley.

In 1942 he joined the U.S. Army, serving in photo intelligence. He was awarded the Bronze Star in connection with military operations in the Philippines.

In 1946 he joined the geology and botany faculty at UCLA, where he would teach for 21 years.

In 1967 he transferred to UC Davis, with a joint appointment in the botany and geology departments.

Axelrod received numerous awards that recognized his research accomplishments, including election to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1981.

He retired from the University in 1977 but remained active as a research biologist at UCD until his death.

Biotechnology training for DANR staff offered on November 11

If you would like to update your expertise in biotechnology, be sure to register for the “Biotechnology Training Session for DANR Staff,” being held on Nov. 11 in the Davis/Sacramento area. The exact location will be announced later.

The training will give Extension staff the opportunity to learn about the latest developments in biotechnology and to participate in workshops on specific topics.

The session is being partially funded by a grant from the Systemwide Biotechnology Research and Education Program.

Registration is on a first-come basis, with preference given to CE county staff. Funds for travel are available.

To register, contact Sydni Gillette at 530/754-8491 or by email (skgillette@ucdavis.edu).
Marketing (from p. 1)

do a better job of in-
forming them.”

In response to this need, Communication Services re-
cently took several steps to support marketing and dis-
tribution efforts. Many of these actions are based on
recommendations from the ad hoc Review Committee
that called for the creation of Communication Services,
feedback from Division authors, and professional knowl-
edge within the unit itself.

- The unit’s first-ever mar-
ting coordinator was hired
late last year. Wendy Divita’s
background is in distribution
and the agricultural commod-
ity markets. Divita is coordin-
nating the new edition of the
Communication Services’
catalog and building market
research and targeted mailing
list capabilities while focusing
her initial marketing strate-
gies on major publications.

“Since Wendy’s position
is funded from sales, we have
to give her the opportunity
to spend her time where the
potential is greatest,” Sams
says.

- Assisted by a marketing
consultant, Communication
Services assessed its markets
and developed a marketing
plan. Both the assessment
and plan have helped the unit
more effectively promote
products to target audiences.

- As detailed in the last issue
of ANR Report, Communication
Services has initiated
a pilot program that shares a
percentage of its sales revenue
with parent programs.

During a two-year trial,
DANR programs will be able
to receive 25 percent of the
revenues generated by a pub-
lication or other educational
material produced by Com-
munication Services. The

goal of the program is to en-
courage production of new,
timely and high-quality pub-
llications and other educational
materials that contribute to
DANR’s mission. For more
information on revenue
sharing, log on to Commu-
nication Services’ website:
http://danrcs.ucdavis.edu/

- Many UCCE offices sell
Division publications and
other materials, and Com-
munication Services offers a
number of programs to assist
them in promotions. A sales
revenue program works in
the counties’ favor: after the
revenues are collected and
sent to CS, county offices
are credited with 40 percent
of the total sales revenue.

“It appears that counties
have expanded their sales ef-
forts,” Sams notes. “This
year’s county sales should in-
crease by almost 25 percent.”

- In other efforts to improve
sales, Divita asked county-
staff for ideas on the kinds
of sales displays they need.
Communication Services is
reviewing their comments and
plans to provide them with
display stands to accompany
publications, flyers and
other promotional materials.

- For county offices that
don’t have sales capacity,
Communication Services of-
tered another sales revenue
program. The offices received
5 percent of sales revenue if
they promoted DANR mate-
rials at farm advisor meetings,
at conferences and at their
offices, and added their four-
digit county code to flyer
or catalog order forms sent
to Communication Services.
Coded phone orders were
credited to the county offices
as well. This county revenue-
sharing program is being
evaluated for continuation
past its June 30 completion.

Regional Director Allyn Smith
to retire in 1999

Allyn Smith, director of
CE’s Southern Region,
has announced he will re-
tire effective March 1, 1999.
Smith has been regional
director since joining UCCE
in 1985. Prior to coming
to UC, Smith spent 24
years at Cornell University.

As regional director,
Smith supervises all research
and Extension programs of
the Division in nine county
CE offices and two research
and extension centers

The Southern Region
is the largest, most populous
and diverse of the four re-
gions, encompassing about
40 percent of California’s
land and 60 percent of its
population.

