

SOIL TEST INFORMATION SHEET NO. C-180

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Sugarcane

1. On soils with no recent history of sugarcane, nitrogen rates may be reduced 25-35 percent from recommended rates due to residual soil nitrogen.
2. Higher recommended rates of nitrogen are needed for fine-textured soil (clay and silty clay) than for coarse-textured soils and for stubble cane than for plant cane.
3. Recommended N, P, and K fertilizers should be applied during April or May.
4. Recent research has shown that applying 15-45-45 or 45-45-45 "starter" fertilizer per acre in the furrow ahead of planting either succession cane or cane after a fallow year can increase yields throughout the cycle. Follow the recommended fertilizer program in the spring in addition to this "starter" amount in the fall.
5. Lime should be applied when the soil pH is below 5.5 on sandy and silt loam soils, and below 5.2 on heavier textured soils. Use dolomitic lime when soil test magnesium levels are medium or lower. For best results, lime should be applied and incorporated during the fallow year.
6. Sulfur usually increases yields in clay soils with stubble cane. Sulfur can be applied annually at a rate of 24 pounds of sulfur in the sulfate form annually, or 1 ton of gypsum I the fallow year.
7. Research has shown that the application of micronutrients is not usually needed for sugarcane in Louisiana.
8. Contact your county agent for additional information and help in your fertilization program. The agent also receives a copy of this report for the parish office files.