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Soil Testing Hay Fields & Pastures

A number of these columns this summer encouraged post-harvest hay field evaluations. If you've done so, I hope they were greening up consistently and looking good. If you have not, it might be a good idea to do so. Some unevenness is starting to show up, and there have been a few reports of some foliage feeders that may not require attention, but should be monitored.

There have also been some concerns expressed this summer about production levels. In some cases, yields exceeded expectation while others were disappointing. If disappointed is the category you fall into, a soil test this fall *might* be a next step to consider.

If conditions are good (soil moisture doesn't always allow it...), fall is a great time for sampling. Doing so offers us the advantage of time for advance application planning, particularly if those applications are going to require 'economic adjustments' to make them work financially.

If pH levels are less than optimum, earlier results also provide the opportunity to plan for lime applications well in advance of next year's growing season. Unlike the relatively rapid response we see to nitrogen, pH correction to levels more conducive for plant response can take some time. Fall soil sampling can help us complete lime applications sooner than later.

In future columns, I'll outline some facets of a good soil sampling program. If you want to get a head start, drop me a line and we can discuss a plan to get you started.

Deciphering Carbon – August 22nd

The theme of this year's fall crops meeting (Thursday, August 22nd) in Oskaloosa will be Deciphering Carbon. We hear a lot about carbon intensity and carbon scores and even carbon markets, but what does it all really mean? Dr. Peter Tomlinson will be our guest for a Q and A session to help answer the common questions around carbon management and carbon programs.

The meeting will begin at 4:45 p.m. at the Colonial Acres Events Center in Oskaloosa with Taylor Insurance Services as our host. First State Bank and Trust is sponsoring a complimentary meal following Dr. Tomlinson's presentation. For meal count purposes, RSVP by Monday, August 19th via e-mail to dhallaue@ksu.edu or the Oskaloosa Office of the Meadowlark Extension District at (785) 863-2212.