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Top Dressing “Wheat Time”

We will soon be ready to top dress this year’s wheat crop. There are always questions about the timing. “Is it too early?” “Will I lose my nitrogen if I use Urea?” “What new products are available?” This past year proved to be a profitable one for many farmers using a couple of products that were fairly new on the market.

Smart Nitrogen

Agrium Encapsulated Urea proved very beneficial on wheat despite varying amount of rainfall. ESN (Encapsulated Smart Nitrogen) consistently gave good yield responses over conventional urea. Applying ESN in the fall either top dressed or in the furrow, provided increased yields and increased protein content of the wheat. Research at University of Nebraska over a three year period produced a consistent yield response in three years of very different rainfall conditions. While performance of conventional N sources varied to N loss, ESN response is very similar from year to year.

Fulvic Acid

Fulvic Acid is not new to our area. It exists in every acre of soil in the Midwest. It has always been in plentiful supply. With our increase yields and intense cropping practices, Fulvic Acid has been depleted to a level that addition of the acid has improved yields and quality of our crops. One such product is **C-Cat** Carbon Catalyst. Carbon Catalyst is manufactured by Teva Corp in Cape Girardeau, Mo. It is derived from mined humates. The Fulvic Acid is then blended with trace minerals. Can be used as a starter in the row or foliar applied when top dressing your wheat. Fulvic Acid increases nutrients uptake and energizes the plant. Yield increases of 8-12 bushel per acre were very common this past year in Southern and Northern Illinois. For more information on this product contact Charles Haubold at 573-579-7779 or contact your Pro Ag Regional Manager.



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Thank You for your Patronage!!

Thanks to everyone! Pro Ag Consulting had another record year. Most acres sampled, most samples tested in our lab and more new customers. To our established customers we appreciated your continued use of our service. To our many new clients, welcome and we hope we can provide you with many services that will make your operation more profitable.

Illinois Soil Tests Show Large Nitrogen Carry Over

Soil Tests taken on Illinois soils this past fall indicates there was larger than normal nitrogen carryover in Illinois corn fields. The reason; lack of moisture during year more so than lack of yield.

Samples were taken in Southern, Central and Northern corn fields. Measurements were taken in the 1 ft. level and then the 1 ft. to 2 ft. level.

The weighted average of nitrate N in the top 2 ft. of all fields sampled was 136 pounds of nitrogen per acre. The Southern Illinois average was as high as the Northern Illinois average.

The data from the sampled fields reflect the dry growing conditions over much of the state in 2012. Some fields tested in Southern Illinois yielded little or nothing, while several fields in Northern Illinois yielded from 180 to 200 bushels per acre.

When water limits yields, the amount of nitrogen used in a field did not seem to affect its corn yield. A few fields with very high nitrogen rates had low yields. Low yields were not associated with high amounts of left over nitrogen.

This shows how complex nitrogen interactions are in the soil. In a year such as 2012, there is little nitrogen loss because of the dry conditions.

The tests in the same area will be repeated this spring to see what affect the moisture conditions will have on nitrate levels.

If you are planting corn back on corn, this information can help you decide what and how much your nitrogen application program should be.

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To do a Simple task
Exceedingly well
Spells Success

Great Opportunity to Save in 2013!

Again this year we are offering a cash discount for soil sampling to be done during the year 2013.

A discount of 20% will be given if paid by February 15, 2013. That's a \$1.59 discount per acre. If you pay by March 15th, the discount will be 18% or \$1.43/acre discount.

To participate let us know how many acres you would like to have tested and we will prepare a booking statement and mail it to you. As soon as we receive your payment, a prepay credit will be prepared and posted to your account.

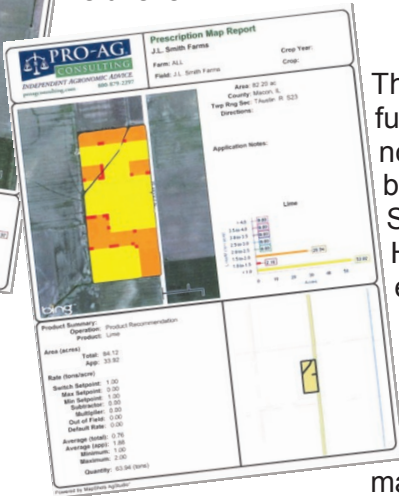
After March 15th, a cash discount of 12% will apply to all invoices paid within 10 days.

Update of New Mapping Program — Agvance 5.0

Last fall we rolled out a new version of our soil testing mapping. We upgraded from SSI Agvance 4.5 to 5.0. This doesn't sound like much of a change but it has been. The software comes with a whole new platform of functions and with this comes more efficiency. Agvance 5.0 moves away from the grid and uses a surface point reference system. We have always had a point from where the data of the soil test is associated with the center of our grids; it's just not going to have the grid feature to the maps. The soil testing operation will not change and we will sample the fields the same way we always have. We will still have the capability to flag farms for application if GPS VRT is not used.



The biggest change will be in map appearance. Maps will have new color schemes, zones, and revised legends which will make them easier to read and understand. Recommendations will still be derived from individual client consultation. Standard and custom levels can be created per client or down to the specific field level.



The program is fully implemented now and has been since Sept. 1, 2012. Here are some examples of how the maps look.

Any questions about the maps please call the Windsor office 800-879-2297 or call your regional representative.

