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The Growers Solution

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VOLUME 18 ISSUE 2

Farming With Growers Since 1963

From a talk given by Richard Yoder, Growers Sales Representative from West Liberty, Ohio

This is the first Growers Annual Sales Meeting my wife and I have attended in several years. Someone back home asked, "Why are you going this year?" I replied that I had been asked to share some of my Growers experiences at the meeting.

He asked, "Why would they ask you to share?" I responded, "Because we are some of the older users of the Growers Program." My friend responded, "So — they've asked an 'Old Geezer' to talk." Right! I'm here as an Old Geezer!

Early in 1964 my dad, Harold L. Yoder, and I along with some neighboring farmers traveled to Milan to spend the day with Dr. Victor Tiedjens. We enjoyed meeting and discussing the Growers Program with him. That's been forty plus years ago. From time to time since Dr. Tiedjens' thoughts and comments have come to mind.

My wife and I started farming together in the winter of 1960 - 61, and, being 24 years old, I had a lot to learn. My employer of six years was the local grain elevator which happened to be the largest Roysters fertilizer dealer in Ohio. My boss "suggested" I take soil samples and send them to Roysters and follow their recommendations. I did that for the 1962 corn crop. We had a \$40.00 per acre fertilizer bill and a yield of 60 bushels per acre. The corn



Richard Yoder, part of 5 generations with Growers since 1963.

price was less than a dollar per bushel. I recall very well our banker was NOT impressed.

1963 brought a few changes. Dad and I were approached by a farming neighbor, Barney Stahler, who was the Growers sales rep for our area. Barney wanted to foliar 15 acres of corn for us and 15 acres for my parents who lived less than a mile away. I will not forget carrying a bushel basket, a bathroom

scales and a moisture tester and counting plant populations. We went from the foliar sides to the non-foliar sides checking yields. The results were such that Dad and I realized following this program was profitable. We

Please turn to page 7

Inside The Solution

Farming With Growers Since 1963

Richard Yoderpage 1

Wineries Pleased With Growers Grapes

Doug Mackpage 1

Nebraska Cattleman Feeds Growers From The Ground Up

Jim Halbeisenpage 2

Maximizing Resources From The Ground Up

Teres Lambertpage 2

Growing Mums With Growers Solution

.....page 3

Christmas Tree Grower Sets Record Straight

.....page 3

Long Time Growers Dairy Customer

.....page 4

Growers Works Well For PA Dairy Farmer

.....page 4

Thoroughbred Horses Shine

.....page 5

Be Careful With Rust Chemicals

.....page 7

Limiting Pesticide Use With The Growers Program

Jim Halbeisenpage 8

Wineries Pleased With Growers Grapes

By Doug Mack, District Manager for Western New York State

Clearview Farms of Branchport in the Finger Lakes Region of New York, is run by Harold Tones, his three sons and three grandsons. I am sitting here with sons, Jim and Don. I'll let them start out by explaining their operation, size, origin, work force and so forth.

Don: "We have about 350 acres of grapes now. About 80 or 90 acres are juice grapes and the rest are wine varieties. It's a family operation; a partnership."

Doug: "How did you get interested in Growers?"

Don: "For several years before we started using Growers, we were using some different foliar feed products. We were seeing some pretty good results, but a neighbor interested us in the Growers solution. We saw some pretty good results at his place, more than what we were seeing with what we were using, so we switched."

Doug: "Do you recall just how many years you have used Growers?"

Don: "Four years. We see better results with the Growers."

Doug: "I know it varies year to year, but what is your basic program?"

Please turn to page 6

Nebraska Cattleman Feeds Growers From The Ground Up

By Jim Halbeisen

The following article was featured in the January 2005 issue of *Gelbvieh World*. When I talked to Jerry Glaser about it, he basically said that much of what he discussed in the article, he learned from us. He's trying to follow the idea of raising quality in the feedstuff and get it into the animal.

As far as his utilization of Growers, Jerry is planting corn with 2.5 gallons of GNS in the row and coming back with 1 to 1.5 gallons of GNS foliar sprayed during the growing season. Glaser sprays off his cultivator.

Jerry is trying to get his calcium levels elevated. On average, he is spending \$50.00/acre per application for calcium. He has done all his acres once, and, on the acres low in calcium, two or more applications have been spread. He said since putting the calcium on he has been able to get very good weed control with less chemicals.

The mineral in the insecticide boxes on the planter is Redmond Conditioner. Glaser's idea is to get some trace minerals along with the Growers. This year he will do some tests with Redmond Salt on the soil to see if it will elevate the sodium level in the feed. They're having questions about getting on big volumes of calcium, so they're kind of tinkering with very small rates of Redmond Conditioner on the land. They are not getting much on, maybe 15-

40 pounds to the acre.

As far as feeding is concerned, the animals are always exposed to GNS in lick wheels. The cows are free choicing Redmond Salt, Redmond Conditioner and fine calcium all of the time. The fat cattle are free choicing GNS and Redmond Salt and are force fed Redmond Conditioner, sodium bicarb and calcium.

