Fertilizer and Ag Chem Challenges and Opportunities in 2022

Kevin B. Meeks, Ph.D, CCA, NMS
Southern Business Unit Agronomist
Helena Agri-Enterprises
2022 Challenges

- **Fertilizer**
  - Limited supply and very tight
  - Worldwide and volatile
  - Local retailers struggling
  - Price uncertainty

- **Ag Chemicals**
  - Price
  - Supply
  - Demand

- **2021 Dry Fall, Winter**
  - What will these fert and ag chem prices affect what we plant?
2022 Opportunities

• 2021 Yields
  • exceeded expectation based on attitudes last spring
  • Cotton
  • Corn
  • Sorghum
  • Peanuts

• Commodity Prices
  • $1.15 cotton (Mar)
  • $5.50 corn (Dec)
  • $7.60 wheat (July)
2022 Fertilizer Challenges

- Price is main issue
  - 100% price increase
    - MAP, DAP, Potash, Urea, AMS
  - 200% increase
    - Anhydrous Ammonia, UAN

- Fertilizer production plants in China shut down
  - Cleaner air
  - Olympics (February in China)
  - Production and exports could resume sometime
Fertilizer Options 2022

• 4R’s of Nutrient Management
  • Right Rate, Source, Time, Place

• Soil Sampling
  • Use soil data on your own farm to drive decisions

• 2022 Product Types
  • Inorganics vs Organics
    • Straight goods, Complete, Mixed
    • Manure, Compost
    • Animal, Human, Wastewater byproducts
  • Chelated, Non-chelated micronutrients
  • Fertilizer Additives (help with fertilizer efficiency)
• Inorganics (synthetic fertilizers) vs Organics (manure, compost, etc)
  • Cost of production:
    • manufacturing process vs livestock
  • Environmental:
    • pollution vs GHG
  • Analysis:
    • consistent vs inconsistent
  • Water solubility:
    • high vs low
  • Logistics
    • Low use rate vs high use rate
  • Efficiency
    • High vs low
  • Weed seed bank
    • Doesn’t have weed seed vs new weed seed (surprise!)
• Run full rates (flat, VR)
• Run cut rates (flat, VR)
• Cut/reduce pre-plant fertilizer
  • If my crop comes up........
  • I’ll just sidedress
  • I’ll run some through the pivot
  • I’ll just run some foliar, it worked last year
  • I’ll just let it ride
• Cut all fertilizer
Fertilizer Placement

• Important to make your fertilizer dollar go farther
• Broadcast
• Banded
• Strip-Till
• Foliar
• Fertigation
2022 Ag Chem Issues

• Ag-chem supplies will be strained
  • Tech or other component limited or no availability
  • Preferred brand may be unavailable
  • Delivery of inventory to dealers will be slower than normal

• Ag-chem prices will go up
A Path Forward

• You are not alone
• Supply issues affect both retailer and grower
• There are solutions available
• We will have to change the way we have conducted business
• Open dialogue between retailer and grower is critical
• We must plan together to be as efficient as possible
Planning is Essential!

• Determine key pests – weeds, insects, & diseases that you normally deal with
• Identify preferred solutions to key pests
• Identify alternative solutions to key pests
• Utilize products within the same MOA to solve problems
• **Communicate your needs to your retail Rep**
• Place orders early
• Be flexible
Weed Control Discussion Points

- What has worked & what hasn’t
- What are your key weeds?
- What is the true cost of unmanaged weeds
  - Lost Yield
  - Wear and tear on equipment
  - Increased labor cost
  - Loss of land value
  - Future costs associated with increased weed seedbank
Start Clean & Stay Clean - BMPs

- Burndown with contact and residual herbicides
- Use adjuvants to enhance herbicide efficacy
- Utilize drift control adjuvants
- Do not cut rates
- Remember **plantback** restrictions
- Use multiple MOAs
- Layer residual chemistry through the season
- Utilize post harvest burndown and tillage to reduce weed seedbank

*Adopted from Weed Science Society of America.*
Start with burndown, follow with pre behind planter, and make an early – mid post application.
Any Questions?

Always read and follow label directions.