



Soil Fertility during Transition

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When considering transitioning to organic agriculture, many growers show angst when it comes to nitrogen management. They fret over crop nutrients and dollar signs, however many longtime AgriEnergy growers realize you don't necessarily need 1.2# of applied nitrogen. Especially, if you're letting the beneficial microbes do their jobs.

So, how does one stop fretting and let the microbes work their magic? They think in terms of growing more microbes per acre, by incorporating biologicals every chance they get.

- Give your crops an extra boost at planting with **Myco Seed Treat™**. MST is a dry seed treatment that coats the seed in beneficial microbes right from the start.
- During planting and throughout the growing season, use **SP-1™**. This product promotes a larger root system by keeping beneficial bacteria around the roots. It also helps greatly with nutrient cycling.
- Post-harvest, get a jump start with your crop residue. Speedy crop residue decomposition can set up the next crop for success by utilizing leftover nutrients. Accelerated decomposition also helps create a desirable seed bed for the next crop. **Residue®** products can help with residue management.

In addition to biologicals, there are other management factors to help withstand the cash flow:

- **Crop Rotation** - Some crops remove more nutrients than others. Every grower has to weigh the short-term cash flow against the long-term soil fertility. Any time the whole plant is removed, a lot of nutrients go with it. For example, selling hay or corn silage creates a real nutrient drain if manure isn't applied to replace the nutrients. Effective crop rotation is a great way to start transitioning soils from being chemically dependent to biologically alive.

- **Cover Crops** - A key concept in improving soil health is to have something growing at all times. Cover crops help build soil health during transition and beyond, while legume covers can grow your nitrogen.
- **Banding** - Banding crop nutrients allows a grower to increase fertilizer efficiency by placing nutrients in close proximity to the plant, when the plant needs it; opposed to broadcasting over the entire surface. Starter fertilizer and sidedress applications are an excellent example of banding.

It is possible to keep up with soil fertility during transition! Talk with your AgriEnergy representative about your transition fertility plan. We can customize a program specifically for you and your needs! **815.872.1190.**