



Management Solutions

Agronomic Solutions, LLC

Spring 2009 Issue



NRCS EQIP 2009 Guidelines Are Out!!!!

NRCS is taking applications now to get ready for the ranking process. Money will probably not go out until the end of May.

Some of the practices will still be utilized in 2009 but it looks like the majority of the practices for which the money will be allocated will be implemented in 2010.

The acreage cap on most of the programs has stayed at 500 acres this year. The amount of money to be paid out has decreased on a lot of the programs this year. This probably is in hopes of getting money to more farmers.

The **590 Nutrient High Management** will be at \$15 per acre for grid sampling. This must include VRT, spread lime, P & K. If you are interested in getting into Grid Sampling, this would be an excellent time to sign up for this program.

Allocations are as follows:

- 599 Nutrient Management Basic—\$4 A**
- 590 High Management—\$15 A**
- 595 Pest Management—\$2 A**
- 633 Waste Utilization—\$23 A**

Spring To Do Checklist

Spring is a busy time of year with a lot of work to get done. Here is a quick reminder checklist to make sure everything gets done.

- ✓ Get me updated soil samples
- ✓ Clean out and inspect manure storages
- ✓ Collect manure samples for analysis
- ✓ Calibrate manure spreaders
- ✓ Spread manure/fertilizer at agronomic rates
- ✓ **Keep accurate records**
- ✓ Update manure spreading & operating records
- ✓ Complete spring tillage
- ✓ Inspect / calibrate planter and drill
- ✓ Accurately & carefully plant your crops
- ✓ Scout fields for emergence
- ✓ Replant only if necessary

CNMPs are still automatically funded. If you have a CFO or your operation has an IDEM permit, you should consider getting a CNMP completed while the funds are still there assist you. Sometime down the road it will be required to have a CNMP. I'm not sure when but am rather confident that at some point in the next 5 years you will be required to have a nutrient plan to follow.

Cover Crops pay \$30 per acre. This is an increase. I would encourage farmers to experiment with cover crops this year, especially with rye grass. Rye grass has a really deep root zone to bring nutrients up and to break up compaction.

They have increased in what they will pay for **313 Waste Storage Facility.** However, brand new operations are not eligible. They will pay for improving existing CFO sites. This could be a good fit for some of you.

Call me or your local District Conservationist. We can help you put the EQIP contract together.

This is a seasonal publication produced by Agronomic Solutions, LLC for the confined feeding operators. Issues and information addressed in the newsletter will be geared towards animal feeding operation owners and managers. Hopefully you will find its contents useful in your operations.
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What is the Right Nitrogen Rate?

Nitrogen fertilizer costs continue to be one of the most expensive variable costs for corn production. Applying “more than enough N” is no longer cheap “insurance” as it once was. Applying “more than enough N” is also not environmentally friendly. High N fertilizer costs should encourage growers to critically evaluate their N fertility program.

Let me introduce you to the **N Rate Calculator** available at the following website:

<http://extension.agron.iastate.edu/soilfertility/nrate.aspx>

The calculator is set up for various states to calculate Nitrogen rates based on maximum rate of return. The two things it takes into consideration is the price of corn and the price of your Nitrogen source, whether it be 28% or anhydrous ammonia. It uses those parameters to determine the rate at which N should be applied instead of the old standards of 1.1—1.2 lbs per bushel yield. Most state universities in the Midwest are switching to the use of this tool for maximum return rates.

We went to the computer and put in different parameters to see what the maximum rate of return would be with the different variables. For instance, if you put in \$280 of 28% and \$4 corn you get a profitable N range of 154—177 with a MRTN rate at 165 lbs. If in this same scenario we increase the 28% to \$350/ton the MRTN rate drops to 157 lbs. with a Profit range of 146—168.

Corn: \$4.50 28%: \$280/ton = MRTN rate 169 lbs./profit range 158-181

Corn: \$5.00 28%: \$280/ton = MRTN rate 171 lbs./profit range 162-185

As you can see this is a good tool to use as it is adaptable to our constantly changing economic situation.

