



Professionals In Your Field

# Servi-Tech Review

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## Fungicide Use



by Orvin Bontrager  
Director of Education & Training, Aurora, NE

The summer of 2007 had unprecedented use of foliar fungicides on corn in the irrigated areas of the High Plains, as well as in the heart of the Corn Belt.

At the time of this writing in early October, much yield information still needs to be obtained to determine the positive effects of the fungicide applications. Yield differences are continuing to be sorted out between the treated and untreated fields or check strips.

An early conclusion would indicate that blanket treating all corn at tassel time or shortly after is not appropriate. Some hybrids react differently based on their susceptibility to gray leaf spot and other foliar diseases.

Overall corn standability is greatly improved. If corn is left to dry down in the field, this alone can be a positive aspect of the fungicide treatments.

Pictured are representative photos of corn that were taken in mid September 2007 in south-central Nebraska. They show the typical visual differences of treated areas with a popular fungicide at tassel time and the untreated area of the field.



Treated



Untreated

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## Featured Crop Consultant

### Brian Bresnahan



Crop Consultant

Benedict, NE

University of Nebraska

6 Years of Experience

Working on Masters

#### Why Brian chose Crop Consulting:

*"I initially chose crop consulting to be close to agriculture and to work with farmers. Of all the people I've met in the world, Marines and farmers are the best. I can see where I'm bringing value to the operation and I feel like my farmers can see it as well. Knowing that makes being an agronomist a rewarding experience."*

#### Favorite thing about his job:

*"The relationships with my customers are clearly the thing I enjoy the most."*

#### Hobbies:

*I enjoy hunting and fishing when not attending activities for my three kids. I will be serving on Congressman Adrian Smith's Military Service Academy Advisory Committee.*

## Is Manure Right For Your Operation?



by Kenny Tucker  
Division Manager, Lyons, KS

Have you considered using manure in place of or in addition to commercial fertilizer? With price increases for major crop inputs such as nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and zinc, it may pay to take another look at the benefits of manure as a nutrient source and as a soil amendment. It may be a viable economic resource for your operation.

Take a look at today's average fertilizer prices: nitrogen \$0.39 per lb, phosphorus \$0.52 per lb, potassium \$0.23 per lb, and zinc \$2.58 per lb. (Average prices for nitrogen and phosphorus sources, potassium is 0-0-60, zinc is 33% zinc sulfate.) Assuming these prices, the following chart shows the equivalent fertilizer value of average poultry and beef manure for the major nutrients available the first year following application.

Manure Type	Nutrient	#/ton available 1st year	*Fertilizer \$ value/ton
Poultry	Nitrogen	53.20	\$20.75
	Phosphorus (P205)	47.70	\$24.80
	Potassium (K20)	52.20	\$12.01
	Zinc	.40	\$1.03
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$57.56</b>
Beef	Nitrogen	6.00	\$2.34
	Phosphorus (P205)	14.40	\$7.49
	Potassium (K20)	17.30	\$3.98
	Zinc	.15	\$.39
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$13.81</b>

\*N=\$.39/unit P=\$.52/unit K=\$.23/unit Zn=\$2.58/unit

Assuming an application rate of two tons per acre for poultry manure, and 20 tons per acre of beef manure, the per acre value of the manure would be \$115.12 for poultry, and \$276.20 for beef, respectively. The cost to have manure hauled and spread will normally run \$30 to \$80 per acre depending on the type of manure and distance from the source. The potential value of manure can be easily seen. In addition to the cost benefits, manure can also increase profits by improving the soil's physical, chemical, and biological properties (which allow for better air and water movement in the soil), and provide micronutrients which are not accounted for in the cost analysis above.

Are there any negative factors related to manure application? Of course there is. Nutrient runoff from treated fields, odor and fly problems for yourself, as well as neighbors, salt damage in over-applied areas, compaction from spreader equipment, and weed seed contamination are common issues of concern.

Just as with any fertilizer product, manure should be applied as recommended based on what the soil tests recommendations dictate. While this sounds simple, the reality is we often have to over-apply some nutrients to get enough of another nutrient applied. For example, to get 120 pounds of nitrogen from the beef manure above, you would apply 288 pounds of phosphorus (P205), which would be approximately a 7 to 10 year supply of phosphorus. Therefore, it is normally best to apply manure to a producer's soils testing lowest in phosphorus, all other factors being equal. We also must keep environmental concerns in mind to avoid nutrient levels from becoming out of compliance with state regulations.

Other solutions are available for some of the problems associated with manure. Properly calibrated equipment will help maintain uniform application. Proper soil moisture will help prevent compaction. Buffer strips can help protect sensitive areas from runoff. Composting manure can help reduce fly problems and decrease weed seed viability.

