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### Tribute to Dr. Nass

Hans Nass, a long-time wheat breeder at Agriculture Canada in Charlottetown, passed away a few weeks ago. He was still involved in wheat breeding efforts that have spanned four decades of producing some very fine winter and spring wheat varieties. Dr. Nass and his team have produced at least 18 commercial varieties starting with the release of Vernon in 1977, and also breeding Belvedere, Walton, Hartland, Borden, Winsloe, Grandview, Sampson and others. He also helped grain growers by producing the annual Cereal Guide for Variety Selection. Dr. Hans Nass made big contributions to Maritime agriculture and will be missed.

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# CropLinks

information on forages, corn and cereals

## Program Changes and New Funding

The NSDAF programs office in Truro will be sending out information on the Farm Investment Fund (FIF) and new federal funding fairly soon. Some information on the three-year federal funding amounts was given to growers at recent field crop meetings that were co-sponsored by AgraPoint. The eligibility details on new items such as manure equipment components, winter cover crops, concrete pads for winter feeding sites in fields, grazing management plans, water management projects and others are still being finalized. For other information not contained in their mailout, contact the NSDAF programs office (1-866-844-4276), visit the website [www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/prm](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/prm) or check with your regional ARC (NSDAF's Agricultural Resource Co-ordinators). Regarding Lime Trucking Assistance and Nutrient Management Planning (NMP), here are a few details to remember when it comes to program funding:

- AgraPoint can do your Nutrient Management Plan. We have five qualified planners with many years of experience in field crops, vegetables, berry crops and tree fruits. Bill and Jack do the field crop NMPs and visit your farm to discuss field productivity, crop rotations, prepare three-year 'best-fit' fertilizer/manure/lime recommendations and do a follow-up visit to explain the NMP binder. There is lots of interest in doing NMP's this year, so contact us soon to get on our list to do a NMP in 2005. For those field croppers already on our "NMP to do list" you will be contacted soon after the programs have been released to provide you with a quote based on acreage, crops and mapping needs. You can't get lime trucking assistance without a NMP.
- For those that have a NMP already done, you are now eligible for the Limestone Trucking subsidy starting April 1<sup>st</sup> providing this will be a listed item on your FIF application (the April 1st start only applies to lime and not any other projects).
- Another change in lime assistance is that if you are planning to do a NMP this year, you are not eligible for both NMP and lime trucking assistance in the same year. The NSDAF programs office will only accept one application per farm per year and projects started before applying to FIF do not qualify.

## New Pocket-size Record Book

For growers that didn't get a chance to see the new AgraPoint Field Crops Record Book at recent winter meetings....these are now available. Each pocketsize booklet contains recording pages for 27 fields and a spot to capture seeding, tillage, lime, manure, fertilizer, pesticide, yield and general cropping comments. This compact booklet provides you the means to get cropping information from the field to the office logbook, NMP binder or software program. If you have a use for this pocketsize record book call or e-mail us re: the quantity you need for 2005.

## Spring Wheat Seeding Rates and Dates

There is lots of yield data from NSAC research (through the Crop Development Institute) to show that early seeding is so critical with spring wheat. For the last three years, Caldwell and MacDonald have compared an early May seeding with a later date (about 3 weeks later) on several spring wheat varieties. In 2002 and 2003 there was a 1.0-1.5 t/ha yield advantage with the early seeding. This research adds weight to the old recommendation that "if you don't get spring wheat in the ground by May 15<sup>th</sup> then keep it in the bag".

The yield response in these NSAC trials was not as conclusive for seeding rate, although only two fairly high rates were studied (340 vs. 440 seeds/m<sup>2</sup>). To keep it simple we'd suggest seeding at a rate to have 375-400 seeds/m<sup>2</sup>. You calculate this by getting the 1000 kernel weight from the seed you're using (from the seed supplier or checking it yourself). I called a local supplier of Hartland wheat and obtained a 1000 kernel weight of 36 grams. For AC Hartland in this case, if you want 400 seeds/m<sup>2</sup> then multiply  $(36 \times .4) \times 10 = 144\text{kg/ha} = 130\text{ lbs/acre}$  seeding rate.

