



GROWING SMARTER

News & Information to Help You Grow

New Seed Count Method For Cotton Ensures Accuracy

Growers probably know that for a while now, corn seed has been packaged based on number of seeds per bag, rather than weight. Corn grow-

ers are familiar with this method of packaging, so they are used to planting by seeds per row foot instead of pounds per acre.

Now, cotton is being bagged this way, which may be a bit confusing at first. But, according to Mike Farmer, district sales manager for Delta and Pine Land Company, this will ultimately be good for Arizona growers and distributors.

“This will benefit growers because it gives them an exact amount of seed in a bag, so those with more sophisticated, precision-type planters will find it’s a lot more accurate,” Farmer explains. “This also should keep returns down to a minimum, so the grower will have less seed to bring back. Hopefully, it will just make everyone’s job a whole lot easier.”

When growers know exactly what their seed needs are, Fertizona can provide the exact number of bags a grower will need for the cotton

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Craig Allen (shown at left), manager of Fertizona—Fennemore, is available to help growers with questions about cotton seed counts.



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Count On Fertizona For Help With Cotton Seed Changes



*Jim Compton
President, Fertizona*

Now that cotton seed is being sold based on seeds per bag rather than pounds per bag, growers may be confused about this new system.

The cotton seed companies have changed to the seed-count system for several reasons. This makes planting a whole lot more accurate for growers with new planting equipment technology, and it standardizes the bags so you know exactly what you're getting every time. This also helps us serve you better, because we can strengthen our inventory management skills and make sure we have the correct amount of cotton seed for our growers.

Growers may have questions about how much cotton seed they'll need for their operation now that these changes have taken place. As always, Fertizona is here to make sure you get the information you need to make good decisions about your farm.

Fertizona is helping growers with this transition by assigning a person at each location to help convert acres to number of bags with ease. Simply call and explain your row width, planting acreage, and seeds per row foot and we'll tell you exactly how many bags you need. If you have any additional questions about the new seed-count method, please don't hesitate to ask.

Fertizona appreciates the business of our valued cotton growers and we're making sure you have the tools necessary to achieve an outstanding growing season.

**Jim Compton
President, Fertizona**

If you have any questions about the new cotton seed counts or need a conversion, please visit www.stoneville.com and www.deltaandpine.com, or call the following people from Fertizona:

- Casa Grande—Ty Currie 520.836.7477
- Buckeye—Janna Eastman 623.386.4491
- San Tan—Tom Montoya 520.836.0103
- Yuma/Roll—Doug Canan 928.785.9016
- Thatcher—Steve Marshall 928.428.3161
- Fennemore—Craig Allen 623.935.4252
- Willcox—Tom Hunt 520.384.2264

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season. Mike Farmer explains that there are financial benefits as well.

“In the past, every bag of seed had a different technology fee because there were different numbers of seeds in each bag,” Farmer relates. “Now every bag of seed in the stack form will be the same price, which will simplify it for the grower.”

Stoneville is also converting to a seed-per-bag distribution method. Stoneville's field production manager Tony Salcido explains that their 230,000-seed bag will eliminate variation in seed size from the packaging and pricing equation and will enhance planning and management accuracy.

“The ag industry has escalated as far as high-tech equipment goes,” Salcido says. “Cotton seed size can vary by the location where it was produced. So that can make a big difference when you're working with air planters that plant by the seed.”

Until growers are accustomed to this new

method, both Stoneville and Delta and Pine Land Company have seed-count calculators that growers can use to determine how much cotton seed they'll need. These calculators are available online at www.stoneville.com and www.deltaandpine.com. Growers can also contact their Fertizona field rep for accurate seed-per-bag conversions.

“If growers have any problems with this new system, I would tell them to get with their field rep or advisor and discuss it with him,” Salcido concludes. “It can cost a lot of money if you order too much or not enough seed, so it's a good idea to plan ahead with your local field rep to make sure you have the correct amount.” ▲



The new cotton seed count method increases consistency and accuracy for growers.