So weigh the pros and cons for your operation and see if manure can improve your soil and your profitability for today and for the future.



**Servi-Tech offices will be closed November 22 and 23, December 24 and 25, as well as January 1, so our employees can enjoy the Holidays with friends and family.**



## Grid Soil Sample and Save Money



by Norb Boyle  
Division Manager, Ackley, IA

Grid soil testing improves the cost-effectiveness of fertilizer applications. Growers feel the need to keep soil testing expenses within a budget. This is understandable, but often misguided. It's based on the perception that soil testing is a cost, not based on the expected value of the data gathered.

Soil samples are a major key for managing soil fertility. This year it is especially important with the increased fertilizer price to put the fertilizer where it is most cost effective. Samples pulled properly, with recommendations made by a qualified individual, are one of the best tools available to the grower to maximize return to the fertilizer investment.

The question is how do you get a reasonable representation of the true soil fertility variation within a field? The easy answer is that more samples are better. Nutrient variability can be significant and can change rapidly. Without an adequate number of soil samples, some recommendations may be based on an incomplete picture.

The appropriate sampling method is field-dependent. It depends on what needs to be accomplished. In some fields with very little variation, a blanket recommendation can be satisfactory. In other fields, extreme nutrient variability may be present and may be undetected.

Most retailers in the Midwest do have variable rate application equipment. By incorporating the information provided by the intensive soil test maps, your Servi-Tech crop specialist can calculate whether an overall variable-rate fertilizer application would have the best return, or whether a uniform lime, phosphorus, or potassium application would be most economical.

By just looking at phosphorus levels alone, or in some areas the pH levels, there are cases where you can pay for the added sampling investment and soil fertility mapping, even if you still make a blanket fertilizer or manure application. Grid soil sampling is a relatively low cost investment in your crop production program, but a cheap, poorly planned soil sample program may be very expensive in the long run.

After walking your fields for even one season, your Servi-Tech crop specialist has a good feel for the fields that exhibit nutrient variability in the soils. With the high land and input costs this season as well as the higher value of the crops we are producing, every dollar counts. We can assist you in making the decisions that are right for your operation, and will know where intensive soil testing and variable rate applications will provide economic returns!



Agronomist Kelly Zachgo grid soil sampling a field in Nebraska.

## Meet our Staff: Kay Lee

- **Title And Job Description:** *Feed Grinder at Amarillo Laboratory- Kay grinds all the feed, manure, and plant samples that come into the Amarillo Laboratory. She also runs organic matter on soil samples.*
- **Favorite Thing About Working At Servi-Tech:** *“Coming to work early in the morning and then being able to leave early enough in the day to be able to enjoy it!”*
- **What Co-workers Say About Kay:** *“Kay does a good job of coming in early and grinding the samples each day for the lab. She is very reliable and willing to help out in other areas when people are gone. She is easy going and gets along well with her co-workers.”*
- **Something Interesting About Kay:** *Kay has a love for dogs. A hobby/passion of hers is showing her dogs in AKC sanctioned confirmation events. She has a Bull Mastiff puppy and two Chinese Crested dogs.*





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# Words From The Manager

Mitch Counce-General Manager

## A New Strategic Business Partnership

Our commitment to improving and adding value to the agriculture production industry continues. Servi-Tech, Inc. and AgRenaissance Software LLC located in Raleigh, NC, recently formed a strategic business partnership. Over the past three years, some of our agronomists have been utilizing, testing, and making suggestions for improvements to an AgRenaissance software product called FieldRecon™. During this time, we discovered that our two companies have a lot in common regarding service and technology for agriculture. The combination of our expertise will allow us to bring new and improved products and services to our customers and others in agriculture. In the coming year, more agronomists and farmers will be utilizing this technology. Both companies will be combining efforts to improve computer software, laboratory, and crop consulting agronomy services which will add value for customers using either or both of our services. The software makes it very easy to keep

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anything associated with crop production and field history in a digital and sortable format with customizable report formats. Our agronomists who use FieldRecon indicate it is extremely easy to learn and very user-friendly. Producers also like the report formats and the ability to receive reports via e-mail. FieldRecon makes it easy for consultants, farmers, ag suppliers, and applicators to recall, sort, share, and utilize any specific stored information. This is a great feature of the software. In a matter of seconds, using Bluetooth technology, selected and specific stored information can be shared with another user. Development plans have begun for an enhanced version of FieldRecon that will give farmers additional useful and easy to use tools in maintaining, tracking, and recalling information about their farm operation.

As farming becomes more complicated and technologically advanced, the ability to track and recall critical information for the decision-making process will become even more important. Our new business partnership is a step in keeping agriculture and our commitment to it on the leading edge.

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