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ST. CLAIR REGION SOIL & CROP NEWS



March 2009

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Fellow Croppers:

Well, it the beginning of another year and as always, the last growing year will go down in history, with a foot note or two.

It has been a long time since so much corn has over wintered in the field – Essex is fortunate to have had a few of these fields. We are in the banana belt so we may have had a jump start last fall. If you checked the temperature in the last two months, it was always two degrees warmer in Essex County than the next county or two, although the dog's water dish still froze solid this winter.

The OSCIA has completed its realignment and we are now down to eleven directors, but that does not mean we are left to do all the work. We are a grass roots organization and it is the people in each county that make this group what it is today. Projects are being put together and I am looking forward to everyone's input to give these plots value added design.

The entire St. Clair Region is going to run a one day tour in Essex County this summer, visiting a local green house and vineyard, ending with a winery and a fabulous meal of local food. Check inside for details. This is the first of a three year tour—next year it be Kent County's turn, followed by Lambton County in 2011. Hope to see you in Essex this summer, it will be worth it!

This year's OSCIA executive is spearheaded by Murray Cochrane as president. Barry Hill is first vice president, Max Kaiser second vice and Joan McKinlay as third. Joan was the first woman director in the OSCIA and is now the first woman on the executive.

Corn plots in each county have been very successful and in order to keep them going, I am encouraging any of you to help out if you are able. All the corn plot trials are printed in this issue. Plot results are generally welcomed by most Agri-business so be sure to label their as to their source and if it is an OSCIA backed site.

Henry Denotter, St Clair Chair and Provincial Director



THANK-YOU TO THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS FOR THIS EDITION:



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NEWSLETTER POSSIBLE!



Lambton Plot Results—Environmentally Smart Nitrogen (ESN) vs. Conventional Nitrogen Application in Wheat (Compiled by Kirk VanWill)

ESN vs. Urea	Yield (bu/ac)		Protein (%)	
	ESN	Urea	ESN	Urea
Don McGugan	48.0	51.8	12.7	12.5
Tony Straatman	102.4	99.5	11.0	10.7
David Williams	81.2	75.3	10.4	10.1
Ian Grant	94.0	102.4	10.8	10.2
Harry Buurma	107.6	103.9	11.4	11.6
Average	86.64	86.58	11.26	11.02

Background:

ESN contains nitrogen in the Urea form but is encapsulated with a patented polymer membrane that releases nitrogen as the soil warms. At cool temperatures the release is slow, but as the soil warms, the speed of the release from the ESN keeps pace with the needs of the plant. Studies have already shown that ESN improves Nitrogen efficiency and environmental safety, however no local yield data has been produced to date.

Lambton Soil and Crop's intent is to collaborate with co-operator farmers to

compare crop yield using ESN vs. the conventional nitrogen fertilizers.

ESN vs. 28%

	Yield (bu/ac)		Protein (%)	
	ESN	28%	ESN	28%
John Veeke	90.9	97.5	10.2	11.1
Harry Buurma	107.6	103.6	11.0	10.5
Average	99.3	100.6	10.6	10.8

The bottom line: for both trials it appears as though there is no significant difference in either the yields or the protein levels when comparing ESN vs conventional fertilizers, based on this very small sample size. As ESN costs 6 cents per pound more than UREA, it would be recommended to continue to use UREA, if choice is based on cost. Perhaps however, a larger sample size might be needed to validate this conclusion..

Don't miss this Event! Essex County Summer Trolley Bus Tour

Tuesday July 7th, 2009 11:00 AM – 7:00 PM

"Bounty of the County: Greenhouses, Wine tasting and Steak Dinner"



This event is a sponsored by the Essex County Soil & Crop Improvement Association.

The Windsor Essex Trolley Bus is a heritage themed trolley holding 45 passengers. The trolley's interior is decked out in solid oak and brass fittings. The trolley runs on soy-diesel, which is a biodegradable, nontoxic, and a renewable form of fuel, which also helps to reduce air pollution.

