



GROWING SMARTER

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NEWS & INFORMATION TO HELP YOU GROW

Dealing With INSV In Produce

Growers need to take preventive steps early

For generations, Boy Scouts have used the motto “Be prepared” as a safety reminder. Although that phrase was probably created to refer to things like a knife, a compass, and a first-aid kit, its message applies across many situations – including lettuce production in the Southwest.

To be more specific, Arizona produce growers need to be prepared for the potential arrival of INSV (Impatiens Necrotic Spot Virus) and for related new threats posed by western flower thrips.

The virus has been observed in lettuce, especially iceberg and romaine, in California’s Salinas Valley for a number of years, and in

2020 it increased in severity to become a leading disease problem. INSV on lettuce causes chlorosis and patterns of necrosis on plants’ leaves, as well as significant stunting and yield loss.

“We have to nip this thing in the bud.”

- Dr. John Palumbo, University of Arizona Research Specialist and Professor of Entomology

“The virus was huge in California last year,” said Dr. John Palumbo, Extension Specialist and Professor of Entomology at UA. “When we first suspected it in Yuma last March, we started surveying right away.”

The research teams checked 43 fields across 25 miles last spring. With the exception of one single field that had heavy symptoms of INSV, only a small percentage of the fields showed signs of infection, and those were at very low levels.

“Fortunately, we’ve had just a touch of it here, with only a few fields testing positive,” said PCA Scott McKenna, Fertizona – Yuma. “But growers are definitely concerned about it, and we have to hope the virus doesn’t hit us with a vengeance.”

“In 31 years, I’d never seen it in Yuma before,” said Dr. Palumbo. “But it’s here now.”

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Preparing for Tough Markets

With all of the current shortages and inflation pressures occurring in the world today, it is sometimes hard to keep up with what is happening. We have three new developments that Fertizona is keeping a sharp eye on. One is the anti-dumping tariffs currently being discussed at the WTO (World Trade Organization) and the FTC (Federal Trade Commission). US manufacturers of nitrogen are claiming Russia and Trinidad and Tobago are dumping UAN-32 on US shores. The second is CF Industries' plant shut down in Louisiana due to hurricane Ida, and the third is CF's, Yara's and now other

European companies' shuttering of nitrogen production due to runaway prices of natural gas.

Most of those developments mean higher prices, and recently CF (which owns 60% of US nitrogen production) started cancelling contracts. That means they think the prices are going to go higher and are trying to get ready for better contracts going forward. This could likely result in shortages of UAN-32 on East and West coast markets in the spring.

Fortunately, Fertizona has bought ahead and will be able to cover our growers' needs. Together

with our customers, we plan to anticipate and prepare for these tough markets.

Thank you,
Casey



Casey Compton, President,
Fertizona & Compton Ag Services



Story continued from cover

Getting ahead of the threat

If the virus is heading for Arizona, how should growers be reacting and preparing now?

"There's naturally a lot of wait-and-see speculation, but you can't wait too long," Dr. Palumbo emphasized. "We have to nip this thing in the bud."

The primary mode of INSV transmission is vectoring by the western flower thrip. The virus is acquired through larval thrips feeding on infected plants. Once larvae have the virus, it carries over to the adult thrips which can then transmit it to healthy plants.

"It only takes a few of those little guys to spread the virus," added Dr. Palumbo, "and five minutes of feeding can infect a plant."

As its name suggests, Impatiens Necrotic Spot Virus developed in nursery stock and ornamentals. The western flower thrips reproduce quickly in greenhouses and fields, especially in warmer months, and migrate easily. In recent years, their expanding populations

have spread into other vegetables, produce, and even weeds.

"After the lettuce harvest this year, we saw thrips traveling to weeds," explained Dr. Palumbo. "Lettuce and weeds are key hosts, so we have to be more aggressive with weed sanitization. Once the virus is detected by a PCA, you need to act fast."

"Our weed control is going to require more diligence," agreed Scott, "and we have to treat the thrips early in the season."

There are thousands of species of thrips (the western flower thrip is also called the alfalfa



Advanced INSV damage is clearly evident in this crop.

thrip), and Fertizona offers many proven treatment and control options. However, Arizona growers and PCAs don't have much experience dealing with INSV in lettuce since it's a relatively new challenge, and early evidence shows it's hard to control.

"They tested various chemistries in Salinas," said Scott, "and the older options seemed to work, like Lannate® and the pyrethroids."

