Agronomists Need Broad Training

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Institutions of higher learning are complex organizations. They are called upon to render a great variety of services. This is the case especially in the colleges of agriculture with their connections with the experiment stations and extension services. The demands for services from the outside are often so great that they interfere with instructional work. Another factor that has interfered with the development of good instructional work is that recognition and advancements of individual staff members have frequently been based on performance in research rather than on their accomplishments in the classroom. The results of research are evident and easily publicized. The accomplishments of instructors can be evaluated most effectively by the performance of the students coming from their classrooms. This takes time, and publicity is either lacking or at best is vague.

The offering of instruction remains as one of the obligations of colleges and universities. This requires the development of worthwhile curricula and good teaching. Curricula should be built largely around the needs of the students rather than too much around the background and experiences of any given instructor. This paper will deal with these needs, with the realization that many students are not fully qualified to make wise selections of courses or are lacking in experience to know the value resulting from a proper integration of courses in a curriculum.

Keeping Curricula Abreast of the Times

Many events important to agriculture have transpired in the past 20 years. Agronomic curricula have been subjected to worthwhile alterations both as to types of courses offered to students and as to the contexts of such courses. New agronomic problems have come up, and in many instances workable solutions have been found. These new findings have enriched curricula; but, without doubt, the greatest development of all has been the enhancement of American agriculture in world economy. It has become evident that American agriculture is important not only as a domestic enterprise, but that it represents an industry of vital importance to the entire economy of the world. The reverse is also the case, namely, that the health and prosperity of American agriculture is influenced by events transpiring in all parts of the world.

Courses in agronomy, and agronomy represents no small part of agriculture, must take into consideration the enhanced position of American agriculture. Agriculture is a world industry, and American crop production represents an important component of it.

Presentations to classes should not be confined to strictly local

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