



# Forage Advisor

TerraLink Horticulture Inc.

Summer 2015

## Plant Science Lab

### Soil Testing

On a dairy farm a soil test is not necessary more than once every couple of years. Given the low cost per acre, it just doesn't make sense to stretch it longer than that, given the value of the information gained by testing. For example, a Standard test package costs \$53.50, which spread over a 10 acre field is \$5.35 per acre. Over a 30 acre field the cost is only \$1.78 per acre.



### Plant Science Lab

A Standard test package at TerraLink's Plant Science Lab includes pH, organic matter, salts, nitrate-N, phosphate, potash, sulphur, magnesium, calcium and base saturation. Although this is sufficient, it doesn't hurt to check micronutrients every 5-6 years too. Even though grass and corn typically don't respond to applications of micronutrients in the Fraser Valley, you wouldn't want your crop to suffer yield or quality because of some minor nutrient that has strayed a little low. The Detailed

test package is more expensive but also includes sodium, zinc, boron, copper, manganese and iron.

Late summer or fall is the best time to soil test. Why? Several reasons: except for nitrogen and sulphur, the other nutrients don't leach over winter, so what is tested in the fall you can assume to be present in the spring. Your recommended rates for nitrogen and sulphur are based more on crop removal than soil test levels, so unless you are engaging in a Nutrient Management Plan, part of an Environmental Farm Plan, don't worry about them for now. Second, both the labs and the folks who conduct soil testing are less busy than they are in the spring. Last, late summer and fall testing allows you more time to apply limestone, should the soil test indicate your field has become too acidic, as it is almost always drier later in the year.

### Don't Forget....

### Fall Planting of Forage Grass Stands or Cover Crops

The best time to plant grass seed is in late summer or early fall when temperatures are cooler and rainfall is back in the weekly forecast. Seeding your fields in the fall will allow grasses time to germinate and establish before winter; this also gives your grass a head start before next year's summer heatwave. TerraLink offers a variety of

Richardson Seed forage and cover crop mixes. Whether you are overseeding an established pasture or planting a brand new field, we've got it covered.

### Forage Mixtures

- Orchardgrass Blend
- Orchardgrass/Tall Fescue Blend
- Premium Ryegrass Blend
- Premium Tall Fescue Blend
- General Pasture Forage Mixture
- Hay Baler Forage Mixture

### Cover Crops

- Italian Ryegrass
- Fall Rye
- Buckwheat
- Winter Wheat
- Barley
- Oats
- Legumes

### Animal Health

### Say Goodbye to Flies!

Flies are not only a nuisance pest causing undue stress, but they may also transmit diseases to your herd. *Streptococcus* mastitis bacteria can live up to 16 hours in a fly which is more than enough time to transmit the bacteria from cow to cow. Cows

Rooted in your community.

TerraLink

that are irritated and agitated by excessive flies will have reduced milk production so any effort to eliminate nuisance pests will impact your bottom line.

Agita™ Fly Bait is a ready-to-use granular bait that provides fast, effective control of adult house flies. The sugary mixture includes the same sex pheromone that female flies release to attract the male flies for mating. This encourages both male and female house flies to remain in the treated area feeding on the bait. Drawn in by the pheromone-based attractant, the flies ingest the active ingredient in Agita™, thiamethoxam. Agita™ kills quickly, and 100% of the flies die within a 2-metre radius of the bait while the bait itself remains clean, attractive and effective longer.



Bait should be scattered in high fly areas or used in hanging bait stations so that it is not accessible to children, pets, domestic animals or wildlife. Spread daily to provide an initial knockdown when fly populations are high and then use as needed. It may be used in barns, poultry houses or anywhere house flies congregate such as windowsills or animal pens. Place out of the reach of your animals. Do not spread on walkways used by animals.

The actual monetary loss from fly infestation is difficult to measure, but estimates from various studies (including Purdue, Cornell and the University of Tennessee) range from 10 percent to 20 percent decline in milk production. Agita™ Fly Bait is an effective method to kill nuisance flies and reduce such losses.

