

THE BALANCE OF NATURE

HEALTHY, BALANCED LIVE SOILS GROWING STRONG, HEALTHY PLANTS BALANCED WITH NATURAL PREDATORS HAVE RESISTANCE TO DISEASES AND INSECTS . . .

Our firm belief that if the conditions are favorable and your soil is of good structure and well balanced so that it can grow a strong live plant that this plant will have resistance to insect and diseases (we did not say immune to) has been greatly reaffirmed again this past season. Today we are more convinced that there are many things involved in a good balance of Nature. We are the first to admit our program also needs decent weather or growing conditions. We are also convinced if we have soil that is of good structure (soil that is loose and absorbs water well and holds water well) will support and grow a plant better in adverse weather conditions. We are also convinced that this type of soil will grow larger and better roots than hard compact soil this also will support a plant better in adverse weather conditions.

When we speak of a balanced soil, we are not only thinking of a balance of Minerals such as Nitrogen, Phosphorous and Potash. These are included, of course, but a balanced soil goes a lot further than that. In fact, we perhaps do not know what the best balance of, or, in a soil really is. Until recent years all but a very few soil tests considered nothing but pH, Phosphorous and Potash. Even when we have the pH reading, we still don't know if that part of soil is in or out of balance. The pH reading could be in the safe margin and we could still be either low or high in either Magnesium or Calcium. It is a known fact we cannot grow good healthy plants when either one of these is seriously deficient. It is quite possible that the pH could be within range 6.8 and yet we could be seriously deficient in Magnesium. We could be low in pH, and bring it up by applying high Calcium lime and suppose we were quite deficient in Magnesium, would this bring the soil into balance? Would this solve our problem? We could even be high in Calcium and actually compound our problem by adding a high Calcium lime.

Then there is also the balance of the Trace Elements. Many of these deficiencies can also cause a lot of problems in our soil, perhaps not only in the actual deficiency itself but by the deficiency of some of these we tie up or lock up some of the other elements that do directly effect the growth and health of the plant. There is so much to be said about this that we will not really get into it at this time.

There is another very important factor or element in the soil that we dealt with to quite a length in the last Micro-News, April-May issue, the organic matter in the soil. Some farmers seemingly are not even conscious of the fact that this element plays an important part in making a good soil and growing a good crop both in quality and quantity. Many farmers do not know how or where or why to test for this element. Organic matter or humus are not for sale as such, these are or are not in your soil due largely to management. This is one of the qualities that is very essential in the soil to grow a crop of good quality and quantity.

As far as I am concerned, if your soil test does not contain the information of most above mentioned elements then I would consider it a waste of time to gather the soil samples. We also find it very

helpful to know the exchangeable basis or saturation of the soils capacity.

We would not want to miss mentioning one of the most important factors in good soil which is so very dependent on so many of the previous mentioned items and at the same time this in return is responsible for making many of the previous mentioned items available to the plant.

What we are talking about now is this mysterious life in the soil. The best test we have at the present time for this life is observation, here again management has so much to do with the presence of, activity or absence of this life in our soil.

Then there is also the life above the soil. I am now again speaking of something that seems to be forgotten and ignored by so much of agriculture today. I am talking about the parasitic and predatory life which will help us to keep the damaging insects under control. And may I ask how in the world do we expect to keep this life and, or the life in the soil healthy and on the job if we constantly douse it with poison.

The above things are what we refer to as the balance of Nature. Nature has provided for us ways and means of keeping things under control or in balance if we permit it to take place.

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