

Low Input—

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page that does not have a compound that contains phosphorus. Every once in a while minors are mentioned, but gee, most soils really don't need them, do they?

You can truly have a soil with no calcium and a PH above 7. Magnesium raises PH 1.4 times as much as an equal amount of calcium, and potassium also has a significant effect on soil PH. Potassium can replace many of the functions of calcium in a cell, although poorly. Unfortunately there is not much profit to be made in selling lime rock.

I would recommend that you all read a book by Neil Kennsey called "Hands On Agronomy." This book is published by Acres U.S.A., P.O. Box 8800, Metairie, Louisiana 70011, ISBN: 0-911311-39-4, Library of Congress: 92-076121.

It is the least voodoo/snakeoil/foofoodust/cosmic free energy/radionic/orogne energy/ideas your poor mind just can't handle, of them all, in its approach and, is a very good introduction to a possibly saner approach to plant culture.

I can't prove to you that these methods work. In a totally disrupted soil it could take years to restore it to a functioning ecosystem. The first step is to stop poisoning your soils with chlorine. If you use KCl in any of your fertilizer blends, stop on a portion of your course. One hundred pounds of KCl or murate of potash contains close to 40 pounds of chlorine. This same amount on an acre of soil would be a pound and a half of K per thousand and a pound of chlorine.

If you run the math on this, you have a concentration of chlorine that's many times the parts per million that you would find in a swimming pool. In short, you have just sterilized the top several inches of your soil. This is unfortunately the zone where most of the microbes that could do your plants some good live.

This is the zone where the aerobes (needing oxygen) that fix nitrogen live. This is the zone where the aerobic microbes that digest thatch live. This is the zone that the aerobic microbes that produce antibiotics that keep disease organisms in check live. This is the zone that if it is anaerobic (lacking oxygen) due to compaction or that horrible sand that compresses to leave no pore space will stunt your grass every bit as much as if you had sterilized it with clox. This is the zone where life happens.

We are even taught in school that KCl should be avoided. Yet when we enter our profession, it is almost impossible to avoid it. Even highly respectable fertilizer companies use it in their "Fairway" or "Rough" grades. Almost all the ag. grades we use on our roughs contain it.

This is the saddest situation of all. Our roughs are mostly low maintenance turf and the area that is most likely to achieve a sustainable ecosystem if it was not routinely whacked by KCl in cheap ag grade fertilizer. If you remember what the Romans did to countries that were giving them trouble, they salted their fields! This is exactly what we're taught to do in school.

More and more this does not seem right to me. Perhaps

this is why fertigation is so effective with one-third or less the fertilizer applied. You put down so little "salt" at any one time that the microorganisms are not affected adversely. To sum up, I feel I have been lied to for a long time.

I recently spoke to a trained soil scientist on the East Coast that had come to the conclusion that he had wasted his entire life after reading my article and speaking with me on the phone. He spoke with the people I had been talking to, and he has read the same books I have. Everything that he had seen go wrong in the field and the resulting problems all came in to sharp focus.

For him, a man with thousands of hours of doing soil analysis and making recommendations, the reality of what had to be heinous collusion of fertilizer and chemical companies motivated by profit and not good agronomy, was apparent beyond a shadow of a doubt.

Is he right? I think he is.

1996 MGCSA MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monday, July 8
IZATY'S GOLF & YACHT CLUB
GARSKE SCHOLARSHIP SCRAMBLE
Host Superintendent: Steve Schumacher

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Wed.-Thurs., August 7-8
MTGF EXPO '96
Resurrection Cemetery

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Monday, August 12
ST. CROIX NATIONAL
MGCSA CHAMPIONSHIP
Host Superintendent: Kevin Clunis

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Sunday, September 15
MADDEN'S ON GULL LAKE
STODOLA RESEARCH SCRAMBLE
Host Superintendent: Scott Hoffman

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Monday, October 7
FOX HOLLOW GOLF CLUB
Host Superintendent: Chuck Molinari

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Wed.-Fri., December 11, 12 & 13
MTGF ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Minneapolis Convention Center