

Nitrogen research Switch to smaller nitrogen cars to continue

NEWARK, DE. — Farmers will need to continue to switch to "driving smaller nitrogen cars through their cornfields," M.R. Teel and L. J. Cotnoir, agronomy researchers, told participants in the University of Delaware's Field Day on Tuesday.

The two researchers pointed out the similarity between the general driving public and farming's use of nitrogen.

"Everyone was driving big cars when gas was cheap," they said.

"Likewise, farmers kept pouring on the nitrogen when it was selling for as cheap as 3.5 cents a pound. But now nitrogen costs about 25 cents a pound and the only way it is going to go is continually up."

That's why major corn research at Delaware's Newark Farm is concentrating on evaluating the ability of the soil to produce nitrogen and finding ways to help the soil produce it more efficiently.

In the test plots, the research program is seeking to compare the efficiency of ammonium nitrogen from urea with nitrate nitrogen from sodium nitrate and to measure the effects of potassium fertility and liming practices on the response of the corn to these two nitrogen sources.

Eight different nitrogen levels on irrigated and non-irrigated plots are being tested, ranging from no application to 300 pounds last year followed by 100 pounds this year.



Group of participants in University of Delaware's Field Day program at Newark farm is shown corn test plots.

Some initial observations have already been noted.

Liming apparently helps in the breakdown of nitrogen in the soil.

And the appearance of test rows receiving no nitrogen shows the corn in getting it from the soil.

"This is one major factor we are stressing in the study," the two agronomists point out.

"What do you do to the soil when you take out 50 pounds of nitrogen to achieve a 50-bushel increase in yield and then don't replace that nitrogen?"

It was explained that 50 pounds of nitrogen is equivalent to 5,000 pounds of cornstalks, 10,000 pounds of rye straw or 1,000 pounds of

humus added to the soil.

"Is there any farmer that is rich enough that he can afford to permanently remove that much organic matter, which required 10 years to be made, from this soil?" they asked.

In other corn research related to nitrogen production, a seven-year study is continuing concerning no-till corn with hairy vetch. An overall 40 percent increase in organic matter has been found in the soil, along with a 200 percent saving in energy due both to the no-till practice and the production of nitrogen by the vetch.

The no-till corn and hairy vetch combination is steadily catching on in

Delaware, according to W.H. Mitchell. He told of the Townsend operation in which 50,000 pounds of hairy vetch seed will be used on 2,000 acres this fall.

In soybean test plots, the use of post-emergence herbicides is being studied on 10-inch row plantings of 175,000 population to the acre.

Following June 13 planting, herbicides were applied July 9, including Basagran, Blazer 2S and Blazer 2L without surfactant at recommended levels to study control of lamb-quarter, redroot pigweed and ivyleaf morningglory. Hoelon 36EC and BASF 9052 are being studied on fall panicum and foxtails.—DA



Historical development of corn is explained to Field Day group by researcher J. A. Hawk.



Effects of application of varying amounts of nitrogen on corn test plots is outlined by L. J. Cotnoir.

1980 Regional Star Agri-businessmen named

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Four outstanding FFA members have been named 1980 Regional Star Agri-businessmen by the National FFA Officers and Board of Directors after deliberations by committees which also include State and National FFA Staff

Jack William Barber, Jr., 19, Colusa, California, is the Western Region winner; Mike Tillman, 21, Marianna, Florida, is the Southern Region winner; Henry Lee Goodnight, 20, China Grove, North Carolina, is the Eastern Region winner, and

Andrew Thomas May, 21, Green Bay, Wisconsin, is the Central Region winner.

The four named were chosen from 782 FFA members who have been selected to receive the American Farmer Degree

As Star Agri-businessmen for their respective regions, each will receive a cash award of \$500 presented by the National FFA Foundation at the 53rd FFA National Convention, November 12-14, in Kansas

City, Missouri.

A committee of judges from leaders in business, agriculture, and education will meet in Kansas City on November 13 to select the Star Agri-businessman of America.

Manheim FFA wins softball tournament

PARADISE — The Lancaster County FFA held their annual softball tournament at Pequea Valley High School recently. Teams from Manheim, Ephrata, New Holland, Penn Manor, Warwick, and

Solanco battled it out in above ninety degree heat. The Manheim FFA team went undefeated to capture the tournament championship for the second year. Members of this year's winning team included

Steve Hershey, Donald Groff, Ed Nissley, Tom Good, Dennis Shelly, Jim Hess, Earl Geib-coach, Barry Geib, Solomon Stoltzfus, Don Slack, Doug Hoover, Dennis Wolgemuth, Mike Pflieger, and Jim Saylor

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