

GROWING SMARTER

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NEWS & INFORMATION TO HELP YOU GROW

Fertizona Gives Cotton Growers Reasons to Feel Good



Proven products and new labels help promote successful crops

As cotton season gets into full swing in the Southwest, growers and processors often ask, "What's new for this year?" or "What should we be watching for?" Those are logical things to wonder about, considering how insect problems, weather, market trends, product availability and other factors can suddenly change your plans.

"Well, as far as chemicals go, it's a little too soon to tell," said Dennis Osborn, Crop Protection Sales Manager, Fertizona. "There are some exciting new products coming along, but they don't have registration yet. For now, a good approach for crop protection might just be to stay with the products that have worked for you before."

Fertizona always recommends a broad-spectrum residual herbicide. This helps to ensure that glyphosate-resistant weed species do not become established on your farm. There are many excellent residual herbicides, and a Fertizona or Compton Ag PCA can advise you on which products work well in your area.

"Actually, the big news in pesticides right now is about the supply chain in China," Osborn added. (See related "Market Update" story on page 7.) "But Fertizona customers will be covered."

Better insect control

Another positive update for Arizona cotton growers is a relatively "new" Section 3 label for foliar applications of Exirel® insecticide (technical trade name Cyazypyr®) in cotton. Labeled

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The Turnaround in Natural Gas

If you've lived for any reasonable length of time, you've probably witnessed a lot of extreme changes in the costs and availabilities of various things we use every day. Remember when interest rates and long-distance calls were really expensive?

That thought recently occurred to me about natural gas. Agriculture relies heavily on natural gas for the conversion process that supports the production of ammonia, urea and other important compounds. Anhydrous ammonia is essential for making fertilizers. In fact, natural gas makes up more than 70 percent of the cash cost of producing ammonia.

However, several years ago, our dependence on natural gas was threatened. In 2003, I wrote a column in this space about how America was facing a severe natural gas shortage, and how it could hurt our business and your operations. We didn't know what to expect, but we geared up for a struggle.

But now things have swung around to the opposite position. After more than 10 years of increased expenditures for gas exploration, supplies are now abundant and we have the cheapest gas in the world. Since 2014, the U.S. has actually become a net exporter of natural gas, as opposed to competing globally to import it.

Like many other ups and downs we've all gone through, there's a sense of pride and satisfaction in knowing that the gas challenges we faced 15 years ago didn't hold us back. Fertilzona was there for you then, and we plan to be for a long time to come.

Jim Compton
President, Fertilzona &
Compton Ag Services



Story continued from cover

for AZ cotton in mid-2017, Exirel® provides a cross-spectrum option for many key cotton pests, including cotton bollworms, armyworms, saltmarsh caterpillars and whiteflies.

Whiteflies have become a common pest in the Southwest for the past 25 years, partly because they migrate to cotton from neighboring host crops, such as spring melons. Whiteflies produce multiple generations within the same season. In cotton, a whitefly infestation can have serious economic impact from nymphs feeding on the undersides of cotton leaves and creating sticky lint and sooty mold. Whiteflies can also transmit cotton leaf crumple virus.

An effective whitefly management program should include careful monitoring of your cotton and neighboring host crops. When managing whiteflies, it's very important to use insecticides with different modes of action, for resistance management purposes.

"We had some good success with Exirel® last year," said Osborn. "It worked really well on

whiteflies and worms in melons. This year we're recommending it more often, especially in non-Bt cotton."

The registration for Exirel®—which includes early-season suppression of thrips—recommends using a spray adjuvant and a rate range of 13.5-20.5 fluid ounces/acre. Use the higher rate range for longer residual or heavier whitefly pressure.

Promote yields with foliar nutrients

Supplementing soil-applied fertilizer with foliar nutrition can significantly increase the yield potential and quality of cotton crops. Foliar fertilizers support essential nutrient levels and plant health during critical growth periods.

"Everybody does their basic N-P-K strategy," Osborn noted, "but the extra micronutrients really make a difference for healthier plants and bolls when the fruit is filling."

Fertilzona offers several excellent foliar nutrition products under our proprietary

"Extra micronutrients really make a difference."

– **Dennis Osborn,**
Crop Protection Sales
Manager, Fertilzona

Furst®-Class Enhanced-Efficiency Fertilizer line. The specially formulated Furst products feature a unique blend of amino acids, proteins and other nutrients, all designed to activate key biological and metabolic responses in plants . . . and give you a better shot at higher cotton yields and quality.

"Cotton prices are up right now," Osborn noted, "so it's a great time to invest in more nutrition and make the most of your yield."

For more information about products for cotton, contact your local Fertilzona or Compton Ag office or visit www.fertilzona.com.



Auza Ranches Casa Grande, Arizona

The Auzas blend long family histories

Many typical farm and ranch families can proudly tell stories about their ancestors living and working on the land across generations; in the case of Joe and Carmen Auza, they actually have two sets of stories about their family histories and how they intersected.

