



GROWING SMARTER

News & Information To Help You Grow

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Francisco "Paco" Davila

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Furst®-Class Fertilizers Promote Yields and Profits

Fertizona's new enhanced-efficiency technology boosts nutrient utilization across multiple crops

The mark of a successful company is innovation.

Leading companies don't stand pat, instead they constantly look for new ways to improve their customers' businesses, and that's exactly what Fertizona is doing with our new line of Furst®-Class fertilizers.

For years, the nutritional experts at Fertizona have carefully studied which nutrients and delivery systems work best to support crops and landscapes in the extreme conditions of the Southwest. Now by combining that knowledge and experience with innovative, proprietary technology, Fertizona is able to introduce the company's exclusive Furst-Class enhanced-efficiency fertilizers for the agricultural market.

Furst-Class products feature a patented combination of amino acids and proteins that activate beneficial biological and

environmental responses in plants. As a result, the plants fed with Furst-Class can metabolize more of the available nutrients and convert them more efficiently. That means better growth for the plants and better return for your fertilizer investment.

"Our Furst-Class enhanced-efficiency fertilizers have been thoroughly researched and specially formulated to help plants thrive in our unique regional environment," said Jimmy Compton, President, Fertizona and Compton Ag Services. "Fertizona is very pleased to roll out this new technology to growers across the Southwest, building upon the long-standing relationships of trust and support we've established with our customers."



Story continued on page 2

The Ups and Downs of Commodity Pricing



It's no secret – anyone watching the news lately has heard about the general lowering of commodity prices.

Corn, the bellwether for commodities, has steadily dropped from \$6.79/bushel in mid-2013 to today's price of \$4.22/bushel. That pricing trend puts downward pressure on profit margins for many US growers, and when you consider the persistent drought western growers are facing, you have the recipe for a lot of sleepless nights.

In the desert southwest, our growers do have some opportunities.

Because of San Joaquin Valley water issues, many growers there have opted to maintain water resources on permanent crops such as trees and vines rather than row crops or forages such as alfalfa. That opens opportunities for desert growers looking for a strong cash crop like alfalfa, or sorghum for forage – both offer significant profit potential for local growers due to their lower input needs.

And recently Pima cotton has enjoyed a second look by growers in Arizona because of California's water woes. Is this a crop segment with potential for future growth? Pima has been checked and managed by many of our veteran PCA's over the years, and their deep backgrounds and know-how will help ensure you a strong crop.

All commodities have cycles and all years have unique challenges, and this year is no different. The one constant I can promise you is Fertizona's ability to help you plan and protect your hard-earned investments. We're with you every step of the way.

– Jim Compton

President, Fertizona and Compton Ag Services

Story continued from cover

Furst®-Class Fertilizers Promote Yields and Profits

Consistent, proven success

Fertizona actually created the formula for Furst-Class fertilizers several years ago, when the original Furst Liquid® product was impregnated onto granular fertilizers for application on golf courses. One of the people responsible for that early development is Craig Allen, Manager, Fertizona – Fennemore.

"It's basic concept is to enhance uptake in the plant when applying fertilizer," Allen explained, "But at first we had no idea how successful it would really be. We were surprised at how well it works. With Furst-Class, we actually saw some golf courses get better results with one less fertilizer application."

Representatives at Fertizona locations have also been experimenting with Furst-Class products on various crops. Time after time, they report seeing increases in both yield and quality, as well as fertilizer enhanced efficiency.

"It's a great mix of benefits for everybody."

– Tyrell Currie, Furst-Class Product Manager, Fertizona

Doyle Stewart, PCA, Fertizona – Buckeye, is working with several of his customers to apply Furst-Class fertilizers.

For example, a grower has been using a combination of Furst-Class Products. Stewart recommends foliar-applied Ferti-Gro 4-16-4, to his grower,

that goes out with Honcho and Dimethoate on young cotton to help set the plant for the fruiting cycle. Additionally, the grower used a subsurface drip irrigation system to apply Furst-Class Concentrate to achieve optimum fruit set and relieve plant stress during the summer.

"He's really happy with the results he's been getting," reported Stewart. "For one thing, the plants definitely seem to handle stress better."

