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PRO-AG NEW HIRES



Emma Althoff

After working part time at Pro-Ag Consulting for the last 3 years, while attending Lake Land College, Emma

Althoff was hired for a full time position working as a Soil Technician. She is in a training program working in the field taking soil samples. While working part time, Emma was involved in all parts of our company, which included grinding soil, working in the lab and helping out in our mapping department. We look forward to Emma making a career at Pro-Ag Consulting.



Desirae Stewart

Desirae is a recent graduate of Lake Land College with a degree in Agriculture

Production. She has had a very strong interest in soils while attending Lake Land College. She competed in soil competition where after placing two years at the state level, she won 1st place at the National level. She is in training working as a Soil Technician helping our Sales Representatives collecting samples. Her long range interest is to become an Agronomist working with our clients. Desirae lives in Mattoon, IL.



Michael Carpenter

Michael started this summer working as a Soil Technician. His travels took him to

various areas working with our Sales Representatives. When asked what areas he likes most, he replied, "I love being outside, especially in Iowa and southern Illinois." Michael currently lives in Sullivan, IL.



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Visit our Web site for the latest in state wide crop news. Each area of business will have the latest information for you.

www.proagconsulting.com

To do a Simple task Exceedingly well Spells Success

SOYBEANS ON SOYBEANS??

With corn prices like they are, many farmers are considering planting more acres of soybeans. That may involve planting some acres on fields that had soybeans last year.

If your plans include beans back on beans, you want to be sure to select a soybean with a very good disease resistant package.

You may also want to take a close look at your recent soil test on the field you are going to plant. Soybeans withdraw more Potash than corn. If your levels of Potash were in the medium range when you last tested, you probably can benefit by adding some additional K₂O for this year's crop.

If you have concerns, contact your Pro-Ag Sales Representative.

A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO SAVE

We know that this year's crop prices are not looking real good, which will reduce operative income for all Midwest farmers. You will be looking for ways to reduce input costs like everyone else.

If you haven't soil tested for this coming crop, there is still time to do so. If you already have or are planning on soil testing this coming year, we have an opportunity for you to save some money.

Our Prepay Program is now in effect. For soils to be tested in 2018, if you elect to prepay before Feb 15th, you can take a 20% discount. If you prepay before March 15th, you may discount your payment 18%. It is simple to do, just decide what fields and how many acres, contact your Pro-Ag Sales Representative and we will mail you an invoice for your payment.

JIM KOESTER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

In 1995, Pro-Ag Consulting established a scholarship program for family members of our client base. The scholarship program is meant to help an interested student develop his or her skills so they too can enjoy the benefits of a career in agriculture.

The program was established when the members of the Hackerson Family were working for Pro-Ag in Windsor and Beardstown. They wanted to show their appreciation for what agriculture had done for them. To date, over \$44,000 has been awarded.

Program Details

Pro-Ag Consulting LLC will award a \$2,000 agricultural scholarship to a college bound senior whose parents or immediate family is a client of Pro-Ag Consulting. This scholarship will pay \$500 each year for 4 years to the college or university the recipient chooses to attend.

Applications can be obtained by calling your Pro-Ag Sales Representative or the office in Windsor at 1-800-879-2297. The application needs to be in the Windsor office by May 15th.

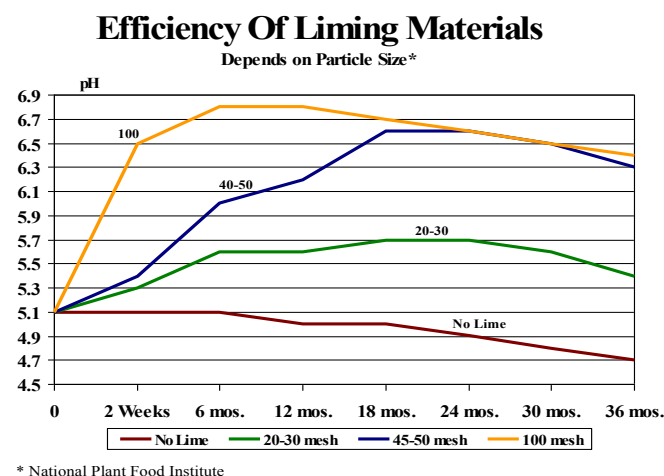
HOW IMPORTANT IS THE FINENESS OF GRIND-IN LIMESTONE

The National Plant Food Institute in Washington D.C. has released a study showing the neutralizing effect of limestone as it relates to how fine the limestone is ground. The study showed a very fine ground limestone (100% passing thru a 100 mesh screen) reacts very quickly and the long term effect is much greater than coarse ground limestone. (See Chart A)

They used three different grounds of limestone. The first was lime that would pass thru a 100 mesh screen. Typically this would be liquid lime or pelletized lime. The second was lime that would pass thru a 40-50 mesh screen which is what we normally call Ag lime in Illinois. The third was coarse ground passing thru a 20-30 mesh screen. The field used for the test had a beginning pH of 5.1.

As seen in the chart, the 20-30- mesh lime took 24 months to reach its full potential and then only corrected the pH to 5.7. The cost of this lime could very easily been the same as the 40-50- mesh lime which also reached its full potential in 24 months but had done its job by correcting the pH to 6.6. But the 100 mesh lime reached its full potential in only 6 months and continued correcting the pH past 36 months.