“I have enjoyed being a
part of Cooperative Extensi-
ion and two universities,
assisting in the nonformal
education of people off
campus, and serving as a re-
gional director for the last
28 years,” said Smith in a
letter to Vice President
Gomes. Smith added that
he and his wife look for-
toward to spending more
time with grandchildren, travel-
ning and “pursuing
nonformal education.”

Wightman (from p. 1)

humor will be greatly
missed.”

Wightman is the chair of
the Human Resources Pro-
gram Planning Advisory
Committee (PPAC). She has
served on the Assembly
Council Personnel Commit-
tee and the 4-H Curriculum
Committee. From 1990 to
1992, she was the home eco-
nomics coordinator for the
Southern Region.

Wightman, a Cornell
graduate, joined UCCE in
February 1961 as a junior
home economist. She served
in Orange and Stanislaus
counties before taking a
home economist position in
Sonoma County in 1962.

In 1965 she left UCCE to
study and travel and subse-
quently spent nine years in
Zimbabwe, where she taught
high school and raised two
children.

She returned to UC in
1978 as a 4-H youth devel-
opment and home advisor
for Colusa/Glenn counties.
From 1982 to 1984, she
served as the county director
of Colusa CE. In 1987, she
transferred to San Luis
Obispo County, where she
was county director from

Wightman says she is
looking forward to her re-
tirement and a new lifestyle
filled with volunteerism,
travel and more time to in-
dulge in personal interests.
Her immediate travel plans:
to go around the world.
UC Davis entomology department will host advisors in September

By Mary Louise Flint

All UC Cooperative Extension advisors are invited to the Department of Entomology/UCCE Outreach meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 16, and Thursday, Sept. 17, on the UC Davis campus.

The purpose of the meeting is to help advisors become better acquainted with the department and also to foster more collaboration between advisors and entomology faculty.

The agenda will include: facilitated interaction among campus-based faculty and participating advisors; presentations from advisors representing UC workgroups about how they would like to interact with the department and entomological issues that are priorities for them; and reports from Davis entomology faculty on research in the department.

The second day will feature a tour and breakout groups.

Travel expenses for advisors will be paid. A detailed agenda and registration form will be sent out in late June. However, please mark these dates on your calendar now. The meeting will begin at 10:30 on Sept. 16 and end at noon on the 17th. For further information, contact Mary Louise Flint at mlflint@ucdavis.edu or 530/752-7692.

Update on CE budget

The UCCE budget augmentation was approved by the Assembly Budget Committee on May 14 and sent to the Joint Conference Committee on the Budget. The Conference Committee met for the first time on June 8 and should get to UC’s budget by mid-June.

CODAD and the county directors are working with VP Gomes, the UC Budget Office and our friends across the state to urge the Conference Committee to approve this important augmentation. Please contact Steve Nation (510/987-0036) or Claudia Reid (916/322-4139) for more information.

Tools you can use

Here’s how to access legislative bills online

By Claudia Reid, Office of Governmental and External Relations

Listed below are several websites you can access for legislative/bill and other political information. Please search these sites for the information you need before contacting us. Due to the high volume of requests, we are unable to provide copies of legislation to everyone in a timely manner! Thanks for your cooperation.

- Federal: http://thomas.loc.gov/
- State: http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/
- State: http://www.ca.gov/
- State: http://www.assembly.ca.gov/
- State: http://www.sen.ca.gov/
- UC: http://www.ucop.edu/advocacy/legismaps/
- Other: http://www.rumble.com
- Other: http://www.calheart@kvie.org

Directory update

- Marin County CE office has several new telephone numbers:
  - Office: 415/499-4204
  - Fax: 415/499-4209
  - 4-H office: 415/499-4207
- The correct fax number for the Office of the Associate Vice President (Henry Vaux Jr.) is 510/587-6415.

Job opportunities

A search is on for a Western Sustainable Agriculture Professional Development Program Coordinator. For details, contact Western SARE (435/797-2257 or check out http://ext.usu.edu/wsare/).