U of I Conducts Corn Response To Sulfur Trials

URBANA, ILL.

On-farm cooperators across the state are needed to participate in a University of Illinois research trial measuring corn response to sulfur. Though not widespread, sulfur deficiency has increased in frequency, notes Fabián Fernández, University of Illinois Extension soil fertility specialist.

This increase in sulfur deficiency may be the result of less sulfur containing fertilizers being used, less atmospheric sulfur deposition, increasing grain yields, and fewer livestock operations resulting in less manure application.

While soils with fine texture and high organic matter will be included, priority will be given to low organic matter, coarse textured soils. Sites with suspect sulfur deficiency are particularly desirable, says Fernández. Field that have received manure or sulfur applications in the last five years will not be considered.

Volunteer farm cooperators will broadcast sulfur in strips using GPS to georeference the strip locations. Corn grain yields will be calculated using a yield monitor or weigh wagon.

Sulfur sources will be limited to ammonium sulfate, MicroEssentials sulfur, and elemental sulfur. One or two rates of sulfur will be applied in strips, each being replicated at least three times. If the sulfur source contains other accompanying nutrients, the corresponding rates will need to be applied to other treatment strips to avoid a differential response to nutrients other than sulfur advises Fernández.

Plant and soil samples will be taken by the researchers as they visit the plot during the growing season.

Farmers interested in hosting such a trial should contact Fabián Fernández, phone 217-333-4426, or email fernande@illinois.edu . In Ogle County you may call Bill Lindenmier at (815) 732-2191 or email lindenb@illinois.edu , also. Δ