The Grass Is Greener When You're On Fertizona's Side

Turf is a crop much like the field crops corn and alfalfa. Like these commercial production crops, this delicate plant requires the right amount of oxygen, water and fertilizer to thrive. But, unlike field crops, rather than yield or protein requirements, aesthetics are key with turf. If the turf isn't looking good, a golf course superintendent or landscape manager can have major problems. Fertizona understands the unique issues turfgrass managers face and can help solve these problems head-on.

"We try to find out what the turf professional's problems are and then make fertilizer recommendations based on their specific needs," says Craig Allen, manager of Fertizona-Fennemore. "With golf courses, we usually make recommendations based on water, soil and tissue."

Customizing SmartBlend™ fertilizers for each golf course has proven very effective for Arizona golf course superintendents.

Kenny Watkins of FireRock counts on Fertizona for quality products and excellent service.

"It's easier to do with golf courses, but landscape operations are different because they typically are spread across many locations," Allen explains. "In those cases, we have to take a more broad-based approach so we've actually come up with an overall Westside SmartBlend™ that works real good over here west of Phoenix."

Allen describes ryegrass as easier to grow, with more problems present in the summer months. "That's when we try to correct major problems on the course."

One golf course superintendent who has benefited from Fertizona's expertise is Kenny Watkins. He is the golf course superintendent at FireRock Country Club, a private 18-hole course in Fountain Hills.

"Fertizona is able to create some custom blends for me and get it out at a really good price," says Watkins. "I like them because they really go out of their way to make sure I'm taken care of."

Catering to the exclusive membership of FireRock Country Club,



Fertizona customizes SmartBlend fertilizers for FireRock Country Club in Fountain Hills.

coupled with the harsh desert environment, it can be challenging to keep the course looking and playing its best. But Watkins manages to keep it in top condition.

"We have such a hard rocky soil and we use effluent water to irrigate the golf course, so we really have to monitor that salt," adds Watkins. "Fortunately, Fertizona gives me excellent customer service and they've been very responsive."

FireRock is an excellent example of a spectacular, high-end golf course that has benefited from Fertizona's personalized commitment to turfgrass managers and dedication to quality products.

"We're trying to solve their problems to fit their needs rather than simply selling a particular product," Allen explains. "And, I think superintendents are attracted to our service." ▲



Fertizona Combines Alfalfa Fertility Program With Weed Control

Any time a grower can save a trip across his field is always a good thing. Wrapping a herbicide application into a fertilizer application is a good way to do this because it saves the grower money, time and labor. Fertizona is making this easier for alfalfa growers by actually impregnating Trifluralin pre-emergent herbicide onto fertilizer granules.

“We’ve been doing this for quite a while now and have had real good results,” says Tim Walsh, Manager of Fertizona–Buckeye. “The bottom line is that we’re saving growers about \$10-12 per acre because the liquid Triap is less expensive per unit than the granular product, and you’re not paying for a second application cost.”

Fertizona uses an injection pump on the blender to impregnate the herbicide onto the fertilizer granule. This ensures consistent application and a uniform granule.

“We do some of this with our SmartBlends™ as well,” Walsh describes. “We also do a 5-26-30 for guys who want some potash in their blends.”

Alfalfa is an ideal crop for this herbicide-impregnated fertilizer combination due to the similar timing.

“In most cases, when the alfalfa begins to break dormancy as it warms up in February or March, it’s a good time to get down your fertilizer application and pre-emergent herbicide for summer weed control,” says PCA Ken Narramore, who covers the Westside including Buckeye, Tonopah and Vicksburg. “That’s why this is a good program. Plus, it will save the grower money due to the input costs of liquid Trifluralin.”

Ken is also pioneering a split ap-

plication of fertilizer and Trifluralin this summer to deal with his growers’ specific weed problems.

