

A Friend of Nature Since 1946

Fertrell®

Notes & Quotes

Feature Product:

WeedBan

The market's first practical, natural weed control! Fertrell WeedBan works by stopping secondary feeder roots, causing seedlings to die. It is effective against dandelions, crabgrass, creeping bent grass, foxtail, lambs quarter, purslane, redroot pigweed, smart weed and barnyard and Bermuda grass. Because it is made from a corn syrup by-product, WeedBan is completely safe. Its nitrogen content makes an excellent, slow-releasing fertilizer. Use WeedBan for pre-emergent weed control. For best results, apply right after snow is gone - application rate 20 lbs. per 1000 sq ft. Although it is a natural product, this product is NOT accepted for organic certification.

Available in 50 lb. and 10 lb. packages.



January / February 2013

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What's The Matter????? Organic Matter By Orin Moyer

The “redheaded stepchild” of N-P-K farming, even in the organic farming community, is organic matter. It is often overlooked by many, even though its importance to plant growth is far greater than any single soil nutrient is. Organic matter/humus is like a bank account for nutrients and moisture; once the levels are up, it is there to use when needed in an emergency (drought, plant stress, etc.). With another growing season behind us and the next right around the corner, now is a good time to give some thought to soils.

The basic definition of soil organic matter is simply, “natural, carbon-containing organic materials, living or dead, but excluding charcoal”. The role of organic matter as far as plants are concerned encompasses much more than that. Organic matter is the living sponge of the soil. This is the place where bacteria, fungi, protozoa, and insects decompose crop residues and turn them into humus & soil. OM has the unique ability to give soil true structure and increase nutrient-holding and water-holding capacity.

So we all agree it's great, but how do we build up the levels in our soils?

There are two main ways that soil organic matter is increased:

1. through the addition/incorporation of crop residues and cover crops
2. through the addition of compost or manures

Cover crops are one of the quickest ways to build OM because they can produce large biomass, which in turn is decomposed by the microbes in the soil into OM and eventually humus. So which cover crops are best? That depends on what you're looking for.

- **Increased organic matter (high C:N)** - sorghum Sudan grass, rye, ryegrass, triticale, oats, wheat, spelt, barley
- **Quick forage or grazing** - oats, forage radishes/turnips, rye, ryegrass, teff for dry fields, sorghum Sudan grass, barley
- **Increased nitrogen (low C:N)** - cowpea, winter pea, red clover, sweet clover, hairy vetch, alfalfa
- **Reduced compaction (deep rooted)** - sorghum Sudan grass, ryegrass-5-6', tillage radish-3-30', sweet clover-deep taproot, cereal rye, oats-30"
- **To attract beneficial insects** - buckwheat, sweet clover, red clover
- **Tolerance to wet soils** - sweet clover, red clover, annual ryegrass, cereal rye, wheat, oats
- **Tolerance to heat and drought** - cowpea, hairy vetch, sweet clover, sorghum Sudan grass, buckwheat, barley, teff.
- **Tolerance to cold** - cereal rye, wheat, spelt, triticale, winter pea, sweet clover

Cover crop plow-downs also promote healthy microbial communities in the soil by providing both food and habitat for the bacteria and fungi to live on/in. Now it is starting to look like a soil food web cover crop, being decomposed by bacteria and fungi (building organic matter and releasing nutrients), protozoa eating bacteria (releasing nitrogen) - and on and on it goes.

We saw so many instances during the drought in the summer of 2012 where abused soil produced crops that were weak and died, while soils that were higher in organic matter (held more moisture), and with good microbial populations kept the crop alive during the dry period. I read a study done at a uni-



iversity in 2012 where they found that soils healthy with microbes would actually keep a corn crop alive seven days longer during a drought than a soil with low fungi population. It is impressive that seven days after the abused soil's corn died the healthy soil finally lost all moisture.

It is important to remember that cover crops must be planted in a timely manner and be sufficiently fertilized. If the cover crop does poorly, its benefit will be much less.

New Employee Update

My name is Peggy Meier, and I am proud to have been awarded the newly-created position of Customer Service Representative, assisting both the feed and agronomy departments. As I learn about Fertrell's products from everyone I work with, I hope to become the person that the customers can have confidence in to answer their questions about our products for their soil and animal nutritional needs.

