

SASKATCHEWAN SOIL TESTING LABORATORY

1982-1983 REPORT

E.H. HALSTEAD, DIRECTOR

During the current operating year (July 1, 1982 to June 30, 1983) the number of samples received by the Laboratory are down as compared to the corresponding period in 1981-82. To the end of January 1983 a total of 54,901 samples were received and analyzed as compared to 70,880 for the same period in the previous year. Nonetheless this year's volume represents the second best year in terms of sample receipts since the inception of the Laboratory in 1966. Reduced sample numbers as compared to the previous year's high are largely attributed to a later harvest in the autumn of 1982 which resulted in a shorter sampling season. Comparative sample numbers for 1980-81, 1981-82 and the July 1, 1982 to January 31, 1983 period are presented below.

SAMPLES RECEIVED AND ANALYZED

	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83*
COMPLETE	39,333 (13,111)	61,686 (20,562)	40,191 (13,397)
NITRATE	1,422 (474)	2,553 (851)	2,970 (990)
INDUSTRY	5,173	9,017	6,086
SOIL SCIENCE	2,020	2,070	2,427
UNIVERSITY	1,167	2,573	1,553
PLANT	1,675	642	1,386
GARDEN	141	242	100
WATER	<u>265</u>	<u>156</u>	<u>188</u>
TOTAL	51,196	78,939	54,901

* July 1/82 to January 31/83

() Numbers in brackets indicate number of fields.

Soil Sampling Agents

Currently there are 25 soil sampling agents under contract with the Laboratory. This network accounted for approximately 33% of the farm samples submitted to the Laboratory in the autumn of 1982. A large proportion of the other farm samples were received from fertilizer dealers and the remainder directly from individual farm clients.

Staff Changes

D.J. Tomasiewicz was appointed as Laboratory Agronomist on April 1, 1982. E.B. Edwards was appointed in June of 1982 to set up a data management system for the Laboratory. In addition, if funds permit the permanent staff component of the Laboratory will be increased in the technical and data processing areas.

Turn Around Time

The turn around time on sample analysis and recommendations remains as one of the major problems faced by the Laboratory. Although turn around time was improved over last year the lack of space in the current facility makes it difficult to provide fast enough service at the height of the season. Changes in the operating system and staffing of the Laboratory will be implemented in 1983-84 in an attempt to alleviate this problem.

New Laboratory

Plans for the construction of a new and larger Soil Testing Laboratory are in place. The new laboratory will be located on the northeast edge of the campus as an addition to the General Purpose Building. The approximate net space will be 525 m² which is twice the size of the current facility. The new laboratory should be in operation by the end of 1983.