DANR ratifies 74 workgroups, taking first big step toward greater program coordination

Does this workgroup encourage the participation of both Cooperative Extension and Agricultural Experiment Station academics? That was among the first questions the Program Council asked as it evaluated each of the workgroup proposals submitted in response to DANR’s first-ever call for workgroup proposals.

“Workgroups are one of our main mechanisms for program coordination, and we are trying at this point to get as many AES and CE people on all three campuses and in the counties involved in workgroup activities as we can,” said Assistant Vice President Lanny Lund.

Lund, the chair of the Program Council, recently announced that 74 workgroups had been ratified and nearly $770,000 awarded as a result of the call.

The names of the ratified workgroups have been published in the online DANR Workgroup Directory, which is posted on the Program Council’s website. If you haven’t bookmarked the site, an easy way to reach it is through DANR’s homepage (http://danr.ucop.edu/).

The call was issued on July 1; submissions were due Sept. 15. Some 117 proposals were received, and each was evaluated. The rigorous, multi-step evaluation process included peer reviews.

“The Program Council realized that the time available to develop and refine workgroup proposals was limited, but overall we were quite encouraged with the results,” Lund said. He noted that Associate Vice President Henry Vaux Jr. approved all of the Program Council’s recommendations without exception.

Lund went on to say that the Program Council expects that an additional 10 to 20 proposals reviewed in this call will be revised and resubmitted next spring, when the next invitation for workgroup proposals will be issued.

“We approved every proposal that met the criteria and made numerous suggestions on those proposals where added coordination was needed so they can come back in the spring,” Lund said. “Many of these

UCR dean Clegg to step down at the end of June

By Lisa Dunlap

Securing more than $150 million for capital spending and revamping curricula and degree programs are just a couple of the accomplishments Michael T. Clegg looks back on as he ends his tenure as dean of the College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at UC Riverside.

Clegg has announced that he will resign as dean at the end of the academic year to return to full-time teaching and research with the department of botany and plant sciences.

“It has been a wonderful and very satisfying experience to serve as the dean of a major college, but I also began to realize a few months ago that it was time for me to seek new challenges,” said Clegg. “My own field of genetics has advanced tremendously in the years that I have served as dean. While I have worked hard to maintain an active research program, it

Agricultural Personnel Management Program teams up with the Agricultural Issues Center

By John Stumbos

UC’s central program for agricultural personnel management and farm labor issues has a new home.

The Agricultural Personnel Management Program (APM P) is now part of the fold at the Davis-based UC Agricultural Issues Center (AIC). Daniel Sumner, center director and the Frank H. Buck, Jr., Professor in agricultural economics at UC Davis, will oversee the program as an integral part of AIC. “This move will allow us to include agricultural personnel and labor issues as a part of our integrated program of research and outreach,” Sumner said.

“The move was imperatively needed to reflect the changing nature of California’s farm labor system; this move is consistent with the central role that AIC plays in California agriculture,” Sumner said. “It is vitally important for the University to be involved providing objective analysis and education programs and this move will strengthen our ability to do so. Our goal is to build upon the program’s notable achievements and extend its reach throughout a network of campus researchers and county Cooperative Extension advisors.”
UC researchers, educators take lead in efforts to prevent pediatric obesity

By Jill Goetz

Breakthroughs in nutritional genomics and behavioral research on human dietary needs and habits—not to mention the explosion of fitness programs and purported weight-loss drugs—have failed to reduce the nation’s waistline. Childhood obesity, in particular, has jumped in the past decade and is now classified as an epidemic by the USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion. What’s more, according to UC Berkeley CE specialist and childhood obesity expert Patricia Crawford, obesity rates are rising fastest among low-income ethnic minorities, including African American, Native American and Hispanic children.

“Though our understanding of the problem of childhood obesity is better, our situation is worse,” says James Sallis, a child psychologist and physical activity expert from San Diego State University. He and Crawford were among many nutrition researchers, health care practitioners and state and local officials who participated in recent UC conferences devoted to the subject of pediatric obesity and other childhood nutrition issues.

On Oct. 27, the UCB College of Natural Resources’ Center for Weight and Health sponsored “Pediatric Obesity in the 21st Century: A Research Symposium on Prevention.” This inaugural event of the center, expected to become an annual symposium, was organized by the center’s codirectors, UCB professor Sharon Fleming and CE specialists Crawford and Joanne Ikeda. A week later, UCCE M erced County sponsored another workshop for practitioners on a variety of pediatric nutrition issues.

