

THE HAY STACK

October 2019

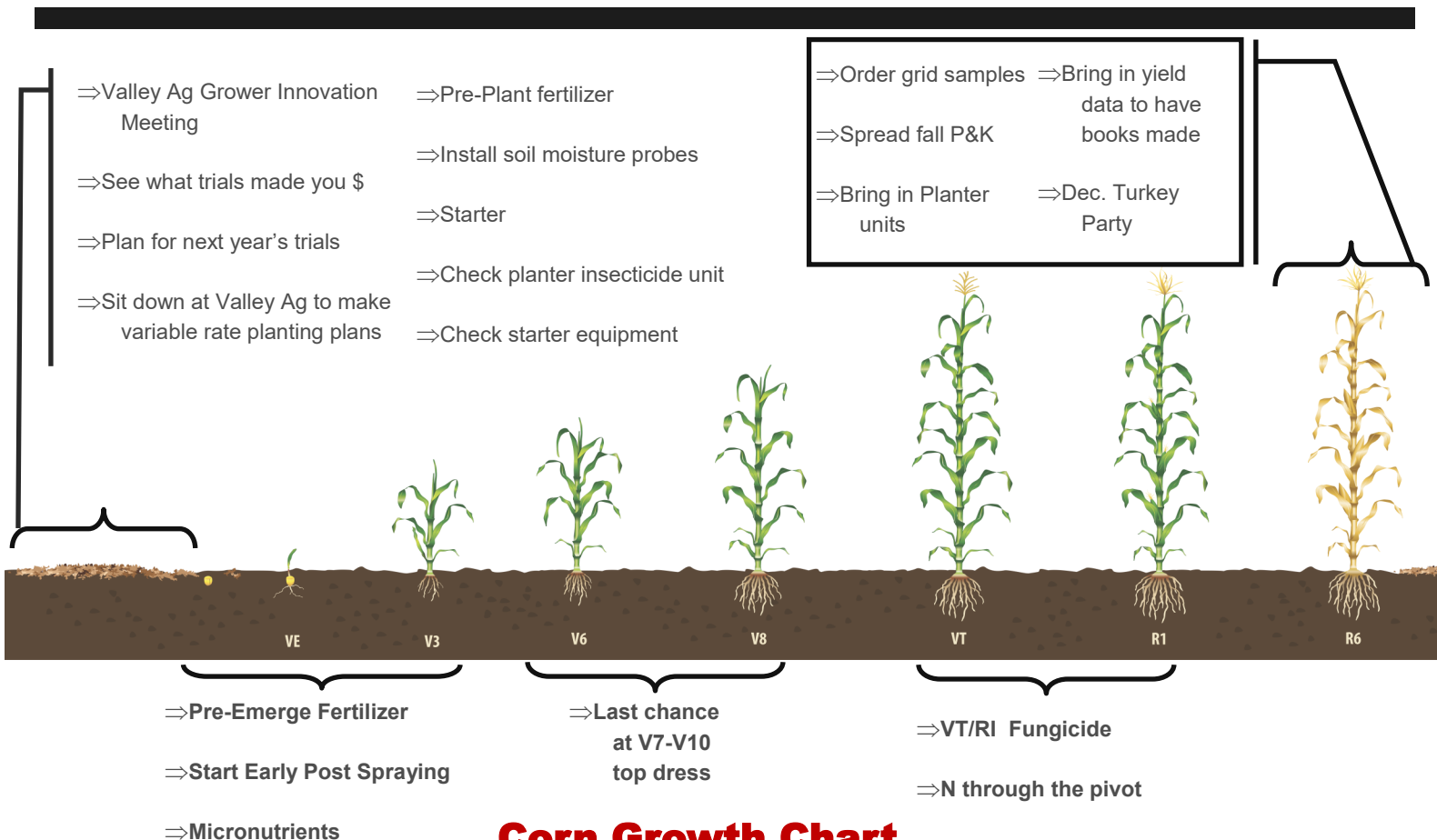
Let's Plan Harvest with Arlo Lykken



It's finally time and harvest is under way. So, let's talk about things we should look and plan for as harvest moves forward. I have noticed more of an issue with White Mold (*Sclerotinia sclerotiorum*) in soybeans fields than in past years. White mold spreads by the movement of spores from wind, insects and rain splash and through hyphae, which is a fibrous growth that grow in the ground that look somewhat like roots. Choosing a seed variety that will provide resistance, seed treatments and an early fungicide application on soybeans at the R1 growth state (beginning bloom) will provide a degree of control. Also, make sure you clean your combine thoroughly from field to field to help from spreading the fungus on more of your acres.

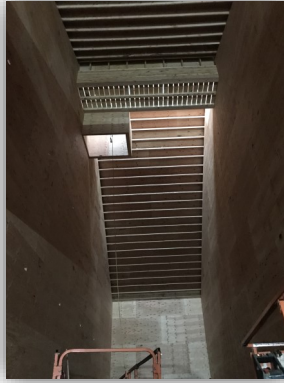
With another year of high to excessive moisture it opens the door for a lot of pathogens in soybean and corn acres. A good practice this fall will be to harvest corn by the stalk integrity rather than by maturity day or moisture content. Squeeze and push the stalk to see if there is stalk rot issues that could cause standability and harvest issues.

When it seems like there's a lot to do, not enough time to get it all done, be safe. Remember if something looks too risky, it is too risky! Have a wonderful harvest.



Corn Growth Chart

From Tara's Desk



Progress!

How would we have known what 2019 would have dealt us? Somehow I thought us running Valley Ag Supply without Greg would have been the most difficult part of this year. Then Mother Nature says "Hold My Beer!"

We have ended September 2019 at 94% of September 2018's sales. Am I in love with that? No. Could it be worse? Yes. So I will be content with those numbers for now. Things could always be worse.

