NEWS REPORT

A & L GREAT LAKES LABORATORIES, INC. FALL 2001

List of Contacts at A&L Great Lakes

Agronomy:
Randall Warden, Jerry Hohla, Dan Kite, Gary Elliott & Myron Warner

Billing & Accounting:
Sharon Topp & Shawn Tinnel

Land Application:
Keith Henley

Quality Assurance:
Greg Neyman

GPS Mapping:
Dan Kite

Telecommunications:
Randall Warden & Greg Neyman

Soil Trak:
Randall Warden, Greg Neyman & Dan Kite

Feed Testing:
Lois Parker & Randall Warden

Water Analysis:
Keith Henley

Pesticide Residues:
Keith Henley & Dan Kite

Fertilizer Analysis:
Jo Ann Nichols

Compost Analysis:
Lois Parker

Area Agronomists:
Gary Elliott & Myron Warner

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$OIL TE$TING OPPORTUNITIE$

Everyone in agriculture is looking for opportunities to add profit to their business. We recently compiled a summary of soil test data to be included in an upcoming Potash and Phosphate Institute (PPI) national soil test survey. Reviewing this data again reminds us that soil testing is a great tool to identify profit opportunities for both the producer and the dealer.

The most striking finding in our soil test summary was that over 44% of soil samples had low potassium (K) soil test levels. Higher rates of K fertilization are needed to meet crop nutrient needs on a wide scale. Fertilization should prevent yield loss and/or increase crop yield ($ to the producer) and result in increased fertilizer sales ($ to the dealer). This is a win-win situation.

Whether reviewing an individual soil test or a soil test data summary, don't overlook legitimate agronomic needs to apply fertilizer. It can help everyone's bottom line.

Area Code Change Coming

Our telephone area code will be changing in mid-December from 219 to 260. Many of you already have, or will be, going through an area code change. Please keep us updated on any phone number changes that you might have.

E-REPORTS

All of our routine reports are available by e-mail in PDF format. Receiving reports by e-mail saves you time and lets you put the information to work. It is your option whether to receive a paper copy. Contact us for more information.

Wisconsin Soil Testing Certification

Effective September 1, 2001 we are a certified soil testing laboratory for cost-share programs in Wisconsin. Our certification was gained after participation in the Wisconsin FSA Soil Testing Certification Program, which enabled us to become proficient with the Wisconsin soil test methods.

We have a special Wisconsin Soil Sample Submittal form for cost-share program samples. Soil samples submitted on this form will be analyzed by Wisconsin soil methods and fertilizer recommendations will be made according to University of Wisconsin guidelines.

Additional information is being mailed to our Wisconsin customers. Please contact us if you have any questions.

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Myron Warner
Certified Agronomist

Meet Myron Warner

A member of the A & L Great Lakes Laboratory team since 1993, Myron Warner is our Certified Agronomist responsible for contacting clients in Ohio, Michigan and Eastern Indiana. Myron keeps current with new research and changes in the agricultural industry. He helps the laboratory identify the current and future needs of our clients, and provides the clients with information on new developments at A & L Great Lakes Labs. Myron coordinates the regional A & L workshops and provides the technical training required for CCA credits.

Myron is an Ohio State University graduate with a degree in Agronomy. He is especially interested in plant tissue nutrient research. Myron's early professional work was managing the first public service laboratory in the U.S. as a staff member of The Ohio Cooperative Extension Service. The OCES laboratory provided farmers with crop nutrient status through plant analyses. Later Myron managed one of the first commercial analytical laboratories in the Midwest that provided both soil testing and plant analysis services.

Myron has three grown sons and three grandchildren. He and his wife Sally live on a lake near London, Ohio, and enjoy water activities, gardening and antiquing.

...and That's the Way it Was

(PART 2 - A & L Great Lakes Laboratories, 1985-2001)

Continued Rapid Growth

A & L Great Lakes continued its rapid growth through the early and mid 80's. We ran out of space at our Decatur Road location, leased an additional building next door, and then ran out of space again. It was very difficult at that time to find existing facilities that were suitable to house a laboratory. Our best choice was to build ... and we did. After a year of planning, designing and constructing, our brand new, state of the art, 12,000 square foot laboratory building was completed in December of 1987.

Again, A & L faced a surge in growth. Contract testing for pesticide residues became a significant part of our business, with demand that continued to increase. Almost before the new laboratory building was completed, our pesticide laboratories were too small. We had to expand again. By 1989, we had completed a 6,000 square foot addition to the building.

A & L Great Lakes Matures

The 90's can be considered a period of maturation of the A & L business. We continued to grow, but not at the rapid rate of the prior decade. Much of this time was spent fine-tuning the business. We continued to adapt technology rapidly, with computerization and automation continuing to take the forefront in this process. We began connecting our lab instruments directly into computers in the early 90's. Today, virtually all of our data is "untouched by human hand".

