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Agricultural Research Growing Faster than Other Life Sciences

- Federal obligations for agricultural research have grown more rapidly than for any other life sciences subfield over the 1978-82 period. During these years support for agricultural sciences research has grown at an average annual rate of 10.6 percent, as compared with 8.9 percent for the biological sciences and 6.9 percent for the medical sciences.

- The life sciences make up by far the largest field of science in terms of federal research support; they account for more than a third of the estimated total in fiscal year 1982, when obligations to this field are expected to reach \$4.7 billion. The Department of Health and Human Services accounts for the largest share of life sciences research support—approximately 66 percent in fiscal 1982—followed by the Department of Agriculture, with 12 percent.

- Between 1978 and 1982, research obligations to the life sciences have grown 38 percent, an average annual rate of 8.3 percent. Approximately half of the funds for the life sciences are directed toward the basic biological sciences subfield, while a third goes to the medical sciences and a tenth to the agricultural sciences.

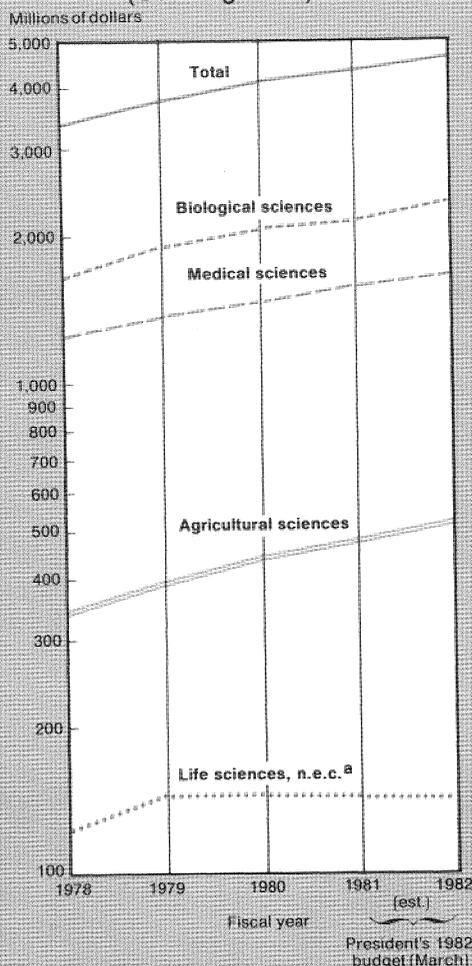
- USDA, primarily through the Agricultural Research Service and the Cooperative State Research Service, will provide approximately three-fourths, or \$400 million, of the estimated \$526 million that the federal government is expected to obligate for agricultural research 1982.

- Plant production research is the largest single research area of the Agricultural Research Service; support for this activity will total approximately \$166 million in fiscal 1982. Emphasis is on collecting, evaluating, and preserving germ plasm resources; improving the genetic potential of crop varieties; developing integrated pest-management systems and farming systems that conserve energy; and several basic research activities in areas such as the biochemistry of plant metabolism.

- The Cooperative State Research Service focuses on (1) production, marketing, distribution, and use of farm products through payments to agricultural experiment stations under the Hatch Act; (2) special research grants; and (3) a program of competitive research grants to fund basic research in high-priority areas related to food production and human nutrition.

- Other federal agencies that support agricultural research include the Agency for International Development, which will provide an estimated \$54 million in fiscal 1982—more than 40 percent of it earmarked for research in aquaculture.

Federal obligations for research
in the life sciences: FY 1978-82
(Semilog scale)



^aNot elsewhere classified: multidisciplinary projects within a broad field and single-discipline projects for which a separate field has not been assigned.

NOTE: Separate data for agricultural sciences are not available prior to 1978.

SOURCE: National Science Foundation