Speakers at the Berkeley symposium addressed both biological and behavioral/cultural components of pediatric obesity. Jeffrey Friedman, a physician and geneticist at Rockefeller University, reviewed recent findings on genetic factors in obesity, a condition now believed to be up to 88 percent heritable in humans. He also discussed leptin, a hormone shown to be instrumental in human weight regulation. Obese people (those with a body-mass index above the 95th percentile for their gender and age group) have higher blood leptin levels than others. “The combined effects of leptin and genes indicate a strong physiological component for obesity,” he said.

In brainstorming sessions, participants explored why pediatric obesity is increasing. Some of the culprits they identified were the exploding fast-food market and its commercialization; reduced funding for public-school physical education and after-school programs; increased time in front of the television; and larger food portions.

“Genetics hasn’t changed,” Ikeda said. “What has changed are the many environmental factors that influence what and how much children eat and how much time they engage in active physical play.”

A theme of the symposium was the need for multidisciplinary collaboration in addressing pediatric obesity. The participants brainstormed on identifying potential allies in future prevention efforts. These included fast-food chains; HMOs and other medical service providers; and athletic, philanthropic, parent-teacher and religious organizations.

Also stressed was the need for increased funding for pediatric obesity prevention. But such funding will not likely become available unless the public better understands the extent and implications of pediatric obesity in California, said Laura Brainin-Rodriguez of the Child Health and Disability Prevention Program of the San Francisco Department of Public Health.

The workshop in M erced, held Nov. 4, was titled “Nutritional Concerns of Today’s Children: A Workshop for Health Education, Social Service and Community Outreach Staff.” The meeting, sponsored by M erced County CE, featured talks by regional CE experts on a variety of childhood nutrition issues.

Lucia Kaiser, a CE nutrition education specialist based at UC Davis, addressed problems related to infant and child-feeding practices, including anemia and baby bottle tooth decay, both of which are largely preventable, she said. Cathi Lamp, nutrition, family and consumer science advisor for Tulare County, discussed ongoing UCCE research on how Latino families feed young children in Fresno, Tulare, Kern and Monterey counties. The researchers have found high percentages of overweight children in these groups—of particular concern, because children who are overweight in their early years are more likely to be overweight as adults.

Lamp emphasized the need for all children to be physically active and to eat nutritious snacks.

Part of the conference focused on highlighting available resources. Linda Kodman, a registered dietitian, reviewed the development of educational materials that are designed specifically for different clientele’s needs.

A new ANR training kit was also described, “Children and Weight: What Health Professionals Can Do” (ANR Publication #3416), due to be available in January. An update of an earlier version, this kit is designed for physicians, nurses, dietitians and other health professionals for use in diagnosing, assessing and treating pediatric obesity. The kit costs $100.

Pediatric health will continue to be a major emphasis of UCCE, which is hosting a series of workshops on pediatric health issues around the state this spring.

For more information on these workshops, contact UCCE M erced at 559/385-7403.

For more information on how to obtain the new “Children and Weight” training kit, contact Communication Services at 510/642-2431 after Jan 2.

Goetz is a senior public information representative for ANR and the Division.
needed further development for ratification, and we provided some initial funding to facilitate that development.”

Even proposals that were neither ratified nor funded were told they could turn in a new plan next spring if they felt another submission was appropriate, Lund said. “We wanted to encourage the participants to get involved in workgroups, and we think that in almost every case the work going into this process will ultimately pay off for them.”

“Our objective,” he emphasized, “is to encourage coordination and to bring Division members together to work on high-priority statewide issues.”

The Program Council employed the following set of guiding principles to evaluate each workgroup proposal: Did the proposal encourage the involvement of CE and AES academics and others? Did the proposed actions represent a group effort? Did the proposal emphasize statewide coordination? Did it duplicate other efforts? Proposals that overlapped other proposals or lacked coordination were asked to reconsider and resubmit their proposals in the next call. Proposals that lacked clarity or focus were asked to rework their proposals for the next call.

Here is a breakdown of the proposals and ratifications according to program areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Area</th>
<th>Submitted</th>
<th>Ratified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Productivity</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ag Policy &amp; Pest Mgmt</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Program Council allocated nearly $770,000 as a result of this call. The remaining $230,000 in 1999-2000 workgroup funds will be carried forward to next year, Lund said.

“In making our final recommendations to Associate Vice President Vaux, we looked strictly at the merits of the proposals and what we thought it would take to strengthen those proposals that were clearly on the right track. We didn’t even add up the approved funding requests until we had finished the evaluations,” Lund said.

