

*From The Desk Of  
Alex Gascho*



## **Lime, Right?**

How many times do you catch yourself thinking about Soil pH? I think about it now because no matter the crop or weather, correcting soil pH has a place for increasing profitability.

The right soil pH is an essential part of creating nutrient availability to your crop. In order to achieve 100% of your fields yield potential raising the pH level maybe necessary, even with great fertility, crops can still be limited by pH. Take a look at table 1. It's one way the USDA shows how yields can be affected by pH.

So how do we fix a low pH problem? With lime. We know not all fields need lime and that variability within fields can be substantial. In fact, rate and placement of lime is so important that liming incorrectly can cause yield loss.

For a solution to this problem, I recommend grid soil sampling. Dave and I have been working with Larry Eekhoff, crop consultant and owner of Agronomy RX in Webster City. This spring we had Agronomy Rx grid soil sample fields and it is now time to put that information to use. Working with an independent crop consultant like Larry, who has had a long career of making fertility recommendations, we will put a plan together for this fall. Having a plan in place now is going to give us a huge advantage in making sure lime and fertilizer are placed correctly. In fact, I wish I would have started thinking about it sooner.

### ***Thanks for reading***

*If you want any more information about having fields sampled or fertility recommendations give us a call*

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**Table 1. Crop yields relative to pH.**

Crop	Soil pH				
	4.7	5	5.7	6.8	7.5
	<b>Relative Yield (100 is the best, 0 is the worst)</b>				
Corn	34	73	83	100	85
Wheat	68	78	89	100	99
Soybeans	65	79	80	100	93
Oats	77	93	99	98	100
Barley	0	23	80	95	100
Alfalfa	2	9	42	100	100
Timothy (grass)	31	47	66	100	95

*Methods for Assessing Soil Quality, page 173 (SSSA, 1996)*