A COMMON ERROR IN INTERPRETING FINANCIAL RETURNS FROM FERTILIZER EXPERIMENTS

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Many of the more recently established fertilizer experiments compare various grades of fertilizer on the basis of a single, but uniform, rate of application. There has been a tendency to apply equal amounts of fertilizer rather than equal quantities of nutrients. The idea has been to determine which of several grades of fertilizer will return the greatest profit under a given condition. It is obvious that in such comparisons the difference in the cost of the fertilizer will vary with the grade applied. In the interpretation of the results, the difference in the cost of the treatments is often taken into consideration and proper adjustment attempted in order to determine which treatment is the most profitable.

In connection with agronomy extension work in a number of states, field demonstrations or tests have been established to determine which of two or more fertilizers will return the greatest profit. Farm-