

Meeting Agenda/Brief Recap & Updates
8pm Monday April 1, 2013



Marion Township Library -Chickasaw, OH

1. **Jim Keller** - Welcome, brief Introductions, meeting purpose.
2. **Ron Meyer and APSA 80** – Ron showed a video featuring a farmer from Nebraska who illustrated why using APSA 80 on corn is very beneficial. APSA 80 is a soil conditioner and surfactant* product which research shows can hold as much as 70% of the nitrogen in the top 12 inches of the soil, versus 40% in the control test plots. APSA 80 also increases water sorptivity** by 34%. After the video Ron and his associate George Justice advised how farmers and golf course mangers in Central Ohio are using the product to retain moisture, loosen soil, and increase production (or improve their lawn's root system and appearance). The product significantly enhances root growth causing the plant to extract more nutrients including phosphorous from the soil. While the farmer from Nebraska used irrigation to apply the product it can be easily applied in conjunction with liquid herbicide or pesticide applications or simply sprayed on. It enhances these applications in that the surfactant qualities of the product allows the weed spray to penetrate leaves more effectively and APSA 80 causes the waxy outer layer of bugs to dissolve killing them. It does not harm beneficial beetles since they have shells. If the claims for this product are valid, it could be a production bonus for our farmers and help reduce nutrients flowing into tiles. Anyone wanting more information can contact Ron Meyer directly at his office: (937) 451-3466, cell: (937) 441-6819, or email: rmeyerr@nktelco.net

***Surfactants** are compounds that lower the surface tension of a liquid, the interfacial tension between two liquids, or that between a liquid and a solid.

****Sorptivity** is a measure of the capacity of the medium to absorb or desorb liquid by capillarity.

3. **Terry Mescher Projects** – At our February meeting, Terry, Mike Ontrop, Kyle Van Tilburg and others described a unit that separates swine pit manure solids from liquids. Phosphorous stays with the solids. In one test at a local farm, the unit had performed well enough to continue testing. They were able to sign up several pork farmers to run additional tests. The unit is currently at VanTilburg farms but they have been unable to duplicate the results of earlier testing. The

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unit is a bit challenging to move due to its size. Testing will continue with hopes that they can get the process to work effectively.

Glen Arnold and Terry will be holding a manure application field day. Location and date to be determined. Glen is working with several local farmers to try his approach of applying both swine and dairy manure to growing crops.

4. **Terry Mescher – New/renewed focus discussion continued.** This is still a work in progress.
5. **Bill Knapke** - Bill provided a slide show depicting how Cooper Farms is selling swine manure based on its nutrient value. Their success in this endeavor provides some hope that swine pit manure can be trucked at least some miles and applied cost effectively with a win for both producer and land owner. Anyone wanting more information can contact Bill directly at (419) 852-8506 or email: billk@cooperfarms.com
6. **Jim Keller Accelerated Genetics** – Jim asked the group if anyone would be interested in listening to representatives with Accelerated Genetics speak about a product from Italy which binds up nutrients in pits and lagoons. Don Hange, sales representative and a scientist from the company will be in the area on April 22nd and can meet that evening. There was enough interest that the meeting will be scheduled. The Chickasaw library meeting room is reserved for 8pm. A reminder will be sent.
7. **Jim Keller – Updates.** \$50,000 grant is still progressing. The applicants received a 3 month extension. They are finalizing fact sheets and decision tools. They want to meet with farmers and discuss feed back in late May 2013.

ADAPT network members met on March 12, 2013. They discussed feedback from their trials and preliminarily discussed a new funding approach using EQIP money. This is all preliminary, with the approaches still being finalized. Attendees felt that it would be well to have Tom Menke or Marc Otte come and share results with the broader group. Jim Keller will arrange.

8. **Updates, ideas, suggestions from the floor.** Lou Brown noted that the ADAPT meeting included a review of the 8 waste water treatment plants in Mercer County. The plants release 61 tons of P₂O₅ into the lake each year so that is an issue also. Bill Knapke added that these treatment plants have five year permits and the allowed levels of phosphorous will be reduced as the permits are renewed. Currently there are no limits placed on the Ag industry regarding phosphorous. Bottom line - too much P₂O₅ flowing into the lake from various sources.

Tom Menke has asked Lou to set up a comprehensive test plot on his farm to try multiple variables with comprehensive testing of outcomes. Tom has also been talking to a person about gypsum and its effect on fields. It holds potential to

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hold phosphorous in the soil. Based on this input, Tom and Lou may do some gypsum testing as well on this test plot.

On Thursday April 4th, Ohio Ag Director, Dave Daniels will speak at the Mercer County Ag Breakfast. He and several others want to tour Lou's farm and maybe a couple other farms as well after the breakfast. They may have some news media with them. The media noted that they want to see how Lou has used EQIP dollars.

Lou was asked to be on the State Dairy Nutrient workshop advisory board. This involvement resulted in a lengthy conference call concerning a new, proposed fertilizer bill. Lou is concerned that too much power may be concentrated in the hands of one individual giving him/her a "license" to unilaterally enact regulations. Lou also felt strongly that the wording "animal waste" should not be included in the bill. The term should be replaced with something like "animal nutrients". The group agreed with his wishes. The State Health Department will be consulted however the Health Department will not have the authority to determine any issues. Discussion ensued about the number of fertilizer outlets (even a big box store selling 10lb bags of lawn fertilizer is considered an outlet) in the state and who would be certified to apply fertilizer. Terry Mescher had some insight into this legislation advising that commodity groups across the state are gathering to prepare feedback to the legislators. Stay tuned!

Brother Nick recently attended the cover crop/no till conference held at Ohio Northern University. He noted that it was well attended with 900 plus people registered. Brother Nick was a bit perplexed that while there were numerous attendees from north Mercer County very few from southern Mercer County were there. Discussion ensued as to why that might be with a suggestion made that the need to tend to all the livestock would be a deterrent. Brother Nick constantly encourages all farmers to come and learn from these educational opportunities.

9. Next meeting – We'll send out notices.