# Lime, fertilizer aren't always needed

GEORGETOWN, Del. — No matter what the soil test says, it's hard to resist the urge to lime and fertilize.

True, lime and fertilizer cost money, but how many farmers are daring enough to risk growing crops without them? What if the experiment fails?

Fortunately, Delaware farmers don't have to experiment with their own crops. Agricultural Experiment Station researchers do it for them.

For the last ten years, William Liebhardt has been growing corn and soybeans at the University of Delaware's Georgetown Substation, with and without the addition of lime, fertilizer phosphorous, and fertilizer potassium. So far, the fertilizer phosphorous, and potassium have not increased yields, and excessive lime has actually reduced yields.

Even after ten years, Liebhardt points out, corn and soybeans are yielding just as well with or without the addition of fertilizer phosophorus and potassium.

"We have a long history of putting on more phosphorous than we need," he says. "Farmers could go years without putting on more. We've gone ten years with no problem."

As for potassium, Liebhardt explains, nature does a good job of keeping it in balance. As plants take the available potassium from the soil, natural chemical reactions in the soil make more potassium available.

Putting on fertilizer phosphorous and potassium when they're not needed neither helps nor hurts yields, the researcher explains. It simply wastes money. But putting on too much lime is more serious. Lime raises the soil pH, making the soil more alkaline. If the soil pH is too high corn yields suffer.


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# Juniata County 4-H swine sale champs sold

The Grand Champion hog at the Juniata County Swine Sale last Thursday was sold to Mifflintown IGA for a price of $3.75 per pound. Shown above with the animal are left to right: Ronald Mummah, 4-H leader; Rick Barrier, manager of the Mifflintown IGA, the buyer; Chris McCahren who showed the hog; and John Groninger, Juniata Concrete, Mifflintown the back up bidder.

The Reserve Grand Champion animal at the Juniata Swine Sale held at the Port Royal Fairgrounds with Long Brothers auctioneers is shown above with from left: Ronald Mummah, 4-H leader; Walter Keister, Middleburg, back up bidder; Greta Lehman, Port Royal, who showed the animal; and John Groninger, Juniata Concrete, Mifflintown, the buyer.


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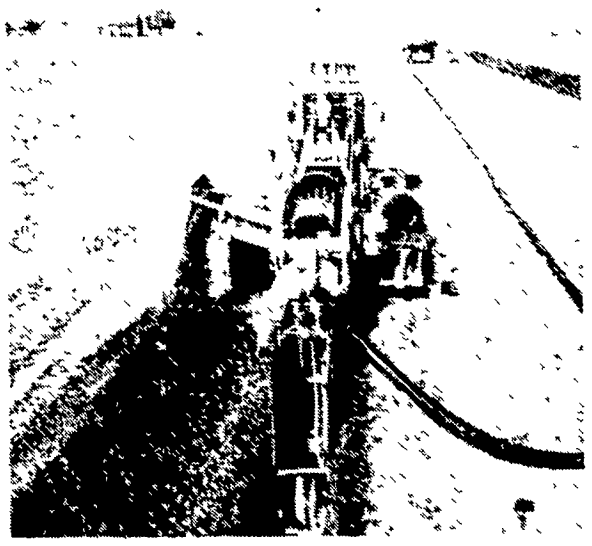

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