LOUISIANA CROPS NEWSLETTER

Cotton, Corn, Soybeans, Sorghum

Volume 2, Issue 1

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Agronomic Effects of Corn Residue Burning

Dr. John Kruse

Many corn producers in Louisiana asked about the agronomic effects of burning corn residue after harvest. Growers had the opportunity for the first time in several years to work their fields in the fall in preparation for the 2011 growing season, and several saw residue burning as a quick and effective option for 'cleaning up a field' so that equipment could move through it more effectively. Residue burning has a substantial impact on grower fields because of the large amount of material involved.

The residue remaining in a field after harvest is roughly equal to the weight of the grain removed – on a dry weight basis. The USDA Agricultural Statistics of 1990 and a report from the National Research Council both published corn residue values that puts total residue from corn at about 7,108 pounds of residue per acre. A recent analysis of corn stover taken from a field in Franklin Parish that yielded between 180 and 200 bushels per acre showed that when the stover was burned, there was a 81% loss of N, 11% P, 18% K, and 55% S. The following is an example from a 150 bu/acre corn yield with 15% moisture content:

150 bu/acre – 15% moisture = 8400 lbs – 1260 lbs = 7140 lbs residue in the field.

Corn residues have reserves of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium (Table 1) that are returned to the soil and have the potential to be utilized by subsequent crops as the residues mineralize and release the nutrients.

Table 1. Nutrient content of corn residue in percent and lbs per acre for a 150 bushel/acre yield.

	Nitrogen		Phosphorus		Potassium		Sulfur	
	%	Lbs/A	%	Lbs/A	%	Lbs/A	%	Lbs/A
USDA 1990	0.95	67	0.1	7	1.45	104	0.17	12
SDSU 2006	0.60	43	0.2	14	1.22	87	0.08	6

The benefits of burning include more rapid warming and drying of soil in the spring, since large amounts of residue left on the soil surface can insulate the ground and trap moisture. Of course, if we continue to have a dry winter, moisture retention may be a benefit provided by undisturbed residue. Burning may also make more phosphorus and potassium available in the ash, as long as the ash is incorporated and does not blow away. Nitrogen availability is more of a mixed bag: burning residue releases nitrogen in the form of a gas and is lost, however, what nitrogen remains is no longer bound in complex carbon structures that microbes must decompose over time, so it is more quickly available. If the residue is burned in the fall, though, the available nitrogen may leach over the winter and be lost from the field. Sulfur is also similar to nitrogen in this regard, with approximately 75% lost in the burning process and some quickly available as sulfate that may leach over winter.

Nutrient losses from burning have real economic value when applied across an entire

farm. Consider the example of a 100 acre corn farm that averaged 150 bushels per acre. Taking the average of the values supplied by the USDA and SDSU, and assuming 100% N loss and 75% S loss one could assume the loss of several thousand dollars in potential fertilizer replacement (Table 2).

Table 2. Replacement costs of nitrogen and sulfur if burned from crop residue on 100 acres.

Nitrogen	$0.60/lb	$0.80/lb	$1.00/lb
	33/Acre	$44/acre	$55/acre
Sulfur	$0.20/lb	$0.30/lb	$0.40/lb
	$1.80	$2.70	$3.60
Total x 100 acres	$3,480	$4,670	$5,860

There are always situations where a producer may feel the need to burn heavy crop residue. Bearing in mind the potential value of the nutrients that will be lost, as well as the loss of soil-building carbon, will help the grower decide when it is appropriate.

References:

Gelderman, R. Estimating nutrient loss from crop residue fires. Extension Extra. ExEx8164. June 2009. South Dakota State University.

National Research Council Subcommittee on Beef Cattle. Nutrient Requirements of Beef Cattle, 6th Ed. National Academy of Sciences. Washington, D.C. 1984. Chapter 7.

USDA, Agricultural Statistics 1990. U.S. Government Printing Office. Washington, D.C., 1990, 372.