## Pre-Emerge Corn Herbicides

Most corn growers in this province use a broad spectrum pre-emerge herbicide tank mix, if they're not growing Roundup Ready hybrids. In checking prices I've found that both Prowl-Atrazine and Primextra II Magnum are your two lower cost options. (Primextra II Magnum alone won't control triazine resistant weeds, all other product tank mixes listed in this article will handle triazines). The co-pack of Converge 75WDG and Converge 480 will cost about \$10/acre more. The newer formulation Converge Pro is about \$14/acre more. If you are using Frontier-Marksman or Primextra-Banvel expect to pay about \$19/acre more. The new Primextra-Callisto option will be \$24/acre more money, however some rebate opportunities with Callisto occur so check with your supplier for details. This price comparison used intermediate product application rates if a range existed. Before purchasing corn herbicide do some pricing comparisons, and always read labels before using. Some of these products are pre-emerge only, can't be used on sweet corn, are not suitable for soil with less than 2% organic matter, etc. Call us or your supplier if you have specific weed control questions.

## Pasture Survey

The Soil and Crop Improvement Association of Nova Scotia recently began a Pasture Improvement Initiative for the province. In order to gain a better understanding of the state of pasture and grazing management in Nova Scotia a survey was sent out to all sheep, beef and dairy producers. Please take the time to fill out the survey. The information you provide will help the steering committee develop an effective program.

## It's True — Lime for the Cost of Trucking

Irving Pulp and Paper in New Brunswick is giving agricultural grade calcite lime to producers for the cost of trucking it away. And even better, this lime is of sufficient quality, both purity and grind size, to be eligible for the 75% trucking subsidy under the Nova Scotia Provincial Farm Investment Fund.

There is a limited supply of this waste product available at any given time. Trucking costs are \$3.00 per mile for a 30 tonne load. Based on a 30 tonne load, the cost per tonne of lime (**without the 75% trucking subsidy**) landed in the following communities is: Antigonish \$34.03; Bridgetown \$43.76; Bridgewater \$40.03; Kentville \$38.43; Mabou \$45.10; Sydney \$50.96; Truro \$24.83; and Windsor \$34.96. (*Updated May 5, 2005 to reflect revised rates supplied by Irving.*)

**Caution must be taken not to over apply this liming material.** It is reported that this lime is finely ground and therefore quite reactive. Over application could lead to soil pH levels higher than 6.5 which can decrease the availability of important micronutrients such as boron, zinc, iron, manganese and copper.

Though inexpensive and effective as a liming material this product might not be the best choice for your particular soil requirement. Soils very low in magnesium, especially when high levels of potassium are present, should be limed with a dolomitic limestone. Dolomitic limestone is the most economical source of magnesium in this region. A soil test will help determine if a calcite or dolomitic limestone is best for a particular soil.

If you are interested in ordering the calcite lime from Irving, contact Bill Crowe at 1-506-433-0867 or 1-800-833-9899. To be eligible for the trucking subsidy you must have an approved Nutrient Management Plan.

## Forages Over-Winter Well

Some winter kill and injury has been reported in alfalfa, but generally forage crops over-wintered well this year. Many factors contribute to winter kill or injury in forage crops making it hard to predict. Large fluctuations in temperatures, lack of snow cover, very low temperatures, desiccation, wet soils, high water tables, frost heaving, lack of winter hardening, diseases, susceptible varieties and cutting frequency all play a part.

Fields that have suffered winter injury are much slower to green up. A close inspection is needed to determine the extent of winter injury. Many plants that have been injured can recover. If a field has suffered some winter injury, an application of a mixed fertilizer that includes phosphorous can help. Phosphorous plays an important role in plant physiology including energy transformation, nutrient transport and the synthesis of new lateral roots and shoots. A soil test will help determine the amount of phosphorous to apply. As well, first cut should be delayed by a week or two on these fields to help them recover.