Sixty-nine of the 74 ratified workgroups were funded through either June 2000 or June 2001; the other five ratified workgroups didn’t request funding. In addition, 20 or so other workgroups received small amounts of start-up funds to rework their proposals. Overall, the funding awards ranged from less than $5,000 for some start-up groups to over $25,000 for some groups with ongoing operations.

Underscoring that program coordination is the workgroups’ ultimate aim and citing the successful pomology continuing conference as a model, the Program Council suggested that, where appropriate, some workgroups hold at least one of their meetings in conjunction with an overarching “coordinating conference.” They even earmarked some travel money so that members of workgroups encouraged to participate in coordinating conferences could attend those events.

The purpose of coordinating conferences is to encourage workgroups that share certain commonalities to talk to each other about key issues, Lund said. The Program Council identified eight possible coordinating conferences: animal industries, agronomy, ornamental horticulture, pomology, vegetable crops, nutrition, family and youth, and natural resources. A list of coordinating conferences and the workgroups involved in each one of them will be posted on the Program Council website.

Workgroups are intended to serve as forums for coordination, enabling CE advisors, CE specialists, AES academics and others to exchange ideas and collectively tap their expertise to help the Division reach its statewide programmatic goals in research and extension.

A workgroup that has been ratified is, according to the call, “recognized as a Divisionwide collaborative team working in the Division’s highest-priority program areas.”

UCR finding could lead to more chilling-tolerant crops

Scientists at UC Riverside report they have identified a gene in blackeye beans that can enable the crop’s seed to germinate and the plants to emerge in cool soil. The discovery could lead to the development of crops with less chance of failing when spring temperatures turn cold after sowing.

The finding, reported in the Nov. 9 issue of Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, also holds promise for improving other, major warm-season crops such as soybean, cotton, corn, rice and sorghum through classical plant breeding, and possibly through genetic engineering. Only a moderate amount of blackeye dry beans—a type of cowpea—are produced in California with a gross value to farmers of $30 million per year. Cowpea also is grown in several southern U.S. states and it is widely grown in West Africa, Latin America and Asia. In Africa, it is particularly important due to its strong resistance to the droughts that have caused widespread failures of other crops and hunger.

Ironically, it was research to breed heat-tolerant varieties of blackeye beans that led to a serendipitous discovery by UCR plant physiologists and breeders Abdelbagi M. Ismail, and geneticist Timothy J. Close. Close that the gene pool of cowpea plants also contains genetic variation for seedling emergence during the cool weather.

“The importance of this finding is not for Africa, but for places like California with subtropical conditions,” said Ismail, a postgraduate researcher from the Sudan. “If we can breed a chilling-tolerant variety of blackeye beans, its ability to emerge under cool soil conditions would offer a considerable advantage to farmers. Early sowing can result in plants with higher yields because plants sown earlier begin flowering before mid-season hot weather occurs, which can reduce pod set.”
The creation of collaborative logical sciences major, and ultimately led to a new bio-life sciences curricula that umbrellas, the revision of disciplinary graduate research development of interdisciplinary graduate was the founding chair of an interdepartmental graduate program in genetics.

The chancellor’s office at UC Riverside held its first search committee meeting in November with the aim of naming a new dean by the end of spring.

Clegg’s accomplishments as dean include the development of a five-year strategic plan that emphasizes academic excellence and makes possible the addition of 50 new faculty and $150 million in capital growth by 2005.

In addition, he oversaw the development of interdisciplinary graduate research umbrellas, the revision of life sciences curricula that ultimately led to a new biological sciences major, and the creation of collaborative research efforts known as the Center for Conservation Biology, the Center for Biotechnology and the Agricultural Research Institute for Deserts.

A guiding principle of his leadership has been to create partnerships between various research units and academic departments in the only UC agricultural college to also include departments in the fundamental sciences. “A sense of shared purpose and cooperation is essential to exploit the advantages of this unique organization,” said Clegg. “I have worked to try to instill such a spirit and I hope that it will continue to be a hallmark of our college.”

Clegg is one of the nation’s top plant geneticists. He is a fellow of the American Academy for the Arts and Sciences and a member of the National Academy of Sciences.

Clegg plans to take a sabbatical beginning in summer 2000 to study the new field of comparative plant genomics.

Dunlap is the science writer in the CNAS–Dean’s Office.

has become clear to me that I needed to focus more of my time and attention on the advances in my own field.”

