

4waRd Thinking Conversations

Top 4 – June Edition

June doesn't lend itself to a lot of downtime for our farmers which is why it's important that your conversations this month are targeted around the RIGHT factors that will help drive yield – both this growing season, and beyond. The Source, Rate, Time and Place of nutrients as a whole (and nitrogen in particular) are all critical to RIGHT-sizing input costs to achieve maximum yields for each operations.



Why it's important...

How to start the conversation...

1 Evaluate Soil Conditions

While it's too late to mitigate soil compaction for this growing season, evaluating these issues in June enables you to set realistic yield goals (and supplemental fertilizer needs) and helps to lay the groundwork for conversations around mitigating compaction through cover crops or tillage, as well as discussing planter attachments that can address sidewall compaction.

Root growth is really important for maximizing yield. When we see soil compaction and/or in-furrow sidewall compaction, the plant's ability to uptake water and nutrients is reduced, which can lead to localized deficiencies, a reduction in overall nutrient use efficiency and yield loss. Let's evaluate where we stand today so we can develop plans for the future.

2 Take Plant Samples

The post-emerge herbicide application is a perfect opportunity to address early season nutrient deficiencies & imbalances identified through plant sampling. Sampling early growth is also a good way to determine any changes needed in the farm's starter fertilizer program.

You're going to be making your post-emerge herbicide application pretty soon, right? Let's take a plant sample now so we can address any nutrient deficiencies in that application and avoid making another pass across the field.

3 Review Nitrogen Modeling

All background information should be entered into the model by now and the farm should be receiving weekly updates on in-field nitrogen levels. Model outcomes should have some in-field verification & oversight to improve customer trust in the outcomes. This is also the last chance to tweak variable rate applications.

Do you have a minute to walk this field with me? I want to show you what the model is capturing and how it relates to what I'm seeing in the field. Then we can talk about potential next steps to ensure our we're maximizing yield as the season goes on.

4 Split Apply Nitrogen

From emergence to V5 (5 leaves present), a corn crop only needs 30 lbs of nitrogen per acre. From V5 through tassel, the same crop requires 6-8 lbs per ac per DAY! Delayed timing of nitrogen fertilizer applications to this growth period can improve the chance that the corn crop has enough nitrogen to maximize growth while limiting the risk of nitrogen loss.

Think about your corn like you would a teenager – once it gets to V5 (around a foot tall) it needs a lot of food to keep growing. Feeding it well in its infancy doesn't do the job. Split applying your nitrogen to feed your teenage corn is important for successful growth and higher yields.



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