

Broiler wastewater skimmings top litter in research report



Lewis E. Carr, left, agricultural engineer for poultry production and processing, explains to Maryland corn and poultry producers how researchers applied skimmings from broiler processing wastewater to corn plots as an

alternative source of nitrogen fertilizer. Results of the two-year study showed increased corn yields without significant increases in pollutants from the alternative nitrogen source.

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Increased corn yields have been reported by Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station researchers who used skimmings from broiler processing wastewater as an alternative nitrogen fertilizer source.

However, in a related study, the same researchers found treated broiler house litter had little advantage as an alternative over commercial nitrogen fertilizer.

Results of both two-year studies were unveiled to corn and broiler industry producers recently at MAES's Poplar Hill Research Farm near Salisbury, Md.

The studies were undertaken, say researchers, to explore the possibility of finding alternative sources of nitrogen fertilizer as the cost of buying and applying commercial fertilizer varieties continues to increase.

In the first study, researchers applied dissolved air flotation skimmings from broiler processing wastewater to corn plots in Fall 1979, Spring 1980, Fall 1980, and Spring 1980.

Yields were highest during Fall

1980 and Spring 1981 applications, averaging 162 and 168 bushels per acre respectively, compared to yields from commercial nitrogen fertilizer applications of approximately 122 bushels per acre.

Researchers also measured ground water from test wells in the plots and found no significant increase in pollutants as a result of the DAF applications.

In the second study, researchers treated broiler house litter with an ammonia suppressant and applied it to no-till and conventional-till corn plots.

Although plant growth soared in those no-till plots subjected to treated litter, yield was lower compared to no-till plots treated with commercially-available ammonium nitrate. In conventional-till plots, yield was somewhat higher for treated litter application compared to commercial fertilizer, with averages of 150 bushels per acre.

Partial funding for the first study came from Perdue Inc. while partial funding for the second study came from the Cosmin Corporation and Haynie Inc.

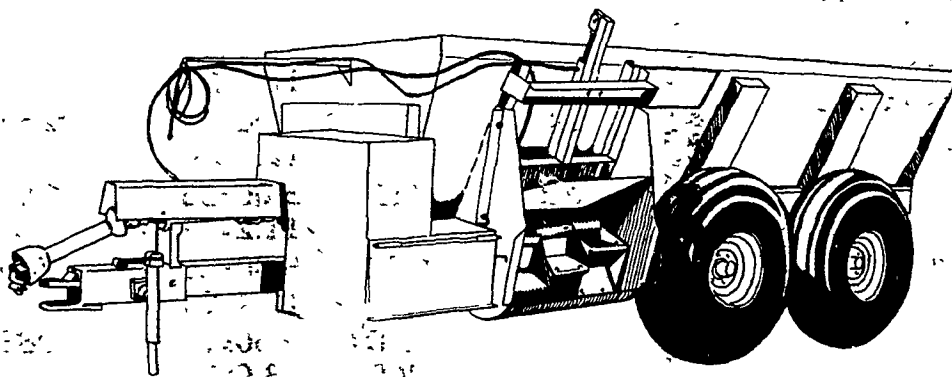
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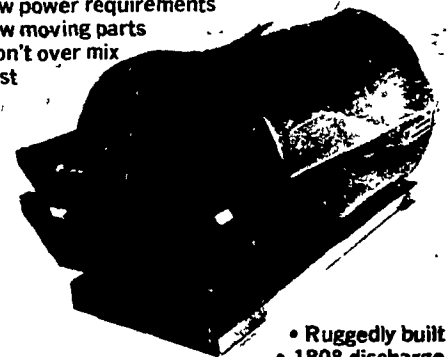
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