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The Growers Solution

LATE FALL 2011

VOLUME 24 ISSUE 4

Farmers Should Invest in (White) Gold

By Jim Halbeisen

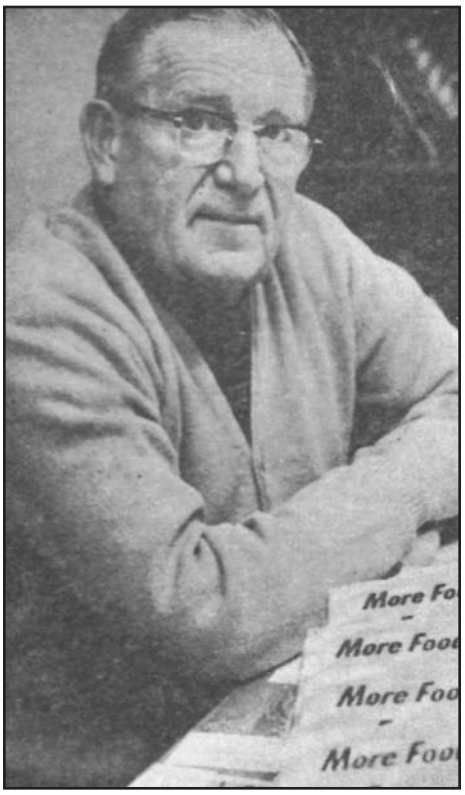
Most agricultural commodity prices have increased significantly, some more than others. Fortunately for a lot of farmers, these price increases have introduced opportunities to investigate various investment possibilities. By way of investment advice, we at Growers Chemical Corporation feel agricultural producers, especially Growers customers, should give investing in land serious consideration. We are not recommending the purchase of more land, but pointing out this is a good time to be investing in the improvement of the productivity of the land already owned or controlled.

Weather during the 2011 crop season caused large numbers of economic problems for agricultural producers throughout areas stretching from central North Dakota to Florida's Atlantic coast. Depending on the geographical area, weather issues ranged from excessively wet all the way to bone-dry and are responsible for problems and stressful conditions farmers are now trying to overcome towards the end of the 2011 crop season.

To help avoid similar adversities in the future, Growers Chemical Corporation suggests farmers, instead of investing in commodities such as gold, etc., they should take this opportunity to improve the land they already have by applying high calcium limestone. Seems most all the economic experts are recommending investing in certain commodities to deal with inflation predictions due to the fiscal policies of various governments around the world. To the contrary, Growers Chemical Corporation believes the agricultural producer's best inflation fighting tool lies in improvements to his ground by way of proper applications of high calcium limestone.

When crops suffer "yield drag", cannot withstand stressful environmental conditions or other quality problems, changing the physical properties of the soil could be a real "shot in the arm" to an agricultural operation. When proper soil calcium levels are reached, the resulting porosity improvement will help fight future soil problems such as; tight crusty soils, poor water holding properties and infiltration, low soil microbiological activity, below average yields, poor use of native soil fertility and the need for added fertility, aka, fertilizer. Choosing to invest available revenues to increase soil calcium levels now, could allow farmers to significantly minimize future crop growing problems such as; excess early and late season rainfall, drought, extended periods of high temperatures, etc. So, our advice to agricultural producers for the long term is to invest in inflation fighting "white gold" — high calcium limestone. For the short term, expense it as an income deduction.

Please turn to page 4



Growers Co-Founder Dr. Tiedjens is the author of "More Food From Soil Science." Books are available from the Growers Mineral Solutions office.

