

SFG Update

Smith Fertilizer & Grain

November 8, 2013

Mark White Knoxville Location



Unlike the United States Government, SFG has been open for business everyday that harvest is taking place. I had to get my "jab" in so I got it out of the way first. We are entering the back stretch of harvest and so far most yields have exceeded what was expected. Notice I said "expected" not "wanted". The hot dry late summer weather took the top out of the local yields but again we have been impressed by how well many of the hybrids and varieties handled the stress.

Some farms in our trade area missed even the meager rain most of us got and unfortunately their yields are greatly reduced. Nation wide the reports are the early planted crops were very good and the Government and private forecasters continue to raise the size of this crop. The annual debate of when we will see the harvest lows is in full bloom with most analysts now predicting this will happen in early November. Storage space is readily available. After 3 years of higher prices, the general feeling is most producers will pass on corn priced in the low 4's and will opt to store it. If enough bushels get locked up, terminals and processors will be forced to pry it loose with an attractive basis. My advice for those that choose this option is to make sure they are among the first 25 percent to sell a mid winter rally and not in the last 25

percent that may miss the boat. Even with beans having a profit edge going into the 2014 planting season, we will still plant lots of corn and today it looks like we will have a 2 billion carryout staring us in the face. We had an export market report last week that exceeded even the most optimistic guesses, yet we still ended the day lower on both corn and beans as the traders look to the November production report that comes out on the 8th. Harvest prices for beans remain in the low to mid 12 range offering a chance to convert some crop to cash. As with corn if a lot of bushels end up in storage we will see an improved basis. South America planting weather will also have an impact on prices as they expect to plant record acres. China continues to be a huge buyer of US beans and even

Russia has purchased beans for the first time in almost 30 years. The fastest way to work through a big crop is to ship it out of the country. As harvest winds up we want to remind everyone that SFG offers extended unloading hours, fast unloads, on farm pickup and competitive pricing. We have plenty of storage space and look forward to helping you get your crop harvested in a timely fashion.



New Dry Fertilizer Shed Being Built at Centerville

We are making slow but steady progress to get our new dry fertilizer facility finished at Centerville. We should be operational in December 2013, look for more information in the next newsletter.



Kyle Smith Albia Location Manager



Harvest is wrapping up. We have been extremely busy here at Albia. With the end of harvest, we move on to thinking about feeding our livestock through the winter. One thing we all worry about is the high cost of feeding cattle. Cow/calf producers must rethink their production strategies. I have included a few tips on cutting feeding costs.

Use Co- Products

Co-Products are less expensive per ton of dry matter than corn so enhanced profitability for the operation should occur. Corn Co-Products like distillers grains (DDG's) and corn gluten are outstanding feed ingredients for livestock and poultry.

Thanks to the ethanol industry, which produces most of these products, they are readily available.

Reduce Forage Waste

Have you ever watched cattle eat hay from a round bale feeder? How much waste is observed? Many experts say 20-30% of the forage is trampled into the ground/manure thus losing feeding value. To properly store bales it requires a site that has been developed with drainage in mind. Do not have the bales touch, preferably leaving 1.5 feet of space for air circulation. Having space between the bales also allows rain and snow to go to the ground rather than being held up touching the hay. We have a couple types of hay feeders in stock and can also get whatever type of hay feeder you would want.

Utilize Crop Residues

Think of the tons of corn and bean residues left on the ground after harvest! We continue to throw this material away year after year. Corn stover contains about 5%-6% protein and almost hay-like NEg values. Not great, but if properly supplemented with co-products,

corn and a co-product balancer can make a feed that's quite adequate. It is paramount that the cow's body condition be maintained and not allowed to slide. Crop residues should be put through a grinding process to enhance digestibility. The use of low moisture tubs like EnergiLass should be encouraged as these improve fiber digestibility by as much as 20% (Kansas State University). Contact SFG to see how we can help cut your feed costs this winter.

If considering the convenience of a self feeder program consider Kents new Exact Beef with Kent Controlled Intake Technology. SFG will be offering this product at \$40/ton off through December 31,2013

We are planning a noon feed meeting December 5th and will be sending out informational postcards later this month. Hope to see you there!

I am looking forward to spending Thanksgiving with my family. I hope that you have a safe holiday with your loved ones.

Mark Young Senior Agronomy Manager



If you were to survey the leading agriculturalists in this country today as to what they consider to be the most important practices to follow in the production of crops, the application of agricultural limestone, or aglime, would certainly rank near the top of the list. The idea that aglime is one of the most effective "production inputs" that you can buy is well established. Excessive soil acidity has been an agricultural practice at least since the beginning of planted crop. In terms of twenty first century agriculture, the use of aglime has become associated with proven agronomic and economic benefits. Its capability to increase crop yields significantly under moderately to strongly acid soil conditions represents one of your most efficient means of increasing crop production and income.

Yet, as important as the application of aglime is to crop production, it is too frequently postponed by many farmers. The national impact of this situation can be amply demonstrated with statistics, which show that annual aglime usage in the United States has historically run at less than 30 percent of the total required to adjust the pH of acid soils to the minimum levels needed to support the economical production of most crops.

This disparity between the need and the actual use of aglime, in view of many proven benefits associated with aglime, suggests that several factors are at work in the marketplace that discourage aglime usage.

