

CropLinks

information on *forages, corn and cereals*

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Do NS Soybeans Need Early N Boost?

With the cooler soil and the slower soybean development, there have been many growers pondering or applying 20-30lbs N/acre fertilizer in the past 2-3 weeks. The nodulation was pretty good in most fields, but it took forever to have most soybeans "green up" properly. In some recent comments by Ontario's Soybean Specialist, Horst Bonner; he says previous research has shown very inconsistent economic yield response to any nitrogen fertilizer on soybeans when yields are below 60 bu/ac (or 1.6 mt/ac). In 2011 OMAFRA set up a number of experiments to see if applying slow release granular nitrogen at seeding time along with sulphur, or a slow release foliar product at the R3 pod set stage will pay off. We need to do some of this research next year under Nova Scotia conditions.

Starter Notes

It's been an interesting cropping season so far. This year it took us about 8 weeks to get the majority of NS corn planted; last year it took less than 2 weeks. May-June was ideal growing conditions (damp and cool) for grasses, but too cold for alfalfa. Nitrogen efficiency has not been great with winter wheat; however fusarium damage looks to be surprisingly low. Now that we are into this run of near 30C daytime temperatures, we'll soon be needing some decent and timely rains as the August – September "make or break" growing period approaches. This issue of CropLinks; touches on some upcoming field days, winter wheat pre-harvest weed control, starter N for winter wheat, early N fertilizer boost on soybeans, fall seeding of forages and a corn yield contest we are premiering this fall. Vacation time is approaching for both Bill and Jack. Those farmers who normally contact Bill for agronomy information should call Jack from August 1 – 10th at 670-5777. From August 11 – 26th Bill is the agronomist to call at 890-4555 for all NS crop inquires.

NSAC – CDI and AgraPoint have an Open House on Tuesday, August 2nd from 3 – 5pm at the Cereal – Soybean – Camelina Test Plots at Lyndhurst Farms in Canning. We'll assemble at test plots on the old Agrifest site at the Peill Farm. This will be a great opportunity to see some of the new winter wheat varieties at a harvest ready stage, new Roundup Ready 2 Soybean varieties that are

in their 2nd year of testing, plus a camelina variety and nitrogen rate trial. Both Professor Claude "Camelina" Caldwell and CDI researcher Doug MacDonald will be in attendance to answer the hard questions. Call Jack at 670-5777 if you need directions to find the trial site.

There is also a **Deep Zone Tillage Session and Tour done by Jude Boucher from University of Connecticut in Truro (July 27th) and the Valley (July 28th).** The details for this are on our website at www.agrapoint.ca/deepzonetillage.php or for more info on Truro session call Amy Sangster (890-8629). The Valley event has a classroom session in the morning, and a field demonstration in the afternoon at Melvin Farms (in Woodville – Tory Lane cauliflower field). Corn growers would benefit the most from attending morning classroom session with Jude at Kentville Research Station. More information can be had by calling Viliam Zvalo (670-5003) or Jack (670-5777).

Winter Wheat Pre-Harvest Weed Whacking

Just wanted to remind growers that are planning to spray any wheat pre-harvest for significant escapes of ragweed, mayweed or grasses, that glyphosate should be applied at 30% grain moisture or less. In cereals, this is at the hard dough stage, when you can only leave a thumbnail impression on the seed. Apply at least 7 days prior to harvest. An application more than 14 days prior to harvest may reduce crop yield and/or quality. It should be noted that glyphosate products are not registered for pre harvest application when the crop will be used for seed. Just a reminder when seeding wheat in mid-September to early October, apply about 15 units of nitrogen fertilizer at this time regardless of the manure application or the previous crop. This starter N really improves fall tillering and plant development. Typically this could come from 50lbs/ac of 34-0-0, or 100lbs/ac 17-17-17, or in lower P & K situations use 175 lbs/ac of 12-24-24.

First Nova Scotia Corn Yield Contest

The purpose of this contest is to promote corn production in Nova Scotia and to publicly recognize the growers and production practices that achieve high corn yields.

It is simple to enter. Any corn silage or grain corn producer who grows 10 acres or more is eligible to enter. Each grower is allowed only one entry. Entry forms will be available on the AgraPoint website after August 1 (or by calling our office) . To qualify for the contest, entries must be faxed to Bill (896-7299) or mailed & postmarked no later than August 25th. Due to capacity restrictions the number of entries will be limited to the first 6 silage and grain entries from the western area and the first 6 silage and grain entries from the central and eastern areas, so be sure to enter early.

For the purpose of the competition, the harvested area must be a continuous area of at least 1.25 ACRES. The four border and end rows of a field can not be included in this area. Only combined or harvested yields will be eligible; with two hopper or high dump loads taken per field. Stubble height for whole plant silage will be no lower than 20 cm. Grain weights will be corrected to 15.5% moisture. Silage weights will be corrected to 100% dry matter. Moisture determinations will be through the provincial laboratory.

A small committee will verify yields and determine the winners. This committee shall have the authority to arbitrate any point of contention and their decision will be final.

In case of a tie the grower with the lowest cost of production will win. The winners will be announced at the Soil and Crop winter meeting. The winners will receive a plaque and prize.

This yield contest not only provides Nova Scotia corn growers a chance to participate in a good natured competition with their peers but also advances crop production techniques as a whole. We hope you will take the time to enter.

Late Summer/Fall Seeding of Forage

When it comes to late summer and fall seeding of forage, we have had our best luck with timothy. Warm soils, fall rains, less weed pressure and cooler temperatures in September and October all help get good establishment, but its' the exceptional winter hardiness of timothy that makes the fall seeding of this grass so successful. No other grass will establish and over winter as well as timothy when sown in the fall. Other grasses like brome, meadow fescue and tall fescue depending on the severity of the winter can also be sown successfully in the fall. Grasses to avoid seeding in the fall include reed canarygrass, orchardgrass and perennial ryegrass. These grasses are too tender to make it through the winter as a seedling.

For fall seeding we recommend seeding timothy @ 8-10 kg/ha in late August or early September. If you want to grow a timothy/alfalfa mix it is best to sow in mid August. The risk of winter injury or kill to the alfalfa can be reduced by seeding earlier. Red clover is best over-sown into the grass on the frost early the following spring.

Several farms have successfully established timothy following winter wheat or barley. It is important to control any volunteer grain prior to seeding. Even a moderate grain cover will smother the new seedlings. A pass with the harrows soon after grain harvest will help the fall-out from the back of the combine to germinate. A final tillage five to ten days following will control the volunteer grain.

Be sure to soil test and add lime and use a starter fertilizer if needed. A moderate application of manure tilled in prior to seeding is often all that is required. Take the time to prepare a good firm seedbed; it really pays off when seeding small seeded grasses like timothy. Using a land level prior to seeding will help firm up the seedbed resulting in greater germination and a more even stand. You may even want to consider rolling after seeding to enhance germination and help prevent the seedbed from drying out.