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Questions & Answers

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Question: I fertilized my soccer field with a 3-point hitch spin type fertilizer spreader. Although I am certain I covered the entire field with fertilizer, a month later there were green stripes running the entire length of the field. What is the proper way to spread granular fertilizer on a field?

Answer: When applying granular fertilizer through a spinner or pendulum type broadcast spreader it is important to be aware that:

Every broadcast spreader has an overlap requirement. Most spinner type spreaders also have an adjustment to correct one-sided pattern variations caused by size and weight of material being spread. Knowing your equipment and following your owner's manual is imperative in providing a uniform, effective application. Any noticeable variation in turf color is probably the product of either:

- Improper overlap
- Improper pattern adjustment
- Variations in ground speed

- 1 **Operate the tractor at PTO speed** (generally 2200-2500 RPM) and at a comfortable ground speed. I prefer 4-5 MPH. At faster speeds you run the risk of scuffing the turf on your turns.
- 2 **Be certain your spreader is calibrated to deliver the proper amount of fertilizer.** Refer to the operator's manual of the spreader for specific calibration and overlap technique.
- 3 **Make one pass around the entire area** you will be fertilizing. I make a second pass on the ends (headlands) of the field parallel to the first. The second pass gives me more room to make my turns and minimizes the potential for scuffing the turf.
- 4 **Make evenly spaced parallel passes up and down the length of the field.** Maintain the proper spacing between your wheel marks. (See Field Tips)
- 5 If the turf is thin and you can't see your wheel marks, mark off the spacing on the ends of the field (headlands) with flags, then just aim for the flags. Be sure to close the spreader chute when you reach the ends (headlands) of the field to avoid over application.

Suggestion:

- **Try not to make sharp turns within the playing area.** This will minimize the potential for turf damage.
- **Never fill or calibrate a spreader on turf areas.** A spill today will haunt you for months to come.
- **Always close fertilizer hopper before stopping tractor.**
- **Always resume forward speed before opening fertilizer hopper.**

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