He said the biggest thing he has seen is just how much the animals have changed in their overall temperaments since he has been on the Growers Program. This winter's purchasers of his bred heifers said they liked their quiet temperament, their body condition, and their hair coats.

Jerry said the animal disease and sickness problems have gone down significantly. With this program he can raise cattle that perform on the value base grid and work on natural programs. Having the capability to not use ionophores, antibiotics, and implants helps to produce a product consumers are seeking.

Another thing he stressed was the lick wheels with the Growers in them. He said when stress increases in the animals, he sees a very big increase in the amount of GNS they consume. Also, if the quality of their feed is down because of the weather or the minerals are out of balance, the amount of Growers going out through the lick wheel goes up a lot. Jerry knows that is definitely a stress factor and the

GNS is what cattle need to help ward it off. The cattle are more content which has a calming effect on their behavior.

The cattle are on a rotational grazing program. He says, "All I have to do is watch them. They pretty well tell me if they are ready for new pasture. Then all I have to do is call, and they move themselves.

"Also, we have been producing yields from our irrigated crops with almost half the nitrogen some have recommended for the yields we are harvesting. I see more earthworms, so I know the soil is healthier.

"Seven years ago Jim Halbeisen challenged me to try tests on my fields with different input products and rates and, also, to trust my instincts on what the cattle needed. This kind of research has improved our operation."

Some of the pathology research done by Dr. T.W. Swerczek DVM, Ph.D introduced Jerry to the idea that livestock health problems are related to imbalances in the soils producing livestock nutrition. At first this disturbed Jerry, but now it makes sense, and he makes the changes needed to correct the problems. This has improved their soil's quality and, in turn, the quality of crops fed to their animals.

In the article we see a lot of the Growers philosophy reflected in the way Jerry thinks about his farming now. ■

Maximizing Resources From the Ground Up

By Teres Lambert, Freelance Writer

Jerry Glaser's business card states "producer of quality beef from the ground up." This isn't just a catchy phrase or a marketing gimmick. It's a to-the-point explanation of how Jerry and Cindy Glaser of Spalding, Neb., raise cattle.

"Our business is a full circle operation with the end goal of producing safe, wholesome, great-tasting beef for today's consumer," Glaser states. "Because we are in the business of raising food for people, our focus starts with the soil and the production from the soil and carries through the genetics and management of our cowherd and feedyard animals."

The calves out of the cowherd and a majority of cattle that go into the Glaser feedyard to produce that "safe, wholesome, great-tasting" end product-beef-are Gelbvieh-influenced. But this isn't just another story about a guy who uses Gelbvieh bulls and finishes Gelbvieh-influenced calves in his feedyard. It's a story about a producer who sees himself strictly as a beef producer who has a responsibility to consumers and to future generations of ranchers.

The Soil, Plants

Corn, alfalfa, native hay, rye, turnips-yes, turnips-and every feedstuff that enters the mouth of a Glaser cow or feedyard calf is homegrown. By raising his own feed, Glaser controls the quality of the feedstuff.

Pesticides and chemicals are shunned. Fertilizer is kept to a minimum, with cattle waste preferred to liquid fertilizer. Calcium is added to the soil to bring it back to the proper pH level. Preferred food-grade corn rather than grain corn is planted.

When corn is planted, insecticides aren't added to the boxes on the planters. Instead, a trace mineral package goes in the insecticide box and minerals are deposited with the seed. The plant then absorbs the trace minerals that the cattle consume.

Cindy, Jerry's wife, points out that years of cropping land has resulted in valuable trace minerals no longer being present in the land. As a result, plants need trace minerals so they can produce a healthy product.

Glaser nods in agreement.

"I don't look at bushels per acre," Glaser tells. "I look at how many pounds of beef can be produced per acre. We're all about healthy soil,



An operation such as the Glasers requires attention to detail and lots of man hours. In addition to Jerry Glaser (pictured), labor is provided by his wife Cindy (pictured), dad Francis and brother Duane.

healthy plants, healthy cattle, and ultimately healthy people."

The Glaser's emphasis on the land extends to the pastures as well. Pastures include native grass (the Glasers are on the east edge of the Sandhills), irrigated pastures, alfalfa and an alfalfa/grass mix. Native pastures are kept in top shape, with cedar trees chopped down as

Please turn to page 5

Growing Mums With Growers Solution

By Robin Cressley

We transplant our mums from a 30 cell tray into 8" and 9" pots from about the second week of May thru the second week of June. The 2004 growing season was somewhat of a challenge. Because of the cool summer, we had mums wanting to set buds early, but we were able to slow down the bud set by feeding them more Growers Nutritional

Solutions.

We set our mum fields up in a way that we were able to apply Growers with a 30' boom field sprayer. We were also able to use a farm grade insecticide instead of a greenhouse grade which saved us chemical cost.

