PERSONAL

profile...

John R. Taylor, Jr.

Born April 3, 1908, Buffalo, Ala. Ala. Polytechnic Institute, B.S., Agriculture, 1929; W. Va. U., M.S., Agriculture, 1935; U. of Wis., Ph.D., Soil Chemistry, 1937. Ala. Agricultural Experiment Station, 1929–34. Ala. Agricultural Experiment Station, Soil Chemist, 1937–38. Virginia-Carolina Chemical Corp., Manager, Agronomy Dept., 1938–46. U. S. Chemical Warfare Service, 1942–45, released with rank of Major. American Plant Food Council, Chief Agronomist, 1946–53. Grand River Chemical Division, Deere & Co., Sales Manager, 1953 to date. Fellow, American Society of Agronomy. Member: Gamma Sigma Delta, Phi Kappa Phi, Sigma Xi, American Association for the Advancement of Science, AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY, Soil Science Society of America.

Sales manager of Grand River Chemical fosters a policy of giving the farmer simple, useful facts about urea

ONE OF THE BEST MOVIES about fertilizers—"Making the Most of a Miracle"—was supervised by a man who practices what he preaches. Today, John R. "Dugan" Taylor, Jr., is making the most of urea for the Grand River Chemical Division of Deere & Co.

As sales manager, Taylor has fostered increased use of urea throughout the Southwest and Midwest. He is truly a missionary in this field. Taylor encourages farmers to apply urea on all crops, but never at the expense of good farming practices. (Company demonstrations and folders on urea application always stress sound farming.)

Early in his career Taylor recognized the value of soil testing. He has been an ardent supporter of scientific methods, and still believes that efficient use of fertilizers is one of the best methods of soil conservation. He encourages his salesmen to give farmers simple, useful facts—specific, not general information—that can be used at the local level.

Moving Urea into Agriculture

His company has increased the nation's supply of urea, and has helped move urea from the "luxury market" into the more common agricultural channels. Taylor has been the driving force behind Grand River Chemical's sales organization, which in addition to sales includes the company's advertising, technical service, and agronomic functions.

Being in charge of company sales, Taylor is naturally concerned that farmers on the average use only about half of the fertilizer recommended by agricultural experiment stations. Like other leaders in the industry, he would like to see nitrogen consumption reach its proper level. Taylor thinks education and better service at the local level are the answers—and basic producers will have to do more of the educational work. "Basic producers can't sit back and expect dealers to do all the promotion," Taylor says. "We will have to do more of this ourselves, even if it means putting additional company men in the field."

Salesmen of the future will have to know more about their companies' products—how the products specifically benefit the farmer, how to use the products on every crop in specific areas. According to Taylor, this may mean more technically trained salesmen. Friendship alone won't make the sale; company salesmen must sell with adequate technical knowledge, and must offer good service.

A Broad Outlook

Having seen all sides of the industry, Taylor has developed a broad outlook on sales problems. For many years, while working as an agronomist for Virginia-Carolina, he prepared the company's educational literature, and kept its salesmen informed of scientific developments.

As chief agronomist for the American Plant Food Council, Taylor made numerous contributions to the fertilizer industry, including the development and promotion of many teaching aids. The booklet, "Our Land and Its Care," used principally by vocational agricultural teachers, is now in its third edition. More than 1.5 million copies of this publication have been distributed free by industry. (The second edition was printed four times.)

Taylor's extensive contacts with the farm community, extension services, agricultural colleges, and the fertilizer industry enabled him to develop a keen insight into the industry's practical side. Drawing upon this experience, the agronomy department of Grand River Chemical developed a cardboard nitrogen calculator, more than 100,000 of which have been distributed to colleges, county agents, vocational agriculture teachers, and farmers.

Scientific Experience

His scientific experience is equally well known. Taylor's research findings at Alabama Polytechnic Institute were most beneficial in developing more effective means of using fertilizers. He is one of the few persons in the commercial field to have been named Fellow of the American Society of Agronomy, an honor of considerable distinction. The major portion of his career has been devoted to correlating and translating scientific information into practical terms for the benefit of the industry.

As to the future, Taylor says, "We cannot remain static in this industry; either we move forward or we slip backwards. We can expect to see continued increases in fertilizer usage and more startling technical developments."