

Tis the Season for Fall Burndown

With spring cereal and wheat harvest drawing to a close, September is a great time to start initiating some fall burndown applications. These initial applications targeting perennial and often problematic weed species, are the foundation of successful weed control programs and success in our 2025 cropping plans. While glyphosate continues to be the cornerstone product of these programs, we must realize and accept the limitations of glyphosate alone in controlling certain weed species. Things like fleabane and waterhemp have drawn a lot of attention due to glyphosate resistance issues but in many cases additional active ingredients are required for improved efficacy and better results on harder to control weeds. Below is a list of some of these weed species and the active ingredients which when combined with glyphosate will give the best chance for control and success. Speak with your Holmes Agro Agronomist regarding rates, timing, recropping restrictions, surfactants and water volumes. Also, consider timing with fall weed control and recognize that "light" frost events can help improve control due to plants being signalled to move nutrients to the root system for winter storage, while "killing" frost events often signal the end of the spraying opportunities for many weed species.

Weed Species	Additional Active Ingredients for Success
Perennial Sowthistle	Dicamba/Distinct
Dandelion	2-4D Ester
Canada Fleabane	Dicamba
Vetch	Dicamba
Alfalfa	2-4D Ester or Lontrel XC
Red Clover	Dicamba
Quackgrass	Trick Question! High-rate glyphosate + LAS

Ensuring a Strong Start to Your Winter Wheat

As winter wheat planting approaches, ensuring a strong start for your crop is crucial. A key strategy is using a good starter fertilizer program, which provides an early nutrient boost essential for strong root development and early growth.

While much thought goes into selecting wheat varieties, early season fertility packages often don't receive the same level of thought, even though it will significantly impact stand establishment, fall tillering, and yield potential. In-row starter fertilizer is particularly effective, studies show it can add an average of 7.5 bushels per acre, and it aligns with 4R nutrient stewardship principles.

Phosphorus is critical in starter fertilizers, driving tiller production, which directly influences yield potential. Without sufficient phosphorus, wheat plants may abort tillers thus reducing yield. Most yield-forming tillers develop in the fall, making starter fertilizer especially important for late planting.

Beyond phosphorus, it's vital to consider other nutrients based on soil tests, including magnesium, sulfur, zinc, boron, and manganese, particularly on lighter soils. Products like Procote BCMZ can enhance your dry fertilizer program by providing a balanced supply of essential micronutrients like boron, copper, manganese, and zinc. These nutrients are crucial for processes like photosynthesis and enzyme activation, promoting healthier, more resilient plants.

The Importance of Fall Fertilizer for Ontario's Crop Production

Why Fall Fertilizer Matters

- Nutrient Availability:** Applying fertilizer in the fall integrates the essential nutrients phosphorus, magnesium and potassium into the soil, making them readily available when crops start growing in the spring.
- Soil Health:** Fall fertilization enhances soil fertility and structure by boosting microbial activity, which aids in nutrient breakdown, supporting long-term soil health.
- Reduced Spring Rush:** Handling fertilization in the fall alleviates the spring workload, leading to a more efficient planting season and better timing for other essential tasks.

Impact on Crop Production

- Enhanced Yields:** Early nutrient availability promotes stronger root systems and healthier plants, resulting in higher yields.
- Efficient Nutrient Use:** Fall application helps manage nutrients effectively, reducing the risk of runoff and loss. This not only benefits crop production but also supports environmental sustainability by protecting water quality.
- Optimized Growth Cycles:** Fall fertilization gives crops an early start, helping them reach critical growth stages sooner. This is especially beneficial for crops with long growing periods or those requiring early planting.

Best Practices

- Soil Testing:** Conduct soil tests before applying fertilizer to determine the right nutrients and amounts needed.
- Application Timing:** Apply fertilizer at the right time and rate to avoid nutrient loss and ensure availability for early spring growth.
- Type of Fertilizer:** Choose the appropriate products and rates based on crop demands. Finally, fulfilling the 4R strategy of right rate, source, time and place.

Fall fertilizer application is crucial for successful crop production in Ontario. By investing in this practice, farmers can enhance soil health, optimize nutrient use, and improve yields.

