

Potassium's role in crop quality

ATLANTS, GA - Scientists throughout the world have investigated the role of potassium (K) in crop quality. A positive influence has been identified for crops grown in temperate and humid regions, for legumes and nonleguminous plants, for annual and perennial crops, and for crops grown as food, fiber, or ornamental purposes. An in-depth report on these quality factors was presented by Dr. Noble R. Usherwood during proceedings of Potassium in Agriculture, An International Symposium.

Dr. Usherwood, an Agronomist and Vice President of the Potash &

Phosphate Institute (PPI), noted that the influence of potassium on crop quality signals specific functions this nutrient plays in plant growth. For example, we know potassium improves protein quantity and quality. This happens because K is essential for the building of protein and efficient use of nitrogen (N).

Quality seed and improved plant standability result when potassium helps with disease resistance and the movement of material within the plant. For crops such as forages, stands last longer due to

potassium's role in reduced winter injury and improved plant tolerance to a rigorous harvest schedule, he said.

Scientists continue to study how potassium improves yield and quality. This nutrient sometimes works in an indirect manner...through positive interactions with other nutrients and production practices. More is being learned about potassium's contribution to appearance, shelf life, size, taste, texture, and other quality components of food and

fiber products.

The amount of potassium needed for high yield and quality can vary with soil conditions, crop requirements, the growth environment and production management decisions. In some cases, the amount needed for optimum yield also gives desired crop quality. For certain crops best quality and economic return are attained at rates exceeding those required for top yield. Such crops would include tobacco, turf, ornamentals, and some grown for

food and fiber.

The awareness is growing about the importance of potassium on crop quality. Research teams are discovering new facts to better understand why and how potassium works in plant growth...and how potassium earned the title of the "quality element" of plant nutrition. Such knowledge put to use gives the best opportunity for maximum economic yield production for the farmer and an abundance of reasonably priced, high quality food for the American consumer.

Franklin Co. sets extension meeting

CHAMBERSBURG - Over 300 persons are expected to attend the sixty-eighth Annual Meeting of the Franklin County Agricultural Extension Association, according to Fred E. Rice, president of the organization.

The event will be held Friday, January 31, at Kauffman's Community Center, starting with an "Ag Commodities Social Hour" at 6:15 p.m., followed by dinner at 7:00. It is open to all Franklin county residents.

Those present will elect five directors for 3-year terms, to represent the townships of Letterkenny, Lurgan, Metál, Montgomery, and Peters on the Association's Board of Directors.

The Association conducts a broad-based educational program within the county in co-operation with The Pennsylvania State University, with local funding provided by the Franklin County Board of Commissioners.

Tickets for the event are currently available at the Franklin County Extension Office, 191 Franklin Farms Lane, Chambersburg; from Conservation District directors, and from Extension Board members: Linda Golden, Betty Gamble, Betty Mummert, Fred E. Rice, Clifford Gayman, Carl D. Wenger, Isaac Horst, William E. Swales, Clarence Stouffer, John C. Brake, Joseph S. Middour, J. Robert Meyers, Jr., Walter Grove, Jeffrey Funk, Fannie Harbaugh, Wilma Wenger, Marie Starr, Wayne L. Beidel, Michael A. John, Rebecca Schoenberg, Wilma Mickey, Herbert L. Stoner, Terry Gillan, Elizabeth Brown, Jack Diehl, Frances Reichard, and Helen Moe.

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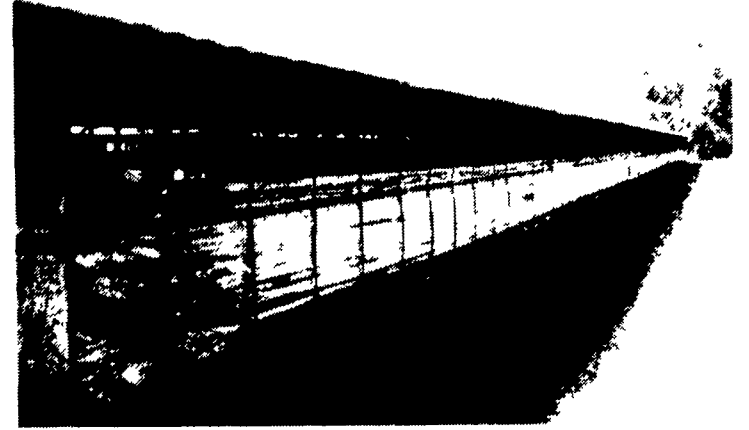
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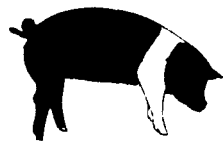
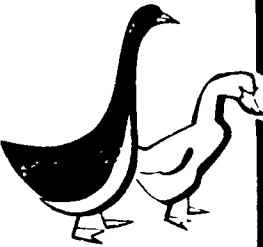
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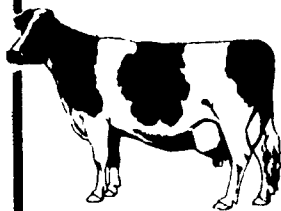
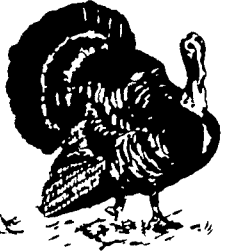
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