

# Corn fertilization tips offered

LANCASTER — Forecasts of near-record plantings and fertilizer use point to a bumper corn crop in 1984.

Weather permitting, U.S. farmers could easily log 8 billion bushels of corn this season, slightly less than the record 8.3 billion bushels harvested in 1982.

High rates of N, P, K and other nutrients will be needed to produce another bin-buster. But farmers should remember that fertilizer placement and timing — not application rate or unit cost — are the keys to maximum profits.

"It's not how much fertilizer you apply — it's how, when and where you apply it that determines return on investment," says Don Johnson, agronomist at Allied Chemical's Arcadian Group.

Johnson offers the following tips for improving fertilizer efficiency:

**Split N application:** Wet weather could cause heavy N losses from leaching or denitrification. To minimize risk, apply 30-60 percent of the crop's total N requirement before planting. Apply the rest in one or several increments after crop emergence.

**If you irrigate — fertigate:** Liquid nitrogen can take a free ride with irrigation water. Fertigation also allows you to "spoon feed" N and other nutrients to the crop throughout the season.

**Feed & weed:** This popular application technique is a natural for high-efficiency programs. Herbicides are often better carriers for liquid fertilizer than water. Also, preplant or pre-emergence herbicide application provides an excellent opportunity

to get part of the total N requirement applied — without having to make a special trip.

**Feed & weed — again:** This practice is no longer limited to the planting season. Using special attachments made for this purpose, farmers can band liquid fertilizer and spray post emergence herbicides in one trip over the field.

**Band N while cultivating:** Despite the trend toward reduced tillage many corn growers today still cultivate fields at least once. Cultivators can be easily tooled up for liquid fertilizer application. Farmers may also use this opportunity to band a liquid rootworm insecticide. Research at Purdue University has shown lay-by applications of insecticide to be as good and possibly better than at-planting applications. This is because the insecticide is more active in the soil at the height of rootworm activity.

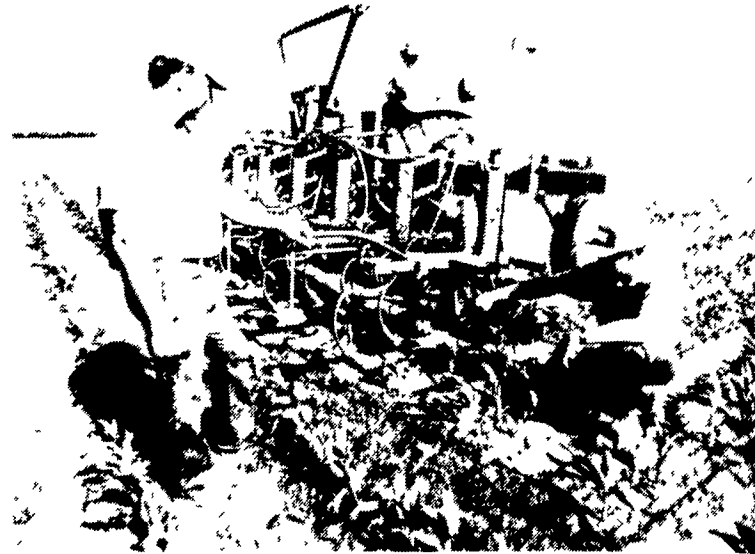
**Keep taps on S:** Deficiencies of sulfur can prevent crops from making efficient use of N and P. As a general rule, the N:S ratio within the crop should be 10-12 parts N to one part S. Using a nitrogen-sulfur solution such as Suran (28-0-0-4S) will help prevent and correct S deficiency and keep N:S ratios in line.

**Band all P and K:** Fertilizer can be surface banded (dribbled) or, for even greater efficiency, deep banded four to five inches beneath the soil surface. Most spray booms can be tooled up with drop hoses for surface banding. Deep banding is often combined with preplant tillage, usually chisel plowing.

Tanks can be mounted on the tractor, three-point hitch, tillage tool or on a separate trailer.

**Apply N with P:** Applying one pound of N for every three pounds P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>, together in the same zone, will enhance phosphate efficiency. Further research has suggested that a 1:1 ratio of N and P will produce even better results. When using 1:1 ratio, fertilizer should be placed at least three inches from seed to avoid seedling damage from phytotoxicity.

**Use a starter fertilizer:** A starter band will support the crop until roots make contact with preplant band. Starter is also a must for early-planted corn and conservation tillage programs, where cool, moist soils can limit crop uptake of P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>. A clear-liquid polyphosphate solution such as Poly-N (10-34-0) will sequester metal ions of certain micronutrients and make them more available to the crop.



Attachment on cultivator permits banding of nitrogen solution, spraying a post-emergence herbicide and cultivating in one trip over field.

## Butler forms scale group

FORT ATKINSON, W1. — Butler Manufacturing Company has created a Scale Group that will manufacture, market and service electronic scale systems currently used on Butler's feed mixing equipment. The Scale Group is a separate unit and will be headquartered in Fort Atkinson, WI.

The Scale Group was formerly a department of the Butler Livestock Systems plant in Garden City, KS. Larry Hayes, president of Butler Livestock Systems, said the decision to create and relocate the Scale Group, "resulted from establishing Fort Atkinson as the focal point for product research and development."

Hayes added that the Scale Group product line has been successful in feed system applications, and now Butler Livestock Systems believes there is more potential for these scale

systems in applications outside existing product lines.

John Stewart has been named vice president of the Scale Group. He was formerly vice president and controller of Butler Livestock Systems. Stewart has 12 years experience with Butler in financial and market research positions.

Bruce Johnston, named product manager, had a similar role in the former Oswalt Division operation in Garden City, KS.

Butler has manufactured electronic scale systems for mobile feed mixing equipment since 1981. The Garden City facility designed and manufactured strain gauge load cells while the scale system's microprocessor-based electronic indicators are manufactured by another Butler operation, Pacific Technology, located in Seattle, Wash.

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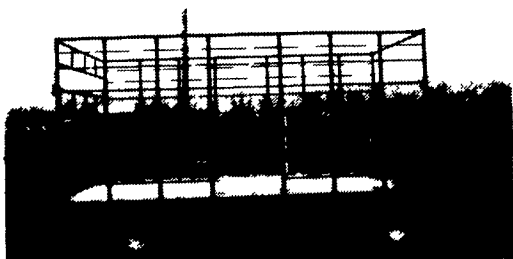
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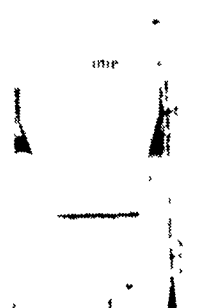
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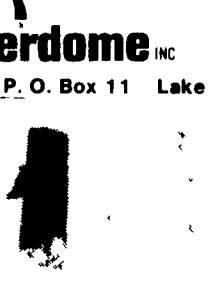
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