



# California

# AGRICULTURE

**F**ifty years ago, UC issued the first California Agriculture, printed as a tabloid under the logotype reproduced above. In tribute to the occasion, we have reprinted below comments from former UC President Robert Gordon Sproul which appeared in the inaugural issue. The headline read: "University President Discusses Work Of College of Agriculture and Its Value to the Farmers." While some comments are dated, others, such as references to the "enigmas" of Pierce's disease and mastitis, echo current concerns. As California Agriculture celebrates its 50th year, we will revisit, in this space, the topics originally raised by Gordon Sproul. We will examine the continuing role of the Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension in service to all Californians and the relevance of the land grant university to society as a whole. — W.R. Gomes, Vice President, Agriculture and Natural Resources

It would be possible to tell the farmers of California just what the University's College of Agriculture has done for them, measured in dollars and cents.

That could be done, but the time and money required to obtain the figures can better be spent, we believe, in active attack upon the farmer's problems.

In 1931 the University did make such a survey of the commercial effects of the work conducted on the four agricultural campuses—Berkeley, Davis, Los Angeles, and Riverside. The survey showed that through the cooperation of the Agricultural Experiment Station and the Agricultural Extension Service more than \$28,000,000 were added to the financial returns of the farmers of California in that year; twenty millions in added production, eight millions in savings—money the farmers did not have to spend.

What a similar survey would show today we can only conjecture, but it is believed the amount would be doubled, at least.

For example: In one county the recent discovery of methods of control of a disease affecting potatoes, developed by the plant pathology division, meant a million dollars to the growers last year; in another county, where University bulls were lent to dairymen, the average butterfat production per cow per year has been raised from 186 to 289 pounds, amounting to a total increase of six and one-half million pounds of butterfat.

In another county, W. H. Chander, Professor of Pomology, solved the little-leaf riddle in deciduous fruit trees, and increased production as much as 60% on approximately 20,000 acres of orchard; with the development of two new Red Kidney beans, another county was able to start production of certified seed for eastern bean growers, an enterprise that this year will earn nearly a million dollars; based on recommendations of the Entomology Division, insecticides have been used by dairymen and cattlemen in another county, with increased production estimated at a quarter of a million dollars a year.

There are underway at present, or just completed, 839 research projects in the College of Agriculture. Some of these agricultural enigmas, like Pierce's disease of grapevines, and mastitis in dairy cattle, still baffle the scientists.

One form of mastitis can be and has been controlled. Research on the other form is proceeding.

Pierce's disease is not new; many years ago it ruined the vine industry of Orange County. Today, several departments of the University — viticulture, plant pathology, botany, and others — are bending every effort to see that it shall not destroy the important grape industry that has grown up in other parts of the state.

The increased awareness of the importance of agricultural research and the growing demands of the agricultural industry, mean of course, that more men are needed for research, and in turn, more buildings to house them. Fortunately, money is available to care for immediate needs, in the sum of more than seven and one-half million dollars.

On the Davis campus, a plant for the School of Veterinary Medicine, is to be constructed at a cost of \$2,170,000, incorporating the latest and best in building design and equipment. At Davis, too, will be built structures for plant sciences, soils and irrigation, poultry husbandry, home economics, and food technology.

At Berkeley, a Forestry Building, Forest Products Laboratory, and a Home Economics Building are to be erected.

At Riverside, one new major building is planned, and in addition, a central heating plant and a structure to house metal and woodwork shops.

Research is never completed until its results are in the hands of the men and women on the soil. Accordingly, the results of research are published in bulletins and circulars and made available to farmers as soon as possible.

A new department of Agricultural Information has been opened by the College of Agriculture. It has set itself the task of simplifying the language of bulletins and circulars and presenting them in brighter appearance.

A new periodical (This is the first issue,—Ed.) will bring the farmer knowledge of projects launched, and of progress as it is being made, before the results are formally published for the recording of scientific accomplishment. Similar material will be supplied to farm journals, newspapers, and radio stations so it may be distributed quickly.

Looking backward over the years through which the College of Agriculture has served the State, I hope you will agree with me that it deserves the encomium, Well done! All the demands of agriculture's representatives have not been met, of course, but the College has contributed mightily to the welfare of California farmers.

The interests of the College of Agriculture and the Farm Bureau are common interests, and fortunately they have always been recognized as such. For your good as well as ours, may you continue to understand the mutual need, each for the other, of the University and California's great agricultural industry.

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*These remarks were condensed from a speech by former UC President Sproul to the annual 1946 meeting of the California Farm Bureau Federation. —Editor*