

# MGA TIMES

## How much Nitrogen?

The MGA Nitrogen Predictor is a service that enables members to be more precise when balancing nitrogen applied with nitrogen requirement. **The MGA Nitrogen Predictor is particularly useful if you farm in a NVZ**, as you must ensure that the correct dosage of nitrogen is applied to your maize crop. Whilst this can be achieved by following RB209 guidelines, the advantage of the MGA Predictor is that its workings are based on MGA trial data and predictions are specific to individual fields. Making adjustments to the total crop nitrogen requirements according to in-depth individual field history generates a more accurate prediction.

Previous use of the MGA Nitrogen Predictor has saved members money by preventing over-application and ensuring that consideration is given to the value of the nutrients already available on farm.

The service is free of charge to members and from Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March can be accessed on the MGA Website, simply complete the on-screen input form for an instant prediction.

## MGA Annual Conference

Over 100 members attended the MGA's 'new format' Annual Conference, held at the Royal Agricultural College, including a visit to Kemble Farms.

The concept of combining theory with practice was well received and we were very pleased with the day. Responses from the event questionnaire have given us some good pointers to be taken

into consideration when planning next year's Conference.

The Conference papers are accessible via the MGA Website and/or on request from the MGA Office, these include: -

- Maize and wholecrop in my farming system  
*Practical farmer paper by Andrew Shakeshaft*
- Which forage for you?  
*Economic appraisal of maize, wholecrop wheat and grass by Pete Kelly, Consultant*
- American conservation and feeding  
*Steve Edmunds - Gordon Newman Travel Award*
- MGA Environmental Factors  
*MGA EcoDrill progress*
- Nutrition & fertility for Dairy Cows  
*Summary of main points from Dirk Zaaijer, MRCVS*
- Study of the promotion of rural youth groups in America to assess how life for young people living in rural Britain can be improved  
*Catherine Tytherleigh, Gordon Newman Travel Award.*

## Optimum row width, drilling dates, use of starter fertiliser?

Summaries of the 2002 MGA agronomy results are enclosed. Full reports for members are available from the office on request.

## Farmer Focus: Member David Holdcroft

David updates us on his farming system and the changes since 1989 when he was a finalist in the very first MGA National Maize Silage Competition! (Enclosed)

## Glossy invasion!

There seems to have been an influx of glossy adverts detailing

the merits of maize varieties this year - Just a quick reminder for members not to lose sight of the independent variety data within the MGA's Booklet.

## The Dairy Show Incorporating National Forage Maize Day (NFMD)

We are very pleased to report that the National Forage Maize Day, traditionally held at CEDAR, in conjunction with MGA, is this year being incorporated into The Dairy Show at the Bath & West Showground, Shepton Mallet, on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> October.

National Forage Maize Day will take place adjacent to the showground and will be an integral part of The Dairy Show. The NFMD element will comprise: -

- MGA maize demonstration
- Commercial demonstration plots
- Machinery demo's
- Specialist seminars relating to maize production and harvesting

*Please note the date in your diary - we hope to see you there!*