“In our area, one of our tough summer weeds is sprangletop,” Narramore explains. “It becomes a big problem in July so I’m going to do a 2 or 2.5 pint application of the impregnated fertilizer in February or March, and I will make another application in July and emphasize the potassium part of the blend when the potassium demands

will be a little higher. I’ll also put on the remaining Trifluralin in July prior to the emergence of the spangletop and hope to get better control that way.”

Please call your Fertizona field rep for more information about the herbicide-impregnated fertilizer for alfalfa. We’ll keep you up to date about the results of Narramore’s split application. ▲

Fertizona’s herbicide-impregnated SmartBlend fertilizers reduce labor costs for the grower.



NEW PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT



Growers who are looking for a convenient liquid product to achieve this increased uptake will prefer the AMS Premium Liquid. Fertilzona also offers a dry formulation called AMS Premium dry.

Make sure to mix the AMS Premium with the water before adding the Roundup.

“The AMS Premium dry product has more than just the ammonium sulfate, it also has 5 percent surfactant and 2 percent deposition aid,” Dennis explains. “The surfactant helps it spread over the leaf and the deposition aid helps retard drift.”

Fertilzona recommends mixing Roundup with AMS Premium rather than fertilizer-grade ammonium sulfate to reduce clogged nozzles and ensure thorough mixing.

“The AMS Premium dry is a soluble powder so it’s a real fine grind,” Osborn says. “If you use a fertilizer-grade granular ammonium sulfate, you run the risk of not mixing it up well enough and plugging up the nozzle, and there’s nothing worse than that.”

Osborn emphasizes the importance of adding AMS Premium first to condition the water. “This is still a very common mistake in the field,” Osborn stresses. “Obviously, if you add the Roundup first you’ve defeated the purpose and have bound up the Roundup molecule. Growers need to make sure to mix the AMS Premium with the water *before* adding the Roundup.”

Contact your Fertilzona field rep for more information on AMS Premium dry and AMS Premium Liquid. ▲

Roundup is a registered trademark of Monsanto Company.

Are Your Herbicides Working As Hard As They Could Be?

Local growers realize that Arizona’s water and soils have a high mineral content, particularly calcium. What they might not know is these minerals actually decrease the effectiveness of some crop protection products.

“Calcium bonds to the Roundup® herbicide molecule resulting in poor uptake. It may reduce weed control effectiveness up to 10-20 percent,” stresses Dennis Osborn, Fertilzona’s Crop Protection Sales Manager. “That’s just throwing money out the window for the grower. Using our AMS Premium dry and AMS

Premium Liquid products can help reverse this effect.”

Fertilzona’s AMS Premium dry and AMS Premium Liquid products are ammonium sulfate-based water conditioners that are available in either liquid or extremely fine powder for easy mixing.



“Roundup actually binds to the ammonium molecule (-NH⁴) which goes directly into the plant as a fertilizer, and takes the Roundup with it,” Osborn adds. “In fact, the Roundup

label even recommends adding ammonium sulfate to increase uptake activity.”

Q & A

SILAGE CORN

Q. I heard that Fertizona will be offering hybrid seed corn to Arizona growers. Do you have any more information about this?

A. Yes, Fertizona has recently partnered with Grand Valley Hybrids of Grand Junction, Colorado to provide conventional and traited hybrids to our growers here

corn as well as grain corn. Grand Valley is devoted to performance, technology, service and value.

Q. I'm a silage and grain corn grower, but I'm wary of changing hybrids. How do you know these hybrids will work in Arizona?

cause this is new product for this area of Arizona, we recommend proceeding with caution. By all means, do a trial and see for yourself how these hybrids will perform for you.

Q. I'm concerned about the level of service I'm going to get if I plant new silage or grain hybrids. Will Fertizona and Grand Valley Hybrids be available throughout the season if I have any issues?

