

January 25, 2011

## ZINC

How are you making sure your corn crop is getting the zinc it needs? As you sit down and plan for next year's corn crop, it is important to discuss zinc products and the application methods with your Central Valley Agronomist.



Zinc is an important micronutrient that is essential for energy production in a corn plant. Zinc deficiency symptoms include interveinal striping or bleached bands on each side of the midrib. Keep in mind, once a deficiency is observed the plant has already taken a yield loss. To keep your corn crop fed properly apply zinc through your starter, zinc-coated seed, and a foliar application.

When you are choosing which zinc products to use it is important analyze the particular product because there are numerous sources. Not all zinc sources are the same! There are zincs that are virtually insoluble and its availability depends solely on soil reactions. There are also zinc sources that actually are manufacturing by-products and can contain heavy metals that are toxic to the plant. At Central Valley, we offer two liquid sources for your starter, those being chelates (meaning its ability to hang onto something). Chelates bond strength vary, which is the reason why we use 10% citric with 10-34-0 and 9% EDTA with 6-24-6. The 10% citric chelate is a weaker bond and will not stay in suspension with 6-24-6; you will end up with a precipitate, or basically a mess. We also carry two granular zincs for customers with dry starter, zinc-sulfates and zinc LS. The difference between the two is that the LS source is more available than the sulfate form and can therefore be used at a lower rate.

You can also give your corn crop a jump start by planting seed that has an Advanced Coating of Zinc. However, this is not meant to supply your crop's full zinc requirement. You also have the option to spoon-feed the crop by applying a foliar application of zinc, along with other micronutrients. Foliar application of micronutrients can be tank-mixed with a glyphosate application.



*The corn on the right was treated with Advanced Coat ZN and tasseled 2-3 days earlier than untreated corn.*

Central Valley customers, on average, will see a starter zinc response in almost every situation, even when soil test zinc levels are high. We have seen a range of 2 to 11 bu/ac with an average of 6 bushels.

Contact your local Central Valley Agronomist to make sure your next corn crop isn't missing out on its Zinc needs.