

# AGRICULTURAL BEET

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## Setting the stage for a successful 2022

### **Crop Consultant and Retail Agronomist Observations of 2021 Fall Soil Nitrate Test Levels.**

Last week you received an AgBeet that spotlighted a summary of early-season soil nitrate levels from soil analysis labs. The timing of the newsletter coincided with a modest rain event which resulted in better-than-average readership and initiated some interesting feedback. A few crop consultants reached out to me to discuss the soil test nitrate projection graph (included again below). This led to a few more phone calls with other crop consultants and retail agronomists to inquire about their early-season observations. A summary of these conversations will be provided in this newsletter.

Crop consultants and retail agronomists appear aligned in their observations. Soil test nitrate levels are both significantly high but also considerably variable in 0 to 2' samples coming out of 2021 fields (especially in corn where the range extended from 30 to 150 pounds or more). The variability is generally (but not in all cases) related to crop uptake / yield or late season rain events and soil mineralization but I was cautioned by a few that this was not a universal observation.

They also asked me to remind shareholders that we can expect fertilizer prices to reach potentially all-time highs for our 2022 crop. Taken in combination with the variability of soil nitrate (and other essential nutrients) caused by 2021 crop production conditions further emphasizes both the importance and the value of knowing what you have for fertility coming into 2022.

**Bottom Line:** The **SMBSC Soil Sample Analysis Program (SSSAP)** has existed for 20 years. However, agronomists inform me that some shareholders may have forgotten about it while new shareholders may not even know about it. The SSSAP was created by SMBSC to incentivize soil sampling by allowing your retail agronomist or consultant to sample your fields and submit under the program. SMBSC will then cover the analysis fee for these fields (sampling fees are not covered). Further, SMBSC also implemented a \$2 / Acre incentive for sampled acres in an attempt to cover some of your sampling fees as well. Please consider utilizing this program to assess your fertility environment going into 2022 regardless of your specific application rate strategy in recognition of current fertilizer prices and in the interest of fertilizing fields for the highest quality crop possible.

Steve Roehl – Ag Strategy Manager

