

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
800 S. Victoria Ave.
Ventura, CA 93009-0042
(805) 654-2924

July 21, 1988

FARM ADVISOR SAYS

UC ECONOMIST STRESSES NEED FOR AGRICULTURAL MARKETING KNOWLEDGE

SACRAMENTO -- An economist for the University of California, Davis, recently warned state officials here that California's competitive edge in agriculture is threatened by a number of serious marketing problems.

Jerry Siebert, in the midst of a year-long analysis of agricultural and natural resources marketing issues, told the State Board of Food and Agriculture at its May meeting that the increasingly global nature of the marketplace is forcing producers to take a harder look at their operations. Even growers' cultural practices have a bearing on their commodities' marketability, he said, noting consumer concern about pesticides.

"We may be the most efficient producers in the world, but we need commensurate efficiency in marketing to retain our competitiveness," he said.

Siebert's comments met with general agreement from board members. "This is where agriculture really falls down," said Board President Richard Peters. "We don't have a lot of rhyme or reason why we market things the way we do."

The study was prompted by industry concerns, Siebert noted. In addition to canvassing a broad cross-section of commodity groups, Siebert is also meeting with UC faculty and extension

- more -

The University of California, in compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, national origin, sex, or mental or physical handicap in any of its programs or activities, or with respect to any of its employment policies, practices, or procedures. The University of California does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status, citizenship, medical condition (as defined in section 12926 of the California Government Code), nor because individuals are disabled or Vietnam era veterans. Inquiries regarding this policy may be directed to the Director, Office of Affirmative Action, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources, 300 Lakeside Drive, Oakland, California 94612-3550, (415) 987-0097.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Kenneth R. Farrell, Director of Cooperative Extension, University of California.

staff to determine specific marketing problems, their causes, their financial impact and how the University should focus its resources to deal with them.

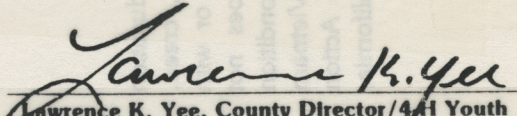
An interdisciplinary approach will be needed, Siebert told the board. "These problems can't be treated in isolation."

Siebert has determined the marketing problems fall in three general areas -- economic, policy and technological. Italy's preeminence in the canning industry and Israel's aggressive marketing of drip irrigation technology, for example, are indicative of a trend undermining the United States' long-standing leadership in agricultural development.

He also noted that many industries have been lured abroad by relatively cheap labor, and many companies themselves have become multinational.

Siebert, former director of Cooperative Extension, is expected to report his findings and recommendations to the University's Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources in early 1989.

#


Lawrence K. Yee, County Director / 441 Youth
Advisor