

January 5, 2007

## **NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR CROP PRODUCERS**

Area farmers and landlords have a new educational opportunity in January on how to utilize soil testing information on their farm. Nutrient management is an important issue and learning how to calculate economically optimal fertilizer rates for corn, sorghum, and winter wheat will be the major focus of a workshop January 19th in Wilber.

Two years ago when the Conservation Security Program (CSP) meetings were held, many producers in Saline County were told to make sure and get your foot in the door. One of the criteria to step through the doorway was to have soil tests documented in the last three years or in the last five years if grid sampled. Since these meetings, more soil sampling has occurred, but are we really interpreting the results for potential increased profit? It is one thing, soil testing because of CSP rules, but it is another situation to take this to another level and utilize the information better.

That is the goal of a workshop at the Saline County Extension office meeting room, 306 West 3rd Street, Wilber, on Friday, January 19th from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Last year, agronomists completed research at the University of Nebraska that has led to revised nitrogen recommendations for corn. The new nitrogen recommendations for corn account for corn and nitrogen prices to maximize economic return. We will show you the corn N calculator, how to interpret soil test information, and determine all fertilizer needs for corn, sorghum, and winter wheat and discuss fertilizer benefits of manure.

The other day, a producer residing between Wilber and Dorchester was showing me soil samples that now had above 3 percent organic matter and one irrigated 80 that has reached 4 percent organic matter. These are soils in the intensive tillage era in the 60's and 70's that used to have 2 percent or below organic matter. It takes many years to improve soil and this producer is starting to reap the benefits. How does soil organic matter levels interact with nitrogen recommendations? Learn this at the workshop, plus plan to bring your toughest nutrient management questions along.

UNL specialists Charles Wortmann and Richard Ferguson will be on hand to help teach the course along with yours truly. There is no fee. Laptop computers will be made available to learn how to run the new soil fertility calculators at the end of the meeting for those that would like to try. Pre-registration is required due to limited space, plus we don't want to mess up the kolache order for break time, so call the Extension office at 821-2151 to pre-register by Wednesday, January 17th. Bringing soil tests from your farm is highly encouraged at this meeting so you can get your questions answered. For more information, call me at the Saline County Extension office at 821-2151 or email [rpryor1@unl.edu](mailto:rpryor1@unl.edu).

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