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28TH AND 29TH NOVEMBER CONFIRMED FOR NUTRITION TRAINING DAYS

New dates have been agreed for this winter's Nutrition Training Days. The meetings will take place on **28th November in Leicestershire** and on **29th November nr Slough**.

An invitation is included in this mailing.

Mike Wilkinson, the MGA Nutritionist will lead the events, you know how useful his articles are, so this will be a good opportunity to meet Mike, learn more and ask questions.

GAS YIELD PREDICTIONS FOR DIFFERENT MAIZE HYBRIDS IS NOW AVAILABLE!

Thanks to longstanding research, commissioned in Germany and accepted last year by the German biogas industry and most importantly the plant breeders, growers now have valuable additional data available to them when they compare varieties for biogas production. The research focuses on quality traits and how their relative presence within a variety can be used to predict the gas yield when the maize is used as feedstock in a digester.

General acceptance has enabled the development of a web site from which farmers can gain independent gas yield predictions for varieties grown in national, regional and local variety trials. The web site can be accessed via the following link <http://www.biogas-sorten.de/>

An obvious benefit of the gas yield prediction data, when combined with DM yield information is the potential to gain optimum gas yields from the fixed volume of crop feedstock.

Members keen to know more may well be interested in attending the 2018 MGA conference at which Dr Antje Herrmann, (pictured) one of the key researchers on the project has kindly agreed to talk to members about the research and how the numbers generated can prove useful to growers.



MGA 2018 MAIZE CONFERENCE—28TH FEBRUARY AT PETERBOROUGH ARENA

As a result of John Morgan and Neil Grooms attendance at the European Maize Meeting, we have been able to secure two excellent German researchers to come and speak at the 2018 MGA Maize conference. Dr Klaus Hunting's research studies methods of silage making and will focus on reducing waste in the clamp and energy loss from heating in the clamp. This paper will be of interest to our dairy farmers and biogas producers. John has reported in more detail Klaus's research in his EMM report, included with this mailing.



Our second German speaker is Dr Antje Herrmann. (See article above).

As well as the review of all the results from the 2017 MGA trials Innes McEwen, Head of Farming and responsible for all feedstocks and digestate for 11 AD plants managed by Future Biogas will give a paper on "The role of maize in our AD business". The programme isn't complete yet and we will update you on other speakers when they have been confirmed.

The popular Short & Sweet session will finish the conference. The MGA have provisionally reserved rooms for the night before at a local Hotel, so if you would like to travel up on the Tuesday and join the MGA council and speakers for dinner that night, we would be very pleased to welcome you. Invitations and booking forms will be sent out in the next mailing.

MGA Conference delegates at Peterborough Arena

UNDERSOWING MAIZE TO REDUCE LEACHING

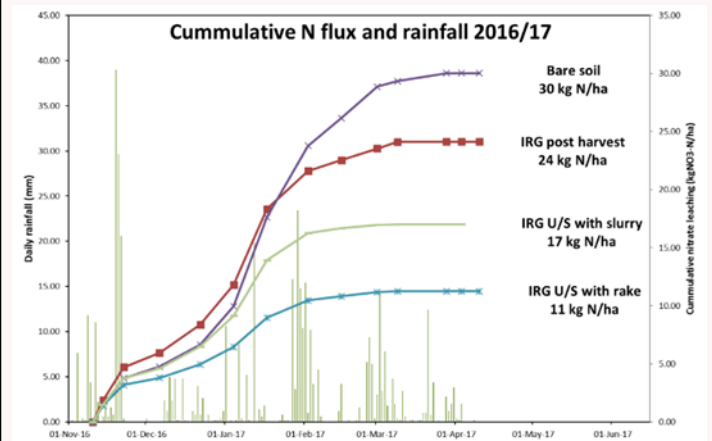
Johns recent attendance at a joint Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) and Wessex Water (WW) farm meeting at MGA council member Joe Foot's farm provided some valuable and indisputable data that supports the ongoing need to recognise the potential of undersowing maize to reduce nitrogen leaching.

The data discussed was generated via on farm trials in Dorset and shows that 'the average leaching over winter following a maize crop is 86 kg/ha, one of the highest of the arable crops tested'.

Using results collected from the maize trials, the project was able to conclude that "undersowing significantly, reduced N leaching, compared to leaving soils bare over the winter period, and sowing a cover crop post maize harvest" "In the following spring, undersown IRG provided higher biomass yields (2.0 TDM) compared to IRG sown post maize harvest (1.3 TDM)".

The undersown IRG contained 30 kg N, 5 kg P and 47 kg K/ha which if managed appropriately could be retained for future use by following crops.

All in all a pretty strong reminder of what is possible if maize is undersown. A copy of the two page handout circulated on the day is available from the MGA office.



Nitrogen leaching data from Wessex Water Dorset Trials (source Wessex Water)

HELP THY NEIGHBOUR!

The phone is pretty warm here at the MGA office with calls coming in asking for harvest advice. It is great to receive such calls as it clearly indicates that members are keen to get on with things when, in most areas anyway, soil conditions are pretty good. With harvest in mind, we ask that members gently remind their neighbours to get on with their own harvest as well. It is for the benefit of all growers that as much mature maize as possible is harvested as early as possible.

Remember that:

- Target whole plant maturity is 32-34% DM
- Plants typically dry down at 2% per week at this time of year.
- Crop maturity should be based primarily on grain maturity. If grain DM% is 58% or above (milk line is half way down the kernel) the crop is mature even if the plant is still green.
- All maize stubbles should be actively managed to reduce post harvest soil or nutrient loss.
- Research clearly indicates that the earlier a catch or full crop is established in the autumn the more nitrogen it will take up and the less nitrogen will be leached over the winter.

Happy harvesting to both you and your neighbour.

MGA FARMER SURVEY

By the 31st August we had received 75 completed surveys and the total has since risen to 79. Thank you to all who filled in the survey, the draw has been done and winners will be informed shortly. The MGA Council would like to especially thank the commercial companies that provided prizes.



We will be producing a summary of the survey in a future mailing.

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 biodegesters.

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.



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