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GROWING SMARTER

CELEBRATING THE 20TH EDITION

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Cool-Season Fertilizers For Turf

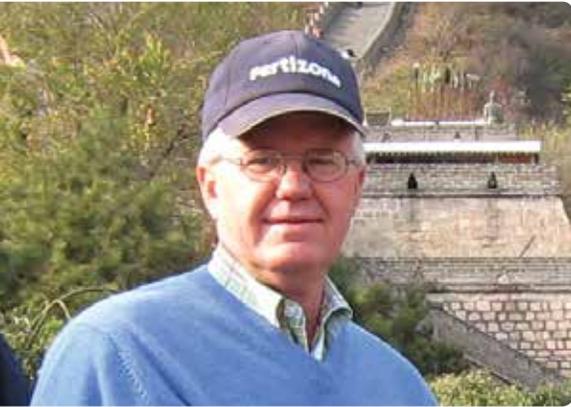
Nitrate Blends Keep Plants Going Until Spring

When the weather gets colder, all plants and turfgrasses need nitrogen to grow and stay green. Ammonium Nitrate blends such as 24-3-3 or 12-0-0 are good cool-season fertilizers because they contain the right nitrate levels for the cool weather and they deliver a quick

source of nitrogen when plants and grasses need it most.

“These products provide quick sources of nitrogen for plants and grasses under cool weather conditions,” says Craig Allen, Manager of Fertizona—Fennemore. “When the weather cools

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A Two-Sided Coin

Recognizing Why The Market Went Up Then Came Down

Every grower has probably noticed how the market recently went up and then

came back down. For months, crude oil prices increased, and so did the corn market, as these two are very closely related.

This is due to hedge funds, which must stay aligned with the commodity mix spelled out in their prospectus. If crude oil prices go up, these funds need to buy more corn, soybeans and wheat to stay balanced. On the other hand, if crude oil prices decrease, these funds need to sell.

However, this past summer, just as quickly as the market went up, it came right back down. Corn futures dropped

from \$7.50 to \$3.50; soybeans from \$16 to \$8.50; crude oil from \$147 to \$49 per barrel. Many agribusinesses were hit hard.

It's important to recognize a key factor that contributed to the collapse in prices. The market swung too far to the upside and then swung too far to the downside. This is a normal market reaction and one that was out of anyone's control. Although we at Fertizona and Compton Ag have no influence over these market fluctuations, we will do everything we can to help our customers through this market correction.

- Jim Compton

cover story continued

down, all plants need nitrogen in order to maintain their color—these nitrate blends are great sources under these types of conditions.”

Nitrate SmartBlends™ 24-3-3 and 12-0-0 are applied at a rate of eight pounds per 1000 ft² and they work best when temperatures get down toward 50 to 60 degrees.

Benefits Of Nitrate Blends

The main benefit of cool-season, nitrate blend fertilizers is that they contain the correct source of nitrogen for milder weather.

“When the weather is cooler, plants can't use other forms of nitrogen as efficiently as nitrate nitrogen,” explains Larry McGee, Lawn and Garden Products Manager for Fertizona. “Blends such as 24-3-3 and 12-0-0 are fertilizers that plants and grasses can use to stay green and continue growing when it's colder. These blends do well until the warmer weather comes in spring.”

Liquid Nitrate Products Work With Fertigation

Unlike 24-3-3 and 12-0-0, which are granular forms of nitrate nitrogen; ammonium nitrate liquid (AN20) and calcium nitrate liquid products deliver the same nitrate nitrogen in a liquid form. These liquid forms can be used with a fertigation system.

“AN20 and calcium nitrate are liquid sources of nitrate nitrogen,” explains Craig. “These products can be used effectively through a fertigation system, so they don't require as much labor to apply.”



Are You Really Getting A Homogeneous Product?

Some fertilizers are homogeneous products, meaning that every prill has the same nutrient composition. Non-homogeneous blends are products in which the manufacturer has mixed components together to produce the desired overall composition.

“Homogeneous products cost anywhere from \$150 to \$200 more per ton,” says Craig. “Because of this, growers need to be aware of what they are paying for and know that what they are getting is a true homogeneous product, rather than just an overall blend.”

Fertizona and Compton Ag Services offer a wide variety of both homogeneous products and blends for each grower, depending on preference.

Why Pay More For Name-Brand Chemicals?

Branded Chemicals Provide Some Benefits Over Generics

In past issues of Growing Smarter, we've talked about the qualities of generic chemistries. However, growers may want to consider sticking with name-brand pest control products, as they provide certain value that generics do not.

“There is a comfort level that some growers get from using a name-brand chemical,” says Dennis Osborn, Crop Protection Sales Manager for Fertilzona. “These are products that they know and have used for years. Some growers don't want to risk using a generic product that doesn't have the research or technical staff to back it up like its name-brand counterpart.”

