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Great Time to Soil Test

Fall is always a good time to pull soil samples once the crop is removed. By doing so, you can get the soil tested and make amendments in the fall. Now that we have had some rain in the past few days, you may have a little easier time pulling the samples. There are several reasons to consider making fall applications.

The pH in the soil is the most critical in cases where the soil is in need of a major adjustment. Remember the pH measures the acidity in the soil. A pH of 7 is considered neutral, with below 7 being an acid soil and above 7 an alkaline soil. Most of the crops we produce do best when the soil is slightly acidic. A pH of 6.2 to 6.8 is often considered the best range. If the pH is way out of range some of the nutrients may not be available to the plants. With that said, adding fertilizer will have little effect when the pH is not in a good range.

In addition the measuring the pH, a basic soil test will also provide the amount of other essential nutrients in the soil. Several nutrients play a key role in plant development. If there is a deficiency of just one of these nutrients plant development will most likely suffer.

At the same time a soil test can save you fertilizer dollars. Rather than guess and simply put something like 200 lbs. of 19-19-19 (often referred to as triple 19) on a hay field, a soil test may show that you need more of one of these or less of another. These numbers can be found on a fertilizer bag. These 3 numbers indicate the percentage of three key nutrients. The first number is Nitrogen followed by Phosphorus (Phosphate) and Potassium (Potash). So the example of triple 19 shows that there is 19 percent of each of these with the remaining 43 percent being filler material.

With the recent passing of SB 150 we will look at this in the training for those who will need a certification for applying nutrients or fertilizer. The example above of using triple 19 year after year might not be the best use of your fertilizer dollars. Crop removal of these nutrients on hay ground may be more like 4 parts of Potash to every 1 part of Phosphate, yet the example replaces these on an equal amount. Over time there is likely a surplus of Phosphate and/or a deficiency of Potash.

The small amount of money it cost to do a soil test may be the biggest savings you can get when it comes to utilizing your fertilizer dollars. To take a good soil test, a field should have soil taken from the top 2 to 4 inches for no-till or top 7 inches for ground that will be tilled. In some cases deeper samples may be required for some crops or plants. It is a good practice to pull 15 to 20 samples from a field for better accuracy for the entire field. These 15 to 20 samples become one sample.

Highland Co. Dairy Service Banquet

Next Monday will be the Highland Co. Dairy Service Unit Banquet. The banquet is at the Ponderosa Banquet Center in Hillsboro. The banquet starts at 7:30 p.m. on October 13.

Market for Walnuts

Black walnut trees for the most part are loaded this year, like they were last year. Where is a market for black walnuts? I am told that the oldest black walnut station in Ohio is in Seaman, OH. The market has been at WC Milling for 45 years now. This year WC Milling will be buying black walnuts at the Seaman Farm, Garden and Pet Center in Seaman, which is located on SR 247 about a mile north of SR 32. Hours for taking walnuts are

Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. and Saturday from 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. They will buy black walnuts throughout October. Current price is \$13 per hundred pounds.

Dates to Remember

- October 9 Dairy Producer Farm Bill Meeting
October 16 Dairy Producer Farm Bill Meeting in West Union at Frisch's at 9:30 a.m.
(Breakfast is on your own. Try to come early enough to be finished eating by 9:30.)
NOTE: Please call the Adams or Highland County OSU Ext. Office to pre-register.
October 22 Dairy Producer Farm Bill Meeting in Hillsboro at FSA Office begins at 1:00 p.m.

Note: Last week I had put a date for the Brown Co. Ox Roast in this section. That was done in error. There is no scheduled Ox Roast .

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