Another tool, especially where manure application has taken place, is the old stand by—the PSNT test. The PSNT test is a presidedressed Nitrate test, a soil test taken out in the field about a week before you want to sidedress the crop. *Agro-nomic Solutions* provides this service for a fee of \$3/acre (same as last year). Kosciusko Co. is working to get grant money to help farmers pay for the PSNT test. You can pull your own soil test, just make sure you keep the samples cool after pulling and get them to a lab within 24 hours. Labs have a 24 hour turn around time to get you the test results.

If you’ve had a CNMP written or if you are collecting Waste Utilization money, it is written into those practices that you use some kind of a management rule like the PSNT test to insure that you are taking credit for the Nitrogen that should have been put there from the manure. Looking at it from the other side, our crops are valuable. If we have put the manure there and if it is not still there and we have lost some of the N then we want to be able to replace that N to make sure the crops have sufficient Nitrogen to reach optimal yields.

A Spad Meter is also available as a tool through the Kosciusko Co. SWCD with whom I hope to work the summer. I plan to work more with meters and tissue testing to help calibrate the PSNT test to give us more ideas of what we can do out in the field to help micro manage for increased yields. I have had a few complaints in the Milford area with the PSNT. They feel if they go with the recommendations that they are leaving yield out in the field. That’s why we want to incorporate more tools like the spad meter and tissue testing to help us make good Nitrogen management decisions.

Another variable is that varieties are changing so much. Some of the new varieties take more N and some of the N is not being taken up into the plants as efficiently. We may need to use more fertilizer, especially foliar fertilizers, with the new varieties.

Tips to Maximize Nitrogen Efficiency

Soil Test: fertilizer recommendations based on accurate soil tests will insure that rates are as close as possible to the economic optimum so do the PSNT test

Delay Nitrogen application: the closer the N is applied to when the crop needs it, the less will be lost through leaching, volatilization, or denitrification. Fertigation through the center-pivot irrigation system is a great way to apply. Or apply foliar nitrogen

late in the season to insure that the nutrients are there when the crop needs it.

Incorporate or inject the fertilizer: basically place the fertilizer below the soil surface which increasing the likelihood that it will be used more efficiently.

Carefully choose your fertilizer: anhydrous ammonia, urea, or 28% solution. You must take into consideration which is most cost effective and how efficiently it will work out for your needs.

Hoosier Farmers: License Will Soon Be Needed to Spread Manure



House Bill 1191 has made its way through the Indiana General Assembly and on April 7 it passed in the State Senate. The bill will add oversight and regulations to your manure management process. If you apply chemical fertilizers, you need to be certified by the State Chemists office. Under HB 1191 sponsored by Representative Joe Pearson, you will soon face a similar process for spreading manure on fields. "This would bring both organic and chemical fertilizers under the auspices of the State Chemists Office," Pearson told HAT during a Statehouse interview. He said the move is needed to make the industry proactive when it comes to protecting the Hoosier environment.

Pearson said, while no one likes more government oversight and regulation, in this case it is something that is actually helping the industry, "These rules will keep you out of trouble. These rules will help farmers do things right instead of punishing them for doing things wrong." He added that Indiana farmers are among the best environmentalists and this program will help them stay that way.

The bill requires the State Chemist to adopt rules to establish certification and educational programs for fertilizer material applicators and fees for the certification and programs. The legislation also calls for penalties for those who violate the regulations.

To Apply Potash --- or Not....

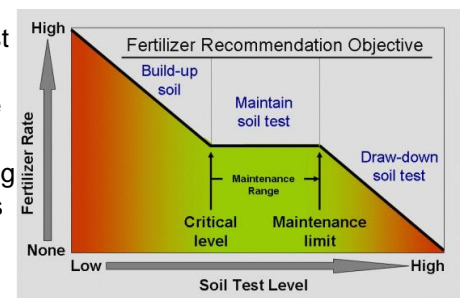
With potash selling for around \$800—\$900 per ton, it is necessary to set up criteria for when to apply and when not to apply. Using soil test results, P and K can be used on fields and portions of fields where crops are most likely to respond to fertilizer applications and not applied on areas where soil test P and K levels are already sufficient for supporting optimum crop yields. The Tri-State Fertilizer recommendations look at CEC and Potassium. In general, if the soil test is 150 ppm, the fertilizer rec is that it be skipped.

