NOTES OF INTEREST FROM TUESDAY LETTERS

A campaign by the Florida Association of SWCD Supervision resulted in the appropriation by the Legislature of $280,250 for accelerated soil surveys. This is up from $36,000 last year, reports Association President P. W. Bottoms (8-21-73).

Ralph J. McCracken, new Associate Administrator of the Agricultural Research Service. Dr. McCracken was Assistant Director of the North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station from 1970-73 (9-4-73).

RESEARCH PROJECT HOLDS PROMISE FOR PRODUCTIVE DISPOSAL OF SEWAGE SLUDGE. Municipal, farm, and legislative leaders recently viewed a trial of full-scale composting of sewage sludge on land at USDA's Beltsville Agricultural Research Center near Washington, D. C.

Sludge from Washington's Blue Plains Sewage Treatment Plant is hauled to the site, mixed with wood chips in windrows, and composted into a material that can be used as a soil conditioner and low grade fertilizer. Although the demonstration project is not yet completed, indications are that operating costs for composting 550 tons of sewage sludge per day will be less than for incineration.

Other advantages are that composted sludge is safer to dispose of than raw or digested sludge, environmental damages caused by incinerating or dumping can be avoided, and a valuable soil-building material is not wasted.

In commenting on the project, Secretary Earl Butz said it was a "typical example of how agricultural research provides some very special service to people who are not primarily engaged in agriculture." Co-