



MILLE LACS SOIL SERVICE ASSN. MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2024

FSA DATES, DEADLINES, OR MESSAGES

In October, FSA processed 2023 ARC-County program payments. The payment rates for our area are Benton County, Non-irrigated corn, paid \$60.17/acre, and Mille Lacs County, Wheat, paid \$21.79/acre. Payments were also earned in Morrison and Sherburne Counties for some crops.

The Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program for 2023 did not generate payments as the actual marketing price for 2023 was over the established reference price for all base crops in our county.

In early November, the County Committee election cycle will begin for FSA. Eligible voters will be mailed ballots that must be returned by December 2, 2024. In our counties, we have two elections taking place. LAA 1 consists of Mille Lacs County townships Page, Hayland, and all townships north of them. There is one candidate for election, Dustin Hoeck. LAA 4 consists of Benton County townships St. George and Glendorado and Mille Lacs County townships Milo and Greenbush. There are two candidates for election, Amber Britz and Michael Traut. If you are in these areas, please take the time to vote for your local representative on the FSA County Committee.

JOKE OF THE MONTH

A man is visiting his aunt in the nursing home. However, it turns out that she is taking a nap, so he just sits down in a chair in her room, flips through a few magazines, and munches on some peanuts sitting in a bowl on the table. Eventually, the aunt wakes up, and her nephew realizes that he's absentmindedly finished the entire bowl. "I'm so sorry, Auntie, I've eaten all your peanuts!"

"That is okay," the aunt replied. "After I've sucked the chocolate off, I don't care for them anyway."

BENEFITS OF FALL APPLIED POTASH

What does adding potash to soil do?

Adding potash can increase root growth and improve drought resistance, maintain turgor (the pressure of fluid within a cell that pushes the cell membrane against the cell wall) reduce water loss and wilting. Aids in photosynthesis and food formation. Reduces respiration, preventing energy losses.

High rates of potash in order to build the soil or to support multiple crops worth, should be applied in the fall of the year. One advantage to a fall K application on alfalfa is the decreased likelihood of winterkill, as extra nutrients are made available before dormancy, this is because potassium acts as the crop's antifreeze. Adding potash in the fall helps it absorb in the soil to become more plant-available.

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO APPLY AGLIME?

In order for you to get the full benefit of agricultural lime, you first need to know when it's best to apply it to your soil. Lime tends to dissolve quite slowly and requires water to do so. As a result, it will typically take up to a year for a significant response to be measured (although a response can be observed and detected within weeks in cases where the soil is extremely acidic.) Keeping that in mind, it's in your best interest to apply aglime immediately following the growing season and crop removal. This will allow ample time for the lime to react and create balance in the soil's pH levels before the next growing season arrives. After the initial application, you should be aware of how much time should pass before you introduce agricultural lime into your soil once again. Soil that has a low CCE (Calcium Carbonate Equivalent) level won't need as much lime to raise the soil's pH but you may need more frequent application. Conversely, soil with a high CCE level will need to have a large amount of aglime introduced to it initially but may benefit from the application for as many as 3+ years.

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SHOULD LIME BE WORKED INTO THE SOIL OR PLACED ON TO THE SURFACE?

Whenever possible, tillage should be used as a tool to incorporate lime into the soil. When lime is worked into the soil, a larger portion of its surface area is exposed to the soil allowing for faster reactivity. Lime applied on the soil surface does not react as fast as lime incorporated by tillage, but what other option is there in perennial pasture systems? Surface-applied lime moves into the soil at a slow rate. It is similar to non-mobile nutrients in its movement in the soil. However, there are a few crops that have roots that feed close to the soil surface, such as bermudagrass and alfalfa. It has been documented that correcting pH in the top two to three inches of the soil has a positive effect on forage production. Even though it is best to incorporate lime whenever possible, it is still important to surface-apply lime to correct soil acidity problems in established pastureland and no-till cropping systems.

DRY SOIL AND FALL TILLAGE

As the soybean harvest comes to an end, and the combines are switched to take off corn, one thing that should have been taken into consideration after the dry year we had is what to do with the residue in the fields this fall. With the rain being very spotty over the last two growing seasons and the soil in parts of the state holding less than half the normal moisture amounts, working in or baling the crop residue may be doing more harm than good. Fall tillage can increase evaporation thus reducing the moisture in the surface layer of the soil. In scenarios where leaving the residue is not possible and the fall tillage is necessary, consider a shallower tillage pass, somewhere around 4 inches deep. This shallower tillage will help to slow the movement of water across the soil compared to deep tillage and large soil clods. The shallower tillage will help to pool up any water that is flowing across the soil, whether that be late fall rains or the winter snow. Similarly, leaving alfalfa stands tall to increase the amount of snow captured from the winds to help keep the ground insulated, taller corn stalks and residue will help to stop the movement of windblown snows into ditches and waterways, allowing more snow in the spring to be absorbed into the soil.

"Put your trust in us."

We've been in the business for over 55 years, we know what we're doing and we do it well. We still believe in a firm handshake, a hard day's work, and the love our customers have for the land. We're here for you from the first soil sample until harvest. If you want the best, done right & at a fair price - put your trust in us.

-Mille Lacs Soil Service Assn.

DOES LIMING HAVE AN EFFECT ON HERBICIDE ACTIVITY?

There are several herbicide families that are soil pH dependent. For example, low soil pH levels may reduce the activity or residual time of triazine (atrazine, Sencor) and sulfonylurea (Peak) herbicides. High soil pH levels (>6.8) tend to increase herbicide activity which increases the risk of crop injury and/or carryover potential. We are currently, taking orders for lime and are ready to spread as the crops come off the field. Call us at (320) 294-5511 to schedule.

HOW LONG DOES LIME TAKE TO WORK?

Since water is required for lime to react with the soil, the effects of a lime application will be slower in dry soil. It often takes a year or more before a response can be measured even under perfect conditions. However, a response may be observed within weeks of the application when soil pH is extremely low. It is important to apply lime immediately after the growing season or crop removal to allow the lime to react, correcting soil pH before the next growing season. The reactivity time also depends on the type of lime used. Liming materials differ widely in their neutralizing powers due to variations in the percentage of calcium and/or magnesium. Usually, liming materials with a high calcium carbonate equivalent (CCE) tend to neutralize soil acidity faster than those with a low CCE. The coarseness of the liming material will also influence how fast the lime will react. In other words, the finer the liming material, the greater the surface area, resulting in faster reactivity.