Event Details:

This event will depart from Colasanti's Tropical Gardens at 11:00 AM. Some of the stops include a tour of a Leamington greenhouse that uses solvent fuels for heat, the Essex Demo Farm, a Vineyard, with free wine-tasting followed by 5:00 PM Steak dinner at a Winery on Lake Erie. Dinner will include local foods from Essex County. Trolley will return you to Colasanti's by 7:00 PM. Bring your own snack for lunch!



Cost is \$40 per person or \$80 per couple and includes dinner. Limited seats are available, book yours now by calling Crystal at 519-674-1500 x1273.

A Message From Your Local President

Essex County

March is here and while still cold, we have been granted a couple of nice days that remind us that spring is around the corner. Each new spring brings with it the usual feelings of anticipation, hope and opportunity.

Our Essex Soil and Crop Improvement group had a very successful annual meeting and I want to thank all of you that made it out. It is always great to see familiar faces at these meetings but I also encourage you to bring along friends and family members to continue to make these events a success.

This year I had the opportunity to attend the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement conference in Niagara Falls. The conference was a highly informative couple of days that proved to me that Ontario farmers are among some of the most inventive and curious farmers anywhere. I would recommend that any member that has the opportunity to attend this event in the future to jump at this chance. We must now go back to our groups and implement and experiment again so that we may share all these findings with each other next year.

So here we are with a new season to look forward to and I wish all of you a very successful planting season on the way to a prosperous year.

Brendan Byrne, President ESCIA

Kent County

Well....another Presidents report. Our annual meeting has passed and it is nice to see a few new directors. Yes, I am President for the 3rd year. We have new Vice Presidents as listed below.

Henry (our Regional Director) has been encouraging me to get the group a little more active. We did have a board meeting and are planning a few activities such as maybe a tour of the Kruger wind farm, a tour of corn plots later on in the year, not sure what else but if you have any ideas please contact myself or Janet Campbell (secretary) or one of the local directors.

Good luck with spring planning and planting.

Ed VanDeWynckel, President KSCIA

Kent County Soil & Crop presents “Gadget Night—Bring an Idea, Take home an Idea: Early April (date TBD)

Details to follow—stay tuned to Noon Farm Show or contact Pat Bednarik, Terry Vanderveen, Dave Derynck or Earl Elgie for details

Lambton County

Lambton Soil and Crop is gearing up for another growing season . There was a great turn-out at our annual meeting in January; the topics discussed were very informative; the meal provided by the figure skating moms was excellent and we received lots of support from area Agri-Businesses. Congratulations to Henry and Jacoba Peters who received the Outstanding Farmer Award. I would like to thank everyone that contributed their time and effort to make the day a success. Also thank-you to those who were willing to serve as directors— we value your input.

As I write this report the weather, has turned mild and it looks like spring is just around the corner. The frost is gone and the water is flowing and hopefully the wheat has wintered well. It is time to start thinking about the studies and projects the members would like to get involved in this summer.

At our first directors meeting for 2009 discussion was held on what our major project should be. Some ideas were, new inoculants for soybeans, seeding dates for clover, fungicides and nitrogen on wheat, bio-solids sludge side by side comparisons, seeding rates for corn, ESN on wheat and ESN on corn.

The results of the election for this year were myself as President, First Vice Frazier Hodgson, 2nd Vice Kirk VanWill. The coming year will undoubtedly have many challenges but also many rewards, and I hope that everyone will achieve success.

Ernie Kramer, President LSCIA

Essex SCIA pH Project 2008—by Adam Hayes

The Essex Soil and Crop Improvement Association initiated a soil pH project in 2008. Four co-operators participated and samples were to be taken throughout the growing season. Unfortunately it did not work out to take the sample until after wheat harvest. There were three sampling times:

July 25, 2008

September 8, 2008

October 7, 2008

Three points were sampled in each field for pH, phosphorus (P), potassium (K) and magnesium (Mg). The sample points were marked with GPS the first time and sampled from the same spot for the second and third samples. Thanks to Agris Coop for taking the samples and to Agri-Food Laboratories assisting with the cost of sample analysis.

