

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FINAL REPORT
FOOD POLICY, 1985
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE
2ND REGULAR SESSION, 111TH

JANUARY, 1985

MEMBERS:

Sen. Edgar E. Erwin
Sen. Walter W. Hitchens
Rep. John M. Michael
Rep. Paul Parent
Rep. Weston R. Sherburne
Rep. Carl B. Smith

Staff:
Christos J. Gianopoulos, Legislative Assistant

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MICHAEL E. CARPENTER, DISTRICT 3
HENRY W. BLACK, DISTRICT 25

CHRISTOS GIANOPOULOS, LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT
DAN STEVENS, COMMITTEE CLERK



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WILLIS A. LORD, WATERBORO
WALTER E. WHITCOMB, WALDO

STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

February 19, 1985

To: Interested Persons and Institutions
From: *CG* Christos J. Gianopoulos, Legislative Assistant
Subj: Errata in the Final Report, Food Policy, January 19, 1985

I regret to inform you of a mistake, an omission of two words in a sentence of the text of the report on page 1, 2nd paragraph (Introduction Section). In the sentence beginning "Several institutions at Orono," two words are missing "research and" and they should be inserted between the word "the" and the word "development" almost at the close of the sentence. The word "arms" in that same sentence should also be changed to "arm". I regret any inconvenience this may cause the reader.

CG/elk/1123

FEB 21 1985

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STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

February 12, 1985

Senator Charles Pray
Chairman
Legislative Council
State House, Station #115
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Senator Pray:

We respectfully submit a resolution which represents a formal conclusion of the study work undertaken by the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture this past summer and fall. This resolution urges the Chancellor of the University of Maine to alter a salary funding policy which places the Cooperative Extension Service and the Maine Experiment Station in a difficult position. The present policy requires that these educational organizations with a significant public mission use a substantial amount of federal funds to meet the costs of salary increases established by the University. Since fiscal year 1976, both the Cooperative Extension Service and the Maine Experiment Station claim that approximately 1.5 million has been diverted from their operating accounts to salary payments. Included within this figure are transfers of funds to other departments of the University, as well as reductions in base budgeting amounts available for direct service. The Chancellor's policy established in July of 1977 has placed a special hardship on two important Maine institutions which Maine farmers will rely upon, more than ever, to chart the course of a new future for Maine agriculture.

We request that this resolution which was unanimously approved on January 10, 1985 by the Joint Standing committee on Agriculture, be sent forthwith to the Legislative body for swift ratification.

Sincerely yours,

Edgar E. Erwin
Senate Chairman

John M. Michael
House Chairman

elk/1048

FOOD POLICY REPORT, JANUARY, 1985

INTRODUCTION:

In March, 1985, the Maine Legislature approved a Food Policy. The policy statement was enacted in the form of a Resolve which establishes a framework to review specific programs related to food production and agriculture. Maine's Food Policy is a comprehensive declaration of intent which seeks to ensure that state programs affecting food production, distribution, and consumption are effectively administered and that the major State institutions involved in this policy area plan activities consistent with the several food policy statements.

Briefly stated, Maine's Food Policy advocates more food production and it encourages the diversification of Maine agriculture to the extent that varied production contributes to the strength of Maine's agricultural economy. Two of the major institutions with a big role to play in the meeting targets implicit in the Food Policy are the Maine Department of Agriculture and the University of Maine at Orono. While the newly reorganized Department of Agriculture has established several new programs to promote the health of Maine agriculture, most of those programs are still too young to review. Several institutions at Orono, including the Cooperative Extension Service, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, as well as the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station have a long standing commitment to Maine and are viewed by the agricultural community as the development arms of State government. Technical advances in production practices often emanate from university sponsored research trials, and many farmers owe their ability to compete in the tough food production business to suggestions formulated at the Agriculture Experiment Station and disseminated by the Cooperative Extension Service.

When an industry or a corporation within an industrial sector establishes a long range goal, it devotes considerable resources at the beginning to research and development work. The purpose of research and development is to pose the essential questions and to conduct trials, testing various possibilities. Experimental work is essential to planning alternative courses of action for future production strategies. Within the context of the food policy for Maine, the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture knew that the University of Maine must understand and support the Food Policy, and they must, above all, realize the decisive role they will be called upon to play in the research, education and extension areas.

The Agriculture committee decided, therefore, to establish a dialogue with principle leaders at the University of Maine at Orono to discuss the commitment of the University to the future of agriculture in Maine.

This discussion was particularly pertinent and timely because of the financial problems at the University which had been intensively reviewed by the Legislature during the previous summer. At that time, Paul Silverman, the former President at UMO, considered a plan to direct financial resources away from public service and agriculture to compensate for shortfalls in other parts of the University. These are the questions that naturally evolved as pertinent given the experience of dealing with the uproar of the contemplated Silverman maneuver.

