

# Blueberry Advisor

TerraLink Horticulture Inc.

July 2016

*What is the single biggest reason to fertilize blueberries after harvest?*

**Answer:**

## Bigger Yields in 2017

How to get bigger yields in 2017? Here's how: There are two major reasons for applying nutrients in the fall. First, and most important, the buds for next year's crop are formed in a period coinciding with September through October. Make sure your plants have adequate amounts of certain nutrients leading up to this time and during these months. Do NOT apply any more nitrogen, because an excess of N may prevent the plants from going dormant properly. If the plants don't go into dormancy properly they will be vulnerable to increased winter damage and diseases. Second, fall is a very good time to bring up soil levels of nutrients that aren't vulnerable to leaching into the groundwater in the winter. If your levels of K or Mg are low, for example, now is a good time to apply them. You can best determine fall nutritional requirements in blueberries with a tissue test, which is best done in late summer. Inquire with our Sales Desk about tissue testing this summer.

### RECOMMENDED FALL NUTRITIONAL CROP INPUTS:

- **Fall Berry Blend 0-11-22 + 10(S)+5Mg+.03Zn+5Ca.** A granular amendment to supply macro and micro

nutrients that your blueberry plants may need in gross amounts.

- **Sulphate of Potash Magnesia 0-0-22+22(S)+11Mg.** Supplies potassium, sulphur and magnesium. Sulphur leaches. Potassium is a nutrient removed in relatively large amounts by the harvest. A general characteristic of typical Fraser Valley soils is low magnesium. Our berry and vegetable crops use an abundance of Mg, and it is commonly in deficiency; even when applied routinely.
- **Potash:** if only potassium is required in the fall, we have many choices! We can supply it as granular potassium sulphate, liquid TigerClaw KDL 0-0-24, liquid TigerClaw Fruit Finisher 0-0-24, liquid TigerClaw Power-K 0-0-20 or liquid KTS 0-0-25+17(S).
- **TigerClaw liquid Zinc DL 10% Zn.** For foliar applications.
- **Eco Bor 10% Boron.** For foliar applications.
- **Stella Maris Aquatic Plant Extract.** Has been proven to increase bud development.

*The size of next year's harvest is completely controlled by what you do this fall.*

### SOIL SUPPLEMENTS AND pH:

- **Elemental Sulphur, granular (90% S).** If you need to lower your soil pH, elemental

sulphur is an effective method. Applied from several hundred to several thousand pounds. Bacteria in the soil convert the elemental sulphur to sulphuric acid, which lowers the pH. This is best in the spring since bacteria are more active in warm, moist conditions. Do not apply more than 400 lbs per acre in established plantings at a time. (Longstroth, M. MSUE Extension. July 15, 2009.)

- **Dolopril and Calpril lime** (Mini Bulk bags only). Prilled form of lime. Raises pH.
- **Hydrocal liquid limestone.** Easy to apply and effective. Raises pH.
- **Ag Grade Limestone.** Regular agricultural grade limestone is also available for raising pH. It is less expensive than Hydrocal or prilled lime products but the logistics of field application are more difficult. Bulk custom application is available for pre-planting situations.
- **Novacal II granular gypsum** adds calcium but doesn't affect the acidity of your soil. This is a pH-neutral product.
- **Humic Acid granular humate supplement** (mini bulk or bags).
- **BioFert Earth Boost 1-1-0.** As an alternative to plain humic acid, try BioFert Earth Boost 1-1-0, a blend of leonardite, feather meal and guano soft rock phosphate.

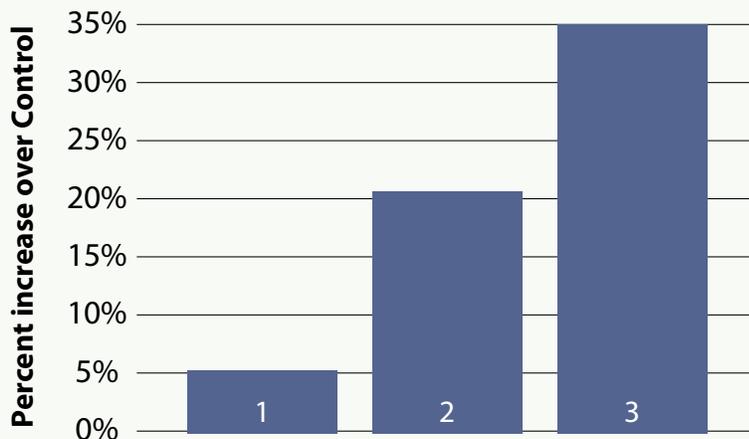
NEW

# Maximize Your Revenue...

... with post-harvest applications of Stella Maris!



*Stella Maris and Bud Development*



Percentage Increase in Buds per Branch on Stella Maris Treated Blueberries

In three different blueberry trials, the number of buds per branch was increased by an average of 18.8% using in-season Stella Maris applications, indicating the potential for increasing yield the following year.

## New Product Preview

### GS-4 Gibberellic Acid Update

This spring we launched GroSpurt's GS-4, our new gibberellic acid product for use in blueberries. So far, we have seen

encouraging results. GroSpurt's GS-4 gibberellic acid is applied as a foliar spray at 50% – 75% flowering if made as a single application. The label recommends GS-4 to improve fruit set if and when conditions for optimum set may be less than perfect. What growers observed was, in general, improved uniformity in fruit size and ripening timing. Some thought the fruit size itself was improved. It is definitely worth trying further. Improving fruit set, size uniformity and ripening timing may ultimately prove beneficial if it reduces labor cost during picking, by concentrating the harvest.



## Post-Harvest Clean-Up

### Weed Control After Harvest

Yes, harvest is a long, hot, annoying time for blueberry producers. The temptation to walk away and take a break from the fields as soon as the last fruit has been shipped must be enormous.

However, letting the weeds grow in late summer and fall can only cost more money in the long run. Weeds are harder to remove or control after they have grown large. The humidity in the canopy of weed and blueberry foliage increases, which will lead to increased disease incidence. Finally, rodents are far worse in a field that has not been cleaned, as the weeds provide cover for them.

Mechanical mowing, chopping and flailing go a long way to reduce the weed. This is a good way to remove weed in the alleyways. In between the plants themselves, it is a much more difficult task

to use mechanical weed control. Herbicides that are typically used post-harvest include glyphosates (Credit XTreme, Touchdown Total, Vantage Plus Max II, and others), which are systemic, Gramoxone and Ignite (contact herbicides), and post-harvest residual products such as Devrinol DF XT, Simazine, Princep and Chateau. Sinbar and Sandea are also available and very effective, however these are typically applied in early spring, as is Casoron.

## Plan Ahead

### Soil Testing

#### 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 is what is 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. Second, both the labs and the folks who conduct soil testing are less busy than they are in the spring. Last, fall testing allows you more time to apply lime, should the soil test indicate your field has become too acidic, as it is always drier in the fall.



Plant Science Lab

## Protect your Investment

### Frost Guard

#### New! Frost Guard 0-0-10

Frost Guard 0-0-10 is an organic-based formulation to reduce damage from frost to buds and shoots. Its systemic mode of action enhances potassium content in tissue and also helps mobilize calcium and phosphorus essential for strong cell structure during winter months.

- Protects perennial and annual crops from frost.
- Increases cell density in buds and new shoots.
- Acts as a catalyst in maximizing nutrient mobility.