My recommendation is to take that 150 ppm and use it as a guideline to create your own critical level. For some it may be 120 ppm and for others it may be 100 ppm depending on how their soil tests look. Generally the lower the CEC of the soil or the sandier the ground, the lower your point is going to be. On sandy ground 100-110 ppm might be your cut-off point. With heavier ground it may be closer to 115-120 ppm.

Basically, just choose to apply a crop removal amount of potash at 100 lbs. for 45 bushel beans. If you push 60+

bushel beans then you need to apply about 150 lbs. per acre. If you're looking at a corn field, 100 lbs. of potash is going to cover crop removal, no matter what the crop yield.

Find your fields with the lower soil test levels and apply crop removal on just those fields to keep the soil test levels from getting lower. Fields or parts of fields with higher fertility levels are fine to skip this year.



The price of potash should be coming down by next year just based on supply and demand but for now concentrate on applying where soil test levels are low to build up the soil and skip where the levels are high. Do keep monitoring your soil through soil-testing as nutrient levels gradually decrease in most soils when fertilization stops.

Manure Auction A Hit



Manure has become quite the commodity these days, as evidenced by the prices garnered for 4,300 tons of it at an auction recently in Danville, Pa. The auction attracted about 70 people and 21 registered bidders. The 4,300 tons of poultry manure was sold in lots or "houses" based on the nitrogen, phosphorus and potash (N-P-K) analysis. There were six buyers with the highest bid coming from a farmer who paid \$20 per ton for 1,500 tons of 68-59-51 manure, for a total of \$33,000. Other high bids included \$15 per ton for 45-46-35 manure; \$21 per ton for 41-66-52 manure; and \$20 per ton for 46-108-68 manure.

To read more go to our website: <http://www.agronomicsolutionsllc.com>

FYI: If you have an NDPS in Michigan or a CFO in Indiana, permitted by IDEM, it is legal to distribute manure, but there is paper work that must be completed. In MI a manifest must be filled out and both parties must sign it. In IN & MI a manure analysis is required before any manure can be given away so the person receiving the manure knows what the nutrient value is. Make sure the **analysis is done before the transfer**. Whether giving or selling manure you must keep up the paperwork.

Place
Stamp
Here

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I have been doing research on Monty's Plant Food and find tremendous potential in this product. This is especially true if you use manure to help nutrients become more plant available and to decrease fertilizer expenses.

I am not trying to make a sales pitch—I don't sell Monty's. I do believe it is a product that can be very beneficial on your fields or on your gardens. My recommendation would be to put 1/2 gallon of liquid carbon down early in the spring for best results. They also have foliar products to put on crops. They should be timed with important growth stages and crop stress.

If you want to try it, don't begin "all or nothing". Experiment with a field or two. Leave some "check areas" so you can compare results. Give me a call and we will come out, dig up roots and do yield estimates later in the summer. I can help you decide if its going to be profitable for your farm.

Monty's can be purchased at Wana Feed Service in Shipshewana (260-768-4567). The cost of 1/2 gallon liquid carbon is approximately \$11. per acre.



Monty's Summary

Monty's Plant Food vs. Fertilizer

- Monty's is food for the plant when it is under stress
- When timing is correct = dramatic results
- No stress probably = little to no results
- Liquid Carbon = better soil health and nutrient availability
⇒ Great to use in fields manured regularly

Since it's not fertilizer

- Still need to soil test
- Depending on results, could still need other commercial fertilizer



For more information call me at (260) 593-2092

Dates to Remember

July 29: Manure Field Day
Albion, IN