We applied Growers foliage spray at the rate of 1 gallon per 50 gallons of water every 7 days. Next year, if we have a warmer summer, we

will foliage feed every 10 days.

We grew a field of mums using Growers right next to another field of mums using a time release greenhouse grade fertilizer. The plant growth and flower sizes were equal, but we saved hundreds of dollars by using Growers foliage feed.

*Robin Cressley
Leighton, PA*

Christmas Tree Grower Sets Record Straight

By TGS Staff

Bev Mast, District Manager for eastern Pennsylvania, sent us a copy of a "Letter to the Editor" published in the *Christmas Tree News*. It was written by Don Hawthorne, a long time Christmas tree grower and Growers customer located about 20 miles northwest of Philadelphia.

Letter to the Editor

Gentlemen:

I read and reread your article on Needlecast by Dr. Ricky Bates of Penn State University in the September 2004 issue. Its recommendations for control of Rhabdocline are completely WRONG. Historically, Penn State people have focused on using toxins for combating problems rather than finding the root causes and permanently eradicating the pathogens.

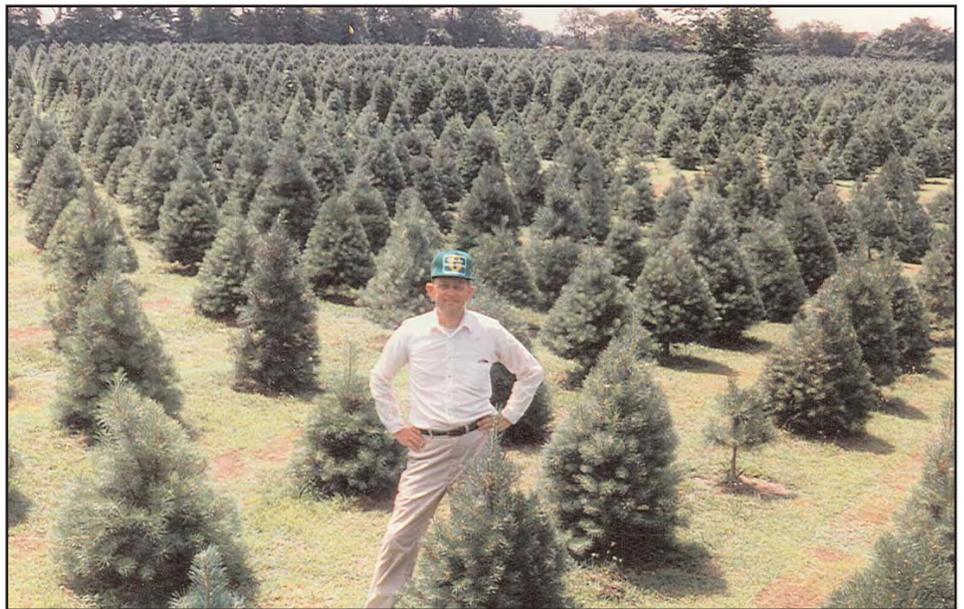
My Douglas had Rhabdocline. I used a 10-K lens to see the fruiting bodies. And I applied Bravo as recommended for two years. But then I found the eradication solution.

Soil tests indicated very low values for calcium. So I added lime by merely drop-spreading it across the surface on an established field (no plowing in or rototilling). The saturation level increased to 87 percent of CEC (but 75 percent should be good enough). I also applied a foliar fertilizer (liquid fish) after bud break and again in late May (Growers 10-20-10); this application also eliminates the Cooley Spruce gall aphid.

Now the Rhabdocline is gone and has not reappeared for at least four years. Last year I gave away the leftover Bravo to a corn farmer because I did not need it any longer.

People do not understand or refuse to acknowledge that the purpose of diseases and insects is to recycle unhealthy vegetation. If plants can obtain all the nutrients they require for good health, they will live a normal life cycle with no problems.

This very important principle is explained in many books on farming. Many are available



Donald Hawthorne, Limerick, Pennsylvania

from ACRES USA, Box 91299, Austin, TX 78709

*Sincerely yours,
Donald B. Hawthorne Jr.
Hawthorne Tree Farm, Limerick, PA*

On The Road Again — Spring 2005

Growers Nutritional 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.

Mar. 9-11

Western Fair Farm Show
London, Ont., Canada

Mar. 17-20

Can-Am Equine
Trade Show
London, Ont., Canada

Mar. 24

Lake Erie Grape Program
Dunkirk, NY

Mar. 24-26

Penna. Beef Expo
State College, PA

Hope To See You!

Long Time Growers Dairy Customer

By Lewis Diener of Arcola in Central Illinois

We started farming in 1968, and we started dairying in 1976. District Manager Harold Kennell came to us in 1974 with Growers. We used 30 gallons the first year in the row with the planter on corn and saw good results. Then we started adding hi cal lime and we kept adding a couple of tons every two or three years.

