MISCONCEPTIONS REGARDING TROPICAL SOILS
O. W. Bidwell, Kansas State University

I had the opportunity to observe some of the soils of northern Nigeria in the field while a visiting professor at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria. As a foreigner in a strange new land I was unprepared for:

1. The exceedingly low silt content of the soils of the tropical savanna of Nigeria.

2. The extremely hard consistence of the Nigerian soils during the dry season—more than 200 days in some parts of northern Nigeria.

3. The large proportion of Nigerian Soils with profile colors indicating somewhat poorly drained to poorly drained conditions.

Low Silt Content

My silt observation for tropical soils was not new. Dr. Kellogg (1) had made similar observations regarding mature Latosols of the Congo 25 years ago. J. Bennema (2) likewise found the Latosols of Brazil to be low in silt. Smyth and Montgomery (3) as reported by Ahn (4) also found low silt content in the soils of southern Nigeria.

Cover Picture: Guinea-corn stubble on loamy sand landscape containing soil profile illustrated in Figure 4.