

REALITIES IN RESEARCH MONEY

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Facing the realities of the 70's it is my opinion that the day has passed when agricultural groups can come before the California Legislature and ask for State General Fund monies to be used by the University of California or other agencies for agricultural research. This is not in any way intended to belittle the need for agricultural research nor the need for additional money.

We in agriculture and related agribusiness activities must realize that today, due to the increase in California's population and the one-man, one-vote court ruling, we are working with an urban-dominated State Legislature which in its list of priorities has placed money for agricultural research near the bottom. When viewed from their vantage point, this attitude is somewhat understandable as one looks at the State's money needs for general education, welfare, natural resources and other people-oriented programs. In addition, agriculture has done a miraculous job in producing high-quality products in quantities which often result in surpluses, so there is little room for an appeal to the Legislature along the lines of need for agricultural research to feed or protect the people.

Another practicality of the 70's which must be recognized by agriculture is that the real control over University of California monies for agricultural research is held by the University administration — not the State Legislature. A total University budget with indications of how the money might be divided is approved by the Legislature. The actual allocation of money within the University is done by the administration of the University and unfortunately agriculture faces the same problem there — working with an urban-oriented administration primarily interested in numbers of people served.

There is no question that agricultural research in all of its phases must be continued and in many cases expanded. This will take more and more dollars and in my opinion the only practical substantial source of additional funds is the agricultural industry itself. Industry funds will be hard to come by so researchers must re-orient their projects and establish priorities which will stand the test of major contributions to the industry problems and needs.

Much as we would like to have General Fund monies appropriated for agricultural research, and much as we can make a case for the benefits to all of the people of the State which derive from agricultural research, we must face the realities of the time. The avocado industry, as well as all of California agriculture, must adopt a do-it-yourself philosophy in the securing of future agricultural research monies.