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Our LAND



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How's Your Alfalfa? -- Did your alfalfa come through the winter with a good stand? And is it ready to produce a bumper crop of high quality hay? To produce a bumper crop, alfalfa needs enough phosphate and potash, says Wallace W. Nelson, agronomist at the University of Minnesota's Northeast Experiment Station in Duluth. Potash is necessary for a strong, vigorous root system, essential for winter survival and maximum yields. If phosphorus is lacking, a spindly, short, low-yielding alfalfa with poor hay quality is the result. What's more phosphate fertilization increases the hay's phosphorus content so essential to proper animal nutrition.

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Soil Saving in Biblical Days -- Many people believe the teachings and the practices of conservation are new--products of the 19th and 20th centuries. Not so according to Marvin Smith, Extension forester at the University of Minnesota, however, soil and forest conservation are mentioned often in both the Old and New Testaments. Many passages tell how forests serve the people and how trees must be protected. Now, as we're approaching the spring forest fire season, it's appropriate to note Joel 2:3 -- "A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth. Behind them also a desolate wilderness." Let's be careful it doesn't happen to us.

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Overdoses of Fertilizer Harmful -- An overdose of fertilizer can be as harmful to a crop as the right amount can be helpful--besides, if you use more than your soil actually needs, it's costing you more than necessary. How do you find out your soil needs? Have a soil test made. You can get complete information from your county agent's office.

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An Idea from Michigan -- Over in Michigan, the Thornapple-Grand soil conservation district invites area farm equipment, fertilizer and seed and feed dealers to a complimentary dinner to discuss how the dealers might fit into a soil conservation program. Lots of favorable dealer comments reported.