Branded Chemistries Backed By Manufacturers

Manufacturers of name-brand products spend a substantial amount of time and money to develop chemistries—they invest heavily in product consistency, quality and timely availability. Traditionally, name-brand products are backed with an equally strong warranty as the generic but the investment in local field staff as well as years of experience is a big plus, especially if there is a problem.

On the other hand, generic companies manufacture post-patent chemistries with minimal investment in research and field staff to test and service the product. These companies partially pass the savings on to growers in the form of a lower priced product. This may be especially attractive to someone on a tight budget.

Growers Preference

“There is nothing wrong with using a name-brand chemistry, it's a matter of preference,” explains Dennis. “If growers have room in their budget and they want the comfort of using a name-brand chemistry that's backed by traditional research and field support, that's perfectly fine. Consider it like a form of insurance and peace of mind.”

In the end, each grower needs to make their own decision as to whether or not the name-brand product provides enough value to justify the premium in price. Fertilzona and Compton Ag Services offer a wide array of options depending on each grower's preference.



Turf Tip

Turf Managers should not discount the value of a complete soil test to determine what condition their grounds are in. Now is an ideal time to have this done—in order to have time to make corrections before spring. Call your Fertilzona field rep to discuss this valuable growing tool.

Turf Tip

Even though micronutrients are used by turfgrasses in very small amounts, they are essential for plant growth. Iron, manganese and zinc are particularly important to help maintain balance—and they help nutrients and water to be used efficiently. Talk to your Fertilzona rep about a SmartBlend™ that will add these valuable nutrients to your turf operation.



Healthy Plants Are Strong Plants

Transit™ Soil Enhances Nutrient Performance And Mobility

Growers are always looking for cost-effective ways of achieving stronger plants and increased yields, especially in challenging economic conditions. Thanks to a unique new product available from Fertizona and Compton Ag Services, growers can get healthier plants with reduced stress by boosting the mobility of crop nutrients.

“Transit Soil is a soil-applied product for root uptake that is formulated to promote strong plant growth—especially in less than desirable conditions such as extreme cold or wet soil,” says Dennis Osborn, Crop Protection Sales Manager for Fertizona. “In this economy, growers need to make everything as efficient as possible when it comes to plant health—Transit Soil helps them do that.”



Furst Liquid

CarbonPower® And Furst Liquid: A Powerful Combination

Furst Liquid, a nutritional amendment produced for Fertizona and Compton Ag Services, also helps utilize nutrients going into plants, but it does so in a different way than Transit™ Soil and KAFÉ™-F. Furst Liquid elicits a response that a plant needs nutrients. It then opens the path for those nutrients to enter the plant. Once Furst Liquid opens the path, CarbonPower® technology brings the nutrients into the plant.

A High-Speed Express To Plants

Transit Soil, which is made by FBS, Inc., is powered by CarbonPower, an active technology that when in the presence of other plant nutrients will take those nutrients to a higher level of mobility. CarbonPower speeds up absorption of nutrients to the plant and allows for faster uptake and translocation of those nutrients.

“CarbonPower is a relatively new chemistry,” explains Dennis. “Essentially, it allows growers to get nutrients to the plant without those nutrients being tied up or impeded by such things as soil molecules. When nutrients are tied up you are basically just wasting your money.”

KAFÉ™-F Moves Nutrients Throughout Leaves

Much like soil-applied Transit Soil works to deliver nutrients to the roots of plants, KAFÉ-F, a foliar product, works with CarbonPower technology to deliver nutrients to the leaves of the plant. KAFÉ-F helps move nutrients through foliar barriers directly into the plant. Nutrients are then distributed where they are needed the most throughout the plant.

“KAFÉ-F is similar to Transit Soil except it’s formulated for foliar applications,” Dennis explains. “KAFÉ-F can be used on any crop where maximum foliar nutrient uptake and systemic movement is desired.”

Growers See Results

“This is an exciting technology that benefits everybody,” says Dennis. “Growers have definitely noticed a difference in early trials of these products. They’re seeing improvements in quality, grade of produce or even sugar content.”

Additionally, in grain crops, 2008 California wheat grower trials resulted in higher protein levels as well as yields.

All In The Family

Jack Seiler Knows The Keys To A Successful Operation

Running a family farm provides many substantial benefits, but also presents some challenges. There are a few growers who have overcome these challenges and thrived in this environment. Jack Seiler is one such example.

Jack Seiler is the owner and partner in Jack Seiler Farms, a second-generation family farm located in the south end of Palo Verde Valley in California. He grows cotton, alfalfa and wheat, and has 12 full-time employees.

Jack was born in Lancaster, California and moved to Blythe when he was 10 years old. At that time, his father obtained a development lease and started growing alfalfa just north of Ehrenberg, Arizona—shortly after, Jack started farming with his dad.

