

# **Agronomy in Today's Society**

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# Foreword

The 1977 annual meeting theme *Agronomy in Today's Society* considered the latest technological improvements of how to feed a burgeoning population within the framework of increasing societal concerns on environment, energy, and health. A great number of the over 1,100 formal papers presented in the 1977 Los Angeles meetings will be published in the journals of the three Societies and in special publications planned for three of the symposia. The meetings also served as a forum for members to exchange new ideas, discoveries, and techniques in research and teaching.

Included in this Special Publication are the three invitational papers presented at the ASA Special Session and the two invitational papers offered in the CSSA-SSSA Joint Session. The invited papers herein range from a global perspective of agronomy's past contributions, the present status, and the challenge ahead. A common thread of concern ran through several of the 1977 invitational papers: A concern that emotionalism involving environmental and social questions of the day are greatly influencing governmental decisions involving agriculture at the same time that prestigious National Science Foundation and National Academy of Science Reports are pointing out the national and international need for increased efforts in food production research.

The necessity and challenge of informing society looms ever greater, for at present their information comes primarily from a communication media which unfortunately has little understanding of either agriculture or science. Agronomists must commit themselves to a more active role in today's society. As scientists they must aggressively inform a public unfamiliar with the important national and international role of agronomic science in shaping man's destiny on Planet Earth.

May the thoughts expressed by the writers hereafter provide much "food for thought."

J. W. Pendleton, President  
American Society of Agronomy