

THE KEYS TO EFFICIENT MAIZE NUTRITION FOR HIGHER YIELDS

Bahía Blanca, October 27, 2021 - Maize has become in recent years the most important crop in Argentina by production volume. But it is also increasingly important to have a sustainable agricultural system. Both productivity and sustainability are driven by good crop nutrition.

Therefore, in this key time to define the necessary tasks for this, it is worth listening to specialists, whose concepts are essential for every peso invested in nutrition to return in more kilos of corn and better soil care.

In a recent training organized by Profertil, the most important crop nutrition company in the country, the renowned expert Gustavo Ferraris, from INTA Pergamino, stated that soil samples should be taken every year.

"There is a low correlation between those taken one year and those taken the following year," he said. And he also stated that several can be done at different times of the same campaign, since "it can give a value when it is done for wheat and another when it is done for maize".

As for fertilization itself, Ferraris indicated that it is convenient to divide one part at sowing and another when making an adjustment. "This also allows us to make a better diagnosis, because for the readjustment there are already many more tools to evaluate, and even take the crop as an indicator to decide," he said.

This year, 7.1 million hectares of maize will be planted in Argentina for commercial grain. That is 15% more than the average of the last 5 seasons. Moreover, it is the eighth consecutive season in which the area planted with the crop has increased. In this context, producers have a growing demand for information in order to implement Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), boosting yields and protecting the environment.

"One hears a lot that in early maize it is difficult to exceed the yield of 10 ton/ha, but the potential of genetics is well above that," Ferraris analyzed. "I believe that many times early maize does not express its full potential due to lack of nitrogen," said the INTA specialist. And he indicated that "there is much to be adjusted in the agricultural approaches to reduce the gaps".

During the training, Ferraris analyzed multiple aspects of nutrition and indicated that "there is an interaction between density, genotype and nitrogen fertilization that has to be evaluated in each case, and the seeders do it". He added that in many situations spacing can also be added as a fourth component to this interaction that determines yields.

In line with growers' needs, Profertil has been making important investments to develop more technology in crop nutrition. One example is eNeTOTAL Plus, a stabilized nitrogen fertilizer, which allows a 30% reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions, constituting an excellent climate change mitigation strategy.

"Nitrogen increasingly requires a dynamic and almost real-time adjustment," said the expert. For many years, Profertil has been closely following the needs of maize, for example through the Maicero program, a diagnostic tool designed to support the decision-making process to achieve a correct nitrogen fertilization, which considers variables such as planting date, hybrid, water and soil conditions, among other elements.

In this line, the company has also been spreading 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 sources with balanced nutrition in mind, and applying them at the right time and in the right way.

As Mirta Toribio, head of the Research and Development area, said, the idea of Profertil is to help spread more and more of the knowledge that is needed for efficient maize management. "For example, we have seen that there is a clear response in yield to fertilization in advanced vegetative stages of the crop," she said.

Toribio added that "today it is increasingly important to apply precision agriculture and have site-specific management of each lot". In this line, Profertil's objective is to help growers become increasingly efficient, so that their investment in nutrients returns in yield and long-term sustainability.

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 20 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 345 direct employees, 1,500 indirect employees and more than 850 active suppliers.

Website: www.profertil.com.ar

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