Later we started spraying all our forage crops. On hay it will go at about 2.5 gallons per acre after each cutting, and we can easily get 4 cuts per year. Hay samples have gone as high as 184 RFV and 23% protein. We do get better leaf retention on the alfalfa.

After we started foliar feeding we saw the difference in the cows. They would not eat as much feed as was recommended. They didn't need it. Over the years we had very little milk fever in our cows. We do feed Growers through our lick tanks. For several years we have been feeding biallage. It is baled at about 50%

moisture wrapped in large round bails, and the cows do like that.

When we started feeding the dairy cows up to 4 oz. of Growers per head per day, we had less heel warts to treat. Our ration was made up of shelled corn, ear corn, oats, beet pulp, soybean meal, brewers grain, Redmond salt, calcium, vitamins A, D, E and Growers. Our herd average was up to 20,000 pounds and 3.6 fat.

We feed a little to horses. We mix 2 gallons of Growers to a ton of oats and corn. They stay fat on less feed and they always have a good hair coat.

We also spray the vegetable garden with good results. Thanks to District Manager Harold Kennell and the Growers staff for bringing Growers to us. ■



Harold Kennell, D.M., with Lewis Diener's hay.

Growers Works Well For Pennsylvania Dairy Farmer

By Aaron L. Kanagy

Hello to Growers and whoever might read this. I have been using GNS now for a little over a year and I see more and more where it is helping me.

First, when the salesman, Elroy Saner, talked to me about it, I was rather slow in believing him simply because it sounded too good to be true.

I had gotten a couple of gallons to spray some corn that was not looking too great. I had some left over, and because I was having some problems with my cows, I thought I'll try it on them. I had one particular cow with real bad foot rot, so bad she didn't walk on it anymore. She was only fresh a couple of months and she was almost going dry because of her sore foot. I got some foot rot treatment from Agway to use on it, but it didn't do any good, so finally I decided I am going to try this "wonderful Growers".

I did not really think it would work any better, but I still thought it's worth trying. It was amazing to me how fast it did work. I

sprayed it right on the sore part of the foot twice a day and in a week she was walking almost normal. She started giving more milk again, so I kept on spraying for a couple of more weeks and it seemed totally better. However about half a year later it started coming back, so I sprayed it again for about a week and I did not see it since.

Note: Through the years GNS customers have reported many similar favorable happenings. Topically applied substances good and bad can be taken into the systems of animals which is the reason we must wear protective clothing when handling or spraying harmful chemicals. Likewise, beneficial products such as GNS can be helpful, but since there has been no valid research we can not recommend it. Eds.

Since then I have used GNS for mastitis either by rubbing it on the infected quarters or by drenching the cow with 6 to 8 ounces of

GNS in a quart of water twice a day. I also use it for cows that don't clean right. If I have a fresh cow that does not clean within a couple of hours of freshening, I drench her with 6 to 8 ounces of GNS in some water and almost every time within an hour she will completely clean and have no infection like I used to have a lot.

I have also seen where using enough high calcium lime on the field makes better crops, more crops and better quality crops. I had a field where I put 5 tons of high calcium burned lime on because it wasn't raising good crops. The next year we had nice hay there.

In the fall 2004 we put some hay in the silo; first off of a field where I never put much lime on and then off the field where I put 5 ton to the acre on. I could see a big difference in the haylage where it kept better and smelled sweeter and the cows liked it better. So I think I'll just keep on doing the whole farm like that. Put enough on the first time over, rather than putting a little bit on at a time. I think it pays. ■

Thoroughbred Horses Shine

By Jennie Henry

In September we went with the Ben Lengacher family and District Manager Ed Bulcher to the prestigious Keeneland Thoroughbred Yearling Sale at Lexington, Kentucky. I was amazed at the quality of beautiful yearling horse flesh in the warm up area waiting to enter the sales pavilion. All

were impeccably groomed, full of vitality and showing their eagerness to begin race training. We learned there were 3,370 horses sold there at an average of \$96,411.00 - each!

The Lengachers, Growers customers, are from Grabill, in northeast Indiana, and are fairly new to the Thoroughbred Horse industry. They are starting out by breeding a small number of brood mares and selling the foals at auction. It

is a competitive business with out of sight stallion, training and handling fees.

I saw their chestnut colt sell. He was huge, measuring 15.3 hands and because of his muscle tone and energy and his shiny, slick hair coat, he really stood out from the rest.

After the sale we had a chance to talk with Ben about his pasture fertility management

Please turn to page 6

Maximizing Resources

Continued from page 2

soon as they are visible and noxious weeds controlled. Cows rotate on irrigated pastures and alfalfa pastures as needed, allowing native pastures to rest.

"Abusing a pasture is hard on it-now and for future generations. Once abused, it is seldom that a pasture will return to the state it was before," Cindy Glaser states. "This land was here long before we were, and it's our duty to be stewards of the land."

