

USDA-sponsored Pakistan studies may reduce fertilizer needs in U.S.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Research sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Pakistan may save the U.S. farmer money in the future by developing plants that generate their own fertilizer.

Quentin M. West, director of

USDA's Office of International Cooperation, said the energy crisis and the consequent increase in the cost of fertilizers has stimulated a growing interest in research applications of biological nitrogen fixation by plants.

West said some plants may be

able to generate part of their own requirements by fixing nitrogen — an essential element for plant growth — from the air into the soil. He said while the nitrogen-fixing role of leguminous plants such as clover and alfalfa has been well established in agriculture, "we still have a lot to learn about nitrogen-fixing non-leguminous plants."

Nonleguminous plants range in size from herbaceous plants and shrubs to trees, such as the alder

West said under a five-year, \$95,800 grant, researchers at Quaid-i-Azam University in Pakistan will study certain non-leguminous plants in their country which fix nitrogen in the soil through nodules on their roots. The research will explore the potential

use of plants with nodulated nonlegumes in reforestation and soil conservation activities under soil conditions where agriculture is now difficult, he said.

One important future application of the research could be in the revegetation of strip-mined land, West said. Possible application of fruit and other forest trees and to improve growth and development of other plants will also be explored.

Of the 15 major known subdivisions of non-leguminous plants which fix nitrogen in the soil, five are located in Pakistan, West said. Areas of Pakistan which have not as yet been surveyed for the plants will also be examined under the grant.

Ashraf Hasan Chaudhary,

associate professor in the Department of Biological Science at Quad-i-Azam University, is the principal investigator in the study. Edward Hacskaylo of the U.S. Forest Service will serve as the USDA cooperating scientist who will oversee the project. Hacskaylo is stationed at the USDA Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville, Md.

The grant will be paid for in the currency of Pakistan, under the special foreign currency research program of U.S. Public Law 480. This program provides for the use of U.S.-owned currencies in a foreign country which cannot be converted into dollars, but which may be used for scientific research which will benefit U.S. agriculture and the American consumer.

Edith Chenault joins Charolais staff

HOUSTON, Tx. — Edith A. Chenault has been appointed director of communications for the American-International Charolais Association, here.

A May, 1978 graduate of Texas A&M University, she has a B.S. degree in agricultural journalism. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Chenault of Cut and Shoot, Tx.

During college, Chenault worked as a copy editor and writer for "The Battalion", Texas A&M's student newspaper. She was also a correspondent writer for "The Bryan Eagle". She was a member of Sigma Delta Chi (the Society of Professional Journalists) and the Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow.

After graduation from college, she was news editor at "The Llano News" in Llano, Tx., where she worked for three years. While there, she was reporter, photographer, and editor, covering community events as well as developing feature stories on personalities and human interest subjects. Since Llano County is primarily ranching-oriented, she spent a great deal of time covering

agriculturally-related events.

Having been raised on a farm and being around cattle for most of her life gave her the interest in majoring in agriculture when entering college. While in college she took subjects which dealt with agriculture, as well as journalism, including agricultural law and agricultural policy, basic animal science, animal reproduction, and heredity. In 1977 she was named a Distinguished Student at Texas A&M.

As Director of Communications for AICA, Chenault will be responsible for the information and public relations programs of the Association. This includes responsibility for conducting and implementing publicity and promotional programs, newsletters, the development of promotional literature and preparing items for use by the "Charolais Journal", as well as supplying promotional information for use by members and AICA affiliate organizations.

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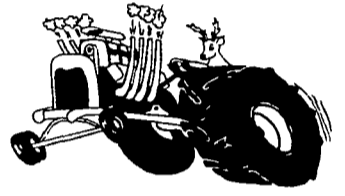
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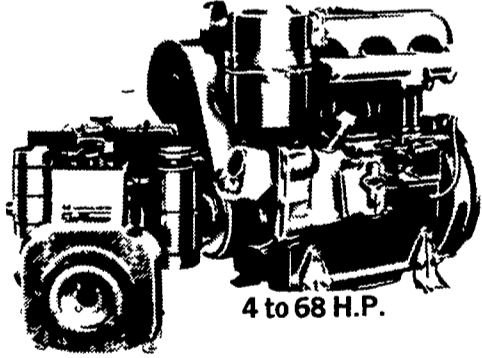
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