

MGA TIMES



MGA 1988 - 2008 (so far!)
20 years of independent advice for farmers.

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In this Issue

- ◆ Maize & Wholecrop for beef—Chris Savery.
- ◆ The Value of organic manures—John Morgan.
- ◆ Conference programme.
- ◆ Nitrogen predictor form.
- ◆



Lloyds TSB | Agriculture

In this our 20th year, the Maize Growers Association are very pleased to announce that Lloyds TSB will be sponsoring the organisation for the next three years. With their help, we hope to extend our trial work, organise meetings around the country and be at the forefront of exciting developments in the areas of grain maize, biogas and of course the ongoing progress in forage maize and wholecrop. As we welcome our new sponsors it would be remiss of us not to thank the HSBC bank for their ongoing support over many years.

MGA's 20th ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

The final programme for this year's conference at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester has been finalised and tickets are already selling well. This is a fantastic opportunity to catch up with all things related to maize, whichever way you plan to use this versatile crop. Please find the final programme within this mailing, together with booking form and we look forward to seeing many of you there. For those who collect BASIS and/or NRoSO points, we have been allocated 4 NRoSO and ? BASIS points.

MGA MAIZE DEMONSTRATION DAY

A clear solution for farmers



The focus of the final demonstration event at The Exeter site on **Tuesday 18th March** will be on soil structure in relation to maize development and the minimisation of environmental risks associated with maize and soils. Other aspects of maize agronomy will be discussed, including nutrient requirements of the crop and how manures can be used effectively to reduce fertiliser costs.

Weather permitting; we will be able to demonstrate seedbed establishment and how different techniques can minimise environmental problems, yet still produce perfect growing conditions for this valuable crop. Simon Draper will be on hand to discuss soils, as well as John Morgan and David Munday from the MGA office, giving practical advice on manures and how using them effectively to replace expensive fertiliser can save serious money. Please ring the office for further details.

Result of surface soil compaction



Subsoiling to prevent surface run-off



MAIZE, WHOLECROP & GROWING CATTLE

Chris Savery's enclosed review of recent research and the feeding of Beef and growing cattle on maize and wholecrop diets, is an excellent reminder of the savings that can be made on expensive concentrates when finishing Beef cattle or rearing replacement dairy heifers. Good quality, home-grown forage is going to be even more important over at least the next 12 months, given the current forward prices for cereals and protein feeds. Careful ration formulation and feeding is going to be even more critical, so use Chris's expertise by contacting the office.

Bulling heifers at Town Barton (MGA office farm) have been fed a ration of just maize and grass silage this winter (5kg Dry Matter of each per day), with no added concentrates. Bulling weights have been easily met at 15 months of age and are continuing to grow well.



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MGA TRIAL PROGRAMME 2008

This is the time of the year when Simon Draper and the MGA Council set out the trials programme the Maize Growers Association will conduct this year. Starter fertiliser and microgranules are an obvious topic that needs re-addressing, herbicide evaluation will continue, as will the NIAB variety trials.

If any MGA member has an interest in any particular areas they feel needs addressing, then please contact the office with any ideas or suggestions before the next MGA council meeting on the 27th February, the day before the conference.

NITROGEN PREDICTOR

With Nitrogen prices continuing to challenge economic logic (please also read John Morgan's technical note), it is important to apply products used at the most appropriate level to ensure excellent crops. With this objective in mind, we would encourage as many members as possible to use the well researched and tested MGA Nitrogen Predictor to calculate this years crop requirements. The Nitrogen Predictor is based on MGA and other research, which provides a site-specific recommendation. With ever tightening regulations in relation to Nitrogen applications (NVZ's etc), we have had to remove the "on-line" N Predictor and deal with all forms through the office to ensure regulations are not breached. Please fill in and post or fax (01363 776938) the attached input form to Jean at the office (there is also an input form on the MGA website which you can download and email to the office). We will get it back to you as soon as is possible.

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