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ABOUT SOIL FOODS.

Determining the Need of Chemical Fertilizers.

The appearance of the growing leaves and tissues can frequently be taken as an indicator for the presence or absence of nitrogen in sufficient quantity to satisfy the maximum demands of plants. A yellowish tinge or a dull green is an indicator of abundant nitrogen. Drouth and excessive moisture may also cause the yellowing or weakening in the coloration of foliage. Failure of clover on lands that at one time produced good yields may be taken as an indication of a shortage of lime and phosphorus. A decline in the wheat grade after years of wheat production can generally be attributed to a shortage or failure in the phosphorus supply.

How to Make Experimental Plots.

However, these generally observed conditions are not sufficiently accurate to be a definite guide, and should be supplemented by a miniature field test, using square rod areas with various chemical mixture applications. This is accomplished by simply staking off a representative area one rod wide and six rods long, and dividing it into six plots. This done apply before seeding on plot one, nitrogen; on plot two, phosphorus; on plot three, potash; on plot four, nitrogen and potash; on plot five, nitrogen, potash and phosphorus; plot six, potash and phosphorus. The adjoining soil will serve as a check plot for all areas. By watching the plots during the crop season and the following two years, a fairly definite conclusion relative to the needs of the field can be secured.

Every soil area should be studied by itself, since the requirements of one field may differ from the requirements of the field adjoining.—L. Stevenson, Secretary Department of Agriculture, Toronto.

Gestation Period of the Cow.

The gestation period of the cow is nine and one-third months, or two hundred and eighty days. Sometimes a breeder figures it as nine months to the day, and then worries because it seems to run over a couple of weeks and the calf is not born when supposedly due. For example, a cow bred on January 1 would be due about October 7 and not October 1. A cow bred on February 1 would be due about November 8, not on November 1. The date of calving is found by counting forward the two hundred and eighty days from the date of service.

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