

Keys to Agronomy

VOL 7

In this issue:

- Producer Spotlight
- Nitrogen
- Wheat Variety Trial
- Crop Conditions
- Upcoming Event
- Recent Calls

PRODUCER SPOTLIGHT



Britton Pointer Lamb County

Britton found a passion for farming when he could reach the pedals. This led to his grandpa sectioning off 50 acres for him to farm on his own and make all crop decisions at 12 years old, with the guidance of his grandpa, of course! This experience along with four generations of family farmers before him, attending bank meetings, FSA meetings, and visiting with accountants grew his desire to farm after high school. More than 100 years later, Britton and his family are still farming in Littlefield, Texas. He is privileged to own 1,200 acres of family land and farms some of his grandpa's land who isn't ready to retire yet. He chalks his farming knowledge up to his late uncle and grandpa. Britton knows farming is not a glamorous job but realizes the importance of crops to the world, spreading awareness, and is a lifetime commitment.

Being a young farmer, Britton is taking all the advice. He considers himself an "old soul" who values the knowledge of his grandpa and listening to the older generations, learning new techniques from his father all while taking care of the land for future generations.

Mr. Pointer realizes he must keep his money on a tight budget while growing his business and enjoying this job and the opportunity to farm. He relies on his faith and the Lord above during the hard times, and there is plenty of those farming in this challenging, dry environment of West Texas. Dryland farming in a rainfall deficit area is Britton's biggest hurdle each year. Inputs are expensive especially when commodity prices are not matching inflation. These factors can break a farmer at the end of the season so Britton must be creative and foreshadow financial obstacles.

This season, Britton had cover crops on every acre of land to prevent soil erosion. His plan is to put rotations into place on circles that are seeing a decline in water to help divide that water throughout the year and increase yields as well as save money. Britton predominantly grows cotton but will be rotating with winter wheat, corn, and milo when needed. Britton wants consumers to know that farming is a family-owned job, not a corporate company, that is trying to help the consumer's families stay fed and clothed all while making a profit and living.

Outside of farming, Britton enjoys playing Farm Simulator on the Xbox where money is free and land is abundant. He also enjoys going to the lake to fish and surf.

Contact Me!

Got an idea, question, or
comment?

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TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

READING A SOIL ANALYSIS

PART 4: NITROGEN

Nitrogen (N) is an essential macronutrient for plant function and is the building block of plant proteins and enzymes. It is required by plants in large amounts because of its important functions in each area of plant development. Nitrogen also plays a role in the photosynthesis of the plant which in turn drives plant growth and yield and gives the plant the dark-green plant vegetation. Inorganic and/or organic N sources must be applied to meet plant N requirements because most soils cannot supply sufficient amounts of N. Too much Nitrogen can also be a bad thing. Having a good soil sampling program to determine your level of available N is the first step in fertilizer management.

SOIL ANALYSIS REPORT																	
DATE: 03/10/23			PAGE: 1														
SAMPLE ID	LAB NUMBER	ORGANIC MATTER % RATE ENR lbs/A		PHOSPHORUS		POTASSIUM K **	MAGNESIUM Mg ***	CALCIUM Ca ***	SODIUM Na ***	pH		COMPUTED					
				P1 (Weak Bray) ppm-P RATE	P2 (Strong Bray) ppm-P RATE	ppm-K RATE	ppm-Mg RATE	ppm-Ca RATE	ppm-Na RATE	SOIL pH	BUFFER INDEX	Cation Exchange C.E.C meq/100g	PERCENT BASE SATURATION				
												K	Mg	Ca	H	Na	
HOME HALF LEASE	11398	1.2L	55	23M	92VH	516VH	704VH	2469M		7.5		19.5	6.8	29.7	63.2	0.0	
	11399	0.8VL	46	55VH	119VH	634VH	585VH	2129M		7.6		17.1	9.5	28.1	62.1	0.0	
	11400	0.8VL	46	80VH	369VH	>700VH	680VH	3483M		7.8		26.0	11.3	21.5	66.9	0.0	

