Holmes Agro-Nomic Newsletter

September 2020

Soybean Preharvest

A preharvest burndown for soybeans is a decision a producer needs to make to control perennial weeds or to enhance uniformity of the crop for harvest. When applying preharvest treatment with glyphosate in addition to Eragon herbicide combined with Merge adjuvant, the optimal timing for this would be when the pods of the soybean crop has 90% changed colour. It is important to monitor the pod development rather than the leaf drop method as the pod colour or seed colour change is a better indicator of crop maturity. The colour of the pods should consist of the lower plant pods being brown to the upper pods yellowish-brown in colour and usually but not always you will notice 80% of the leaves will have dropped and the remaining leaves will be yellow. Another method is inspect whether the seed has detached from the pod membrane in the upper third of the plant, if so a preharvest aid can be applied to the registered crop. Both methods are an indicator that the seed should be close to 30%. You want to make sure you do not apply too early as it could negatively hurt your yield potential by reducing seed size and seed weight. It is important to be proactive with this management tool to ensure timely application.

VRT Fall Fertility

Now that we have taken the grid sample for a field, what do we do next?? Grid Samples can show a lot of information about a field but you need to know what you are looking for and what is the lowest hanging fruit that will give you the best return on your investment. When determining lime applications for example, we look at the results for pH, buffer pH, %Ca and Ca ppm, if the farm needs lime these results will be able to show us the areas of the field that need the lime and the proper rate for each area. As seen in the photo this is an example of a lime variable rate application script for a field with different demands for lime. The same can be said for other nutrients not just lime, we do variable rate fall applications with potassium, magnesium and phosphorus, it all depends on what the soil is telling us through the soil samples.

Insects in Soybeans

Throughout the summer, our agronomists and growers have been noticing higher than usual levels of defoliation in soybean fields. Growing conditions this year have been favourable to insects, leading to higher than normal populations of flea beetles. These small black beetles will eat the leaves of soybean plants, in a series of small connected holes, leaving the leaf veins, giving the leaves a "skeleton" like appearance. While this damage stands out, and it can be easy to find large numbers of beetles in the fields, it is rarely economically justifiable to spray them. In order to determine the threshold, pick 5 random plants from 10 areas of the field, and monitor the level of defoliation. Through most of the season, the level is 25%, but during flowering this will drop to 15%. If defoliation is at those levels, then a spray application is recommended.

Another major pest that has been appearing this year is the Bean Leaf Beetle. These are a larger red/brown beetle with black marks on their shells. In the earlier part of the growing season, these beetles will chew larger round holes in the leaves of new trifoliates. As the season progresses, they will move to chewing holes in pods. It is important to note that they will not eat all the way into a pod, leaving a thin white membrane behind. If you are seeing pod feeding that extends right into the seed, it is likely a different pest. These holes in the leaves can lead to seed discoloration, diseases, or shriveled seed. Throughout the reproductive stages, if leaf defoliation is at 15-20%, then a spray is warranted. If more than 10% pods are showing signs of damage, and green, then beetles should be controlled. This level is lower in IP or edible beans, where seed quality is important to be able to market the seed.

We are Hiring!

Holmes Agro is looking to hire a professional applicator for our Stayner and Orangeville locations. The right candidates should have the following qualifications: positive attitude, continuous learner, dedicated team player, strong time management and organizational skills. Ideal candidate will have a DZ or AZ license, strong mechanical aptitude, confident with computer technology and operating equipment. For more details go to www.holmesagro.com. Please send resumes to archie@holmesagro.com

Winter Wheat Fertilizer Starter – the Priority is Phosphorous

Most crops have a difficult time getting enough Phosphorous (P). Recent provincial soil test information would suggest that we have a significant percentage of soils testing medium or less in P. P moves very little in most soils. P moves in the soil by diffusion, a slow and short ranged process that depends on soil moisture. P availability also varies based on many factors; soil CEC, application timing, soil structure, temperature, other nutrients, soil pH and crop being grown.

