The soil surveyor is not an extension worker, he is primarily an investigator and recorder of facts pertaining to soils and soil conditions. The nature of this work is such that it is not practical or advisable for him to give to the public the scientific findings of his work until these findings have been correlated, sifted and refined. For example, he cannot state that 60 per cent of his area is of a certain type which contains 1290 pounds of phosphorus per acre of surface soil, even though such may later be found to be the exact condition. Nor can he advise the farmers of the area to adopt new soil practices until definite information will back up his recommendations.

Nevertheless, it must be remembered that the ultimate purpose of the soil survey work and the only justification for the expenditure of public funds for this purpose is that it furnishes valuable and needed information to the public. Looking at the soil survey from that angle, the surveyor is seen not only as a collector of information but as a dispenser of such information as can consistently be given out by him previous to his published report.

Perhaps it is not so much the question "Should the surveyor give out information?" but rather, "What information and how?"

Unless properly informed the public may have mistaken ideas of the survey work even to the point of handicapping the surveyor. Not always can the public be blamed for the source of information itself may be wrong. To illustrate, in one Iowa county the agricultural agent announced and the newspapers printed the statement that the men making the soil survey of that county would be at the Farm Bureau office all day Saturday of each week to test soils and give advice concerning soil problems. Needless to say, other arrangements and corrected announcements had to be made.

Certainly it is a worth while bit of extension work on the part of the soil surveyor to correctly advise the local newspapers, the county agent and other farm leaders of the real purpose of the survey and its value to the farmers. This should be done upon starting the field work if not sooner.

During the actual mapping of the soils there are few days when the surveyor is not stopped by some one and questioned (oftimes critically) about what he is doing. Here is an excellent opportunity to do some real extension work and let this man, who may be a leader in his community, know what the soil survey will finally do for him and his county. Show...