A. As always, Fertizona field reps are dedicated to growers and will be there to help you through the process. In addition, Grand Valley Hybrids is committed to supporting Arizona growers and answering any questions you have. For more information about Grand Valley Hybrids, contact your Fertizona field rep or call Mark Harris with Grand Valley Hybrids at 970-250-8978.

Roundup Ready and YieldGard are registered trademarks of Monsanto Company.



Fertizona will offer traited hybrid silage and grain corn seeds to Arizona growers.

in Arizona. We selected Grand Valley Hybrids because of their esteemed reputation in the industry, commitment to the West and superior technology. They have been around since 1946 and we think they can bring a lot to the table with their Roundup Ready® and YieldGard® gene seed technology for silage

A. This is a common question. You can rest assured Fertizona and Grand Valley Hybrids have done the proper investigation of these new technologies before introducing them to our valued growers. Grand Valley Hybrids has done significant testing in the Southwest and they have a good idea of which genetics and traits will work in Arizona. They are currently selling corn in the Texas Panhandle, Eastern New Mexico, the Estancia Valley and Rio Grande River Valley, and parts of Arizona. There is probably nobody in the West that looks at as much corn as Grand Valley Hybrids so their expertise will help growers have successful silage or grain corn crops. However, be-



If you have a question or comment for Fertizona to answer, jot it down and mail it to:

**Growing Smarter
C/O Fertizona
2850 S. Peart Rd.
Casa Grande, AZ 85222
fax: 520.836.3447
or e-mail tcurrie@fertizona.com**

All questions will be answered promptly and if your question appears in a future issue of *Growing Smarter* we'll send you a Fertizona baseball cap.



Grand Valley Hybrids conducts rigorous tests throughout the West to ensure quality seeds.

Kent Cleckler Delivers For Arizona Chili Growers

Chili growers in the Willcox area have come to depend on Kent Cleckler for his integrity and dedication to their crops. From starting and stopping their pivots, to being available at all times to help solve problems, Kent has built a solid reputation for his expertise and skills.



Kent Cleckler, Fertizona field representative in the Willcox area.

Cleckler is a PCA who has been working with Fertizona for nearly 20 years and specializes in assisting chili growers. He describes water issues as the biggest challenge chili growers face in Arizona.

“We’re in a drought situation right now,” Cleckler says. “It is very important to manage fertility and water very carefully.”

To help chili growers manage fertility, Cleckler recommends a pre-plant application of potassium followed up by nitrogen at first bloom. In Willcox, growers spoon-feed with 150 units of nitrogen using central-pivot sprinkler irrigation.

Cleckler is very careful with chili crops, which he describes as temperamental. “Sometimes you look at them wrong and they die,” he jokes.

The delicate nature of chilies is further complicated by their water needs. After the difficult stage of getting the plant up, ground moisture is exceedingly important.

“You don’t want to over-water it or under-water it because when it starts setting fruit, you can knock the fruit off real easily,” Cleckler stresses.

Cleckler gives his growers credit for watching the weather closely and using strong cultural practices to help their crops thrive.

“We get leaf spot down here, but usually we just bump up the micronutrients and give it a real hard shot of fertilizer to take care of that,” Cleckler says. “If we find *Phytophthora* we’ll treat with Ridomil®, but one thing we always have to keep a lookout for is weeds.”

Tillage is an important issue according to Cleckler, and he recommends growers really make appropriate use of soil tillage systems.

When he is not scouting for pests for his field corn and chili growers, Kent enjoys riding Harleys and spending time at the lake. ▲

Ridomil is a registered trademark of Syngenta.

Kent Cleckler helps Willcox chili growers achieve successful crops.



FERTIZONA LOCATIONS

Fertizona—Casa Grande Main Office

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Dennis Osborn—Crop Protection
Gene Kempton—Seed Products
Jimmy Compton—Crop Nutrition
Lamont Lacy—Credit Manager
Larry McGee—Lawn & Garden
Barbara West—Controller

Fertizona—Buckeye

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Craig Allen—Manager

Fertizona—Roll

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