



AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Fred R. Taylor, Chairman
Agricultural Economics Department

The North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station and College of Agriculture has had almost a quarter of a century of dedicated forward-looking achievements under the inspired direction of Director and Dean Arlon G. Hazen.

In spite of ups and downs in the economy, the Agricultural Experiment Station and College of Agriculture has expanded its role of providing ever greater service to North Dakota. Dean Hazen has served as a model and challenge to others in his urge to be always of greater service to the people of North Dakota. We might state that his direction and leadership was strong, responsive, and demanding, yet concerned, critical, and constructive.

It is under this type of leadership that the staff of the Department of Agricultural Economics served during this period, 1956-1978. It is a pleasure to try to document a few major accomplishments as follows:

From a nucleus in 1956 of four professional people located in five rooms, the department staff has increased to 26 professional staff, plus 14 research scientists who assist them, housed on two floors of Morrill Hall. From seven undergraduate students majoring in agricultural economics in 1956, the department has grown to some 350 majors in 1978, and from two graduate students we have increased to some 26 graduate students on a continuing basis.

In our instruction program we see a change from three persons trying to teach some 20 courses and provide catch-up research on eight research projects to a program where we now have 16 staff providing courses in about every area of demand, and 36 research projects providing work on economic and social problems across the entire spectrum of North Dakota's economy.

The department's research program has shown numerous accomplishments in research meaningful and significant to the people of North Dakota. Numerous feasibility studies on: sugar, livestock processing, sunflower processing, wheat gluten, barley malt, straw-pulping plants, just to mention a few, have been undertaken. Studies relating to large interdisciplinary efforts on major watershed projects and rural water systems, "ARE" (weather modification programs), "MIP" (irrigation potentials), and "REAP" (Regional Economic Assessment Programs) relating to economic and demographic changes and impacts of coal development on North Dakota have been accomplished over the years.

Work on "RIMAS" (Resource Inventory, Monitoring and Analysis System), projects on energy development,

transportation changes, use of natural resources, and such areas as population and enrollment projections, estimates of revenues of state agencies, and use and economics of the state's wetlands and real estate values and projected changes have provided North Dakota with appropriate and significant accomplishments and data to help guide its leaders and people.

The development of such research and management tools as "AGNET," "GIN," "RIMS," "RIMAS" and allied programs by the department have provided service to farmers and ranchers in improved and better production and marketing of the products of their farms.

The Rural and Community Development program, "REACT," has provided a model for the state's planning districts in economic development. Tools and materials developed by researchers in State Planning District VI have been in demand in all planning districts of North Dakota. A large number of planning materials have been derived from research in this area.

Leadership in lignite coal development and use as a major source of energy, and an evaluation of the economic and social impacts of coal development have been maintained by the department. Continuing research on problems as they develop will be maintained.

Changes in agricultural programs, agricultural prices and returns, and all government programs on the North Dakota economy will continue to be monitored, and effects on our economy reviewed in the future. Our work continues to show high rates of return from funds invested in agricultural research. Actually, the primary beneficiaries of agricultural research are consumers, who are concerned about reasonably priced food.

The objective of the Department of Agricultural Economics will continue to be "to provide an ever better service to North Dakotans" and the motto "doing a better job tomorrow than we can do today!"

Our whole program will continue to be directed toward answering timely questions, and be responsive to the demands of our people. Space does not provide for direct listing of the many other significant accomplishments of the research, instruction, and education program of the department. We look ahead to continued growth and balanced adjustments in the North Dakota economy.

We believe that the future of North Dakota agriculture will continue bright and beautiful if leadership, such as that evidenced by Arlon G. Hazen, is maintained over the years ahead!