It is a very exciting experience for me to learn about the natural and organic benefits for agriculture and animal health. We can't keep treating our planet like a place that will last forever no matter what we do to it.

My summers were spent in the small town of Jeffersonville in the Catskills. I have memories of my grandparents' small farm and the hard work it took to grow, harvest and preserve the fruits of their labors.

Lancaster County is the best of both worlds for me - the beautiful rural area all around and Park City Mall just down the road...

I look forward to being a part of the Fertrell family and growing and learning from everyone.

News from the front

With the busy season just around the corner, we would like to remind everyone to please e-mail or fax your orders to the office. The fax is on 24/7, and the number is 717-367-9319. Emailed orders may be sent to info@fertrell.com.

When you are calling for Orin Moyer in the agronomy department, please be patient, as this is a very busy time of the year for him. If Orin is not available, perhaps the receptionist would be able to help you, or you can feel free to leave Orin a voice mail, including the phone number you can be reached at or details of when you will call again. Orin can also be reached via e-mail at orin@fertrell.com.

To request freight quotes, please e-mail beth@fertrell.com or call her at ext. 223. Please include all details: delivery town, state and zip code, residential or commercial delivery, dock availability, pallet jack, short truck, lift gate, notify call or delivery appointment needed for delivery. Most of these services require additional charges from the carrier and may be avoided if we have detailed information about the delivery location. If the recipient has regular receiving hours, please include these when placing your order.

Upon delivery, please mark any possible damages, and check for notes from the driver on the bill of lading PRIOR to signing off on the delivery.

As an additional reminder, if the auto-attendant picks up your call, you may immediately dial the extension number of the person you wish to speak to.

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Question and Answer Corner:

I understand you do soil testing, but I do not see that on your site. I have a small, four to five acre field I want to use for hay, but was told it was a good idea to have the soil tested. Can you tell me how to go about that with your company? I don't want to use weed killers and chemicals, so you were recommended?

We use A&L Lab in Richmond, VA and Agri Analysis in Leola, PA for testing. The general test is \$20 and will be billed to you once we receive the billing from the lab (after the test has been processed).

The lab will forward the test results to our agronomy department, and we will make recommendations based on the crops you plan to grow. There is no fee for the recommendation. We can send you the soil kits along with the lab info and sample form. Please let us know how many you need and your mailing address, and we will get them out to you.

What do you have for aphids in my greenhouse? For aphids, we almost always use Pyganic. It works extremely well on aphids and whiteflies.

I have a customer that would like to loosen up some red clay with greensand. Would someone give me their thoughts on this matter? *Yes, Greensand can certainly be used for this purpose. Because of its actual form/structure, Greensand has the ability to loosen tight clay soils and also bind very sandy soils to increase moisture holding capacity.*

I have about 15 blueberry bushes, and I'm going to use your berry program. The program instructs us to use 2 lbs. per 100 sq. ft. and 5 lbs. per 100 sq. ft. Is there another way to measure the amount used to make it easier for me, such as 1 cup per plant? *Yes, typically on mature bushes we would suggest applying between 1/2-1 cup per plant; depending on what the current soil nutrient levels are. That should give you a good start.*

Can you please explain what the difference would be when using Berry Mix verses Holly Care on blueberries? *The difference between the Berry Mix and Holly Care is that the Holly Care is formulated with extra sulfur to help lower the pH for acid-loving plants (like blueberries). Also, the Holly Care has a different analysis of 4-6-4 verses 4-2-4 for the Berry Mix. I would suggest using the Holly Care on blueberries.*

What do you have for leaf hoppers on my hayfields? *You can use Liquid #3 at 3-4 qts. per acre or also 3-5 lbs. of sugar in the tank, sprayed one week after cutting.*

How do you sweeten the soil? Will fish, crab or alfalfa meal do that? *We recommend an application of calcium or aragonite.*

Can you tell me how long the liquid 2-3-1 lasts once a container is opened? Does it have a shelf life of sorts? *The fish will basically last for years on end. It is stabilized to a low pH of 3.8. Once mixed with water, though, it needs to be used that day. If it sits in the container for an extended length of time, it may require some extra stirring, but it will keep fine.*

