

MGA TIMES



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ADDITIVE GUIDE

As harvest approaches we would draw your attention to the silage and crimped grain additive guide sent out with last years harvest mailing. The guide took a lot of putting together and includes contact details and web page information for the additives available in 2012. The MGA additive guide can be downloaded from the MGA website. www.maizegrowersassociation.co.uk

EUROPEAN MAIZE MEETING HEADS TO ITALY

August 26th – 27th sees the members of the European Maize Committee meet in Northern Italy for the annual get together. As in the past, the plan of action is based around two sessions, the first of which is a “Status of the Maize Crop” paper. As its title suggests, the paper presented by each participating country, sets out the latest information on their maize crop, as well as a little detail on the maize related research and development going on in that country.

Following that, each country presents a paper on the meetings chosen subject, which this year is “Biodiversity and Environmental Issues”. Simon Draper, who will present on behalf of the MGA, plans to focus on the ADAS/MGA/Rothamsted, two site project, looking to answer some of the environmental challenges presented by maize growing.

The meeting presents a great opportunity for the MGA team to rekindle our extensive european contacts and learn of research being undertaken elsewhere. We also take the opportunity to try and identify useful conference speakers for future events. As in the past, a full review of the meeting will be sent out via a mailing later in the year.



Delegates at last years meeting in Dumfries

MAIZE DISEASE SURVEY

ADAS have asked us to forward this to members:-
 The maize growing area has been increasing year on year for the last decade and is recognised within the agricultural industry as a key crop in the rotation. However diseases, particularly eyespot, can cause significant yield losses.

In light of this, ADAS has been commissioned to conduct a pilot survey to determine the most important diseases affecting maize production in England and Wales. The results will be used to focus research and product development to improve both farm yields and profitability.

We are looking for growers of any size group, who are willing to allow an ADAS consultant to conduct a detailed disease assessment in a field of their choice and fill in a short questionnaire about current agronomic practise e.g. variety and cultivations. This will take no longer than 10 minutes and all personal information will be kept completely confidential.

In return ADAS will provide a summary of the results, along with your field results for comparison, free of charge.

If you would like to take part, please contact Tim Boor at ADAS Boxworth on 01954 268235 or 07720 497107. Alternatively email tim.boor@adas.co.uk.

ORDER YOUR MGA MINERALS

The MGA minerals, which continue to be manufactured and distributed on our behalf by Mole Valley Farmers, represent good value for money and continue to be formulated to 100% of the stated specification. It is also worth noting that the basic formulations can be tweaked for individual farmers and that mineral straights such as limestone flour etc can be purchased under the MGA Banner. Please remember that the MGA receive a small commission for any minerals sold and that this money goes to subsidise further MGA Research and Development.

To order MGA minerals, please ring Mole Valley Feed Solutions on 01278 420481.

MGA COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP

The MGA would like to welcome three new commercial members to the Association, Dow Agrosiences, SAMCO and Vaderstad. We would also like to remind all commercial members of the opportunity to advertise products, either in the MGA Times or including a flyer in the mailing. If you are interested, please give Jean a ring. (01363 775040)

MGA IN IRELAND

In this mailing there is a full report on the MGA study tour to Ireland which took place in early July. The report outlines what the group saw and got up to and should act as a good introduction to what we hope will be a good paper to be presented in February 2014 at the Annual MGA Conference. The key theme of the tour was maize growing using plastic. The visits and discussions had while in Ireland certainly convinced most of the MGA travellers.

The picture to the right shows Richard Ambler standing on the border between maize drilled with and without plastic to show the considerable difference in crop development.



A VIEW OF THE MAIZE AREA DRILLED IN 2013

Neil Groom, MGA Council member and Grainseed Ltd comments on the maize seed sold this year.

“Speaking throughout the trade we would suggest that total area of maize established is similar to 2012, but in my opinion there has been a movement to wholecrop in the marginal areas of Wales and NW, due to a couple of poor harvests, but this loss has been made up with expansion of maize for AD in the East.

British Society of Plant Breeders put the Biogas area in 2013 at approx 15,500 ha, therefore 10% of UK total area of 150,000 ha - this has doubled since 2012. Another interesting statistic is that 20,000 bags were Poncho + Mesuro treated, so what will happen for this area next season with Nionic ban? My opinion on crops are that the majority are better than normal, there has been good fertilisation and nice grain swell which means over here in the East we will be on for an early harvest”.

JULY WEATHER SAVES THE DAY!

With such a cold spring and early summer the mini heatwave and useful rain late in July could not have come at a better time for many maize crops. As the month progressed, day time temperatures rose to ensure that the monthly average temperature of 17°C ranked third highest since 1910. Sunshine levels were high, which will also help boost maize development, with the 251 hours of sunshine received by the UK being 145% of the long term average for July. While it is unlikely that the August weather figures will break as many records, the month has not been bad and crop development has continued steadily. We wait to see if the improved weather will speed up crop maturity and ultimately bring harvest date forward.

GM CROPS REMAIN STALLED IN EUROPE

Monsanto have pulled out of further development of GM crops in the European Union, (EU) even though the area of GM maize planted in Spain has increased by 20% compared to that established in 2012. In contrast to the rest of the EU where the lack of enthusiasm has in effect forced GM seed companies to stand down on the technology and focus on conventional seed supply, the appetite for the technology in Spain continues to grow. The Spanish GM maize, (modified to ensure resistance against the European Corn Borer) area of over 138000 ha's now accounts for nearly a third of the Spanish total. Something for a future study tour to investigate perhaps?

ANOTHER REQUEST FOR EMAILS

The MGA are gradually embracing more modern technology. We now have 322 members who are contactable by email. If you are not receiving our occasional messages, please email the office and I will put you on our list. Along with email and new website, we are now “tweeting” as well. While we had a quiet few minutes at the Livestock Event we set up an MGA twitter account. If you would like to follow us the address is @maizegrowers



We aren't going to tell you what we had for breakfast!, but any breaking news and updates will be posted when there is something useful to say.

Last Word:

On a sad note, Jim Williams a dairy farmer from South Yorkshire, who with his wife Sarah and family have run a very successful Maize maze in Cawthorne for many years and one of our most loyal members has sadly lost his battle with cancer. I was made very welcome by the Williams family two years ago when I went to pick up a sample of maize for the LINK project. Jim has been a great ambassador for dairy farmers and farming in general. Our sympathies go to Sarah and family. As well as the training day in September, (invitation enclosed) we are having an Open day at Graeme and Patrick Cocks farm in South Devon on 10th October. More details will appear on the website and I will email members with reminders. Oh Yes! Mustn't forget the tweet!!

DRILL
 Westerwolds
 Italian Ryegrass
 Forage Rape
 Stubble Turnips
 Forage Rye
NOW
 For extra winter feed