Versatile range of products

Furst-Class works across a wide range of crops and is available in several convenient forms, including foliar sprays, infused liquids, concentrates and impregnated granules. Furst-Class products are also available for turf and landscape applications.

"By infusing a number of Fertizona products with our proven Furst technology, the Furst-Class line now gives growers a premier brand that enhances plant health, yield potential and fertilizer efficiency," added Tyrell Currie, Furst-Class Product Manager, Fertizona. "It's a great mix of benefits for everybody."

Don't your crops deserve the Furst-Class treatment? Contact your local Fertizona representative for more information, or visit us at www.furstclassfertilizer.com.

Transformer® soil-wetting aid & conditioner

Improving aeration and water distribution in the soils can enhance yields

Compacted soil is a fact of life for many Southwestern growers, and a constant obstacle in maximizing production. Obviously, the more water and nutrients that plant roots absorb, the better it is for your crops, and that's where Transformer® can help.

“Average weight of melons was 18.7% higher.”

– 2012 Oro Agri test results

Transformer from Oro Agri is a unique soil-wetting aid that improves irrigation efficiency and nutrient utilization. Some people call it “water tillage” because it opens up compacted soil to increase the movement of water and oxygen down to crop roots.

By loosening earth and creating bigger gaps between soil particles, Fertizona and Compton Ag representatives recommend Transformer because it

allows air and water to penetrate more deeply and evenly into the ground. That uniform water distribution stimulates feeder root growth over a larger area. As a result, young plants can then absorb moisture and transport nutrients more effectively – which promotes increased crop yield and quality.

Tested and proven

In trials on citrus orchards, Transformer was applied with a flood irrigation and then checked four months later. At that time, tests with an infiltrometer showed increased water penetration in the soil at both 8-inch and 16-inch depths (20 and 40 cm), indicating that Transformer helped the soil to remain more porous¹.

In a 2012 European trial on watermelons, the average weight of first-harvest melons from fields treated with Transformer was 18.7 percent higher than fruit from the untreated acres².



Other soil advantages

When water penetrates more thoroughly, it helps to force carbon dioxide out of the soil and get replaced by valuable oxygen. Higher soil-oxygen levels increase microbial activity, which further supports nutrient efficacy. Properly aerated soil also reduces risks of some root diseases such as phytophthora.

Transformer can be applied through irrigation systems in conjunction with most liquid fertilizers. It can also be applied to soil through a boom spray or aerial application.

Fertizona offers many products like Transformer to improve soils and increase yields. Contact your Compton Ag or Fertizona representative for more details.

Footnote:
1,2 (<http://oroagri.com/country-selector.php?region=one-sa>)



Don't forget!

When things get busy at spring planting and time flies by, it may be easy to overlook certain essential steps for your safety and success. For example:

- Always check and recalibrate sprayers when making pesticide or fertilizer applications
- Be sure to clean tanks and sprayers when going from one product to another
- Wear safety goggles and personal protective equipment (PPE) when using pesticides

For more details, talk to your Fertizona dealer or sales representative.

Mycogen® brand corn hybrids

Fertizona offers corn genetics developed for Southwestern growers

The leading seed companies continue to roll out advanced, stacked genetics to meet different needs of growers around the world, and Fertizona can offer you many options.

For example, Mycogen® brand corn hybrids from Dow AgroSciences feature SmartStax® technology with built-in crop protection. SmartStax allows growers to protect more acres from damage caused by corn insects, including European corn borer, corn rootworm, corn earworm, western bean cutworm and black cutworm.

SmartStax technology treats insects with multiple modes of action instead of just one, which provides improved control and minimizes concerns about developing insect resistance. First-generation traits offer only a single mode of action.

Better yet, SmartStax reduces the above- and below-ground refuge requirement from 20 percent to just five, meaning you can plant the high-yielding hybrids on 95 percent of your acres.

Many great choices

"We're excited about the SmartStax products," said Tyke Bennett, Seed Products Sales Manager, Fertizona. "For our region, we recommend hybrids

TMF2H918 and TMF2L874. They're both especially well-adapted to the silage markets of the Southwest and California."