Some quarries in Illinois produce 100 mesh limes using a Stedman mill operation. Your county agriculture office will have copies of Producers Information Report on all quarries in Illinois. Included in that report will be the Calcium Carbonate Equivalent Correcting Factors for each quarry.



AGRONOMY FACTS

Did you know –

- ◆ Nitrogen grows leaves, Phosphate grows roots and Potash grows fruits & flowers.
- ◆ When Phosphate is spread on the ground it will move no more than 3cm from where it is placed.
- ◆ Nitrogen moves with water table. It can go up or down or sideways in the soil.
- ◆ Potash fixes in the soil to negative charged clay colloids. It will leach downward but never upward.
- ◆ If you have a low Cation Exchange Capacity (CEC) soil (below 2.5) or a silt loam soil, Potash should never be applied in the fall because it will leach downward out of the root zone before the next year's crop can use it.
- ◆ Sulfur in the Sulfate form (SO₄) moves in the soil like liquid Nitrogen. If applying Sulfate (SO₄) it is best applied in the spring close to planting.

STARTING OUR 39TH YEAR

Independent consulting companies have a relative short life span according to several independent research firms. Very few exceed 20 years. We are very proud that we are starting our 39th year.

With farming margins getting tighter each year we have been able to retain our clients and add new ones. We thank you for your continued support and look forward to working with you in the years to come.

STUDY SHOWS P & K REMOVAL LOWER

For many years, the University of Illinois Agronomy handbook has shown the amount of Phosphorus and Potassium removed by our growing crops. Where those figures came from, no one is quite sure. The new three year study now shows that corn and beans actually remove much less than what had been thought.

The three year study was for the years, 2014, 2015, and 2016. They got help from the Illinois Soybean Association and the Illinois Corn Growers Association and many Illinois grain elevators. The purpose was to take grain samples from all over the state of Illinois and find out how much Phosphorus and Potassium was in each bushel of grain that was removed from the field.

They collected 2,335 corn and 2,620 soybean samples over the three years. A commercial lab analyzed all the samples. There were considerable differences from year to year and as well as from different regions of the state.

In order to see if yield levels were related to grain nutrient levels in a way that would allow adjustments of the per bushel nutrient level to the field yield, they gathered estimated yields from the fields that produced the samples collected in 2014 and 2015. Some correlation between yield levels and nutrient levels were formed in a few samples but adjusting grain levels based on yield would have made little difference.

Grain P and K numbers in some cases were slightly different from year to year and from one region to another. They did not find any consistent effect on location or crop year on nutrient levels.

New Values 10-15% Lower

After analyzing all the samples of corn, it was determined that each bushel removed .37 lbs. of P₂O₅ fertilizer. This compares with .43 lbs.

currently in the handbook. Also for corn, the value of .24 lbs. of K₂O was removed compared to .28 lbs. in the handbook. Both are 15% less than what the handbook currently shows.

For beans the results were similar. A bushel of soybeans removed .75 lbs. of P₂O₅ compared to the book value of .85 lbs. of P₂O₅. For Potassium, a bushel removed 1.17 lbs. of K₂O compared to the book of 1.30 lbs. of K₂O. A 12% and 10% reduction respectfully.

Tests are currently being done on wheat and the results of 625 samples show the handbook to be 50% higher than actual removed numbers. When data is completed on 2017 samples, they will post results.

Summary

To put this all in proper perspective, how much difference will this make if you are using yield to replace removal? Over two seasons, one field with 200-bushel corn and the next year 60-bushel beans, using the old book numbers come to 137 lbs. of P₂O₅, or 297 lbs. of 18-46-0. New figures of 119 lbs. of P₂O₅ or 258 lbs. 18-46-0. For Potassium, old book value of 134 lbs. K₂O or 223 lbs. of 0-0-60, new figures of 118 lbs. of K₂O or 196 lbs. of 0-0-60.

Converting those removal numbers to soil test value, Phosphorus or P value would decrease 14 lbs. and K₂O value would decrease 28 lbs.

We need to remember our soils release nutrients each year that become available to our crops. Then when we consider the crop removal of nutrients and add back the soil released nutrients, our soil test will then show the new nutrient level we have in our soil.

If you would like copies of this study, contact your Pro-Ag Sales Representative for your area.

GARY FRYE RETIRES

Gary Frye of Payson, IL retired from Pro-Ag Consulting on December 31st after 34 years of service. He started in Beardstown with John Hackerson when the company was called Professional Agricultural Services. He continued to work out of the Beardstown office until Don bought out John and Joan Hackerson's interest and moved that operation to Windsor, IL. Gary's area was west of Springfield and extended into Missouri. Gary and his wife, Kathy, will continue to live in Payson, IL. Gary's accounts are now being handled by Dustin Parker out of our Windsor office.

We thank Gary for his many years of service and wish him and his family the very best in his retirement years.



Nutrient	New Value		Old Book Value
	Lb. P/K (oxide) Per Bushel		
Corn P	0.37		0.43
Corn K	0.24		0.28
Soybean P	0.75		0.85
Soybean K	1.17		1.30