Dr. Palumbo also suggested Lannate® and Radiant® insecticides, quickly adding that they should be rotated and not overused.

"Thrips are going to be here, always," he said. "Right now, cultural management and timing are critical. We need to keep fields clean so we'll have fewer weed hosts for the thrips, and we need to be aggressive with control. The longer you can delay the risk of INSV infection, the better."

For more information about controlling thrips and weeds, talk to your local Fertizona or Compton Ag office, or visit www.fertizona.com.

A Great Fit, At Last

Brad Brchan likes where life has taken him

Some people have the good fortune of stepping into a great job at an early age and then enjoying a lifelong career there. For PCA Brad Brchan, Manager of Fertilzona's Yuma branch, that path was quite a bit different—and he's very glad to be where he is now.

Born in South Dakota and raised in Wyoming, Brad moved to Arizona as a young man. Having grown up around agriculture and having an interest in it, he earned an Associate's degree in Ag Education with a goal of becoming an FFA teacher.

After some other direction-changing decisions along the way, Brad went to work for a while at the Copperstone gold mine in La Paz County, Arizona. Then he later returned to college to get a degree in Ag Economics from the University of Arizona.

He got a job with a large national fertilizer company, and in a lucky twist of fate, Brad happened to become good friends with many Fertilzona employees from around the same area.



"I was actually their competitor," he said. "They were great guys and we hung out together a lot. Tyke Bennett (Seed Sales Manager at Fertilzona) would even come over and help me with my horses."



Through those ongoing social connections, Brad developed a deep respect for Fertilzona. "It was like a big, cool family," he said. "I could tell they knew how to do things right."

Brad kept working for that competitor's company for 25 years, but when the management position at Fertilzona – Yuma opened up three years ago, he jumped at the opportunity.

"Grateful to be here."

– Brad Brchan, Manager, Fertilzona - Yuma

"Working for a private, family-owned organization was a great change from the corporate environment I was in before," he said. "I'm really grateful to be here."

At our Yuma branch, Brad and his staff of 20 serve dozens of regional growers whose main crops are lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, and citrus, as well as some summer crops, including alfalfa, wheat, and cotton.

"My main responsibility is to make sure our salespeople have the products they need to do their jobs," Brad said, "and to help them make our customers' jobs easier."

Away from work, Brad enjoys playing golf and being outdoors, but admits he doesn't have a lot of free time. He has four grandchildren, ranging from six months to four years old, and they keep him very busy.

"I used to have horses, but now I have grandkids instead," he said with a laugh, "and they like to boss me around."



Looking Better All The Time



Now you have more reasons than ever to use Endurant®

When golf course superintendents discover a way to make their courses more attractive and save money at the same time, word gets around. One example is Endurant® turf colorant, which has continued to gain loyal followers since its introduction more than ten years ago. Endurant is a popular choice because it can reduce a course's need for overseeding—and the expenses that go along with it.

Not to be confused with old-fashioned turf “paint,” Endurant is an organic pigment that gives dormant grass a natural, consistent green color all winter, without the cost and trouble of overseeded ryegrass. As demands on water usage increase throughout the West, many regional superintendents are enthusiastic about the idea of “liquid overseeding” with Endurant. If you can avoid traditional overseeding, you naturally use a lot less water.

While colorants are a proven, viable solution to maintaining green turf with reduced irrigation, seed is another factor, as the industry is experiencing material shortages and shipping delays.

“Endurant is definitely a bigger deal this year,” said Nick Lubich, Turf Management Specialist

at Fertilzona – Fennemore. “The challenges with seed and water are making superintendents adjust their budgets.”

“Water issues are a huge driving factor in the uptick of colorant usage,” agreed Jennifer Seevers, Turf Colorant Division Manager for Endurant. “It’s providing a sustainable alternative for many turf managers.”

At one Arizona golf course – the gorgeous Eagle Mountain in Fountain Hills – the results with Endurant have been outstanding.



“The Endurant keeps everything green, all the time, and that keeps the golfers happy,” said Eagle Mountain Golf Course Superintendent Mike Reinecke. “I’ve been very happy with Endurant, and the company has mastered the product. Its color looks better than ever now.”

“The technology over the last 10+ years continues to evolve, perfecting the cultural practice of utilizing colorants,” added Jennifer.

“We’ve had great success with entities such as the PGA, NFL, and MLS. Endurant has become an industry standard.”

