

**ELECTRIC GAUGE MEASURES NEED FOR IRRIGATION**

An electrical robot to tell when crops need irrigation, and how much, was described by a soil scientist. It also shows how deep the water penetrates and can save money in irrigation, Dr. George J. Bouyoucos, research professor of soil science, Michigan State college told the 26th national colloid symposium of the American Chemical society.

The electrical farmer is a water absorbent block of plaster of paris, or nylon. The block is buried in the ground at any depth. It always holds as much moisture as the surrounding soil.

Electric current is fed thru the block, and the resistance to the current indicates its moisture content and thus that of the soil.

Dr. Bouyoucos said it is a practical, scientific guide to show farmers, fruit growers and golf course superintendents how much water is needed.

"Irrigation water is scarce and expensive in many places, and this method revealed that the same yield of crops can be obtained with considerably less irrigation water, bringing about large savings," he said.

The blocks can be left in place for continuous measurements.

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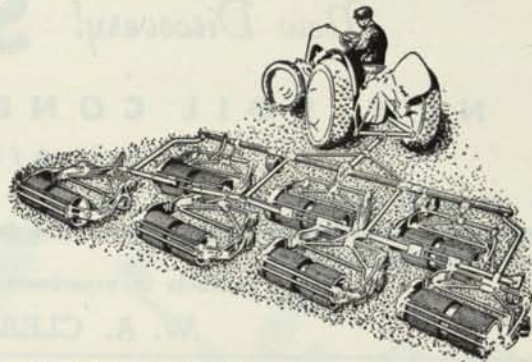
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