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Editorial

Plant Protection: In dealing with the food problem facing the country, emphasis has till recently been laid both by administrators and scientists on the aspects relating to increasing production by various means such as irrigation, application of fertilizers and introduction of improved varieties of crops. These are undoubtedly important aspects but it should not be forgotten that the losses in crop production caused by pests and diseases in the field and in storage are enormous and if timely and adequate steps are taken to reduce such losses the quantity of our available food supply would be increased considerably.

It is the realisation of this important aspect of the food problem in recent years that has led both the Central and Provincial Governments to pay increasing attention to the organisation of research and the strengthening of field staff, with a view to helping the cultivator in combating pests and diseases that affect his crops. A special Plant protection service to tackle problems on an All-India basis is functioning in New Delhi. In Madras, the organisation for plant protection has been strengthened recently, by the appointment of four plant protection officers for the Province and two plant protection assistants for each district. Provision has also been made, we understand, to supply the necessary fungicides, insecticides and spraying machinery to each district. We hope, that the cultivators would take full advantage of the plant protection organisation and seek its aid in combating the pests and diseases affecting their crops.

While the setting up of a plant protection service by Government is an important step, much yet remains to be done before the full benefit of the organisation is to be realised by the cultivators. Fungicides and insecticides are in short supply and spraying machinery suited to Indian conditions are not available. India is entirely dependent on foreign countries for the supply of spraying machinery and the cost of these appliances is often beyond the means of the

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CARNATIC BUILDINGS
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ordinary cultivator. Any measures taken to combat pests and diseases to be successful should cover the entire affected area and lack of means to cover large areas in a given time is one of the chief reasons why the methods sometimes fail to achieve the desired results.

It is time, therefore, that our industrialists turn their attention towards manufacture of spraying machinery and chemicals needed for Plant protection and we can assure them that a profitable future awaits those who embark on this enterprise.

The use of Fertilizers: We are glad that the Government of India are appointing an expert committee under the chairmanship of Dr. J. N. Mukerjee to go into the question of the use of fertilizers and organic manures, and submit their recommendation after an exhaustive enquiry and examination of relevant data that are available from the various Agricultural Research Stations in the country. While we do not wish to anticipate the findings of the expert committee we have no doubt in our own mind that considering the inadequacy of organic matter in most of our soils and the difficulty of replenishing it from outside due to limitations in our water supply, judicious use of fertilizers is one sure means of increasing our agricultural production. We are aware that virulent attacks on the practice of using fertilizers have been made in recent years and an attempt has been made to create a controversy where, in fact, there is none. No one claiming to be a scientific agriculturist minimises the importance of the value of organic manures. The careful conservation of organic refuse and their utilisation to the fullest possible extent are essential for crop production. But it should not be forgotten that the introduction of fertilizers about a century ago has led to enormous increase in food production throughout the world and if countries like America, Japan and Russia have trebled their acre yields of crops within the past few decades, the fact is attributable to a very great extent to the use of fertilizers.

We have ample evidence in this country that many crops benefit by the application of fertilizers and though here and there instances may be found of the adverse effects of *unbalanced* manuring it will be found on the study of evidence that proper balanced manuring has resulted in increased output.

The report of the expert committee will be eagerly awaited by all those interested in the agricultural progress of this country and we have no doubt that they will complete their task with expedition.

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(Chemist)

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I. Introduction.

production of sugar much and consumption of sugar the deficiency of sugar from the other Provinces tropical belt but in the industry is developed than in the tropical So climatic and varietal of white sugar industry compared to the other

Number of sugar factories
sugar p

Province.	No. of mills working
United Provinces	67
Bihar	29
Madras	11
Bombay	10

It is thus clear of sugar in our Province essential and it is the for production of more

II. Varietal.

sugar production is as ones in use. No doubt with high sugar content qualities. The cultivation while the sugar man objective is "More s