One new addition to the A & L line of services came in 1993, when we expanded into the environmental testing market. The capability for testing water, wastewater and hazardous wastes was added, complimenting our agricultural testing business. Today our environmental laboratory accounts for roughly 30 percent of A & L's testing business.

Undoubtedly, the low point in the 90's history came on March 26th of 1996. A transformer

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...and That's the Way it Was – continued

malfunctioned, causing a major fire in the laboratory section of the building. Despite major damage amounting in the 100's of thousands of dollars, we were able to resume operations within a week of the fire. The five-month rebuilding period that followed was a great character builder for the staff.

It's Not Over Yet!

And so, here we are at our 25th anniversary year. We feel fortunate to be one of those businesses that has survived and continued to thrive for so many years. Without question, a lot of that success is due to a group of dedicated employees who take great pride in their work. As we proceed into our next quarter century we know that the story is not over yet! We've only completed chapter one!

DRYER AND (SOIL) DRYER

Properly drying the number of soil samples received during our peak seasons is a significant challenge. Growth over the years has taken us from a maximum capacity of 500 samples many years ago to over 4,000 samples per day last fall. Removing moisture from this many samples is not an easy task, however. Drying 4,000 samples can mean removing 200-300 gallons of water in a just a few hours.

Some labs feel they can speed up the drying process by increasing the temperature in their soil dryer. According to the publication *Recommended Chemical Soil Test Procedures for the North-Central Region* (NCR No. 221), "the temperature of the (drying chamber) should not exceed 104 degrees F. This is especially critical for potassium analysis, which can be significantly influenced by drying temperatures."

We have a new soil drying system that meets this challenge. We spent several months working with engineers to design a state-of-the-art soil sample drying room. Through a refined balance of airflow, ventilation, condensation of extracted moisture, and minimal heat, we will now be able to dry over 6,000 samples per day this fall. And we will be doing this in the recommended manner. This assures that you receive quality results in a short period of time.

Stormwater Sampling

If you are an industry or associated with construction activity, you may be required to collect stormwater samples. Under Rule 5 of the Wet Weather Section of Indiana Office of Water Quality, stormwater sampling is required of persons involved in construction activity that results in the disturbance of more than one (1) acre of land. In addition, Rule 6 requirements apply to specific categorical industrial facilities, which have a point source discharge of storm water associated with industrial activity from their facility. Other states have similar regulations.

Samples must be taken during a "typical" storm event of at least 0.1 inch of rainfall. The storm event must also be preceded by at least three days (72-hours) of no measurable rain. Sample collection must also be initiated within the first 30-minutes of the rainfall event. The first set of samples to be taken are grab samples and represent what is in the water at the instant it is taken. The second set of samples collected are composite samples, and are made by mixing (compositing) a number of samples that are taken throughout the duration of the storm event.

If you have a stormwater permit and haven't yet sampled this year, contact the laboratory for a sampling kit. If you need information concerning specific stormwater requirements for your industry or construction site, contact the Office of Water Quality within your State. For additional information on sampling, required analysis, containers, preservatives and shipping, contact Keith Henley.

2001-2002 Tradeshows

We will be exhibiting at several tradeshows and meetings. Please attend and visit with us.

2001:

September 6-7	Midwest Pork Conference, Indianapolis
September 12-13	Midwest AG-Industries Exposition (MAGIE), Danville
November 12-14	Indiana Water Pollution Control Association Annual Conference, Indianapolis

2002:

January 7-9	Indiana-Ohio Agribusiness Exposition & Annual Convention, Indianapolis
January 15-17	Fort Wayne Farm Show, Fort Wayne
January 15-17	Wisconsin Fertilizer and Chemical Association Annual Meeting, Madison
January 21-23	Illinois Fertilizer and Chemical Association Annual Conference, Peoria
January 22-24	Michigan Agri-Business Association Winter Conference, Lansing
February 5-6	Michigan Water Environment Association Joint Expo, Lansing

Departed Friend

With sadness we report that Carole Meyers recently passed away. For many years (1977-1994) she was the friendly voice answering the phone.

2001-2002 Soil Fertility Workshops

Our Soil Fertility Workshops offer an opportunity for continuing education on basic soil fertility concepts for people involved in production agriculture. Below are dates and locations for our 2001-2002 Soil Fertility Workshops. Registration forms will be mailed later in this year. Contact us for information.

2001:

November 27 – Findlay, OH
November 29 – Plymouth, IN
December 4 – Danville, IL
December 6 – Columbus, IN

2002:

February 26 – Plover, WI
February 28 – Janesville, WI
March 5 – Saginaw, MI
March 7 – Kalamazoo, MI

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