

## HARVEST PROGRESS

### MAIZE: TECHNOLOGY WAS A KEY FACTOR IN A CAMPAIGN AFFECTED BY THE LACK OF RAINFALL

**Bahía Blanca, March 17, 2022** - The maize harvest is speeding up and yields are showing the impact of the drought that affected the season. However, there are many cases in which it is clear that investment in technology has helped to consistently sustain crop productivity.

In this situation, every kilo counts, especially when maize prices are the highest in history, as detailed a few days ago in a report issued by the prestigious Rosario Stock Exchange. In this path of defending yields through technology, crop nutrition, and particularly urea, has played a fundamental role.

In a campaign like this one, it is particularly important to analyze the right need of each lot, in each circumstance. Gustavo Ferraris, a leading INTA specialist in crop nutrition, indicated during a training organized by Profertil that "nitrogen increasingly requires a dynamic and almost real-time adjustment".

In this regard, a program that Profertil has been using for many years to follow the needs of maize, called Maicero, is of particular importance. "It is a diagnostic tool designed to support the decision-making process to achieve a correct nitrogen fertilization, which considers variables such as planting date, hybrid and also the water and soil condition, among other elements," said Mirta Toribio, head of Research and Development.

Many of the fields that have overcome the climatic difficulties of this season are late planted maizes, a production scheme that is growing increasingly in the country and that in this cycle exceeded 60% of the area, according to data from the Ministry of Agriculture of the Nation.

Ferraris is clear when he says that, in these productive circumstances, "nitrogen re-fertilization allows to increase yield potential by 20%". The expert recalls that "the shift in rainfall increases the participation of late sowing, to give stability to maize, making its critical period coincide with the rains". And he added that "late dates put an interesting floor to production".

In recent years, maize has become the most important crop in the country in terms of production volume. This season, despite the drop in productivity due to the drought, it

will continue to be so. Profertil, as the most important crop nutrition company in Argentina, is committed to disseminating the necessary tools for producers to sustain and boost their yields in every circumstance.

"For us, it is very important to help spread more and more the knowledge that is needed for the efficient management of maize," said Toribio. And, in this regard, she added that "today it is increasingly important to apply precision agriculture and to have a site-specific management of each lot".

In this regard, she pointed out that the company has been disseminating for many years the Best Management Practices (BMP) for maize nutrition, which include determining the appropriate dose (based on diagnostic tools such as soil analysis), choosing the sources with balanced nutrition in mind, and applying at the right time and in the right way.

"MPMs allow us to increase nutrient use efficiency and that is key in campaigns like this one," she said.

This year 7.1 million hectares of maize were planted in Argentina for commercial grain, according to official data. This is 15% more than the average of the last 5 campaigns. In addition, this is the eighth consecutive season in which the area planted with the crop has increased.

Therefore, beyond the water shortage that many suffered and that had an impact on yields, it is important to remember that technology always helps. Sometimes, to defend yields in adverse circumstances; and at other times, when the situation is right, to enhance them. As Toribio said, "in the field the vision is usually beyond one campaign and, at Profertil, we think the same way."

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## About Profertil

It is a company devoted to the production of the fertilizers needed to optimize crop yields in a sustainable manner. Integrated in equal parts by YPF and Nutrien Inc, it has been operating its production plant in the port of Ingeniero White for 21 years. There, it produces 1,320,000 tons of granulated urea annually, the main nitrogen fertilizer for the soil. In addition, it sells other fertilizers and prepares tailor-made mixtures to provide each territory and crop with the nutrition required. It has administrative offices in Buenos Aires, logistic terminals in Necochea, San Nicolás and Puerto General San Martín (Santa Fe). It has 362 direct employees, 1,500 indirect employees and more than 850 active suppliers.

**Website:** [www.profertil.com.ar](http://www.profertil.com.ar)

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