Blue Mountain Minerals

Aglime Quarterly AG FACT

Calcium moves through the xylem, following water from the roots to the place of highest water loss. Water related conditions, drought, wind or waterlogging, can give rise to calcium related problems.



Ammonium or Saturation Paste

A soil test is important for many reasons: to improve crop production, aid in the diagnosis of soil and crop problems, improve nutrient balance, protect the environment from leaching excess fertilizers and save money.

"When using a soil test to determine how much calcium to apply to leach salts, it is best to use the Saturated Paste Extract numbers, usually reported in meq/l. Most standard salinity leaching calculations are based on these soluble numbers. The three cations: Ca, Mg and Na make up virtually all the positive ions that aid soil colloid aggregation. Bicarbonate, HCO3- is an anion that has influence, because it can take out some of the free solution Ca to form precipitated lime. To account for this impact, use the Adjusted SAR.

If a Mid-West style test is used on an alkaline soil where you only get Ammonium Acetate values, the reported value for "free" Ca can be artificially high because the Ammonium Acetate blows apart the lime. All plant available nutrients are not only the ones in solution. Plant roots create a mild acid which can make many of the soil bound nutrients available".

Graphs and charts on soil reports are great for a quick look at how good or how bad the soil is an a field. But when it comes to addressing and prioritizing problem fields, evaluating nutrient deficiencies or excesses, and calculating remediation you may need to see more of the details that are on the spreadsheet form of a soil report. Check with your certified crop advisor for more information.

Source: Blake Sanden, UCCE Irrigation and Soils Advisor.

Problems From Low Calcium

Plants with low calcium levels can have weak cell walls and membranes making them open to a variety of diseases and post harvest problems. Almonds, pistachios and fresh produce like apples and celery are among the crops that require high amounts of calcium.

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