2025 Calendar Picture Deadline – Sept 27th

The deadline to submit pictures for the 2025 Calendar is fast approaching, please email your pictures to calendar@holmesagro.com before September 27th. We are proud to be able to provide a calendar full of grower pictures – all thanks to your great submissions!

Current Trends in the Fertilizer Market

Nitrogen and Urea

The nitrogen and urea markets have been in tight trading ranges since spring, separating from the broader commodity market trends. Historically, nitrogen and urea prices have closely tracked the fluctuations in commodity markets, but recent shifts indicate a different pattern. This divergence can be attributed to several factors:

1. **Reduced Exports from China:** Over the past five years, China has significantly reduced its urea exports, impacting global supply and pricing dynamics. This contraction has been a crucial factor in stabilizing urea prices despite broader market trends.
2. **Russia's Pricing Strategy:** Russia's new strategy of maintaining higher pricing has altered the global fertilizer landscape. By avoiding sales below other traders, Russia has created a buffer in the market, contributing to the relative stability of nitrogen and urea prices.

Phosphates

The phosphate market is currently experiencing high demand and producer consumption. US tariffs on phosphate imports are playing a significant role in supporting domestic prices, keeping the market relatively elevated. Similar to nitrogen, Russian producers are maintaining higher pricing, which has helped stabilize the phosphate market despite global fluctuations.

Potash

Potash prices are aligning more closely with general commodity market trends, reflecting a softer global demand. Recent developments, such as a rail strike, have further influenced the market. Suppliers have pushed early movements of potash to mitigate potential disruptions caused by the strike, ensuring product supply. Overall, out of the big 3 nutrients, potash pricing has been leading product in price reductions this fall.

High Value in September Scouting

As we near the later part of our growing season, it is still important to be out scouting your fields. Soybeans will soon start to show signs of maturing and with that comes the opportunity for pre-harvest weed control with products like Eragon to set up for a clean planting bed for winter wheat. This growing season has brought continuous and substantial rainfall which may have given opportunity for weeds to establish within the canopy. We may also see some white mold infection start to become more visible.

At this time of year, corn diseases can be present both on the ear and the plant. Gibberella ear rot is one of the most common ear infections and can create vomitoxin concerns at harvest. Knowing if you have higher pressure in certain fields is key in targeting those fields first for harvest. An inspection for leaf diseases can be valuable as well. Fortunately, we still don't see much tar spot pressure in the area, but assessing your hybrids for Northern corn leaf blight and rust can be good knowledge when choosing hybrids this fall.

It is important to assess your wheat stubble and cover crop ground as well. Fall burndowns can provide our best weed control opportunities out of all our rotations. Stubborn perennials and winter annuals can be much easier to target this time of year. There is lots to learn being out in the field whether making decisions for next year or best management decisions for harvest strategies. Reach out to your Holmes Agro Agronomist with any questions or findings.

Clean Farms Last Day – October 18th

Clean Farms collections are still open, we are accepting returns until October 18th, 2024. Jugs must always be triple rinsed, with lids and labels removed. If there is product remaining in empty jugs, the bag will be rejected as improperly cleaned jugs cannot be recycled. Please call the office to be directed to the drop-off area when on-site. Thanks for your participation!

Returns For 2024 Season

We accept returns for any unopened, undamaged seed, skids, bulk bags or unopened chemical jugs. We do ask the following:

1. If we are picking up returns at your site, we prefer it if you can be there to help load. If you cannot be, please leave returns out for us, and if required, we will ask for approval to use your equipment.
2. If you are bringing returns to any of our locations, please ensure all products are on a skid to help ease the unloading process. Please call ahead to let us know you are bringing back returns.
3. Thank you to those who returned their corn and soybean products in a timely manner. Fall crop production product returns are due back by **September 27, 2024**. Winter Wheat seed returns are due back by **November 11th**.



Upcoming Events

Sept 10-12th – Canada's Outdoor Farm Show, Woodstock ON

September 28th – Dufferin Farm Tour dufferinfarmtour.com/

October 1st-5th – International Plowing Match and Rural Expo, Lindsay, ON

October 18th – LAST DAY Clean Farms Collection

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Jeff Nicole Laura Bill Greg Taylor Scott John Lydia Dennis Brooklyn Claire