Healthy Animals

The Glasers run about 350 cows, mainly Angus and black baldies. Their bull battery is comprised of mostly black Gelbvieh and black Balancers. The Glasers speak highly of the resulting offspring for three key reasons: 1) the "free lunch" hybrid vigor, 2) their ability to perform in the feedyard and 3) on the rail performance that indicates a top-quality end product.

"In the early days we used Gelbvieh bulls to lower our birth weights and increase weights at marketing," Glaser states. "When the beef industry began stressing carcass traits, we stayed with Gelbvieh, adding Balancers, and began using bulls that give us the best combination of growth and carcass. Today we put a heavy emphasis on carcass traits, even seeking bulls that have a double gene for marbling.

"This program is working for us. In addition to having calves for our feedyard that sell well on the grid, we have the option to use our heifers as replacements. This year, however, we opted to not keep any replacement heifers because their growth potential made them too valuable not to feed out," Glaser states.

Lighter-weight replacement heifers were purchased. These heifers were bred artificially for one round, then followed up 10 days later with bulls for natural service. Rather than have specific "heifer bulls," the Glasers prefer to use their younger Gelbvieh and Balancer bulls on their heifers. Ultrasound at 35 days revealed which heifers were settled AI and which ones the bulls serviced. If the price is right and a buyer wants them, the AI-bred heifers will be sold. If an agreement cannot be reached, then

the heifers will be kept and the Glasers will benefit from their AI investment as well.

Heifers AI-bred calve first. Heifers serviced by the bulls start calving March 1, with cows beginning March 20. Calving is completed by mid-May.

Newborn calves receive the typical vaccinations and first day protocols. But calves are never implanted.

"Those who market implants and many producers will insist that I'm missing some weight gain by not using implants," Glaser says. "We still have good weights and I believe we also have better value-added carcasses."

Calves are weaned from the cull cows in July. Other calves are weaned in September and are weaned in the pasture with a cross fence separating dams and their offspring. Glaser believes this creates less stress on the calves. After a week the calves go into the Glaser feedyard.

Pays to Sort

Because their feedyard holds more cattle than they can produce, the Glasers have Jerry's dad, Francis, seek other animals. He frequents the area livestock marketing facilities and has an eye for the good ones.

"Dad will look at tens of thousands of calves to find the right ones for us," Glaser says. "When we conduct the follow-up on these calves, most likely, the calves will be Gelbvieh-influenced. One thing we notice about Gelbvieh calves is that they have muscle, are docile and will be at the bunk eating when other cattle scatter."

The Glasers don't have a ruminant nutritionist. They rely on what's worked in the past and research to keep on top of what's available and will work in their program. To maintain their emphasis on a healthy animal, their feed ration includes the same trace mineral package that is used at planting. This trace mineral package, he says, helps build the immune system and keeps the use of antibiotics at a minimum.

All cattle are marketed on a value-based grid. As such, Glaser does a significant amount of sorting, as cattle come in and as they are ready to go out. Sorting is strictly by eye.

"I've been told that the most valuable tool for a cattleman is a sorting stick, and I know that to be true," Glaser notes.

Carcass summary data sheets reveal that Glaser is sorting his cattle as needed and that his genetics and management program are on target. For example, groups of spring heifers marketed March, June and October, 2004 resulted in 66 percent to 77 percent Choice. Almost every animal hits YG 1, 2 or 3, with a majority being YG 2. Three groups of steers were 80 percent to 85 percent Choice and YG 1, 2 and 3.

Another revealing area on Glaser's carcass summary data sheet is the settlement information. While the gross dollars amount always catches Glaser's attention, the premium paid over the "base Nebraska weighted average" is what really makes Glaser smile. Per head figures such as \$30.19, \$36.87, \$51.64 and \$58.06 on spring calf sheets and \$60.61, \$90.48 and \$126.43 on yearling steer sheets indicate that his operation's genetics and management are on track.

"Swift & Co. purchases 4.2 million cattle a year, and Jerry Glaser's cattle rank in the Top 1 percent," states Tim Schiefelbein, director of live cattle procurement for Swift & Co. "Jerry uses the right breed mix, and his from-the-ground-up program results in high-quality carcasses."

While Glaser is pleased that his packer likes his cattle and appreciates the performance of his cattle, the Glasers have another reason to smile. After all, they are achieving their goal as stated on Jerry's business card.

"Because we believe you are what you eat, we want to provide the American consumer with a product that is as nutrient dense and as healthy as possible," Glaser summarizes. "From our soil program to our feedyard program, our entire program is geared to be value-added and to make the beef produced here safe, wholesome and great tasting."

A pointed conversation with Tim Schiefelbein of Swift & Co. was the impetus for the Glasers to switch to Gelbvieh bulls. Jerry urges Gelbvieh seedstock producers to keep the breed's advantages and take steps not to dilute the breed's strengths.

