Board cites inadequate funding for research and extension

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In a special report to the President and Congress, the National Agricultural Research and Extension Users Advisory Board said a proposed seven percent increase in the 1981 agricultural research and extension budget is inadequate for growth in food production and export for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's expanding areas of responsibility.

The board said despite proposed increases, the resource base for food at agricultural research and extension continues to remain at a static two percent total of federal research and development funding, where it has been for the past 10 years. The report said the resource base must be increased, and recommended the increase come from redurection of funds from some other areas.

The board said that while they recognize and appreciate the President's action in halting the erosion of federal funding for food and agricultural research, they are not satisfied that most other areas of federal research and development were increased at nearly double the rate of food and agriculture, at some 13 percent

John Ragan, incoming board chairman, said the board wanted to emphasize

dairy herd.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In that funding must be report emphasized that the special report to the significantly increased in focus and demands of resident and Congress, the research and extension agricultural research and extension have expanded esearch and Extension food production.

Ragan, the state veterinarian for the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, said, "Food crises may result from absolute inadequacy of volume or from the effect of price structures which make food unavailable to significant numbers of people in spite of overall adequate supply It is our view that a food and fiber crisis currently exists, since there are people in the world suffering from hunger and malnutrition and we see no immediate reason to expect the situation to improve."

Ralph Abascal, outgoing chairman, said in a letter to the President, "We recognize and appreciate the President's increased support of agricultural research and extension. However, this report reiterates our long-held concern that the substantively broadened responsibilities of the agricultural research and extension system, and the increasing dependence of the nation and world community on food and agricultural resources, make fiscal reprioritization of funding in this area essential."

Abascal, who is general counsel for California Rural Legal Assistance, said the

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report emphasized that the focus and demands of agricultural research and extension have expanded from the traditional "farm gate" to marketing, nutrition, consumer and environmental areas at a time when there was no real gain the research and development funding.

The report highlights areas of concern for agricultural research and extension, basing priorities on board recommendations reported to the secretary of agriculture in October 1979 as well as new issues determined at a recent field meeting in Orlando, Fla.

The report cites eight areas of concern. —Economic and social

implications of U.S farm and rural structure;

--The need to increase support for basic research relative to the food and agricultural sciences; -The need to improve and expand implementation of integrated pest management programs;

-The need to develop and implement new technologies and practices which will reduce agriculture's dependence on petroleum energy;

-The need to provide adequate quantities and quality of water for agricultural use;

-The need to develop and maintain national and worldwide food security, including the overall quantity of food produced and equity in quality and distribution;

—The need for improved national policy and education in human nutrition; and

-The need to control the depletion of agricultural land and soil, as well as losses in soil quality



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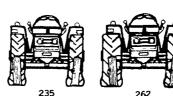
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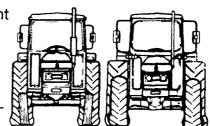
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