A TECHNIQUE is of value only if the information gained from its use adds data useful in explaining a measured variation in plant or animal response. A brief review of the major principles of animal nutrition and the general plant-animal complex would appear to be a necessary beginning point to this subject.

The nutrient requirements for a specific animal performing a definite function can be stated at three levels of intake: (1) minimum level at which the response will occur, (2) optimum level consistent with production, and (3) maximum level that can be reached without creating a deficiency of other nutrients or toxic conditions. In practice, this results in an increase in production as a ration is moved from a nutrient deficiency to a nutritional optimum, a plateau in production from the optimum to the maximum level and a decline in production when the maximum has been reached and nutrient intake exceeds the optimum.