Gelbvieh-cross calves are performing on the rail and helping the Glasers rest assured that they are producing beef that meet the demands of today's consumers. ■

Thoroughbred Horses

Continued from page 5

practices. Remembering back, he said, "We were having trouble with the grazing pasture. The horses would eat in certain areas, and the rest would go to weeds. We knew the soil was lacking, but we didn't know what to do about it. Then a man at the local feed store suggested I talk to Ed (Bulcher)."

When Ed saw Ben's pasture, he knew it needed calcium even though tests didn't call for it. Ed suggested he apply high calcium limestone, and to produce the best quality, maybe up to 15 tons per acre. In September 2003 and again in 2004, Ben applied 5 tons per acre. He is real pleased with his pasture condition now. "You walk out there today and it is just as thick as the yard, and the weeds are going away. The soil is just getting better and better. By applying 5 tons of lime each year we are doing it gentle and easy - long term is the way to go."

"When we spread the lime, we didn't get it all up where the pile had been. Now the horses eat the grass right down there. It looks like the boys had weed-eated it."

Ben is foliar spraying his pasture with GNS every 4 or 5 weeks. He said, "The growth has been unreal, but I think it will take another two or three years until we get the soils to their highest level. I'm studying the soils, and see they are still not as uniform as I would like. Now we are seeing more sweet white clover which Ed tells me only grows on high nutritional soils."

The hay gets three GNS foliar sprays each season. "The hay is awesome," Ben described. "When I throw a slab to a mare she just dives in. She doesn't smell it first or anything."

"My old hay guy called about an order," chuckled Ben, "but I told him the horses wouldn't eat it. You open up the Growers hay and the leaves are still there. It is a lot finer. The non-Growers hay is more coarse, and it loses its leaves so there are more stems. I think

the feeding value is probably 30% better with the Growers hay. You can see it."

Ben purchases his horse feed and tries to buy only feed grown on the Growers Program. He top dresses his feed with GNS.

"This year most everything is in place," Ben said. "The pasture, the hay and the nutritional feed, I'm pretty well set.." And Ed said, "You're starting to get all the genetic potential out of the animals." Ben continued, "I feel I am at about the highest nutritional potential I can be. The rest is up to the good Lord." Ed added, "The most important are the sunlight, air and water, and He provides that."

Ben is confident each year his horses will attract more attention at the sales even though he is new in an industry steeped in old traditions. "I definitely see a change in my horses. Guys try to sell me prepping stuff to add shine to the horse's coat and hooves, but I don't need it. The grass and pasture does it." That's the beauty of working with Growers - and Mother Nature. ■

Wineries Pleased

Continued from page 1

Don: "We've lowered the amount of nitrogen we are using, and we've almost cut out the potash usage."

Doug: "What kind of gallonage of Growers (GNS) do you use in a season?"

Don: "Depends on the varieties. Some are getting just four gallons of GNS per acre and some are getting up to eight gallons."

Doug: "What are you actually seeing?"

Don: "Well, quality of the grapes. Especially the sugar. That's been the issue here, especially for the juice and some of the wineries with the wine varieties. We just feel we are getting better sugar than we used to."

Doug: "How about vine health?"

Don: "Vine health. We thought we were coming along pretty well with that, but this was an adverse year, so we are not happy with this year's vine growth. I don't think that is the fault of any product out there. It was the season. Even early on, we thought we had good initial growth, but then as wet as we were, nothing looks good, wood wise, at this point."

Doug: "You mentioned some of the wineries, what were they saying to you?"

Don: "Well, they are pleased with the sugar. And it seems we were able to get to the harvest point quicker, especially compared to our neighbors who aren't using Growers. We watch what is going on around us and see we are achieving a little bit higher quality and a quicker harvest."

Doug: "Now, are you doing after harvest or late season foliar sprays?"

Don: "We are doing a lot of after harvest foliar spraying. But this year we did some of

what I would call "late season sprays." We knew by the time we finished picking, we wouldn't have canopy left to spray, so we sprayed a few of them before they even got harvested. We'll see how that turns out."

Doug: "Is this the first year for the late season sprays?"

Don: "We did a little last year, but we didn't watch it that close. Things get done during harvest sometimes, but if the guys don't keep good track for us, it is hard to follow up. When you are working 20 hours harvesting, then someone comes on a sprayer for 3 or 4 hours, just to get it done, we're happy."

Doug: "But despite the complaints I hear, if you really want to, it is possible to get that spray on."

Don: "Yes, it's a management decision. It's tough to do sometimes. Like I said, somebody has to be willing, after a long day of picking, to say, 'Well, I guess I'll go out and try to get that spraying done.'"

Doug: "You must feel it is worthwhile then, or you wouldn't struggle to get it done."

Don: "Yes, we can see it in the fall now, when we do that, the foliage is healthier and it even seems like it takes that first initial frost a little bit better than without it. It's hard to document it, but when you look around, it just seems like our vineyards look a little better than the ones that haven't had Growers."

