



## Brockett's Ag Advice

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Corn planting is underway in the southern parts of the state and is just around the corner in the central area. Sometimes farmers get in too much of a hurry to get that corn seed into the ground. This hurry often causes lost time, lost dollars, and frustrations. The best advice on corn planting is to follow the book.

1. Get a soil test - you need pH to determine the potential success of the material you use for weed control.

2. Apply lime if it is called for or even if it not called for, if the ground has been in a no-till program for several years. Apply at least a half of a ton per acre. Proper pH is essential if you expect weed control material to work.

3. Calibrate or at least know how your planter is dropping the seeds.

4. Make sure the soil temperature is up to corn planting level.

5. Get the herbicide on at the proper time. Do not plant corn without provisions for weed control. Personally I would prefer getting the herbicide on prior to planting unless I was using a specific post planting material. If I have it on prior to planting, rainy weather does not cause the corn and weeds to sprout before weed control is applied. Weed control is a must if you want a decent crop.

6. Check the planter before planting to make sure that one or more of the tubes is not blocked and that all chains are loose and working. It would not hurt to check it a few times while planting either. Make sure that all parts are working as they are supposed to. It is frustrating to find at a later time

(like once the corn has come up) that one row was not being planted or the seeds were not being properly covered.

### Lime is Important

Lime may be the most important ingredient in crop production for farmers in much of Pennsylvania. It furnishes soil nutrients (calcium, magnesium). It also neutralizes soil acids (pH). A near neutral pH is necessary for proper action of many weed control materials. Acid soils result in necessary plant food nutrients being tied up by other elements such as aluminum. Thus you could consider lime as being a fertilizer, a neutralizer, and a soil conditioner.

### Beware Gyp Products

Everyone is at one time or another tempted to buy a "gyp" product. Farmers are no exception. In fact, farmers may be more subject to such temptations than most other groups, except the elderly. One reason for both groups to be vulnerable is that both are somewhat isolated from the general public. Both groups at times become lonely for human conversation and thus "suckers" for fast talking "pitchmen." Thus it may be simple for a "fast talker" with a new soil conditioner or a magic nutrient producing machine or a miracle fertilizer to con a "sucker" into buying and perhaps even recommending it to someone else.

There are different classes of "gyp" products. There are those that may be considered as outright frauds with practically no value for any purpose. Some may even be harmful. These are often sold by phone or a fast talking person who is a stranger and will be gone as soon as he or she has collected the sale money. There are others with some value that seldom live up to purported claims. These may even establish some local following with a local salesperson. They may not be harmful and may even be beneficial, but cost far more than they return. Then there are the semi legit type products. These have value and could return some secondary benefits but are usually overpriced in relation to those returns and benefits.



The satisfaction that comes from doing a good job of farming

Liming is one of the most important factors in keeping your soil in the highest productive range. By raising the pH from a level below 6.0 to 6.5 or higher you can expect to harvest as much as 5 more bushels of corn per acre, with similar increases for all other forage and cash crops.



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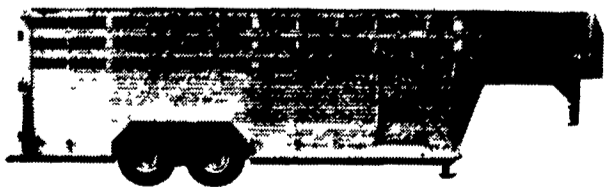
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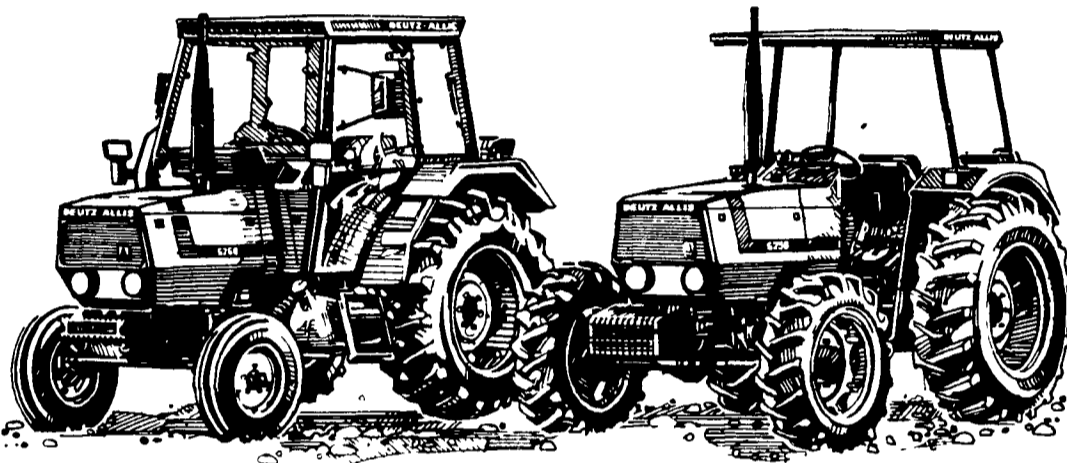
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