



Maximising early season nutrition in top fruit crops

Many growers are already well into spraying their crops with essential nutrients though this early part of the season, however it is being impeded by the variable weather and the fact that in many areas we are still 2-3 weeks behind on growth or the orchard floor is just too wet to keep driving sprayers through.

Many growers have thought about leaving out sprays and playing catch up later and others are thinking about grouping sprays to cut down on the amount of times they need to pass through the orchard.

As many growers will be worried about the fact they need to get essential fungicides on, our agronomists are fielding questions about grouping sprays or changing timings to allow for more room in the spray tank and tank mix compatibility. With this in mind we thought it may be useful to offer our best practice ideas for nutrient spray timings and tank mix options for nutrients.

When it comes to timings there is flexibility on timings depending on the role of the nutrient and when the plant is maximising uptake and flow of the nutrient

Many growers will be considering about phosphorus and potassium early and be thinking that even at mouse ear stage they can make a difference.

- ✓ It is important to remember that with macro nutrients foliar uptake improves as the canopy grows so leaving it a little later will even out uptake and you will make a greater difference 2-3 weeks later.
- ✓ Also removing it will allow essential calcium to be tank mixed without fear of precipitation, if not using a chelated source.

Early sprays should be concentrated around magnesium and copper. Magnesium is highly active and although there not much canopy a difference can still be made especially if a penetrant comes in the product you use or you add one with it. With copper you need far less to make a difference and it will support the early crop response to reduced susceptibility to bacterial and fungal pressure.

For the flowering period definitely concentrate on Calcium, Boron, Zinc and Molybdenum. Start pink bud on apples and pears and white bud on cherries and other stone fruit. These nutrients are so important to optimising fruit set and quality and will support the tree in holding fruit during what can be an environmentally stressful period. Calcium is especially important to provide support right the way through flowering until the fruit is 5mm in size as this is the only period, though cell division, when the tree is loading the fruit with as much calcium as possible.

When it comes to manganese and iron, foliage is king. As the crops begin to unfurl those early leaves the chlorophyll engine goes into overdrive and it is this period when the chlorophyll support nutrients of manganese and iron are being used in higher amounts. Optimising these two nutrients though this period will maximise leaf size and give far more power to photosynthesis. This will drive up carbohydrate production to support the important processes being demanded of the trees and to give the developing fruit the best change of staying on the tree and gaining greater size. Sprays for these nutrients can be concentrated around petal fall and the couple of sprays after that will generate the best results.

continues



Tank mixing

Tank mixing can be difficult and many products tank mixed together with pesticides is even more difficult when calcium is required. The anions of sulphate and phosphate and the use of phosphites in both agrochemical and nutrient forms will create mix problems if calcium is free to react.



We recommend

It is for this reason Engage Agro focus our work with top fruit with Bio-Chel Ca chelated calcium. Its robust chelation allows its use in even the most ambitious tank mixes without fear of reaction and even offers a safening effect in reducing the scorch potential of other product and nutrients.

Further information and downloads are available on the following link.

[CLICK HERE for more information on this technology](#)

www.engageagroeuropa.com/bio-chel

We recommend

When it comes to tank mixing, many growers shy away from mixing two or three nutrients together with pesticides in fear of damaging new leaf or flowers. Although this is good practice, it can be done. In developing nutrient sprays, Engage Agro focused on optimisation and safety and over time this became our current MAS-Power range of foliar nutrients.

- ✓ All of the MAS-Power foliar nutrients are built using a specific package of support compounds designed to allow for optimal penetration, assimilation and distribution of the nutrient along with minimising potential for scorch and compatibility issues.
- ✓ All are built to be tank mixed with each other without fear of reaction and are built to be compatible with pesticides and growth regulator applications.
- ✓ Usual rules apply, however mixing 2-3 MAS-Power foliar nutrients together with pesticide applications, is safe to do.

For further information contact your EAE advisor - downloads are available on the following link.



[CLICK HERE for more information on this technology](#)

www.engageagroeuropa.com/mas-power

Contact
us

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and you can talk to one of our fruit agronomists.