Corn Varieties for Louisiana 2011 and ranking for tolerance against the Southern root-knot nematode

Dr. Charles Overstreet

All of the varieties are considered susceptible. However, the lower the ranking in the list, the less reproduction by the nematode.

Variety	Root-knot ranking
AgriGold A6479VT3	65
AgriGold A6489VT3	86
AgriGold A6533VT3	81
AgriGold A6632VT3Pro	91
AgriGold A6633VT3	72
AgriGold A6839	44
Armor 1161PRO	31
Armor 1511C	1
Armor 1545PRO	52
Armor 1655PRO	89
Armor 1868PRO	57
Armor BXC028VT3	62
Armor BXG080GT	27
B-H Genetics BH 8895VTTP	43
B-H Genetics X9150G	75
Croplan 6725VT3/P	60
Croplan 7131VT3	19
Croplan 8505VT3/P	28
Croplan 8756VT3	70
Dekalb DKC61-05	54
Dekalb DKC64-69	55
Dekalb DKC64-83	73
Dekalb DKC65-63	15
Dekalb DKC66-96	76
Dekalb DKC67-88	78
Dekalb DKC68-05	68
Delta Grow 2888	9
Delta Grow 3788	21
Delta Grow 3988	2
Dyna-Gro 57V21	23
Dyna-Gro 57V59	58
Dyna-Gro 58V69	49
Dyna-Gro 58V72	29

Golden Acres 26V31	34
Golden Acres 27V01	77
Golden Acres 28V81	36
Pioneer 31D62 (YGCB,RR2)	10
Pioneer P1184HR	66
Pioneer P1615HR	50
Pioneer P1745HR	93
Pioneer P2023HR	16
REV 25HR39	8
REV 25HR49	39
REV 25R19	26
REV 25R29	22
REV 26HR50	17
REV 28HR20	12
REV 28HR29	69
REV 28HR30	11
REV 28R10	5
REV 28R30	32

Image 1: Root-knot stunting on right, treated on left

Ranking for all the corn varieties are from Dr. Terry Kirkpatrick at the University of Arkansas. He tested 94 varieties and included a number that are not on our list for Louisiana. The lower the ranking, the less reproduction occurs on this variety. The variety with the highest ranking produced 45 times more nematodes than the lowest ranking variety.

If you have fields with the Southern root-knot nematode, try to choose varieties that have a lower ranking. This will at least reduce the population increase of this nematode for whatever crop that might be grown the next year. This would be particularly important when using corn as a rotational crop with cotton, soybeans, or sweet potato. Although corn is a great host for the root-knot nematode, it is often difficult to observe the very small galls produced on the root system.

Image 2: Root-knot galling on corn

Are There Errors in the Louisiana Crops Newsletter?

Would you like to receive our Newsletter?

Let us know!
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The reaction of nematodes to the various 2011 soybean varieties

Dr. Charles Overstreet

Group III and early IV Varieties	Root-knot	Reniform	Soybean Cyst R3	Soybean Cyst R14
Armor 42-M1	MS	-	MS	MR
Croplan 4417	S	-	-	-
Croplan 4455	S	-	-	-
Delta Grow 4470RR	S	-	MS	MS
Delta King DKR 4440	S	S	MS	MS
Dyna-Gro 36C44	S	-	S	MS
Pioneer 94Y40	S	-	S	R
Progeny P4206RR	-	-	R	MR
S07-5049	S	S	S	MS
Group IV late				
Armor 47-F8	S	S	S	MS
Armor 47-G10	S	S	MS	MS
Armor ARX 1471	S	S	MS	MS
Armor ARX 47-R33	S	S	S	S
Asgrow AG4605	-	-	MR	S
Asgrow AG4630	S	S	S	S
Asgrow AG4730	S	-	S	S
Asgrow EXP948R2	S	S	S	S
Channel 4851R Brand	-	-	MS	S
Croplan 4877	S	-	-	-
Croplan 4998	S	-	-	-
Delta Grow 4770 RR	S	-	S	MR
Delta Grow 4880RR	S	S	MS	MR
Delta Grow 4970RR	S	-	S	MS
Delta Grow 4975RR	S	-	MS	MR
Delta King DK 4968	S	-	S	MS
Delta King DKR 4744	S	S	S	S
Delta King DKX 1473	S	S	MS	MR
Delta King DKX 1491	S	S	S	S
Dyna Gro 33G48	S	S	MS	MR
Dyna-Gro 36Y48	S	-	S	S

