

Weekly Article

10-11-2021

Apply Lime Now to Save Money Next Spring

Hello, my Name is Richard Purdin with OSU Extension, Ag and Natural Resource Educator and Community Development Educator for Adams County. I hope to better inform local producers and the public of the latest news in the world of agriculture. Time sure flies by fast, it feels like it was just yesterday I was discussing planting conditions and preparing for summer chores. The calendar tells me it is mid-October but the weather outside feels more like mid-August with daytime highs in the 80's and lows in the 60's. It sounds like fall weather may return for the week of 18th through the 22nd with more normal temps of highs in the 60s and lows in the 40s. I am not a big fan of cold weather, but it is needed for multiple reasons. One of the big reasons is to halt growth and reproduction of destructive pest such as the fall armyworm (FAW). Reports of continuous damage from the 2nd generation of fall armyworm larvae (worms) on cover crops and winter wheat stands. Fall is also a great time to think about nutrient management planning for the following spring. Applying limestone is a common practice for producers to do in the fall of the year but why?

The old timers use to say liming the soil is sweetening the soil and this is a true statement. Limestone is a buffering agent that increases the Ph of the soil. So how do you know when it is time to apply limestone to your soil and what benefits does it have on the soil and future crop growth? The first step to know if a lime application is needed starts with a soil test. A soil test will tell you your current soil PH level. Keep in mind that soil conditions at the time of collecting the soil sample can affect PH level results, making sure the soil is not too wet or too dry and collected in a plastic bag or bucket is important for adequate results. Soil PH levels should be maintained between 6.0 and 7.0 for optimum plant growth. Maintaining your Soil Ph levels between 6.0 and 7.0 have many benefits here are just a few.

- Essential nutrients such as Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Potassium become more available to plants
- Supplies Calcium and Magnesium to crops (especially important for pasture grazing operations)
- Increases Microbial activity allowing crop residue and organic matter to release nutrients to the soil.
- Reduces harmful accumulation of aluminum and manganese concentrations.

Many producers avoid applying limestone to the soil because of the added cost. I would have to argue with this way of thinking! Limestone is by far your cheapest form of fertilizer that has lasting impacts on soil health. With current fertilizer prices for nitrogen, phosphorus, and Potassium hovering around \$750-\$850 a ton, it is important that we are making use of essential nutrients in the most economical way. Fertilizer applied on very acidic soils are at risk of being lost or unavailable for plant uptake. In summary fall is a great time of year to take time and test the soil, evaluate cost of production prices, and apply lime if the soil PH is below 6.0. Applying Limestone in the fall also allows time for the lime to breakdown and start working over the winter season.

Some other details to go over.

- October 27th, 2021, Cybersecurity and you seminar 8:00 am-11:00am. Hear from professionals about current cyber security trends, how to protect yourself, and Free Resources. Register at www.ADAMSCOUNTYOHCHAMBER.COM/CHAMBER-EVENTS
- BQA Recertification will be held at United Producers in Hillsboro Ohio October 19th, 2021, the program will start at 6:30 P.M. RSVP by calling (937)393-3424. Food will be served between 6:00 p.m. and 6:15 p.m.
- Milkweed pod collection taking place now through the month of October at the Adam County Soil and Water Conservation service, call (937) 544-2033 Ext.4
- Want to become a certified UAV Pilot? October 21st and 22nd 8:00 am-4:30pm location OSU Extension Hamilton County office 1802 Princeton Rd Hamilton, Ohio 45011. Cost is \$200 per person register at <https://cvent.me/eXVmdw>
- October 20th Used tire collection day 10:00am-6:30 pm 95 Trefz Rd West Union Ohio. \$1 per tire call (513) 732-7744 for more details.

From the field

- Soybean harvest is in full swing with yields ranging from 56-72 bu/ac Moisture levels still a little high.
- Corn grain harvest is full swing- 170 bu/ac -200bu/ac yields have been reported slightly lower than normal test weight.
- Lime applications being made
- Winter wheat and cover crop emergence is looking good.
- Wrapper tobacco market opens October 19th stripping has begun.
- Soybean grain is drying down, but stalks are staying green.
- Pasture conditions are still in excellent condition.
- Manure applications being made after crop harvest.