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LETTERS

More on sludge

In the article on sludge, (WT&T, Feb. 1985), it is interesting to notice that the original work for the Milwaukee Sewerage Commission by Dr. Knorr seems to have been completely overlooked!

Our company had the contract to remove sewage sludge for the City of Tampa. We did a lot of experimental work in the handling and use of "Sunset Sludge." Its primary use was as a topdressing for lawns. After two or three dressings, we found we were not having the usual calls for chinch bug sprays.

Calls to the University of Florida turf people referred us to the original research of Dr. Knorr. It seems the level of sulphur is quite high in sludge as it is taken up by grasses. This imparts a bitter taste which bugs don't like.

We had a pasture on which we conducted experiments to prove this.

Using several increasing amounts of sludge and nitrogen sources, the grass was allowed to grow. We then let the cattle and horses in.

Grass with the nitrogen application was eaten first, then minimum of sludge, reluctantly the increased amounts of treated grass were eaten. But as soon as the nitrogen-treated grass regenerated, they began eating it again. This was readily visible for several years. The horses used this area for a toilet and refused to eat. We had to mow and clean up the area that had the higher doses of sludge!

No one seems interested in what we found out in the original research. For some reason they prefer to walk the same (old) trail. We had many experiences with sludge in the years we sold and used it.

Robert L. Perry
Sunset Nursery Inc.,
Tampa, FL



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