



Top Secrets of Growing Organic Corn

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Driving through northwestern Minnesota, you'll see corn fields that range from too wet to too dry and everything in between. Then, you'll see Paul Novacek's corn. You'll never know they only had .40 inches of rain, in a 3-week span, when this picture was taken. Paul is an AgriEnergy dealer in East Grand Forks and owns & operates Synergy Ag LLC. He farms significant organic, transition, and conventional acreage.



Aside from corn, he grows oats, forage peas, pinto beans, kidney beans, and red potatoes.

When asked what his secrets were, he graciously shared them:

AER: When we saw the picture of your organic corn, we just had to come up and see it with our own eyes! What's your secret?

PN: Our fertility program includes cover crops of oats, peas and winter rye

whenever we can get them into the cropping system. This year, on the corn, we spring applied two to three tons of poultry litter based on soil tests. We have seed treatments that include **SP-1™** and **Myco Seed Treat®**. We have in-furrow planter treatments that include Damm fish, K-Sulfate, **SP-1™**, Eco-Tec, and Bio-Repel Garlic. We try to target foliar treatments on the corn at V4 and again at V10 based on tissue tests. These foliar treatments include Damm fish, K-Sulfate, **SP-1™** and any micronutrients that show up low on the test. We use the Biomin micronutrients if needed. After harvest we used **Residue®** on all of the acres to aid in residue breakdown for nutrient cycling.

AER: We like to see the **SP-1™** & **Myco Seed Treat®** combination. Which product do you feel made the most impact?

PN: We especially like the **SP-1™** product as it provides good energy & protection to the germinating seed, as well as for supporting early season plant growth.

AER: Rumor has it, this is the best organic corn you've grown to date. Did you do anything different this year?

PN: We used flame weed control this year for the first time on the corn, and we're satisfied with the results. For early season weed control, we also use a tine weeder, rotary hoe, and row crop cultivators as needed on all the crops. For mid to late season weed escapes, we also have labor that will walk the field to help manage this.

AER: When we walked your fields, we were impressed with your disease control. What's your plan of attack?

PN: For disease control we use foliar treatments of EF-400 and Bacstop on the oats, dry beans and potatoes.

AER: As we quickly approach harvest, do you have any yield predictions?

PN: We have been blessed with cooperative weather for the 2018 growing season. We have had timely rains and above average GDU's to help accelerate the crop growth after a somewhat slow start for spring planting. We are looking forward to Harvest 2018.



We're looking forward to harvest 2018 too! If you want to start a similar program, give us a call today. Now's the time to start thinking about a **residue management program!** **815.872.1190.**