Last fall Arlo, Jimmy, Daryl and I sat down and made a five and ten year capital investment plans for Valley Ag Supply. I was a big fan of taking down the steel fertilizer bins in Gayville (behind our office) and expanding the east-of-Gayville fertilizer plant. The day the crane arrived to set the bins on the ground was bittersweet. You know who I wanted to text? Greg. He would have liked to see the progress. It was a big deal for Greg and I to have made that investment in the spring of 2003, it was our first dry fertilizer plant and we put LOTS and LOTS of tons through that baby! Her life expectancy was 10-15 years and this was year 16 (I was pregnant with twin boys when we built it—"Build a fertilizer plant and had twins in six months' time! It'll be fun they said" 😊). The fertilizer plant in town we disassembled was 500 tons, this month we built two 600 ton bins on to our dry fertilizer plant out east of Gayville. We are definitely not going backwards on our storage and blending capabilities.

I've said it before and it's worth repeating, competitors have wanted to sit down to talk about my options in selling Valley Ag Supply...I know my options, and I also know I'm not selling. I'm totally committed to Valley Ag Supply as are my colleagues. They continue to impress me with their intelligence, work-ethic and give a damn. My suppliers and reps have also helped us tremendously. Just because we are small and independently held doesn't mean that we don't have access to inventory, technology and training like the big guys. That being said, I don't take our customers for granted. We will continue to work hard to earn your business each season and appreciate your business tremendously.

To get myself out of the office this fall, I will be in the country a bit watching harvest, I hope to see a few of you-maybe take a round in your combine. Safe harvest season to you all.