Inside The Solution

Growers Conference Calls

The ongoing Growers Conference Calls are always on the second Thursday of the month, and our next calls will be December 8 and January 12, both at 9 p.m. EST. To join in, dial 1-940-287-4000. (NOTE! NEW DIAL-IN NUMBER.) When asked for the Participant Access Code, dial in 8262757#. (Same access code number as before.) Then press 1 to acknowledge the call is being recorded. The recording is for the benefit of those not able listen in at the time of the Call. Recordings of the most recent Calls and previous Calls can be accessed on the Growers website, www.GrowersMineral.com, under Calendar of Events, Conference Calls and Previous Call Recordings, or call the office for the server's 'dial-in number.' ■

Peanuts and Growers

By Chris Carter and Pete Collins

What could be more Southern than peanuts? We like them boiled, roasted, and, on occasion, even fried. We like them covered with chocolate, honey roasted, and we even like them in a peanut butter pie. But best of all, we like to see them loaded on the vines as we dig them in September and October. That's right, this is peanut time and we would like to tell you the stories of four of our Southern farmers who are having success with their peanuts and the Growers Program

First, by Chris, we want to introduce you to Sammy Perkins. Sammy's family has been farming on their farm in the southwest corner of Georgia near Whigham since 1948. We first met Sammy at the Sunbelt Expo in Moultrie, GA about four years ago. Like many farmers, Sammy was cautious and moved at his own pace. As he saw improvements in one crop, he moved forward adding Growers to the next, then on to another crop with each coming year. He started with cotton using Growers as an add-on and slowly-but-surely, except for a little N, has replaced his other fertilizers. He now uses Growers in some capacity on most all his crops which include corn for silage, cotton, pastures and hay, pecans and, of course, peanuts.

Sammy has added high calcium limestone to most of his fields at rates of between 2 and 4 tons to the acre. With crop prices not being the best the last couple of years he says he hasn't been able to add as much lime as he would like. With prices much better this year his plans are to add several tons to as much acreage as possible to continue increases in yield and quality.

I asked Sammy if he would share with us what he used in the way of GMS and Growers Nutritional Additive (NA) on his peanuts. His reply, "In the past I haven't really used much fertilizer on my peanuts, so I went with 4 gallons GMS to the acre with 8 ounces of NA at bloom time." That's two sprays at 2 gpa GMS and 4 ounces of NA each time. With what

Sammy Perkins dry land peanuts averaged 3800 to 4400 pounds per acre.

Jimmy Covins best experiment yielded 6200 pounds of peanuts per acre.

Sammy has dug and harvested to date, yields on his dry land peanut acreages have been between 3800 and 4400 pounds per acre which are good yields and with grades in the mid to upper 70's, which are considered excellent. We will keep in touch to see what the rest of his crop yields, because he thinks his best peanuts are still to be picked.

Second, by Chris, we would like you to meet Jimmy Covin of Sasser in southwest Georgia. We met Jimmy at a peanut meeting where he told us the story of he and his brother experimenting with liquid fertilizer. Not just any liquid, but fertilizer they made themselves. From what he told us, for many years he had been all over the country building electrical lines. One day he felt as if he had been spoken to and began to feel he wasn't supposed to be away from home so much. He knew he should be at home farming, so he "cashed in," came home, and, with his "seed" money, set out to be a peanut farmer.

Jimmy is a perfect GMS customer. He experiments and pays attention. I asked Jimmy how his home brew worked. He said, "Not too bad, but it just about killed us with all the stirring and mixing we had to do." Needless to say he was glad to find out about Growers, a solution already mixed and in perfect balance with all the minors included. As we said, Jimmy is a perfect GMS customer because he tries different types of applications and rates. He has so many different combinations going I won't even try to list them. Some of the more interesting experiments included dribbling 2 gallons of GMS per acre between twin rows using 130 pounds of seed per acre. This was on ground where he had applied 4 tons per acre of hi-cal lime prior to planting and 1.5 tons per acre 28 days after they came up. At bloom he followed-up with three 1 gpa GMS foliar applications — one spray included 8 ounces of GNA. These were some of the best yielding peanuts he had, 5900 pounds per acre dry land and grades in the 78 to 79 range. But these were not his best. On some acreage he applied 5 tons of lime per acre before planting with an additional 2 tons per acre later. On that land, at planting, he used 2 gallons of Growers in a 2 x 2 placement, 2" beside the seed and 2" below the seed. Then, in three foliar applications of 2 gpa each, he applied 6 gallons per acre of Growers. These yielded as high as 6200 pounds per acre, again, on dry land, and, again with grades in the high 70's. Lastly, for another comparison, Jimmy planted a field of single row peanuts with 68 pounds of seed per acre, and he applied 5 tons of hi-cal lime per acre before planting. With no pop-up (Growers by and below the seed) he sprayed the foliage with GMS in three one gallon per acre applications and no Nutritional Additive. These peanuts yielded 2300 pounds per acre and convinced Jimmy the value of applying GMS to the soil at planting.