- (1) What priority does agriculture have within the University? Does it have a priority?
- (2) Are the resources adequate to do the job?
- (3) In particular reference to the Experiment Station, how is it decided that certain projects are conducted? Do farmers have any say in the development of the research agenda? What kinds of farmers have influence, if any?
- (4) What are the intermediate and long term goals of the CES, AES, and the College of Life Sciences?

FINDINGS:

This inquiry proceeded under the direction of a Study Committee, comprising 5 members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture. The Study Committee met first in August to review a study proposal and to authorize legislative staff to collect pertinent information. In September, the Legislative Assistant to the Committee visited the Orono campus to discuss the purpose of the study with the following University officials:

Kenneth W. Allen, Vice President for Public Service

Philip F. Dufour, Assistant Vice President for Public Service

Bohdan M. Slabyj, Acting Chairman of Food Science

Harold M. McNeil, Director of the Cooperative Extension Service

Forest M. French, Associate Extension Educator

Wallace C. Dunham, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Director of the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station

Mark Anderson, Assistant Director of the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station.

On November 15, 1985 the Study Committee held a meeting to directly pose the big questions: How strong is the commitment to agriculture within the University system? Is the present administration at Orono willing to advocate for adequate support for the Cooperative Extension Service and the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station to not only enable those institutions to do their jobs adequately in the present, but to also consider new possibilities for agricultural activity which are consistent with the goals of Maine's Food Policy?

The Study Committee clearly heard that agriculture is an important subject and program area for UMO, but the Orono campus still labors under the opinion that it does not have enough funding to both maintain academic standards and also support existing levels of service at the Cooperative Extension Service and the Experiment Station. While there will be no attempts to cut the budgets of the public service sector related to Agriculture, there will also be no push to provide more resources to CES and MAES until there is more money to go around.

Leaders of both the Agricultural Experiment Station and the Cooperative Extension Service feel particularly mistreated by a salary policy established by the chancellors office in July, 1977. This policy stipulates that the University will only contribute 50% of funds required for faculty salary increases. The remaining 50% must come from federal allocations (USDA) received by these organizations. Over one million dollars of federal funds have been drained from direct service since the establishment of the policy, and base budgets continue to be significantly reduced. The loss of funds does not include another one-half million dollars the Extension Service claims to have lost as a result of reallocation and transfer since FY 1976. The Cooperative Extension Service projects the loss of 12 service positions, and the same kind of problem confronts the Experiment Station at a time when it is being called upon more than ever by farmers to chart a new course for applied research. The creation of an agricultural advisory committee at the Experiment Station within the past year reflects the common interest of the farmer and the research community to communicate about the needs of Maine agriculture.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

After considerable discussion about the possibility of advocating direct line item budgeting for both the Cooperative Extension Service and the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station, the study committee recommended the preparation of a resolution which urges the chancellor to change the salary policy. Line item budgeting is considered much stronger medicine for solving the problem at hand, but many questions emerged about the political problems involved in securing support for the more radical alternative. In January, 1985, the full committee approved the following resolution to be sent to the Legislative Council for introduction to the Legislative body.

CG/elk/1046

RESOLUTION, memorializing the chancellor of the University of Maine concerning salary policies which hamper the Cooperative Extension Service and the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station.

We, your memorialists, the Joint Standing committee on Agriculture of the Maine Legislature in the One Hundred and Twelfth Legislative Session assembled, most respectfully present and petition the chancellor of the University of Maine as follows:

Whereas, the Cooperative Extension Service and the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station are vitally important institutions in maintaining the strength of Maine Agricultural sector.

Whereas, the Cooperative Extension Service and the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station have an indispensable role to play as the research and technical assistance arm of the agricultural community of the State of Maine; and

Whereas, the Food Policy of the State of Maine will require the full participation of both the Cooperative Extension Service and the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station in order to achieve the goals declared; and

Whereas, the chancellor of the University of Maine has established a salary policy which requires the Cooperative Extension Service and the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station to deplete its allotment of federal funds to cover the costs of salary increases; and

Whereas, the salary policy established by the chancellor of the University of Maine drains financial resources away from direct service to the agricultural community of Maine and if allowed to continue will severely restrict the ability of these institutions to fulfill their mandates as public service institutions; now be it therefore

RESOLVED, that we, your memorialists, respectfully urge that the salary policy established by your office in July, 1977 be changed to reduce the extraordinary pressure placed on the federal allotments which sustain the Cooperative Extension Service and the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station and be it

RESOLVED, that we, your memorialists, respectfully request that more State monies be directed to both the Cooperative Extension Service and the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station to adequately support salary increases for faculty, to maintain and strengthen levels of service, and to provide new opportunities for expanded development of production & marketing possibilities which will strengthen the agricultural sector of Maine; and be it

RESOLVED, that we, your memorialists, respectfully urge that incentives be established within the university system to encourage communication in the public service sector between the farmers of Maine and both the Cooperative Extension Service and the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station, further insuring that research and technical assistance activities produce results which have practical significance for Maine farmers; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we, your memorialists, respectfully encourage that the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station develop a long term research agenda that anticipates agricultural production changes that may be needed or advisable in the future.

CG/elk/429