

Letter to the Editor



Sir: The Committee on Professional Relations is a unit of the American Chemical Society concerned with the professional interests of chemists and chemical engineers. Our activities include, among others, the investigation of multiple terminations involving chemical professionals, assistance to individual ACS members who feel they have received unprofessional treatment by their employers, and the development and publication of professional employment guidelines for chemists and their employers.

In brief, we like to see chemists utilized in addressing relevant problems that demand the skills which they have developed. We feel, for example, that in the past the Department of Agriculture has utilized chemists to solve problems that the nation's agricultural interests could not address on their own. Now, we understand that a major reduction in this service to agriculture will occur under the current reorganization within the Federal Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture's Science and Education Administration (formerly Agriculture Research Service). As we understand it, this reorganization will entail the dismantlement of large sections of the Regional Research Centers of the FRS. At the Eastern Regional Research Center, about half of the Oils and Fats Laboratory and a small group doing research on honey are scheduled for elimination. The Cereals and Oil Seeds Laboratories at the Northern Regional Research Center will be discontinued. One-third of the research efforts on cotton will be eliminated at the Southern Regional Research Center, and at the Western Regional Research Center the entire Wool Research Division is being dismantled. This reorganization is scheduled for completion by the end of fiscal 1978, or September 30, 1978.

The abolishment of these research programs involves the loss of jobs for many chemists and chemical engineers. But it involves also the loss of highly valuable services performed by these laboratories for the benefit of the nation as a whole and of producers both in the agricultural and in the industrial sectors. It is in this latter regard that we urge your support in protesting the dismantlement of these laboratories.

We have contacted the Director of Personnel at the Science and Education Administration of USDA for information concerning the effect of the reorganization on the chemists and chemical engineers employed in those laboratories scheduled for elimination. We are also corresponding with the ACS local sections whose members will be adversely affected by this action.

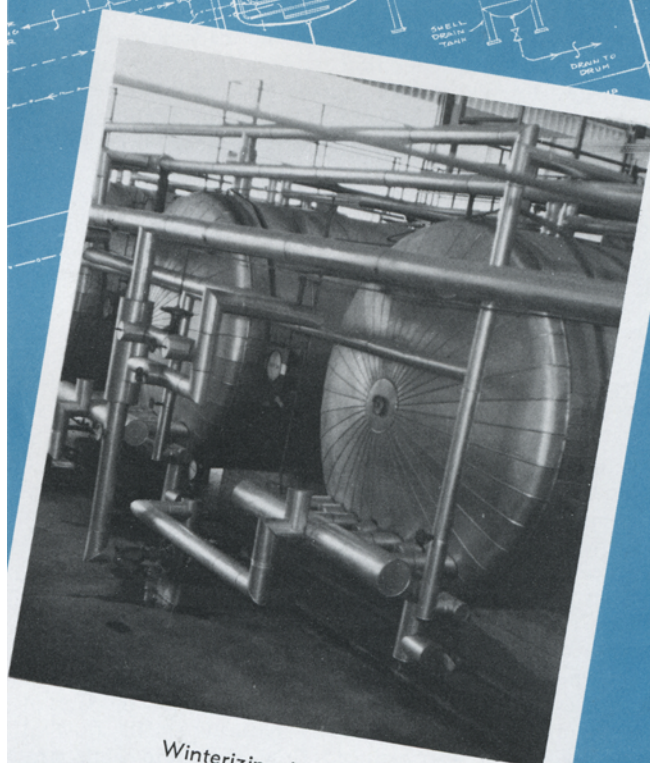
Please join us in protesting these drastic cutbacks in agricultural research. Your anticipated cooperation in this effort is greatly appreciated.

F.W. KIRSCH
Chairman
Committee on Professional Relations
American Chemical Society

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