The results showed no statistically significant changes in pH or Mg levels with time but there was a slight trend

Soil Sample Data

Cooperator	Date	Sample	pH	BpH	P	K	Mg	Texture
FB	Jul-25	1	6.9		12	205	933	F
FB	Sep-08	1	6.8		15	219	894	M
FB	Oct-07	1	6.7		16	223	805	F
FB	Jul-25	2	6.3	6.5	18	183	606	F
FB	Sep-08	2	6.2	6.6	19	195	629	M
FB	Oct-07	2	6.1	6.7	29	222	672	F
FB	Jul-25	3	6.4	6.7	23	210	709	F
FB	Sep-08	3	6.3	6.6	23	225	690	M
FB	Oct-07	3	6.2	6.9	24	224	664	F
BH	Jul-25	1	6.6		26	167	535	F
BH	Sep-08	1	6.5	6.8	38	166	539	M
BH	Oct-07	1	6.4	6.9	35	176	528	F
BH	Jul-25	2	7.3		29	230	504	F
BH	Sep-08	2	6.8		27	203	498	M
BH	Oct-07	2	5.9	6.6	27	212	385	F
BH	Jul-25	3	6.2	6.7	15	167	414	F
BH	Sep-08	3	5.9	6.5	30	221	474	M
BH	Oct-07	3	7.1		33	215	483	F
MR	Jul-25	1	5.9	6.5	10	116	339	F
MR	Sep-08	1	5.9	6.4	16	148	362	M
MR	Oct-07	1	5.8	6.8	25	130	338	M
MR	Jul-25	2	5.9	6.6	23	122	401	F
MR	Sep-08	2	6.3	6.6	24	127	378	M
MR	Oct-07	2	5.3	6.2	26	124	467	M
MR	Jul-25	3	5.6	6.4	18	104	472	F
MR	Sep-08	3	5.4	6.6	25	128	468	M
MR	Oct-07	3	5.5	6.5	16	147	320	M
TS	Jul-25	1	6.3	6.6	11	182	410	F
TS	Sep-08	1	6.0	6.6	16	212	388	M
TS	Oct-07	1	6.4	6.8	17	232	394	M
TS	Jul-25	2	6.1	6.5	14	242	371	F
TS	Sep-08	2	6.3	6.7	16	242	424	M
TS	Oct-07	2	5.9	6.6	19	234	335	M
TS	Jul-25	3	5.7	6.2	13	184	315	F
TS	Sep-08	3	5.7	6.5	18	180	314	M
TS	Oct-07	3	5.4	6.2	23	216	260	M

of decline. There were statistically significant changes in P and K with time. Both nutrients showed significant increases. This could be due to nutrient release from crop residue breakdown or as the nutrients were leached from the wheat straw. Another possible reason for the increase could be that more available forms started accumulating in the soil as crop uptake had ceased. The project will not be continued in 2009.

Marc Rivest named Essex Conservation Farm of the Year Award 2008 (submitted by Michael Dick)

Comber farmer Marc Rivest is the winner of the 2008 Conservation Farm Award. The announcement was made at the Essex Soil and Crop Improvement Association 2008 annual meeting. The award is presented each year to the farming operation which best displays conservation farming practices and the winner is determined by a committee of Directors from the Essex Soil and Crop Improvement Association.

Throughout Marc Rivest's 37 years of farming he has not only continued to incorporate conservation practices on his farm but has promoted environmentally friendly farming to the Essex agricultural community. He has an Environmental Farm Plan which promotes environmental stewardship and beneficial management practices, reducing soil erosion while protecting water courses. Marc grows soybeans, corn and wheat using crop rotation and no-till cropping, as well as grid soil sampling and variable rate fertilizer application farming techniques.