“Any turf setting can benefit from Endurant,” said Cory Scherting, Fertilzona’s Turf and Landscape Sales Manager. “Turf and landscape professionals see how colorant works on the best golf courses, and then they wonder why they haven’t tried it for themselves.”

“I’ve talked to golfers who’ve played on painted turf, and they can’t tell the difference,” said Kevin Walsh, Turf Management Specialist, Fertilzona – Fennemore. “It looks completely natural. At one club where we tested it, nobody could tell the turf had been colored.”

“The benefits are endless,” Jennifer said. “Whether used in conjunction with overseed for HDTV readiness or as a liquid-overseed, there are so many options for turf managers today to save money on seed, fertilizer, and equipment wear and tear, as well as the scarcity of water.”

“Endurant is a fantastic option in many situations,” Kevin added. “100 percent of my customers who’ve tried it are satisfied and want to use it again.”

Fertilzona is the Master Distributor of Endurant in the Southwest. For more details, contact us at 623.935.4252, or visit www.fertilzona.com.

“Nobody could tell the turf had been colored.”

– Kevin Walsh, Turf Management Specialist, Fertilzona – Fennemore



Enhancing Your Success

Make your chemicals more effective with Oro Agri surfactants

All your life, you've probably heard advice about what it takes to succeed: hard work, planning, luck, honesty, and so on. But did anybody mention surfactants? They can definitely promote your success as a grower.

The right surfactants or other adjuvants in your spray products will improve how they react with plant surfaces and penetrate them. That naturally enhances the effectiveness of whatever you apply, such as pesticides, foliar nutrients, defoliants, and PGRs.

“It’s my favorite adjuvant for citrus or pecans.”

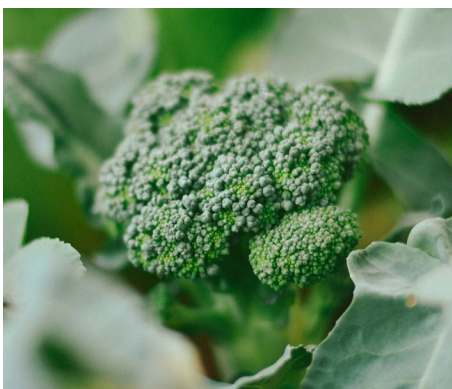
– PCA Don Platt, Fertizona – Casa Grande

“The key is to minimize the loss of water and chemicals you spray,” said Jon Pasquinelli, Regional Sales Manager for Oro Agri USA. “When water rolls off a leaf onto the ground, that’s waste. Coverage is key.”

Fertizona supplies several excellent, popular adjuvants from Oro Agri, including Wetcit®, Vintre®, and Oroboost®, which was developed for organic crops.

“Tests show that our products deliver active ingredients into the plant within 15 minutes,” Jon added. “That increases the efficiency of the AI.”

For example, Wetcit is a patented, orange-oil-based surfactant that overcomes water-repellent properties of plant leaves and insects, enabling sprays to penetrate surfaces more easily and increase coverage. Wetcit is especially effective with defoliants and systemic products because it moves down to the roots faster.



“I use Wetcit with all cotton defoliants,” said PCA John Hume (Fertizona – Roll). “It’s a really good spreader and absorber. It opens up more bolls and dries them quicker.”

“Wetcit is awesome in combination with defoliants,” agreed Dennis Osborn, Crop Protection Sales Manager, Fertizona.

Vintre is a penetrant/surfactant uniquely formulated to improve the distribution and coverage of translaminar and systemic pesticides and other sprays.

Developed specifically for vine and tree crops, Vintre has proven to be extremely helpful in orchards. “It’s my favorite adjuvant for citrus or pecans,” said Don Platt, PCA, Fertizona – Casa Grande. “Vintre is actually cheap insurance for the cost of everything else you apply, because it gives you more mileage out of anything you’re putting on.”

Don also uses Oro Agri’s Oroboost almost exclusively when spraying organic orchards.

Oroboost is a WSDA-registered organic adjuvant formulated to improve coverage and penetration of organic pesticides and foliar nutrients. Using proprietary technology, Oroboost accelerates translocation of active ingredients throughout plants, including roots, for faster results. University studies proved that Oroboost-treated applications are absorbed into the leaf more quickly than pesticide alone.

“It’s a great product,” PCA Jared Osborn (Fertizona – Roll) said confidently. “I’ve used it on broccoli, celery, and head lettuce, and I’ve seen it give better coverage.”

