



MILLE LACS SOIL SERVICE ASSN. MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2024

FSA DATES, DEADLINES, OR MESSAGES

Anyone wishing to take out a Marketing Loan in 2024, please contact the office by Wednesday, December 18th to allow for processing and disbursing the loan prior to FSA's cutoff timeframe. Similarly, any farmer that may have a loan or other debt they want to pay and have it count in the 2024 tax year, please submit your payment by Thursday, December 26th. The FSA staff want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

HEALTHIER SOILS

Glyphosate over-use has been detrimental to farmer's bottom lines beyond increasing impact from herbicide resistant weeds. Glyphosate acts as an antibiotic and binds to minerals, reducing soil biodiversity essential for soil physical health, and plant and human nutrition. For producers interested in resilient farming systems and reducing inputs, there are several options that don't involve searching for bigger hammers. Heavy reliance on herbicides for weed control has helped create linear thinking processes that make it difficult to see alternative options for weed control without glyphosate. How can you shift from this weed control and killing focus to an integrated weed management approach that promotes life in the farming system instead?

It can feel daunting to consider farming with minimal herbicides, however, consider what benefits you would see on your farm if you reduced glyphosate. Outcomes such as improved soil and plant health; improved nutrient availability, rainfall use efficiency, increased natural bio-controls, and lower costs of production; in turn lifting the profitability of your business.

Glyphosate is used on much of America's farmland, discover where it is used most in the graph below.

JOKE OF THE MONTH

An engineer dies and reports to the pearly gates. St. Peter checks his dossier and says, "Ah, you're an engineer - you're assigned to hell." So the engineer reports to the gates of hell and is let in. Pretty soon, the engineer gets dissatisfied with the level of accommodations and starts designing and building improvements.

After a while, they've got air conditioning, flush toilets, escalators, elevators, and so on... and the engineer is becoming a pretty popular guy. One day, God calls Satan on the telephone. "So, how's it going down there in hell?" God asks.

"Hey, things are great. We've got air conditioning, flush toilets, and escalators. There's no telling what our engineer is going to come up with next!" Satan says.

"What? You've got an engineer? That's a mistake - he should've never gotten down there. Send him back immediately!"

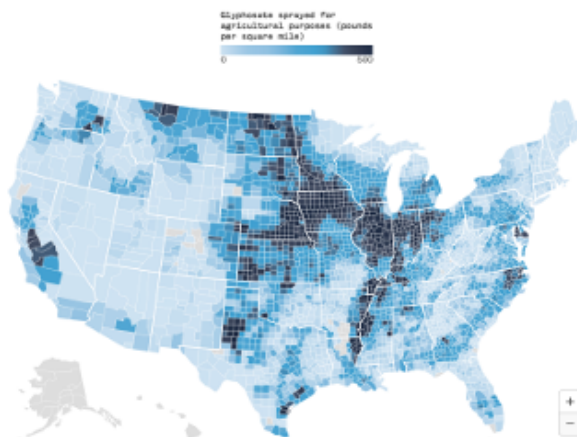
Satan replies, "No way! I like have an engineer on the staff - I'm keeping him!"

"Send him back up or I will sue!"

Satan laughs uproariously and answers, "Yeah right, and just were are you going to get a lawyer?"

Glyphosate usage in the U.S.

Herbicides containing glyphosate are most used in farmland counties, with areas in Texas topping the list.



Notes: Usage was not reported in the counties colored gray.
Source: U.S. Geological Survey
Graphic: Danica Jefferson / NBC News

**ARE YOU READY TO THINK DIFFERENTLY
ABOUT WEED CONTROL?**

Weeds are also useful indicators of soil structural problems or soil nutritional imbalances. This makes it possible to remove weed problems by managing the issue with the soil. Taking a plant tissue test from a preferred plant species and a weed species in close proximity can be incredibly revealing. Compare the results to see where they are significantly different. As a general rule, the weed will be higher in places where nutrients are functionally low. The only exception to this rule is with sodium and nitrates; when high in weed tissue, soils are high too. ID what your weeds are trying to tell you, then do them out of the job.

If you're not quite ready to pull the plug, a no-risk approach to reducing glyphosate is through the use of a carbon buffer. For foliar sprays, use fulvic acid at a rate of 1 part to 5 parts herbicide. You need to reduce your herbicide by at least 30%. The fulvic acid rapidly penetrates leaf surfaces as plant food and then supports the bio-remediation of the herbicide after application. It'll cost you less, you'll use less, and you'll be working towards your soil health goals.

A majority of the weeds that we battle every year thrive because of an imbalance of nutrients. Unfortunately, there is no quick and easy fix, or 1 tool option, utilizing what Mother Earth is trying to tell us, and you knowing your farm and what has worked best over the years, we can keep building a plan to grow better crops. We've pictured a book that we refer to quite often, assuming most of the people reading this book are not ready to transition to an organic operation, this book can help reduce some costs in unnecessary fertilizer and herbicide costs.

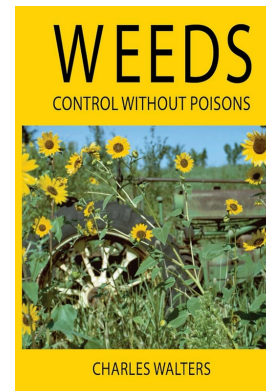
Thank You For Choosing
Mille Lacs Soil Service!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND NEW YEAR!

We have had another successful year, and we most definitely couldn't do it without our patrons, both new and old. We have an incredible team here always waiting to help you better succeed when it comes to your crops, and soil health.

Cheers to a fantastic year! May you succeed in all of your endeavors, we wish happiness and health to all in 2024. Happy Holidays and a very Happy New Year!

**WEEDS, CONTROL WITHOUT POISONS
BY CHARLES WALTERS**



"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.

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