It's been proven that phosphate is a key nutrient for establishment of a healthy crop and understood that phosphate is the lead contributor to increasing root mass. Strong root development and overall root mass is the foundation and the building blocks to high yield potential. Because of the many factors that can antagonize P availability, as outlined above, we must strive to ensure that soils are adequately supplied with P to support optimum root development and crop growth.

Wheat will positively respond to seed placed Phosphorous, as banding puts a readily accessible P source in the root zone making it positionally more available. Banding also concentrates other nutrients with the P, such as sulphur (which can help acidulate high pH soil growth medium for improved P uptake), such as nitrogen (which can slow fixation reactions and enhance P uptake), such as potassium (soil test K – as the level of soil bank K drops, root uptake decreases).

A balanced winter wheat starter program with a priority to Phosphorous can easily be designed to best match your method of application and nutrient requirements. KMag, Sulphate of Potash and or ProCote BCMZ are some other products available to help enhance a starter program. It all starts with the soil – talk to your Holmes Agro advisor about fertilizer products and placement to power up your wheat crop!

Rules of the Road

- Anything equipped with a slow-moving vehicle (SMV) sign cannot travel faster than 40 km/hr, regardless if capable of doing so. The SMV sign must be on the furthest back part of the equipment (trailer, wagon etc)
- Equipment does not have to travel on the shoulder of the road unless you are wider than the lane allowance. Drivers are encouraged to avoid the shoulder if possible due to unknown conditions and structure potentially not supporting the weight of the equipment and creating an accident.
- Farm pickups must watch what weight they are registered for with the MTO if they are hauling anything behind them.
- If you are moving your own product in your own truck, you do not require a DZ license. You still require the Z portion for airbrakes, but you can drive with a G level. However, if you are moving product for someone else, you require the appropriate class (A or D)
- You must use visible signal lights, or hand signals if lights are not available/visible. An escort vehicle may be used in low light/dark hours.
- Equipment (including trucks loading at harvest) cannot be parked on the road if they are taking up active lane space. They cannot impede the flow of traffic in case of emergency. Producers are encouraged to contact their municipality if they need help with this.

These are only some highlights - growers are encouraged to make themselves familiar with the rules of the road as per the MTO to ensure they are operating in a safe manner.

Going Paperless

Going Paperless conserves valuable resources and is more efficient than regular postal mail. Sign up for any of the following options available for Holmes Agro customers:

- Invoices and Statements: Contact our office staff to set up your account for paperless billing: micheller@holmesagro.com
- Payments: Setting up online or telephone banking is simple. Select Holmes Agro as the payee and use your 5-digit account number, which is listed next to your account name on invoices and statements. Holmes Agro bill payments are available at the following financial institutions: Bank of Montreal, CIBC, Meridian Credit Union, National Bank, RBC Royal Bank, Scotiabank and TD Canada Trust.

Newsletters: Please email Nicole to sign up for electronic newsletters: nicole@holmesagro.com

CLEANFarms 2020

CleanFarms collections are still open, with Holmes Agro now getting regular pickups. To keep ahead of the volume of recycling bags growers MUST call ahead when they have jugs/bags to return. As always, jugs must be triple rinsed, with lids and labels removed. If there is product remaining in empty jugs, the bag will be rejected as improperly cleaned jugs cannot be recycled. When on site, please call the office to be directed to the drop off area. Thanks for your participation!

Calendar 2021

It's never too early to start sending in pictures for the 2021 calendar. We are proud to be able to provide a calendar full of grower pictures year after year – all thanks to your great submissions! Please email your photos to nicole@holmesagro.com

Upcoming Events

September 15-18 – Canada's Outdoor Farm Show **ONLINE**, Woodstock (https://www.outdoorfarmshow.com/)

********** ***Please email nicole@holmesagro.com to sign up for our e-newsletter*** **********