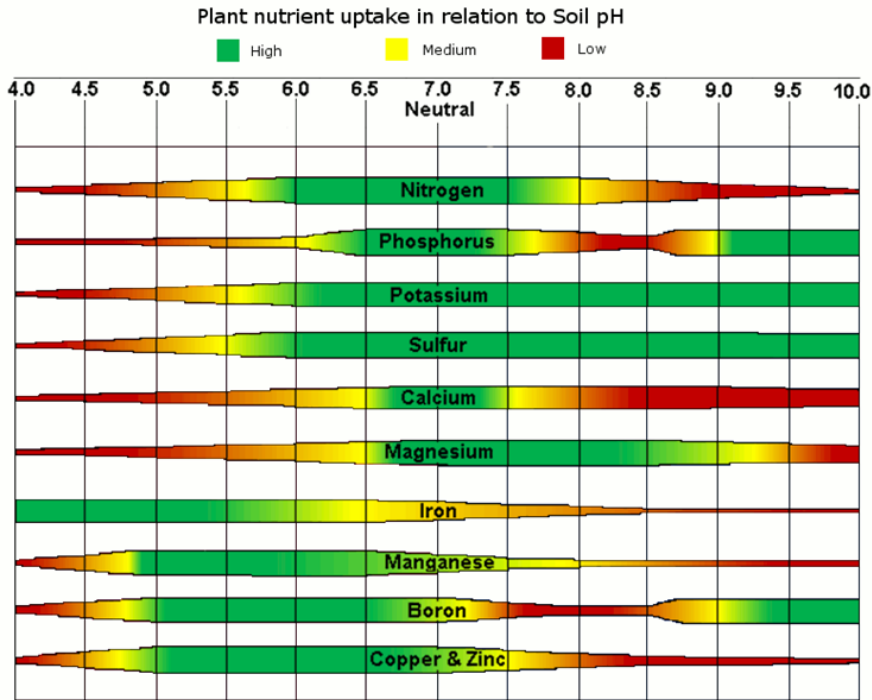
~Tara Pirak



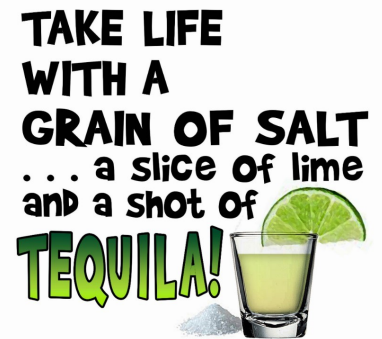
REASONS WHY FALL IS #1 :
-CHILLY WEATHER.
-HALLOWEEN/
-SWEATERS.
-LITERALLY EVERYTHING.
-BUGS HAVE RETURNED TO HELL
WHERE THEY BELONG.
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Lime Application by Cody Olson