HALO 4:94 LL	S	-	-	-
HBK R4729	R	S	S	MS
HBK R4829	S	S	S	MR
HBK R4924	S	S	S	MS
HBK RY4920	MS	S	S	MR
MorSoy RTS 4824	S	-	S	S
MorSoy RTS 4955N	S	-	S	MR
Group III and early IV Varieties	**Root-knot**	**Reniform**	**Soybean Cyst R3**	**Soybean Cyst R14**
MorsSoy RT 4914N	S	-	S	S
Pioneer 94Y70	S	-	S	MR
Pioneer 94Y80	S	-	R	MR
Progeny P4606RR	S	-	-	-
Progeny P4610RY	-	-	-	-
Progeny P4807RR	S	-	-	-
Progeny P4906RR	S	-	-	-
Progeny P4908RR	S	-	-	-
Progeny P4920RY	S	-	-	-
Progeny P4928LL	S	-	-	-
Progeny P4949RR	S	-	-	-
Progeny P4960LL	MS	-	-	-
S06-3095 RR	S	-	-	-
S07-5151	S	S	S	MS
Schillinger 457.RCP	S	-	MR	MR
Schillinger 458.RCS	S	-	MS	MS
Schillinger 478.RCS	S	-	S	MR
Schillinger 495.RC	S	-	MS	MR
Schillinger 499.RC	S	S	MR	R
Schillinger 4990.RC	S	S	MS-MR	MR
Terral REV 48R10	S	-	-	-
Terral TV49R17	S	-	S	S
UA 4805	S	-	S	MS
UA 4910	S	S	MS	S
USG 74F96	S	-	MR	MS
Group V				
AGS 554 RR	R	-	S	MS
AGS 597 RR	S	-	S	S
Armor 53-Z5	S	-	MS	MR

Armor ARX 1535	S	S	MR	MR
Armor ARX 1551	S	S	S	S
Armor ARX 1552	S	S	S	S
Asgrow AG5503	MR	-	S	MS
Asgrow AG5606	MR	-	R	MR
Asgrow AG5831	S	-	-	-
Croplan 5007	-	-	R	S
Croplan 5222	-	-	R	MR
Croplan 5419	-	-	R	MR
Croplan 5663	S	-	-	-
Delta Grow 5555RR	S	-	S	S
Group V Varieties	**Root-knot**	**Reniform**	**Soybean Cyst R3**	**Soybean Cyst R14**
Delta Grow 5970RR	S	-	MR	MR
Delta King DKX 1533	S	S	MS	MR
Delta King DKX 1534	S	S	MS	MR
Delta King DKX 1539	S	S	S	MS
Delta King GP-533	S	-	S	S
Dyna-Gro 33X55	R	-	MS	S
Dyna-Gro 35F55	S	-	S	S
Dyna-Gro 35P53	MS	S	S	S
HALO 5:65 LL	-	-	MR	-
HBK R5226	MR	-	S	MS
HBK R5525	MR	-	MS	MS
HBK R5529	S	-	S	S
HBK R7028	-	-	S	S
HBK RY5220	S	S	MS	MS
HBK RY5820	S	S	S	S
Jake	MR	-	S	R
MorSoy RT 5168	S	-	MS	MS
MorSoy RT 5388N	S	-	MR	MR
MorSoy RT 5429	MR	-	-	-
MorSoy RT 5688N	S	-	S	MS
Osage	S	-	S	S
Pioneer 95Y01	S	-	R	MR
Pioneer 95Y40	S	-	MS	MR
Progeny P5110RY	-	-	R	MR
Progeny P5115RR	MR	-	R	-
Progeny P5160LL	MS	-	-	-

