

Dave Ferch – Andy Awald
Hamlet, Indiana
574.867.2441
farmfert@earthlink.net

Carl Netzer
Stillwell, Indiana
219.369.9121
cnjn@csinet.net



FARM FERTILIZERS & SEEDS, INC.

Vince Hoffman
Bourbon, Indiana
574.342.4435
lhfarmfert@kconline.com

Westville Farm Supply, Inc.
Kevin Hannon
Westville, Indiana
219.785.2624
westvillefs@verizon.net

WEATHER ALMANAC

February 2007

This Month's Issue Includes:

- Plan Now for Timely Planting
- Benefit of Inoculation
- The 4th Nutrient
- February thru Summer Weather

4th MAJOR NUTRIENT

Does your corn get the sulfur it needs for optimum performance? Sulfur is not generally retained in the soil...especially in low capacity (sandy) soils. The benefits of sulfur include:

- Increased efficiency of nitrogen used by plants.
- Increased protein in grain and grasses. Sulfur rivals nitrogen in protein synthesis.
- Controlled nitrate build-up in forage crops.
- Improved physical condition of soils.

Our primary products to provide needed sulfur to the crop are:

- Starter fertilizer (included in our top 3 starter formulations)
- Ammonium sulfate in plowdown fertilizer
- K-Mag

Let's discuss a low-cost sulfur recommendation for your corn this season.

APPLICATION SUCCESS KIT

If you are doing your own application, you know how critical it is to have the right things on-hand to keep your sprayer moving. Additionally, having the right Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) with you at all times is not only a safe bet, but is also the law. Add in the required recordkeeping put upon you by State and Federal Regulations, and you've got a lot of things to worry about! Let Farm Fertilizers & Seeds help you with our pre-packaged APPLICATION SUCCESS KIT. For one fixed price, you will receive:

- 2 One Pint containers of Defoamer
- 1 Gallon of Wipeout Tank Cleaner
- 2 Pairs of Chemical Resistant Gloves
- 1 Pair of Chemical Safety Goggles
- 1 Set of Tyvek Coveralls for Emergency Use
- 10 pks of StrikeZone WDG Drift Control, treats 2000 gal. of Spray Solution
- 20% off Coupon for Tee-Jet Nozzles purchased through Farm Fertilizers & Seeds from Agro-Chem
- Sprayer Record Book with calculator, fulfills all Federal and State Regulations
- Spray Adjuvant Guide
- 5% Coupon for additional Adjuvant Purchases through 4-1-07

Contact us today and see how our APPLICATION SUCCESS KIT can help you out this year!

STARTER FERTILIZER STARTS HERE

Most people don't give much thought to where their starter fertilizer came from before it is loaded in their truck in the spring. Farm Fertilizers & Seeds, on the other hand, takes pride in the history and production of your starter fertilizer. All our starter fertilizer comes to Hamlet either by truck or by rail in its basic components. We generally use four ingredients to produce our custom starter blends. All our starters are blended in our liquid blender, using a certified calibrated scale, so all our blends are accurate. By producing them this way, you can be assured that your starter fertilizer is thoroughly blended and of the correct analysis. Blending by weight, and not by volume, is the only accurate way to determine analysis of your liquid starter blends. Throughout the year, our blends are tested by the Office of the Indiana State Chemist to ensure accuracy in their analysis. We are very proud of the high success rate that our blends have in meeting our minimum guaranteed analysis. If you aren't buying your starter from us, be sure to ask how the product was produced and for an assurance of analysis. If you are buying from us, you can be sure that the fertilizer is a quality product!

WEATHER ALMANAC...MID-WINTER THROUGH SUMMER:

Here's your February Weather Almanac as prepared by consulting meteorologist Frank Watson.

February Weather Forecast...

Temperatures are favored to average below normal with near normal precipitation totals expected during February.

Variable clouds are expected to open the forecast period on Thursday, February 1 with passing snows into the weekend of February 3 and 4. Snow totals are expected to be light.

Fair skies are favored for Monday, February 5 and clouds are expected to return on Tuesday, February 6. Look for a fairly significant winter storm as the week goes on with locally heavy snow totals possible and colder temperatures.

Clouds should break over the weekend of February 10-11 with lingering light snows.

Prospects are fair for another significant winter event sometime Tuesday through Thursday, February 13-15. Locally heavy snow totals are possible with falling temperatures.

A blend of sun and clouds accompanied with passing light snows are favored from Friday to Wednesday, February 16-21. Snow totals should be light.

More clouds and sun are expected from Thursday to Sunday, February 22-25. Passing snows with cooler than average temperatures are also expected during this time period.

More sun with decreasing chances for snow is favored from Monday through Wednesday, February 26 – 28. Temperatures should warm to close out the month.

March Weather Outlook...

Temperatures are expected to average below normal with below normal precipitation totals. Favored dates for heavier precipitation center on March 1-2, 6-7, 19-20, 24-25, 27-28 and 31.

Long Range Weather Outlook...

The heart of spring through the heart of summer.

April could show near normal temperatures with below normal precipitation.

May is expected to bring below normal temperatures and near normal precipitation.

June should bring near normal temperatures with below normal precipitation.

July is likely to feature slightly below normal temperatures and below normal precipitation.

August may bring above normal temperatures with below normal precipitation

February Astronomy Calendar...

This month opens with a Full Moon on Groundhog Day, February 2nd. This month's full moon is commonly known as the Snow Moon as we're typically in deep snow cover over much of the northern tier of the U.S. at this time. Get out a pair of binoculars on this same night and take a close look around the full moon. That bright light close to the moon is the planet Saturn.