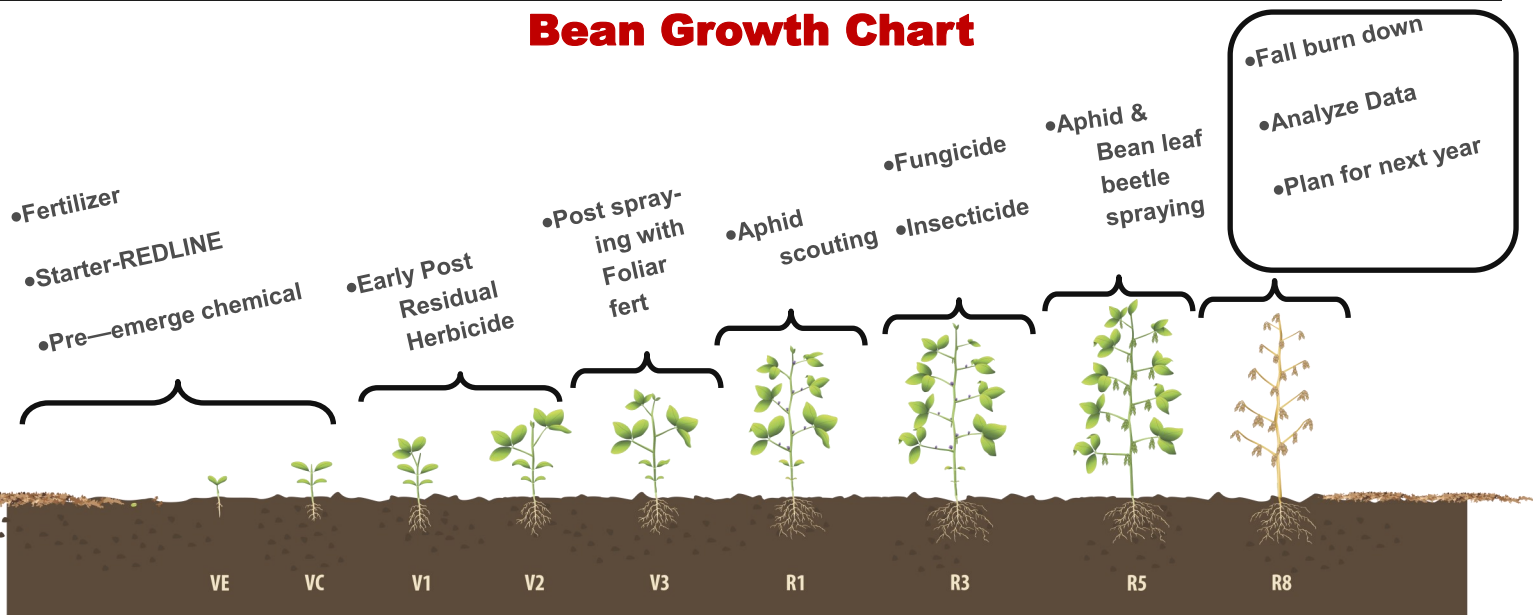
Fall is the best time to think about getting some soil amendments down after harvest in addition to your fertilizer program. As many may already be aware, Valley Ag is one of the few suppliers of high quality, variable rated, powdered lime product within several hundred miles of this part of the country. We spread hundreds of tons of lime each year for our customers as well as wholesale to co-ops and other ag retailers. The main purpose of lime is to RAISE the pH of the soil. When we first look at a soil test, many of us agronomists look first at the pH of the field, followed by observing phosphorus levels. The reason we do this is because if your pH is far too low, phosphorus (as well as other nutrients) basically become unavailable, limiting the effectiveness of the fertilizer we apply. As seen in the image to the left, availability drops off for many nutrients as the pH falls. If we see that the phosphorus levels are ok, right around 20ppm, but the pH is at or below 6.0, the plant is unable to uptake the available nutrients. A recent soil test I reviewed had a pH of 5.6, if you look at the chart, it's clear that the availability of nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, sulfur, calcium, and magnesium all become very low. Adding lime to that area will eventually bring the pH back to an acceptable range (ideally 6.8-7.2) thus making your valuable inputs available for the crop the next year.



The powdered lime is really where Valley Ag excels, its fine, powdered consistency breaks down and starts working over the winter months for the next season, whereas pelletized lime is not nearly as effective and may require several applications of product, costing you more in the end. Since soils around here are so variable, we will not spread lime unless we have accurate, up-to-date grid sampled data so we make sure we get the right amount of product in the right place; we don't want to raise the pH of a portion of the field that may already have an acceptable or high range. Lime prices have not changed for us over several years and growers really notice the benefits the following years after the investment. If you have any questions or are curious if your field needs some lime, don't hesitate to call and we can get you set up this fall!



Bean Growth Chart





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A Reminder from Laura Nystrup

This is your friendly reminder as we move into fall and harvest begins, that now is the time to think about applying fall P & K. There are many benefits to fall application:

1. Less compaction
~The compaction from the machine going over the field is naturally broken up by the freeze & thaw cycle
2. More availability of nutrients for your crops by springtime
~Phosphorus and Potash can take 3-6 months to become available to crops. Therefore, applying P&K in the fall will provide nutrients earlier in the growing season.
3. And don't forget -fall application *costs less!*
~In the current environment, we all are concerned about the bottom line. A fall application is about \$2/acre less than in the spring!

So as you are going into fall, please call us if you have questions. We would be happy to help you. Have a safe harvest season!



Contact Us!

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