

## Cultivate Only Suitable Land, Farmers Urged.

Pennsylvania farmers were cautioned this week on selecting soils used in meeting stepped-up demands for U.S. food products at home and abroad.

"We advise farmers to use the scientific information contained in modern soil surveys," said Ivan McKeever, state conservationist for the U.S. Soil Conservation Service.

McKeever pointed out that when this country was plagued by large crop surpluses, a great deal of land was taken out of cultivation. It was put into grass and other vegetation that protected the soil against erosion. This may be the most profitable and protective use for a considerable amount of this acreage. McKeever recommended proper management of these grassland areas if they remain in grass.

However, we need to increase yields of acreage now in cultivation. Only the best and most suitable land presently out of production should be brought back into crop produc-

### Soil Sampling

(Continued from Page 13) equipment has removed most of the human error. This means we can do a more accurate job of analyzing soil samples, Bandel says.

But—he hastens to add, the soil test results can be no

tion. Otherwise we could return to the wasteful days of erosion when our productive topsoil was washed away because we were not equipped at that time with conservation skills that our Pennsylvania farmers are employing today, McKeever said.

"Soil surveys provide a scientific guide for choosing land," the conservationist said. "They reveal soils that can be cultivated profitably and safely. They also show marginal soil that should be left in grass or other protective cover."

McKeever suggests that farmers contact their local Soil and Water Conservation District before putting the plow back into the grass sod this spring.

Lancaster County has a completed Soil Survey so proper land use can be determined almost immediately, he said.

more accurate than the sample submitted. He says poor sampling can give a completely erroneous picture of the soil, and suggests several principles to follow in sampling.

1—Divide fields or lawns into uniform areas with each sample representing not more than 10 acres. Take soil from at least 15 or 20 places in the area. After all the samples have been collected from one area, mix them thoroughly in a clean bucket, and take a pound of soil to send to the laboratory.

2. Stay out of any "unusual" spots such as finishing furrows, back furrows, fence rows, low spots, or places where manure or fertilizer has been spilled.

3. In old corn and soybean fields, or in gardens, sample between the rows. Banded fertilizer in the rows could contaminate the sample and give a false test result.

4. Sample to the correct depth. In lawns or pastures this is about two inches. In plowed fields it is to plow depth.

Soil testing pays, Bandel says, but reminds farmers that the test result can be no more accurate than the sample.

Don't say it unless you mean it—then you won't have to deny you said it.

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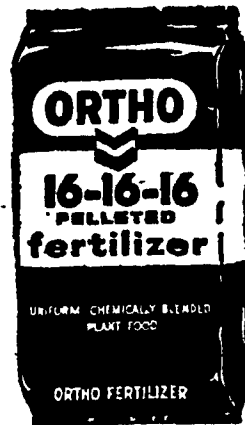
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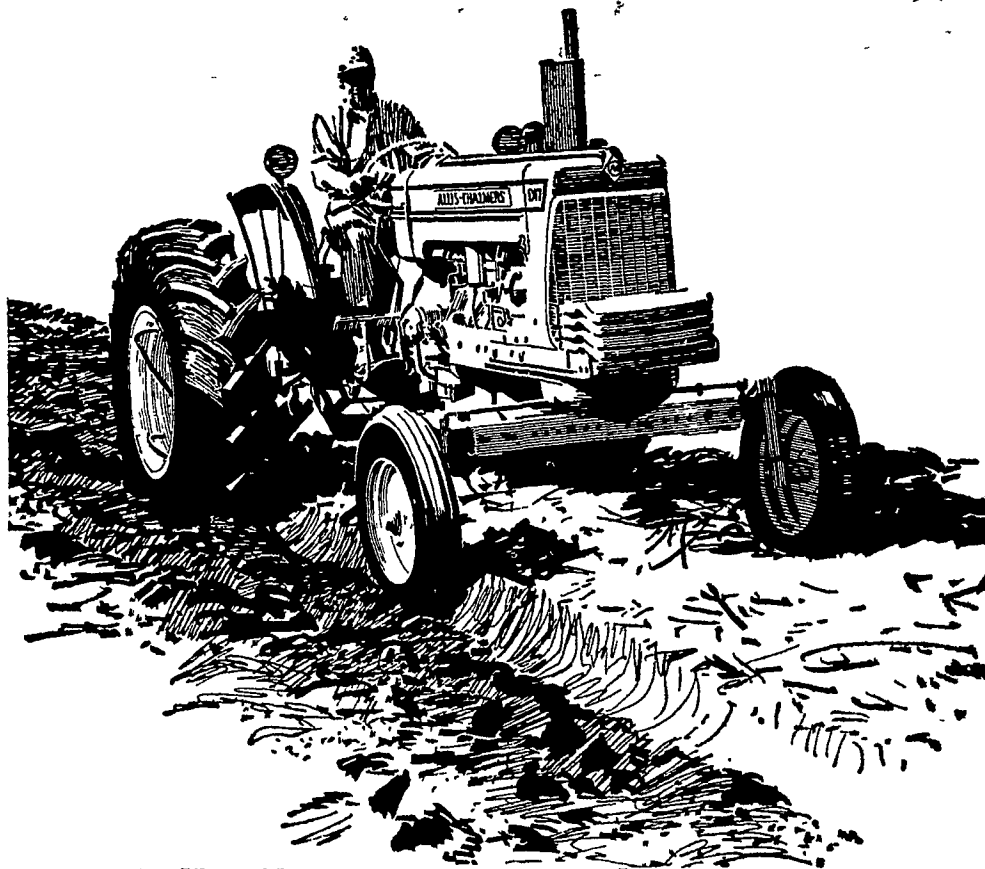
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