We are putting together a fertility plan for a 14 acre hay field as part of our organic certification plan. Our soil testing indicated a need for 40 lbs N, 50 lbs P and 110 lbs K per acre. Our soil pH is 5.3 and our organic matter is near 10%. I've been looking through your product list, and I'd be curious what product(s) you'd recommend. *Based on what you have told me, I would suggest using Fertrell Super K 3-4-7. It is a great product for topdressing hay fields. I would suggest applying at a rate of 350-400 lbs. per acre. Also, you should consider applying either 1 ton of hi-cal lime or 750 lbs of aragonite to address the low calcium levels.*

I'm looking for a general (in quantity per acre) fertility program for my sandy, somewhat barren little pasture. The top 12 inches of the soil is mostly sand, and then it's hard red/yellow clay. The only thing that seems to do fairly well is Bermuda grass and centipede. I do have one 10,000 square foot patch that is full of lush clover because I've been spreading manure there for the last few years. I just don't have access to enough manure right now to do the whole place. I found you guys in the Stockman Grass Farmer and visited your website. I'm stoked that you offer a wide variety of natural products and not "toxic rescue chemicals." The amount of products is overwhelming for a novice like myself so I'd like a general baseline program. My average soil PH is about 5.8 and I've made the mistake in the past of using dolomitic lime and lime high in magnesium. I would suggest that you consider using Fertrell Super N 4-2-4. Also, if your pH is that low you should consider applying Hi-Cal Lime. I would suggest using the following rates: Super N 4-2-4 at 350-400 lbs. per acre, Hi-Cal Lime at 1.5 ton per acre.

I have been thinking of spreading kelp on my pastures as a soil amendment. My dealer says the soil type is less expensive than the feed type - true? Also, he has never used it directly on the soil. Any lb. per acre recommendations would be appreciated. What got me thinking of it is seeing the spots in my pasture where the cows have spilled their mineral supplement (kelp) in past years. Typically we would suggest applying approximately 75-100 lbs. per acre. Yes, I would suggest using the soil kelp as it does cost less than the feed kelp.

How much sulfur is in the molasses blocks?
There is very little sulfur in the molasses blocks - 0.0520%.

Is the molasses included simply to make it more palatable, or is there a nutrient benefit?

It is used to feed the microbes in the digestive tract, which increases digestibility. It is also in there to help hold the minerals and fine particles to the grain particles.

Hi, I'm trying to formulate feed rations for my pasture's layers, turkeys, and broilers. I like your recipe for the layers, but I'm wondering what my options are for creating a vegetarian ration for the other birds? What can be substituted for the fish meal - flax meal perhaps? To properly replace the fish meal, you would need to add 100 lbs. more of roasted soybeans and 1.5 lbs of DL methionine per 50 lbs of fish meal replaced. Flax meal is not a great replacement, but you could use it as part of the same replacement formula above. Keep in mind that regardless of what you put in their feed, your animals still won't be on a true vegetarian diet. They will catch and eat bugs, worms, small rodents, and small reptiles. Their metabolism very much requires meat-type protein for them to be truly healthy. They get their required methionine from those types of protein. The commercial industry adds it synthetically as I did above to meet their nutritional requirements for methionine. It is the poultry's first limiting amino acid.

I have a couple of questions about your goat & chicken ration: I am interested in going to whole grains in feeding, but I see that you do not recommend whole grains. Can you explain?

Whole grains work fine for smaller back yard flocks, but they are not very efficient for large-scale producers, in that they slow down digestion and overall feed efficiency. Therefore, whole grains are not as cost effective in terms of production for income. Also, whole grains can only be managed by mature poultry and goats. Young poultry are not able to consume or digest whole grains like corn or soybeans.

Question and Answer Corner Con't:

About Nutribalancer...is the yeast culture a good substitute for Diamond V culture, and can it be given free choice? *Yes, the live cell yeast cultures in the Goat Nutri Balancer are a good substitute for the Diamond V. Yes, the Goat Nutri Balancer may be offered free choice.*

I see in your chicken ration that you recommend aragonite. My local mill does not carry this. Would feeding lime be a good substitute? If not, what do you recommend?

If you can't get aragonite which is available from your Fertrell dealer, you can use oyster shells as a second choice or calcium carbonate as a final resort.

Spring Garden Tips:

- Plan now for the veggies you will grow next season.
- Sample soils for optimum production if you have not already done so (cost averages \$20 per test)
 - soil should be above 40 degrees.
- Re-check the availability of your seed selection.
- Attend Fertrell growers' meetings in your area.
- Look for availability of Fertrell products in your area.
- Research your insect control options.
- Order your potting soil and fertilizers early so that once the weather breaks you will have them on hand.