Oroboost is approved for use with all organic pesticides and foliar nutrients. It also provides versatility through mix rates that allow you to control where and how inputs are applied.

“Our job is to deliver chemicals into the plant where they’re supposed to go,” Jon continued, “and that gives you the greatest chance of success.”

To learn more, contact your local Fertizona or Compton Ag office or visit www.fertizona.com.





Let Your Money Do More

John Deere Financial can increase your buying power

Some people say that money makes the world go 'round. Many of us think that agriculture does. In any case, the two go hand-in-hand, because growing crops calls for spending money on inputs . . . and John Deere Financial makes that easier.

"We tailor financing programs to cover growers' upfront costs and help get them through the crop cycle," explained Michael Hoffstatter, Area Sales Manager for John Deere Financial. "By providing an additional source of capital, we take pressure off your cash flow. That gives you the ability to do more with your money, such as investing or buying land."

In other words, purchasing your needed crop inputs – seed, chemicals, adjuvants, fertilizers, etc. – with support from John Deere Financial gives you much greater financial flexibility and control. Taking advantage of that early-season financing on inputs can relieve a lot of your cash-flow concerns and free up more operating funds. A John Deere Multi-Use account offers attractive terms and repayment schedules that match up with your harvest timing.

"We can finance any crop input a grower may need," Michael said. "We're currently partnering with Bayer on purchases of cottonseed, and it's a sweet deal."

"Right now is a perfect time for us to be getting this message out," added Shea Nieto, Fertilizer's Credit Manager. "It's great that our customers have this convenient financing opportunity."

"This is just a piece of the puzzle in a grower's financial picture," added Michael, "and we want to help our customers however we can. John Deere believes in agriculture."

Applying for a John Deere Multi-Use account is fast and easy. For more information, talk to Shea or your Fertilizer representative.

You can also contact Michael directly at 913-251-2974 or visit deere.com and click on "Finance" for additional details.



"It's great that our customers have this convenient opportunity."

– Shea Nieto, Credit Manager, Fertilizer

Welcome to Casa Grande

Fertizona's headquarters has a colorful background

Fertizona has been around for over 40 years now, and when people ask us about our history, we're proud to tell the story. It all began in 1980 when company founder Jimmy Compton had an attractive opportunity to buy a small agricultural-chemical supply company in Casa Grande, including all its existing inventory. At that time, the area had several more companies selling agricultural inputs than we have today, so it was a bold move to enter that arena. For a variety of reasons, many of those earlier competitors are no longer operating.

The building in Casa Grande that Jimmy bought was built in the early 20th century and had served as a dehydrated alfalfa facility for the Arizona Feeds Company. Since 1980, the site has seen many improvements and expansions, including a new office built in 1996 plus an addition to it

in 2019. In 2016, Fertizona's new "Big Barn" was built a half-mile away, providing much greater storage capacity for dry fertilizers. In 2020, a new 17,000 square-foot warehouse was completed at CYC Solutions, one of Fertizona's affiliated companies, and it has enabled faster and more efficient delivery for growers around the region.



Thanks to the ongoing upgrades, the Casa Grande location now has more than ample storage for dry and liquid fertilizers, bulk and package chemicals, and a wide range of seeds. Fertizona also recently added a second bagging line to expand our abilities to offer customized fertilizer formulations in smaller bags for nurseries and golf courses.

"We weren't able to put product into anything as small as a five-pound bag before," said Tyke Bennett, Fertizona's Seed Products Sales Manager & Fertilizer Bagging Manager. "The popular smaller bags definitely fit the needs of our small-market customers."

The Casa Grande location is much more than a storage, bagging, and delivery hub, though. It is also the nerve center and heart of our operations. Casa Grande is the official corporate headquarters for the Fertilizer Company of Arizona (more commonly and familiarly known as "Fertizona" to our customers). Here is where our organization's varied essential business functions are handled, including Purchasing, Accounts Payable, the Credit and Finance departments, Marketing, our Safety Program, and more.

A successful company needs to provide high-quality products to stay in business, but it also requires a lot of skilled, conscientious individuals to make everything run smoothly. The dedicated team at Fertizona Casa Grande is an example of that every day.



New Hires

Rudy Valdez
CYC Solutions

Melvin Meahl II
CYC Solutions



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Tyke Bennett
Seed Products & Fertilizer Bagging

Jimmy Compton
Crop Nutrition

Shea Nieto
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John Haggard, Manager

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