

Check Soybean Fields For Nutrient Problems

Low soybean prices for the past few years have caused farmers to cut back on their fertilization. USDA surveys of armer use of fertilizer on row crops reflect this cut back. For example, in 1984 Arkansas farmers fertilized about 24 percent of the soybean acreage. But in 1988, only 21 percent was fertilized. Mississippi growers fertilized 40 percent of the soybean acreage in 1984, but only 21 percent in 1988. The situation was different in the Midwest because most soybeans are grown in rotation with well-fertilized corn. That is not the case in the South.

Farmers have cut back on phosphate and potash use on other crops, too. While this decline in soybean fertilization has been taking place, there has been an increase in potash deficiency problems on cotton, limiting yields and profitability. Subsoil deficiencies of potash have been related to the increased frequency of deficiencies in cotton.

Soybean producers need to scout their fields for nutrient deficiencies this summer to be sure that yields and profits have not been limited by correctable nutrition problems. If deficiencies are present, proper fertilization programs should be followed to eliminate the problem. Growers need to be aware, too, that borderline potash deficiencies in soybeans were worse when certain herbicides were used in 1987 and 1988.

Early scouting of fields this year can provide timely detection of yield-limiting nutrient problems. Plant analyses can help di-

agnose those problems and others that may not be readily apparent. Early diagnosis may allow corrective actions during the current growing season.

In Brazilian soybean fields a potash deficiency, called green stem, has been reported in recent growing seasons. After physiological senescence, deficient plants continue to have green stems and retain leaves, some remaining green in color. Some soybean varieties planted in Brazil have genetic backgrounds similar to those grown in the southern U.S. Farmers should be on the lookout for green stem in their fields in the fall of 1989. Such incidences could be reported to local Extension specialists, fertilizer dealers or the Potash & Phosphate Institute (telephone number 404-634-4274).

Potash is an essential nutrient that can be effectively applied to deficient soybeans during the growing season. In Arkansas, Extension specialists report that soybeans diagnosed as deficient in July responded to potash fertilizer applied July 29, producing yield increases ranging from 18 to 26 bushels per acre.

Many growers scout their soybeans for insect and disease pests. That is the time to be looking for yield-limiting nutrient deficiencies as well. Scout early so corrective measures can be taken in the current growing season. Remember that it pays to identify and act early on factors that are limiting your yields.

University Of Maryland Appoints Ag Ambassadors



Seven of the 11 College of Agriculture student ambassadors at the University of Maryland posed recently for their picture. Standing are, from left, Gary E. Seibel of Knollwood, agricultural engineering senior; Christine A. Keppel, ag economics senior; Cynthia G. Bailor, natural resources management graduate; Mildred A. Hayman, natural resources management senior; and William R. Reed III, natural resources management junior. Seated are, from left, Brenda S. Irwin, ag economics freshman and Trisha E. Marsh, animal sciences freshman.

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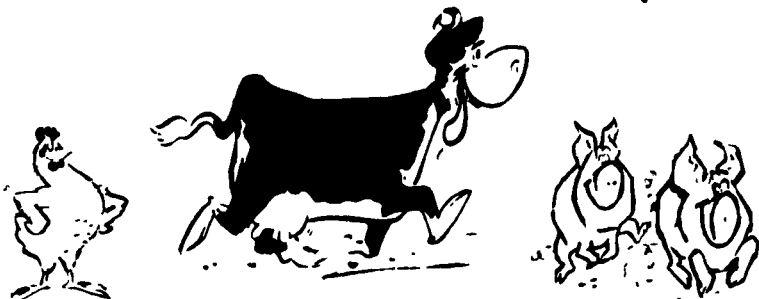
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