Clegg was named dean in 1997 following three years as acting dean. He joined the UCR faculty in 1984 as a professor of genetics and was the founding chair of an interdepartmental graduate program in genetics.

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The shift is part of the Division’s reorganization. “Through this consolidation we expect to do a better job of focusing the University’s scarce resources on the many farm labor issues facing California agriculture,” said Associate Vice President Henry Vaux Jr. “The program will also receive greater input from a new ANR workgroup on farm labor issues, a move that will deepen the research base and broaden access for the farmers, ranchers and workers who depend upon it.”

“Agricultural labor” noted Sumner, “accounts for a large part of the total production cost for many California commodities.”

CE specialist Howard Rosenberg, the former director of the APMP, notes that “In California at least 75 percent of farm work is performed by hired employees. Some 35,000 agricultural employers in the state pay $5 billion a year in wages. Our job is to help these employers, and their managers, supervisors and workers cope with the countless human resource decisions they face every day.”

With its extension programs, the APMP helps agricultural business operators to understand how their choices shape organizational structure, job design, recruitment and selection, training and development, immediate supervision, pay and benefits, employee communications, corrective actions and other responses to problems. The program was established by a specific augmentation to the University budget in 1981 and is one of more than two dozen statewide programs managed by the Division.

In addition to Sumner, the program’s staff consists of UCCE farm advisors Gregory Encina Billikopf (Modesto) and Steve Sutter (Fresno), and secretaries Yolanda Murillo and Elizabeth Resendez.

CE specialist Rosenberg also lends support and expertise to the program. A third farm advisor position is currently vacant.

The APMP produces a wide variety of research and extension publications, workshops and technical assistance to help agricultural managers implement personnel management practices that contribute to their bottom line while meeting the standards of labor law and other public policy concerns. Detailed information about the program is online at the APMP’s website http://are.berkeley.edu/APMP/

The site boasts a wealth of material and structured links to educational articles, legal and governmental references, news, databases, research findings, advice and other resources. This address is also linked to the website created by Billikopf specifically for his extension program. His site was recently voted the best in the country for 1999 by the National Association of County Agricultural Agents. For additional information about changes in the Agricultural Personnel Management Program or the Agricultural Issues Center, contact AIC at 530/752-2320 or agissues@ucdavis.edu.

Stumbos is a senior public information representative for the Division.
Computer operating systems and Y2K problems

By Claudia Myers

(Engineer’s note: This is the second of three articles on what you need to do to make your work computer ready for the date change from 1999 to 2000. The first article appeared in the Sept. 8-0 ct. 11 issue of ANR Report.)

There are three basic areas of concern: the bios, the operating system and applications. I covered the bios last time. I’ll cover software application programs in the next issue.

Every computer has an operating system that forms the foundation for its software applications. Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows NT, Windows 3.1, Mac OS and UNIX are all operating systems.

The reason the operating system needs to be compliant is that it interacts with the software applications. For example, a software program might encrypt the registration date and compare it to the date of the computer’s clock. If the computer resets itself to 1900 or 1980 and the computer’s date is then before the registration date, it may not allow you to use the software, thinking it has been tampered with.

So, what do you do? First, Macintosh operating systems do not have a Y2K problem. So, if you have a Mac you don’t have to worry about the operating system.

Windows 3.1 or 3.11 operating systems need to be upgraded to Windows 95 or 98. Realistically, upgrading probably doesn’t make sense because the computer most likely isn’t fast enough, doesn’t have a big enough hard drive and doesn’t have a CD-ROM drive. In those cases, you could buy a new computer or take your chances with the old one. If it is a stand-alone computer, it may be fine, even if it thinks the date is 1900. But remember, if you do keep a Windows 3.1 or 3.11 computer around, it is hopelessly out of date and won’t be able to use newer software programs.

Almost all of the other operating systems in use on desktop computers are Windows operating systems. With both Windows 95 and Windows 98 you may need to run a simple update program to make them Y2K compliant. Microsoft has developed a program, “The Microsoft Year 2000 Product Analyzer,” that scans your hard drive and creates a report listing Microsoft software, including your operating system and software programs. The report tells you if the operating system is compliant or not and provides a link to product information and any software update that is recommended.

The UCCE Internet v.3 CD that we sent out in September includes the Microsoft Year 2000 Product Analyzer program. Double click on “y2k ms product analyzer” in the Y2K Software folder in the Win95-98 folder. It will install the program on your computer. After it is installed, go to the Start Button, Programs, and select Microsoft Year 2000 Product Analyzer.

