WHAT IS NOT BUT SHOULD BE KNOWN ABOUT EXTENDING
THE LENGTH OF THE DAIRY ROTATION BY
USING FERTILIZERS

(Abstract)

J. S. OWENS

The dairy rotation must be chiefly or exclusively to raise hay, corn,
and pasture. The problem is, how successfully can the meadow be
kept a meadow, the pasture a pasture, and the corn lot kept in corn
by the aid of commercial fertilizers from the three standpoints of
quantity of production, quality of crops, and economy?

Data from Missouri, Delaware, New York, Connecticut, Rotham-
sted, and Massachusetts on top dressing hay indicate that hay yields
can be kept at a rather high level for many years, but that weeds
creep in and the yields finally decrease somewhat and very rapidly
if no top dressing is applied.

Clover and alfalfa are benefited by mineral top dressings.
Evidence was presented to the effect that corn could be grown
continuously with rather high yields, but here, as in the case of hay,
the high cost of the fertilizer in maintaining the yield is a big factor.

Experimental data from Connecticut were cited to prove that
pastures are also helped by top dressing. Cheaper fertilizers offer
much hope in this respect.

Permanent meadows of grass hay do not supply the quality of
forage needed. It may be wiser to shorten the rotation, grow more
legumes, and improve the quality of the hay.

"Our problem, then," it was concluded, "is not how long our
rotations can be made, but whether or not they can supply the
quality of hay needed and whether or not long rotations will produce
the feed crops needed at the lowest cost."

DISCUSSION

J. B. ABBOTT, in commenting upon this paper, said, "It is difficult
to say just what the New England rotation is, but I would like to
believe that it consists of corn, a cash crop, seeding down to oats,
clover, and hay for three or four years. This, however, is not followed
in the majority of cases and too often the rotation is a hit and miss
one, leaving the hay down until the yield is no longer profitable.

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2 Extension Agronomist, Connecticut Agricultural College, Storrs, Conn.