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New silage corn hybrids for 2012

Growers and dairy producers can increase tonnage, milk and profit potential

Corn growers who produce crops for silage have good reasons to be excited about new hybrids available at Fertizona this year. The leading seed producers have been introducing advanced genetics that incorporate key traits, such as improved insect protection, higher tonnage, better digestibility and more, all representing high-yielding opportunities to help dairy producers get more milk per acre.

“We’re recommending some great new Mycogen® hybrids right now, especially with the SmartStax® gene,” says Tyke Bennett, Seed Products Sales Manager at Fertizona. “These hybrids use a combination of traits to give growers a lot of benefits, like insect protection above and below ground.”

The SmartStax gene is available in three Silage-Specific™ hybrids being released by Mycogen for 2012. The new products being introduced this year also include beneficial TMF (Totally Managed Feedstuffs) hybrids available through Fertizona.

“A few of the new hybrids are fifth-generation, and they’re all backed by lots of research,” explains Vernal Gomes, Silage Market Developer for Mycogen. “With some of our hybrids, data from 16 universities showed an average production increase of almost five pounds of milk per cow per day, compared to traditional silage varieties.”

TMF hybrids for dry conditions

“Our big challenge, particularly in parts of Arizona, is water,” Bennett adds, “because corn needs so darn much of it. The good news is that some of the new silage varieties are specifically bred to deal with that, which is a big help for our customers.”

The new corn hybrids from Mycogen include outstanding choices developed for stress tolerance and reduced water availability. For example, TMF2L874 is a new, 118-day hybrid that’s well adapted to growing conditions in the Southwest. Featuring SmartStax technology, it provides above- and below-ground protection from insect damage, plus high tonnage and good digestibility.

“TMF2L874 offers the most complete, multi-mode action for worm control available,” adds Gomes.

Story continued on page 2

The current European economic crisis seems to be a world away, so much so that many US growers think that what is happening in Europe has absolutely nothing to do with them. However, it's important to realize that what we're dealing with is a global market.

The total output of the European Gross Domestic Product (GDP) makes up 26 percent of the entire world's GDP. To put that in perspective, the US makes up 21.5 percent

with China trailing far behind at 10 percent. When significant regions are put under financial stress, demand drops, resulting in such a degree of uncertainty; in these cases, commodities are typically the first to feel the stress.

So with the futures market under pressure to sell, naturally market prices will

go down. As market prices go down, bullish futures will succumb to minimize losses in selling. More selling equals lower commodity prices.

“We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails.”

- Bertha Calloway, American civil-rights activist

What does that all mean?

Logically, if commodity prices are lowering this affects other commodities such as Ag inputs like fertilizer, lending a great deal of uncertainty to what your inputs will be when the time comes to plant.

There are two main things to consider when uncertainty exists in the marketplace – firstly, what happens globally, affects you locally. Our job at Fertilzona is to monitor that and to give you an informed decision at the time of planting, what is the best route for you to go.

And secondly, we have gone through these types of situations before and have successfully navigated through them. As always, Fertilzona and Compton Ag Services will always be there with you throughout the 2012 growing season to best serve your needs.

- Jim Compton

President, Fertilzona and Compton Ag Services



Silage Corn Hybrids

“The new hybrids can mean quite a substantial return on investment.”

- Vernal Gomes, Silage Market Developer, Mycogen

“There’s a lot to know about these silage hybrids, especially with all the new technology,” says Bennett.

“Fertilzona has been having grower meetings to keep our customers informed—not just for the growers, but also the dairies they serve. The meetings are designed to be educational, and they’re getting good turnouts, so we’re spreading the word about better silage.”

“The new hybrids can mean quite a substantial return on investment,” adds Gomes. “When a dairy producer is able to cut back on purchased grains and reduce other input costs, it’s a real profit opportunity.”

Talk to your Fertilzona or Compton Ag Services representative about new silage hybrids, or contact Tyke Bennett at 520.836.7477 for more information.

Gomes also strongly recommends TMF2H918 for Fertilzona customers who grow silage corn. Although not part of the new 2012 lineup, it’s a popular and proven hybrid for areas that are tight on water.

“It’s a hybrid that originally came from Argentina, and it’s bred for extremely high stress tolerance,” he explains.

“It’s very forgiving under all kinds of dry conditions.”