Mycogen TMF (Total Managed Forage) silage corn is bred for high tonnage and for digestibility that averages 4 percent higher than conventional corn hybrids. TMF hybrids are also known for well-developed ears and long, wide leaves plus tall, strong stalks for more total dry matter.

2H918 is a full-season hybrid with excellent drought tolerance and standability as well as good spider mite tolerance. Hybrid 2L874 combines high yields with good NDFD scores

and unsurpassed insect protection.

On studies in multiple states, SmartStax hybrids demonstrated an average yield advantage of 616 pounds per acre compared to non-Bt hybrids under minimal insect pressure.

"There are a lot of potential economic benefits of these hybrids," Bennett added. "SmartStax can help you yield better than ever."

For more information about the latest corn technology, contact your local Fertizona or Compton Ag rep today.

"SmartStax can help you yield better than ever."

— Tyke Bennett, Seed Products Sales Manager, Fertizona

Seed Technology Agreements

It's time to sign your seed technology agreements for the season. Please contact your branded representative for more information.



Bayer CropScience

www.agcelerate.com

Rep: Tony Salcido
Cell: 520.251.0027



Dow AgroSciences

www.traitstewardship.com

Rep: John Reding
Cell: 602.370.4294

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www.agcelerate.com

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VIP Farms

Generations of success in the Gila River Valley

Many family farms are justifiably proud when they can say they have a third or fourth generation still working their ancestors' land, but few can claim the longevity of VIP Farms in Thatcher, Arizona. The Palmer family which owns and operates VIP is currently grooming its sixth generation of descendants.

The Palmers can trace their local roots back as far as the 1880's. Today, the farm's operations are managed by Dennis Palmer and his son, Matt, who represent the fourth and fifth generations of the family lineage. The farm's title of "VIP" is actually an abbreviation of Dennis' father's name: Verle I. Palmer.

"We don't want people to think that the name means we feel we're important," Dennis explains modestly. "We're keeping our family legacy going, and the VIP initials are just part of it."

"We believe in doing the best we can with the tools we have."

– Dennis Palmer, VIP Farms

Growing...and growing

Although the name and ownership of the farm have stayed the same for a long time, other aspects of the VIP operation frequently change and upgrade. Dennis and Matt are continually looking for ways to increase yields, maximize water availability and improve their production efficiency. For example, the farm now uses 12-row planters and new John Deere round module pickers, which Dennis says can make their cotton harvesting go about 30 percent faster.

"We're always experimenting with something," Dennis adds, "and we believe in doing the best we can with the tools we have."

Another way that VIP Farms has dramatically changed over the years is in its sheer size and numerous expansions. The Palmers now manage approximately 4,300 acres spread across more than 20 miles, with 2,900 irrigated acres in cotton last season. They also rotate many acres planted in wheat. The operation usually has about 20 full-time employees on staff.

Even though VIP Farms is clearly a great success story, the Palmers admit they constantly struggle with water issues. After the drought of 2012, they had to cut back on their planted cotton acres this past year. Dennis is optimistic, though. "The water will come back around," he says. "It always does. It's not a matter of if, but when."



Support from Fertilzona

"VIP is definitely one of the top farms around," says Shawn Wright, Manager, Fertilzona – Thatcher. "I've worked with them for nine years, and they're great people."

The Palmers rely on their Fertilzona branch in Thatcher for a variety of fertilizer, seed and chemical products, as well as for storing much of their harvested wheat and providing useful advice.

"Shawn is always very willing to do whatever he can for us," says Dennis. "We really appreciate how Fertilzona helped us with our planting when we needed it."

As for the future of VIP Farms, the next generation of Palmers seems to be coming along nicely. Matt has a daughter and three sons, and he says, "They like to play in the dirt, so we hope they'll want to be farmers."

More information about VIP Farms can be found at www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zk3lrY0qMM.

Preventing fungal diseases

Early protection helps you avoid damage in lettuce

Farming is unpredictable to begin with, and experienced growers learn to play the odds. However, sometimes it's just smarter business to invest in prevention – for example, with fungal diseases in lettuce.