Mercury will be in good viewing position in the evening sky from February 3rd to 11th. View Mercury on Friday, February 9. It's about a handspan above the horizon at sunset with Venus and Uranus nearby.

As the sun sets on Saturday, February 10th, Saturn is not only rising and visible through the night, it's at its closest approach to Earth.

For easy planet viewing the next few nights, look for Jupiter near the moon on Monday, February 12. Mars will be near the moon on Wednesday, February 14 and finally Venus will near the moon on Monday, February 19.

The moon will be passing through the Pleiades, the star-cluster commonly known as the Seven Sisters on the evening of Friday, February 23. If skies are clear you should check this one out.

The only meteor shower of the month is on Monday, February 26. The Delta Leonid meteor shower is on this night with the moon waxing towards full.

There is a neat website that NASA has for viewing the International Space Station (ISS). It's fairly easy to navigate and gives you date and time for your location for viewing the Space Station. The address is: <http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/station>

SOYBEAN INOCULANT PAY-OFF

Midwestern universities have been testing soybean inoculant products for several years with consistently positive results. Yield increases of two to seven bushels per acre have been common in productive producer fields where seed was inoculated properly and planted into moist soil in a timely manner.

Ohio State University has conducted tests over the past 12 consecutive years on fields one would generally not expect a yield increase due to the fact that they are rotated, well-drained, and with adequate pH and fertility. The average yield increase from 64 Ohio trials is 1.94 bushel/acre (with inoculation material cost of \$3.00/acre).

North Dakota State University tested 15 to 39 soybean inoculation products yearly during 1999 through 2005. The average yield increase from those 155 product evaluations was 2.7 bushel/acre, with a yield change due to inoculation ranging from -0.5 bushel/acre in 2005 to 8.2 bushel/acre in 2003.

Michigan State University conducted soybean inoculation trials in 2003 and 2004 containing 12 and 13 treatments respectively. The average yield increase for the six test sites in 2003 and five test sites in 2004 was 1.33 bushel/acre and 0.72 bushel/acre respectively.

Purdue University has tested inoculation products for eleven years and reported average yield increases up to 2.4 bushel/acre in some years and a long-term average yield increase of 1.0 bushel/acre.

Iowa State University in 2004 evaluated twelve inoculant products at two locations. The combined results from the two location tests ranged from -2.4 bushel/acre to 4.4 bushel/acre.

Over the long term, soybean inoculation appears to be profitable throughout the Midwest. Although yield increases are small in many fields with a history of soybeans, the cost to inoculate the seed is also small.

Let's talk about the potential return from inoculation of your seed beans this season.

TIMELY FEBRUARY PLANNING MEANS TIMELY APRIL PLANTING

If you plant potatoes (or corn) on Good Friday, you're looking at a week earlier planting date this year compared to last. Regardless, February is the month to finalize your plans for spring so you (and we) can be ready to go to the field as soon as weather and field conditions permit.

We need your up-to-date **field maps** showing what crops will go where so we can be prepared to provide timely delivery/application of the needed products and services during the spring rush.

We need to finalize your **seed** needs as soon as possible to assure you will have the specific high performance hybrids and varieties you want to plant.

We need to arrange for **ProKote Gold seed treatment** for your soybeans (up to 30 days prior to planting) to protect your seed against early season stress and increase potential yield. ProKote seed treatment enhances early season vigor, improved stand, and accelerated canopy closure by 3 to 6 days. Multi-year tests show an average of 3½ bushel yield increase per acre.

Are you planning to plant more corn acres this season? Which fields will be corn on corn? Will those fields have complete and balanced fertility to sustain optimum potential yield and assure the extra return you are looking for? We need to plan **spring fertilizer** so we can schedule application to build or maintain fertility levels as soon as weather and field conditions permit for timely planting.

We need to finalize your **starter fertilizer** order and discuss the value of micronutrient enhancements.

We need to review your **herbicide program** focusing on those problem weeds that are taking yield and put together recommendations to give you effective weed control in every field.

We need your current **cell phone number** (let us know even if you think we should already have it) so we can keep in touch during the rush of spring. We also appreciate pre-season notice of any changes in billing for this season...makes record keeping and settlement MUCH easier and more efficient.

Our job each spring is to do our very best to stay ahead of your planter (and follow close behind) so you can maximize the benefit from timely planting. We can best do this if we sit down together now and update your maps, files and plans so when you call for products and application we can respond promptly. THANK YOU in advance for your cooperation.

Weather Lore... Why Do We Have A 'Leap Year'?

The solar year is approximately six hours longer than the calendar year, which is why February must gain an extra day every four years. The extra date in February is called Leap Year with February 2008 having 29 days.

Area Normals For The Month

JAN 28 - FEB 3
AVD. HIGH 31
AVG. LOW 14
SUNSHINE 47
% DAYLIGHT HOURS
Precipitation .42

FEBRUARY 4 - 10
AVD. HIGH 32
AVD. LOW 15
SUNSHINE 41
% DAYLIGHT HOURS
Precipitation .49

FEBRUARY 11 - 17
AVD. HIGH 35
AVD. LOW 17
SUNSHINE 41
% DAYLIGHT HOURS
Precipitation .49

FEBRUARY 18 - 24
AVD. HIGH 37
AVD. LOW 19
SUNSHINE 46
% DAYLIGHT HOURS
Precipitation .49

FEB 25 - MAR 3
AVD. HIGH 40
AVD. LOW 21
SUNSHINE 50
% DAYLIGHT HOURS
Precipitation .51

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Farm Fertilizers & Seeds Inc.
Hamlet - Stillwell - Bourbon - Westville
PO Box 88
Hamlet, IN 46532