

# Plant nutrition featured at Berks Co. crop day

By LAUREL SCHAEFFER  
Staff Correspondent  
LEESPORT — Speaking before a sizeable audience of Berks County farmers, Wayne Hinnish, Extension agronomist from Penn State, discussed some of the important aspects involved in plant nutrition and soil compaction as it is effected by various tillage methods. "Nutrients must be present in a soluble form in the soil," the agronomist told the farmers. "Making the relationship between the soil, water and air in the soil, is important. Hinnish went on to relate that the soil pH was also stressed for its importance." Soil pH is a major implication to minimum tillage," Hinnish stated. "When nitrogen concentrations are near the

surface they produce an acid layer forming a roof on the soil, which is a major problem with no-till and minimum tillage."

When using these tillage practices Hinnish stated that it is important to get a sample of only the first two inches of soil to be checked for acidity. A normal soil sample of several inches won't show the acid problem, he informed the farmers.

Hinnish recommended soil should be limed every year or so to counteract the acid problem on the soil surface if the nitrogen is not incorporated into the soil by plowing or other means. A thousand pounds per acre of lime was recommended every year.

Soil compaction is a

problem with every type program, the agronomist stated. Anytime equipment is run over the soil compaction results, especially with the massive heavy equipment used in handling liquid manure during adverse weather. Compaction results in increases of soil water and decreases of evaporation, Hinnish told his audience. There is also an increase in the nitrogen loss when the soil is overly compact. Hinnish explained, that the reason for this is a decrease in the air in the soil, resulting in anaerobic bacteria changing the nitrogen compounds to gas which evaporates into the air.

Different types of soils determine the methods of tillage which are best suited for particular areas, the agronomist added. Heavier soils are less adapted to no-till concepts, he explained.

Also addressing the Berks County Farmers on December 12 were, Willis McClellan and John Baylor, Extension agronomists. They discussed the herbicide situation and the new clover varieties.

## Sale held

BELDIT, Wis. — Fifty-seven head of registered Brown Swiss cattle consigned by 51 breeders from 16 states sold for a record overall average of \$2,226.32. The 57 head consigned went to 44 breeders from 16 states. Thirty-three head sold for \$1,500 or more.

Sponsored by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and the Kentucky Brown Swiss Association, the sale was managed by Brown Swiss Enterprises, Inc. This year's 16th sale, in conjunction with the National Annual Meeting of the Brown Swiss Cattle Breeders' Association was held at Broadbent Arena, Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center, Louisville, Kentucky, on December 4, 1977.

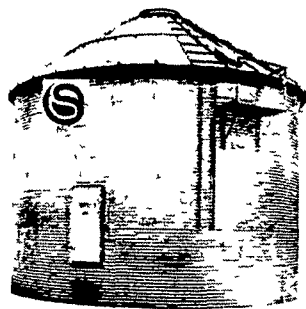
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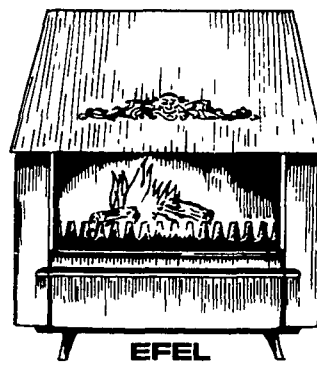
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