



# FERTILIZER NEWS

## Tackling high humidity conditions

Whitfert Sales Executive Ken Ashworth, reports that as a result of more humid conditions, seeding can be more challenging for some.

Fertilizers do vary considerably in their ability to tolerate atmospheric moisture and it should be noted that fertilizer blends generally have lower critical relative humidity than their components. In some cases it will be significantly lower, making some blends impractical.

"Farmers would have experienced humidity problems in the past," Ken said. "However the lessons may have been overlooked because in the previous few years, humidity was generally low and seeding occurred mostly in drier conditions.

**"Regardless of product, it is good practise to spread a thin layer of hydrated lime on the floor of the fertilizer storage shed. This helps stop the fertilizer drawing up moisture through the concrete.**

"After the shed is filled, spread more hydrated lime lightly over the fertilizer and cover it with a tarp or plastic. That helps keep air and moisture out and is especially important if the shed doorway faces the prevailing winds. All fertilizer should be covered whenever it is practical to do so.

"In humid conditions and first thing in the morning it is good practise to throw a handful

of hydrated lime into the fan of the seeder. This will be blown throughout the seeding rig and dry everything out before you start.

"Leaving seeder tynes on the ground overnight can cause problems because it will suck moisture up to condense in the boots.

"When loading fertilizer into the seeder, sprinkling a little hydrated lime onto fertilizer going up the auger will coat the granules and again, prevents the granule from sucking in moisture.

"When the fertilizer bin is full, add another 1-2kg of lime to the top. This little extra amount will flow through the system and keep things dry, as we know in these conditions the air that is pushed through the system will carry moisture. Over-use of hydrated lime should also be avoided, because this can create its own problems," Ken said.

Hydrated lime is caustic so appropriate care should be taken when it is being handled, including appropriate clothing, dust mask and eye protection.



*Ken Ashworth  
Sales Executive  
Whitfert  
Mobile: 0418931469*



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For more information please call the Whitfert Team in Kwinana on 9419 9999