Jimmy has a great outlook on life which helps him succeed and keeps him moving forward. He tells the story of his first year back on the farm and his first peanut crop. He had left the power company with some money set aside to live on, so he paid his bills as they came in. When he sold the last of his peanuts that year, he had just enough left to buy him and his wife Wanda a chicken dinner. With the help of hi-cal lime and Growers and, not to mention his perseverance, its pretty sure Wanda will get a lot more than a chicken dinner this year.

Third, by Pete, we next go to Sumner Farms near Omega, in south central Georgia, run by Steve Sumner along with his sons Stephen and Thomas. This mega farm grows 900 acres of peanuts, 150 acres of cantaloupes, 200 acres of snap beans, 160 acres of squash, 75 acres of peppers, 1100 acre of cotton plus, of course, a lot of watermelon. Everything is grown on the Growers Program, using hi-cal lime, GMS and Growers Nutritional Additive.

Growing high yielding peanuts is in Steve's

Please turn to page 4

Steve Sumner, "I believe I've seen a 15% yield improvement since being on the Growers Program."

Nitrogen Price: The Problem and the Solution

By Jim Halbeisen

Farmers preparing for the 2012 crop season are finding the price of the element nitrogen has increased significantly. Nitrogen in the form of 28-0-0 could be purchased in northern Ohio in the summer of 2010 for approximately $225 per ton. As of October, 2011 that same 28-0-0 from the same supplier costs approximately $380 per ton, a 69% increase. The nitrogen price increases for different North American areas and other forms of nitrogen may not all be exactly the same, however, their increases will approach similar percentages.

While traveling the Growers Chemical Corporation sales area, producers always ask how GMS is affected by raw material price increases. Raw material suppliers furnish all the ingredients making up the product, so their pricing has a direct and immediate effect on the price of GMS.

Relating to nitrogen, Growers Chemical Corporation suggests there are two predominant reasons for price increases:

1. The 2011 spring weather in the US corn belt was very wet. Since many US corn farmers apply nitrogen in the fall of the year, those who did felt a large portion was lost to the environment during the 2011 spring season's heavy rains. Their concerns resulted in a lot of US corn belt farmers, who normally do not side-dress nitrogen on corn, to do a significant amount. This extra demand in the early summer of 2011 drove nitrogen prices significantly higher and those prices have not retreated.

2. As the production of the US corn crop for the 2011 season has fallen short of yield expectations, corn prices have remained strong through the summer and into the fall of 2011. This corn price strength has emboldened the chemical companies supplying the nitrogen raw materials to raise their prices. Farmers realize natural gas is the most important raw material needed for the production of nitrogen, but since the price of natural gas is at one of its lowest levels in several years, agricultural nitrogen price increases can't be laid at the feet of the natural gas price itself. Perhaps the old saying, "whatever the market will bear," best explains today's nitrogen price situation.

Since 1955 Growers Chemical Corporation has been showing farmers how to grow economically competitive crops with significantly lower amounts of nitrogen use. By implementing the Growers Program, producers can take advantage of native soil nitrogen to produce very profitable crops and, at the same time, reduce the use of commercial nitrogen inputs.