Winter Specials:

Fertrell Gold Liquid Starter 2-4-2

Specially formulated as a starter or pop up fertilizer. Readily available phosphorus speeds germination and promotes rapid and vigorous growth.

Use on corn and row crops, as foliar feed, for forages and small grains, on lawns and turf, on vegetables, in drip line irrigation, and on all ages of fruit trees and shrubs.

Available in quart, gallon and 5 gallon containers.
10% off through end of February, 2013



Fertrell Liquid Starter 2-3-1

A fish hydrolystate that is made from rainbow trout. A great starter fertilizer, it is blended to meet the organic requirements set forth by the USDA. Liquid Starter 2-3-1 can be used as a foliar feed or throughout the season. It has been screened and filtered to prevent the clogging of sprayer nozzles.

Available in quart, gallon and 5 gallon containers.
10% off through end of February, 2013

Kelp Conditioner

Beneficial in the fight against mycotoxins, Kelp Conditioner helps buffer and combat the effects of mycotoxins in grains and forages, both wet and dry alike. Even though you can't see, smell or taste them, most mycotoxins are there hiding, waiting to rob you of your health and profits. The most common symptoms are, in order of occurrence: decrease in feed intake, increase in somatic cell count, dull or poor-looking hair coats, and poor productive performance. For about 6 cents per day, you can help your animals live better, healthier lives. Each reduction of 50,000 SCC should give you an extra 25 cents in your pocket.

Available in 50 lb. bags

10% off now through end of February, 2013

Welcome New Dealers

Naomi's Organic Farm Supply - 2615 SE Schiller St.,
Portland, OR 97202 Phone 503.517.8551 Fax 503.546.9755
order@naomisorganic.com

Ag Supply Inc. - PO Box 139, Sibley, IL 61773
Phone 217.745.2424 Fax 217.745.2372
agsupplyinc@hotmail.com



Reflections by Don Brubaker

We all love fall. Those beautiful colors, warm days and cool nights cause me to reflect on the months past. As I visited farmers in Pennsylvania and Maryland during the summer months, there was one recurring theme in that most farmers seemed to be reacting to conditions in the field and barn instead of being proactive. I would like to encourage everyone to develop a plan over the winter to be more proactive in their approach to farming next year.

Every farmer I talk with, when asked why they are farmers, will inevitably say to be home with their family. So how can we take advantage of being home with the family? One of the best ways is to find a way to divide up the farm responsibilities. For most farms this is easily done, but where it all falls apart is in the scouting and not reacting fast enough when something goes wrong.

Most husbands and wives don't have enough quiet time together, so I have been encouraging them to go for a walk a couple of times a week around the farm in the evenings. In the quiet time of the walk, you will both be able to reflect on the day and week past. In this reflection you will be able to make decisions that will benefit the farm and your family as a whole. During this time you can also monitor what is happening with the crops and animals that are under your care, thus making the appropriate decisions proactive as opposed to reactive.

So get out there and enjoy the fall and winter with your family before the busyness of spring and summer are upon us again.

A Friend of Nature Since 1946

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67 YEARS!

Upcoming Events

Jan 16 2013 – Fertrell Farmer/ Grower Meeting, Brush Valley PA info or to register call 800.347.1566 or e-mail info@fertrell.com

Jan 22 2013 – Fertrell Farmer/ Grower Meeting, Anderson Twshp Bldg., 1295 Whitehall Road, Turbotville, PA 17772 , for info or to register call 570.437.6954 or K3SDR@verizon.net

Jan 26-27 23rd annual Nofa NJ Food & Agriculture Winter Conference, The Student Life Center at Brookdale County Community College, Lincroft, NJ

Jan 27-28, 2013 - North Central OH Dairy Grazing Conference, Buckeye Event Center in Dalton, Ohio
Info: leah@smallfarminstitute.org or 740.545.6349 (Leah Miller)

Feb 6-9, 2013 - 22nd Farming for the Future conference, State College PA info: 814.349.9856 Kristin Hoy

Feb 7-9, 2013 - MOA Organic and Green Energy Conference, University Plaza Hotel, Springfield, MO

Feb 25-27, 2013 – NOFA-NY Winter Conference, Saratoga Hilton & City Center, Saratoga Springs, NY call 585.271.7166