SAMPLE ID	NITRATE NO ₃ ***	SULFUR S ***	ZINC Zn ***	MANGANESE Mn ***	IRON Fe ***	COPPER Cu ***	BORON B ***	EX-CESS LIME RATE	SOLUBLE SALTS			CODE TO RATINGS: VL = VERY LOW L = LOW M = MEDIUM H = HIGH VH = VERY HIGH NR = NOT RATED ND = NONE DETECTED IS = INSUFFICIENT SAMPLE ENR = ESTIMATED NITROGEN RELEASE This report applies only to the sample(s) tested. Samples are retained for a maximum of thirty days after testing. A & L PLAINS AGRICULTURAL LABORATORIES, INC.
	ppm-NO3 RATE	ppm-S RATE	ppm-Zn RATE	ppm-Mn RATE	ppm-Fe RATE	ppm-Cu RATE	ppm-B RATE	mmhos/cm RATE				
HOME HALF LEASE	2VL	8L	0.9VL	6L	5M	1.0M	1.6H					
	2VL	5L	2.3L	7L	5M	0.9M	1.3M					
	5L	6L	1.2L	8L	7M	1.5H	1.5H					

In the field:

- Nitrogen in the available form to plants is nitrate (NO₃⁻) and ammonium (NH₄⁺)
- Deficiency symptoms include yellowing of the leaves or leaf veins and will appear first on the lower leaves. and on leaf tips and progress along the midrib until the entire leaf is dead
- Nitrogen in the form of surface-applied Urea must be fully incorporated or irrigated in or it will volatilize as ammonia gas. Nitrate-N can also be lost by leaching. Excessive irrigation or a heavy rainfall event can also cause leaching of nitrogen along with other nutrients.
- Because of the clayey subsoils of the High Plains, soil testing for nitrate should be done to a depth of 24 inches
- Apply nitrogen at the proper time to reduce the risk of leaching and denitrification

On the analysis:

- Nitrogen is tested as nitrate (NO₃) form
- Results reported in nitrate-N in lbs/acre
- Multiple the analysis ppm number by 0.3 per inch of soil sample depth = total pounds of nitrogen in the soil. Example using the sample above: 0.3 x 6 = 1.8 = 2 x 1.8 = 3.6 pounds of nitrate nitrogen in the soil
- Keep in mind, nitrogen results are a reflection of what is immediately available in the soil and not the future



Photo Credit: Ohio's County Journal

IRRIGATED WHEAT VARIETY TRIAL HARVEST



We finally wrapped up the wheat harvest at the irrigated site in Olton after being rained out and on, twice!

A big thanks go out to Dustin McFaddin for providing the land for this project and to Dr. Calvin Trostle (Extension Agronomist) and his student workers for planting and harvesting!

Be looking for this data in the wheat grain variety picks for the Texas High Plains publication coming soon!



CROPS OFF TO A GREAT START!



June is over and our crops look great around the Castro/Hale/Lamb County area. Although there have been some crop loss reports, I am pleasantly surprised with the remaining fields' conditions. Cotton with a cover or without, under pivot or drip, and even dryland, are developing quite nicely even producing squares and above 90% retention.

Rainfall totals in June, according to the Mesonet are:

Plainview: 3.02 inches

Hart: 2.93 inches

Abernathy: 2.53 inches

Olton: 2.47 inches

Dimmitt: 1.94 inches

Amherst: 1.51 inches

Earth: 1.26 inches

In the last 10 years for the month of June, rainfall has been above 2 inches four times.

According to the National Weather Service, our area is expected to be "normal" for temperatures and precipitation for the month of July and the drought monitor is looking encouraging as well. Let's continue to pray we get timely, slow rainfall and gather quality heat units.



UPCOMING EVENT

CARBON, CROPS, AND GREENHOUSE GASES...OH MY!!



**BASICS OF SOIL
NUTRIENT HEALTH
BY DR. KATE LEWIS**



DATE: TUESDAY, JULY 25H

TIME: 10 AM TO 2 PM

WHERE: OLTON COMMUNITY BUILDING

406 2ND ST. OLTON, TX

Lunch sponsored

RSVP



Kristie Keys 325-665-8790

Recent Calls



Trees

Are you noticing dead branches on your trees? Maybe a whole tree has died recently out of the blue? Keep in mind it is hot and we've recently been through a drought. If you have been watering them regularly and still noticing symptoms, contact me. I'm looking at putting a program together for tree care.

Peas

Not the kind in your garden! This has been a hot topic this month and I am doing some research to find out more about peas as a crop in this area. I have uploaded a new document on my website about using crop-specific inoculants. If you grow peas currently and wouldn't mind me asking some questions, please reach out!



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