



BUILDING A BETTER PROGRAM

Moving Fertility Forward

SINCE I BEGAN in the fertilization business over 20 years ago, my curiosity for growing healthy turf has not waned for even one second. I have been constantly looking for ways to improve the current system and cultural practices of turf care with a “Soil First” mentality. While this is not a new thought process, the concepts behind it were greatly outdated. To be clear, I don’t take an “organic” approach to lawn care, I believe that it is a noble cause and applaud anyone who chooses that route, but there is a better way. There has been a battle over organic vs traditional in lawn care for many decades. I don’t believe that this is a good place to exert energy when the answer is simple, they are both better than the other. Let me explain;

There is a reason that the current mode of fertility is widely accepted, traditional NPK programs provide customers with fairly instantaneous results when compared to their organic counterparts. This is important when running a lawn care company because your customers base 95% of their opinion of your service on the visual aspect. The

flipside is that the organic model provides a considerable amount more to the soil than its traditional counterpart, over time giving it a leg-up as far as sustainability, water and nutrient holding and so-forth. This was always a consideration when I was initially developing the products that we produce and sell today. I needed to get the soil building ability of organics and the visual results of traditional fertilizer in one unit. This ended up truly being the best of both worlds. I was able to produce easy to use liquids that stimulated the microbial populace, foliar fed the plant and left carbon behind in the soil on every application.

Once the mode of application and timing were set, I made it a point to build a program that would continually be enhanced by each and every forth coming application. This is when the mantra of “programs not products” was adopted for my company. While you can take any one of our soil building components, plug it in to your route and enhance your fertility program, the “fertility sandwich” is a much better model to follow. What this means is we are building on to a seasonal program by adding key components at key times to get the best result all season long. This model enabled us to get very specific with programs and dial them into a specific company based on their location, weather, soil types, amount of apps and various other factors so that we can take advantage of whatever mother nature throws at us.

To the point of using pieces of our offerings in your program, the type of fertilizer, method of application, frequency and length of season play a huge part in what we recommend plugging in to your program. Each of our soil building products, N-Ext Air8™, D-Thatch™, RGST™, MicroGreene™ and Humic12™, are meant to add much needed punch to a standard NPK program. Even with these, we consider each and every product you will be putting out alongside it as you go along so that you get optimum results every time.

Understanding carbon-based fertility is also a good thing to cover here. We have been using this term for quite some time and now it has become a buzz word that many companies are using to promote their new products. The form and function behind the term is simple, utilize carbon substances, (ash, humic shale, kelp, bio-char) in a so-



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lution or fine granule with nutrients, to be deposited and left behind in the soil to aid in, microbial repopulation and colonization, increased buffering capacity of the soil, better nutrient retention and so forth. The reality is that the addition of carbon substances is greatly enhancing fertility programs nationwide. This is due to the fact that the expense is minimal compared to the gains and the net result is a more robust program with happier customers. One of the biggest benefits is the greater utilization of nitrogen. Carbon and nitrogen relationships in the soil are of vital importance and when introduced together, this dynamic duo works synergistically to deliver nitrogen more effectively and for longer durations.

I have seen many different ways that companies have marketed and applied our products over the years and as time has gone on, the general public has gotten much more educated about carbon-based fertility and are able to understand the benefits with much greater awareness than a decade ago. This is leading to a much easier and more successful transition when beginning to utilize these products in your program. The reality is that anything we produce can be fit into any granular or liquid program. High volume, low volume, we are able to tailor the N-Ext™ products to your unique business model.

When you consider what type of fertility best fits your business model, you will be looking at a multitude of factors; type of customer, availability of products, cost per thousand and so on. There is a science to everything. Planning out what goes down at the right time is a calculated and important decision that is often made way too far in advance (before all variables are considered). This is why we take a more expanded view when making our recommendations for your specific needs. There are some key components that we apply at the same time of year regardless of geographic locale or apps per season. N-Ext RGST™ is one of these. I recommend going out 2x annually in the spring and fall to both start off and put lawns to bed in a stronger way. The beauty of this product is it fits into any program and budget. At .21 cents per thousand RGST™ benefits far outweigh the costs and this can be applied with herbicides, pre-emergents, insecticides and fungicides without any special mixing.

This holds true with many of the other N-Ext™ products and again we look at building a better program for you so that your mind can focus on growing the business while we focus on growing better turf.

John Perry is President/CEO Founder of Greene County Fertilizer Company and its parent company, Bio Green USA and author of Lawncology®.