TOBACCO

Greenhouse Water Quality

The first step in a successful tobacco greenhouse fertilization program is a NCDA&CS water sample. NCDA&CS provides water analysis for $5.00 per sample. A clean, 16-20 ounce nonreturnable plastic drink bottle with a screw-on cap is an excellent water sample bottle. The bottle should be rinsed several times with the water to be tested before collecting the sample. The water should flow several minutes before securing the sample. When completing the NCDA&CS solution analysis information sheet, specify ST in the solution code. ST represents transplant production solution source water. In the sample description/comments area, please state tobacco float greenhouse.

*Water quality is typically the starting point when solving a potential greenhouse nutrient deficiency. If a preseason water sample has been taken, this speeds the corrective measure process.*

Float Tray Sanitation

The most common tobacco greenhouse diseases are damping-off (rhizoctonia or pythium), collar rot (sclerotinia), and bacterial soft rot (Erwinia).

Used trays are a documented source of rhizoctonia damping-off. Before reuse, thoroughly wash the trays and allow them to dry. *All used trays should be either fumigated with methyl bromide or steam sterilized prior to reuse.* Do not depend on dipping trays in any sanitation product (including bleach) to kill disease pathogens satisfactorily.

To fumigate with methyl bromide, stack trays criss-crossed up to 5 feet high. Then tarp and seal. Apply methyl bromide at 3 pounds per 1,000 cubic feet (length X width X height – all measurements in feet). Allow at least 48 hours of aeration before filling with media.

WHEAT

Manganese Deficiency

Isolated, random field areas of yellow, stunted wheat may be the result of manganese deficiency. Several such field areas have been recently identified in Duplin County.

Manganese is a micronutrient necessary for plant growth. Some plants are more sensitive to low soil plant-available manganese levels than others. These plants are commonly called manganese-sensitive. Wheat and soybeans are two manganese-sensitive crops.
There are two common causes of wheat manganese deficiency. The most common is high soil pH. In high soil pH situations, wheat roots are present in mineral soils with a pH above 6.2. Adequate manganese levels may be present in the soil but due to high pH, the manganese is not plant-available. The second, less common cause of wheat manganese deficiency is low soil manganese levels (Mn-I less than 26).

If wheat manganese deficiency is identified, foliar spray ½ pound/acre of actual manganese. A second application (same rate) may be necessary 10-14 days later. This action will correct the manganese needs of the current crop only.

**Topdress Nitrogen: To Split Or Not To Split?**

Evaluate your wheat tiller density in late January.

If tiller density is low (less than 55 tillers/square foot), apply ½ of the topdress nitrogen in late January and the remaining ½ in early March. If tiller density is low, you may be able to see the ground between plants within the row. If tiller density is low, you can easily see the ground between rows.

If tiller density is high (55+ tillers/square foot), apply all topdress nitrogen in early March.

*Applying topdress nitrogen to high tiller density wheat in late January/early-mid February results in increased risk of freeze damage, disease, and lodging. This traditional practice can reduce yields.*

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**NC Small Grain, Soybean & Corn Growers Associations Annual Conference**

January 17 & 18
Sheraton Imperial Hotel – Research Triangle Park
For more information, call 919-877-9392.

**NC Highway Patrol Motor Carrier Enforcement Regulation Information Session**

Thursday, January 17 – 6:00 pm
Sampson Co. Agri-Expo Center - Clinton
NCHP Motor Carrier Enforcement Officers will present commercial vehicle (including farm) regulations.

**Soybean/Corn/Wheat Meeting**

Tuesday, February 5 – 6:00 pm
Duplin County Extension Center
Dr. Jim Dunphy, NCSU Extension Soybean Specialist, will be the guest speaker.

**Cotton Production Meeting**

Wednesday, February 13 – 6:30 pm
Wayne County
Please call closer to the meeting date for additional information.

**Peanut Production Meeting**

Thursday, February 28 – 6:00 pm
Duplin County Extension Center

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