**NEW from TerraLink!**

**Freshstall<sup>K</sup> Bedding Conditioner**

Freshstall<sup>K</sup> is a unique blend of ingredients that are designed to reduce ammonia emissions and help aerobically break down the litter. It can replace hydrated lime in calf pens, comfort stalls and maternity pens. The unique, non-caustic chemical nature of Freshstall<sup>K</sup> helps absorb moisture and urine in the bedding, thereby improving the barn environment. It is also a good soil conditioner and can be safely spread onto the land.

**Soil Preparation**

**Fall – the Best Time to Apply Limestone**

Limestone should be applied in the fall.

Why?

The uptake of nutrients into plants depends partly on the acidity of the soil (pH). The best pH range to aim for is dictated by soil type, climate and crop type, and for forage grass or silage corn, the optimum pH in the Fraser Valley is about 6.0 to 6.5.

Fertilizer is essentially salt. When fertilizer is applied, it will come into contact with moisture that surrounds each particle of soil. Subsequently it will dissolve, upon which nutrients become available for uptake to plants. This is a fairly rapid process. Limestone, on the other hand, is rock. It breaks down by erosion, and this is not a rapid process at all, even when incorporated. It is even slower if the limestone is surface-broadcast. Typically, several months pass before the biggest change in pH takes place. To raise pH to the optimum target range by the time you apply nutrients in the spring, the best time to apply limestone is in the fall.

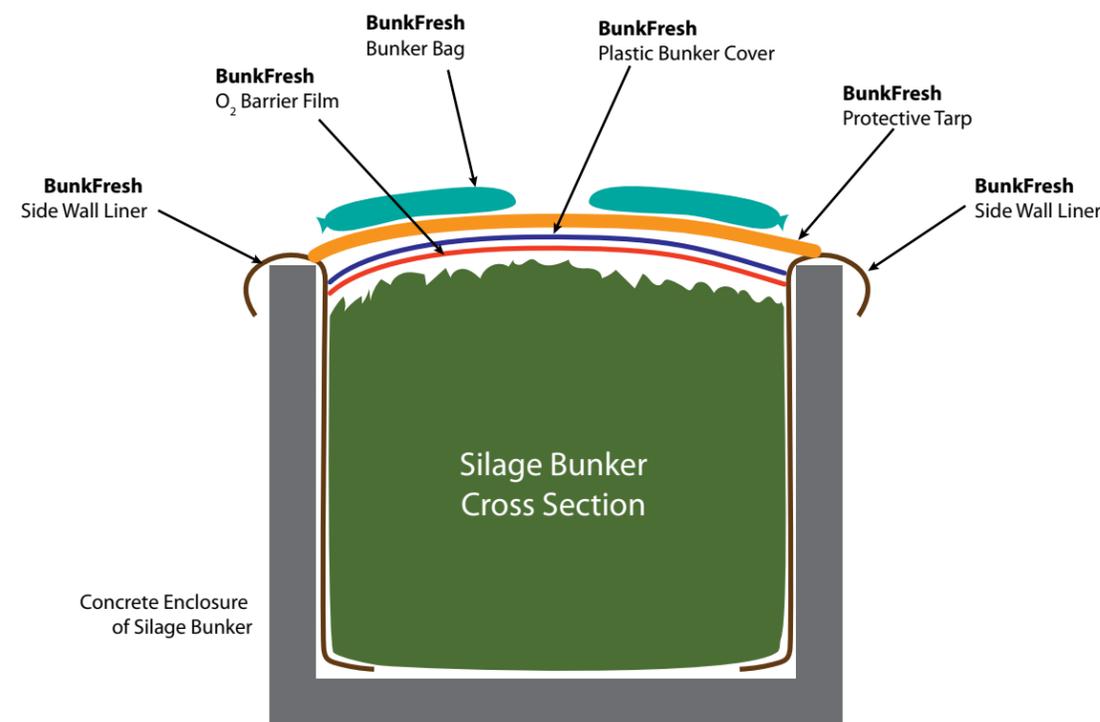
**Leatherjackets Update**

This spring several dairy farms in the Fraser Valley suffered serious damage to new forage grass stands from leatherjackets. This has become a concern because there are no longer any registered pesticides to control them. Staff at TerraLink and other firms brought this issue to the attention of the BCMA and the PMRA. Together we hope to work with pesticide registrants to try to seek minor use registrations. Go the TerraLink website [thort.com](http://thort.com) and search “leatherjackets” to find a detailed fact sheet for more information.

