Soybean Group Asks For Research Funds

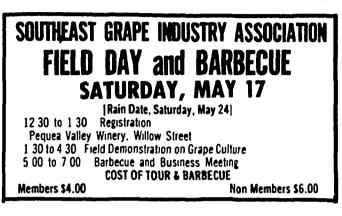
major factors demonstrating a need for more intensive soybean research, according to Vernon Scott of Tillar, Ark., chairman of the American Soybean Association (ASA) Research Committee.

In testimony recently before the House and Senate appropriations subcommittees on agriculture and related agencies, Scott

Rising soybean production contended that soybean he stated. costs and static yields are research has been hampered. Scott sa research has been hampered by lack of funds and asked Congress to increase its soybean research appropriation.

> Althouth soybean production costs have doubled since 1972, Scott said, yields have reached a plateau.

"When figured on a fiveyear average, our yields have increased less than 10 percent since the late 1950s,"





Scott said cost per unit of production must be reduced if soy oil is to compete with Malaysian palm oil, which costs very little to produce and currently is priced about \$200 per ton less than soy oil on the domestic market. Palm oil production has increased 49 per cent since 1970 and will be a continuing source of future competition, he added.

A lack of basic knowledge about the soybean plant, said Scott, has kept soybean scientists from understanding why the plant loses 70-80 per cent of its production capacity by aborting flowers at an early stage, why the soybean plant does not respond to nitrogen fertilizer the way most plants do, and why water moves less freely within the soybean plant than in other plants.

"Considering the limited funds available to soybean production reasearch, our scientists have done an admirable job," he said. "The problem stems from the fact that we have not had enough funds, nor enough scientists."

Noting that the U.S. soybean crop is currently valued at \$8 billion, Scott said the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) will spend only \$5 million on soybean production research this year, or .06 of one per cent of the crop's value.

The ASA representative asked Congressmen to support an additional \$1.4 million appropriation for ARS soybean research and a funding increase of \$1,252,000 for soybean research by the **Cooperative States Research** Service (CSRS).

"CSRS makes excellent use of the federal funds supplies, "Scott contended. "For every dollar of federal appropriations, the CSRS invests another \$2.60 from other sources in soybean research."

Scott said research to help lower per unit production cost would be beneficial to the nation's consumers, who annually use about 600 million bushels of soybean per year in the form of soy oil, meal-fed meat and poultry, glue, food products and medicines.

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