AID IS TWO-WAY STREET

There has been so much discussed and written about this country's "foreign aid" programs, including several in agriculture and related areas, that it is easy to think this is a one-way street.

Actually, that is not true. Plant scientists, for example, have collected thousands of foreign plants which may have some use in this country, either in their present form or in some plant breeding, plant utilization or pharmaceutical manner.

As new races of disease affect small grains, cotton, legumes and other crops of great value in this country, scientists scurry across the world seeking foreign plants with resistance or tolerance to these diseases. Other foreign plants yield oils of special properties vital to the intricate hardware of space travel. Many plants from other continents yield chemical products which later are synthesized in American laboratories for medicine, industry and other purposes.

Right now U. S. Department of Agriculture botanists are intensively searching the world for plants containing substances that may inhibit cancer. During the past five years these botanists have collected over 10,000 plant samples, representing about 6,000 of the world's 250,000 species of seed plants.

After long months of testing and retesting, extracts from over 400 species have been found to significantly inhibit tumor activity in laboratory animals. Further testing will eliminate many of those plant substances too toxic for human use, or which have undesirable side effects.

Scientists feel confident, however, that eventually they will discover plant extracts usable, safe and effective for human use.

We in this college have often expressed high regard for scientific research, and for the wide dissemination and exchange throughout the world of information helpful to humans.

If, from some obscure plant in Asia, Latin America or Africa, came the key to end the dread scourge of cancer, our regard for this international exchange would rise even higher.

And such an obscure plant substance surely would be ample repayment for much of the time, effort and money now going into our "foreign aid" programs.

Harold E. Myers

Dean

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and
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Hybrids May Double Cantaloup Production

Cantaloup yields can be doubled by planting hybrid seed, says Dr. Robert E. Foster, University of Arizona Horticulturist, stationed at the Mesa Branch Experiment Station.

The first generation hybrid cantaloups, similar in genetic principles to the highly successful hybrid corn or hybrid onions, are also of higher quality and are disease resistant. For the tests, Dr. Foster obtained hybrids by hand pollination but says he has already worked out methods for seed companies to produce similar seed cheaply without hand labor.

These methods, as well as those enabling growers to use the new type of seed efficiently, are based upon previous discoveries by Dr. Foster.

Success of the hybrid cantaloup program depends upon choosing the correct parent strains, just as it does with hybrid corn. "The methods have been worked out," said Dr. Foster. "The seed companies can perfect their own parent strains and once they do, will have complete control over new cantaloup varieties." The University of Arizona will provide some "starter" parent stocks to interested companies.

If you've already filled out and returned the green postal card, giving your name, address AND ZIP CODE NUMBER, we thank you very much. If you have not done so yet, we urge you to do so now. After the cut-off date, all addresses without the zip code number will be dropped from our mailing list.

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