

CFR 0141

Chavner Thompson

Century Old Farms Show Small Loss in Soil Value⁴⁰

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County Extension Agent

The productive ability of soils on Century Farms in Jackson County has not slowed down over the years. This is the finding in soil test reports received by the agent from soil samples taken on

four of the nine farms in the county which received Century farm honors last year in the program initiated by the Oregon Historical society and the state department of agriculture.

Two soil samples were taken from each farm selected having areas of similar soil types, one sample being taken from an area cropped over a long period of time and the other sample from an area cropped for a lesser period or not at all.

Samples were tested at the Oregon State College Soil Testing laboratory. The Northwest Plant Food association and the National Plant Food institute paid the testing fees.

At the George W. Dunn Century farm on Neil creek near Ashland one sample was taken from a field which had been in orchard until about 1900 and since cropped in an alfalfa-grain rotation. A comparable sample was from an area never cultivated. On this farm the soil became slightly more acid through cropping with a reduction of p.H. from 7.2 to 6.5. The amount of available phosphorous and potassium was reduced, but is still within the medium levels for most crops' use. Organic matter content has dropped through the years of cropping from 5.59 per cent to 3.56 per cent.

From the Anna Beeson Carter Century farm near Talent samples were taken from a pear orchard planted about 1930 after being cropped to a grain-alfalfa rotation, and from a field cleared of native brush and trees in the late 1920's and since in forage crops. On this farm both the orchard and pasture have the same reaction with a p.H. of 6.6. The supply of available phosphorous and potassium in the orchard was reduced from that of the pasture, but was still at a level adequate for crops having a high requirement for these essential plant nutrients. The organic matter of the land cropped the most had dropped slightly from 3.31 per cent to 2.51 per cent.

Soil samples from the Frank Dean Century farm on the Old Stage road were taken from a field cropped continuously for many years, mostly to grain and now in alfalfa, and from a part of the same field which was established to walnut trees in 1913. The p.H. in the alfalfa field is 6.5 compared to 6.9 in the orchard. The phosphorous levels are still high, with some reduction in the field. The level of potassium is still adequate for many crops, but for optimum legume growth supplemental potassium would be recommended. Annual grain cropping with resulting erosion on this hill field showed a reduction of organic matter to 1.17 per cent from the 5.42 per cent in the orchard.

The fourth Century farm where soil tests were taken was Chavner Thompson's on old Highway east of Gold Hill. One sample was taken from a field continuously cropped to corn, grain and peas, and alfalfa. The comparable sample was taken from an unimproved pasture still in native grass, brush and trees. The p.H. of the cropped field dropped slightly from 7.1 to 6.8. The phosphorous levels are lower but still ample for most crop requirements. Potassium was reduced in comparison with the uncropped field, yet the level is still high enough that no potassium fertilizer recommendations would be made at this time for the present crop.

The slight increase in soil acidity as indicated by the p.H. is to be expected from cropping use. All the samples tested showed a still favorable soil reaction for the production of crops. The phosphorous and potassium test results best indicate the inherent ability of the soil to make more of these necessary plant nutrients available for crop use.

Different crops require different levels of plant foods. Some of the tests show a need for applications of phosphorous and potassium. It is not unusual to add these materials to soils being cropped for the first time.

The reduction of organic matter is usually found after years of cropping and could account for part in the reduction of available phosphorous and potassium.

APPLICATION FOR CENTURY FARM HONORS

Location and Size of Farm Jackson Co Township 36 R3W
sect 14-15 22-23 about 700 acres

Present Owner Charner Thompson

Address Good Hill one

Do You Live on this Farm and Farm the Land? yes

Do You Make \$150 or more from This Farm? yes

If You Live off This Land, do You manage the Farm operation? yes

Name and Date of First Generation Owner Tom Charner
1856 Donation Clanes

Brief Description of Farm Pasture land and hay
grain - cattle

History my Grand Father settled here in 1856 on
57 He took up a home stead then bought out
several other home steads they called these
Donation land Clanes

Signature of Present Owner Charner Thompson

CFR0141