

Moroccan project to improve farm productivity

By Perry Jensen

Helping to improve the productivity of farms located in near-desert conditions is the aim of an agricultural research station recently set up in Morocco, project director Donald G. Hanway of the UNL Agronomy Department said.

"In February, a contract was signed to help Morocco develop research capabilities in agriculture," Hanway said.

The Mid-American Agriculture Consortium chose UNL to head the Moroccan project. The consortium is comprised of UNL, Iowa State University, Kansas State University, the University of Missouri and the University of

Oklahoma. It is designed to cooperate with international development of agriculture, Hanway said.

In February, B.R. Bertramson and Henri Talleyrand were the first UNL staff members to go to Morocco, Hanway said. Donald Bray went there in July. They will be in the northwest African country for two years. Hanway said he also traveled to Morocco to do detailed planning for the next couple of years.

"Morocco is a semi-arid land that receives only eight to 15 inches of rain a year," Hanway said. "And in the summer, a high pressure system builds up over the area, and there is no rain from May until September."

Crops, consisting mainly of wheat and barley, must be

planted in November because most of the rain falls from December through February. The barley is then harvested in May and the wheat in June, Hanway said.

He said the research station will try to develop "new technologies" to increase yields.

The main problem in Morocco is that present farming practices keep the land bare, Hanway said, causing soil erosion, a long-range threat to the land.

If yields increase, Morocco could slow down its rapidly increasing wheat imports. This would help Morocco become a more self-supportive nation. It also would help Morocco raise its standard of living, which is extremely low, Hanway said.

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Jill Gifford, manager of the UNL Dairy Store located in Filley Hall on East Campus, scoops up some chocolate ice cream for a customer.

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Instruction was first goal at Dairy Store

By Carol Harrah

For over 50 years, the UNL Dairy Store in Filley Hall on East Campus has served as an educational tool for students as well as an inexpensive shop.

The store offers a low-priced assortment of university-made cheeses, ice cream and other dairy products.

Jill Gifford, manager of the UNL Dairy Store, said that the store's original purpose was to train food science students.

"When the store was first begun, its main purpose was to teach different processes of food making to food science majors, but many things have come about from this," Gifford said.

From this beginning, Gifford said, the store has grown into a shop that sells the finished products and provides several full-time jobs and part-time jobs for college students.

"Students can benefit from the work experience," Gifford said. "We hire students with various majors, not just those in food science . . ."

The non-profit dairy store uses money from food sales to help pay operational costs. The university provides financial assistance to enable the dairy store to offer its products at low prices.

"We do go through slow periods (on sales), so the university does help where it's needed," Gifford said. "One way that we are different from other businesses is that we do not have to pay rent, since it is university property."

Gifford said ice cream cones are popular from April through October. She said store employees keep busy mailing our gift boxes of cheese during the Christmas season.

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