In 1976 Jack took a break from farming to attend Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Crop Science with concentration in plant protection. Upon graduation, he returned to Ehrenberg to work with his father.

When the lease in Ehrenberg expired, Jack and his father found a lease in the Palo Verde Irrigation District of Blythe and in 1991 they moved their operation. Jack's father retired in 2003 and Jack now manages the operation himself.

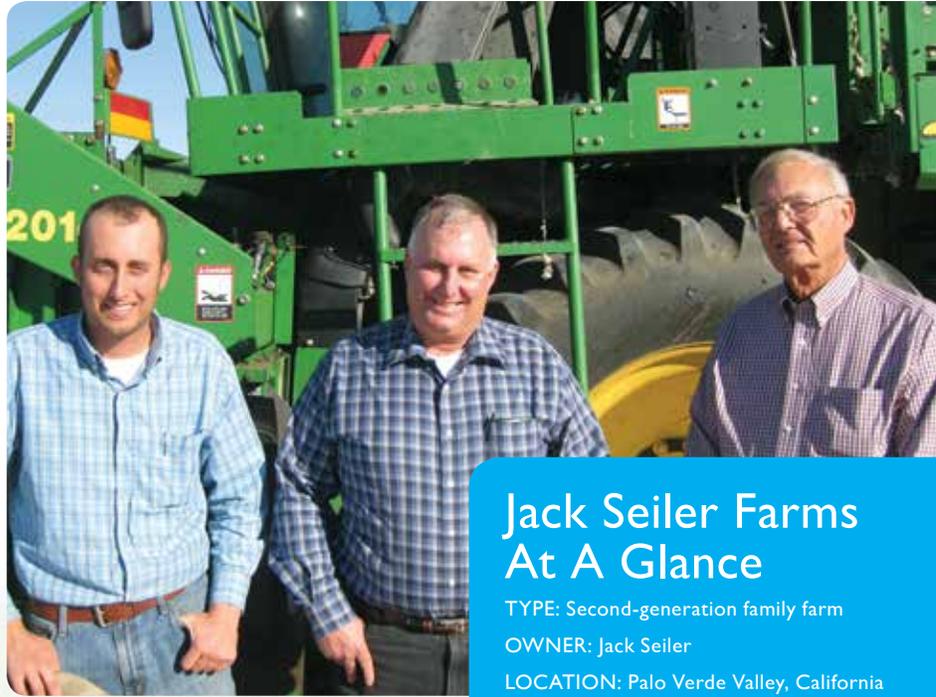
Overcoming The Challenges

Although running a successful family farm is challenging, it's a challenge that Jack has met and exceeded.

“Understanding your true costs and watching those costs is critical to being successful in farming,” explains Jack. “If growers can wrap their arms around their true costs, they are better able to make decisions.”

Jack is also a big advocate of proper crop marketing. For example, he grows dairy hay in spring and retail hay in summer—and he tries to customize each cutting for a particular market. For his cotton marketing he takes advantage of marketing tools that Calcot® offers.

“Some growers work hard growing crops then drop the ball on marketing them,” says Jack. “I'm an aggressive marketer and it has really helped me throughout the years.”



Pictured from left to right:
Ryan, Jack, and Jack's dad—Jack

Jack Seiler Farms At A Glance

TYPE: Second-generation family farm

OWNER: Jack Seiler

LOCATION: Palo Verde Valley, California

CROPS GROWN: Alfalfa, silage corn,
cotton and wheat

ACRES: 4,000

STAFF: 12 full-time employees

Looking To The Third-Generation

Jack's 25-year-old son Ryan, who also received a Bachelor of Science in Crop Science from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo with a minor in agricultural business, is an employee at Jack Seiler Farms. Jack even talks about the possible hand-off of the operation to Ryan in 10 to 15 years.

“Ryan is in his second complete season with us. He does a great job,” says Jack. “I'm proud of him.”

A Win-Win Relationship

Compton Ag Services has been working with Jack Seiler Farms for four years and supplies them with fertilizers and pesticides.

In addition, Compton Ag does truckload deliveries of anhydrous ammonia 82-0-0 (NH₃) for the farm. They set up Jack Seiler Farms with twelve NH₃ tanks and Jack and his employees set the tanks themselves—saving time and money.

“I am real impressed with Compton Ag and I enjoy doing business with them,” explains Jack. “They have great customer service, they listen to my needs and they always try to find me the best value. I would tell any grower to give Compton Ag a try.”