- Short term land leases often prohibit its use because they place too much of a financial burden on the tenant.
- Farmers don't appreciate the true value of aglime or don't know it is needed on their fields.
- It is sometimes difficult to see results.
- They think it is too expensive.

Proper use of aglime is one of the most important management inputs in successful crop production. Excess soil acidity is a primary constraint to high, profitable

yields and long term soil productivity. Benefits of a sound liming program.

improves soil physical, chemical, and biological properties

- improves symbiotic nitrogen fixation by legumes
- influences the availability of plant nutrient
- reduces toxicities
- improves the effectiveness of certain herbicides
- supplies calcium, magnesium, and other minerals

The purpose of SFG agronomists is to provide information on soil acidity and the use of aglime. They are not to be a textbook, but rather a point of sale guide for the farmer. Be sure to talk to your SFG agronomist to understand the principles and concepts of aglime which will result in your increased profitability through the use of aglime.

**Greg Willer
Agronomy Sales**



Harvest is slowly wrapping up. Now is the time to start thinking about nitrogen applications for next year's crop. Smith Super Grow can be a highly effi-

cient and effective source of nitrogen for the 2014 corn crop. Super Grow is a Co-product from the Heartland Lysine plant that is produced from bacteria that feed on corn sweeteners. The product has a positive charge ion that attaches to the soil and must be released by soil microorganisms to be in the nitrate form.

Unlike other forms of nitrogen, Super Grow is not susceptible to volatility. This characteristic makes it the perfect product to apply during the winter months when the ground may be frozen and an anhydrous bar would not be possible. Super Grow is applied with floaters by skilled applicators so there is little to no ground compaction.

The Super Grow analysis is; 7-.5-1-4. A ton of Super Grow will provide a mix of 140 pounds of nitrogen, 10 pounds of phosphorus, 20 pounds of potassium and 80 pounds of sulfur (sulfur has been lacking in many fields). This is an environmentally friendly and safe form of nitrogen that will not hurt the earthworms in your field. SG is licensed and approved by Iowa Fertilizer Law and SFG has over 20 years of experience with the product. This is a very good option for growers who are practicing no-till in their fields. If you would like to know more about the product, please give your SFG agronomist a call.

For more articles and market information please visit our website at www.sfgiowa.com.

**Brad Kaufman
Agronomy Sales**



As harvest wraps up we are starting to think about fall fertilizer. We have been testing out some products on dry fertilizer that has been providing very good yield increases in both corn and beans. Avail has been providing nice yield increases in corn and Titan has been providing the same in beans. So what do these products do?

Avail helps make Phosphorus fertilizer more readily available to the plant.

Phosphate is getting tied up in the soil by elements such as Iron, Calcium, and Magnesium, making it unavailable to the crop. Avail encapsulates the Phosphate and captures the elements in the "shell" to make the Phosphorus more readily available. Studies have shown that we are only utilizing 15-20% of the Phosphate we are applying to the soil. When using Avail that number jumps to 75-80% utilization. In the last two years we have seen average yield increases of 15-20 bushel per acre.

Hybrid	Moisture	Yield
Avail	14.5	166.5
Titan	14.3	156.4
Check	14.6	149.3

Titan is a biochemical fertilizer catalyst that helps break down residue and release the organic matter in the residues.

The traditional way we fertilize is to fertilize ahead of corn ground and have enough left out to support a bean crop. However, by using Avail and making the Phosphate more readily available it is recommended to fertilize ahead of each crop. By using Titan on corn stalks with additional P and K we have seen an 8-11 bushel per acre yield increase over the traditional way of fertilizing.

Hybrid	Moisture	Yield
Traditional Fertilizer Program	11.2	48.5
X-30-60 Titan	11.5	56.6
X-50-60 Titan	11.4	59.6

Both of these products provide very good returns on your investments.

**Taylor Banks
Agronomy Sales**



With harvest starting to wrap up it is time to start thinking about fall field work to break up crop residue and reduce compaction in fields. Compaction causes many issues to a planted crop, such as poor emergence, poor infiltration of water and nutrients, poor root

development, and weak stalks later in the season. In recent years, disks or "turbo tills" have been used to break up corn-stalk residue and aid in releasing nutrients back into the soil. These tools work very well in that aspect but they do not alleviate any compaction issues in the fields. The best way to reduce compaction through tillage is to pull a knife ripper or a disk chisel to break up the plow pan and get below the area normally worked with a disk or field cultivator. With both of these tools the operator must use some awareness to the topography of the field as they do loosen up a lot of dirt that can lead to erosion problems if the row pattern is not contoured to the hills. Knife rippers on hilly ground is probably the better alternative since they have a shank

that breaks up the subsoil compaction, but unlike disk chisels leave crop residue on the surface to help with erosion concerns. The key to compaction reducing implements is having a tractor big enough to pull the implement as fast and as deep as it was intended to go. For most knife rippers the industry standard is between 30 and 40 horsepower per shank. Pulling an implement too shallow or too slow can reduce its performance and also cause additional compaction from the wheels of the tractor. When considering using a ripper or disk chisel to reduce compaction this fall keep in mind that good field conditions and the right tool will give the best results in your fields next spring.