

Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor:

The Agrispon advertisement on page C43 of the February 16th issue of Lancaster Farming provides the public with certain conclusions drawn by Agrispon representatives from research data obtained at Penn State University. The conclusions of Agrispon are not supported by the Penn State research personnel who actually conducted the experiments.

As project leader for this research, which was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, I feel that the public has the right to know that for a total of 16 different experiments conducted with Agrispon under laboratory, growth chamber, greenhouse, and field conditions the results failed to show any consistent, statistically significant, positive response to Agrispon. I am concerned that contrary reports based upon misinterpretation of the data might lead farmers to depend upon the product for the next growing season.

Our data indicate to us that unless the carry-over nitrogen from previous crops is substantial, yields of corn and other non-legumes may be reduced by 50 percent and perhaps more if Agrispon is used in place of normally recommended levels of fertilizer nitrogen.

I have not published the existing data for two reasons. First, additional

experimentation is in progress. Second, we had intended to wait until a decision had been made regarding registration of Agrispon, in order not to create a premature public issue. But in view of the Agrispon advertisement, I feel compelled to summarize the results of the experiments referred to in that advertisement.

Results for 11 laboratory experiments indicated that for a total of 35 treatments with Agrispon compared with untreated soil, four small increases in nitrate-nitrogen were observed compared with 25 decreases and six with no effect.

Growth chamber studies comparing Agrispon at 10, 20, 100, and 200 times the recommended field application rate gave changes in plant growth of -4, +7, -1, and +3 percent, respectively, over untreated soil. On the other hand, an equivalent of 100 pounds of nitrogen per acre as ammonium nitrate fertilizer increased plant growth by 92 percent. Only the plants treated with fertilizer nitrogen had statistically greater growth rates than plants on untreated soil.

In a greenhouse experiment involving orchardgrass on 20 soils of Pennsylvania, carry-over nitrogen from a previous crop of corn on the soils gave an average increase in plant production of 141 percent over untreated soils;

Agrispon with two applications at 10 times the rate recommended for use in the field gave increases of three percent for soils with carry-over nitrogen and six percent for soils not receiving fertilizer nitrogen for the previous crop. The nitrate-nitrogen in the Agrispon, 0.06%, was considered by us to be sufficient to account for these small increases in plant growth.

Field experiments with corn have been conducted by both Dr. Richard Fox and our soil chemistry group. Dr. Fox had plots treated with Agrispon in the fall of 1978 and again in June of 1979. The corn grain yields at 15.5% moisture were 88 bushels per acre for no treatment and 90 bushels per acre for Agrispon compared with 121, 135, 137, and 149 bushels per acre for plots receiving, respectively, 50, 87, 110, and 160 pounds of fertilizer nitrogen per acre.

In our field plots, Agrispon representatives assisted in the applications of Agrispon. The average corn silage yields for check plots (no nitrogen added) were 14.4 tons per acre compared with 14.1 tons per acre with Agrispon, while plots treated with nitrogen fertilizer yielded 21.9 tons per acre. Grain yields averaged 102 bushels per acre for checks, 113 bushels per acre for Agrispon, and 167 bushels per acre with nitrogen fertilizer.

The average 11 bushel increase from Agrispon was not statistically significant.

Dale E. Baker
Professor of Soil Chemistry
Penn State University

Dear Editor,

I believe your idea on a ten day pay is the right approach. I am pleased to see that you suggest it. We should not have to wait to be paid.

I am against a security

fund which the farmers would have to pay for. I thought we all wanted less government controls and less bureaucracy.

Leland Stanford
R1 Dillsburg

Now Is The Time

(Continued from Page A10)

injured the hands of many of the participants.

TO STRIVE FOR GOOD MILK QUALITY
Milk is very important to all dairymen.

The production of a large

quantity of milk helps the bank account. The production of high quality milk satisfies the consumer and creates a greater demand for milk.

Andy Martin, one of our local dairy service men, states that most dairymen know how to produce quality milk, but often don't take the time to put the practices in operation.

Milk of poor quality and poor taste will not sell and may be rejected by the buyer. Good sanitation in the barn and in the milk house is very important. Feeding silage after the milking period is another very important item.

All dairymen should strive for top quality milk - nothing less.

Crafty Creators meets

FLEMINGTON, N.J. — The 4-H Window Display Contest was the main topic for discussion at the February 5, 1980 meeting of the Crafty Creators 4-H Club.

The meeting was held at the home of their leader, Nancy Bachardy, of Flemington. The title of their display is "We Cook and Sew and Make Things Grow"

Upcoming events in which the club members will be participating are the mid-year and summer judgments.

A trip for the members was also discussed. Duke Gardens and Voorhees Kitchens were two places which were suggested. The next meeting is to be held on February 19th at the Bachardy residence.

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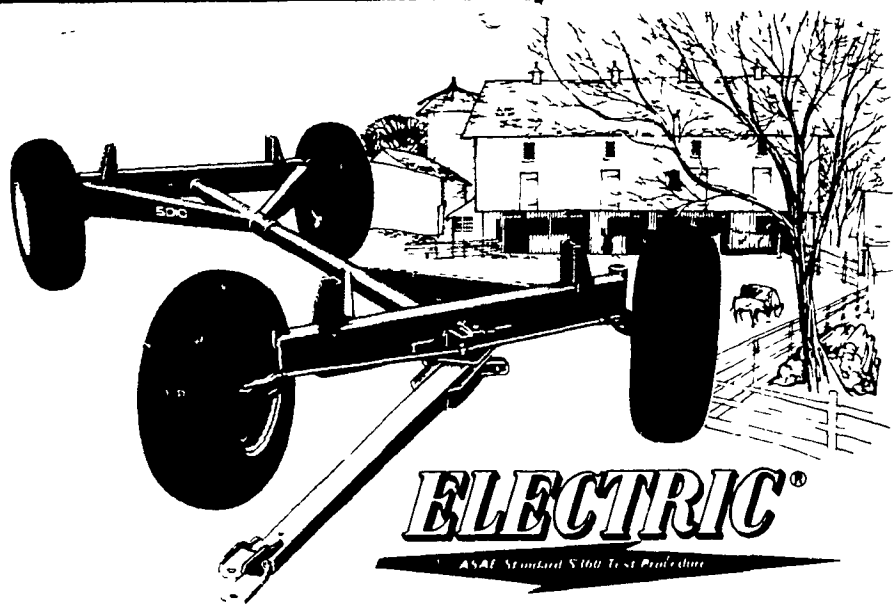
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