### **Automatic Mist Sprayer**

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# Foliar fertilizers may remedy

### soil deficiencies

Budget-conscious farmers who opted for a basic, no-frills N-P-K fertilizer program last spring should keep their eyes peeled this summer for yield-limiting micronutrient deficiencies, says Don Johnson, agronomist at Arcadian Corporation.

A deficiency of zinc, magnesium, iron or other micronutrient—even for the shortest period—may severely limit the crop's yield potential and return on the farmer's N-P-K investment, he adds.

"Additional N, P, K and even sulfur can be sidedressed during cultivation," he notes. "But when it comes to applying small doses of micronutrients, you can't beat the response time or the efficiency of a proven foliar fertilizer."

Johnson says foliar micronutrients such as NZN, NMG or NFE are designed for use on crops with high-yield potential and are generally not recommended as

replacements for good soil fertility.

"But if the crop is under stress from excess moisture, hail, disease, soil compaction or other condition that prevents roots from absorbing soil nutrients, a foliar fertilizer can nurse the crop through the stress period until it can function on its own," he explains

In situations where soils can genuinely short of micronutrients, multiple applications of a foliar fertilizer may be needed to sustain an adequate nutrient balance in the crop, he says.

But a micronutrient deficiency is not a prerequisite for getting crops to respond to a foliar-applied micronutrient fertilizer, Johnson says. Research by Arcadian Corporation and several landgrant colleges has turned up yield increases in fields that were not considered to be short on micronutrients.

"Crop responses to NZN have been so consistent that you can't help but second guess current standards for zinc requirements in high-yield crop production," Johnson claims.

Foliar micronutrients can be applied by air or with a high-clearance sprayer, preferably with a routine pesticide to save a trip across the field. They can also be metered through overhead sprinkler irrigation systems.

Johnson reminds farmers that there are two types of foliar fertilizers—those that actually are designed specifically for foliar application, and soil fertilizers that are adapted for foliar use.

Quality foliar fertilizers solutions made specifically for foliar application generally allow farmers to apply greater quantities of fertilizer in a single pass. They also mix easily with most other pesticides.

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96	4280	.240 (1/4")		'300 to 360
96	4723	.240 (1/4")	16'- 0''	'360 to 420
96	6075	.240 (1/4")	21'- 4''	'480 to 560
96	7425	.240 (1/4")	26'- 8''	'600 to 700
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