Progeny P5210RY	R	-	R	MR
Progeny P5218RR	MR	-	MR	S
Progeny P5460LL	MR	-	-	-
Progeny P5610RY	R	-	R	MR
Progeny P5622RR	S	-	R	MR
Progeny P5650RR	S	-	R	MR
Progeny P5706RR	MS	-	R	MR
Progeny P5960LL	MR	-	-	-
S05-11268	S	-	MS	MR
S05-11482	MR	-	MS	R
Terral REV 54R10	S	-	-	-
Terral TV54R28	MS	-	MS	MR
Terral TV55R15	S	-	S	MR
Terral TV55R20	S	-	S	MS
Group V Varieties (continued)	**Root-knot**	**Reniform**	**Soybean Cyst R3**	**Soybean Cyst R14**
Terral TV59R16	MS	-	S	S
USG 7582nRR	S	-	MR	MR

Soybean ratings are R = resistant; MR = moderately resistant; MS = moderately susceptible; S = susceptible. A dash indicates that no information is available about the reaction of the nematode to the variety.

The reaction of the various soybean varieties that are on the list for Louisiana during 2011 were obtained from several sources including pest ratings from the seed companies, reniform ratings from Dr. Robert Robbins in Arkansas, and Dr. Terry Kirkpatrick with the Arkansas soybean selection program. There are a few varieties which have resistance against the Southern root-knot nematode. None of the varieties have any resistance against the reniform nematode. Soybean cyst nematode has been widespread in Louisiana in the past but has not been a serious problem for several years. However, we are constantly remaining vigilant to prevent the development of a race that can attack the normal varieties that are grown in our state. Continue to use crop rotation with corn, milo, cotton, sweet potatoes, rice, or sugarcane if any problem fields are identified. Use varieties with multiple resistances to various races if soybeans are produced in the same area for more than one year. Contact your local county agent if soybean cyst nematode appears to be causing damage especially if resistant varieties are being used. Many soybean varieties don't show symptoms of Soybean Cyst Nematode but still can sustain considerable yield damage.

An FYI From Donna Morgan of the Master Farmer Program

A Phase I, Master Farmer Program Training will be held at the LSU Ag Center Facility on 119 Robin Street in Napoleonville, LA on January 26th from 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. There will be a lunch provided. Livestock and Cropland Producers from all surrounding parishes (Lafourche, Terrebonne, Assumption, Ascension, St. James, Iberville, St. John, St. Charles) are encouraged to attend.

To become a certified Master Farmer, you must complete three phases:

I. Training (8 hours of classroom instruction)
II. Attend a Model Farm Field Day put on by the LSU Ag Center III.
III. Request an RMS Plan be developed by NRCS/Implement the plan on the entire farming operation that the producers has control over.

This program is voluntary, and there is no timeframe to complete the certification process.

For more information, please contact Donna Morgan at 318.229.9955 or dsmorgan1@suddenlink.net

Poultry Litter Use in Louisiana Row Crops

John Kruse and James Hendrix

Higher fertilizer costs for Louisiana crops such as corn, cotton and grain sorghum have caused many producers to inquire about the potential value of poultry litter as a source of crop nutrients. Grower experience and recent research both indicate poultry litter can serve as an excellent 'base fertilizer' in many instances, but because of its nature, this product should rarely be relied upon as the only fertilizer applied on an annual basis for a summer crop such as corn or cotton.

What is Poultry Litter?

Poultry litter is a mixture of poultry manure and the bedding material used in commercial chicken and turkey operations. A layer of bedding material typically made up of rice hulls, wood shavings or sawdust is placed upon the flooring surface in these facilities. . After one to several batches of birds are raised in the facility, the blend of bedding material and manure is removed from the poultry house and stored outside. The composition of nutrients and organic materials in poultry litter can vary greatly depending on the sources of bedding material, duration of use, and the feeding regimen of the birds.