Providing grower education

By developing hybrids that combine unique genetics and traits, Mycogen gives corn growers and dairy producers greater flexibility in their silage programs. However, it can be tricky to know which hybrids are best for a specific agronomic situation, so Fertilzona is making the choices easier for you.

Economical options for broadleaf control

“I’ve never found a small grains herbicide that I’ve liked as well as MCPA.”

- Lin Evans, independent PCA, Maricopa County

Marco Palmer Farms, Pima Ariz.

They say you can’t teach an old dog new tricks, but what about teaching young guys some handy old tricks? In this case, the lesson would be about phenoxy herbicides.

Phenoxy, or phenoxyacetic acid products, have been around longer than most of us, but many of today’s young growers and field technicians aren’t familiar with them. More commonly known by names such as 2,4-D and MCPA, phenoxy herbicides have a proud history of effective broadleaf weed control in grass crops – all very economical and without resistance issues.

“These products have been available for so long, we took it for granted that everybody knew what they were,” says Dennis Osborn, Crop Protection Sales Manager, Fertilzona. “2,4-D used to be the most popular herbicide in the world, but now we’re talking to guys who don’t know anything about it.”

2,4-D (which is an abbreviation of 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid) and MCPA (dimethylamine salt of 2-methyl-4-chlorophenoxyacetic acid) were introduced in the 1940s to be plant growth regulators. However, the

chemistry worked too well, and the treated plants grew so quickly they actually died. It didn’t take long for people to realize that phenoxy would make a great post-emergence weed-killing method.

Low cost, high returns

Phenoxy herbicides are very affordable, which naturally led to their popularity. Although not as widely used today as they once were, Americans still apply over 40 million

“I’ve never found a small grains herbicide that I’ve liked as well as MCPA,” says Lin Evans, an independent Pest-Control Advisor (PCA) in Maricopa County, “and I’ve used it extensively for all manner of broadleaves. Phenoxy are terrific, as long as they’re used with caution.”

Evans emphasizes that when using phenoxy herbicides it’s important to be careful about spray drift and residual chemical in your tank. He recommends a drift-control agent such as 41A and a good tank cleaner like Tanklean. Fertilzona offers many excellent products for those needs. Higher volumes of water and lower pump pressure (to produce bigger droplets) also work for reducing drift risks.

“We just want people to know that when used properly, these products are really economical and effective,” Osborn says, “and those are the things you want in a herbicide.”

Talk to your Fertilzona or Compton Ag Services representative about how phenoxy products can fit into your specific weed-control program, or stop by your local branch for more information.



pounds of 2,4-D every year. Lawn care professionals use it to control broadleaf weeds on residential and commercial landscapes. In the Southwest, phenoxy herbicides are most often applied on wheat, barley and pasture grasses.



Controlled-release nitrogen promotes efficiency

Feed crops better and lower your fertilizer costs

There's an interesting new trend in agricultural fertilizer efficiency: controlled-release nitrogen. Already very popular with nurseries, golf courses and landscape professionals, controlled-release fertilizer products offer farmers a wide range of benefits.

As their name describes, controlled-release fertilizers deliver nutrition to the soil at a gradual rate over an extended period of time. The slow, steady release delivers nitrogen and other nutrients to plant roots to match a crop's ongoing growth demands.

"Turf and ornamentals industries have used these controlled-release products for years," says Craig Allen, Manager, Fertilzona – Fennemore. "They know it's a more efficient nutrient delivery system. Now as the trend moves over into agriculture, we have an educational opportunity to introduce growers to those benefits."

New technology

Controlled-release (also called "slow-release") products rely on unique high-tech manufacturing to encapsulate tiny nitrogen granules inside a special coating. Once in the soil, the coated granules release their nutrients at different times—based on temperature, moisture, etc.—to keep feeding the plants for a long time. This technology can also be applied to liquid fertilizers.

"Controlled-release technology has the potential to save you money over the season."

- Craig Allen, Manager, Fertilzona – Fennemore

In addition to providing more efficient nutrition, controlled-release products minimize nitrogen runoff. When fertilizer in the soil isn't absorbed by the plants' roots, the nutrients often leach out or simply migrate from the target zone. That means you paid for fertilizer which isn't being utilized.

