

Trickle Fertigation: “Environmentally Friendly Fertility”

Whenever fertilizer is applied, there always exists the risk of fertilizer losses into the environment. Fertilizer application strategies have been developed that hedge against loss and provide confidence that the needed nutrients are available at the proper plant growth stage. Such strategies save money, promote profitable yields, and protect the environment. Always keep in mind that for the dollar invested in a required fertilizer nutrient the return is greatly multiplied.



The application of fertilizers injected into irrigation allows for excellent control of a crops nutrient uptake. This process known as fertigation is taken a step further when plasticulture systems are involved. Plasticulture is the use of plastic mulches with trickle tube irrigation and it is this production strategy which provides the utmost in nutrient and water conservation when producing a crop. When applying nutrients through a trickle tube in a plasticulture system, actual lbs of required fertilizer are based upon the percent of an acre under the plastic. This generally equates to one-half or less of the fertilizer needed in conventional row crop production. Also the nutrients are under the protective cover of the plastic and are not likely to run-off or leach too deeply during heavy rainfall.



There you have it – Trickle Fertigation, “*An Environmentally Friendly Fertility*”. With some engineering, a little ingenuity, and a modest investment trickle systems can be part of the smallest and the largest operations with profitable returns. If you are interested in trickle fertigation systems, or would like some help or information don't hesitate to call your Extension office.

R. David Myers
Extension Educator, Agriculture
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