

April 2009 Service Bulletin

Crop Production:

We are entering another season of production that is full of uncertainties and issues that are beyond our control. Global supply and demand influencing grain and input pricing, unstable markets and tightening credit; not to mention the unpredictability of the weather from one season to the next.

While these things are beyond our influence, their volatility forces us to strictly manage the factors that are within our control, such as nutrient management. Understanding the crop's nutrient needs, and measuring the supply on hand with laboratory analysis, allows an economical rate of additional nutrients to be calculated.



- Demand** - required nutrients (yield goals x crop removal)
- Supply** - available nutrients (soil's ability to supply, legume plowdown, manure application)
- = Need** - additional fertilizer required

Fertilizer decisions should not be based solely on the **price** of the product, but rather on its **value** to optimizing yield.

Growing Degree Day Calculator:

As the calendar turns to April, Agri-Food Laboratories will once again be tracking the accumulation of growing degree days, as a prelude to this year's forage harvest. With snow cover behind us, we will soon be experiencing Dormancy Break, marked by five consecutive days where the temperature exceeds 5°C.

Keeping track of growing degree days and estimating forage amounts and resultant nutritional values will help you assess the best cutting time.

Growing Degree information will be available on the website at www.agtest.com.

Feed Inventories:

Achieving desired production levels for dairy operations can be challenging and once achieved, maintaining these levels can be difficult. Consistency in all aspects of the operation is very important. With this in mind, one area that receives a great deal of attention is the milking cow ration(s).

It is very frustrating to achieve the desired production levels with a particular ration, only to find that the inventory of one or more of the forages is quickly running out.



By addressing the possible requirements with respect to potential cow numbers and production levels, a plan can be formulated for the upcoming planting season. With adequate acreage and reasonable yields, inventory shortages can be avoided and desired rations can be maintained throughout the year.

Agri-Food Laboratories is chosen more often by industry leaders for analytical quality, knowledge, integrity, innovation and service.