If the results say the particular Microsoft software is “compliant,” you are all set. If it says “compliant (prerequisite required),” it means that you have to run some kind of patch or update program. It will tell you what you need to run and how to download it from Microsoft.

We have put some of the more common patches on the UCCE Internet v.3 CD. The Windows 95 upgrade patch is on the CD but not Windows 98 or NT.

Generally with Microsoft Office software programs like Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Access, you have to run the Microsoft Office SR-1 patch, then the SR-2 patch. Both patches are on the CD we sent.

M.ifestyle is the information technology manager at Communication Services.

Intermountain seeks proposals

The Intermountain Research and Extension Center has issued a call for new research project proposals for calendar year 2000. Completed Project Proposals and Annual Request for Land, Labor, and Facilities forms are required for all new projects.

Proposals should be 2-3 pages in length. Researchers are encouraged to provide detail sufficient to weigh projects against competing proposals. Forms are available to download from the Research and Extension Centers’ website at http://danrec.ucdavis.edu/

The proposals’ due date is Jan. 7. Individuals with questions about the forms or research support and available facilities should contact Harry Carlson, center superintendent (530/667-5117; hlicarlson@ucdavis.edu).

Names in the news

The UC Davis College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences has some new members on its leadership team. Dean Neal Van Alphen appointed James Macdonald as executive associate dean of the college; Lowell S. Jarvis as associate dean of the Division of Human Sciences; and Michael Parrella as associate dean of the Division of Agricultural Sciences.

Vice President Gomes has been elected chair of the Western Administrative Heads Section, National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges Board on Agriculture.

Associate Vice President Henry Vaux Jr. has been elected chair of the Western Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors.

Frederick Murph, dean emeritus and a veterinary virologist at UC Davis, was elected to the Institute of Medicine, one of the highest honors for a health researcher. Murph played a role in the initial discovery of the Ebola virus in 1976. (From Oct. 22 issue of Dateline UC Davis.)
IPM offers workshops for trainers of pesticide handlers and fieldworkers

The statewide Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Project is conducting “train-the-trainer” workshops in both English and Spanish to qualify growers, farm supervisors, labor contractors and others to train pesticide handlers and agricultural fieldworkers. “Under the federal Worker Protection Standard (WPS) people training pesticide handlers and/or fieldworkers who work in production agriculture or commercial greenhouses and nurseries must be qualified trainers,” said Patrick O’Connor-Marer, coordinator of IPM’s Pesticide Education Program (PEP). “This program familiarizes trainers with the federal WPS requirements and California training requirements and provides useful information on how to conduct training programs.”

Upcoming locations and dates include:

**Trainers of Pesticide Handlers and Agricultural Fieldworkers (eight-hour workshop)**

- M odesto: Dec. 14 (S); Dec. 15 (E)
- San Luis Obispo: Jan. 11 (S); Jan. 12 (E)
- Indio: Feb. 8 (S); Feb. 9 (E)
- Salinas: M arch 14 (S); M arch 15 (E)
- Parlier: M arch 21 (S); M arch 22 (E)

**Trainers of Agricultural Fieldworkers only (this four-hour workshop is held in English and Spanish)**

- Indio: Feb. 10
- Salinas: M arch 16
- Parlier: M arch 23

Each eight-hour WPS workshop teaches pesticide safety and effective teaching techniques. Course instruction covers label comprehension, environmental protection, health issues, laws and regulations, handling procedures and fieldworker safety. Participants receive hands-on training in equipment and use of protective clothing.

The four-hour WPS fieldworker only workshop trains people in pesticide safety issues and laws and regulations as they relate to training agricultural fieldworkers. Throughout both workshops, participants learn various training methods that will help them become better instructors. On completion of both types of workshops, participants will receive certificates that they can use to obtain blue “EPA Training Verification” cards from the Department of Pesticide Regulation.

For the eight-hour workshop, the $135 fee includes the 400-page Pesticide Applicator Instructor’s Handbook, EPA and other resource materials, lunch and refreshments.

The registration fee for the four-hour workshop is $50 and includes resource materials and refreshments.

Enrollment is limited, so early registration is strongly advised. For further information, call 530/752-5273; email dmcclarke@ucdavis.edu or visit IPM’s Internet site at http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/IPM PROJECT/workshops.html.

Since 1994 PEP staff have trained more than 3,500 instructors, who in turn have trained more than 800,000 fieldworkers and pesticide handlers.