

out of sight and, given human nature, that often means out of mind. Maintaining communication with campus means that you must call, you must travel. You must work at nurturing the connection between yourself and your department. (Ironically, by doing your job well and satisfying local needs, it makes it easier for your department to be less concerned with your part of the state, and to interact less, rather than more, after your arrival on the scene.)

Although there are special problems involved in being a new researcher in an off-campus location, there are some special advantages as well. For example, an off-campus location frees one from the burden of committee membership. Perhaps a more important advantage, however, is that an off-campus location provides a unique environment for experiencing the reality of agriculture for a researcher who has had little contact

with production agriculture. A location in the heart of an agricultural area allows one to develop insights into the practical side of the agricultural industry and generally to broaden one's perspective on applied research. Growers are obviously very knowledgeable about aspects of their particular specialties many new researchers know little about, and, fortunately, most growers are very willing teachers. Graduate students working with off-campus faculty also benefit from a practical input into their educations by growers, who may be pleased to be able to be a part of the educational system. For those of us who are not from agricultural backgrounds and may someday be teaching production courses, working off-campus is an especially valuable experience that will add much to the courses we may someday develop. In addition, direct feedback and support from growers can be a very rewarding

source of stimulation and ideas for research, both for graduate students and their advisors.

In addition to the rewards of interacting with growers and students in an off-campus location, cooperative research with someone from another discipline at your facility can be extremely productive and satisfying as well. If such a relationship can be established, especially in a small station, a broadening of knowledge, experience, and stimulation results that may be less likely to occur to researchers on campus, who have less frequent interdepartmental contact.

The consequences of a position off-campus are both positive and negative. One does feel the loss of certain aspects of academic life, which creates, at least initially, a sense of extreme isolation. However, many of the aspects of life off-campus can be made quite acceptable and possibly even turned into advantages in a nascent career.

LETTERS

NITROGEN FERTILIZATION

In the Feb. 1987 issue of *HortScience* 22:34-36, I was interested in the paper by Charles A. Mullins entitled "Effects of Nitrogen Fertilization on Production of Mechanically Harvested Snap Beans". However, I found that two very important items of significance were not given:

1) The form of N applied was not given. It would be assumed that the N fertilizer was applied at seeding, although this was not specifically indicated. The form of N can have a marked effect on the response of snap bean to applied N.

2) Soil-testing information was given, but no identification of the method of extraction. Therefore, the values reported are meaningless without knowing how the test result was obtained. Such details are significant if the reader is to use the findings reported.

This is not the first time I have noted similar omissions. It is important that authors identify procedures adequately when conducting soil tests and plant analyses, and those details that relate to fertility treatments. Also, when dealing with N treatments, the previous crop can have a very marked effect on N response as there may be considerable N carry-over from unused N fertilizer or N released from decomposing crop residues. The suggested 17 kg-ha⁻¹ N rate may not be applicable to situations where the soil contribution of plant available N is lower or higher than existed in the soil used by Mullins. One wonders what was the previous crop and cropping conditions?

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• Author's reply

I agree with Jones that the information requested is useful and would add to the article. However, I doubt that any article published has all the information that could and should be presented for a perfect paper. I assume that my name and address was a part of the publication so that anyone wanting additional information could contact me. This study was conducted at the request of representatives of a seed company based on their worldwide observations of excessive N use, excessive plant lodging, and difficulty with machine harvest of snap beans. Those observations included both organic and inorganic forms of N and were essentially the same as we found previously with Bush Blue Lake-type snap beans in Tennessee. The newer cultivars apparently have considerable Bush Blue Lake parentage and lodge less with lower N fertilization levels. This article will be reprinted by the seed company involved and will be distributed in several countries as part of an effort to promote improved snap bean production practices.

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NEEDED: A BETTER WORD THAN "ORNAMENTALS"

H.B. Tukey, Jr.'s request for a better word than "ornamentals" (*HortScience* 22:9, Feb. 1987) is a point well taken; however, "urban plants" may or may not be an acceptable replacement. It is true that "ornamentals" does us a great disservice. Whether "urban plants" with a professional connotation would be any better would depend on its acceptance in the mind and market. A correct term is needed to qualify the essential and beneficial effects of ornamental horticulture on human

beings. It must have both psychological and economic meanings.

An old Chinese saying is that if a man has but two pennies he should use one to buy bread and the second to buy a flower to save his soul. Our profession serves the soul and touches on art, design, and survival.

Years ago, the word "environment" was in vogue, and some departments incorporated that word in their titles. One staff member of a department with an environmental horticulture title said the name change did not matter. Our plants are environmental plants and in that sense influence the very survival of humankind.

Perhaps Roget, Soule, and a computer search could find us a more suitable term. Computers have given us the "wonderful" new company names for U.S. Steel and others. Despite their "success", Tukey's request should be given to them to try.

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Letters to the editor, with the writer's name and address, should be sent to: ASHS Editorial Office, Lincoln C. Peirce, Science Editor, Dept. of Plant Science, Nesmith Hall, Univ. of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824. Letters may be edited for purposes of clarity or space.
