

CHAPTER IV, SECTION A Continued

Table 3. Fertilizer Computer Edited for Crops Irrigated: 1974

	Corn for all purposes	Sorghums for all purposes	Hard red winter wheat	Berries	Nursery and green- house products	Orch- ard	Popcorn	Vege- tables, sweet corn, or melon	Soybean	White wheat
NEW ENGLAND										
Maine.....								X		
New Hampshire.....								X		
Vermont.....								X		
Massachusetts.....				X						
Rhode Island.....										
Connecticut.....					X					
MIDDLE ATLANTIC										
New York.....										
New Jersey.....										
Pennsylvania.....	X			X		X				
EAST NORTH CENTRAL										
Ohio.....									X	
Indiana.....	X									
Illinois.....	X								X	
Michigan.....	X								X	
Wisconsin.....	X			X					X	
WEST NORTH CENTRAL										
Minnesota.....	X									
Iowa.....	X								X	
Missouri.....	X	X							X	
North Dakota.....	X									
South Dakota.....	X				X				X	
Nebraska.....	X	X							X	
Kansas.....	X								X	
SOUTH ATLANTIC										
Delaware.....	X									
Maryland.....	X									
Virginia.....	X					X			X	
West Virginia.....	X					X				
North Carolina.....	X					X			X	
South Carolina.....									X	
Georgia.....	X				X				X	
Florida.....	X	X		X	X		X			X
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL										
Kentucky.....	X								X	
Tennessee.....	X								X	
Alabama.....					X				X	
Mississippi.....	X								X	
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL										
Arkansas.....	X	X								X
Louisiana.....	X									X
Oklahoma.....	X			X						X
Texas.....										X
MOUNTAIN										
Montana.....										
Idaho.....							X		X	
Wyoming.....										
Colorado.....	X								X	
New Mexico.....										
Arizona.....	X				X					
Utah.....										
Nevada.....	X									
PACIFIC										
Washington.....	X		X				X		X	
Oregon.....	X						X		X	
California.....				X						
Alaska.....										
Hawaii.....									X	

of the tons used. Wheat accounted for 21 percent of the acreage fertilized, but only 11 percent of the tons used. The combined acreage of cropland and improved pasture fertilized accounted for almost 7 percent of the total acreage fertilized. These proportions differ greatly depending on the region or State.

The proportion of the actual pasture or crop acreage which was fertilized in 1974 shows substantial difference by crop or item. Of the individual crops for which separate data are available, the proportion ranges from a high of 99.6 percent for rice to a low of 19 percent for hay. More than 80 percent of the acres of

field corn, rice, cotton, tobacco, Irish potatoes, vegetables, and sugar beets for sugar were fertilized.

The rate of application of fertilizer was also significantly different for the various crops or items. The average rate per acre fertilized was 318 pounds. The average rate per acre for the major crops varied from 1,874 pounds for tobacco to a low of 169 pounds for wheat. Irish potatoes and corn received applications of 1,057 and 385 pounds per acre, respectively.

The gross-weight measures of fertilizer are not a good measure of the amount of actual plant nutrients applied. Even though two crops have received approximately the same gross-weight application, the plant nutrient content of the fertilizer involved may be significantly different.

The use of liquid fertilizer has been increasing at a rapid rate in recent years. However, this use of fertilizer has not been uniform for all crops. Corn accounted for more than one-half of the total liquid tons applied in 1974. The proportion used ranged from less than 10 percent of the total tonnage for a number of crops to more than 48 percent for sorghum. Table 5 shows the proportion of dry and liquid fertilizers used with some of the major crops on farms with sales of \$2,500 and over.

Of the 1.1 million farms with sales of \$2,500 and over reporting the use of dry fertilizer, 1 million (92 percent) used less than 50 tons in 1974. In comparison, for liquid fertilizer 409,000 of the 435,000 farms reporting (94 percent) used less than 50 tons. Table 6 shows the percent of these farms reporting dry and liquid fertilizer.

Data show that the farms in the larger sales groups fertilize a higher proportion of the crops harvested than farms in the lower sales groups (see table 7). The farms in the larger sales group also applied a higher rate of fertilizer per acre than the farms with less sales.

Changes in Fertilizer Use

Increased fertilizer use probably has contributed greatly to the increasing yields