Nutrient Value

Care should be taken to thoroughly sample poultry litter to determine its exact nutrient content for macronutrients such as N, P, and K, as well as secondary and micronutrients such as Ca, Mg, S, Cu, Fe, Mn, Zn and B. An average value of N, P_2O_5 (Phosphate), and K_2O (Potash) for poultry litter is around 60 pounds of each nutrient per ton of poultry litter. This product is an organic material, so most of the nutrients require some time to be decomposed (broken down) by soil microorganisms (beneficial soil bacteria and fungi). Roughly a quarter of the nitrogen in poultry litter is in the plant-usable inorganic form of ammonia-N (NH_3-N), but this form of N can easily volatilize if the material is surface-applied and not incorporated quickly. Another reason to incorporate poultry litter after application is to reduce the potential for surface runoff of organic N and P, which can add to downstream nutrient overloads and result in eutrophication and degraded waters. Research has shown that 30 to 80% of the nitrogen will be available to a crop in the year that a poultry litter application is made. As a rule of thumb, most producers should estimate about 50% of the total N and 90% of the P_2O_5 and K_2O will be available in the first growing season. Poultry litter is also alkaline in nature and can have a liming effect on soils. Perhaps its greatest asset is that because it is organic, it is an excellent source of organic carbon, adding cation exchange capacity to the soil and increasing soil structure and water holding capacity if used over several years.

Photos provided by USDA ARS

How to Use Poultry Litter

Timing: For optimum benefits during the year of application, it is best to apply poultry litter just prior to spring planting. This reduces the amount of nutrients subject to volatilization and vulnerable to runoff and leaching from winter rains. This also results in the highest nutrient availability for the current year's crop.

Rate: Apply poultry litter based on the crops phosphorus needs, not its nitrogen needs. Most Louisiana row crops need much more N than P, so applying it at rates that meet a crop's N needs leads quickly to excess P in the soil. This excess P can not only run-off, but can compete with other nutrients for availability and uptake. Take adequate soil tests of a field to determine its P needs, and apply poultry manure accordingly. **Supplement the amount of N and K a crop needs that are not met by the litter with standard fertilizer sources.**

Method: Apply at least one to one and half tons of poultry litter per acre, when appropriate. Many producers and consultants note that lesser amounts are difficult to apply evenly due to the clumpy nature of the material. Incorporate quickly after application to reduce volatilization and runoff . Utilize a manure spreader that has been calibrated with poultry litter, as this material spreads differently than other organic materials such as dairy manure.

Benefits of Poultry Litter

A recent demonstration project conducted at the Scott Research Center located on the Macon Ridge indicated that two applications of 1.5 tons of poultry litter per acre over a two year period resulted in an increase in cotton lint yield of 111 pounds per acre (946 lbs of lint per acre on the treated plots and 835 lbs of lint per acre on the untreated plots) in 2010.

Agronomic research with rice demonstrated that poultry

litter was more effective increasing rice yields on precision-graded silt loam soil more than on precision-graded clay soil, indicating coarser textured soils may respond better to the addition of poultry litter than heavier clay soils. This effect is likely due to an increase in soil organic matter as a result of applying poultry litter. Soils with higher organic matter have greater nutrient exchange capacity, more developed soil structure, increased levels of beneficial microorganisms and greater water holding capacity than similar soils with less soil organic matter.

Potential Drawbacks

The incorrect or excessive use of poultry litter as a fertilizer source can lead to excess N and P in the environment, potentially causing negative environmental consequences. Poultry litter is similar to all manure-based materials that have the potential to be a source of plant pathogens , but proper litter application management should minimize contamination risks. In additional, organic operators and conventional producers that repeatedly utilize poultry litter as their major fertilizer source risk an increase of soil arsenic. A primary feed additive used in commercial broiler operations to help control parasites and increase weight gain is arsenic. Most of the arsenic in these additives is excreted as waste. Soils that stabilize arsenic are loamy to clay soils that are acidic to neutral, and not subject to frequent flooding or have shallow water tables. Arsenic toxicity to plants increases on sandy soils, high pH soils or wet soils. The occasional use of poultry litter rarely leads to arsenic concentrations in the soil that would affect plant development, but this heavy metal may increase in soils when applied repeatedly at heavy rates.