A Product Worth Trying

If you farm south of Rt 16 in Illinois, South of I-70 in Indiana anywhere in Missouri your soils are probably low in magnesium, sulfur and maybe Potassium. Crop success is often measured by yield, but quality factors such as firmness, color, grain fill and weight can increase the value of profitability of the crop.

Magnesium (MG) is the central component of Chlorophyll, the pigment molecule responsible for absorbing sunlight during photosynthesis. **Potassium (K)** is known as the "quality" nutrient, a good source of (K) promotes a healthy root and a strong stalk (K) also promotes plant vigor and resistance to disease. (K) is essential in starch and sugar formation.

Sulfur (S) builds proteins in plants and is a key component in many unique traits. Sulfur promotes vigorous plant growth and promotes seed weights and quality. One product contains a balance of all three of these nutrients. It has a brand name of K-Mag. It is available through many fertilizer dealers. It may seem expensive but when you evaluate the nutrients analysis in the product, it "offers a lot for the buck." K-Mag contains less the 2.5% Chloride and has a neutral PH analysis, and has 22% K₂O 10.8 Mg 22 % Mg.

Yield response to applications of K-Mag has been very impressive. If your soil tests calls for application of Potash, Sulfur or Magnesium, you may want to apply K-Mag. Ask your Pro Ag Agronomist for details.

30 Years - using Pro-Ag Soil Fertility Program

Darrell and Melanie Hall, and Melanie's parents Marvin and Ester Gorden have just harvested their 30th crop using Pro-Ag Consulting LLC's soil fertility program. Having completed their first soil testing in 1982 for the 1983 crop, they have used Pro-Ag's services for 30 consecutive years. It all started when Darrell attended a regional seed corn meeting in 1982 and heard John Hackerson talk about his idea of balancing soil nutrients. Darrell was so impressed, he went home and told Melanie that they had to get her father Marvin to go to the next meeting where John was the featured speaker. As it turned out, the next meeting was close to home in Decatur, IL.



Darrell and Marvin reviewing Pro-Ag yield maps of their crops.

After the meeting, Darrell and Marvin discussed with John about sampling some of their fields. On the way home, they discussed the idea with one of their landowners. Always willing to try new things, he was receptive to the idea. Three farms were tested. The next year, more farms were added. Darrell said "When I first heard John speak, It made so much sense to me, I wandered why more people were not already using this program. I felt like we were putting on too much fertilizer." Starting the soil testing program they soon found they needed a lot of limestone. Darrell says "Fertilizer companies do not like to sell lime because it is not a money maker for them."

The soil test results showed they needed some nutrients in some areas but had way too much in other areas. So the decision was made to test every acre every year. The plant nutrients were then applied to areas that would increase yields but still hold down their input costs. Melanie added "We started farming in 1983. Those were very difficult economic times for farming. We were trying to buy machinery and purchase inputs. Interest rates were 15-18% and we were selling corn for \$1.86 a bushel. Pro-Ag's program helped us get started by showing us how to get the greatest economic return for our dollar."

"We had been applying a mix of 200# of 18-46-0 and 200# of 0-0-60." Marvin said. "That was costing about \$32-33 per acre. Using Pro-Ag's program we were able to reduce our costs including all the extra lime, to about \$19 per acre." During the first 4 years of testing and following Pro-Ag's program, corn average 173bu and beans 52.5 bu. Years 8 thru 11, corn average was 193bu and beans 55.6bu. Marvin said "I was real skeptical at first because it was so different from what we had been doing. It really took me about 3 crop years to be totally convinced. Now I would not do it any other way." "We liked Pro-Ag's program for three reasons. The soil testing and maps were very well done. Secondly, having agronomic help and information at no extra cost was a big benefit. Lastly, Pro-Ag did not sell a product; we always thought their advice was unbiased." Darrel added.

Sometime the advice was hard to follow. Marvin asked John how much nitrogen he needed to apply. After calculating the plant population and soil type, John said to apply 150# of actual nitrogen. Marvin and Darrell had been applying much more. John said to Marvin "Now if you can't sleep at night with that amount of N, go ahead and put more on because I don't want you to call me at 2am because you can't sleep." Marvin and Darrell laughed and said the 150# rate gave them the highest economic return. Melanie said, "We don't feel like we have to be the biggest farmers to be successful, but we want to have the most economic output of each acre."

Melanie went to Illinois State University and majored in Agri-business. She roomed with Darrell's sister and met Darrell when she stood up with his sister at her wedding. Darrell moved to Moweaqua in 1980 and worked for Marvin. Melanie and Darrell were married in 1981. They have a daughter named LeAnn who is in graduate school at Purdue University.

Besides raising corn and beans, they raise purebred Oxford sheep. The size of their flock is 50 breeding ewes. Their breeding stock is recognized nationwide for the quality-they have bred and shown 8 National Champion Rams since 1980 and 14 National Champion Ewes in the same time period. They also exhibit from coast to coast and have shipped sheep to Canada, Maine and the state of Washington.

Recent changes in their farming operation, includes using Pro-Ag's yield mapping program to compare yields by soil type, elevation, variety, etc. Another recent change was putting fertilizer attachments on the planter. They now ad a started solution with added sulfur and zinc. In summary, Darrell said, "Balancing the phosphorus and potash in the proper ratio is the most important factor for producing maximum economic yields."



Melanie & Darrell visiting LeAnn when she was interning in Australia.