Recently many producers have discovered, to produce high yields, they have allowed their crops to "hog feed" on nitrogen, and they are now finding minimal yield losses occurring with certain reductions in nitrogen applications.

Our discussion here always comes back to, "How much yield can a farmer afford to 'buy with increased inputs,' especially if he is working with soils with less potential yield capacity or in years when significant environmental stress is predicted."

We at Growers Chemical Corporation consistently have found very few, if any, agriculturally related companies have, or are educating their customers as to how they should protect their operations from forces beyond their control, i.e. weather, etc. Due to political and economic uncertainties of our times, many large companies in the business world today are hoarding cash to help insulate their operations from unpredictable adverse economic conditions. Likewise, an excellent way for farm producers to protect their operations from future adverse environmental or economic conditions, would be to use nitrogen more judiciously in their corn and other crop inputs.

If this discussion appeals to you as an agricultural producer, please contact your GMS sales representative or call Growers Chemical Corporation at 800-437-4769 for details. ■

The Bad News

By Staff

Actually, the bad news isn't as bad as it could be and no where near as bad as producers are beginning to hear from most of their other farm suppliers.

A price increase was delayed as long as possible, but, because the situation is getting progressively worse, Growers Chemical Corporation determined it could no longer absorb the ever mounting price increases coming from all the different raw material suppliers.

Accordingly, a price increase for GMS is in effect as of November 1, 2011 for the foreseeable future.

Now, the good news. The November 10% CIAD early order discount is again available, which, in effect, makes the GMS price close to the same it has been for the past couple of years. The intention for December through March, is to have in place all the regular 8% through 2% CIAD discounts as well. ■

On The Road Again

LATE FALL 2011

Growers Mineral Solutions is scheduled to set up and staff booths at the following upcoming farm shows and conventions this winter. It's a great time to stop in and review your plant food and animal nutrition needs, hear about new developments at Growers or just chat with the folks who make it all happen—your friends and neighbors.

Dec. 6-8, 2011 Tue-Thur	Great Lakes Fruit & Veg Expo Grand Rapids, MI
Jan. 3-5, 2012 Tue-Thur	Keystone Farm Show York, PA
Jan. 6-7 Fri-Sat	Georgia Fruit & Vegetable Savannah, GA
Jan. 16-19 Mon-Thur	Delaware Ag Week. Harrington, DE
Jan. 17-19 Tue-Thur	New Jersey Veg. Mktg. Conf. Atlantic City, NJ
Jan. 17-19 Tue-Thur	Fort Wayne Farm Show Fort Wayne, IN
Jan. 17-18 Tue-Wed	Ohio Produce Growers Congress Sandusky, OH
Jan. 19-21 Thur-Sat	Virginia Farm Show Fishersville, VA
Jan. 24-26 Wed-Thur	Empire State Fruit & Veg. Expo Syracuse, NY
Jan. 31-Feb. 2 Tue-Thur	Mid Atlantic Fruit & Vegetable Hershey, PA
Feb. 1-3 Wed-Fri	Southern Farm Show Raleigh, NC
Feb. 3-4 Fri-Sat	Northern Indiana Grazing Conference Howe, IN
Feb. 7-8 Tue-Wed	Alexandria Area Ag Show Alexandria, MN
Feb. 7-9 Tue-Thur	Canadian International Farm Equip Toronto, Ontario
Feb. 15-18 Wed-Sat	National Farm Machinery Show Louisville, KY
Feb. 22-23 Wed-Thur	Ontario Fruit & Veg. Conv. Niagara Falls, Ontario
Feb. 23-25 Thur-Sat	NYS Farm Show Syracuse, NY
Feb. 28-Mar 1 Tue-Thur	Central Minnesota Farm Show St. Cloud, MN

Hope To See You!