Other Factors to Consider

- Increased weed seed germination – many producers have noted an increase in weed seed germination after an application to crop fields. This occurrence is likely due to the addition of nutrients to the soil as well as organic acids scarifying and stimulating weed seeds to germinate, not from weed seed present in the litter.
- Analyze both soil and poultry litter to determine correct use rates.
- Calculate the cost of both material and transportation to make sure it makes sense and is truly cost effective. Producers should also calculate the cost for supplemental sources of fertilizers to complete the annual fertility program for a crop.

Example Poultry Litter Use Calculator:

Step 1. A producer soil samples his field and determines he needs 190 pounds of N, 35 pounds of P_2O_5, and 60 pounds of K_2O to grow corn.

Step 2. He then has some poultry litter analyzed and finds that it is: 3% N, 3.3% P_2O_5, and 2.5% K_2O, and has 38% moisture. Litter analysis reported on an “as is” wet basis.

Step 3. He calculates the amount of phosphorus (P_2O_5) needed on a dry matter basis.

P_2O_5 Needed	% P_2O_5 in litter	Calculate	= Pounds of dry litter
35	3.3	35/0.033	1061

Step 4. Convert to wet basis. This calculation corrects for the weight of moisture (water) in the litter.

Dry litter needed	% Moisture	Calculate		= as is wet litter needed
1061	38	100% - 38% = 62%	1061 lbs/0.62	1711

Step 5. Determine how much supplemental N is needed from other fertilizer sources. Assume 50% N availability over the growing season.

Wet material applied	% dry matter	Calculate dry matter content	= Dry matter applied	%N in poultry litter	Calculate N applied	= N applied dry basis	Available N = 50%	Supplemental N needed for corn crop
1711	62	1711*0.62	1061	3	1061*0.03	32	32*0.5=16	190-16=174

Upcoming Calendar Events for 2011

Jan 28

Louisiana Cotton and Grain Association Annual Meeting, Bayou DeSiard Country Club, Monroe, LA 9:00 am through lunch

Feb 1-2

National Conservation Systems Cotton and Rice Conference, Crown Plaza, Baton Rouge, LA

February 3-4th, 2011

Louisiana Ag Industries Association (LAIA) Annual Convention, Paragon Casino & Resort, Marksville, LA. Members and representatives from the seed, fertilizer, chemical, grain, and feed industries are invited to attend this annual meeting which will be held at the Paragon Casino Resort in Marksville. This meeting is open to any and all producers, consultants, industry representatives, and LSU AgCenter personnel. Registration begins at 8:00am on Thursday and meeting will start at 9:00 am. For more information, please contact Donna Morgan at 318.229.9955 or dsmorgan1@suddenlink.net

Feb 16

Rapides Parish Cotton Meeting 8:30-12:00 /Dewitt Livestock 100 Gregg Marshall Drive Alexandria, LA 71302

Feb 1-28

Vote on national sorghum referendum at local FSA offices. Producers that growing sorghum since national checkoff began in 2008 are eligible to vote.

Feb 9-11

Louisiana Agricultural Technology and Management Conference, Alexandria, LA

July 7-10

Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting, New Orleans Marriott, New Orleans, LA

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Weeds	Corn, Grain Sorghum, Cotton. Soybeans	Bill Williams	318-334-36309(cell)	bwilliams@agcenter.lsu.edu
Weeds	Corn, Grain Sorghum, Cotton weed control. Soybeans	Daniel Stephenson	318-308-7225(cell)	dstephenson@agcenter.lsu.edu
Entomology	Cotton, Corn, Soybean, Grain Sorghum	Rogers Leonard	318-435-2157 318-334-0147(cell)	rleonard@agcenter.lsu.edu
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