

# Managing Nitrogen, Controlling Losses On All The Minds Of All For 2009

KANSAS CITY, MO.

**W**hether your crop is cotton, corn, rice or wheat, if you are a grower of field crops, you are thinking about nitrogen more than ever before. The last year saw record prices for fertilizers, and while that spike has subsided temporarily, it's very unlikely that the price of nitrogen will settle back to pre-2007 levels. As a result, farmers are seeking ways to improve efficiency, through nitrogen stabilization and controlling nitrogen losses.

For instance, AGROTAIN International, LLC, saw a rapid growth in demand for its Stabilized Nitrogen technology over the past couple years. The company produces AGROTAIN for urea, AGROTAIN PLUS for liquid fertilizer (UAN) and SUPER U, a stabilized stand-alone fertilizer.

"Until fertilizer prices increased so rapidly, the farmers who had not made AGROTAIN stabilized urea their standard best management practice weren't aware of the dollars they were losing," says Jimmy Johnson, Southern Division Director for AGROTAIN. "But when something costs three or four times more than last year, you tend to focus on getting the most out of every dollar. And since we offer a solution that can help control that nitrogen loss for pennies per pound, our popularity continues to increase."

On average, 30 percent of the nitrogen in surface-applied urea can be lost to volatilization before the plants can access it. Recent university cold weather studies showing volatilization in cool temperatures has increased demand for AGROTAIN use in wheat and corn even more.

AGROTAIN controls these losses from volatilization. Similarly, AGROTAIN PLUS extends the availability of nitrogen in the ammonium form and reduces volatilization, denitrification and leaching losses in urea fertilizer and UAN applications. SUPER U, conversely, is a stand-alone fertilizer that merges the triple-action technology of AGROTAIN PLUS with urea in a cutting edge phase transformation process.

Prior to the price spike, AGROTAIN International had already seen steady growth in farmer interest and began plans for production expansion. Back in September of 2008, the business, along with parent company Lange-Stegmann, celebrated the grand opening of a \$20 million expansion project at its headquarters in St. Louis. The addition included a SUPER U production facility, the Stabilized Nitrogen Center; and the largest inland urea import terminal in the United States.

"Volatile fertilizer prices are driving growers to evaluate their nutrient management programs," said Mike Stegmann, president of AGROTAIN International. "This search for efficiency has created unprecedented demand for our technology and that was the primary driver behind our investment in our recent expansion."

Built to fulfill the surging demand for Stabilized Nitrogen fertilizers, production capacity of the Stabilized Nitrogen Center is expected to be 125,000 tons annually, while rising demand is expected to result in additional plant expansions in the near future. Δ