



How to Regain Momentum After a Frost.

If you're reading this, you likely have a concern about the recent frost and the potential damage it's done to your planted crops. Some of you may have already taken precautions, such as lighting smudge pots, running windmills, and using irrigation water. Our focus here is not about taking pre-frost precautions, but what can be done to get your frost damaged plants back to health.

Regrettably, sometimes the only thing you can do is wait for the freezing temperatures to pass, assess the damage, and then decide if a replant is needed. Replant decisions are usually well guided by extension recommendations as well as local expertise.

With corn, the decision to replant is a difficult one as the growing point of corn remains below ground, well inside the plant until it's several inches tall. Since the corn's growing point is still below ground, the damage from a freeze may be marginal.



However, the corn tissues that die above ground will also become a physical barrier to new growth. These dead corn tops dry out, get tangled and can choke off new growth. Or worse, they may rot and take the live tissue with them. For corn crops that die back to the ground we suggest you need a really good reason not to replant.



Potatoes can also be badly affected. Frost damage can lead to seed piece decay, a major problem for plants that are still relying on the seed piece for energy. This can lead to a loss of set, an ever-present challenge for potato growers even without the loss of the seed piece.

All annual crops that survive a frost will have lost momentum. Even peas and cole crops get stressed if its cold enough. Perennial crops like alfalfa will start growing again from the crown but the damaged tissues will not continue to grow. A plant trying to rebound from its frosted condition is under major stress. The new growth following a frost event is largely fueled by stored energy - energy that, unfortunately, may already be depleted from the plant tissues that just got frosted.

What can be done as a foliar application to re-energize crops affected by a frost ?

- **Replace the minerals that have been lost in the dead or damaged tissues.**
Replace the lost N, P, K, and traces with products such as **Accelerator**, **TracePak**, **MicroTech AG** and **Micrel Total**. *(Your rep will help you select the best trace package for your crop).*
- **Incorporate anti-oxidants such as Drammatic O Fish into the product to directly counter these abiotic stresses**
- **Reinforce the spray with the beneficial bacteria from MVP. The good microbes that live in partnership with plants, below *and* above ground, got hammered too.**
- **Wait to apply these products until after the plants have started to rebound from the frost damage. It does little good to apply foliar nutrition if the plant is unable to take it in or use it.**
- **Do so in a gentle manner. These plants are injured and should be nursed. All of the products mentioned above are in this category.**

As a wrap up, if you grow in a region susceptible to late frost events, you may want to consider a pre-emptive application of Drammatic Fish. This product lower the freezing point of the plant, is often effective in mitigating frost damage, and will set your plant up for a faster recovery from a frost event.



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Give us a call today so we can help you maximize your Total Farm Profitability.

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