

1980 fertilizer consumption up

Sewage sludge

(Continued from Page A24)
removes 40 percent of the water and what's left is the "dry" sludge.

This filter cake sludge is then hauled to farms in dump trucks and spread with a Big A dry sludge applicator, a truck with a box spreader and high flotation tires.

Analysis of the South Plant filter cake sludge has shown approximately 45 pounds of nitrogen, 88 pounds of phosphorus, and 9 pounds of potassium are applied to each acre when the maximum annual rate has been reached.

The City of Lancaster's Bureau of Sewers has been working with Penn State's Ray Shipp in coordinating the sludge program to the soil limits on the Lancaster County farms since 1974, said Van Zile.

"We try to take soil tests on all application sites before any sludge is spread so we have background information for comparing future tests.

"Our sludge samples are taken twice a year and tested in our own laboratory. We check the heavy metal

content in the sludge every two to three months.

We soil test the cropland where sludge has been applied after 30 dry tons have been spread."

In order to dispose of their annual sludge production the Lancaster plants need about 600 acres of cropland to spread on year-round. Although their current agreements with farmers Clair Brenneman, Franklin Myers, Henry Herr and Harry Byers provides for over 600 acres of application sites, Van Zile pointed out he is always looking for more farms.

During summer months when crops prevent sludge from being spread, the Bureau of Sewers still has to get rid of its sludge. So, they pay farmers \$25 an acre for not growing a crop on the acres needed to carry them from June to September, Van Zile explained. A new plant, scheduled for completion sometime in the next five years, will provide more strong capacity, he added.

Van Zile emphasized his bureau tries to cooperate with both the Lancaster County farmers and the

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. consumption of commercial fertilizer for the year ended June 30 reached 52.6 million tons. That's up two percent from the 51.5 million tons consumed a year earlier. It also topped the previous high of 51.6

state's environmental agency.

"If the fields are too wet and farmers don't want us on their fields, we won't spread. We don't want to make anyone mad," Van Zile said. "All we ask is that they try to understand when we have trouble with mechanical breakdowns or personnel shortages and the need arises to reschedule the sludge application."

He noted that there is always a need for some land to be lined up in advance for sludge application, adding the necessary permits sometimes take up to a year and a half to be processed by DER.

Interested farmers should contact Bob Bruce at the North Plant, 291-4811, or Bill Horst at the South Plant, 291-4825. The sludge is distributed on a first come first serve basis within a 10-mile radius of each plant.

million tons consumed in 1976-77.

Primary nutrient content (nitrogen, phosphate and potash) totaled 23.0 million tons, up two percent from last year's previous high.

Nitrogen consumption, at 11.4 million tons, was up six percent from a previous high of 10.7 million tons a year earlier, phosphate usage, at 5.4 million tons, was off four percent from a year earlier and potash use, at 6.2 million tons, was down one percent.

Illinois continued to lead all states in fertilizer consumption, though it was pressed by California.

The Illinois total, at 4.50 million tons, was up seven percent from a year earlier; California's total, at 4.47 million tons, was up eleven percent. Iowa remained the No. 3 fertilizer user with a 3.9

million ton total that was down one percent from a year earlier.

Others in the top 10 include Texas, 2.92 million tons; Indiana, 2.84 million tons; Ohio, 2.37 million tons; Minnesota, 2.31 million tons;

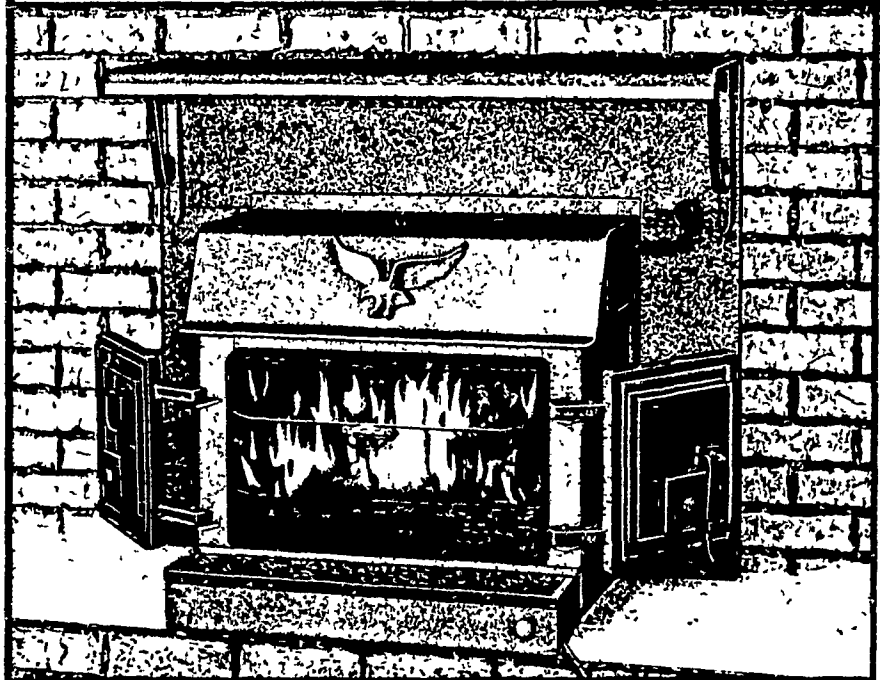
Georgia, 2.17 million tons, Florida, 2.11 million tons and Nebraska, 2.03 million tons.

Those 10 states accounted for 56 percent of the nation's total.



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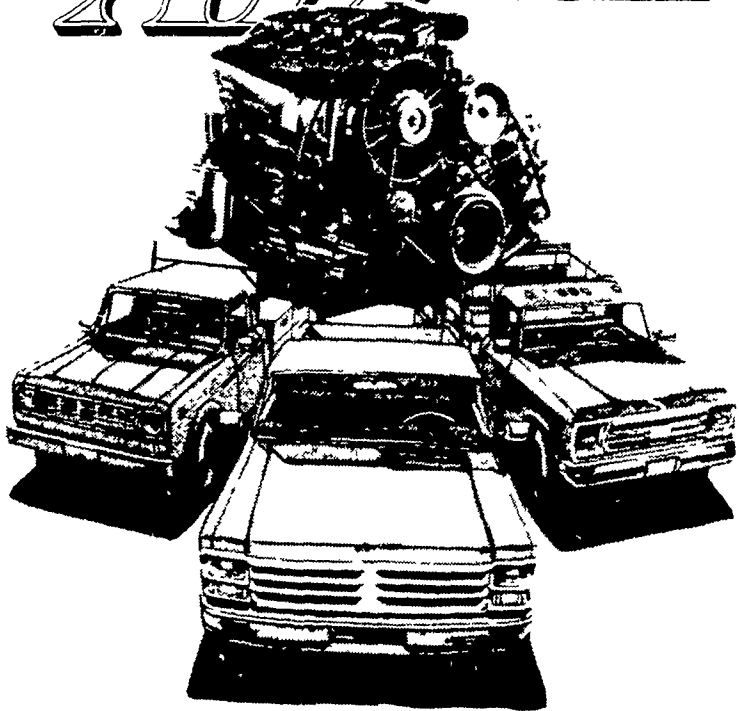
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