

### Phosphorus Fertilizer Not Yet Proven

Several types of phosphorus fertilizers are being offered for sale to Oregon farmers this year which may have dubious value.

Unproved materials on the market, according to Arthur S. King, O.S.C. soil conservation specialist, include ground rock phosphate and various fused materials. The latter are manufactured by heating phosphate rock in a furnace with or without accompanying materials. While these materials may carry upwards of 30 percent or more total phosphorus,

here is the catch: only a small percentage is immediately available.

A substantial tonnage of this rock phosphate is used annually with apparent success in the mid-west, using heavy applications of 1,000 pounds to a ton per acre. These applications take care of phosphorus needs for several years, and apparently under soil conditions there the system is satisfactory. This system in Oregon, however, gives little indication that the same results are obtained.

Annual applications of proved available materials has been substantially more profitable. Phosphorus fertilizers that have proved themselves under Oregon conditions include superphosphate which supplied 18 to 20 percent available phosphorus and some available sul-

phur. In this category, triple superphosphate or treble phosphate carries 42 to 48 percent available phosphorus. Complete fertilizers carry a varying percentage depending upon the individual formula.

There is always a chance, King states, that new materials may be better than those offered in the past. But, he is advising farmers to use rock phosphate or other similar materials with caution. Use them on a trial basis until they have proved themselves, he suggests.

When properly used, any of the tried and proved materials will take care of phosphorus needs of any crop in any Oregon locality.

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