Mille Lacs Soil Service
Foreston, Minn.
FERTILIZER · CHEMICAL · SEED SALES
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MILLE LACS SOIL SERVICE ASSN. MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2026

FSA DATES, DEADLINES, OR MESSAGES

JOKE OF THE MONTH

Sitting on the edge of the highway waiting to catch speeders, a state police officer saw a car driving along at 22MPH. He thinks to himself that the car is just as dangerous as a speeding car. So, he turns his lights on and pulls the car over. Approaching the car, he notices that there are 5 old ladies, 2 at the front, and 3 at the back, all wide eyed, and looking like ghosts.

The driver, obviously confused, said, "Officer, I don'tunderstand. I wasn't going over the speed limit! What did you pull me over for?"

"Ma'am," the officer said, "You should know that driving slower than the speed limit can also be dangerous."

"Slower than the speed limit? No sir? I was doing exactly 22miles an hour." The old woman said proudly.

The officer, trying not to laugh, explained that 22 is the route number, not the speed limit. A little embarrassed, the woman smiled and thanked the officer for pointing out her error.

"Before I go, ma'am, I have to ask, is everyone okay? These women seem badly shaken and haven't said a word since I pulled you over."

"Oh! They'll be alright in a minute, officer. We just got off Route 142."

GETTING STARTED WITH COVER CROPS & COVER CROP SELECTION

The most popular cover crop choice in Minnesota is Winter Rye. Before choosing a cover crop, consider your crop rotation and harvest timing, as well as whether you want a cover crop that will overwinter.

Crop rotation and harvest timing are important! The earlier you plant, the more growth your cover crop will achieve in the fall. Within a corn and soybean rotation, it's best to choose an overwintering crop like Cereal Rye, Triticale, or Barley. Try to use a cover crop from a different plant family to avoid plant disease carryover. If you are planting cover crops after August 15, it's best to use cool season crops because there isn't enough time for adequate growth. Great options include Forage Pea, Barley, Wheat, and Triticale.

Overwintering crops will provide the best soil protection throughout the winter and into spring. For a quick growing grain that doesn't overwinter, seeding Barley in the fall is a good option.

Stay Connected!

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Mille Lacs Soil Service

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Thank You For Choosing Mille Lacs Soil Service!

FALL APPLIED FERTILIZER

Whether you are looking for a tax benefit, less workload in the spring, or are just trying to do the right thing for your soil, there are several benefits to applying fertilizer in the fall.

Potassium can be effectively applied in the fall, like phosphate and sulfur. Potassium is not subject to loss mechanisms like nitrogen.

Phosphorus and sulfur can also be effectively applied in the fall, which could help keep your microbes active for breaking down dead plant material.

Potash, phosphate, and elemental sulfur can be more effective when broadcast in the fall. This gives it more time to assimilate into the soil and helps nutrients to be more plant available. This holds true when looking at a winter crop.

FALL LIMING

Some of you have heard us talk about the appropriate Calcium to Magnesium ratios. Calcium is essential! If not enough is available, it means that there will not be the right amount of air and water, and there will not be the efficiency needed to get the other nutrients into the plant. Depending on the soil test, Calcium needs to be in the 70% range to be most effective, and EVERY other nutrient rides on Calcium's back. Calcium puts the starch into the leaf of the plant.

"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.

CONSIDERING COVER CROPS?

Cover crops can play a vital role in many farming systems and have many benefits. Cover crops offer two main types of benefits: those we can see immediately, and those that may not show until next season.

One benefit that would have an immediate effect would be erosion control. Actively growing cover crops would help to prevent raindrops from displacing soil particles, and the roots would help to hold the topsoil from being removed by rain or wind. A not so immediate benefit would be nutrient scavenging. Cover crops planted after the crop has been harvested will use the remaining Nitrogen and other nutrients in the soil and will store the nutrients over winter until next spring. From there, the cover crop can either be harvested or, more typically, worked under or sprayed and become a type of green manure for your primary crop.

There are several different types of cover crops, many of which have similar benefits, but also some that are specific to themselves. Legume species can help to add Nitrogen to the soil by turning atmospheric Nitrogen into usable Nitrogen in the soil. Tillage Radish can help to break up hard pans and compaction via its long taproot. One popular cover crop in our area is Rye. Rye can be a great option for multiple reasons. Rye is a good choice for farmers because it is cost effective and widely available. Besides price, Rye also makes a good cover crop because it is fast growing and, in the spring, it will begin to grow when the soil temperatures are as low as 34 degrees.

Please feel free to contact us for further discussions on winter crops and our specials on fall applied fertilizers!