



Soil.....Our Greatest Asset

Thoughts for Fall, 2010

Throughout the year, in conversations with producers, the discussion sometimes goes beyond the current year's crop and we talk about being good stewards of the soil. After all, the soil is the factory from which, we build our crops.

We have the potential for a great crop if the soil is not too wet, too dry, too cold, if the pH is right, if it holds water long enough or dries fast enough, if the soil will hold nutrients and then release nutrients. There are many ways we can influence the productivity of the soil. One way is to influence the activity of micro-organisms in the soil.

Soil micro-organisms must survive in the same environment as our crops, plus additional stresses such as pre-plant tillage, pre-emergence herbicides, and soil compaction. It is the surviving micro-organisms that will thrive in the soil if given the opportunity.

A healthy population of micro-organisms in the soil will have a positive affect in the soil including increased soil aeration, increased water holding capacity, reduced compaction, increased organic matter digestion, and increased release of nutrients from organic matter and nutrients tied up in the soil. The result is healthier crops and better yields.

You may ask how the micro-organisms help create healthy soils?

- Bacteria – Generate oxygen in our soils

- Algae – Food for bacteria

- Fungi – Generate enzymes for nutrient conversion

- Mold – Aids in residue composting

- Yeast – Breaks down cellulose (fiber)

- Mycorrhizae – Attach to roots and aid in nutrient and water uptake

- Actinomycetes – Directly attack and compost crop residue

DeltAg Soil Solution, a proprietary blend of organically complexed nutrients, amino acids, enzymes and vitamins, is specifically designed to stimulate the growth and activity of soil micro-organisms that have survived today's farming practices.

Soil Solution is normally applied one time a year. We recommend making this application in the fall, following harvest, to give the soil more time to digest crop residue and improve tilth for spring planting. However, many growers make this annual application in the spring up to planting, knowing the benefit will be in the following crop year. **Soil Solution** is applied at 24 Oz. per acre when broadcast incorporated or at 32 Oz. per acre when surface applied. For best results, make these applications to the same fields annually for sustained long term benefits. **Soil Solution** has also been shown to be very effective for thatch digestion in turf.

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