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LATE FALL 2011

Inside:

Peanuts and Growers

Continued from page 2

blood. His father Rudolph Sumner set the world record peanut crop in 1972 with 6414 pounds per acre.

Steve is a think-outside-of-the-box kind of guy and was introduced to Growers by Kent Hamilton of Southern Valley Farms several years ago. At the time Steve was looking for ways to improve melon quality and he knew calcium was a key element.

After successfully using the Growers Program on his melons, it didn't take him long to get the rest of the operation on board. Over the last few years he has applied hi-cal lime at an average rate of 2 to 3 tons per acre per year, now totaling about 6 to 10 tons per acre. Quoting Steve, "I see improvements each year. I believe I've seen a 15% yield improvement since getting on the Growers Program." Steve's dry land peanuts are pushing or exceeding the 4000 pounds per acre mark and his irrigated yields will weigh in around 6000 pounds per acre, both of which are good yields. Grades are ranging from 75 to 80, which are excellent. This year's variety was Georgia OL6.

I enjoy visiting Sumner Farms and I am always amazed at what they accomplish. Steve and the boys stay very busy, but, because they love to talk farming, they do make time for me.

Fourth, by Pete, brothers Brent and Don Wainright, first time peanut growers, are from Live Oak in north central Florida. Don has been using hi-cal lime on his forage crops for the past few years and likes what he's seen. I talked with them this past spring about getting on the Growers Program with their new 2011 peanut crop and they agreed!

Things got off to a rocky start for all of us down here in the southeast with the drought and scattered rainfall. Because our Suwannee County rainfall was hit-or-miss, Brent and Don had some issues with the stand in their first plantings, but the bulk of their acreage turned out great and our guys are making a good dry land peanut crop. Yields are coming in at or near the 4000 pounds per acre mark and with excellent grades.

The brothers prepared their ground by spreading 5 plus tons of hi-cal lime per acre and sprayed a total of 4 gallons of GMS; 2 gpa in the first spray and 2 gpa in the second spray with an added 8 ounces of GNA. Seeing the results Jimmy Covin had on his peanuts, we are talking about an additional 2 gallons of GMS per acre as a starter at planting time for next year's planned 1500 acre peanut crop. To insure good germination in our thin and often quite hot soils, we will recommend the starter be placed in a 2 by 2 position, that is 2" beside and 2" below the seed bed. Brent and Don plan on getting their hi-cal lime out early this winter, putting 2 to 3 tons per acre on, turning it down, then another 2 to 3 tons per acre on top and harrowing that in. This will put the lime deeper into the soil profile enabling it to work at its maximum potential. The deeper and longer the hi-cal is in the soil, the better it does. We have seen as the calcium moves down through the soil, plant roots tend to follow, which is of great benefit during dry periods. We think the calcium not only corrects pH, but provides nutrition for plant growth and production.

Brent Wainright's first time peanuts averaged 4000 pounds and damage and splits were less than 1%.

Brent and Don believe the calcium played a key role in their "seed quality" peanuts which is an excellent grade. Damage and splits have been at 1 % or less which is also excellent.

The brothers are optimistic about the 2012 peanut prices and are already looking forward to putting out next year's peanut crop. ■

The Growers Solution

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More About Growers

We hope you will find this newsletter helpful and interesting and we welcome your input. Please send letters-to-the-editor, comments, suggestions, etc. to: Growers, P.O. Box 1750, Milan, OH 44846, call 1-800-437-4769, fax 419-499-2178.

email: growers@hmcltd.net
or visit our Web site: www.growersmineral.com

Invest in (White) Gold

Continued from page 1

"White gold" and its beneficial properties are thoroughly discussed in the reference book *More Food From Soil Science* by V. A. Tiedjens, one of the founders of Growers Chemical Corporation. *More Food From Soil Science*, available from the company at $20.00 each, ppd., is undoubtedly one of the best reference guides any agricultural operator could have relative to soil fertility and for solutions to many other everyday farm problems. ■