Marc has planted windbreaks and grassed buffer strips on his farm, and maintains a woodlot which provides food and shelter for bees and local wildlife. He has also installed rock chutes, and drop inlets to reduce and filter field run-off before it reaches the Ruscom River.

As an enthusiastic participant in environmental activities, Marc has taken part in the corn nitrogen calculator program with OMAFRA as well as a study on offsetting atmospheric carbon dioxide loading with agricultural crops. In 2008, he chaired the organizing committee of the 16th South West Agricultural Conference. Marc was instrumental in having a drainage header tile included in ERCA's grant program as an alternative to rock chutes at lateral field tile outlets. Marc is truly an advocate for farm conservation and the environment.



Ontario Cosmetic Pesticide Ban—Effective April 22nd, 2009 Earth Day—by C. Baresich

Recent legislation prohibits the use of pesticides for cosmetic purposes in Ontario. The regulation provides an exception from the ban for the agricultural industry.

The ban is part of the McGuinty's government toxin reduction strategy to reduce pollution and protect the health of Ontario citizens.

Agricultural Use Exception

Farms are excluded from this ban as are bee keepers, golf courses, sports fields, arboriculture and specific natural resources, under certain conditions.

Agricultural Use Does Not Include the Following:

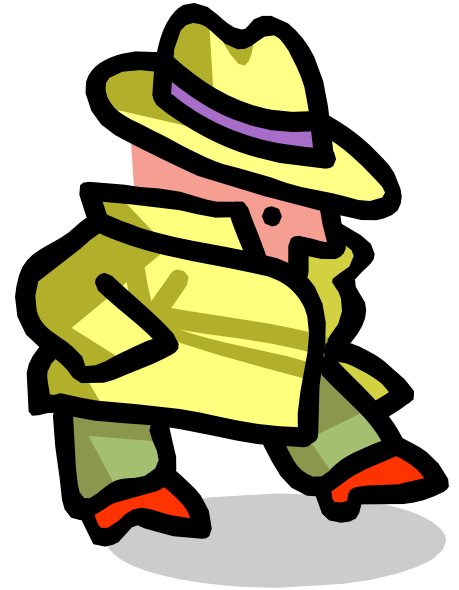
- Agricultural production primarily for use or consumption by household members;
- Production related to the growing of agricultural crops used for residential purposes in a public space;
- Production related to the growing of plants in parks, cemeteries or lawns for the primary purpose of display.

For more information, see www.ene.gov.on.ca/en/land/pesticides/healthy.php

Fake Inspector Visits Dairy Farm—C. Baresich

On February 17, 2009, a Kingsville dairy farmer received a strange, unannounced visit from an inspector. The man, posed as a food inspector, carried a clipboard and asked to see the animal feed. The inspector, who gave his name as Chris Sinclair, looked at the feed room and cleaning agents for the milk parlor before leaving. The man did not show any identification, nor did he offer any paper work to the farmer, which would be a normal practice.

The next day the farmer spoke with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, after suspecting that something was not right. The CFIA told him that the man who showed up was not their employee. Consequently, the Ontario Provincial Police issued a warning to farmers about the suspicious male, pretending to be an inspector.



When Can Someone Enter Your Property?

Generally, most inspection agencies do not ‘drop by’ for a visit; most agencies call ahead and inform you of their intentioned visit. If anyone ‘drops by’ for a visit, this may be a warning sign. You should immediately request credentials and the photo identification provided by the inspection agency that they are representing. Driver’s licenses are NOT sufficient identification. Confirm the credentials by calling the agency. If you feel at all uncomfortable, ask to reschedule for a later date.

