

# Commission On Education In Agriculture and Natural Resources

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The Commission, a unit of the Agricultural Board, Division of Biology and Agriculture, NAS-NRC, funded by NSF, has two objectives:

(1) The first is to continue to review trends in education for undergraduates in agriculture and natural resources; stimulate discussion, re-evaluation and improvement; and prepare recommendations for the development of academic programs in the future.

(2) The second goal will be to stimulate and assist in the development of the agricultural aspects of general education, especially but not exclusively general biological education, at all educational levels. This encompasses agriculture as a contribution to the cultural enrichment of the student population at large, as well as to the professional goals of biologists and other scientists and engineers.

Among the major current Commission projects are the following:

A program, co-sponsored with the Commission on Undergraduate Education in the Biological Sciences (CUEBS), to develop recommendations for desirable preparation in the biological sciences for undergraduates in agriculture, including agricultural engineering and natural resources, and to propose mechanisms for achieving this kind of preparation. Seven action committees representing various areas of agriculture and natural resources — animal science, plant and soil science, food science, environmental engineering, social science, agricultural education and natural resources — are studying and recommending desirable preparation for undergraduates in their areas. Reports produced by these committees, and a summary report, will be reviewed by professional and scientific societies during spring, summer and fall, 1966. This will be followed by a November 11-12 Conference on Undergraduate Education in the Biological Sciences for Students in Agriculture and Natural Resources, to be attended by deans and directors of resident instruction in agriculture and natural resources, and selected others.

A Conference on Undergraduate Teaching in the Animal Sciences, involving 20 animal scientists and several observers, will be held May 20-21. Purposes are to (1) assess the status of undergraduate education in the animal sciences, (2) recommend action, if any, that should be undertaken to improve undergraduate teaching in the animal sciences, and (3) suggest mechanisms for implementation of recommended action. This Conference may establish a pattern for similar conferences in other areas.

Conferences on undergraduate education in agricultural economics and phytopathology in August, 1966, and agronomy in November, 1967 will be co-sponsored with the appropriate societies. These conferences are a continuation of a program begun with conferences in dairy science and horticultural science held in August, 1965.

Panel visits to the agricultural divisions of Prairie View Agricultural and Mechanical College, Mississippi State University, Yakima Valley Junior College-Washington State University, California State Polytechnic College and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College will be held during spring, 1966. These four-six member panels have two objectives: (1) to inform the Commission about the status of, and trends in, undergraduate education in agriculture and natural resources in the host institution, with special reference to new and successful programs, and problem areas, and (2) to assist the host institution in self-evaluation. The selection of visit sites reflects the importance of four types of institu-

tions in education in agriculture and natural resources: Land-Grant, non Land-Grant, two-year and those attended primarily by Negroes.

A Panel on Natural Resource Science has been formed to be concerned with desirable changes in the education of scientists, resource managers and other professional personnel who will be involved in the use and management of natural resources. The Panel is taking into consideration the educational changes made necessary or desirable by the rapid change in the use of land and other renewable natural resources, and by the intensifying interest in wise use of our renewable natural resources. The Panel is developing model curricula for undergraduates preparing to be resource scientists and managers.

The Commission is conducting an informal study of the extent to which students other than those majoring in agriculture and natural resources are exposed to concepts in agriculture and natural resources that should be a part of their general education. The Commission may undertake activities in this area, depending upon the results of the study.

The Commission is completing a position paper on technician training, and has recently published reports of pilot studies of educational needs as seen by two agricultural industries.

Members of the Commission are: A. E. Darlow, *Chairman*, Oklahoma State University; D. G. Aldrich, Jr., University of California (Irvine); Lincoln Constance, University of California (Berkeley); G. R. Ferguson, Geigy Agricultural Chemicals; George A. Gries, University of Arizona; A. R. Hilst, Purdue University; Roy M. Kottman, The Ohio State University; and Lloyd E. Partain, U.S.D.A.