FERTIZONA AND COMPTON AG WELCOME
The Following New Team Members

Name	Location	Position
Johnny Mason	Willcox	Delivery Driver
Kory Mohler	Casa Grande	Delivery Driver
Jake Hughes	Fennemore	T&O Salesperson
Timothy Hudson	Willcox	Branch Manager
George Hirsch	Thatcher	Delivery Driver
Matt Kime	Willcox	Plant Operator
Robert Fuller	Willcox	Plant Operator
Michael Hammonds	Willcox	Plant Operator
Pedro Favela	Ag Express	Driver
Jared Mattice	Thatcher	Delivery Assistant
Francisco Lopez, Jr.	San Tan	Delivery Assistant
Felipe Ruiz, Jr.	Casa Grande	Reactor Assistant/Delivery Staff
Cristobal Enriquez	Willcox	Delivery Staff

Furst Liquid

Cantaloupe Trial Information

These trials were conducted in Yuma, Arizona on cantaloupe crops. Production practices were identical with the only differences being the addition of Furst Liquid.

Benefits/Results:

- Average yield of Furst Liquid- 920 cartons/acre
- Average yield of customer standard - 801 cartons/acre
- Average yield of best customer standard - 882.5 cartons/acre

Difference Furst Liquid vs. Other 3 Blocks:

119 cnts/ac @ average of \$2.00 per carton = gross of \$238.00

Difference Furst Liquid vs. 2 Best Blocks:

37.5 cnts/ac @ average of \$2.00 per carton = gross of \$75.00

Rate of Furst Liquid: 16 oz/ac

Furst Liquid cost per gal: \$115.00 per gal

Investment in Furst Liquid: \$14.375 per ac

Net return vs. customer ave: \$223.63 per ac (1556% ROI)

Net return vs. best blocks: \$60.63 per ac (422% ROI)

See the results *Furst*-hand by contacting your local Fertizona or Compton Ag rep!





“I always knew I wanted to work in agriculture. Growing up, my dad was a farmer and I would help him in the field from time to time—I really enjoyed working on the farm.”

- Tim Hudson

Tim Hudson Takes Over

New Willcox Manager Has Deep Roots In Agriculture

As the new manager at Fertizona—Willcox, Tim Hudson is responsible for the day-to-day operations at that site. Everything from ordering chemicals, pricing invoices and overseeing a sales team of three experts falls under his duties.

In addition to his everyday responsibilities, Tim also supervises Fertizona’s only liquid calcium nitrate fertilizer plant. When Tim arrived at Fertizona in May of 2008, Fertizona was running only one shift at the calcium nitrate plant—and it became his goal to increase storage capacity and production. Now, less than a year later, the plant is up-and-running 24 hours a day.

No Stranger To The Industry

Born and raised in King City, California, Tim is no stranger to the agriculture business.

“I always knew I wanted to work in agriculture,” Tim says. “Growing up, my dad was a farmer and I would help him in the field from time to time—I really enjoyed working on the farm.”

A graduate of Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Tim earned a Bachelor of Science in Crop Science and went on to work for six years as a pest control advisor. After that, he held

management positions with various fertilizer companies and later went into a farming partnership in San Ardo, California. Last year, he made the switch to Fertizona.

Partnering With Growers

Tim and his sales team are constantly working with their growers to help them increase yields and manage their growing operations more efficiently.

“We offer our growers soil and plant samples,” Tim explains. “It allows us to monitor their plants, find out what they need and see if there are any specific problems we can pick up on and correct before they become huge deals.”

In addition, Tim works closely with chemical company representatives in an effort to stay on top of new products that are coming out.

“We always want to make sure we’re aware of new products that may benefit our growers,” says Tim.

When Tim isn’t busy overseeing the operations at Fertizona’s Willcox location, he enjoys spending time with his wife Kim at their home in Vail, Arizona, just outside of Tucson.

FERTIZONA LOCATIONS

Contact Your Local Office For All Your Needs.

CASA GRANDE

Main Office

2850 South Peart Road
Casa Grande, AZ 85293
(520) 836-7477

Dennis Osborn, *Crop Protection*
Tyke Bennett, *Seed Products*
Jimmy Compton, *Crop Nutrition*
Lamont Lacy, *Credit Manager*
Larry McGee, *Lawn & Garden*
Jeffrey Benge, *Controller*
Keith Hall, *Director of Operations*

BUCKEYE

26705 West Baseline Road
Buckeye, AZ 85326
(623) 386-4491

Tim Walsh, *Manager*

FENNEMORE

17102 West Olive Avenue
Waddell, AZ 85355
(623) 935-4252

Craig Allen, *Manager*

ROLL

4212 South Avenue 39E
Roll, AZ 85347
(928) 785-9016

Doug Canan, *Manager*

SAN TAN

San Tan Industrial Park
Sacaton, AZ 85247
(520) 836-0103

Tom Montoya, *Manager*

THATCHER

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Thatcher, AZ 85552
(928) 428-3161

Shawn Wright, *Manager*

WILLCOX

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Willcox, AZ 85643
(520) 384-2264

Tim Hudson, *Manager*

YUMA

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Mike Espil, *Manager*

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