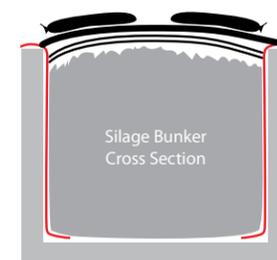
**BunkFresh Silage Plastics from TerraLink**

Introducing TerraLink’s new line of plastics to assist dairymen and ranchers in silage storage, under the brand **Bunk Fresh**. Our Silage Plastics come in various sizes and thicknesses and are available for many different uses. Contact the TerraLink Sales Desk at 1-800-661-4559 for more information about this new line of products.

**How to use BunkFresh Silage Plastics:**

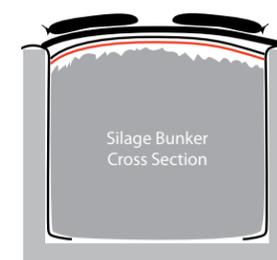


**BunkFresh Line of Products:**



**BunkFresh Side Wall Liner**

- For a clean side wall surface between bunker wall and silage, resulting in less feed spoilage.
- Size: 40 x 100 ft.



**BunkFresh O<sub>2</sub> Barrier Film (Roll)**

- Oxygen barrier designed to improve freshness in silage by reducing oxygen penetration.
- Features co-extruded 5 layers blown film.
- Colour: clear.
- Length 164 feet. Widths: 23, 33, 43 or 53 ft.



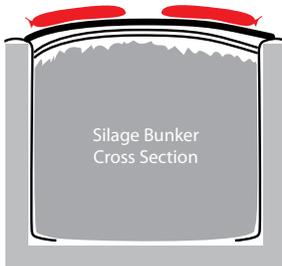
### **BunkFresh** Plastic Bunker Cover (Roll)

- Improved construction featuring 6 ml thickness and co-extruded black/white for reflective yet anti-light penetration qualities.
- Excellent UV resistance for possible multiple uses.
- Protects fodder by eliminating exposure to light, water and air.
- Superior mechanical properties and strong resistance to impact and tearing. Thickness: 100 - 200 um.
- Various sizes available:  
Length 100 ft; widths: 25, 33 or 40 ft.  
Length 150 ft; widths: 40 or 50 ft.  
Length 200 ft; width 120 ft.



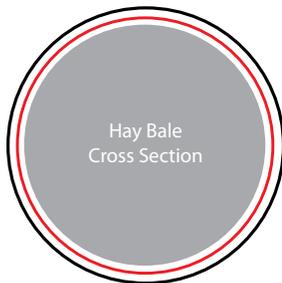
### **BunkFresh** UV Protective Cover Tarps

- Tough polyethylene woven design to protect fodder by providing an extra layer of protection from mechanical damage.
- Excellent UV resistance for multiple uses.
- Superior mechanical properties and strong resistance to impact and tearing.
- Sizes available: 20 x 25 ft; 30 x 35 ft; 40 x 45 ft; 50 x 55 ft.



### **BunkFresh** Bunker Bags

- Designed to protect the seal by weighing down protective layers like Oxygen Barrier Film, Plastic bunker Cover or UV Protective Tarps.
- Replaces tires or other old-fashioned ways to weigh down a cover.
- Long and narrow shape, good weight, easy to handle.
- Tough polyethylene material for multi-year use.
- Available pre-filled with granular limestone, OR sold empty so you can fill them yourself, in bundles of 50s or singles.



### **Silage Bale Net**

- TerraLink Silage Bale Net is designed for standard bale wrapping, where nets are required prior to bale wrap application.
- Size: 48" x 9,842 ft.

Other sizes available upon request.



### **Silage Bale Wrap**

- Silage Bale Wrap is a multi-layered, co-extruded, high quality film.
- Superior stretch for round and square bales.
- UV protection for 12 months.
- High adhesive strength. Tried and tested performance.
- Available in white or green.
- Rolls of 75 cm x 1,500 m.