"My parents and grandparents were sheep ranchers, and Joe's parents and grandparents were, too," Carmen said. "Our families knew each other, and we just both grew up with it. Joe and I met when we were only 10 years old."

Fortunately, Joe and Carmen stayed friends throughout their childhoods and later got married after finishing college. Since then, they've spent the past 54 years owning and managing Auza Ranches in Casa Grande, specializing in the production of sheep and beef cattle. Their operation currently has about 6,000 sheep and 800 cattle, but at times the sheep herd has been as large as 10,000.

The farming operation includes 2,000 planted acres of alfalfa, corn and cotton. The Auzas'

sheep graze on their land in Arizona until the summer heat begins, and then the lambs are weaned and sent to Colorado to be finished in feedlots. The ewes are moved to higher pastures in the mountains near Williams, Arizona, west of Flagstaff, for summer grazing on local grasses and other forage.

"Raising sheep means you have to ranch in cycles," Carmen explained, "but we have a good system that has worked well for us for a long time."

The Auzas' ranching and farming operations maintain a full-time staff of 20–25 employees, plus a number of Peruvian sheep herders who get hired on for seasonal work as needed. Joe and Carmen also have a son, Joseph, and a daughter, Yvette, who both help them with a variety of responsibilities. They have five grandchildren as well.

In addition, the Auzas have come to rely on the support of Fertilzona over the years, mostly for seed and fertilizer, which they get

from our facilities in Casa Grande. The Auzas also trust Fertilzona for important crop-checking activities.

"We've been working with Fertilzona a long time, and we've always been very happy with their service," Carmen said. "They're good people, and very reliable."

Although the Auzas' successful business requires a lot of attention and commitment, Carmen said they're able to find time to travel, including some trips with Jimmy and Cindy Compton.

"Sheep ranching is a whole way of life," Carmen said. "And it's been a good life for us."

"Sheep ranching is a whole way of life."

– Carmen Auza,
Auza Ranches,
Casa Grande, Arizona

FUL-PROOF!

Ful-Proof Promotes Plant Health and Growth

Uptake enhancer makes crop nutrients and chemicals better

Now Fertizona customers can easily improve the way your crops absorb whatever you spray on them, which helps you produce higher crop yields and quality. Known as Ful-Proof, the exclusive product is a powerful uptake enhancer made from fulvic acid.

Fulvic acid is derived from the humic acid found in soil that's rich in decomposed organic matter. Fulvic acid has always occurred naturally in plants and soils, but its tremendous value in crop production has only been recognized and appreciated in recent years.

Created by micro-organisms in the soil, fulvic acid is an all-natural chelating (from the Greek word for "claw") agent with a very low molecular weight that facilitates its penetration into plants. Specifically, Ful-Proof bonds with minerals in your fertilizer to make the nutrients more readily absorbable by plant roots and more mobile through plant cells. Nutrients are then quickly delivered to all sites within the plant.

As a result of that enhanced uptake and nutrient efficiency, Ful-Proof promotes many important crop growth benefits, such as enhanced seed germination, improved development of roots and shoots, increased metabolism of proteins, better plant respiration, and much more. Fulvic acid also stimulates vigorous and healthy plant growth by dissolving and transporting enzymes, hormones, amino acids and natural antivirals in the soil.

Ful-Proof is ideal for use on all soils and plants under all conditions. Fulvic acid may be administered via foliar applications, and it is very efficient when applied as a root drench or foliar spray. Its ability to penetrate plants can also be very useful with defoliants and contact herbicides.

To learn more about Ful-Proof and fulvic acid, contact your local Fertizona or Compton Ag office or visit www.fertizona.com.



Grow With the Flow

A chemigation program can enhance pesticide performance

Success in agriculture often depends on finding ways to grow crops more efficiently, and in the Southwest, a perfect example is chemigation.

Chemigation means simultaneously applying crop chemicals with the water pumped through your irrigation system. Injecting herbicide, insecticide or fungicide right into your irrigation offers a wide range of benefits. It saves time, money and fuel when you don't have to ground-apply your chemicals separately, and you reduce soil compaction and potential crop damage by eliminating trips through the field with spray equipment.

But probably the biggest advantage of chemigation is pesticide performance, particularly on lettuce at germination.

"Chemigation provides much more even distribution of your herbicide, and you avoid a lot of leaching," explained Gordon Goodwin, Pest Control Advisor, Fertizona-Yuma. "You've already got water moving down through the soil profile, and this way you increase the absorption of chemical into the weeds' germination depth zone, and not below it."

That's extremely important with a product like Kerb® SC herbicide because the active ingredient moves with water. In desert lettuce production, Kerb herbicide is usually applied several days after the sprinklers were started.

"For the past several years, I have growers who split their Kerb chemigations and apply it on the second or third day of irrigating, and then a final application on the last day of sprinklers," Goodwin said.

