

USDA Establishes New Research Groups for Pioneer Science Work

Progress in setting up special pioneering research groups, to explore the scientific unknown beyond the present limits of knowledge, is reported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

These new units for basic research, organized around outstanding scientists, are being established in various divisions of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. Plans for them began to take shape as early as last April, following a realignment of functions within the Service. A memorandum explaining the purpose of the new pioneering research groups was sent to division directors by USDA Research Administrator B. T. Shaw on May 17 this year.

So far, two of these laboratories are in full operation. They are the Pioneering Laboratory for Mineral Nutrition, in the Soil and Water Conservation Research Division, and the Pioneering Laboratory for Plant Physiology, in the Crops Research Division. Both are located at USDA's Agricultural Research Center, Beltsville, Md.

Charters have been approved for three additional laboratories, also located at Beltsville. They are the Pioneering Laboratory for Blood Antigen Research, in the Animal Husbandry Research Division, and Pioneering Laboratories for Insect Pathology and Insect Physiology, in the Entomology Research Division. Pioneering research groups in a number of other Agricultural Research Service divisions are being planned.

Commendation of USDA for its encouragement of pioneering re-

search within the Agricultural Research Service was expressed last month in a resolution of the Agricultural Research Institute, an organization affiliated with the Agricultural Board of the National Academy of Sciences—National Research Council.

The Institute's resolution said, in part: "This action by the Department of Agriculture is regarded as the single most significant step in decades which will promote the welfare of the fundamental elements of agricultural science . . . This program . . . is viewed as a step which will attract the highest calibre of scientist and particularly will stimulate interest among students in our colleges and universities anxious to pursue pure science as a career."

Commenting on the research units, Dr. Shaw said, "Scientific facts and principles are the starting points for imaginative processes that lead to new things and new ways of doing things. The thinking, observation, experimentation, and analysis necessary to establish new facts and principles are what we mean by 'basic research'."

"Our advisors outside the Department, as well as USDA research people themselves, believe that we have not been doing enough basic research. The tremendous recent advances in farming and in agricultural industry are largely the result of basic scientific discoveries made years ago or some time now we have been scraping the bottom of the basic research barrel. To find answers to the problems of today's and tomorrow's agriculture, we'll have

Production Credit Stockholders in Annual Meeting

The annual stockholders meeting of Lancaster Production Credit Association will be held Friday December 13. At the annual conclave, two directors will be chosen.

The meeting is to be held at the Mount Joy Elementary School at 10.30 a. m. Chief speaker will be Wm. H. "Bill" Johnson, extension representative of the Farm Credit Administration.

Samuel G. Ober, Rheems; J. Homer Graybill, Manheim R3; Richard P. Maule, Collins, and Ira D. Welk, New Providence, are the nominees for the two directors posts. After the meeting, lunch will be served to the stockholders present.

Two nominees will be picked for national directors Candidates are Samuel B. Williams, Middletown R D, Julius S. Nilson, Shellsville; Richard B. Lefever, Holtwood R D, and W. Harold Graybeal, Pleasant Grove

to push fundamental knowledge ahead faster.

"The pioneering research groups we are setting up will help to meet this need for more basic research — research that is not concerned with solution of immediate problems, but rather with broadening and deepening man's understanding of the physical world and of life processes. We are confident that these groups will encourage the freer play of genius in agricultural research. The new facts they discover will make all our applied research more effective."

Pioneering research units, Dr. Shaw said, are to be established only in subject-matter fields for which research funds have been authorized, and in which it can be expected that new basic findings will substantially advance agricultural science.

Dr. Shaw emphasized that the new groups will do only a part of the basic research undertaken by the Agricultural Research Service. The regular research divisions will continue, as at present, to plan and carry out fundamental investigations aimed at supplying new scientific facts and principals recognized as needed to solve particular agricultural research problems.

In the memorandum on pioneering research sent last May to the directors of Agricultural Research Service divisions, Dr. Shaw pointed out that "all research in the Department is, and should be, directed toward helping agriculture perform its role — by solving current problems, anticipating and averting future problems, and creating new and better things for and from agriculture."

He emphasized, however, that the success of problem-solving research depends fundamentally on new scientific discoveries. He pointed to the need for "research that is not aimed at specific, practical problems or objectives, but rather at the advancement of science. Only in this way can the scientist have the freedom he needs to follow where the research trail leads and find the unlooked-for."

"Obviously," Dr. Shaw added, "such 'undirected' research can be entrusted by those responsible for use of public funds only to scientists who are fully competent to accept this trust."

Dr. Sterling B. Hendricks and Dr. Harry A. Borthwick are two of the USDA scientists selected for pioneering research duties.

Dr. Hendricks, chief chemist of the Pioneering Laboratory for Mineral Nutrition, is widely known for his contributions to soil science and mineralogy, plant physiology, and chemistry. A member of the National Academy of Sciences, he is a 30-year veteran of the Department. Dr. Hendricks and his associates will work in the direction of developing a better understanding of processes related to the mineral nutrition of plants. At the outset this research will involve studies of how plants accumulate inorganic ions, and how these ions function inside plants.

Polled Breeders To Build New Home in K. C.

The American Polled Hereford Assn. was off to an auspicious start toward the construction of a permanent home in Kansas City, Mo.

At their annual banquet held recently in Harrisburg, 30 cattlemen subscribed a total of \$30,750 toward erection of a building in Kansas City, Mo., for the association headquarters.

Leon Falk, Jr., of Pittsburgh and Schellsburg, chairman of the Pennsylvania National Livestock Exposition, site of the 36th National Polled Hereford Show and Sale, subscribed \$2,000 in a "sale of bricks" in a building fund campaign.

Colonel Jewett Fulkerson of Missouri auctioned the bricks at the banquet attended by approximately 300 cattlemen and their wives and guests from more than 20 states and Canada. Gov. George M. Leader was principal speaker.

According to the American Polled Hereford Assn each brick was purchased for a minimum of \$500. Two bricks were purchased for \$5,000 each, highest at the auction, by the Missouri Polled Hereford Assn. and the C. E. Knowlton Farms of Bellefontaine, Ohio.

Don M. Chittenden, executive secretary of the breed organization, said registrations in the Polled Hereford breed are increasing each year. He cited the high increase in the Eastern United States. Chittenden explained that 10,172 Polled Hereford breeders are now registered with the association.

Earlier, M. P. Moore, of Senatobia, Miss., was elected president of the American Polled Hereford Assn. He succeeds John Shiflet of

Red Rock, Okla. D. C. Andrews, Kirkwood and Union, Mo., was elected vice president.



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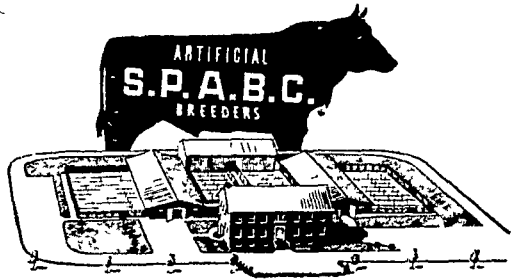


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