Here Are Some Tips on What You Can Do If Someone You Do Not Know Tries to Enter Your Property for an Inspection

1. *Ask to see credentials and confirm the inspector’s identification by phoning the agency, especially if you feel as though something is wrong; ask for a business card and keep that business card. They should be okay with you confirming their identity; if not, something could be wrong.*
2. *Be wary of anyone who does not appear to be professional, or who has a lack of professional knowledge. A personal vehicle may also be an indicator that this is not a professional inspector, although not always.*
3. *Record the time and date. If they do not have a business card, record the name of the inspector as well as the name, address and phone number of the agency and branch that they represent.*
4. *Ask the inspector the purpose of their visit and make a note of it. Determine the scope of the visit. Discuss (and make a note of) the purpose of the visit and the exact area or equipment to be inspected.*
5. *If an inspector says, “May I look around?” any answer other than “No” may be interpreted as consent. You have the right to withdraw consent at any time.*
6. *An inspector may not use force to enter your facility (unless they have a warrant).*
7. *Never allow an inspector unescorted access to your property.*
8. *If individuals attempt to gain entry onto your premises without providing proper identification, try and record vehicle license plate numbers and general description details and report them to police.*

Exceptions¹

The Provincial Animal Welfare Act (effective March 1, 2009) allows the Ontario SPCA to enter your property without a warrant, if they have received a complaint about animal neglect or cruelty on your property. Animal neglect and cruelty is enforceable through the Criminal Code of Canada, with penalties of up to 2 years imprisonment and \$60,000 fines for first offences.

The OSPCA must have reasonable grounds to believe an animal is in immediate distress in order to enter your property without a warrant. In addition, the OSPCA has the authority to inspect premises, other than homes, where animals are kept for the purposes of exhibit, entertainment, boarding, sale or hire.

Farm Animal Neglect²

Animal cruelty generally falls into the category of neglect or intentional cruelty. Neglect is the failure to provide adequate water, food, shelter, or necessary care. Examples of neglect include: starvation, dehydration, inadequate shelter, parasite infestations, failure to seek veterinary care when an animal is in need of medical attention, allowing a collar to grow into an animal's skin, confinement without adequate light, ventilation, space or in unsanitary conditions and failure to trim hoofs or nails resulting in excessive growth (e.g. hoofs curling upwards). In some cases neglect is a result of the owner's ignorance, and can be rectified by law enforcement authorities, like the Ontario SPCA, educating the owner and issuing orders to improve the animal's living conditions.

Acknowledgements: 1. www.news.ontario.ca, www.betterfarming.com 2. www.ontariospca.ca



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Kent Soil and Crop Improvement Association 2008 Headline Project—Adam Hayes

The purpose of the project was to determine if there was a yield advantage to spraying corn with Headline. Headline was sprayed around the tassel stage of corn and yields were taken at harvest. Only one plot was replicated three times.

Results

Cooperator	Check	Headline
Brent McFadden	210.9	207.1
Dave Ross	233.5	241.9
Henry Ptaszynski	189.2	198.1
Ken & Phil Richards	196.8	194.3
	187.7	188.1
	175.2	184.4
McGeachy Farms	219.6	226.4
Rossdalyn Farms	215.8	232.6
	215.8	229.4
	215.8	241.8
Ted Jarecsni	132	147.8
Vanedi Farms	154.2	159.3
Average	195.5	204.3
Ken & Phil Richards Rep 1	196.8	194.3
Rep 2	187.7	188.1
Rep 3	175.2	184.4
Average	186.6	188.9

Ken & Phil Richards Rep 1	196.8	194.3
Rep 2	187.7	188.1
Rep 3	175.2	184.4
Average	186.6	188.9

The yield results from **Table 2** show where the plot was replicated and did not show a significant yield difference between treated and untreated.

Table 1 shows the results of all the plots including the results from the replicated plot. The other seven plots only had one check and in most cases one treatment strip.

There was a significant yield difference between treated and untreated strips. As there was little replication and they are from one year only, the results should be interpreted with some caution or used with other research/replicated data.



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