

Water and food

Researcher: Scientists must learn from poor to help poor

By JERRY OSLIN
Staff Writer

If scientists and technicians are to solve the problems of the world's poor, they must learn from and work with the poor people of the world, a British researcher said Monday.

"To alleviate world hunger, we need to adopt a new professionalism and put poor people first," said Dr. Robert Chambers, a professor with the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, England.

Chambers' speech was part of Texas A&M's food and water conference.

Chambers told a group of about 400 people at Rudder Auditorium that scientists and re-

searchers are not solving world hunger because they don't see the real solution to the problem.

"If we produce more food, we can vanquish hunger," I have heard this again and again at international conferences and from the empirical evidence, this is simply not true," Chambers said. "World food supplies have been rising faster than population."

The problem is not with production of food, Chambers said, but with the power of poor people to obtain it.

Scientists have been wrong in other hunger-solving approaches, Chambers said.

"The growth trickle down approach has been very strongly discredited; it is a kind of naive wish fulfillment on the part of de-

veloping countries," he said. "There are too many countries where there are a relative few who benefit from the growth."

The lack of food is not the only problem facing the world's poor, Chambers said.

"There is a lack of basic goods among people such as matches, batteries, soap, salt and even clothes," he said.

Scientists and other problem solvers have been wrong in their approach to solutions because of their inability to learn from poor people.

Chambers called scientists' inability to learn from poor people "normal professionalism."

"As professionals we tend to value the sophisticated, complex and the high tech rather than

things which poor people value," he said. "We also are trapped in cores of knowledge which we can transfer to the poor people who are ignorant of this knowledge. If we are going to alleviate poor people's problems, then the flow must be the other way around."

If scientists really want to alleviate the problems of the world's poor, they need to start seeing problems and priorities from poor people's point of view.

"We shouldn't see things from our point of view; We should see things from their (poor people) point of view," he said. "The key to changing policy is to establish what the priorities are and the way to do that is to ask them."

"We professionals are part of the problem and we have to look at ourselves," Chambers said.

Groundwater conservation issue discussed at conference

By JERRY OSLIN
Staff Writer

If countries don't stop using groundwater to irrigate crops in dry areas, the remaining groundwater will become salty and unusable, two scientists told about 300 people Tuesday at Texas A&M's food and water conference.

Dr. William Brown, Chairman of the Board on Agriculture of the National Research Council, and Dr. Marvin Jensen, president of the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage, both said new technology needs to be

used to help save the remaining groundwater in dry areas.

Brown, a member of the National Academy of Sciences, said underground aquifers in every state of the United States, including the Ogallala Aquifer in Texas, are becoming more salty because of the increased dependence on them for irrigation water. He also said groundwater is becoming more polluted by pesticides and fertilizers.

Brown said new drought-resistant and salt-resistant hybrids need to be developed to stop the overuse of groundwater to irrigate agriculture.

The use of salt water for irrigation retards the growth of crops, Brown said.

Researchers have spent too much time developing high-yield hybrids instead of anti-drought and anti-salt hybrids, Brown said.

"There has been little research done on drought resistant hybrids," he said. "There has been some progress in developing new hybrids, but those have been high-yield hybrids and not environment-resistant ones."

Jensen said groundwater should be considered a supplement to irrigating crops and not as the main source.

More efficient methods of irrigation need to be used to conserve groundwater, Jensen said.

More efficient methods of irrigation are available but farmers don't use them because water costs so little.

"Free and low-cost water leads to waste and other problems such as increased salinity," he said.

New water-efficient methods should be developed but proven methods should be used, he said.

Chemical and technological breakthroughs can have a major impact but the major breakthroughs have evolved slowly over the past 100 years," he said.

A&M won't fight final GSS ruling

By KAREN BLOCH
Staff Writer

Texas A&M's nine-year battle to deny University recognition of the Gay Student Services group apparently ended in defeat for the University last week.

On May 20, the U.S. Supreme Court denied A&M's motion for a rehearing of the case and University officials say they will not attempt to fight the ruling.

Dr. John Koldus, A&M's vice president for student services, said Tuesday the University will not oppose the ruling.

"The Supreme Court made a decision and the University will abide by it," Koldus said.

Don Albrecht, associate director for student activities said his office hasn't recognized the GSS because they haven't filed registration papers yet.

"There's nothing left for us (the

University) to fight," Albrecht said. "They (the GSS) just need to register with us."

Albrecht said he hasn't heard anything from GSS since the Office of Student Services verified the Supreme Court's decision.

"We expected to hear something from them," he said, "but so far, we've heard nothing."

"They don't have to go through the recognition process, but they need to register the group. All organizations have to register with us every year. All the GSS has to do is fill out the registration papers."

As a recognized student organization, the GSS will be allowed to use campus facilities, advertise on campus, use office space in the Student Programs Office, hold meetings on campus, use banking facilities and mailboxes in the Student Finance Office and use funds supplied by the MSC Bookstore for the use of student groups.

History today

Associated Press

On May 29, 1953, Mount Everest was conquered as Edmund Hillary of New Zealand and Tensing Norkay of Nepal became the first to reach the summit of the 29,000-foot Himalayan mountain.

In 1765, Patrick Henry denounced the Stamp Act before Virginia's House of Burgesses. Responding to a cry of "Treason!" Henry

replied: "If this be treason, make the most of it!"

In 1790, Rhode Island became the 13th and final original colony to ratify the United States Constitution.

In 1917, the 35th president of the United States, John F. Kennedy, was born in Brookline, Mass.

One year ago: The United States announced it had sold 400 Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to Saudi Arabia in the face of escalating conflict in the Persian Gulf.

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