

Fertilizer Shortage Seen Not Harming Vegetable Producers

Possible shortages of fertilizer, and accompanying high prices, should create no serious problem for most commercial vegetable growers of Pennsylvania, a plant scientist announced during the annual Vegetable Conference February 11 to 13

at The Pennsylvania State University.

Such farmers should obtain good results in 1974 by spending no more for fertilizer than they paid out in 1973, stated Dr. Cyril B. Smith, professor of plant nutrition at Penn State. Dr.

Smith said commercial vegetable growers of Pennsylvania have a "soil bank" rich in plant foods, to supply a higher percentage of needed nutrients.

"There probably never was a better time to use some of the fertilizer reserves existing in the soils of most Pennsylvania vegetable farms," he affirmed.

What is often needed is not a whole range of plant nutrients in large amounts but small quantities of certain nutrients to balance out the needs of a crop, he pointed out. For several years Dr. Smith and associates have carried out extensive experiments with various fertilizer treatments, especially on snap beans and sweet corn.

For instance, in eight snap bean experiments in 1973, the best overall response came from applications of 25 pounds of nitrogen and 60 pounds of phosphate per acre. Dr. Smith said long-range studies indicated adequate levels of potash for

1974 vegetable crops.

"The first small quantities of fertilizer usually give a high percentage of the potential response from a crop. Small amounts of fertilizer needed for commercial vegetable crops in 1974 can be applied in bands along the rows," he suggested.

He observed that potash should not be applied to vegetable crops unless recommended by a soil test. Potash seldom gives a favorable response with vegetables and can upset the nutrient balance if applied in excess.

Strong evidence from experiments shows that magnesium should not be applied in fertilizer for snap beans and sweet corn. In addition, potash and magnesium should not be applied together since one counteracts the effects of the other. Where needed, magnesium should be applied in lime.

"All this means that lime is a better bargain than ever since it has not in-

creased appreciably in price. Adequate liming will increase the effectiveness of fertilizer and can supply magnesium when needed," he concluded.

Charles J. Noll, associate professor of vegetable science at Penn State, reported quackgrass is a greater threat to northeastern agriculture than any other single pest. He advised vegetable growers that the best place to bring quackgrass under control is in a cornfield.

Professor Noll said the term eradication is not used in connection with most weed control work. A field where quackgrass has been 99 per cent controlled can, without further treatment, become 100 per cent infected in four years.

He suggested that the chemical AAtrex should be applied to quackgrass in early spring or early fall. If the weed is 6 to 8 inches tall, an oil should be used with the spray mixture to give a more lasting effect.

Following treatment, the quackgrass should be left undisturbed for 6 to 8 weeks before plowing. The spring application can be applied to plowed or unplowed fields as early as possible.

A second AAtrex treatment should follow corn planting as a pre-emergence application. Herbicide residue in the soil will require the farmer to plant corn in the same fields the next growing season.

Substitute Dowpon M for late summer or early treatments the following spring, Noll said, at a rate of 15 pounds per acre in the fall or 8 pounds per acre the following spring. A delay in planting of from 4 to 6 weeks is needed to avoid injury to the corn crop.

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There may be a fuel shortage, a toilet tissue shortage, and a wheat shortage, but there's no shortage of fabrics in this country, reports a sewing magazine. It states there will be enough fabrics in stores to make all the clothes your family will need.

Calendar

(Continued From Page 10)

- Unionville. Production of corn, alfalfa, soybeans as feed and cash crops.
- 12:30 p.m. - DHIA Workshop, Elizabethtown Trust Company, Washington St., Elizabethtown.
- 7:00 p.m. - Atlantic Breeders Co-op meeting, Blue Ball Fire Hall.
- 7:30 p.m. - Poultry Education meeting, Farm and Home Center, Lancaster.
- Northern Lancaster County 4-H Soil and Water Conservation club meeting.
- Friday, February 22
- 10:00 a.m. - Atlantic Breeders Co-op meeting, Penn Township Fire Hall, Huntsdale.

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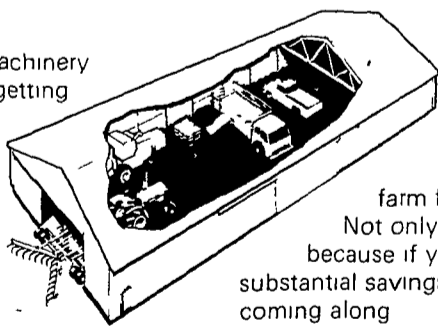


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