More economical in the long run

Because controlled-release fertilizers keep working long after you apply them, they provide nutrients to your plants for several weeks or months. That extended feeding allows you to make fewer fertilizer applications in a season, which saves you money on both nitrogen and fuel.

"Some people shy away from controlled-release products at first when they see the price tag," Allen says, "but you have to weigh the cost of one application of a long-lasting fertilizer against two or more applications of a traditional product. Controlled-release technology has the potential to save you money over the season. "With proper research and discovery by Fertilzona's field men, we hope to have these new methods adopted into everyday practices."

Fertilzona and Compton Ag Services offer many kinds of controlled-release fertilizers, so stop by one of our locations. Visit www.fertilzona.com for maps and directions.

Success at many levels—Button & Bohnee Farming Partnership thrives on unique diversity

Most highly successful agricultural operations excel at things beyond growing crops, and the Button & Bohnee Farming Partnership (BBFP) in Sacaton, Ariz., is a great example.

“We’ve always believed in diversifying,” says Terry Button, Executive Director of the partnership. “It’s better for the land than monoculture, and we can spread our equipment more efficiently.”

The diversification is obvious in what the farm produces, including cotton, wheat, alfalfa, Bermuda hay, unusual native crops, sweet corn and more.

“We’ve worked with Fertiliza a long time. Their service is excellent.”

- Terry Button, Executive Director, Button & Bohnee Farming Partnership

Partnering with family and friends

The BBFP operation covers approximately 4,000 acres and has a full-time staff of 22, but it began as a small venture. In 1974, Terry and his wife, Ramona, pictured above started with 10 acres that Ramona’s parents had farmed. They quickly expanded, and then established a partnership with Harlan Bohnee, who managed more than 1,200 acres nearby and was already sharing many services with the Buttons.

In 1976 the group was joined by Terry’s brother Dale, and in 1980 another brother, Karl, came aboard. Today the partnership also includes Irrigation Supervisor Danny Mark plus Terry and Ramona’s daughters, Brandy and Velvet.

“Button & Bohnee has always done real well,” says Tom Montoya, Manager, Fertiliza – Santan. “They’re great people.”

Button & Bohnee relies on Fertiliza for crop chemicals, fertilizer and more.

“We’ve known Tom since 1982, and we’ve worked with Fertiliza a long time,” says Terry Button. “Their service is excellent, and Tom really pays attention to details.”

With an operation as diverse as Button & Bohnee, that’s a lot of details.

For more information about Ramona Farms or the Button & Bohnee Farming Partnership, call 520.418.3642.



The Amazing Tepary Bean

Most people have never heard of tepary beans, but they’re among the oldest domesticated crops in North America. Teparies, whose name is from the Papago word “t’pawi,” go back thousands of years, and are extremely drought-tolerant, highly nutritious and have a pleasant, nutty-sweet flavor.

Naturally high in fiber, tepary beans generally have a 23-30 percent protein content, which is more than common beans, such as kidney and pinto. Teparies also have high levels of iron, zinc, calcium and potassium. Better yet, tepary beans are low in polyunsaturated fat and have “slow-release” sugars—making them a healthier choice for anyone prone to diabetes.

But if they’re so great, why did tepary beans almost

disappear? One theory is that arriving Spaniards and other Europeans in the 18th century looked down on the native crops and simply preferred to grow their own. Fortunately, some tepary plants survived and are now having a resurgence.

“They’re getting great acclaim as people recognize their value and nutrition,” says Terry Button of Ramona Farms in Sacaton, Ariz., a leading producer of tepary beans. “We grew them before anyone knew about them. If you see somebody else growing tepary beans today, their seed stock can probably be traced back to us.”

Ramona Farms’ tepary beans can be purchased at many retail locations in southern Arizona. For more details, call 520.418.0900.

Choosing herbicides for small grains

Cost-effective control options help you maximize profits

With wheat, barley and oat crops being planted right now, and many of them looking to bring higher prices, you need a good plan for keeping weeds and grasses from cutting into your yield and quality.

“We’re seeing a lot of durum wheat this season, and it’s at a premium,” says Dennis Osborn, Crop Protection Sales Manager at Fertizona. “Growers understand it’s more beneficial than ever to minimize weed competition, and Fertizona can help.”

Among common weed and grass problems facing small-grains growers in the Southwest are wild oats and Italian ryegrass. Wild oats are stubborn, highly competitive annuals that can seriously damage wheat and barley, especially early in the crop cycle. In addition to yield losses, wild oats cause dockage at the elevator.

