

(A) INTRODUCTION

A village waste dump situated near the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture has been turned into a composting centre. The object of this undertaking was to determine the economic possibilities of producing an organic fertilizer from habitation wastes. At the same time it has been possible to study some of the problems of management and technical difficulties that were encountered in this project.

The possibilities of composting village wastes have previously received attention at the College. At that time, while an organic manure of high quality was produced, it was concluded that the composting of village waste was not economically feasible. These earlier trials were completed in 1936. (31).

At the present time, the popularity of farmyard manure among peasant producers, particularly market gardeners, has resulted in a definite shortage of this organic fertilizer.

By composting at an established dumping site, it was considered that the costs of production reported earlier could be considerably reduced. To attain this end, the former disposal crew has been retained on the site as the nucleus of the composting crew. Only slight additions of labour have been required. In computing the cost of the village waste compost, wages paid the normal disposal crew have not been included.

(1) A survey was made of material received and methods of disposal at waste dumps in the County of St. George. These dumps vary greatly in size, from the extensive disposal area required for industrialized Port-of-Spain to the simple requirements of the village of Arima, where the wastes are but road-sweepings, hedge-clippings and household refuse.

A survey was made of waste materials other than village waste that could make valuable additions to a compost system based on village waste.