

## MGA TIMES



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## MAIZE COMES UNDER ATTACK FROM THE SOIL ASSOCIATION

### In This Issue

- ◆ Cranfield survey report
- ◆ Basic payment rules & soil management.
- ◆ Dutch maize growing.
- ◆ Harvest tips.

### SILAGE ANALYSIS REMINDER

As always once the maize is harvested it is important to know the constituent value of the crop for either animals or biologists.

The MGA have an arrangement with Sciantec Laboratories and if you require sample bags, please do not hesitate to contact Jean in the MGA Office and she will send you the appropriate packs.



### SOIL EROSION SURVEY

Soil has played a prominent role in this months MGA mailing. The bad press from the Soil Association has reiterated the importance the MGA have always placed in promoting good practice after maize harvest.

In this mailing Alexandra Cooke and Agnese Mancini, PhD students at Cranfield University conducted an online survey of MGA members and have produced a very interesting report.

Those keen readers, watchers and listeners amongst you can't have failed to have noticed with dismay, the unprecedented attack on maize growing in recent weeks.

Originating from the publication by the Soil Association of their Runaway Maize – subsidised soil destruction booklet, the anti maize story was taken up by BBC country file, as well as the BBC farming programme and several publications. It is my belief that the publication was at best misleading and I plan to make my dissatisfaction clear to all those who will listen over the coming weeks and months.

#### **A little consultation a little too late!**

While the MGA were consulted, post publication of the booklet and within days of Countryfile being filmed, the cat was most certainly out of the bag and we continue to deal with the aftermath. It was such a shame that the SA did not feel it appropriate to consult before publication, as many of the valid points within the booklet could have been made in a more balanced way.

I can confirm that I am meeting with the Authors of the report and senior folk within the Soil Association next month, as well as NFU representatives in London.

My aim in both meetings will be to set the record straight and point out the considerable inaccuracies in the publication. The publication fires many shots at maize, with the key criticisms being:

- The negative environmental problems associated with the crop including, ag chemical use, soil erosion, nutrient loss etc.
- The role of maize as a feed-stock for biogas production.

The number of inaccurate comments within the publication are too long to list here, however rest assured I have worked through them and will put pen to paper and circulate them to the relevant organisation for a response in due course.

There are always two sides to an argument, that said I am always keen to try and see the other side of an argument and there is no doubt that the publications contains food for thought for the MGA. If nothing else, it proves that we have not been shouting our sustainable maize growing messages loud enough for others to hear. I would urge all growers to take a look at the document and decide for themselves what you think of it.



**The date and venue for the 2016 MGA Maize Conference are now confirmed. The venue is The Peterborough Arena and the date is Thursday 25th February.**



## MAIZE AS A BIOGAS FEEDSTOCK RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT LOOK-SEE AND DISCUSSION



**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September  
Nr Gayton, Kings Lynn, Norfolk  
4.00 pm in the field followed by refreshments**

The MGA would like to invite you to an on farm viewing and discussion about the "Maize as a Biogas Feedstock" research we are involved with.

We will be led through the on farm trials by the team carrying out the research. In addition Simon Draper and John Morgan from the MGA will be on hand to contribute to the discussions.

Research to be reviewed will include:

NIAB descriptive list variety trial – "second cutting date".

MGA/Future Biogas later maturing maize variety trial.

A replicated starter fertiliser trial where all plots have been topped up to 150kg/ha of N.

Plots treated with Efficient 28 N and Nitamin, both forms of non scorching foliar polyamide nitrogen.

To book your place, and supper, at what we anticipate being a popular event please contact the MGA office via email [info@maizegrowersassociation.co.uk](mailto:info@maizegrowersassociation.co.uk), fax 01363 776938, or phone 01363 775040.

Attendance at the meeting is free for MGA members. Non members are welcome to attend but will need to join the MGA. The cost is £138 including VAT and this includes membership for a year.



BASIS & NRoSO points available



### EUROPEAN MAIZE MEETING

Long term MGA friends Tim O'Donovan and Willie Tanner from Ireland are hosting this years European Maize Meeting and have reported that we have a full complement of countries attending the discussions, at which we will not only learn of the 2015 maize crop fortunes in each country, but also hear presentations about the foliar disease threats to the crop, this being the chosen specialist subject for this year's event.

If time allows we are also due out on farm and I hope will get the chance to share a Guinness with our European partners. The European Maize committee continues to be a great source of information and contacts for our information gathering activity. As in the past I will review the meeting content over the coming months via the MGA mailings.

**Maize Master**  
**50:50 dip/tet Italian mix**

**Lasts two years**  
**Multiples cuts**  
**Soaks up surplus N**  
**Reduces soil erosion**

### MGA MINERAL RANGE

The mineral range, originally formulated by Gordon Newman and subsequently updated by Chris Savery and the team at Mole Valley Farmers, includes the **MGA SUPERSPEC 200, MGA DRY COW, MGA GRAZING AND MGA YOUNGSTOCK MINERAL**.

Members can rest assured that, as well as receiving competitively priced top quality minerals, a significant element of the purchase price will be directed to the MGA Research Fund.

Mole Valley Farmers make the minerals to MGA specifications and we receive a commission on every bag sold.

Minerals are ordered direct from Mole Valley Farmers and designated telephone/ fax numbers have been set up for this purpose only - it is **not** possible to order any other MVF products on the numbers given below.

You can either telephone or fax your order on the following numbers:

**Telephone 01278 444829 Fax: 01278 446923**

Please remember if you have an order to make, a query about delivery, invoicing or product, then please contact the Mole Valley contacts given above.

If you need advice about mineral feeding, or if you have a formulation query,

you can telephone the MGA office on 01363 775040.