Chemigation also delivers significant advantages with a herbicide such as Prefar® 4-E, since photo degradation can cause the product to lose efficacy.

"Spraying with a tractor after the lettuce is planted and then waiting hours before the water arrives reduces Prefar's effectiveness," Goodwin added. "It works better when you apply it to the first irrigation cycle in the beginning."

To inject a pesticide into an irrigation system, the product label must specify it can be used with your type of system.

To learn more about chemigation and specific applications, contact your local Fertizona or Compton Ag office or visit www.fertizona.com.





A Truly Interesting Perspective

Yvonne Rodriguez brings a positive attitude to safety

When asked to describe herself, one of the phrases Yvonne Rodriguez uses is “pretty boring.” But when you consider the importance and scope of her work for Fertizona, that hardly seems appropriate.

As the company’s Safety Director, Yvonne is responsible for making sure that all of Fertizona’s products and practices comply with governmental regulations for shipping, storage, handling and application. That covers a virtually endless array of rules and requirements set out by the EPA, OSHA, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Transportation and other government agencies, both state and federal. It’s a highly demanding and ever-challenging position, frequently with unexpected situations that call for immediate action.

“I need to be diplomatic in this role, because some people naturally don’t like being told what to do,” Yvonne said. “But we have to follow the law. Also, I like finding innovative ways to do things better.”

Yvonne joined Fertizona in 2017 after John Haggard (Manager, Fertizona – Buckeye) worked with her on an ADEQ (Arizona Department of Environmental Quality) project and decided he wanted to hire her.

Although she wasn’t looking for a new job, Yvonne liked the company’s offer and saw it as a great opportunity.

At that point in her career, she already had an impressive record of valuable experience and success. In addition to a degree in Environmental Technology Management from ASU and a Master’s degree in Toxicology from San Diego State, Yvonne had worked in Arizona state and tribal environmental agencies for more than 10 years.

“I really like the fact that Fertizona is a family-run business,” she said. “It’s nice to get away from all the politics you have in a government position. Fertizona gives me a lot more freedom and flexibility.”

Yvonne is based in our office in Casa Grande, but commutes from her home in Chandler. When she’s not working, Yvonne likes to read, run, bike and play with her 85-pound rescued Rottweiler, Diego.

“It’s my job to ensure everyone understands the safety regulations and we agreeably meet all of those requirements,” she said. “I’ve always enjoyed the work I do, partly because there’s so much variety.”

That doesn’t sound boring at all.

“I like finding innovative ways to do things better.”

– Yvonne Rodriguez,
Safety Director, Fertizona

WELCOME

New Hires

FRANK ENGLAND
Fennemore

**MIKAYLA BUSH-
RAMIREZ**
Compton Ag Services

SANTIAGO CORRAL
Casa Grande

CODY KLINE
Fennemore

JASON FELIX
Casa Grande

MCKENNA DUNIVANT
Buckeye

EMMANUEL ESCONTRIAS
Casa Grande

**"Fertizona customers
will be covered."**

– Dennis Osborn,
Crop Protection Sales
Manager, Fertizona

A Kink in the Supply Chain

New Chinese regulations affect production of crop chemicals

Agribusiness people are used to being affected by unpredictable market influences, but did you ever think dirty air in China would make a difference in how you farm?

That's exactly what's happening now with crop chemicals. As China's economy has rapidly grown in recent years, one side effect has been a tremendous increase in air and water pollution caused by Chinese factories without environmental controls. In 2015, scientists at the University of California estimated that nearly 1.6 million people in China were dying each year from heart and lung diseases related to their polluted air. That averages more than 4,000 deaths a day.

In response to the problem, Chinese officials have been cracking down on polluters. In July of 2017, for example, 5,322 businesses were inspected (often without warning), and 1,389 of them were in violation of environmental regulations. As a result, many chemical plants were shut down or forced to relocate away from big cities. Those closures affect American agriculture because they impact how chemical manufacturers obtain ingredients from China.

"The problem isn't usually with the larger companies, but smaller formulators in China that supply many active ingredients or intermediates," explained Dennis Osborn, Crop Protection Sales Manager, Fertizona. "Those little guys feed the big guys, and when there's a disruption in their supply chain, the products don't get made."

Normally that scenario would be terrible for an ag-chem dealer, but Fertizona was ready for it.

"Fortunately, we had good intel from our industry sources and saw it coming," Osborn said, "so we bought extra inventory before any shortages hit. A lot of people didn't have that advantage."

Industry observers think the changes may be good in the long run, because forcing Chinese companies to make improvements will help to level the international playing field and encourage more production in North America.

"Some growers will see product shortages this year and they'll be forced to switch brands," Osborn said, "but Fertizona customers will be covered."



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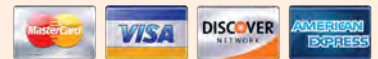
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