Jim: "If after harvest is the optimum time to put Growers on, and you have to have leaves, like he was saying, we sometimes did it during harvest. We seem to carry our leaves a little longer than some of the others, but, I don't know, with the pressure of the year and disease, we might have sprayed more fungicides than the other growers. So, it's probably something we have to watch more in the years down the



Jim and Don Tones

road."

Doug: "I have heard other people say that after the first frost they could see exactly where they had put the Growers."

Jim: "Well, we thought we could."

Don: "Well that's true, because a lot of guys don't spray Growers. There are some of our wine varieties that we've always sprayed after harvest with a fungicide for powdery control, usually something like sulfur, just to knock the powdery out. And we've always seen a difference there with other vineyards losing their leaves way before we did, so there are some differences just in the spraying programs themselves."

Doug: "You are spreading high calcium lime. Tell me what your liming program has been and for how long and what you see."

Jim: "We have been spreading lime fifteen years at least. Back then we were doing maybe half a ton to a ton an acre figuring it was just maintenance. Your information tells us to push the calcium level, so we've been upping that. Now we do 2 ton or better per acre on some of it, but, with our acreage, it takes a while to get over it all. The soil seems to act a little different — so we are happy with it." ■

Farming With Growers Since 1963

Continued from page 1

increased our lime applications and our Growers acres.

In April, 1964 it became apparent at the grain elevator we were not totally following the Royster recommendations! I was told foliage fertilization was a fraud and that too much limestone would make my soil HARD. My boss gave me the option: either cancel the Growers order or terminate my employment at the elevator. I chose to leave my job, realizing as a result of that decision, our family of five would be without health care insurance.

It always amazes me how news like that gets around in a farming community. Our local Piqua Ag. Lime dealer came to me and, if I told no one, offered to give me a 14 ton load of lime FREE! Having just limed much of the farm with 2 tons per acre, I chose to apply an additional 8 tons on one acre, skip one acre and apply an additional 6 tons on the third acre.

The following years proved high-calcium lime would not make the soil hard. Just the opposite. The soil became so loose the mold-board plow would not throw a crown. The soils samples sent to Purdue and Ohio State revealed increases in phosphorus and potassium above the already high readings.

Also, in the 1960's we discovered alfalfa liked large amounts of calcium. We were selling premium alfalfa hay to River Downs Race Track in Cincinnati. Our lime dealer would apply 2 tons of lime immediately after the first cutting every year - weather permitting. I learned that lime dust seemed to stop the spittle bug and that saved an insect spray.

During these years of raising alfalfa Barney could not convince me to foliar feed alfalfa. One spring I consented to foliar half of one field. I remember going to the field with Barney later and saying, "See, there's no difference!" Barney said nothing and we walked out into the field and he cut off some plants from the foliar fed areas and the non-foliar fed areas. Barney laid cuttings out on the pickup's tailgate. WOW! A very noticeable difference. The plants were the same height, but the foliar fed plants had more branches and more and larger leaves.

This did not go unnoticed by my dad. I remember him making hay away from home

trying to have enough to feed his dairy herd. After my parents started liming and using Growers in the early to mid '60's, Dad found the Growers Program gave him enough alfalfa for his dairy plus he had some to sell to River Downs. The feed quality also improved. Dad learned that two gallons of Growers mixed into each batch of dairy feed had benefits. And whenever Wilbur Franklin had a seminar in our area, Dad was ready to go.

After church one Sunday, after we had had a heavy rain the night before, a neighboring farmer asked Dad, "How come water doesn't stand in your fields?" I don't remember Dad's answer, but I do remember Dr. Tiedjens had predicted that years earlier. Experience was teaching us soil physics and soil chemistry. I recall one wet spring we had just plowed, worked the ground and were planting corn. A neighbor stopped by and told us it was too wet to plant corn. He walked into our fields, picked up some clods of soil and crumbled them in his hand. I noticed him shaking his head. He just didn't understand and commented that his clods would make good mud balls!

During the 2000 corn harvest where the 8 ton and 6 ton limestone plots were put in, I couldn't make a full round with the combine until I harvested beyond them. Only then did I not have quite a bin full in a round. Steve commented, "Dad, your lime plots are still showing up." In the past forty years the whole farm probably has had forty plus tons of Piqua Ag. Lime. I asked myself, "Could these lime plots still be making a difference after thirty six years?"

Some of you may have seen the article in the Fall 1995 issue of *The Growers Solution* entitled "Fourth Generation with Growers." Our granddaughter, Sarah Link, had received a Superior Rating at the county and district level science fairs for her projects concerning the importance of 85% calcium saturation in the base exchange. This came as a result of her having studied Dr. Tiedjen's writings.

Back in April 1964, Sarah's mother, then a second grader, asked her mother what it meant to "get fired." The bus driver had told her that her dad had been fired from his elevator job. Her mother explained to her little girl the

decision her dad had made. It takes an understanding wife to accept the decision her husband had made. In the fall of 1964, under new management, I was reinstated in my job at the elevator. I continued on there until 1972 when we purchased the dealership for Piqua Ag Lime, the same dealership that had given us the 14 ton load of free lime back in 1964.

