

INTRODUCTORY.

Though essentially a crop of the warmer temperate regions, the Soy bean has of late attracted attention in the tropics because of the premium it commands over most other oil seeds in the world markets. Its introduction into Trinidad has opened up possibilities of far reaching importance. For the present however, it can only be regarded as a potential money crop and one of the few that can be grown by peasants in the wet weather. Its eventual success will depend on the attitude taken by those interested in the purchase of soy bean oil from elsewhere.

In order to secure a permanent place for the crop in native agriculture certain amount of selection work for desirable strains has already been undertaken and research into the factors governing optimum nodule production has also been launched. The present Experiment is in part a continuation of this research into the scope for artificial inoculation with patent cultures under prevailing conditions. The results achieved so far have not been very promising because of the rather indifferent mode of nodulation but there are indications that the time factor is involved, since the organisms, apparently, are not able to infect the roots in sufficient numbers during the first year of their entry into the soil. Whether they will be more effective in subsequent years can only be determined by repeating the experiment on the very same plots.

The other phase of the investigation is an outcome of observations made by Prof. Cheesman on appearance of Soy beans grown on the "variety" plots in the Botany Department. The plants on the whole looked stunted, with the lower leaves crinkled and yellow, showing symptoms of chlorosis. When treated with a little potash they revived to an appreciable extent, indicating that as far as the potash requirement of the soy bean was concerned, the soil was too deficient in that constituent to meet the demand.

It was therefore decided to test this out on a similar soil type concurrently with the proposed "inoculation" experiment.