

PLANT NUTRIENTS

AdvanSix Sulf-N® Ammonium Sulfate

Sulfur Fertilizer is Not Just for Sandy Soils Anymore

Agronomists agree that many sandy soils need sulfur fertilizer to support profitable crop growth. But now some agronomists are finding that heavier-textured soils also need sulfur.

Sites responsive in Wisconsin. Areas of sulfur deficiency in Wisconsin have generally been limited to the northern part of the state where sandy soils are naturally low in sulfur, reports University of Wisconsin soil specialist Dr. Keith Kelling. But Kelling documented a response to sulfur on alfalfa that was grown in southern Wisconsin on a silt loam soil with relatively high organic matter levels (3.5-4.0 percent).

This is likely due to anti-pollution regulations which have significantly reduced the amount of airborne sulfur that crops get from industry smokestacks, says Kelling. According to a report from the Wisconsin State Department of Natural Resources, sulfur dioxide emissions from state industry have dropped by nearly 50 percent in 10 years.



Sulfur-deficient alfalfa
Photo courtesy: Dr. Keith Kelling,
University of Wisconsin

Kansas research monitors trend. A growing trend toward early planting and no-till planting may also be fueling the need for sulfur fertilizer on heavier-textured soil types. According to Ray Lamond of Kansas State University, soil type is no longer the only factor to consider when evaluating the need for sulfur. Farmers should also look at their tillage practices and planting dates.

“In many cases, we’re planting corn into soils that are five to six degrees cooler than conventionally tilled ground,” says Lamond. “These cooler temperatures are inhibiting the release of sulfur from organic matter in the soil.”

Including sulfur in a starter band that is placed two inches below and two inches beside the seed can speed up early growth of corn and boost yield, says Lamond. In his tests, even heavier textured soils and soils with high organic matter levels have responded to sulfur with yield increases of 10 bushels per acre.

Elemental versus sulfate. For best results from spring applications of sulfur, use the sulfate form because it is readily available for crop uptake. Elemental sulfur, by contrast, must be converted into the sulfate form with the help of soil microbes, which are less active in cool soil conditions.

Sulf-N® ammonium sulfate (21-0-0-24S) supplies 100 percent of its sulfur in the readily available sulfate form.

Contact AdvanSix

To learn more about the benefits of Sulf-N® Ammonium Sulfate, visit AdvanSix.com or SulfN.com or call: **1-844-890-8949** (toll free, U.S./Can.) **+1-973-526-1800** (international)

AdvanSix
300 Kimball Drive, Suite 101
Parsippany, NJ 07054

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