“Most growers tend to have a wait-and-see approach before they use a fungicide, but sometimes that's not good enough,” explained Dr. Mike Matheron, a plant pathologist with the University of Arizona Extension Service. “At this time of the year, as soon as conditions are favorable for downy mildew, it's important to have a preventive treatment before you see any disease damage.”

Specifically, Dr. Matheron warned about higher humidity that causes dew to form on a lettuce crop for several mornings in a row, which can be conducive to a downy mildew infection. Untreated downy mildew spreads rapidly through the air and may even become systemic in a crop.

Serious fungal disease can cause significant economic damage to a crop. Although it's unusual for the downy mildew pathogen to kill lettuce, it causes spots on the leaves and affects the crop's quality and value.

Another disease threat for lettuce in cool, moist weather is sclerotinia drop, a soil-borne fungus also known as white mold.



It tends to develop on lower leaves, making it harder to see. That also means it's more likely to stay active in the field and become a bigger problem.

If your lettuce is exposed to damp conditions or high humidity this planting season – or if previous disease threats exist – don't wait and risk a fungal infection. Fertizona offers effective fungicides as well as phosphites and liquid sulfur to provide the valuable early prevention that Dr. Matheron recommends.

For more information about fungicides or any other products, please contact your local Fertizona location or representative.

Here we “grow” again

Fertizona, Compton Ag Services and CYC Seed Co™. are proud to present their newest employees, each committed to bringing you the technology, expertise and service you need to help you be the most successful grower you can be.

Jeffrey Hawley
Buckeye - Delivery Driver

Mary Roth
Buckeye - Customer Service

Sarah Thielman
Fennemore - Field Assistant

William Bell
Santan - Delivery Driver

Travis Cluff
Willcox - Delivery Driver

Milford Hammons
Willcox - Delivery Driver

Daniel Torres
Yuma - Delivery Driver

Tamara Gray
Compton Ag Services - Office Assistant

Dafne Olmos
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Cesar Martinez
CYC Seed Co. - Plant Operator

John Rose
CYC Seed Co. - Plant Operator

Kelsey Thomsen
CYC Seed Co. - Customer Service

Tyson Wright
CYC Seed Co. - Plant Operator



Compton
Ag Services





Getting better every day

Paco Davila works to improve Mexican agriculture...and himself

Francisco “Paco” Davila has been a full-time employee of Fertilzona de Mexico in Hermosillo for only about a year, but it’s been more than enough time to prove that he and his job are made for each other. In his position as a sales representative and nutritional consultant, Davila provides a special combination of skills, training, knowledge and dedication.

As a young boy, Davila discovered a love for agriculture while working in the fields with his father. He decided to become an agronomic engineer, and encouraged by his parents, Davila left his home in the small town of Huachinera to enroll at the Universidad de Sonora. After graduating in December of 2012, he was hired by Fertilzona de Mexico.

“I’m very grateful for this opportunity,” Davila says. “As part of that, I try hard to improve myself every day. I also want to be able to give back to my family for everything they did to help me get ahead.”

A wide range of experience

Davila calls on growers primarily in the Mexican states of Sonora and Baja California. He typically covers about 700 kilometers (435 miles) every week to serve customers growing melons, grapes, potatoes, pecans and alfalfa. Davila’s expertise in crop nutrition makes him a valuable resource for recommending fertilizer formulations, rates, timing and application methods. He even conducts field trials for Fertilzona products, such as Furst®-Class Concentrate.

“I like dealing with different crops and exploring new things,” he says. “For me, learning isn’t an optional benefit of my job. It’s part of what I want to do every day.”

Putting the company first

In addition to his desire for self-improvement, Davila constantly strives to make Fertilzona de Mexico look good.

“I always do my best to keep customers satisfied, and that helps to put the Fertilzona name at the top,” he says. “When you improve yourself, you improve the company as well. I treat Fertilzona as if it were mine.”



“When you love what you do, everything is easier.”

– Paco Davila
Sales Representative,
Fertilzona de Mexico

In his spare time, Davila enjoys riding horses with friends or playing baseball on a team he helped to organize – all with the same enthusiasm he brings to his job. As he adds, “When you love what you do, everything is easier.”



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