“We can cover any control need a grower has.”

- Dennis Osborn, Crop Protection Sales Manager, Fertizona

Italian ryegrass and wheat have similar maturities, so it’s important to minimize grass competition early. Research shows that just one Italian ryegrass plant per square foot can reduce wheat yields by four percent.

Other frequent problems in wheat and barley are barnyard grass and canary grass, along with broadleaf weeds such as nettleleaf goosefoot, shepherdspurse and wild mustard.

Many good chemical options

For broadleaves in small grains, easy and affordable control solutions are the phenoxy herbicides MCPA and 2,4-D, which are explained on page 3.

Over a dozen products are registered for weed control in wheat, but they’re not all created equal. Some herbicides may be less effective on certain weed species or provide less broad-spectrum control. You also need to consider weed leaf stages, product application windows, weed resistance and the herbicide’s mode of action.

“We can cover any control need a grower has, on annuals or perennials,” says Osborn confidently, “but we first need to know exactly what those needs are, on a field-by-field basis.”

Herbicides Fertizona recommends most often include Hoelon®, Osprey® and Discover NG® in Arizona and Axial® XL in California, all of which have proven very effective. Although Buctril® and Puma® are being phased out by Bayer® CropScience, we offer high-quality generic equivalents of those chemistries.

Many tank-mix options are available as well. For example, good post-emergence broadleaf control can also be obtained using Affinity® TankMix in Arizona and Express® with TotalSol® in California instead of phenoxy herbicides.

Application rates and timing vary, depending on the product and your crop situation. We can advise you on what will work best for you.

A long-term control program may include crop rotation, pre-emergence herbicides, diversified modes of action and other steps. But for right now, trust Fertizona to help you protect your vulnerable young wheat, barley and oats when they need it most.


Ask your Fertizona or Compton Ag Services representative about grain herbicides or contact Dennis Osborn at 520.836.7477 for more specific information.



Shepherdspurse



Nettleleaf Goosefoot



Tyke Bennett's career has been quite a ride

Thanks to Fertizona, you could say that Tyke Bennett has finally settled down.

Fertizona's Seed Products Sales Manager, Tyke Bennett, moved around quite a bit and lived in many places before joining the company. A native of New Mexico and a graduate of New Mexico State University, he worked for several years as a produce buyer for a large food company.

"My job was to follow the lettuce," Bennett explains. "I traveled a lot and spent my winters in Yuma, Arizona. I liked it down here where it was warm."

Tyke's career also included 10 years with the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association. Bennett's passion for rodeo literally changed his life, because it was during a roping competition that he met Shannon, his wife-to-be. The long-

"You couldn't ask for a better place to work."

- Tyke Bennett, Seed Products Sales Manager, Fertizona

time bachelor finally "tied the knot" in a different sense when he and Shannon were married in 2005. The Bennetts now have a daughter, Nita, 4 years old, and a son, Buck, who's 2. Not surprisingly, the family includes four horses.

It was through rodeo events that Bennett met Jimmy Compton, ultimately leading him to Fertizona.

"It was perfect timing and a great opportunity for me," says Bennett, who's now been with the company for six years. "You couldn't ask for a better place to work."

Making the deals

Although his title is Seed Products Sales Manager, Bennett says he does much more buying than selling. It's his responsibility to locate, order, and procure all of the various seed products Fertizona and Compton Ag Services' customers may need in any growing season.

"I'm always looking for the best deals on quality seed," he explains. "That means I have to buy smart."

Bennett also needs accurate estimates of how much seed to get and when to have it shipped. Those decisions are tied to factors like grower expectations, commodity pricing, pre-buy discounts and other market conditions.

"For example, the Texas drought last year really affected the sorghum seed supply," he says.

Bennett's ongoing efforts to arrange lower seed costs and manage inventory enable Fertizona to offer you more competitive pricing, and to assure that you get the seed you want, when you need it.

Higher quality of life

One of the things Bennett really appreciates about Fertizona is the company's emphasis on family values and having a life outside of the job.

"They're overwhelmingly good about that," he says enthusiastically. "Quality of life is important to everybody here. It's a lot less stressful than what I had in the corporate world."

Spoken like a true modern-day cowboy.