

MGA TIMES

Maize Growers Association

February 2019

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New Admin

As most of you will know, Jean Howard has retired from the admin position, after a very loyal 15 years working with the MGA, and is now focusing her efforts into her shared log business with her husband. The position has been filled by myself, Sarah Tucker, and I'm hoping I can do it justice! I graduated from the University of Reading in July last year with a degree in Agriculture, and have been working in a temporary contract with NIAB as a field trials assistant in between. I come from a primarily dairy-farming background but have recently started my own sheep enterprise with a total of 31 Texel x Suffolk ewes (which are hopefully due to lamb in March/April!) so if you have any secrets to keeping sheep alive please call the office. I look forward to meeting you all over time and hope I can help and support you half as well as Jean has.

Maize Drilling Courses

Spaces are filling fast for March's maize drilling courses! We have a limit of 20 per course and have over-half-filled our quota already. The plan, in brief, is to register you all at 9am (tea and coffee available), commence a theoretical talk from Simon Draper at 9.30am during which he will talk about seed-bed preparation, drill depth, row width and seed populations, and then have an in-field demonstration by either **Vaderstad** (our kind sponsor for two of the events) or **Amazone**. The drill demos will not be manufacturer-specific, i.e. the knowledge you gain will, we hope, be transferable to whichever make of drill you choose to operate. The course should finish at around 12pm and will be followed by a snack lunch. Certificates of attendance will be provided to all who attend. If you would like to book a place, please contact me as soon as possible.

Conference Review

Thanks to those of you that came to the conference, we had successful day with over 90 attendees at the NFU Conference Centre, Stoneleigh. Our excellent speakers, Craig Green, Gavin Davies, Leif Knudsen, Neil Groom, Oliver Knowland, and Tori Morgan, enthusiastically covered a variety of interesting and relevant topics. In addition, eight stand-holders: Volac, Vaderstad, Sly Agri, Elsoms Seeds, Lallemand, Samco and our two main sponsors **ARK Agriculture** and **Syngenta**, offered their advice and services to attendees during the morning and lunchtime breaks. A mention must also be given to **Samco** for sponsoring the conference papers this year, which I hope will be useful to those of you that attended for future reference. The conference papers have been published in the member's area of the MGA website, under the resources headings, should anyone else like to find out what went on!

Soil Temperatures

Continuing Jean's tradition of sharing soil temperatures around the UK, I intend to test the soil temperature here at 9am every Monday morning from 4th March and either announce it on the website or email it around to you. It would be more effective if we had as many people from as many areas of the UK as possible doing the same. That's where all of you will come in handy. For those that are willing and able, I would like you to test your soil temperature and then drop me an email to let me know what you've found. If you would prefer to telephone me on a Monday morning to let me know then please do so! Please take readings as close to 9.00 am (the coldest time of the day) as possible, and at around 5 cm (2 inches deep) to improve consistency.



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Mesuro! treated

Maize seed

Avitus Gatsby

Rubiera FieldStar

Agrii

Email Mailing

If anyone would like to receive the MGA mailing by email that does not already, please drop me an email to let me know. Otherwise, I will continue to send them in the huge **yellow** envelopes.

MGA Trials 2018

At the conference, two of our council members, Neil and Oliver, gave a run-down on the results of some of the 2018 field trials. The main observations are as follows:

1. Mesuro treated seed lasted longest on soil-surface in bird repellent trial
2. Mesuro seeds drilled at 7-10cm performed best when compared with those drilled at 2cm and untreated seeds drilled at both 2cm and 7-10cm. Untreated seeds drilled at 2cm were the least productive. This pattern was seen whether seed was drilled on 21st April or 21st May
3. In the nutrient trial in Broxton (unfortunately the Norfolk replicate was not harvested due to the drought), it was found that the highest-yielding treatment was the combination of 60kg/ha DAP at drilling, and Boost at 20l/ha pre-emergence and post-emergence
4. There was no eyespot present in the fungicide trial due to the dry weather seen during the 2018 growing season. However, a yield benefit of almost 2t/ha DM was noted for those plots treated with Quilt at 1 l/ha when compared with the untreated plots. This benefit was also seen in starch and ME yields



Untreated shallow Mesuro deep

Norfolk Trial - Early Stages



Untreated Boost 20 pre, 20 post + DAP

MGA Minerals

A quick reminder that our mineral range is still available via Mole Valley Farmers. The price list for the first quarter of 2019 can be found enclosed in this mailing. A brief background for newer members: the MGA minerals were inspired by a trip to France during which it was found that there were maize-diet specific minerals available as standard, an equivalent of which was not on offer here in the UK. Consequently, the MGA and Mole Valley came up with four types of mineral: milking (SuperSpec200), grazing, dry cow and youngstock. Each is designed to supplement a primarily maize diet. If you would like to know more, either contact Mole Valley or give us a call.

Nitrogen Predictor Form

It is reaching the time of year when you're all thinking about preparing for your maize crop. As you're aware, maize needs nitrogen, so in order to help you determine just how much nitrogen your crop will require, the MGA came up with our **Nitrogen Predictor**. This predictor has been quoted in RB209 as a valid method of estimating the N requirements of a maize crop. Included in this mailing is a copy of the Nitrogen Predictor form. You have the opportunity to fill in this form and post it back to the office (or scan and email it), and we will use your information to give you an approximate value for the number of kilograms per hectare of nitrogen each field will need. A copy of the input form can also be located on the MGA website. If you have any questions or require any clarifications, please let me know.

Dates for your diary:

18th March - Maize Drilling Course @ Sparsholt College, Hampshire

19th March - Maize Drilling Course @ Kingston Maurward College, Dorset

27th March - Maize Drilling Course @ Plumpton College, Sussex

11th June - MGA AGM, more details to follow

DID YOU KNOW...?
Maize is grown on every continent in the world except Antarctica

