

Questions and Answers

Devoted to the discussion of intimate problems on turf culture and plant growth. We are an international authority on these subjects. Send in your contributions—\$1.00 will be paid for each one.

QUESTION:—Can you send me, or publish in your magazine some reliable data and information as to the use of iron sulphate in eliminating clover, chickweed, etc., from golf greens, also as to its use in solution in powdered form, as an ingredient in compost or fertilizer mixtures, rate of application, etc. Also what is its effect on the soil in retarding growth of grass?—V. C. Doerschuk, Massena, New York.

*ANSWER:—*The principal use of iron sulphate in America today is to eradicate weeds in turf, particularly dandelions. Experiments have been conducted by many of the State Experimental stations in the use of iron sulphate as a weed spray, and they have met with success with certain weeds.

The spraying method is preferred and it is customary to use 50 gallons of 20% solution of iron sulphate per acre.

Iron sulphate has been found to kill chickweed and purslane after repeated sprayings. Heal-all, gill-over-the-ground, broad and narrow leaved plantain, have either been killed or badly injured by the spray. The iron sulphate will not kill crab grass and other weed grasses. It must also be remembered that it is injurious to white clover.

Iron is an element of vital importance to the growth of green plants. A certain amount of iron seems necessary as one of the factors in the normal development of chlorophyll (leaf green), although it is not regarded as a constituent of the organic bodies which make up this substance.

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QUESTION:—Should a lawn be planted in the fall or in the spring?

*ANSWER:—*Both. Make one-half your planting not later than early October and sow the balance of your seed in March when the ground has "heaved" from freezing. As soon as possible after seeding, ground should be rolled when dry. Fertilization will be much more effective if put on in the late winter while the ground is in this heaved condition. (Ohio)

QUESTION:—Fertilizers are sold to us, guaranteeing certain percentages of nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash. Isn't one 8-6-2 fertilizer just as good as another made in the same proportions?

*ANSWER:—*No. It is not. The 8-6-2 percentages will be the same possibly, but the character of filler used will make the difference in the value. At least one-third of any complete fertilizer you buy, will be filler, in order to bring the finished product up to the proper proportions. If your filler happens to be some clean organic product which is or will early become a humus, the chemicals which provide the greater part of the 8-6-2 will become more rapidly available for plant food. If the filler used is lime, garbage tankage or similar inferior products, the action of the fertilizer will be delayed, especially if your soil is deficient in organic matter. (Penn.)

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QUESTION:—Why does a clay soil produce so much better bloom than other soils, and better looking?

*ANSWER:—*When the leaves of a plant begin to mature, it begins to bloom. If it is planted in a too rich soil and the tendency is to continually grow tender foliage, the start of maturity will be delayed and there will be but small imperfect bloom. If plants are grown in a soil which will hasten maturity, such as a good vegetable garden, the plant will be matured so early that but a normal bloom will result. A clay soil will start an early maturity in the leaf but there is a longer period before the termination of maturity and a much larger and better bloom is the result. (Ohio)

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QUESTION:—Should sulphate of ammonia be used in preference to nitrate of soda for an early spring fertilizer or is cottonseed meal or soya bean meal a better source of nitrogen if mixed with early topdressings?

*ANSWER:—*Ammonium sulphate and nitrate of soda are both very quick acting fertilizers. Sodium nitrate is detrimental in many ways and