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*Leaching of Nitrates in Different Soils*

The purpose of this experiment was to determine which soils best kept nitrogen from leaching, and whether corn plants affect how much leaches out. Eight soil columns of sandy soil and eight columns of clay soil were constructed. Each soil column was saturated with water and then 1 Liter of water was poured on top of the soils. Samples of this run-off water were collected for a base line test. Nitrogen fertilizer in the amounts of 60, 100, and 200 pounds per acre were applied to the appropriate columns and corn planted. Two days after planting, a second water sample was collected and tested for nitrogen. The nitrogen levels were determined by using the Hach Nitrate test. The data collected did not support up the hypothesis, that there would be less nitrogen leaching from the clay soil. The sand soil had lower amounts of nitrates in the waste water, and held water a longer than the clay soil. The clay soils did hold nitrogen, there was a greater amount found to be leached out into the run-off water. Continued data collection is needed to further investigate nitrogen leaching.