I was told in April 1964, "If you don't plow down potash you won't be farming long." and "Foliage feeding won't work, you don't rub soybean meal on a cow's back." I was even called a "Jug Farmer" by a dry fertilizer salesman. Sure glad I didn't take his advise!

Later a customer called me thinking he killed his Royal Burgundy garden beans foliar feeding with Growers. All but a few of them looked dead. I suggested he water them heavily and wait. Soon most of them came roaring back to life. They told me later they had canned 200 quarts, enough for their family. I tell my customers, "More Growers is not necessarily better!" A dairy farmer free choosing Growers says his cows go for GNS like he goes for soft drinks, but then another dairyman three miles away said his animals weren't interested in Growers free choiced.

On field crops in an ideal year, weather wise, some neighbors might top your yields. But when we have less than ideal conditions, I can hear Wilbur Franklin saying, "The Growers Program will shine like a beacon." I have experienced that! Two years ago, when it was very dry and my beans averaged forty one bushels per acre and the corn 117 bushels, my son said, "Haven't heard any neighbors talking about yields that good." When we have a very wet year the drowned out spots on neighboring farms are much larger than they were years ago. I remember so well Dr. Tiedjens asking, "What are you going to do in a real wet year?" or "What are you going to do in a real dry year?"

Now, forty years later, I understand and my thanks go to Dr. Tiedjens for his pioneer research.

I would also like to say how much I have appreciated working with Dr. Tiedjens, Wilbur Franklin, Ralph Humes, Ed Bulcher and Jim Halbeisen. Also, a big "Thank You!" to Mr. and Mrs. Joe Henry, Jennie and the staff at Growers for continuing the Growers Program. ■

Be Careful With Rust Chemicals

By Jim Halbeisen

Many of the agricultural publications are giving continual updates on all the various aspects of Asian soybean rust. One article that attracted our attention said that grazing stubble or making silage from

soybeans that have been chemically sprayed for the rust could be a problem.

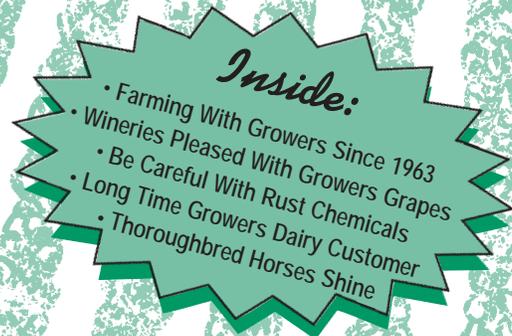
We contacted Dr. Teung F. Chin, a biological scientist from the Office of Pest Management Policy of the Agricultural Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture about this issue.

Dr. Chin told us that different chemicals used to prevent Asian soybean rust have differing label restrictions. Therefore, any farm operation that might possibly graze soybean stubble or make soybean hay or silage needs to check the chemicals' labels before using to forestall future problems. ■

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Limiting Pesticide Use With The Growers Program

By Jim Halbeisen

While conversing with Growers Nutritional Solutions (GNS) customers this past summer, we found a pesticide issue needing to be addressed. Once growers, especially vegetable producers, have the Growers Program well established, they usually find their operations' pesticide needs much reduced. They see as soil health improves, plant vitality improves also. However, there needs to be some precautions.

Plant pathologists tell us as plants become healthier their protective mechanisms kick in to deal with injurious plant infections which can be in the form of insects, bacteria, fungus, virus, etc. With very severe plant infections the producer may need to use some pesticide to help the plant along.

For example, during the summer of 2004 many areas of North America had long periods of continued overcast wet weather, which is very conducive to fungus infections and mold infestations. Most long time GNS customers have never totally walked away from pesticides, but they have been able to use lesser amounts or less caustic replacements. Also, many customers wisely start early with some sort of protection when plants are prone. Then, as the season progresses and if the environmental conditions allow, they may be able to reduce their pesticide inputs. Most producers believe it is best to prevent plant problems rather than to trying to cure them after they have had a chance to become established.

So, our point is, when dealing with insects, bacteria, fungus or virus, producers should try

preventative measures early, even though the infections may not have expressed themselves yet. This way, if the environment becomes ripe for problems, they will be ahead of the game.

We at Growers Chemical Corporation believe healthy soils are fundamental for healthy plants because they can better resist infections. However, when the environment encourages plant infections, even the healthy may need some protective help.

So once again the old farmers had it right; an ounce of protection is worth a pound of cure. ■

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*March is the Last Month
for a Discount!*

Early Order Discounts

It's not too late to take advantage of the Growers seasonal Cash In Advance of Delivery (CIAD). The CIAD for March is 2%. After March, there will be no additional discounts for the rest of the growing season. Call your Growers representative for an explanation of the early order discounts, quantity pricing, and delivery of Growers Nutritional Solutions. ■