



Welcome to Ground Work

Dear J.P.,

Time spent now getting ready for the busy spring season can pay big dividends. This is a good time to make sure all of your equipment, including tanks and fertilizer equipment, is ready to go. Fertilizer tanks should be thoroughly cleaned before each new season. That can go a long way toward preventing problems when you are the busiest. Make sure your pumps and filters are ready to go also. Think through your fertilizer handling process to see if there are bottlenecks that could be avoided. Most of the AgriEnergy products do need to be agitated before unloading from the tank because they tend to stratify over time. Check to make sure hose gaskets and cam locks are in good condition so that the hose connections do not leak. Make sure all valves are in good working order also.

It is good to filter the liquid products each time they are moved. This reduces the chances of having a problem during application. Make sure that filters are sized appropriately. All products are filtered through an 80 mesh screen when they are shipped from AgriEnergy. We recommend that you size sprayer nozzles so that nothing finer than a 50 mesh screen is needed to protect from nozzle plugging. That often means that you need to apply at least 15 gallons per acre with your sprayer. You should have at least a primary filter after the pump. Secondary filters after each solenoid section may be desirable, depending on your monitor system. This can eliminate the need for screens at the nozzles when nozzles are sized correctly.

Achieving optimum planter performance is one of the most important things that impact your bottom line. Having uniform emergence and uniform stands are two big drivers in determining the final yield. Your planter needs to be in tip top shape to achieve that. Replace all worn drive chains or other drive parts, as well as worn seed and fertilizer coulters. Make sure bearings are in good working condition. Make certain all moving parts are properly lubricated throughout the planting season. Most importantly, make sure seed metering units are calibrated properly for your seed and driving speed so that you can achieve uniform plant spacing. Check for proper alignment of closing wheels and fertilizer openers. Make sure fertilizer is being applied the proper distance from the seed for the type and amount of fertilizer that you are using. Don't use more down pressure on fertilizer and row units than is necessary to achieve a uniform depth of operation. Excessive down pressure creates compaction in the row area where you least want it.

So much of the year's success depends on doing things right at planting time. Make sure you and your equipment are ready to go when you get that window of opportunity to plant.