

In Short ■ by Raymond J. Miller and Clare I. Harris

Commodity Group Support of Public Agricultural Research

Public agricultural research receives most of its support from four sources: state appropriations, USDA, other government agencies, and private sources. Colyer and Norton summarized the trends and levels of this support in a Fourth Quarter 1995 *Choices* article. Here, and, we believe, for the first time, we show how much commodity groups, a specific private source, contribute to public agricultural research.

To make our estimates, we surveyed all fifty state agricultural experiment stations (SAESs) and 1890 colleges. We received usable data from all states except New York, New Jersey, and Hawaii. The data show support for agricultural research on thirteen commodities and that support comes from both the state and national commodity groups.

The table presents the commodity research support (CRS) in millions of dollars for each commodity and the ratio of the commodity research support to cash farm receipts for each of the thirteen commodities, expressed as a percentage. Each of these data sets are arranged in descending order. Individual CRS values range from a high of \$6.9 million per year (five-year average from 1989 to 1993) for dairy to a low of \$718 thousand per year for swine. The total CRS for all thirteen commodities is \$37.7 million on average for five years. Even though \$37.7 million appears to be a large sum of money, it's a very small share (only 0.025 percent) of the \$152.5 billion in sales from these thirteen commodities in 1990. By comparison, the National Science Foundation reports that all industries combined (nonagricultural as well as agricultural) use approximately

3 percent of sales for research. Also, by way of comparison, the total budget for SAES (including commodity research support) and USDA research agencies equaled \$2.6 billion in 1990.

Individual ratios showing commodity research support as a portion of cash farm receipts are highlighted in the second part of the table. The ratios show that for the size of the industry, rice producers provide a much higher level of support than does any other commodity. When all thirteen commodities are compared on this basis, three of the four animal industries provide the lowest levels of research support. ■

■ For more information

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Commodity research support (CRS) and CRS/CFR (cash farm receipts) ratios, annual averages, 1989-93

	CRS 5-Yr. Average Million \$	CRS AS % of CFR
Dairy	6.91	0.036
Fruit & nuts	6.65	0.068
Soybeans	4.68	0.042
Rice	3.75	0.362
Beef	3.07	0.008
Wheat	3.04	0.044
Vegetables	2.40	0.025
Potatoes	1.63	0.073
Cotton	1.48	0.029
Greenhouse & Nursery	1.31	0.015
Corn	1.21	0.009
Poultry	0.88	0.006
Swine	0.72	0.007
13 Commodities	37.73	0.025
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